



Ice Age Drift

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Three People You Should Meet

Dane County Naturalist Lars Higdon

Article by Tom Gross

Volunteers who work with Dane County Parks were pleased to learn that the new Naturalist would be hired before Wayne Pauly leaves. They were even more pleased when they saw the resume of the new Naturalist, and they were not disappointed when they met him. Lars Higdon came on board in late July so he will have over two months to work with Wayne and ease into the position. (See the Fall 2015 Drift for more about Wayne Pauly. He will retire at the end of September.)



Lars Higdon
Photo by Tom Gross

Four Chapter members spent a morning with Lars recently and were left with a very good impression. He has a BS in Natural Resource Management from UW-Stevens Point with minors in Conservation Biology and Natural Science Broadfield. He has an MS from UW-Madison in Restoration Ecology. He worked for three years as a restoration ecologist for Madison Audubon but for the last five years he worked for the Irvine Ranch Conservancy in southern California. I can understand why he was anxious to get back to Wisconsin, where fire is your friend, not your enemy. With Audubon, his duties included invasive species control, tree and brush removal, seed collecting and planting, and prescribed burning. Anyone who volunteers with the Dane County IAT will recognize that list of activities.

Lars was interested in, and appreciative of, the work that the Chapter has been doing at Prairie Moraine County Park, the County's property on Pine Rd. (Liebetrau), and elsewhere. After our meeting, he suggested getting together again to discuss our mutual plans and goals and how he can assist our efforts. We look forward to a long and productive relationship.

Proud Steward Anne Helsley-Marchbanks

Article by Amy Lord

1. How long have you been volunteering with the Ice Age Trail? Anne remembers the first time she volunteered with the Ice Age Trail fondly – November 2000 at a work day planting the Holmes Prairie, now known as Table Bluff. She remembers Wayne Pauly, a beloved county parks manager who is about to retire, energetically explaining the how's, why's and what's of prairie planting and engaging the 30 to 40 volunteers about the importance of

what they were doing that afternoon. She now understands what it takes to do a planting, the accuracy of the process – it can be tedious and intense, but the end product is fantastic.

2. What first brought you to the organization?

Anne's first experience with the Ice Age Trail was back in 1990 at a Hike-A-Thon in Lodi. Time had passed and Anne came across the Ice Age Trail again in the spring of 2001 at a Ski-Hike-Snowshoe event in the Brooklyn Wildlife Area. It came at a not so perfect time in Anne's life that, in fact, was a perfect time. She came to find out she had a love and passion for working along the trail and in prairie restoration and land stewardship. She has worked in the Brooklyn and southern Montrose sections ever since.

3. What inspires you to be involved or make the trail/organization better?

It's a good feeling to know you are making a difference. You know you are needed in maintaining the trail and being a good steward of the surrounding lands. Anne is needed and feels very good about the work she does!

4. Are there any special projects you are involved with or projects you are proud of?

Anne loves being a part of the burn crew. The first invite to get involved with a spring burn came in March 2001, when she got a personal phone call asking her if she would like to help on a burn. She didn't know what that meant. When she found out she could bring her kids with her to observe while she found out what this "burning" was about, she was in. Her son, in fact, helped on a burn before she did! As a single parent, working with the Dane County Chapter was a great opportunity for Anne to do something important with her children, have a social outlet, and be outside. It was a win-win for Anne and the Ice Age Trail.

Anne has helped with the restoration work in Montrose since before the lands were purchased for the Ice Age Trail, and she has been the trail steward for the southern Montrose area since then. Anne is a founding board member of the Friends of the Brooklyn State Wildlife Area (incorporated in 2007). *Continued on page 2...*



Anne Helsley-Marchbanks
Photo by Christopher Marchbanks

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Join us for one of the fun Fall events listed in the calendar insert!

Anne has also served as the Dane County Chapter treasurer for the past 4 years.

Anne is proud to have been a part of three Eagle Scout projects in the Brooklyn and Montrose sections completed by members of Boy Scout Troop 2 in Madison while she was an Assistant Scoutmaster. All three projects were savannah restorations, but she is especially proud of her son, Christopher Marchbanks, and his restoration projects. His project was two-fold, removing non-native brushy species from the Crane Overlook prairie in Brooklyn, through which the Ice Age Trail passes, followed by removing the non-native honeysuckle, buckthorn, autumn olive and multi-flora rose from an area to the east of Young's Prairie, in southern Montrose, as a step towards restoration of the oak savannah there.

For various reasons, these two disparate projects ended up being two years apart, rather than the planned three weeks, and Anne is very proud of her son for sticking through to the end. A few years later, the Ice Age Trail was routed through the end of her son's Eagle Project area.

5. Most favorite trail section

Anne has only hiked Brooklyn, Montrose, and Lodi (remember the opening story from 1990... that's when she hiked Lodi.) Anne seems to be more of a worker than hiker. Anne spends her life pulling weeds but hopefully she'll be able to enjoy a hike or two in the future!

6. What advice do you have for new members on how to get involved and how to better enjoy the trail?

People are always welcome! We want new and existing supporters to learn about the trail and what we need to do to maintain it. Utilize the resources – trail angels, resource books, trail monitors, the Ice Age website (www.iceagetraill.org), and hiking leaders. Anne would love to see new faces at workdays in Brooklyn and Montrose. If you have questions, please reach out to Anne to learn more about how to get involved!

Thousand Miler Wannabe Denise Vine

Article by Tom Gross

I ran into Denise Vine on the Ice Age Trail twice last week. She is a Chapter member who has undertaken the challenge of becoming a 1000-Miler; one who completes the entire Ice Age Trail. At this writing, the Alliance lists 127 people who have completed the Trail. Some do it as a continuous trek on the Trail every day from start to finish. Most do it in sections, using weekends and vacation time because they have other obligations or choose not to take on the physical demands of a through-hike. Most people walk the Trail at a leisurely pace but a couple people have run the entire way.



Compass plant at the Liebetrau Prairie // Photo by Tom Gross

Denise does a combination of running and walking. Because of this, she prefers to go it alone. This means using the common self-shuttling method of dropping a bike at the day's end point for the return trip to her car. She does not use the popular Facebook site called Thousand Miler WannaBes [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/214797715197465/>] that some find useful for learning of current Trail conditions.

Denise agreed to answer some questions that I sent via e-mail:

1. When did you start?

My first hike was the Hike-A-Thon on June 4. I had competed in trail races for years. Last year I broke my foot and tore my quadricep. I ended up at CORE Athletic to work on my injuries/weaknesses. Eric Lord had posted information for the Hike-A-Thon at CORE. I thought I would give it a try. I wanted to

try the 20-miler, but was busy that morning so I signed up for the Verona Segment. For the event, I paid enough to become a member of the Ice Age Trail Alliance. Because of that, I received the Mammoth Tales magazine. This is where I first read about the 1000-miler Club. Being I am no longer racing, I liked the sound of this challenge and like that there is no time limit in which to complete it. I did my first hike on my own on July 30. I had been searching on-line for "Best Hikes in the US". Kettle Moraine kept popping up. I decided to start there with the Clover Valley Segment and continue on the connecting route to the Whitewater Lake Segment and the Blackhawk Segment. I was not even remotely prepared. I had thought, "How hard can it be to run/hike about 20 miles?" Turns out it was harder than I thought. I did the last 1/3 of miles in the same time it took me to complete the first 2/3. I ran out of water with 2 miles of hiking and the bike ride back to my car left to finish. I had no bug spray and was wearing shorts and a tank top. I soon discovered why people hike in long pants. I had my first experience with Wild Parsnip and still have the scars to prove it! But I am still wearing my shorts as I like to run as much as possible.

2. How many miles have you done?

So far I have completed 110 miles.

3. What resources do you use?

At the Headquarters, I purchased the large map for tracking what segments I have done. I also purchased the Trail Atlas and the Trail Guidebook. I carry the pages for the segments I am doing from the Trail Atlas with me on all of my hikes. I use these to keep me on the right path and to find my way back to my car on my bike. I have no sense of direction and am a horrible map reader so this has been really good for me to work on those skills. I read about the segments I will be doing in the Guidebook. I take it with me in the car and use it to determine where to leave my bike and where to park my car. It really came in handy for the Monticello Segment. *Continued on page 3...*

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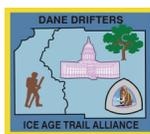
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Dane Drifter Update

Article by Gary Wensing



As summer winds down, we're hoping we see some more finish up

their Dane Drifters hiking rewards in the cooler Fall weather. Since our spring update, we've had 15 hikers complete the program along with 33 more people register (151 people have signed up and 66 have completed it). Remember, you don't need to finish in any particular time frame, so if you've registered, keep working on those segments and you'll join the ranks of finishers! Check out the various hikes on the fall and winter calendar and work on finishing with some other trail hikers.

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.iceageatrail.org/home>).

Congratulations to the following Dane Drifters!

Name	City	Distance [†]
Mary Leibig	Windsor, WI	TS
Tony Leibig	Windsor, WI	TS
Matthias Rupp	Madison, WI	TS
Kelly Rupp	Madison, WI	TS
Kathy Kehl	Plainfield, WI	TC
Greg Weeg	Round Lake Beach, IL	TC
Chase Jones (age 11)	West Salem, WI	TC
Michael Livesey	Middleton, WI	TC
Lou Ann Novakl	Sun Prairie, WI	TC
Jesse Cooper	Madison, WI	TC
Katie Cooper	Madison, WI	TC
Michelle Amacker	Madison, WI	TC
Thomas Vergeront	Sun Prairie, WI	TC
Mark Kaczmarek	Franklin, WI	TC
Mary Cieslewicz	Menomonee Falls, WI	TC
Bryn Thompson	Madison, WI	TS

[†]TC: Completed trail segments and connecting routes;
TS: Completed trail segments.

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

Thousand Miler Wanabee (continued)

I would have arrived unprepared for the long, pitch-black tunnel had I not read that you need to bring a flashlight. After I load my bike into the back of my car, I head for the nearest gas station for Gatorade, chocolate milk and a big bag of Dill Pickle Potato Chips!

4. What do you think about when walking/running/biking?

When I am walking and running, I do my best not to think! I have teenagers and three elderly dogs at home. My son is a senior in high school and there is a lot to think about in helping him to plan for his future post-high school. My daughter is a sophomore and well, she is a teenage girl, so that explains enough! One of my dogs has developed pretty severe separation anxiety when I am not home. So if I think about things, I will worry too much about what is happening at home and with the rest of the family. When I am biking back to my car, in all honesty, I am thinking, "Please don't hit me," every time I hear a car approaching, while also thinking about how much I hate biking uphill and praying I spot my car soon! Part of the reason I enjoy

running the segments is that no matter how fast or slow I am going, it still feels like I am flying through the trees. It makes me feel strong and healthy to be in nature. I also feel very appreciative that places like this still exist.

5. Do you have a target date for finishing? Things will clearly get more complicated as you get farther from home.

When I first decided that I wanted to be a 1000-miler, I wasn't very realistic. Doing 20-30 miles a week, I could finish in just over a year. Now that I have more miles under my belt, reality has sunk in. First of all, I do not want to be walking the connector routes if there is snow and ice on the roads and I definitely do not want to ride my bike back to the car! I also haven't figured out how I am going to accomplish the segments that are more than a few hours drive from home. Those segments may have to wait until next Summer and I may have to enlist the help of my family. My husband loves to fly fish, so if I can find some fishing close to the segments, I can probably get him to help me out!

We will check in with Denise next summer to track her progress.

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Wisconsin's Youth Unplug on the Ice Age Trail

Article by Luke Kloberdanz, Director of Outreach & Education, IATA

Maybe you heard them from a distance, talking or laughing. Perhaps you stepped to the side of the Trail and allowed a large group of kids to pass, steadily moving across the lightly glaciated hills of Table Bluff or the prairies and savannah of the Lodi Marsh. Then again, you may not have caught a glimpse or sound, but they were on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance's Saunters program has grown steadily since the incipient year of 2008. Today, Saunters engages over 1000 youth and nearly 100 educators in all four seasons of exploration. The goals of learning through experience, combatting childhood obesity and getting unplugged remain at the core of programming. They experience the Trail all across the state, but a large number of this year's Saunterers utilized Ice Age Trail segments in Dane County.

The numbers are pretty amazing. In 2016, over 600 Saunters participants hiked segments in the area. All but 80 of these youth visited the "must hike" Table Bluff Segment. They did more than hike, they gave back by planting prairie seeds, removing red cedar and other invasives, providing corridor clearing and picking up trash. These activities create a collective experience that cannot be replicated in most school settings. They become a memory that is part of their growth and consciousness.



Members of Lodi's Saunters Program

These experiences are not possible without the volunteer stewards that work to make the Trail and surrounding landscape open, accessible and imaginative. On behalf of all Saunters participants, thank you for taking such good care of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. You are creating memories that truly last a lifetime and you are helping to make the Ice Age National Scenic Trail an integral part of current and future conservationists.