

# MISSISSIPPI VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGY CENTER

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - LA CROSSE



## 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

# FROM THE DIRECTOR

As always, MVAC's public outreach efforts and cultural resource management activities have been wide ranging and impactful. Our staff gave an impressive 140 presentations that reached about 6,400 people, including at community events such as Celebrate 100 Years of History, Nature, and Recreation at Perrot State Park; Whitewater Valley Archaeology and History Festival at Whitewater State Park; Night at the Museum at Riverside Museum in downtown La Crosse; and Archaeology Meet and Greet at the Black River Falls Public Library. The Annual Artifact Show at Valley View Mall featured artifact displays by 17 avocational archaeologists as well as artifact identifications and other information provided by MVAC staff. MVAC also hosted five experiential opportunities: the Archaeology Month Volunteer Field Survey; the Summer Public/High School Field School and Field Experience at the Turtle Hill site in Goose Island County Park; and three youth classes at UWL. Local newspapers, television stations, and UWL covered MVAC activities at least 22 times this past year. Other outreach activities included lab tours, web and social media outreach, and answering daily phone, e-mail, and in-person inquiries.

Our research and contracts staff has enjoyed a busy and productive year working on projects ranging from urban redevelopment to trout stream restoration. Staff members collaborated with federal and state agencies, local municipalities, private corporations, and landowners to help them plan and implement projects effectively. Projects ranged from background research and advance field surveys to on-site monitoring of sensitive locations during construction. Our contract projects continue to offer valuable on-the-job field and laboratory experience for students and recent graduates to carry into their future careers. This creative approach to cultural resource management work exemplifies our whole-hearted commitment to research, preservation, and education/outreach.

MVAC is a sponsored research and education unit of UWL, and we are nationally recognized for the work we do. We receive minimal direct university support and need to generate our own income through grants, contracts, and donations. Your generous contributions are crucial to our work in uncovering our region's amazing heritage, informing the public, and preserving the past for future generations. Thank you for your support!



*Timothy McAndrews*

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Jean Dowiasch, *Education Coordinator/  
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Wendy Holtz-Leith, *Research Archaeologist*  
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Marcee H. Peplinski, *Business Manager/  
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Vicki L. Twinde-Javner, *Research Archaeologist*

Erik Anderson, *Archaeologist*  
Cindy Kocik, *Archaeologist*  
Lindsay Lentz, *Archaeologist*  
Brett Meyer, *Archaeologist*  
Christina Yuen, *Archaeologist*

*Cover: MVAC archaeologists (l-r) Brett Meyer, Cindy Kocik, Christina Yuen, and Erik Anderson at the Sugar Loaf in Winona while surveying for a Winona Parks project.*

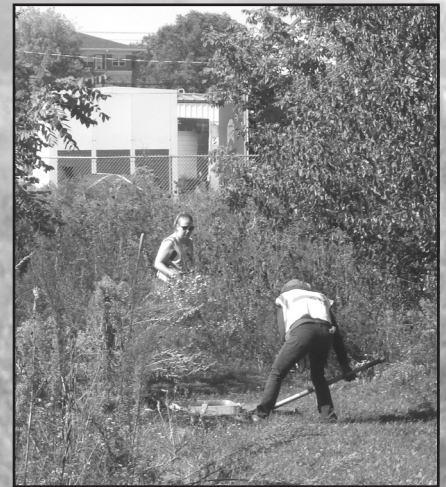
## **Research**

### **Associates:**

David Anderson  
Constance Arzigian  
Suzanne Harris  
Amy Nicodemus  
James Theler  
Heather Walder

# MVAC CONTRACT SERVICES

MVAC's contract work this year spanned a wide range of clients and projects. Contracts staff provided all levels of archaeological investigations, plus curation services, to agencies and units of government, engineering firms and other businesses, and private citizens. Existing clients continued to refer new firms to MVAC, broadening our client base. MVAC once again provided archaeological monitoring for multiple projects in sensitive areas of La Crosse and surrounding communities. Other projects in Wisconsin and Minnesota ranged from airports to highway construction, residential and commercial developments, and a rapid transit line in the Twin Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota.



*Clockwise from upper left: monitoring at the Don Pertzsch site in Holmen, shovel testing for the Dane County Regional Airport, Phase I survey along Villa Louis Road in Prairie du Chien for proposed upgrades. Background: Brett Meyer shovel testing along the Winona Bluffs.*

# 2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS

## **James P. Gallagher Awards for Archaeological Excellence: *Dave & Barb Skogen and Three Sixty Real Estate Solutions, LLC***

This year MVAC is presenting two James P. Gallagher Awards for Excellence in Archaeology, for two adjacent redevelopment projects in downtown Onalaska. A significant portion of the city's downtown is underlain by an important and extremely sensitive archaeological site, and these projects were designed specifically to avoid or minimize impacts to the locations. One award is being given to Dave and Barb Skogen for the creative design of Dash Park and its adaptation of current landscape features with minimal ground disturbance. The second award is being given to Marvin Wanders, owner of 360 Real Estate Solutions, for the design of the new Great River Residences, currently under construction. In this case as well, ground disturbance to potentially intact areas was minimized. Both projects, and the people behind them, exemplify the use of a "best practices" approach in which advance planning helps in achieving redevelopment goals while still preserving important and sensitive archaeological resources.



*L-R: Barb and Dave Skogen, Maggie Rauschl*



*Marvin Wanders*

## **Special Recognition: *Marcee H. Peplinski***

MVAC staff are delighted to present a Special Recognition Award to our recently retired Business Manager, Marcee Peplinski. Throughout her 21 years of service, Marcee oversaw business activities and finances that spanned all of MVAC's contract work, outreach and educational activities, and development. Her pragmatic approach and knowledge of MVAC's complex inner workings were greatly appreciated by UWL administrators as well as MVAC staff, and she has left the organization in great shape to continue its multifaceted work. As long-time colleagues and friends, all the MVAC staff extend their thanks and best wishes to Marcee in her retirement.



*Marcee H. Peplinski*

## **Special Recognition: *Chuck Thompson***

MVAC is also presenting a Special Recognition Award to Chuck Thompson of Dairyland Power Cooperative (DPC). In 2007 DPC received MVAC's Distinguished Service Award in recognition of its outstanding work with archaeology. Chuck joined DPC in 1985, and as Manager of Siting & Regulatory Affairs, he is responsible for obtaining permits and approvals for transmission lines, substations, and communications facilities in a five-state area. MVAC has greatly appreciated his constructive and ethical approach and willingness to go above and beyond what was required. Chuck will be retiring in several months, and all the staff at MVAC thank him for his exemplary work with us and wish him the very best.

## Archaeology Education Award: *Summit Environmental School*

Summit Environmental School partnered with MVAC to provide a year-long archaeology program for students during the 2018–2019 school year. In the fall of 2018, students were introduced to archaeology and how early peoples of La Crosse used the area's natural resources in their everyday lives. Under the supervision of MVAC staff, students from grades 2 through 5 shovel tested the school grounds and recovered prehistoric and historic materials. Six excavation units were dug in May 2019, with students involved in all aspects of fieldwork, including digging, mapping, and documenting. The project was spearheaded by third-grade teacher Debra Klaeser, who had participated in several MVAC archaeology classes designed for teachers, with enthusiastic support from school principal Dirk Hunter, and all the teachers and students.



*Fourth graders excavating at the Summit School site in May 2019.*

## Regional Archaeology Award: *Hoyt & Jeanine Strandberg*

The Regional Archaeology Award for 2019 goes to Hoyt and Jeanine Strandberg, from Alma Center. Living in close proximity to the Silver Mound Archaeological site, Hoyt has amassed an impressive collection of projectile points, stone tools, and preforms made from Hixton silicified sandstone. Jeanine joins Hoyt in collecting artifacts once a year, on his birthday. The Strandbergs regularly display their collection at MVAC's annual Artifact Show, along with numerous other shows throughout the year, ranging from Monticello, Wisconsin, to Collinsville, Illinois. Hoyt and Jeanine have also displayed their artifacts at MVAC-sponsored events such as Archaeology Day at Silver Mound and the Wisconsin Archeological Society's 2019 Field Assembly. Hoyt also shares his collection with students in the Alma Center School District, and with the public at the Garden Valley Township 150 Year Celebration. According to Hoyt, sharing the area's history through his collection is just the right thing to do.

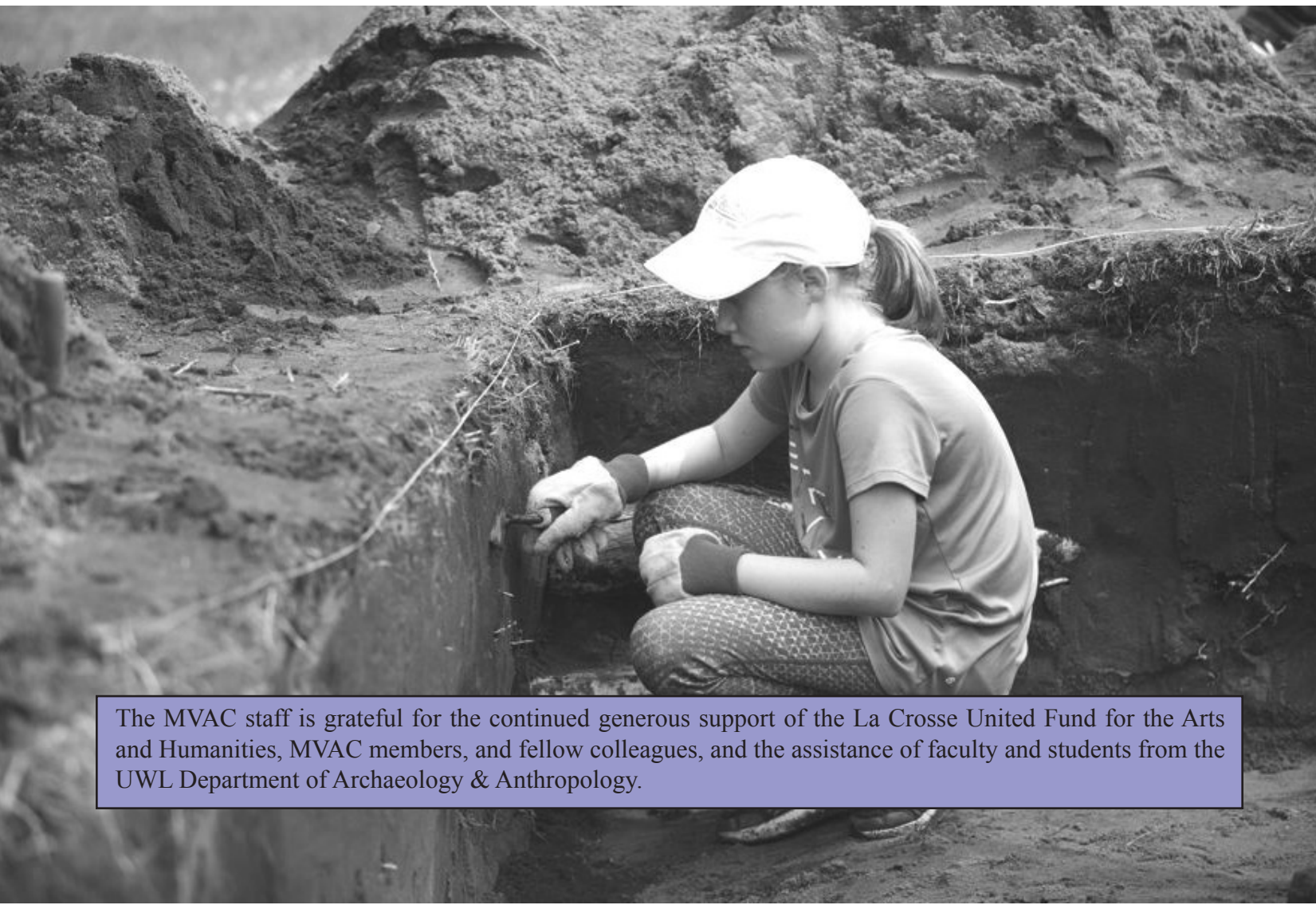


*Left: Hoyt (center) examining an artifact during the MVAC artifact show. Above: Jeanine setting up for the show.*

# ARCHAEOLOGY EDUCATION PROGRAM

## Public Outreach Highlights

- 140 presentations reached 6,382 people.
- 2,500 people attended the annual Artifact Show at Valley View Mall, and 17 individuals displayed their collections.
- 14 people participated in the spring Volunteer Field Survey during Wisconsin's Archaeology Month.
- MVAC's Annual Public/High School Field School and Field Experience had 15 participants in 2018 and 25 participants in 2019. Both field schools offered Open Houses and were held at Goose Island County Park.
- Three MVAC youth classes were offered during the summer.
- The Annual Award Ceremony speakers were Robert "Ernie" Boszhardt in 2018 and John O'Shea in 2019. The spring 2019 lecture was provided by Robert Birmingham.
- MVAC received 387 outreach contacts with an average of 32 contacts per month.
- MVAC's website received 13,911 pageviews with 735–1,504 pageviews each month.
- MVAC's Facebook page has received 1,030 "likes" with 59 new "likes" during the year.
- MVAC's Tumblr blog has 4,408 followers with 1,001 new followers during the year.
- 29 videos available on MVAC's YouTube channel were viewed a total of 2,211 times, with 398 views during the year.
- Numerous visitors viewed MVAC exhibits in La Crosse at Riverside Museum, the South Side Neighborhood Center, UWL Archaeology Center and Laboratory, and UWL Murphy Library.
- Two grants were received for special educational projects.



The MVAC staff is grateful for the continued generous support of the La Crosse United Fund for the Arts and Humanities, MVAC members, and fellow colleagues, and the assistance of faculty and students from the UWL Department of Archaeology & Anthropology.

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*Susan and Walter Steele (left) displaying their family's collection at the Artifact Show.*

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*Biface recovered at the Turtle Hill site (47LC866).*

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FOR THE  
ARTS AND  
HUMANITIES

## Our mission

is to enhance the cultural life of the area by encouraging and providing opportunities for businesses to invest in the programs of local Arts and Humanities organizations in an efficient and effective way.

# THANK YOU

for wrapping your arms around the Arts and Humanities in 2018! Thanks to your generosity, we exceeded our goal and raised **\$106,093** for our member groups.

## UFAH Proudly Supports

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## 35<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

The following gifts to the 35th Anniversary Campaign are gratefully acknowledged and help bring many events, programs, exhibits and classes to the La Crosse community.

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