

Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes



Annual Newsletter

Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes
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NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION
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The Year in Review: Selected Projects

The Friends maintain the **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail**, removing downed trees, branches, and debris, mowing the edges, and repairing problems. In the winter, we groom sections for cross-country skiing.



Our **Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR)** team advises visitors on the risks associated with certain dune hikes and climbs. This year, they made over **25,000 visitor contacts**. Since 2016, this "friendly" approach has **reduced the need for rescues by two-thirds**.



Ranger Luke Wassink shows off a **new Automated External Defibrillator (AED)**. Six were purchased by Friends for use in park emergency vehicles, one of this year's Park Priority Projects. Other Priority Projects are listed on the back page of this report.





The Friends purchased **accessibility track chairs** that enable individuals with physical limitations to get out and enjoy more of the Lakeshore. Friends' volunteers manage the program, which enabled **55** visitors the chance to go out this season.



The Friends provided materials and volunteer labor to help repair several sets of **beach access stairs** that were washed out by high water on Lake Michigan.



The National Lakeshore is studying the feasibility of building a **mountain bike trail** on park land south of Glen Lake. The Friends are funding some planning and environmental impact studies.



The Friends are assisting the park in a multi-year application to achieve **Dark Sky Park** status.



Each summer, the Friends sponsor weekly **Yoga-on-the-Beach** classes at Glen Haven Beach.



To maintain the historical agricultural landscape in the **Port Oneida Historic District**, volunteers from Friends and Preserve Historic Sleeping Bear **mowed about 1,000 acres** this summer.

Volunteer with the Friends!

We are an all-volunteer organization.

Perhaps our greatest contribution to the National Lakeshore are the volunteers who support the park in a wide variety of ways. Nearly **400 people are signed up as Friends volunteers**. **256** of them provided a combined total of **over 12,013 hours of service**. The Friends could not exist without these volunteers, and the National Lakeshore is a far nicer, safer, and more interesting place because of them.

We have a wide range of volunteer opportunities.

Whatever your interests, whatever your skills, we probably have a volunteer role that you would enjoy. The Friends has more than a dozen active programs ranging from maintaining the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail to helping keep the beaches clean and safe.

See volunteer job descriptions: <https://friendsofsleepingbear.org/volunteer-info/>

Ready to sign up?

Register at <https://friendsofsleepingbear.org/volunteer-registration/>

We will respond within a few days to discuss opportunities to get you started.

Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Ambassadors walk or bike the Trail wearing their orange Ambassador vests. They answer questions, help people, and provide a friendly face.



Adopt-a-River volunteers paddle a few times through the season to correct or report issues, and occasionally join in clean-up parties.



Adopt-a-Beach volunteers sign up for a stretch of beach and visit it regularly, collecting trash and reporting problems.

Adopt-a-Trail volunteers hike designated trails about once a month, removing small obstacles and reporting larger issues.

Adopt-a-Highway volunteers work as a group, joining in organized clean-up parties three times a year.

Other ways to volunteer

Volunteers are needed for:

- Maintaining the **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail**.
- Making the Lakeshore **accessible** to people with physical challenges.
- Creating and distributing **educational publications**.
- Performing **Preventative Search and Rescue** operations.
- Planning and building **new trails**.
- Managing the Friends' activities, including **project leadership, communications, fundraising, finance, recruiting, information technology, serving on the Board, and serving in officer positions**.



For details, visit: <https://friendsofsleepingbear.org/programs/>

Friends 2021 Stats

In FY2021...

728 current members

\$74,730 donated by individual members

256 individuals **volunteered**
12,014 hours

25,000 PSAR visitor contacts

55 track chair users hosted

Over **280** participants in
Yoga-on-the-Beach

1,199 pounds of trash
picked up from beaches

13 beaches patrolled

29 hiking trail sections
(about 85 miles) monitored

20 miles of Sleeping Bear
Heritage Trail **maintained**

1,000 acres mowed

Volunteer Spotlight

Rod Nettleton volunteers with the **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail Crew**, keeping the trail clear of fallen trees, clean of debris, safe to use, and looking good. In addition, Rod maintains the Crew's two Gators, blowers, and mower.

After retiring as a civil engineer and moving to the Sleeping Bear area full-time in 2014, Rod was looking for a worthwhile activity, a way to meet people, and not too much stress.

While riding on the trail one day, he came across a Friends' information table and found something that met his needs.



Beth Schram volunteers with the **Adopt-a-Trail** program, helping to keep the trail safe of debris and reporting on issues that need park attention. Since signing up with the Friends in 2020, Beth has logged over **700 hours of volunteer time**! She also actively participates with Adopt-a-Beach, Heritage Trail, and Bot Squad, monitoring avian botulism.

Beth moved to the area 35 years ago, and she fell in love with the trails, hiking with her family. Her late father had a special

fondness for the Good Harbor Trail, and after he passed, her family wanted to honor him. She and her sister joined the Friends and chose to adopt his favorite trail. You'll find Beth



hiking Good Harbor Trail at least once a week, honoring the legacy of her dad and a place they loved together.

Chairman's Message

During this pandemic year, people sought escape from their stress and isolation by getting out in nature, setting visitation records at Sleeping Bear. This made the work of the Friends especially important. With over 700 members including 250 active volunteers, we partner with the National Lakeshore to help ensure that visitor experiences are good ones and to protect this special place.

In very simple terms, we do two things – recruit volunteers and raise money. Volunteers extend the capability of the park staff. Money helps pay for tools, materials, and services. Without your support in these two ways, we could accomplish nothing. With your support, we can accomplish a great deal. Fortunately, **FY 2021 was a strong year for the Friends – many dedicated volunteers, highest-ever revenues, and a record of excellent service to the Lakeshore.**

Thank you for your past support. Please help us to move forward into an even stronger 2022.

JERRY PETERSON,
Chairman
Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes



Superintendent's Message

If you look at the past year, on paper you wouldn't think there was anything out of the ordinary; full campgrounds, busy trails, wide open beaches, and spectacular sunsets. Despite a continued pandemic and record visitation, 2021 has been a success for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.

This success though, is tied directly to the partners we have working by our side. The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes has endured all the trials of the past year and continued to impress with their resilience. No matter the challenge, our **Friends have shown up, on time, every time!** Every member of the Friends supports the park in their own unique way, and for their own reasons. When a partner group harnesses the passion, dedication, and creativity of the community, the park becomes a better place.

We value every member of Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes and we are proud to call you our **Friends!**

SCOTT TUCKER,
Superintendent
Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore



The Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes is a 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is *Protecting resources and heightening visitor experiences in partnership with Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.*

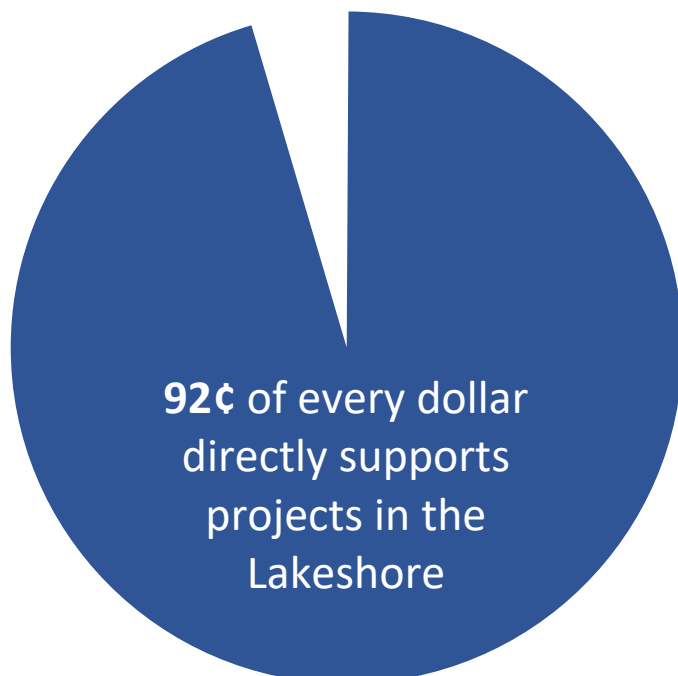
Donate to the Friends!

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore connects us with nature, history, culture, loved ones, and friends old and new – creating memories that last a lifetime. **Your gift protects the park, and preserves those possibilities for moments of magic today and for generations to come.**

DONATE TODAY:

Go to <https://friendsofsleepingbear.org/donate-now/>
or return the enclosed remittance envelope.

As an all-volunteer organization, we are able to keep costs low, so we can put more money into things that directly improve the Lakeshore and the enjoyment of visitors.



Special Fundraiser

We are in need of a new place to store our equipment! Due to the renovation of the Sleeping Bear Inn, we need to move from the garages there. A new, 1600-square-foot storage facility is planned at the Dune Climb to store:

- Heritage Trail maintenance tools and equipment
- The Park's Mobile Visitor Center van
- The Friends' track chairs and trailer
- The Friends' publications and supplies.

Help us make this project happen by making a generous donation this fall. Our target is to raise **\$30,000** to complete the capital needs for this storage building. Select '**Dune Center Garage**' when you donate at <https://friendsofsleepingbear.org/donate-now/> or on the enclosed remittance envelope.

Statement of Support

PROJECT	FY 2021
Income Projects	
Book and Merchandise Sales	\$ 48,205
Educational Publications	\$ 18,910
Other Income Projects	\$ 1,623
Total	\$ 68,738

Expenditures Projects	
SB Heritage Trail Operations	\$ 17,150
Mountain Bike Trail	\$ 11,100
Kettles Trail	\$ 4,438
Snowshoe Field Trip Program	\$ 3,799
Accessibility Initiatives and Programs	\$ 1,196
Other Programs	\$ 2,476
Total	\$ 40,159

Park Priority Projects	
Defibrillators and EMS Supplies	\$ 7,269
Beach Water Quality	\$ 5,700
Kelderhouse Accessibility Improvements	\$ 5,000
Bark Ranger Intern	\$ 4,300
Chainsaw Purchase	\$ 1,360
Star Party Support	\$ 1,000
Zoom Webinar Subscription	\$ 883
Total	\$ 25,512

TOTAL SUPPORT	\$ 134,409
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Thank you to our 2020-2021 Business Supporters

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 Empire Outdoors
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 The Secret Garden

Our Board

Jerry Peterson, Chair
 Natalia Szymczak, Vice Chair
 Bill Stott, Secretary
 Steve Klein, Treasurer

Members:

Joan Antle	Kerry Kelly
Lynn Aleksov	Heather Patterson
Tracy Barrilleaux	Laurie Pope
Steve Horne	
Laura Ann Johnson	
Fred Luthardt	

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