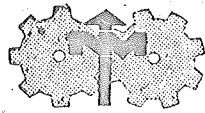


TWIN CITY



news

Saturday, April 22, 1972

The Post-Crescent A 8

18,000 Trees to Arrive For Arbor Day Planting

NEENAH-MENASHA — Some 18,000 trees will arrive at Twin City schools next Friday, as part of the Arbor Day Centennial Celebration.

Leo Nickash, one of the coordinators of the event, reflected on the importance of trees to industry in the Neenah-Menasha area.

"Since the majority of Neenah-Menasha industry, directly or indirectly is based in part on the production of trees and good conservation practices, it becomes important for our citizens to lead, in thought and action, the way for Wisconsin to sound forest practices."

The other members of the committee are Bernie Bestler,

Mowry Smith, and A. John Wiley. In addition to the trees, a set of books are being donated to the Neenah and Menasha school libraries, and a large number of posters have been delivered to each of the schools. Several school clubs are planning additional observances demonstrating Arbor Day.

Financial, material or other forms of support for the project has been received from the following organizations and firms: Menasha Local 324, Bergstrom Local 889, the Menasha Corp., Wisconsin Tissue Mills, Kimberly-Clark, the Neenah-Menasha a Chamber of Commerce, and the Wisconsin Wildlife Foundation.

18,000 Trees

Arbor Day Plans Made

NEENAH-MENASHA — Some 18,000 trees will be distributed in Neenah-Menasha public and parochial schools Friday afternoon, April 28, as part of the Neenah-Menasha Arbor Day Centennial Celebration.

Leo Nickash, Bernie Bestler, Mowry Smith and John Wiley are co-ordinating the event. Nickash, active in conservation work for his labor union, stated that it is important for the citizens of Neenah and Menasha to take a little time each year to reflect on the importance of trees in our lives. "Since the majority of Neenah-Menasha industry, directly or indirectly, is based in part on the production of trees and good conservation practices, it becomes important

for our citizens to lead in thought and action, the way to sound forest practices for Wisconsin," he said.

In addition to the trees sets of three books are being donated to Neenah and Menasha school libraries. The books were acquired from the U. S. Forest Service Educational Service Division and are entitled "Trees and Water," "The Finance of Trees," and "The Genetics of Trees."

A number of large posters also have been delivered to each of the schools. Each teacher will be supplied with information on Arbor Day to help relate this celebration to the economy here in Neenah-Menasha. A number of school clubs are planning ad-

ditional special observances demonstrating Arbor Day.

Organizations and firms which have contributed money, time and, or materials to make this project successful include Menasha Local 324, Bergstrom Local 889, Menasha Corp., Wisconsin Tissue Mills, Kimberly-Clark Corp., the Chamber of Commerce of Neenah-Menasha and the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.

"The bridge of cooperation in this project is really worth noting. Unions, industry, the Chamber of Commerce, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation and all the schools are cooperating to make this one project successful," commented Nickash.

FRI. APRIL 22-1972
DAILY - NORTHWESTERN



News-Record

Thursday, April 26, 1973

Arbor events start with 18,000 trees

NEENAH-MENASHA — Annual Arbor Day festivities will be observed on several fronts this year, as programs in the schools overlap with those planned earlier to celebrate the Twin Cities Centennial.

One tree will be delivered to each of the 18,000 students in all Neenah-Menasha public and parochial schools Friday, with a teacher's kit explaining the importance of trees.

Concurrently, some 5,000 pine tree seedlings will be delivered to area residents today and Friday as part of the Centennial group's Trees for Tomorrow program.

Additionally, 60 members of "The Troopers," Lakeview School's conservation club, will attend the Trees for Tomorrow camp in Eagle River May 7 through 9, on full and partial scholarships.

Promoters of the programs point to the historical significance of trees, particularly in the Twin Cities where the paper making industry dominates.

According to Leo Nickasch, program chairman, 11 different community unions, industries, clubs and organizations have contributed funds for the trees and the student scholarships.

"We are truly grateful for the enthusiastic co-operation and assistance we have received in organizing

this third annual Arbor Day program," Nickasch said.

"This community's paper and printing industries have a great dependence on our nation's forests for our own prosperity. Our adults have really contributed a lot of leadership to our youth in helping them to participate in such a comprehensive Arbor Day program. We don't know of a community anywhere that has so many adults involved in an Arbor Day program. Neenah-Menasha has a lot of community spirit to show for its first 100 years, and this program is evidence."

The 11 community groups, in addition to the Chamber of Commerce, are: Kimberly-Clark Corp., Kimberly-Clark Local 482, Menasha Corp., American Can Local 148, Bergstrom Local 889, N-M Elks Lodge, N-M Jaycees, Neenah Education Association, and the Neenah and Menasha Rotary clubs.

Arbor Day this year is Friday. Wisconsin has celebrated it since 1889, 17 years after the commemorative day was set aside at the request of J. Sterling Morton, a member of the Nebraska Board of Agriculture.

A conservationist committed to youth

BY ELIZABETH GALL

News-Record staff writer

NEENAH — When Leo Nickasch was a small boy attending St. Joseph School in Appleton, a Capuchin father took him and other boys on fishing expeditions down to old Lutz's Ice House on the Fox River.

With a great deal of foresight, the priest warned the boys that sooner or later man's disregard for nature would catch up with him. Those words stayed with Nickasch and



Leo Nickasch

now, years later, Nickasch is recognized in this area, as well as the state, as a committed conservationist.

Nickasch is chairman of the forestry sub-committee of the State AFL-CIO's conservation committee. He is a member of the advisory board of Trees for Tomorrow Camp, Eagle River, and a member of the board of directors for Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. Nickasch also helped form the Twin City Union Environmental Council.

Though known well in adult circles for his environmental efforts, Nickasch's greatest fans are 60 Lakeview Elementary School fifth and sixth graders. He was instrumental in arranging a pilot program for elementary school kids at Trees for Tomorrow. The students, all members of the Troopers Ecology Club, were the

first group of elementary school kids to participate in a four-day workshop in the camp.

The students have been back from camp for several weeks now, but the letters of thank-you to Nickasch keep coming in the mail.

Nickasch believes strongly that the future of the environment lies in the hands of children and he believes that with a good, sound environmental education program the kids will grab the environmental ball and run with it.

Nickasch says his eyes were opened four years ago when on a wilderness hike with a group of 4-Hers. The kids asked him why adults were keeping everything "secret" and told him there were a lot of smart kids around that could do something to help.

"I don't think it does any good to talk to adults," Nickasch said. They're going to keep throwing their beer cans around and "that's why we have to get to the kids."

"You betcha I believe in them," he added, "Can you imagine any adult walking along these roads, picking up beer cans and pop corn boxes like the kids do?"

Nickasch's environmental specialty is trees. "Tree planting has been a passion with me ever since I was a kid," he remarked. These days, he and friends take expeditions up north between Wabeno and Lily to help replenish Wisconsin's forests.

Nickasch, a maintenance mechanic at Kimberly-Clark, is not critical of the paper industry contributions to environmental problems. In fact, he believes the people of Wisconsin "can thank the paper mills for the forests we've got." He noted that over 900,000 acres of forest land in the state are owned by the paper companies.

He remembers that when the Twin City Union Environmental Council was formed, workers were accused of "getting into bed with the polluters." But, not so, Nickasch said. Employees realized that paper companies needed assistance in their pollution abatement efforts. "We knew paper mills were polluting, but we wanted an orderly clean-up so it wouldn't throw thousands of people out of jobs. Pollution didn't happen overnight and you can't clean it up overnight."

His passion for nature has caught on within his family too. Stray rabbits which have lost their mother are regular guests at the Nickasch home on Maple Lane. And with a half groan, half-chuckle, Nickasch recalls the time his family raised 13 mallard ducklings. The "old lady," Nickasch said, had been killed by a water skier.



News-Record

Neenah-Menasha Edition of The Post-Crescent

Thursday, Jan. 27, 1977



'Trees' scholarship

Jerry Barr, seated center, looks over "Trees for Tomorrow" literature with conservationist Leo Nickash, left, "Trees" fund drive chairman, his daughter Barbara Nickash and Ted Jarosh, principal of Neenah's Lakeview School, following Barr's donation of scholar-

ship funds for the program. The scholarships given in the name of the late Myrna Barr, former Neenah teacher, will be awarded to needy sixth graders attending the "Trees for Tomorrow" camp this spring. (News-Record photo)

Scholarships for 'Trees'

NEENAH — Jerry Barr, son of the late Myrna Barr, former Taft School teacher, has set up a memorial fund in her name to be used to provide scholarships for needy Taft students who will be attending the "Trees for Tomorrow" camp this spring.

"Trees" is a special environmental education program which has a camp at Eagle River. Each spring, about 60 sixth graders from the public and pri-

vate schools in both Neenah and Menasha participate in camp activities for three days in May.

Barr attended a workshop at the camp in 1970 and was a strong supporter in getting the "Trees" program initiated here.

She was recognized for her leadership role in the teaching of conservation and ecology when named Wisconsin's teacher of the year in 1971.

TWIN CITY

News Record

as we see it

Thursday, April 29, 1982 Page 3

A dream in need of fulfillment

A pastor of a rural parish eyed a stand of young white cedar gracing the entrance to a 125-year-old cemetery one day and said the trees were his "12 apostles."

Those trees are flourishing today because of one man's help 20 years ago. That man is Leo Nickash, a champion of trees.

The cedars are but one monument to Nickash and his first years when union Local 482 appointed him to the state AFL-CIO Conservation Committee as its representative.

The rural parish Boy and Girl Scout troops wanted to beautify their church, school and cemetery, but needed trees. They were too late for DNR orders. When contacted, Nickash found "a few extras" to help out — several hundred to be exact.

Nickash may little remember his many acts of generosity over the last 20-some years, but those he benefitted will be forever grateful.

This last week of April and first week of May, Neenah and Menasha school children will plant living memorials to one man's dedication to renewable resources.

Nickash would like to see a school forest and wildlife area in Neenah-Menasha one day.

He's a busy man, even in retirement, tirelessly criss-crossing the state in the name of conservation education, youth and resource management.

The many groups he has benefitted and who help support his efforts might begin working now to make Nickash's dream come true. That effort could be spearheaded by the union he served so well.

What better way to honor one who has left his mark on so many boulevards, yards, fields and woodlots than to have a nature area dedicated to his vision?

'Trees' for tomorrow's leaders

Monday, May 22, 1978

Twin City News-Record

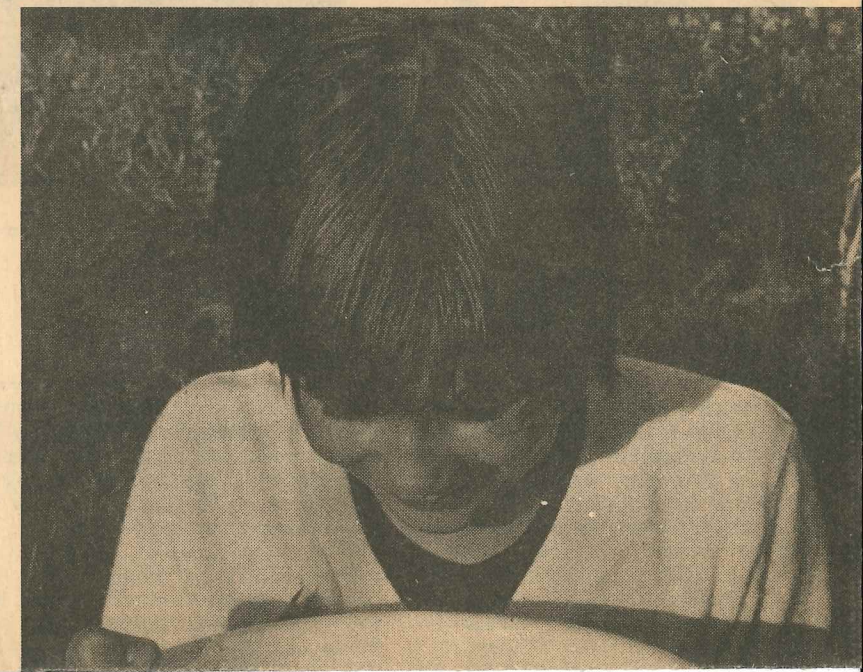
Page 3

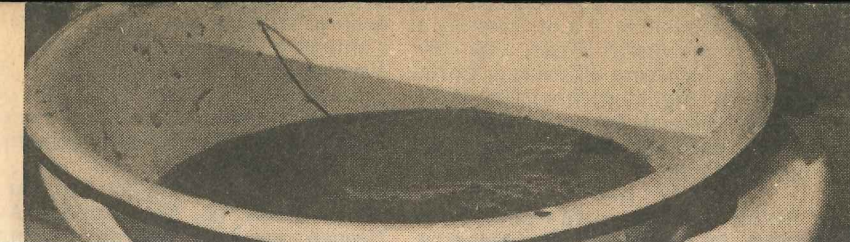


Lessons from nature

Menasha fifth graders learned a great deal about the outdoors during a three-day workshop at the Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center in Eagle River last week, and wherever they went pencils and clipboards were close at hand. Above left, the children explore a beaver habitat, filling out investigation worksheets like the one Mark Rathack is pondering at left. Bottom left, Zanel Fruendt and Lori Klapper try to determine what the bag hanging on the sugar maple is for while below, Leo Nickasch, chairman of the Arbor Day Committee that arranged the pupils' stay, supervises a tree planting by Tammy Becher and Brian Butt. Above right, workshop coordinator Al Berkman, a retired conservationist from Wausau, leads a group through the center's demonstration forest. Below right, Anita Socha peers into a pan of lake water looking for insect specimens.

News-Record photos by Kathy Walsh Nufer





Nov. Fri. 7-80
~~Nov. Fri.~~

He's a modern-day Johnny Appleseed

BY JANE DWYRE GARTON
 Post-Crescent staff writer

Every day is an arbor day if you are Leo Nickasch. Nickasch is the man behind the annual Arbor Day observance in Neenah-Menasha, but he makes it his year-round business to talk about trees.

Meet him on the street and he'll get to it:

"Why do we have to be concerned about northern Wisconsin?" he'll quiz his friends.

"What can we do to make the public more aware?" he'll ask his colleagues on the DNR Technical Forestry Review Committee.

Ten years ago he was a member of the AFL-CIO's forestry committee. He read an article about reviving Arbor Day and took the lead to do just that in the Twin Cities. He doesn't take total credit for that at all, but he makes no bones about the fact that he went to bat to get the money that would mean the trees could be planted by the children.

The first year there was a contribution of trees from one paper company. The next year several others donated funds along with Leo's union, Local 482.

The roots were planted for future Arbor Days and the efforts made in conjunction with the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry were even recognized nationally for their success.

Nickasch has simple motivations. His role on a blossoming number of state forest and conservation committees is one which usually is advisory, not policy-making. But he shakes the bushes to get action, too.

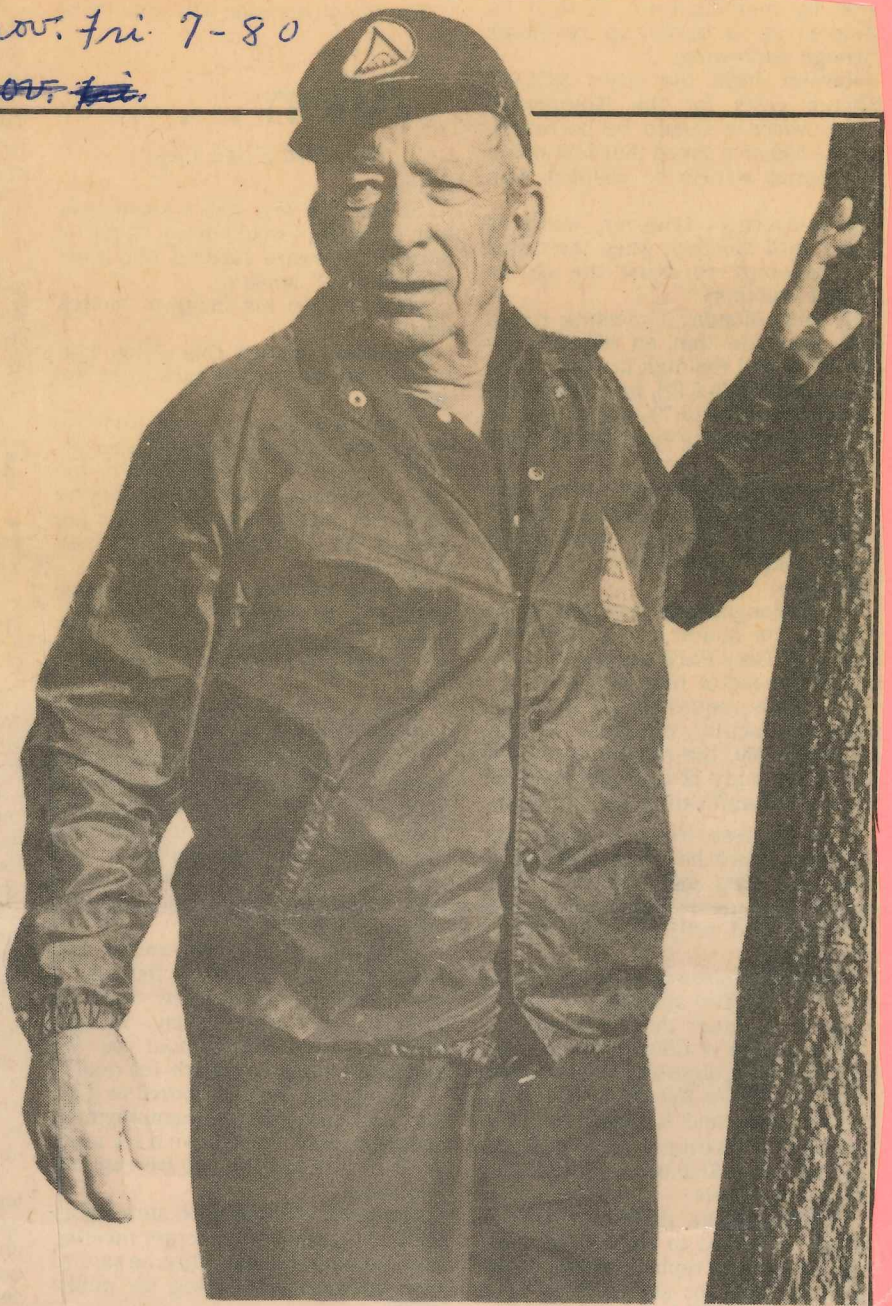
One of his favorite topics concerns a bill which has been introduced in the Legislature several times — a bill to provide \$3,000 to implement a statewide Arbor Day celebration in which every fourth-grader in the state would be able to plant a tree provided by the Department of Natural Resources.

"It didn't have a \$50,000 price tag so it got lost" is how he describes what happened to the piece of legislation that simply was not a high priority when it came to the final days of the legislative session.

He's had the aid and backing of Rep. Michael Ellis (the bill passed the Assembly 96-0) and Sen. Gary Goyke. And he'll be after them again when the next Legislature convenes to reintroduce the bill.

Once the bill is passed, the DNR will be authorized to provide trees and upon the request of a school principal, the children will be able to dig in on the last Friday of April and plant their

Continued On Page 2



"Who has more to lose if we don't have recreational areas than the working people? They need it the most."

— Leo Nickasch

Modern-day Johnny

Continued From Page 1

tree.

"Leo's only one man," said Nickasch about his role. He has been retired from Lakeview Mill for several years now and the work that he started on the forestry committee of the AFL-CIO before his retirement has intensified with the extra time he has.

But he credits much of the successes he has had to many other people from industrialists to professors to his union's members.

He says he picked up his theory on children from the late Jake Shapiro, a former University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh faculty member who advocated starting environmental education in elementary schools.

"Don't try to tell them what direction to go. Show them. They will set their own course," said Nickasch about children.

The kids keep him going, he said, although his work for projects like the Governor's Conference on Forest Productivity and as a director of the MacKenzie Environmental Center near Poynette is for the total conservation picture.

"Trees for Tomorrow" is more than a camp in northern Wisconsin for Nickasch. The phrase represents his philosophy.

"Who has more to lose if we don't have recreational areas than the working people? They need it the most," said Nickasch.

He cites statistics:

- There are 15 million acres of for-

ests in Wisconsin.

- Those forests cover 43% of the state's land area.

- More than 60,000 Wisconsin residents are employed in the production of timber and wood-related products.

- Wisconsin's forests produce \$1.5 billion worth of products.

- Forests provide recreation.

The multiple-use concept which recognizes forests for environmental and economic significance is dear to Nickasch. Resource planning is a must that he will continue to contribute to. He sees paper companies tapping the forests in the south and wants to make sure there are forests here in the future to keep the industry as an integral part of the area.

"Don't tell me the 'big kids' don't care," Nickasch said about the efforts he has seen on the part of industry to work with environmentalists.

He will continue work on a major push to get demonstration forests into state hands so that people can visit and appreciate those spots.

"I don't believe people from metropolitan areas should have to drive 280 miles to see a tree," he said. He believes there will be movement on a state level toward acquisition and subsequent care of demonstration forests to supplement the only other major one in southeastern Wisconsin — Kettle Moraine State Forest.

"Before they put this carcass on Boot Hill, I'm going to have one," said Nickasch, about getting a demonstration forest for the most populous area of the state.

News-Record

NEENAH-MENASHA EDITION OF THE POST-CRESCENT TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 1984

Out of little seedlings... grow ideas

NEENAH-MENASHA — Arbor Day plans for the Twin Cities' 14th annual celebration April 27 are well underway, according to Leo Nickasch.

The Neenah-Menasha Arbor Day Committee, chaired by Nickasch, is a cooperative effort of the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and the Neenah-Menasha Labor Council. The committee's work extends beyond the Arbor Day celebration to environmental education programs in cooperation with local schools each

spring, Nickasch said.

For Arbor Day, all fourth grade students will be given seedlings, provided by the state, to plant wherever they choose. "It took us three sessions to get that bill through," said Nickasch, "and now every fourth grader, by law, will have a seedling." The committee actively supported the bill which passed in 1981.

A primary effort of the committee is to raise scholarship funds to send fifth and sixth grade youngsters from Twin City schools to the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station in April. The station, near Amherst, provides students (selected by their schools) with a three-day opportunity to study nature.

"They get to study the chain of life in the water and forestry. They take night hikes and bird watch," said Nickasch.

Out of...

The center has more than 500 acres, three lakes and 1,200 adjoining acres featuring land forms ranging from hardwood forests to northern bogs.

The committee and its sponsors provide 288 selected students with a partial scholarship of \$11.50 for the study and ask them to earn an equal amount. Nickasch stressed, however, that no child will be turned away because of need. The Kimberly-Clark Foundation picks up the tab for such youngsters. Students are selected on the basis of interest, good behavior and science project entries.

Fund-raising efforts are in progress. The committee hopes to raise about \$4,000 for the year's activities.

"Our first commitment is to the kids," said Nickasch. "What we have left over we put into trees to plant in the area."

The committee also co-sponsors, in May, conservation education field

days with the Winnebago County Soil and Water Conservation District. More than 450 fifth through eighth grade students participated in 1983. Students visit the Selle Farm and Rat River Wildlife Area in the Town of Winchester. Park, agriculture, conservation and natural resource experts are on hand to explain environmental sciences to the students.



News-Record

A special Neenah-Menasha section of The Post-Crescent, Wednesday, April 17, 1985



News-Record photo by Dave Pieper

Natalie Synowicz and Michelle Apritz looked for some critters during their visit to the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station.

The wonder of another new season

BY KATHY WALSH NUFER
News-Record staff writer

AMHERST — Each spring 288 fifth graders from Neenah and Menasha public and private schools get a chance to investigate first-hand the wonders of the new season.

Specially selected for their interest in nature and projects they submitted, the youngsters travel in groups of 48 each to the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station here where the outdoors serves as their classroom for two and one half days.

Menasha pupils initiated the spring tradition this year, with the first group leaving April 8. Participants from St. John, St. Mary, St. Patrick and Trinity Lutheran schools returned home today as Neenah groups began their stays.

The Environmental Center has three lakes and more than 500 acres of forest, farm and marshlands for the young nature lovers to explore, and a variety of land forms ranging from northern bogs to conifer forests for them to compare.

There are also dormitories, a main lodge, library and classrooms equipped with everything from soil-testing to specimen-collecting gear.

Overseeing the children's land and water explorations are University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point professors, interns and graduate students in environmental studies.

Under the adults' supervision, the children hike woodland trails seeing, touching and hearing important and unforgettable lessons from nature.

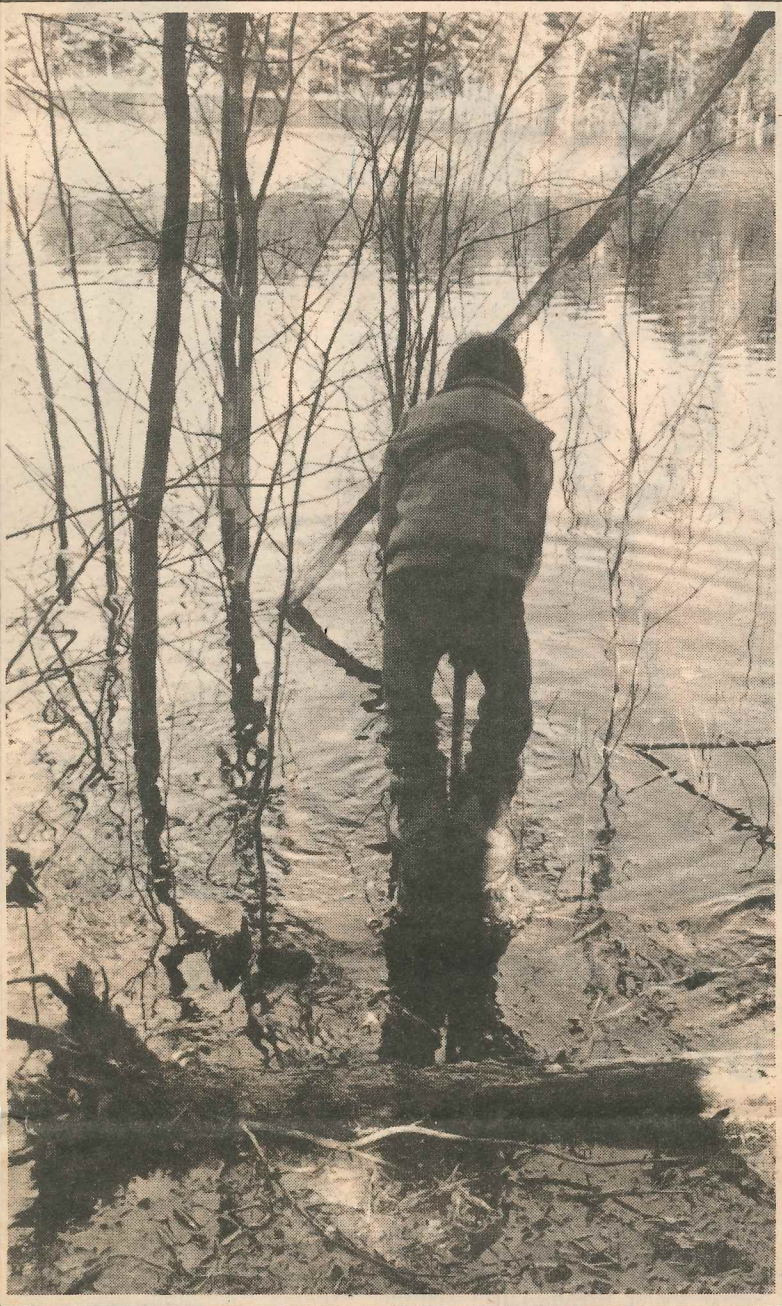
The curriculum concentrates on such topics as the web of life, how birds make a living, how animals mark their territory, "rummaging" through the ruins of an abandoned parsonage, pond study and "Beaverology."

Evening campfires are the background for lessons on owls and the constellations.

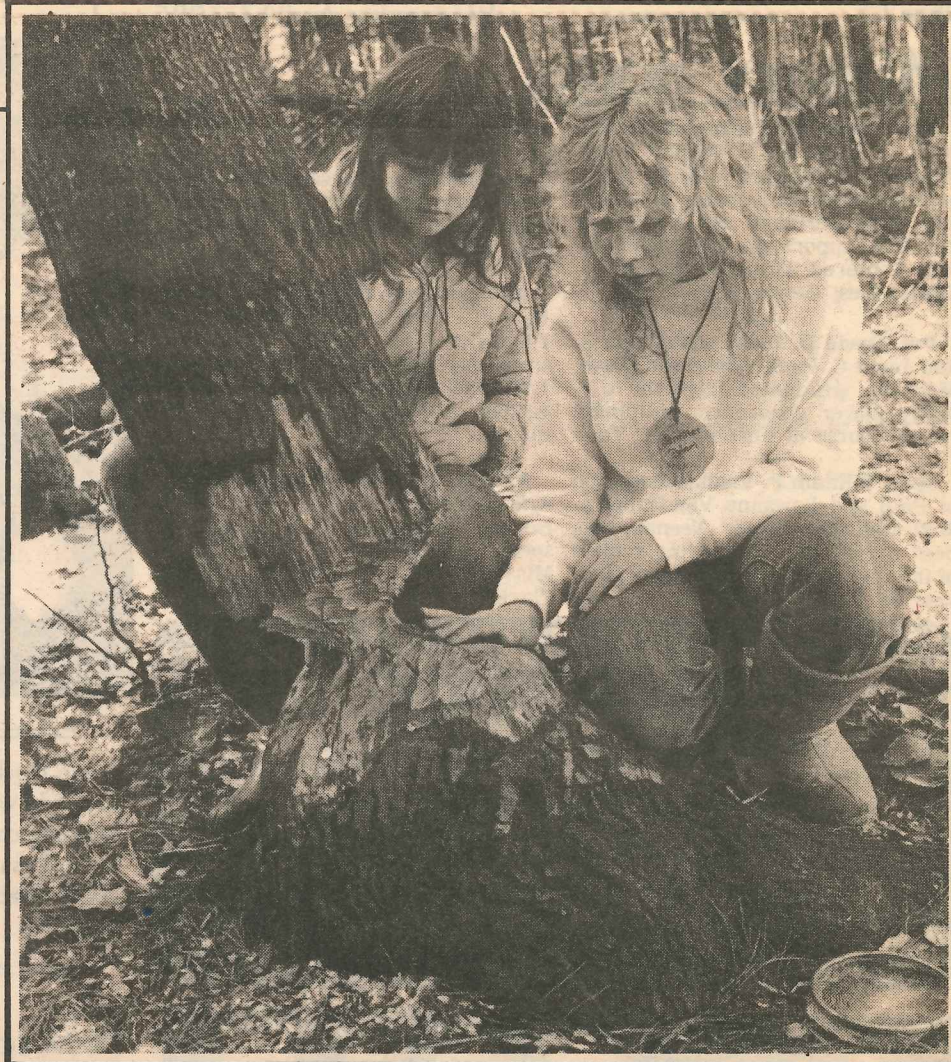
One of the most popular spots is the pond where the youngsters pan for tiny water critters and try to identify what's what.

Continued on page 11

Scene



Kevin Schmidt, left, gets close to some mud while Tracy Giesen and Jennifer Bierl, right, take a close look at a tree.



Continued from Page 1

Particularly fascinating for last week's visitors was the sighting of beavers at work in their habitat.

Gegan Elementary teacher Lee Murphy, who has been accompanying children to environmental workshops for several years, noted that another favorite with his group this spring was the ruin rummaging.

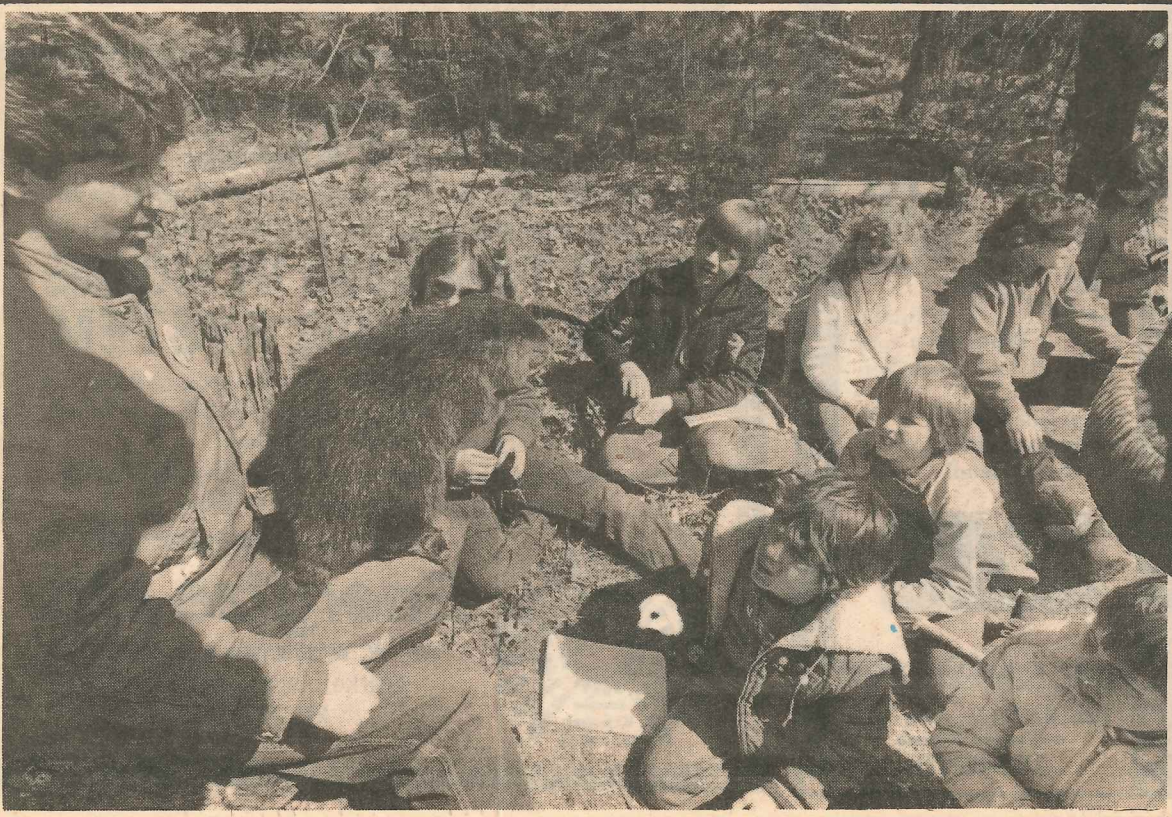
Pretending to be archeologists, the fifth graders went about discovering how the family managed to get water into its cistern, and from bits of leather found at the site, determined that the homeowner had made leather goods for a living.

Murphy noted that year after year the children come away from their outdoor education with an understanding of mankind's tie to the environment and the need to take better care of it. "They seem to take better care of things not only up there but back home," Murphy said, adding that many have new confidence that they can make a difference.

The environmental workshops are coordinated in Menasha by Banta Principal Ray Feit and in Neenah by Coolidge Principal Ted Jarosh. Funds supporting the program come from the Neenah-Menasha Labor Council and the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce. Chief fund-raisers for the organizations are Leo Nickasch and William Hanson respectively.

News-Record photos by Dave Pieper

Lea Robson and an interested audience took part in a class in "Beaverology" at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station last week. The animal was the center of attention during the popular course. At far right, Aimee Mignon examined an animal jaw bone.



Working for Smokey, working for nature

BY PAT STENSON
News-Record staff writer

NEENAH — "For a guy with as big a mouth as me, I couldn't say a thing," Leo Nickasch related.

What forced Nickasch into silence (temporarily, of course) was a surprise gift from friends. A beautifully framed print of Smokey the Bear now hangs on Nickasch's kitchen wall.

He was at a Wisconsin AFL-CIO Conservation Committee meeting in Park Falls recently when Jack Wolter, supervisor of Chequamegon National Forest, presented the gift.

"I don't know if I can repeat it the way he said it," said Nickasch. "He said, 'We've got a guy here that represents you all very well. This is Smokey's 40th anniversary this year. This is a print from the original painting commissioned by the artist. And it says over here in the corner: 'To Leo from your friends Chequamegon and Nicolet National Forests. Now get on up here and get it.'"

The print by artist Rudy Wendelin "Smokey Still on Guard" is one more way of recognizing the contributions Nickasch has made to preserving the state's National Resources.

"It's kind of in appreciation for the many years I put in in forestry programs," he said. He serves on numerous environmental boards and committees including the Forestry Plan Technical Advisory Committee of the Department of Natural Resources Bureau of Forestry and the Governor's Forest Productivity Committee.

Nickasch is known locally for his efforts in promoting Arbor Day and conservation education. In 1971, Nickasch, formed a committee that planned Arbor Day activities in Winnetka City schools. Kimberly-Clark helped Nickasch that first year by donating 18,000 seedlings. In 1973, 66 sixth grade students

spent two and a half days at the Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center thanks to the committee, which became a committee of the Neenah/Menasha Chamber of Commerce that year. Environmental workshops are now held at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station, Amherst Junction.

From 1973 through 1984, more than 1,750 students have participated. Since 1980, more than 3,000 fifth through eighth grades students from both parochial and public schools have participated in field trips at the Rat River Wild Life Area and the Selle farm.

"In any programs, if the kids didn't believe in them and the two leaders didn't go overboard, these programs would have fallen flat," Nickasch said. "I have two beautiful people that believe in them — Ray Feit and Ted Jarosh." (Feit is principal of Banta and Jefferson elementary schools and Jarosh is principal of Coolidge Elementary School.)

Nickasch's love of nature grew from his out childhood. "I was raised in Appleton and a priest we had in fourth grade would take us out fishing. The Germans, see — my parents — never had time to go fishing. He would spin the yarns about the woods and rivers."

Nickasch, as an adult, became an outdoorsman who worked in a Kimberly-Clark mill. "Working people were concerned with the environment and created the Wisconsin AFL-CIO Conservation Committee. My local asked me if I would represent them and I've held it ever since."

He's gained the reputation as an expert in conservation. He said of the strategic plan for Wisconsin Forests which he helped produce: "In addition to economics down the road to the year 2000 and beyond — I hope we've created recreation areas for the working people. I don't believe anyone needs recreation areas more than the working class."



"I hope we've created recreation areas for the working people. I don't believe anyone needs recreation areas more than the working class."

Nickasch

Aug. 8, 1984

Fri., August 2, 1985

The Northwestern

Group aims for forest growth

NEENAH — A new statewide organization called the Wisconsin Forest Productivity Council has been formed to stimulate forest productivity in Wisconsin.

The group's organizational meeting was held recently at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point campus. Participants included representatives of educational institutions; governmental agencies; private, non-industrial landowners; and the state's forest products industry, including the paper industry.

Leo Nickasch, 471 Maple Lane, Neenah, has agreed to serve as a representative of the AFL-CIO Conservation Committee for the new Congress.

Richard Schneider, manager of northern woodlands for Nekoosa Papers, was elected chairman of the council. Other officers include Gerald Vande Hei, chief of the forest management section of the Department of Natural Resources, as vice chairman; Thomas Schmidt, execu-

tive director of the Wisconsin Paper Council, as secretary; and Daniel Meyer, director of public affairs for Consolidated Papers Inc., as treasurer.

The 13 organizations which had representatives elected to the council's board of directors were the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, the State Tree Farm Committee, Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center, the Wisconsin County Forests Association, the Wisconsin Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, the DNR, the U.S. Forest Service, the University of Wisconsin-Extension, Appleton Papers Inc., Consolidated Papers Inc., Nekoosa Papers Inc., Thilmany Pulp and Paper Co. and the Wisconsin Paper Council.

Schneider said the council's goals will be increased productivity on all commercial forestlands in the state, with a particular focus on the two-thirds of the resource owned by pri-

ivate, non-industrial landowners, and also to increase the public's awareness of the importance of Wisconsin's forest resources.

Schneider emphasized the council won't duplicate services or programs of existing organizations, but will cooperate and coordinate with them.

The group envisions an initial pilot program in three to six counties to provide advice, guidance and assistance to private landowners. Eventually the pilot program will be expanded to all timber-producing counties in the state, he said.

A network of volunteers from state and federal agencies, industrial and private consulting foresters and other volunteers will be established to help with productive forest management planning and techniques as well as harvesting advice.

"This effort is the culmination of the work of a broad group of organizations, agencies, companies and individuals," Schneider said. "All are

seriously concerned with the threats to our renewable forest resources and the predictions of fiber shortages impacting Wisconsin's forest products industry in a few short years.

"The time is right, and it is absolutely essential that positive steps be taken immediately," he said.

Private, non-industrial owners own about 60 percent of the commercial forest land in the state," Schneider pointed out. Public lands, including national, state, county or locally managed, account for another 32 percent. The forest products industry owns only about 8 percent. However, growth rates on both private, non-industrial lands and public lands trail those on industrial forests.

Schneider said the problem confronting them is forecasts of wood fiber shortages nationally by the year 2030, and within Wisconsin by the turn of the century, less than 15 years away.



Neenah-Menasha Northwestern photo

Fox Cities Chamber Foundation honored

The state Department of Natural Resources Board has recognized the Fox Cities Chamber Foundation for purchasing fire prevention materials for area schools. Looking at the plaque

from the DNR are, from left, Leo Nickash, Arbor Day committee chairman; Gene Francisco, DNR regional forester; and John Rankin, chamber and foundation board member.

Oct 9, 1986

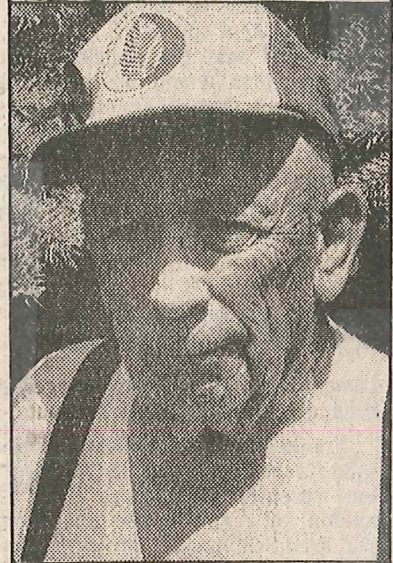


Fire prevention

News-Record photo by Ed Deschler

Gene Francisco, right, Oshkosh area DNR forestry supervisor, presents a plaque to Leo Nickasch, center, chairman of the Neenah-Menasha Arbor Day committee, and John Rankin, of the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in appreciation for the chamber's donation of fire prevention materials.

THE STATE



Leo Nickasch Sept. 18, 1988

Plantings take root thanks to 'Mr. Trees'

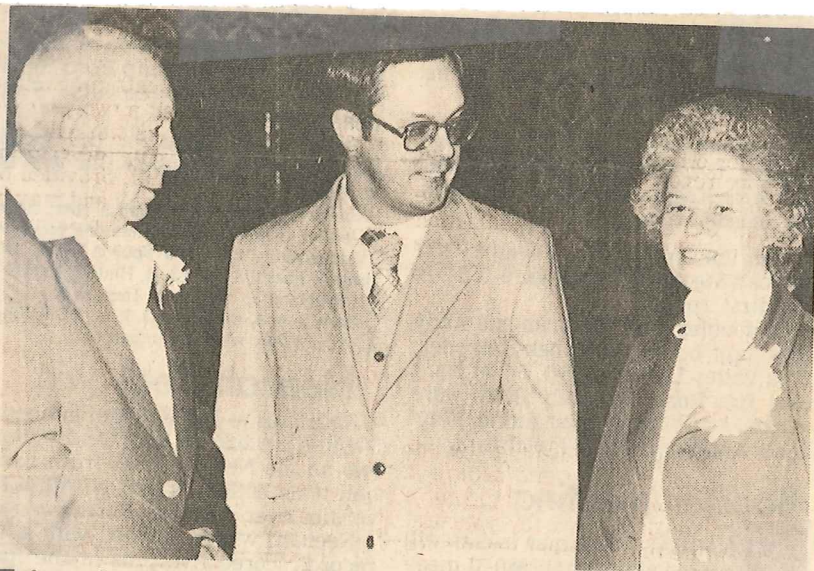
Leo Nickasch's well-known nickname is well-earned.

Thousands of tree seedlings have been planted by hundreds of schoolchildren in Neenah and Menasha over the years, largely as a result of Nickasch's tireless efforts. Those efforts, which he began as a volunteer 17 years ago, have evolved into a cause of conservation education.

They call Nickasch, 73, "Mr. Trees."

The Neenah resident was a maintenance worker for Kimberly-Clark Corp.'s Lakeview plant in 1971 when he formed a committee to promote Arbor Day with the distribution of 18,000 seedlings donated by the company.

"I think [the forest] serves the purpose for everything," he said recently. "Watershed, jobs, wildlife, paper."



Friends of education

Bob Lomphey, center, talks with two who were honored as "Friends of Education" at a Neenah Education Association recognition banquet Friday at the Valley Inn, Neenah. Leo Nickasch, left, has furthered knowledge of the environment among youths and Peg Dickson has long been associated with the efforts of the American Field Service program for student study overseas and in the United States. (News-Record photo)



Leo Nickasch

Neenah man gets award

NEENAH — Leo Nickasch, 471 Maple Lane, has been awarded the Munsingwear, Inc. Conservation in Action Award for his conservation work in Wisconsin.

Nickasch is chairman of the forestry sub-committee of the State AFL-CIO's conservation committee, a member of the advisory board of Trees for Tomorrow camp at Eagle River, and a member of the board of directors for the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. He has also worked with the Neenah-Menasha Union Environmental Council.

In addition to his work in adult environmental circles, Nickasch has been active in the establishment of a pilot program for children at Trees for Tomorrow. As a result of his efforts, some 60 Lakeview Elementary School fifth and sixth graders were the first group of elementary school children to participate in a four-day workshop in the camp.

June, 1987

Wisconsin
conservation

Arbor Day Committee Receives Award



The Neenah/Menasha Arbor Day Committee of the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry has received the "Outstanding Performance Award" from the Fox River Valley Chapter of the Wisconsin Society of American Foresters for its overall performance in the category of a group that has promoted involvement in forestry and/or natural resources projects.

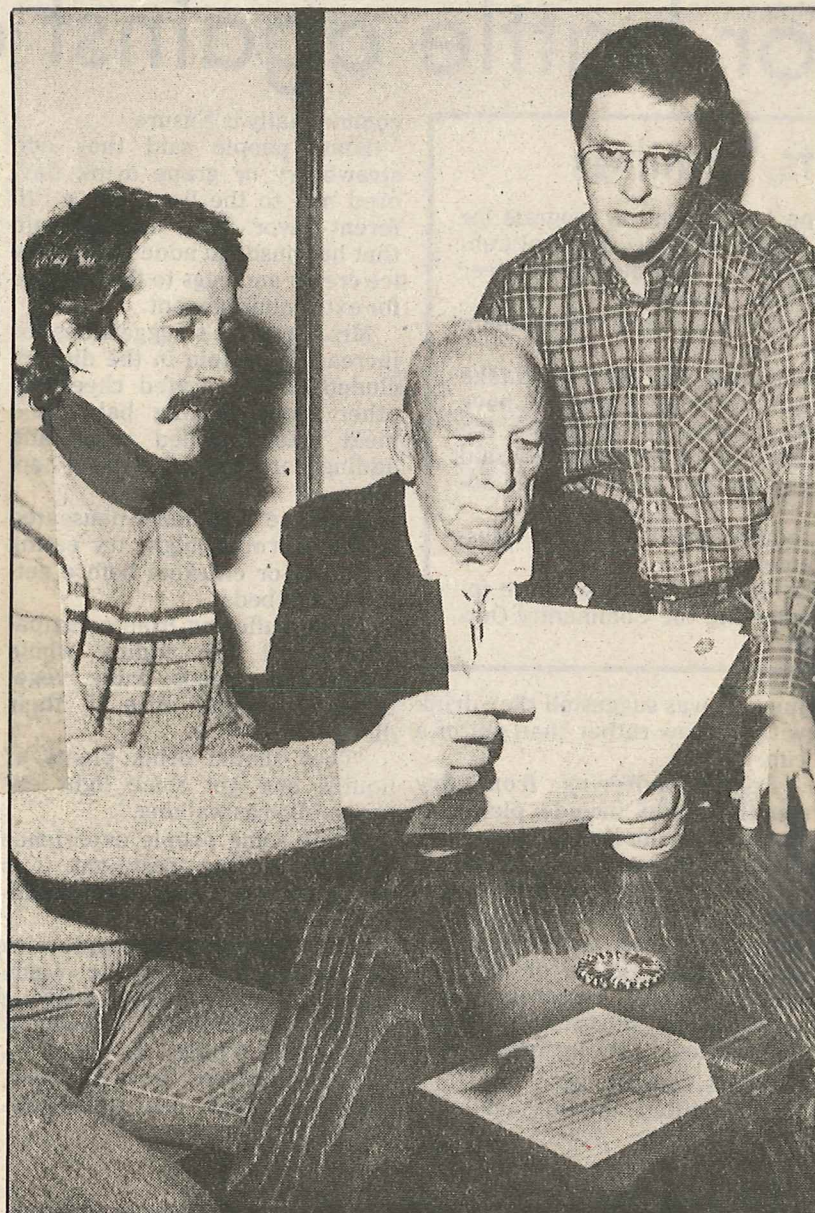
The Arbor Day Committee, since 1971, has planned Arbor Day activities for the Neenah/Menasha schools, provided free tree seedlings to fourth grade students, sponsored two-and-a-half day environmental workshops at Trees For Tomorrow and at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station for interested fifth and sixth grade students, and participated in conservation field trip for sixth grade kids to a local wildlife area, among other worthy projects.

Al Waelchli, chairman of the Fox River Valley Chapter of SAF, presented this award to committee chairman Leo Nickasch on April 2 (see photo) in Appleton at the chapter's spring meeting.

Mon., April 6, 1987

Oshkosh Northwestern

Neenah-Menasha



Northwestern photo by Dick Meyer

Arbor Day honors

The Northeast Chapter of the Society of American Foresters has given an award to the Neenah-Menasha Arbor Day Committee for its efforts in bringing forestry education into the schools. Looking over classroom materials are, from left, Ron Jones of the DNR's Appleton office; Leo Nickasch of the local Arbor Day committee; and Allan Waelchli of Shawano, chapter chairman and consulting forester.

Focus on the future:

Committee plants trees, teaches too

By Pat Stenson
News-Record staff writer

Folks were busy digging and planting all over the Twin Cities Friday as Arbor Day was celebrated in a big way — as it is every year in two cities that frequently earn awards for their efforts.

This year, Menasha collected a Gold Leaf Award from Tree City, USA, and Neenah nabbed a Silver Leaf Award. Presentations were made in special ceremonies Friday morning at Smith Park and Memorial Park respectively. Throughout the two cities many promising new trees were planted honoring dozens of residents.

In Menasha, all first-grade students took part in the ceremony while the Butte des Morts Junior High Band played. Neenah High School's Band played for its park dedications while Neenah grade school students participated. Throughout Neenah Joint School District, groups from senior citizens to Neenah Community French Program visitors were honored.

The Neenah-Menasha Arbor Day Committee doesn't devote just one day a year to environmental efforts. All year long — especially in spring — the group is working to educate and inform.

Last month, about 300 selected fifth and sixth graders throughout the cities completed training at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station at Amherst Junction. With the cooperation of University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, the program offers students a two-and-one-half-day experience on site. Since 1973, almost 4,000 students have had the advantage of participating with the committee's financial help. Students only need pay half the cost.

This month, about 2,000 more students in fourth through sixth grades will take day-long field trips to the Rat River Wild Life Area and the Orville Selle farm in Larsen where they learn of ecological balance and of how man can successfully work with the environment for future generations. That effort be-

gan in 1980 when the committee joined with the Winnebago County Soil & Conservation District to co-sponsor the trips.

Committee roots go back to 1971 when it was formed under the leadership of Leo Nickasch with the purpose of providing ongoing programs of environmental education aimed particularly at the community's young people. That first year Kimberly-Clark Corporation helped out by donating 18,000 mixed seedlings. All students from Neenah-Menasha schools received a seedling to plant that Arbor Day. After that, the committee saw to it that, every year, all fourth grade students would have a seedling to plant.

In late 1981, years of lobbying by the Neenah-Menasha committee and then-State Rep., now-State Sen. Michael Ellis, headed by Nickasch resulted in a law that required the Department of Natural Resources to furnish seedlings to all fourth graders in the state upon request.

The committee has grown steadily since its inception. In 1972, Mowry Smith of Menasha Corporation, Jim Asmuth of Wisconsin Tissue Mills, Harry Sheerin of Kimberly-Clark and Rufin Skiba of the AFL/CIO/UPIU Local 482 joined the committee work. In 1973, the committee became a member of the Neenah-Menasha Chamber of Commerce. Also in that year the environmental workshop pilot began by sending youngsters to Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center in Eagle River. In 1981, in an effort to curb expenses, the workshops were transferred to Amherst Junction.

The Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in 1976, continued joint sponsorship of the committee with area labor unions.

Its goals remain the same: to develop funding to allow as many students as possible to attend an environmental workshop and to develop Arbor Day programs which call attention to the important role trees play in our environment and economy.



News-Record photo by Mar

Neenah's Washington School Principal Art Prosek happily plant the flowering crab that will remind his school of him spring as he transfers to Spring Road.



News-Record photo by Robert Baeten

Adding another shovel-full of soil to plant the tree in his honor is Loren Graunke, retiring principal of Neenah's Spring Road Elementary School.

Profile: Leo Nickasch

STEVE HAAS

Northwestern Staff Writer

NEENAH — Who do you think of when you think of trees — Paul Bunyan? Maybe Ewell Gibbons or James Watt?



Leo

Nickasch

Nickasch's love of the environment has its roots in his boyhood years of growing up in Menasha and Appleton. He recalls that when he was a fourth grader at St. Joseph's School in Appleton, the pastor of St. Joseph's Catholic Church would sometimes take a group of boys fishing along the banks of the Fox River. The priest would talk about the beauty of nature, along with spinning tall tales, which kept everyone entertained.

"Father was an Iowa farm boy who loved the outdoors. He was really a conservationist at heart. Much of what he was rubbed off on me," Nickasch said.

Nickasch worked as a millwright for the Kimberly-Clark

Corp. for 39 years, retiring in 1978. He moved to Neenah after World War II. His home, appropriately enough, is on Maple Lane.

It was through his association as a representative of Local 482, United Paperworkers International Union, that Nickasch became active in conservation and environmental education activities in the Fox Valley and Wisconsin. Twenty years ago, the state AFL-CIO established a conservation committee and Nickasch was chosen by his local union to serve on the panel. Nickasch was soon elected chairman of the group's subcommittee on forestry.

Nickasch said his greatest pleasure stems from his work with children. Most of his efforts in conservation have been directed toward making the environment a classroom for youngsters.

Through Nickasch's efforts, the Neenah-Menasha Labor Council and the Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce and Industry have sent hundreds of Twin Cities school children to a three-day environmental camp every year at the Central Wisconsin Environmental Station at Nelsonville in north-central Wisconsin. About 300 fifth and sixth grade students from

Profile/Page A3



Leo Nickasch

Continued from Page A1
Neenah and Menasha public and parochial schools attend the camp each year. The program has been in existence for about 15 years, Nickasch said.

"A teacher who had students at the camp once said to me, 'We teach them so much out of textbooks, but the real world is out here.' That's the value of the program," Nickasch said.

In 1977, the Kimberly-Clark Foundation established a scholarship in Nickasch's name so needy youngsters could attend the environmental camp. The scholarship is for children who cannot afford the small portion of the fee not covered by the contributions from the labor council and the chamber of commerce.

Nickasch said the high point of his life came when the Wisconsin Legislature

passed an Arbor Day bill in 1981. It provides that all fourth grade students in the state be given a free tree seedling from the Department of Natural Resources nurseries. Requests for trees must be made through school officials.

Nickasch pointed out that it took three tries to get the bill through the legislature. He credits the AFL-CIO and numerous service groups for supporting the bill and working to win its passage.

"It was a long, uphill fight, but we finally got the bill passed. That was the greatest joy of my life," Nickasch said.

In August, Nickasch was appointed by Gov. Anthony Earl to the state council on forest productivity. The council is charged with finding more productive ways to use the state's forests.

Friday, July 20, 1979

Neenah's Nickasch to aid state on forest plan

NEENAH — Leo Nickasch, long involved in both state and local environmental education projects, has agreed to assist the Department of Natural Resources in the preparation of a statewide forestry plan.

Nickasch, 471 Maple Lane, will provide the Bureau of Forestry input in the development and review of the plan, which is required by the Federal Resources Planning Act. It is the first of its kind in the state and will serve as a guide for forest resource management.

During work on the plan Nickasch will also act as liaison between the state and local environmental groups he is involved with. He is particularly active in the Trees for Tomorrow and annual Arbor Day programs. Another project Nickasch has taken on this year is the development of facilities for the handicapped at the Mackenzie Environmental Center. He is chairman of the handicap trails committee.

Wednesday, Aug. 9, 1989

Twin City News-Record

Page 3



News-Record photo by Scott Whitcomb

Nickasch honored

Leo Nickasch of Neenah has been cited by the U.S. Forest Service for his outstanding achievement in forest fire prevention activities as well as his volunteer work with wildlife awareness services and programs in the Neenah, Menasha and Oshkosh areas and in the state. Nickasch is a long-time conservationist and promoter of environmental programs for children.

Sunday, Aug. 6, 1989

Nickasch honored by U.S. Forest Service

NEENAH — Leo Nickasch, long-time conservationist and promoter of environmental education programs for local school children, has been cited by the U.S. Forest Service for his outstanding achievement in forest fire prevention activities as well as his volunteer work with wildlife awareness services and programs in the Neenah, Menasha and Oshkosh areas in particular and Wisconsin school districts in general.

Wednesday, Mar. 9, 1988

Twin City News-Record

15 years

Environmental learning continues

The Neenah-Menasha Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce Arbor Day Committee, Leo Nickasch, chairman, has completed plans for this year's Central Wisconsin Environmental experience at the Amherst Center.

The program began in 1973 with students going to Eagle River. Today, it continues with students visiting Amherst Center every spring. More than 3,000 students have enjoyed this unique way to study the environment.

This experience is for boys and girls in fifth grade in the public schools and for sixth grade students in the parochial schools. Again this year, another 288 students will have the benefit of the program. The cost to the students is \$14, which is less than one-half of the total cost. The program has been given the generous support of many Twin City businesses, in-

dustries, trade unions and interested private citizens.

The program is coordinated in the Neenah Schools by Steve Rasmussen, principal of Neenah's Clayton Elementary School, and Dick Geiger, principal of Menasha's Banta Elementary School. There will be six different sessions for the students, beginning with the first session on Monday, March 28, and ending with the last session on Wednesday April 20. Each session is three days in length.

The setting at the center in Amherst is ideal for young children. The dormitory facility is rather new and is warm and attractive, and the center does its own cooking in a central facility.

Students will study forestry, pond life, beavers, birds and the applications of environmental education as it pertains to their daily living.

Nickasch's growing concern

Post-Crescent photo by Dave Pieper



Leo Nickasch, "Mr. Trees," has been an Arbor Day promoter ever since 1971.

To the children, he's 'Mr. Trees'

By Jim Flasch
Post-Crescent staff writer

NEENAH — Towering timber takes the center-stage spotlight each year as Leo Nickasch directs the lights and action around trees and forests for hundreds of Twin Cities public and parochial school children.

Sometimes lost in the shadows cast by those trees, and unseen for the forest, is the main man responsible for innumerable specimens' very existence.

Nickasch, 73, is one example of the larger-than-life living legends who have promoted Wisconsin's natural forest beauty and wildlife areas for future generations.

Nicknamed "Mr. Trees" by the school children he so diligently tutors year after year in the schools of Neenah and Menasha, Nickasch truly believes in the mission he has accepted and rigorously pursued over the past 17 years.

A self-proclaimed "outdoor lover at heart," Nickasch first picked up the challenge of promoting Arbor Day in 1971 when he formed a committee to plan activities for the Neenah/Menasha Schools.

At that time, Nickasch's employer, Kimberly-Clark Corp., helped out by do-

"His main forte has been with school youngsters getting a sound basis and background for resource management and respect for nature and the out-of-doors."

— Bob Ellingson
Department of Natural Resources

nating 18,000 mixed seedlings to be distributed to the school children to plant.

The following year, Local 482 of the United Paperworkers International Union asked Nickasch to serve on its conservation committee.

"I thought if I was going to work on it, I better start doing something, and that started me with the kids," Nickasch said.

"I love every bit of it," Nickasch said with obvious pride during a recent interview at his home.

After that first year, the Neenah/Menasha Arbor Day Committee gave seedlings to all local fourth grade students.

In late 1981, the state Legislature passed a law requiring the DNR to furnish seedlings to all fourth grade students in the

state who request them for Arbor Day planting.

According to the Neenah/Menasha Arbor Day Committee, the bill would never have passed "without the constant lobbying efforts of Leo Nickasch, the Arbor Day Committee, and state Sen. Michael Ellis," who was then a state representative.

"It's been a real pleasant experience," Nickasch said. "Especially with the children, because they want to learn about nature."

Nickasch credits children's enthusiasm for actually making the Arbor Day Program grow faster than most of the thousands of trees planted, because without responsive children, Nickasch said the program would have faltered years ago.

Bob Ellingson, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, has known and worked with Nickasch for the past 20-some years and loudly applauds the work he's done.

"His main forte has been with school youngsters getting a sound basis and background for resource management and respect for nature and the out-of-doors.

"He's not afraid to tackle anything, no

Continued on page 5

The children know him as 'Mr. Trees'...

Continued from page 1

matter what the issue is," Ellingson said.

"And I guess you could say he is always looking out for the underprivileged who do not always have the ability to partake in these activities."

Ellingson cited career workshops, teacher workshops, Scouting activities and a host of other activities Nickasch has become active in through his conservation leanings.

While Nickasch is best known for his work in forestry, Ellingson said other conservation efforts have also benefited.

"He is very concerned for forestry, but it's not let that blind him to the needs of clean water, clean air, and recreational needs, particularly as pertains to children and the families" such as canoing, boating, hiking, and camping.

"He is particularly tenacious on all those activities," Ellingson said. "And he is always concerned about those aspects when we're doing any long range planning."

While Nickasch likes to downplay his role in getting passage of the free tree legislation, Ellingson revealed that Nickasch was the "lead person

who led the foray into the state Capitol and gave his support both by letters, speaking and phone calls.

"There were a lot of people he worked with," Ellingson said.

While he sees himself as a conservationist, he doesn't use the word ecologist because of the difference.

"I don't believe in letting a tree grow up and die. I believe in harvesting with restraint. If you didn't, you wouldn't have homes and you wouldn't have paper."

Aspen trees, Nickasch pointed out, can easily be clear cut and not lost because they quickly rejuvenate.

While he lists no "favorite tree," Nickasch does have special trees he would like to see re-planted and replenished in the state.

"You don't see butternut, American beech, or black walnut trees any more around here. You do see a few chestnuts," Nickasch said, but he'd like to see more of those planted too and is working on a project to establish native nut trees in city parks.

"He has been vividly interested in the planting of trees for future generations," according to Ray Feit, former principal at Banta Schools.

Nickasch has also been instrumental in sending school chil-

dren to camp to learn more about the environment and trees.

"And he's always been real interested in seeing that finances don't deter kids from going to camp," Feit said.

The year 1973 was a trial year for the sending Neenah/Menasha school children to camp at the Trees for Tomorrow Environmental Center at Eagle River.

Since then, over 3,000 fifth and sixth grade Neenah/Menasha students have participated in the two and one-half day workshops at Eagle River and the Environmental Center at Amherst.

Feit said Nickasch has always visited the camp when the students are there. "We look upon him as a benefactor."

"Leo has always been really devoted to the schools' outdoor program, and he has been more than willing to furnish any material he can get on conservation and outdoors. He's gone out of his way to furnish the materials and then went around and talked to the kids."

Nickasch retired in 1978 from the Lakeview mill in Neenah. In 1983, he was presented with the company's community service award for his vol-

unteer work.

He was honored in large part because he played a key role in re-establishing the Arbor Day Program in the Fox River Valley.

He is a member of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, National Forestry Association, National Wildlife Federation, the Forest Products Council, the Governor's Forestry Council and numerous other forest and outdoor panels, committees and organizations.

"One thing that should come through about Leo is his very, very strong feelings and belief in youth and the educational system of our society."

"Leo believes us old duffers don't have much steam left, but if we leave them (children) a legacy of what we believe in and the skills to manage it, then they'll preserve our resources for future generations," Ellingson said.

"You couldn't have picked a more sincere, dedicated individual than Leo," Ellingson said. "He's done far more as a volunteer and interested citizen than any professional has."

"State employees don't work in the governor's office, but he does," Ellingson added.