



# It's Our Nature

Newsletter of the Fox Valley Sierra Group of the Wisconsin Chapter of the Sierra Club Vol. 22 Issue 3

## Fox Valley Sierra Group Meetings

December 8, 2022 - 6:00pm

### *40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary & Holiday Party*

Bubolz Nature Preserve  
4815 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI

Come celebrate with us. 40 years of Exploring,  
Enjoying and Protecting the Planet.

Details on page 2

January 12, 2023 - 7:00pm

### *Winter Activity Tips from REI*

Girl Scout Building (next to Bubolz Nature Preserve)  
4693 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI

Details to come

February 9, 2023 - 7:00pm

### *Wisconsin Conservation Congress*

Zoom meeting - watch for link  
in email, our website or facebook

Details on page 3

March 9, 2023- 7:00pm

### *Tri County Recycling*

Girl Scout Building (next to Bubolz Nature Preserve)  
4693 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI

What can we recycle and what happens to it?

April 13, 2023 - 7:00pm

### *Monarch Butterfly Migration*

Girl Scout Building (next to Bubolz Nature Preserve)  
4693 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI

Details to come

May 11, 2023 - 7:00pm

### *Discover the Ice Age Trail*

Girl Scout Building (next to Bubolz Nature Preserve)  
4693 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton, WI

Presented by the Ice Age Trail Alliance.

Details can change, keep up to date at-  
[www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley](http://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley)  
[www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra](https://www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra)

## From the Chair

November 2022

2022 is rapidly drawing to a close and your Fox Valley Sierra Group Executive Committee has been hard at work preparing for our annual holiday party and 40th anniversary celebration to be held on Thursday, December 8th. January 14th, 1982 was this group's first program meeting at the Appleton Public Library under then chair Dale Schaber. Dale has been central in finding donors so we could return to Bubolz for our celebration and in organizing the event. I can't thank him enough for his hard work getting the Fox Valley group going and in planning this event 40 years later. When you see him at our gathering in a few short weeks, please extend your thanks also.

I regret to announce that long time executive board member Rich Krieg will not be seeking re-election at the end of his term. Rich served as our outings chair and worked on issues relating to state parks and national public lands. He will be truly missed... Which brings me to our next subject.

More than ever, we need your help to keep our group vital and active. We are looking for volunteers no matter what your interests are, for board positions or short-term assistance on numerous projects. Please reach out to us so that we can continue to offer outings and educational opportunities to the Fox Valley community.

In that same vein, we are going to be in need of raising funds in this upcoming year. We will be having a fundraiser in January at Pinot's Palette. Check out the details in our newsletter and invite your friends. The more the merrier and you don't need to be a Sierra Club member or an artist to join in the fun.

In addition, Diane Perschbacher, our treasurer, has been diligently working on getting a fundraising page setup. This will make it easier for you to make donations, no matter how large or small, so we can pay for facility rental now that we're meeting in person again, as well as printing and mailing costs for our newsletters and other expenses.

Not interested in painting or donating at this time? Recruit your friends, family and co-workers in the Fox Valley to join our group. New member dues are a bonus to our group's treasury.

I hope you and yours have a peaceful holiday season. Looking forward to connecting during our many educational events and outings in 2023 and.....see you at the party on December 8th!

Penny Paiser-Wilson  
Fox Valley Sierra Group Chair



## **Fox Valley Sierra Group 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**December 8, 2022  
6pm - 8:30pm  
Black Bear Den (lower level)  
Bubolz Nature Preserve  
4815 N. Lynndale Drive, Appleton**

Share and enjoy your favorite  
trail mix, holiday snack or finger food

Penny Bernard Schaber will give an environmental  
summary of our environmental activities  
during the past 40 years

Have fun with our Annual  
Holiday Recycled White Elephant Gift Exchange

Enjoy a Slide Show from Activities of our Past

And of course 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Cake.

### **Attendees are asked to bring**

- Their own nonalcoholic liquid refreshments
- Favorite trail mix, holiday snacks or other finger foods to share (nothing that needs utensils, pots or pans)
- A holiday recycled gift in a brown paper bag for the Gift Exchange.

Those bringing a trail mix, holiday snacks or finger foods are asked to fill out a description of the treat and list the ingredients.

No alcohol beverages are allowed at Bubolz Nature Preserve during our meeting and program.

A white elephant gift is not something you buy but something you have in your house that you think someone else might like. Don't buy a gift, recycle one.

Those attending our celebration are asked to let us know at dschaber@athenet.net. Not a requirement but it will help in planning.

We care about you and your family and want to make sure you stay safe and healthy. If you are not feeling well or are sick, please stay home. Let's all show respect and care for one another.

Our first FVSG public meeting was well attended and many local people who were interested in the environment came to the Appleton Public Library on January 14, 1982. We had an organizational meeting where people could sign up for specific duties to help get the FVSG Board started. Many attendees expressed a keen interest in having a Sierra Group in the Fox Valley area.

People who were already Sierra Club members in the Appleton area were invited and helped organize this first meeting. Our first Chair was Dale Schaber and our first Vice Chair was Jim Schultz. Throughout these 40 years we have had many strong, dedicated Chairs and Executive Committee members.

Our first guest speaker was Jim Staudacher who was the first person in Wisconsin to thru-hike the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. He started on May 14, 1979 at the Eastern terminus marker at the base of the tower in Potawatomi State Park and finished at the Western terminus marker in Interstate State Park in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin on July 29, 1979. Jim averaged 15-20 miles per day. His 1979 hike took him 81 days. At the time of his hike he was a 20-year old Marquette University student.

The Fox Valley Sierra Group has been going strong since this first meeting. We are well known for exciting outings, successful environmental campaigns and being an active and involved Sierra Group that has a lot of fun getting together outside, and inside, all year! We want to continue our programs, outings and activities for many more years. We invite you to join us in celebrating our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in style!



## PAINTING FUNDRAISER

We all experience cabin fever during Wisconsin's cold, snowy winter. Why not get out with friends and help your Fox Valley Sierra Group raise some badly needed funds on Wednesday, January 18th at 7:00pm at Pinot's Palette in Appleton. Arrive 15-20 minutes early for setup. We will be painting "Moonrise Lake."

Cost per painter is \$37 which covers your canvas and supplies. Please pass the word to friends and family. Even if they aren't a Sierra member, they can join the fun and as part of Pinot's Paint it Forward program, each chair filled is another \$10 donation to our group.

Sign up at <https://www.pinotpalette.com/appleton/event/652583>. Guests are welcome to bring snacks and appetizers into the studio to enjoy during class. Beer, wine, and an assortment of non-alcoholic beverages are available for purchase from the studio's full-service bar. BYOB not allowed.

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## Get involved in the Wisconsin Conservation Congress in 2023!

Join us for an overview on the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) on Thursday, February 9th at 7 p.m.

This state-funded organization is responsible for voicing citizen concerns regarding natural resources and working with the Natural Resource Board (NRB) and Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The WCC is important because they are influential in shaping regulation and taking positions that are referenced by WI lawmakers.



During our discussion we will learn more about this organization, including:

- Quick overview on the WCC and their annual process
- Writing and submitting citizen resolutions in a strategic way across the state during March
- Voting to support eco-friendly resolutions in the Spring Hearing in April
- County delegates, maybe you? We will briefly touch on the opportunity to get new people involved with the WCC, *this year especially!*

The virtual discussion will be hosted by Amy Mueller, Sierra Club Wildlife Team member from Waukesha County. She will be sharing what she has learned while trying to navigate this organization in the hopes of making positive changes for natural resources.

*This Giving Tuesday (Tuesday Nov 29<sup>th</sup>) or any day  
please support your local Sierra Club, Fox Valley Group!*

**GIVING  
TUESDAY**

Right here, in the Fox Valley community, we work to bring fun and educational activities to everyone, including

- Recreational outings that make our beautiful, natural resources accessible to all;
- Programs that highlight local issues which affect us, such as clean water, clean energy and land use;
- Inclusive conservation campaigns like
  - Supporting and maintaining our beautiful Ice Age Trail for all to enjoy for generations to come
  - Highlighting water quality concerns which originate from mining activities and CAFOs.

Your Fox Valley Group needs your support, now more than ever!

Please donate at <https://www.teamsierra.org/wisconsin/FoxValleyGroup>, in any amount, to support a more sustainable future for all here in the Fox River Valley. Don't forget to join us at an informational or social gathering, soon - we can't wait to meet you!

# Winter Outings

## January 18, Wednesday

### ***Painting Party at Pinot's Palette in Appleton - 6:45 PM***

See page 3 for details.

## January 28, Saturday

### ***Snowshoeing or Hike Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest - Greenbush***

Explore the glacial landscape by snowshoe. BYO snowshoes. Distance 2.5 miles. Bring a lunch to enjoy at one of the backpacking shelters. Mid morning starting time.

Contact Monny Hjerstedt, 920-558-0013 text/call, mhjerstedt17@gmail.com.

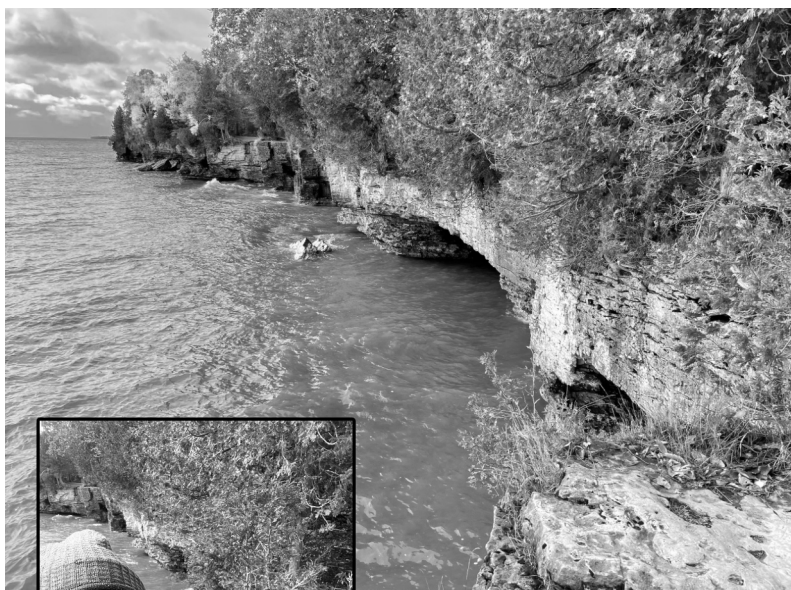
## February 18, Saturday

### ***Snowshoeing or Hike Hartman Creek State Park***

We will be snowshoeing by Hartman Lake and the rolling hills south of the lake. Maybe a little bushwhacking. If there's not enough snow, we'll just hike instead. BYO snowshoes. Distance: 3 miles. Mid afternoon starting time. Optional stop afterwards at the Wheelhouse for pizza. Contact Monny Hjerstedt, 920-558-0013 text/call, mhjerstedt17@gmail.com.

For more information or additional outings check out our facebook page or our website.

***Explore, Enjoy and Protect***



On October 15, Jo & Monny enjoyed a nice hike on the FVSG outing to the Whitefish Dunes State Park and Cave Point County Park trails in Door County.

# Fox Valley Sierra Group

## Board Elections

We have annual elections at the end of the year to keep our group going. You can help lead us into the future. Does not have to be a big commitment, do what you can handle. The board meets around 10 times a year, with lately being zoom meetings.

We really need your help. Our current Chair Penny is running again. Can you help her and the other board members?

## Penny Paiser Wilson

Her bio-

My first direct involvement with Wisconsin's Sierra Club was volunteering for the climate march in Madison in 2017 where I headed up the social media team. A month later, I joined the Fox Valley Sierra Group's executive committee. During my time with the group I have managed the facebook page, coordinated with the Friends of the Black River Forest and their efforts to stop the Kohler Andrae Golf Course and served on the Earth Day Hike committee. In February of 2022, I took over for Alan Lawrence who moved to Virginia as the group's chairperson. I am running for re-election to the board, election as the Chair, so that I can help the group continue our strong legacy of education and activism. I hope you will support me in my passion for protecting our environment and building a sustainable future.

### Sierra Club Mission Statement

To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth;

To practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources;

To educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

## Wanted

Board Members

Website editor

Program Ideas & Topics

Speakers for Public Meetings

Program Coordinator

Outings Ideas

Outings Leaders

Newsletter Writer/Reporter

Communications and Media Coordinator

Volunteer Coordinator

Fundraising Ideas

Fundraiser Coordinator

Tracking Conservation Issues

Forestry and Land Issues

Water Quality

Environmental Education

Tabling at Events

Membership Coordinator

Secretary

Hospitality Coordinator

Contact one of the board members on back page if interested. Or email us at [fvsierragroup@gmail.com](mailto:fvsierragroup@gmail.com).

On October 12, Dean Hoegger, of the Clean Water Action Council of North Eastern Wisconsin spoke to us about protecting public health and the environment using local, state and federal laws. They have been effective and successful in a number of occasions. Some of the future concerns are liquid manure spreading from CAFOs, coal tar pavement sealants and human health effects of PFAS exposure.

Check out their website at [cleanwateractioncouncil.org](http://cleanwateractioncouncil.org)





## WHY A SMALL RIPON NEIGHBORHOOD IS FIGHTING TO PROTECT THE WATERWAYS OF ONE OF WISCONSIN'S LARGEST LAKES

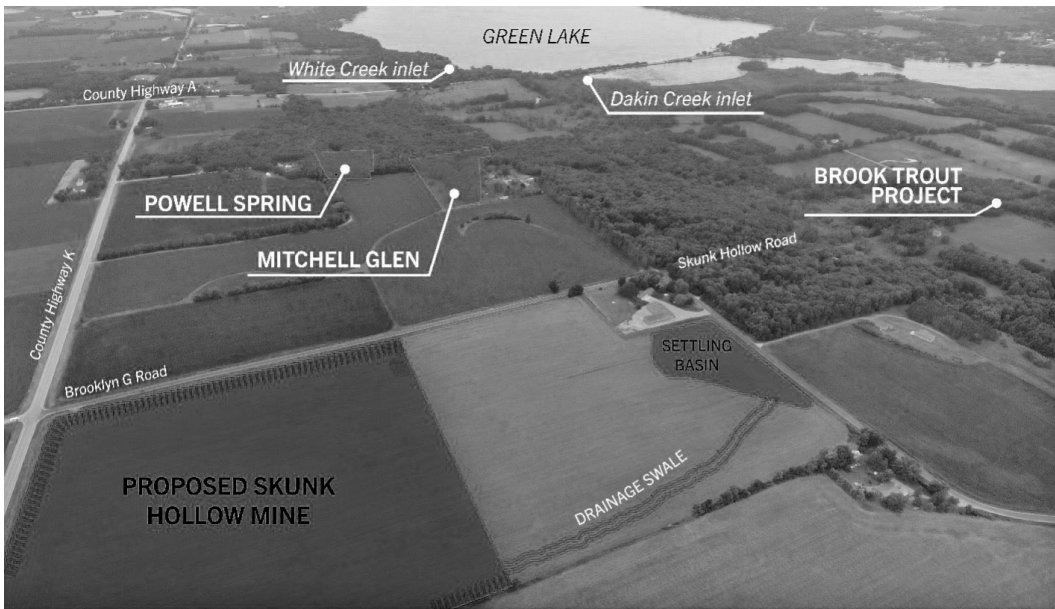
By: Kristen Rasmussen – Director of Communication, GLA

GREEN LAKE, WISCONSIN, OCTOBER 31, 2022— On the east end of Big Green Lake, Wisconsin's deepest natural inland lake, lies a small neighborhood that is fighting to protect livelihoods and local waterways from a proposed mining operation.

If the approved plans for the Kopplin & Kinas Skunk Hollow Mine move forward, the 40-acre quarry would be located just one field away from several iconic springs that are sensitive to groundwater fluctuations, and would abut a neighborhood that relies on clean drinking water wells.

Skunk Hollow Mine harming his operation. Nehm depends on a reliable supply of potable water and must undergo routine water quality testing of his well. Any compromises to his well—the farm's only water source—would require that he truck in water for his cows, an economically unsustainable option for an industry already burdened by thin profit margins.

"The farm is approximately 300 acres and we've been on this location since 1990," shared Nehm. "A quarry at this location could have substantial disruption to our dairy operation."



Aerial overview of the approximate location of the Skunk Hollow Mine and its stormwater features in proximity to Green Lake and surrounding water resources. Groundwater flows from the proposed mine site northwest, toward Green Lake.

Photo Credit: Mat and Henry Boerson; graphics by the Green Lake Association.

The Green Lake County Land Use Planning & Zoning Committee public hearing in July was packed with community members who expressed concern over the lack of public notice and insufficient consideration of ecological risks of the proposed project. After hours of public comment and testimony, committee members approved a conditional use permit for the Kopplin & Kinas Skunk Hollow Mine.

Since then, members of the surrounding community have come together to form a coalition called "Stop the Mine. Save Green Lake." to prevent the mine from going forward.

Nonmetallic mines have been shown to disrupt groundwater levels, which can negatively affect conditions in surrounding springs and deplete local drinking water supplies.

"To survive in farming, we need to respect the land and the water," said Nehm. "Commencing a mining operation so incredibly close to this treasure of Mitchell Glen seems short-sighted."

Carl Nehm, a Grade A dairy farmer whose fields are adjacent to the potential quarry, is concerned about

In August, three local entities—the Green Lake Association (GLA), the Green Lake Conservancy

(GLC), and the Green Lake Sanitary District (GLSD)—united with a landowner to file two appeals challenging Green Lake County’s approval of a conditional use permit for Skunk Hollow Mine.

“We are not opposed to mining, but we are concerned about mining here,” said Stephanie Prellwitz, Executive Director of the GLA, on behalf of the appellants. “Our organizations have been working tirelessly to protect these natural resources. We cannot sacrifice short-term gains for potential permanent damage to our tremendous ecological assets.”

Green Lake and its surrounding watershed are exceptional resources to the community. The GLA, GLC, and GLSD remain committed to protecting the natural resources under threat due to their proximity to the mine, including nearby unique waterways like Mitchell Glen, Green Lake’s two primary trout streams, and Powell Spring—which discharges enough fresh spring water to form a 10-foot-wide river directly from the exposed limestone bedrock.

On behalf of its water resources, ecological treasures, and the community, the three organizations urge you to take action. Learn more by visiting [www.greenlakeassociation.org/skunk-hollow-mine](http://www.greenlakeassociation.org/skunk-hollow-mine).

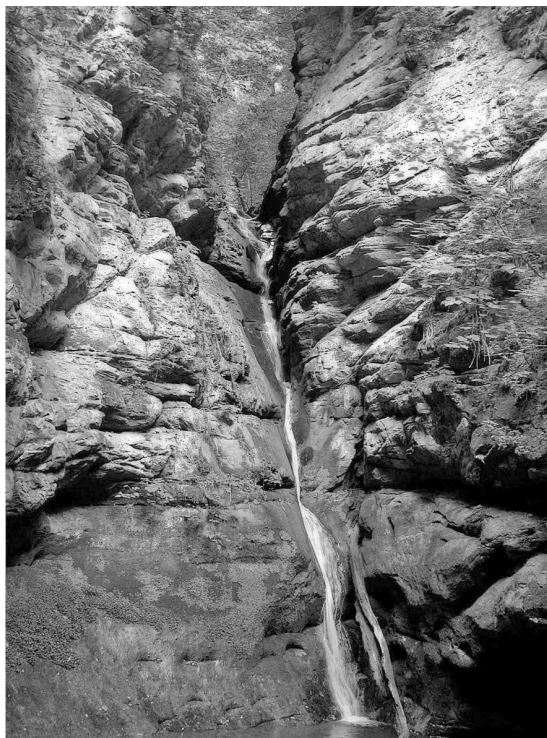
## ABOUT THE GREEN LAKE ASSOCIATION

The Green Lake Association is an environmental non-profit based in downtown Green Lake, Wisconsin. To support their mission for a cleaner, more resilient Big Green Lake, visit [greenlakeassociation.org](http://greenlakeassociation.org).



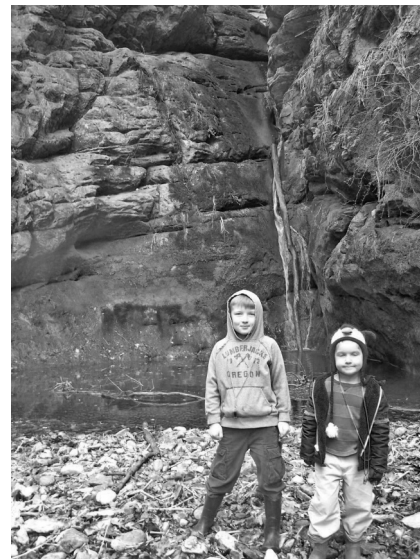
The source of Powell Spring pours out from the side of a limestone rock face, located just below the cabin shown in this image. Powell Spring is dependent on groundwater and is located 2,000 feet from the proposed Skunk Hollow Mine site.

Photo credit: Green Lake Conservancy



Mitchell Glen, an iconic Green Lake landmark owned by the Green Lake Sanitary District, supports a remarkable biodiversity of plants and animals, and provides ecosystem services that benefit the public.

Photo credit: Tom Eddy



Two local children explore Mitchell Glen, a groundwater-dependent system that features sandstone bluffs, springs, and a waterfall—all located one farm field away from the proposed Skunk Hollow Mine.

Photo Credit: Local Green Lake family



Photo Credit: Green Lake Association

Fox Valley Sierra Group  
*Of The John Muir Chapter Of The Sierra Club*

P.O. Box 124  
Neenah, WI 54957



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[sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley](http://sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley)

## FOX VALLEY SIERRA GROUP CONTACTS

[fvsierragroup@gmail.com](mailto:fvsierragroup@gmail.com)

**Chairperson, Conservation,  
Facebook**

Penny Paiser Wilson • (920) 720-9741  
133 Klompen Court,  
Neenah 54956-4352  
[wilscats@new.rr.com](mailto:wilscats@new.rr.com)

**Vice Chair, Chapter Conservation  
Chair, Group Political Chair**

Will Stahl • (920) 277-7189  
216 Stevens St., Neenah 54956  
[wrsy55@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wrsy55@sbcglobal.net)

**Treasurer**

Diane Perschbacher • (920) 216-2159  
2531 Bruce Ct., Neenah 54956-6108  
[DPerschbacher1@new.rr.com](mailto:DPerschbacher1@new.rr.com)

**Newsletter Editor, Web,  
Communications**

Monny Hjerstedt • (920) 558-0013  
567 Oak St., Neenah 54956  
[mhjerstedt17@gmail.com](mailto:mhjerstedt17@gmail.com)

**Member at Large**

Donna Gasbarro • (920) 202-4333  
[gasbard14@gmail.com](mailto:gasbard14@gmail.com)

**Environmental Education,  
Chapter Delegate,**

Laura Menefee • (920) 824-5339  
2755 Elm Ln. Sturgeon Bay WI 54235  
[Menefee.laura@gmail.com](mailto:Menefee.laura@gmail.com)

**Secretary, Membership, Hospitality**

Jo Hjerstedt • (920) 479-4900  
567 Oak St., Neenah 54956  
[jhjerstedt@hotmail.com](mailto:jhjerstedt@hotmail.com)



FVSG web site

Stay up-to-date on the latest environmental news, outings, programs and events by checking out our website at [sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley](http://sierraclub.org/wisconsin/fox-valley) or find us on [facebook.com/foxvalleysierra](https://www.facebook.com/foxvalleysierra)

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