



# WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 8, Issue 3

November 2012

## Outdoor Classroom Dedication

Article by Sue Hall & Photo by Kaylee Zalewski



An area of the Mead Wildlife outdoor education center was recently dedicated to Kent D. Hall in honor of his contributions to the Mead Wildlife area. The dedication took place on Sunday, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with the Grandparent's Day at the Mead. At the dedication, Brian Peters, the new Mead Property Supervisor praised Hall's "undying dedication to natural resources and environmental education". Tom Meier, who worked with Kent during the fundraising phase of the Mead Education Center and endowment for the educator, remarked that "Hall takes on a project and follows it through with nothing but excellence. This education center and educator funding couldn't have happened without his dedication and fundraising expertise."

Hall headed the fundraising of \$1.6 million which covered 2/3 of the cost of the building and also raised \$1 million for the educator endowment. He was on the Board of the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Assn. for 10 years serving as vice president.

In receiving the award, Hall remarked that "he couldn't have built the environmental center by himself; it took major donors like Wausau Homes and the Mead Witter Foundation and contributions from a multitude of others to help make it a reality." His quote on the plaque says, "The future of the world lies in the hearts and souls of children – let the wild shine in".

## Friends of the Mead/McMillan

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- Brian Peters  
Project Manager
- Bill Hirt
- Pam Resech, Educator  
Office 457-6771 ext. 5

### Webmaster:

- Malcolm Gold

### Newsletter Editor:

- Dave Grabski  
dgrabski@charter.net



## 2012 Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program

Article & Photos by Patrice Eyers

As the sun begins to peak through the cattails, fourteen young hunters are scanning the skies for what could be their first duck. Many have been waiting for what seems like an eternity. They had hiked or canoed into the marsh by only the light of their headlamp. The adults accompanying them are volunteers, here to teach, encourage, and mentor. The mentors give these new hunters tips on calling, how to work with a dog, and how to set decoys. The excitement for them is equal to their young hunters, but for a much different reason. For many of them, they have reached that stage of hunting where the most fulfilling hunt is when they can pass their passion on to another.

Young hunter on the marsh



Mentors teaching how to work with dogs



By noon, many of the groups are returning from the marsh - many with more work ahead of them. The table begins to fill; mallards, green wing teal, wood ducks (even one with a band), blue wing teal, and Canada geese. Everyone is excited about their experience and has a story to share, whether they harvested a bird or not. A story of a marsh hawk knocking a wood duck out of mid flight is a favorite, as is the one about otters playing on the bank. This *Learn to Hunt* program has been a huge success.

The 2 day event is filled with hands on activities including canoeing, shotgun patterning, clay target shooting, and calling. In addition, youth are taught about waterfowl I.D., wetland management and conservation, and the role hunters play in wildlife management. The Mead Wildlife Area's Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program is proud to do its part to meet the challenge posed by WDNR Shooting Sports Coordinator Keith Warnke to provide hunting opportunities to 2000 youth in 2012.

Day two of the event is the mentored hunt. Mentors and their youth hunt either Mead Wildlife Area or McMillan Marsh. The hunt day falls on the Waterfowl Youth Season opener, and provides the new hunters with a bounty of resident ducks. Providing these new hunters with an enjoyable experience is the goal and by holding the hunt on the youth weekend, the youngsters don't need to compete with the high number of water fowlers seen on the Mead during the regular season. The more enjoyable the experience, the more likely these youngsters will continue to hunt. And for those that don't? Hopefully this program will provide them with an understanding of its value, and we care for what we value.



Dave Stanley teaching canoeing

(continued on next page)





## Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Program (continued from page 2)

This program is completely free of charge. The federal framework of the youth hunt declares youth 16 and younger are not required to have a federal waterfowl stamp. In Wisconsin, youth participating in a registered Learn to Hunt program are not required to have a hunting license or a state waterfowl stamp. But that's not the end of it. Recognizing the financial burden associated with waterfowl hunting (waders, gun, ammo, decoys, call, etc...) the Mead LTH program began a "hunting equipment loaner program". Through an outpouring of community support, we have purchased or had donated; 15 pair of waders, 20 life jackets, and four youth model 20ga shotguns, numerous decoys, and a variety of camouflage clothing. All of these items are available to our participants to borrow throughout the entire waterfowl hunting season.

Planning for the 2013 program is already underway. For more information on the Mead Wildlife Area's Learn to Hunt Waterfowl program, please contact State Conservation Warden Barry Fetting at 715-457-2740 or Wildlife Technician Patrice Eyers at 715-457-6771 ext. 5.

Bill Hirt a successful mentor, Jeremiah Smith assisted



### Class of 2012

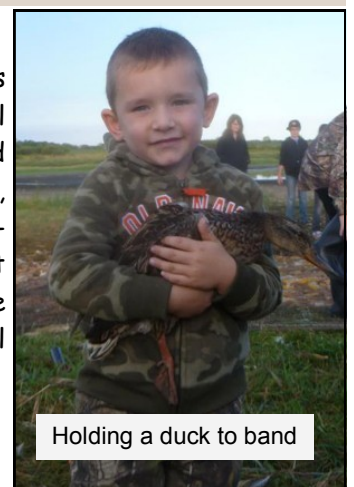


### Youth Duck Banding Day Article and Photos by Patrice Eyers



Erika Taylor helping to release a banded duck

We had a great time at this year's youth waterfowl banding day. A total of 156 birds were banded and included species such as mallard, wood duck, green wing teal, and a black duck. After banding, families gathered back at the Mead for donuts and juice while exploring some wetland and waterfowl related displays.



Holding a duck to band





## Geocaching...Huntin' for Family Fun

Article & Photos by Jamie Jestadt - Auburndale Phy Ed

We had close to 70 people participate in our first ever Geocaching event, held on October 27th at the Mead Wildlife Area. Think of Geocaching like a treasure hunt...."caches" are hidden all over the world in places like parks and forests. A cache can range from a tiny metal bottle cap to a large Tupperware container. Inside each cache is a log filled with people's names that have found it and sometimes little trinkets or other surprises. Our caches had trivia questions in them relating to health and

biology, such as, "Approximately how many times does your heart beat each day?"



We hid 10 caches around a 2-mile loop at the Mead. Families needed to use a GPS system with the cache coordinates on it to navigate their way through the woods and prairies to find the caches. Everyone was really into it, looking under rocks, inside tree branches, and digging in piles of leaves. Mr. Jim Peterson, one of our fifth grade teachers celebrated a huge accomplishment - this event marked his 3,000th Geocaching find! Wow, way to go Mr. Peterson!

Everyone who participated had a wonderful time, and we hope to plan another family Geocaching event sometime in the spring. Thank you to everyone who participated and for being flexible with us while we learned to use the GPS systems!

## 6th Annual Solar Tour

Article Tom Brown & Photo by Pam Resech



On Saturday October 8th, the Mead Education & Visitor Center hosted visitors to the facility as part of a national Solar Tour open house. As in past years, Architect Tom Brown spent the day at the building greeting visitors, giving tours, and answering questions about the sustainable design and renewable energy features of the facility.

About 2 dozen visitors stopped in to learn about the building and its features. This was the 6th year that the Mead has participated in this event, sponsored locally by the Midwest Renewable Energy Association.





## Mead's Forest & Wildlife Habitat Demonstration Tour

Article & Photos by Pam Resech

A new interpretive auto tour is being established through the Mead property. This tour starts at the parking lot located at the end of Plum Lane and ends at the parking lot on Highway O. Visitors interested in taking the auto tour will need to register for a gate key at the office during regular business hours. Visitors can also enjoy the tour by hiking along this trail with the informational booklet as their guide.



*Don Ebbers installing one of the number blocks to the post.*

This self-guided tour was established to inform visitors, private landowners and wildlife enthusiasts alike, about the benefits associated with actively managing forested lands for wildlife. The tour includes 10 interpretive sites highlighting various aspects of the landscape and the management practices associated with them. The route takes you through distinct habitats; aspen stands, forest openings, northern hardwood forests, wetlands, and sedge meadows to demonstrate the benefits associated with active land management and the relationship of various habitat types to one another.

Many volunteers have been involved in establishing this trail, digging the 10 post holes, staining the posts, creating the number blocks and installing them. More hours will now be involved in removing and recreating the number blocks, re-digging and re-staining new posts due to the vandalism along this trail by parties using them for target practice. If anyone knows the parties involved please contact the local wardens or call the Statewide "24-hour" Confidential DNR Hotline at **1-800-TIP-WDNR (847-9367)**. Thank you.



*John Shippy removing one of the vandalized number blocks.*

This habitat demonstration area and printed booklet are the results of a cooperative effort between the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, through a grant from Turkey Stamp funding and funds from the Ruffed Grouse Society.

*Male Ruffed grouse on a drumming log. One of the many species that benefit from actively managed forest land.*





## Rocks for New Geology Area

Article by Bob Gutknecht Photos by Pam Resech

A couple of years ago, Dan Damrow had the idea that a geology walk should be established at the Mead Wildlife Area. Dan ran the idea past Tom Meier at that time. Tom asked people he knew that liked rocks for their help. That idea has grown with the help of a number of people in government and the private sector. Every quarry operator that we have talked with has been very supportive of the idea. The quarry operators liked the idea that students and adults would be shown what geologic happenings determined what we see in the area and the significance of the rocks found in the area.



6 ton rhyolite sample

Dr. Gene LaBerge, a retired Geology Professor from UW Oshkosh mapped a large portion of Marathon County. Dr. LaBerge developed a list of rocks that he believes demonstrates the geology of the area. We have collected the following rocks based on that list:

- ♦ Banded iron formation from Jackson County, obtained by Dan Damrow from an abandoned iron mine.
- ♦ Diabase from a quarry operated by Athens Hard Rock (client of Russ Wilson) near Athens Wisconsin
- ♦ Granodiorite from Mathy's Cisler Quarry south of Mosinee. Rock from this quarry is the source of all of the railroad bal-last for Canadian National Railroad.
- ♦ Ruby red granite from Michel's Anderson Brothers and Johnson quarry. Granite from this location is used for grave markers, road base, countertops and tiles, facing for buildings and decorative stones.
- ♦ Rhyolite from the 3M Quarry in Wausau, Wisconsin. The rhyolite is crushed and becomes the small rocks that are dyed and applied to asphalt roof shingles.
- ♦ Quartzite from the abandoned 3M quarry at Rib Mountain State Park. Some of the rocks from this location contain ripple marks, evidence that Rib Mountain used to be under an ocean.
- ♦ 450 million year old stromatolite fossils from the Schaal Quarry near Gillett, Wisconsin and the Sperberg Quarry near Pulcifer, Wisconsin. The large stromatolite was donated by Mike Reisch of Earthhaven Museum, Gillett Wisconsin. If Mike hadn't saved the fossil, it would have been ground up for road base.

Rocks obtained but yet to be delivered to Mead:

- ♦ Sandstone from the Schaal Quarry demonstrating bedding.
- ♦ Sandstone from Dan Damrow's collection of jellyfish and Climaetichnites.
- ♦ Gneiss from Wausau and Opelt's Quarry near Neillsville, Wisconsin.

We have yet to find a sample of pillow basalt.



Pictured receiving the grant: (L to R) Don Fox-President of the Friends, Joan Bikowski-Cellcom rep, Pam Resech-Educator, Bob Gutknecht-Rock collector, & Dan Damrow-Paleontologist

Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association received a \$500 Green Gift from Cellcom on November 14th. The Green Gift will support the addition of the new geology trail and display. Read more here: <http://ow.ly/fiwKy>





## Turkey Foot Trail

Article & Photos by Pam Resech

Thanks to a lot of hard work and creativity the Mead has a new walking trail. The walking trail is .25 miles long and connects the Educational Prairie Garden on the southeast side of the Center to the Berkahn Bike trail by John Hollar's woods. The trail meanders past a tall grass prairie consisting mostly of Big Bluestem grass, hence its name "Turkey Foot Trail", which is a nickname for the grass.

In the middle of the trail was a rocky formation between the bio-swales (part of the water filtration system). Wednesday's crew of volunteers built a bridge over these rocks using the same material as the boardwalk trail. Blair Lorbecki coordinated the project of creating the bridge panels from metal. Blair commissioned Greenheck of Wausau to design, laser cut and paint these animal panels and trailhead sign. He then welded them into metal frames. Jim Resech and Pam welded the 8 "scrape" animal figures (deer, coyote, badger, bear, turtle, butterfly, salamander, and frog) to re-bar and painted them to place along the trail.

Don Ebbers and Tim Kaiser took on the task of mounting these animal panels to a wooden frame and creating the railing on the new bridge. Don also dug the holes for the trailhead signs. Wayne Johnson and Dick Shepherd put up the "Turkey Foot Trail" signs. The only process left is to stain the wooden posts...have to wait for warmer weather.



Students from Grant Elementary pose by the trailhead



Students from Madison Elementary explore along the trail





## News Briefs

Articles & Photos by Pam Resech & Kaylee Zalewski



### First time visit:

I got the opportunity to work at the Wildlife Management (WM) booth in Milwaukee during the State Fair. It was a wonderful experience! When visitors came to the DNR camp, they not only got to interact with the WM booth, but also the other divisions: Soils, Water, Forestry, Fisheries, Wardens, and State Parks. This was the perfect opportunity for many visitors' questions to be answered and to discover something else about the outdoors.

When visitors came to the WM booth, they got to make their own tracking booklet by stamping, tracing, or rubbing a track print of the wildlife on display. Visitors could touch and feel the many different pelts, tracks, and bones that were also displayed.

Many visited the booth and thoroughly enjoyed their experience. I know that by working at the Fair I witnessed the excitement of the children interacting



### New Donation:

A new handicap picnic table was donated to the Center by the John Hollar family in memory of Gertrude Bruening.

### UW-SP Interior Design Class Tours Mead Headquarters:

On Friday September 14th, students from the Interior Architecture program at UW-SP visited and toured the Mead facility. Architect Tom Brown, designer of the building, also teaches sustainable design courses at UW-SP. Students in his class had the opportunity to see first hand the green building and renewable energy features used at the Mead, which is used as one of the case study examples in his class.



### New Eagle Scout Project:

Stuart Deets from Marshfield delivered his Eagle Scout project on Wednesday November 14th. The project is a day use flight cage for the educational owls. He started his project with the help and plans designed by Tom Meier for his owl- "Mobly". The cage was designed to give Mobly more freedom of movement while on-site, instead of being in her carrying cage.

Tom is still doing educational programs on-site with Mobly-by special requests. Pam has acquired an educational eastern screech owl-"Slate", that she using for teaching on-site and off-site owl programs. The flight cage has been modified to be used by either owl when they are at the Mead.



### New Front Kiosk Project:

A visitor information kiosk project is in progress. The kiosk is located by the front gates. When complete the kiosk will have display panels for posting current information, maps and brochures.

Volunteers Don Ebberts, Tim Kaiser and Andy Richardson were involved in the construction so far. Bill Hirt helped position the roof with the tractor.



### New Observation Deck Displays:

Six nest boxes for wildlife (barred owl, bluebird, robin, kestrel, bat & wren) are now on display on the observation deck overlooking the wildlife scrape. The bird boxes were constructed & mounted by volunteers; Jim Resech, Andy Richardson, Wayne Johnson & Dick Shepherd. Connie & Raymond Milz donated the bat house. Plans for these boxes are available to visitors by request in the Center's office.







## Spooktacular Event and Food Drive

Article by Pam & Kaylee, Photos by Veronica & Rich Lietz

Another great family fun "Spooktacular" event was held on Saturday October 20, 2012. This community event is sponsored by the Friends of the Mead/McMillan and the Mead Staff to increase public awareness about the Mead Wildlife Area and to help the local food pantries.

The 2012 Spooktacular Planning committee worked very hard to make this year's event as successful as last year. From the new activities: Trick or Treat Trail, prize bag decorating, & stargazing to last year's favorites: pumpkin painting, cookie decorating, and games galore, much fun was had by all. New lobby displays "Starry, Starry Night"-introduced visitors to the October night sky and "Boneyard"-children enjoyed digging in the sand and locating "critter" bones.

With over 300 visitors to this year's Spooktacular, the Mead was able to donate over 280 different non-perishable food items to the St. DePaul Vincent and Soup or Socks Food Pantries in Marshfield.

Mother Nature could not have provided a better night for the hikes and star gazing. Thank you again to all the visitors, the many donors, and the volunteers who helped to make this Spooktacular another success.



Kaylee-Lucy the Lightening Bug



- Pumpkin painting: Marlene Furo, Joan Dickrell & Carol Buttke
- Cookie decorating: Rhonda Reigel & Mallory Beigel
- Prize bag: Cheryl Blenker & Brenda Osterman
- Stargazing: Don Ebberts & Andrew Blenker
- Costume Parade: Krissy Wojner
- Trick or Treat Trail Critters:

Kaylee Zalewski-lightening bug, Bill Seybold-Mr. Bones, Rhonda Hoesly-turtle, Ann Marie Gross-rabbit, Janice Wieloch-bee, Marcell Wieloch-bat, & Chad Whalhood-owl

- Trick or Treat Trail Guides: Jill Falstad & Mosinee Boy Scouts: Jeremy, Dan, Colin
- Games: The Deets Family; Tim, Cheryl, Stuart, Aaron & Elena and Zachary Stange
- Hot Cider & Popcorn: Terri Hamus & Kim Simcakoski
- Souvenir Showcase: Jeremiah Smith
- Greeters: Sally Linzmeier & Sue Mancl
- Parkers: Clay Buttke, Wayne Johnson, & Jim Dickrell
- Photographers: Veronica & Rich Lietz
- Extra helping hands: Blair Lorbecki, Merlyn Reigel, & Justin Wilke



More pictures of this event and future events can be found at [www.meadwildlife.org](http://www.meadwildlife.org)













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## **Wetland's Gazette**

### **Notice of Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of The Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, Inc. will be held on **Saturday, January 19, 2013** at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitors Center starting at **9:00AM**.

Please plan to attend this Annual Membership meeting. At this meeting we will be reviewing our activities of the past year, electing officers and board members and discussing our plans for the future.

The Friends group remains a grass-roots volunteer based organization that needs continued input and active involvement of the members. So mark your calendar to save this date, and I encourage you to bring a non-member friend. We always welcome new members.

As required by our Corporation by-laws, all current Friends members will be mailed a more detailed notice of the Annual Membership meeting in early January.

Hope to see you on January 19<sup>th</sup>.



Don Fox, President  
Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, Inc.