



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 7, Issue 3

November 2011



A Friend is Someone You Can Count On **Article by Doug Aziz, President**

As I look back on 2011, I am struck by the magnitude of the projects/events which have occurred at Mead Wildlife Area during the last ten months.

For example, the year started out in January with the completion of the first phase of the Ephemeral Trail and Boardwalk project. If you haven't had an opportunity to walk- the- loop that traverses the Audubon Trail, Dragonfly Pond Dike, Boardwalk and Bike Trail you have missed out on the most significant addition to Mead Wildlife Area since completion of the Education and Visitor Center. In early March the second phase of the new Cormorant and Great Blue Heron Rookery was completed with help from a dedicated crew from WPS. Next was our annual Pancake Breakfast in May which has become a much anticipated event. Then in August we had our second Sportsman's Auction which again raised substantial funds to support the environmental education program at Mead Wildlife Area. And, in September the second annual Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program was held on two successive Saturdays.

As if that wasn't enough, two entirely new events were held in September and October i.e. Grandparents Day and Spooktacular which will be described in detail in this newsletter.

Looking forward to 2012, all of the projects/events described above will be repeated except that the Sportsman's Auction will be replaced by the biannual Neighborhood Picnic which is an equally ambitious undertaking.

It would be a gross misrepresentation to imply that the Friends organization could have pulled-off a fraction of the items listed if it wasn't for all of the "other" volunteers who show up time and again to support our efforts. We are grateful for the participation of the pancake and sausage cookers and all of the servers and cleanup help in the kitchen; the crew from WPS; our volunteer auctioneer; the mentors, instructors and others who supported Learn to Hunt; Aldo Leopold Audubon and Sue's other helpers along with everyone who supported Spooktacular.

The Friends sincerely thank all of the friends mentioned above and all of the other volunteers who serve as Greeters on weekends and help with building and grounds maintenance or any of the other tasks which help to make Mead Wildlife Area a special place.



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Sportsman's Auction Fundraiser

by 2011 Sportsman's Auction Planning Committee: Doug Aziz, Don Ebbers, Don Fox, Don Furo & Jerry Harvey
Photos by Pam Resech

The 2nd Annual Sportsman's Auction fundraiser sponsored by the Friends of the Mead/McMillan (Friends) was held on Sunday, August 14, 2011, at the Mead Wildlife Area (MWA). This second fundraising event was again a very successful endeavor.

Donations were accepted for three months prior to the auction. A couple of new approaches done this year were a bulk mailing to members and past supporters, Jerry Chuilli-the auctioneer, featured our auction on his website and volunteers promoted the auction on 550 AM radio and the Channel 7 Early Show.



Fifty-six donors donated 524 individual items. Twenty or 11% of the 180 people on the Friends membership mailing list made a donation. Each donor received a thank you letter and a copy of the computer generated Chuilli Auction sales report to be used for the purpose of taking a tax deduction on their 2011 taxes.

The machine shed very adequately handled the estimated 140 persons who attended the auction. One hundred chairs were set up and people also stood in the large door openings. Due to the nice weather 35 large items were placed outside while the rest were inside. After Jerry combined some of the donations there were 359 items listed in the published auction booklet.

Auctioneer Jerry Chuilli and his assistant, Lynette Hansen, ran an efficient auction. The auction ran from 10am to

2:30pm. The auctioneers donated their services including four trips from Wittenberg by Jerry Chuilli prior to auction day.

Lisa's Sweet Shoppe Bakery and Catering of Wittenberg, Wisconsin provided reasonably priced food and beverages. They made a cash donation of \$50.00 that was added to the auction proceeds.



The fundraising event netted over \$10,880.00, which included a \$1000.00 grant from Thrivent to help cover the expenses of \$1,250.00. There were also four 50/50 consignors share expenses of \$1,103.50. All proceeds of this sale will be used to benefit the Mead Wildlife Area Educational Programs-**Our Future**.

Thanks to everyone, Board members, Mead Staff, Friends volunteers and all other volunteers for all the hours everyone invested the past few months and on auction day to make this fundraiser event a success. A conservative estimate of hours donated by everyone involved was over 400.





Learn to Hunt Waterfowl

Story & Photos by Patrice Eysers



CLASS OF 2011

In September, the Mead Wildlife Area hosted its second annual Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program. State Conservation Warden Barry Fetting and Wildlife Technician Patrice Eysers organized the events which included an 8 hour waterfowl hunting clinic and a morning hunt during the youth hunt weekend.



**CONSERVATION WARDEN
JON SCHARBATH WITH
STUDENT PA XIONG**

Fourteen students participated in the clinic. During the clinic, students, their parents (grandparents), and their mentors learned about shotgun shooting, shotgun patterning, wilderness safety, waterfowl hunting laws, canoeing, boating safety, retrieving dogs, calling, decoy placement, waterfowl biology, and identification.



CANOEING AND BOATING SAFETY



BILL HIRT DISCUSSING WATERFOWL ID



DECOY TACTICS

In addition to the 14 students, also involved were 16 volunteer mentors, 14 volunteer instructors (6 Conservation Wardens & 5 from Wildlife Management), 18 businesses that made donations to the program, and 7 volunteers that assisted with lunch and clean up on both days. If you or someone you know would like to get involved next year – contact Patrice at 715-457-6771.



DUCK CALLING



**SHOOTING INSTRUCTOR JERRY
HARVEY, MENTOR DAVE STANLEY, AND
STUDENT DALTON CRAIG AT THE
SHOOTING RANGE.**



**MENTOR BILL HIRT WITH
STUDENT RYAN MCLELLAN
AND HIS FIRST DUCK**



Nature's Niches

Article by Kaylee Zalewski & Pam Resech

Bats are very important animals for our environment, but many people believe bats are not a good thing to have around. Did you know that a bat can eat over 1,200 insects in an hour? Bats not only help with insect control, but they are also the main pollinators for many farmers and fruit growers.

There are about 950 bat species in the world. That means that one in four mammals are bats. Talk about diversity! In Wisconsin, there are eight species of bats. Bats are true mammal flyers. Unlike flying squirrels that glide, bats are designed to fly due to light bones and membranes on their wings. Bats are nocturnal animals that can see some, but they use echolocation as the main way to locate prey and move around in their environment.



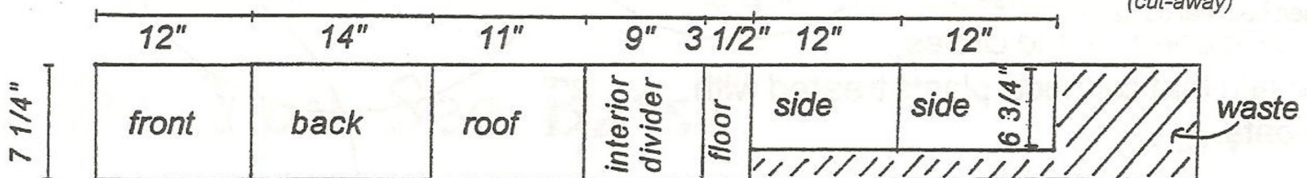
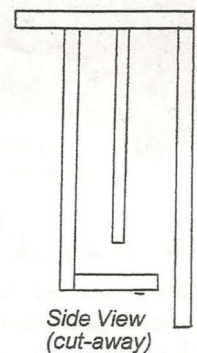
Little Brown Bat-*Myotis lucifugus* flying outside of the Mead Visitor Center.

Photo taken by Clay Buttke

Bats find hibernacula or safe places to sleep during the cold portions of winter. Many bats will huddle together for warmth.

These places that they roost in can either be in snags, caves, mines, or under the bark of the tree. Any place that can hide them from wind and keep them warm will work.

Many bats around us are facing a disease called White Nose Syndrome. This disease is a fungus that covers the bat's nose. It affects the bat's brain causing them to wake up earlier in the winter which then results in them freezing to death. This disease has impacted the number of bats so much that bats are now on the endangered species list. Without bats the insect population would increase even more, making the outdoors unbearable. So do not think of bats as bad, but think of them as Nature's Exterminators.



Bat Houses: One way you can help little brown bats is to build bat houses. These artificial roosts provide shelter for bats. When you are done, hang the bat house 10-25 feet above the ground facing east or southeast. Be sure the bats have easy access to the bottom. The "new residents" will help you by eating thousands of insects during the summer months.



Junior Naturalist Days

Article & Photos by Kaylee Zalewski



This page is dedicated to the many students & children, "junior naturalists," who visit the Mead Wildlife Area.

Since the last newsletter, two Junior Naturalist Days have occurred. The first one "The Wonders of Wetlands", was held on Sunday July 31st. On this day visitors got to learn about the importance wetlands, what animals call it home, and the plants that can be found there. Then visitors got to go out with volunteer educator Bill Seybold and explore the Educational Scrape by taking pond samples to see what animals were lurking below. Participants also got to take home a nature journal that they created to commemorate what they learned and discovered.



The second one "Prairies: America's Bread Basket" was held on Sunday August 28th. On this day guests learned about the significance of prairies, by discovering the different plants and animals that call it their home. Bill & Kaylee took visitors on a walk around the Audubon Prairie trail, which allowed them to see the plants up close and personal. Afterwards, visitors got to create a nature journal about prairies and received some art and craft ideas to try at home.

Both events were a success and more events are in the works. Please check

the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Web-site: www.meadwildlife.org click on the Events link or the Educational Calendar to see the upcoming events at the Mead.



"Spooktacular Event"

by 2011 Event Planning Committee: Pam Resech, Kaylee Zalewski, Marlene Furo & Rhonda Reigel
Photos by Amy Furo

A great time was had by all at Mead's 1st non-scary, family fun Halloween "Spooktacular" on Saturday October 22. Over 230 people attended the 2 hour event, which was sponsored by the Friends of the Mead/McMillan & the Mead staff. Admission for the event was a non-perishable food item or \$2.00 per person. 270 food items were collected by volunteers Marcell & Janice Wieloch; these donations were then taken to the food pantries; Soup or Socks & St. Vincent DePaul in Marshfield by Pam Resech.



Once inside guests were able to participate in many inside and outside activities. A huge thank you goes out to all the volunteers that lead these activities:

- Pumpkin painting: Marlene Furo, Joan Dickrell & Nicole Simcakoski
- Cookie decorating: Rhonda Reigel, Sue Meyer, & Rhonda Hoesly
- Games: Sally Linzmeier, Sue Mancl, Zachary Stange & the Mosinee Boys Scouts: Jeremy Falstad, Logan Kasat, Andrew Blenker, Jordan Hoffman, Colin Griesmer, & Emery Moser
- Hot Cider & Popcorn: Terri Hamus & Kim Simcakoski
- Night Animal Displays: Bethany Bonesetter
- Night Hikes: Kaylee Zalewski, Terry Gillespie & Mallory Beigel
- Fall Skit by Campfire: Bill Seybold, Barb Gillespie, Rylie & Alisha Peterson, Krissy Wojner, & Stuart Deets
- Souvenir Showcase: Sue Hall & Beth Clouse

Thank you to the volunteers in charge of safety issues before & during the event:

Parking: Don Ebbers & Clay Buttke

Tiki Torches & Campfire: Don Hartle, Bill Hirt, Brian Peters, Patrice Evers, Merlyn Reigel, Jim Dickrell, Don Fox, & Jeremiah Smith

Clean-up: Tom Furo & Blair Lorbecki

A Special thank you to Amy Furo for photographing the event, pictures can be viewed on the Friend's web-site at www.meadwildlife.org.

A few comments on the evaluation slips: "Loved it! Terrific Family Fun", "It was all great!" "Family had a great time.", "Awesome, thank you to the staff! Hope to come out next year!", "Great Event, We had fun, thanks!", & "Do it again, thank you."

With so many wonderful comments, suggestions & volunteer help, plans are in the works to make this an Annual event at the Mead Wildlife Area.





"Spooktacular" Event Photos by Amy Furo





ATTENTION DEER HUNTERS

Friends of the
Mead McMillan
Association Inc.

**HELP US KEEP OUR
WILDLIFE AREAS
WELCOMING TO ALL**



The Friends of the Mead McMillan Association in conjunction with the Marshfield Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited and Veolia Environmental Services will be providing two dumpsters for deer remains disposal. These dumpsters will be available to hunters from November 14th through December 16th. Please visit the Friends website in the coming days for more information including locations and times.



www.meadwildlife.org



Great Gift Idea!

Friends of the Mead/McMillan Membership

Friends of the Mead/McMillan members know the value of Membership!

Please check the label on the front cover of this newsletter as your membership might have expired. If there is no date on it, you are receiving this newsletter free for now. If your membership is up for renewal or you would like to become a member and help us with our environmental efforts, fill out this form.

If you would like to purchase a membership for your family or friends you can do so by filling out this form. We appreciate your support of our efforts to promote environmental education for youth and adults who come to the Mead Wildlife Area.

The annual membership fee is \$30 Family/Individual. Make Check payable to Friends of the Mead/McMillan. Mail to: Mead Wildlife Area, S2148 Cty Hwy S, Milladore, WI, 54454

Renewal ____

New Member ____

Gift for New Member ____

Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip	
Phone	
Email	

Thank you for your support with our environmental endeavors!



Family Programs

Article & Photos by Pam Resech

A Wildflower Walk program was held on Saturday October 1st. Visitors were taken on a leisure walk around the Center's gardens and through the Audubon Prairie.

The Mead Wildlife Area is home to a variety of grassland types that provide critical habitat for prairie and grassland wildlife. The variety of colors painted on the prairie canvas is a sight to behold in addition to the many prairie insects and birds that rely on the blooming flowers. Participants could bring along baggies to collect some seed samples to start their own canvas or add to their existing canvas.

If you have ideas about future family programs you would like to see offered at the Mead Education & Visitor Center please send your request to Pam Resech at pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov or phone 715-457-6771 ext. 5.



Fall Education

Article & Photos by Pam Resech



One of the many groups to come to the Mead during the Fall season were the second grade students from Grant Elementary, Marshfield. 94 students, plus adult chaperones and teachers enjoyed a beautiful fall day exploring and learning about nature on Friday September 30th.

Students and their chaperones participated in four of our educational programs. They went on a wagon ride to the wetlands with Kaylee and studied pond life. Bill Seybold and Pam took them through the forest and taught the students about the energy cycle. Marlene Furo played a game of Colorful Confusion, in which the students learned how animals have adapted to survive by using different colorations. The Grant teachers led their students around the Audubon Prairie trail on a nature scavenger hunt.





Grandparent's Day at the Mead

Article by Sue Hall

A fun time was experienced at the Mead Wildlife Center when Friends of the Mead joined with Aldo Leopold Audubon members and Saint Peter's Middle School students to celebrate Grandparents Day on Sunday, September 11th. Over 150 parents and grandparents brought their grandchildren to experience nature by building suet and seed bird feeders, walking the Audubon prairie nature trail, viewing area birds with binoculars, doing a scavenger hunt at the historical display and exploring the wetlands and grasslands on the new boardwalk.

This is the first year that Audubon has participated with the Friends of the Mead to acquaint young bird watchers with feeders to instill a love of bird watching in their own back yard. With the success of the occasion, both groups indicated they would like to make it an annual event. The older students commented that they enjoyed it too; watching the fun the kids had making the feeders even though their fingers occasionally got hit when



Jerry Harvey with his 2 grandsons — Brody & Jaxon Braunsky

Photo by Pam Resech

they missed the nail while hammering and got their fingers instead. The St. Peter's middle school students were enthusiastic and great at helping the younger students build their feeders. Several grandparents came out to visit the Mead alone as their grandchildren lived in another town or were grown. Several remarked that they had not ever been to the Mead Visitor Center before and enjoyed seeing the energy efficient facility. Grandparents of the youngsters remarked that "This is a great way to show kids about birds as they get excited that they created the feeder themselves, they are more apt to observe the birds and getting a colorful sheet showing the birds really helped, too."



Grandparent's Day at The Mead (continued from page 10)



Working to build seed feeders
Photo by Pam Resech



Jim & Delores Zakrzewski
Photo by Sue Hall



John Shippy leading a group exploration
Photo by Pam Resech

Sue Hall explaining bird feeders to young and old
Photo by Pam Resech



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Mailing Address Label

Please check the label of this newsletter as your membership might have expired. If there is no date on it, you are receiving this newsletter free for now. If your membership is up for renewal or you would like to become a member visit our website; www.meadwildlife.org or stop by the Center.

Wetland's Gazette

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, Inc. will be held on January 21, 2012, beginning at 9:00 a.m., at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center.

A reminder will be sent to everyone receiving this newsletter in early January. It will include the agenda for the meeting as well as some suggestions for activities you can participate in afterwards weather permitting of course.