

DNR eDigest

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The Bureau of Education and Information's goal is to publish "The E-Digest" bi-weekly on paydays. The bureau will publish additional issues, as needed. Contact "E-Digest" editor Diane.Brinson@wisconsin.gov or at 608/266-5215 to submit stories, story ideas and photos that communicate internally the department's work, policies and issues that matter to DNR employees.

January 29, 2009

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DNR National Guard member salutes region's wildlife supervisor

By: Marcus Smith, Southeast Region

Southeast Region (SER) wildlife supervisor **Tami Ryan** became part of American military history when she was honored with an American flag that flew over a U.S. Air Force base in Iraq. Captain **Bill Barthen**, a SER wildlife biologist and an active member of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, presented the flag to Ryan at region headquarters in December in recognition of her support for him as a new DNR employee.

Ryan hired Barthen as a chronic wasting disease (CWD) biologist in June 2006. After only two weeks on the job, he received orders to report to the Border Mission in Arizona. Following his deployment to Arizona, his boots hit the ground in Iraq with Echo Troop, 105th Calvary. It was his second tour of duty in Iraq.

Ryan's flag flew over what was formerly Logistic Support Area Anaconda, where Barthen was stationed. Camp Anaconda is located at Joint Base Balad, 42 miles north of

Baghdad and the headquarters of the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. The 332nd traces its origins back to the 332nd Fighter Group, the home of the Tuskegee Airmen.



Captain Bill Barthen presented Tami Ryan a U.S. flag that flew over a military base in Iraq, in recognition of her support of his service.
WDNR Photo

There is a growing demand for American flags that have flown over military bases in Iraq. According to the U.S. Army's article ["Flags Flown over Palace for Family and Friends,"](#) over 3,000 flags have flown over Al Faw Palace at Camp Victory since the flag program began a year ago. Because of the number of requests, 629 flags are flown each week in honor of individuals and organizations.

Idea for presenting Ryan a flag took shape during 2007 tour of duty.

"Our senior noncommissioned officer (NCO) Sgt. Major Paul Easterday took the initiative to talk to our higher headquarters and see what the likelihood was of our soldiers getting flags flown as mementoes in honor of anybody of their choice. He was authorized and we canvassed our unit, which is about 180 soldiers, and asked how many wanted to do a flag for anybody back home, e.g. family member, employer, a mentor in high school, whatever their situation was."

"I had several people I wanted to recognize, but Tami Ryan from the DNR was my first choice. It's difficult to replace somebody who's not around and yet continue doing their work. I was so new in the organization that I felt a huge debt to the DNR, and Tami's support of my service was exceptional, so I wanted to recognize that in some way," said Barthen.

"Supporting Bill in his military service has been a privilege," said Ryan.

"Although we hear about our military in the news on a regular basis, the experience of working with an Army National Guard member who also is a member of the SER wildlife management program, has been much more personal. I have learned first hand the sacrifices our troops make for our country on a regular basis. It is an honor for me to receive an American flag flown on an army base in Iraq during Bill's second tour of duty there," she added.

Before the flag could be presented to Ryan, a detail of soldiers travelled to Mayor Cell DET 1, the command staff headquarters for each camp, where they raised the flag to fly for a short period of time. Like each flag recipient, Ryan received a numbered certificate, personalized and signed by the command staff.

Ryan was the 923rd recipient of a flag from Camp Anaconda. With upwards of 30,000 service members at any given time at Camp Anaconda, Barthen believes the importance of receiving a flag is hard to overstate.

“When you look at the thousands of service members that have gone through there, it’s quite a privilege to have something like that done. It’s the equivalent of having a flag flown over the White House or a state capitol. It’s pretty significant.”

According to information from the DNR Bureau of Human Resources, Barthen is one of five department employees on active duty in the military. Two are deployed to Afghanistan; one is stationed in Iraq; and two are stateside.

Footnote: *Marcus Smith is the public affairs manager for the Southeast Region.*



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Zebro and Bougie receive 2007 and 2008 Rebecca Wallace Awards

Northern Region enforcement leader **David Zebro** received the 2007 Rebecca Wallace Award and Northeast Region storm water management specialist **Cheryl Bougie** the 2008 Wallace Award at the January 28 Natural Resources Board meeting. Secretary **Matt Frank** presented each with a pen and ink watercolor by retired DNR graphic artist Jim McEvoy.

After a one-year hiatus, the department sought nominations of employees who demonstrated through their work that they had made “the greatest contribution toward either improving relationships with external partner agencies and organizations on mutually-shared environmental quality,” or had “mentored department staff.”

The board created the award in 1997 to honor the memory of Becky Wallace who, with her husband, was killed in an automobile accident, leaving behind three young sons. Many recognized Wallace for her advocacy on behalf of Wisconsin’s water resources.



Because of illness, Dave Zebro was unable to attend the board meeting. In his place, Northern Region director John Gozdziński and Law Enforcement bureau director Randy Stark accepted the Rebecca Wallace Award from Sec. Matt Frank.

WDNR Photo

As chief of Wisconsin's Nonpoint Source Pollution Abatement Program "she will long be affectionately remembered by her colleagues at the department for her dedication to mentoring and supporting her staff, her positive disposition, and her ability to forge partnerships and find common ground between strongly-held divergent points of view," reads the board's memorial resolution.

Zebro honored for leadership and working with partners to mentor young hunters

Now-retired law enforcement supervisor **Michael Bartz** nominated Zebro, Spooner, for the 2007 award. Zebro, a 16-year veteran of the department, brought together and mentored the team that developed and implemented an electronic complaint database which works through the Daily Enforcement Activity Reporting System (DEARS).

In addition, Zebro worked extensively with the state Department of Justice to create an electronic citation system similar to those that other Wisconsin enforcement agencies use. "When implemented this system will greatly reduce workload for wardens and court officers tracking citations, (aid) customer service staff inputting data from paper copies, as well as enhance the accuracy and timeliness of filing and tracking citations," said Bartz.

Other partnership and mentoring on Zebro's list of accomplishments include:

- Bringing together farmers in the crop damage program, hunter education instructors, local conservation clubs and youth to identify and match young people interested in hunting deer who don't have a mentor or place to hunt.
- Bringing local conservation clubs and bear hunters together to clean up thousands of acres of county forest property.

Other conservation wardens around the state have picked up on both of these initiatives.

Zebro's son frequently fishes with him. He also coaches his son's youth hockey team and organizes tournaments.

Bougie became “internal program consultant” in response to staff turnover

Bougie, Green Bay, received the 2008 Wallace Award in recognition of the professional and personal mentoring of staff in the Storm Water Management Program following a large staff turnover during the year. According to her nomination, because Bougie had the most experience, she served as an expert resource for new staff, as well as permanent staff and consultants.



Spencer (left) and Mitch Wallace joined Cheryl Bougie as she proudly displayed the award given in their mother's memory. WDNR Photo

The nomination described Bougie as the person who receives the most complaints and has to deal with many difficult enforcement situations. As a result, she's created working relationships with many consultants and cities' staffs while helping them meet their storm water permit requirements.

Supervisors call her the “internal program consultant,” discussing important program decisions with her and respecting her recommendations and feedback. As the first regional staff specialist, Bougie has trained nearly every employee in the regional program over the past 15 years and is considered a statewide expert.

The nomination refers to Bougie as “the dedicated mother of two sons, helping them succeed in school, mastering the skill of balancing both personal and professional life.” Her husband Dave Bougie joined the storm water program in 2007.

Nominate someone for the 2009 Becky Wallace Memorial Award

All department permanent or project employees are eligible for the Wallace Award. The awards committee encourages nominations from both individuals and groups of employees, e.g. a team, a section, a work group. To learn how to submit a nomination and the criteria for selecting the recipient, go to the [“Rebecca Wallace Memorial Award Nomination Format”](#) Intranet page.

Karen Voss received the first Wallace award in 1998. Subsequent award recipients were **Janet Beach Hanson**, 1999; **Eileen Trainor**, 2000; **Kathy Bartilson**, 2001; **Ron Preder**, 2002; **Nancy Larson**, 2003; **Laura Herman**, 2004; **Tom Lovejoy**, 2005; and **Carol Bentzler**, 2006.

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John Olson honored with 2008 Wildlife Leadership Award

By: Bob Manwell, Office of Communication

DNR furbearer ecologist **John Olson**, Ashland, received the Bureau of Wildlife Management's 2008 Leadership Award at the bureau's statewide meeting in Appleton on January 13.

"John is a leader in his professional life and also a leader 'off the clock,'" said Shawano wildlife technician **James Robaidek** in presenting Olson with the award. "He is an inspiration to others...and an 'eternal educator...'"

Olson is creator and chief organizer of the Wisconsin Fur School, an effort that got its start training DNR wardens and biologists, but now is attended by natural resources students from the University of Wisconsin's Madison and Stevens Point campuses, as well as Northland College.



Son Devin, and his friend Angie O'Neil, shared a proud moment with John Olson as he displayed his 2008 Wildlife Leadership Award.

WDNR Photo

"John has worked tirelessly on developing a set of best management practices for trapping and cable restraint, and his relationship with the Wisconsin Trappers Association has benefited furbearer management and laws in Wisconsin," said Secretary **Matt Frank**.

In addition to being DNR's lead in furbearer management, Olson is a member of the Wolf Management and Wild Rice committees and is liaison to the County Forest Association and the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Fur Harvest Committee. He also is a member of the U.S. Furbearer Conservation Technical Working Group.

Along with having his name added to past leadership award winners, John received a laminated, bent-shaft canoe paddle to propel him in one of his favorite off-work

activities as a modern-day voyageur.

Greg Kessler takes home 2008 Biologist of the Year Award

Greg Kessler, Bayfield and Douglas counties wildlife biologist, took home the Bureau of Wildlife Management's 2008 Biologist of the Year Award.



Greg Kessler accepted the 2008 Wildlife Biologist of the Year Award from Sec. Matt Frank and Bureau of Wildlife Management director Tom Hauge.

WDNR Photo

“Greg is solely responsible for the wildlife management program over a large geographic area including a large metropolitan area, Wisconsin’s largest county forest and Wisconsin’s oldest state forest,” said Frank in introducing Kessler. “In addition to public lands management, he is very active in encouraging and helping private landowners conduct wildlife habitat management.”

Kessler also facilitates hunter and trapper education courses and has helped organize and conduct turkey and bear learn-to-hunt programs, a new archery club and range, county sports shows, hunters' expos and Master Gardener training programs; he also participates in county fair and sports club meetings. He is a major contributor to and publisher of the Area's annual "Wildlife Management Shareholders Report."

Active in more than just wildlife area management, Kessler manages four state natural areas and is DNR liaison to a natural area friends group. He organized and now leads programs to eliminate mute swans and feral pigs in his work area; works with others to control phragmites and spotted knapweed on state properties; and has a hand in gray wolf population monitoring and management in his area.

Kessler also has a reputation for “standing up” to tough hearing cross examinations by senior law office attorneys and former DNR secretaries.

2008 Wildlife Technician of the Year Award went to Brian Peters

The wildlife management program recognized **Brian Peters**, DNR wildlife technician stationed with the Mead Work Unit, as the 2008 Wildlife Technician of the Year.



Lucy Peters joined her husband Brian after he received the Wildlife Technician of the Year Award for 2008.

WDNR Photo

Peters is part of the management team that keeps the 40,000-acre Mead/McMillan work unit humming. He also serves as liaison to the local friend's group; administers major programs such as share-cropping and planning; and holds primary management responsibility for a 6,500-acre wildlife area.

"Brian has proven to be an extremely valuable and dedicated employee," said Bureau of Wildlife director **Tom Hauge**. "He carries the values, expertise and approach that mark a truly great technician. We're thankful for Brian's many years of exemplary service."

A dedicated educator, Peters has contributed to the education of thousands of children who have visited the Stanton W. Mead Education and Visitor Center. His peers also view him as the department's go-to guy when someone needs a Bigfoot called in.

Footnote: *Bob Manwell is a public affairs manager, working with the Division of Land.*


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Retirement benefits presentations set for March and April

The Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) is offering free public presentations on Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) benefits in March and April. These presentations are valuable opportunities for WRS members, their spouses and others to learn more about ETF-administered retirement benefit programs.

ETF strongly encourages participants in the WRS who considering or planning retirement in the near future to attend a session.

Among the topics included in the presentations will be:

- Calculating retirement benefits

- Annuity options
- Separation benefits
- Taxes
- Survivor benefits
- Health and life insurance benefits

ETF also will provide information to questions about when to retire and how to determine actual benefit payments.

Each presentation runs from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., unless noted otherwise. No reservations are needed, and all locations are handicap accessible.

Following are the city, date and location of each spring 2009 presentation:

- **Appleton:** Wednesday, April 15 in the Fox Valley Technical College cafeteria/commons, 1825 N. Bluemound Dr.
- **Cleveland:** Tuesday, April 7 in the Lakeshore Technical College Lake Michigan conference room in the Lakeshore Building, 1290 N. Ave.
- **Eau Claire:** Tuesday, April 21 in the Chippewa Valley Tech College auditorium room 103, 620 W. Clairemont Ave.
- **La Crosse:** Tuesday, March 10 at the UW-La Crosse Cartwright Center–Valhalla (student union), 1741 State St. **Note:** the Social Security Administration will make a presentation from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., followed by the ETF session.
- **Middleton/Madison:** Tuesday, March 24 in the Middleton High School Performing Arts Center, 2100 Bristol St., Middleton
- **Pewaukee:** Tuesday, April 14, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the Waukesha County Technical College Richard T. Anderson College Center, 800 Main St. (Free parking available in lots 7, 8 and 9)
- **Superior:** Tuesday, March 31 at the UW-Superior Rothwell Student Center Ballroom, 1605 Catlin Ave. (Free parking available in lot 2)
- **Wausau:** Thursday, March 19, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the North Central Technical College Center for Health Sciences auditorium, 1000 W. Campus Dr. **Note:** the Social Security Administration will make a presentation from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 pm., followed by the ETF session.

Editor’s Note: The presentation and others are available on ETF’s Internet site as video recordings. Go to ETF’s [“Video Library Mediasite Presentations”](#) web page.

If the weather is severe on the date you plan to attend, listen to local radio stations for possible cancellation.

ETF tentatively plans to hold similar sessions in the fall in Green Bay, Kenosha, Madison, Monroe, Rhinelander, River Falls and West Bend.



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Dick Lathrop receives 2008 Technical Excellence Award

DNR research scientist **Dick Lathrop**, Bureau of Science Services, recently accepted the 2008 “Technical Excellence Award” from the North American Lake Management Society (NALMS).

The society honored Lathrop for “outstanding research in lake restoration, protection and management.”



Dick Lathrop proudly displays his “Technical Excellence Award.”
WDNR Photo

The award recognized Lathrop for:

- his leadership as program chair of the highly-touted 2001 and 2005 NALMS symposia held in Madison;
- his guest editor role in organizing the 2007 special journal issue of "Lake and Reservoir Management" entitled “Long-term perspectives in lake management;”
- and his scientific publications, including one on the eutrophication of the Yahara lakes published in the special issue.

Jim LaBounty, former editor of "Lake and Reservoir Management" said of the 2007 journal: “That is far and away my very favorite special issue. And, your paper is my very favorite paper in 13 years (as editor). I feel it is a contribution that none can top...a great piece of work.”

Lathrop started with the DNR in the spring of 1977, working as a limited term employee (LTE) in the Office of Inland Lake Renewal. Later that year, he took a full-time position

as a limnologist in the pre-reorganization Bureau of Research.



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Science Services research seminar series runs through March

By: R. Chris Welch, Bureau of Science Services

Building on the success and popularity of its previous seminar series, the Bureau of Science Services will conduct another series of seminars highlighting staff research and program activities. The four afternoon sessions will be held at 2:30 p.m. in room G09, GEF 2 in Madison.

Science Services staff invites all DNR employees to attend or tune into a live webcast. A few days before each session, the bureau will email announcements and post flyers with information on connecting to the webcasts.

You don't need to register for these seminars. Consider participating in the following sessions:

Monday, February 9

"The Leopold-Pine Island Important Bird Area: Strategic Habitat Conservation in Action"

Presented by Mike Mossman (Wildlife and Forestry Research Section scientist) along with Yoyi Steele (Wisconsin Important Bird Area Program coordinator in the Bureau of Wildlife Management) and Steve Swenson (Leopold Memorial Reserve ecologist)

Thursday, February 26

"Controlling Eutrophication in the Yahara Lakes: Challenges and Opportunities"

Presented by Dick Lathrop (Environmental Science Services Section research scientist)

Thursday, March 12

"Volunteer assessment of road stream crossings in Wisconsin and recent work in the Pine and Popple watersheds demonstrate the importance of implementing DNR aquatic organism passage guidance"

Presented by Jonathan Simonsen (Office of Energy and Utilities environmental analysis)

and review specialist)

Monday, March 23

"Demographics and viability of wild brook trout and brown trout source populations for Wisconsin's wild trout stocking program"

Presented by Matthew Mitro (Fish and Habitat Research Section scientist)

For more information on the seminar series and/or to receive the email announcements on the webcasts, send a message to me ([Chris Welch](#)) with a subject line reading "Add to seminar distribution" or call (608)264-8592.

Footnote: *Chris Welch is the communications manager in the Science Information Services Section.*


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Forestry publishes intro to "Forest Sustainability Framework"

By: Kathleen Kiefaber, Bureau of Forestry Services

The Division of Forestry and UW-Extension recently released the new publication "[An Introduction to Wisconsin's Forest Sustainability Framework.](#)" The report provides an overview of the organization, content and major themes of "Wisconsin's Forest Sustainability Framework."

The Wisconsin Council on Forestry wanted a way to answer the question: "How do we know whether or not we're managing Wisconsin's forests sustainably?" Last year, an advisory committee to the council decided on a set of criteria and indicators of sustainability and published them as a framework.

The framework provides a template for gathering specific data on the sustainability of Wisconsin's forest resources, and the Division of Forestry is using it to develop "Wisconsin's Statewide Forest Assessment."



Brilliant fall colors on private forestland in the Kickapoo Valley.
WDNR Photo

Once completed in 2010, the assessment will report on the overall condition of Wisconsin's public and private forests; compare past conditions to the present to understand trends; and identify issues and threats to forests statewide. The assessment will serve as a practical and comprehensive reference document for both DNR staff and external partners.

Data covered primarily will focus on a statewide scale, with some information at the county level. Topics cover a range of ecological, social and economic themes, including:

- Housing density and its effects on fragmentation and parcelization
- Changing forest land ownership
- Quality and quantity of growing stock
- Extent and condition of high conservation value forests
- Amount of carbon in biomass by tree species
- Recreational uses and opportunities on forest land

The Division of Forestry will develop a ten-year strategic plan based on the findings from the assessment. Because Forestry shares many of the goals expressed in the plans of other DNR programs, e.g. Wildlife Action Plan, Wisconsin Wetland Strategy, etc., it will look for opportunities where it can integrate with the plans of those programs.

You can order hardcopies of "An Introduction to Wisconsin's Forest Sustainability Framework" from the Darwin Road warehouse. Share your copy with your partners and other organizations that are interested in sustainability issues.

If you have any questions about the "Introduction to Wisconsin's Forest Sustainability Framework" or the "Wisconsin's Statewide Forest Assessment," email [Rebecca Gass](mailto:Rebecca.Gass) or call her at (608)266-9261.

Footnote: *Kathleen Kiefaber is an associate planner with the Bureau of Forestry Services.*

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DNR probing mallard deaths on frozen Rock River

By: Greg Matthews, South Central Region

Snowmobile Alliance offering \$2,000 reward

The DNR is investigating the apparent killing of over 60 ducks by snowmobilers in two separate incidents on the Rock River this past weekend.



Conservation warden trainee Joel Polzin, a Ft. Atkinson native, worked with warden Dave Walz in examining some of the 62 ducks killed by snowmobilers on the Rock River near Ft. Atkinson.
WDNR Photo

The Fort Atkinson Fire Department recovered 62 mallards the morning of January 26, from the frozen Rock River near the Main St. (State Highway 89) bridge in downtown Fort Atkinson. Three injured ducks were rescued and taken to a wildlife rehabilitator.

Jefferson County DNR conservation warden Dave Walz, Watertown, said at least 29 ducks were killed Friday night, January 23, and at least 33 more were killed Sunday evening, January 25. Another half-dozen birds were frozen in the ice and couldn't be recovered.

“These unfortunate incidents reflect badly on the vast majority of snowmobilers who ride responsibly. Hopefully, someone will step forward with information to help us catch whoever was behind this,” said Walz.

The Jefferson County Snowmobile Alliance is offering a \$2,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of those responsible for the latest waterfowl killings by snowmobilers “skipping” over open waters on frozen waterways. A similar episode took place two weeks ago on Lake Winnebago in Fond du Lac County.

Anyone with information on these incidents should contact warden Walz at (920)262-9508 or the DNR Hotline at 1(800)TIP-WDNR (1{800}847-9367). The hotline number operates 24 hours a day seven days a week, and anyone who calls it or otherwise provides information can remain anonymous.

Footnote: *Greg Matthews is the South Central Region's public affairs manager.*

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Consider Savings Bonds in response to economic climate

[National Bond and Trust](#), the company that sells [U.S. Savings Bonds](#) to State of Wisconsin employees, recently announced that the interest rate for the New Series I bonds has gone up again and now is earning 5.64%.

“Today, Americans have the lowest savings rate since the Great Depression. This is due in part to the lack of general education regarding savings and personal financial management,” writes NBT’s president.

NBT promotes Savings Bonds as a safe and secure way to save money. Because the Treasury Department backs the bonds, which are tied to inflation rather than the stock market, they can’t lose value.

As a reminder, state and federal taxes on interest earned are deferred until the holder cashes their Savings Bonds. If the holder uses Savings Bonds to cover expenses for higher education, interest also can be federal tax exempt.

For more information about U.S. Savings Bonds, call National Bond and Trust at (414)443-2744.

