



Ice Age Drift

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Neighbors' Gifts Enlarge Valley View Preserve

Article by Dave Jenkins

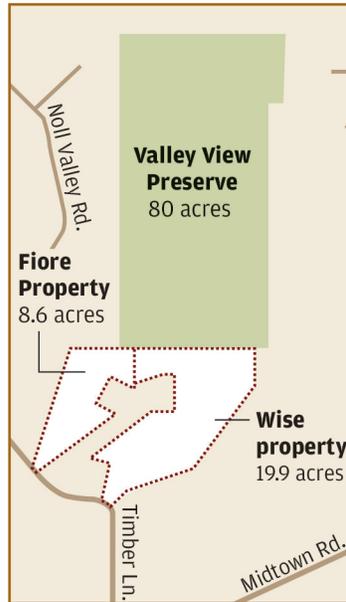
The 81-acre Ice Age property at the Valley View Preserve in Dane County gained nearly 29 more acres in late October, thanks to donations of part of their homesteads by long time volunteer stewards Tom and Bonnie Wise and their shared driveway neighbors, Jim and Susan Fiore.

Held up for awhile by Town of Middleton officials over the shared driveway and other concerns, the donation won't mean an eventual linear extension of the trail. However, it expands the lands permanently protected along most of the southern boundary of the preserve, and represents the first acquisition of land or land rights for the trail in Dane County since 2013. It also lets the Ice Age Trail Alliance add up to another half mile of auxiliary loop trail.

Perhaps of equal importance, the Wise gift for the first time gives the IATA its only permanent vehicular access to Valley View for prescribed fire and other landscape-scale stewardship and restoration work. Yet the access from Timber Lane is obscure enough to not attract unauthorized motorized use.

Most of the donated land, valued at \$1.425 million, consists of improved oak woodland, with some oak savanna on the 19.9 acres the Wises contributed. It contains some savanna obligate species, such as American spikenard and woodland Joe Pye weed. While not rare or endangered, the plants are seldom seen on other IATA lands in Dane County.

Wise, long the steward and trail monitor for Valley View, said he never intended to sell his land for highest and best use (upscale homes just south of the exclusive Noll Valley development), but



Graphic by Jason Klein. Wisconsin State Journal. Reprinted with permission.

had originally planned to retain ownership during his lifetime.

But the Fiore, who had bought their land while it was enrolled under the state's managed forest law, were facing the choice of cutting up to half their mature trees for timber by 2017 or paying significant monetary penalties. Some of the

Wise property also was under MFL constraints, and the two properties together made a more significant and attractive gift. To avoid MFL penalties, the donors deeded the lands to Dane County Parks rather than directly to the IATA.

Cutting the trees would have been like killing the forest's mothers and grandmothers to Susan Fiore, who had recently heard a researcher speak of the symbiotic underground network of woodlands and assert that mature trees give more assistance to their own offspring.

Their land "was the only thing of value we had to leave to the future," she said. The gift also allowed them to continue enjoying it without being responsible for its care beyond their three-acre homestead, she said, noting they had pulled 51 bags of garlic mustard last spring.

For Tom Wise, the gift was emotionally very satisfying, allowing him to achieve a lifetime goal of protecting the land while allowing him to continue managing the land, including expanding the oak savanna, as an IATA volunteer.

In addition to the land, the Fiore gave \$22,500 to the IATA to fund future stewardship. Over the years, Wise has invested a similar amount in equipment used mostly for the benefit of public land, including IATA lands, and countless volunteer hours.

Can You Help?

Membership/Outreach Committee Looking for Members!

The Dane County Chapter is looking for members to join the Membership and Outreach Committee. The committee would like to meet on a quarterly basis and better engage new and current members on how to get involved with the chapter. If you would like to join the team, please contact Amy Lord at paulsen_amy@yahoo.com. A meeting is being planned for January/February.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities!

The Ice Age Trail will be hosting a booth at two upcoming events: Garden Expo February 12-14, and Canoecopia March 11-13, both at the Alliant Energy Center. We are looking for volunteers to help staff the booth and be available to talk to attendees and answer questions about the Ice Age Trail.

The contacts are Tom Gross for the Garden Expo [ta144@tds.net, 798-4999] and Luke Klobberdanz for Canoecopia [luke@iceagetrail.org, 798-4453]



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Try one of the Winter Events listed in the calendar insert!

Meet a Member

Dave Jenkins

Article by Amy Lord

How long have you been a volunteer with the Ice Age?

Dave had been familiar with the Ice Age Trail for quite some time; he was a member, wrote the check every year, and read the newsletter. He knew he wanted to help but finding time was difficult. He became a regular volunteer after his retirement in Spring 2008. To date, Dave has put in over 3500 volunteer hours!

What first brought you to the organization?

Dave was somewhat familiar with the chapter and its work in land restoration. He figured it was an easy way to learn something he could use to take care of the acreage he owned. He did not anticipate he would be as involved as he is! If you want to learn about the land, the plants, and the wildlife in Dane County, volunteering on chapter workdays is one of the best ways. Dave is amazed at how many plant species he's learned about while working on the trail. Volunteers get an up close and personal interpretation of what Dane County has to offer and you don't have to feel guilty going off trail.

What inspires you to be involved and make the trail better?

It's not a bad thing to have a little OCD when doing prairie stewardship and trail maintenance. It is tedious, hard, and sometimes not fun, but it's a critical component to the beauty and health of the trail. The Ice Age Trail Alliance and Dane County Chapter has amazing people committed to performing stewardship. Their passion and knowledge is contagious and the friendships Dave has built are very important to him. If you are willing, you can learn something new every time you volunteer.

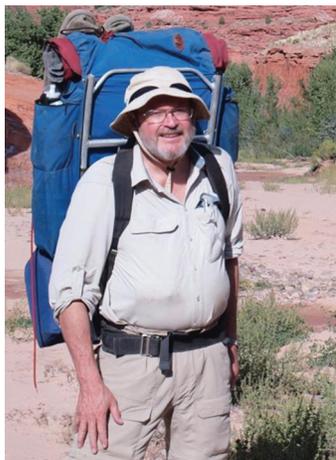
Do you have any projects you've worked on that you are especially proud of?

Dave is very involved with controlled burns. He participated in his first fire in 2009 and has been involved with 70+ for the chapter, Dane County Parks, and DNR. The fire group works very well together and has great teamwork. Most members have some level of formal training. Once a fire is started, everyone has to know their role and respond accordingly. [With typical modesty, Dave failed to mention his five years or so editing the chapter newsletter, writing most of the articles, and creating a quality communication tool. See another of his articles in this issue.]

What is your favorite trail section?

Hiking: Table Bluff just northwest of Cross Plains. You will find more variety in 2.5 miles than just about anywhere else in Dane County.

Working: Liebetrau –county land just one mile northeast of Table Bluff. There is no trail yet so one of the few ways to see the prairie is on a work day.



Dave Jenkins

What advice/recommendation would you give to a new member on how to get involved or better enjoy the trail?

Dave and some of the other regular volunteers are very task oriented, which may be taken as uninviting. This is not the case, the group just knows what they have to do and they do it. If you are a new volunteer, ask questions! Engage the "regulars" in conversation to learn about the trail. There are lots of work days, especially during the winter. Check out the Dane County Chapter online calendar at iceagetrail.org. Take a look and join the group for one or many! Stewardship is an ongoing process so join us as much as you can.

My Favorite Segment

A Hike to Delight

Article by Linda Hein

Yaktrax, trail shoes, hiking boots, snowshoes: no matter the footwear or the season, the Cross Plains segment of the Ice Age Trail never fails to delight me. The hike winds uphill through an oak and hickory forest, traverses a savanna and a prairie before going through another wooded section, returning through prairie and downhill to the village streets. Living nearby, I am able to hike its almost three miles several times a week. Each trip brings a new pleasure, whether it's a plant I haven't seen before, flocks of bluebirds, the raucous call of a pileated woodpecker or the flashing of a white tail deer I startled.

Spring bursts with life. Wild geraniums and shooting stars abound in the wooded sections and penstemon, both white and violet, present themselves in glorious profusion in the prairie, which sits high atop an unglaciated hill. As the seasons progress I am greeted by changing vistas: the pinks and purples of coneflowers and vervains in summer give way to the yellows of fall. The summer savanna is covered with purple milkweed flowers, attracting monarch butterflies, and winter with the dead seed heads appearing above the snow has its own beauty.

Walking in wild places has been a lifelong pleasure for me, and I have enjoyed learning about and identifying the flora of each area, so it was especially thrilling as I scrambled down a wooded hillside late one spring, to come across a plant I had never seen before: the exquisite showy orchid, a small orchid with pink and white petals. I look for it every year and usually find one in a new place.

This really is a unique landscape and it is a privilege to be able to enjoy it so often. I remember well when the glorious prairie was nothing but a cornfield and the woods were becoming overrun with garlic mustard. The trail's upkeep is an ongoing effort, and I'm always grateful for the efforts of the volunteers who built, planted and maintain this segment.



Do you have a favorite segment in Dane County?

We will publish some on our web page and select one for each upcoming printed issue of the Drift. Submit to: ta144@tds.net

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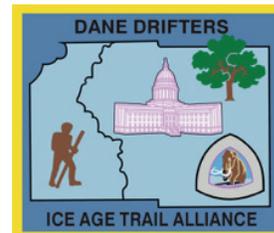
Dane Drifter Update

Article by Gary Wensing

Just a quick update as we wrap up a second full year of the Dane Drifters hiking rewards program. Nine people finished the program since our newsletter in August. This makes a total of eighty-seven people who registered in the two years with thirty-two completing the program and receiving their patch and certificate. Of the nine to complete since August, two completed both the trail segments and connecting routes while seven completed only the trail segments.

Please congratulate the following:

Name	City	Distance
Robert Alt	Madison, WI	Trails Segments
Paula Alt	Madison, WI	Trails Segments
Ed Spoon	Verona, WI	Trails Segments
Janet Wood	Madison, WI	Trails + Connectors
Betty Bauhs	Madison, WI	Trails Segments
Dick Bauhs	Madison, WI	Trails Segments
Len Punke	Hartford, WI	Trails + Connectors
Dory Blobner	Wauunakee, WI	Trails Segments
John Painter	Madison, WI	Trails Segments



Join the Dane Drifters and then hike all the beautiful IAT segments in Dane County. You'll earn this cool patch and a certificate of completion.

As a reminder, the Program is only \$10 for IATA members, \$12 for non-members and \$6 for a companion to a registered hiker and you can earn a patch, a certificate of completion for hiking all of the segments of IAT in Dane County, and you support the Dane Co Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

If you want to join the Dane Drifters or learn more info, contact Gary Wensing and Kristi Kenyon of Cross Plains at kensinginn@tds.net or see the Dane Co page on the IATA website (<http://dane.iceagetrail.org/home>).

Whether you're working on the program or not, everyone is welcome to join us on group hikes on our trail segments.

Check the enclosed calendar to see what we have planned in the coming months.

Become a Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

The IATA does NOT share or sell member personal information.

- I have enclosed a check payable to the Ice Age Trail Alliance.
- No payment is enclosed. Please send sign-up forms for secure automatic bank withdrawals.
- Please charge my (circle one)

VISA Mastercard \$Amount _____

Card # _____ Exp. _____

Signature _____ IATA Code _____

Trail Maintainer: \$35 \$50 \$75

Trail Builder: \$100 \$150 \$250

Trail Protector: \$500 \$750

Yellow Blaze Club: \$1,000 \$2,500 \$5,000

Glacial Leadership Circle: \$10,000 \$25,000

Mail to:

Dane County Chapter
Ice Age Trail Alliance
2110 Main St.
Cross Plains, WI 53528

Join Online! Visit us at www.iceagetrail.org.

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Return Service Requested

Dane County Chapter
www.dane.iceagetrail.org

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2016 Annual Meeting and Elections

Join Us January 31st



Melanie McManus

After a fairly exhaustive search for a venue in the West Madison/Middleton area, we are back in Cross Plains at the library, 2107 Julius St., for our annual meeting on January 31, 2016. The evening will begin with a potluck dinner at 6:00 followed by our annual meeting and election of officers. We will also approve a budget for the coming year and consider changes to the by-laws to bring them up-to-date and reflect common practice. Please see the chapter web page [<http://www.iceagetrail.org/volunteer/chapters/dane-county/>] or call Tom at 798-4999 for a copy of the proposed by-law changes.

The evening will conclude with a program of interest to all Trail members regardless of how much of the Trail you have managed to hike. Two hikers we introduced you to in 2014 decided they enjoyed their time on the trail so well that they hiked it again. Jared Wildenradt of Cross Plains started section hiking the trail within two months of completing it the first time; and he has begun hiking it again. Thru-runner Melanie McManus of Sun Prairie ran

the Trail from west to east and has now decided to run from the east to the west, and to take the western bifurcation this time. Please join us to pose questions to them about their experiences. Both were members of the Facebook 1000-Miler Wannabe site.



Jared Wildenradt

find us on [facebook](#)

Join the Dane County Chapter Facebook Group and stay up-to-date on trail happenings.