

Member Appreciation Picnic

Saturday, October 10, 2015



**Kids'
Activities!**

Richland Electric
Cooperative Warehouse
30 E. Robb Rd.,
Richland Center, Wisconsin
11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, October 10, and join us for our REC Annual Member Appreciation picnic. It will be held at the Richland Electric Cooperative warehouse at 30 E. Robb Road in Richland Center. The picnic gives us a chance to meet and visit with our members, and it's held in October to commemorate Cooperative Month.

Our menu includes grilled chicken breast sandwiches, pork, hot dogs, brats, potato salad, beans, cheese curds, apples, and beverages. The food is prepared and served by REC directors and employees, with the picnic beginning at 11 a.m. and ending at 2 p.m.

Please reserve October 10 for the picnic and bring your family to join us for good food and friendship and allow us to say "thank you" for being a member of Richland Electric Cooperative! To help show the cooperative spirit, we are asking everyone attending the picnic to bring a non-perishable food item or cash donation for the Richland County Food Pantry.

MY CO-OP



Richland County AG & HOUSEHOLD CLEAN SWEEP

Saturday, October 17, 2015

Additional information is also available on our Website at:
<http://recycling.co.richland.wi.us/>

A FEW OF THE ACCEPTABLE ITEMS ARE:

Silvex, Fungicides, Wood Preservatives, Chlordane, Shellac Stain, Battery Acid, Varnish, Engine Cleaner, Turpentine, Moth Balls, Silver Polish, Dioxins, Glues, Fluorescent Tubes, Nail Polish Remover, Oil Base Paints, Lithium, Nickel Cadmium, Mercury, Silver-Oxide and much more.

Richland County Fair & Recycling Office
Phone: 608.647.6859 • carla.doudna@co.richland.wi.us



Kids experiencing ducky LOVE

Text and Photos by Al Cornell

After winding through Viola and down to where U and I turn off, I was soon following REC lines up Elk Creek to the home of Scott and Erica Walter.

But I wanted to talk to Connie, Delburn, and Arlon about their duck-banding experience. A few days earlier, they had rubbed sleep from their eyes at 4:30 a.m. to traverse the county to a wood duck banding site near the Wisconsin River.

They agreed that the getting-up time was four hours earlier than their relaxed summer vacation schedule. Yet, they hadn't hesitated when Scott asked if they wanted to go help band some wood ducks. Connie and Delburn had been there before and were excited by the hope of handling those beautiful little wild ducks. Arlon was pleased to now be able to join those older siblings.

During a stop at QuikTrip, only Arlon selected outside of the doughnut option. He had an egg sandwich. So fueled, they soon drove across a field, made rough by pocket gopher mounds, to a spot where a few other vehicles were parked. From there, they carefully made their way in the dark through poison ivy that had been mowed short. In a quarter mile, they came to a spot in the trail where other people were waiting under silver maples and river birch.

Unseen by the kids, two people sat in a blind waiting for ducks to get on the bait. Arlon said it was cold, and his dad placed his long-sleeved shirt on him. Anyone who has looked up at Scott's face can imagine how well the shirt covered the boy.

Suddenly the gentle breeze in the trees and early birdsong were interrupted by a loud boom. Arlon said, "I didn't know what the boom was, but I just started running like everyone else." Soon everyone arrived at the net where most woodies had quieted down, but a few were still flapping in hopes of freeing themselves.

The scent and sight of black powder smoke lingering in the air added intrigue to the early morning scene. The disarray of captured ducks quickly gave way to an orderly setup of people picking ducks out from under the net and taking them to banders seated on folding chairs.

At first, the five kids on scene were enlisted in the business of carrying banded woodies to the edge of the pond and releasing them.

Delburn said, "I let them band the ducks, and then I let the ducks go."

Connie added, "I think it's cool because you can't just go out in a slough and grab a duck."

They talked about getting scratched by those sharp wood duck toenails. Connie had one scratch, but it was at the bend of a finger and slow to heal. Arlon had four scratches. Delburn had one scratch and suggested that wood ducks have sharp toenails for landing on tree branches and gripping them.

Connie said, "I got a few ducks out from under the net. We had been told not to let any unbanded ducks get away. One got a wing free and flapped me, but I held on tight. The ones that had been banded before, I took to the guy who wrote the band numbers down. If it had

not been banded previously, I handed it to someone to band, and then they gave it back to me to release."

Arlon piped up, "I want to keep a duck."

Delburn responded, "They're wild animals; it's illegal to keep them."

The consensus was that they needed to add tame ducks to their four cats, three dogs, a hamster, two steers, 30 chickens, and one turkey. A raccoon had gotten the other turkey when it was small.

After the ducks were all banded, the site was cleaned up. Connie helped by carrying the four rockets that had propelled the net over the ducks and putting them in a box.

Delburn said, "I did the fun part and let the other people do the work."

Arlon added, "I got to sit in the blind and look out at where the ducks were caught."

Delburn said, "They band ducks so they can find out how many the hunters

take and how far they travel and how big the population is." Though that brief statement could be elaborated on, he nailed it.

Connie said, "I watched Earth Movies that showed wood ducks nesting in cavities in trees. The little ones jump out from high up in trees and bounce when they hit the ground."

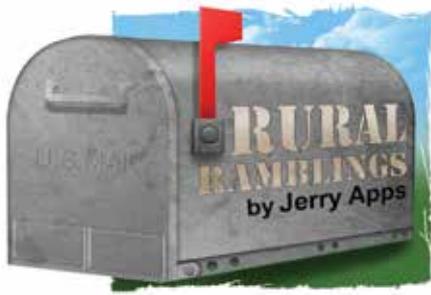
Delburn thought the main way you can distinguish the males from the females was by their heads. He said, "The males have more colorful heads," and added, "We see two fly up or down Elk Creek sometimes."

Arlon commented that the wood duck was his favorite.

While they couldn't recall eating wild duck, Connie suggested that their wild pheasant ravioli dish tasted great. Delburn had that look in his eye. He's thinking about trying wood duck as table fare, after the successful hunt, of course. 

Opposite page: Arlon with a young male wood duck that has been banded. 1. Even though they got up early Arlon, Connie, and Delburn light up as they handle wood ducks. 2. A leg band is attached to a wood duck. 3. A wood duck brightens the morning for Delburn. 4. Delburn helps Connie remove a duck from under the net. 5. Many folks agree with Arlon that the wood duck is a favorite.





AUTUMN ON THE FARM

I have fond memories of autumn on the farm. Cool crisp days. Frosty mornings. Trees turning to many shades of red, yellow, orange, and brown. Canada geese winging over in long Vs stretching from horizon to horizon. The mile walk to our country school. Eating a bright red apple picked from a tree.

I also have memories of the hard work that was involved with corn harvesting, and of less-than-pleasant weather. Late fall days were often cold, raw, and windy. Once the corn was cut, the cornfields became vast, open areas where the weather could get at a person full force. There was no place to hide, nowhere to get out of the wind. But we all knew that the fall work must be completed, because winter waited just around the corner, sometimes making its appearance earlier than we anticipated. The threat of an early winter assured us that we took the autumn harvest seriously. Those who didn't finish harvesting corn before the first snow found the work considerably more difficult.

We grew about 20 acres of corn, sometimes 30 acres during World War II. When the corn was ripe, usually by mid to late October, Pa would hitch our team to the corn binder and begin cutting the cornfields. The corn binder cut the dried cornstalks more easily than it did the green corn for the silo, and thus the team had an easier task. The cooler fall days also made pulling the corn binder a bit easier for the horses.

Once a cornfield was cut, we gathered the corn bundles and stood them into corn shocks. Shocking corn was entirely hand labor, but it was not near as disagreeable as shocking oats. Of course we had to bend over to pick up the corn bundles. They were heavier than oat bundles, but we could stand when building the shock. We stood enough bundles in the shock

so it would withstand a stiff wind, yet not so many that the bundles on the inside couldn't dry well. We wrapped a length of binder twine around the shock just below the tassels to help keep the cornstalks standing. Our corn shocks looked like teepees, narrow at the top and wide at the bottom, lined up across the stubbled cornfield in neat rows stretching for 80 rods (a 20-acre field was 80 rods long and 20 rods wide) in a 20-acre field. It was an artistic creation, yet our sore backs and aching arms didn't allow my brothers and me to appreciate the beauty before us. Pa appreciated what he saw, though; he appreciated the practical and the aesthetic, the economic and the artistic of a field of corn shocks drying under a bright autumn sun with our woodlot, ablaze in fall color, serving as a backdrop. I still fondly remember those days.

Excerpted from "Horse Drawn Days," Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2010. See www.jerryapps.com for more information.



Shannon Clark, Manager/CEO

1027 N. Jefferson St., P.O. Box 439, Richland Center, WI 53581
608-647-3173
www.rec.coop
Find us on Facebook



**Richland Electric
Cooperative**

Your Touchstone Energy[®] Cooperative

Board of Directors

Calvin Sebranek, President • Gerald Wendorf, Vice President • Judy Murphy, Secretary • Daniel Hillberry, Treasurer
Don Huffman, Jim Goplin, Tim Tiller, Steven Fuller, Jeff Monson