

Results of the 2022 Public Archaeology Program at the Cove Site (47DR428)

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INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Archeological Society awarded a Public Education in Archaeology Grant to Robert Jeske and Randy Dickson for partial funding to support public archaeological education programs currently conducted by Crossroads at Big Creek (Crossroads) in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. Crossroads is a non-profit land restoration organization whose mission is: “a preserve which offers education, conducts research and provides outdoor experiences to inspire environmental stewardship in learners of all ages.” Archaeology fits well into the Crossroads mission because it is an educational outdoor experience that is easily shared with students and inspires stewardship by centering the role of humans in creating their environment. Crossroads recognizes that the natural environment is not a landscape untouched by human beings, but is a

community of plants and animals in which people play a fundamental role. Because of this intrinsic relationship between humans and the landscape, archaeology plays an integral part of land restoration, conservation, and environmental learning.

Educational Activities: Based on school time allocation and curricular needs, not all students participated in all activities, however most students engaged in at least 3 of the 4 activities when they visited the site. Activities included:

1. Excavation at the Cove site. Elementary school students, general-public adult volunteers, professional volunteers and Crossroads staff excavated three 2x2 meter and one 1x2 meter units, totaling 22 square meters. Units averaged a depth of approximately 30cm below ground surface, for a total of 6.6 cubic meters excavated and screened through .6cm mesh screen. Two pit features (Features 19 and 20) were identified. Feature 19 was mapped, bisected, profiled and sampled for flotation analysis by Crossroads personnel and a professional volunteer (Dr. Richard Edwards). Feature 20 was mapped on the afternoon of the last day of excavations and was left in situ for future work.
2. Students observed the production of stone tools via flintknapping demonstrations provided by Jeske. Students also participated in an interactive activity where they compared an assemblage of replicated projectile points to an assemblage recovered from an archaeological site.
3. Students participated in a hands-on technology activity conducted by Dickson. Students used an atlatl to throw (safety-tipped) spears and darts at a 3-D deer decoy. Students learn about pre-industrial hunting activities, the sophisticated construction of throwing spears, and the physics of flight.
4. Crossroads staff took students on an interactive nature trail walk/discovery on the Crossroads property, allowing students to recognize the relationship of human activities at the Cove Site to nearby lacustrine, marsh, grassland and woodland environments.

Results of the 2022 Program at Crossroads at Big Creek:

Elementary School Student Outreach. Over the course of two weeks, a total of 295 students from two Door County schools (Sunrise and Sevastapol) participated in at least three of the four activities (excavation, flintknapping, atlatl throwing, natural resources hike). The 42 teachers and parent chaperones were also introduced to these activities.



Students learning atlatl technology.



Students learning cultural background of Cove Site.



Students excavating at the Cove Site.



Students watching flintknapping demonstration.

Adult Education Outreach. A total of 37 adults were introduced to archaeology in the field at the cove site excavations. While some chose to observe, approximately a dozen took their turn at screening dirt excavated from the units. Another 12 adults were introduced to archaeology at the Ida Bay Day, where Jeske used an artifact/archaeological equipment display to prompt questions and discussion.



Adult learners screening at the Cove site.

Public Speaking Outreach

On September 27, a total of 46 people attended Jeske's lecture/discussion of cultural and environmental interactions in Precontact period Wisconsin. Entitled the *Myth of the Wilderness*, Jeske suggested that environmental reclamation was not possible without understanding humans as an integral part of the ecological landscape since the end of the Ice Ages. A recording of the talk and Q&A session is currently available at <https://youtu.be/9jJ6VHt-UdE>.

Media Interviews and Reports

The project was reported on by Green Bay Channel 11 News. The clip is available at <https://fox11online.com/news/local/archeological-dig-underway-at-crossroads-at-big-creek-in-sturgeon-bay-randy-dickson-robert-jeske-anthropology-history-artifacts#>

The report was also picked up by MSN.com and can be found at <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/artifacts-uncovered-during-archeological-dig-at-sturgeon-bay-nature-preserve/art-AA12jO2E>

An online interview and newspaper report from Door County Daily.com can be found at <https://doorcountydailynews.com/news/655133>

The project was publicized at least three times in the *Door County Pulse*.

<https://doorcountypulse.com/explore-ground-and-sky-at-ridges/>

<https://doorcountypulse.com/new-map-walks-trailgoers-through-human-history-at-crossroads/>

<https://doorcountypulse.com/humans-and-their-role-in-nature/>

Presentation of Research at the Midwest Archaeological Conference

Jeske and Dickson organized a poster symposium titled *At the Crossroads: Archaeology and Public Outreach in Door County, Wisconsin* at the 2022 Midwest Archaeological Conference, in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The posters will be displayed at the Collins Educational Center at Crossroads, and can be accessed online at the UWM Archaeological Research Center's Outreach Page: <https://uwm.edu/archaeology-laboratory/news/public-outreach/>. The symposium consisted of the following posters:

- 1 *Archaeology & Outreach with Crossroads at Big Creek*. Randy R. Dickson (Midwest Archaeological Consultants) and Coggin Heeringa (Crossroads at Big Creek).
- 2 *The Cove Site: 47DR428*. Randy R. Dickson (Midwest Archaeological Consultants), Robert J. Jeske (Jeske Archaeological Consultants), Richard W. Edwards IV (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), Seth A. Schneider (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), William M. Balco (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), Sean P. Gleason (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee).
- 3 *The Ida Bay Site: 47DR35*. Randy R. Dickson (Midwest Archaeological Consultants), Robert J. Jeske (Jeske Archaeological Consultants), Richard W. Edwards IV (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), Seth A. Schneider (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), William M. Balco, Sean P. Gleason.
- 4 *Preliminary Ceramic Analysis: Ida Bay and Cove Sites*. Seth A. Schneider (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee), William M. Balco (University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee).
- 5 *Functional Analysis of the Cove Site Lithic Tools*. Katherine Sterner (Towson University) and Robert Jeske (Jeske Archaeological Consultants).

Archaeology & Outreach with Crossroads at Big Creek Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin

Land Acknowledgement

We recognize that our three preserves reside on the ancestral land of First Peoples dating back as far as 3,000 years ago. This land was, and continues to be, of great importance to their descendants. We seek to honor these First Peoples and the land itself by discovering and sharing accurate stories of their lifeways and by protecting our designated archaeological historical sites for the future.

Program Mission

Our archaeological investigations at sites 47DR-35 and 47DR-428 utilize science and humanities by exploring how the land shaped the people living on it while being shaped by those same people. By understanding our past we can learn to make sound management decisions to shape a healthier land for the future.

Commitment to Wisconsin Educational Standards

Our program uses archaeology to meet Wisconsin educational standards and justify school field trips by offering hands-on lessons emphasizing skills like developing research questions, analyzing data, conducting field experimentation, and learning about prehistoric ways of life.

Crossroads at Big Creek

Crossroads at Big Creek is a series of preserves which offer education, conduct research and restoration, and provide outdoor experiences to inspire environmental stewardship in learners of all ages.

Experience-Based Archaeology

Our programming offers specific experiences including:

- Archaeological survey and shovel testing
- Developing research questions
- Recording data
- Reading (and creating) maps
- Identifying artifacts
- Classifying and analyzing lithics
- Using flotation method to capture organic materials
- Observing flintknapping demonstrations to learn about stone tool manufacture and use
- Building shelters
- Using atlatls to simulate prehistoric hunting practices
- Recognizing resources necessary for survival
- Understanding how the landscape was utilized in the past

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First poster in the Crossroads symposium, presented at the Midwest Archaeological Conference, La Crosse Wisconsin, October 10, 2022.