

Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway 2019 Annual Summary



Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW) is a non-profit member organization that works to protect and preserve the wilderness-type experience of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

Our Strategic Plan includes three primary goals:

- 1) Information and education
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) A well informed membership

Annual Meeting – Saturday, January 25

FLOW's annual meeting will be Saturday, January 25, 2020 at 1:00pm at Grandma Mary's restaurant in Arena. A business meeting, recognition of award winners, and celebration of the year follows. A low cost buffet meal is offered. Please bring a dessert to share. The public is warmly encouraged to attend!

New Benefit for FLOW Members

In 2020, FLOW will be launching the Riverbiz program enabling members to receive discounts at river-oriented businesses when presenting a FLOW membership card. Your membership contribution will benefit FLOW's mission while benefitting you.

Watch for information on these discounts. If you are a business owner in the river valley and want to support FLOW, while increasing goodwill in the community, contact Membership Committee member Chuck Rathmann at chuck.rathmann@ifs.com or call 414.403.1066.

Riverway Champions 2019

Four "Riverway Champions" will be celebrated this year during FLOW's annual meeting on January 25. Riverway Champions are chosen for outstanding service to FLOW's mission to preserve the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

The **Adult Riverway Champion Award** will be presented to recently retired DNR water quality expert and FLOW Science Committee member, **Jean Unmuth** of Sauk Prairie.

The **Youth Riverway Champion Awardees** for 2019 are three sisters, **Maya, Lydia and Vivian Jensen** of Spring Green.

According to Timm Zumm, FLOW's president, Maya, Lydia and Vivian have distinguished themselves by outstanding involvement as volunteers in a wide variety of FLOW's projects and events. **Congratulations to all River Champions!**

Information and Education

LWSR Celebrates 30 Years



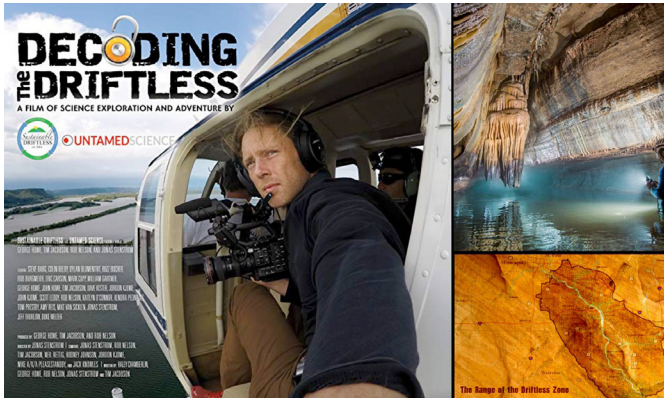
FLOW President, Timm Zumm, with former Governor Tommy Thompson



The Lower Wisconsin State Riverway celebrated its 30th Anniversary on November 10th at the Vintage in Sauk City. FLOW members attending helped honor the organization that has been so critical to protecting and preserving the Lower Wisconsin River. FLOW President Timm Zumm said "It was very special to be in the presence of the people who were involved in the formation of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. The history they shared should be remembered and their wisdom should be applied in today's world."

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“Decoding the Driftless” screenings



In March, FLOW partnered with the Driftless Area Land Conservancy and Arcadia Books in Spring Green to host two screenings of “Decoding the Driftless” at the Gard Theater. 130 high school students from the River Valley, Ithaca, Iowa-Grant, and Reedsburg districts attended the first showing and included a question and answer session with Mark Cupp of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Board. Later that evening a second showing for the public played to a full house. Local Emmy Award-winning filmmakers George Howe and Tim Jacobson of Sustainable Driftless teamed up with national TV series host Rob Nelson of Untamed Science to produce this feature-length film about the amazing origins and diverse natural and archaeological resources of the Driftless Region. FLOW sponsored another screening in May at the Base Camp restaurant in Mazomanie that was also well-attended.

River Teaching and Safety



In 2019 FLOW continued its mission to engage and inform the public on the subject of the Lower Wisconsin River through participating in a number of community events. Flo the Paddlefish helped spread our message, making appearances at Cross Plains Trout Days, and joining in the River Valley Homecoming and the Muscoda Morel Festival parades, as well as leading the River Alliance Fools Flotilla for the 7th time.

Flo was also once again on hand at FLOW’s booth at the annual canoe expo Canoecopia in March.

Every year FLOW helps facilitate group outings to learn about and enjoy the river. In 2019 FLOW hosted paddling events with the Driftless Area Land Conservancy, an Environmental Law staff outing, and joined with the River Valley Birders to present the Spring Green Bird Festival’s 1st annual Birding by Canoe field trip at Bakkens Pond.



In October, Timm Zumm took Cambodian conservation student, Puthea Chea, on a personalized Wisconsin River tour. Puthea was visiting Spring Green to learn about sustainable forestry.



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FLOW also promoted the river across the age spectrum with presentations at Greenway Terrace Assisted Living Facility, and a water safety class for the kids at SwimWest in Madison. Additionally, two of our Youth Riverway Champions, Vivian and Lydia Jensen assisted President Timm in piloting the safety boat for the Wisconsin River Canoe Race in July.

FLOW Stewardship

FLOW promotes stewardship of the lower Wisconsin riverway by working with local groups such as the Three Eagles Foundation and Cultural Landscapes Legacies, Inc. to coordinate tours of internationally significant Native American effigy mounds and other heritage sites. FLOW also helps coordinate workdays to preserve and maintain important areas. The State Natural Areas Program honored FLOW as the volunteer steward of the Twin Lizards/Boyer Mounds site and the Blue River Sand Barrens. More info: <https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/lands/naturalareas/documents/volunteer/blueriverwinter.pdf>



Advocacy

In 2019 FLOW advocated for the Riverway and water quality issues by partnering with the Wisconsin Conservation Voters to promote Conservation Lobby Day, and by joining the Midwest Environmental Advocates in legal environmental actions.

“Kids Don’t Float”



Our Kids Don’t Float 2019 season began on April 20th when we distributed 190 Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) at 10 stations along the Lower Wisconsin River and ended on October 27th when we retrieved 164 for inspection, possible retirement and inside winter storage. Although 26 PFDs were missing, we are hopeful they will be used to keep kids of all ages afloat.

Through good quality PFD donations and purchased replacements, we keep a supply ready for weekly replenishing of stations. We need to stock more Adult Universal PFDs per station in 2020. These are most often missing. Are you able to help?

Science Committee

In May, FLOW members Jessica VanEgeren, Ron Grasshoff, and Timm Zumm met with our new DNR Secretary Preston Cole to advocate for conservation issues pertinent to the river. Natural Resources Board member, Fred Clark helped facilitate the meeting.



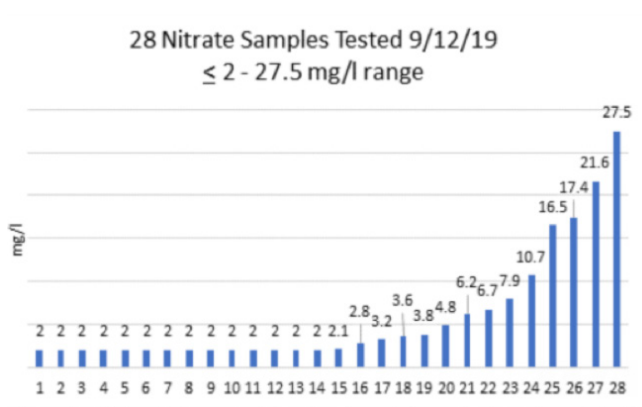
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Science Committee (con't)

Jean Unmuth represented FLOW at the Water Quality Task Force public hearings sharing FLOW's concerns.

Jean Unmuth and the Science Committee have also been advocating for an environmentally viable solution to the flooding issues in Fish, Crystal, and Mud Lakes. FLOW's Science Committee is working to lend expertise towards finding a solution that would protect the river.

FLOW Science Committee members worked with the Green Fire conservation group to address nitrate contaminated drinking water and form a list of recommendations to help remedy this challenge. FLOW member, Dave Marshall tested area well water for Nitrogen (NO₃-N) at the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board meeting in September. Five samples of the 28 tested were higher than 10 mg/l (the safety limit). The same contaminated aquifer that affects our drinking water supply also pollutes the State Riverway.



The Science Committee reported successful overwinter survival and reproduction of State Endangered starhead topminnows in river area sloughs initially stocked in September 2018. The goal is to establish a population above the Prairie du Sac dam. The Science Committee will continue this project.

Jumping Spiders Committee

This committee has the goal of getting people outside to explore and learn about the different organisms that live in the riverway. Participants were exposed to the iNaturalist app, used to identify and catalog wildlife. One goal is to especially engage our youth membership. We hosted our first field trip in tandem with the July 4th weekend Fire on the River campout.



On October 12, FLOW hosted Spooky Critters are Not Spooky for about 20 kids and adults at the Spring Green Community Library. Janessa Johnson and Natalie Rohe gave a fact-filled presentation about some of the (not really) scary critters that can be found locally, such as bats, snakes, opossums, and, of course, Jumping Spiders. Members of UW Platteville's Animal House brought along some live critters. Jumping Spider Committee Chair, Katya Frank, did a great job putting this event together.

Informed Membership

In 2019 FLOW continued its mission to keep people informed of river levels and safety issues such as dangerous sand bars and the landslide that occurred off Hwy C just east of the Hwy 23 Bridge last July. FLOW also keeps the public abreast of news that impacts the riverway such as progress on the proposed Wisconsin River Recreation Bridge.

FLOW again hosted popular events like the Fire on the River campout and Rhythm on the River.

Financial Report

INCOME	Amount (\$)
Balance from 2018	7,228
Memberships and contributions	12,897
Income DNR Grant for Symposium	1,650
Total Income	14,547
EXPENSES	
Expenses, general fees and supplies	12,275
Trailer for FLOW paddlefish	1,600
Trailer for KDF life preservers	2,950
Total expenses	16,825
Balance into 2020	4,950