Friends of Fred Smith Newsletter

December 2025

Preserving Fred Smith's Legacy: 2025 Summer Conservation Report

This summer was a busy and productive season for statue preservation at the Wisconsin Concrete Park! Thanks to the dedicated efforts of our preservation team, many of Fred Smith's remarkable sculptures received much-needed attention and care.

Highlights of the work completed include reattaching Paul Bunyan's head, hat, hand, and rifle, as well as the wolfhounds' head and tail. During his 7 week stay over the summer, our professional preservationist, Ben, also completed extensive structural reinforcements on numerous statues, repaired large cracks, and reattached several hands, feet, and heads.

Meanwhile, our seasonal preservationists, Kendra and Rachel, focused on restoring color and detail—repainting all of the statues' hands, feet, and faces. They also refreshed several key features around the park, including the Statue of Liberty and the Freedom of Capital Dome bas relief plaques, the Mileage Marker, and the Indian with Red Feathers sculpture.

These preservation efforts not only stabilize the artwork for years to come but also bring back the vibrant spirit and personality that make Fred Smith's creations so beloved by visitors.

Park Improvements

It's been a busy and productive year at the Wisconsin Concrete Park! Thanks to the hard work of our team and Signature Sign and Graphics, we've completed a three phase signage project by making several exciting improvements across the grounds and facilities.

Outside, visitors will notice several new features that make it easier to explore and appreciate the park. We added a new restroom sign for better wayfinding and installed a Preservation Workshop sign to highlight the ongoing restoration work that keeps the sculptures in such great condition.

One of the most exciting projects this year was the recreation of Fred Smith's original "Wisconsin Concrete Park" metal sign. The replica, crafted from durable fiberglass, now proudly hangs on the chain link fence—paying tribute to Fred's handmade original while ensuring it can be safely enjoyed for years to come.

We also introduced numbered plaques for each statue, which correspond with our updated site map and brochure. This addition makes self-guided tours easier and helps visitors learn more about each sculpture's story and history as they explore the grounds.

Inside the Friends of Fred Smith Center, we partnered with Price County to install a brand-new drop ceiling and lighting, brightening up the space and creating a more welcoming environment for meetings, events, and educational programs. The updates not only improve the building's comfort and appearance but also help with energy efficiency and maintenance.

Each of these improvements reflects our ongoing commitment to preserving Fred Smith's visionary art environment while enhancing accessibility and enjoyment for all who visit.

2026 Projected Projects:

- **Rock Garden Tavern foundation repairs**
- **Two canopy roofs will be replaced on statue tableaus**
- **Landscaping around Historic House**
- **Other landscaping & fence improvements to Park and Tavern**
- **Brush and buckthorn removal throughout park and woods**

Park Information & Updates

Countryside Artists Gallery & Gift Shop located in the historic Fred Smith House. Hours of operation: Memorial day weekend-October Thursday-Sunday 10 am- 4 pm

Rock Garden Tavern: Upper level two-bedroom vacation rental and lower level bar open select days or available for private events. Follow us on Facebook or Instagram @WisconsinConcretePark for updates.

Tuck Point work being completed on the back side of the Rock Garden Tavern

Freshly painted hands, feet, and faces on statues

Thirteen New and Updated Interpretive Signs were installed on our Nature Trail

Intern Caitlin Rooney was with us for two weeks to assist our Preservationist with statue preservation.

FoFS Adopt-a-Highway

Our Fred Smith Center can be rented for a variety of events, including workshops, trainings, parties, and social gatherings.

2025 Workshops

February
Wine Making

February
Bunco

September
Basket Making

October
Free Outdoor Painting
sponsored by WAB Grant

March
Beaded Hanger

March
Egg Decorating

October
WI Wildlife Presentation

Ongoing
Yoga & Sound Bathing

April
Paint Your Partner

November
Cookie Decorating

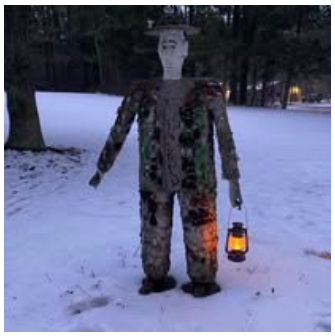
May
Cork Birdhouse

May & June
Book Signings

November
Kolache Baking

Our Workshops are not designed to generate profit-supporting arts education is simply part of our mission

2025 Concrete Park Events



January
Candlelight Walk

May
4th Graders Field Trip

Community Participation: Booth at Phillips Fall Harvest Fest & Phillips Christmas Parade

October
Halloween Party

Park Tours: Happy Tours Bus Group, Lakeside Villa, Friday Summer Community Tours, Convertible Club, Retired Teachers

Book Walk on our Nature Trail
Seasonal

December
Visit with Santa

Friends of Fred Smith Members

We are so grateful to our members for their continued support of the park! If you are interested in becoming a member please contact us at: 715-339-7282 or fofs@pctcnet.net

- Carol & Jeffrey Allen
- Alan & Diane Barkstrom
- Karen Baumgartner
- John & Anne Baxter
- Richard & Kristin Bemis
- Joe Bending
- Pamela Berg
- Justin Blomberg
- Wayne & Janie Boho
- Carrie Brietzke
- Mark & Marjory Brzeskiewicz
- Kathie & Tony Budaj
- Kevin & Barbara Chapman
- Christine Coleson
- Peter & Kathi Dahlie
- Jeff & Laurie Denny
- Sally Denzine
- Gilbert Dering
- Brenda Deringer
- Mark & Reggie Distin
- Jim Draeger
- Bill & Cindy Elliott
- Etola Foytek
- Greg Foytik
- Arlyne & Tom Frane
- Merceda Gehrke
- Mary K. Grow & David W. Dwyer
- Matt & Ann Grzywnowicz
- Bill & Annette Gudim
- Edye Hackbarth
- Ed & Peggy Hainy
- Debi Hallas
- Connie Harding
- Dan & Kathi Hlasny
- Jes Hollinger
- Don Howlett & Lisa Stone
- Diane Hutte
- Don & Nancy Ihlenfeld
- Linda Johnson
- Irene Johnson
- Sherrie Kandutsch
- Grace Kielsmeier
- John Klimowski
- Steve & Shannon Kolden
- Linda Konkol
- Robert & Linda Kopisch
- Andy & Cari Krahn
- Bob LaPointe
- Vicki Leffel
- Lynda & Dan Ludwig
- Gay Marschke
- Bruce & Susan Marshall
- John & Brianna McArthur
- Jean Meives
- Anna Miller
- Tom & Sheila Miske
- Kathryn Nelson
- Sally & Nate Nez
- Brent & Bonnie Nygaard
- Tom & Linnea Olson
- Chad & Laura Palzkill
- Linda Parker & John Krause
- Jon & Sherry Pesko
- Mary Jean & Lester Peterson
- Rich & Laurie Pilch
- Deb Reinke
- Andy & Angie Richardson
- Kevin & Tara Rose
- Jim & Elgenia Ross
- Bob Roth
- Fred Scruton
- Dave Sersch & Eileen Stuntebeck
- Joel Sigfrid
- Al & Suzanne Smiles
- Shirley Smith
- Randy & Nicole Spacek
- Eva Tavares-Reilly
- Lee & Nancy Turnquist
- Bryan & Sharon Vergin
- Ron Walcisak
- Linda Winn
- Bill & Terri Yoho
- Mary Zimmerman
- Gloria Ziolkowski

Thank you Corporate Sponsors!

- **Foley's Tree Service**
- **Northern Comfort**
- **Northern Sight Vision Clinic**
- **Price Electric Cooperative**
- **The Wandering Chef, LLC**

Celebrating Our Members

This August, we were delighted to host our annual Member Appreciation Dinner at the Rock Garden Tavern—a special evening dedicated to saying thank you to our members for their ongoing support.

The event was a wonderful opportunity to relax, connect, and celebrate the community that keeps Fred Smith's legacy thriving. Guests enjoyed a delicious meal while catching up with friends, meeting new members, and visiting with our preservationist, who shared insights into this year's restoration projects and upcoming plans for the park.

Members also had a chance to see recent improvements around the park which reflect the continued dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters who work year-round to preserve and improve this unique outdoor art environment.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who joined us for the evening—and to all of our members who make our work possible. Your support helps keep the Wisconsin Concrete Park a welcoming and inspiring place for visitors from near and far.

We look forward to gathering again next year for another memorable evening of friendship, good food, and celebration!

Friends of Fred Smith Bus Trip

This fall, the Friends of Fred Smith hosted a special bus trip to Wausau for members and community friends—a day filled with art, nature, and great company!

Our first stop was the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum, where participants enjoyed exploring the world-renowned Birds in Art exhibition and other inspiring displays.

Afterward, the group visited the Monk Botanical Gardens, a peaceful and beautifully designed natural space. Members strolled through vibrant gardens, walked the accessible trails, and took in the fresh air and autumn colors.

The trip offered a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow art and nature enthusiasts, share stories, and experience the cultural richness of our region together. Everyone returned home with smiles and great memories—it truly was a great day!

Stay Connected

N8236 State Highway 13 PO Box 73 Phillips, WI 54555

Ann Grzywnowicz: Operations Manager

: 715-339-7282

: fofs@pctcnet.net

@wisconsinconcretepark

www.wisconsinconcretepark.org

FOFS Board of Directors

- Marjory Brzeskiewicz President
- Janie Boho Vice President
- Mary Jean Peterson Treasurer
- Eva Tavares-Reilly Secretary
- Alan Barkstrom
- Etola Foytek
- John Klimowski
- Robert Kopisch
- Gay Marschke
- Sally Nez
- Terri Yoho

Friends of Fred Smith Mission Statement: to support the Wisconsin Concrete Park in cooperation with Price County. The mission of Friends of Fred Smith, Inc is to preserve the Wisconsin Concrete Park and all its resources--- including sculptures, landscape, and historic Smith Family House--- and to maintain and develop it as a public educational and cultural facility.