

The Goldfinch



Daviess County Audubon Society

www.daviessaudubon.org

May 2007

Powell leaves legacy of support

Earth Day weekend proved bittersweet for the Daviess County Audubon Society, which bid goodbye to the Martha Washington of the 40-year-old club, Millie Powell.

After months of illness, the 89-year-old Powell died April 19 at the home of her daughter, Bonnie Terrizzi, in Beattyville.

The gentle woman was remembered by longtime DCAS member Tom Hicks as a quiet pillar of support for her husband of 60 years, DCAS co-founder Bert Powell. For Rose Ann Radzelovage, even little things meant a lot to club members.

"We would go out there for a walk, and she would always have cookies waiting for us," she said. Members also drew off her love for wild flowers she said. Fittingly enough, visitors to Glenn Funeral Home were treated to a slide show of Millie's life, interspersed by photos son Wilton Powell had taken of wild flowers and birds on their property.

Terrizzi reiterated her appreciation for the plaque which will adorn the Powell Bird Blind. It was displayed at the funeral home in celebration of Millie's devotion to the environment.

The former Maceo resident was born in Germantown, Tenn., on Sept. 26, 1917. She was the daughter of William A. and Fannie Pearl Stephens Norris; a homemaker; member of Cumberland Presbyterian Church where she was a Sunday school teacher. Along with her DCAS membership, she also had been a member of the Daviess County Camera Club and the Owensboro Area Museum of Science and History.

She is survived by her husband, Albert L. Powell Jr.; children, Bonnie (and Frank) Terrizzi of Beattyville and Wilton (and Sheila D.) Powell of Maceo; grandchildren, Amanda L. (and Derek) West of Reed and George A. Terrizzi of Beattyville; stepgrandchildren, Jeff S. Beavers and Rex A. Beavers, both of Maceo; three great-grandchildren; and four stepgreat-grandchildren.

To perpetuate Millie's love for nature, the DCAS and the family are working on ways to spend memorial dollars to enhance the bird blind and area around it at Girl Scout Camp Pennyroyal. About \$300 was donated to the chapter on her behalf. Those still wishing to do so may send checks to the DCAS, attention to Charles Morris, treasurer, 1400 Woodbridge Trail, Owensboro, KY 42303.



Millie Powell's presence at Girl Scout Camp Pennyroyal will endure.

Tree tribute honors Wilson

A young American yellowwood stands at Owensboro Community and Technical College in tribute to one of the champions of the college's outdoor classroom, the late Julian Wilson. The tree was planted April 22 by family and friends.

Charles Morris told those gathered about the need to find a native plant and something a little unusual for the arbor tribute. He thought the flowering display of the yellowwood would be fitting.

Morris lovingly kept the tree safe from

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Coming in May: It's time to do a little fishing

Rob Rold will present a program about fish at the May 14 meeting of the Daviess County Audubon Society, focusing on Kentucky species, their habitats, ranges and ecological niches. It will be held at 7 p.m. at First Christian Church, Seventh Street and J.R. Miller Blvd.

Tree

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from freezing April temperatures by storing it in his garage, then transporting it to OCTC, despite getting stuck in the mud around the pond.

His efforts were worth it, based on the delight shown by Wilson's wife, Donna, when she arrived at the south side of the outdoor classroom pond. The family has donated a millstone from the Wilson farm to be placed by the tree. A plaque paying tribute to his contribution to nature will be placed on the stone. Among those contributions was the creation of the monthly bird census, which included sandhill cranes, wild turkeys and a female black-throated blue warbler.

His other contributions to the club range from the Web to the newsletter. Even as a kid, he delighted members, providing the perfect foil to Bert Powell. Brenda Little told the legendary tale of him painting a fake bird as a painted bunting, causing Powell to plunge into an icy creek in December in hot pursuit. Little concluded the ceremony by asking visitors to contract the EPA about new regulations for utility towers – an issue Julian felt strongly about – and by reciting a poem, "Remembering Julian": "Be you friend, stranger, his fellow man/ Know that he trod these paths/ Where nature's beauty/ Filled his soul./ I think he'd ask of you/ The hopes he held/ Where you now stand/ Care for the Earth."

The club's role in caring for this spot has just begun. Jan Howard has volunteered her truck to transport the millstone to the site, once the spot dries. There is also some discussion about transplanting blue-eyed Marys from the Wilson Farm to the area of the yellowwood.

Dr. Kit Gallagher of OCTC noted that it will require work on the members' part, because it requires a lot of watering to maintain the proper soil moisture. It will also require patience. Morris noted it's a slow-growing tree that takes 10 years to bloom.



From left, Donna Wilson, Dr. Kit Gallagher and Wilson's stepfather, Thurman Garrett, and mother, Dovie Garrett plant an American yellowwood.

Hahus spotlights insects' resiliency at April meeting

The resilient nature of insects was the focus for the April 9 meeting of the Daviess County Audubon Society. Steve Hahus discussed these creatures of the wild, sharing some of his expansive photography collection.

Hahus has spent 3½ summers in his bid to develop a CD similar to one he produced featuring Daviess County wild flowers. Even when completed, it will only scratch the surface of all available species in North America, about 93,200, several thousand of which live in Daviess County.

Insects and plants are the first organisms to adapt to a new ecosystem. Physical traits of insects determine their habitat, he said. "They basically live to eat," he said.

Those same traits help them live long enough to reproduce: their flexibility, their three pairs of legs, their



Hahus' six-spotted green tiger beetle

small size and protective coloration. They also possess durable exoskeletons similar to lobsters and other crustaceans.

"If you've ever seen animals that eat insects, from their excretion, you know that's the part they can't digest," he said.

Their metamorphosis is mysterious, but it allows only limited competition between larvae and adults.

Next time you think about stepping on an insect, Hahus notes that only 5 percent of all insects are harmful. That 5 percent, however, cost farmers millions, as well as those ridding them from their home.

But, they also have benefits, helping to pollinate crops. Some prey on more harmful pests, citing aphid-fighting praying mantises and ladybugs as examples. Others recycle plant and animal material to go back into the earth.

Herrmann sounds call for community gardens

An advocate for sustainable farming headlined community environmental activities throughout April.

Angela Herrmann of Indianapolis, Disciples Home Missions Web site developer, sounded the call for community farming during the April 23 program at First Christian Church.

She notes that “cheap food” comes at a heavy price. Corporations have largely ignored damage to ecosystem: contaminated water supplies, lost habitat, lost topsoil, which ultimately has led to a loss of independent farmers; increased waste and carbon emissions and illness.

Economically, laborers see very little from their efforts: Only about 19 percent of food costs go the growers, 81 percent to marketing.

She lamented the lost potential of the organic movement. Ultimately, it’s been a victim of its own success. As residents “voted” with their food choices, more corporations delved into the organic market, weakening the standards and depleting resources quickly as fields are stripped of their viability and abandoned. The excessive packaging and “food miles” in growing organic foods in such places as China make these models nonsustaining.

She challenged audience members to find out where their food is coming from and how it is being produced. She asked some of her students to do that, sharing one student’s multiple roadblocks in dealing with Campbell’s, noting that data was like “national security intelligence information.”

In a perfect world, the search for answers could be found in the neighborhood. It’s been done before. Author Barbara Kingsolver notes how only a few decades ago, local food was the norm, now it’s considered elitist. Local choices lead to better food choices. Herrmann joined a community-supported agriculture program and enjoyed the health benefits of eating locally growing vegetables all summer.

She also encouraged support for farmers’ markets and the use of community gardens. Through Disciples of Christ, she has worked with gardens from Oregon to Indianapolis. She gets particularly enthused when young people are recruited to work with these gardens, so the art of growing is not lost. To be a sustainable community, Owensboro would need to have about 40 community gardens. First Christian Church had hoped to have a community garden in the Germantown community, however, Aloma Dew said there is too much lead in the soil for food to be grown there. Plans are going ahead to use it for flowers, she said.

Earlier in the month, wet weather curtailed the local Step It Up program, co-sponsored by Brescia University and the Sierra Club. DCAS member Jill Flachskam noted that a couple of brave bikers still rode in the event, which called for the need for substantial and rapid action on the issue of global warming.

Indoor events, including an address by Sr. Michele Morek, went on as scheduled. Flachskam said the event proved to be a good chance for participants to learn more about the DCAS, which had a manned booth at the April 14 event.



Whitesville “hummingbirds” try some nectar.

Whitesville kids explore Yellow Creek

Yellow Creek Park birds greeted K-1 and first-graders from Whitesville Elementary for their annual nature morning.

Bill and Brenda Little took small groups into the woods to see what they could spy. After an evening rain, they saw a lot. Kids marveled at goldfinches, woodpeckers, including yellow-shafted flicker; a hawk, red-winged blackbird, cardinals and other friends.

“Kids aren’t bird snobs,” Brenda Little said, noting they were fascinated by colorful starlings who were building a nest.

Across the parking lot, Mary Kissel had to shout a birds’ beak program above the sound of birds. Kids enjoyed trying out the various beaks. One girl completed the rare task of catching a “fly” with the barn swallow beaks. Another penned a new name on a great blue heron – “the UK Bird.”

Upcoming education events include a bird session with Cravens after-school students at 3 p.m. May 1, and programs on birding and climate change at Sutton Elementary May 14 and Mary Carrico School May 15.

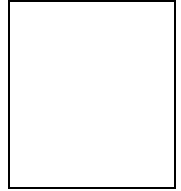
Hoosier migrants welcome DCAS

The April cold snap put the brakes on some of the migrants to the Hoosier National Forest, but members of the Daviess County Audubon Society saw 44 species on the April 21 field trip in Perry County, Ind.

Steve Anderson, Steve Hahus, Charles Morris, Donna Hanley, Carolyn Williams, Jill Flachskam and her father saw the following species: Canada goose, wild turkey, red-winged blackbird, mourning dove, American robin, common grackle, eastern meadowlark, chimney swift, turkey vulture, northern rough-winged swallow, northern cardinal, American crow, eastern bluebird, red-tailed hawk, purple martin, barn swallow, broad-winged hawk, song sparrow,

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The Goldfinch/May 2007
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Migrants

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American goldfinch, Carolina wren, eastern towhee, tufted titmouse, field sparrow, Carolina chickadee, blue-gray gnatcatcher, blue jay, red-shouldered hawk, red-bellied woodpecker, ruby-crowned kinglet, white-eyed vireo, brown-headed cowbird, white-throated sparrow, chipping sparrow, great blue heron, brown thrasher, yellow-throated vireo, yellow-throated warbler, pileated woodpecker, eastern phoebe, downy woodpecker, American kestrel, killdeer, Louisiana waterthrush, northern parula.

Bluebirds battle chilly spring

The cold spring has had a definite impact on nesting in two of the four trails that the Littles monitor in Ohio County. At Wayland Alexander Elementary, they finally had two lonely bluebird eggs laid by April 22 – neither in a camera box. Normally, Brenda Little said they would have five or six nests with eggs being incubated.

Southern Elementary is doing better with two bluebird nests having four eggs each. One of the nests is in the camera box with its first egg laid Easter morning. So 250 children and about 40 staff are having a wonderful time watching their bluebirds on TV monitors. These are the same kids who lost all four of their baby birds in a cold snap last year. The other nest on Southern's campus was started earlier and was expected to be hatched soon.

One of the Hoover Hill nestboxes was struck by a tree during a recent storm. If the eggs inside were protected, as many as 21 eggs are under incubation: five chickadees and the rest bluebirds. They also hope to have birds nest on a trail at the Ohio County Senior Center once construction is completed.

May events

Education program at Sutton Elementary,
12:45 p.m. May 14.

Meeting, 7 p.m. First Christian Church,
Seventh and J.R. Miller, May 14.

Education program at Mary Carrico School,
Knottsville, Morning, May 15.

For news, dues

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