

2015 WCC AWARDS

2015 Awards

[Statewide](#)

[Local](#)

[Educator](#)

[Delegate of the Year](#)

[DNR Staff](#)

[NRB Members](#)

[Nomination Info](#)

THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

STATEWIDE CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

The Wisconsin Conservation Congress selected **Shadows on the Wolf** as the recipient of the **Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year** award.

This organization was recognized and presented with the award at the annual Conservation Congress statewide meeting at Stoney Creek Inn, Wausau.

Shadows on the Wolf is a non-profit organization with three chapters in the Wolf River watershed: Shiocton, Clintonville, and Shawano. With about 1000 members this organization has spent over \$900,000 on local projects and donations since establishment in 1992. Not only has this group invested time, money, and effort into local projects they have also changed the attitudes of people in their area. Conservation Warden Mike Young noted, "one of the offshoots of their efforts has been the changing of the attitudes of the local sportsmen... from one of entitlement to one of stewardship."



2015 Statewide Organization of the Year award accepted by President Kevin Conradt of Shadows on the Wolf

Jim Binder, a WCC delegate from Waupaca County, nominated Shadows for this distinction and asked for the opportunity to present the award. One of Jim's first interactions with this group was a fund raising effort to start a trapper's education program. When he asked the group for a donation they didn't just say yes, they

asked him how much he needed. President Kevin Conradt takes the position, "when it comes to youth, our group has no problem helping out."

During the award presentation, retired DNR Fisheries Director Ron Bruch also took his turn at the mic to thank Shadows on the Wolf for their efforts in working with the department in the areas of conservation and habitat improvement.

The Conservation Congress would like to recognize Shadows on the Wolf for their accomplishments, thank them for their hard work, and acknowledge their commitment to conservation and their lasting contributions to the protection of Wisconsin's natural resources .

LOCAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

The **Southwestern Wisconsin Chapter of the Quality Deer Management Association** was honored as the recipient of the **Local Conservation Club of the Year** award.

This local chapter of the national Quality Deer Management Association is very involved in conservation education, habitat enhancement, recreational activities, volunteer projects, and fundraisers. Some of their endeavors in these areas include: supporting archery in the schools programs, increasing antlerless harvest by inviting hunters onto member properties during the holiday hunt, donating venison to the deer donation program, donating subscriptions of *Quality White-tails* to local high school libraries, and sponsoring a yearly educational event and food plot seed sale.

One special project this group undertook included building a tower deer stand to help a youth with leukemia harvest his first deer, which he did; harvesting both a doe and a buck four minutes apart. Truly a special moment and lasting memory for everyone involved.

For their continuing commitment to conservation and their lasting contributions to the protection of the natural resources of Wisconsin, the Conservation Congress recognizes the Southwestern Wisconsin Chapter of the Quality Deer Management Association as the Local Conservation Club of the Year.



Tony Grabski accepting the award on behalf of the Southwestern Wisconsin Chapter of the Quality Deer Management Association

EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR

The Conservation Congress has chosen **Chuck Strysick** as the **Conservation Educator of the Year**. Each year the Wisconsin Conservation Congress honors a deserving individual who is dedicated to educating others about the wise use and conservation of Wisconsin's natural resources and environment.

Chuck Strysick is described by Sheboygan County Conservation Association President Phil Mersberger as an avid outdoor enthusiast, an 18 year veteran of teaching youth about the outdoors, and a true advocate of our natural resources and all outdoor youth education. In the realm of youth outdoor education in Sheboygan county Chuck wrote the book, literally.

One of the greatest achievements of his career is writing a *Fishing 101 Curriculum* for grades 2-4 which has been adopted by the Sheboygan Public School System's Adventure Program. Chuck has also been instrumental in youth outdoor education through his efforts as Muskies, Inc.'s Youth Director, 4-H Fishing Key Leader for Sheboygan County, and through Americorps fishing programs. Within those roles and programs, amongst others, Chuck has facilitated Take A Vet Fishing Day, Sheboygan County Conservation's Annual Youth Outdoor Activity Day, Muskies Turning Leaf Youth Program, 4-H Ice Fishing Program, and Youth Fishing Classes for Washington and Ozaukee counties' 4-H clubs. Chuck's teaching prowess was captured on film by the crew from Outdoor Junkies in 2014 during one of his 4-H ice fishing programs out on the hard water of Random Lake.

For his continuing commitment to outdoor education and lasting contributions to passing on our conservation legacy the Conservation Congress recognizes Chuck Strysick as the 2014 Conservation Educator of the Year.



Chuck Strysick accepting the 2014 Educator of the Year Award from WCC Chairman Rob Bohmann

WCC DELEGATE OF THE YEAR

Edgar Harvey recognized as the Conservation Congress David A. Ladd Delegate of the Year Award Recipient

With 37 years of service as a Conservation Congress delegate no one can doubt Edgar Harvey's commitment to public service and conservation issues. Ed is one of the Congress' "go-to" guys and can always be counted on to pitch in when things need to get done. His involvement in Congress activities at all levels are a testament to his dedication to this organization. He's always ready and willing to help out when asked to take on new challenges that arise.

During his tenure, he has served three terms as Congress Secretary (1995-97 and 2000-01), five terms as Congress Vice-Chair (2001-06), five terms as Congress Chair (2006-11) and countless other terms as County Chair, Executive Councilor, and as Chair of various committees.

Edgar has a diverse WCC resume and has sat on numerous committees over the years covering a wide range of topics. A few of those committees on which he has served include: Warm Water, Forestry & Parks, Fur Harvest, Congress Audit & Master Planning, Air, Waste, & Water Committee, and the recently created CDAC Oversight Committee.

He has also represented the Congress's interests on the Wisconsin Legislative Council Special Committee on Private Forest Land Programs, Believability of Numbers Committee for the Deer 2000 Project, DNR Steering Committee on the SAK Audit, DNR Beaver Task Force, DNR Fur Harvest Committee, multiple DNR interview panels, and as the CDAC Chair for Sheboygan County.

With all that Edgar has done, and continues to do, for the Congress one would believe he doesn't have much time for anything else. In truth he also finds time to help cultivate new trappers as a Trappers Education Instructor along with maintaining membership in the Wisconsin Trappers Association, Sheboygan County Conservation Association, Ridge Runners Sportsmens Club, and Fisherman's Road Fishing Club.

For years, Ed has continuously been a leader for the Congress at all levels and he has humbly worked to improve the ability of this organization to represent the public's voice. For his exceptional service to the citizens of this state and his unwavering dedication to conservation and the protection of the natural resources of Wisconsin, Edgar Harvey is the winner of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress David A. Ladd Delegate of the Year Award. Congratulations Edgar.



Edgar Harvey accepting the David A. Ladd Delegate of the Year Award from WCC Chair Rob Bohmann

WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

At its Annual Convention in May 2015 the Wisconsin Conservation Congress (WCC) recognized several DNR employees for their ongoing, outstanding work on behalf of the people and natural resources of the state.

Nathan Roberts recognized as WCC Wildlife Biologist of the Year

Nathan Roberts is a Research Scientist for the DNR out of the Rhinelander Office specializing in providing information vital to the management of wolves, bears, bobcats, otters, and other furbearers and carnivores in Wisconsin. Although Nathan has only been with the DNR for one year, his current research and previous published works have caught people's attention. So much attention that the WCC Fur Harvest Committee Chair Edgar Harvey nominated Nathan for this award.

As a Research Scientist Nathan is working on a five-year wolf project along with research on tracking bobcat and bear range expansion to provide crucial data for determining harvest quotas and hunting zones. Another task he is working on is reviewing survey techniques looking for ways to make them more efficient, precise, and reliable. Overall, his work with bobcats is most noteworthy and is what Edgar Harvey especially lauded Roberts for during the presentation of the award.

For his exceptional dedication to the area of wildlife research and his achievements in sharing information and expanding knowledge the Wisconsin Conservation Congress recognizes Nathan Roberts as the Wildlife Biologist of the Year.



Nathan Roberts accepting the Wildlife Management Award

WCC Fisheries Management Award goes to Ryan Koenigs

Ryan Koenigs is a Senior Fisheries Biologist on the Winnebago System specializing in sturgeon. He was nominated for this award by former DNR Fisheries Director Ron Bruch and this is what Ron had to say about Ryan:



*Ryan Koenigs accepting the Fisheries Management Award
with Rob Bohmann and Ron Bruch*

The highly successful Winnebago Sturgeon Management program which we had built with the public and the Conservation Congress over the previous 20 plus years did not miss a beat with the transfer of the reins from me to Ryan. He truly understands the importance of working closely with the public through a variety of outreach, involvement, and education methods to build ownership in and effective implementation of fisheries program actions and regulations. Ryan's biologist and outreach skills, along with strong leadership capabilities, quickly put him in leadership roles on the statewide Sturgeon Team to update the statewide plan and on the new Fish Age Task Group to co-lead an effort with UW-Stevens Point to re-define and update protocols for aging fish. His contributions to these two teams will have impacts on the Wisconsin Fisheries Management Program and fisheries in the state for decades.

For his exceptional achievements in sturgeon management and his dedication to creating excellent fishing opportunities the Wisconsin Conservation Congress recognizes Ryan Koenigs as the Fisheries Biologist of the Year.

WCC RECOGNIZES DEPARTMENT STAFF

Conservation Warden Mike Hirschboeck — Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

For all of the hard work Mike does to achieve an excellent balance of enforcement, education, and community involvement the Conservation Congress, at its annual convention, recognized Mike Hirschboeck for his exemplary service to the people and natural resources of Wisconsin.

Mike is a nine year veteran of the Racine West station where he has developed a reputation as a high performer. His supervisor, Warden Jennifer Niemeyer, noted, "Southeast Region supervisors and staff have indicated that when they want something done quickly and right, they call Mike."

As someone who rises to any occasion with professionalism and a contagious positive attitude, Mike doesn't complain about high work loads; he challenges himself to work longer and harder to get the job done. In 7 of his 9 years at Racine West he has been called upon to cover a vacant station.

Mike's success as a warden can be attributed to his knowledge and connections to the community. He has developed and fostered a diverse network by working cooperatively with other law enforcement agencies, organizing learn to hunt opportunities, mentoring new hunters, working kid's fishing clinics, and working with groups in both the business and conservation communities, to name a few. These connections are a huge asset in helping Mike find solutions to problems by working as a team with input and assistance from his network.



Mike Hirschboeck, the WCC Law Enforcement Officer of the Year

Warden Kyle Dilley selected as the Conservation Waterfowl Officer of the Year

Warden Kyle Dilley is a field warden stationed in Dane County and is a very passionate waterfowl hunter. As a warden Kyle is one for going the extra mile with taking on extra duties not assigned to him such as being a firearms instructor, a member of the elite tactical team, a water survival instructor, a background investigator, and the regional internet investigator. This past fall he also volunteered to share his waterfowl expertise at "duck school" for warden recruits where he assisted new recruits in enforcement scenarios geared at helping them become prepared to enforce waterfowl regulations. As an enforcer himself, Kyle issued 18 citations for waterfowl related violations during the 2014 season.

Warden Dilley is also actively involved in wetlands protection and this past year investigated a complaint of wetland cutting, coordinated the cleanup of a traffic accident diesel spill into a wetland, and followed up on numerous erosion control complaints. An additional complaint Kyle followed up on was the vandalism of a waterfowl blind on the Marshall Mill Pond. Technically this case was outside the realm of his responsibility but that did not deter him from identifying the culprits and letting the Dane County Sheriff's Office take it from there. The responsible individuals were cited and had to return all blind materials they had stolen.



Warden Kyle Dilley with WCC Chair Rob Bohmann

On and off the clock Kyle is active with waterfowl organizations. This past fall he partnered with Wings Over Wisconsin for Learn to Hunt and youth hunt events and every fall he attends a Dane County Conservation League meeting to keep them up-to-date with new regulations.

For his efforts in waterfowl and wetland protection the Wisconsin Conservation Congress recognizes Warden Kyle Dilley for his exceptional service to the citizens and natural resources of the state as the Waterfowl Officer of the Year.

THE WISCONSIN CONSERVATION CONGRESS

Kari Lee-Zimmermann
WCC Liaison
101 S. Webster Street
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Tel: 608 266 0580
Fax: 608 266 6983

E-mail:
kari.leezimmermann@wisconsin.gov



*“Let us work to together
to properly manage
and wisely use our
natural resources...”*

- Prolog of the Congress Creed

We're on the web!
Visit dnr.wi.gov and
search for
“Conservation Congress”



WCC Delegates volunteering
their time at the WCC display

WCC RECOGNIZES NRB MEMBERS

NRB Members Recognized For Years of Service

Dr. Christine Thomas is the Dean of the College of Natural Resources at UW-Stevens Point and the founder of *Becoming an Outdoor Woman*, an international organization promoting women in the outdoors. She began her career on the Natural Resources Board in 2004 already knowing a great deal about the Board as evident in her doctoral thesis on the Board and a published paper entitled, “One Hundred Twenty Years of Citizen Involvement with the Wisconsin Natural Resources Board.” While on the Board she has held positions as the board’s Chair (2007-10), Vice-Chair (2006-07), and Secretary (2011-13).

Jane Wiley started with the Board in 2007 although her service to the people and natural resources of Wisconsin began much earlier as a member of the Stewardship Advisory Council (1994-2001). Jane’s support of the Conservation Congress can be seen through her regular attendance at many Congress functions including District 3 spring and fall meetings, Spring Hearings, and Annual Meetings. At this year’s Annual Meeting she reaffirmed her support of the Congress and volunteered her services to help with the Youth Conservation Congress Initiative.

Over the years both Christine and Jane have been ardent supporters of the WCC and have used the Congress as an additional conduit for gathering much needed public input on natural resources and conservation issues.

For their enduring friendship and partnership, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress recognizes and thanks Dr. Christine Thomas and Jane Wiley for their exceptional support of the Conservation Congress, their commitment to citizen input, and their service to the state through their work on Wisconsin’s Natural Resources Board.



Natural Resources Board members Christine Thomas and Jane Wiley with WCC Chair Rob Bohmann after the April 2015 board meeting

DO YOU KNOW AN ORGANIZATION OR INDIVIDUAL THAT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED?

Each year the Conservation Congress seeks nominations for Statewide Conservation Organization of the Year, Local Conservation Organization of the Year, and Educator of the Year.

If you know of a statewide or local conservation organization or individual dedicated to educating others on conservation matters, please consider nominating them for one of the Conservation Congress’s annual awards.

Visit the WCC website at dnr.wi.gov for application and nomination forms.