

# The Friends of Aztalan State Park

## Ancient Times

Summer 2008, Newsletter



### TOM DAVIES 1948-2008

Our dear friend and Aztalan State Park manager died on Thursday, April 17, 2008, in Madison. He had been suffering from complications of a stroke. Tom was

the only single person assigned to Aztalan and did everything from giving tours to property maintenance. He was born in Milwaukee and for many years was a school teacher in Lake Mills. He served in the Vietnam War as a sergeant and remained active in the Vietnam Veterans association.

Squad members remember Tom as a strong and effective leader.

After joining the Department of Natural Resources, Tom essentially became the first park manager in the history of Aztalan as a park and managed the property on a shoestring budget with verve and aplomb. The lovely cared for grounds, the interpretive signs, the well maintained facilities are all Tom's legacies, as is the Friends of Aztalan State Park organization that he nurtured and encouraged. Tom was buried in the Rock Lake cemetery at Lake Mills. He is survived by his wife Wendy, his daughters Ginger and Allison, granddaughter Calista Shirley, sisters Lorna and Kay, and many other relations. We will all miss his presence at a place he loved.



### A note from Bob Birmingham

Dear Friends of Aztalan State Park Members,

Thank you so much for your kind donations to the Aztalan Visitor's Center Fund in memory of Tom Davies. He would have been delighted, and we are grateful.

Bob Birmingham, President  
Aztalan State Park

IN REMEMBRANCE  
A Special  
Tom Davies  
Memorial  
Issue

# A Tribute to Tom Davies



The Tom Davies Family and Friends of Aztalan State Park would like to thank Tom's many friends for their contributions to the Aztalan Visitor's Center in his honor. Over \$4,000 was received and this constitutes a wonderful tribute to Tom and his dedication to Aztalan. He would have been very pleased, honored, and probably embarrassed at the outpouring of well deserved attention. The donors include the following, but many anonymous gifts were also received. Others will be acknowledged in the next newsletter. Those still wishing to make a contribution can use the form on the back page. We all share Tom's dream for a first class visitor's

center appropriate to the wonderful and unique site and we are determined to see that happen. We are sure that Tom's presence will be felt when it opens.

Tom's co-workers at DNR Parks and Recreation, Marifrances Cataldi, Al and Norma Peters, Mary Lee Anderson, Dr. Richard and Karen Roots, Ralph and Norma Larson, Bridget Trimm, Mark and Sue Martin, Jean Scott, Jude and Sue Hartwick, Roger and Beth Wiedenfeld, Susan and Robert Manske, Karl Anderson and Carolyn Heidemann, Peter and Bonnie Flannery, Dave and Doris Thompson, Carl and May Hendrickson, Patrick and Terra Henner, Bill Hanley, Lake Mills High School staff-Sunshine Club, Drs. John and Pat Richards, Arlene and Jerry Strunk, Dr. Ronald and Martha Liebenow, Phil and Phyllis Sillman, John McIntyre, John and Charlotte Schroeder, Dave and Mary Mulderink, James and Cherie Miller, Frank and Shirley Stekel, Drescher and Associates Real Estate, James



Surrett, Susan and Patrick Noethe, Harry and Charlotte Doherty, Bruce and Gloria Darnell, Waukesha County Chapter 425 Vietnam Veterans of America, Nona Christiansen and Bob Persons, Dolores Elliot, Morris and Vicki Wickliffe, Martha and Norm Hallowell, John and Barbara Margowski, Diana Kuehl, Gary and Veronica Anderson, Arthur and R. Diane Hanson, Charles and Linda Haugen, Jaqualin Schenck, James and Sherry Klosiewski, Nancy Wenger, Milton Strauss, Gary and Marian Jasurda, Hope Oostdik, Joan Hansen, Richard Fowler and Lori Rhodes, Daniel and Debra Weidert, Charles and Lori Kilian, Marjor and Brenie Weinstein, Harold and Thelma Casey, Rosealie Hyman, Leila Beltz, Janice Thompson, Dave and Jane Weier, James and Marcia Shirley, Kristeen and Paul Schroeter, Mary Zickermann, Elaine and Eugene Dobbratz, Linda Mueller-Bouche and David Bouche, James and Gail Kottwitz, Kathryn and Larry Roedl Jr., Carla and Michael Morrman, Ronald and Ann Copsey, Debra Bohlman-Groehler, Chrisine Nolan and Patrick Stevens, Diane and Dale Lings, Donna Ferguson, Sandy and Wayne Hasel, Patrick and Mrs. Lloyd Eagan, Harold and Diana Thom, Karen Smith, Robert Birmingham, John and Lorna Fox, David and Laura Borsechnik, Karla Schroedl, Elaine Newhouse, James and Jean Shaw, Lail Wallskog, Robert and Jeanne Topel, Timothy and Kathryn Galvin, Robert and Darlene Lipske, James and Regina Hampton, Rosemary Schmeid, Charles Dellis.

# In memory of Tom... ... a prehistoric garden is planted

Well, we did it! We've planted a Mississippian Native American garden just south of the park shelter. Many thanks to John Broihahn and Gabriele Lubach for coming out with the heritage seeds, as well as their expertise in digging, shoveling, and planting. We were able to plant corn (small, multiple headed ears), squash, and dinosaur goards. Also, thanks to Al and Judy Foskett from the Jefferson County Master Gardener's Organization for their help in preparing and planting, Finally, without Mark Dudzik (DNR archaeologist), Bob Birmingham and Lance Stock (acting Aztalan park manager), the project wouldn't have even started. Mark and Bob laid out the area in a non-sensitive area, Lance rototilled the clay soil and provided the tools necessary to get things going; Bob provided the ideas and energy to get things started, as well as some shoveling (with his son Kevin) to help prepare the soil.

My students and I will be making antler rakes, mussell hoes, and a rad-looking buffalo scapula shovel for further weeding and tilling. Let's hope mother nature cooperatives weather wise and that the insects and animals seek nourishment elsewhere. Tom Davies, for whom the garden will be named, would be very pleased. I'd imagine he'll figure out a way to keep the chipmunks and ground squirrels away.

By the way, we'll need plenty of help weeding and thinning as the summer goes along. If you are interested please contact me at e-mail ([hartwickj@mail.fortschools.org](mailto:hartwickj@mail.fortschools.org)) or phone (920)-568-0626.

## Two weeks later...

Sprouts, sprouts everywhere! Though it's a small plot, it's exciting to see our wandering row of corn atop the mounded hills of top soil. On the sides of the Western mounds we have the squash sprouting through and finally the sunflowers are pushing through their own separate mounds. The dinosaur gourds have not yet come through on the northern hills, but their arrival is hopeful any day now. The incessant rain has created a nice pool of water that protects the garden. We have enough protection, so the rain can let up for a few days. Feel free to take a look, but beware of the spongy soil and mud.



*Aztalan board members inspect the new garden planted in memory of Tom Davies*

Next weekend, or the weekend after, I should have a chicken wire fence up. I'm hoping to have the antler rakes, mussel hoes, and scapula (buffalo) shovels completed by the summer solstice. This may be a clever way to arrange for people to weed the garden. It's a human trait passed on across cultures to "Tom Sawyer" others into doing our work.

*Jude Harwick  
Aztalan Garden Coordinator*





# Thinking of Tom

Tom led many tours with my Crossroads Alternative School students. He was vibrant and talking with the students. He made a point of bringing along artifacts or objects to show the students that made Aztalan's history come alive. His love for Aztalan State Park was evident the moment you walked with him up the mounds or across the field. His passion extended beyond the park of Aztalan, but into the teaching and lore of the park and of the Mississippian culture.

*Jude Hartwick*

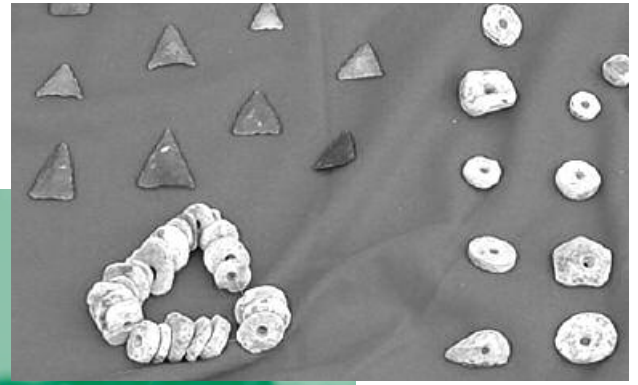
Tom Davies has long been an enthusiastic friend of Aztalan State Park. His informative tours have sparked the interest and imaginations of hundreds of school children and adults, and his guidance has been an energizing force for the Friends of Aztalan Board. His insight, candor, knowledge, and wit will be deeply missed.

*Arlene Strunk*

Tom was a gem in the rough who sincerely cared for Aztalan State Park with all his being. I certainly enjoyed working with him over many years.

*Al Peters*

For future events at Aztalan and other info about the Friends go to  
**[www.aztalan.us](http://www.aztalan.us)**



## Join Us Membership

The Friends of Aztalan State Park invite you to learn about the Mississippian culture. To join our group call Bob Birmingham at (608) 241-4958 or email [birmi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:birmi@sbcglobal.net) for more information or write to us at: Aztalan State Park, P.O. Box 855, Lake Mills 53551.

## Thanks to...

president...Bob Birmingham 608-241-4958

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920-830-9403

our eternal Thanks to...  
dnr educational specialist...Tom Davies