



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 6, Issue 3

November 2010

End of an Era

Article by Doug Aziz & Photos by Pam Resech

Kent Hall – Vice President and principal fund raiser of the Friends, for the last ten years, recently announced he would be retiring from the Board of Directors (BOD) at the end of his present term of office in January.

Kent's contributions to the Friends and the Mead/McMillan Wildlife Areas are immeasurable. A few highlights are worthy of mention; the most significant, of course, was spearheading the fundraising for what became the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center, without which Mead Wildlife Area (MWA) could never have achieved its full potential as a focal point for environmental education. Of almost equal significance was the follow-up campaign to match the \$500,000 challenge grant offered by the Mead Witter Foundation, Inc. to provide funding for a full time Environmental Educator, to optimize the effectiveness of the facilities at MWA.



"The future of the world lies in the hearts and souls of children—let the wild shine in."

Most recently, Kent assumed responsibility for raising \$40,000 to match two grants that were secured for the development of the Ephemeral Trail & Boardwalk project which is currently underway. Each of these accomplishments are significant by themselves, but together they represent an unmatched commitment to environmental education for which Kent can and should be proud of.

On behalf of the Friends, I want to take this opportunity to thank Kent for his long standing dedication to our organization and his ceaseless efforts to provide the financial resources needed to accomplish our objectives.

In the meantime, the following appointments were approved to insure a smooth transition on important BOD responsibilities. They include; Don Fox – Vice President, Jim Peterson – Secretary, and Mark Lewandowski – Chair of the Fundraising/Membership Committee.

Tom Meier- *"I have known Dr. Hall since I was a grad student at UW-SP. Kent's dedication to the Mead & McMillan Wildlife Areas through his involvement with the Friends group has truly been invaluable as well as incredible. He will be greatly missed."*



Friends of the Mead/McMillan

Officers

- President—Doug Aziz
Mosinee 693-3491
- Vice-President—Kent Hall
Stevens Point 344-8081
- Secretary—Don Fox
Marshfield 676-3115
- Treasurer – John Shippy
Junction City 457-2575

Directors:

- Doug Aziz
- John Crawley
- Don Fox
- Don Furo
- Malcolm Gold
- Michael Gross
- Kent Hall
- Sue Hall
- Jerry Harvey
- Ellie Kafka
- Mark Lewandoski
- Jim Peterson
- John Shippy
- Bob Trembl

DNR Staff on BOD:

- Tom Meier, Project Manager
- Brian Peters
- Pam Resech, Educator
Office 457-6771

Webmaster:

- Malcolm Gold

Newsletter Editor:

- Dave Grabski
dgrabski@charter.net



Manager's Report

Article by Tom Meier & Photos by Betty Ptacek

This period of our calendar year has been extremely busy. With reductions in personnel and vehicles, due to statewide cutbacks, it is often difficult to meet our work objectives and priorities.

We held the Mead Neighborhood picnic on Sunday August 22nd with a resulting beautiful day and a good turnout.



Friend's members and volunteers were essential to the success of the day as well as our neighbors who brought numerous desserts and door prizes. We hosted about 275 neighbors and a hearty thanks to all for making this event a continuing success.



John, Gem, & Sue M.

In early September we began to prepare for new changes to our waterfowl season approach on Mead Wildlife Area. Due to years of overcrowding on opening day and earlier and earlier opening dates, we have seen a reduced ability of the wildlife area to hold birds during the early buildup of migrants in September. As an experimental management effort, after several meetings with waterfowl hunters, a closure to the early goose season, expansion of two refuges, and a 16 day 1pm closure to hunting hours have been implemented for a three year period. Special media efforts, additional posting of the wildlife area, and an intensive survey approach were required to ensure the success and evaluation of this program. Then just as all was set for the season opening on September 25th, we received almost 6 inches of rain and all h--- broke loose. Our dikes and wetlands went under water, roads were closed, and the start of 7 day work weeks with long hours began.

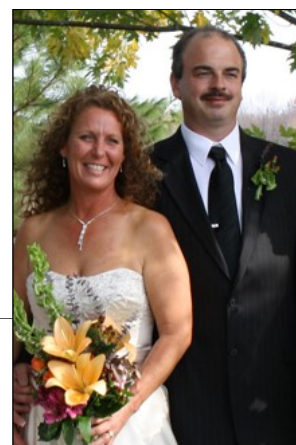


Sue H. Barb, Diane, & Bev

Since the flood, it has been flood clean-up, repairing of holes and erosion on dikes, fallen tree removal, road repair, and water control in addition to normal wildlife area work activities. We have made tremendous progress but other issues like moving of trails, burning, brushing, invasive plant control and facility repair have suffered. The additional affects of the late October wind storm have added additional work to an already packed maintenance schedule, demonstrating once again that Mother Nature is still and will always have the last word.

As we head into late fall and winter we are now gearing up for the gun deer season as well as our winter work. We will be looking at continued flood repair, dike renovation, brush removal, oak release in timber sale areas, assisting Pam with education, and other standard work items.

It will be the Thanksgiving soon and then Christmas so I therefore want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable holiday season! ~Tom



Congratulations to Pam! Pam and her fiancé Jim Resech were married on October 10th at their home in Stetsonville.



Ephemeral Trail & Boardwalk Update

Article & Photos by Patrice Eyers

The boardwalk project has come a long way in the past few weeks. With a crew of some amazing volunteers, the boardwalk is up. While there is still work to be done – the boardwalk is in place and the planks have been laid. Plans for the winter include bringing in material for the graveled portion of the trail. The boardwalk will not open for business this year as the pans must settle before the curbing can be attached. A

super huge pat on the back to our volunteers; Donnie Furo, Don Fox, Jerry Harvey, Steve Meyer, John Shippy, Don Ebbers, and Doug Aziz.



Donnie using his tractor to unload the semi



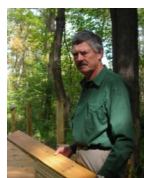
Donnie Furo, Don Fox, and Jerry Harvey — leveling it all out.



Jerry Harvey walking the “plank”.



The finished project



Nature's Niches

Article & Photos by Patrice Eyers

With all the talk of the Ephemeral Trail and Boardwalk, we thought it would be nice to highlight Ephemeral ponds in this issues “Nature’s Niches”.

Once thought to be simply puddles in the woods, ephemeral ponds (EP’s) are now known to be thriving, yet temporary ecosystems. EP’s are variable in appearance, water sources, time of filling, surrounding habitat, plant and animal composition, and many other factors. However, all EP’s share 2 common characteristics: they do not hold water permanently and they are free of breeding populations of fish.

EP’s are dynamic hatcheries for terrestrial organisms. The nutrients and energy of fallen leaves in the pond are cycled into amphibians from the adjacent woodlands. These animals make up a significant portion of wildlife in the forest, however because of our own inattentiveness, we often do not realize their abundance and hence their significance.

EP’s provide many benefits to wildlife. They are essential for many amphibians to complete their annual life cycle, they provide important drinking water for wildlife in the forest, and they provide an important passageway for amphibians (like the blue-spotted salamander) and reptiles as they travel from one wetland to another.



Blue-spotted Salamander



LEARN TO HUNT WATERFOWL – FINALLY A REALITY

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PATRICE EYERS

A special project very near and dear to the hearts of several Mead staff members became a reality this fall. Conservation Wardens Barry Fetting and Paul Leezer, Marathon County Biologist Cortney Schaefer, Mead WLA Project Manager Tom Meier, and Wildlife Technicians Bill Hirt and Patrice Eyers hosted the first annual Mead WLA Learn to Hunt Waterfowl Clinic and Hunt. Ten participants between the ages of 12 and 15 who had completed the Hunters Safety Program and had no waterfowling experience were paired with experienced volunteer mentors with the goal of introducing and recruiting new hunters into the declining sport of waterfowling. The event was sponsored by the Mill Creek Education and Gun Club.



Boating and Gun Safety



Setting Decoys

On the day of the clinic, students and mentors partook in a full day of activities that included: an Introduction to Waterfowl and Waterfowl ID; Boating and Gun Safety, a Clay Shoot, an overview of Waterfowl Hunting Regulations, a decoy setting and duck calling demonstration, and a display of both retrieving and versatile dogs.

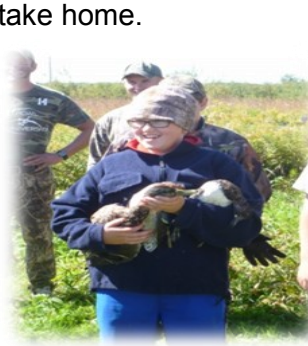
Calling Demo...Quack, Quack



New Friends



Retrieving



Happy Hunters





LEARN TO HUNT WATERFOWL – FINALLY A REALITY (continued)

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PATRICE EYERS



The morning of the Youth Hunt brought 10 new faces full of anticipation, excitement, and curiosity into the marsh. Ten new faces dressed head to toe in camouflage. For some, it was their first trip in a canoe. For all, it was a new experience. As the morning progressed and the hunt slowed - a new group of waterfowl hunters emerged -some with ducks, and some without – **but all successful**.

The day concluded with a lunch fit for any waterfowler; hot cocoa, grilled goose breast, duck gumbo, goose pot pie, hamburgers, camaraderie, and ten new tales from the marsh. The event was a huge success – even for those of us not participating in the hunt. Congratulations to all of those involved and the “Class of 2010”.

“I think it’s important to instill a sense of appreciation for a species before we go out and harvest it”

Conservation Warden Barry Fetting

Don Fox Recognized as Outstanding Volunteer

Photos by Don Fox & Patrice Eyers



Don Fox was recognized during the September Friend’s board meeting for his outstanding hard work and dedication to the Mead Wildlife Area. His name was added to the “Appreciation Plaque”, which is located in the Center Lobby. The “Appreciation Plaque” is devoted to the recognition of organizations and/or individuals from the private sectors that devote time and/or monetary support to the wildlife area on a continuing, unselfish, and highly committed basis.

Don has helped out with numerous projects and events sponsored by the Mead staff or the Friends group. Besides his volunteering activities, Don is an excellent woodworker. Pam asked him to help her “fix” the birdfeeder by the classroom. Much to her surprise, he constructed and installed a beautiful new one that holds four feeders. After that, she had him design and construct the display boxes for the “Ducks on a Stick” mounts and the custom build shelving for the odd shaped storage room located off the classroom.



Steve Meyer, Don, Doug & Pam loaded the unit.



“Ducks on a Stick”:
Perfect for Waterfowl ID



Continuing Education

Article & Photos by Pam Resech



Fourteen teachers visited the Mead as part of a 4 day Continuing Education workshop focusing on bird conservation and education. The Mead was chosen to be part of their workshop because its diversity in the Wisconsin landscape, especially as it relates to birds.

Bob Welch started the day off with an introduction to mist netting and bird banding, the highlight being the capturing and banding of a scarlet tanager. Kent Hall followed with his presentation about the restoration of bluebirds in Wisconsin and the

continuing effort to establish new bluebird monitoring trails, even locating them on school property. After lunch, Andy Paulios gave a talk about the Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative (WBCI), and the important roll birds play in our everyday lives. After an overview of the property by Pam Resech (Stange), the teachers enjoyed a wagon ride around North Honey Island for the unique opportunity to view birds in their natural habitats.



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 \$20. 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!



Junior Naturalist



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

Thank you to all the 2nd grade students from Auburndale Elementary and the 4th-8th grade students from St. Paul Catholic School-Mosinee for submitting their beautiful drawings and acrostic poems. 😊



Fall

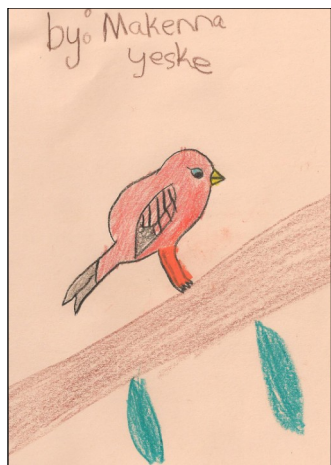
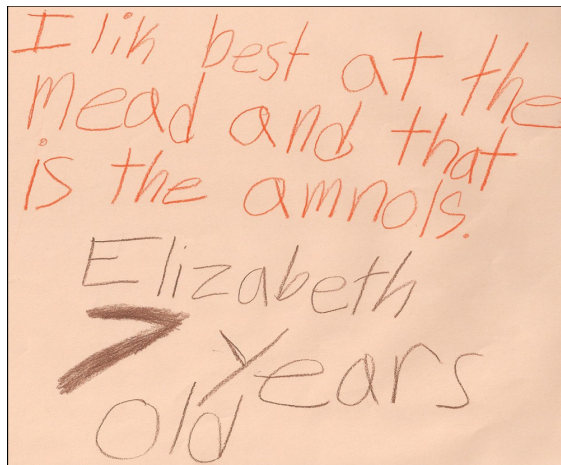
By Abbie-4th

F-fun

A-awesome

L-loves

L-leaves



Habitat

By Eric-4th

H-hidden

A-adapt

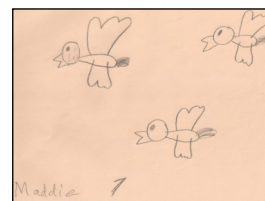
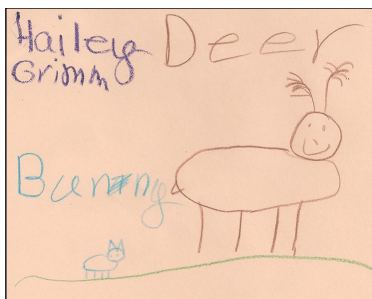
B-big

I-insects

T-tree

A-animals

T-temperature



Climate

By Nick & Brendan-5th

C-cold

L-leaves

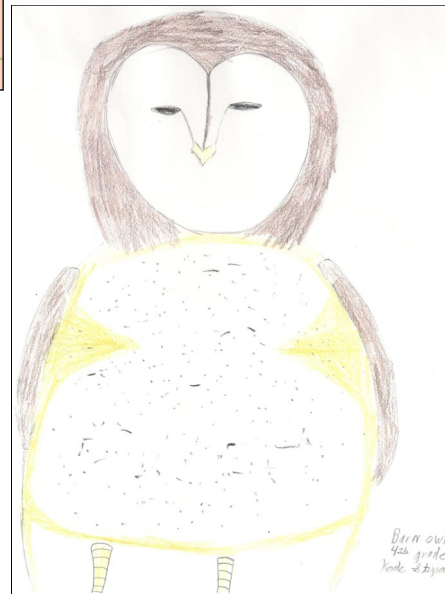
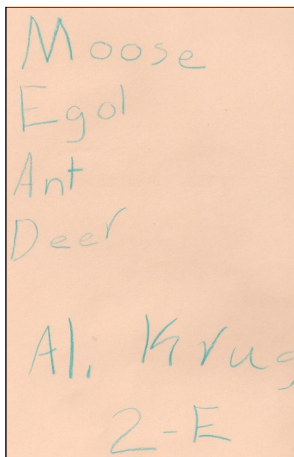
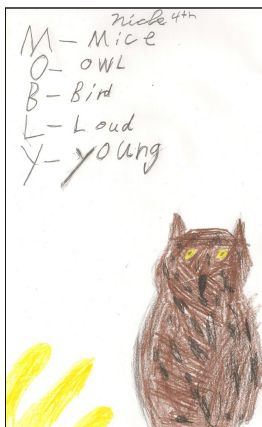
I-introductions

M-Mobly

A-air

T-temperature

E-ecosystem



Please submit your story, poem, game, riddle or drawing to Pam Resech (Stange) at pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov.



Youth Volunteering: “Get Dirty for God”

Article and Photos by Sarah Bultman & Ellie Schmidtke



On Monday July 26th, campers and staff from Crossways Camping Ministries Waypost Camp in Hatley visited the Mead to “Get Dirty for God.” Middle school aged campers pulled countless weeds from the rock landscaping, transplanted native plants to the garden, and repainted a picnic table and recycling barrels.



One of the most unusual projects was helping to create parts of a cave for use at the Sporting Heritage Youth Day and Halloween. Hannah Olson said, “It was fun! We got to paint and papier-mâché.” She was part of the group that painted the cave entrance and paper maché the exit. Stencils were also created to simulate hieroglyphics (cave drawings) for the interior of the cave.



The youth participating in “Get Dirty for God” attend Waypost camp for a week with the emphasis of serving others to make a difference. Jacob Duer found the experience to be “rewarding.” “Don’t be afraid of the work and dirt,” was advice from Reid Zietlow. Others enjoyed the nature setting.



Allyson Garcynski liked the work because she got to see some butterflies and other wildlife.

The Mead was a great place for the youth to serve!



Adult Volunteering: “Why I Became a Volunteer”

Article by Ellie Kafka & Photo by Malcolm Gold

My volunteering experience at the Mead/McMillan wildlife area has been an interesting adventure that is a far cry from the nursing career that I had my whole life. After retirement I decided that I wanted to volunteer in an area that would be completely different than the career that I had been involved in before, and I believe that I have found it.



The Mead/McMillan has so many opportunities in which to get involved. It is a great community resource that many people know little about. The maintenance of thousands of acres of open marshes, hardwood and aspen forests, grasslands and wetlands, is a huge part of what happens at the Mead/McMillan wildlife area. Also, outdoor education of the youth in the surrounding counties is a primary goal. I’ve always felt that kids should get out and enjoy nature. The staff at the Mead has wonderful, exciting programs in which even the “city” kids enjoy. That is why I am volunteering. Anything that will help with this education makes sense to me.

I’ve been able to be involved by becoming a greeter for the center, helping with the souvenir store, keeping the membership up to date, and serving at the pancake breakfast. All of the activities have been interesting and fun, with the added benefit of meeting the great staff at the Mead/McMillan, and the youth and adults that visit the center.



Exploring Your Heritage

Article & Photos by Pam Resech

In their continuing effort to spread the word about the benefits of the Mead and McMillan Wildlife Areas and the dedication of the Friends group to these properties property, Doug Aziz and John Shippy again manned a booth during the 2010 Sporting Heritage Youth day held at the Wausau School Forest.

The day is dedicated to teaching youth, age 8 and up, along with their adult supervisor the joys of the great outdoors. There is no cost to the participants, which is organized by the WI-DNR Law Enforcement bureau and supported by many sporting organization's volunteer members.

Some of the activities that the kids participated in were:

- Learn to Paddle a Duck Boat
- Skin a Beaver
- Cast a Musky Rod
- Archery Lessons (bows provided)
- Trap Shooting (guns and ammo provided)

Doug and John wanted their booth to be more interactive with the kids, so they asked Patrice and me to come up with something. We came up with the idea of kids exploring their heritage through the exploration of a cave.



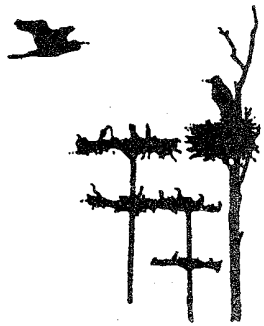
The Mead is an excellent place to put new found skills to work. Patrice and I, with the help of the Crossways summer camp volunteers constructed a cave. Within the cave were drawings, each drawing had a letter associated with it.

The kids were given a clue and then sent into the cave to discover the answer by writing the letter on their sheet that corresponded to the drawing. Once they found all of their letters, the answer was an activity they could do at the Mead.

While the kids were "exploring" the cave Doug and John were able to chat with

the sponsors. This is the third year they have supported the Heritage Youth day, and we are all are pleased with the continuing growth in the awareness of the properties.





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

Mailing Address Label

Wetlands Gazette

Friends of the Mead/McMillan Board of Directors invite you to attend their Annual Meeting

We will be reviewing our activities from the past year, elect officers and board members,
and discuss our plans for the future.

**Bring a friend and come enjoy a morning at the Mead, have some re-
freshments and after the meeting participate in the following activities:**



- * Snowshoe/hike to view the new Ephemeral Trail & Boardwalk
- * Live presentation with Mobly, the Great-horned owl
- * "A Journey through the Mead" film

When: Saturday January 15, 2011

Time: 9am-11am

Where: Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center

