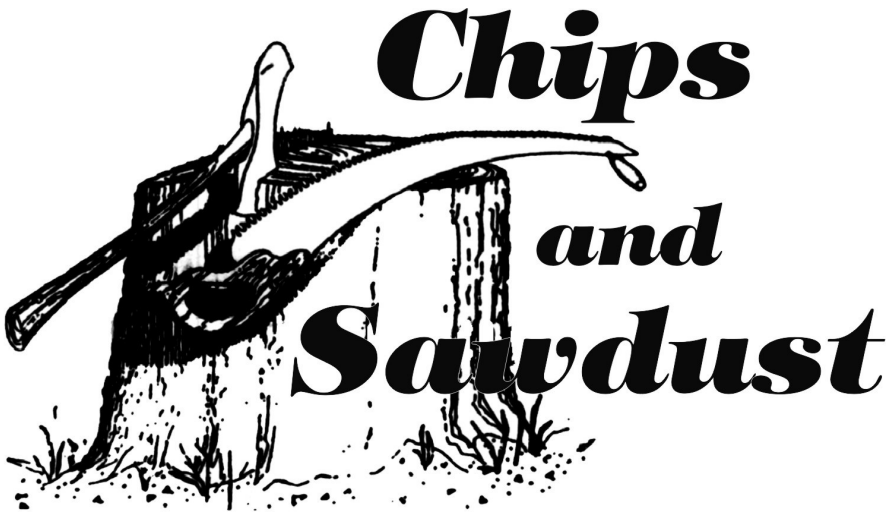


Volume 50

Number 1



A quarterly newsletter from the

**Forest History  
Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

P.O. Box 186  
Bangor, WI 54614

Spring 2025

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### **Save the Date**

Forest History Association  
of Wisconsin

### **50th Annual Fall Conference**

October 3—4, 2025

North Lakeland  
Discovery Center  
14006 Discovery Lane  
Manitowish Waters, WI

# Chips and Sawdust

Volume 50, Number 1

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*Dedicated to the discovery,  
interpretation, and preservation  
of the forest history legacy of the  
State of Wisconsin*



## From The President's Chair

*This year plans are forming for the nation's celebration of the Semiquincentennial, looking back on 250 years since our declaration of independence from England. In fact, activities started on April 18 with "Two Lights for Tomorrow" commemorating Paul*

*Revere's ride announcing approaching British troops. The White House is planning a full year of festivities with the official launch on Memorial Day this year. Why am I bringing this up in the FHW newsletter? Our nation's founding is closely tied in with the beginning of our organization. According to the 25th Annual Meeting proceedings, held in Rhinelander in 2000:*

*"The Forest History Association of Wisconsin had its beginnings early in 1975 when a group of representatives from the wood products industries, conservation agencies and the University of Wisconsin met to discuss a potential bicentennial project which would remind our citizens of the importance of forests in Wisconsin's past, present and future.*

*Their discussions led to the founding of the Association as a non-profit, tax-exempt endeavor whose principle objective would be to preserve Wisconsin's forest heritage."*

*When the board was planning for this year's annual meeting there was some debate on whether we should identify the 2025 meeting as our 50th anniversary meeting or if next year would be more appropriate. The idea for the FHW was conceived in 1975, but the first annual meeting was not held until 1976, making 2025 the 50th annual meeting, but next year, the 50th anniversary of the first meeting. If it sounds confusing, it is! However you look at it, 50 years is a significant accomplishment for our organization!*

*That brings me to this year's meeting on October 3 and 4 at the North Lakeland Discovery Center near Manitowish Waters. We are celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest (NHAL). The Discovery Center was a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in the 1930's, then later became a Youth Conservation Camp before it was repurposed by community and school leaders as the Discovery Center with the mission to explore and connect people to the area natural, cultural and historic resources. In addition to the field tours and presentations focused on the state forest and surrounding area, we can stay in the historic accommodations at the Center. If the dormitory style CCC accommodations are not your style, area hotels are available. Visit the Discovery Center's website to learn more about its mission and history at [www.discoverycenter.net](http://www.discoverycenter.net). More information about the field tour and presentations are included in this newsletter and registration details will soon follow.*

*As part of the NHAL 100th anniversary celebration, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is having a public event at the Crystal Lake Beach Area*

and Nature Center on Saturday, June 7th, from 9 am to 3 pm. There will be many local groups exhibiting at the event, including us. If you are in the area at that time, please stop by and say hello. Crystal Lake beach is 17 miles south of Manitowish Waters on County Road N off of HWY 51.

It is not too early to start planning for our meeting in 2026, and the subject to focus on, and celebrate is the 50 years of our organization. Our first meeting was held in Rhinelander in 1976 and the 25th meeting was also held in Rhinelander in 2000. Is it time to visit Rhinelander once again? One location under serious consideration is UW-Stevens Point Treehaven, a 1,400 acre education center located southwest of Rhinelander that has the facilities to support our meeting. I would like to hear your thoughts about where to visit next year and what topics and field trips you would like offered. I also invite you to help with planning the meeting, please drop me a note at either [thefhaw@gmail.com](mailto:thefhaw@gmail.com) or my personal email at [highknollroad59@gmail.com](mailto:highknollroad59@gmail.com) if you have ideas or would like to help out in any way.

When we were incorporated in May, 1976, there were seven board members listed; Thomas Fulk, Ned Revie, Frank Fixmer, Adrian DeVriend, Roger Drayna, Carl Theiler, and L. G. Sorden. They were a diverse group representing the US-Forest Service, an insurance company, the paper industry, UW-Extension, logging, and UW-Madison. Frank Fixmer was elected to the Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame in 1997. In past newsletters you may have read about the partnership we have with the UW-Stevens Point Archive program to develop a collection of materials based on the work of members in the Forestry Hall of Fame. In the spring of 2023, materials for Mr. Fixmer were collected and archived, giving us a glimpse into his career. How about the other six founding board members, who were they and what made them interested in forest history? I have started a search to find out more about each one, an initial internet search found some information. If you knew any of them, please pass your knowledge on. I would like to write a short summary of each one for the 2026 newsletters.

The time to consider renewing your association membership is coming up. Our fiscal year goes from July 1 to June 30 of each year and early June is when we send out our dues reminder. Please respond early so we don't have to send out reminders later in the year. Also think about paying for multiple years, there is a cost savings if you pay for three or five years at one time, and you won't get a reminder every year about renewing. See the website for more information on the amounts.

The FHAW is a volunteer organization that exists because of your membership, encourage others you know to join and let's look forward to another 50 years of completing our mission to inform, educate, archive and publish about the forest history legacy of Wisconsin!

Regards,

Jim Kerkman

## 2025 Annual FHAW Conference: Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest

The Forest History Association of Wisconsin's Annual Conference will be held on October 3–4, 2025, at the scenic North Lakeland Discovery Center in Manitowish Waters, Wisconsin [www.discoverycenter.net](http://www.discoverycenter.net)

This year's event will commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest, celebrating its rich natural and cultural history.

Friday, October 3, begins with a guided tour of historic sites around Manitowish Waters, including a stop at the Camp Mercer Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) site and other local landmarks. After a short break, the day will conclude with a banquet at the historic Little Bohemia Lodge, famously tied to the John Dillinger story.

Saturday's program will take place at the Discovery Center, formerly the site of the Statehouse Lake Youth Conservation Corps Camp. The day will feature a series of engaging speakers exploring the unique environmental and historical significance of the region. Registration and check-in will open at 8:30 a.m., with presentations beginning at 9:00 a.m. and wrapping up by 3:00 p.m. The Association's annual business meeting will be held during the lunch break.

A detailed agenda and registration information will be available in June.

As the conference coincides with Colorama—a peak fall color season in the Northwoods—early lodging reservations are highly recommended. A block of rooms is reserved under “Forest History Association of Wisconsin” at the Great Northern Hotel in Mercer, just 15–20 minutes from the Discovery Center. To reserve, call 715-476-2440 directly.

For a more immersive experience, consider staying in the affordable bunkhouses on the Discovery Center grounds—details coming soon. You can also explore additional lodging options, including boutique hotels, vacation rentals, and campgrounds at: <https://manitowishwaters.org/places-to-stay/>

We look forward to seeing you in October for this special celebration of Wisconsin's forest heritage!



*660th Company Civilian Conservation Corps, Camp Mercer, along the banks of the Manitowish River. Circa 1935.*



*The Little Bohemia Lodge was built in 1929 by Emil Wanatka. It gained fame and infamy as the setting of a botched raid by the FBI, then called the Bureau of Investigation, against the John Dillinger Gang.*

## Centennial Event Held at Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest

The Forest History Association of Wisconsin participated in the 100th anniversary celebration of the Northern Highland–American Legion State Forest on Saturday, June 7. As one of more than twenty event exhibitors, Association members shared the rich history of Wisconsin's forests and promoted our mission: to inform, educate, archive, and publish that history.

The Northern Highland–American Legion (NHAL) is Wisconsin's largest state forest and one of the most visited properties in the state. What began as Wisconsin's first forest reserve has grown into over 236,000 acres—approximately 90 percent forested—and includes more than 900 lakes and 290 miles of rivers and streams.

The origins of the NHAL date back to 1925, when a large area of state land in Vilas County was designated the Northern State Forest Park. This land was renamed the Northern Highland State Forest in 1937. Meanwhile, in 1924, the Wisconsin Veterans Bureau, acting on behalf of the American Legion, received authorization to purchase Camp Minne-Wawa, located on the isthmus between Lake Tomahawk and Big Carr Lake in Oneida County. In 1929, the state legislature acquired additional land to establish the American Legion Memorial State Park and Forest Preserve, later known simply as the American Legion Forest. In 1968, these two properties were officially merged, forming the Northern Highland–American Legion State Forest.

The 100th anniversary celebration invited guests to honor the forest's enduring legacy and its vital role in preserving Wisconsin's natural heritage with a day full of educational



*Forest History Association of Wisconsin Vice President Tom Jerow spoke about the organization's mission and activities, highlighting its dedication to preserving, promoting, and sharing the rich history of Wisconsin's forests and the people who have shaped them.*

programs, exhibits, and family-friendly activities.

Association member and author Mary Schueller delivered an engaging presentation titled "An Inside Look at Forest Soldiers of the NHAL: A CCC Tribute." She shared highlights of the work performed by the men of Civilian Conservation Corps Company 650, based at the Star Lake State Conservation Work Camp.

The men of the CCC had a clear sense of purpose during their time at the camp, located on the scenic shores of Star Lake in Vilas County. They were there to help restore the Northwoods to its former glory, reminiscent of the "good old nineties." Their mission included planting, improving, and protecting the forest, as well as conserving wildlife—all to ensure the public could continue to enjoy and benefit from Wisconsin's rich natural resources.

The handout for this presentation is available at the FHW website, [www.foresthistoryassociationwi.com/publications/](http://www.foresthistoryassociationwi.com/publications/) (under forestry publications)

Visit: "[100 Years At Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest](#)" for a more complete history of NHAL State Forest.

## Association Considers Offering Members Choice of Newsletter Format

The Forest History Association of Wisconsin is exploring an option that would allow members to choose how they receive the Association's quarterly newsletter—by print, digital delivery, or both. This initiative is being considered in response to member feedback, growing interest in sustainable practices, and the desire to meet the diverse needs and preferences of our membership.

For years, the printed newsletter has served as a valued communication tool, offering members news, historical features, updates on upcoming events, and stories that celebrate Wisconsin's forest heritage. As we move forward, the Association wants to ensure that all members can enjoy the newsletter in the format that best suits their lifestyle and reading habits.

Each option has its own unique benefits:

- **Print Format:** A traditional printed newsletter is a tangible item that many readers enjoy holding and reading at their own pace. It can be filed for future reference, shared with friends, or placed on a coffee table to spark conversation.
- **Digital Format:** A digital version—delivered via email or accessible through our website—offers instant access and portability. It's easy to store, search, and reference on any device, and particularly useful for members who travel. It also supports the Association's ongoing efforts to reduce printing and mailing costs, and to minimize environmental impact.

- **Both Print and Digital:** For members who want the best of both worlds.

## FHAW Newsletter Format Preference Survey

We'd appreciate your feedback as the Association considers offering a choice in how you receive our quarterly newsletter, *Chips and Sawdust*. Please take a moment to let us know your preference:

1. **How would you prefer to receive *Chips and Sawdust*?** (Please check one)  
☐ Print only  
☐ Digital only (PDF via email)  
☐ Both print and digital
2. **Why did you choose this format?** (Optional – helps us better understand member needs)  

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3. **Would you be open to receiving future FHAW communications (event updates, reminders, etc.) by email?**  
☐ Yes ☐ No

**Your name:**  

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4. **Your email address** (if choosing digital format):  

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**Mail to: FHAW, P.O. Box 186  
Bangor, WI 54614**

The survey can also be completed online at: [FHAW Newsletter Format Preference Survey](#)

*Thank you for helping us serve you better while supporting our mission to preserve and share Wisconsin's forest history.*



## UWSP Student Elric Gulden Completed FHAW Internship



*Elric Gulden*

Elric Gulden, a senior at the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point majoring in History and Social Studies Education, successfully completed his internship as the Forest History Association of Wisconsin's Archival Intern for the semester.

Originally from Milladore, Town of Sherry, Elric brought a strong personal connection to the region's forested landscape. "There's a pallet plant where my brother worked after high school, Saint Luke Lutheran Church, which I attend from time to time, and Anderton Park, where my family holds annual reunions," he said.

Since 2021, Elric had worked for Wood County Parks and Forestry, maintaining the grounds at both North Wood County Park in Richfield and Powers Bluff County Park and Winter Recreation Area—known to the Potawatomi as Skunk Hill—near Arpin.

During his internship, Elric focused on organizing and digitizing a significant collection of materials donated by WDNR Forestry retirees Jim Miller and Don Thompson. These items, which had ties to several Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame members, were received by the Association the previous summer. In addition to processing this new collection, Elric also assisted with ongoing digitization efforts involving existing archival materials.

The Forest History Association thanks Elric for his valuable contributions and dedication to preserving Wisconsin's forest heritage. His work has helped ensure that important pieces of forestry history are accessible to future generations.



### ***From the Newspaper Archive***



#### **Conservation Department Pleased with Outdoor Plan, but Watchful**

MADISON—The Wisconsin Conservation Department is pleased with the vast new sums of money to be available for recreational lands buying and development under Gov. Gaylord Nelson's resource program. It has repeatedly pledged its fullest cooperation in executing it.

But its officials feel uncomfortable, according to recent developments, because a new agency has been created to intervene in the department's handling of the project.

The plan calls for spending \$50 million during the next 10 years for outdoors recreation improvement and resource protection.

The new agency is a recreation advisory committee headed by Nelson and

containing six department heads as members, one which, the conservation department has a single seat, assigned to director L. P. Voigt.

At the first session of the advisory committee this week, Voigt read a prepared statement which included this observation:

"The conservation commission has endorsed this new program established by the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1961 with the understanding that its power will not be usurped through committee policy decisions for establishment of long-range plans or guidelines in its specific areas of responsibility as assigned by the legislature."

Voigt made no direct comment when a little later the committee, at the governor's suggestion, turned over to the department of resource development, an independent agency headed by Nelson's lieutenant, David Carley, money for the development of a total resource conservation planning blueprint for the future.

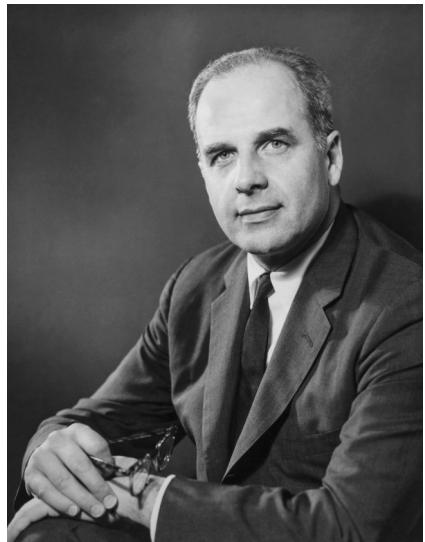
The conservation commission and department in the earlier stages of Nelson's promotion of the new resource program reacted coolly, obviously worried that the result would be to sidetrack its own responsibilities in the field of natural resources management and preservation. The department has been the primary agency in the field since the original Wisconsin Conservation Act in 1927.

The governor for several years has been critical of what he has called the lack of long-range planning by the conservation administration.

In his statement to the new advisory committee, Voigt repeatedly emphasized that his department is prepared to plan on a long-range basis and to file development plans at biennial stages also, and that it has in fact been conscious of the need for advance planning for a long time. The governor was reminded that the department has at least 200 separate projects on its planning boards, ready to go when the money becomes available.

Actually, the conservation department will be the major agency involved in the new resource development effort. About 85 per cent of all of the new money appropriated is by law made available to it. But the advisory committee retains policy control, with respect to the nature and pace of the acquisition, and it can control priorities through its control over money allotments by biennial periods.

The evident purpose of Voigt's polite reminders was to avoid the delega-



**Gaylord Nelson**

By CQ Roll Call & The U.S. Congress - [https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=msu.31293012373860&view=1up&seq=161&q1=nelson,Public Domain,https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=128791045](https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=msu.31293012373860&view=1up&seq=161&q1=nelson,PublicDomain,https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=128791045)

tion of his powers and responsibilities to some of the other agencies brought into the advisory committee, including the highway department and the department of public welfare. Frictions and conflicts have been rendered less likely by recent political developments. Four of the six conservation commissioners to whom Voigt is directly responsible are Nelson appointees.

It has become apparent in statehouse circles that Nelson and Voigt have an agreeable personal relationship. (*from the La Crosse Tribune, Sunday, Sep 24, 1961, Page 18*)

## **Kettle Moraine Slated to Share In Youth Camps**

### **Would Help Improve Parks and Forests**

Gov. Gaylord Nelson has released details of his proposal to spend \$2½ million over the next ten years on three young conservation camps that would give 600 Wisconsin boys an opportunity for constructive outdoor activity each summer, Nelson said that all Wisconsin boys between 16 and 19 would be eligible to apply. The boys would work on fish, game, forest and park improvement projects, and would be paid \$18 a week plus room and board.

The governor said that within 50 miles of the three camps. the conservation department had a 30-year backlog of work projects covering a total of more than 310,000 acres of parks, forests, wetlands and fishing grounds. Without added help, Nelson said, the department estimates that some of these projects will not be completed until the 1990's.

On the basis of priorities established by the conservation department, Nelson said, the first camp would be opened at Interstate Park in northwestern Wisconsin, the second in the Rhinelander area in northcentral Wisconsin, and the third in the Kettle Moraine Forest in southeastern Wisconsin.

### **Six Week Period**

Each camp would be designed for 100 boys and would operate for 12 weeks during the summer months, with each group of boys staying for six weeks. In this way, each camp would provide job opportunities for 200 boys each summer. The boys would work on conservation projects within a 50 mile radius of each of the camps.

At Interstate Park Camp, this would include projects in Polk, St. Croix, Burnett, Washburn, Barron, Dunn and Pierce counties. The conservation department has more than 47,000 acres of land requiring improvement in this area.

At the youth camp in the Rhinelander area, the boys would work on conservation projects in Oneida, Forest, Langlade and Lincoln counties, plus parts of Florence, Oconto, Shawano. Marathon, Taylor, Price and Iron counties. State owned conservation lands in this area total almost 190,000 acres.

### **Would Aid County**

At the Kettle Moraine youth camp, more than 74,000 acres of public lands would be available for work projects within a 50 mile radius, including all of Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Jefferson, Dodge, Washington,

and Fond du Lac counties. The Kettle Moraine camp would also enable the boys to work on conservation projects in parts of Manitowoc, Calumet, Green Lake, Columbia, Dane, Rock, Walworth and Racine counties.

Gov. Nelson said the camps would be operated by the state welfare department with the conservation department supervising work projects and providing conservation education programs.

Nelson said that if the legislature acts on his proposal with all possible speed, the camp at Interstate Park could be opened the coming summer. The youth camp near Rhinelander is scheduled to open in the summer of 1962 and the camp in the Kettle Moraine area in the summer of 1963. Nelson also noted that it may be possible to expand Wisconsin's youth conservation camp program if the U. S. Congress passes legislation now before it to provide federal matching funds to states having such programs. *(from the West Bend News, Thursday, April 13, 1961, Page 2)*

## State Teenagers Get Lesson in Conservation

CAMPBELLSPORT - Ten teenagers stood up to their underarms in the brown waters of Millhome Creek. They wore waders and yellow hard hats, and shoveled tar-like goo into a pump attached to a diesel tractor.

They were mucking. In mucking, sediment is filtered from the water and clear water is chan-



*A crew of conservation campers at Millhome Creek remove muck from stream.*



*Donning shoes for hip boots: Sue Soldner, Beaver Dam*

neled back to the creek through underground plumbing.

Camp counselor JoAnn Lohr, Reedsburg, a UW-Platteville senior in chemistry and biology, sat atop the tractor, operating a noisy pump.

The teenagers, all Wisconsin high school students, spend about six hours a day clearing the water for the brown brook trout and other fish in the creek that empties into the Sheboygan River.

Later, the crew will build wing deflectors - stacks of rock - to shorten the stream and make the water run faster. Faster water is cooler - a better home for trout. Opposite the wing deflector they will build a boom cover of cedar planks that provides a cool, dark nest for the trout.

At the end of the day, the group empties muddy waders and is driven about 40 miles from here back to the Kettle Moraine Youth Camp, which is 10 miles north of West Bend.

Their work of improving fish habitat, along with the management of parks, game and forests are all projects of the Wisconsin Youth Conservation Camp program, sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources.

### **Blisters, Mosquito Bites and Sore Muscles**

Before the six-week summer work and education program is over for 100 Wisconsin teenagers, they will have pulled weeds, picked up litter and built bird houses. They will take down fences, survey duck nests and control erosion on pond banks. The pay, about \$60 a week and a reward of blisters, mosquito bites and aching muscles.

The Kettle Moraine Youth Camp, on the edge of the Kettle Moraine State Forest in southeast Wisconsin, is one of four state camps where teenagers live in a boot-camp setting. Luxury is forgotten inside the camp.

To the sound of reveille at 6:30 a.m. the young men and women rose from army-like bunk beds to dress in grubby jeans, T-shirts or tank tops and work shoes. Girls abandoned makeup and curling irons to make their bunks shipshape for inspection.

Camp counselor Claudia Mey, 19, a UW-Eau Claire sophomore in communicative disorders, yelled at the young women in the second dorm: "Come on you guys, it's 7 o'clock. We're never gonna make it!"

The girls smoothed gray blankets over the thin cots, carefully tucking and retucking to make them perfect.

Breakfast was at 7:15 a.m.

The dorm that places first in inspection stands first in chow line; the one that places last must do some extra work around camp after supper.

At 8 a.m. a fleet of vans leaves for work sites within 50 miles of camp. One went to the Greenbush Kettle area, 17 miles north of camp, where the crew used 25-pound steel pry bars to remove large rocks from a cross-country ski trail. The air smelled of sweet clover and hickory, oak and ash trees made up the wooded den.

Peggy Hayes, 16, a junior at Washington High in Germantown, near Milwaukee, said: "I came here to learn about life in the mountains." She wants to study conservation, probably forestry, in Georgia.

### **Crew works at Old Wade House**

Another crew went to the Old Wade House State Park, a restored tavern from stagecoach days. There the crew removed bricks from the walk outside to level off the dirt underneath.

Carrie Showers, 15, a sophomore at Janesville Parker High School, wanted the job because she likes to work outdoors. Her brother attended camp during the first session.



*Mark Thompson, Monona, sweating on the forestry crew*



## **As usual, hard work is rewarded**

Hard work is rewarded with trips to Milwaukee Brewer games, shopping malls and movies, and campouts or canoe trips.

The Wisconsin Youth Conservation Camp, begun in 1962, was the first of its kind in the nation.

The Youth Conservation Camp sprang from the ecology-minded administration of former Gov. Gaylord Nelson, who devised a 10-year Outdoor Recreation Program to collect cigarette taxes for Wisconsin parks improvement.

Lack of jobs for teenagers in the early '60s and the need for developing lands were the reasons for the camp, said Ray Hendrikse, director of the YCC camp for seven years.

In 1972, the federal government contributed \$10 million to foster the Wisconsin program and start programs in other states, now known as the Youth Conservation Corps. Today, the Wisconsin Youth Conservation Camps are run with state and federal money and federal standards.

Two six-week sessions of camp are held each summer in Wisconsin. Students apply through their high schools and are chosen at random from a balance of Wisconsin counties. This year, about 4,000 high school students applied and about 1,500 were selected.

Other Youth Conservation Camps are the Mekan River Youth Camp for young men in Neshkoro, the Ernie Swift Camp for young men and women in Minong, the Statehouse Lake Camp for young men in Manitowish Waters and Camp MacKenzie in Poynette. *(from the Wisconsin State Journal, Madison, Sunday, July 23, 1978, Page 31)*

### **50th Fall Conference Committee** **(Manitowish Waters, Wisconsin)**

Jim Kerkman  
Tom Jerow  
Cindi Stiles  
John Berg  
Jim Bokern

### **Membership Committee**

Bob Walkner  
Tom Jerow  
Jim Kerkman

### **Finance Committee**

Jim Kerkman  
Bob Walkner  
Arno Helm  
Ed Forrester  
Don Schnitzler

### **Nominations Committee**

John Grosman

### **FHAW Website Committee**

Scott Bertz  
Don Schnitzler

### **Archives Committee**

Jake Bonack (chairperson)  
John Grosman  
Jim Bokern  
Matt Blessing  
Ricky Kubicek  
Don Schnitzler  
Brad Casselberry  
Steve Schmidt

### **Exhibits & Annual Proceedings**

Don Schnitzler

*Always looking for members to help  
with our Committee Work!*

*Interested — Reach out to us at:  
[thefhaw@gmail.com](mailto:thefhaw@gmail.com)*



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