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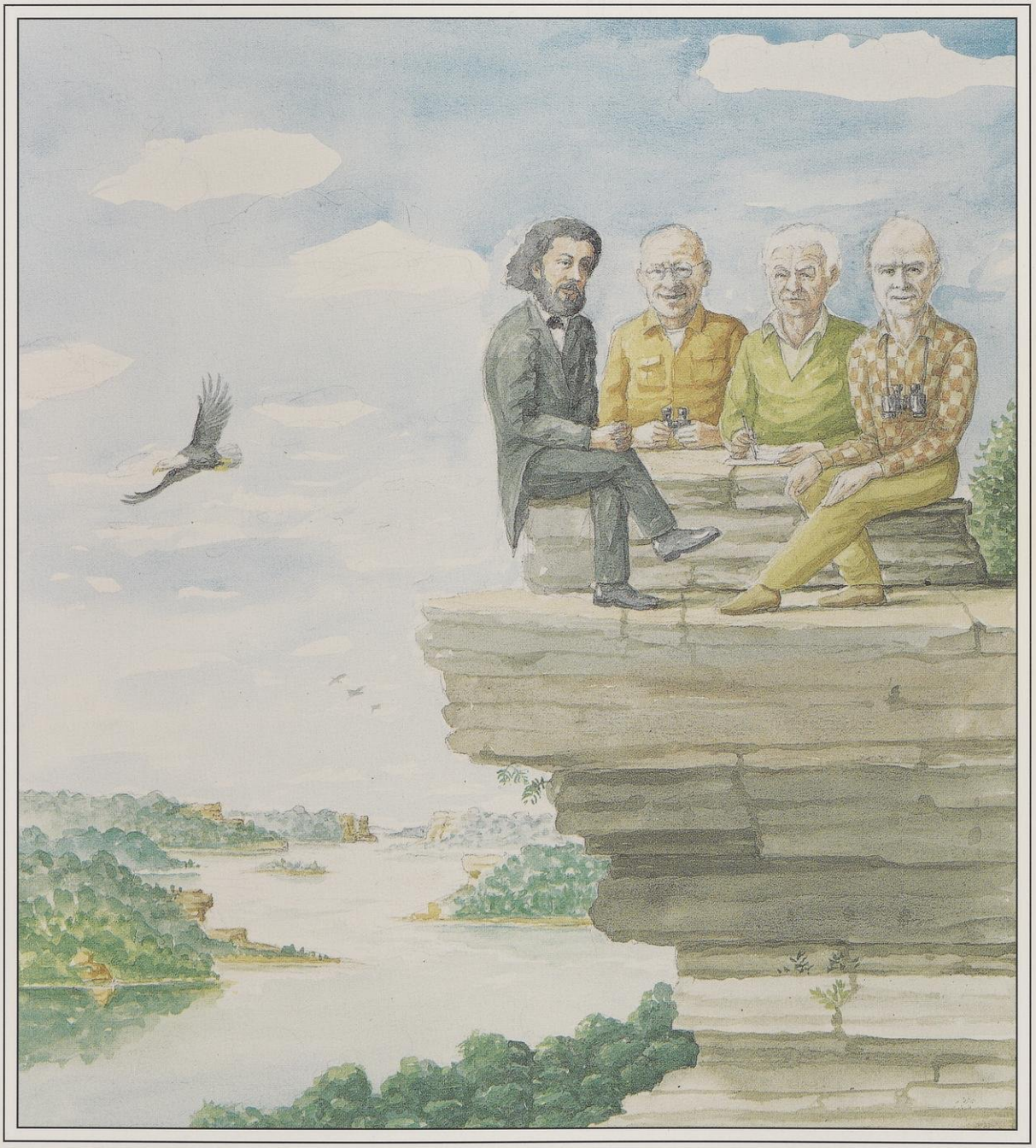
GENESIS AND LEGACY: WISCONSIN'S ENVIRONMENTAL PIONEERS

Wisconsin Academy Review

A JOURNAL OF WISCONSIN CULTURE



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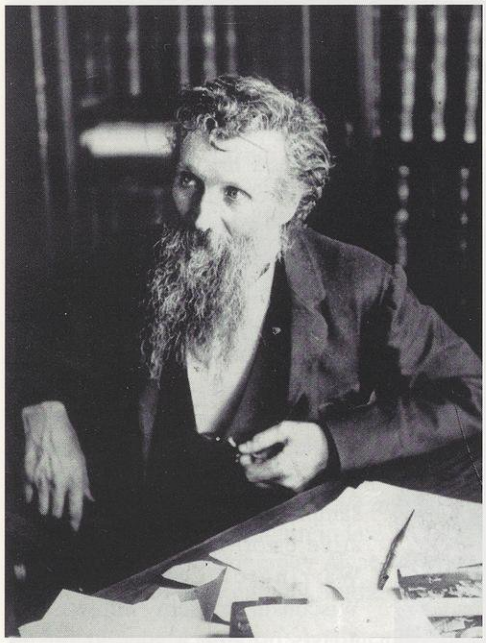

John Muir

FRONT COVER: John Wilde's fanciful water-color conflation of Wisconsin's Environmental Pioneers.

BACK COVER: Unfinished Memories. *Painting by Barry Roal Carlsen, 1998. 24x36", oil/panel.*

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GENESIS & LEGACY

The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters was chartered by the State Legislature on March 16, 1870, as a membership organization serving the people of Wisconsin. Its mission is to encourage investigation in the sciences, arts, and letters and to disseminate information and share knowledge.

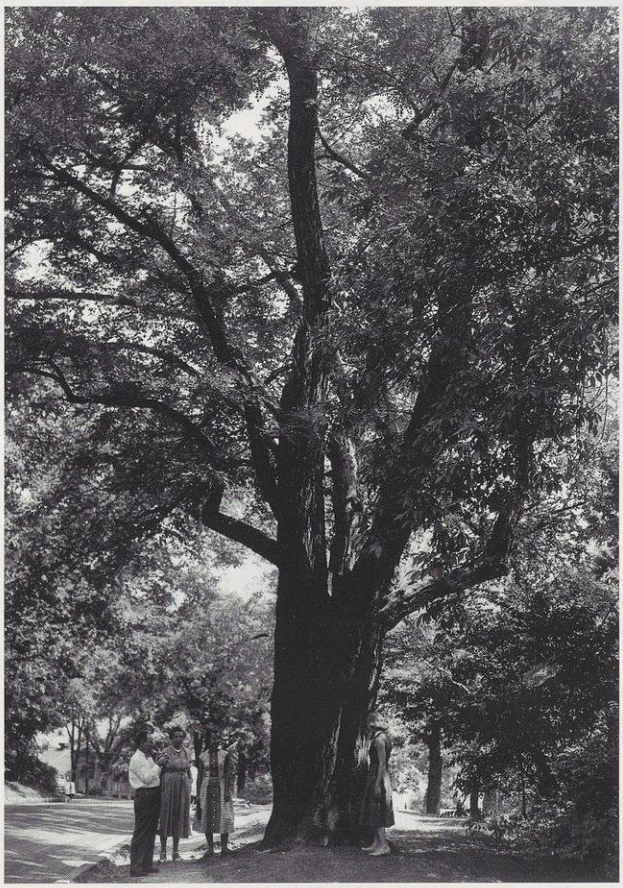
Editor's Notes

I'm honored to serve as guest editor of this issue of the *Wisconsin Academy Review*. By way of introduction to the major theme of this issue let me offer the following quote from "The Sense of Place," an essay written by Wallace Stegner and published by the Wisconsin Humanities Commission in 1986:

> "The deep ecologist warns us not to be anthropocentric, but I know no way to look at the world, settled or wild, except through my own human eyes. I know that it wasn't created especially for my use, and I share the guilt for what members of my species, especially the migratory ones, have done to it. But, I am the only instrument that I have access to by which I can enjoy the world and try to understand it."

Stegner is one of three individuals—the other two being John Muir and Aldo Leopold—whose lives and work formed the basis for a special forum on "Genesis & Legacy: Wisconsin's Environmental Pioneers." The forum featured a lineup of distinguished speakers from Wisconsin and around the country who gave special insight into the distinctive perspectives and achievements of Muir, Leopold, and Stegner as well as their own views of what needs to be done to preserve and conserve our natural heritage. The day-long program was held in Madison on April 18, 1998. Academy fellow Paul Hayes and Carl Zichella, regional director of the Sierra Club, served respectively as masters of ceremonies for the morning and afternoon sessions. Also featured was a showing of Florentine Films' *The Boyhood of John Muir*, produced by Diane Garey and directed by Lawrence Hott. Capstone of the program was a special tribute to Gaylord Nelson, former Wisconsin governor and United States Senator, who is the founder of Earth Day.

The Symposium was organized by the Wisconsin Academy in cooperation with the following organizations: Sierra Club Midwest, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, University of Wisconsin Press, University of Wisconsin–Madison General Library System, University of Wisconsin–Madison Institute for Environmental Studies, and the Aldo Leopold Nature Center. Major financial support for the forum came from the Evjue Foundation, the Sierra Club Foundation, Placon, and Midwest Airlines, Inc. Support for publication of this issue of the *Review* has been provided by The Wilderness Society.



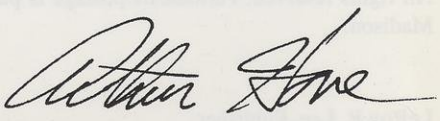
The "Muir Locust" stood outside North Hall on the University of Wisconsin campus in Madison until 1953. It was here Muir recounted, "I received my first lesson in botany from a student by the name of Griswold. . . . He reached up, plucked a flower from an overspreading branch of a locust tree, and, handing it to me, said, 'Muir, do you know what family this tree belongs to?'"

The papers collected here are published in the sequence they were presented at the forum. Capsule biographies of the authors are included in the Contributors listing on the facing page.

Another highlight of this issue is the cover portraits of Muir, Leopold, Stegner, and Nelson by John Wilde along with his watercolor portraits of a selected Wisconsin artists. This sampling emerged from a cooperative effort between Wilde and Warrington Colescott, both Wisconsin Academy fellows. The artists created a special poster "Celebrating 150 Years of Wisconsin Art" as part of Wisconsin Sesquicentennial events and projects sponsored by the Academy. The 23 x 38 inch poster is available from the Academy for $15 ($10 for Academy members).

In this Wisconsin Sesquicentennial year, the contents of this issue help remind us of the important aspects of who we are and where we are, qualities that Stegner celebrated in his essay: ". . . a place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known it, died in it—have both experienced and shaped it, as individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities, over more than one generation."

The experiencing and the shaping continue as the legacy evolves.



Wisconsin Academy Gallery Schedule

September	Nicholas Frank, sculpture
October	John Shimon and Julie Lindemann, photography
November	Laura Dronzek, painting

CONTRIBUTORS

▶ A third-generation Californian, Jackson Benson was born and raised in San Francisco. He graduated from Stanford University with honors in the humanities and subsequently received his MA from San Francisco State University and a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. Since 1966 he has been a professor of English and comparative literature at San Diego State University where he teaches twentieth century American literature. He has published nine books on modern American literature, including the authorized biography, *The True Adventures of John Steinbeck, Writer*, which won the PEN-WEST USA award for nonfiction. He has twice been a fellow of the National Endowment for the Humanities, has received several awards for teaching excellence and is on the editorial board of two scholarly journals. His most recent work is a biography, *Wallace Stegner: His Life and Work*, which was published by Viking-Penguin in late 1996 and shortly thereafter won the Evans Biography Award given by the Mountain West Center for Regional Studies at Utah State University.

▶ Nina Leopold Bradley's botanical research has taken her from the Illinois River to the Big Island of Hawaii to the Chobe Game Reserve in Botswana, Africa. She has received several awards, including the Feinstein Environmental Award, Wisconsin Idea Award, Bob Marshall Award, and The White Lady's Slipper Award. She received an honorary Doctor of Environmental Science degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1988 and an honorary degree from Northland College in 1998. She holds a bachelor of science degree from the UW–Madison and did her graduate work in botany and paleobotany at the University of Missouri. She currently serves on the board of the Aldo Leopold Foundation and the Aldo Leopold Nature Center, is a member of the nominating board of the Heinz Family Foundation, and the editorial board of *Orion Quarterly*.

▶ Barry Roal Carlsen is a senior artist with the University of Wisconsin Publications in Madison and has been designing the *Wisconsin Academy Review* since 1991. His paintings have been exhibited twice at the Wisconsin Academy Gallery. In Wisconsin his oil paintings can be seen at the Edgewood Orchard Galleries in Fish Creek, the Grace Chosy Gallery in Madison, and the Tory Folliard Gallery in Milwaukee. Carlsen has received grants from the Wisconsin Arts Board and the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission in recent years

▶ William Cronon, Frederick Jackson Turner Professor of History, Geography, and Environmental Studies at the UW–Madison, is a historian who studies American environmental history and the history of the American West. His first book, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (1983), received the Francis Parkman Prize from the Society of American Historians. In 1991, Cronon completed *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*, which examines Chicago's relationship to its rural hinterland during the second half of the nineteenth century. It was awarded the *Chicago Tribune*'s Heartland Prize for the best literary work of nonfiction published during the preceding year. It also was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize in History and later received the Bancroft Prize, the George Perkins Marsh Prize from the American Society for Environmental History, and the Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Award from the Forest History Society. Cronon has co-edited *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past* and recently edited *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*. He is at work on a local history of Portage, Wisconsin, which will explore ways of integrating environmental and social historical methods with nontraditional narrative literary forms as well as a book about writing nonfiction and an anthology of first-person accounts describing life on the land in different parts of the United States. He recently has completed a three-year term as president of the American Society for Environmental History and serves as general editor of the Weyerhaeuser Environmental Book series for the University of Washington Press. He holds degrees from the UW–Madison, Yale University, and Oxford University, and has been a Rhodes Scholar, Danforth Fellow, and MacArthur Fellow.

▶ Stephen Fox, an independent scholar for the past twenty-five years, has published five books and numerous articles on American history, including *John Muir and His Legacy: The American Conservation Movement* (1981). Fox earned his bachelor's degree with honors in history at Williams College and his doctorate in American Civilization at Brown University. He is on the board of directors of PEN New England and the Associates of Boston Public Library.

▶ Alan Jenkins, a graduate of the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point, is a poet and essayist whose work has appeared in *North Coast Review,* the *Wisconsin English Journal*, and *The Highground Magazine* and has been featured on Wisconsin Public Radio's *Spectrum West*, a weekly regional arts magazine for which he is a co-producer. In 1995, he self-published a successful chapbook, *The Hard Edge of Romance*. He has been one of the organizers of "The Vision and The Word," a collaborative project involving 50 writers and visual artists which originated in the Chippewa Valley in late 1997 and was exhibited by the Wisconsin Arts Board in the Wisconsin state capitol in early 1998.

▶ Paul W. Johnson has served as chief of the Natural Resources Conservation service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture since January of 1994. Prior to his appointment, Johnson was an Iowa farmer and former state legislator, well known as an architect of environmental legislation. As a representative in the Iowa General Assembly from 1984 to 1990, he was a major architect of Iowa's Groundwater Protection Act, a model used nationwide for its emphasis on research, education, and voluntary approaches to water quality. He also authored the Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection program (REAP), the Iowa Energy

Efficiency Act, and the Iowa Integrated Farm Management Program. He served on the board of Agriculture of the National Academy of Sciences from 1988 to 1994, where he was involved in major studies in agriculture, forestry, and conservation. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan where he earned his bachelor's and masters degree and pursued doctoral studies in forestry. He taught forestry in Ghana for two years and has worked for the USDA Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest and has served as a visiting professor of environmental policy at Luther College.

- Marybeth Lorbiecki, a freelance writer and editor, is the author of *Aldo Leopold: A Fierce Green Fire*, which was the winner of the 1996 Minnesota Book Award for Biography/History and a 1996 Distinguished Service to History Book Award from the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. (A soft cover edition will be published by Oxford University Press in 1999.) She also is the author of a children's biography on Leopold, *Of Things Natural, Wild, and Free*, which won a John Burrough's Nature Book Award. She has worked with her illustrator husband on the environmental series for kids: *Earthwise at Play* and *Earthwise at School*.

- Michael McCloskey is the chairman of the Sierra Club and has been associated with that organization for more than thirty-five years. As chairman, he is a senior policy officer and spokesman for the organization. He also is chairman of the Mineral Policy Center and co-chairman of the Environmental Management Task Force of the President's Council on Environmental Quality. He also has served as executive director of the Sierra Club (1969–1985) and as its conservation director (1966–1969). He is a past chairman of the National Resources Council of America and is a member of both the Law Commission and the Commission of Protected Areas of the World Conservation Union. He holds a degree in law from the University of Oregon, a degree in government from Harvard College, and serves as an adjunct professor of public policy at the School of Natural Resources and Environment of the University of Michigan.

- William Meadows is president of The Wilderness Society. Before joining The Wilderness Society, he was the director of the Centennial Campaign for the Sierra Club. From 1988 to 1992, Meadows was vice president for college relations at Sweet Briar College where he also helped found the school's Environmental Education Project (SWEEP). Previous to that he was executive director of alumni relations at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. In addition to his professional activities, Meadows also served on the board of directors for the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, District III; the Tennessee Environmental Council; the League of Women Voters-Nashville and held a number of leadership positions in the Tennessee Chapter of the Sierra Club. He was awarded the Sierra Club's Community Service Award in 1995. Meadows received his bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt and earned a masters degree in education from George Peabody College in Vanderbilt.

- Gaylord Nelson served as Wisconsin's governor from 1959 to 1963 and as U.S. Senator from 1963 to 1981. He is known as the founder of Earth Day in 1970 and wrote the original legislation designating the Apostle Islands as a National Lakeshore. He has been a counselor of The Wilderness Society since 1981.

- Carl Pope is executive director of the Sierra Club, an organization he has served for the past twenty years in various capacities, including associate conservation director, political director, and conservation director. In addition to his work with the Sierra Club, Pope has had a distinguished record of environmental activism and leadership, serving on the boards of the California League of Conservation Voters, Public Voice, National Clean Air Coalition, California Common Cause, Public Interest Economics, and Zero Population Growth. He also has served as executive director of the California League of Conservation Voters and as the political director of Zero Population Growth. Among Pope's major accomplishments is California Proposition 65, the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic initiative which he co-authored in 1986. Pope graduated summa cum laude from Harvard College in 1967 and spent the following two years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Barhi Barhi, India.

- Gregory Shaffer is an assistant professor in the Law School at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. He holds degrees from Stanford University and Dartmouth College and has published poems in *The Christian Science Monitor, Wind, Tributaries, Piedmont Literary Review, Sheaf, Hootenanny,* and *Chattahoochee Review*. He is the author of the recently published chapbook, *Forest*.

- T. N. Turner is a computer system architect at The St. Paul Companies. His poems have been published in *MacGuffin, Galley Sail Review, Crazyquilt Quarterly, Pennsylvania English, Voices International, Portland Review, Potpourri,* and other publications. His first chapbook, *Portraits of Poets Past*, was published by Potpourri in 1994. A second chapbook, *Eighteen Early Poems*, was published by Poetic Page Publications in 1996.

- Thomas Vale, professor of geography at the UW–Madison, teaches and writes about physical geography (notably vegetation change), natural resources (particularly parks and wilderness), landscape (especially landscape meanings), and the American West. He has authored, co-authored, or edited seven books, including *Walking with Muir Across Yosemite* and *Wisconsin Land and Life*, and has published more than three dozen papers in professional journals. He also has served as department chair for one of the leading geography programs in the nation.

Genesis & Legacy

Wisconsin's Environmental Pioneers

From the top of a hill on the north side of Lake Mendota I gained a last wistful, lingering view of the beautiful University grounds and buildings where I had spent so many hungry and happy and hopeful days. There with streaming eyes I bade my blessed Alma Mater farewell. But I was only leaving one University for another, the Wisconsin University for the University of the Wilderness.

John Muir, The Story of My Boyhood and Youth

We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. There is no other way for land to survive the impact of mechanized man, nor for us to reap from it the esthetic harvest it is capable, under science, of contributing to culture.

Aldo Leopold, *from the "Foreword" to* A Sand County Almanac

I don't know about you, but Sid and I think a little city like this, with a good university in it, is the real flowering of the American dream. Don't you feel it? It might have felt like this in Florence in the early fifteenth century, just before the big explosion of art and science and discovery. . . . Before we're all done with it, let's make Madison a place of pilgrimage.

Wallace Stegner, *from the novel* Crossing to Safety

John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner & Gaylord Nelson meet high on a Mississippi bluff to contemplate saving the Earth.

Two Scrapings and a Bluebird's Nest

by Carl Pope

We stand where glaciers groaned.

Our landscape starts with ice. A tumbled, mile-high lake of blue, blue ice, crevassed in black and white, walls off our continent's older past.

Pre-ice a richer garden flourished—diversity requires times, in species as in speech.

Ice, melting, shapes frontiers. Wisconsin was a work in progress. Europeans were not the first to pioneer till, relic lake, moraine. The plants and animals, a shadow, the briefest start of what the ice had scraped away, forests and prairies, all pioneered this land. Yes, pine and badger, wolf and alder, maple, pike, are but a pollster's sample of what fled before the ice.

They did not pioneer alone. The first peoples also drifted north, filling in wherever ice had fled. Their fire, we think, sustained the edges marking wood and prairie. They kept the land open, because they lived across it, Wisconsin their frontier.

With fire their plow, fire their bulldozer, they changed the fifteenth century forest, and the sixteenth, the seventeenth, the eighteenth, changed in tiny puffs and saffron glows, slowly.

Then came the second scraping—the nineteenth century—ax, plow, saw, engine, flame.

And so a century ago, a little south of here, Frederick Jackson Turner, another Wisconsin son, asked the Great Question.

"The frontier has closed," he told America. "What's next?"

After Genesis, after Legacy, what's destiny?

John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner, each wrestled with this question. Each pursued the frontier course. Westward they went, far from Wisconsin, tracing the glacier's path from different compass headings.

Stegner's father drifted north by west, seeking his Big Rock Candy Mountain, following glacial milk across the border, Canada, then back again, across the relic beds of ancient lakes—Agassiz, Gallatin, Bonneville. Perhaps his restless dreams required shores too wide for what he found, in warmer climes and arid times.

The largest relic Western sea of all, the Great Salt Lake, embraced his son.

Wallace Stegner sought kindness. He didn't find it in his father, nor in the vision, land as lottery, humanity as gambler, that drove his father and his family round the compass.

> ***"The frontier has closed," he told America. "What's next?"***

Improbably, he found it in Zion. Stegner took Brigham Young, and softened up that tough old bird, until the beehive's hum, and not its sting, became the face of Mormonism to the world. These folks, NEST, Stegner told us, like some damn blue bird.

Because they nest, they don't need roads to take them everywhere.

Settled community, the kindness neighbors bring, balanced with hope's geography, with wilderness.

Wilderness requiring and sustaining kindness—one shoot of destiny sprouted from Wisconsin's glacial soil.

Leopold went south by west, to landscaped allocated, isolated as the glaciers failed. High Gila meadows left behind, refugia from the earlier age, above the desert's heat. Leopold first sought destiny in science. Finally he most clearly saw that land and man must co-evolve.

He left the West, its paradigm: America the great commodity; Americans its owners. He came back, Wisconsin's son, to glacial soil—a work in progress—to restore and harvest from it knowledge, rightness even.

Land as ethic, as community—Aldo Leopold's thicket along the river of our destiny.

John Muir was wilder. Straight West he sought the glacier's deepest scar—Yosemite. Then Glacier Bay, the unrepentant ice itself, exulting and defiant. Rejecting Progress even as that promise peaked, anti-Victorian Victorian, romantic, Muir looked on the land as spirit, and as temple, man as acolyte, not demigod.

Calling upon the spirits of the mountain wind, their spiritual defiance, Muir's mighty fir tree swayed to destiny's gale.

Knowledge in balance with wildness, community and ethic, spiritual defiance—Wisconsin's answers to Wisconsin's question—What's next?

Separately, resonate though they may, this flora cannot thrive alone or colonize post-glacial soil. Each rejects, each fights one aspect of what Muir called progress, Leopold domination, Stegner exploitation, the answer of a hundred years, our century, to Turner's question.

Today, that century old answer bears the title "market," America as shopping mall, Americans consumers. Yes, we should, we must reject this vision—shopping mall as destiny—joining Muir, Leopold and Stegner. But we must also see the work in progress. Our vision is still but the briefest spring, a pollster's sample of our need.

Surely we need the warmth that kindness brings; fresh ideas and genes from wilder strains; community to carry us through grief; an ethic of respect for all of life; and something bigger than ourselves for awe.

Somehow we must combine what Stegner, Leopold and Muir discerned wandering down the glacier's trail, and add a new awareness—work in progress. It will not do to freeze Wisconsin as it was a century or more ago. For it was still a pioneer, a frontier of its own behind the glacier.

We no longer need to live extensively across the land. A few acres can feed many.

We no longer wish to live lightly upon the land. High-rise and asphalt outweigh teepee and travois.

Somehow we must live within the land. We must withdraw from much of it, nest like some damn bluebirds in snags within the forest.

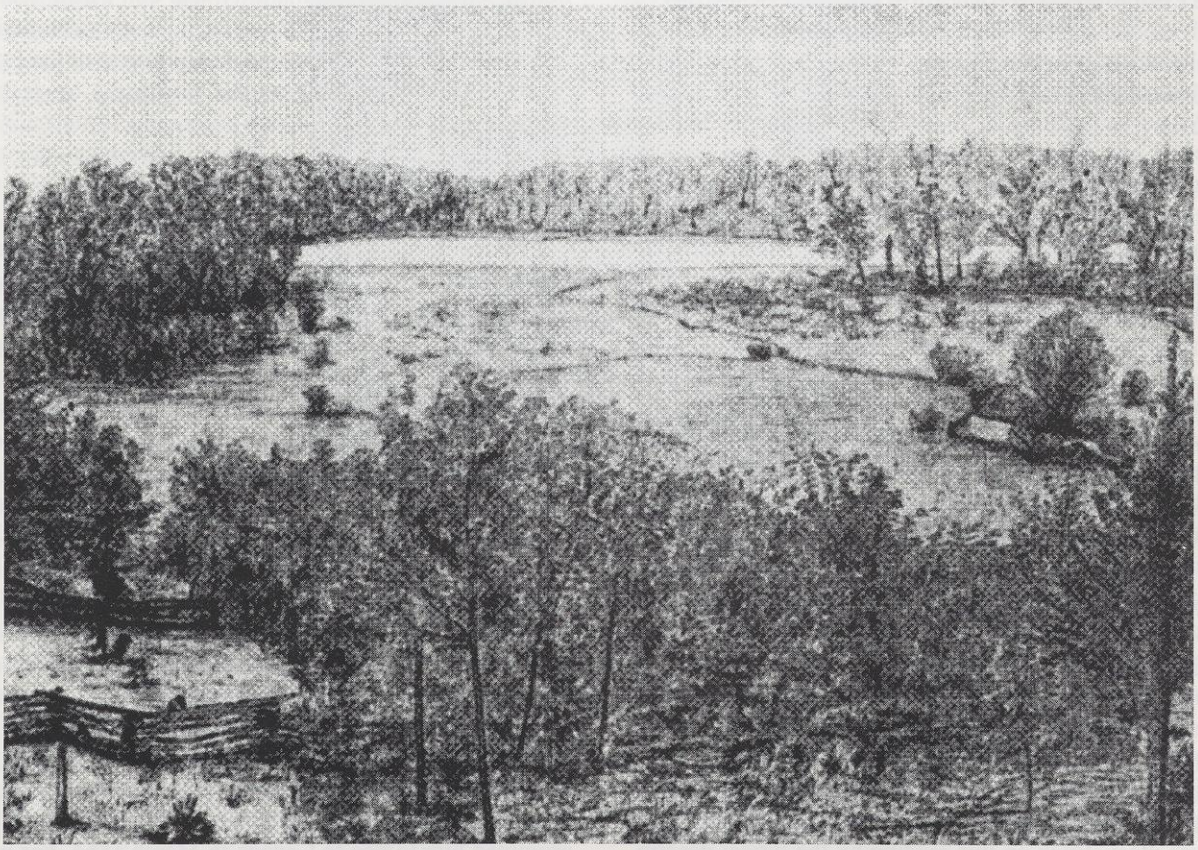
Give nature room, connected room—room to begin again—to recolonize glacial soil—room to grow, room to flood, room to burn,

Room for diversity, connected room.

Somehow we must live within the land, and not across it. Somehow we must allow its rhythms to evolve, diversity to naturalize.

How?

We must gentle our footsteps and soften our voices until we hear the evolution of the wind. After the glacier's groan comes the whisper of the spring. Can we listen? ❧



John Muir's drawing of Fountain Lake, a significant part of his boyhood environment.

John Muir, Wisconsin, and the Environmental Tradition

by Stephen Fox

John Muir came to Wisconsin in 1849, as an eleven-year-old Scottish immigrant, and lived here for fifteen years. This is where he grew up, was formed and educated; where he discovered botany and geology, the intellectual passions of his life, and where he met Jeanne Carr, the major influence on his intellectual development. When he left Wisconsin in 1864, his mature attitudes about nature and the need for greater human forbearance in dealing with the natural world were essentially in place—if not as yet fully expressed. Though generally most identified with California, Yosemite Valley, and the Sierra Club (and though he thought of himself, wherever he was, as essentially a Scotsman), his conservation work and the writings that made him a principal founder of American environmentalism may be traced back ultimately to his Wisconsin years.

A general point at the outset: Muir was not like you and me. He was different; that differentness was the ultimate source of his power to persuade and inspire, and to help invent something as new and unprecedented in the American experience as conservation. As we sort through his early years, the overriding impression is one of quirkiness and idiosyncrasy: of peculiar and eccentric pursuits undertaken for reasons known only to Muir—if to him—and carried on in isolation, without companions and with very little reinforcement from outsiders.

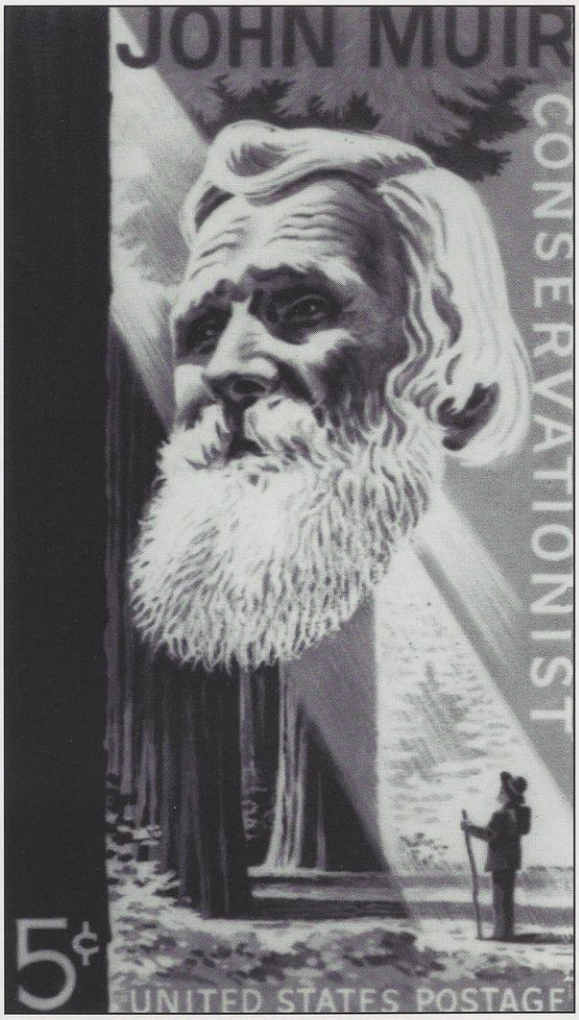
In 1849 the Muirs settled on 80 acres of virgin land in south-central Wisconsin, in Marquette County. John as the oldest boy was taken out of school and given the hardest tasks on the farm. For Muir the future conservationist, there were two basic frames of reference. Within the family, John butted heads with his domineering father; and in the fields and forests he encountered—and probably accepted—the prevailing pioneer attitudes toward nature, which were straight from the first chapter of Genesis: to subdue the land and establish human dominion over the earth and all its life forms. Muir's family was saturated in the Bible. Encouraged by whippings from his father, Muir had learned to recite from memory the entire New Testament and most of the Old. In that spirit, pioneers tended (for example) to see trees as just an especially large and difficult weed, an endemic impediment to their practical intentions.

The main available source for these years is Muir's memoir, *The Story of My Boyhood and Youth*, written over a half-century later. I re-read it recently for the first time in twenty years. I was most struck on this reading by the lyrical descriptions of the natural world, especially the birds, of the Wisconsin frontier: his "baptism in nature," as he called it. My hunch is that these later descriptions were filtered through the conservationist sensibility of his maturity, and don't truly represent his nature attitudes as a boy. On the farm, his encounter with nature remained more in the pioneer spirit, a matter of the human will overcoming and rearranging the wilderness by grubbing out tree roots and chipping through eighty feet of sandstone to dig a well. He also hunted for food and amusement, shooting birds and gophers—an activity that later appalled him. But the detail and texture of his nature descriptions, recalled even so many years later, do suggest that he had already acquired the habit of careful observation, of quietly watching and listening and not missing much. Even as an overworked farm boy, he was already capable of paying full attention to his natural environment.

In 1860 he left home and, after various adventures, enrolled at the new state university in Madison. Essentially unschooled since Scotland, he was ravenous for knowledge. The speed and facility of his intellectual development are quite striking. In one year, he went from the university's preparatory department to giving learned lectures on chemistry and geology before adult audiences. In his letters home, the spelling and grammar, formerly quite desperate, quickly improved. The act of seeking higher education was itself a rebellion against his father's will; and his eager embrace of the scientific method, and of revealing the natural world through empirical study, pushed him toward rejecting the strict Scotch Calvinism on which he had been raised. In his early twenties, he was now gradually redefining himself.

The threat of conscription for service in the Civil War prompted him to flee to Canada in March 1864. For months he kept to himself, collecting plants in woods and swamps, avoiding towns and legal authorities. This furtive time led to what he later called one of the two supreme moments of his life. Late one

afternoon, he found the rare orchid Calypso borealis. It brought together, crystallized, a train of thought that had been building in him during his last years in Wisconsin. The plant was hidden in a thick bog, doing nothing "useful" to humans, but it was still sufficient unto itself, beautiful and useful in ways that had nothing to do with people. So—Muir was starting to think—perhaps the conquering imperative in the book of Genesis was wrong in assigning value to various parts of the natural world according to whether they could be reduced to human intentions.



This new perspective was emphatically echoed three years later, during Muir's thousand-mile walk from Kentucky to Florida. Engulfed and dazzled by all the unfamiliar flora and fauna, from palm trees to alligators, Muir again mused about the human place in the grand design of nature. "The world we are told was made for man," he finally wrote in his journal. "A presumption that is totally unsupported by facts." Instead, he went on, nature had its own mysterious purposes, and man was only one small and subordinate part of the whole scheme, despite his arrogant presumptions otherwise. This was the central insight of Muir's life, the basis of his later career in conservation: the need for greater human humility toward nature, and a sense of the delicate interdependence of all its parts.

Eventually Muir became famous because of his writing. He published a good deal, in magazines and newspapers, and eventually in books. But his own attitude toward books was surprising and revealing. "I have a low opinion of books," he wrote in his journal in about 1872, during his Yosemite period. "They are but piles of stones set up to show coming travelers where other minds have been, or at best signal smokes to call attention . . . No amount of word-making will ever make a single soul to know these mountains . . . One day's exposure to mountains is better than cartloads of books."

Now, this is a rather discouraging attitude for any of us who like to think that books should matter in the grand scheme of things. But it was consistent with how Muir's nature attitudes had developed—not from reading, except incidentally, but from careful observation in nature, especially the encounter with Calypso, and then the central insight after walking through the South. From paying careful attention, in other words.

Muir in fact read widely and copiously; deeply engaged in his reading, he filled the books of his own library with marginalia and jabbering arguments. Yet—remarkably—he seldom referred to any of this reading in his own published writing. Instead he wrote just from his capacious range of personal experience, mining and revising the journals he had kept on his excursions through nature, trusting and passing on only the evidence he had found first-hand, directly, with his own senses.

This tells us something important about Muir—and indeed about the history of American environmentalism. Muir's experience—of going out into nature and literally reading the land, treating it as a text with lessons to impart, and thereby reaching an original new perspective—has been repeated many times.

Three examples: A young William O. Douglas, the future Supreme Court justice and distinguished environmentalist, hiking the mountains of the Yakima Valley of his native Washington state, and feeling an eerie resonance one night from the warm chinook wind, a sudden sense that humans were an integral part of a friendly natural universe, and not the unique lords of creation they imagined they were. Aldo Leopold, intent early in his career on eradicating wolves as worthless varmints, looking into the fiercely dying eyes of a wolf he had just shot, and realizing to his surprise, by a perception that was unbidden and nearly unconscious, that the wolf had as much right to that land as he did. The writer Joseph Wood Krutch, at the start of his second career as a nature essayist in the 1940s, hearing the familiar, renewing sounds of the spring peeper, the harbinger of spring in New England, and whispering to it: "Don't forget, we are all in this together."

Leopold, Douglas, and Krutch were—like Muir—quite bookish. They spent most of their working lives reading and writing. But they all reached these important insights by a process more experiential than intellectual, a process which was wholly their own, arrived at independently. That's my point here: This crucial understanding is available to anybody who goes out into nature with open senses and an open mind, who can sit quietly, observe the whole amazing show, and ponder what it might mean; to anybody, in short, willing to pay full attention.

Intellectual historians—historians of ideas—tend to see history as a kind of ideological relay race in which ideas come from somewhere identifiable and are handed off from one writer to another (and thus are seldom original), with influences that can be traced and schools of thought that may be identified. The effect is to set up a row of antecedents leading directly, knowably, to the individual under discussion. Thus, for example, Muir is usually described as an ideological disciple of the Concord transcendentalists, of Emerson and Thoreau.

It is true that Muir had a famous meeting with Emerson in Yosemite in 1871—the other supreme moment of his life, along with finding Calypso, according to Muir—and that in old age Muir bought and devotedly read Thoreau's collected works, and told people that Thoreau was his favorite author. But Muir had read little of Emerson, and none of Thoreau, until years after his crucial encounter with Calypso in 1864, and then his walk through the South and his central insight in 1867. His essential attitudes toward nature were already in place before he read these guys. It seems to me that this is often the case: we pick up a book because we already agree with it. In general, we read to be confirmed, not converted.

For many of the key figures in American environmentalism, direct experience in nature has in crucial ways mattered more than reading. For another example, consider the case of Rachel Carson. One of her intellectual antecedents would seem to be Aldo Leopold. His *A Sand County Almanac* has been easily the most quoted, most influential environmental book of this past half-century; in it he expresses an attitude that recalls Muir's central insight, of the need for more human forbearance in treating nature. Carson's *Silent Spring*, published fourteen years after *Sand County*, was the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of contemporary environmentalism: the call to action that, more than any other single document, transformed conservation from a small, rather elitist cult to the mass movement we have known since the 1960s.

In her book, Carson also expressed an idea that by now will sound familiar: "The 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance, born . . . when it was supposed that nature exists for the convenience of man." Given the prominence at the time of *A Sand County Almanac*, one might expect that Carson was here influenced in her thinking by Leopold's book; but, according to Linda Lear's recent biography, Carson never even read *A Sand County Almanac*. My hunch is, again, that she reached her version of the central insight by direct experience in nature—in her case, the field studies and habitual beachcombing in the 1950s that went into her great books about the ocean and its environs.

What I am suggesting, however sketchily, is that the history of environmental ideas has been less a relay race than a series of often unrelated spontaneous generations by which individuals reach the essential perspective on their own, through an often unexpected moment of inspiration or insight, in a private and independent encounter of paying full and direct attention to the natural world.

Muir is a prototype here; and his life illustrates a second large, basic point about the American environmental experience, on which I'll conclude. Muir's sometime associate, and then antagonist, in conservation affairs was Gifford Pinchot, founding head of the U.S. Forest Service in 1905. It must be said—I surely don't mind saying it—that Pinchot always had an acute sense of his own historical significance. He wrote an influential memoir, under the modest title *Breaking New Ground*, and he kept, it seems, every scrap of paper that ever crossed his desk. His collected papers are one of the largest such collections housed in the manuscript division at the Library of Congress. In his memoir and other writings, Pinchot created a certain version of the origins of conservation: in effect, that the heavens parted, and Gifford Pinchot appeared, bathed in a celestial light.

This version of events has had enormous influence on how conservation history has typically been written. The general idea is that conservation began in government bureaus (like the Forest Service), among scientifically trained experts (like Pinchot), who bestowed their esoteric knowledge on a resisting but finally grateful public.

Well, it wasn't that way. Conservation really began in the decades after the Civil War among concerned individuals outside government—such as George Perkins Marsh, Charles Sprague Sargent, George Bird Grinnell, Robert Underwood Johnson, and John Muir—and in particular among private volunteer organizations. These organizations included hiking and mountaineering groups, such as the Appalachian Mountain Club founded in Boston in 1876, and the Sierra Club started by Muir and others in San Francisco sixteen years later; groups of hunters and fishermen, such as the Boone and Crockett Club started in New York in 1887 by Grinnell and his friend Theodore Roosevelt; and associations of bird lovers, in particular the state Audubon societies launched by local groups of women in the 1890s. Conservation in government bureaus was then a result of this growing public interest, but the public pressure came first.

This has great ongoing meaning, beyond the esoteric squabbles of historians. The heart and soul of the environmental movement has always been its concerned private citizens—zealous amateurs who recognize a problem and take direct action to influence public opinion and force government responses. Environmental affairs have therefore unfolded, over the course of the past century, as a rather delicate minuet between professionals inside government and amateurs outside it, with each group bringing its particular strengths. Professionals have provided expertise, staying power, scientific authority, and direct access to political influence. Amateurs have brought zeal, independence, and the freedom to take disinterested positions on their perceived true merits, irrespective of selfish career paths or salaries. Each contingent has been more effective because of the balancing and monitoring activities of the other. Each has proved to be indispensable, and together they have achieved what neither could have done alone. But the originating faction, the core of the movement, has been the zealous amateurs; and one of the main founders of that amateur tradition was John Muir, the first of the Wisconsin environmentalists. ❧

The Environment that Nurtured Leopold

by Marybeth Lorbiecki

Aldo Leopold, shown here near Chihuahua, Mexico in a 1938 photograph taken by his son, Starker, was an avid sportsman. He learned his early lessons in conservation from his father, Carl, "his teacher in the field [who] took his son to the swamps, woods, rivers, lakes, and prairies at every chance to teach him woodscraft, and the skills and ethics of hunting and fishing."

In Leopold's life, as in anyone's, there were countless influences on his thoughts and emotions that are too tangled and intermeshed to be easily dissected. Yet it is worth considering three major categories of influence: his family, his community, and the land itself.

Aldo Leopold grew up in the household of his maternal grandparents, Charles and Marie Starker, who were prominent citizens in the community of Burlington, Iowa. They lived on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi. Born in 1887, Aldo was the first grandchild of the Starkers, who had themselves endured the loss of five children in their second summers. So you can understand why the Starkers did not take the gift of children lightly. Nor did Aldo's parents, Clara Starker Leopold and her husband, Carl. Upon Aldo's birth, they all gathered to plant a red pine in his honor. This was just the first of the many pines that would become part of this forester-to-be's life. Much later, Aldo would admit: "I love all trees, but I am in love with pines."

His grandfather, Charles Starker, was a naturalist, architect, and landscape architect (as well as a grocer and a banker), and he spent a great deal of his semi-retired days with the young Aldo, teaching him about horticulture, natural history, drawing, and the aesthetics of the land. His wife, Marie, was a gardener, kind of the queen of the Starker family greenhouse. Like her husband, she was interested in horticulture, and it is rumored she had a particular fondness for ferns.

Their daughter, Clara, took after her parents. A gardener, skater, and sports enthusiast, she showered her enthusiasm and delight in the outdoors on all four of her children, but especially on Aldo, her first and her favorite. Clara organized Sunday picnics out to the lakes and woods that became a hallowed family tradition. She also set up a picnic spot at the home place, in a wide spot in her father's bluff-side trail. She had a fire pit built there and two cross sawbucks with some planks laid over it for a table. In this table, you can see the beginning of the later Leopold family tradition of using only what is necessary. That table stayed out in all weather, and as pieces rotted away, the family never replaced the table, they merely replaced one piece at a time. So friends and family who used that table would almost always note one plank that was new standing out amongst the rest of the weather-beaten crew.

Clara also modeled and engendered in her eldest son a love for literature, philosophy, and writing. (Perhaps she was trying to balance out the influence of all her husband's hunting and fishing literature.) She passed on novels and poetry for her eldest to read, and encouraged him to attend an eastern boarding school for the second part of his high school years, which he did. It was through writing home over 10,000 pages of letters in his young adult years that Aldo practiced and fine-tuned his wordsmithing skills.

Aldo's father, Carl Leopold, was the owner of a furniture factory, so he was carefully attuned to the supply and demand of wood. Carl was also an avid hunter and fisherman, and Aldo's teacher in the field. He took his son to the swamps, woods, rivers, lakes, and prairies at every chance, to teach him woodscraft, and the skills and ethics of hunting and fishing. Through his tutelage, Aldo learned to read the land.

It is clear that from these mentors—Charles, Marie, Clara, and Carl—Aldo developed the qualities of mind and spirit, and the habits that would serve him for the rest of his life. As any naturalist, he learned to observe each species and how it fit into its environment as well as how it interacted with other species. As a gardener, he learned to enjoy manipulating the land to increase its beauty and its fertility. As a sportsman, he learned to think as an animal and be part of the survival of the fittest. He liked to test himself to see if he could survive on his own in the wild as just one of the rest of the other species.

From this early training, Leopold acquired the ability to feel at home in various outdoor settings, from the urban garden to the national forests, from the vacant lot to the wilderness expanse. He had learned how to observe, to enjoy, and to take notes.

By the age of eleven, Leopold was writing in school composition books about the wildlife he was observing, and at the age of fifteen, he began the first of his ornithological journals. Though he observed details on a physical level, he responded on intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic levels. He wrote to his father in the spring of 1904:

"I hope you . . . will enjoy many of these fine Spring days over in the swamps, just seeing things; indeed I cannot imagine wanting to kill anything now when there is so much to see and appreciate outdoors."

Through his notetaking, Leopold had so keenly tuned his powers of observation that when birds did not appear at their appointed times in the spring, he would grow concerned. Later in life, he was rarely seen without a small notebook, a pencil, and a pocket knife for sharpening it in his pocket. These quickly jotted notes in the field often led to the meaningful essays that so many of us have come to treasure. He wrote of this acquired habit: "Keeping records enhances the pleasure of the search and also the chance of finding meaning in the events."

It's clear that the training of his elders had served Leopold well.

One can see the effects of Leopold's early training coming out in his teaching at the University of Wisconsin. Unless the thermometer dipped dramatically, Leopold had his students meet outdoors, and they learned to take notes of what they observed and interpret the meanings of what they saw. In his explanation for the purpose of this course, "Wildlife Ecology" for non-major students, Leopold explained: "There is drama in every bush, and when enough men know this, we need fear no indifference to the welfare of the bushes, or birds, or soils, or trees. We shall then have no need of the word conservation for we shall have the thing itself." Wildlife Ecology became one of the most popular courses on campus. It's clear that the training of his elders had served Leopold well.

Now, apart from the influences of Aldo's parents and grandparents, there were those of Estella, his wife. Estella became his first editor and sounding board, his friend, lover, and the manager of his household, which would eventually include five children and many colleagues, students, and friends. It was her efficiency in taking care of Leopold's day-to-day family affairs that allowed him the time and security to be out in the field, to write, to travel, to teach, and to experiment with careers. Her influence on his life and her belief in him can never be too strongly stated. (Imagine how you would have felt in the middle of the Depression, with five children to clothe and feed, if your husband would say to you something to the effect of "My job is ending soon, and I'm not sure where the next one will come from, but I'd like to focus on finishing my book and invest $500 to get it published.")

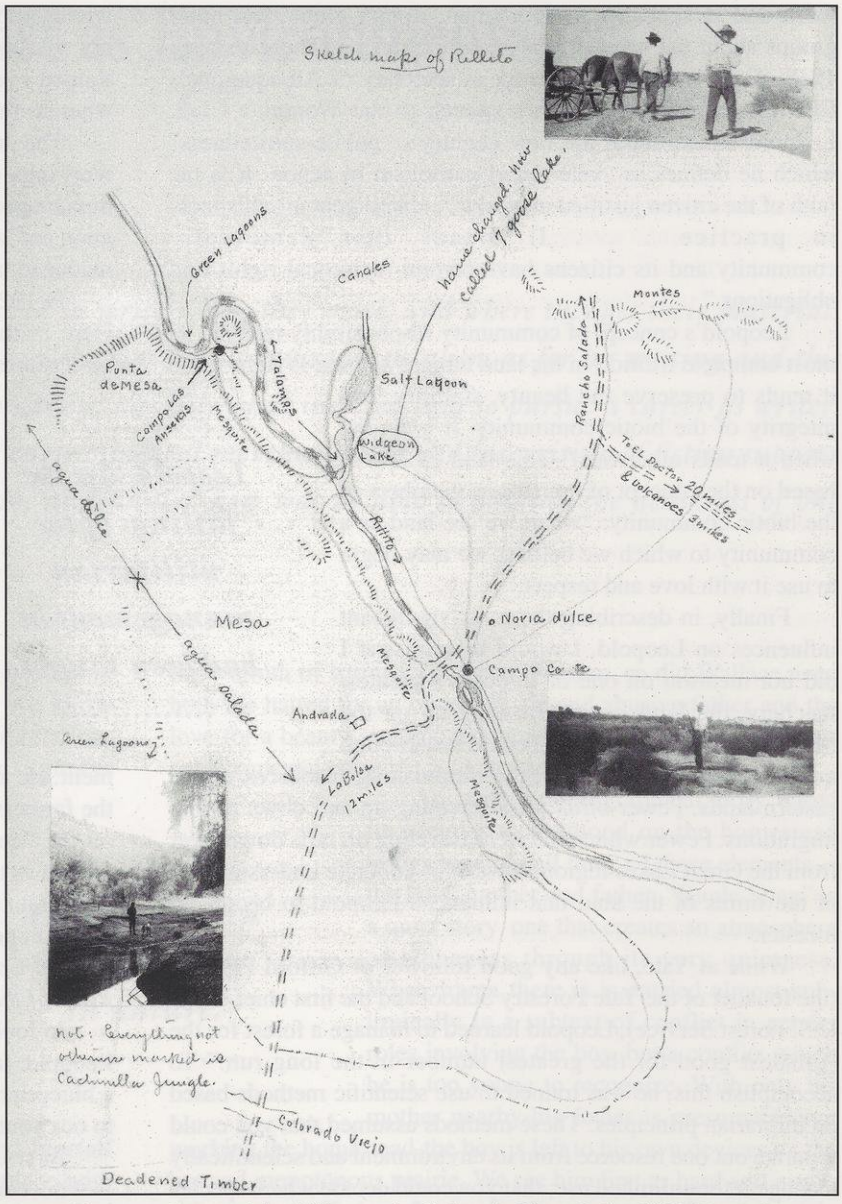
Then beyond the nurturing circle of these family members, there were the many others who had defining influences on Leopold: Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot, President Hadley of Yale, William Temple Hornaday, Arthur Ringland, John Guthrie, Charles Cooperrider, Raymond Marsh who saved his life, Arthur Carhart, Robert Marshall, Evan Kelley, Herbert L. Stoddard, and

Robert McCabe, to name just a few. Yet, I do not believe that these people would have influenced Leopold so strongly if he had not been brought up in the time period he had, where there was imbedded in society some expectations about community and moral responsibility. And this, I say, is the second significant set of influences on Leopold—the societal environment in which he grew.

If one looks back through diaries and letters of American men and women in earlier times, you will often find references to individuals' beliefs that they need to give back something to their community and to the progress of humanity: the concept of wanting to leave the world better for having lived in it.

Long before Teddy Roosevelt became president, he was a real hero to Carl Leopold and consequently to his son Aldo. With George Bird Grinnell, Roosevelt had started the Boone and Crockett Club, one of the earliest hunting groups in America dedicated to conservation. Roosevelt summed up best the biblical value of giving back something to the world. He stated: "Much has been given to us, and much is rightly expected of us. We have duties to each other, and duties to ourselves, and we can shirk neither."

In Leopold's life, he not only absorbed principles of community duty but also witnessed examples of civic responsibility in the lives of his grandparents and parents. Charles Starker helped plan and design many aspects of Burlington, including one of its earliest naturalistic parks. He helped found the opera house, public library, and cemetery, among other things. Marie was a leader in the county agricultural society and took an active part in organizing the county fairs, especially the horticultural exhibits. Clara followed her mother and also became a leader in local gardening clubs. Carl was active in conservation, working to bring about legislative hunting restrictions, and he emphasized ethics in his hunting. Both Charles and Carl were known in Burlington for their integrity—their strict attention to ethics in all their business dealings.



Leopold's journal map of the Rillito on the Colorado River Delta, 1922 (Leopold Papers, UW Archives)

You can see Aldo's response to this environment in his letters home from school: "It is deeds, not tears, that shall, and someday will, give to the oppressed of the earth their due! Therefore, let us rejoice in the June and work."

In another letter, he assured his father that as soon as he was able, he would do his best for "our poor ducks and other game in return for what they have been and will be to me."

Though his family was not of the church-going type, his education was in part very biblical, as were most public and private educations of the time. But he supplemented the expected biblical studies with his own surveys of forestry and land uses within the Bible, along with wide-ranging readings on society, ethics, and moral philosophy, including writings by Socrates, Plato, John Stuart Mill, Thomas Jefferson, Thoreau, Muir, Darwin, and others. He kept a little notebook of favorite quotations that he added to all his life, and used effectively— that's why he always seemed to have the perfect quotation in his essays and speeches.

I believe it is Leopold's societal environment that was rich with a philosophy of "to whom much has been given, much will be expected," and musings on what contributes to the betterment of society and the world that kept Leopold continually striving, trying to give something back for the much he had been given as a child.

Leopold's interiorized principles of community responsibility began to come to the public eye during his early forestry

work and in speeches to sportsmen, Rotary clubs, and other groups about the necessity of conserving game. Then again, in 1918, it can be seen in his work as secretary of Albuquerque's Chamber of Commerce. In a speech to the Women's Club, Leopold talked about the new century's "public-spiritedness" which he defines as "year-round patriotism in action. It is the faith of the citizen justified in works . . . intelligent unselfishness in practice . . . It means that democratic community and its citizens have certain reciprocal rights and obligations."

Leopold's concept of community responsibility reached its most complete fruition in his land ethic: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the beauty, stability, and integrity of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." This land ethic was based on the concept of humans as members of the biotic community: "when we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Finally, in describing the most significant influences on Leopold, I would be remiss if I did not mention on one of Leopold's greatest teachers, the land itself. Growing up on the Mississippi Flyway, Leopold could see through a sort of microscopic view, the diminishing resources of the eastern lands. Fewer birds were traveling up and down during migrations. Fewer white pine were traveling on rafts down river from the Great Lakes region. It was this concrete understanding of the limits of the land that influenced Leopold to become a forester.

While at Yale, like any good follower of Gifford Pinchot, (the founder of the Yale Forestry School and the first chief of the U.S. Forest Service), Leopold learned to manage a forest for the "greatest good for the greatest number in the long run." To accomplish this, he was trained to use scientific methods based on utilitarian principles. These methods assumed that you could separate out one resource from its environment and scientifically manage it for unlimited use; that you could decide which species were good (or useful) and which were bad; which landscapes were scenic or fruitful, and which could be discarded; which natural processes were beneficial and which were harmful.

Leopold was first able to put these methods to use in the Southwest, where he found the forests far different from the ones he studied on in the East. After nearly a decade of service in District 3, Leopold was made chief inspector. It was at this point that he most clearly began to see the differences and take note of the implications. The lands of the Southwest, in their aridness, showed him concretely the underlying fragility of the land community, and the interconnectedness of its members. Leopold saw the failings of the utilitarian management he had been taught. Erosion was running rampant. Species diversity had declined. Watersheds were being destroyed; and soon, deer populations would erupt, leading to starvation and forest ruin. In comparison, Leopold visited wild land in Mexico, land that was as arid and fragile as the land in the Southwest but that had not yet borne the brunt of scientific management. Leopold's trained eye saw quite quickly that this wild land was healthy, whereas the managed land was not.

The understanding that came from his new insights into the workings of the land strengthened his resolve to save wild, unmanaged lands in wilderness preserves, not only for recreation and wildlife habitat, but for science—to offer a control for managed lands.

In 1924, Leopold moved from the Southwest to Wisconsin. Here in the Midwest, Leopold surveyed the states cut up by agriculture and the effects on the wildlife, soils, and watersheds. There were few wild lands in this area to try to preserve. The only responses left were to be satisfied with the status quo, or to try to restore samples of what had once existed. This, the less traveled path, is the one Leopold chose, and it was the University of Wisconsin–Madison that gave him his first opportunity in this area. With pioneering scientists such as Norman Fassett and John Curtis, Leopold inaugurated the university's arboretum, dedicated to restoring a sample of what Wisconsin was prior to European settlement. He also promoted land restoration in his outreach work to the farmers of the state and in his celebrated family experiment on the "corned out" land along the Wisconsin river, lovingly known as the Shack land. In all these experiments, the land was a constant and beloved teacher. And we are fortunate enough to have Leopold's musings on some of the teachings of the land, in *A Sand County Almanac*, as well as in *Round River*, and *The River of the Mother of God*.

Leopold saw the failings of the utilitarian management he had been taught.

In looking back over these, my categories of influence on Leopold: family, community, and the land, I believe we can find a blueprint for what we need to offer to others, most especially to our youth, as we move into the twenty-first century.

First, it seems that mentors—loving, committed mentors—who can teach children and adults to read the land—to observe, enjoy, and take note of the workings of the land community—will be a gift that will be unendingly fruitful and diverse in its positive ramifications for the future.

Second, it seems we will move a step forward toward living in harmony with the land if we are able to reclaim in our culture a sense of moral responsibility to give something back to the community, and enlarge the boundaries of that community to include members of the larger land community of which we are a part.

And last, but not least, the more we can spend time outdoors, out of comfort zones and virtual realities, with the land community, the more we shall respect it (and its members), learn from it, and treasure it. For as Leopold said, "Once you learn to read the land, I have no fear what you will do to it, or with it. And I know many pleasant things it will do to you." ❧

Wallace Stegner: Artist as Environmentalist

by Jackson Benson

As a biographer, I have been interested in writers, why they write, and where they get their material. But Wallace Stegner has been as well-known for his environmentalism as for his writing and this raises a number of additional questions: not only what inspired him to pursue a career as writer, but what led him to become involved in the environmental movement, how did his writing of fiction support or detract from his environmental activism, and finally, how was he able to balance the demands of one against the other?

What are the circumstances that lead someone to becoming an environmentalist? In Wallace Stegner's case we know that the ground was prepared for him by an intimate relationship with nature during childhood. Spending his summers while growing up on the last homestead frontier in Saskatchewan, he was without playmates, alone with his parents who throughout the long days were preoccupied with trying to make the farm function. But rather than suffering from loneliness as one might expect, he found joy in being solitary in nature. Perhaps this reaction is characteristic of all those who eventually become concerned with preserving the natural environment.

He found joy in being solitary in nature.

From the ages of five to eleven, Wallace found himself on a desolate prairie three to four months a year, a place with "searing wind, scorching sky, tormented and heat-warped light, and not a tree," a place where livestock could roam for days without encountering the fence of a neighbor. Yet, amazingly enough considering such a barren and hostile environment, Stegner could still look back on a childhood not of suffering and boredom, but of "wild freedom, a closeness to earth and weather, a familiarity with both tame and wild animals."

What led him to such an early appreciation of nature was a mother who taught him the beauty of both books and of his surroundings, so that the two, literature and the environment, were joined together for him in a positive way early in life. In addition to the positive influences of his mother was the negative influence of a father who came to stand in Wallace's mind for all the careless, selfish exploiters of nature in the West. Just as bulbs and fruit trees need both the cold of winter and the returning warmth of spring in order to blossom, so did Wallace need both the hatred for an opportunistic and abusive father and the love for a beauty-seeking and generous mother in order for his environmental conscience to develop.

An early autobiographical story based on Stegner's childhood on the homestead brings together all three of these elements—the land, mother and father. "Bugle Song" is a quiet story, one that creates an atmosphere of aloneness through its very quietness. What drama there is is carried almost subliminally in a subtext of conflict in gender roles involving the boy, but a conflict which he is too young to recognize. With only his mother nearby-his father is presumably out working the homestead-the boy is left to his own devices on the hot and monotonous prairie. We see him first as hard and insensitive to the suffering of animals. He seems to perform his grisly task of trapping gophers and killing them (and on occasion feeding them to his pet weasel) with grim satisfaction as part of the masculine frontier role.

Although absent during the course of the story, it is obviously the father, or his spirit, that dominates this family, and he is the model that the boy feels he should emulate. The mother protests the boy's cruelty and he ignores her, yet he does follow her wishes in preparing for school in the fall by reading his poetry book, and in this and the romantic daydreams generated by the poems he reflects her softer, more civilized approach to life. Thus, a second conflict in the story, connected to the first but different in kind, is developed between the active, instinctive, and physical on the one hand, and the life of the mind—the imagination and the stimulation of the imagination by literature—on the other.

Both conflicts would persist in Stegner's consciousness throughout his life, and similar contrasts as we see them in "Bugle Song" between male and female roles, between insensitive and sensitive, caring and uncaring are carried as themes throughout his fiction. We can recognize in these contrasts the conflict at the heart of the Western archetype, and the adult Stegner, who plumps down squarely on the side of the mother, becomes a writer who spent much of his career refuting the mythic West. This in turn would lead him to such environmental activities as refuting the arguments of the sagebrush rebellion.

Wallace Stegner became an omnivorous reader, and as a boy, who was small and weak, he found his only successes came by achievement in school. Out of such a background, one could predict that he might become a writer, but he never thought of it as even a possibility. Nevertheless, following a long, circuitous route, as described in his essay, "Literary by Accident," he eventually became both writer and teacher of writing. His first major success came with *The Big Rock Candy Mountain*, the story of his own growing up and the conflict between the values of his father and mother. In depicting his father as exploiter and mother as conserver, the novel is an early reflection of the author's evolving environmental conscience.

He remained connected to the land, aware of its natural and historical values.

But the work that really put him on the map of environmental literature was his biography of John Wesley Powell. It brought Powell to the public mind as an early hero in the conservation struggle and brought to the fore the history of the mistakes and controversies of Western land and water policy. In reminding us of Powell's assertion, which so infuriated his contemporaries, that most of the West beyond the 100th meridian was either desert or near desert and that settlement and development must take this into account, Stegner's book can take its place alongside such seminal conversation works as Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*.

Although embracing Powell's values, Stegner did not write the book out of a passion for environmentalism, but as a tribute to a man he admired. He got onto Powell because his doctoral advisor at the University of Iowa suggested he write his dissertation on a colleague of Powell's, Clarence Edward Dutton, a nineteenth century scientist, civil engineer, and literary naturalist. Just by chance the Stegner family had a cabin on the Fishlake Plateau, right in the middle of the high plateaus which were Dutton's territory. Wallace had a realization that "all of a sudden history crossed my trail. I found that when I went up Seven Mile I found I knew what had happened there sixty, seventy years before." The literary and the natural environment once again came together in his life.

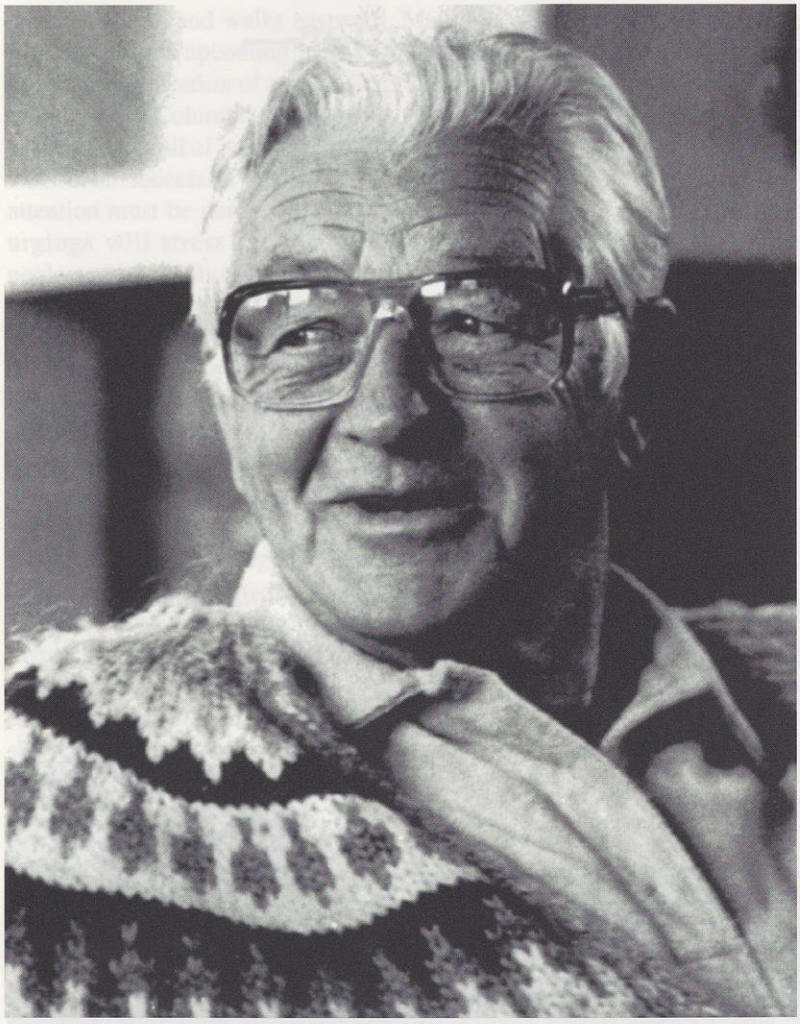
Writing about Dutton and then about Powell brought out another Stegner interest, which became more passionate as he grew older—the history of places. That, too, would become part of his conservationist arsenal, giving his environmental articles more depth. That he had such a variety of weapons in his arsenal—as an accomplished writer of fiction and non-fiction, as historian, as active outdoorsman, as amateur naturalist and geologist, and as teacher—make him almost unique in the pantheon of environmental heroes. Just stop for a moment to think how his role as teacher of writing connected with his environmentalism; look at the many students of his who have been connected with the land and with a strong sense of place: Larry McMurty in Texas, Wendell Berry in Kentucky, Edward Abbey in New Mexico and the Southwest, Ken Kesey in Oregon, James Huston in California, and Ernest Gaines in Louisiana.

Although the groundwork had been laid, from childhood to maturity, Wallace Stegner as activist did not emerge until mid-life, after many short stories, novels, and the research for the Powell biography was nearly finished. Just researching and writing the Powell book taught him a great deal, not only giving him detailed knowledge of the first for conservation in the West, but also providing a different mind-set, a realization of how important and on-going the battle had been and still was. In addition, as an inveterate traveler and camper throughout the West, he remained connected to the land, aware of its natural and historical values, but it took a moment, a moment of transformation, that would take him from sympathizer to activist.

To trace the history of that moment, we need to go briefly to Stegner's teaching career, which began at a small Lutheran college in Illinois while he was a doctoral student, to the University of Utah after his degree, and then to the University of Wisconsin. He found he had no chance, during the depths of the Depression, to get promoted and gain tenure at either of those universities, so from Wisconsin he went on to Harvard as a Briggs-Copeland Fellow. At Harvard he met a number of famous literary figures, and particularly important to him were Robert Frost and Bernard DeVoto. They became mentors to him—Frost in literature and DeVoto in conservation, and both in regard to humankind's relations to nature.

You might have noticed how often Stegner in his fiction quotes Frost, and it could be said that Frost provided a background of metaphor which Stegner adopted and brought into his own talent for figurative language to deal with nature in literary terms. Both Frost and Stegner were basically realists: in the poetry of the one and the fiction of the other, life can be hard and nature, while it can be beautiful, can also be unforgiving.

But it was DeVoto who would provide the moment of transition for Stegner. They became close friends in Cambridge and had a lot in common, since both had come out of the West to the



Wallace Stegner

East and both were non-Mormons from Utah. Both were involved in writing both fiction and history. During the 1940s and '50s, DeVoto's was one of the few voices in the mainstream media as an advocate of the preservation of public lands and supporter of the National Parks Service (he had a bully pulpit in his "The Easy Chair" column for *Harper's*). The two men played tennis and badminton together, and Stegner was a regular at DeVoto's Sunday evening martini get-togethers of Harvard luminaries. DeVoto was vociferous and argumentative in support of his convictions, and over several years Stegner got an earful of DeVoto's passion for conservation.

Stegner left Harvard after World War II to go to Stanford to found its creative writing program. In 1952 he took a trip around the Colorado Plateau and Grand Canyon areas of the West to do research for the Powell biography and came back fuming over the complaining he had heard throughout the region about the Bureau of Land Management and the Park Service. Many of the complaints were unjustified and founded on false information, such as the supposition that the federal government had taken public lands away from the states. He and DeVoto had been corresponding regularly about his research for the Powell book, and in a phone conversation on his return from his trip, he revealed his anger about the attacks on federal land management.

DeVoto listened impatiently and then told him, "For God's sake, man, don't tell me. I know all about it. You need to sit down and write about it, get the article published, and spread the word." And Stegner did. That was the moment an activist was born. That first article was "One Fourth of a Nation: Public Lands and Itching Fingers," and he had a very difficult time finding a magazine that would publish it. Finally his agents got it placed with *Reporter* magazine for the May 1953 issue.

Wallace Stegner went on to write some 85 articles entirely devoted or partially devoted to conservation and environmental problems. In addition, he celebrated his friend's, Bernard DeVoto's, contributions to the struggle by writing his biography. He edited *This Is Dinosaur: Echo Park and its Magic Rivers* (1955), which was largely responsible for preventing the construction of the Echo Park dam and, with his son, Page, wrote about our complex and generally destructive relationship with our continent in *American Places* (1983).

But beyond even these things, in a final triumph of his art as an expression of his beliefs, he was able to bring the two strands of his life, literature and environmentalism, together. We find this combination in nearly every novel he was to write, from *A Shooting Star* in 1961, to *Crossing to Safety* in 1987. And what was extremely important to him was that he did so without perverting his fiction by making it a vehicle for overtly preaching a message. Bringing to bear his literary skill to define our place in nature in one of his most poignant passages, he has the dying Marian tell the grief-stricken Joe Allston in *All the Little Live Things*:

> "Don't feel bad. I'm glad you love me, but I hope you and Ruth won't grieve. It's right there should be death in the world, it's as natural as being born. We're all part of a big life pool, and we owe the world the space we fill and the chemicals we're made of. Once we admit it's not an abstraction, but something we do personally owe, it shouldn't be hard." ❧

John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner—Three Wisconsinites, Three Connected Lives

by Thomas R. Vale

Wisconsin's three environmental pioneers—John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner—never met. But their lives entangle, and we can imagine a spring day sixty years ago, April 18, 1938, when the three connected. It is a fanciful day, although the facts make it possible; we can imagine it this way. . . .

An inch of rain has fallen on Madison over the previous two days, but on the morning of the 18th—still warm and a little humid—the sun shines brightly. At the far western side of town, at 2222 Van Hise Avenue, a 51-year old professor of agricultural economics (who signs his letters "professor of game management") steps from the door of a handsome house onto his front yard walk. Pausing for a moment, he glances upward at the still milky sky, listens to a cardinal whistling from somewhere to the south, and then moves to the sidewalk,

"As the instructor of English considers his classroom lesson, he reaches the corner of Allen and Van Hise and notices an older man, apparently deep in thought, walking eastward on the sidewalk. . . . They greet one another—perhaps a nod, a quick 'good morning,' or a tip of hats."

where he turns and walks eastward. Much occupies his mind. He thinks of his upcoming trip to Missouri, where he will both join in the dedication of a wildlife refuge and speak at the state university in Columbia. He wants to use the opportunities to argue that, for all of its analytical prowess, scientific inquiry has been most successful at taking things apart, and he feels that attention must be paid to connecting things back together. His urgings will stress the rekindling of a time-honored but neglected intellectual fire, natural history, "the forgotten science," as he calls it. His thoughts turn to a great California naturalist who said something that fit, and he tries to remember the sentence—"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe"—wise words, he judges, although the metaphor does not quite work. Regardless, he muses, it might be useful.

As it happens, a little more than a block away, at 2216 Regent Street, just as the professor of agricultural economics steps from his front door, a 29-year old instructor in the Department of English emerges from his more modest home. He, too, hesitates to admire the pale blue of the sky and the singing of a cardinal off to the north. Then he heads eastward on the sidewalk, his mind full and busy. He has just submitted to a New York publisher a short story about a lonely boy on the Canadian prairie, a boy with a pet weasel, a fixation on killing ground squirrels, and a fondness for the poetry book that his Mother encourages him to read—the story is called "Bugle Song." He hopes for a quick acceptance because, quite frankly, he could use the money (although he knows that regardless of what happens to this submission, more stories about the boy and his family await to be told). At the corner of Regent and Allen, where he turns to the north, however, his thoughts drift to the more immediate matters of his class in intermediate composition and exposition. He thinks of a California naturalist whose prose—although much too gushy for his own taste—nonetheless flows with metaphors and Christian symbolism; perhaps some of the writing might provoke his students (he likes to prod them in a Socratic style of discussion).

As the instructor of English considers his classroom lesson, he reaches the corner of Allen and Van Hise and notices an older man, apparently deep in thought, walking eastward on the sidewalk. Stepping out into and then crossing the quiet street, the younger man reaches the far side just as the elder man arrives. They greet one another—perhaps a nod, a quick "good morning," or a tip of hats. The greeting is brief, however, because the English instructor turns eastward down Van Hise, heading toward the eastern end of campus, while the professor of agricultural economics angles north on Allen, progressing toward the far western side of the university. Nonetheless, in that instant, the lives of John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Wallace Stegner join, perhaps as never before, or ever again. It would have been, if it ever happened, a special day.

Special, yes, but, in another way, not necessarily unique. Any of us today can read the three great Wisconsin writers and bring them together in our individual minds—such is the power of the written word. And, thus, any of us who read the essays in this volume will be connecting to the lives of three men who enrich not only a state, our state, but also a more universal human thought. Connections of lives—a foundation for a humanistic world—might involve, moreover, not just similarities but also differences among those joined. Such comparisons enhance our understanding of Wisconsin's environmental pioneers.

Any of us today can read the three great Wisconsin writers and bring them together in our individual minds—such is the power of the written word.

Muir, Leopold, Stegner—Some Comparisons

Although we celebrate John Muir, Aldo Leopold, and Wallace Stegner as our own Wisconsinites, their lives connected to the state rather differently. First, each bonded to the Badger State at a distinctive stage of life: Muir lived in Wisconsin from ages 11 to 29 (a time of his "boyhood and youth"); Stegner spent a couple of years in Madison when he was in his late twenties ("early adult"); Leopold completed his final 24 years of life here ("mature adult"). Second, each was tied to the university at Madison, although, again, uniquely: Muir enrolled as a student for two years (before giving new dignity to the stereotyped "college dropout"!); Stegner briefly taught in the Department of English as an young instructor; Leopold spent 15 years, his crowning scholarly period, on the faculty in the School of Agriculture. Third, each of the three linked to another part of the country, the American West, although differently from their ties to Wisconsin: Stegner grew up in the West and returned to it as an adult; Leopold temporarily moved west and might be said to have matured intellectually during his 15 years in New Mexico; Muir wandered West, unintentionally becoming anchored for the rest of his life by California's Sierra Nevada and San Francisco Bay Area. In a variety of ways, then, the personalities of all three men reflected, and were enriched by, the places in which they lived.

The youths of the three men also offer intriguing comparisons, particularly with similarities between Muir and Stegner. Stegner's childhood was one of economic poverty (imposed by a father's endless roaming in pursuit of the "big rock candy mountain"); Muir's family lived only modestly on a Wisconsin farm (a consequence of a father's austere life style); the Leopolds, by contrast, enjoyed considerable economic prosperity in their Iowa home. Both Stegner and Muir lived with domineering, even abusive fathers—eventually also to be seen by their sons as dominating the natural environments in which they

Memory's Window: Dawn Visit *by Barry Roal Carlsen. Oil/panel, 16 x 24 inches, 1998.*

lived—but with supportive and nurturing mothers (Stegner more clearly so than Muir). Young Aldo Leopold, again in sharp contrast with the other two, grew up with not only nurturing parents but also a supportive extended family. As a consequence of their troubled home lives, Stegner and Muir spent much time alone; Leopold, it seems, did not. Although different in these familial relationships, all three read a great deal (the words used in other essays in this issue to describe the reading habits of each young man might be applied to any one of them: "omnivorous"; "ravenous"; "wide-ranging"), and all shined at school, at learning. (Stephen Fox mentions Muir's proclaimed "low opinion of books," but do not misread the naturalist's hyperbolic enthusiasm for learning in the out-of-doors. Fox also observes that Muir's working life was dominated by "reading and writing.") Judging from the varied youthful experiences, the pathways to environmental sensitivity may wind through different woods.

In addition to their associations with places and their experiences during years of youth, Wisconsin's environmental pioneers connect to one another—by similarities and differences—in their career or adulthood lives. First, each developed an ability to concentrate his observational eye, to see closely and carefully the natural world, to interpret the landscape. Each man not only cultivated this keen sensitivity, moreover, but also harvested the crop of knowledge that blossomed from such direct experience in the natural world, in the landscape (what each saw may have been a bit different, but that comparison will be discussed later). In addition, the development of this watchful talent presupposes that the natural world, or the combined natural and human world, is fundamentally knowable and rational, susceptible to human understanding. This characterization of a logically comprehendible universe, obvious for natural scientist Leopold and social scientist/humanist Stegner, just as appropriately applies to Muir, who, in spite of contemporary portrayals as an adventuring mystic, just as enthusiastically as the other two studied the workings of the world, wrote careful descriptions of what he observed, sought understanding of processes, recorded—in his mind and on his paper—empirical truths. All three believed in, and dedicated themselves to appreciate, a knowable creation.

Second, the development of their individual lives suggests something more general about the structure of the universal human life. For example, the outside, non-familial, person—someone who helps frame a personality or influence a direction of activity—looms large for many people. For Muir, Jeanne Carr (whom he met as a faculty spouse at the University of Wisconsin) remained a lifelong confidante; for Stegner, Bernard DeVoto inspired a young writer to broaden his writing to include environmental activism. Strikingly, no such person seems obvious for Leopold, perhaps testimony to his strong family support. Also, each of the three men describe a critical moment, an instant of time, when an event transformed their lives: for Muir, it was the discovery in Canada of the Calypso orchid; for Stegner, it was the admonition from DeVoto to become involved in environmental protection; for Leopold, it was the seeing of the fading light in a dying wolf's eyes. Perhaps such singular occurrences, such momentous occasions that cast long shadows into the future, generally structure the human life.

Muir, Leopold, Stegner—all dedicated themselves to writing, and all gained reputations as effective writers. Although the academics Leopold and Stegner contributed to a scholarly liter-

ature (Muir did as well, but less so), all three earned their fames by composing for an educated, general audience. (It may be that Leopold's and Stegner's writings are easier to appreciate on a first reading; Muir's prose, at least on the modern plate, may be an acquired taste.) The impact of each is suggested not only by the ubiquity with which their passages are quoted in a wide variety of venues but also by the familiarity of their phrases (heard so commonly that we may not be always conscious of who coined them)—"the range of light"; the "land ethic"; "the geography of hope."

All three men also developed prominence as environmental activists (they did so mostly through their writing—none of them ran for public office or became a lawyer!). Leopold, more than the other two, consciously and willingly entered the frays to influence policy, whereas Muir—who had envisioned himself a lifelong wanderer—and Stegner—largely dedicated to a reflective life of writing—more reluctantly became advocates for environmental concerns. The degree to which each became a part of the environmental establishment within government varied greatly: Muir forever remained apart, always an outside critic, and Stegner only briefly served as government advisor; Leopold, by contrast, pursued two decades of work with the U. S. Forest Service before becoming a faculty member at the University of Wisconsin. On the other hand, Leopold's reputation grew more from his non-government writing and activism than his agency reports or decisions, and in that way all three men earned environmental renown as critics of and reflectors upon, rather than implementors of, formal policy.

Each man developed prominence as an environmentalist, but the frames for their concerns enclosed different pictures of the link between the natural and human worlds: Muir saw the need to protect nature from society; Leopold envisioned a nature incorporated within society, or a society within the bounds of nature; Stegner hoped for a human society to match the beauty and grace of the natural world. Nonetheless, in spite of these not inconsequential differences, each man championed the preservation of wilderness; each believed in the reality and importance of wild landscapes. This shared enthusiasm for a state of nature, even within distinctive frames for joining the natural and human worlds, suggests that the contemporary vogue, the modern fashion, to criticize the wilderness ideal as a false idol may be misguided; perhaps what we need is simply to recognize that protected wilderness is but one of many positive and constructive ways that people and nature connect.

Finally, all three men, although speaking at different times in the country's development, criticized the course of modern civilization. All shared what Stegner called "nostalgic regret" over the changes in society and landscapes brought about by continued growth. Would any of them—Muir, Leopold, Stegner—say that the Wisconsin of today—even with its larger tax base, its greater job opportunities, its enhanced economic activity—is a better place than the Badger State that they once knew?

Another Special Day

I began this essay with a special, partly fanciful, morning—I will conclude with another exceptional day, this one not needing embellishment . . .

It is December 24, 1914. In Los Angeles, rain has fallen earlier in the month (a quarter of an inch as recently as the 22nd), but Christmas Eve dawns dry and mild, one of those bright, balmy days of winter in southern California. Whatever the glory of the weather or the season, it is a sad day: John Muir lies dying in a Los Angeles hospital bed. He has traveled by train southward from his Martinez, California, home to visit his daughter in the Mojave desert; he has been told that his bad cold might improve in the arid air. But pneumonia develops, and a doctor—summoned from Los Angeles—accompanies Muir back into the city for intensive care. The newspapers report the illness of the California naturalist, so great is his fame. He dies in mid-morning.

On this same day, 27-year old Aldo Leopold is back in his home town—Burlington, Iowa—tending to his family grieving over the death of his father two days earlier. Aldo has come from Albuquerque, New Mexico, where, after an illness of his own, he has recently been assigned to the regional grazing office of the Forest Service. He is now in his fifth year in the Southwest, a lifelong government career seemingly lying ahead, a career of managing forest and range, cattle and deer, water and soil. At the moment, though, it is cold in Iowa, and a little snow falls from a gray sky.

It is colder still—although not bone-rattling frigid—and spitting snow in Eastend, on the Canadian prairie just north of the Montana line. Five-year old Wally Stegner—together with his mother and older brother—have first arrived in Eastend that summer, following his roaming father who had come out earlier to establish the family homestead on the prairie frontier. The four of them live the warm months on the empty plains but are now in town for the winter. After the loneliness of the homestead, little Wally appreciates being around other people. But he feels the winter cold.

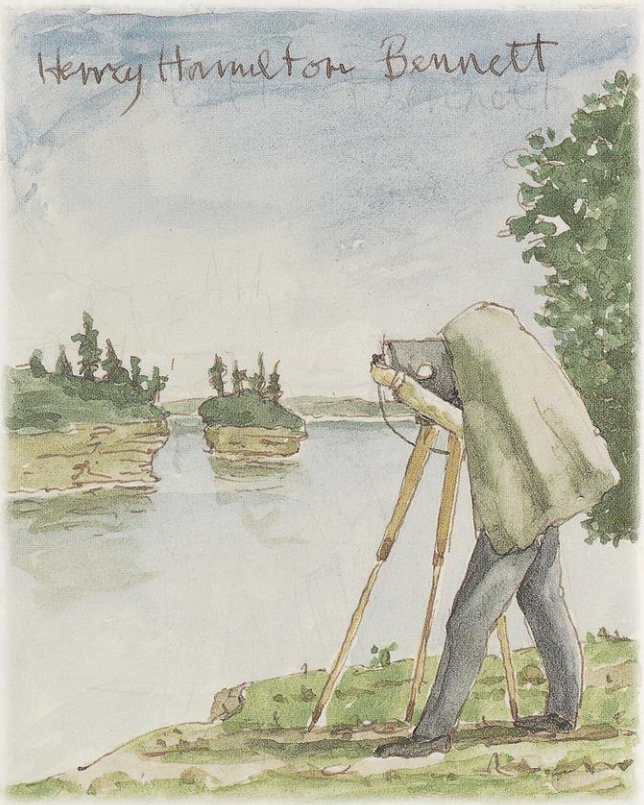
Three lives—one ending, one blossoming, one beginning. On that day, who could have foreseen that later in the century all three men would be joined, all three lives connected, whether on a springtime morning at a Madison street corner or in the pages of the *Wisconsin Academy Review*. But here they are, bound together, and, through our reading of the papers on Wisconsin's environmental pioneers, our lives connect with theirs. We desire to learn of these men, to gain their knowledge and insight, to listen to the wisdom of their words, but we also want, in a more visceral way, to stand with them, to say that their wise words remain wise, that nature is indeed full of "beauty-loving tenderness" . . . that indeed "we shall hardly relinquish the shovel . . . but we are in need of gentler . . . criteria for its use." . . . and that indeed we seek a society filled with "everything that makes life graceful and civilized." ❧

Genesis and Legacy text continues on page 31.

A John Wilde Sampler of Wisconsin Artists

In April and June the Wisconsin Academy Gallery featured solo exhibitions by Academy fellows Warrington Colescott and John Wilde. The exhibitions came on the heels of the publication of a poster prepared jointly by the two artists to celebrate 150 years of Wisconsin Art in conjunction with the observance of the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial. The artists featured in this section were chosen by John Wilde who did the special watercolor portraits of the artists as well as the portraits of Wisconsin's environmental pioneers which appear on the cover of this issue. Artists selected for the poster by Colescott but not pictured here include: Aaron Bohrod, George Catlin, Nick Englebert, Ruth Grotenrath, Jens Jensen, Edmund Lewandowski, Schomer Lichtner, Georgia O'Keeffe, Alfred Sessler, Gerrit Sinclair, Fred Smith, Edward Steichen, Brooks Stevens, Robert von Neuman, and Santos Zingale.

Special thanks is given to the West Bend Art Museum and the Milwaukee Art Museum for assistance in compiling the artists' biographies. Serigraph, Inc., of West Bend printed the poster as a contribution to the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial.



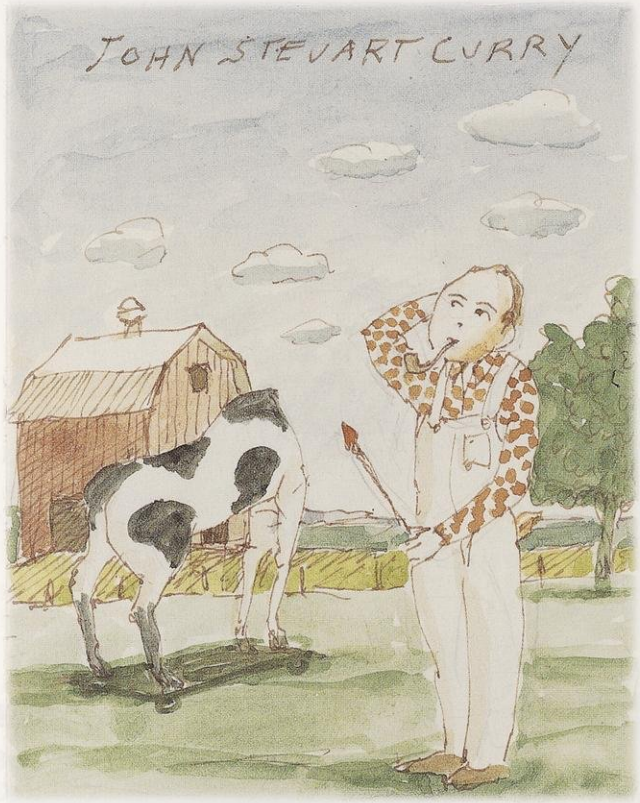
Henry Hamilton Bennett

Born 1843 in Farnham, Quebec, Canada
Died 1908 in Madison, Wisconsin

Henry Hamilton Bennett came to the Wisconsin Dells region from Vermont in 1857 at the age of 14. He tried his hand at carpentry, shopkeeping and other odd jobs and then answered the call from Ulysses S. Grant to join the Union Army. When he returned home from the Civil War in 1865, Bennett had a crippled hand, the result of accidentally shooting himself with his own rifle. He married and joined his brother, George, in buying a portrait studio. For a while, they did a brisk business taking portraits of returning soldiers who wanted to be photographed in their uniforms, but then their trade fell off sharply in the town of a few hundred people. George quit the business and Henry Bennett turned all of the studio work over to his wife, Evaline.

Bennett had decided that he was going to capture, in photography, the spectacular beauty of the area's steep-walled sandstone cliffs and winding Wisconsin River cutting through them. The Chicago, Milwaukee, & St. Paul Railroad commissioned him to photograph the landscape along the many miles of track in Wisconsin. In an age when photography had only been shortly removed from the tintype era, Bennett originated methods for printing and mounting pictures and devised improvements for his cameras.

A large exhibition of the pioneer photographer's work was shown in 1978 for a month at the Lee Witkin Gallery in New York. This was the first major show of Bennett's photographs anywhere outside Wisconsin.



John Steuart Curry

Born 1897 in Dunavant, Kansas
Died 1946 in Madison, Wisconsin

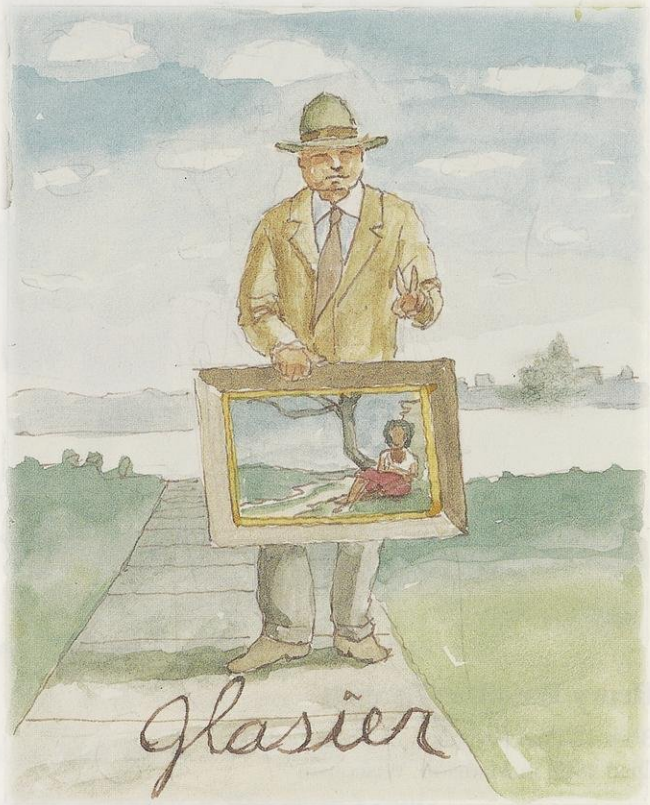
John Steuart Curry was born on a farm in Kansas. In pursuit of a career as a commercial artist and illustrator, he studied at the Art Institute of Chicago from 1916 to 1918. He joined his brother at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania from 1918 to 1919, and then moved to Leonia, New Jersey to work for Harvey Dunn, a well-known magazine illustrator. Curry's first published work was an illustration of the train that went past his father's farm in Kansas. The *Saturday Evening Post* paid twenty-five dollars for it. From 1926 to 1927, he studied at the Schoukhaieff, Russian Academy, in Paris. Curry painted Midwestern scenes and regional events that linked him with a group of artists known as "Regionalists," including Thomas Hart Benton and Grant Wood. He is remembered as an outstanding exponent of the American scene school of painting. His canvases exhibited an expert sense of coloration and a skillful clarity of drawing which vigorously conveyed the power and tension frequently implicit in his subject matter. Curry was named the first artist-in-residence at the University of

Wisconsin in 1936. He encouraged rural artists and inaugurated annual statewide exhibitions of rural art in 1940. Although he was primarily recognized as a painter, he also had some expertise as a sculptor.

Joseph Friebert

Born 1908 in Buffalo, New York
Lives and works in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

In the 1930s, Joseph Friebert was a pharmacist at the Oriental Pharmacy in Milwaukee. It was at this time that he became acquainted with an important group of young, local artists, including Schomer Lichtner and Santos Zingale, who painted in a realist style. By 1942, Friebert had become a full-time art student at the Milwaukee State Teachers College, where he received his BA in 1945. He received a masters degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1951 and spent thirty years on the art faculty at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee before retiring in 1976. Friebert's works have often been described as "old world," referring to his awareness of paint surfaces and skill in layering the canvas with overlays of paint, much like Rembrandt and other Dutch painters. Friebert was later influenced by Cubism and Expressionism, his works becoming more ordered and abstract. In more recent years, he has done figurative paintings using broadly sketched lines to depict drifting figures against hazy backgrounds.



Marshall Glasier

Born 1902 in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin
Died 1989 in New York, New York

Marshall Glasier studied for a short time at the Art Institute of Chicago, where he also worked at Alexander Green's bookstore, perhaps accounting for his lifelong love of literature. After a four-year stint in the Marines, he worked as a commercial illustrator in both Washington, D.C. and New York.

Glasier studied drawing with George Grosz at the Art Students League while in New York. He then moved to his parents' house in Madison, Wisconsin, where he maintained an attic studio for twenty years. Glasier spent two years as artist-in-residence at Reed College before becoming a life drawing instructor at the Art Students League in New York, a position which was to last thirty years.

Glasier considered his work, mostly drawings and paintings, to be "always in process." His rather surrealist landscapes took their inspiration from the driftless region of Wisconsin. Glasier's work was widely respected and reviewed; he had solo shows in both Milwaukee and New York, and is listed in the

1945 *Catalogue of the Encyclopedia Britannica Collection of Contemporary American Painting*. He was considered to be a great teacher, as well as a successful artist.

Owen Gromme

Born 1896 in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin
Died 1991 in Madison, Wisconsin

Owen Gromme received no formal art education. His career began in 1917 as a taxidermist for the Chicago Field Museum. In 1922, he joined the Milwaukee Public Museum, where he worked as taxidermist and curator of birds and mammals until his retirement in 1964. Gromme's many years of research yielded over sixty publications, the most important being *Birds of Wisconsin*, which has been reprinted several times. His wildlife art evolved out of the necessity to mix paints, and make notes and sketches while in the field. As a result of his keen observation and taxidermy skills, Gromme produced the carefully crafted wildlife paintings for which he is well known. Following his retirement, Gromme served as curator-emeritus at the Milwaukee Public Museum and received an honorary degree from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1990.

Emily Groom

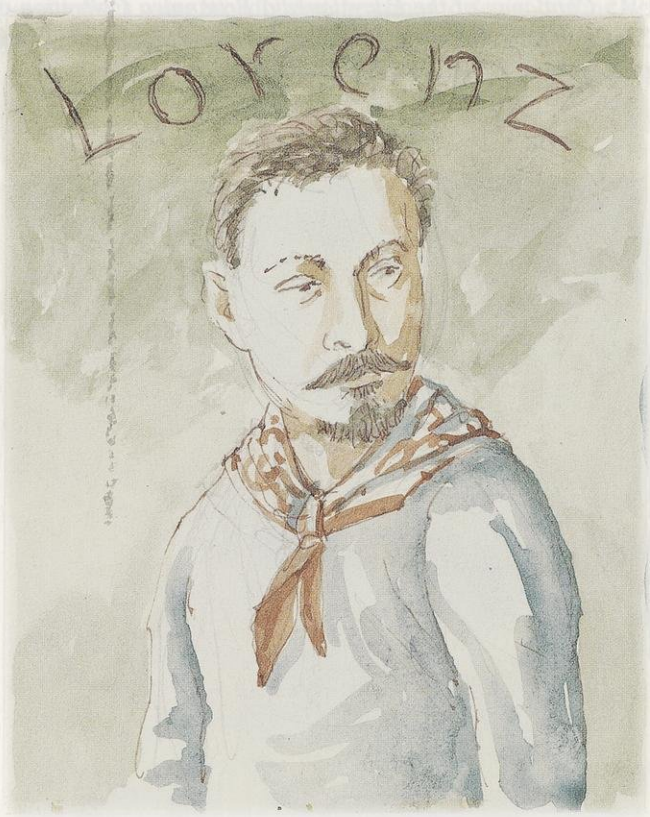
Born 1876 in Wayland, Massachusetts
Died 1975 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Emily Groom lived most of her life in Milwaukee. She studied at the Art Institute of Chicago with John Vanderpoel, the Art Students' League in New York, the Boston Museum of Fine Art, and in London. She taught for fifty-five years, thirty-seven of them at the Milwaukee-Downer College and at the Layton School of Art. She was also co-founder of the Wisconsin Watercolor Society, with Marion Bode. Groom established her studio in Genesee Depot, Wisconsin. While her work shows no hint of the German academic influence so commonly found among these early Wisconsin artists, there is ample evidence of French Impressionism in her landscapes. Freshness and spontaneity are characteristics of her quickly-sketched works. Her studio was surrounded by flowering fruit trees and brilliant flowers. These Wisconsin views became the hallmark of her watercolors and paintings. Groom's later, rather abstract, cloud paintings were inspired by viewing clouds from airplanes. Throughout her life, she received many awards: gold medals in St. Paul and Milwaukee, purchase prize New York Watercolor Club, and first prize for watercolors in Women's National Exposition, St. Paul. In 1932 Groom won a medal and a one-hundred dollar prize for a painting in the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors 19th Annual Exhibition.

Harvey Littleton

Born 1922 in Corning, New York
Lives and works in Spruce Pine, North Carolina

Harvey Littleton earned a degree in Industrial Design in 1947 from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. He then attended the Cranbrook Academy of Art in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, where he received his MFA in 1951. At Cranbrook, he worked in ceramics because, unlike glass, it could be worked in an independent studio. Littleton taught ceramics at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, continuing to pursue his goal of reviving glass as an artistic medium. In 1962, Littleton conducted seminars that were successful in creating formulas for melting glass at lower temperatures, enabling artists to work with glass in a studio setting. He then established the first studio art glass program in the United States at the UW, where he remained until 1977. His distinctive glass forms are achieved through his manipulation of heavy glass gathers swung into curved tubes or large rods. Littleton's personal search for form has resulted in many graceful, complex and colorful variations.



Richard Lorenz

Born 1858 in Voigstaedt, Germany
Died 1915 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Richard Lorenz studied art at the Royal Academy of Art in Weimar, Germany. In 1886 Lorenz came to America and was commissioned to execute a series of panorama paintings. He helped to complete the Atlanta Cyclorama. His specialty was equestrian painting. In 1887 and 1888, Lorenz was in California and Texas, spending considerable time with the Texas Rangers. Soon thereafter, Lorenz was teacher to many Wisconsin artists at the Wisconsin School of Design in Milwaukee: Louis Mayer, George Raab, Alexander Mueller, and Edward Steichen. Lorenz was a long-time Milwaukee art teacher with a lasting influence on the city's artistic development. He credited his success in painting to his earlier studies in sculpture and the principles of modeling. Lorenz made many painting trips to Oregon, Colorado, Arizona and California, making hundreds of sketches for his paintings of the American frontier. His sense of history, his skill in sketching animals, and his curiosity and enthusiasm for the West, led him to become one of the foremost painters of Western genre after Frederic Remington's death. Lorenz was preoccupied with light and with the sincerity and meaning of vast solitude. Today he is also known for his Midwestern genre scenes.

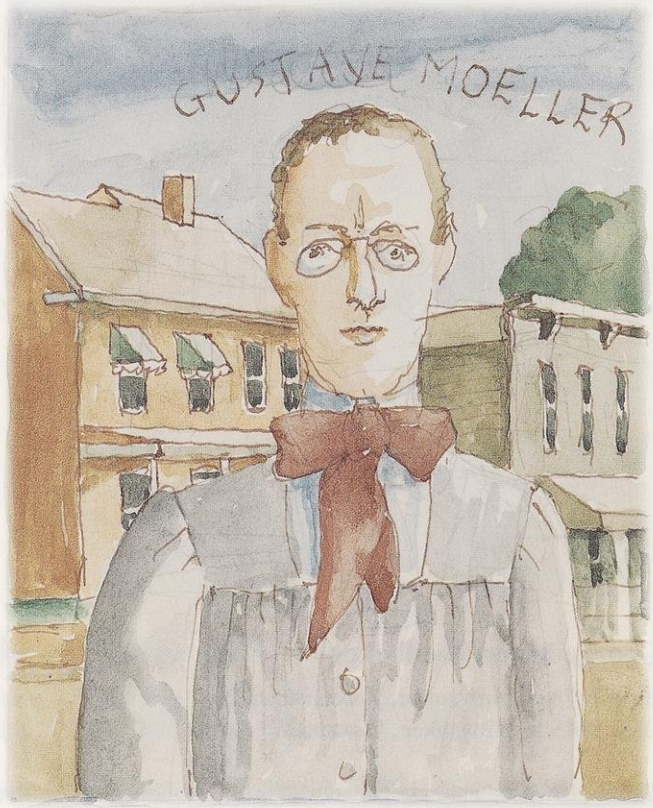
Helen Farnsworth Mears

Born 1871 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin
Died 1916 in New York, New York

Helen Farnsworth Mears grew up in Fond du Lac as part of a creative family. Her father was at one time an inventor and her mother, Mary, was a poet and playwright. Mears' father, who studied to be a surgeon, provided her with lessons in anatomy and created her sculpting tools. By her late teens, her work caught the attention of the famous New York sculptor, Augustus Saint-Gaudens. After Mears won an important commission for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, she became Gaudens' studio assistant. Soon thereafter, she decided to further her studies in Europe.

Mears continued to assist Gaudens with commissions while in Paris, and returned to Oshkosh in 1898. The next year she opened her own New York studio where she completed a nine-foot marble sculpture for the Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol. At the same time, she completed a five-year project which won her a silver medal at the 1904 St. Louis Exposition.

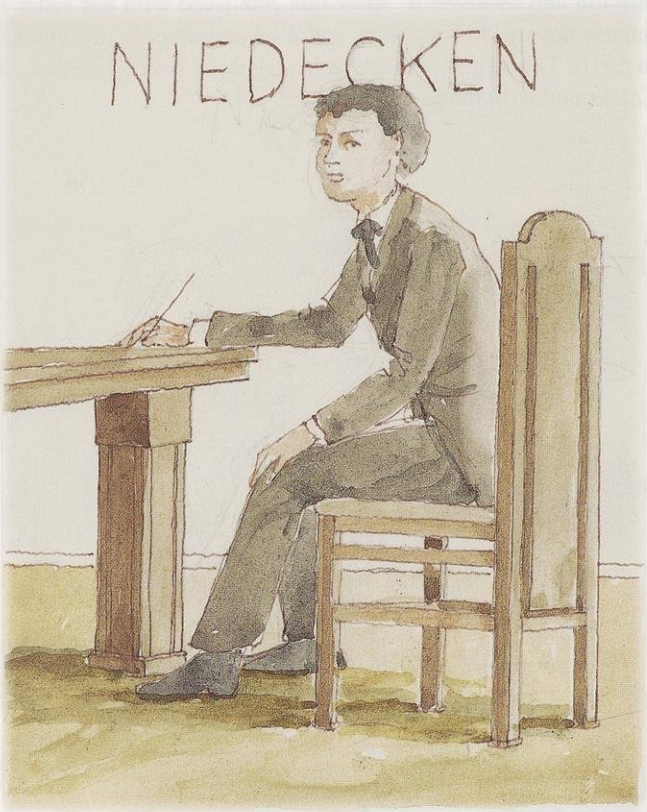
Mears continued to receive important commissions from 1904 to 1910, one of which secured her a fellowship at the famed MacDowell artists' colony in New Hampshire. In1910, Mears presented a model for a figure to be placed atop the Wisconsin State Capitol dome. Mears was given the impression that she would receive the commission, but another sculptor whose advice she'd sought on her model applied for the commission and received it. After this, she lived with her sister in intense poverty in New York and died prematurely of influenza in 1916. The largest collection of her work is at the Paine Art Center and Arboretum in Oshkosh.



Gustave Moeller

Born 1881 in New Holstein, Wisconsin
Died 1931 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

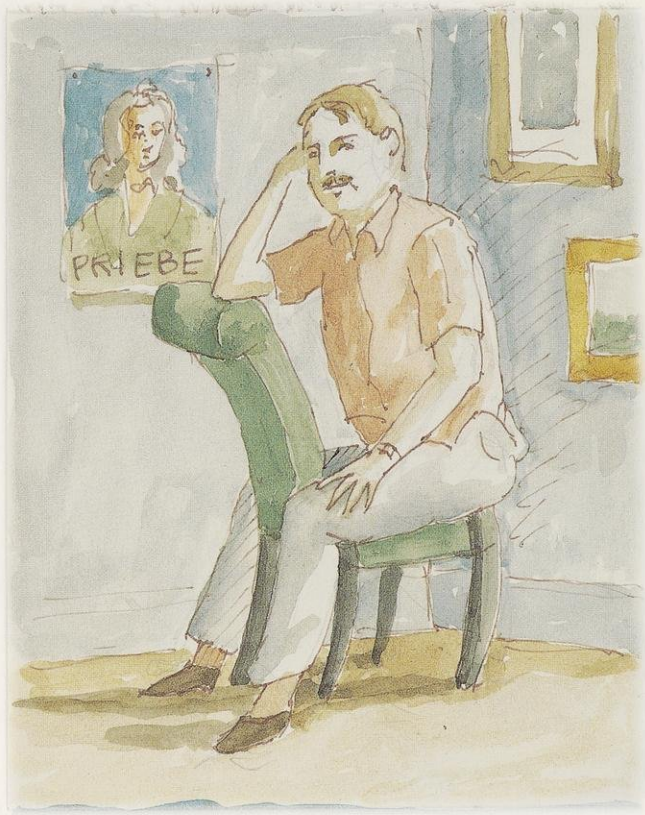
Gustave Moeller came to Milwaukee as a child, and, except for his schooling, rarely left the Midwest. He was one of the first students to enroll in the Milwaukee Art Students League, which brought him under the influence of Richard Lorenz and Louis B. Mayer. His later studies took him to New York and Munich. Upon his return to Milwaukee in 1923, he taught at and became director of the Milwaukee State Teachers College until his death in 1931. He taught Ruth Grotenrath and Schomer Lichtner, among others. Moeller is best known for utilizing native Wisconsin subjects, thus resisting European influences. His paintings characteristically were finely structured compositions with flat areas of color. Moeller's often-emulated palette contained lush yellow-green for the landscape, brick red for his buildings and violet-grey for shadowing.



George Mann Niedecken

Born 1878 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Died 1945 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

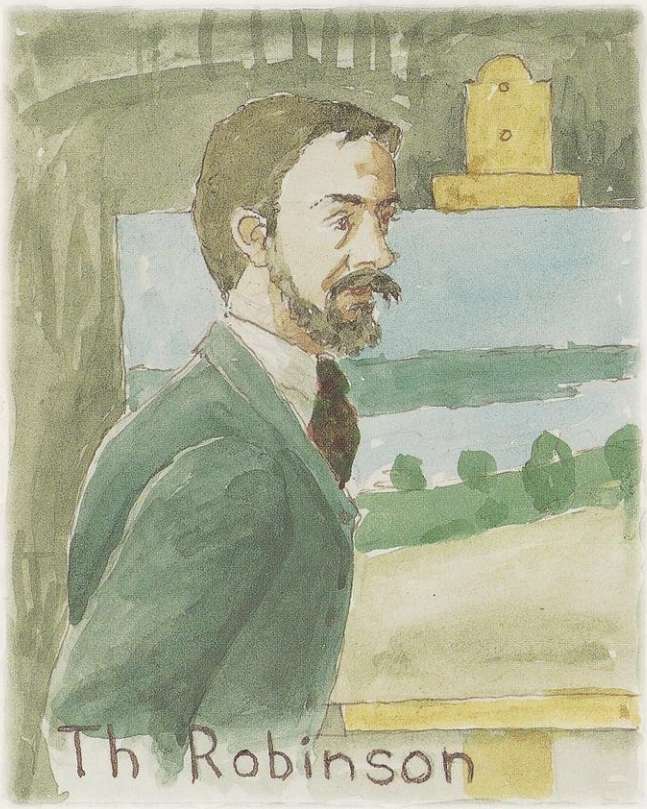
George M. Niedecken began studying art at the age of twelve under Richard Lorenz. He attended the Art Institute of Chicago, where his classmates included Louis B. Mayer, Alexander Mueller and George Raab. In 1899, Niedecken traveled to Paris to study under Alphonse Mucha. Niedecken's earliest work was based on ornamental plant motifs, undoubtedly influenced by Modernist mural decoration. In 1907, Niedecken founded his own interior design firm, the Niedecken-Walbridge Company, which provided custom furnishings for eleven Frank Lloyd Wright residences. Niedecken designed furniture, carpets, embroideries, lighting fixtures, stained glass and metal work in a variety of modern and revival styles.



Karl Priebe

Born 1914 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Died 1976 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Karl Priebe studied at the Layton School of Art in Milwaukee and at the Art Institute of Chicago. Later he worked as a member of the anthropology department at the Milwaukee Public Museum, served briefly as director of the Kalamazoo Art Museum, Michigan, and as an instructor at the Layton School of Art. Priebe was one of the few Wisconsin artists of his generation to escape the Regionalist label. In 1941, at the age of 27, Priebe received the international Prix de Rome award for excellence. Priebe's paintings often include birds and exotic animals, figures and small symbolic objects, coming together in an almost Surrealist fashion. The washed tones and soft lines of these paintings add to their dream-like atmosphere. Priebe has been called a "fantasist," but he preferred to describe his work as a "tempered realism . . . realism filtered through the imagination."



Theodore Robinson

Born 1852, in Irasburg, Vermont
Died 1896 in New York, New York

Theodore Robinson moved to Evansville, Wisconsin with his family at age 4. He suffered from acute asthma all his life and, as a result of being confined by illness, started drawing at an early age. Robinson began formal art studies at age 17, and continued his studies at the Art Institute of Chicago and the National Academy of Design in New York, where he helped organize the New York Art Students' League. Robinson studied and painted for a few years in Paris, where he exhibited in the Salon. He won two awards from the Society of American Artists and became an elected member. Robinson taught art in New York and at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. He divided his time between New York and Paris, where he was a confidant of Monet.

Despite early affiliations with the academic style school of painting, Theodore Robinson is remembered as an impressionist. He was the first artist to import the American variety of Impressionism from France to the United States with an 1889 New York exhibit. The school of American Impressionism would take hold and become an academic manner only a few years after Robinson's death at age 43.

Francesco Spicuzza

Born 1883 in Termini Emerese, Sicily
Died 1962 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Francesco Spicuzza immigrated to Milwaukee with his parents in 1891. Although largely self-taught, Spicuzza did study at the Milwaukee Art Students' League with Alexander Mueller from 1905 to 1910. In 1912 he became a member of the Wisconsin Painters and Sculptors Society. He opened his own studio after the lithographic shop in which he worked went bankrupt. Spicuzza taught hundreds of Milwaukeeans, either at his studio or in classes at the Milwaukee Art Institute. Spicuzza's philosophy of art was to trust his own eyes, rather than being carried away by anyone else's impressions or ideas. He believed that simple, sympathetic, poetic bits of nature make one see the beauty inside. He was fond of working on canvas outdoors in the sunlight and relied on bright colors applied in a thick impasto manner, similar to that of the French Impressionists, whom he emulated. Although Spicuzza painted many subjects, including portraits and floral still lifes, he is best remembered for his scenes of women and children splashing in the waves at Bradford and McKinley Beaches in Milwaukee. Throughout his life, Spicuzza won more than 60 major art awards.

Elsa Ulbricht

Born 1885 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Died 1980 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Elsa Ulbricht was an artist and an educator. She studied at the Milwaukee Normal School, receiving a degree in education before attending the Pratt Institute in New York. During her education she was influenced by Wisconsin artists Alexander Mueller, George Raab, and Frederick Fursman. She attributed her lithographic skills to Robert von Neumann. In 1955 Ulbricht helped found and chaired the art department at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. She served for many years as director of the Ox-Bow Summer School of Painting in Saugatuck, Michigan. This provided Ulbricht with time to paint, and she was at her most prolific in the 1920s and 1930s. Her paintings reflect a serenity that belies the anxieties present in America during that time. Broad areas of light color and relaxed poses were her hallmark. Ulbricht was a director of the Milwaukee Art Institute. She organized and developed the WPA Handicraft Project, which gave employment to 5,000 unskilled women during the Depression.

Frank Lloyd Wright

Born 1867 in Richland Center, Wisconsin
Died 1959 in Phoenix, Arizona

Frank Lloyd Wright is internationally recognized as a master of twentieth-century American architecture. A native of Wisconsin, he attended the University of Wisconsin before moving to Chicago in 1887. For about five years, he worked under the noted architect Louis Sullivan. Wright went on to establish his own practice in 1893 in Oak Park, Illinois. During those years, he generated a new sense of architectural form and space in the evolution of the Prairie Style. In 1911, Wright built his home on family property in Spring Green, Wisconsin, where in 1932 he established the Taliesin Fellowship. The design elements of his architectural style sprang from the contours of the Midwest prairies: horizontal bands of windows, hovering roofs and an open floor plan. Whenever possible, Wright designed furniture, carpets, and art glass that complemented his buildings and related to architectural details. This concept of total design was one of Wright's most notable contributions to modern architecture.

The Legacy of Muir, Leopold and Stegner

by Michael McCloskey

What has been the legacy of these environmental pioneers who have been touched by their time in Wisconsin: John Muir, Aldo Leopold and Wallace Stegner? Obviously their work is still read and appreciated, and their ideas live on.

Connections

The Sierra Club values the connections it has had to all three of them. The work that Muir pursued inspired his admirers to found the Sierra Club (in 1892) to help him, and he was its first President—serving in that role for twenty-two years. We still have memorabilia belonging to him, such as his tin cup. I used to have a painting by his Scots friend, William Keith, hanging over my desk. I corresponded with one of Muir's daughters; and early in my career I remember an old lady in our San Diego chapter telling me that she once went on a walk with "Mr. Muir." His spirit is still very much with us.

Muir was shaped by his enforced labor in clearing the wilderness forests of Wisconsin for his family's farms, first at Fountain Lake and later at Hickory Hill. Our Wisconsin chapter—our John Muir chapter—has helped preserve his boyhood homesite as a National Historic Landmark.

Wisconsin was Aldo Leopold's home for most of his adult life, and he was a Midwesterner at heart. I don't know whether he was ever a member of the Sierra Club, but two of his sons served on our board of directors; Starker (in the 1940's) and Luna (in the 1960's), and a daughter—Estella—once ran for our Board. I knew her and Luna. Aldo Leopold clearly admired John Muir. Because Muir tried in 1865 to acquire the Fountain Lake property of his youth as a wildlife sanctuary in 1865, Leopold regarded that date as the beginning of a time of "mercy for things natural, wild and free" in Wisconsin. On Leopold's death, his seat on The Wilderness Society Council was taken over by a delegate from the Sierra Club: Richard Leonard.

Wallace Stegner taught for two years at the University of Wisconsin in the late 1930s and became a spokesman for conservation on the national scene in the 1940s, warning against giveaways to the grazing interests. Not only was Stegner a novelist, he also was something of an activist—albeit an ambivalent one. He put together a book at our suggestion on Dinosaur National Monument in the mid-fifties to rally opposition to proposed dams. Our Executive Director of the time prompted him in 1960 to write the eloquent letter linking wilderness to the "Geography of Hope." He served on club committees and on our board of directors (1964–68), where I knew him. He also served on the Council of The Wilderness Society and on the boards of numerous groups dedicated to preserving open space. He won the Sierra Club's prestigious John Muir Award and was made an Honorary Life Member.

Backgrounds

While all three of these figures were affected by their time in Wisconsin, Leopold may have been affected most deeply. His conceptualization of the conservation challenge was shaped by his experiences here, though his earlier years in the West influenced him too. Here Muir learned to yearn for wilderness but went west to find really big wilderness. Stegner had experiences here too and in the East but really was rooted forever to Utah where he spent his formative years. His focus was entirely on the West— especially the arid region of the intermountain West. Of the three, Muir probably traveled most widely abroad, but Leopold was probably more influenced by what he saw.

As one tried to assess what they stood for, Leopold is the most accessible since he pulled his final philosophy together in *A Sand County Almanac*. Muir's ideas are scattered across a large body of work, with little to tie them all together. And Stegner's views are merely implicit in his novels, though they can also be gleaned from articles and interviews.

Over his lifetime, Leopold went through a major transformation from being a practitioner of utilitarian management to becoming an ethicist, who had learned from science and learned to regret much of what he had advocated. Muir started out learning the ways of science too (albeit much earlier) but quickly became more of a mystic and celebrator of nature. His views changed very little over his lifetime. Other than learning not to trust the Bureau of Reclamation, Stegner seems not so much to have changed as to have vacillated between an anthropocentric and biocentric perspective.

On a scale keyed to this distinction (i.e., biocentrism vs. anthropocentrism), most see Muir as embodying the most bio-

centric perspective, with Leopold representing less of this perspective because he would look more to science for method—though his ends are certainly biocentric. Stegner might actually be less biocentric than either. Much of his conservation is concerned with reconciling people with the land and its limits. Even his rationale for wilderness turns on its value to us as humans. Stegner also never really had much rapport with Muir as a writer.

Muir's Views

At an earlier time, Muir was viewed more as a popularizer and an activist (that is certainly the way Stegner sees him), who got his ideas form Thoreau and Emerson. Now, however, as interest grows in ideas of biocentrism, his reputation is reviving and prospering. His ideas are taken more seriously.

Muir's biocentrism is not rooted in science, though it is rooted in his experiences with nature. However, in its intuitive and mystical way, it does foreshadow the connectedness that was later expressed in the science of ecology.

In many ways, Muir was all about repudiating the cosmology of his Calvinist father. Muir denied that the world was made for man; we are but "one small part of the one great unit of creation." All of creation exists not to make us happy but for the "happiness of each one of them." We don't have "the intrinsic right nor religious justification to thwart those purposes." Each of them is a "part of God's family, unfallen, undepraved." Muir felt that we should feel ourselves "part of wild Nature, kin to everything." The universe would be "incomplete without the smallest transmicroscopic creature . . ." He decried those who were ". . . blind to the rights of all the rest of creation."

Muir not only reverses the traditional assumptions about relationships, his is a mystical vision of the universe. He felt "The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness." Michael Cohen believes that "Muir felt himself to be part of a larger cosmic order when he was in the woods, in the mountains." Muir said: "Earth and heaven are the same—one and inseparable." He spoke of experiences in wilderness "where one day is a thousand years and a thousand years one day." Some even believe he thought plants and inorganic matter were imbued with spirit—that he viewed all of nature as an animate thing—an organism.

Regardless of whether in the end Muir was a pantheist or not, he clearly saw nature as having a sacred character. He preached the "gospel of nature" and articulated a theology of wildness. He sought the "wildest, leafiest, least trodden way" and asserted "wildness is a necessity." He "saw harmony and order in even the wildest storm."

Clearly, Leopold was too much of a scientist to feel comfortable with all of Muir's mysticism, though he did reject the Judeo-Christian assumptions about man's place in the universe. And Stegner's penchant for realism and moderation probably made him uncomfortable with Muir's mysticism.

However, Muir was also a practicing conservationist. When he said that "everybody needs beauty as well as bread," he was acknowledging that we do need bread and places to produce it. He said "It is impossible, in the nature of things, to stop at preservation. The forests must . . . not only (be) preserved, but used." He hoped for the ideal where "woodlands are not allowed to lie idle (but) . . . made to produce as much timber as possible without spoiling them." Some of this was said in the heat of battles to hold onto the new forest reserves (in 1897), but he recognized that not all land would be preserved.

Muir also looked heavily to the federal government for solutions. He lobbied hard for new national parks and forest reserves. He had unfortunate experiences with government at the state and local level (viz.: with the recession of Yosemite and Hetch Hetchy). He even supported having national parks administered by the army.

Stegner was a true heir to this tradition. While he came to reject the particular dam-building activity of the Bureau of Reclamation, he nonetheless still believed in the benefits of strong federal agencies and felt the West needed them to survive and to counter-balance selfish interests. He saw the Forest Service more as a regulator of grazing than as a seller of timber.

Leopold, however, came to a different conclusion. He refused to support legislation to give the forest service power to regulate private forestry. He felt government made too many mistakes in its interventions in nature. He concluded that the only firm basis for reform was change in the minds of everyone who owns land; they needed to embrace a proper "Land Ethic." He thought this challenge was "too large, too complex, and too widely dispersed" to be performed by government.

These differing perspectives may reflect where they lived and when they lived. For instance, what was suitable for the western public lands states might not work as well in the Midwest.

Yet this split also reflects enduring differences over public policy. Muir and Stegner were probably much more willing to confront powerful forces head on in political fights, and they did. Leopold saw these issues more often in terms of state level struggles over deer management where commercial interests were not players and average people were.

Muir's Legacy

The contemporary Sierra Club probably reflects more of the tradition of Muir and Stegner than that of Leopold. Science is not a major animating force, nor is concern for changing land owner behavior. The club has never involved itself much in disputes over managing species of interest to sportsmen.

But the club does involve itself in public lands issues across a broad front, and I think John Muir would be proud of us. The Sierra Club has been in the thick of issues to save the ancient forests of the Pacific Northwest. It led the way to rescue the biggest block of unprotected virgin redwoods in a Redwood National Park and is trying to save the Headwaters Forests too.

It is trying to get better protection for the Giant Sequoia groves that are not in parkland. It has tried to rescue biodiversity in Wisconsin's national forests. And it looks to the day when commercial logging can be phased out in national forests.

When the occasion demanded, the club has met the challenge of preventing any more Hetch Hetchy's. It leapt into the midst of successful efforts to defend Dinosaur National Monument against being dammed; it kept dams out of the Grand Canyon National Park and repeatedly it has come to the defense of the Boundary Waters Wilderness.

The club has been involved in almost every effort in the past half century to expand the National Park System, often in a leadership role—having just done so in the Mojave Desert. It was in the forefront of the historic efforts to protect large tracts of nature in Alaska in the 1970s and has partnered closely with The Wilderness Society to build the National Wilderness Preservation System now to over 100 million acres. Through my efforts, the club has made pioneering surveys of the remaining wilderness in the world and soon will release a global estimate of how many wild rivers remain.

The club sees wilderness still as a place where the impact of humans is minimal, rather than as places where habitat is necessarily important. It has been drawn to campaign for wilderness in the southwest where esthetic values are high and habitat values low (e.g., in Utah and the Mojave Desert). Rocks, cliffs, canyons, rough water, and big, open spaces excite it as much as anything—regardless of whether anything much can grow there.

But even so, the club does not talk about wilderness as Muir would have, or even Stegner might—partly because no one has their talent, but also as much because that would not be politic. Mystic language will not pick up votes in Congress. Yet echoes of their feelings persist.

The club has become active in the efforts to defend and strengthen the Endangered Species Act. In those efforts, it connects more with the Leopold tradition as it wants to make room for new findings of science (i.e., the basis for opposing the "safe harbors" agreements) and to keep the biotic community healthy.

The club has been slow to absorb the changing implications of modern ecology. To some extent this reflects the club's being rooted more in the Muir tradition and the arts than the sciences (viz: literary and artistic traditions), but partly it reflects concern that ecology has become less focused on communities and never moved in the normative direction that Leopold wanted. Not only did ecology become mechanistic, but it is abandoning premises of stability and diversity in climaxes. It offers us less as a source of inspiration and guidance.

For somewhat similar reasons, we have been slow to warm to ideas of conservation biology. We are excited about the challenge of conserving species diversity, but a number of us are perplexed over its disdain for existing systems of protected areas. Its critique lacks cultural and historical perspective, as well as good political sense.

All three of our subjects related to the environmental challenge largely in terms of traditional conservation. They all focused on land and wild things. But much of modern environmentalism focuses on problems such as pollution, climate change, growth and social change. They had little to say about these, though Stegner and Leopold were aware of what had happened while they were alive.

Problems of this type certainly destroy wildness and make it impossible to practice the kind of land ethic that Leopold wanted. But their nature also suggests that their remedy will not be found in better behavior by individuals. These problems arise from large forces beyond the control of individuals. In this context, Leopold's embrace of voluntarism as the answer is not instructive.

However, seeds of ideas may be found in his land ethic that may have broad application. We do need to find better patterns of mutual interdependence as we live on this planet. However, ecology is not helping us find what this means, as it seems to have turned it back not only on beauty and integrity as non-scientific concepts, but on stability as well now in the age of chaos theory.

The Last Blackbird

I saw the last blackbird
Flying from a stump of a tree
In a swamp—
  A shrill call
  And scarlet swatch
    Identifying it.

I thought I'd never see
Another blackbird this fall,
For they left weeks before
  To where only rich
  And poorest go
    When late September comes.

The last blackbird flew low
Over tall, dead weeds,
Like Rachel
  Searching for her lost children.

  Next morning,
    The last blackbird was gone.

T. N. Turner

Conclusion

The vagueness of Leopold's injunctions leads us ever more back to Muir's theology. Today's environmental movement has largely accepted his biocentric premises, if not all his mysticism. Differences remain over what is shallow and what is deep, what is practical and what is required, but Muir speaks to us at the most fundamental level.

All three would agree that we must look within ourselves for the answer. What Muir has to say does not depend on the sanctity of science. Muir's vision continues to make sense and guide us, even when science lets us down. It gives us something to believe in—a world that is basically good, if we only will be good to it. ❧

Sand County: the Essence of Leopold's Thought

by Nina Leopold Bradley

One morning, some time ago, Americans woke up as usual to read their papers. After the news, sports, and scandal sections, they turned to the comics. There, in his "Doonesbury" comic strip, Garry Trudeau made reference to, of all people, John Muir and Aldo Leopold—a surprising achievement for these two splendid men!

About the same time, a Wisconsin newspaper ran a column for the lovelorn. One ad read: "Middle-aged man, interested in Vivaldi and Aldo Leopold, seeks interested female." I hope he found the right gal. I can imagine my father smiling at this one!

Aldo Leopold outside his beloved "Shack" in the heart of the "Sand County" area near the Wisconsin River north of Baraboo.

It seems that the influence of these men has reached new proportions.

I have been asked to comment on Aldo Leopold's legacy. You could not have selected a more prejudiced person for this assignment.

My father's little volume, *A Sand County Almanac*, was published posthumously, in 1949. It stands as the distilled essence of Leopold's mature thought. As a measure of the success of this volume, it is seldom found in second-hand book stores. Instead it finds its way into bike bags, backpacks and on bedside tables. The demand for this little volume has continued to escalate for fifty years.

Aldo Leopold is well known for his advocacy of a system of wilderness preserves and his role in the founding of The Wilderness Society. Preserving and studying wilderness was important in part so that we might retain the capacity to compare unspoiled land with lands more intensively altered by human economic activity. His ecological rationale for wilderness preservation was scientific, historical, spiritual and recreational. He wrote:

> "I am glad that I shall never be young without wild country to be young in. Of what avail are forty freedoms without a blank spot on the map?"

I want to share with you our family story another blank spot on the map, but hardly a wilderness. Our Sand County farm, forgotten and left for dead, had been heedlessly ravaged by men who regarded land as commodity to be exploited and abandoned. Here the frontier story had progressed from wilderness, to farm land, to waste land. The sand burs in our socks were effective reminders.

The family years at our Sand County farm were an experience in the slow sensitizing of people to land. It is interesting to hear how my father perceived our family activities as he writes in the Foreword to *A Sand County Almanac*:

> Part I tells what my family sees and does at its week-end refuge from too much modernity: 'the Shack'. 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.

With the benefit of age, I read with new perspective, a quotation from my father, written many years ago. "There are two things that interest me, the relation of people to each other, and the relation of people to land." In this very early statement, Leopold captured the essence of his concerns, as all his life he worked to understand the complexity of the land community and his place in that community.

At the Shack, my father's two interests came into play, the relation of our family members to each other and our relation to this piece of land. Blending science, natural history and philosophy, these were years of expanding awareness of ecology, of diversity in natural environments, of working to understand the interconnectedness of the natural system.

Here my father became a participant in the drama of the land's inner workings; as he transformed the land, it transformed him. By his own actions and transformation, Aldo Leopold instilled in his children a love and respect for the land community and its ecological functioning.

With the flurry of weekend activity this family of teenage kids had time for adventure and discovery, while working to bring health back to the land. From April to October scarcely a weekend went by that someone did not plant or transplant something—a mosaic of conifers, hardwoods, and prairie. This was one of the first attempts at ecological restoration, as our family worked to complete the frontier story and bring the forgotten waste land back to health.

Leopold's pioneering contribution to the science of ecological restoration is but one aspect of an enduring legacy.

I quote again from the Foreword:

> There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot.
>
> Like winds and sunsets, wild things were taken for granted until progress began to do away with them. Now we face the question whether a still higher 'standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free.

In this statement Leopold challenges us to reappraise our value system and ask where does use of land end and abuse of land begin? Do we want to squeeze the land for all it is worth for still more material possessions, or do we want a wider diversity of values which would incorporate harmony between man and land? This challenge remains with us today—to lean less on corporate exploitation and more on sensitivity to our natural world.

Leopold stressed the need for an internal change in our intellectual emphasis, loyalties, affections and convictions that reflect a consciousness of individual responsibility for health of the land—an ecological conscience. He writes, "A conservationist is one who is humbly aware that with each stroke he is writing his signature on the face of the land."

Over a lifetime my father came to realize the full "price" of depleted floras and faunas—the loss of ecological functions and the loss of wild beauty, wonder, and mystery in the world. He could see firsthand the full extent of the land degradation. He suggested that it was time for science to deal with the earth itself and utilize the information being generated from the emerging discipline—ecology.

Aldo Leopold worked directly with farmers, hunters, and politicians to erect practical, on-the-ground conservation programs. He led the way in propelling the U.S. conservation

Memory's Window: Undercurrents *by Barry Roal Carlsen. Oil/panel, 17 x 24 inches, 1996.*

movement from garden and shooting clubs to government agencies and legislatures. His ability to communicate to these various groups is expressed through his legacy as a wonderful combination of prophet, professor, civil servant, and lover of the land.

On the Leopold Reserve today, 50 years later, we continue working to bring the frontier story full circle from wilderness, to wasteland, to restored biotic health. Along with restoration activities, keeping phenological records is part of the action.

During the 13 years our family had at the Shack, we recorded daily, weekly, seasonal events—tracks of animals in the snow, the arrival of migratory geese, the courtship of woodcock, flowering of plants, etc. We learned the true meaning of father's statement, "Keeping records enhances the pleasure of the search and the change of finding order and meaning in these events."

The study of the seasonal events of the natural system is known as phenology. My father writes, "a year to year record of this order, is the record of the rates at which solar energy flows to and through living things . . . the arteries of the earth." Comparing my father's phenological data, taken in the 1930s and 1940s with ours recorded in the '70s, 80s and 90s at the same place, gives us unique opportunity to monitor responses of plants and animals to climate—to temperature, day length, etc.

Are these family addictions of action and documentation a legacy or simply a genetic trait?

With all my biases and partiality, I suggest that my father's major legacy to future generations is the same as his legacy to his children: to reform our attitudes toward land, to reconsider our natural and cultural heritage, in terms of things natural, wild and free and, finally, to establish a harmonious relationship between humans and the land. ❧

The Path to the Wilderness Goes Through the Heart

by William H. Meadows

My personal involvement in environmental issues dates back to thirty years ago. The catalyst for that involvement, and for what has become a career as an environmental activist, was Gaylord Nelson, founder of Earth Day. It is truly wonderful that I now find myself in an office next to Gaylord Nelson at The Wilderness Society.

Those who have written on the genesis aspect of our topic asked the question, "What is next?" Let me try to answer.

I have chosen to focus on Aldo Leopold, rather than John Muir or Wallace Stegner, because Leopold continues to provide philosophical grounding for The Wilderness Society. He continues to provide our moral guidance and our intellectual spirit. I might have chosen to focus on John Muir if I were still working at the Sierra Club. The Wilderness Society, of course, has a special relationship with Aldo Leopold: he was one of our founders. We treasure this relationship, and we honor it in many ways. Each new employee receives a personal copy of *A Sand County Almanac*. Throughout our offices, you can find photos and drawings of the man, as well as his writings. We present an annual award in his name. We also have just published a commemorative magazine to honor Leopold and his writings. It was produced as part of the 50th anniversary celebration of the publication of *A Sand County Almanac*. Yet, the greatest honor The Wilderness Society hopes to pay to Leopold is through our everyday work.

In considering the critical need for wilderness protection, Leopold called for constant vigilance and dedicated advocacy. ". . . A militant minority of wilderness-minded citizens," he wrote, "must be on watch throughout the nation, and available for action in a pinch." That thought is never far from our minds as The Wilderness Society works to safeguard America's big wilderness.

Yet, even as he wrote these words, Leopold recognized that a militant minority of people would never be enough. How right he was. As successful as the conservation community has been at protecting wild places, the sad truth is our federal, state, and local public lands are in trouble. They are being compromised and degraded by air pollution and water pollution, excessive development, road building, logging, cattle grazing, mining, and recreation. At the same time, wild places on private lands are being paved over at an alarming rate.

Clearly, something more is needed. That something, Leopold taught us, is for the nation to embrace a new relationship to the land, what he called a land ethic. The Wilderness Society takes Leopold's lesson to heart. We are committed to fostering a land ethic based on Leopold's writings as broadly and as deeply as possible within the American people.

To some this is naive thinking, even a fool's errand. I remember discussing strategy recently with a congressional aide: "How do we build a broader constituency for wilderness?" I mentioned my interest in connecting people to the land in a more spiritual way, including my interest in building bridges to the faith community. He reminded me that Congress is not a sentimental, religious, or philosophical body.

Ironically, I have heard the same sort of thing from within the conservation community. Some say there is no place for that touchy-feely thinking in the rough and tumble world of wilderness advocacy.

Yet, a recent experience tells me otherwise.

At a dinner celebrating the late Senator Paul Tsongas and his work to protect the Arctic National wildlife Refuge, Jonathon Solomon, chairman of the Gwich'in Steering Committee, an Athabascan tribe in Alaska and the Yukon, spoke of his reverence for the Arctic Coastal Plain. The Gwich'in's life and culture is centered on caribou. And the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, that area that we hope to place in wilderness protection, is home to the caribou. It is the place where caribou go to calve each spring and to raise their young. Not only is the life and culture of the Gwich'in centered on caribou, the actual word "Gwich'in" means "people of the caribou."

There has been no stronger spokesperson for wilderness protection in the Arctic than Jonathon Solomon. He has spoken many times to organizations, Congress, and members of the administration, but in his talk in Boston he focused not on the

economic or ecological value of the Arctic, although such arguments can be made on behalf of the Gwich'in. He spoke instead about the sacred nature of the Refuge. He said the Refuge is so sacred for him and his people that he has never been there. In his culture, the Refuge is for the caribou and not for man. It is as strong an ethic as I have heard recently.

I am convinced that we—that is every one of us who cares about the health of America's wild lands—become stronger and more successful as advocates or as managers when we embrace Leopold's land ethic in our day-to-day work. It speaks to our need to connect people not only to the land but with each other. "There are two things that interest me," Leopold wrote, "the relationship of people to each other and the relationship of people to the land."

Leopold spent a good deal of time thinking and writing about community. He even used the word to define the land ethic: "The land ethic simply enlarges the boundaries of the community to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land."

It is this concept of community writ very large that is at the heart of the vision The Wilderness Society strives to realize for the children of the next millennium.

Beacon *by Barry Roal Carlsen. Oil/panel, 18 x 16 inches, 1997.*

Although we set aside wilderness areas and other public lands for protection, there is a growing sense that we are still losing too many wild places. Call them woodlots or open spaces, call them swamps or wetlands, call them city parks or national forests—what they have in common is their wild natural character and their importance to our well-being.

To save these and other important wild places, we and other groups seek to create a nationwide network of wild lands. This is a network that will connect urban parks with remote wilderness, mountains with oceans, and deserts with wetlands. A network that protects our physical, emotional, and spiritual health by protecting the biodiversity, ecological integrity, and natural wealth of this nation.

At the heart of this vision are our shared hopes and dreams as Americans, for this is a network that will connect people with each other even as it connects wild lands together. This, I believe, would be the greatest expression of Leopold's idea of community and land ethic.

Like the space program that put America on the moon, creating the network requires an unwavering national commitment forged on the common understanding that a protected network of wild lands makes us a healthier and stronger nation. And like the space program, it gives each of us a sense of national purpose and community with our fellow Americans.

At the heart of the network is the nation's wilderness system. The Wilderness Society's role is to do what we do best: save the Big Wilderness areas. At the same time, we are embarked on an unprecedented effort to map America's other remaining wild lands. This will not only help The Society in our work to protect Big Wilderness, but will serve as an invaluable tool for our conservation partners across the country in their efforts to protect other public and private places.

A few years ago, before he came to work for The Wilderness Society, the director of our northeast region attended an annual meeting of the Society of American Foresters. He went with the express purpose of persuading SAF to add to its code of ethics a canon regarding an ethical relationship to the land.

It was a tense situation when he addressed the group's delegates. He asked them to begin the meeting by describing their first memories of the forest. A man rose to speak. He told the group that as a small boy sixty years ago his father would lift him upon his shoulders and off they would go, hiking through the Olympic rain forest. Others told stories of special places, special memories—about family: fathers, mothers, children. Each person spoke from the heart about their love for the forest. Through this sharing, a group poised for conflict became a community of people.

The substantive discussion that followed was more positive and productive than our director could have hoped for. SAF adopted a land ethic. As one participant put it, "We simply have no choice, there is no debate."

This is not to say that all differences have been resolved. Hardly. The Wilderness Society still butts heads with SAF over forest management issues. Nonetheless, in that story, I find hope and an important lesson for us to embrace.

Not so long ago, we had a similar session at our offices in Washington, D.C. The staff gathered for what was described as

a sacred objects session. Each person had been invited to bring an object of some personal importance, something that symbolized their love for the land. The session lasted for well over two hours as dozens spoke about their sacred objects. Emotions welled up and tears flowed. It was an incredible experience.

There is a unique power in speaking about our passion for the land. It is a power to move others. This passion, I believe, comes from a deep, multi-faceted relationship we hold with the natural environment. Professor Stephen Kellert of the Yale School of Forestry describes this relationship in terms of needs. He has identified five needs humans seek to satisfy through our environment. They are material, physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. Our passion for the land is strong precisely because we find fulfillment of all five needs through the land.

For too long now, we, as a nation, have ignored the emotional and spiritual in full-bore pursuit of the physical and material. The consequences to the American landscape have been tragic. We have destroyed so many wild places in the name of economic progress. In so doing, we have diminished the potential for all of us to realize emotional and spiritual fulfillment.

Similarly, in seeking to protect these wild places, environmental advocates have become quite adept at employing ecological and economic arguments based on our physical, material, and intellectual dependence on nature. Indeed, The Wilderness Society has often led the way in developing such arguments. Yet, educational efforts based on the more intangible connections having to do with the emotional and spiritual go largely unexplored and underutilized.

While we should continue to use utilitarian arguments, I believe we will only achieve permanent gains when we also speak to people about the spiritual and emotional values of wild places. These are the values that truly inspire, that truly move people to permanently change their attitude and behavior toward the land.

It is for this reason that The Wilderness Society pushes the Bureau of Land Management to base a management plan for the Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument on a land ethic.

It is for this reason that we develop partnerships with communities of faith in the Pacific Northwest to help save the rainforests there.

It is for this reason that we team up with the Reno Museum of Art to help develop an exhibit on the relationship of humans to the Sierra Nevada.

November

This is the season
of the crows:
what could be was.

Black-scissored wings
caw, caw, jeer
shadows across the snow.

Where limbs held leaves
black blooms cry
nothing which we own.

The snow is white
until iced rain
and then the ice is gray.

Now each on its own
wheels round the others:
who by whom's betrayed?

Into a cloud
a frozen pond
cold snared the sky.

A crow caws black
some snow lies white
the ice is here.

Gregory Shaffer

For success demands of us that we articulate the full range of wilderness values in a compelling way. That means we must speak of them from our experience, from our passion, and from our heart.

Some of us do this already . . . and do it well. I think of Terry Tempest Williams, a passionate voice for the beauty and spirit of the red rock canyon lands. Or Gary Snyder who writes of wild things in the Sierra Nevada. There are others—no longer with us—who continue to inspire: Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner, Rachel Carson, John Muir, the list goes on and on.

I know I will never be able to speak with the same eloquence of these people, but I know I can be a powerful voice for wild places. Not because I am the head of a national environmental organization, but because I have passion and love for these places.

Twenty-five years ago, some friends asked me to help save from development a small, unlikely lake outside Nashville, Tennessee. Through this effort, I came to know and love a place called Radnor. Radnor Lake had—and still has—no value to those who see value only in dollars and cents. But it does have significant spiritual and emotional value to a great number of people.

A few years after the fight to save Radnor Lake, I read *A Sand County Almanac* for the first time. As I read, I came to understand the larger lesson of my involvement. Radnor Lake was a personal version of the farm Leopold wrote about. I came to understand the power of knowing and loving a place, a power easily translated into persuading others to save that place. As president of The Wilderness Society, I carry this lesson with me today.

New generations are learning this same lesson every day. Recently, I read an article in the *Washington Post* about the growing popularity of naturalist-led hikes for children in and around Washington, D.C. Families—parents and children alike—are literally lining up to learn about the wild places near their homes. These places are no doubt worth more—in dollars and cents—as shopping centers or housing developments. But, their value to these people I suspect is measured in something far greater.

It is measured in time spent joyfully together as a family. It is measured in a child's curiosity about the wonders of nature. It is measured in an unmeasurable love for these places.

It is the nurturing of a new generation of wild loving children. It is conferences such as this that give me hope and make me a believer that a nationwide network of wild lands and a new American land ethic may be a dream, but they are no fantasy. ❧

Loving the Wisconsin Land

by William Cronon

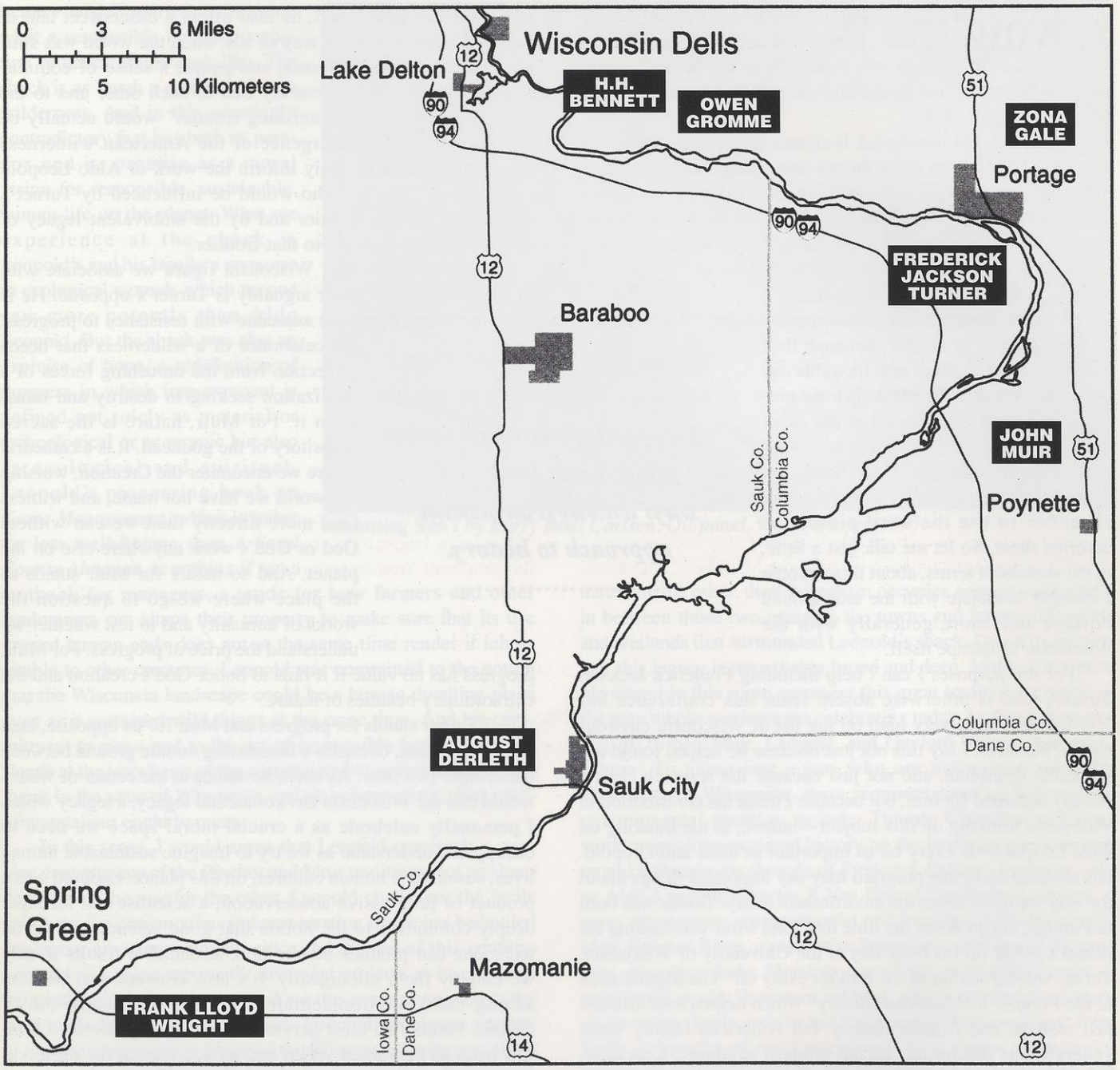
It is an honor and a privilege to join with so many friends and colleagues to celebrate a subject that has intrigued me for a very long time: Wisconsin's remarkable tradition of commitment to the environment. In a sense I'm going to pick up where Bill Meadows left off. I think it's absolutely crucial to know and love a place; it seems to me that in many ways that is what we are here to celebrate. In talking about the genesis and legacy of Wisconsin's environmental pioneers, my emphasis will be on the Wisconsin part of that legacy.

My thesis in this context derives from an essay I wrote in 1990 called "Landscape and Home: A Sense of Place in Wisconsin," which I wrote for a talk I delivered to the Madison Civics Club. I'll be forever grateful to Carol Toussaint for inviting me to give that talk and write that essay because it forced me to put into words some thoughts that have been on my mind for many years. Writing that essay actually helped persuade me to leave Yale University and come back to the University of Wisconsin–Madison, to a place that seemed to me to be a better home for values and ideas about the environment that matter a great deal to me. It also gave me the topic for a book on which I am now working, a history of Portage, Wisconsin. Like Nina Leopold Bradley, these environmental traditions in Wisconsin are very much bound with the core of my own life, and I would never want to shed or deny the biases these traditions encourage in me. And like Bill Meadows, my own political and moral coming of age regarding the environment dates back to Gaylord Nelson's Earth Day in 1970; like him, I have been thinking and worrying about these issues ever since. And I think that for me, like Nina, this has something to do with living in Wisconsin.

The riddle that led me to my 1990 essay and to the book I'm now writing about Portage, is the peculiar phenomenon associated with the narrow strip of land that runs along the Wisconsin River from the Wisconsin Dells down to Spring Green. This strip of land has somehow generated an extraordinary number of individuals of real artistic and intellectual and scientific importance who have thought and meditated as profoundly as anyone in America on the human place in nature. As you work downstream from the Dells you encounter in turn: H.H. Bennett, the photographer who helped create an American tradition of landscape photography in nature; Owen Gromme, the painter of Wisconsin birds; Aldo Leopold, the pioneer ecologist and consummate prose stylist whose writings on the land ethic have remained among the most influential of the twentieth century in creating and motivating the modern environmental movement; Frederick Jackson Turner, author of the frontier thesis and one of the founders of American history as a modern academic discipline; Zona Gale, the Pulitzer-Prize-winning novelist and dramatist who turned her hometown of Portage into a fictional place called Friendship Village; John Muir, our most passionate nineteenth-century prophet of the sublime wilderness; August Derleth, a leading regionalist writer of the upper Midwest and in his own mind, at least, a latter-day Thoreau; and at the southern end of this corridor, Frank Lloyd Wright, surely the greatest American architect and one of our most influential thinkers about nature.

For all of these folks to be gathered in such a small and relatively unknown area is really quite astonishing.

For all of these folks to be gathered in such a small and relatively unknown area—a strip of land I sometimes jokingly refer to as "the navel of the universe for American ideas of nature"—is really quite astonishing. It poses for us a riddle that is at the heart of this forum: why did this extraordinary concentration of artists and intellectuals, all with a special concern for the human place in nature, just happen to gather here? What were they all doing living in this strip of land along the Wisconsin valley, and was there something about the soil of this state that offered unusually fertile ground for their ideas? Is this just one of history's fluky accidents? Or is there something strange and unusual going on here? I can't try to answer this



Map courtesy of UW–Madison Cartographic Lab.

question in any great depth in a talk of just a few minutes, but I think I can sketch some possible answers.

Let me start with the subject of this forum. I resist just a bit the core premise, since I think it's risky to approach this riddle of Wisconsin's environmental traditions solely through the lens of "great men." It's easy to place too much emphasis on highly articulate and famous folks, and to place too little on many less well-known people who provided the crucial context within which the more famous trend setters worked. That's probably why Wallace Stegner ends up on the program. About his importance as a writer and environmental thinker, there can be no doubt whatsoever. He is an important figure in our national culture and history, but his ties to Wisconsin are far less organic, far more accidental, than the other people we're discussing here. The same thing, more curiously, could be said about Georgia O'Keeffe, an equally important person in shaping ideas about nature in the United States in the twentieth century. O'Keeffe grew up in Sun Prairie, but her connections to Wisconsin seem not to have been very important to her subsequent work. And so, much as I love and admire Wallace

Stegner, I'm intentionally going to leave him out of my discussion. His place and his story, to my mind at least, belong farther west, in Utah, in Arizona, and especially in the border country between Montana and Saskatchewan which he made so profoundly his own.

The question I want to ask is at once both more general and more local. I'd like to ask if there's something about Wisconsin that has made it especially well suited to the asking of hard, subtle questions about the moral obligations we human beings owe to the natural world. In this sense, I'm as much interested in the legacy of these pioneers as in the genesis of the traditions for which they are partly responsible.

What is Wisconsin's environmental legacy? Famous figures do matter, of course, because they help the rest of us think new thoughts and articulate half-formed ideas that are present but not fully expressed in the air of the culture. It does indeed matter what these folks say. They helped change the course of history, which is why it is not at all unfair to use the word pioneer to describe them. So let me talk just a little, in the sketchiest terms, about three people I strongly associate with the area around Portage and, more generally with the Wisconsin landscape itself.

Crucially, what Turner offered was in many ways an environmental approach to history.

For my purposes I can't help including Frederick Jackson Turner, who is otherwise absent from this conference but nonetheless stands very high on my list of Wisconsin environmental pioneers. I say this not just because he helped found my academic discipline, and not just because the research chair I occupy is named for him, but because I think his contribution to Wisconsin thinking on this subject—indeed, to the thinking on Aldo Leopold—is every bit as important as Muir and Leopold. His absence from this program may say important things about the way we think about the environment today. Turner was born in Portage, at just about the time that John Muir was leaving his parent's home for his brief stay at the University of Wisconsin. Turner was the author of the famous essay on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History" which helped establish not just western and frontier history, but American history more generally, as disciplines in the modern academy. Crucially, what Turner offered was in many ways an environmental approach to history. His history was a story of ordinary people living their lives on the land, in which the land was an absolutely crucial component of the historical stories that he narrated for us. This landed tradition of history has permeated the University of Wisconsin ever since, and has made it an extraordinarily welcoming home for thinking about the human place in nature over time.

The ambivalence of Turner's core message is this: on the one hand, he offers us a paen to progress, a celebration of the process that wrested a civilization from a wilderness and transformed that wilderness to create the nation that we know today. On the other hand, he also offers a bittersweet tale of losing an earlier frontier way of life when the world was simpler, democracy more direct, and people's sense of community and place more intimately tied to each other and to the land. This sense of a "vanishing frontier" would actually be crucial to the later emergence of the American wilderness ethic. It would powerfully inform the work of Aldo Leopold and Wallace Stegner, who would be influenced by Turner's sense of a passing frontier and by the ambivalent legacy of progress that is attached to that frontier.

If Turner is the key Wisconsin figure we associate with progress, then John Muir arguably is Turner's opposite. He is the comparable figure we associate with resistance to progress, the celebrator of a wilderness that needs protection from the onrushing forces of a civilization seeking to destroy and transform it. For Muir, nature is the sacred repository of the godhead. It is a cathedral where we encounter the Creation, worship the world we have not made, and witness God more directly than we can witness God or God's work anywhere else on the planet. And so nature for Muir stands as the place where we go to question the works of humanity and to test whether we understand the price of progress. For Muir, progress has no value if it fails to honor God's creation and the extraordinary beauties of nature.

If Turner stands for progress and Muir for its opposite, then Leopold, I think, occupies a fascinating middle ground between these other two men. As such, he stands at the center of what I would call the Wisconsin environmental legacy, a legacy which I personally celebrate as a crucial moral space we need to occupy and understand as we try to imagine sustainable human lives, sustainable human cultures, on this planet. Leopold was a product of progressive conservation, a scientist and manager deeply committed to the notion that good science and sound technique can produce better, more sustainable results if only we employ them intelligently. It's now conventional wisdom among many environmentalists that Leopold came out of Gifford Pinchot's Forest Service but eventually liberated himself from its benighted vision and moved toward the preservationist camp of John Muir, celebrating and seeking to protect pristine wilderness. But it seems to me that this familiar story, powerful and compelling as it may seem to be on the surface, in fact does a serious injustice to the subtle, complicated thinking of this very subtle and complicated man.

Remember, the shack property, which Leopold and his family sought to nurture back to biotic health (like the UW Arboretum which Leopold helped inspire) is nothing if not a brilliantly designed, carefully manipulated piece of nature. Almost nothing is present on that land without human beings having willed it there. The whole place is carefully conceived to reflect a powerful sense of ecological restoration and aesthetic

Mourning Sun I *by Barry Roal Carlsen. Oil/panel, 9 x 12 inches, 1995.*

beauty which aspire to imagine what a responsible human occupation of nature might look like. The shack is as much a garden as it is a wilderness. And in this seemingly contradictory fact lies both its paradox and its promise as a moral vision for responsible, sustainable, human life on the planet. What we experience at the shack is Leopold's and his family's response to ecological wounds which no one saw more potently than Aldo Leopold. But the shack was also an exercise of hope, a redefinition of progress in which improvement is defined not solely as material or technological or economic but also as ecological and spiritual. Leopold's pioneering book on *Game Management*, which is today far less well-known than *A Sand County Almanac*, is nothing if not a textbook for managers, a guide for how farmers and other landowners can shape their property to make sure that its use toward human ends does not at the same time render it inhospitable to other creatures. Leopold was committed to the notion that the Wisconsin landscape could be a human dwelling place even as it sustained wild things at the same time. And his commitment to place and to the act of responsible human dwelling stands at the very heart of the complicated twentieth century dialogue in the state of Wisconsin and elsewhere about what environmentalism ought to mean.

In this sense, I would argue that Leopold represents a genuine convergence of the Pinchot and Muir traditions, not an abandonment of the one for the other. Leopold challenges the facile split between conservation and preservation which has bedeviled American environmentalism since the middle of this century. Leopold saw these apparently divergent projects as inseparable: we must work to sustain the land we use even as we protect the land we do not use. For this reason, Leopold has always seemed to me quintessentially a figure of the Wisconsin landscape. If we imagine him and his work purely in the context of the great expanses of western wilderness which he clearly loved and sought to protect, I think we miss half of his legacy. For he also loved, and loved no less, the smaller wild places that co-mingled with farms and towns across the Wisconsin landscape. In many ways I would say that his most important work had more to do with these small wild places, small only in the sense that they are so scattered and so much in our own backyards, than with the apparently larger and greater wildernesses of the West.

Now, if I'm right that Turner, Muir, and Leopold helped situate a Wisconsin land ethic between the progress of civilization and the frontier on the one hand and the sublime beauty of wild nature on the other, then Wisconsin occupies a space somewhere in between those two poles, in the towns and farms and woods and wetlands that surrounded Leopold's shack. I want to reassert that this legacy is remarkably broad and deep. Many of the people seated in this room represent this great tradition as much as the men whose work we are celebrating today. In this, I think not just of Turner, Muir, Leopold, and Gaylord Nelson, but many others. To name just a few who are associated with the University of Wisconsin, these representatives of Wisconsin's environmental tradition include: Thomas Chamberlin, whose work on geology explored history on the landscape in ways that would influence the thought of Frederick Jackson Turner as well as Aldo Leopold; Charles R.Van Hise, Chamberlin's student, a great progressive conservationist and founder of the Wisconsin Idea; Edward Birge, a pioneer in limnology, who began the process of making Lake Mendota one of the most studied ecosystems in the world; Benjamin Hibbard, who pioneered the history of the public lands and the field of agricultural economics; John Kolb, a founder of rural sociology; John Curtis, profoundly important ecologist, responsible not just for the Arboretum, but for whole new ways of conceiving of ecology; Norman Fassett, a great taxonomist who has taught many of us how to identify Wisconsin wildflowers and grasses, and also a leader in setting aside the first nature preserves in the state of Wisconsin; James Willard Hurst, who helped rethink our understanding of law and the environment; Andrew Hill Clark, a fine historical geographer who continued this project of thinking historically about the land. And the list goes on. Powerful intellectual currents have flowed though this state and this university which have made Wisconsin a pioneer in original thinking about the environment for well over a century now.

The question I want to ask here at the end is: why? I won't try to answer comprehensively, but I'll offer a few eclectic observations. Some have to do with the University of Wisconsin–Madison, whose environmental resources and traditions seem to me broader and deeper than virtually any other university on the face of this planet. These intellectual traditions were in part founded by Turner, Leopold, and the other intellectual leaders I have already named, but their legacies have proliferated to such an extent that you would be hard pressed to find a department anywhere on this campus which doesn't have at least one faculty member and a number of students for whom the environment is a central intellectual project. A peculiarity of this university that people often don't recognize is that it combines in one institution a liberal arts college and land grant agricultural and engineering institution in a single university. As a result, we don't have a Michigan State and a University of Michigan; rather, we have single a University of Wisconsin in which applied scientists in engineering and agriculture who have worked to define what conservation should mean for life on the land, have been in constant dialogue with humanists and scientists associated with the College of Letters and Science. This cross-disciplinary dialogue about life on the land has been profoundly important to the nature of the intellectual community at this place.

The Wisconsin Idea of early twentieth century progressivism, which Charles R.Van Hise was instrumental in creating, is about encouraging university intellectuals to get out on the land and talk with the people who live there. The Wisconsin Idea teaches university faculty and staff members that it is important to be in dialogue not just with the landscape but with the citizens of the state who fund their work. This dialogue in turn encourages reflections on the place of the university on the land in a way that many, many other institutions do not support. It always seemed to me when I was a faculty member at Yale that the only kind of science that mattered in the Ivy League was science that could win you a Nobel Prize—and there are no Nobel Prizes in ecology or soil science or agronomy. The Nobel has never driven science at land grant universities like Wisconsin. We do applied science here as much as we do pure science and in that dialogue many important insights about the human place in nature inevitably arise.

There are other curious environmental features that affect this institution and state. One, I think, is being located on the cusp of the terminal moraine. This university sits within a few miles of the terminal moraine, and we are therefore surrounded by legacies of the glacier. I think Wisconsinites are more aware of what the glacier means for their landscape than many, many other Americans. Certainly Muir, Turner, and Leopold were all profoundly conscious of the effects of the glacier on this countryside. I would argue that this taught them to think historically about land. They saw Wisconsin as a landscape changing over time in complicated ways that made it a place in need of storytelling. You cannot understand *A Sand County Almanac* or Frederick Turner's frontier thesis without understanding this: Wisconsin is a landscape of layered history and of stories that can be read from the land. This too is powerfully a part of our environmental tradition.

There's the peculiar ethnic mix of this state. I've never known how far to push this one, but it seems to me that the German and Scandinavian populations of Wisconsin link the state to ongoing dialogues in Europe about land and its responsible use. Leopold's own life looked to Germany both for hunting traditions and forestry practices, and Leopold's thought evolved in dialogue with various debates about land use going on in northwestern Europe. Then there's the importance of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin even as far back as Turner's day, and certainly continuing right down to now. You cannot understand Gaylord Nelson's role in the politics of this state unless you recognize the importance of hunters as a voting bloc in northern Wisconsin, to say nothing of urban populations from southern Wisconsin, Illinois, and Minnesota migrating into the north woods for recreational purposes. Political support for protecting wild land and recreational parks was fundamental to Leopold's intellectual career as well.

But I want to return finally to the middle landscape, which I think Leopold understood so brilliantly. Wisconsin is nothing if not but a patchwork quilt in which wild places exist side by side with farmlands, factories, and towns, all existing in close proximity to each. In Wisconsin it is harder than elsewhere to forget where the food on one's dinner table comes from, and equally hard to forget the places where wild creatures make their homes. These places still exist right next door to each other, so we witness their interconnections as many more urban Americans often do not. Because we call this middle landscape home, with all the powerful moral resonance which that word "home" carries in our language and in our thought, we're forced to embrace the whole of the environment in ways that seem to me absolutely crucial if we are to take moral responsibility for all human endeavors. It's hard in this state to draw a stark moral boundary between the human and the natural, because the two are so utterly entangled here . . . and that seems to me to be the moral and political space that all human beings in fact inhabit, whether they recognize it or not. Wisconsin's middle landscape is thus an especially valuable terrain on which to confront the future of humanity on earth.

Not just the wilderness, but also the farm. Not just the wetland, but also the woodlot. Not just the forest, but also the factory. Not just the nature preserve, but also the human workplace. We cannot help but take responsibility for them all. This, surely, is what the author of *Game Management* and *A Sand County Almanac* was urging upon us when he spoke of land as a community to which all of us belong as much as it belongs to us. This, surely, is what the Wisconsin environmental legacy we celebrate today is finally all about. That legacy and the land it seeks to protect are among the greatest of our great possessions. ❧

The Geography of Hope

by Paul Johnson

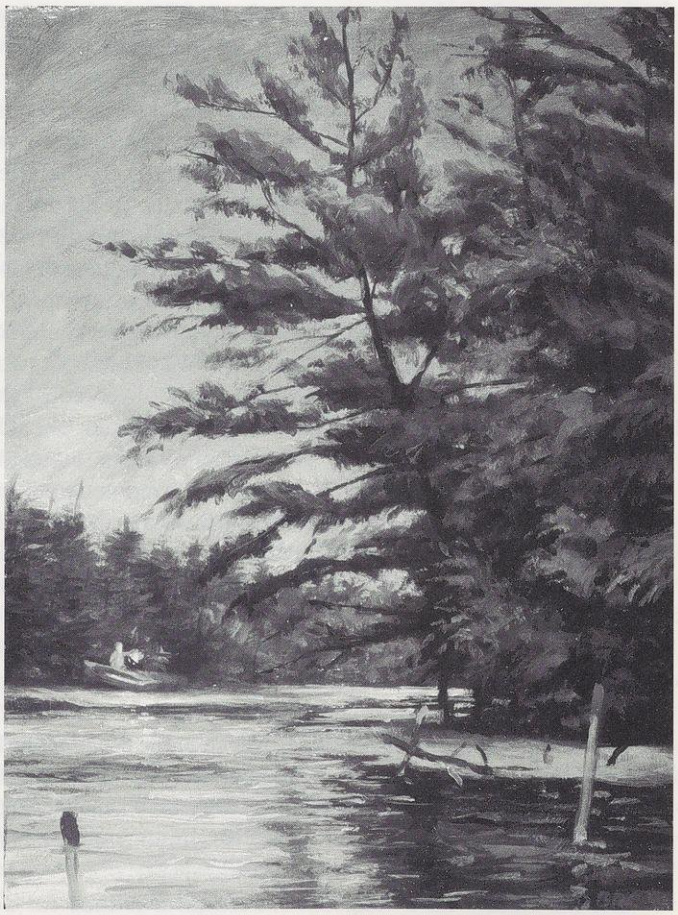
I feel very close to the people that we're honoring in this forum—all of them. Like John Muir, I was born to a conservative father; although I was one generation removed from the old country, and by that time they had found that guilt and shame did just as well as the leather strap. Unlike John Muir, I was born at the other end of the country very close to Yosemite, and settled very close to Wisconsin. John Muir went the other direction. Like John Muir, only one hundred years later, we both took a walk; he to Canada and then to California, and I to the Peace Corps. We both had beards.

I also feel very close to Wallace Stegner. I grew up in South Dakota amongst those very large skies, not quite the west, although pretty close to the hundredth meridian. I too grew up shooting gophers and lying on my back watching the clouds. I too learned the joys and the sorrows of owning and raising animals; like he did with his colt.

I feel very close to Aldo Leopold. My family and I also found a worn out farm, one that had been used up. And over the past twenty-five years we have tried hard to nurture that farm back to health. I can understand what Leopold wrote about in *A Sand County Almanac*.

All of our Wisconsin conservation heroes grew up close to nature. This was important. Although formal conservation education is helpful, I worry that young people today don't have the opportunity to experience the sound of silence that many of us did.

It takes a lot more that just experiences, though. I grew up in and around Yosemite, Sequoia, and the great rivers of the west. But I must say, that until I left, the things that interested me most were the fire fall over Glacier Point, and those big dams. My father wanted to be an engineer, I think, and took us often to see those big dams. We felt that they were so wonderful. "Roll on Colombia, roll on. Your power is turning our darkness to dawn. So roll on Colombia, roll on."



Dusk Beacon *by Barry Roal Carlsen. Oil/panel, 7.5 x 25.5 inches, 1996.*

We've learned much about nature and care of the land from the teachers we honor. John Muir wrote and talked incessantly about the beauty of nature, took people to see it, and out of that came the Sierra Club. He certainly reminded us that dams come at great environmental costs. How many times have you heard and read that all things are connected to everything else?

Aldo Leopold taught and wrote better than any I have ever read. My father was a preacher and we had Bible study day in and day out, year in and year out. I mean no disrespect when I say that I never could get it, but now I think I understand what he was about. I read Leopold over and over and over again. I read Stegner over and over and over again. I read Muir over and over again. Perhaps I should try the Bible again!

Wallace Stegner—such a powerful writer, such a sense of place. He made it very clear to us that the land doesn't belong to us, but that we belong to the land.

As I've thought about our American conservation journey I've come to see it in three rather distinct parts: our public commons, our regulatory framework, and our land stewardship ethics.

Let me reflect on how those we honor stack up to my conservation trinity. All three spoke and wrote elegantly about our public commons. They were giants in establishing and defending our public lands. John Muir gave us the emotional foundation, Aldo Leopold the intellectual footing, and Wallace Stegner helped us understand the importance of public lands in our increasingly hectic world. National heroes don't come any better than these three.

Muir, Leopold and Stegner helped lay the foundation for our more recent efforts, to define and encode private and corporate responsibility. But perhaps more credit for this effort goes to our Wisconsin pioneer, Gaylord Nelson. He and his contemporaries gave us the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, the Endangered Species Act and others. We continue to debate these laws and, no doubt, Muir, Leopold and Stegner would not be silent if they were here today and could witness the dismembering efforts of some members of Congress.

Aldo Leopold outshines all other conservationists when we consider the land ethic. We have about two billion acres of land in our 48 contiguous states. Of that figure, 1.3 billion acres are in private hands. We have about two million ranchers and farmers and about ten million owners of small woodlots. Half of our population lives in suburbs, most on a small but significant plot of land.

Leopold, in his 1939 essay, "The Farmer as a Conservationist," noted that it is the American farmer who weaves the conservation carpet on which America stands. He also wrote that landowners paint a portrait of themselves on the land. I would add that so do our communities. So does our nation. In 1938, Leopold reminded us of our twentieth century paradox when he wrote in an essay called "Engineering and Conservation" that "our tools are better than we are, and grow better faster than we do. They suffice to crack the atom, to command the tide. But they do not suffice for the oldest task in human history, to live on a piece of land without spoiling it."

Where do we go from here? Thanks to John Muir, Aldo Leopold, Wallace Stegner, and Gaylord Nelson we celebrate today the laws and programs that protect our national forests, parks, wildlife refuges, water, air, endangered species, and wilderness areas—those places Wallace Stegner referred to as our "Geography of Hope."

Let me close with a suggestion. Perhaps it is time for a National Private Stewardship Act—one comparable to those that protect our national commons, our water, air and endangered species. Perhaps it is time to take the next step in the journey our Wisconsin conservation pioneers started by recognizing Muir's interconnectedness of the natural world and beginning to break down our thinking that public lands need more attention than private lands. Perhaps it is time to give significant support to Leopold's land ethic by rewarding those who practice good land stewardship. Perhaps we need a private lands stewardship act that, through support of public and private land conservation, will give us Wallace Stegner's real "Geography of Hope." ❧

Dusk of the Ebb

The inland sea once rested
here, the all-consuming melt
of the last great glacier
cutting lines on bluffs
water rising or receding.
None were here to record
or to reorder life after
the purification settled all.

Here we live on an island
below all of the striations,
an island one must search
to find is surrounded only
by trickle and subtle percolation
but surrounded nonetheless.

Our daughter dreams the waters
will rise to lap and push
at our cabin door, and she
is glad my canoe rests near
the top not below our reach
in case this dream is memory
returning as a flood of prophecy.

I cannot tell her
it is only a child's dream,
that our hill, circumscribed
by nameless headwaters
and unassuming wetlands
will not someday be covered
and lost in another purgation,
one so desperately needed.

I cannot tell her the dream
means something other than
a child remembering time
when the Earth was clean and free.

Alan Jenkins

The Genesis of Earth Day

by Gaylord Nelson

The final event in the Genesis & Legacy program was a dinner honoring former Wisconsin governor and U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson for his "monumental accomplishments on behalf of the environment, and especially for engendering in the national consciousness that love of the land so richly manifested in the Wisconsin environmental tradition." Nelson was presented with a special citation signed by Governor Tommy Thompson, University of Wisconsin System President Katharine Lyall, and Wisconsin Academy President Rolf Wegenke. The following text is an excerpt of the remarks Nelson made in response to the special recognition and in keeping with the themes of the forum.

It is an honor, deserved or not, to be included in this forum involving such towering historical figures as Muir, Stegner and Leopold. Indeed, being included on this program with these notables prompts me to wonder about the likelihood that the committee arranging this event made an unintended error. Now, I hasten to assure you that whatever error may have been made, I don't intend to raise any question about it. There was a time when such a possible mistake would have given me a case of the jitters but that time has passed into history. I learned long ago that one should never worry about or demand an explanation of why some unexpected honor or recognition came your way. If you do, the arrangements committee is likely to review the whole situation and discover they made a mistake, prompting them to withdraw the honor. It is my advice that when some unexpected recognition comes your way, just take it and run—don't look back, don't ask questions and don't answer the phone until the honor is securely in your grip and the situation is irreversible. This is a strategy that has never failed me during the half-century that has slipped by since I was elected to the legislature in 1948.

Since Earth Day 1970, newspaper reporters frequently ask what turned my interest to the environment. The answer is, I have no notion. It happened gradually over time, by osmosis I suppose, the same way people become interested in classical music or most anything else. When I was growing up, Clear Lake was a village of some 670 in northwest Wisconsin (now ballooned to 950) 60 miles east of the Twin Cities. Fortunately, the St. Croix River defines the border between Wisconsin and Minnesota and thus kept undesirables from crossing into our territory unless they owned a boat and could figure out how to row it across without ending up downstream in the Mississippi.

Several years ago on the occasion of his 100th birthday, Old Bert Goodspeed said, "when I came to Clear Lake 80 years ago there was a whole lot of nothing up here and there still is." That was and is its strong point. The whole lot of nothing consisted mostly of three little lakes surrounded by dairy farms—Mud Lake at the end of Main Street on the east side of town and at the west side Little Clear Lake and Big Clear Lake. The lakes were occupied by fish, turtles, cattails, muskrat houses and visited every fall and spring by migrating birds and ducks. There was enough going on around those lakes to keep us busy and stoke our interest in the works of Mother Nature.

By the time I went to the governor's office after ten years in the legislature, the environmental challenge had climbed to the top of my agenda and was, I thought, far more important than any other issue including issues of war and peace. That is still my view. In the governor's office, we devoted a lot of time and energy to many environmental issues. Harold Jordahl and Phil Lewis were involved in all or most of them, as were Esther Kaplan, who managed the governor's office, and Sherman Stock, who managed the state office for the 18 years I was in the Senate.

The ORAP program, which levied a one-cent cigarette tax with the ultimate objective of acquiring a million acres of park, recreation, wetlands and wildlife habitat, is worth mentioning because the idea has survived with bipartisan support for 37 years since the program began in 1961. When Warren Knowles became Governor and it was time to extend the program, he successfully pushed for its extension, funded by a bond issue. Several years later it was further extended with a $250 million authorization. Representative Spencer Black is an outstanding environmentalist and was a key force behind the passage of this most recent extension.

Upon election to the U.S. Senate, it was my good fortune to secure assignment to both the Interior and the Public Works Committees which had jurisdiction over most environmental legislation. From that vantage point, it became possible, finally, to give permanent protection to my favorite river, the St. Croix, and the beautiful Apostle Islands by passing legislation including both of them within the National Park System. It also became feasible from that vantage point to successfully push through legislation establishing a National Hiking Trails system and to preserve the world class 2,000 mile Appalachian Trail by authorizing the purchase of all the private lands crossed by the trail from Maine to Georgia. When the legislation passed, more than 800 miles of the Trail crossed private lands. As of this

year, only 33 miles of additional private land acquisitions are needed to permanently protect the Trail.

Still, to me, the most troubling problem over the years was that the environmental issue, the challenge to preserve the ecosystem that sustains plant and animal life was not on our national political agenda. Until it got on the agenda, the issue would not receive serious attention from the political establishment.

One day late in 1962, it occurred to me that if President Kennedy could be persuaded to go on a national conservation tour, it would give great visibility to the issue and finally force it onto the national political agenda. President Kennedy liked the idea and laid plans for a five-day, eleven-state tour to begin in September 1963. Hubert Humphrey, Gene McCarthy, Joe Clark and I were invited to join the President on the first leg of his trip to Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Minnesota.

As luck would have it, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty with the Soviet Union was scheduled for a vote in the Senate that morning. The President held up Air Force One until we could get there. The test ban treaty was ratified and of course that dominated the news for the five days of the tour. Needless to say, the Presidential tour didn't put the issue onto the national political agenda as I had expected.

While the President's tour did not force the environmental issue onto the national political agenda, I continued to hope for some idea that would thrust the environment into the political mainstream. Six years would pass before the idea for Earth Day occurred to me in the summer of 1969, while on a conservation speaking tour out west.

At that time, there was a great deal of turmoil on the college campuses over the Vietnam War. Protests, called anti-war teach-ins, were being widely held on campuses across the nation. On a flight from Santa Barbara to the University of California–Berkeley, I read an article on the teach-ins, and it suddenly occurred to me: Why not have a nationwide teach-in on the environment? That was the origin of Earth Day.

In a speech given in Seattle in September 1969, I formally announced the event. The wire services carried the story nationwide. The response was dramatic. It took off like gangbusters.

Earth Day achieved what I had hoped for. The objective was to get a nationwide demonstration of concern for the environment so large that it would shake the political establishment out of its lethargy and, finally, force this issue permanently into the political arena. It was a gamble, but it worked. An estimated twenty million people participated in demonstrations all across the country. Ten thousand grade schools and high schools, two thousand colleges, and one thousand communities were involved.

It was truly an astonishing grassroots explosion. The people cared, and Earth Day became the first opportunity they ever had to join in a nationwide demonstration to send a big message to the politicians—a message to tell them to wake up and do something. On that day, the environment was elevated to a permanent position on the national political agenda.

An interesting historical footnote was added by the John Birch Society. I selected April 22 as the date for Earth Day because it wasn't exam or vacation time on college campuses and it was a good date for primary and secondary schools. Within a week after Earth Day was announced, I came under heavy attack by the John Birch Society charging that this was Senator Nelson's ill disguised attempt to honor the 100th anniversary of the birth of Lenin.

The most important environmental progress in the past 25 or 30 years revolves around changing attitudes toward the environment—a greater sensitivity, concern, understanding and willingness to address emerging environmental challenges. While we have made many gains in addressing a number of specific environmental problems, the critical challenge is huge and the overall progress far too slow. Forging and maintaining a sustainable society is The Challenge for this and all generations to come. In responding to that challenge, population will be one of the key factors in determining whether we succeed or fail.

At this point in history, no nation has managed, either by design or accident, to evolve into an environmentally sustainable society, which can be described as "one that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." We are all pursuing a self-destructive course of fueling our economies by consuming our capital—that is to say, by degrading and depleting our resource base—and counting it on the income side of the ledger. That, obviously, is not a sustainable situation over the long term. The hard fact is that while the population is booming here and around the world, the resource base that sustains the economy is dwindling. It is not just a problem in faraway lands, it is an urgent, indeed, a critical problem here at home right now. We are talking about over-population, deforestation, aquifer depletion, air pollution, water pollution, depletion of fisheries, urbanization of farm land, soil erosion and much more. All of this is happening here and now.

Intellectually, we have finally come to understand that the wealth of the nation is its air, water, soil, forests, minerals, rivers, lakes, oceans, scenic beauty, wildlife habitats and biodiversity. Take this resource base away and all that is left is a wasteland.

In short, that's all there is. That's the whole economy. That's where all the economic activity and all the jobs come from. These biological systems contain the sustaining wealth of the world. All around the planet, these systems are under varying degrees of stress and degradation in almost all places including the United States. As we continue to degrade them, we are consuming our capital. And, in the process, we erode living standards and compromise the quality of our habitat. It is a dangerous and slippery slope.

The bottom line is this: We are not just toying with nature, we are compromising the capacity of natural systems to do what they need to do to preserve a livable world. We can, we must and we will forge a sustainable society but it will take better leaders and better followers than what is available just now. ❧

WALKING WITH MUIR ACROSS YOSEMITE
by Thomas R. Vale and Geraldine R. Vale.
The University of Wisconsin Press. 166 pages, 40 illustrations, $14.95 softcover.
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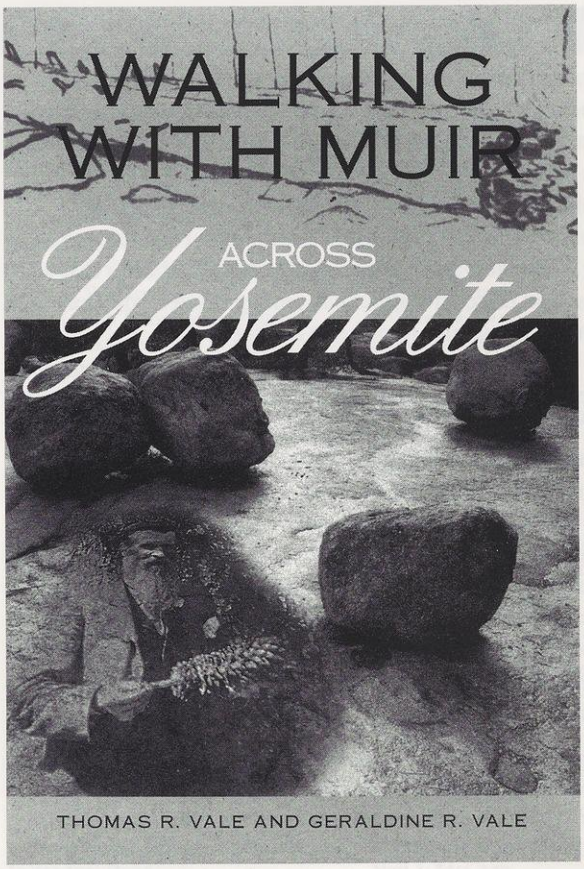
by Faith B. Miracle



When John Muir first encountered the wonders of the Yosemite Sierra in 1869, he was well conditioned to be an attentive student of nature, serious in his pursuit of knowledge. As a child in Scotland he had played on the rocky coast of the North Sea and acquainted himself with details of his natural surroundings.

Muir was eleven years old when he arrived in Wisconsin in the spring of 1849, and he took every opportunity to escape from the endless chores and hard labor of pioneer life. Whenever possible he explored the "glorious wilderness" that surrounded the Muir family's Marquette County farm, and he particularly came to love the "garden meadow" that separated his home from spring-fed Fountain Lake.

During his years at Fountain Lake Farm he learned about wildlife, native flowers, ferns, and mosses. Later, as a university student in Madison, he continued his "botanizing," exchanging letters and comparing respective herbaria with his siblings back in Marquette County. These archived letters reveal the extent of Muir's engagement with the natural world in Wisconsin; thus the seed was planted that would later manifest itself in the great naturalist he was to become.

Approximately six years after Muir left Wisconsin he spent his first summer in Yosemite, and he remained profoundly attached to "the glorious mountain sublimimities" for the rest of his life. Over the years he walked, studied, and changed from solitary naturalist to fervent activist. Always, he kept notes, and his jottings were enhanced by drawings. These journals still provide guidance and inspiration for modern-day naturalists who want to observe and learn—and respect. Thomas Vale and Geraldine Vale are among these naturalists, and together they have written a thoughtful book based on their saunterings in Muir's Yosemite footsteps.

Walking With Muir Across Yosemite is a multidimensional little book that takes the reader on an armchair trip through time and landscape—exploring, commenting, and comparing the experience of today's park visitor with that of John Muir as recorded in his journals. Muir's own flowery and sometimes inflated prose reflects the Victorian period in which he lived: "exalting," "grandeur," "glorifying," and "Godful" are Muir words. He proclaimed his delight: "Every rock, mountain, stream, plant, lake, lawn, forest, garden, bird, beast, insect . . . It seems too great and good to be true."

Occasionally the Vales express themselves in Muir-like phrases, referring to "a scattering of tiger lilies, planted by nature's graceful hand" or "songful joy of air sifting through the pines." For the most part, they use language which is elegant and descriptive, at the same time earthbound and accessible: "A California quail caw-caws from a bushy lookout; a rufous-sided towhee trills and a chat whistles from deep within the tangle, answered by the staccato of the wrentit."

Happily, the Vales found much to write about that would be familiar to Muir—many of the natural features that so engaged him can be enjoyed by today's observant visitor. While there have been changes in rivers and dams, climate and weather patterns, some animal species, and the landscape itself due to erosion, exfoliation, grazing, logging, and development, Yosemite nonetheless retains much of its mid-nineteenth century character. Unhappily, most visitors seem to care little for Muir-like encounters, for quiet solitude and patience to look, listen, learn. The park is a busy place, especially during the summer months. The Vales refer to it as "the linear human flow."

The book contains photos, maps, tables, and charts as well as drawings and jottings by both of the Vales and by Muir himself. The Vales have been exploring Yosemite for years, and we have the benefit of their scientific knowledge. We are given a history lesson in Yosemite geography and geology early on. Precise details, such as the number of lines Muir devotes to various subjects in his journals, are helpful and do not interfere with the pace of the narrative. The Vales have not attempted to match Muir step-by-step; sometimes references are site-specific, other times they write, "Muir may have wandered on this very slope . . . "

This is a little book with a huge mission. Toward the end, the Vales get down to business. They offer thoughts on today's purposes for the park, criticize the intrusive recreational behaviors and activities, and analyze how operations can be improved, as each year more than four million visitors enter the area.

Tom and Geraldine Vale fervently wish that more of these visitors would follow Muir's example of "observing, studying, reflecting and caring." Sadly, they find little that suggests this kind of sensitivity exists among modern-day campers and hikers. They would like to see change.

In 1865, not long after John Muir left Wisconsin, he made the first of three unsuccessful attempts to purchase the meadow at Fountain Lake Farm. He wanted to protect the flowers and ferns from being trampled by livestock. This was an early effort to save land for land's sake. More than a century later, the Vales are calling for protection of land for land's sake. They ask that we consider Yosemite and other national wild areas as "more than trivial playgrounds." They ask that we emulate Muir and "raise our individual spirits and collective voices with him."

This is an important book. It offers educated and heartfelt guidance.

Faith B. Miracle is editorial director for the Wisconsin Academy. In the late 1980s she participated in the successful effort to obtain National Historic Landmark status for Fountain Lake Farm, John Muir's boyhood homesite in Marquette County.

THE BENTLEY COMPANY, FIVE GENERATIONS OF WISCONSIN BUILDERS SINCE 1848 by H. Russell Zimmermann. The Bentley Company, 1998. 79 pages.

by George Parker

The number of business enterprises that can make the claim to have continuously operated since Wisconsin became a state in 1848 can probably be counted on the fingers of both hands if newspapers are eliminated. The Bentley Company is one of these, having operated as a building contractor since 1848. An export packaging business was added during World War II. What is even more remarkable is that it has been managed by five successive generations of Bentley family members. It continues to be so today. Even more amazing is that all of the family executives appear to have been competent managers and successful businessmen over the entire 150-year period. In my business experience this is the corporate equivalent of drawing to an inside straight!

Unlike many corporate publications, *The Bentley Company* was written by an outside professional, H. Russell Zimmermann, a well-known Milwaukee architectural historian, and it shows. The book is well organized, lucid, and a pleasure to read. Throughout, the illustrations are relevant to the text and are in close physical proximity to the dialog describing them, thus saving the reader from having to flip pages back and forth for referencing. The book consists of seven chapters which seamlessly describe finite and consecutive periods of the company's history. A family tree is included which gives an easy-to-understand management timeline. There is also an index which is most helpful and very unusual in publications of this type.

What I found extraordinary is that The Bentley Company right from the outset built important buildings, many of which still stand today, for individuals and groups famous in Wisconsin history. As his first job after arriving in Wisconsin via New York from England, John Bentley, founder of the firm, built Alexander Mitchell's residence, which now survives as the Wisconsin Club. The Villa Louis residence in Prairie du Chien was built by this company in 1870–1871—it was recently rededicated as a house museum and is now owned by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. During a recent visit there, knowing that I was going to write this review, I checked construction details as carefully as I could and can attest that the building appears to be as solid today as the day it was completed 127 years ago.

While residences were important in the early years, the company's experience has expanded to include the construction of commercial buildings, churches, schools, municipal structures, etc. The Bentley Company's experience, both here and in Canada, has covered the broad spectrum of North American building requirements.

The Bentleys are not only to be congratulated for staying in business for one hundred and fifty years, but also for giving students of Wisconsin this work. This book is of interest for the impressive register of the Bentleys' accomplishments, but also because of the architectural legacy depicted and described in it. The wide range of building achievements arranged in chronological order makes the stylistic walk through Wisconsin's architectural history of this period both understandable and enjoyable. It is copiously illustrated and should enjoy a place along side Richard Perrin's seminal work entitled *The Architecture of Wisconsin*.

The Bentley Company has grown substantially over the years. If there is a fault to the book it would be in the lack of statistical data concerning the business's growth over the past 150 years. But that is a minor defect and one that may not be of interest to everyone.

For further information concerning this work please contact Vic Grassman, Director of Business Development, The Bentley Company, at (414) 365–6000.

George Parker, a retired businessman, is an occasional contributor to this publication and president of the Wisconsin Academy Foundation.

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