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Posted March 14, 2007

## Foot patrol set for Fox River Trail

Volunteers will work with Brown County Sheriff's Department

By Ed Byrne  
Gannett Wisconsin Newspapers

GREEN BAY — When spring arrives and the snow disappears, people using the Fox River State Recreational Trail will find volunteers affiliated with the Friends of the Fox River Trail patrolling the parkway.

The Fox River Trail Patrol volunteers will serve as a courtesy presence along the trail's 20-mile route from Green Bay to the Calumet County line.

Trail patrol members also will serve as eyes and ears for the Brown County Sheriff's Department and the Brown County Parks Department.

Members of the trail patrol met recently with Capt. Randy Schultz, who heads the sheriff's department's patrol division.

The trail patrol has no law enforcement powers, and a major part of its efforts is expected to be in giving information and assistance to trail users.

"I would like to see a partnership with law enforcement," trail patrol member Pam Aerts said.

Schultz said that was his vision, too.

John Trester, secretary of the Friends of the Fox River Trail, said his view of the trail patrol has changed.

"We were thinking about an 'auxiliary' (to law enforcement)," Trester said.

"I would have liked to have been more of an aggressive observer."

Now he favors a more passive approach.

"What I would like from the sheriff's department is they take a serious look at our complaints," he said.

Patrol volunteer Mike Gerke said there are frequent violations of trail rules — from pet leash law violations to people ignoring stop signs at street crossings and some riding bicycles too aggressively.

The Friends group has evidence of transients camping along the trail and beer parties in more remote sections of the trail, especially in Allouez from the State 172 bridge south to the De Pere city limits.

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Cory Cochart (left) and his brother Chad, both of Potts Construction Co. in Oneida, work on a section of a bridge on the Fox River State Recreational Trail, a few miles north of Hilbert on Tuesday. They were installing a temporary fence to keep people off the bridge until it is complete. The work should be finished in a couple of weeks. Post-Crescent photo by Dan Powers

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### Fox River State Trail

The Fox River State Recreational Trail stretches 20 miles from downtown Green Bay to the Brown/Calumet County line. An annual state trail pass or a daily pass is required for bicyclists, in-line skaters and horseback riders older than 16 years old. There is no fee for walkers. Daily passes are \$3 and are available at the trailhead. Annual state trail passes are \$15.

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Schultz suggested that patrol members travel in pairs and always carry cell phones.

He urged patrol members to have 911 and a confidential non-emergency phone number to the Brown County Public Safety Communications Center programmed into their phones for one-touch dialing.

"You need to know that your cell phone service works in the area of the trail you are patrolling, and you need to know your approximate location on the trail," Schultz said.

Schultz said there is a problem at the south end of the county, where a cellular 911 call can connect to a tower in Calumet or Outagamie counties, and the caller will find himself talking with a dispatch center in Appleton or Chilton instead of Green Bay.

*Ed Byrne is the editor of the Wrightstown Post-Gazette.*

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