

October 23, 1989

Group braves rain to open

The miserable weather Saturday didn't keep the 60 energetic people away from the opening ceremonies of the Kettle Creek Conservation Authority's (KCCA) Kirk-Cousins Management Area.

Plaques were handed out to representatives of the various private corporations, public agencies, private individuals and public groups who banded together to raise \$32,000 for the KCCA's Conservation fund

used to acquire 13 acres of the wetland. The benefactors have their names posted on a sign unveiled at the ceremony.

The event was part of the KCCA wetland tour which conservation au-

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thority community relations co-ordinator Kevin Montgomery said is used to explain the purpose and need of wetland conservation and recreation.

"It was a super day. I think everyone who went became better informed about wetland, not only the conservation of wetland, but the appreciation of wetland for birdwalking, hiking and seeing wildlife."

The tour encompassed visits to both private and authority-owned wetland in Elgin and surrounding counties.

"It was quite a successful project and had a great response from the public," said Mr. Montgomery.

Trees were planted at the site to commemorate the contributions each donor made to the area.

Although the entire area is managed by the KCCA, only 25 acres of the 100-acre wetland is owned by the authority, while 40 acres is owned by CFBL Radio and the rest by the London-Middlesex Separate School Board.

Elgin MP Ken Monteith and MPP Marietta Roberts were on hand to offer congratulations for the co-operative effort of preserving the wetland. St. Thomas city council members previously offered regrets they couldn't attend.

The tour began at 8 a.m. with coffee at the authority offices then a half hour later the group boarded two buses and set off for Kettle Creek Woods at Dalewood Conservation Area. Visitors walked around the area while member of the St. Thomas Field Naturalists, Bob Hubert, spoke about wildlife management activities on KCCA lands.

The tour continued to Pitcher Plant Fen where Bill Stewart, also a St. Thomas Field Naturalist, outlined the importance of the privately-owned wetland and summarized his current research on dragon flies in Elgin County.

Mr. Montgomery explained that a fen is "quite similar to a bog."

Lake Whittaker Conservation Area was next where tourists received information about the experimental aerator project and the KCCA management of wetlands for conservation

and recreation.

At Hearn's Wetland, Carl and Marion Hearn showed visitors the various conservation practices they've followed on their property. Mr. Hearn is the vice chairman of the KCCA.

The last wetland visit was to Glanworth Complex comprised of 11 separate wetlands consisting of 38.2 hectares.

The tour ended with a luncheon at the KCCA office.



TREE PLANTING TIME — Charles Cousins plants one of the trees at the official opening of the Kettle Creek Conservation Fund's Wetland Acquisition at the Kirk-Cousins Management Area, which is located south of London along Wellington Road. The trees were planted in recognition of the contributions of corporations and individuals like Mr. Cousins.

(T-J Photo)