

The Arboretum News

Our mission is to connect the Platteville community to the Rountree Branch corridor, through recreation, conservation, and environmental education.

WINTER 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



PCA President Bob Hundhausen

Greetings from the trail.

As we wrap up our volunteer season for the year, I would just like to say again, thank you to our very generous volunteers, donors, sponsors, and trail users. We could not do it without you.

Hoping all of you had safe, healthy, and wonderful holidays.

Happy 2021! In many ways 2020 was still a great year, but I was happy to tear that page off the calendar.

Bob Hundhausen
PCA President



PCA Board of Directors & Officers

Bob Hundhausen - President
Kristopher Wright - Vice President
Shannon Baxter - Secretary
Dianne Jentz - Treasurer

Bob Digman	Mike Penn
Robin Fatzinger	Luke Peters
Dan Flesch	Julie Pluemer
Joe Jacquinet	Gene Weber
Brian Laufenberg	

Past Presidents:

Mike Penn - 2017 - 2019
Frank Steck - 2016 - 2017
Robin Fatzinger - 2013 - 2015
Ric Genthe - 2011 - 2013, 2015 - 2016
Kris Wright - 2005 - 2011
David Canny - 2004 - 2005

Newsletter Staff

Co-Editor - Susan Kies
Co-Editor - Dena Nechkash
Creative Director - Ric Genthe
Reporter-at-Large - Gene Weber

First Graders Walk and Learn On Trail

By Sue Leamy-Kies



First graders line up to look at one of the kiosks along the way.

On Friday, October 9, Platteville's first graders got out of school for an hour-long stroll to take in the sights and sounds of nature's local classroom, the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail. The temperature climbed to 70 degrees and the sun and fall colors shone bright as each first grade class from Westview School, along with their teachers, boarded a bus to be transported and dropped off near the trail. Adhering to COVID-19 safety measures, the classes took turns visiting at different times during the day.

"We've been doing this every year since 2016. It's become one of my favorite lesson plans," said teacher Brooke Buch, who often bikes on the path in her spare time.

Before the scheduled day, Buch showed her students photos of some of the animals and birds that could be spotted on the trail: otters, beavers, foxes, groundhogs, eagles and hawks. Additionally, Buch used the opportunity to teach about the importance of community and what can be accomplished when people work together, as in a school, a class, a city. On the

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PCA President Pursues Passions

By Dena Nechkash

Platteville Community Arboretum's leader of the last year, Bob Hundhausen, first became involved with the organization because of his love of running.

"When I first came to town five years ago, I looked for a trail to run on," Hundhausen said. "I also worked out at Snap Fitness. I started speaking to Jen Schweigert, who was on the PCA board at the time, and she connected me to the board."

Hundhausen's love of the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail, Katie's Garden and the idea of being a part of something that could be important to this community for years to come is what keeps him volunteering for the PCA.

"I love to run and have run nine full marathons and dozens of half marathons," Hundhausen said.

"However, my knees are unfortunately killing me, so I am sticking to walking and biking

recently." Hundhausen said the PCA and its volunteers do a wonderful job of maintaining and beautifying the trail. "I think that our thoughtful conservation of the river corridor is important," Hundhausen said. "We are in a constant battle to remove invasives. Next year we will be expanding our storage shed to accommodate volunteers and their equipment."

He said new and interesting things are happening on the trail all the time.

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Brooke Buch's first-graders begin their stroll on the David Canny Rountree Branch

first graders...

day of the walk, she directed them to the kiosks near the Delta 3 Engineering parking lot to see the displays of pictures and names of the volunteers and monetary donors for the trail.

"The trail is a major asset to the community," Buch says. "I want students to have an idea of the many people it takes to make something like this possible."

In previous years when COVID-19 wasn't an issue, Buch says Dan Fleisch, a retired teacher and PCA board member, met them on the trail to discuss some

of the various plants along the way. Buch also made a scavenger hunt so students could find and identify specific places and plants using pictures she took ahead of time.

"Many have been to the trail before, but some haven't," she said. She hopes their class trip will encourage students to spur their families into taking advantage of the exercise and educational opportunities available to them on the trail right in their own backyards.

Treasurer Jentz Keeps Track

By Sue Leamy-Kies

"You're not going to meet anyone on the trail because someone forced them to be there. People are on it because that's where they want to be, which makes it a very happy place," says Dianne Jentz, PCA Treasurer, who enjoys walking, biking and running on the trail with her family and doing her part to support it.



Dianne Jentz running a half-marathon on Rountree Branch Trail.

PCA after its formation, and Jentz says, "Julie made the transition very smooth. She had everything very organized and provided assistance as I adjusted to the role."

Jentz's duties include managing the PCA mail, tracking donations, grants and endowments, bank deposits and paying the bills. She uses QuickBooks to manage the accounts receivable and payable and to

formulate reports which she presents at the monthly board meetings. Jentz says spring and fall are the busiest times, as that is when the board promotes new memberships and endowments.

Jentz is the Vice President of Business Lending for Heartland Credit Union and leads a busy life. She fits in her work as treasurer for PCA "by finding an hour here and an hour there, usually during my 'me time' in the evening." She says there has been more free time this year, as family and social activities have been limited due to COVID-19. Jentz, who lives in Platteville with her husband Ron, took to the trail and ran a half marathon this fall. They have three children: Courtney and Austin, in college, and Natalie, an 8th grader.

Jentz encourages members to continue volunteering their time and donating funds to support the trail and to spread the word to others to do the same. "The trail is a great asset to the Platteville area and community," she says. "We want to make sure it is well maintained and cared for to ensure it is able to continue for generations."

Dianne Jentz is one of the Rountree Branch Trail's biggest fans: "It's very rewarding being on it," she says. "It brings most of your senses out and is beneficial both physically and mentally. It's a great place to be!"



Dianne Jentz stands by the volunteer kiosk on Rountree Branch Trail.

Combatting Honeysuckle in the PCA

By Grace Milanowski

Frequent trail users have likely noticed much clearer views of the stream and a much thinner understory recently. Our volunteers and the UW-Platteville Reclamation Club have been hard at work this fall and winter removing invasive, exotic honeysuckle shrubs.

This exotic honeysuckle originates from Asia and Russia. It was brought to North America as an ornamental plant in the 1800s for their bright berries and flowers. It quickly became a successful invader of fields, forests and open areas and now can be found in much of the United States.

Honeysuckle, along with other exotic, invasive plants, are problematic because they can outcompete native plants in a variety of ways. Honeysuckle shrubs are particularly good at shading out and preventing establishment of desirable native species and, in turn, deplete soil moisture and nutrients. It also has a longer growing season than native shrubs, leafing out earlier in the spring and staying green longer into the fall, giving them a competitive edge and leading to a decrease in native plant abundance and diversity. Because our North American fauna did not co-evolve with this species, honeysuckle also is not a major component of any animals' diet that may keep it in check like other woody species. Birds and other small animals do eat the berries (though toxic to humans), which contributes to widespread seed dispersal and the creation of dense honeysuckle thickets.

We strive to use the most environmentally friendly methods to restore habitat along the trail and only implement the use of herbicide judiciously. In the case of honeysuckle, an herbicide applied immediately to the stump after cutting is an effective method we use during the fall and winter and won't adversely affect other plant species. Honeysuckle is an aggressive invader and monitoring and follow up treatment of recently cleared areas will be necessary for years to come. As honeysuckle is removed, we'll be adding native grasses, flowers, shrubs and trees, creating more suitable habitat for the wildlife that makes the trail their home.



Before and after honeysuckle removal



ABOVE: Honeysuckle berries and flowers, photos from: Vermont Invasives, <https://vtinvasives.org/>

Join our Wonderful 100 Volunteers:



Volunteers are the backbone of the PCA. Our volunteers maintain the trail and gardens and put on recreational, educational and fundraising events. There are countless ways volunteers can get involved at the PCA. We'd love to put your expertise to work! Please get in touch below if you'd like to join one of our volunteer teams or have other skills to contribute. Our volunteers love the social networking and healthy activities.

VOLUNTEER ROLES:

Join our Green Team: Maintenance teams meet at recurring 2-hour weekly workdays to restore habitat, remove invasive species, plant native species. Current teams meet Tuesdays 8:30 a.m., Wednesdays 9 a.m. or Wednesdays 5:30 p.m. And we are initiating a new 2 hour Saturday morning team for those who want to help on weekends.

Join our Brown Team:

Meets at recurring 2-hour weekly workdays to work on bigger projects like construction projects or tree removal. Current team meets at 8 a.m. Mondays.

Gardening Team:

Gardeners maintain garden plots along the trail.

Join a Committee:

- Activities Committee
- Ecology Committee
- Finance Committee
- Marketing & Membership Committee
- Planning Committee

Email:

plattevillearboretum@gmail.com to volunteer with us.

PCA Wish List

- Pole Saw - \$600
- Trees - \$7,000
- Replacement for worn/damaged tools - \$250
- 8 ft ladder - \$100
- 2 battery operated drills - \$200
- 100 3–5-gallon landscaping pots to start a PCA shrub nursery (secondhand/reused are welcome)
- Volunteers interested in 2 hour/week work teams, committees, board member or one-time tasks
- Estate Gifts
- Endowment Gifts

Interested? Please email: plattevillearboretum@gmail.com

Responses to last month's Wish List: Special thanks to the Platteville Community Fund for providing funding for the tree gators and Stihl brush cutter. And, thanks to Juli McGuire for accepting the PCA Map Coordinator position.

Artwork Added to Trail

By Dena Nechkash

Four new art pieces have been secured through Lancaster artist Bill Mitchell for placement along the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail in 2020 and 2021. The first two pieces, 'CRISPR' and 'Funnel Vision,' have already been installed, while '4,200 Stones' and 'Farm Report' are being constructed this winter for spring installation.

Mitchell is a proud supporter of the arts in Platteville. He and his wife, Angie, purchased the building at 120 W. Main Street in Platteville to lease to Rountree Gallery and provide a home for creative exhibits in Platteville's downtown. Bill currently serves as president of Rountree Gallery. He also donated the 'CRISPR' piece. Two others, 'Funnel Vision' and '4,200 Stones,' were funded by Cindy Tang while 'Farm Report' was purchased through donations to PCA. Materials for the signs were secured from Platteville businesses. The sign posts were donated by Builders FirstSource, and the first two signs were ordered from Signs To Go.

Learn more about the artist at <http://www.readadapted.com/> or Instagram @billmitchellartist. In Mitchell's own words:

'CRISPR'

Created in 2019 using spruce, box elder and black locust and located along the David Canny Rountree Trail at the Hwy. 80 bridge.

"Contorted natural branching transforms into a double helix structure, referencing the gene editing technology CRISPR. The intersection of the natural and the manipulated deserves consideration for how humans interface with the environment and all the other species. "As we consider how technology enhances our lives, we should be asking where the balance lies as well.

"Careful thought should be given to our relationship with technology so as to not lose our humanity. It's become clear with COVID-19 that a small strand of RNA can deeply affect an entire species. What are the implications on other species when we alter the genetics of plants, animals and humans?"

"The work is temporary, made from natural materials and finish, it will return to the earth when the wood deteriorates and the piece collapses. Placed on a foundation stone at the location of a former bridge is a reminder of transition and impermanence.

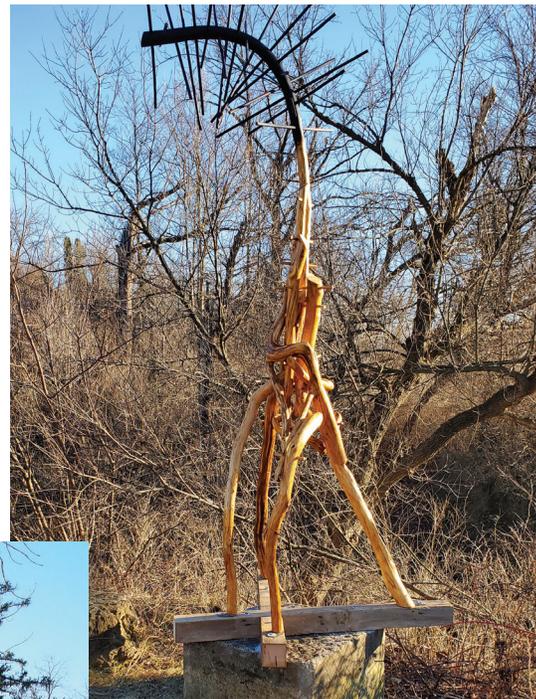
"The Norway spruce tree was removed for a construction project, the 38-inch diameter trunk had numerous twisted and contorted branches protruding, supporting the massive canopy. The branches have been in storage since 2008 until used to create this work, the trunk was sawed and dried, then used for furniture in the renovated home."

Funnel Vision

Created in 2020 using eastern red cedar and black locust and located between the stream and trail near the gazebo at the eastern trailhead.

"Each end of the funnel offers a different perspective, view and perception. See the wide view from the narrow end and the narrow view from the wide end. Acting as an aperture, the scene is narrowed or broadened in relation to the perspective, view and perception.

"The funnel's ubiquitous form is used as a way to concentrate and transfer, in this case, visual information from both ends. In daily life, views are often controlled and perspectives managed. Eastern Red (*Juniperus virginiana*) cedar is an inspirational, yet often just tolerated, tree. Employed in this piece for strength, availability, durability and familiarity, it is partnered with Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), native to the Eastern United States, yet considered invasive in this region and is strong and highly rot resistant for the connecting dowel pins.



PCA 2020 Wrap-up

By Dena Nechkash

As 2020 comes to a close, the Platteville Community Arboretum is recapping the events and celebrating the accomplishments of another productive year.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in March required people to socially distance themselves, wear masks and sanitize their hands regularly to prevent the spread of the virus, the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail saw an influx of users who were looking to spend time outdoors getting some exercise and exploring our community safely.

Grace Milanowski, the Lead Coordinator for PCA, who started in the position early in the year, helped an effective committee leadership team working with the newly developed Activities, Ecology, Finance, Marketing and Membership and Planning Committees.

"This committee structure has allowed us to more efficiently make decisions and grow the PCA," Milanowski said.

In August Milanowski and PCA volunteers organized and conducted a trail user count and discovered trail use has increased dramatically in 2020. Previously it was estimated that an average of 125 people used the trail each day; new results estimate approximately 400 people are on the trail each day. The trail has been an invaluable community asset as more people sought safe, outdoor activities during the pandemic.

The trail doesn't maintain itself. In 2020, a approximately 50 trail maintenance and board or committee member volunteers logged approximately 2,300 hours performing a wide variety of tasks. "Our volunteers have kept the trail looking great throughout 2020 and we're always appreciative of their dedication and efforts," Milanowski said.

Volunteers accomplished widespread removal of invasive species such as burdock, wild parsnip, garlic mustard and honeysuckle along the entirety of the trail and re-seeded native grass and wildflower seeds in certain cleared areas. They also began ongoing site preparation of three habitat reclamation areas along the trail. In collaboration with the City of Platteville and volunteer gardeners, the group was able to reestablish the Butterfly Garden in its new location to provide habitat, refuge and food for native pollinators. The Ecology Committee also identified locations and tree species and contracted the planting of 25 new trees in October. The group continues to work to develop both short and long-term plans for trailside habitat.

Volunteers also built, painted and installed five new kiosks highlighting Platteville history along the trail. With help from the City of Platteville, they also added painted lane lines for bicycle safety in three areas of the trail. In early December, two of four commissioned art pieces created by Bill Mitchell were installed along the trail.

The Membership & Marketing Committee has expanded its annual newsletter to quarterly editions due to the addition of creative writing volunteers Dena Nechkash and Sue Kies. An enhanced website as well as additional Facebook friends and e-mail addresses were established to further improve the electronic newsletter distribution.

The group also recently added map coordinator Juli McGuire to facilitate any map changes, order updated maps and provide quantities to volunteers to distribute maps throughout the tri-state area. Another accomplishment of the Membership & Marketing Committee was the creation of a Memorial Tribute Brochure to provide opportunities for memorials along the trail. The new brochure has been distributed throughout the region to funeral directors, financial advisers, bankers, lawyers and churches to offer options for honoring loved ones.

In the spring, the membership/contributor letter received an all-time high response, bringing in more than \$14,000 in donations. PCA is building its endowment fund in order to provide the sustainability of funds for trail maintenance and the part time coordinator positions. Every membership renewal and contribution helps further the goals of our organization.

The Activities Committee focused on creating events and activities that foster goodwill, education and exposure to the PCA each calendar year. Chairman Joe Jacquinot looks for exciting new activities coming to our community in 2021, including geocaching, educational guided walks and local art created by community members. The committee also looks to build upon previous successful events such as the Monster Dash Fun Run and kettle corn distribution at Platteville Dairy Days.

For details on improvements to the trails, upcoming meetings or events or how to get involved, go to <https://www.plattevillearboretum.org/>. Like their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/plattevillearboretum> to stay up-to-date. PCA's instagram is '@plattevillearboretum'

SECRET ORIGIN
A Brief History of Comics
EXHIBIT FROM
DEC. 10 THRU FEB. 6
Reception/Exhibit Talk on
Friday, Dec. 11 from 5-8 p.m.
with talk by Bob Hudhausen at 6 p.m.

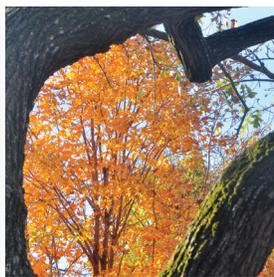
An exhibit of the art, history and scandal of the comic book industry featuring the extensive comic book collection of local collector Bob Hudhausen.

Rountree Gallery
120 Main Street
Platteville
routreegallery.org

the **WEATHER CORNER**
By Sue Leamy-Kies

According to The Farmers' Almanac, late February and early March of 2021 will fill our driveways with plenty of the white stuff. If you are not into skiing or snowmobiling or making snow angels, you may be thinking, Oh, joy! However, be comforted that April and May will be warmer and drier than most years, leading into a hot, dry summer. Maybe it would be ecologically wise to shovel some of that snow into your rain barrels for later? Just a thought.

Enter Your Photo- Win a Free Calendar and/or \$50 Gift Certificate



Drum roll, please . . . Announcing - PCA's first annual wall calendar and photo contest!

Wouldn't it be cool to look for a specific date or birthday on your inaugural PCA wall calendar, allowing you to gaze at fantastic photos reminiscent of your favorite spots and experiences on the trail? And, wouldn't it be even cooler if one of those photos was taken by none other than---you? Just think, all this fun and you will be helping PCA raise funds in support of your trail, too, as these calendars will be available for purchase to the public for \$20.



We know many of you are photo buffs already, so let's see your shots. You can use a phone or any camera to capture scenery, people, animals, objects, nature---whatever---as long as they depict experiences or sights along the David Canny Rountree Branch Trail. If you have taken photos in the past that have not been used previously in promotion of the trail, you may enter those, particularly fall, as photos are due before another fall will come around.

Thirteen photos, one for the cover and twelve for each month, will be chosen and judged using the following criteria:

1. *Quality (clear, sharp, defined)*
2. *Composition (interesting, eye-catching, captures essence of trail)*
3. *Seasonal Connection (conveys particular season or month)*



Hints: Good photos could do one or a combination of the following: convey emotion, tell a story, capture a unique moment—or an ordinary one, show contrasting concepts, capture unique detail, light, color, action or perspective.

Due date: July 1, 2021

Send photos to: plattevillearboretum@gmail.com

This calendar is planned to come out for 2022, so photos should be submitted by July 1, 2021. If your photo is chosen for publication in the calendar, you will receive a free calendar worth \$20. And, if your photo is chosen as the calendar's featured cover photo., you will get a \$50 Platteville Restaurant Gift certificate.

Submit as many photos as you like, as long as they meet the criteria above. Now, time to get snapping!

Note: Any photos chosen for the calendar may also be used in future trail promotions and advertising.

MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED

Become a Member or Make a Donation

The PCA is truly a community effort, as all activities, projects and maintenance are fully supported by community volunteers, donations and memberships. Become a member or make a donation at any category level, to help support such efforts.

Memberships may be purchased or donations made securely online through PayPal by clicking <https://www.plattevillearboretum.org/membership>

or mailing a check to:

PCA • PO Box 302 • Platteville, WI 53818

*Multi-year contributors of \$250+ are known as "Trail Blazers" and recognized on trail information media

president passions...

"We will be continuing to make our small trail one of the nicest in the entire state," Hundhausen said. "I love that we are getting artwork on the trail, doing more events like our fun run and have a possible educational tour in partnership with The Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums."

Hundhausen, originally from Seattle, Wa., has been a Wisconsin resident since 1985. He attended UW-Madison and has lived in the Madison area most of that time. He and his wife of 30 years, Victoria, have two children: Gabi, 24, who attends UW-Platteville, and Paul, 20, who is hopefully returning to UW-Platteville as well.

Hundhausen is a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones Investments, helping people with their long-term financial planning for their families or businesses, including college and retirement planning. He is also involved in the Platteville Kiwanis, Rotary Club of Southwest Wisconsin, Platteville Optimists Club, Building Platteville and the Platteville Regional Chamber Board of Directors. Currently, his other passion, collecting comic books, is on exhibit at Rountree Gallery in Platteville, through Feb. 6. For details on the exhibit, visit <https://www.rountreegallery.org/>.

Volunteers Wanted!

We're developing guided walking tours in the PCA in collaboration with the Mining & Rollo Jamison Museums. These guided tours will incorporate topics relating to nature, history and geography of the area.

We're looking for people to help:

- develop the "script" of the tour: choosing, researching and writing about topics and
- guides to lead the tours when developed

If you're interested, please get in touch at: plattevillearboretum@gmail.com