

Bad Axe Watershed

Group makes plans for 2023 funding

By AMBROSIA WOJAHN

Over a dozen members of the Bad Axe Watershed Council held a special budget-planning meeting at the Parr farm on Thursday, June 15.

“The purpose of this meeting is to determine the best use of funding for this group,” Amy Oliver said.

In total, the group was awarded \$20,000 in 2023 DATCP funding and an additional \$20,000 in Ho-Chunk funding. \$11,807 remained in rollover DATCP funding from 2022.

Each amount awarded was divided into categories such as ‘Farm Tours,’ ‘Demos and Research,’ and ‘Supplies.’

“Although DATCP in particular has regulations with the categories, there could be some leeway for moving more money to bigger projects,” Oliver explained.

The group began by discussing demonstration and research projects.

The promotion and demonstration of roller crimping methods was of particular interest.

Roller crimping is an agricultural method involving a tool called a roller crimper. The crimper rolls over a living soil cover, such as rye, and lays it down before the planting of crops.

The flattened cover acts as a large-scale version of mulching a garden. Crimping can be done in one pass, without the need for any spraying or cultivation.

“As people introduce roller crimping on their land, it can start as a trial-and-error process while they figure out what works,” Brad Robson commented.

“If we can provide incentives for Farmers to try roller crimping, we can gather more information about it.”

Ben Wojahn recommended making a large purchase of Aroostock rye seed, a quickly-maturing variety shown to work well on crimped fields.

“If we can get a large amount of Aroostock seed, we can distribute it among farmers who are interested in the implementation of roller crimping,” Wojahn said.

Kevin Parr discussed financial incentives for roller crimping.

“I would suggest raising the current \$25 per acre rate, as the cost of everything has risen in the last few years,” Parr invited.

There were questions as to whether conventional farmers have interest in trying out roller crimping.

David McClurg, a conventional farmer himself, expressed a lot of interest in

implementing roller crimping on his own land. Several other conventional farmers in attendance were equally as open to it.

“It’s important to show that crimping isn’t just for organic farmers, that it can work on conventional fields as well,” Robson emphasized.

Returning to the topic of incentives, Travis Klinkner threw around numbers to offer interested farmers.

The group decided to offer \$200 per acre of roller crimping demonstration, with a five-acre cap for each farmer. Money from the 2022 rollover funding was assigned to those costs.

Moving on to event planning and funding, the group discussed the July joint watershed meeting Bad Axe is hosting at Esofea County Park, as well as the Farm Tour at Travis Klinkner’s property on August 18 and 19.

There are hopes of acquiring demonstration tools including a rainfall simulator and sand table for Klinkner’s watershed event. There was also talk of hiring a speaker relating to watersheds for those days.

“We can use the ‘Field Days/Tech Days’ budget for any expenses with those events,” Amy Oliver said.

Travis Klinkner and Kevin Parr spoke in favor of spending some funds for promotional merchandise.

“T-shirts with our logo and name on them, as well as baseball caps, would be a nice method of getting the word out,” said Parr.

In terms of demonstrations, the group talked about holding a fencing demonstration for farmers. Kevin Parr was open to holding that event on his property.

It was concluded that \$1,000 would be spent on fencing demonstrations.

Another \$1,000 was assigned to a pond restoration project which will also be held at the Parrs’ farm.

David McClurg offered to plant Aroostock rye on his property, and \$1,000 was set aside for that.

In terms of other demonstrations, prairie strip implementation was a large topic of conversation.

“When we incentivize prairie strips, we should consider the risk associated with the method and try to guarantee some profit to the farmers,” Travis Klinkner suggested.

Farmers discussed the many benefits of prairie strips. One aspect is the increase in pollinators prairie

strips bring into the fields, which has been shown to increase crop production.

\$4,500 was loosely set aside toward prairie strip demonstrations.

Lorne Goede inquired about work on the county farm. Ben Wojahn responded that plans hadn’t been made for any projects this year, but that it would be valuable to speak with the general government about implementing projects and possibly renting land out.

There was discussion of renting out tools to improve soil health for further demonstrations on farmland. The group tentatively assigned \$1,700 in funding to equipment rental.

Time to walk!

Get motivated and stay active! Registration is now available for Crawford County on the Move, a 9-week walking group program taking place in Soldiers Grove, Gays Mills, Seneca, and Prairie du Chien. Starting the week of July 9, participants will meet weekly for a short health education piece and a group walk. Daily walking logs and weekly tips will also be provided. Registration is free and so are the T-shirts!!

“I’m very excited to see Crawford County on the Move back again this year,” shared Dawn Adams, Crawford County Public Health Specialist. “We had great feedback from participants last year and those participants have been really looking forward to the event starting again. It would be great to get some new folks signed up so that even more people can benefit from this program.”

Crawford County on the Move will be meeting in the following communities:

- Prairie du Chien – Tuesdays at 5 p.m. beginning July 11 at La Riviere Park
- Prairie du Chien – Wednesdays at 9 a.m. beginning July 12 at the Prairie du Chien Memorial Library
- Seneca – Wednesdays at 6 p.m. beginning July 12 at St. Patrick’s Catholic Church Parking Lot
- Soldiers Grove – Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. beginning July 13 at the Lions Club Shelter
- Gays Mills – Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. beginning July 13 at the Lions Club Shelter

Those interested can register at crawfordcountymi.org/health under “Programs & Services” or call the Health Department at 608-326-0229 to register or if you would be interested in starting your own walking group!



CASHTON’S NATE MACK jumps to attack the ball at the net during Saturday’s FunDays Volleyball Tournament in Soldiers Grove. Mack plays for Grandall’s, which took second place in the tournament.

Cruz Crew wins

Plenty of good volleyball at Fun Days

For a second-straight season, the Cruz Crew from Sparta, Wisconsin won the Annual Soldiers Grove Fun Days Volleyball Tournament.

This year’s team featured many different faces from the year prior and included Ray Cruz, Peter Scarborough, Jonah Stuhr, Kim Johnson, Hannah Hoesley and Ellie Hoesley.

The Cruz Crew (15-2, 4-1) defeated Grandall’s (Angel Ley), a team from the Cash-ton area, in the title bout 2-0.

Grandall’s finished 11-5 overall and went 2-2 in tournament play after sweeping their semifinals opponent, Colonel Gunk’s Gaggle (Nate Beier).

Third place went to 2Block Shakur, a four-person team from the Rhinelander area. The team made the eight-hour round trip because they were looking for something different and had trouble finding a tournament which would take a team of four. 2Block Shakur fell 2-1 to the Cruz Crew in the semifinal round.

The Rhinelander group defeated Colonel Gunk’s Gaggle 2-1 in the third place bout. Beier’s group was the only squad to notch at least one set win against each of the participating teams.

Alex Michek brought a group from Highland which placed fourth and Matt Ar-

noldi from LaCrosse brought another team of four. Crystal Noble organized a local team, but couldn’t finish pool play due to injuries.

“It was good to have 6-7 teams this year,” said tournament organizer Nate Beier. “We were on short notice in terms of getting the word out, so having that many teams felt good. I’d like to see more local participation next year, however, because we need local support in order to keep these small town festivals alive.”

Seneca’s Ridge and Valley Rally will have a volleyball tournament on Saturday, July 8 starting after the parade. Dawn Ray is the director.

Marquette dies of illness on return journey

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Mass on Easter Sunday and declared the opening of the Mission of l’Immaculée-Conception (Immaculate Conception) in honor of his life-long patroness the Virgin Mary, or as he always referred to Her, the Blessed Virgin Immaculate. The opening of a new mission in the minds of the Jesuits did not entail the building of a church or other structures; it required only the first preaching of the Gospel. That moment, without any doubt, constituted the highlight of Jacques Marquette’s life and career.

His illness again became worse, and his two French companions convinced him to return to the Mission of Saint-François-Xavier at the conclusion of the Easter Sunday celebration. After returning to Lake Michigan, Largillier and Porteret decided that traveling along the lake’s eastern shore might make for a faster return. Marquette’s health continued to deteriorate. His companions took him ashore at what is today Luddington, Michigan, and there, Jacques Marquette died on 18 May 1675, just two weeks shy of his thirty-eighth birthday. His body lay buried in a grave prepared by Largillier and Porteret. Two years later, Christian Odawas disinterred his bones and returned them to the Mission of Saint-Ignace at the Strait of Mackinac, where they re-

main today.

Thus, Jacques Marquette achieved the martyr’s death he seemingly always desired. His fellow Jesuits would continue his work among the Illiniweks and the other Native nations of the Midwest, but their valiant labors west of Lake Michigan came to an inglorious end in the early 1700s. From 1712 to 1733, the French and their Native allies engaged in series of conflicts known as the Fox Wars with the Meskwakis, and these clashes resulted in the Jesuits ending their missionary labors in Wisconsin by 1728. For the next century, the Native peoples of the state had no missionaries—Roman Catholic or otherwise—among them. Only after the United States gained sovereignty over the region did Christian missionaries to the Native nations return. They hailed from other countries and religious orders, such Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, an Italian priest of the Dominican order, who arrived at Green Bay in 1831. Another well-known missionary was Fr. Florimond Bonduel, a diocesan priest from Belgium who arrived in 1835. Both men had to compete with Protestant missionaries during their careers, a situation their Jesuit predecessors did not experience.

It would be wrong to judge Marquette and his fellow Jesuits as somehow initiating the wave of white settlement

that ultimately led to the displacement and removal of Native peoples from Wisconsin and the Midwest. Doing so would be to commit the grave historical error of presentism: applying the values of the present on persons in the historical past whose understanding of the world differed greatly from our own. Moreover, the Jesuits had no plans for Native conquest or removal. If one can discern an ultimate objective in their writings, they envisioned a Christian commonwealth in the lands west of Montreal where the Native nations and the French would someday live side by side in perfect harmony, governed by the strictures of the Gospel. That this region after 1776 came under the sovereignty of the young American republic, with its insatiable lust for Native land, is not a sin we should place on the shoulders of Jacques Marquette during the commemoration of the 350th anniversary of his journey down the Mississippi River.

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PREPARATION OF traditional Voyageur foods was one of the activities demonstrated to encampment visitors. Here Dave Turner suspends a pot over a cookfire to prepare a traditional Voyageur stew made from salt pork, yellow peas, and onions, carrots and potatoes.