



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 3, Issue 2
July 2007

Festival at the Mead

Article by Nancy Stevenson, Sally Overholt, Sue Hall

We were surprised and happy that despite the weather we had over 500 people come to enjoy all the festivities at the Mead on June 3rd. We appreciate everyone who came and walked the trails with umbrellas in hand, saw the albino deer that used to roam around the Auburndale area, viewed the new historical display, watched the pottery demonstration led by Vince Heig, and listened to the melodious sounds from Tom Gustin with his hand-made Native American flutes. A special appearance from Rob Nurre, aka the "Surly Surveyor", was a big hit with the crowd gathered at the kiosk. Children were able to enjoy a variety of nature activities prepared by Pam Stange with the help of Boy Scouts from Auburndale.

A special thank you to the 22 artists who donated their beautiful creations for the silent art auction. This along with the food sales coordinated by Don Furo, enabled us to raise over \$4000 for the Mead Trust Fund.

The Friends' Board appreciates your continued support of the Mead Wildlife Area and promoting wildlife education, alternative energy concepts, and the enjoyment of nature. Thanks for making the day a success!

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
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- *Doug Aziz*
- *Dan Belter*
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- *Randy Cutler*
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- *Kent Hall*
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- *Bart Hobson*
- *Sally Overholt*
- *John Shippy*
- *Nancy Stevenson*
- *Bob Tremi*
- *Jim Yulga*

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

Editor:

- *Dave Grabski
dgrabski@charter.net*



Randy Cutler welcomes guests

Photo courtesy of Jim Yulga



Rob Nurre at the Festival

Photo courtesy of Richard Clouse



Friend's Help Urgently Needed

Article by Doug Aziz

The success of our Sportsman's Auction fund raiser to be held August 11, 2007, at the Mead Wildlife Area depends on the quantity and quality of donations we obtain. Each member of the Friend's can play a critical role in that success. If, like me, you or someone you know has surplus outdoor related equipment which they have replaced with updated and/or newer gear, please get them to consider participating in this event by donating or consigning whatever they have to the Friend's for our auction.

Examples of the kind of items we are looking for include: fishing tackle of all types (i.e. rods, reels, tackle boxes/lures, nets/bait buckets & electronics for use in boats and/or ice fishing); hunting equipment such as guns, knives, decoys, ammunition, reloaders, reloading components, electronic game callers, and trail cameras; camping gear like tents, stoves, lanterns, heaters, packs, sleeping bags, air mattresses/ground pads, and cooking kits; trapping supplies; bikes - both road & off road (mountain) as well as canoeing/kayaking equipment. We will also accept boats, canoes, kayaks, outboard motors, electric trolling motors and ATV's. Collectibles including beer company mirrors of outdoor scenes, stamp art (state & federal), and wildlife art prints. Other ideas include hand and power tools including antiques such as wooden planes, saws, etc., and antique farm implements.

Items which sell for \$49.00 or less will be considered as donations. Items selling for \$50.00 to \$149.00 will be eligible to receive a 25% rebate to the donator and anything selling for \$150.00 or more can receive 50% of the selling price as a rebate. All donors/consignors will receive a tax certificate so they can claim a deduction on their 2007 taxes.

Even if you don't have items of your own to donate you can help greatly by contacting family members and friends to solicit items from them. Please consider taking time to participate in this important fund raising event, on behalf of the Mead Education Trust, which will enable us to achieve our goal of hiring a full time educator for the Mead Wildlife Area as soon as possible.

Donated items can be dropped off at the following locations:

1. Mead Wildlife Area on Wednesdays from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. (other times can be arranged by calling Brian Peters at 715-457-6771)
2. Wausau area contact Doug Aziz at 715-693-3491 to arrange a time to drop off items at Gander Mountain or to have them picked up by Doug.
3. Marshfield area contact Dennis Dieringer at 715-387-4651
4. Wisconsin Rapids area contact Jim Yulga at 715-435-3177
5. Stevens Point area contact Sue Hall at 715-344-8081



Update on Fund Raising for the Mead Wildlife Area Education Trust

Article by Kent Hall

We are encouraged by the fund raising results for the Mead Trust to date. We are currently well ahead of our anticipated donations and pledges. At the current rate of donating/pledging, we could reach our goal before the end of this calendar year, one year ahead of the goal we set when we started our fund raising efforts.

Our fundraising started in mid-February. At the end of June, 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ months later, we have raised 80% of our \$550,000 goal (\$439,655) in donations & pledges. It is now up to the Friends Board and Friends members to step up to the plate to help us complete our fund raising goal.

So far, both the Board and members are doing quite well. The 13 member Board has pledged or donated \$48,000, 8.7% of our fund raising goal. In addition, our Friends members have donated another \$8,000. These figures total over 10% of our fund raising goal, an impressive figure in my mind.

Donations received in the past two months include: \$50,000 from George & Susan Mead (in addition to the \$500,000 challenge grant from the Mead-Witter Foundation which they direct), \$50,000 from the Seramur Family Foundation (arranged by Friend's Board Member, John Shippy), \$25,000 from the Judd S. Alexander Foundation (pledge), \$25,000 from the Walter Alexander Foundation (pledge), \$10,000 from the Dudley Foundation, \$10,000 from the WPS Resources Foundation (pledge), and \$5,000 from the Richard Steeves Foundation.

Friend's Board members have made several contributions to fundraising. Nancy Stevenson, Sally Overholt and Sue Hall organized the June 3rd "Festival at the Mead," which has netted \$5,300 so far. Sue Hall also arranged for a \$1,600 challenge grant from Thrivent Financial Services, Bob Trembl arranged for a \$1,000 donation from his company, Gamber-Johnson, and Dennis Dieringer is negotiating donations from both a Foundation and a bank in Marshfield.

Currently, Friends Board members are coordinating several fund raisers for the Mead Trust. Beth Clouse, is working with both the Auburndale PTO and the Auburndale Education Association on fund raisers. Board members, Doug Aziz, Don Furo and Randy Cutler are also coordinating a Sport's Auction at the Mead Center, to be held on August 11, 2007.

Our fundraising to date has been an amazing mix of major giving from foundations and corporations to smaller incomes from brat & bake sales. When added together, they spell success for our attempt to raise money for a permanent educator at "the Mead".

If you have any fund raising ideas, or want to make a contribution to this important conservation cause, don't hesitate to call (715-344-8081) or email (kentsue@charter.net).



SPASH Students Conduct Research for DNR

Article and photos by Mark Bohanski

The Wisconsin River Academy (WRA) is an accredited Wisconsin Charter School that began in 2003 at SPASH (Stevens Point Area Senior High) in Stevens Point. It is an environmentally focused charter school with emphasis placed on hands-on outdoor experiences and the development of sound environmental ethics. Students have conducted water tests on the WI River and on some of the flowages in the Mead Wildlife Refuge as well as other private bodies of water. Other students have conducted fish population surveys on the Wisconsin River using fyke nets. These surveys are run by the students where they go out and place six to eight nets into the water, remove captured fish once every 24 hours, and weigh and measure the length of each fish and release it. The survey usually lasts for three days. With every northern pike, muskellunge, and walleye captured scales are removed and are used as part of a genetics study being conducted by Steve Harris, a biology teacher at SPASH.

Students in the WRA have also planted trees in the Mead Wildlife Refuge and for private citizens as part of our forestry/reforestation module. Students have also assisted the Mead staff in duck nest counts in the Mead Wildlife Refuge. This population study involves using a 100 yard rope with one-gallon milk jugs filled with water tied onto the rope then dragged across nesting grounds and to try to flush nesting ducks. Once the duck has been flushed, the nest site is recorded, species of duck identified, and the number of eggs in the nest are recorded. There is an on-going study of wood duck population at the Mead that began in 2005. Twenty-four wood duck boxes were put up in a portion of the Wisconsin River flowage and each year students go out, open each box and record what animal used the box.

Some of the students from the WRA have also been helping the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources track radioed fish in the Wisconsin River. The DNR have placed transmitters in catfish and sturgeon and our students travel a portion of the river trying to pick up their signal. When they do pick up a signal they record which fish it is based on the frequency and where it was transmitting from. We are always looking for more projects and are willing to provide assistance to people that would like to improve their property for the benefit of wildlife. If you would like more information about the Wisconsin River Academy or what we can do for you, please feel free to contact DuWayne Behnke (715-344-4300) or Mark Bohanski (715-342-4827).





Auburndale Teachers Support Mead Educator

Article by Beth Clouse

The Auburndale Education Association has been working hard at raising money for the Mead Wildlife Area Education Trust! As summer started, the Auburndale teachers started frying up brats at Festival Foods in Marshfield. They spent four days, June 8th and 9th, and then June 22nd and June 23rd frying those brats and hot dogs! Many of the teachers helped out with this project, along with some spouses and even a retired teacher or two! All of the money from the brat fries, along with the money earned at the bake sale held in March at the FFA pancake feed will be given to the Mead Wildlife Area Education Trust. The teachers have had fun doing these projects, and hope that other educators will pull together and work for this worthy cause! After all, it is just another way that we can touch the future!

Stewardship Grant Benefits Mead Wildlife Area

Article and photos by Sue Hall

Portage and Wood County residents had plenty to celebrate on June 27th when Lt. Governor, Barbara Lawton came to the Stanton W. Mead Wildlife and Educational Center and announced the expansion of 2,804 acres including 15 miles of waterfront along the Eau Pleine River.

The land was purchased from Consolidated Water Company through the Stewardship Fund, part of 10,000 acres placed in public trust statewide, prompting the governor to proclaim Wednesday as "Stewardship Day" in Wisconsin.

A ceremony at the mead featured several area dignitaries. Kent Hall, Friends of Mead/McMillan Vice President was master of ceremonies and welcomed the various groups to the event, thanked the Mead Staff for their continued dedication and introduced DNR regional director, Scott Humrickhouse who said it was important to anyone who uses the land for the purpose of outdoor recreation to have such a program as the stewardship fund to have in perpetuity for future generations.



L to R: Harland Brock, chairman, town of Milladore; Philip Offer, chm. Town of Green Valley, State Representative, Louis Molepske, Lt. Governor, Barbara Lawton, and Portage County Executive, Mark Maslowski



L to R: Lt. Governor, Barbara Lawton, Bart Hobson, Pres. Friends of Mead/McMillan, Mark Anderson, Resource Mgr. Consolidated Water Power Co., Ruth Schuette and State Representative, Louis Molepske



Stretch Your Wings by Volunteering at the Mead

Article by Stephanie Haka — Volunteer Coordinator

Have you ever thought about stepping outside your comfort zone and volunteering at a center close to your heart? Why not consider the Mead Wildlife Area, a jewel nestled in the valley of the Eau Pleine River.

On Monday, June 25, 2007 a meeting was held at the Stanton W. Mead and Visitor Center that introduced those in attendance to the Mead Wildlife Areas recreational and volunteer opportunities. Tom Meier, Project Manager of the George W. Mead Wildlife Area, shared the facilities mission statement which is: to ensure plant and wildlife habitat diversity through sound resource management; allowing compatible recreational activities, and fostering an appreciation and understanding of natural resource values and issues through education.

The Mead Wildlife Area has many valued volunteers who have shared their comments:

Russell Zimmerman from Stevens Point says, *"I volunteer out at the Mead because I love wild-life. I enjoy the staff and the working conditions are great. I'm able to help teach educational programs to students and I know each and everyone of them will remember their unique experiences for a long time."*

Since 1970 Larry Ruhde of Marshfield has enjoyed a whole host of recreational opportunities like birding and hiking at the Mead. *He says, "My most memorable volunteer activity was an Orienteering Program I had the opportunity to assist with. I love all the energy that the students exhibit."*

Marlene Furo of Junction City, a long time educational volunteer at the Mead and Friend of the Mead McMillan was asked why she volunteers. *She stated, "I volunteer because I enjoy working with children. I've always been interested in the preservation of the environment. Plus, the Mead is close to home and helping out keeps me occupied."*

The Mead Wildlife Area is currently networking and recruiting individuals in an effort to expand its volunteer base. Many of the available opportunities require minimal experience and a willingness to help wherever the need arises. We are currently in need of help with the following volunteer positions. All are based on a 6-month commitment from the volunteer and generally run from April - October.

Volunteer Facility Cleaner

Individuals needed to assist with general cleaning of the facility in between monthly scheduled professional cleanings. Duties include vacuuming, mopping, dusting, and cleaning sinks and counters. Training, supplies and equipment are all provided. A total of 8 cleaning hours are needed per week which can be broken down into 2-4 hour shifts by several volunteer people.



Stretch Your Wings by Volunteering at the Mead Wildlife Area (continued)

Volunteer Center Greeter

Individuals working in this position will be the initial and principal contact people for visitors to the center. Each Greeter will be provided materials, handouts, and general information to aid them in performing the tasks of this position. Greeters will provide the public with information that explains the purpose, recreational opportunities, and use of the wildlife area. Individuals who are out-going and who will enjoy talking with and disseminating information to the public are best suited for this position. Hours may range from 4 to 10 hours per month dependant on the greeter's availability. We are currently attempting to staff this position on Saturdays from 10:00 - 2:00 p.m. for the months of September and October.

Volunteer Grounds Maintenance Person

Individual in this position will undertake general weekly maintenance of the facility. Duties will include sweeping of sidewalks and kiosks, cob-web removal, planting of prairie forbs, planting of trees and shrubs, bird feeder maintenance, cleaning of exterior windows and doors, and snow shoveling. A log will be kept to keep track of items that have been and need to be accomplished. Training will be provided. Skills needed for this position are: familiarity with hand tools used in lawn and garden work, plus a desire to work out of doors and the ability to work alone or with others. Support needed for approximately 2-4 hours per week per person as the volunteer's schedule allows.

Volunteer Education Facilitator

An individual in this position will assist Mead personnel in carrying out planned educational programming. Educational programming is primarily designed for school age children with an activity-based approach. Facilitators will become involved in session set-up, presentation of material, and individual assistance to participating children. A person in this position must be available weekdays. Our busiest periods are late April through early June. Hours may range from 6 to 24 hours per week, dependant on an individual's personal schedule and availability. Training will be provided.

The Mead Wildlife Area, which is managed by the Department of Natural Resources, understands and appreciates the value of great volunteers. Please join our team by contacting Stephanie Haka - Volunteer Coordinator at the Mead Wildlife Area office at 715-457-6771 regarding your availability to help. Plus, check out the web site at www.meadwildlife.org for an overview of the Mead's many recreational opportunities offered to the public.

Visit The George W. Mead Wildlife Area Online

<http://meadwildlife.org/>



LEOPOLD WORKSHOP COMES TO THE MEAD

Article by Ken Blomberg

Photos by Cheri Gessner

For the past twenty years, Leopold Education Project (LEP) workshops have been held across the country. For the past two springs, the Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center has hosted a central Wisconsin version, "Striving for a Land Ethic while Watching the Sky Dance of The Woodcock".

According to LEP coordinators, "The Leopold Education Project (LEP) is an innovative, interdisciplinary, critical thinking, conservation and environmental education curriculum based on the classic writings of the renowned conservationist, Aldo Leopold. The Leopold Education Project teaches the public about humanity's ties to the natural environment in the effort to conserve and protect the earth's natural resources."

As a LEP facilitator and an active bird bander for the USFWS, I was in a position to combine several interests, banding woodcock, sharing the works of Leopold and showcasing the new Mead Education Center. Little did the folks that planned, designed and built this extraordinary facility know, but they positioned the building right on top of an American Woodcock singing ground. Planning a banding clinic was a snap, with about five active males dancing in the fields directly south of the front doors.



Ken Blomberg

LEP's "Lessons in a Land Ethic", lets participants experience the hands-on, minds-on techniques of teaching about the natural world and learn how Aldo Leopold's conservation classic, *A Sand County Almanac*, can successfully be used in a variety of educational settings to stimulate critical thinking and promote responsible decision making regarding our impacts on ecosystems.

Formal and informal educators, youth leaders, naturalists and volunteers have successfully utilized the LEP curriculum to encourage development of a land ethic.

It is adaptable to both formal and informal teaching situations and the Mead sessions have been successfully used by teachers, agency personnel, landowners and volunteer educators.



At the end of the day, and after reading Leopold's passage, *Sky Dance* from the *Almanac*, participants were treated to a hands-on banding exercise which included several woodcock dances and a male bird that was captured in a mist net, banded and released into the night. A perfect ending to a wonderful day of Leopold, woodcock and the Mead.



Join the Friends of Mead-McMillan

Article by Bart Hobson, President

The Friends' Board of Directors are gratified at the increasing number of members of the Friends of Mead-McMillan. When you join the Friends you become a part of the wonderful events that continue to make the Mead Wildlife Area one of Wisconsin's most innovative and exciting natural resources.

Receiving the Friends' newsletter means you are either already a member or have been identified as someone who is interested in the Mead and might consider joining. If you are a member, please check to see if there is an insert with this issue notifying you of the need to renew—and consider inviting a friend to join the "Friends." If you aren't yet a member, please consider sending in the enclosed application form.

The Friends have grown ten-fold over the past few years. We hope to retain every current member and attract many more in the year to come. Thank you for your support of the Friends and of the Mead!



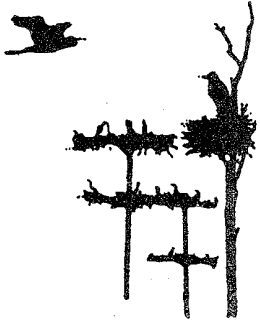
Prairie Garden in bloom at the entrance to the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center.

(Photo courtesy of Pam Stange)

Russ Zimmerman teaching a Heritage lesson this spring at the Stanton W. Mead Education Center.

(Photo courtesy of Pam Stange)





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

Mailing Address Label

Wetland's Gazette

SPORTSMEN'S AUCTION August 11
A BENEFIT FOR MEAD EDUCATOR TRUST

A live auction is being planned for the benefit of the Mead Wildlife Area Education Trust on August 11, 2007, at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center.

Anyone interested in participating in this activity either as a member of the committee, volunteer at the event or as a donor of unused outdoor related gear can contact Doug Aziz (715/693-3491) or az54455@yahoo.com if you have questions regarding donations or wish to participate in any way.