

ARCHAEOLOGY NEWS

CONNECTING THE PAST, THE PRESENT, AND THE FUTURE

As MVAC's 40th Anniversary year draws to a close, we've enjoyed revisiting the organization's history—including in the conversation with MVAC's founder, Jim Gallagher, featured in our **new video**. We're also excited about starting our next 40 years! In an upcoming video, we'll be talking with MVAC's current director, Tim McAndrews, about where we are right now, and what we're aiming to do in the future. Stay tuned!



Archaeology News is a publication of the Mississippi Valley Archaeology Center.

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1725 State Street

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EVENTS

We're hoping to hold additional in-person activities during 2023. Watch our **e-News**, **website**, and **Facebook** page for updates!

MVAC AVAILABILITY

- MVAC is usually open during regular business hours, but if you would like to visit, we recommend emailing or leaving a voicemail in advance to make sure someone will be available (mvac@uwlax.edu or 608.785.8463).

UPCOMING EVENT

Artifact Show

Come to Valley View Mall and see artifacts representing the area's long history. Local collectors will display their personal collections, and MVAC staff will bring artifacts recovered from local excavations. Archaeologists will be on hand to answer questions. Bring in your own artifacts for help in their identification. Call MVAC at 608.785.8454 or email mvac@uwlax.edu if you would like to display your artifacts.

Saturday, March 4, 2023

10 AM-5 PM

Valley View Mall

3800 WI-16

La Crosse, WI 54601



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40 YEARS OF MVAC

It's hard to believe—this year is MVAC's 40th anniversary! We've been looking back at the organization's history and thinking about the hard work and innovative thinking it took to get MVAC off the ground. So we went straight to the source: Dr. James P. Gallagher, now UWL Professor Emeritus, who came up with the idea for MVAC and then (the hard part!) made it happen. We've captured some of this history in a **new video interview**, and we're sharing some here as well.

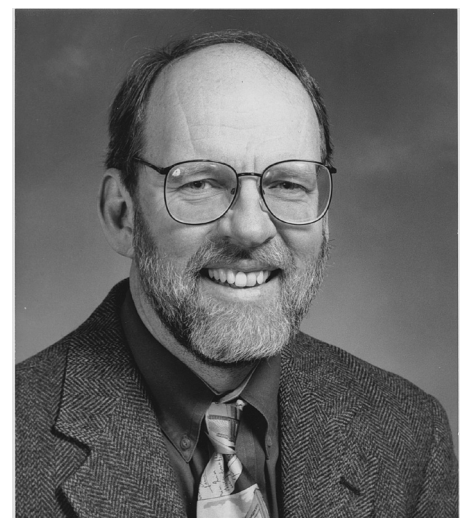
New PhD in hand, Jim applied for a teaching position in his hometown of La Crosse. UWL was seeking someone who would start an archaeology program basically from scratch, and when Jim was hired in 1977, he was the perfect choice. Students were enthusiastic, and local residents were interested as well. Once Jim started, the need for an active, more comprehensive program was clear—community members wanted information, expanding development was threatening sites, and there was more work than one person could do.

UWL resources were limited, so how could a bigger program happen? How could it be made sustainable? Jim came up with a novel approach—a organization that would go beyond undergraduate teaching to include contract services, grant-supported research, and public involvement, too.

- For teaching, Jim created an environment where archaeology students got hands-on, real-world experience in their own communities. Students went on field surveys to record new sites, participated in excavations at development-threatened sites, and helped put the results together in the lab.
- Cultural resource management work for agencies, developers, and other businesses provided important sources of funding for staff and student crew, as well as opportunities to develop positive relationships throughout the region.
- Grants were another important source of funding, supporting student and staff research, establishing MVAC and UWL as a regional archaeology center, and fostering educational outreach.
- Public involvement and support were the essential fourth component. Community members participated in field surveys and public field schools, attended presentations, and volunteered. In return, they generously supported MVAC's outreach efforts.

Those four components in combination became—and still are—the key to MVAC's success as well as its identity. Many things have changed over the past 40 years, from new technologies to increasing Indigenous participation and evolving laws and practices. MVAC has embraced those changes and continues to do so. Moving forward, one thing that will not change is MVAC's commitment to the values and the integrity Jim Gallagher instilled in the organization.

MVAC's current director, Tim McAndrews, will be sharing that commitment to the future in an upcoming video. Look for the link in the **December e-News** or on **MVAC's home page**.



Dr. James P. Gallagher

COLLECTOR NEWS: SHARING HISTORY WITH FUTURE GENERATIONS

Due to the pandemic, MVAC's annual Artifact Show was cancelled in both 2021 and 2022. However, the pandemic did not stop collectors/avocationalists from their continued search for artifacts, and sharing their finds with their family, local students, and the public.

JAREMY COBBLE

I did quite a bit of surface collecting last year and found a few interesting artifacts. I found my first artifact made of hematite, which was a very small celt. I knew right away it was hematite by the shine it produced with the sunlight reflecting off it, but I did not know exactly what it was until I pulled it out of the ground. I was pretty excited! A few days later, I was hunting a field somewhat out of the normal site area, thinking that I may find a stray projectile point or two and came across a nice dark gray "flake." After I pulled it out, I realized that it was not a flake, but a base of a Wyandotte Turkey Tail point! I could not believe it.

I had a fun time last year taking my daughter out in the field for the first time. Every five minutes she had to show me all her finds. With the help of my wife, she found her first arrowhead.



JAY BITTNER

This past year was very busy. My girls Elise and Olivia continue to help me find and discover new archaeology sites. They get so excited when they find a flake in the field. Olivia found her first projectile point last spring and Elise found her second projectile point last summer. Both girls are learning how to properly photograph record and document every flake and artifact that they find, to help gather data for future research. I was able to record several new sites with the Wisconsin Historical Society, as well as updating a few previously recorded sites. I appreciate the help, support, and recommendations from MVAC with recording these sites!



Check out MVAC's **December e-News** for additional information from these collectors.

HOYT STRANDBERG

Hoyt survived two Covid infections, spending 10 days in the hospital during his first infection. After his recovery, he was back to conducting surface surveys and finding interesting artifacts. Here are two Agate Basins and a square knife Hoyt found over the last two years.



BETTY STEELE

Betty continues to share her late husband Gary's collection with students in the Black River Falls school district. Since schools have been back to in-person classes, Betty and MVAC archaeologist/Education Coordinator Jean Dowiasch have provided presentations to the district's 3rd graders at the Black River Falls Library. Thanks to Library Services Coordinator Vicki Doud Fisher for organizing the visits.





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SUPPORTING MVAC

If you haven't already, please consider renewing your support for MVAC's ongoing mission of discovery, research, education, and preservation. If you would prefer, you can make your donation with our **secure online donation** option through the UWL Foundation. Your support is greatly appreciated!

MVAC EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS ARE SUPPORTED IN PART BY:

- The United Fund for the Arts and Humanities
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