

THE ICF

BUGLE

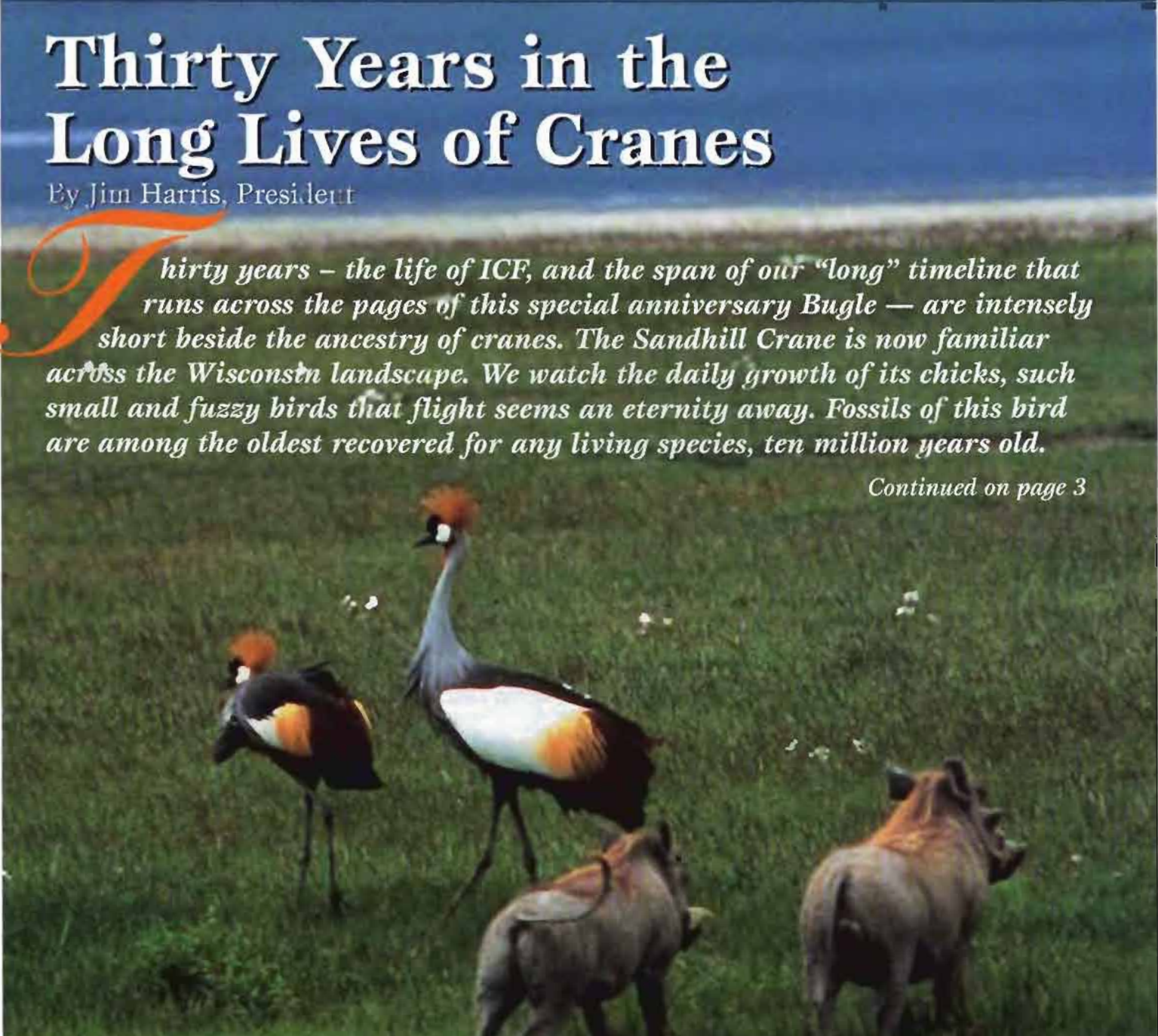
World Center for the Study and Preservation of Cranes

Thirty Years in the Long Lives of Cranes

By Jim Harris, President

Thirty years – the life of ICF, and the span of our “long” timeline that runs across the pages of this special anniversary Bugle — are intensely short beside the ancestry of cranes. The Sandhill Crane is now familiar across the Wisconsin landscape. We watch the daily growth of its chicks, such small and fuzzy birds that flight seems an eternity away. Fossils of this bird are among the oldest recovered for any living species, ten million years old.

Continued on page 3



Now is the time of crisis for many wildlife species. The next thirty years will likely determine whether Grey Crowned Cranes can continue living widely across the plains of Africa, and what future will be possible for other cranes and a diverse host of wildlife around the world. This 30th anniversary issue of The ICF Bugle is dedicated to the memory of George A. Ranney, Sr., a long-time friend of the cranes. Photo by Carl von Treuenfels.

Looking Back, Looking Forward

By George Archibald, Co-founder

After 27 years as the President of ICF, on November 1, 2000, with the full blessing of our Board of Directors, I passed the leadership to Jim Harris. At the time, Jim had worked at ICF for 16 years and in recent years had served ably as Vice-President for Programs. It was a wise move. Jim's exceptional abilities have been expressed in his outstanding involvement in two gargantuan projects - the reintroduction of Whooping Cranes to Wisconsin, and the supervision of a 10 million dollar grant received from the Global Environment Facility to help the wetlands used by Siberian Cranes.

Concurrent with my decision to step down, a supporter from New York, Dan Lufkin, stepped up and secured a grant for \$500,000 from the Peter Jay Sharp Foundation to create an endowment at ICF producing income to support my personal conservation activities worldwide. Through the generosity of other members of ICF, an additional \$371,410.41 has been added to the Sharp Fund.

Maintaining a salary from ICF and having the excellent service of a full time assistant, Julie Zajicek, I moved my office to my 1910 farmhouse in the Baraboo Hills, a home that I share with my wife, Kyoko, and

our three cats. E-mail and the telephone keep me connected to the program staff at ICF and to a myriad of colleagues around the world. I attend staff meetings at ICF every Thursday afternoon, and as Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors, I attend four full board meetings annually and many committee meetings. To help ICF with the ever-pressing



Here in the solitude of Keolado National Park, winter home of Siberian Cranes, George shares his love, enthusiasm and knowledge of cranes with a new generation of Indian conservationists. Left to right - Gopi Sundar, Jatinder Kaur, George Archibald, Borad Chandresh, Aeshita Mukherjee. ICF Archives



Perhaps ICF's most unusual story is that of Gee Whiz (left). George courted his imprinted mother and through artificial insemination Gee Whiz arrived in 1982. Gee Whiz was one of the first cranes to be moved from the Sauey farm to the new site on Shady Lane Road. He resides in Crane City today paired to Ooblek and produces chicks. Photo by Carl von Treuenfels

need to raise more support, I do many VIP tours, to ICF and the wilds of central Wisconsin, as well as to far-away places like Bhutan and Botswana to experience culture and cranes. I also have a busy speaking schedule. During the past two years, I gave 56 public presentations to 7600 people.

With support from the Peter Jay Sharp Discretionary Fund for George W. Archibald, Chairman, my conservation activities have concentrated on three areas: Louisiana, the region of the Indian subcontinent, and the Korean DMZ. As members of the Louisiana Crane Study group, my colleagues and I are investigating possibilities of eventually returning both migratory and sedentary Whooping Cranes to the vast wetlands of southwestern coastal portions of the state. On and near the subcontinent of India, I am working with others to strengthen an Indian Working Group on Cranes

Timeline

1971

➤ Ron Sauey and George Archibald meet at Cornell University and share the same dream of saving the world's cranes.


1972

➤ George captures 12 Brolgas and Eastern Sarus in Australia for captive breeding in Baraboo.

1973

➤ Establishment of ICF as a tax-exempt organization on the Sauey horse farm in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

and develop plans for the conservation of biodiversity - including migratory cranes - along two corridors that flow from India across Pakistan and Afghanistan and on into Russia. In Korea, through my participation with the DMZ FORUM, an NGO headquartered in New York, I am working with a plethora of colleagues to craft a process to engage the two Koreas in helping save critical habitats on and near the DMZ for half of the world's White-naped Cranes and a quarter of the world's Red-crowned Cranes. In addition, through collaboration with the Platte River Trust's Dr. Felipe Chavez-Ramirez, we are helping Cuban Sandhill Cranes. And with colleague, Dr. Mary Bishop, we continue our efforts to study and help the Black-necked Cranes in Tibet.

It's a relief to have passed the burdens of the day to day administration of ICF into the most capable hands of Jim Harris. It's thrilling to accept new responsibilities in strengthening our Board of Directors, raising support for ICF, and helping the wild cranes. And in our free time, Kyoko and I tend to our menagerie of flora and fauna that includes prairie and savanna restorations, flower and vegetable gardens, a vineyard, and an assortment of peafowl, turkeys, ducks, guinea fowl, geese, pigeons and chickens. We feel honored that a wild pair of Sandhill Cranes has elected to nest in the wetland beside our home. Through them I connect on a daily basis from March through October to the spirit of the wild cranes worldwide. Usually during the winter, I travel abroad to meet other cranes in the wild. 



Ron Saucy, ICF co-founder, and four Indian Sarus Cranes meet on the property of Ron's parents Norman and Claire Saucy. The Saucy farm was ICF's home from 1973 to 1983. The rent was \$1 a year. Many people who admire cranes worldwide will always be grateful for the gift the Saucy family gave the cranes. ICF Archives

Continued from the COVER story


The Sandhill branched off from the other cranes of the genus *Grus* long before the most recent species evolved, including the Whooping, Red-crowned, and Black-necked.

Yet the Crowned Cranes are older and more primitive than members of the genus *Grus*. Their fossils have been discovered in Nebraska, laid down before the coming of ice sheets that brought extinction to many of the great mammals and birds. Crowned Cranes today are confined to Africa.

Now we are experiencing another time of extinction, remarkably rapid and this time caused by humanity. These years - the thirty years just past that are ICF's history, and the next thirty years that we hope can bring greater security to the cranes and places they inhabit - are a crisis time. I am reminded of my son, aged fourteen months, in a coma from a brain injury, when the doctors strove to bring him through the dangerous hours. Our task is to bring the family of cranes through this crisis-time, the dangerous years of collision between ancient nature and human change.

The recovery of the Sandhill in Wisconsin, from a low population of about 100 to over 12,000 birds today, is our parable of hope for the other species in low numbers or still in serious decline. For some species, we may indeed bring recovery, much as a patient passes the difficult time to enjoy a long life and good fortune, as they say of the cranes in east Asia. The life of a crane species has been very long indeed.

Yet cranes are sensitive to waters of the landscape. And these waters across vast areas have been forever diverted and damaged and put to human uses. On our crowded earth, the future of cranes in many places will depend on unending vigilance, tending to the balances of water and drought, the same balances that are vital for human futures as well.

In the past 30 years, we have learned what is needed to safeguard the cranes. As an organization intent on the lives of ancient creatures, we have studied the short-term urgencies of crisis, and the long spans of time and effort required if conservation is to have meaning. 

1974

- First publication of The Brolga Bugle, ICF's newsletter.
- ICF offers tours to small groups on Saturdays only.

1975

- ICF hatches the first Red-crowned Crane in the Western Hemisphere and names it "Tsuru".

1976

- The Annual Midwest Sandhill Crane Count begins as a cooperative venture between ICF and Middleton High School students.

Crane Conservation and Education

By Dietrich Schaaf, Education Director

At last, spring is here.

Several times today as I write this, there has been a Ruby-crowned Kinglet (or maybe more than one) gleaning tiny insects from the birch trees on the newly green lawn outside my window. The Whooping Cranes that were led on migration by ultra-light aircraft in 2001 and 2002 are back in Wisconsin, and of course, our gates are open again for visitors to the ICF site. We welcome them, for they are among the very important people who will carry away our messages, spreading the word about cranes and their habitats, and the pressing need to conserve these irreplaceable natural resources. This is the time of year when all of us at ICF seem to redouble our efforts, inspired perhaps by the nesting cranes and the fact that new generations of birds soon will need us to champion their cause.

Championing the cause is one aspect of getting the conservation job done. We at ICF are proud of all that's been accomplished in the past 30 years, but even with our many successes, there's always more to do. Conservation involves being ever watchful, to protect our gains, and to conquer new

ground as the opportunity arises. Education is an important tool – some would argue *the* most important tool – in this struggle to protect our wildlife resources, for one simple reason: without an informed and supportive public, most of the conservation gains we make will not survive in the long run. People must learn to value wildlife and wild places if these things are to survive and flourish for generations to come.

How we communicate with and

technology today to reach our audiences. ICF's website (www.savingcranes.org) has a global reach, and because it is such a powerful tool, we must maintain it carefully and keep the content up-to-date. This has created problems as well as opportunities, and means that we have to devote new resources – time and money – to the task of staying on the leading edge. Similarly, we've begun to explore distance learning, a technological innovation that allows audiovisual communication

(back and forth) between, say, ICF and classrooms around the state of Wisconsin or even further afield. The possibilities for reaching larger audiences in places we could not ordinarily visit are enormous.

Despite such technological advances, there is still a need for the kind of personal contact that we give visitors to the ICF site, or through our outreach programs when we visit schools and other venues to give a program. Nothing beats the personal touch, coming face-to-face with your audience,

and telling them a good story. People appreciate it, and there are those who prefer that approach to getting on the Internet or watching a presentation on TV, even if they can talk back to the



Crane Fest 2003 was a great success. It is a wonderful way to kick off our public season and encourage people to learn about cranes, wetlands and migratory birds. Our non-migratory mascot Sandy is the most popular crane that day. Photo by Nellie Schmitz

educate people at ICF has evolved over the years. The reach and scope of our programs have grown, and new techniques have been developed or adopted. A good example is the way we use

Timeline cont.

1976

- George visits Russia for the first time.
- ICF receives its first Whooping Crane from the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.
- ICF breeds Hooded Cranes in captivity, the first time in the world.

1977

- ICF receives hatching Siberian Crane eggs from Russia.
- Freelance writer Jim Harris meets Ron & George & writes about ICF.


1978

- Mary Wickhem chairs first meeting of expanded board.
- ICF hosts Soviet visitors – Vladimir Flint and Alexander Blistanov.

... 30 Years Out

presenter. Seeing the real thing, rather than having a virtual experience, still seems to be one of the best ways to get our message across. It's important that we not forget this, lest we de-emphasize personal contact for the technological approach, when there is indeed room for both.

Regardless of how we get there, it's ICF's mission to provide information and instruction, to inspire people and engage them in the conservation of cranes and the important wetland and grassland ecosystems upon which the birds depend for survival. The cranes become a vehicle that we use to introduce concepts that apply to nature conservation as a whole, tying these birds to the natural world in which they live, where all species, including our own, must follow the same ecological rules in the end.

One of ICF's great strengths over the years has been the ability to bring people from various cultures and walks of life together in the common effort to solve conservation problems. As we go forward into the 21st Century, we will continue to capitalize on this strength and others, among them the skill and dedication of our staff and associates. The world today stands at a crossroad with respect to its ecological future, and it will take a lot of hard work on the part of many dedicated individuals to ensure that the road leading to an environmentally healthy future is taken. ICF still has much work to do and contributions to make, as we continue to "champion the cause." 



This summer South African colleagues, David Nkozi (left), Bird Life South Africa, and Samson Phakathi, South African Crane Working Group, are joining our staff to gain experience in educational outreach, field work and captive breeding techniques. Both have visited area schools and participated in special on-site events. Photo by Betsy Didrickson



Sawson leads a tour for a Wisconsin Elementary School. Photo by Debbie Nieuwenhuis

1979

- ICF signs land contract to purchase new site five miles north of Sauvey farm.
- ICF hatches Brolgas for the first time in North America.

1980

- First plantings of prairie vegetation on the new site.
- Over 1,000 people visit ICF in May.

1981

- ICF hatches Dushenka, the first Siberian Crane ever bred in captivity.
- Ground is broken for new Johnson Pod on 160 acre landscape of ICF's future home.

My Life with Siberian Cranes

By Claire Mirande, GEF Project Director

My first encounter with a Siberian Crane left me on the receiving end of a sharp, pink bill. "Dushenka", the first Siberian Crane chick hatched in captivity, did not welcome the intrusion of a new aviculturist in his territory. Yet the magic and majesty of this bird as he defied me to enter his world profoundly drew my spirit and has led me on an odyssey that has spanned 18 years.

In 1976 George Archibald ventured with open heart and mind into the mysterious Soviet Union, where he developed a lifelong friendship with Vladimir Flint. Together, the two scientists undertook a quest into the remote taiga of Siberia to collect eggs of the rare and little-known Siberian Crane. In parallel, they established captive flocks at the International Crane Foundation (ICF) and the Oka Nature Reserve, which led to the miraculous hatching of "Dushenka".

Ten years later I arrived with a hunger to become involved in ICF's unique, multi-disciplinary approach to conservation. It has been an honor to work with these diverse mentors and to take part in creating and achieving shared dreams. In 1987 I visited Oka for the first time with two veterinarians from the National Wildlife Health Center. Although right after Perestroika, the government was still wary of foreigners. After seemingly endless tours of Moscow, we were finally allowed to spend two brief and intense days at the beautiful Oka Reserve. Strong links and friendships began that continue to grow and flourish through numerous exchange visits.

In these early years, we conducted veterinary, behavioral, and genetic research that improved management of both captive and wild cranes. We shared our skills and developed a global network of breeding programs aimed at preserving genetically and demographically healthy crane populations.

Today there are over 190 Siberian Cranes in 33 centers worldwide sup-

grounds in India continued to plummet. It was clear that our efforts to save this species needed to move in new directions. In cooperation with the Convention for Migratory Species (CMS), ICF has worked to build a strong network of scientists throughout the ten countries that are home to wild Siberian Cranes. Since 1993 a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) concerning Conservation Measures for the Siberian Crane has been signed by eight of the range states. We are optimistic that Afghanistan and Mongolia will sign in the near future.

We have been delighted to find promising young people anxious to become involved. As we came to understand the threats faced by these birds, we struggled to secure funds and other resources to help these people acquire the skills and tools needed to take on the challenges of reversing the decline of this species.

Conservation Plans were updated at meetings every two years. The plans initially focused on reducing mortality and releasing captive produced birds to rebuild the wild populations. Videos, posters, children's art exchanges, and crane fests were some of the tools used to foster an awareness and appreciation for the value of the birds and their wetlands by communities and decision-makers.

Several decades of research have started to reveal the mysteries of this bird. Scientists hid in blinds in the remote, frozen taiga to study breeding and foraging ecology. Creative techniques were developed to capture elusive birds and attach small transmitters



Yuri Markin weighs a Siberian Crane chick and attaches a satellite transmitter before it is released into the wilds of Siberia. Photo by Alexander Ermakov

porting an ongoing study to develop effective reintroduction techniques. The Cracid Breeding and Conservation Center became a primary partner and provides both birds for release and funds for field conservation.

As the situation in captivity improved, the numbers of wild Siberian Cranes on the wintering

Timeline cont.

1982

► Tex, the female Whooping Crane imprinted on humans, is courted by George. Through artificial insemination a chick is hatched and called Gee Whiz.

► Tex is killed by a racoon the same day that George appears on Johnny Carson's Tonight Show.

► The Brolga Bugle, ICF's quarterly newsletter for members, becomes the ICF Bugle.

1983

► ICF opens to visitors on Shady Lane Road in Baraboo. Cudahy Visitor Center and Johnson Exhibit Pod dedicated.

► ICF ships first captive Siberian Crane eggs to USSR.



The nomadic reindeer herding Khanty people and the Siberian Crane are both threatened by changing cultures and gas development in West Siberia. The GEF Siberian Crane Wetlands Project seeks to protect both this rare bird and the threatened group of humans that share their home. ICF Archives

that send signals to satellites. This enabled us to follow the birds to their previously unknown breeding and migratory areas.

Although there were real successes under CMS, we realized that to ensure the long-term survival of the Siberian Crane we should expand from a species to an ecosystem approach. To effectively implement carefully made plans we also needed to secure a long-term source of funding. Over the last three years ICF has worked intensively with the United Nations Environment Program and colleagues in Russia, China, Kazakhstan, and Iran and secured a \$10,000,000 Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant.

The GEF project will address threats to key wetlands used by Siberian Cranes during breeding, wintering, and migration. It aims to increase awareness of and capacity for flyway protection efforts in the participating

nations. The project will be implemented on three levels.

Locally, the project will seek to curb specific threats to wetland sites, in part by engaging local communities in programs to develop more sustainable livelihoods; raising public awareness; and building capacity for local site management. On a national level, the project will expand the legislative and political framework

for wetland protection and improve coordination of wetland conservation efforts within and beyond national borders. Finally, on an international scale, the project will collaborate with other transnational flyway initiatives in implementing international conventions such as the CMS MoU. A regional coordination center will be established in Beijing and a Flyway Coordination Center in Moscow as a means of facilitating cooperation and collaboration between various initiatives.

When I look to the future my dream is for safe, naturally functioning wetland ecosystems that are graced by the breathtaking variety of species currently struggling in our changing world. This dream inspires me to rise each day and face the new and growing challenges. It is often two steps forward and one step back, but I know in my heart that we are making a difference, that our work has value, and that our dream is real.

Different Versions of Paradise

Claire Mirande was hired as ICF's Curator of Birds in 1984 and thought she would stay until she got bored. Well, it hasn't happened. After 18 years, Claire feels that she is still growing and tackling new challenges.

"When I first got here I wanted to do it all! That is the scientist in me," Claire said. "Then I realized that being a micro manager was not good. I knew I had to let people grow and I found that leading them through a process and letting them discover the answers was extremely rewarding."

Realizing that she could not do everything herself is one of the most valuable lessons ICF has taught her.

In 1992, her life changed. She was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS). At the same time, she was recruited to work for a captive breeding center in Hawaii. She turned it down and the center could not believe that she had turned down paradise. Claire's response was that there are different versions of paradise.

"When I found out that I had MS, I decided right then not to focus on the loss, but to look at it as an opportunity," she said. "I needed to look at what I could still do, consistent with what I had been doing, with my physical limitations."

Claire could not physically do her job as Curator, so she worked with ICF to create a new position as Director of Conservation Services, which has mostly focused on Siberian Crane conservation.

Recently Claire was instrumental in landing a \$10 million grant for the conservation of the Siberian Crane and its wetland habitats. She is coordinating four countries and 16 sites. Claire will travel three months out of the year. Many of the kindred spirits she has cultivated over the last 18 years are now her partners with whom she communicates on a daily basis.

Claire and her service dog Morgan.



1984

► Completion of the new office building and chick rearing complex; ICF pioneers "isolation rearing" efforts to release captive cranes in the wild.

1985

► ICF receives Black-necked Cranes, making ICF the only place in the entire world to have all fifteen species.

1986

► Construction begins on "Crane City," a complex of crane enclosures and buildings.

Partners in Growth

The successes for cranes and their habitats throughout our 30-year history were made possible by the commitment and generous support of our caring members.

ICF would especially like to thank the following foundations, corporations, other organizations, and individuals who have contributed cumulative gifts of \$10,000 or more in the last 30 years (through May 2003). Thank you for making a difference!

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Timeline cont.

1987

► The death of co-founder Ron Sauey is mourned worldwide.

1988

► ICF begins first major wetland restoration outside of Wisconsin at what is now Tram Chim National Park in Viet Nam.

1989

► ICF receives 22 Whooping Cranes from Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

► Completion of "Crane City", ICF's primary breeding facility consisting of 65 crane enclosures.

Windway Capital Corporation
Wisconsin Power & Light
World Bank

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Anonymous (Japan)
Aid Association for Lutherans
American Zoo & Aquarium
Association
Calgary Zoological Society
Convention for Migratory
Species of Wild Animals
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Solomon Weinstock and Barbara
Silber
Mrs. Howard Weiss
David and Sandra Whitmore
Mary Wickhem
Peter Willmann Estate
Virginia Wolfe
Jane Wood
Mary Wright
Fern Young

1990

➤ ICF hatches its first Black-necked Crane chick named "Trung Trung". Fourteen of the 15 species have been raised at ICF.

1991

➤ Ron Sauey Memorial Library for Bird Conservation completed.

1992

➤ ICF conducts first wetland and water bird aerial surveys in Cambodia.

ICF Restorations Taking Root

By Jeb Barzen, Director of Field Ecology

Celebrating ICF's 30th anniversary presents a marvelous opportunity for ICF's members and partners to reflect upon our past three decades. As a staff member for over 15 years, I would like to share with you some musings on an often over-looked part of that history.

Prairie restoration at ICF has occurred throughout most of ICF's history. The first full-scale attempt to re-establish a small section of prairie began at our first site on the Sauey farm back when Jimmy Carter was president. During the summer and fall of 1977, Charlie Luthin, a friend of George Archibald's and a prairie advocate, was recruited to organize stalwart volunteers to collect native seeds and plant them on 1/2 an acre of an old alfalfa field. This prairie has figuratively and literally taken root as ICF has grown in its turn.

In 1979, Konrad Liegel took up the reigns of ICF's fledgling restoration program. Konrad expanded upon Charlie's initial work by broadening the experimental nature of each new planting. The science of restoring any ecosystem two decades ago was still young, and there were many practical questions to be answered. For example, researchers were still refining basic restoration techniques, such as when they should plant or how they should prepare the seed bed for plantings.

As we learned more about the needs of cranes, and as our site grew, the restoration program continued to develop. My arrival at ICF late in 1987 followed the work of Stuart Utley from 1985 - 1987. I had the advantage of evaluating the early experiments that Charlie and Konrad had initiated after their restoration plots had been growing for up to a decade. Though I didn't real-

ize it at first, the ability to look back on these experiments over time has proven crucial in my ability (and that of others) to understand how ecological processes determine the distribution and abundance of prairie species over time.

When we examined the prairies that Charlie and Konrad planted, we found that their results were quite variable. A spring planting of prairie seed, for example, would do better than a fall planting in one year, while in another year the exact opposite would occur. How could both fall and spring plantings provide the best success under the same experimental design in different years?

With questions like these in mind, Rich Beilfuss (ICF's Africa Program Director and restoration colleague) and I began to reformulate the scale at which we examined outcomes for our attempts at restoring prairie ecosystems. Many prairie plant species, for example, live for a decade or more. As you would expect from any long-lived species, the maturation time of individual plants can often take years. Precisely how many years is still hard to say.

Photopoints, a photograph taken in the same location over many years, are one way to measure this difficult question. The photopoints illustrated here come from a prairie restoration planted in November, 1990. The first growing season for the planting began in 1991, and the dominant vegetation during this time was composed mostly of annual weeds like ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*). Few planted native species could be seen without searching on your hands and knees for tiny seedlings beneath the weedy forest.

By the third growing season (**Photopoint 1 - July, 1993**), however, three planted species characteristic of prairies in their early stage of development were easily seen. Canada wild rye (*Elymus canadensis*), the abundant grass in this picture, flourished from the second through the third growing seasons and then declined, typical of a short-lived perennial species. Two forb species (flowering plants that are neither woody nor grass-like) also mimicked the pioneering strategy of the Canada wild rye by this time: the tall yellow coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), and the short bluish hoary vervain (*Verbena stricta*).

By the fifth growing season (**Photopoint 2 - July, 1995**), Canada wild rye couldn't be easily seen and had largely been replaced by other native grasses. Hoary vervain, like Canada wild rye, was also declining by the fifth growing season. In turn, cone flower remained abundant until the sixth growing season before it too began declining. Rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*), on the other hand, was just beginning to flower in the fifth growing season but was not yet visually abundant.

Ten growing seasons into the experiment (**Photopoint 3 - July, 2000**), the plants dominating the planting were unlike the three initially abundant species. Canada wild rye was still uncommon in the planting but, after a decade, so too was yellow coneflower and hoary vervain. Rosinweed (*Silphium integrifolium*), rattlesnake master, and white indigo (*Baptisia leucantha*) had become the showy species dominating this planting. As of 2003, the same three species still dominate the planting.

Timeline cont.

1 9 9 2

➤ ICF begins rearing Whooping Cranes for a non-migratory flock to be released in Florida.

➤ ICF sponsors International Crane Workshop on a boat on the Amur River between Russia and China.

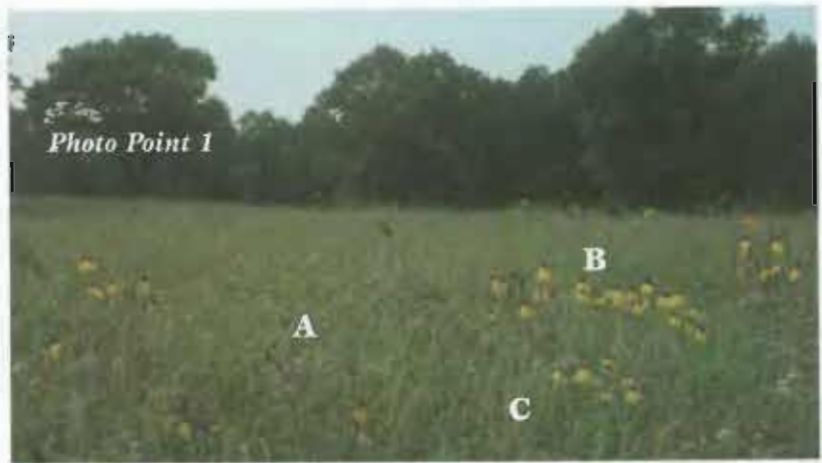
1 9 9 3

➤ Founding of Russia's first privately managed nature reserve, Muraviovka Park.

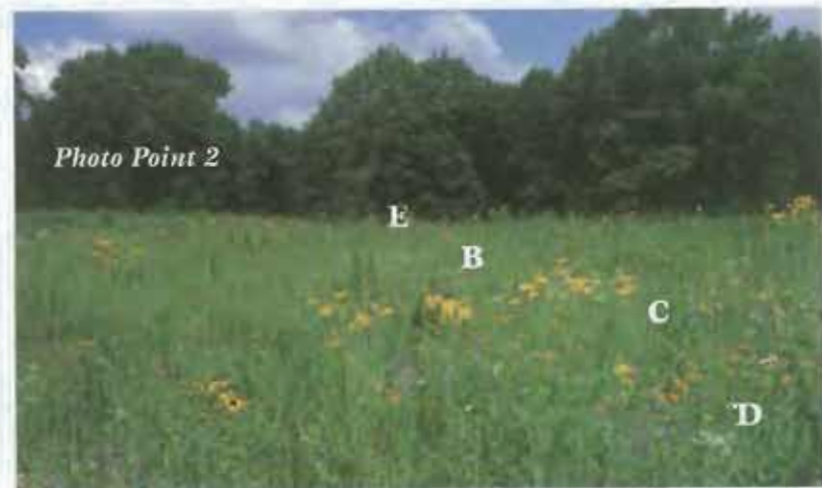
All six of these species were present in our planting in 1991 during the first growing season, but it took a full decade of maturation and competition before all six species reached a relatively stable level of dominance. Future changes in dominance for individual species may still occur with these or other species, but perhaps more slowly. Prairie dropseed (*Sporobolus heterolepsis*), for example, is still developing its distinctive clumps after 13 growing seasons.

The 1990 planting had 61 species planted from seed, and a majority of these species are long-lived perennials. When we compare the 1990 planting with several identical plantings completed in other years, the pattern of change is similar (e.g., Canada wild rye always started out strongly and then petered out), but the specific long-lived perennials that became dominant in each of the plantings varied considerably from one year to the next. Each of the plantings in our experiment now appears very different from the others as a result. Why does this occur? Our experiments suggest that the composition of the plant community that occurs in a particular planting depends upon what happens sometime during the first growing season. Thus, differences in the amount of rainfall in a given year, interaction between species competing for limited resources such as light and nutrients, and natural processes such as fire may initiate variations among identical plantings during their first growing season. Once these changes occur, long-lived species ensure that changes early on will persist for a decade or more.

Though simple in their appearance, these ecological concepts are crucial in shaping how we understand the interaction between ecological processes and the kinds of species that persist in a prairie community. Similar processes may function in other ecosystems, many of which cranes use. Our research at ICF is unique, for few other studies have examined these relationships over as long a time scale as this. Thus, the restoration work that Charlie and Konrad pioneered on ICF's site has created a living laboratory that aids in answering many questions about ecosystem restoration, a cornerstone of our crane work. However, after nearly thirty years, we are just beginning to understand these complex processes. What will we learn next? That's for future monitoring to determine.



Photopoint 1 The 1990 planting photographed during the 3rd growing season in July, 1993. The three large oaks in the background mark the boundaries for this photopoint. The labeled species are: A. Canada wild rye (*Elymus canadensis*), B. yellow coneflower (*Ratibida pinnata*), and C. hoary vervain (*Verbena stricta*).



Photopoint 2 The same planting photographed in July, 1995. In addition to the species in Photopoint 1, species depicted here are: D. rattlesnake master (*Eryngium yuccifolium*) and E. rosinweed (*Silphium integrifolium*).



Photopoint 3 The same planting photographed in July, 2000. In addition to the species mentioned in Photopoints 1 and 2 this picture depicts F: white indigo (*Baptisia leucantha*). Photos by Jeb Barzen

➤ Construction of the Gerald and Gladys Scott International Guest House completed.

➤ First release of non-migratory Whooping Cranes in Florida..

➤ ICF hatches its first Wattled Crane successfully.

➤ African Crane and Wetland Workshop convenes in Maun, Botswana.

The One and the Many

By Jim Harris, President

By April 18 this year, we thought that 20 of the 21 Whooping Cranes released into the eastern flyway had returned to Wisconsin from Florida. The remaining crane, #9, a female from the 2002 release, had been low in the pecking order in the flock of 16 chicks dominated by #5 male from the 2001 release. These 17 birds had wintered in the release pen on the Gulf Coast of Florida at Chassahowitzka. As the winter progressed, #5 became partial to females in the flock, and sometimes protected #9 from harassment by the dominant chicks. On April 1, when #5 and the flock of chicks started their migration, #9 dropped out within a few miles, then more slowly made her way north.

When she arrived alone in Atlanta, #9 was confused and landed near a construction company on the south side of the city. She attempted to circle around the east edge of the city when she continued. Her route took her up the wrong valleys into the mountains north, where thunderstorms and poor visibility prevented our tracking team from following. When the weather cleared, our small plane found her well off course in a flooded clover field in North Carolina.

When our trackers took a break at Easter, #9 again slipped away.

By late April, with the rest of the flock safely returned, we worried about the last crane, somewhere in the Appalachians, a poor place for one white crane. Thanks to the generosity of Windway Capital Corporation, we sent a Cessna 182 and intern Lara Fondow back to look for her. Late on the second day, they found #9 farther east in Virginia, but only 60 miles from her clover field. She might not get back on her own. Last fall, when she and the other 15 chicks followed the ultralight

aircraft south, she had been crated and driven in a van for over 160 miles around Atlanta. She didn't know the way.

Over the next few days, we assigned a second ICF tracker to join Lara; together, they would catch #9. We arranged a second, larger plane to carry #9 and her crate, but we still needed



ICF Aviculturist Sara Zimorski, dressed in crane costume, carries #9 female Whooping Crane toward the waiting truck. Of the 21 cranes released by the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership, only this one bird failed to migrate on her own from Florida to the upper Midwest in April. The monitoring team located and captured her in Ohio, and an airplane provided by Windway Capital Corporation flew her back to Wisconsin. Photo by Lara Fondow

landowner permission to go in and get her. Just as everything seemed set, our second plane had engine trouble and #9 flew into West Virginia.

In the end, we caught her at a reclaimed coalmine in Ohio. Lara, Sara Zimorski, and pilot Charles Koehler

dressed in white crane costumes and climbed onto the level top of the mine, now all green with grass. Within moments, #9 left her pond and flew straight toward the costumed figures she knew so well from Florida, where Lara and Sara had watched over the flock through the winter. Sara picked up #9 and put her in the crate.

By late afternoon, the Windway jet arrived in central Wisconsin, and our crew released #9 close by male #5, now in company with two female chicks (the flock had fragmented since returning to Wisconsin). We watched and waited. #9 quickly rejoined the trio. But times had changed - #5 drove her off. Now we watch her solitary but nearby, using her own small wetland.

All Whooping Cranes alive are descended from a flock of just 15 birds wintering at Aransas on the Texas coast in the early 1940s. Our tiny eastern flock is already larger. #9 is just one bird out of today's world population of 418 Whooping Cranes. But, from the one, we gain hope for the many. The story about #9 is about human caring - we will not forget even one bird.

Those of us committed to cranes are also committed to the places that cranes need. That green-grassed coalmine of Ohio may never have another crane. But central Wisconsin's Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, and all the state-owned and private wetlands surrounding it, represents a one-of-a-kind place with wolves and eagles, reintroduced Trumpeter Swans, and now white cranes.

The future of Whooping Cranes depends on necklaces of wetlands spanning the long flyways. In February, I visited Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas coast where the last Whooping Cranes lived in the

Timeline cont.

1994

► Richard Beilfuss begins major Africa project on delta of the Zambezi River in Mozambique. These wetlands are home to many of the world's endangered Wattled Cranes.

► ICF begins poverty alleviation project at Cao Hai Nature Reserve, that becomes a foremost example of community involvement in conservation in China.

1995

► Opening of the Amoco Whooping Crane Exhibit.

► ICF goes on-line with its website www.savingcranes.org

1940s. Decades of intense conservation have nurtured and protected that flock, which in March numbered 184 birds. Biologist Felipe Chavez-Ramirez took me out among the tidal pools in the salt marshes of Aransas, protected from the open Gulf by barrier islands and joined to the inner coastal waters by channels of varying widths that allow the waters to run far among the marsh grasses, where blue crabs live and spawn.

The salt marshes are dense with green plants, but scattered among the green are small pools that the cranes prefer (not the larger bays and open lakes). Apparently the blue crabs are most abundant and easiest to catch in these pools, where fresh water mixes with salt. I stood with Felipe in our rubber boots in the clear water, watching the great cranes at a distance.

"There's no where else," Felipe said, "on all the Texas coast, with such expanses of salt marshes and small pools. Only Aransas."

"No where else?" I echoed.

"Well, behind Padre Island, there's a smaller area. But everywhere else, up and down the coast, it's different. Bigger water, or dense saltgrass, not the small pools the cranes prefer."

The salt marshes at Aransas are strictly protected, and so are the cranes. But the freshwater that must mix with the saltwater, to make the best marshes for blue crabs, is not getting into San Antonio Bay – too many people take the water before it reaches the coast.

This one-of-a-kind place, unique in all of the world for Whooping Cranes, is threatened.

I love to work at ICF because each crane matters, and our mission makes us guardians of the special crane places around the world, on the five continents where cranes live.

Each of the special crane places is irreplaceable and beautifully breathtaking.



Felipe Chavez-Ramirez (on right) leads the way across one of the pools favored by Whooping Cranes as they search for blue crabs in saltmarshes of Aransas National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas coast. Felipe is studying relationships among cranes, blue crabs, river inflows and water salinity in a region where human populations place increasing pressure on freshwater resources. As river flows diminish, estuaries and nearby saltmarshes become more salty and predation on blue crabs goes up, resulting in fewer blue crabs for Whooping Cranes. Photo by Jim Harris

ing... Necedah and Aransas for the Whooping Cranes, the Han River Estuary by the Korean DMZ for the wintering White-naped and Red crowned Cranes and Tram Chim in the delta of the Mekong in Vietnam with Sarus and many storks, and small wetlands in the mountains of Ethiopia where the Wattled Cranes nest as they also do on the deltas of Zambezi and Okavango.

I also love the challenges and mission of ICF because the cranes one by one and all those beautiful, irreplaceable places depend on the efforts of

people to make them safe. Collectively, the cranes and crane places need help from thousands, indeed millions of people.

Yet individuals make a key difference. When I think of Aransas, I think of blue crabs and freshwater and standing in rubber boots with Crane Biologist Felipe Chavez-Ramirez. His insight and passion for the marshes –

Felipe is a scientist with a strong voice – may enable the fate of cranes and their favorite food, the blue crab, to influence water management for the rivers running to the Texas coast, and so preserve some of the richest and most threatened ecosystems in America. Likewise, refuge biologist Tom Stehn watches over each and every white crane at Aransas. For 20 years, I have relished hearing his white crane stories. Each of those crane places has one or several voices of caring.

The crane world gives a sense of scale for the immensity of earth. The Earth with all its billions is beyond my comprehension, beyond anything my affection can do. Yet the cranes have such spirit that they stand as individuals, plain to you and to me. Just as the fate of #9, and #5 and all their sisters and cousins, is also the fate of the Whooping Crane, so your caring, and the caring action of our fellow crane lovers, is the future for cranes. Through ICF, we join the individual efforts – each human's allotment of concern and impact – into rivers that run together as they change the sea.



1996

- ▶ International Art Exchange begins.
- ▶ Princess Sayako, ornithologist and one of three children of the Imperial Family of Japan, visits ICF.

1997

- ▶ Tram Chim Sarus Crane Reserve becomes Tram Chim National Park, Vietnam's first wetland National Park, an important wintering area for the endangered Eastern Sarus Cranes.

- ▶ Li Fengshan is hired as China Program Coordinator, the first foreign national to join ICF staff.

From Captivity to the Wild, Breeding Cranes for Reintroduction

By Michael Putnam, Curator of Birds

Throughout ICF's 30-year history, the captive breeding of cranes has been an important part of our efforts to save these endangered birds from extinction. Yet, then as now, there is uncertainty surrounding the question of whether captive breeding and reintroduction can help conserve cranes in the wild. For the past 30 years, ICF has been actively involved in a grand experiment to learn if captive produced offspring can indeed be used to bolster or re-establish wild populations. In broad strokes, progress in this experiment can be roughly divided into three decade-long steps toward answering this question.

In the first decade, the Aviculture Department (now the Crane Conservation Department, or CCD) worked to develop methods to breed cranes reliably in captivity. Some early successes include the first captive breedings of Hooded and Siberian Cranes, as well as several first breedings of exotic crane species in North America. Eventually, ICF bred all 15 species.

With such good breeding success there soon was a large crane population housed in the ICF facilities. It quickly became apparent that ICF could not by itself house all the cranes it raised, nor keep all the cranes needed to maintain genetically healthy captive populations. Former Curator Claire Mirande worked to involve many zoos in crane breeding, and to manage collectively the genetics of these populations through programs such as Species Survival Plans. As part of this effort, ICF has trained numerous people in the arcane skills of crane propagation.

Also during the second decade, ICF began to raise captive birds that were

suitable for release into the wild. The first efforts focused on producing young that didn't identify humans as conspecifics, and we used puppets to insure that they imprinted only on their own species. Later research led to pilot studies with Dr. Robert Horwich and Dr. Richard Urbanek, leading to successful releases of captive-raised Sandhill Cranes into the wild.


During the most recent decade, ICF has applied these early successes to two reintroduction efforts, both with Whooping Cranes. Beginning more than a decade ago, ICF has raised Whooping Crane chicks from captive-produced or

hatched his first chick this year, while the second male, "Rain", is incubating eggs with his mate.

The second effort is to reintroduce migratory Whooping Cranes into eastern North America, starting with a flock that migrates from Wisconsin to Florida. As a founding partner in the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership, ICF has contributed several chicks, helped raise and train these birds, accompanied them on their first ultralight aircraft led southward migration, monitored them on their wintering grounds and then followed them as they migrated back to Wisconsin on their own.

Since 1973, ICF's CCD, along with many other partners, has helped answer the question of whether captive breeding for release can help save these birds from extinction. We have shown that captive cranes breed regularly, and their young can be raised to survive in the wild. Yet it is only in the last two years that we have seen the first successful reproduction in the wild of captive-raised Whooping Cranes in the non-migratory Florida flock. While these preliminary results are encouraging, we might have a better understanding of the breeding

success of captive-reared cranes in the wild in another 10 years, and in another 30 years, whether they can bolster or re-establish wild populations for the long haul.

A speedy recovery of Whooping Cranes is best and something we all work for. However, ICF, and all supporters of Whooping Crane recovery, view these efforts as long-term investments whose full rewards will be best enjoyed by our children and grandchildren. 



ICF was the first captive center to breed Hooded Cranes. ICF Archives

wild-collected eggs for release into a non-migratory flock in Florida. During this time, 69 chicks from ICF were released. As is true for many wild young birds, high mortality took a toll on the newly released birds. Early on, many fell prey to bobcats. However, improved rearing methods, especially teaching the birds to roost in water, led to improved survival. As of April 2003, 16 ICF birds live in Florida and two males have started breeding. The first male, "Goober",

Timeline cont.

1998

- Five Whooping Crane pairs in Florida show signs of nesting but no eggs are found.
- First group of ICF volunteers help Cuban colleagues with public education and research.

1999

- ICF joins the Whooping Crane Eastern Partnership (WCEP) in efforts to reintroduce a migratory flock of Whooping Cranes into their historic Eastern United States range.

2000

- George Archibald steps down as President and Jim Harris, former Vice President of Programs, steps in.
- WCEP releases an experimental flock of Sandhill Cranes led by ultralight aircraft from Wisconsin to Florida.

Contributions for January 2003 – March 2003

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Lufthansa

Some of the many activities at Crane Fest 2003



Fanny McFancy tea party brought to you by Irene Sullivan



Face & hand painting by Renat Kirtichev. Photos by Nellie Schmitz

The ICF Bugle is the quarterly newsletter for members of the International Crane Foundation. ICF was founded in 1973 by Ronald Saucy, Ph.D (1948-1987) and George Archibald, Ph.D. Bugle comments or questions? Please write or call Kate kate@savingcranes.org or P.O. Box 447, Baraboo, WI, 53913. 1-608-356-9462, ext. 147.

Editor: Kate Fitzwilliams

Memberships are vital to ICF. Please join or give a membership to a friend at the following annual rates:

Student or Senior Citizen.....\$20	Sustaining.....\$250
Individual.....\$25	Sponsor.....\$500
Foreign.....\$30	Patron.....\$1,000
Family.....\$35	Benefactor.....\$2,000
Associate.....\$100	

2001

➤ The first flock of Whooping Cranes is led to Florida behind ultralight aircraft operated by Canadian non-profit Operation Migration.

2002

➤ The Whooping Cranes led to Florida return to Wisconsin in April and a new flock is led to Florida in autumn behind ultralight aircraft.
➤ From the Florida non-migratory flock of reintroduced Whooping Cranes. One pair hatches and raises a chick dubbed "Lucky".

2003

➤ ICF TURNS 30!
ICF receives Global Environment Fund (GEF) grant for the conservation of major wetlands used by Siberian Cranes.

Conservation in Action: From Wisconsin to the World

➤ **Thursday, June 26, 1 pm – 5 pm**
UW-Extension Pyle Center, Madison
Wisconsin

This summer, scientists and conservation practitioners from across the nation and around the world will gather in Duluth, Minnesota for the 17th annual meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology. As prelude to this meeting, the Aldo Leopold Foundation, ICF and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters have invited colleagues to come to Madison, Wisconsin to share their information and experience from work at sites in the U.S.A., Asia, and Africa. Our speakers will examine eight exciting conservation projects at home and abroad. **For further information, contact Amanda Okopski or Curt Meine at the Wisconsin Academy, 608-263-1692.**

All About Cranes

➤ **July 2, 2003 – Sept. 28, 2003**
International Crane Foundation
Art Gallery

A show and sale of original watercolors by local Baraboo Artist Janet Flynn (20% of sales to benefit ICF)

Join us for an Opening Reception,

➤ **Monday, July 7th, 2003 from 5 pm – 7 pm**

Prairie Fest

➤ **Saturday, July 19, 2003**

9 am – 5 pm

International Crane Foundation

ICF is hosting its first ever Prairie Fest! Come celebrate with us. This event will include guided prairie hikes by ICF naturalists, lectures by Jeb Barzen, Rich Beilfuss, and other prairie experts, live animal exhibits, music, and hands on activities. At 4:30 Aldo Leopold's daughter, Nina Leopold Bradley, will read her father's "Prairie Birthday".

ICF Reunion/Intern, Staff and Volunteer Appreciation

➤ **Saturday, July 19, 4:30 pm – 11 pm**

As ICF celebrates 30 years, we wish to recognize the invaluable contributions that have been made by its staff, interns, and volunteers. **If you were or know a past intern, volunteer or staff member and would like more information on this event, contact Ann Burke at aburke@savingcranes.org or 608-356-9462 ext. 222**

Annual Meeting/Member Appreciation

Celebrate ICF's 30th Anniversary

➤ **Sat., September 13, 9 am – 5 pm**
International Crane Foundation
Open House

➤ **5:30 – 9 Banquet**

(The Wintergreen Resort):

Keynote Speaker: Renowned Author, Naturalist and ICF Member Peter Matthiessen.

A gifted writer and National Book Award-winner, Peter (Birds of Heaven, Travels with Cranes) provides literally a worldwide tableau in his quest for the various cranes.

Look for the Annual Meeting Registration in the August Bugle

Background art throughout Bugle by Janet Flynn

ICF thanks Next Level Design and Spectra Print for the donation of their resources on this special issue.



International Crane Foundation

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