



WETLAND'S GAZETTE

Volume 14, Issue 2

August 2018

From the Field

Article by Property Supervisor - Brian Peters

As I mentioned in my last update, we are planning to acquire a UTV (utility vehicle) with tracks and cab that can be used for habitat management activities and access in soft ground conditions and snow. There was a slight delay in the purchase process as I needed to wait for our new budget year to begin on July 1st. Several donations have been received toward the purchase of this unit. Donors include the National Wild Turkey Federation, Whitetails Unlimited Marshfield Chapter and the Friends of Mead/McMillan Inc. I sincerely thank the donors for their commitment to the effective management of wildlife habitats on the Mead and McMillan Wildlife Areas! They have started the process to acquire the UTV.

As usual, dike repair work is a continuous process when conditions are suitable and staff are free from other commitments. There are several major dike renovation projects funded by duck stamp dollars that are ongoing. The Teal Dike project is completed. This project was funded by a federal NAWCA grant with match by the Wis. DNR and contributions from donors including the Friends of Mead/McMillan. At a future date we are planning to invite all donors to come and view the finished project that they helped make possible. A second NAWCA grant was awarded for Smokey Hill dike renovation. This project is partially completed.



Photo by Patrice Evers

The Wisconsin Rapids area wildlife program staffing level has decreased significantly because of vacancies in Wildlife Technician positions. This is due to retirements, promotions and one person leaving state service. Mead is fully staffed but will be aiding the Sandhill/Meadow Valley work unit until some of the vacancies are filled with new personnel. Sandhill currently has only one staff member on duty to manage 80,000 acres and the associated facilities. The hiring process is proceeding.

Two prescribed burns were completed on Mead this spring to improve grassland habitat. Approximately 300 acres were burned. More treatments are in the works for late summer/fall.

Annual duck banding operations are progressing. The goal is to achieve our quota of 500 mallards and 125 wood ducks by September 4th. We use a cannon net to capture the mallards and walk-in traps for the wood ducks.

Fall will be here soon and the hunters and trappers will be on the properties enjoying these activities. These are the primary uses that wildlife areas are managed for. And the hunters and trappers foot the bill for most of the habitat management and infrastructure maintenance work that we do on the properties.

Friends of the Mead/McMillan

Officers:

- *President—Jeremiah Smith
Wausau: 715-572-6372
Email: jere1683@gmail.com*
- *V-President—Justin Guthman
Mosinee: 715-650-3032 Email:
Justin.Guthman@ascension.org*
- *Secretary—Connie Milz
Milladore: 715-457-3106*
- *Treasurer—Matt Ahles
Mosinee: 920-991-2209*

Directors:

- *Joan Dickrell*
- *Marlene Furo*
- *Arne Ruha*
- *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*



Dragonfly Pond Docks

Article by Don Fox Photos by Don Fox

On February 12, 2018, Friends volunteers started removing the old Tommy Docks from the Dragon Fly Pond. This task was completed by March 28th.

In March the design for the eight new docks was developed, Friends Board of Directors approved \$4,000 to fund the project, and the sites for the docks were selected.

On April 10 and 11 the eight 5 x 8 foot and two 5' x 12' dock frames were assembled, the deck boards were cut and predrilled.

On May 10th volunteers started the installation of the docks. By August 1st this project was completed.

The total cost of materials used for this project was \$3,710.44. This total was \$289.56 under the \$4,000 the Friends Board of Directors had approved for this project.

On this project five Friends volunteers spent a combined total of 305 hours to complete all the phases listed above. Each volunteer donated the following hours:

- John Shippy - 15
- Warren Austin - 51.5
- Tim Kaiser - 55.5
- Dick Shepherd - 86
- Don Fox - 97

Dick and Don put the safety rails on the two L shaped docks. The photos are of the west L shaped dock and the east L shaped dock with the gravel ramp dam wings installed. John and Warren added gravel to complete the approach ramps.

Once the draw-down is over and Dragon Fly Pond refills, there will be eight docks for the visiting students to use for their water studies.



John, Warren, Tim and Dick, it was great working with you on this project. Your dedication to getting it completed is appreciated.



McMillan March Matters

Article by Kyle Christianson

2018 has been an interesting year. A late season snow storm slowed down the oncoming spring and brought us a lot of water. Beavers have been extremely active throughout the marsh. They are a constant source of frustration and amazement. Trapping opportunities abound! With the assistance of the AWA, we installed an apple tree/mast tree planting on the west end of the property. The purpose is to provide an area of year-round food for small game and deer. For those who use the bike trail. Dike work will take place in August in the Pool 6/Main Flowage area. The bike trail will be closed during operational hours and opened while not operating.

As August sets and September dawns, the usership of the marsh changes. The bike trail closes to bikes August 31st and hunting seasons begin September 1. Please be respectful of all users. Enjoy the marsh and the remainder of summer. Fall will be here before we know it.

As always, if you have questions or comments for McMillan Marsh, call 715-457-6771 ext.3 or email kyle.christianson@wisconsin.gov

Work of the Friends Association

Article by Connie Milz

At our meeting on July 10, 2018; Sue Hall handed our flyers and answered questions about the Fall Family Festival. Date: September 9, 2018 from 11 am to 2 pm. Activities are "Wildlife in Your Backyard" with David Stokes; Wildflower & Butterfly walk at Noon; Animal & nature crafts from 11 am to 1 pm. This is sponsored by Aldo Leopold Audubon Society and Friends of the Mead/McMillan. John Shippy moved that we give Sue Hall up to \$100 to cover the final expenses for the event. Justin was the second and the motion carried.

At this time, we are looking at what Rettler engineering has to offer for our amphitheater project. Their submitted plan for the amphitheater project was completed and does reflect the needs of the DNR. Brian had a plan completed by Rettler and paid the \$2200 because it is acceptable for the DNR. The plan we received from REI was not acceptable by the DNR. The board will get a "Not to Exceed" price from Rettler and get a detailed explanation from them of the project. We still hope that this project can be completed this summer or fall at the latest.

John Shippy reported that six of the eight planned docks on Dragon Fly pond have been completed with a current total of 257 volunteer hours going into the project. The last two were to be completed by the end of July depending on the weather. Another project completed is the Habitat Diversity Lookout project to recognize Tom Meier's service to the Mead.

There is a need to review the agreement between the DNR and our group. Jere suggested that the Executive committee review it for the next meeting.

Brian shared Pam's report; she is at Wisconsin Farm Technology July 10-12. She has an exhibition set up in the Youth tent in Marshfield. The building is having an issue with the internet connection at this time. The spring education program went very well as did the Winged Wonders event; both were considered a success. There are four Story Times coming up yet this summer and bookings for the 2019 spring season are being taken at this time.

Our next meeting is September 4, 2018 at 6pm.



Fall Family Festival Article by Sue Hall

This year the **Fall Family Festival** will be held on Sunday, September 9th, from 11-2. We would like to invite your family and friends to come to celebrate with us at the Mead Wildlife Area. Activities will feature environmentalist, David Stokes who will entertain the audience with live frogs, turtles, insects and other creatures that bring joy to their lives. His “Wildlife in your backyard” presentation will be at 1:00. Prior to his performance, students from Dr. Perry Cook’s UWSP Science Methods classes will help with varied “hands on” craft activities including building a suet feeder with pictures of birds in this area that would come to the feeders. There will be a wildflower and butterfly walk at noon. Participants can also explore the nature trails, the boardwalk, observation decks and "Green Energy: visitors' center".



Snacks will be provided and picnic tables are available if you want to bring a sack lunch.

The event is co-sponsored by the Aldo Leopold Audubon Society and the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Assn. The Mead Wildlife Area and Visitor Center is located at S2148 County Hwy S, Milladore, WI 54454

Spooktacular Article by Pam Resech



Join us for our 8th Annual non-scary,
Family fun night **Halloween** event

This Year's Theme: "Endangered Species"

- ◇ *Decorate a Pumpkin or Cookie*
- ◇ *Play games for Prizes & Candy*
- ◇ *Create a Halloween Craft*
- ◇ *Wear your Halloween Costume*
- ◇ *Spooktacular Safari-Outside*
- ◇ *Meet an Endangered Species*
- ◇ *Enjoy Halloween Refreshments & a Campfire*

Date: Saturday October 20, 2018

Time: 5:30pm-8:00pm

Admission: Free with a non-perishable food item, or \$2.00 per person

Location:

**Stanton W. Mead Education & Visitor Center
S2148 Cty Hwy S Milladore, WI 54454**

**Sponsored by: Friends of the
Mead/McMillan & Mead Staff**

For More Information:

Visit our website: www.meadwildlife.org

Contact: Pam Resech at 715-457-6771 ext. 2



Little Naturalist Storytime

Article by Joan Dickerell & Marlene Furo Photo by Pam Resech

This year the Little Naturalist Storytime was enjoyed by 84 children 37 adults and we had the help of 20 volunteers. The four weeks (July 19-August 9) went by quickly. Our first topic to explore was “Rocks and Minerals. Participants heard a story about how rocks and minerals are formed followed by a hike to the geo-field. Everyone went home with a rock that they painted, enjoyed lava cupcakes, and ended their day with the “Stone Soup” story.

The second week’s topic was “Endangered Species”. Endangered species on the Mead are depicted on an educational display board that was shared with the children along with a Whooping Crane story. Pam, our Educator, took the group on a hike along Dragonfly Pond, continued around the Boardwalk Trail and ended on Turkeyfoot Trail. The hikers learned about the various habitats on the Mead and how they are necessary to ensure that all species can survive in this area. The children created a stamp track card, explored pelts, bones and pictures of the endangered Mead animals. Their day ended with a crane’s nest snack.

The third week started with a great story about fossils. The children then were able to search for and crack open geodes found in the new sand pit area. Each geode held an artifact that the children were able to keep. Their take home crafts were fossil rubbings and Kool-Aid clay casts of ancient fossils. Pretzel butterflies were enjoyed as a snack.

Paul Bunyan, his wife and friends came for the last story time. Did you know that seven logging camps were once located in the Little Eau Pleine River valley, which is now the Mead property? The new lumberjacks called Greenhorns (the children) were awakened by the camp cook clanking a wooden spoon and a pitcher. The greenhorns started their day by watching a PowerPoint about the life of a lumberjack in logging camp, which was presented by Pam. The children were given character names of camp workers and asked to act them out during the presentation. “Fitters” notched the tree, and “Fellers” used the crosscut saw to saw down the tree. There were many more camp jobs that we learned about during the presentation. Saturday night was special as everyone at camp danced and so did we. What fun! The kids made tree cookie name tags out of real trees, ate sinkers (donut holes) drank blackjack (coffee, only we had root beer) and ate ice cream, which our story about Paul Bunyan has him responsible for inventing. Items and clothing from camp life were on display and discussed. The volunteers & staff wore clothing from the era.





Winged Wonders - Marvelous Monarchs

Article Kris Rued Clark Photos by Pam Resech

In celebration of our native pollinators, Mead Wildlife Area hosted the annual “Winged Wonders” family event on Sunday, June 24, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. The event serves as an education for children and adults, with children’s activities, crafts, a scavenger hunt, and prizes.

This year’s featured presenters were retired kindergarten teacher, Kathy McGrath and her husband, Pat, from Port Edwards. The two have become avid hunters, chasing after the eggs and caterpillars for Monarch butterflies. During the summer months, they turn their home into a giant nursery for Monarch butterflies, filling aquariums with eggs, caterpillars, and milkweed, waiting for them to transform into Monarch butterflies. They then release the butterflies, hoping to slow their decline due to habitat loss. The butterflies that hatch in August are tagged before release, in hopes they will be found in Mexico and their journey will be recorded.

A dynamic speaker, Kathy puts her decades of classroom experience to good use, keeping children engaged throughout her presentations. Of particular interest were the Monarchs still in the chrysalis stage, suspended from their glue-like buttons, and passed around the room. Kathy encourages others to get involved in helping to save the Monarch butterfly. In the spring of 2017 she worked to have Port Edwards named the first Monarch Village in the United States, and Port Edwards now has a butterfly garden to encourage our native pollinators. Doug Watson was also on hand with his information and display to help encourage visitors to help save the Monarch butterfly.



Leonard Pijan displayed his original artwork, including many drawings of wildlife, and shared his enthusiasm for



drawing and painting with the attendees. Also, on hand was Kris Rued-Clark, signing and discussing her book, co-authored with Sylvia Oberle, “Adventures on Wisconsin’s Ice Age Trail,” and encouraging others to find a nearby trail to hike. The Ice Age Trail is one of 11 National Scenic Trails and has the distinction of being entirely within the state of Wisconsin. The Ice Age Trail traces the terminus of the last glaciers that carved the landscape of our state 12,000 years ago.

Wood County Master Gardeners gave a presentation and helped children plant seeds in cups to take home. Throughout the “Winged Wonders” event, visitors took time to walk outside and look for native pollinators among the wildflowers blooming. Volunteers from the Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association sold raffle tickets and beverages and assisted with children’s craft activities, in addition to helping to plan and sponsor the event.



USSA

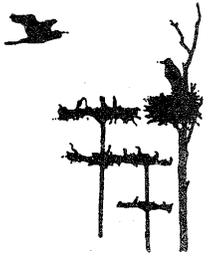
Article & Photo by Joan Dickerell

The Mead Wildlife Area welcomed thirteen youth hunters, their families and mentors on April 12, 13 and 14th. But Mother Nature had other plans, as you recall, central Wisconsin had that last snow storm of the season, which dumped about two feet of snow for everyone to enjoy. Let me share the story of one USSA (United Special Sportsman Alliance) family and the turkey hunt at the Mead on that weekend. Although the disabilities or critical illnesses that the hunters have didn't change their quest for the wily turkey.

Angie has three daughters ages twelve to fifteen and Laura age thirteen was the lucky USSA hunter this year. The family from Genesee, Wisconsin, was excited about the hunt and exploring the wilderness area of the Mead. This was the first year that the Mead Center was hosting the event and Angie couldn't have been happier with the warm, welcoming atmosphere she and her family got at the Center. She said that the teenaged daughters were over-whelmed by the mounts, pelts and information about the area that they were able to explore while they waited for their hunting sister to return. Angie stated that the gathering location was a positive change and even with the weather conditions, that were all but perfect, the Center was a comfortable and warm area to meet at when the hunters and mentors ended their hunting day. We were very pleased by how well the property was cleared of snow.

Although Laura did not get a bird, she can hunt again next year, the over-all success rate was 7 turkeys, all toms. Laura and her family will visit the property again with good memories





**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 or stop by the Mead Visitor Center.

Wetland's Gazette

Friends of the Mead/McMillan Membership

PLEASE CHECK RENEWAL DATE ON YOUR NEWSLETTER LABEL

The Mead and McMillan Wildlife Areas are dedicated to preserving and enhancing areas in Central Wisconsin for many to enjoy and to learn about their wildlife heritage. Friends of the Mead/McMillan Association partner with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to promote this mission by volunteering and also offering financial support through membership in the Association.

Annual individual/family membership is \$30. Sponsor is \$100.00 per year, two additional Sponsor renewals becomes Lifetime. One time \$300.00 is Lifetime

Make Check payable to Friends of the Mead/McMillan. Please enter amount: Renewal _____

You can also use the form below to renew or upgrade your membership.

Renew online at www.meadwildlife.org This website is also supported by members.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____

Mail to: Friends of Mead/McMillan membership
S2148 County Hwy S, Milladore, WI, 54454