



# WETLANDS GAZETTE

Volume 5, Issue 2

August 2009

Join Us for the  
**Mead Wildlife Area's 50th Celebration!**  
**Saturday August 29, 2009**  
**6:30am-4pm**  
**\*\*\*FREE\*\*\***  
**Family Fun for All Ages!**

**\*\*\*Bring your bikes, binoculars, and cameras to get out and enjoy your State Wildlife Area**



**6:30am-8am:** Enjoy a biking bird tour lead by Kent Hall around the Berkahn trail or a hiking bird tour lead by Dan Belter around the Audubon trail.

**8am-11am: All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast**

Adults: \$6.00, 6-12: \$3.00 Under 6: Free  
Sponsored by Friends of the Mead/McMillan



**10am:** Bake Sale sponsored by Marathon High Eco Club

**11:30am-3pm: Hamburger/Brat Fry** sponsored by the Izaak Walton League

**Scheduled Events:**

- 7am, Noon, & 2pm-Wagon Tours into the "Interior" of the property
- 11am & 1pm-Muddy Waters Dog training presentation and demonstration
- 10am, Noon, & 2pm-Warden's Laser Shot Shooting Simulator & BB gun shooting gallery
- 10am-Wetland Exploration Activity
- 1pm-Wind Wise Activity
- Scavenger Hunt Activity of the day's events (win prizes)
- Mead Family Dedication and cake
- Walking tours of the Prairie Gardens and Audubon Prairie



\*\*\*Visit informational booths from area conservation clubs and organizations that have supported the Mead and its mission over the years.

For more information phone: 715 457-6771 or visit our website: [www.meadwildlife.org](http://www.meadwildlife.org)

If you would like to help with the Pancake Breakfast, contact Don Furo at 715 457-6770 or [dfuro@tds.net](mailto:dfuro@tds.net)

Location: Mead Wildlife Area Education and Visitor Center  
S2148 County Hwy S, Milladore WI

Sponsored by the Mead Staff and Friends of Mead-McMillan

## Friends of Mead-McMillan

### Officers

- *President—Doug Aziz*  
*Mosinee 693-3491*
- *Vice-President—Kent Hall*  
*Stevens Point 344-8081*
- *Secretary—Jim Yulga*  
*Wisconsin Rapids 435-3177*
- *Treasurer – Sue Hall*  
*Steven's Point 344-8081*

### Directors:

- *Doug Aziz*
- *Beth Clouse*
- *Randy Cutler*
- *Don Fox*
- *Don Furo*
- *Sally Furo*
- *Stephanie Haka*
- *Kent Hall*
- *Sue Hall*
- *John Shippy*
- *Bob Trembl*
- *Jim Yulga*

### DNR Staff on board:

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

### Webmaster:

- *Jim Yulga*

### Editor:

- *Dave Grabski*  
[dgrabski@charter.net](mailto:dgrabski@charter.net)



## **Looking for Help**

### **Article by Doug Aziz, President**

The Board of Directors (BOD) of Friend's of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc. (FMMWA) serves you, the membership, in a number of important ways. First and foremost is the ongoing management of the funds you entrust us with. The ever shrinking DNR budget continually presents us with opportunities to fund educational and management activities at Mead Wildlife Area. For example, we provided funds for an LTE position to support the spring educational program. We also recently funded the purchase of a new photocopier and half of the cost of two additional waterfowl mounts. Other recent financial decisions include the purchase of a display cabinet and substantial inventory of souvenir items we now offer for sale to support the educational program.

The BOD recently completed a review and revision of the bylaws which govern FMMWA as well as the updating of the various brochures (Environmental Education Program Opportunities, Tile & Brick Donations and Membership) we fund. Another brochure which is under development has to do with the subject of "planned giving" which will be directed at increasing the resources of the Mead Wildlife Area Trust.

As you can see, the BOD deals with matters of substance without which the Mead Wildlife Area and, more importantly, the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center could not reach their full potential. Although we are fortunate to have a dedicated group of individuals who currently serve on the board we currently have three openings which we need to fill. By doing so, we hope to avoid the danger of doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. In other words, we perceive the need for new blood to bring energy to the board and insure its continued relevance.

The board meets every other month for approximately two to two and one half hours to do the business of FMMWA. Members are included on committees which require an additional time commitment which can vary from very little to as much as you care to take on. All that is required is a genuine interest in supporting the educational and management activities at the Mead and McMillan Wildlife Areas. Accordingly, this is an open invitation to all members of the Friend's organization to consider joining us in this important work.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Friend's BOD or, have questions in that regard, please contact me by email at; [az54455@yahoo.com](mailto:az54455@yahoo.com), and I will help any way I can.

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

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



## **Manager's Report**

### **Article by Tom Meier**

The spring and early summer have proven quite interesting. The spring was cool and wet allowing us to refill most of our wetland impoundments, but the summer has seen a complete turn around with almost drought conditions returning to our part of the state. Flowages are now dropping between 2 and 3 inches per week with little significant rainfall in sight. Recharge to the water table has been minimal thus raising concern on what the rest of the summer and fall will hold. Since the turn of the century, we have experienced much dryer conditions, than is true historically, and our ability to manage the wetland complexes here at Mead and McMillan has been severely affected.

With the dryer conditions though, we have been able to undertake many projects that would normally be more weather dependent. We have completed the new Berkahn Flowage dike system that splits this flowage into two sections. This will facilitate the opportunity to manage the area more efficiently and ensure watered habitat in one cell while the adjacent cell is in drawdown mode or repairs. Dikes have been mowed, the bicycle trail has been patched, parking lots picked up, woods trails mowed and reseeded, plantings completed around the Center, timber sales closed out, and spring surveys completed. Ruffed grouse are up and it looks as though waterfowl production this year is very good.

Many of the accomplishments we are making are at the hands of volunteers and I can not stress the importance of their support in the operation and maintenance of the area. A hearty thanks to all who take the time to give us a hand!!

The summer holds great promise for control of invasive plants, undertaking of several wetland projects, the development of a forest management auto tour, and the restoration of our yellow barn. The barn is slated for a new roof this summer and potential painting next year.

On July 1, we began our new 2010 fiscal year. Although we have seen some reduction in the total budget amount, we are doing better than many other areas of the Department. Thanks to major funds from the sale of hunting, trapping, and fishing licenses, we are going to have reasonable resources to work with this coming fiscal year. This being said, we will be losing a vehicle as the state downsizes its fleet, thus making it tough to service staff and volunteer workers this summer.

Be sure to join us for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on August 29<sup>th</sup>, I look forward to celebrating this significant event with all of you!

Volunteers are a very important part of the Mead operations. We appreciate their efforts no matter how big or small their contributions. If you have some time or know someone who would like to become part of our volunteer team, please give us a call or visit our website [www.meadwildlife.org](http://www.meadwildlife.org) for a listing of the volunteer opportunities available at the Mead.



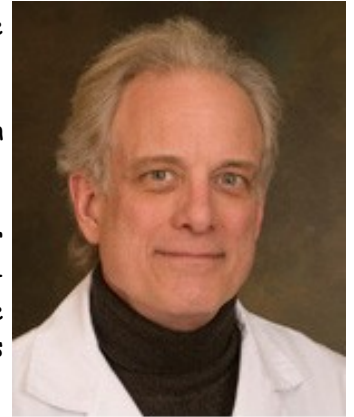
## **Long-time President of Friends Retires from Board**

**Article by Kent Hall**

Dr. Bart Hobson tendered his resignation from the Friends Board of Directors in late June.

Bart joined the Friends Board of Directors in 2001 and took over the Presidency in 2003. He served in that capacity until January 2009.

Bart provided steady guidance for the Friends as they set the goal of fund raising for the Stanton W. Mead Visitor and Education Center. He not only presided over numerous, critical meetings of the Board during this time, but personally contributed to the development of the Mead Center and helped raise funds for several special functions developed by the Board.



Bart continues to work for the Urgent Care Center at the Marshfield Clinic in Wausau. In addition to his work, he will be spending quality time with his wife, Lila, and their three sons.

Bart—you will be missed!

## **Mead Clean-Up Day a Huge Success!**

**Article by Pam Stange**

We would like to express a heartfelt thanks to the many volunteers who helped us with the Spring Clean-up Day on Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Doug Aziz, Patrick & Betsy Hagert, David Powers & his friend Marilyn, Don Furo, John Shippy, along with Kent Hall, helped Bill Hirt with the picking up of trash in the parking lots and along the roadsides of Mead. Tom Meier & Brian Peters had help repairing the bricks and pavers around the center and in the amphitheater from Larry & Anne Graham, Connie Milz and Bob Kahn. Pam Stange led the cleaning crew of Claire Aziz, Mary, Shippy, Sue Hall, Tom Bitner, his son Thomas, daughter Jennifer along with her husband Richard on the massive task of dusting, scrubbing, vacuuming, and mopping the inside of the Center. Jim Yulga took charge of cleaning around the outside Center by using the leaf blower to clear off the windowsills, kiosks and sidewalks. Later Pam was able to help him with the mulching around the newly planted trees and shrubs and freshen up the Trailhead signs. After all the hard work a leisure lunch of brats, hamburgers and an assortment of dishes brought by the volunteers was enjoyed by all.

We would also like to thank Todd Tyrolt and the Hub City Shooters 4-H Club for their clean-up of the parking lots and roadsides to the Smoky Hill observation deck on Monday May 4<sup>th</sup>. After their hard work, the club held their month meeting at the Center and enjoyed a cookout.



**Claire Aziz**

Photo by Sue Hall





## Our Prairie Garden is Growing . . .

Article and Photos by Pam Stange and Joan Dickrell



The property at the Mead continues to be developed and the latest area to be enhanced is a prairie garden southeast of the Education center. On May 30th the Friends of Saint Philip Youth group planted the first plot in the prairie garden. The planting, mulching and touring of the grounds were enjoyed by the youth group as well as the adult chaperones.



The Friends of Saint Philip Youth were awarded an Izaak Walton League conservation/environmental project grant and together with their own funds purchased plants to fill one of the eighteen plots in the garden. It was an enjoyable morning, and for some members their first visit to the Mead.

In March, Friends of the Mead/McMillan were awarded a Lorrie Otto Seeds for Education grant, which is funded by the Wild Ones organization. Wild Ones is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the use of natural landscaping with native plant species as an ecologically better alternative to traditional landscaping practices. The grant is only awarded to projects that focus on the enhancement and development of an appreciation for nature using native plants and must emphasize involvement of students and volunteers and increase the educational value of a site. With this grant money native forbs and grasses were purchased from Prairie Nursery, Westfield Wisconsin.

On June 3rd, the 2<sup>nd</sup> graders from Marshfield Lincoln Elementary with the assistance of Sue Meyer planted the prairie dropseed plugs. Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepis*) produces a magnificent fountain of fine textured, emerald-green leaves adding a touch of elegance to any planting. Considered by many to be the most handsome of the prairie grasses, it was planted around the bio-swale in the prairie garden because it makes a well-defined and distinctive border.



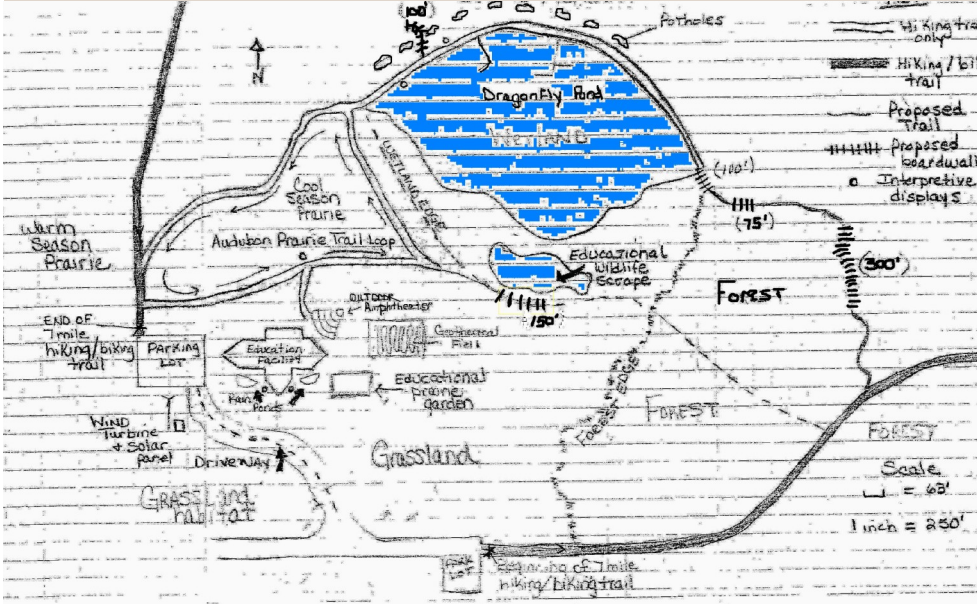
At the end of June, the Central Wisconsin Chapter of Wild Ones received a generous donation of native prairie plants from Prairie Nursery. Dan Dieterich contacted Pam, and the Education Center was the recipient of 676 forbs. The Mead staff along with volunteers Joan Dickrell and Marlene Furo worked diligently to get these plants into the ground in the garden and around the Center. Native prairie plants provide a tremendous value to the landscape. Prairies and gardens utilizing these native plants require a surprisingly small amount of upkeep for maintaining their beauty, helping to manage rainfall runoff, preventing erosion and improving the soil.

If your club or organization would like to get involved with this growing educational project contact Pam Stange by phone (715) 457-6771 or email [pamela.stange@wisconsin.gov](mailto:pamela.stange@wisconsin.gov) for more information.



## Future Trail and Boardwalk

Article by Patrice Eyers



The Mead Wildlife Area is proposing the construction of a new trail and boardwalk system connecting the Audubon Prairie Trail to the Berkahn hiking/biking trail. The boardwalk will have an extension to the educational wildlife scrape located to the south of Dragonfly Pond and an extension into the sedge meadow north of the pond. The trail will continue from the dike constructed around Dragonfly Pond through the forested section east of the pond eventually connecting to the bike trail. Board-

walk sections are to be constructed over existing ephemeral wetland areas within the lowland hardwood forest.



Sample boardwalk through sedge meadow

The trail/boardwalk system will serve as an interpretive trail where visitors can explore a variety of wetland types, view a demonstrative wildlife scrape, and observe habitat transitioning among predominant habitat types (wetlands, grasslands and forest). The trail will provide for the opportunity for all visitors to learn from and enjoy the tremendous diversity of plant and animal communities that exist on wildlife areas. The trail system will also allow visitors to traverse the different habitat types without traveling on facility access roads. It will also allow visitors to hike or snowshoe a shorter distance than the seven-mile trail now allows or they may incorporate the new trail into a longer hike.



Non-intrusive pan type footing.

Funding for the construction of the trail/boardwalk will depend on monies from possible grant opportunities, capital development funds and the opportunity for individuals or corporations to adopt boardwalk sections. Sections will be personalized acknowledging personal and/or corporate donations. Each section will measure 5' wide X 8' long, with decking made of recycled plastic lumber - similar to *TREX* material. Sections will also include two non-intrusive pan type footings thus decreasing the impact of the boardwalk on the wetland complex. Individuals may adopt a section for \$470.00. The purchase of observation area decking and benches will also be available.

**If you or someone you know is interested in this special opportunity, please contact the Mead Wildlife Area at 715-457-6771.**





## **Raptor Workshop**

**Article and picture by Pam Stange**

I recently attended the Raptor Workshop at Linwood Springs Research Station by Stevens Point. The first of its kind, this workshop is designed to cover many of the techniques used in raptor studies. I was able to widen my field skills in several areas including: capture and handling techniques, mist nets, tree climbing, reading molt, video surveillance and blood sampling. This one week workshop was the most exciting hands-on experience I have ever had. Our workshop leaders Gene Jacobs and Loren Ayers agreed this was one of their most successful workshops. We were able to capture and handle five species of raptors. The raptors we captured and banded were a Red-shouldered Hawk and chicks, a Broad-winged Hawk, a Cooper's Hawk, Kestrel and chicks and a juvenile Red-tailed Hawk. We were also able to observe an Osprey and nest as well as an active Bald Eagle's nest with 2 adults and chicks.



Pam Stange releasing a Red-Tailed Hawk

This experience will help me with my future choice of a species to use in the educational programming offered at the Mead. By far our most popular program is Mobly with Tom. By having another raptor program option, more school groups may be able to have an up close experience with a representative of the natural world. Thank you to the board members and Friends of the Mead/McMillan for sponsoring me.

## **Canaries in the Wetlands**

**Article and pictures by Patrice Evers**



Emily Hilts and Taylor Guralski watch as Olivia Lemanski performs a dissolved oxygen test

The implementation of our new wetland program "Canaries in the Wetlands" has created a lot of interest this past education season. We experimented with several different approaches to the lesson plan to see what worked and what did not. Educator Pam Stange and Patrice Evers plan to hammer out the details of an official lesson plan this fall.

The program focuses on the functions and a value associated with wetlands, but expands to include the physical measurements used to determine water quality and well as the biological parameters one might use for observation, thus, integrating macro invertebrate, amphibian, reptilian, fish, bird, and wetland plant identification. The lesson provides information to students and adults inter-

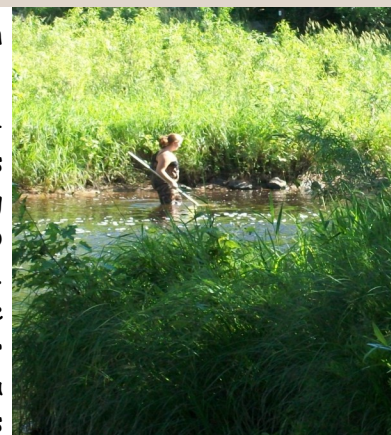
Canaries in the Wetlands (continued on page 8)



#### Canaries in the Wetlands (continued from Page 7)

ested in the quality of our waters and an interest in pursuing their own actions such as starting or participating in a citizen based monitoring program.

In June, the Marathon High School Ecology Club began their own stream monitoring program on the Big Rib River with training provided by Mead Wildlife Area's Wildlife Technician\Naturalist Patrice Eyers. The group learned about measuring parameters such as dissolved oxygen, transparency, stream flow, as well as how to evaluate water quality by examining the macro invertebrates found in the stream. Patrice also assisted the club in writing a WEEB grant to aid in the funding of the project. The Mead WLA was glad to lend the necessary equipment to the group for such a worthy project. The Ecology Club plans to continue monitoring their site on a monthly basis and have established their site with the Water Action Volunteers Program. Patrice plans to continue working with this group and provide training to interested new club members.



Becca Brelle searches for macro invertebrates in the Big Rib River

**If you know of a school group interested in beginning a stream, lake, or wetland-monitoring program you can contact Patrice Eyers at [patrice.eyers@wisconsin.gov](mailto:patrice.eyers@wisconsin.gov) or 715-574-8973.**

## **PJ Jacobs Junior High Students Explore Mead**

**Article and pictures by Dave Grabski**

Since May of 2000, when the first students from PJ's started visiting the Mead, over 2200 students from PJ's have had the opportunity to learn firsthand about becoming stewards of the Mead Wildlife Area and of our planet.

On May 12, 13, and 14 over 220 7th grade students from the Science classes of Dave Grabski & Jeff Mlsna visited the Mead Wildlife Area to learn and explore. Students were in their Environmental Science Unit studying environmental problems/solutions and energy resources.



The day started with an introduction held in the amphitheater to the Mead Wildlife Area by Tom Meier, Pam Stange and Brian Peters.

After the introduction students moved to the classroom where Tom Meier lead a discussion about the history of the Mead Wildlife Area, stewardship, and then began the ever popular Mobly session. This is always one of the most popular sessions at the Mead. Mobly is a Great-Horned Owl from Arizona. She has imprinted on humans

PJ Jacobs Students Explore Mead (continued next page)





#### PJ Jacobs Students Explore Mead (continued from Page 8)

(and Tom in particular) and as such would not be able to survive in the wild. Tom has used her for many years as an educational experience for students and adults alike. Students learned about Mobly's habitat and niche in the ecosystem, as well as how and why she is different from owls found in nature. Mobly is smaller and lighter colored than Great-Horned Owls from Wisconsin due to the differences in habitat between Arizona and Wisconsin. Her call is slightly different than wild owls which would cause them to kill her if they could get to her, so Tom keeps her at his home in a specially constructed cage. After the session was over, Mobly "waved" to the students as she left the room.

Canaries in the Wetlands/Wildlife Management was a new session that students were able to participate in. Students learned about the function and value of wetlands and how to



evaluate the health of a wetlands area by looking at the macro invertebrates found in the wetlands and taking tests of water samples. Students evaluated the water quality of the two different wetlands areas. Students took measurements of dissolved oxygen, turbidity of the water, nitrogen levels, phosphorus levels, and pH levels. Combined with the macro invertebrate inventory students then determined which wetland area was the most healthy.

In the Wind Wise session students were exposed to various alternative energy resources with a focus on wind energy. After an introductory discussion stu-

dents were given supplies to build their own model wind turbine. Their task was to design a wind turbine that would produce the most amount of electricity. There were many creative designs, some of which worked better than others, but everyone had fun and learned much about wind energy in particular and alternative energy in general.

Throughout all of the sessions the Mead staff did an excellent job of infusing discussions about environmental problems and solutions.





## **A Wish List for The Mead**

**Article by Pam Stange**

We would like to thank the following people for helping fulfill some of our dreams:

- ⇒ Jerry and Lois Harvey for the RCA 20in TV and DVD player, which are currently being used in the Lobby playing a trailer DVD of Gerard Fuehrer's wildlife DVDs or as a monitor for the cameras in the bluebird houses.
- ⇒ 6th graders from Grant Elementary, Marshfield for the hammer
- ⇒ Marlene Furo and Rhonda Reigel for the 4 plastic totes for educational supplies and plastic plant tray covers to help germinate prairie seeds
- ⇒ 5th graders from Auburndale Elementary for the red toolbox with the assortment of small hand tools
- ⇒ John Callahan & Sharon Sauter for the plastic tote and assorted hand tools
- ⇒ Jim Resech for the DVD player, VCR and TV stand
- ⇒ Sally Overholt for the cash donation of \$200.00, which was used to purchase a push lawn mower and 2 step stools for the Center
- ⇒ Central Wisconsin Cooperative, Iola for the 3 heavy duty outdoor 25ft extension cords

As we continue to dream of things we would like to have, please look-over this list to see if you would like to make an in-kind donation of any of the following items or a monetary donation towards the purchase of. Items on this list can be new or used (in good working order).

### **New Educational Supplies:**

- ◆ Digital Camera, easy to use, for recording visiting groups and events happening at the Center
- ◆ Digital Photo Frame (11x14) to display photos in the lobby of visiting groups, wildlife, plants and events taken at the Mead.

### **Educational Supplies:**

- ◆ Flannel or Felt Storyboards
- ◆ Paper (Photo and Printer)
- ◆ Plastic Sleds with tow ropes (winter activity)
- ◆ Children's Nature Books (K-4<sup>th</sup> grade level)
- ◆ Hand Puppets- Animals or Birds
- ◆ Teacher's Guide about Nature Journaling
- ◆ Photo Pocket Display 20x30 inches

### **Center Supplies:**

- \* Fiberglass 8ft Step Ladder
- \* Rolling Coat Rack with hangers

### **Wildlife Management Supplies:**

- ◆ Utility/Terrain Vehicle (2 purposes - hauling equipment and hauling students)



## **Mead Wildlife Area Souvenirs**

**Article by Sue Hall**

*On your next trip to the Mead Wildlife Area, we invite you to check out our souvenir items. There is no charge for school & adult groups to attend classes at the Mead, but your purchase of these items helps support the environmental programs offered at the Mead.*

Available for purchase are:

<b>Wristbands</b> - engraved with "Mead Wildlife Area"; comes in three different sizes and five different colors.	<b>\$1.25 each or 5 for \$5.00</b>
<b>Key chains</b> - great for putting on backpacks (have pictures of different animals found at the Mead and say "Mead Wildlife Area").	<b>\$1.00</b>
<b>Buttons</b> - pictures of animals found at the Mead.	<b>50 cents</b>
<b>Plastic water bottles with Mead logo</b> -	<b>\$2.00</b>
<b>Note cards</b> - 3 different sets, one with animals found at the Mead and the other sets have 2 different views of the Mead Center.	<b>\$5/pack of 4</b>
<b>Caps</b> - embroidered with Mead Wildlife Area	<b>\$16 &amp; \$18</b>
<b>T-Shirts</b> - youth sizes (S-L) say Mead Wildlife Area - "We've Got Friends in Low Places"	<b>\$10.00</b>
<b>T-Shirts</b> - adult sizes (S-XXL)	<b>\$12 &amp; \$15</b>
<b>DVD's</b> - 4 types- Wildlife at the Mead by Gerard Fuehrer	<b>\$24.95</b>

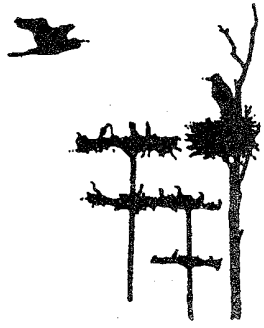
## **FRIENDS OF THE MEAD-McMILLAN ASSN. INC**

*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. We appreciate your support of our efforts to promote environmental education for youth and adults who come to the Mead Wildlife Area. If your membership is up for renewal or you would like to help us with our environmental endeavors, you can do so by filling out this form and sending it to Mead Wildlife Area, S2148-S, Milladore, WI, 54454.*

*The annual membership fee is \$20.*

*Thank you for your support!*





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

Mailing Address Label

Wetlands Gazette

## **Bird Corridor**



Mead staff along with volunteers planted a new "Bird Corridor" of trees and shrubs to eventually provide birds with shelter by the new Center.

Photo by Pam Stange