



**AUSTIN CHAPTER 10
IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE**
www.austinikes.org

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JIM STILES AND MARK OWENS RECEIVE STEWARDSHIP AWARDS FROM THE MINNESOTA DIVISION OF THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE.

Jim Stiles and Mark Owens received stewardship awards from the Minnesota Division for their conservation efforts. Stewardship awards go to individuals that have accomplished notable conservation work in Minnesota.

Jim Stiles received the Stewardship award for the following successful chapter projects/campaigns:

- **Mill Pond Rain Garden Project** – Jim assisted Mark Owens in planning, fundraising, and ordering wildflowers for the Mill Pond Rain Garden Project. Jim was a key contributor by organizing chapter member volunteers to aid in planting and mulching. Overall \$17,000 was raised and 1.5 acres were planted with prairie and wildflowers. This project has been a huge success and is located right near downtown for city residents to use and view.
- **Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment** – Jim, along with his wife Merlene, played the lead role in educating the public about the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment in Austin/Mower County. He motivated our membership to spread the message of the importance of this amendment to our states natural resource future. With his passion and perseverance, Mower County was one of the leading counties with over 64% voting for the amendment.
- **State Capital Bus Trips** – For the past two years Jim has organized bus trips to the state capital to meet with area legislators and discuss environmental issues. Ike's members from Austin and Owatonna along with Audubon members and local students go to the capital. This year's topics included: upholding the Legacy Amendment, defending environmental review standards, sulfide mining, and a clean energy future.

Mark Owens received the Stewardship award for the following successful chapter projects:

- **Mill Pond Rain Garden Project** – Mark initiated and led this project in 2010. He sought out funding by applying for a \$5000 matching grant from the Minnesota Lakes, Rivers, and Streams Partnership. He found additional project partners that included: Austin Park and Recreation Department, Austin School District, Mower County Water and Soil Conservation District, Cedar River Watershed District, Minnesota DNR, Spruce Up Austin, and Austin Coalition for Environmental Sustainability. Overall \$17,000 was raised and 1.5 acres were planted with prairie and wildflowers. This project has been a huge success and is located right near downtown for city residents to use and view.

- **Cedar River and Dobbins Creek Water Monitoring** – Mark assisted Larry Dolphin with straight pipe identification and e-coli testing of the Cedar River and Dobbins Creek. Mark and Larry volunteered over 100 hours collecting water samples and testing those samples. Two main areas that have been polluting now have septic and or have been hooked up to the City of Austin for waste treatment. Austin Chapter 10 won the 2008 Save-Our-Streams Award due to Mark’s efforts.
 - **Purple Martin Project** – Mark assisted Bob Goetz with the Purple Martin Project in the City of Austin. Mark helped build, refurbish, and install purple martin houses throughout Austin. The project has been a success with more purple martins returning and nesting each year.
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For more information on the Austin Chapter 10, please contact Dave Cole at 433-4654. ###

Austin Chapter 10 of the Izaak Walton League is a non-profit conservation organization whose mission is to conserve, maintain, protect, and restore all soil, waters, wildlife, and other natural resources.

For more information on Austin Chapter 10, please visit our website: www.austinikes.org.