

SPRING 2023 MEMBERSHIP ISSUE

SANCTUARY

A NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDGES



The last board is in place,
rest and enjoy this space.

PRESERVATION • EDUCATION • RESEARCH



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DEAR FRIENDS,

On a recent stroll along the Hidden Brook Boardwalk, I found myself taking in the ever-changing environment. Spring is here. There may still be snow on the ground, but you can feel the forest beginning to settle into the new season. The changes are apparent. The sounds, smells, and colors are developing. Last month, the forest smelled crisp and felt still. This week the forest smells fresh and organic as if the soil is exhaling a breath of relief as it begins to thaw.

Each year, I have to be reminded that many notable signs of spring arrive later in Baileys Harbor. Spring ephemerals will soon begin emerging throughout much of Door County, but we will patiently await our turn for the magic of spring wildflowers to emerge. Until then, we will enjoy the slow thaw, budding tamaracks, singing warblers, and lack of mosquitos.

Water is flowing in Hidden Brook today. You can hear the soft trickle of the water as it runs along the banks, up over the rocks, and under the bridge. As the snow continues to melt, the water will rise, and we will see a myriad of changes. Crayfish will come out of their mud burrows to feast on the emerging aquatic insects. Minnows and long nose suckers will traverse from Lake Michigan and into the swales to find the perfect rocky substrate to spawn amongst. Green herons will return from their winters in Columbia and will find the perfect stick or reed to attract small frogs and fish as their evening snack. The forest, ridges and swales will seem to come to life, and will live to tell a new tale.

The Sanctuary offers a place of solitude for anyone or anything that enters. Today the sun may be out, and you can hear male wood frogs singing their mating tune. Tomorrow, it may be a bit warmer, and the black-throated green warblers may sing their identifiable zee-zee-zee-zo-zee song. And the next day, you may encounter a slow-moving porcupine walking along the toe rail of the boardwalk, before finding the perfect tree along the trail to climb up to their safety zone. Each day brings a new experience. The ability to explore the Sanctuary's trails regularly is grounding.

I feel honored to be able to explore and learn from these lands. For generations, the Sanctuary has been stewarded to ensure it remains pristine for future generations to explore, adore and celebrate. Today we have the great responsibility to manage these lands as a vibrant organization that is maintained by of the strong support of our members.

What does it mean to be a member of The Ridges Sanctuary? Our members have guided important activities in preservation, education and research for over 85 years. As decision makers, program participants, volunteers, board members, donors, explorers and staff, our members play a vital role in ensuring the Sanctuary is protected and managed. Whether you are considering becoming a member or have been a member for 1, 3, 10, or 40 years, your commitment makes a difference. You belong to a community that believes in the important mission of the Ridges Sanctuary. **We count on you to help us move forward.**

To our members, thank you. It is because of you that we thrive. To anyone considering becoming a member, join our community! We promise to make your experience inspiring, impactful, and fun!

Onward together,

Katie Krouse
Assistant Director

MEMBERSHIP

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A MEMBER?

Being a member of The Ridges Sanctuary means being a part of a community that works together to ensure that the future of the Sanctuary is bright and is protected and preserved for future generations. Our members contribute to the growth of the organization on a daily basis by participating in educational programs, hiking the trails, volunteering, serving as Board members, filling out surveys and submitting feedback, and participating the decision-making process. Together we have built a community of inspired leaders, stewards, teachers, and students that believe in the value of nature and of the natural environments found within The Ridges Sanctuary.

Mark your calendar for our upcoming **ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Join us for a celebration of the last year during this fun social event.
Hosted on the first Saturday of August at the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center.

Information such as event details, member actions and registration will be shared in June.

Here's what some of our members had to say about what they love about being a member of The Ridges Sanctuary:

"I love being a member of The Ridges Sanctuary because it means I have the satisfaction of supporting a place I love."

– Bill

"I love being a member because I get to explore the Sanctuary trails often and learn how to be stewards of my property during the adult education programs held at The Ridges."

– Mary

"I love being a member of The Ridges because it allows me to maximize my impact and support an organization that helps ensure that my grandchildren will be able to admire the Sanctuary as I do today."

– Steven

"I love being a member of The Ridges Sanctuary because it has allowed me to discover more ways to get involved through volunteering and learning opportunities."

– Kate

"I love being a member and bringing my grandkids to Door County for a visit and enrolling them in Backpack Adventure Camp, where they learn all about the special features of The Ridges Sanctuary."

– Lynda



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

MEMBERS ARE THE BACKBONE OF THE RIDGES SANCTUARY

As members, there are many ways to get involved. We strive to create opportunities that cater to the unique strengths and interests of each and every member. Whether you become a member to hike the Sanctuary trails, find a community through volunteer projects or help guide the future of the Ridges as a Board member, you are playing an important role in The Ridges Sanctuary.

VISIT THE SANCTUARY



EXPLORE

- Hike The Sanctuary Trails
- Take a Guided Hike
- Participate in Educational Programs

VOLUNTEERS

Our incredible community of volunteers drives all activities at the Ridges Sanctuary. There are many teams that work together to create a meaningful experience for everyone that visits the Sanctuary. Get involved by joining any number of the following teams: The Wednesday and Thursday Crews, Reception Desk Team, Guided Hike Leaders and Sweeps, Trail Docents, Garden Keepers, Range Light Docents, Administrative Support Team, Citizen Science Team, and Special Events Crew.

Visit our website

www.ridgessanctuary.org/join/volunteer

Or contact us at volunteer@ridgessanctuary.org

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Ridges has a number of active committees that further support the activities of the Sanctuary. Individuals with many different backgrounds have participated in our committees to share their expertise, insights, and passions with our mission-driven experiences. The Ridges Sanctuary Board and Advisory Committees of Development, Governance, Finance, Land, and Education, are supported by a mix of Board Members, At-Large Community Members and staff, and together we tackle important issues throughout the year.

BOARD MEMBERS

The Ridges Board of Directors works diligently to lead The Ridges Sanctuary with vision, passion and inspiration. **Turn to the next page to learn more about why YOU should consider getting involved!**

BECOME A MEMBER



ALBERT FULLER SOCIETY MEMBERS

The Albert Fuller Society is a community of members of all ages who have chosen to leave their legacy on The Ridges by including the Sanctuary in their estate plans. By including the Sanctuary as a planned gift, you have ensured that future generations can experience the Sanctuary as we do today.

INFORMED DECISION MAKERS

As a voting membership, our community helps make important decisions about the future of the Sanctuary by electing individuals into positions of leadership and endorsing changes in how we govern ourselves as an organization. These critical membership activities ensure that the future of the Sanctuary is guided by a community that represents our membership.

DONORS

The impact of our donors is inspiring. Through monetary, time, and service-based donations, The Ridges Sanctuary has the opportunity to implement and expand important activities in preserving the Sanctuary, educating all ages, and performing research on threatened species found within the Sanctuary.



GET INVOLVED

RIDGES AMBASSADORS

Each and every day, we hear comments from new visitors who say that fellow members encouraged their visit to The Ridges. Sharing what excites you about The Ridges Sanctuary with your friends, family, neighbors and others affords us the opportunity to engage more individuals and inspire the next wave of Ridges Ambassadors.

SUPPORTERS AND VISIONARIES

During every phase of Ridges Sanctuary growth and development, we have relied on the voice of our members. Our members provide a critical perspective that has helped ensure decisions made represent the interests of the entire organization. Through the recent development of a 20-year master plan for the Sanctuary, we have leaned on our membership for their support and vision to move us into the future.

BOARD & COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

The success of The Ridges is attributed to the unfailing contributions of our volunteers. If you have visited our beautiful Sanctuary, participated in our events, or been a volunteer at the Ridges, and would like to help The Ridges continue to grow our vision, please consider offering your time and talents as a Board member. Being a part of a community of people who are dedicated to our mission of preservation, education, and research of this unique place is highly rewarding, and we would welcome you as an active member on our leadership team.

Our organization has a rich history of visionary people who have successfully led us to our current status. They have challenged us, and the rewards are visible. As we look forward to the future, like our forebears, we are open to new ideas, perspectives, and experiences, all of which make this place a more healthy, vibrant part of the community. We welcome contributions from all backgrounds. Desirable skills include development and fundraising, leadership, finance, educational programming, nature research, and land management. No single person has all the skills we need, and we are interested in helping everyone find their place with us.

Much of The Ridges leadership is made up of members, who either as volunteers or through conversations with staff and other individuals, indicate an interest in providing their skills and talents to the effort. Board members also are identified through their backgrounds, experience, and potential contributions as like-minded leaders to the Ridges mission.

Board members are elected and accountable to the membership. Board actions are supported by an engaged and energetic staff who participate in fostering our vision. The Ridges Board thinks **BIG**. We are customer focused. We work closely with our community with a reach that goes beyond Door County.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Governance is a higher level of volunteerism. Board members continually inquire as to how they may contribute to the mission of The Ridges Sanctuary for future generations. While financial contributions are encouraged, contributing time and energy to the many ongoing projects is just as valuable to the Ridges and exceedingly rewarding as an individual.

How does a prospective leader prepare to serve on The Ridges Sanctuary Board?

Most Board members begin the learning process by volunteering in any of the mission areas of preservation, education, or research. Working and meeting new members as well as visitors who have the same passion for nature and the environment is a rewarding social activity. The new friendships formed, connections made at monthly volunteer lunches, and the deeper knowledge gained of the unique environment and operation of our organization contribute to the inspiring culture of The Ridges Sanctuary.

"As a Ridges volunteer, I have met many wonderful people over the years and some have become good friends. The volunteers are all so passionate about The Ridges and want to help in any way they can. They give so much of their time and energy to support our mission - it's gratifying to be part of it."

— Sandy Miller, Board Director Secretary



*Gathering of Board members at a recent vision workshop.
Left to right: Sher Rockway, Linda Brooks, Bill Wolff, Dave Zuhlke,
Deb Fitzgerald, and Sandy Miller.*

What are the requirements to become a Ridges Board member?

A passion to preserve and protect the unique environment of the Sanctuary is essential to Ridges Board membership. While there are no required qualifications, Ridges Bylaws require that all Board members are Ridges members in good standing. Some members bring backgrounds in finance, land management, education, fundraising and development and science to their roles. All these attributes are helpful but not necessary. Most Board members continue their learning process through their Board service.

How long does a Board member serve?

Board members are elected at the Annual Meeting each August by vote of the membership and serve a three-year term. At the end of three years, they may elect to run for another three-year term. At the end of the second term, they must go off the Board for at least a year before they can run again.

"I joined the Ridges Sanctuary Board to help provide stewardship of this beautiful, sensitive and ecologically significant place. Since joining, I've been inspired by the passionate, competent staff and their vision of the Ridges future. I've been inspired by the depth of knowledge, passion and experience Board members bring to the table. We are not alike in many ways, but those differences fall away when we're together, replaced and united with a collective mission. We all desire to leave our corner of the world better positioned for the animals and plants that thrive here; for the future generations who will follow in our footsteps. The Board provides an outlet to turn that desire into action."

— Deb Fitzgerald, Board Director

WE NEED YOU!
Join our Leadership Team!

To learn more, contact us at
leadership@ridgessanctuary.org.

Board and Committee Membership

Participating in leadership activities at The Ridges Sanctuary is considered one of the greatest contributions a member can make. Many Board members began with membership on one of the Board committees, formed to advise the Board on specific operations. These committees consist of Board members and members-at-large and are an excellent first step to understanding Board operations for prospective members.

STANDING AND ADVISORY COMMITTEES INCLUDE:

GOVERNANCE

Works to enhance and develop strong Board members, selects candidates for the Board, reviews By-laws and policies of staff and Board, and conducts Board orientation and training sessions.

DEVELOPMENT

Conducts and promotes fundraising and promotional activities in conjunction with Development staff.

FINANCE AND AUDIT

Reviews and oversees the financial condition of the organization. Works with the Board Treasurer and staff to ensure a healthy financial operation.

LAND

Focuses on the review, discussion, and deliberate land protection opportunities and land stewardship issues. Advises the Board on land stewardship goals, land management plans and research activities, and recommendations for acquiring new properties that fulfill The Ridges mission.

EDUCATION

Strengthens the Ridges vision of becoming a leader in environmental education and interpretive programming. Supports Ridges staff with ongoing programs, program plans, evaluations and new opportunities, and financial planning, fundraising and advertising and marketing for programs.



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Volunteers, members and Board members celebrate
their accomplishments at the Range Light
Boardwalk Dedication.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

www.ridgessanctuary.org
or call: (920) 839-2802

GET INVOLVED

DONATE

The Ridges Sanctuary relies on the generosity of our supporters to protect our lands, advance research initiatives, expand adult and youth education, and to build capacity to support the growth of the organization. Ways to donate include: **Undesignated** contributions to offset operational expenses; **Designated** contributions for specific initiatives; and **Endowment** funds to ensure contributions are available in perpetuity. In addition, Planned Giving can be one of the best ways for an individual or family to leave their legacy. Please consider making a tax-deductible gift today.

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are the backbone of The Ridges and the core of many of our important programs. Over 200 dedicated individuals share their time and talents in a variety of ways. From trail maintenance, assisting in The Nature Store, and leading/assisting with hikes, to serving as a lighthouse docent, helping with citizen science programs and carpentry projects -- there are numerous opportunities to contribute. No prior experience is needed in any category. Visit our website or call to find out how you can be a part of the team.

JOIN

Join over 2,600 individual, family and business members and enjoy the best of everything The Ridges has to offer. Membership includes free, year-round admission to all Ridges trails, program guides and newsletters, discounts on Nature Store items, and member rates for our programs and events.

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