



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 2 Issue 2

August 2006

1st Annual Prairie Chicken Festival **By Sharon Schwab, CWGCA Coordinator**

On Saturday, April 22nd, Mead Wildlife Area was home to the 2006 1st Annual Prairie Chicken Festival. There was a mix of indoor (educational displays, children's crafts, guest speakers) and outdoor activities (bird banding demonstrations; tours of grassland, wetlands, and managed grazing). Dozens of volunteers were present to make this inaugural event a success.

Thomas Brown, Architect, highlighted the "green features" of the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center and gave a brief tour of the building. WDNR staff Tom Meier and Andy Paulios gave a presentation entitled, "Grasslands and the Greater Prairie Chicken." Golden Sands Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC & D) staff Brian Brezinski and Teal Fyksen gave an overview of management intensive grazing and toured Good Earth Farms in nearby Milladore, and Dr. David Drake from UW-Madison gave a talk on Backyard Wildlife. Yoyi Steele, Coordinator of the Wisconsin Important Bird Areas (IBA), gave the highlight and keynote address. Friends of Mead-McMillan association (FMMA) member Kent Hall nominated Mead Wildlife Area as an IBA and during the keynote address the Mead (along with the Paul Olson, Buena Vista, and Leola Wildlife Areas) were officially dedicated as IBA's.

FMMA members Beth Clouse, Kent and Sue Hall, and John and Mary Shippy kept busy all day helping children at the craft table, manning a booth, or greeting visitors to the Center.

WDNR Mead staff were vital in the preparation and implementation of this large event. Special thanks are extended to Tom Meier, Brian Peters, Bill Hirt, Tony Geiger, and Tom Weber.

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*

Mead Web Site

www.meadwildlife.org

**Mark your calendars for the 2nd Annual Prairie
Chicken Festival:**

Saturday, April 21, 2007!



The Friends of Mead – McMillan Win State Award !

Article by Sue Hall

The Friends of Mead-McMillan Association was the 2006 recipient of the State Conservation Organization of the Year award. The award was presented at the annual Conservation Congress statewide convention at Lambeau Field in Green Bay on May 12th and presented at their banquet.

The Conservation Congress is an independent advisory organization composed of Wisconsin citizens representing their counties' interest on all natural resource issues on a local and statewide basis.

Ronald Roettger, chair of the Conservation Congress awards committee, said the Friends of the Mead-McMillan organization was chosen for its promotion of stewardship, devotion to conservation education, and the development of the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center.



Photo to Left

Board member Beth Clouse helping a guest make a Snowy Owl during an activity at the 1st Annual Prairie Chicken Festival held at the Stanton W. Mead Education Building at the Mead Wildlife Area.

(photo courtesy of Sue Hall)

Photo to Right

Board member Sue Hall helping children during an activity at the 1st Annual Prairie Chicken Festival .

(photographer unknown)





New Energy Brochure Available

Article by Thomas Brown, Architect

A new color brochure has been printed that highlights the energy and environmentally-friendly features of the new Mead facility. Entitled "Energy and Green Design," this is the third in a series of brochures produced by The Friends for visitors to the building. The other two brochures in the series are an overall Guide to the Mead Wildlife Area and a Birding Guide to the Mead.

The Energy and Green Design brochure is a full-color two-sided foldout. The outside front and back covers explain the advantages of sustainable design and renewable energy, with a list of information sources and a description of how these features can be applied to residential construction. The inside foldout serves as a guide to the main green design and energy features that can be found at the Mead Education/Office building.

There are photographs and descriptions of the five types of renewable energy systems: wind energy, solar photovoltaic electricity, solar hot water, geothermal heating & cooling, and the biomass central masonry heater. A general explanation about each technology is included, along with information about the specific system in place at the facility.

The main environmental aspects of the materials and systems chosen for the building are also described, along with special techniques employed in the construction of the building. These include information on site work, energy conservation, water conservation, indoor air quality, natural lighting, materials choices, and other sustainable design features.

Information about these features can also be viewed from Architect Tom Brown's website at www.tombrownarchitect.com/mead-case-study/mead-case-study.htm. There is also a link to this information from the Mead website at www.meadwildlife.org.



Members of the student chapter of the UWSP Izaak Walton League serve food and beverages for guests at the 1st Annual Prairie Chicken Festival held at the Mead Wildlife Area.
(photo courtesy of Sue Hall)



Mead Educator Position

by Tom Meier, Project Manager, Mead Wildlife Area

Efforts to secure a permanent Educator position for the Mead-McMillan wildlife work unit began with the creation and signing of a “Memorandum of Understanding” between The Friends, The Mead Witter Foundation of Wisconsin Rapids, and the Department of Natural Resources. The document was approved and signed by all parties in late April. Basically, the memorandum establishes that the Friends and the Mead-Witter foundation will fund the salary of a full time educator while the Department covers the benefits.

Although this agreement outlines the approach to the position, the Department still has to request a position from the Department of Administration (DOA) and also the Joint finance Committee of the Legislature. This request is now with DOA and we are hopeful that it will be forwarded soon to Joint Finance with a recommendation for approval. This is not a slam-dunk though because DOA is under a Democratic Governor and Joint finance is controlled by the republican party. It seems like nothing is easy now days but we are hopeful that both parties will see the high value in this partnership to provide an educator.

Donations Given to Mead Education Facility

Article by Sue Hall

With over 2500 students coming to the Mead Educational Facility this past year, the donations of educational materials was very much appreciated. The Central WI Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited donated \$500 to purchase micro-viewers which are being used with a variety of water and nature studies.

The Community Foundation of Portage County also made a grant donation of \$1,000 for educational materials of which 5 stereo microscopes were purchased. Prior to this contribution, the Mead staff had to borrow microscopes from UWSP – having their own is of great benefit according to Tom Meier, Project Manager of the Mead..

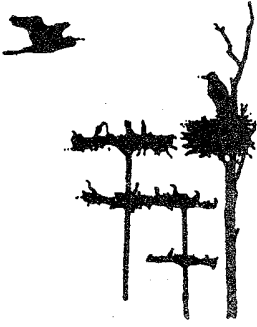
The Friends Board of Directors very much appreciates the contributions from the Community Foundation of Portage County and Whitetails Unlimited, Central WI Chapter.

Since students who come to the facility are of various age groups, and the groups who attend range in size from 40 to over 150, it is important that stations are available to allow the staff to divide them into small groups, utilizing many hands-on activities simultaneously. Additional educational materials needed to help the staff educate these students with their environmental endeavors include: individual student guides, additional lab equipment, and study mounts for displaying throughout the building.

Anyone who would like to donate additional educational materials should contact the Friends of Mead-McMillan (Vice-President Kent Hall – 344-8081).

Student Attendance Update from Tom Meier

In 2002 (the first full year of educational programming at the Mead) 470 students from the local area attended programs at the Mead (without adequate shelter for inclement weather). In just the first six months of 2006 there have been over 2100 students that have visited the Mead Wildlife Area. What an increase—and we still have the fall season to go! Programs were also delivered to 370 students off property at their schools.



An Invitation To Membership

The Friends of Mead-McMillan Association, Inc., is a private, non-profit corporation dedicated to the purpose of assisting with wildlife, interpretive and management activities at the Mead-McMillan State Wildlife Area. This organization is comprised of individuals from many different backgrounds interested in increasing public understanding, appreciation, support and enjoyment of wildlife and their habitats.

Your annual membership helps support:

- Wildlife education for over 2000 area youth, annually
- The function & maintenance of the new Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center
- Wildlife management practices on 30,000 acres
- Updated maps and information on Mead-McMillan Wildlife Area
- Maintenance of Mead and McMillan Bike Trails

If you would like to become a member of the Friends of Mead-McMillan, or purchase a personalized tile or brick, please fill in the form below and return it with your tax deductible contribution.

Name: _____ Address: _____ City: _____ Telephone: _____ Email: _____	Personalized Donations: Tiles in Building: <i>See Reverse Side</i> \$ 250: One Paw \$ 500: Two Paws \$1000: Four Paws (With Logo Option) Bricks In Amphitheatre: <i>See Reverse Side</i> \$ 100: 4" x 8" \$ 250: 8" x 8" \$ 500: 16" x 8"
--	--

Check appropriate membership option: _____ Individual/Family: \$20 _____ Business/Corporate: \$100 _____ Patron: \$250	Membership Amount: \$ _____ Tile Amount: \$ _____ Brick Amount: \$ _____ Additional Amount: \$ _____ Total Enclosed: \$ _____
--	---

Make your tax deductible check payable to: Friends of Mead-McMillan Assoc., Inc.

Mail to: Friends of Mead-McMillan Assoc., Inc.
 S2148 County S
 Milladore, WI 54454

For Information Call: Kent Hall at 344-8081 (Friends) or Brian Peters at 457-6771 (DNR)

Thanks for your support; your renewal date will be placed on your newsletter label.

Personalized Tiles

All tiles are 12" x 12" and are placed in the foyer of the building (dozens of tiles are in place and can be investigated for quality & composition). Lines are a maximum of 17 characters.

One Paw: \$250, Maximum of 2 lines

Two Paws: \$500, Maximum of 3 lines

Three Paws: \$1,000, Maximum of 4 lines or corporate logo (add \$100 for logo)

Tile Inscription:
Line 1: _____
Line 2: _____
Line 3: _____
Line 4: _____

Tile Inscription:
Line 1: _____
Line 2: _____
Line 3: _____
Line 4: _____

Personalized Bricks



<p style="text-align: center;">Brick Inscription: 4" x 8": \$100</p> <p>Line 1: _____</p> <p>Line 2: _____</p> <p>Line 3: _____</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Brick Inscription: 8" x 8": \$250</p> <p>Line 1: _____</p> <p>Line 2: _____</p> <p>Line 3: _____</p> <p>Line 4: _____</p> <p>Line 5: _____</p> <p>Line 6: _____</p>
---	--



Bluebird Trail Re-established at Mead

Article by Kent Hall

For three years, the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society monitored a 20 box bluebird trail at Mead Wildlife Area. In the fall of 2005, these boxes were removed because no one had been found to continue to monitor them. For a professional trail, it is unacceptable to put boxes up without monitoring them because of the many complications that can occur during the nesting season that require adjustments by the monitor.

Enter Doug Aziz, retired executive from Wausau Papers, Mosinee Division, and Bill Hirt, Wildlife Technician, Mead Wildlife Area. Doug agreed to construct the nest boxes (from wood donated by Wausau Homes) and to be Chief Monitor for the revived, 20 nest box trail. Bill has had an interest in the nest box program at Mead for many years and agreed to be the Substitute Monitor when Doug could not be there.

In early April, Doug and I placed the boxes in locations that had been used the previous year. Unfortunately, the boxes were put in about two weeks late and bluebirds started nesting later than they did in other areas of the trail in central Wisconsin. Normally, that would not make a difference as the birds can pick up that time during the nesting season. But this season was marked by an extreme weather event in the 2nd week of May. The week of May 11 & 12 was extremely cold and windy, and on these days, rain pelted the area for nearly 48 continuous hours. As a result, our entire trail lost 257 eggs & nestlings, about 30% of what we expect to lose for the entire season.

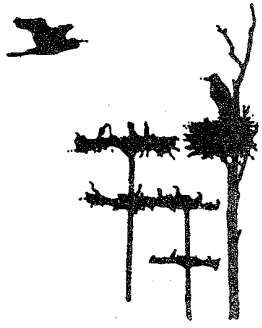
The Mead route was particularly hard hit and lost 21 nestlings and 11 eggs, 63% of the total loss on the route to date. It never recovered from this severe blow, but still is expected to produce 60 or so bluebirds by the end of the season. Moreover, 46 Tree Swallows were produced in the boxes, so we are proud to have produced over 100 song birds for the environment for the 2006 season.

Doug has already located some potential sites for next year and hopes to expand the trail to 25 boxes. He tells me that his experiences were extensive this season, but that finding a box knocked over by a bear and fighting rabid deer flies, especially at the Dog Run grounds, was unique. Thanks to Doug, Bill, and the Mead Staff for caring about cavity nesting songbirds.



Tom Meier, with Sally and Don Furo at the Natural Resources Board Meeting held at the Mead Wildlife Area. Sally and Don are super volunteers at Friends projects at the Mead)

(photo courtesy of Sue Hall)



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

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5

Wetland's Gazette



Marv and Rudy Schuette attended the Natural Resources Board of Directors meeting held at the Stanton W. Mead Education Center this spring.
(photo courtesy of)