



# WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 13, Issue 1

March 2017

## A Great Year Ahead!

### President-Jere Smith & Photos by Pam Resech

Friends of the Mead/McMillan group is excited for the 2017 year!

Here's a quick glimpse of some important things happening with the group.

We added two new board members at our annual meeting: AJ Pearl and Connie Milz. Their contributions are already being noticed and appreciated.

A long time board member Jerry Harvey has retired down from the board. He plans to give his grandchildren even more of his time and attention. Thank you Jerry!

We have a new treasurer Matt Ahles who is relieving John Shippy of that duty. Thank you John for your many years of service. You always did a great job!

We were able to assist the DNR to secure a North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant. This is a great accomplishment for the Friends and the DNR. We assisted the DNR with securing this grant in 2015 as well as this year in 2017. These grants are designated for dike projects on the property. The dikes are an integral part to the property but also contribute large monetary and labor strains. The sizable amount of these grants greatly reduces these strains.

A large project the Friends group will be taking on in 2017 is the Outdoor Amphitheater Project. The purpose of this project is to rebuild the Amphitheater. This structure is mainly used for the many school group field trips and our educational events.



Loose pavers are a concern

Given the size of this project we have appointed a fund-raising leader, Connie Milz. She will be responsible for leading and coordinating all fundraising. Connie and the Friends could greatly use the help of spreading the word or making a donation to the project. If you have ideas of who might like to contribute or if you would like to contribute, please contact

Connie Milz at 715-457-2690 or email her at [connie@tznet.com](mailto:connie@tznet.com). You may also contact me at 715-572-6372 or [jere1683@gmail.com](mailto:jere1683@gmail.com).

To end I would like to encourage all members to get out and enjoy the property this spring. Come to the Open House on Saturday April 8th, or the Earth Day cleanup on Saturday April 29th. As the weather warms and spring arrives there are all kinds of outdoor activities to do. Bird watching, hiking, turkey hunting, fishing, or canoeing are a few activities you, your family, and friends can enjoy on the property this Spring.

## Friends of the Mead/McMillan

### Officers:

- *President—Jeremiah Smith*  
Wausau: 715-572-6372  
Email: [jere1683@gmail.com](mailto:jere1683@gmail.com)
- *V-President—Justin Guthman*  
Mosinee: 414-491-3862  
Email: [Justin.Guthman@ascension.org](mailto:Justin.Guthman@ascension.org)
- *Secretary—Jim Peterson*  
Auburndale: 715-652-3143
- *Treasurer—Matt Ahles*  
Mosinee: 920-991-2209

### Directors:

- Joan Dickrell
- Marlene Furo
- Lorraine Michalski
- Connie Milz
- AJ Pearl
- Eileen Riehle
- Arne Ruha
- Dick Shepherd
- John Shippy

**Please Note:** We are currently looking for people to fill the vacancies on the Board. If interested please contact VP—Justin Guthman for an application.

### DNR Staff on board:

- Brian Peters,  
Project Manager
- Pam Resech, Educator  
Office 457-6771 ext. 2

### Webmaster:

- Justin Guthman

### Newsletter Editor:

- Dave Grabski  
[dgrabski99@gmail.com](mailto:dgrabski99@gmail.com)



## From the Field

**Article by Property Supervisor-Brian Peters**

In the last newsletter I thanked the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association, the Bill Cook Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, the Wetlands Conservation League, the Marshfield Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited, the Mill Creek Education & Gun Club, and the Aldo Leopold Chapter of the Audubon Society for their willingness to partner with DNR on a federal grant application through the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA). I thank you all again, because the good news is that we were awarded the grant! The project to be funded from this grant is an extensive refurbishment of a section of Smoky Hill flowage dike that is in very poor condition. The dike runs parallel to the river on the north side of historic Smoky Hill. Several significant holes have developed this spring with the freezing and thawing of the dike. The flowage will be drawn down (drained) this summer so that work on the dike can begin later this year.



Other major dike repair projects, such as the previous phase 1 NAWCA project on Teal Flowage dike, have made progress this winter despite the unfavorable weather conditions. We experienced serious flooding in February which is not typical. The flooding resulted from a warm spell with rain that melted all the snow within one day. When that happens suddenly, the river rises drastically (seven feet at the Smoky Hill bridge) over a 24 hour period.

Several timber sales were completed on Mead and McMillan this winter. But the weather was not good for those operations either, and there were some issues with lack of frost in the ground. The spring weather conditions also affect our plans for prescribed burning of grassland and marsh habitat. We have several burns planned for this spring, late summer and fall.

The realignment of DNR that I mentioned in the last newsletter has progressed to the beginning of its implementation phase. Many details of how the department's workload is distributed geographically are being analyzed. The goal is to have a majority of the changes implemented by January of 2018.

Lastly, we are very pleased to be able to hire a limited term employee (part time) to assist Pam with the education program. The new employee's name is Brandi Tempel. She is a graduate of UWSP with a degree in Environmental Education and Interpretation.

## McMillan Marsh Matters

**Article & Photo by Wildlife Technician-Kyle Christianson**

Another Wisconsin spring is upon us. The staff has been dealing with flooding issues from snow melt and rain events. While managing water, several infrastructure issues on several dikes have been discovered. These holes and tunnels will need to be repaired this summer.

If you drive down Karau or Frey roads, you may have noticed the completion of a timber sale. The sale attracted a lot of deer as tree tops became available for browsing. Waterfowl have returned to the marsh. Geese, Mallards, and Pintails have been seen utilizing muskrat houses and open water.

Lastly, this year's Earth Day spring clean-up will be on Saturday April 29th. We will meet at the Meadow Ave. parking area at 9am. Volunteer opportunities still exist. If you would like to participate or just have questions, please send an email or call me.

Email: [kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov) or phone @ 715-457-6771 ex. 3 See you on the Marsh!





## We Need Your Help

**Article by Lorraine Michalski-Volunteer & Photos by Pam**

You may have been at the Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center for an event or walked the trails at Mead or McMillan Wildlife Areas and seen busy volunteers leading indoor or outdoor programs or assisting with management activities.

We are inviting you to attend the Open House on Saturday April 8 from 10-2pm to talk with a volunteer and become involved as one of our volunteers. Your commitment is determined by the time you have available.

The Greeter program is every weekend 11am-3pm, from mid-May until the end of October. Education Assistants work with activities at events and school field trips. Wildlife Assistants and Grounds volunteers help maintain the property. Many other areas include social media, office, souvenir sales, photography, fund raising and events.

If you already are a volunteer, please keep a record of your hours and record them into the volunteer log book. During 2016 over 2,100 hours were recorded even though many hours are not on record. These hours are important to us when we apply for grants.

If you cannot come to the Mead Education & Visitor Center on Saturday April 8<sup>th</sup>, please send me an email: [sar2ge@gmail.com](mailto:sar2ge@gmail.com)



## Friends of the Mead/McMillan Membership

Please check your mailing label for date your membership expires. Use this form for new or renewals.

Annual family membership fee is \$30, sponsor is \$100.00, Lifetime is \$300.00.

Renewal \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_ Gift for New Member \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check payable to Friends of the Mead/McMillan.

Mail to: Mead Wildlife Area membership S2148 Cty Hwy S, Milladore, WI, 54454.

Or you may renew or join online at [www.meadwildlife.org](http://www.meadwildlife.org)

Name	
Address	
City	
State	
Zip	
Phone	
Email	

***Thank you for your support with our environmental endeavors!***





## Welcome New Board of Director Members!

### Self-Bios



#### Connie Milz:

My husband, Ray and I moved to Milladore in 1974 to a dairy farm. He was a dairy farmer for 41 years, but I never milked a cow; we all live with regrets. I worked as a Physical Education teacher for 33 years in the Marshfield school district, which didn't give me much time to help on the farm except in the summer.

During that time we had two children, Valerie and Kevin. Valerie makes her home in Milladore while Kevin moved to Signal Mountain, TN. It was nice while I was teaching in Marshfield and they were in the Stevens Point district; kids can have a rough time when your mother or father teach in the district you attend. They didn't have to deal with that issue because of the location of our farm.

Once I retired in 2003, I started another career in banking. I have worked for Advantage Community Bank in Mosinee for fourteen years and have just recently gone to part time. Because I do enjoy being active I felt I have some time to volunteer at the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center. Joan

Dickrell was on the board of directors and encouraged me to join. I was elected this January at the annual meeting; it does help when there is an open spot, and no one is running against you.

Since joining the board, I have come to realize this will be an educational experience and I will learn a lot as I work with the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association. I hope you are able to visit and make use of the area as my family has in the past. We are so fortunate to be so close to this facility. Please visit.

*"Life may not be the party we hoped for, but while we are here we might as well dance."*

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#### AJ Pearl

I have had a lifelong interest in the outdoors. My family had a cabin in northern Wisconsin when I was growing up, and spending time there was one of my favorite things to do. In high school I spent two summers working for the Youth Conservation Corps, building trails at a park in Indiana. I love spending time in nature, hiking and bicycling. I believe that we need to protect and preserve native habitats for all plant and animal species.

I am married and I have two adult children. I moved to Wisconsin Rapids with my husband in 1990. We bought a passive solar home and we recently had a masonry heater built in our home.

I was an elementary school teacher for 13 years and I love teaching kids about the outdoors and nature. After I retired I took the Wisconsin Master Naturalist course and began looking for opportunities to volunteer. I also have a passion for Wellness. I have attended yoga trainings and currently teach two classes a week.



**To Teach is to touch a life forever**





## **Thank you; Retiring Board Member-Jerry!**

### **Self-Bio**



#### **Jerry Harvey:**

I have helped at Mead since the mid 70's. In 1975 or 1976 John Dunn and I tried to fill muskrat and turtle holes on the river dikes. I became a Board member in 2010. I would estimate that over the years that I probably have between 350 - 400 volunteer hours at Mead. Unfortunately, I am bad in that I very seldom signed the Mead Volunteer Log book.

I was involved with a variety of construction projects, both before and as a board member. Don Furo and I built the touring wagon, Don Fox, Don Furo, John Shippy and I built the first section of the boardwalk and one viewing platform, put the first storage deck in the pole shed, designed and helped build trash collection area, designed and built with

help, Pam's educational storage area in the pole shed and built the archery backdrop.

Other volunteer areas I have participated in; mowed lawns, worked with Pam to establish an educational turkey ecology class, driver for the educational touring wagon, a greeter and at numerous Mead events: Pancake Breakfast, Grandparent's Day, Spooktacular, Friends of Auburndale High, and Outdoor Adventure Day.

I have greatly enjoyed my time helping at the Mead. Even though I am retiring from the Board to have more time with my grandkids, I will still be involved and help as much as possible and bring my grandkids to the Mead events.

## **Welcome New LTE-Brandi!**

### **Article by Joan Dickrell**



Brandi Tempel, the newest staff member at the Mead Wildlife Center, recently graduated in December from the UW-Stevens Point campus with a degree in Environmental Education and Interpretation.

Brandi grew up in a country home, always enjoying time spent outdoors and caring for her numerous pets. She enjoys doing anything in nature including hiking, kayaking, and bird watching.

Brandi is also currently working with the Boys & Girls Club of Portage County at the Rosholt extension. She has worked with numerous groups of students of various ages at environmental education centers throughout Wisconsin.

Brandi's past experiences also include public programming, trail construction, signage creation and placement as well as lessons for student groups. Brandi's volunteerism brought her here to help with education & events at the Mead.

We are looking forward to her sharing her knowledge in Ornithology, interpretive media creation and her excitement for teaching about the natural world. Brandi will be helping with education as an LTE Naturalist. Welcome Brandi!





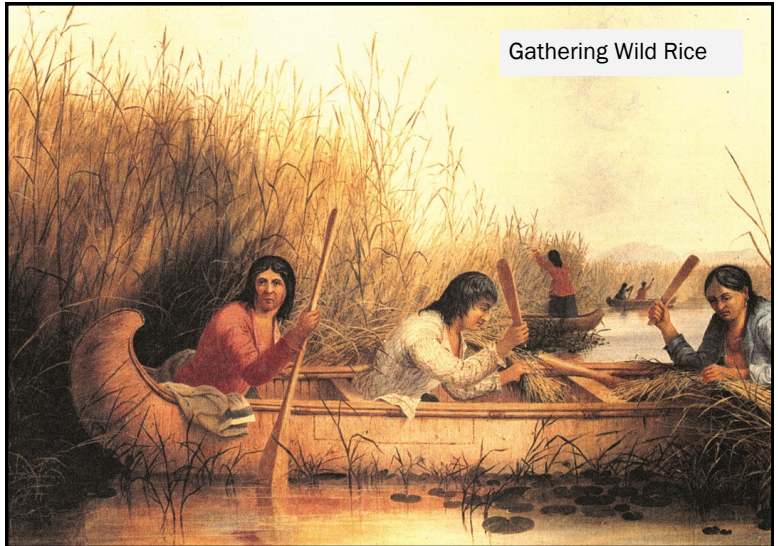
## History of Smoky Hill

### Article by Eileen Riehle-Volunteer

**NOTE:** The following is from a book "Little Eau Pleine Stories" by John G. Pinion, published in 1949 by the Marshfield News-Herald. The story of the battle of Smoky Hill is a legend that has been handed down. Recent research into Native American oral history yielded no documentation to verify the legend.

Smoky Hill was occupied as a camp and village site by the Chippewa (Ojibwa) Indians. Due to its location immediately south of Rice Lake it was extremely valuable. The Hill, which at one time was an island, was not very tall, but it was tall enough to make it feasible to use as a camping ground.

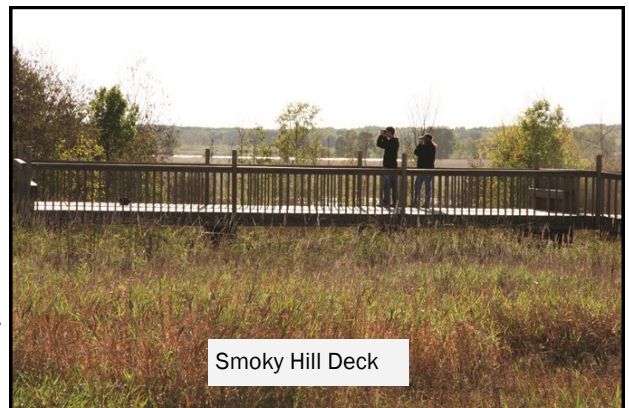
Around 1756, there was a battle that took place on Smoky Hill between the Chippewa and the Winnebago (Ho Chunk) tribes. At that time, the Little Eau Pleine River was also called the Sugar Maple River, because of the numerous Sugar Maples along its banks. The Chippewa, as was their custom each spring, moved downstream to tap the maple trees for sap to make sugar. In their absence a band of Winnebago moved in, took over and set up camp on the hill. At the time of the battle, the Chippewa were friendly with the French. It became apparent that if they were to regain the Hill they would need help from the French at Green Bay. A runner was sent to the fort and the French agreed to provide help. At that time, they were friends with the Chippewa and they relied on the Chippewa to furnish them with pelts. After the battle was won the Chippewa returned to their village on the Hill, where they remained for many years.



How did it get its name? The Chippewa gave it the name of Smoky Hill because of the fog that occasionally surrounded the top of the Hill. Legend has it they believed that the fog was a manifestation of some "evil spirit".

It is important to note that Smoky Hill was an island in the lake. Around 1908 or 1909 the lake was drained and the river forced to change course. This Hill covered approximately 50 to 60 acres in area. It should be noted that prior to the draining of the area it was heavily forested and had many trails running throughout. It was drained to make a farm there.

Today, there is an observation deck on Smoky Hill. The deck is a great place for watching the many types of birds that come into Rice Lake.





## **“Winged Wonder’s” Event**

Mark your calendar for this year’s “Winged Wonder’s “ event, Celebrating our Native Pollinators. This year’s main topic is “Bees”. At the time of this publication the presenters for the event are not finalized.



The event will be held on **Sunday, June 25th from 11-3pm.**

Along with the presentations and displays, there will be numerous areas for children to make crafts, play games, hike, etc., before, during and after the presentations.

This event is **Free** and **Open to the public.**



7 different species of **bees** were put on the **endangered** species list. If the bees disappear, strawberries, avocados, coffee all disappears.

### **Other Announcements: by Pam Resech-Wildlife Educator**



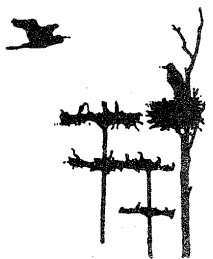
Update from Kaylee Lietz, who was the LTE Naturalist here until October of 2015.

*We are excited to announce that we had a son on December 7, 2016. He was 7 lbs. 12oz. and was 19 inches long. We named him Carter John Lietz.*

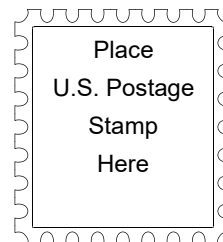
*We are all doing well adjusting to our new addition and we are all very happy.*



Justin Guthman-Vice President won first place at the Friend's Annual Meeting soup contest.



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



Mailing Address Label

**Attention Members:** Please help keep our records current by providing Friends with changes to your contact information.

\*\*\* **Please Note:** the mailing label has your membership date. 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 visit our website: [www.meadwildlife.org](http://www.meadwildlife.org) or stop by the Mead Visitor Center.

## Wetland's Gazette



### Annual Earth Week Clean Up Day at Mead & McMillan Wildlife Areas

\*\*\***Later Date:** Saturday, April 29th 9:00am—1:00pm

Come celebrate the ending of Earth Week, by helping with our annual spring clean-up day. We hope you and your family will take advantage of this great opportunity to join us in the fun of enjoying nature and helping "spruce-up" the wildlife areas. Your efforts will be rewarded with a lunch @ the Mead Center!!

To get your assignment, please meet at one of the following areas; for the Mead Wildlife Area-the Center and for McMillan Marsh-the parking lot at the end of Meadow Avenue. We will be working on the following tasks:

- Picking up trash in parking lots and along roadsides, both properties
- Cleaning around the outside of the Mead Center; windows, & kiosks
- Gardening activities: pruning shrubs, removing dead plants, putting out plant signs@ Center

*Volunteers should bring their own leather gloves and rubber boots. We will provide rubber gloves, safety vests, & garbage bags. Following the clean up, we will provide a lunch of BBQ's on a bun, chips, and soda. If you would like to contribute a dish to pass, it is welcome, but not necessary. Please let us know, if you plan to bring something!*

\*\*\*To help us coordinate the site activities; Volunteers should RSVP by **Monday, April 20th**

**Mead Crew-Pam Resech:** 715-457-6771 ext. 2 or email [pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov](mailto:pamela.resech@wisconsin.gov)

**McMillan Crew-Kyle Christianson:** 715-457-6771 ext. 3 or email [kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov)