



# WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 2, Issue 1  
March 2006

## **Friends** **Article by Randy Cutler**

Friends are not always easy to make, and you have to work at keeping a friend.

I get all kind of forwarded emails about a good friend is this or a real friend does that. These emails seem meaningless. What's important is reaching out to find friendships that give value to our life, to our community, and to our children's future. A friendship like being a **Friend of Mead-McMillan** is the kind of friendship I am talking about. Being a Friend of the Mead McMillan is easy, especially if your friend is your neighbor to a fantastic piece of land that is right out my backdoor. I think that those of us that are fortunate enough to live near the marshes have a responsibility to reach out to the Friends of Mead-McMillan. Friends, realize the value of these marshy resources. We also realize that in order to keep these resources for our future generations we need to show others their value. Some of us are also friends of the marshes because we want a better way to promote conservation and want to become involved with its management. These are the reasons that I am a member of the Friends of Mead-McMillan. I would urge the other neighbors, close or far away, to join this group. There are hundreds of people who live near the borders of the Mead or the McMillan Wildlife Areas who might find value in being part of our special group. It is a very informal, serious, involved group, focused on the future, fun, fellowship, and friendship. Now that we have bike trails, signage, and even a fantastic building, it is more important than ever for all neighbors to get involved. It's a chance to enjoy what is out your back door, give back to your community, and most of all make new friends.

Randy Cutler is a founding member of the Friends of Mead-McMillan Association.

## **Friends of Mead-McMillan**

### **Officers**

- *President—Bart Hobson  
Wausau 355-8772*
- *Vice-President—Kent Hall  
Stevens Point 344-8081*
- *Secretary—Dennis Dieringer  
Marshfield 387-4651*
- *Treasurer – Sue Hall  
Steven's Point 344-8081*

### **Directors:**

- *Dan Belter*
- *Beth Clouse*
- *Randy Cutler*
- *Dennis Dieringer*
- *Kent Hall*
- *Sue Hall*
- *Bart Hobson*
- *Nancy Stevenson*
- *Bob Trembl*

### **DNR Staff on board:**

- *Tom Meier, Superintendent  
Mosinee 693-7336*
- *Brian Peters  
Stevens Point 344-7924*

### **Editor:**

- *Dave Grabski*



## **Moving from Boston and Discovering The Mead**

**Article by Nancy Stevenson**

My family came to Stevens Point from Massachusetts in January, 1963, greeted by mountains of snow, fierce winds, and temperatures far below zero, conditions which persisted, it seemed at the time, for weeks. What an inhospitable climate! I was grateful that my husband's transfer was only temporary, and in two years we would return to Boston.

And then came springtime, with the greening of the countryside, carpets of wildflowers and the magic of migration. We spent every spare moment exploring - city parks, county parks, rural roads - and fell in love with the beauty of the unspoiled landscape and the abundance of wildlife wherever we roamed. Remarkably, all this wonder was just beyond our doorstep. (Of course we stayed; two years became four, we bought a home in the country, and I'm still there.)

As time passed and the children grew, we ventured farther a field, finding state parks and wildlife refuges to visit, and it wasn't long before we discovered "The Mead." Our favorite walk was the dike between Berkhahn Flowage and the Little Eau Pleine, with vast wetlands on one side, rich river bottom woods on the other, and birds everywhere. (Plus enough insects, reptiles and amphibians to keep the boys occupied!) Although we investigated other fascinating areas of the Mead, this remained our most special destination for many, many years.

My personal involvement at Mead began as field trip chair for Aldo Leopold Audubon. Soon after Tom Meier became Project Manager at the refuge, we initiated a series of trips to acquaint chapter members with the great diversity of wildlife and habitats in the area, and the management techniques employed to maintain this diversity. With Tom, we were able to visit parts of the refuge not usually seen by the general public. My knowledge and appreciation of the Mead continued to grow.

For more than 25 years I have run a breeding bird transect for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service right through the heart of Mead. In addition, at Tom's request, I surveyed other areas of the refuge for nesting species and population densities. The combined data from these surveys have been used in planning management practices, such as brush control and prescribed burns, which benefit both the land and the birds.

I have come to the Mead with my family, with close friends, and with other birders. My three sons practically 'grew up' here; my oldest son now conducts frog surveys for Tom; and my youngest grandson will come with his class to the new education center, as this next generation discovers the magic and wonders of the George W. Mead Wildlife Area.

As a member of the Friends of Mead-McMillan Board of Directors, I am privileged indeed.

**Visit The George W. Mead Wildlife Area Online**

**<http://meadwildlife.org/>**



## **McMillan Marsh Bike/Pedestrian Trail**

### **Article by Dennis Dieringer**

Located to the immediate north of Marshfield, the McMillan Marsh Wildlife Area provides quality opportunities for the outdoor enthusiast. Bird watching, walking, running, biking, hunting, snowmobiling, and enjoying nature at its best can all be found at this one stop environmental gem. With the 6 mile bike/pedestrian trail you can leave your work behind and indulge yourself in a quiet moment with nature. In the spring you might see the rare Blanding Turtle on the trail or newly hatched duck chicks following their parents. With aspen, mixed hardwoods, and open grasslands, the area has an abundance of waterfowl, songbirds, and other wildlife. The Little Eau Pleine River flows through the heart of the wildlife area providing much of the wildlife habitat.

In the summer of 2006 a new kiosk with information about the trail, the history of the area, and other pertinent information will be unveiled. This will be completed by the Schmeckle Reserve in cooperation with the DNR Mead/ McMillan Wildlife Areas. This will follow the Interpretive Master Plan for both wildlife areas.

The pedestrian trail is open year round, with the bike trail open from May 1 through September 1. No ATV's, motor vehicles, motor cycles, or horses are allowed on the trail. Dogs must be on a leash from April 15 – July 31 due to nesting of waterfowl. The trailhead is located one-quarter mile off of Mann Road on Meadow Avenue. A parking lot, map, and miscellaneous information are available at the trail head. Come and enjoy the beauty and tranquility of the McMillan Marsh!



(Photo's Courtesy of Brian Peters)

### **Moving Day!**

Finally the day arrived for the staff of George W. Mead to move into the new building. After having resided in the older facility since 1969, it was an unbelievable and exciting day according to the staff. Tom Meier, Superintendent, said it hasn't sunk in yet and he is still getting comfortable with the new surroundings. There are a lot of interruptions during the day and he is still sorting things out from the old facility, but he is thrilled with all who have helped make this a reality. There have been so many people who have contributed to this venture, from the area residents who have come to help dig the roads, put up fixtures, Rudy Schuette who even put on the drawer handles, and especially, the Friends of Mead/McMillan who spearheaded the whole fund raising and continue to donate numerous hours to meet and help with the structure. Tom is especially appreciative of the support he receives from this staff which is comprised of Brian Peters, Bill Hirt, and Tony Geiger who are all Wildlife Technicians and Tom Weber who is a certified Mechanic.



(Photo's Courtesy of Brian Peters)





## **Banding American Woodcock on the Mead and in Central Wisconsin**

### **Article by Ken M. Blomberg**

Twenty-some years ago, I realized the American woodcock's world and mine weren't very far apart. In the field behind our house, I discovered that males and females could be found courting each spring, beginning in March. In early May hen woodcock walk their chicks within a stone's throw of our residence. Each fall, at dusk, many fly above the alders bordering the edge of our woods.



After graduating from UWSP in 1976, I began a career in water resources, freelance writing and raising bird dogs. I also joined several conservation organizations, volunteered to run woodcock singing-ground surveys and obtained my federal bird-banding license with the sole purpose of banding woodcock. Since 1984, I have banded woodcock in Portage, Marathon and Wood counties. Mist netting male woodcock on their singing grounds and capturing hens and their chicks with my German Shorthaired Pointers transported me into a world few people have the opportunity to travel. And it's led me on a lifetime love affair with the bird and the natural world it inhabits.

(Photo's Courtesy of Erik Blomberg)

Back in the 1980's, we banded woodcock on the Buena Vista Marsh. It was home to some of the most productive woodcock breeding and nesting habitat found in the state. However, intensive habitat manipulation, including burning, grazing, spraying and mowing and a change in management philosophy removed much of the young growth aspen needed for nesting and breeding. We followed the woodcock and abandoned the marsh. That led us to the Mead Wildlife Area, six miles west of our place, which is swarming with woodcock from early spring, to late fall. In the spring, both local and migrant birds arrive, utilizing the abundant upland habitat along the Little Eau Pleine River valley. In the fall, when the temperatures drop and the ground freezes, they migrate south with the wind to their backs. I have joined DNR personnel studying woodcock on the Mead, including a project that sampled blood and measured lead level concentrations. The study included mist netting adults and locating hens and chicks with bird dogs.



Over the years, several band returns were reported back to me by the USFWS. One fall, a hunter in central Louisiana shot a banded male that I had mist netted near our home earlier that spring. Another involved an adult female, banded the previous spring as a chick that was recovered in a neighbor's garden, an apparent victim of a





cat. Several others fell to the gun in central Wisconsin.

My son Erik, who began banding woodcock with me as a seven-year-old, later enrolled at UWSP, studying wildlife management. Besides working along side me on the Mead, he spent his summers in Lincoln county trapping, banding and radio-tagging woodcock with graduate student Jed Meunier, who happens to be the great-grandson of Aldo Leopold. Meunier's master's work was a part of a three-year, three-state study on woodcock mortality and habitat use. This past spring Erik, now a graduate student in wildlife management at the University of Rhode Island, and I mist netted and banded a male woodcock on a singing ground behind our house. The bird left a short time after being banded, leading us to believe he was a migrant on his way to more northerly breeding grounds. As it turned out, our banded bird apparently picked up favorable winds and continued up the Wisconsin River valley until he hit the south shore of Lake Superior, where he followed a northwesterly direction to the Grand Rapids, Minnesota area. On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Minnesota DNR Commissioner, Gene Merriam, shot our banded woodcock on property owned by Ruffed Grouse Society's National Board President Wayne Jacobson, near Hill City, MN.

Woodcock Chick - banded April 4, 2005  
(Photo Courtesy of Erik Blomberg)



This spring, I will be locating and mist netting woodcock around and near the new Mead Education/Office Building. As part of a Leopold Education Project (LEP) Education Workshop in April, we will follow the "sky dance" of the American woodcock and study the classic writings of the renowned conservationist, Aldo Leopold.



(Photo Courtesy of Erik Blomberg)

***"To band a bird is to hold a ticket in a great lottery."*** Aldo Leopold

# **STANTON W. MEAD EDUCATION AND VISITOR CENTER**

## **POLICY AND AGREEMENT FOR MATERIAL GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources  
Through  
The Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc.

### **Purpose:**

The Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center (Center) is a wildlife and natural resources education center located on the George W. Mead Wildlife Area. Material gifts, possessing a natural resource base, may be gifted to the Center, through the Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc., from individuals, estates, firms, and corporations.

### **Gift Categories:**

Gifts may include wildlife mounts, photography, art, artifacts, drawings, books and other natural resources related materials that may be of use in decorating the facility or enhance the active education of youth and adults on wildlife or natural resource techniques and concepts.

### **Acknowledgement:**

The Friends of Mead McMillan Association, Inc., and the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center staff wish to acknowledge and thank you for your gift of \_\_\_\_\_ valued at \$\_\_\_\_\_.

### **Gift Conditions:**

Your gift, upon signing this agreement, will become the property of the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center. Due to the fact that some items may be duplicates of items already received, be of lesser quality than desired, or not be applicable to the program needs of the center, the Friends and the Center hold the express right to sell, auction, trade, or otherwise dispose of said gift items for the overall benefit of the Center and its mission. All proceeds received will be retained locally with the Friends for the associated programming and maintenance of the Center.

THE FRIENDS OF MEAD-MCMILLAN RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR REJECT ANY NON-MONETARY DONATIONS.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Firm or organization if appropriate: \_\_\_\_\_

RECEIVED BY: \_\_\_\_\_ DNR Rep. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# **BUILDING USE POLICY**

**Implementation Date: November 21, 2005**

## **STANTON W. MEAD EDUCATION AND VISITOR CENTER**

***The Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center is a state-owned building which may be used by a variety of groups & organizations for many different purposes. This policy sets the general conditions by which the building may be used.***

### **General Policy:**

First priority for use of the building will be given to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) and the Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc. (FMMA).

After the needs of the WDNR and FMMA are met, consideration will be given to other groups or organizations having goals and purposes related to natural resources that are compatible with the missions of the WDNR and FMMA. The building may be used for meetings, training, education programs, and other similar activities deemed appropriate by the WDNR and the FMMA Building Policy & Use (BPU) Committee.

The building can not be used for political or religious purposes, for the purpose of generating income for a private party or business (i.e. commercial purposes), or for private celebrations such as weddings, anniversaries, class reunions, etc. Use of the building may be denied at the discretion of the WDNR and/or the FMMA's BPU Committee.

Priority will be given to groups wishing to use the building during normal business hours (i.e. weekdays, 8 AM to 4:30 PM) and during the less busy times of the year (i.e. winter & summer). Groups wishing to use the building after normal business hours, on weekends or at busy times of the year, may be denied occupancy based solely on the availability of staff to open, close, and monitor the use of the building.

The use of tobacco is not allowed in the building. The use of alcohol will be approved on a case by case basis. Serving of food and beverages is allowed but must be approved prior to use of the building.

### **Obligations of Users:**

Users must take reasonable precautions to ensure the building is kept clean and undamaged. Users are responsible for any damages done during the use of the building and will be billed for these damages or unusual cleaning costs. Users will be responsible for setting up and taking down chairs and tables or any other equipment (such as AV) used during the time in the building.

### **Fees:**

Use of Education Room: \$50/day or part of day

Use of Kitchen: \$50/day or part of day

Use of Library: \$25/day or part of day

All fees are to be paid to: **Friends of Mead-McMillan Assoc., Inc.**, who is solely responsible for all cleaning costs for visiting groups to the Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center.

Fees may be waived at the discretion of the WDNR and the FMMA BPU Committee

# STANTON W. MEAD EDUCATION AND VISITOR CENTER BUILDING USE AGREEMENT FOR ORGANIZATIONS AND CLUBS

*This agreement is in accordance with the Building Use Policy (attached) for the Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center*

**Organization Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Desired Date(s) of Use:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Desired Facility Use:</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Unit Fee</b>	<b>Request</b>
	<b>Library</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$</b> _____
	<b>Classroom</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	<b>\$</b> _____
	<b>Kitchen</b>	<b>\$50.00</b>	<b>\$</b> _____
	<b>TOTAL DUE (Enclosed)</b>		<b>\$</b> _____

**(Make check payable to Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc.)**

**I have read and agree to the attached Building Use Policy**

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICE HELD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVAL BY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment Received: Amount:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DENIAL BY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REASON:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_





## **Fund Raising Report** **by Kent Hall**

### **Renewed Members:**

Paul & Deborah Adler, Marshfield  
Kerry & Cheryl Brimmer, Mosinee  
Sandi Chilar, Mosinee  
Bern & Mitzi Hlavac, Stevens Point  
Sally Overholt, Stevens Point  
Bob & Carol Tremel, Custer

### **New Members:**

Richard & Paula Barnes, Mosinee  
Steven & Michelle Bjella, Stevens Point  
Larry & Karen Nack, Hewitt  
Steve & Sue Meyer, Marshfield  
Bob & Elie Reid, Wausau  
Larry Ruhde, Marshfield  
Jerry Ugland, Plover  
Ryan Urban, Milladore, Plover

Since the last newsletter, we have received \$26,599 additional donations from the following sources. Thanks to everyone for helping support the "New Mead".

\$20,000 – WDNR, Stewardship Grant for educational panels at the Mead Center

\$ 5,000 – Sally Overholt, for a Wildlife Educator

\$ 500 – Whitetails Unlimited, Central WI Chapter, for educational materials in the building

\$ 444 – Koerten Gallery, for framing of Pat Perzynski's Trumpeter Swan print

\$ 250 – Bob & Carol Tremel, for a Wildlife Educator

\$ 250 – James Hollar, Milladore

\$ 125 – Pat Perzynski, for Trumpeter Swan print

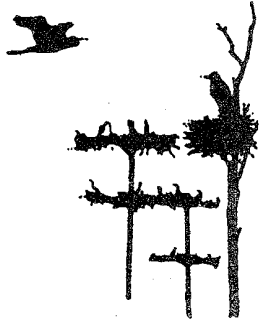
\$ 30 – Bern & Mitzi Hlavac, for educational materials for the building



Teacher's Wind Energy Workshop sponsored by The Friends of Mead-McMillan Association

January 21, 2006

(Photo's Courtesy of Jennie Lane)



**Friends of  
Mead/McMillan  
Association, Inc.**  
S2148 County S  
Milladore, WI 54454

Mailing Address Label

Wetland's Gazette



## **2005 Excellence in Service Award**

The Friends of Mead-McMillan Association was awarded the 2005 Excellence in Service Award from Governor Doyle on February 15, 2006 for their work on the Mead Wildlife Area DNR Headquarters and Education Building. Accepting the Award (from left to right) are Tom Brown, project architect; Kent Hall, Friend of Mead-McMillan; and Tom Meier, DNR Mead/McMillan Project Supervisor.

(Photo Courtesy of Sue Hall)