

# Membership Survey of the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve – 2020

This survey aimed to find out how the *Friends* of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve can satisfy the Friends membership interests and expectations. Of the 280 surveys mailed, 120 responses were received by March 2020, a very good return rate of 42%. Thank you for completing the survey and sharing your thoughts.

*Note: Not all members answered all the questions, so responses don't always add up to the total of 120 surveys submitted.*

## 1. About our members.

1a. When did you join the *Friends* of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve?

- 2001-2005    2006-2010    2011-2015    2016-Present

**The larger number of people joined during the early years of the Friends, formed in 2001. Since then membership growth has been steady.**

total	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016+	no year
120	55	19	20	21	5

1b. How often did you visit the Preserve in the last 12 months?

- 0    1-2 times    3-10 times    11 and more times

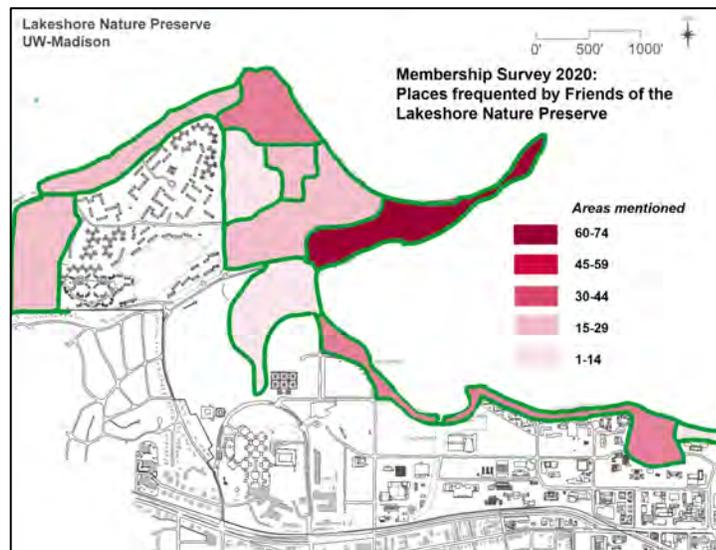
**The group of 2001-2005 members walks or hikes in the Preserve as much as members who joined later. Thirty members mentioned birding on their walks.**

	total	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016+	no year
0	13	8	3	1	1	0
1-2	24	11	3	4	5	0
3-10	38	16	7	6	7	3
11 and more	43	20	6	9	8	0
Total	118	55	19	20	21	3

1c. What do you do in the Preserve?

- Walk or hike                      everyone who visits the Preserve (includes 5 joggers)
- Birding                              30
- Observing nature                20
- With dog                            5
- Photographing                  4
- Campfire, picnic                4
- Attend field trips, volunteer, garden, meditate, seek silence.

1d. Which areas of the Preserve do you visit most? \_\_\_\_\_



- The Picnic Point destination is most popular.
- Frautschi Point and Howard Temin Path are second.
- Many members also walk in Eagle Heights Woods, along the lakeshore from Raymond Cove toward Picnic Point, as well as Biocore Prairie and the area of Bill's Woods.

1e. What draws you to the Friends of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve?

- Efforts and mission of the Friends to support the Preserve 55
  - Nature and beauty 40
- A few marked both categories.

**2. How can we better engage members and the community to connect with the Preserve?**

**Field trips and Nature Outings.** The *Friends* host 30 field trips/year, with topics ranging from geology, fungi, trees, birds, prairies, and wetlands to climate change, and attracting over 500 people from the community and students. Typically, a quarter or less of the participants are members.

2aa. Have you attended one or more field trips during the past 3 years?

- Yes
- No
- Intend to in the future

**More than half of those who responded attend field trips. At least 43% of the 2001-2005 group attended field trips, but more recent members attend more often; 66% of 2016+ members attend.**

	total	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016+	no year
YES	63	24	11	12	14	0
in future	9	3	2	2	2	0
no	49	29	5	6	6	3
Total	120					

2ab. What may have kept you from attending?

Too busy, 43; out of town, 14; weather, 13; health 9.  
Other responses: walk on my own/friends, too lazy, kids are bored, no car.

2ac. What other topics would interest you?

General consensus that the current offering is fine and impressive.  
*Suggestions:* cultural history, controlling invasives, mushrooms, native American heritage, ecology, restoration over time.

**2b. New Activities and Events.** What other kinds of events or activities would you be likely to attend? Mark all that apply.

- Picnic
- Guest speaker, indoors
- Wellness walking group
- Field trip to another site
- Environmental breakfast cafe
- What other topics? \_\_\_\_\_

- Indoor speaker 41
- Fieldtrip to other site 23
- Wellness walking 15
- Picnic 16
- Environmental Breakfast café 14

**2c. Outreach.** The *Friends* partner with other organizations with exhibits on behalf of the Preserve. In addition, we would like to explore opportunities to assist the many diverse groups in the Madison community to experience the Preserve, including people with limited mobility.

2c. What opportunities or events would you suggest to engage more diverse groups?

*Partnering:* with community centers, UW South Madison Outreach, Boys and Girls Club, diversity student organizations, Foundation of Black Women, Goodman Com. Center, Joy Trip Project, Institute of Discovery.

*Opportunities for children:* Walk with Bucky, meet the rowing team, Odyssey.

*Additional suggestions:*

Opportunities for groups with limited ability: all-terrain wheelchairs, publicize trails accessible to wheel chairs, offer bus rides.

Field trip leaders from diverse groups: African-American, Asian, Latino, Native American, such as graduate students, fisherman, EHC gardeners.

One Prairie Partner Internship for first generation or multi-cultural student.

Engaging a wide range of visitors in citizen science.

Broaden things out a bit: get Patty Lowe to speak, night sky at fire circle, natural resources of Wisconsin heritage, logging pinery, Brownstone mining, Peshtigo fire, ethnic gardening, poet evening, drumming, PowWow.

Collect data on visitors (profile, numbers), in collaboration with Preserve Committee

**2da. Annual meeting.** This is an event to meet up with other Friends, hear a keynote speaker, learn what's new in the Preserve, elect new Board officers.

Have you attended one or more Annual Meetings during the past three years?

Yes                       No                       Intend to attend in the future

**While the majority of members welcomed both field trips and annual meetings organized by the Friends, quite a few members do not like such organized gatherings or meetings.**

	total	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016+	no year
Yes	56	21	11	12	9	3
intend to	8	2	0	1	5	
No	56	30	7	7	8	4
Total	120					

2db. What makes you want to come?

- 40 Speaker/topic
- 21 Meeting friends
- 13 Hear more about Preserve news
- 1 Food

2dc. If you don't attend, what keeps you away?

- Mostly time conflicts
- Not interested in meetings (5), Sloth (3+), bad hearing (3), health (3), too long (1), too much time on business meeting(1), no car (1), other.

2dd. Is there a particular topic you would like to hear about?

Majority was happy with selection of speakers by the Board. Impressive series.

**3. If you are considering more involvement, what area(s) might interest you?**

Mark your preferences in the list below.

- Restoration (physical work in restoration and invasive species control)
- Citizen science (Bluebird Trail, Purple Martin House, water quality monitoring)
- Education and outreach (helping with field trips or exhibits)
- Survey of plants in restoration areas
- Communication (newsletter, blog contributions, photo sharing)
- Board of the *Friends*
- Other

*Please contact Steve Sentoff with your interest (shsentoff@gmail.com).*

*Or provide your contact information here: \_\_\_\_\_*

The majority of responses below reflects general preferences of members. Several members also expressed interest in becoming actively involved.

- 29 Restoration
- 25 Citizen science
- 11 Plant surveys
- 10 Education
- 8 Communication

Seven members provided contact information.

**4. How should the *Friends* support the Preserve through our memberships' financial contributions?**

All of the *Friends* expenditures benefit the UW Lakeshore Nature Preserve directly or indirectly.

4. What projects/topics should be added to the list below for financial support?

- ✓ Prairie Partners Internships
- ✓ Spring planting festival
- ✓ Citizen science projects expenses (*equipment for monitoring of bats, birds and water quality*)
- ✓ Restoration projects (*Eagle Heights Woods*)
- ✓ Stewardship fund of the Preserve

**General comments:** The present list is very good – already a large list for a small number of *Friends*. Don't spread Board too thin. Some answers given would fit under Question 6: Issues.

Ranking: Restoration  
Internships  
Invasives  
Stewardship

**5. How do you access information about the *Friends* of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve?**

***Friends* website at <https://www.friendslakeshorepreserve.com>.**

This website informs about field trips and events, the *Friends* citizen science projects, blogs on people stories and events, nature sightings in the Preserve, research and environmental science pages prepared by members for members, online newsletter, and more.

5aa. Do you use the *Friends* website?  Yes  No

**Over half of those who answered this question use the website. Responses show a trend of more frequent use by members who joined more recently.**

	total	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015	2016+	no year
Yes	52	18	7	11	14	2
some	7	3	1	2	1	
No	49	25	9	7	6	2
no answer	10	10				
Total	118					

5ab. What is effective on this website?

Up-to-date, diverse, informational on upcoming events, ton of information, easy to navigate, useful, looks good, ...

5ac. What is missing or can be improved?

Making more people aware of its existence, links to research papers and other organizations.

**5ba. *Friends* Newsletter, Preserve!**

5ba. What do you like about the *Friends*' newsletter?

Informational, interesting articles, variety of stories, attractive, well-edited, in-depth, update on activities, quality and production, photos, good mix, short and sweet, fine, most

important tool for me at this time, list of field trips, content, beautiful, interesting lead articles, opossum.

5bb. How can it be improved?

Overwhelmingly positive response: Many said it is fine as. Most did not comment.

Suggestions were: include it in the new UW-employee welcome package, focus on Friends activities and accomplishments.

**5c. Friends email.** How do you assess the frequency of mailings?

About right                       Too many

**Only about twenty members did not respond to this question, presumably because they do not use email. Otherwise, the overwhelming response was "About right."**

5d. What other ways of communicating do you suggest?

Most responded that email is best, two members suggested social media.

Comments: big issue is how to publicize the Friends to people who would enjoy being members if they knew about them; more emails on current sightings in Preserve (Tundra swans, trillium in bloom...).

## **6. Are there particular issues related to the Preserve for which you would like the *Friends* of the Lakeshore Nature Preserve to advocate?**

**Of 34 responses, the most mentioned topic areas are listed below.**

Effigy mounds/Ho Chunk/history/preservation

Protect from development/UW light encroachment

Invasive species

Dogs off leash

Preservation/restoration of marsh

Infrastructure management (trails getting wider because of heavy use)

Under-represented groups

Clean-up of lake/water quality

Storm water/flood management

Too much negative signage

Truck traffic on service road

*Quote from one response to question 6: "I am not aware of any current threats, but it is essential to protect the Preserve from having any of its land taken away. Bill Cronon used to tell us that the only way to protect the Preserve long term is for people to love it. The Friends help people love the Preserve!"*

## **7. Is there anything else you would like us to know?**

*Most frequent:*

Happy to provide support financially.

Thanks! I am a proud member --- Keep up the good work --- Committed organization.

Grateful for the dedication of those of you on the Board and Committee; I am proud of UW and the Friends for this beautiful ecology.

Support the efforts of the staff as much as possible. I appreciate the work of volunteers and staff.---- I hope that the Friends will continue to strongly support the Preserve while working under the guidance of these talented people. We are all part of the same team – however, we need to remember that the university is in charge --- Preserve staff is doing a great job, with very limited resources.

*Single comments:*

UW noise: Softball stadium loud speakers disturb wildlife and ruin the Preserve Experience (also marching band).

Trail just below first fire circle has mulch with bits of plastic in it. Disappointing. Picked up bits each time I walked there.

You could bring school classes out to various parts of the Lakeshore Preserve, tell the kids about its history and conservation issues, and have the teacher set up a class project which you would then put onto your website, including photos. (They may be future advocates for keeping the land undeveloped).

Restoration of the marsh so one can enjoy a walk around it again.

I am always available to speak about the human history of the lakeshore. Card attached.

Neotropical forest migrants, including more than fifty species of warblers, make the Preserve a very special resource.

The field trips and webpage are fantastic

**8. Can you share with us your favorite moment or experience in the Preserve?**

<b>Bird Moments</b> 27	<b>Owls</b> 7	<b>Eagles</b> 6	<b>Waterfowl</b> 8
<b>Running &amp; Walking</b> 16	<b>Flowers</b> 6	<b>Trees</b> 5	<b>Winter Visits</b> 5
<b>Field Trips</b> 4	<b>Lake/Lakeshore</b> 4	<b>Skies/Sunrise/Sunset</b> 4	<b>Social Events</b> 4
<b>Discoveries/ Surprises</b> 4	<b>Animals</b> 3	<b>Campfires</b> 3	<b>Marsh</b> 3
<b>Volunteer Moments</b> 3	<b>Spiritual/Peace of Mind</b> 3	<b>Unusual Sightings</b> 2	<b>UFO</b> 1