

DANE COUNTY NATURAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Dedicated to the protection and preservation of natural areas in and around Dane County through conservation easements, land donations and education.

FALL 2000

Local Environmental Stewards Shine

In March, the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation took time to recognize four significant contributions to preserving our community's natural heritage at the seventh Stewardship Awards Reception. The event took place at Fyfe's Corner Bistro in Madison.

"It's important to honor the work of those who have made a lasting impression on the landscape," says Executive Director Daniëlle Wood. "These awards present an opportunity to celebrate both the land and people who are dedicated to its preservation."

This year's Stewardship Award winners were:

- The Town of Dunh for its groundbreaking Purchase of Development Rights program, which has helped protect hundreds of acres.

- Kathleen Falk for her contributions to conservation in Dane County, including her leadership on "Design Dane" – an initiative to guide local growth.
- John Lussier for his strong support of the Dane County Parks Department, including the Fish Lake Project and the Heritage Center at Lake Farm Park.
- The Wisconsin State Journal for its seminal role in raising public awareness about the need to preserve Lower Eagle Heights Woods and Fish Lake.

(continued on page 5)



Keynote Speaker:
Nina Leopold Bradley
See excerpts from her
speech on page 5.

photo by Ed Blume

Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Bolsters Foundation

The Bolz Family has again demonstrated its staunch support for the Natural Heritage Foundation's work. The Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation has established an endowment fund for our organization with the Madison Community Foundation. Annual distributions from the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation Endowment Fund will support the Natural Heritage Foundation's operating expenses.

This fund has been established as a matching grant to strengthen the land trust's long-term security. With that in mind, the Eugenie Mayer Bolz Family Foundation will match contributions totaling up to \$150,000.

"We're happy to support the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation," says Bob Bolz, who helps direct his family's foundation. "We believe strongly in its work, and think this fund will go a long way to giving the organization a stable financial base."

Bolz is one of the Natural Heritage Foundation's founding members. He served on our board of directors from 1984 to 1990. He currently sits on the organization's Endowment Committee.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for our members to join the Bolz family in supporting conservation close to home," says

FISH LAKE LOWDOWN:

What's the buzz on our Fish Lake Project? The Foundation just received the State Stewardship money we were awarded to help buy this property. This grant covers the first two phases of the three-step purchase. The remainder of the funding will come after we complete the third and final step next April. At that point, the Foundation will transfer all of its Fish Lake property to the Dane County Parks Department.

(continued on page 3)

Executive Director Daniëlle Wood.

Members can contribute directly to the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation Endowment Fund at the Madison Community Foundation. For more information, contact Wendy Coe at 232-1763. We will also be sending more information about how you can participate in this challenge grant after the first of the year.

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GIS in Land Use Planning at DCNHF

Late this summer, Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation set up a Geographic Information System (GIS). Because it can tie a variety of information to a geographic area, GIS is one of the most powerful tools available for environmental conservation. The Foundation will apply GIS technology to our planning and projects. This will give us the ability to use available data to make more informed decisions.

What is GIS?

GIS is a computer-based system for mapping and analyzing information about events and objects in the world. It stores the information in "layers" that are linked by location, such as a parcel or township. GIS combines database information with geographic analysis – allowing better use of spatial data. For instance, GIS can tie information about an area's soils and vegetation to information about land ownership for analysis. This can be useful when looking at how development patterns are affecting natural areas.

GIS in land use and environmental planning

GIS is commonly used in land use and environmental planning. The foundation of GIS analysis as applied to these disciplines can be traced to the Ecological Method presented in *Design with Nature*, a landmark book written by Ian McHarg in 1968. This concept outlines the values, principles, and processes for guiding human development in the natural world. Information integration is a core concept underlying both the Ecological Method and GIS. As a tool to bring together information from the specialized earth science disciplines, GIS can identify areas unsuitable for development or areas most suitable for conservation.

GIS at DCNHF

The Foundation owes its new GIS capabilities to a grant from the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI)—the leading developer of GIS software. The grant came from ESRI's Conservation Program, and included GIS software and training. ESRI's Conservation Program has provided similar grants to many organizations, including The Nature Conservancy.

The Dane County Land Information Office is helping us develop our GIS. Fred Iausley, their GIS specialist, assisted us with obtaining and using county information on soils, watersheds, waterways, vegetation, property ownership, and roads. The county also recently completed its 'Fly Dane 2000' program. This aerial photography project provides current, highly detailed images of the county for a variety of applications. For instance, such imagery allows us to locate different types of land cover, such as woodland, agriculture, driveways, or open fields.

There are many potential uses for GIS at a land trust. For example, we could use GIS to overlay watershed, environmental corridor, and parcel information over an aerial photograph to determine what sensitive areas are under development pressure. Initially, the Foundation will focus on assessing our region's conservation needs, project planning, coordinating our efforts with government and other partners, and mapping. Using GIS technology in these areas will help us to more effectively and efficiently accomplish our mission.



Nancy Weiman

Welcome Nancy

Nancy Weiman has joined our staff as our administrative assistant. Prior to working with us, Nancy was secretary to the Director of Church Planting, Great Lakes Baptist General Conference. Nancy has also been a receptionist for Physicians Plus. She has been married to her husband Elliot for 32 years. She has two grown daughters and is grandma to Sarah, 2, and Jonah, 5 months. Nancy lives in Madison, and enjoys walking and shopping.

Hail and Farewell ~

The year 2000 has seen some changes at the Foundation. Last spring, we welcomed three new members to our Board of Directors:

Ed Blume tramped through the woods and waded through small streams as a boy in Indiana where he was born and raised. He graduated from Purdue University in 1969, and came to the University of Wisconsin-Madison for his master's degree in Political Science. Since then, he has worked primarily in the capitol as a staff member or lobbying for a variety of companies and associations. Ed lives in Madison with his wife, Sandy, and their two children, Jeff and Elizabeth.

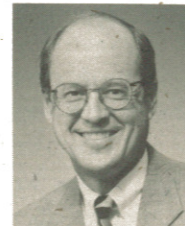
Chris Hughes is a senior associate with Stafford & Rosenbaum, LLP in Monona. Chris received his undergraduate degree in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and his law degree from Indiana University. His practice focuses on general municipal law, land use, and real estate. He also has been involved in land use education. Chris enjoys outdoor activities such as canoeing and hiking in his spare time. He lives in Middleton with his wife and two sons.



Ed Blume



Chris Hughes



Mark Nolen

Mark Nolen is Executive Vice President of Johnson Bank in Madison. He has worked in the banking and commercial lending industry for 28 years. Mark's community involvement has included chairing the Town of Springfield Plan Commission for several years, serving as a committee member for the Pheasant Branch of Ducks Unlimited for 15 years, and being active in the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time at his family cabin in Vernon County. He also enjoys hunting, golfing, and other outdoor activities. Mark is a lifelong Madison-area resident, and he and his wife Janie now live in the Town of Springfield. He has two grown children. Mark currently serves as Board Secretary.

We've also said goodbye to two outstanding board members. Thank you for your hard

work and dedication to making sure the Dane County area remains a wonderful place to live.

Larry Gleasman sat on our Board of Directors for six years. He is a small business owner, as well as the Governmental Affairs Director and Equal Opportunities Coordinator for the REALTORS Association of South Central Wisconsin. He serves or has served on the Board of Directors for the Madison Development Corporation, the Urban League, Community Housing and Services, the Dane County Public Affairs Council, and the Dane County Development Company. He is also a former County Board Supervisor and long time community activist.

Jeanie Sieling served on our Board of Directors for five years. She currently directs the Dane County Department of Planning and Development, and now is on the board of 1000 Friends. She also worked as Executive Assistant to former Dane County Executive Rick Phelps. Jeanie also served as Mayor of Fitchburg from 1985 to 1988.



photo by Jeffrey Strabel

Blue Mounds Tour

In June, Julie Hayward and Donn D'Alessio hosted a tour of their conservation easement in June. Attendees benefited from the collective knowledge of three naturalists, as they tramped through the property's oak woods, wetlands, and recovering prairies. Special thanks to our hosts, tour organizers Kathy Oppengard and Board Member Gene Roark, and our naturalists - former Board Member Wayne Pauly, Rich Henderson and Scott Sauer. Here the group enjoys the Hayward-D'Alessio oaks.

Fish Lake (cont'd. from pg 1)

Meanwhile, the wheels are already in motion for turning the lakeshore, woods and farmland into the newest Dane County Park. The Parks Department, along with partners including the Foundation, has begun planning for the clean up and restoration of the land. The planning process will include opportunities for public input. While the transformation of the Fish Lake site is just beginning, it took commitment from our members and donors to bring the Fish Lake project this far. Hats off to you!

If you have questions relating to the restoration of the Fish Lake property, please contact Jim Mueller at the Dane County Parks Dept. at 246-7968.

Stewards (contd. from pg 1)

Nina Leopold Bradley gave the evening's keynote speech. Bradley is a lifelong conservationist and one of the founders of the Aldo Leopold Foundation in Baraboo. She is one of Leopold's four children. (See facing page for the text of her remarks.)

The event also acknowledged the efforts of people or groups who helped make the Foundation's Fish Lake Project a success. Honorees included: the City of Lodi, Mike Irwin, Kathy and Bill Pielsticker, Roxbury Tavern owner Tom Gresser, Dorf Haus Restaurant owners Vern and Betty Maier, Jean Unmuth, Wendy Weisensel and Dave Marshall, Doug Haag, and Ray Unrein.



Stewardship Award Winners Kathleen Falk and Town of Dunn Chair Ed Minihan



Wisconsin State Journal Columnist and Fish Lake Raconteur Bill Wineke amuses the crowd.



Fish Lake honorees show off their spiffy new Fish Lake Mugs. L-R: Lisa Lutz of the Roxbury Tavern, Jean Unmuth, Wendy Weisensel, Dave Marshall, Vern Maier, Betty Maier, Bill Pielsticker, Ray Unrein, and Mike Irwin.



Former Board Member Cal DeWitt presents Beth Hastings of the Town of Dunn with its award.

2000 Stewardship Awards

photos by Ed Blume



Stewardship Award winner Jack Lussier and his daughter.

An Ethic of Care

Excerpts from Nina Leopold Bradley's remarks at the 2000 Stewardship Awards:

Without community support and understanding, many of our efforts, especially in the field of conservation, are to no avail.

One of my father's most serious themes is a call for people to connect with the land and to connect with each other. He writes: "the individual is a member of a community of interdependent parts...to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively, the land."...

In 1948, he wrote: "That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics." There are not many scientists who speak of love or an ethic of care.

This morning early, my husband and I were walking some of the trails on the Leopold Reserve. Wind direction had quieted the traffic noise from I-90. Wood ducks were courting on our pond; chorus frogs were singing their national anthem; phoebes were catching insects on the blooming Skunk Cabbage; goose music was everywhere. I know that my father, too, would have loved it.

Leopold's love of the land was deep and complicated.

His love of the land was sometimes filled with joy. He wrote on one occasion, "Never had there been so rare a day or so rich a solitude to spend it in."

At times, his love of the land was heavy with grief. He wrote: "one of the penalties of an ecological education is that one lives alone in a world of wounds."

The depth of his feelings directs his pen: "No more snipe whistling in the meadow"; "no more piping of widgeons and chattering of teal as darkness covers the marshes"; "no more whistling of swift wings when the morning star pales in the east"; "what if there be no more goose music?"

Sometimes Leopold spoke in metaphors of art: "The landscape of any farm is the owner's portrait of himself."

In *The Green Pasture* he wrote: "I know a painting so evanescent that it is seldom viewed at all, except by some wandering

deer. It is a river who wields the brush, and it is the same river who, before I can bring my friends to view his work, erases it forever from human view. After that it exists only in my mind's eye.

With each essay in his small volume, *A Sand County Almanac*, Leopold celebrates the community – the network of dependencies and complications, the web of relationships, finally proclaiming his "land ethic" – a moral theory grounded in caring relationships between human beings and the non-human world.

In 1935, my father bought his worn out 80 acres in the sand counties of central Wisconsin. In the deepest depression of American history, this land had been exploited. It had been planted to corn until the depleted soil blew into sand dunes. After the last farmer abandoned it, a boot-legger took over and continued the reckless treatment until the house burned down, leaving only the metal rings from his liquor barrels as his legacy.

The only building left on the property was a dilapidated chicken-house turned cowshed with manure knee-deep on the floor. The corned out fields surrounding the Shack were coming up to sand burs and panic grass, each of which burrowed into your socks in a painful way. How could anyone love such a place?

Well, there was work to be done. The Shack became a family enterprise to which each member contributed, cutting wood, splitting wood, building bird houses, planting prairie grasses and wildflowers, shrubs and trees. From April to October scarcely a weekend day went by that someone did not plant or transplant something.

My father wrote: "On this sand farm in Wisconsin, first worn out and then abandoned by our bigger-and-better society, we try to rebuild, with shovel and axe, what we are losing elsewhere. It is here that we seek – and still find – our meat from God."

For all of us, Father, Mother, who was always understanding and enthusiastic, and the five siblings, the Shack years were an experience in the slow nurturing and restoring of this sad estate. At the same time, we were being sensitized to love and respect for the land. Planting, weeding, watering, watching – there was time for adventure, discovery, and

learning that came with the simple existence. In the one-room Shack, we felt the comfort of being warm before the fire, cozy in our sleeping bags, creative in making our own music, and always that splendid togetherness. As we worked, little did we realize what was happening to our lives.

It took more than a few weekends of work and more than a few years of plant growth to rebuild the demolished ecosystem. Today the rewards of these Shack years are more than a healthy landscape – they are values deep within each of us. They have directed our lives. This property has become our legacy – our emotional commitment to bringing back the elegance and the beauty that were indigenous to this land. Here is an expression of love for the land, a bonding engendered by hard work and lots of play.

Recreation today has taken a new direction. Now, so many years later, I like to think of the Shack project as a metaphor for second-home development!

Aldo Leopold's "second home" pioneered an alternative route toward recreation – away from the five-bathroom palace perched atop a well manicured hillside – an exhibition perhaps of consumption and its "standard of living."

In summary Leopold wrote: "Recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely mind." He suggests that such receptivity might allow us to expand our notion of recreation to include such activities as nature study and research, ecological restoration, and participation in conservation projects.

My father had the unusual ability to speak of love in his professional writing – this at a time when scientists tended to restrict themselves to cold, explicit and unemotional professionalism.

The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation, dedicated to the protection and preservation of natural areas, is one of many nongovernmental organizations that provide opportunity for volunteers to participate in working the land. Your foundation helps to answer Leopold's call for people to connect with each other as they connect with the land; this is a kind of bonding that will continue to strengthen our community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Thank You

The Natural Heritage Foundation thanks our dedicated volunteers and supporters, including:

Ed Blume for donating office equipment,

Debby Bushy for helping out around the office,

The Cornell Family for helping to maintain Wilke Preserve,

Julie Hayward & Donn D'Alessio for their hospitality on our field trip this spring,

Jay Hole for helping to re-arrange our offices,

Travis Olson for installing our mini-blinds,

Kathy Oppegard & Gene Roark for organizing our 2000 field trip,

Wayne Pauly, Scott Sauer and Rich Henderson for serving as naturalists on the June excursion to the Hayward/D'Alessio Easement,

Bill Pielsticker, for ongoing presentations on the Fish Lake Project,

Kathy Pielsticker for serving as the chair of our outreach committee,

Donna Thomas for joining our fundraising committee,

Mark Williams for helping maintain the Wilke Preserve parking lot, and

Tom Williamson of the Madison Public Schools Work and Learn Program, for helping out around the office.

Our special thanks go to long-time friend Hazel Knudson, who recently donated \$5,000 for maintenance of Wilke Prairie.

Thanks also to the following businesses and organizations for a variety of help:

The Dane County Conservation League for donating the proceeds from their Spring Banquet Raffle to Fish Lake,

Grant Thornton, LLP consultants Dale Manning and Scott Laich for upgrading our information systems, and

Michael, Best & Friedrich Attorney Johanna London for helping develop our new planned giving program.



Kudos for Token Creek

Board members and friends were on hand to receive an award from the Dane County Executive's office at the Design Dane! State of the Land Conference 2000. Our work in the Token Creek Watershed was honored as an Innovative Land Use Initiative for a broad-based grassroots initiative in watershed natural resource protection, restoration and growth management." Pictured here are (l-r): Windsor Town Chair Alan Harvey, Susan Fox, former Board Member Jeanie Sieling, Past President Mike Slavney, Leonard Massie, Gene Roark, former Board Member Jan Zimmermann, Token Creek Watershed Board Member Hedy Grove, Kris Euclide, and Executive Director Danielle Wood.

They Made It Happen

Our deepest gratitude goes to the following individuals who helped make our Stewardship Awards Ceremony wonderful:

Ed Blume, Susan Fox, Leonard Massey, Deb Slavin, Mike Slavney, Jeff Strobel, and Mark & Peggy Williams.

Thanks also to our underwriters:

Berbee Information Networks, Craig and Lea Culver, Fontana Sports Specialties, and Suby Von Haden & Associates.

And to our sponsors:

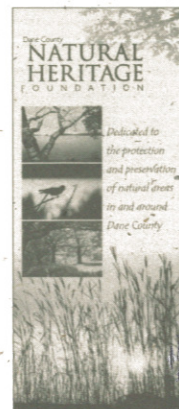
Anna & Dale Bender, Tom & Shaila Bolger, Nan Cheney, Lisa & Jim Cummings, Cal & Ruth DeWitt, Lloyd & Pat Eagan, Emily H. Earley, Kris Euclide & Doug Steege, Harold "Bud" Jordahl, Rick Kavelage, William Lunney & Judie Pfiefer, Howard & Nancy Mead, Jean & Walter Meanwell, Gail & Dan Shea, Al Nemeth & Deborah Slavin, Gene & Jean Roark, Jeanie & Jerry Sieling, Bill White, Williams Environmental Associates, and Jan & Scott Zimmermann.

Special Gifts

Honor friends or family who love our community's natural beauty by helping to protect it. A special gift to the Foundation can commemorate a birthday or other special occasion, or honor a loved one.

Memorial

In Memory of Joyce Steinmetz,
From Jean Meanwell



Share Our New Brochure with Your Friends

For copies of our beautiful new brochure, please contact us at 258-9797. This is a handy way to spread the word about our organization and its work. Special thanks to Designer Jeff Strobel for donating countless hours on this project!

Sprucing Up Wilke Preserve

Six stalwarts from accounting firm Virchow, Krause & Company, LLP put in a backbreaking afternoon's labor at Wilke Prairie August 31.

Christine Smith, Stacy Anderson, Patty Zibrowski, Pat Hamann, Debra Cook, and Lynn Baldwin spent the hottest day of the summer refurbishing our parking lot and collecting ox-eye sunflower seed with Foundation staff and Vice President Mark Williams. They were participating in the United Way's Eighth Annual Day of Caring. More than 2,000 volunteers donated their time and talent to area non-profits, including the Foundation.

Matt Ruwaldt, an intern with Madison Audubon, led the after-noon's seed-collecting expedition. According to Matt, ox-eye sunflower seed costs approximately \$85 per pound. The sunflowers are well-established on the Wilke prairie, so Madison Audubon will use the seed on prairie restorations elsewhere.

Virchow Krause volunteer Christine Smith collects sunflower seeds.



Debra Cook at the United Way Day of Caring event.



Vice President Mark Williams tames the parking lot vegetation at Wilke Preserve.



50 tons of gravel makes for a long afternoon.

Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation

Help us protect natural areas close to home!

Membership categories:

- ☐ Individual \$25
- ☐ Household \$50
- ☐ Enthusiast \$100
- ☐ Benefactor \$250
- ☐ Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/Zip _____

Please send me information on:

- ☐ Volunteering
- ☐ How to make a gift through my will
- ☐ How to make a gift of real estate

Contributions are tax-deductible as provided for by law.

Please make checks payable to the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation.

Thank you!

- ☐ Check this box if you prefer to remain anonymous.

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Wilke Preserve

By Matt Nilsson

Editor's Note: This is the latest in a series of retrospectives on the Natural Heritage Foundation's preservation projects over the past 17 years.

In 1901, Hazel Knudson was born on a farm just north of Waunakee in the Town of Vienna. Highway 113 borders the property, and back then it was little more than a dirt road that people traveled by horse. Knudson still lives in the area today and has fond memories of the farm. In 1993 she decided that she wanted to protect it from development so she contacted the Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation.

"We talked with her about what she wanted and she decided to make a donation," recalls Ruth Oppedahl, the Natural Heritage Foundation's Past Program Director. "Her donation was matched with state Stewardship funds so we were able to acquire the land."

In addition to the farm, much of the 38-acre parcel was wetland with a stream feeding into

Six Mile Creek. Knudson wanted to turn it into a small wildlife refuge that people could use for field trips and nature study.

"Waunakee is growing and I wanted to create something of beauty to act as a buffer against urban sprawl," Knudson said shortly after her donation, which was dedicated to the memory of her parents, Franklyn and Augusta Wilke and her brother, Clarence Wilke.

The foundation decided that it would be best to restore the farmland to native prairie.



"It only made sense that if it was going to be owned by a land trust, it should eventually be planted to native plants," Oppedahl says.

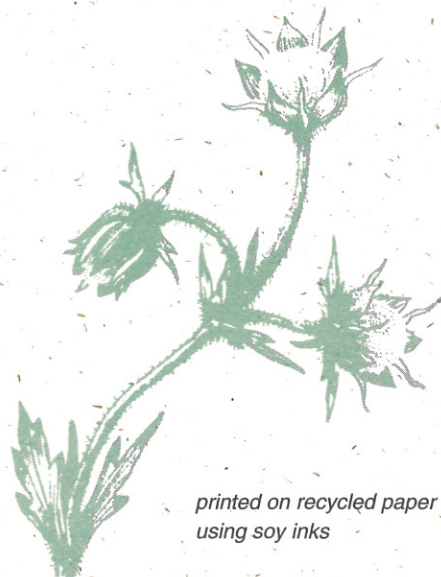
"The goal was to plant a high percentage of flowers. We were trying something a little different so it would be more colorful."

Among the prairie flowers included in the plan were evening primrose, ox-eye sunflower, purple prairie clover, rattlesnake master, sweet black-eyed Susan, white-false indigo and yellow coneflower. Volunteers collected hundreds of pounds of seeds and began planting in the spring of 1995.

Today, the restoration is still underway. And although the Wilke Prairie Preserve is far from complete, it has served as a valuable demonstration project on prairie restoration and a site for student research. It has also provided much-needed wildlife habitat, especially for birds such as meadowlarks, ring-necked pheasants, sparrows and bobolinks.

yellow coneflowers

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