



Newport Wilderness Society, Inc.

2025/2026 Annual Report

A Not-for-Profit Friends Group

for

Newport State Park
Door County, Wisconsin

<https://friendsofnewport.org>

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Date of Incorporation: August 26, 1985

Mission of the Society:

To work with the management of Newport State Park, Door County, Wisconsin, to help preserve the natural beauty of the Park's forest, meadow and shore areas for appropriate public use.

Goals of the Society:

- Help preserve Newport State Park as a minimal development natural park;
- Encourage the individual study and the preservation of wilderness and nature in Newport State Park and elsewhere in the county;
- Seek volunteers to help the Newport State Park management with projects to maintain the Park and facilitate its proper use;
- Develop other projects and programs appropriate for the Park as may be determined by the Board of Directors working with the Park management.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Note: the date in parentheses notes when the Board Member's term expires.

Deb Ford (2028)	Deb retired from nursing and moved to Ellison Bay from northern California in 2019. She is an avid birder and recreational photographer. She enjoys exploring Newport in all seasons and is very happy to help support the work of NWS.
Maureen Flatley (2026)	Maureen is a Wisconsin native. She practiced as a small animal veterinarian in the Fox Valley of Wisconsin for 36 years including the last 16 years as a small business owner. She and her husband Tom became full time residents of Ellison Bay in 2020. Maureen has been a long time active member of the Sierra Club Fox Valley Chapter, and Wild Ones Fox Valley Chapter. Maureen was treasurer for Wild Ones Fox Valley from 1995-2000. Maureen currently volunteers at The Clearing in Ellison Bay, works with Citizen Science programs at the Ridges, volunteers at Newport State Park, as well as Door County Humane Society. Maureen is a recent graduate of the Master Naturalist program.
Rick Foster (2026)	Rick Foster is a retired attorney who lives with his wife Mary in Ellison Bay. He is an avid fisherman and kayak enthusiast.
Larry Gales (2026)	Larry Gales moved to Ellison Bay in 2020 after retiring from the University of Cincinnati, Lindner College of Business, where he taught undergraduate and graduate courses in Management, Human Resources, and International Business for 31 years, and for the last 20 years of his career. Larry continues to teach online courses in cross-cultural management for the University of Cincinnati. Larry enjoys hiking, biking, and kayaking in Door County, as well as gardening and woodworking. Along with board and volunteer work with the Newport Wilderness Society, he volunteers regularly at the Clearing.

Mark Glasser (2026)	Mark is an avid hiker and backpacker with a passion for maintaining trails and experiencing wilderness environments. Mark is a certified sawyer and volunteers with organizations including the Ice Age Trail Alliance, The Clearing, Door County Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy, and Habitat for Humanity.
Kari Hagenow (2026)	Kari fell in love with Newport while spending time in the Park conducting surveys for the Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas II. She currently works for The Nature Conservancy. From 2012-2018, Kari was also the coordinator for the Door County Invasive Species Team. In her free time, she enjoys running, hiking, birding and camping with her husband, Tyler, and son, Edwin.
Gene Kenny (2026)	Gene retired from the University of Wisconsin as a Physician Assistant in pediatric cardiac surgery in 2016 after 32 years. He and his wife Helen moved to Door County full time and live on Europe Lake. Gene is an avid woodworker and volunteers with Habitat for Humanity, The Clearing and Newport State Park.
Jann Kostecke (2027)	Jann is originally from Kansas City but has lived in Appleton, Wisconsin for many years. She has worked as an accountant for over 40 years, mostly at large companies, and has been happily self-employed most recently. She and her husband Keith own a home in Liberty Grove and spend every minute they can in Door County. Jann enjoys spending time at Newport State Park hiking or snowshoeing in the woods and listening to the birds.
Keith Lemburg (2027)	Keith retired to Door County from northeastern Illinois in 2019 after a 40-year career in landscape contracting, in communities on the north shore of Chicago. Keith's educational background is in landscape horticulture and design, and he is a member of the International Society of Arboriculture. Keith recently completed the Wisconsin Master Naturalist Program and is a volunteer steward for Door County Land Trust at Three Springs Reserve.

Stacey McKendry (2027)	Stacey had a career in education both as a classroom teacher and administrator. She moved to Door County on the day she retired in 2020. In 2022, she became a certified Master Naturalist through the Wisconsin State Program. Since then, she has logged over 300 volunteer hours supporting Newport State Park, The Clearing, and The Ridges Sanctuary.
Francis Osorno (2028)	Francis retired in 2022 after working for over 37 years at Procter & Gamble, the last 15 years as the global technical lead for Manufacturing Execution Systems. He and his wife moved to Ellison Bay in 2022, to complete their house and start to enjoy retirement. They have enjoyed Door County for over 25 years prior to their move with many camping trips and other activities. Francis enjoys volunteering at Newport where he and his wife are trail stewards. Francis is also certified as a sawyer at the park.
Dave Petersen (2028)	As full-time residents of northern Door County, Dave and his wife, Carol have thoroughly enjoyed exploring Newport State Park and much of its offerings. By contributing to and actively participating in the Newport Wilderness Park Friends Group, he is eager to channel his energies and ideas towards creating opportunities for visitors to immerse themselves in a wilderness environment and fully appreciate and learn about its unique qualities.
Sherry Seubert (2026)	Sherry Seubert moved to Door County in 2019 from Winneconne, Wisconsin. She is an avid hiker, enjoys snowshoeing, camping, traveling, canoeing and outdoor adventures with her children and grandchildren. She has spent many hours hiking and enjoying Newport. Her professional background includes a 10-year healthcare career in occupational therapy, 20 years of business ownership in real estate rental property, and 12 years of entrepreneurship with her health and wellness business. Sherry is a certified nature and forest therapy guide and certified yoga teacher.

Mary Ellen Sullivan (2028) A resident of Sister Bay since September 2019, Mary Ellen was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri. She raised her twins, James and Madeline, in a rural southern Illinois community called St. Jacob. She has worked in many different environments as a secretary/executive, secretary/administrative assistant, and as third grade teacher. As a Board Member, Mary Ellen is focused on helping with future preservation endeavors.

NEWPORT WILDERNESS SOCIETY Committee Assignments

2025-2026 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mark Glasser - President
Maureen Flatley - Vice President
Kari Hagenow - Secretary
Jann Kostecke - Treasurer
Stacey McKendry - 5th Officer

NOMINATING – Executive Committee

FINANCE, MEMBERSHIP & FUND RAISING – Jann Kostecke

NATURE INTERPRETATION & STEWARDSHIP – Kari Hagenow, Beth Bartoli, Maureen Flatley, Keith Lemburg

INVASIVE SPECIES – Maureen Flatley, Deb Ford, Rick Foster, Keith Lemburg

MERCHANDISING – Sherry Seubert, Helen Kenny, Beth Bartoli

VOLUNTEER SERVICES – Mark Glasser, Dave Petersen

COMMUNICATIONS – Deb Ford, Beth Bartoli, Stacy McKendry

LONG RANGE PLANNING - Gene Kenny, Larry Gales, Dave Petersen, Francis Osorno

President's Report

By Mark Glasser



Thank you for reading our Annual Report and for your support of the Newport Wilderness Society.

The Newport Wilderness Society was founded in 1985 and the tradition of caring for our beautiful park continues. There have been many people that have come before us and paved the way for the work we do today. It is a privilege to carry on that tradition.

The major event that occurred in the park this last year was the August storm that impacted the south end of the park the most. The Rowley's Bay Trail, Ridge Trail, Newport Trail, and many campsites were destroyed. The DNR and local fire departments had to rescue campers who were trapped. In January, the DNR hired a contractor to re-open the trails using large equipment. I'm happy to say that all of the trails are now opened as well as the campsites. If you have not walked the area, I would encourage you to do that and get a first hand view of the power of the wind. It will take many generations for the forest to recover to what it once was.

Looking ahead, we are underway in our work to improve the Dark Sky Viewing area and will have that completed by year end. We also are adding 3 new walk-in campsites along the Lake Michigan shoreline. Additionally, we have new interpretive signs in the Park.

If you have not visited the Park recently, I encourage you to stop by and see the improvements we have made to the trails, the gardens at the visitor center, and the displays inside the Visitor Center, and experience the wide range of naturalist programs. Come and enjoy the beauty of Newport State Park.

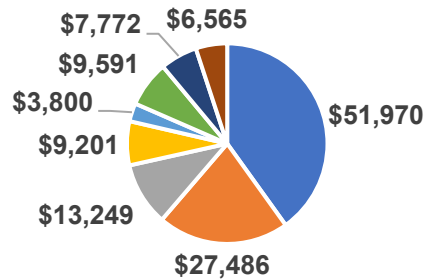
TREASURER'S REPORT

Jann Kostecke, Treasurer

The financial position of Newport Wilderness Society remains strong. Highlights for the 2025-26 fiscal year included the following:

- Over \$98,800 total in contributions and grants were received this year, which is up from \$84,238 last year. Contributions, memberships, and private grants were a little over \$61,815 and grants from Knowles-Nelson funds and Destination Door County were \$37,000. We thank you for your generosity!
- Retail sales at the park increased almost \$4,800, and net profit from retail sales increased by over \$3,300 to \$18,914.
- The Dark Sky Viewing Area project moved ahead with nearly \$52,000 in spending, mostly for demolition of the changing rooms and creation of a gravel path. Destination Door County had contributed a grant of \$50,000 to assist with paying for this project through the end of June 2026. Another \$50,000 grant for Phase III of this project was recently approved.
- The Campsite Improvements project, to build three new campsites, began with purchases of an outhouse vault and an initial payment for construction costs (total so far about \$9,600). A Knowles-Nelson grant was approved by the State of Wisconsin for \$20,000 which will be paid at project completion.
- Spending of \$13,200 for exhibits and signage included the Hotz Exhibits and signage in the park areas most affected by the August storm to explain to visitors what happened and how recovery is being managed.

What Does Your Donation Pay For?



- Dark Sky Viewing Area
- Naturalist Program
- Signage and Exhibits-Gardens, Storm Damaged Areas, Hotz
- Campsite Improvements
- Invasive Species Removal
- Gardens, Birds and Bats
- Other - Events, Maintenance, Supplies
- Less Interesting Yet Necessary Things - Software, Postage, Supplies, Insurance

BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY NEWPORT WILDERNESS SOCIETY

	June-2022	June-2023	June-2024	June-2025	June-2026
Cash and Savings	\$ 170,839	\$ 136,436	\$ 79,927	\$ 77,180	\$ 63,863
Investments	232,717	261,858	170,740	200,372	235,979
Inventory and Other	9,916	12,944	25,145	27,973	24,439
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 413,472	\$ 411,238	\$ 275,812	\$ 305,525	\$ 324,280
TOTAL LIABILITIES	-	2,289	4,680	7,378	1,525
TOTAL NET WORTH	\$ 413,472	\$ 408,949	\$ 271,132	\$ 298,148	\$ 322,756

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

by Mark Glasser



The following Board Members are up for re-election to another 3-year term at the Annual Meeting. They are: Maureen Flatley, Larry Gales, and Sherry Seubert.

We have 3 new Board members that are nominated for a 3-year term and a vote at the Annual Meeting. They are:

Helen Berch-Kenny: Helen moved to Door County from Madison Wisconsin with her husband Gene in 2016. She worked 30 plus years in Nursing and as a Health Care Administrator in Madison. She is a Master Gardener since 2012 and Master Naturalist since 2022. Helen has a love of plants, especially flowering ones and has enjoyed learning more about native plants and animals of northern Wisconsin, especially bumble bees. She enjoys glass art, kayaking and has a love of nature, hiking and listening to the many birds that migrate here every year.

Dave Kocken: Dave and his wife, Paula, retired up here in the summer of 2023 and are year-round Northern Door residents. Dave is one of our regular volunteers at Newport and also completed the chainsaw safety training class. His previous career was in the industrial electrical and process control field. Dave also teaches woodworking and woodturning classes at the Clearing.

Laura Bokhof: Laura and her husband, Paul Rios, moved to Ellison Bay in April of 2023 from the Chicago area. Her professional life was spent primarily in the healthcare industry where she worked in the human resources and leadership development field. Laura has extensive experience in management development, strategic planning, adult education, executive coaching, organizational development and design, compensation management, and employee relations. She also served on the boards of two non-profit organizations - A Safe Place for

Women, an advocacy and support group for victims of domestic violence, and Companies that Care, an organization dedicated to supporting and mentoring disadvantaged youth to support their successful entry to and graduation from college. Laura also participated in the Door County Master Naturalist program in 2024.

Rick Foster, Gene Kenny, Kari Hagenow, and Mark Glasser will be leaving the Board and we thank them for their many years of service.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

By Mark Glasser



Nothing speaks to the health of an organization as much as membership. Currently we have 339 active members in the Newport Wilderness Society. We are grateful for this support and work hard to see that we continue to serve the needs of Newport State Park.

Included in our memberships totals are a loyal and committed group of businesses who support the Newport Wilderness Society. These businesses are listed below:

Al Johnsons Restaurant & Butik, Sister Bay, WI
CellCom, Green Bay, WI
Door County North, Ellison Bay, WI
Ecology Sports, Sister Bay, WI
Ellison Bay Service Club, Ellison Bay, WI
Husby's Food and Spirits, Sister Bay, WI
Island Orchard Cider, Ellison Bay, WI
Jerry's Flowers, Sister Bay, WI
Kick Ash Coffee, Ellison Bay, WI
Sister Bay Bowl, Sister Bay, WI
Terra Cottages, LLC, Ellison Bay, WI
Timothy Tischler, DDS, Sister Bay, WI
Twisted Tree at the Pharm, Sister Bay, WI
Wagon Trail Campground, Ellison Bay, WI
Washington Island Ferry, Washington Island, WI
Wild Tomato, Sister Bay, WI

Water Street Inn, Ephraim, WI
Wolfe Horticulture, Fish Creek, WI

Please continue to support the organizations who have invested in our park through the Newport Wilderness Society.

NATURE INTERPRETATION AND STEWARDSHIP

By Beth Bartoli

We protect what we love. That seems like an understatement for anyone fortunate enough to work at Newport State Park. From our first event of the season in January (90 people attending the First Day Hike) to the last scheduled event in October, there were many visitors that enjoyed programs, park information and friendly conversations, learning the many reasons to love this park. There were 52 naturalist programs offered with about 2200 visitors in attendance. (This does not consider the daily interactions with visitors either out in the park or in the office and Nature Center.)

There is a new face in the naturalist office! Kaleigh Kogler joined us this year and is a great addition to our park family (read all about Kaleigh in the last newsletter). She and I share the responsibilities of the many facets of the naturalist position here. Both of our salaries are funded by NWS, and we are very grateful for that.

Highlights of a few projects include continued work on the Nature Center and new interpretive displays on the Hotz Trail. In the works in the Nature Center is a geology interpretive display and an area dedicated to Newport Wilderness Society and the volunteers that make it all happen. The Hotz Trail displays are an exciting and much anticipated addition to the land that was preserved and cherished by Ferdinand Hotz and his family. There is a new display at the original outhouse located in Lot 1 near the office. Additional interpretive panels highlighting the Hotz legacy have been installed at the Hotz stone gate and where the Hotz cabin originally was. I hope you get to experience this wonderful look back in time at the former cabin spot. Current family members of Ferdinand Hotz have been very involved in this project, so many thanks to the Apfelbach family for carrying on their family legacy.

Work has also started on the natural seating area in the dark sky viewing area near Lot 3. This will greatly enhance our visitors' experiences when visiting in the evening and during programs. None of this would be happening if it weren't for the dedication and efforts of NWS.

INVASIVE SPECIES REPORT

by Maureen Flatley



In 2025, the Invasive Species Committee continued to locate, monitor, and manage the invasive plants at Newport State Park. Deb Ford, Rick Foster and Maureen Flatley co-chaired this committee in 2025. Our invasive work started May of 2025 as groups of volunteers removed garlic mustard around Campsites 1 and 2, along the Lynd Point Trail, and around campsites 3,4,5, and 6. Forget-me-not removal was also initiated along the Poetry Trail. Spotted Knapweed continued to be managed by volunteers along the beach area at Lot 3 including the dune areas.

Also. In summer of 2025, two invasive species interpretive signs were installed -one on the Monarch Trail leading to the Rowley's Bay Trail, and one at Lot 3 at the beginning of the Europe Bay Trail. This signage serves two purposes- to explain the importance of invasive species management, and to encourage the use of boot brushes that are located throughout the park.

MERCHANDISE COMMITTEE REPORT

by Sherry Seubert

Total sales for the first 11 months of the fiscal year 2025-2026 at Newport were \$34,252 compared to the first eleven months of fiscal year 2024-2025 of \$27,569. Approximately half of this amount is profit. Sales continue to increase each year. Kick Ash sales continue to be steady with a total of \$5,127 for the first 11 months of the fiscal year. We are grateful for their continued support of the Newport Wilderness Society. There were some new merchandise items added this year, namely a brand-new Dark Sky design on T-shirts, and a new zip up hoodie. There is a new dark sky children's T-shirt. There are many new book titles and other fun items like guided journal notebooks, mugs, and small flashlights with red lenses for dark sky viewing nights.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES COMMITTEE

by Mark Glasser



Volunteering at Newport State Park is a great way to give back to the community, meet new friends and have fun outdoors during all 4 seasons. There are many ways to be involved and getting started requires joining our internet-based communication tool, groups.io. This is the way we communicate volunteer opportunities to everyone and share thoughts on what work needs to be done. To indicate your interest in becoming

a volunteer, please go to our website, friendsofnewport.org, and click on “volunteer”.

Looking back on the last year, we spent a lot of time maintaining the trails in the Park. It seemed like one major weather event after another, beginning with the big blowdown in August. Then we had heavy snowfall, big winds, and lots of rain thrown in, just to make it interesting.

Looking ahead, here are some of the volunteer opportunities where you can help enhance the Park:

- Candlelight Hike and Ski
- Perseid Meteor Shower event and other dark sky events
- Newport Wilderness Days
- Wednesday workdays
- Serving on the board of the Newport Wilderness Society
- Hikes and presentations on Newport’s flora and fauna
- Every Day is Earth Day conference
- Trail work, clearing brush, removing invasive plants
- Working in the office
- Cross-country ski trail grooming
- Monitoring birds and butterflies

We look forward to having you join us as a volunteer. You will have a good time, make new friends, and make a difference as we support the Park!

Communications Committee Report

By Deb Ford

The NWS Communications Committee utilizes a variety of media to publicize information about park programs, volunteer opportunities, and NWS projects at Newport.

The NWS website is found at <https://friendsofnewport.org/>. It features an event calendar and secure pages to join NWS, to renew memberships, or to make a donation. It is packed with articles and information about park resources, park history, and about NWS and the work we do at Newport.

The NWS monthly e-newsletter North Star News continues to grow. It reaches over 725 subscribers, providing information about park programs, NWS projects, and educational articles about the natural world at Newport. The NWS Facebook page has over 3,200 followers. We also rely on our local newspapers to help get the word out about naturalist-led programs and NWS events at the park.

Our Newport Friends and Volunteers email group was created to help us organize and communicate volunteer needs at the park. It can be found at: <https://newportfriendsandvolunteers.groups.io/g/main> . We now reach 152 enthusiastic people for help with a variety of projects and events.

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

by Larry Gales

After significant delays, the Dark Sky Viewing Area project is moving ahead. Construction by Hockers on the path, viewing area, and telescope pads should be nearly complete by the time of the Annual Meeting. The next steps are the construction of the shed and changing stall and installation of new, expanded solar panels and dark sky compliant path lighting, including the path to the bathroom. We have ordered bollards with red lights, lights for inside the shed and the bathroom. These are durable commercial quality fixtures that should last a long time and be maintenance free. The bollard at the stage area includes an electrical outlet for power.

The shed/changing stall construction will be supervised by Tim Halbrock and will provide opportunities for volunteers to participate. We will provide notification when construction is slated to start.

Construction by Eland Electric on the solar panels and lighting will begin once Hockers completes their work. This should start in August. Sono tubes (concrete) need to be poured for lighting, solar panels will be on a structure adjacent to the existing panels, and cable will be laid to supply power to the path lights, bathroom, and shed.

2024-2025 Newport Wilderness Society Annual Meeting Minutes

July 26, 2025

Newport State Park Shelter

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 9:09am by President Mark Glasser.

President's Introductory Remarks: State of our organization is great, and things have gone well this past year. Mark recognized the current board, WDNR staff, volunteers and donors that contribute to NWS. NWS is celebrating 40 years this year – the oldest Friends Group in the State of Wisconsin. Mark recognized and extended his thanks to past board members and those that came before us. Mark highlighted the following things NWS has done in the last year:

- Replaced windows in shelter by Lot 3
- New entrance garden, updated songbird garden
- New benches on Fern Trail
- Trail maintenance and trail steward program
- Cleaned up campsites, rebuilding of campsite privacy screens
- Naturalist programs
- Installation of 10+ boot brushes & interpretive signage related to invasive species
- Garlic mustard, spotted knapweed, and other invasive species control
- Updates to poetry trail
- Continued visitor center upgrades
- Picnic bench repairs

Looking ahead, the big project underway is the Dark Sky Viewing Area. Last December we invited the community and NWS members to learn more and comment on the project. Grants from Destination Door County, Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, and many private donors are making that possible.

Treasurer's Report: Jann Kostecke, Treasurer, shared that we've been able to accomplish all of these things through strong donor support and the work of volunteers. Not final numbers for the year, but Park Office and shop broke all records last year for merchandise sales. Coffee sales and merch at Kick Ash help as well. We'll continue to need contributions, but we are fortunate to have the contributors that we do.

Board Member Nominations:

Nominated for another 3-year term: Deb Ford

Nominated to join the Board: Francis Osorno, Mary Ellen Sullivan, Dave Petersen

Motion to approve all four nominated board members, seconded. No discussion. Approved unanimously.

Park Manager's Report: Brian Grube thanked the Friends Group, volunteers, and all that contribute to the park. This group is the envy of Parks around the state of Wisconsin. Brian applauded work on entrance and songbird gardens, and efforts on invasive species. WDNR staff is small and mighty – challenge having time split between Newport and Rock, but knows he has such great staff here and our naturalist programs are envied as well. Visitation is on par - 131,000 in 2023, 159,000 visitors in 2024, this year trending slightly behind with a cold May and early June – will likely be close to the 2023 numbers. The park has seen an yearly increase in inquiries about the Dark Sky status – the identity of the park has shifted with the Dark Sky designation out in the forefront.

Recognition for Departing Board Members: Mark recognized Julia Keepper and Jim Black for their significant contributions to the Newport Wilderness Society as outgoing board members. They were presented with gifts (Newport water bottles) for their contributions.

Motion to Dispense with the reading of the 2023-2024 NWS Annual Meeting Minutes:
Motioned, seconded, unanimously approved.

Motion to Dispense with Other Committee Reports:
Motioned, seconded, unanimously approved.

Additional Remarks:

- Question regarding Knowles-Nelson status at the Statewide level. Over the past years we have received several KN grants – this would impact NWS. Members are encouraged to write or call your legislators and let them know that KN is important.
- Deb Ford recognized Carol Ash, who recently stepped down from the Board after six years, but is not in attendance at the annual meeting. Mark will be providing Carol with thanks and a gift in the future.
- Shoutout to Les Keepper for helping with all the trees that were downed in the ice storm this winter.
- Recognizing Bill Sheckler – this is the first annual meeting he has not attended in the history of NWS, he was missed!
- Thank you to the NWS communications team for their beautiful photography and thoughtful communications (and frequency)!
- Thank you to Mark as a leader and for helping connect people with the park and opportunities for them to contribute and volunteer.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40am, seconded. Approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted by Kari Hagenow, Secretary, on August 15, 2025.