

The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

Grassroots Conservation in Action

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The
Prairie
Enthusiasts



A Landscape for Life – Celebrating the Mounds View Grassland

Arlo Paust

Mounds View Grassland is beloved by many. Located about 20 minutes southwest of the Madison area, just beyond Mount Horeb, it is an accessible piece of heaven on earth. As former landowner Dennis Thomson proclaims, “you can’t go anywhere without seeing beauty” on this preserve owned by The Prairie Enthusiasts and managed by our Empire-Sauk Chapter. “There are always hints of the history of the land—the geology, the soils—dating back to millions of years ago when it was ocean.”

The Federally endangered prairie bush clover has been one of those hints brought to life by restoration efforts of The Prairie Enthusiasts volunteers. It was thought to be completely lost in Wisconsin, but starting in the 1970s,

as prairie remnants were beginning to be located and managed with fire, the species started to show itself again here and there, likely coming back from seed in the soil.

“...you can’t go anywhere without seeing beauty.”

Rich Henderson, site steward of the Mounds View Grassland, recounts how prairie bush clover was first discovered at Mounds View several years ago: “The intern crew was pulling weeds, looking at the ground,” he explains, and as they worked at this somewhat tedious task, they noticed this formerly lost species holding on. With protection and care,



*The Thomson family has a love for the land that spans generations.
(photo courtesy of Heather Rinke)*

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Our Mission

The Prairie Enthusiasts seek to ensure the perpetuation and recovery of prairie, oak savanna and other associated ecosystems of the Upper Midwest through protection, management, restoration and education. In doing so, we strive to work openly and cooperatively with private landowners and other private and public conservation groups.

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On the Cover: Photo of the Schurch-Thomson
Prairie at Mounds View Grassland
by Eric Preston



President's Message – What Guides You on Your Journey?

Scott Fulton, President

For thousands of years, the people who lived here shared a common set of values across diverse cultures, languages, and lifeways: a deep sense of relationship with the land and its living things, respect for all the members of that community, a desire for reciprocity and balance, and responsibility to future generations. Their active care, through fire and other means, built and maintained over time a beautifully open and richly diverse landscape where everyone could thrive.

Those who colonized here from elsewhere in the world beginning in the 1600's clearly did not share those same values, at least with respect to the land. They tended to view land and its many resources as property to be used as its owners saw fit. They worked hard to make the land productive, and we have all benefited in our current lifestyles from their centuries of labor.

However, by the mid-Twentieth Century, some visionaries began to see that there was something deeply wrong with this attitude about our relationship with the land. Aldo Leopold, in his Sand County Almanac, described the natural communities he loved beginning to disappear and laid out a set of values he called the "Land Ethic" as a way forward. John Curtis, in his Vegetation of Wisconsin, scientifically documented those communities down to their species composition, giving us important tools to identify and perhaps restore them. Rachel Carson, in her Silent Spring, made clear in a heart-rending way how our modern technologies could subtly but certainly destroy the animals and plants we most cherish.

Almost 50 years ago, inspired by those visionaries and others, a few small groups of young men and women began to seek out the last remnants of the prairies and oak savannas that had once dominated much of our upper Midwest landscape. Where they could, they began to cut away the encroaching brush and trees, plant rare seeds collected from other remnants, and, most importantly, rekindle the use of prescribed fire. No one paid them to do this – it was a labor of love to restore these tiny but exquisite islands of "biodiversity" (a term then recently coined).

Over time these local groups grew and had some success. Eventually, they came to understand it was not enough to just restore and manage these treasured remnants – they also had to be permanently protected and cared for by future generations. That required more financial, legal, and organizational resources than any one local group had. They also were learning fast, both from the infant science of restoration ecology and from their own hands-on experiences. They realized that by coming together regionally they could share both resources and knowledge to make what they were doing sustainable. However, they also knew that their dedicated communities of land stewards are intensely rooted in place. Thus, The Prairie Enthusiasts, with its structure of local volunteer chapters, was born.

Today that seed that was planted two generations ago has grown into an organization with 11 chapters in three states, almost 50 preserves protected through ownership or conservation easement, over \$12 million in assets, and a volunteer membership of well over a thousand, served by a growing professional support staff. Many of our first generation of pioneering leaders have passed away or are retiring from the field, and even our second-generation leaders (myself included) are beginning to think about handing off the torch. Despite all this impressive history and growth, all of us in TPE believe that our work in the world is only just beginning and will become even more important as time goes on.

At this critical point in our history, as we consider once more how to sustain ourselves into the future, the Board of Directors, under the leadership of Executive Director Debra Behrens, undertook to develop a set of core values for TPE. The goal was to articulate what most essentially defines who we really are as an organization, what we cherish, how we behave, and how we make decisions together. Even though they have been mostly unstated, our core values have guided us on our journey so far. By making them clear to all, they can help inspire

and guide those who will continue this journey after us.

As developed and approved by the Board, these are the core values of The Prairie Enthusiasts:

- **Rooted in reverence for the Land**

All that we are, and everything we do is deeply rooted in our love and respect for the Land – the communities of soils, water, plants, animals, and other living things of which we are a part.

- **Long view**

The origins of the land are ancient. We are stewards of the present – the legacy entrusted to our care. Our actions shape what is possible for future generations.

- **Working together**

We are responsible for caring for the land. Everyone has a unique ability to contribute. By working together, we form bonds that make our community stronger than ourselves.

- **Sharing knowledge**

We honor wisdom and experience, science and the arts. We are seekers and teachers, sharing what we have learned and encouraging others to build on it.

I for one am very proud to be part of an organization based on these core values. Let me know what you think at sulton@theprairieenthusiasts.org. ■



Executive Director's Message – Our place in the story of Mounds View Grasslands preserve

Debra Behrens, Executive Director

Just over a year ago I squeezed into the back seat of the “safari truck” at our Mounds View Grassland for the first time. We were giving a tour to potential donors to the capital campaign for expanding the

preserve, and Rich Henderson was at the wheel.

Rich is the lead site steward at Mounds View. He is one of our founding members and, after retiring from an accomplished career with the Wisconsin-DNR, he has devoted himself to more than full-time service as a volunteer leader. Over the last 20 years, he has built relationships with many nearby landowners and has earned their trust. So naturally it was Rich who first learned about the opportunity to permanently protect the Hanley family farm. He served on the chapter’s planning committee for the project and eventually on the fundraising cabinet, which was how we got to spend so much time in that truck together.

Rich is a patient teacher, and I am curious by nature. I pestered him with questions, and he was generous with his wisdom. By the time our well-traveled tracks were covered in snow, the project had grown to a 350-acre expansion, our \$3 million+ fundraising effort was nearly concluded, and I had a treasure trove of stories that I will never forget.

We are the stewards of today. To be good stewards, we seek to understand what has come before. In this moment of celebration for Mounds View Grasslands preserve, we call to mind the many milestones that brought us here and remember the people who made them possible. Joan Thomson is one of them. Just over a year ago as I was learning about her place in our story, she passed away. Her devotion to this land inspired her to remarkable acts of kindness that have allowed us to preserve its beauty and diversity. We cannot really appreciate what Mounds View Grasslands has become without understanding the Thomson family’s connection to it.

Soon Mounds View Grasslands will be more than 900 contiguous acres – a prospect that fills us with wonder.




Debra Behrens, Janet Loewi, Ursula Muehllehner, Debbie Cervenka, on a tour of Mounds View Grassland with Rich Henderson (photo courtesy of Ursula Muehllehner)

During one of my visits last year our conversation turned to what would happen if the land was developed. What about the birds who rely on its open landscape? Or the stars we can only see in the abundance of its dark skies? Silence fell as we pondered these questions. And then Ursula Muehllehner announced: “When I am gone, I want to look down from those stars and see this land united. I’ll be smiling down on it from the darkness of that sky.”

Ursula’s passion for this project was contagious. The leadership, optimism and homemade brownies of campaign chair Topf Wells sustained us. The early efforts of Empire-Sauk Chapter’s leaders, perseverance of our campaign cabinet volunteers, and generous outpouring of support from many first-time and many more loyal donors brought us to this moment. And all of this happened in the middle of a global pandemic.

Our story is still unfolding. Thank you for being a part of it. ■





it has begun to bounce back. “It was really neat that the interns got to find such a rare plant showing itself again,” he recalls. “It’s a plant that has very specialized habitat requirements... it just needed an opportunity to make a comeback.” When managed with reverence, our prairie landscapes can be highly resilient. This is just one instance of the abundance of life made possible by the restoration efforts underway at Mounds View Grassland.

This spring we are celebrating another major milestone for Mounds View Grassland: the success of our first major capital campaign. More than \$3 million has been contributed by generous members and friends in just 18 months – including \$1.9 million from private sources, \$895,000 by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and \$249,000 from Wisconsin’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program. This special funding will help The Prairie Enthusiasts acquire, protect, and manage an additional 350 acres of essential habitat for rare and threatened plants and animals. Today, Mounds View Grassland consists of the A to Z Farm, Schurch-Thomson Prairie, Shea Prairie and now the Hanley Farm Prairie addition. The keystone parcel for the expansion, the Hanley Farm, is a vast expanse of grassland, prairie remnants and oak stands. The resulting 900-acre preserve will be one of the largest contiguous restored grassland and remnant prairies in the region.

Together, we are building upon the legacy of those who have loved this place for generations. To celebrate this moment, we wanted to share a handful of their stories with our entire community. We are so grateful for every person who has contributed to making this possible!

Why Here?

The Hanley property was recognized as a rare and special place by founding members of the Empire-Sauk Chapter in the 1980s. Twenty years later, the chapter joined the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Wisconsin DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pheasants Forever, Blue Mounds Area Project, Driftless Area Land Conservancy, and Dane County to focus and coordinate efforts in what became known as the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area straddling the Iowa and Dane county line. This region was identified as the best place in Wisconsin to manage for upland prairie and grassland on a landscape scale for three reasons: the amount of unplowed original prairie, the number of rare species still present, and the acres of marginal cropland planted to grass cover through the USDA Conservation Reserve Program. Located in the heart of the project region, Mounds View Grassland became vital to the landscape-scale conservation effort.

The most notable portion of the Hanley Farm

addition is a hillside prairie remnant located in the far southwest corner of the farm. It is astounding that, over 170 years of settlement on this land, this small piece of the natural ecosystem has remained untouched.

Recalling his first visit to the Hanley Farm remnant, prairie enthusiast Jim MacDonald recalled his amazement at how “it truly looked different.” There were native plants here, like bastard toadflax, that he had never seen. Inspired by what he encountered, Jim would go on to steward his own prairie and other restoration projects in Green County.

History of This Land

In the mid-19th century, prairies were abundant in the Upper Midwest. When the first European-descended settler farmers plowed the prairie or grazed their livestock, they were not thinking about the long-term impacts on the plant and animal communities they were eliminating. They were surrounded by prairie and savanna as far as the eye could see. Their immediate concern was survival and making a living for their families. European settlers were in a new land and often did not recognize the inherent value of the natural communities here, nor did they anticipate how quickly the landscape would be “civilized.”

In the mountainous countries of their origin, there were always plants and land that were more resilient than human intervention – or at least rocky topography that prevented its submission. Agriculture also greatly increased in scale to unprecedented sizes – and we are still seeing that increase today. “Get big or get out” has been the long-standing guideline for American agricultural success.


What is now Mounds View Grassland is part of the Ho-Chunk nation’s ancestral land. Their activities here, before European settlement, consisted of seasonal hunting, fishing, and foraging. They cared for the land, managing it with fire. Approximately 5,000 years ago, the climate started to become warmer, drier and more conducive to carrying fire, which resulted in a vast prairie landscape with small pockets of oak savanna. This prairie landscape is dependent on human involvement for its survival. That interdependence remains – but the perceptions and practices of the people living on the land has changed dramatically.

Enter the Hanleys

The Hanley farm gets its name from a widowed Irish emigrant, Mary Downey Hanley, who moved here with six of her eight children in 1882. However, this Irish-descended family seemed more interested in mining than farming. There was a small pocket of Irish families in the area, but to the west was an English/



Hanley Farm in 1906



Welsh population, and to the east and south was a large Norwegian settlement. A wooded area on the Hanley property was known as the “Irish woods.” Mary and her husband, Patrick, had emigrated about 1850, first working in mines in Virginia before coming to Clifton, Michigan, where Patrick was a copper miner. After Patrick died in a mining accident in 1875, Mary came to Wisconsin, eventually ending up on what is now known as the Hanley Farm. After her son, John, was married to a young German neighbor, Mary Thousand, in 1893, the farm was sold to them the following year.

The Hanleys were not the first European-descended settlers on the farm. It changed hands following its first purchase from the government in 1858, but it was the Hanley presence on this land that has given us the great resource we can celebrate today. Although the land had been owned by farmers, they may not have had the time or resources to cultivate their entire acreages. It was common to have some “unimproved” land (as the agricultural census called it) on your property through the 1880s. It was in this decade that the farm was acquired by the Hanleys. Three years after John and Mary’s marriage, the rest of the Hanleys all went westward, settling in Eureka, Utah, where John’s brothers worked in silver and quartz mines.

John and Mary likely stayed in Wisconsin because of Mary’s Thousand family links. They kept their family small, having only one child about ten years after their marriage. When this daughter, Myrtle, was nearing high school age, they decided to move into Mount Horeb where John Hanley opened the Hanley Auto Company in about 1916. His efforts were dedicated to this venture, but they retained ownership of their farm. Hanley Auto Company was successful and they were not strapped for cash, affording the luxury to own excess, undisturbed, land. The prairie remnant may have been left untouched simply because their family was small and they did not have the need or the desire to cultivate or graze the portion farthest away from their homestead.

After WWII, Myrtle’s daughter, Mary Lou Fosshage, married Leroy Underwood (Mary Lou’s sister, Joan, married Leroy’s brother, Chet). Leroy and Mary Lou took over operation of the family farm and farmed it from 1963 to 1987. In 1987, they enrolled the cropland into the USDA Conservation Reserve Program and planted it mostly to grass cover along with small areas of trees. It became a critical lifeline for grassland bird species in steep decline.

The Relationships That Saved a Landscape

Local prairie enthusiasts and restorationists knew of this property for forty years as having a high quality remnant. Rich Henderson first visited in 1985 when working as an ecologist with the Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Research. He had been asked to assess the remnant for Joyce Powers of the first prairie seed

company in Wisconsin known as Prairie Ridge Nursery. Rich recognized the Hanley Farm remnant as a State Natural Area quality prairie. Prairie Ridge then leased the property from Leroy and Mary Lou Underwood from 1986 to 1994. During these years, they collected seed, cleared brush, and conducted burns. In 1996, Rich, now a volunteer with The Prairie Enthusiasts, received permission from the Underwoods to continue maintaining the prairie with help from volunteers. A formal agreement was soon made to expand the habitat by planting adjacent brome fields to prairie, a total of 17 acres. Long-time volunteer, Jan Ketelle, remembers those days: “Everything was really brushed in. There were trees, and the prairie was getting degraded because it wasn’t being managed. But the remnants were there.”

At about the same time, on the adjacent Dennis and Joan Schurch Thomson property where other prairie remnants still existed, The Prairie Enthusiasts started helping with the management of those areas as well. Dennis Thomson was naturally appreciative of native ecosystems, having grown up with his noted botanist and conservationist parents, Olive and John Thomson. Nearby is the Thomson Memorial Prairie preserve of The Nature Conservancy, which they helped acquire and is dedicated to their lost son, Douglas. The Thomsons could even be considered the first spark of prairie appreciation and conservation in the area.

Dennis and Joan’s remnants had been preserved simply through “benign neglect,” as Dennis referred to it. Dennis recalls that when his parents first saw the remnants on his land in the 1970s, they were “agog” at the plants growing there. As Dennis and Joan lived in another state, they generously donated their 160 acres to The Prairie Enthusiasts in 2007, along with an endowment for managing the site. Their former dairy barn now houses equipment, serves as a prairie seed processing facility, and is sometimes a classroom. This formed the beginning of the Mounds View Grassland preserve. Additionally, the Thomson family established the Olive and John Thomson Internship Endowment with The Prairie Enthusiasts to support students in restoration ecology and conservation. By 2015, the purchase of adjacent lands containing more quality prairie remnants, pastured unplowed prairies, cropland, over-grown oak savanna, cold-water trout streams, and wetlands brought the preserve to 570 acres.

As Joan Schurch Thomson became physically challenged, the visits Dennis made to the prairie became solitary pilgrimages of healing. He explained, “I could find peace and a sensory delight in the beauty of the flowers and grasses, the sound and appearance of the wind blowing across the tall grasses, seasonal changes in the smell of the vegetation and earth, the feel of the diverse leaves and stalks, and the smells and tastes of the many flowers and plants. The vocabulary of a sommelier doesn’t begin to cover what’s needed to describe a prairie.”



Birds photographed by Eric Preston, flowers and lepidoptera by Eric Volden

A Landscape for Life

The same family has owned the Hanley Farm for 140 years and has allowed grass to grow on former cropland for the past 35 years – a great step forward for soil restoration. Grasslands provide critical ecological services, including sequestering carbon, reducing runoff and flooding, and improving water quality – benefitting all forms of life. Grassland and prairie provide extraordinary opportunities for relaxation, recreation, and education.

The whole Mounds View Grassland is open to the public for photography, birdwatching, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, fishing, research, and education. Bringing it back to life takes decades of work and there is still so much more to do. Former landowner Dennis Thomson emphasized this: “Volunteers are needed to make things happen. I have great gratitude for all the hard work. It is not a government program that keeps these organizations going; it is volunteers.”

The Hanley Farm is home to more than two dozen rare and endangered species of plants, animals, insects, reptiles, and birds. Examples include upland sandpiper, Henslow’s sparrow, Bell’s vireo, redheaded woodpecker, regal fritillary butterfly, red-tailed leafhopper, and pickerel frog. The high diversity of flowering plants provides valuable food and shelter for a wide variety of insects including pollinators.

In his 28+ years stewarding the Mounds View Grassland, Rich Henderson has witnessed how restoration offers life the opportunity to express its natural resilience. When the Endangered rough rattlesnake-root was discovered at the preserve there were only about six known populations left in the state. Prior to restoration activity at Mounds View, “they had been blocked from the sun under the brush. When we started clearing brush and burning, they reappeared and started flowering again.”

Prairie restoration can be magic. Clear the brush and – poof – a native plant reappears after years of suffering in shade. Fauna also hold a starring role in this magic appearing act.

Nesting prairie birds like the upland sandpiper are flourishing at Mounds View Grassland. So much so that people have to watch where they walk to avoid stepping on nests as the birds swoop and holler overhead. “These birds need huge areas of land. That’s something that Mounds View is helping to preserve,” noted Jan Ketelle, who has been among the most active volunteers at Mounds View for decades.

There are lots of dens here of mammals such as badgers, coyotes, and foxes. Once, when Rich was showing a den to some visitors, a badger darted right through the group to its burrow, safe underground. “They all got to see a badger up close and personal.”

Restoration efforts are often rewarded with a beautiful synchronicity. Volunteers wanted to re-introduce the Baltimore Checkerspot butterfly

to the preserve. First, with plantings of turtlehead, wood betony, and swamp lousewort to cater to the butterfly's unique requirements for each stage of life. The plan was to bring in a pioneer population to repopulate the preserve, but once the host plant population was restored, Rich was thrilled when "nature beat us to the punch. Before we could introduce the butterflies, they found it on their own from miles and miles away." Nature rewards our efforts.

Mounds View volunteer Eric Preston is an avid birder and photographer. One day on the preserve he spotted an eastern meadowlark wearing some colored bands. "I asked Dave Sample of the DNR about it," Eric explained, "and he looked up his notes and found the guy who probably banded it." After some research they learned that the bird had been banded nearby eight years ago. "It's one of the oldest known meadowlarks identified. Eight years is pretty much the limit of how long a meadowlark will live. This bird kept coming back and survived so long is because Mounds View provides a habitat that's really hard to come by these days."

Volunteer Highlights

Around 150 to 200 different people volunteer at Mounds View Grassland in a given year, putting in upwards of 5,000 hours total, but "it could be much higher" according to Rich Henderson. We spoke with two long-time volunteers, Jan Ketelle and Eric Preston, to learn what keeps bringing them back to the preserve.

When I started out, recounted Jan, "I didn't know a thing about wetlands and I didn't like wetlands because you have to walk on those hummocks" but, when the time came to collect seed for the Shea Prairie Restoration, Jan discovered "I really like wetlands because, despite the hummocks that make it hard to walk, there are a lot of really great plants! That's what I mean about opportunities to learn there – it's endless."

There is a pretty dedicated group of volunteers at the Mounds View Grassland, but more help is always needed. Rich Henderson's expert leadership brings volunteers like Jan Ketelle back. "When a new person joins," she says, "we try to make them welcome." Current needs are violet surveyors, seed production bed help, and bird surveying – see the Empire-Sauk Chapter updates on page 26 for more details on current volunteer opportunities at Mounds View Grassland.

"Weed pulling is always needed. It might not seem as fun as burning," Jan urges, "but you need to have the long view of what your goals are."

When Eric Preston moved to Madison from California in 2009, his wife knew Rich Henderson and asked for recommendations on where to buy property. Rich said, "you don't want to do that, you want to come volunteer with The Prairie Enthusiasts" ...and they did! "We came out and met Rich, and Jan Ketelle showed us how to identify and pull wild parsnip. And I got hooked... I've learned more about plants in the last few years than I knew in my whole life before then."

Eric Preston refers to Mounds View as his happy place. "It's the closest I can get to wilderness in South Central Wisconsin," he enthuses. "There's a wilderness to it because it has rare plants and animals and a very diverse ecosystem. There's a lot to explore." As volunteers, he explains, "we all have the same goal to preserve and restore a natural diversity of native plants and animals."



*Mounds View Grassland site steward, Rich Henderson
(photo by Rob Baller)*



*Mounds View Grassland is loved by birders and
butterfly enthusiasts alike! (photo by Rob Baller)*

Mounds View Grassland – A Model for our Future

The vast fire-dependent ecosystems once covering over one-third of Wisconsin have been mostly lost over the last 150 years to the activities of European settlers and their descendants. Housing, industrialization, agricultural development, and lack of fire have fragmented and degraded the prairie landscape. Eric Preston confided, "I'm concerned about the bulldozer and the plow," but he sees the preservation of Mounds View Grassland as a source of hope.

"Permanently protecting this property adds to a core of conservation lands in a rapidly developing landscape, and provides habitat for species like the rusty patched bumble bee and prairie bush clover, monarch butterflies and other pollinators, and many grassland songbirds," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Region Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services, Lori Nordstrom. "We are excited to be part of this effort, joining partners who have worked for decades to protect working farms alongside remnant and reconstructed prairies."

The Prairie Enthusiasts is a grassroots network of volunteers; each of us would have little effect without joining hands with the many others who share their time, energy, and other resources to restore these fire-dependent ecosystems. Our efforts are rewarded by whispers of wind at Mounds View Grassland and a soaring chorus of appreciative birdsong. It is a celebration of gratitude for our prairie community. ■

In memory of Joan Thomson

*Dennis and Joan Thomson
generously donated their 160 acres
which are now part of the
Mounds View Grassland.
(photo courtesy of Heather Rinke)*



**Join us in Celebrating the Hanley Farm acquisition
at Mounds View Grassland – Save the Date!**

**Saving Wisconsin Prairie Campaign Celebration
Wednesday, June 8 – 5 to 7pm
8624 Reilly Rd, Barneveld, WI, 53507**



The Long View from Mounds View

Grace Vosen

My relationship to the land we call Mounds View mirrors the experience of many other prairie enthusiasts. When I applied for an internship there in 2015, I knew precious little about prairies. They were just some kind of special ecosystem found in my state. I couldn't have named more than five prairie plants, even though I was studying botany.

Similarly, "The Prairie Enthusiasts" was just a name on a job description. I had no idea how quickly I would come to feel at home in that organization — or how much my knowledge would grow in those six weeks. Meadowlarks and bobolinks provided the soundtrack as our intern crew roamed the landscape. By the time school started up again, I could identify plants based on how they felt when they brushed against my ankles. (True story!)

The dedicated volunteers I met at Mounds View nurtured my interests. They encouraged me to be observant and to ask questions. Most importantly, they encouraged me to stick around. Prairie restoration became part of my identity as I continued to attend work parties and Chapter meetings. I became a Prairie Enthusiast with capital letters. And as my passions and skill set changed, so did my role in the group.

The repetition of this process for hundreds of people over several decades is what makes The Prairie Enthusiasts special. Isolated individuals come to recognize their interconnectedness with the land and with one another.

Guided by science, they care for their pieces of the prairie.

With the addition of the Hanley property to Mounds View, we didn't just acquire more land. We acquired the task of keeping it in good health and sharing its beauty. In doing so, may we help our community grow. ■



Grace Vosen Toppling King Mullein (photo by Amber Ring)

Sharing Knowledge from Mounds View

Jon Henn

The first time I visited Mounds View Grassland was during the fall of my first year as a Ph.D. student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I visited to help with some ongoing research and to start a research project that examined how changing winter climate conditions are likely to affect prairie plant communities. I remember being very impressed with the sheer size of the preserve, the beauty of the big hills, and the patches of remnant and restored prairie.

Once I got my project started, it involved manipulating snow depth by shoveling snow from some parts of the prairie onto other parts and prescribed fires during both spring and fall to see whether potential future winter conditions might change the outcome of management decisions like fire timing. This project brought me out to Mounds View at least every month for four years and I feel extremely lucky to have experienced how the prairie changes through the year in detail. I spent many days during the winter skiing around to my plots through wind-sculpted, sparkly snow. I also spent many days through the growing season watching as violets and shooting stars gave way to spiderwort and wood lilies then bee balm and finally asters and gentians. Being able to see this process from year to year left a lasting impression of the diversity and resilience of prairies and deep respect for the dedicated staff and volunteers (especially Rich Henderson) of The Prairie Enthusiasts who make this all possible.

While I have finished my Ph.D. and moved on, the research that I started at Mounds View continues and is in its sixth year! So far, burning, regardless of timing, is important for promoting high plant diversity. However, the loss of snow has had minimal effects so far, stay tuned to see whether this changes over the long term. ■



Photo courtesy of Jon Henn

Thank You to All Involved with Hanley Farm Acquisition

Topf Wells, Campaign Chair

THANK YOU

The Prairie Enthusiasts took a deep breath and a big chance a couple of years ago when it decided to buy the Hanley Farm, a 260 acre addition to the Mounds View Grasslands. Full of prairie remnants, restored prairie, grasslands, springs, and many rare species of native plants and animals, with opportunities to improve all those resources and restore more prairie, this land is a vital addition to the Preserve. And the riskiest. The purchase was the largest acreage sought by The Prairie Enthusiasts and with a fundraising price tag of around \$3 million to cover all acquisition, fundraising, and endowment establishment costs and a contract requiring a close by June, 2022, it was the most expensive. The goal included funds for the future stewardship of the land, additional pending acquisitions to the Preserve, and to support the fund-raising. The money was an obvious challenge but the fund-raising would surpass the wholly local, grassroots approach The Prairie Enthusiasts had always taken. We'd have to have professional help and seek generous donors who did not yet know of our work and history.

Thanks to the spearheading initiative efforts for the Empire-Sauk Chapter and The Prairie Enthusiasts' Chapter Support leaders, and dozens of folks who are reading these words, The Prairie Enthusiasts succeeded. The Hanley Farm will soon be ours and managed for the grassland birds, rare pollinators, iconic mammals, endangered plants, and all the folks—our neighbors and us and generations to come—who'll visit the Grasslands.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.

Now another risk—specifically thanking some folks who threw their hearts and souls into this campaign (the risk being not being able to mention everyone who gave time and treasure to this campaign). Rich Henderson has nurtured the Grasslands for decades and worked with the Underwood and Hanley families in caring and planning for the conservation of their lands. Rich led this campaign, wrote grants, answered questions, gave tours, participated in hours of meetings all the while maintaining the intense and skilled stewardship of the Grasslands and other The Prairie Enthusiasts properties. Scott Fulton was President when the decision to purchase was made and was instrumental in some key decisions, most notably to proceed with hiring a new Executive Director and expanding The Prairie Enthusiasts' professional staff. The easy call would have been to delay one or the other since both are difficult undertakings. Both efforts were successful and, more crucially, were mutually supporting. The best example was, and is, Debra Behrens, the new Executive Director. She threw herself in full support of the fundraising and raised tens of thousands of dollars via personal appeals. Teresa Midthun, a fund-raising consultant with McDonald Schaefer, provided professional services, leadership, guidance, and contacts to the campaign. I worked over 30 years in state and local public service and saw many consultants come and go. Simply put, Teresa was superb and, far and away, the best consultant I ever worked with.

The Prairie Enthusiasts and Empire-Sauk Chapter



Topf with his daughter, Leigh, and grandson, Blake



(photos by Andy Sleger, Benjamin James Siebers, Brooke Lewis, Eric Preston, Eric Volden, Jerry Newman, Jonathan Henn, Juniper Sundance, Kevin McKown, Kevin Sink, Mary Zimmerman, Mike Engel, Paul Kaarakka, Paul H. Zedler, Rob Baller, Robert Hansis, Ron Lutz II, Tim Eisele, Tracey Stuart, Scott Weber, Steve Hubner, Susan Carpenter, Ursula Muehllehner)

A Mosaic of Life Made Possible by You

Thank you for giving of your time, energy, and resources to protect and manage natural havens like the Mounds View Grassland. You give our natural world the opportunity to thrive – thank you! This image of a regal fritillary is made up of 100 photos submitted from The Prairie Enthusiasts community over 600 were submitted in total.

leadership and the special planning committee for the campaign were thoughtful and thorough in that planning. They laid the groundwork for the group I know best, the Campaign Cabinet. This group found the private donors, other conservation organizations, and foundations and asked them for money with the result that of the \$3.1 million we raised, 66% came from those donors and about 6 months quicker than we had planned. The Campaign Cabinet is (and this is like listing an honor roll): Greg Armstrong, Katie Beilfuss, Rich Beilfuss, Kristine Euclide, Jack Kussmaul, Max Lagally, Curt Meine, Ursula Miehlllehner, Jim O'Brien, John Shillinglaw, Beth Whitaker, and Carla Wright. Spencer Black was the Honorary Chair. I was lucky enough to chair this group (Rich thought I'd be a good cheerleader and keep the meetings on time). This is a wonderful group of dedicated conservationists. All made generous donations. Many had not asked others for money for any good cause. That's hard to do and they did so with great grace and humor.

Oh yeah, COVID happened. That meant that meetings, contacts, and requests that normally would have been made in person had to occur virtually, by email or over the phone. The Cabinet never flagged in their efforts despite those additional burdens.

As important as the private donations and foundations were grants totaling over \$1.1 million from the Wisconsin DNR Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). These were competitive grants

to preserve critical habitat, improve outdoor recreation, and save endangered species. Many DNR and USFWS staff worked long hours over two years to help us apply for those grants. Rich Henderson coordinated our applications and supplied the scientific information needed for them.

The Prairie Enthusiasts offers our most sincere and intense thanks to each individual donor for your extraordinary and timely generosity.

This campaign was a huge success in and of itself, but it should have another lasting and extraordinary benefit: creation of the foundation for The Prairie Enthusiasts to purchase and manage other critically important lands and waters. Stay tuned. ■

Mounds View Grassland Featured in Writing the Land

Nature has inspired artistic expression since our species' earliest days. No doubt many of us have in some moment felt the urge to translate our passion for prairies into music, images or words. This year, the Mounds View Grassland will serve as the palette for a study in verse.

Writing the Land is an initiative of the Massachusetts-based organization, NatureCulture (<https://www.nature-culture.net>). Focusing on the intrinsic connection between environmental and creative communities, this project partners with various nonprofit and conservation organizations to coordinate the "adoption" of protected lands by poets. Each poet is paired with a specific parcel for nearly an entire calendar year, and is expected to create work inspired by the experience. The project emphasizes the importance of individual connection to land and place. The product of this nationwide effort will be an anthology to be published in 2023.



Michael Brandt is the Writing the Land poet assigned to the Mounds View Grassland (photo courtesy of Michael Brant)

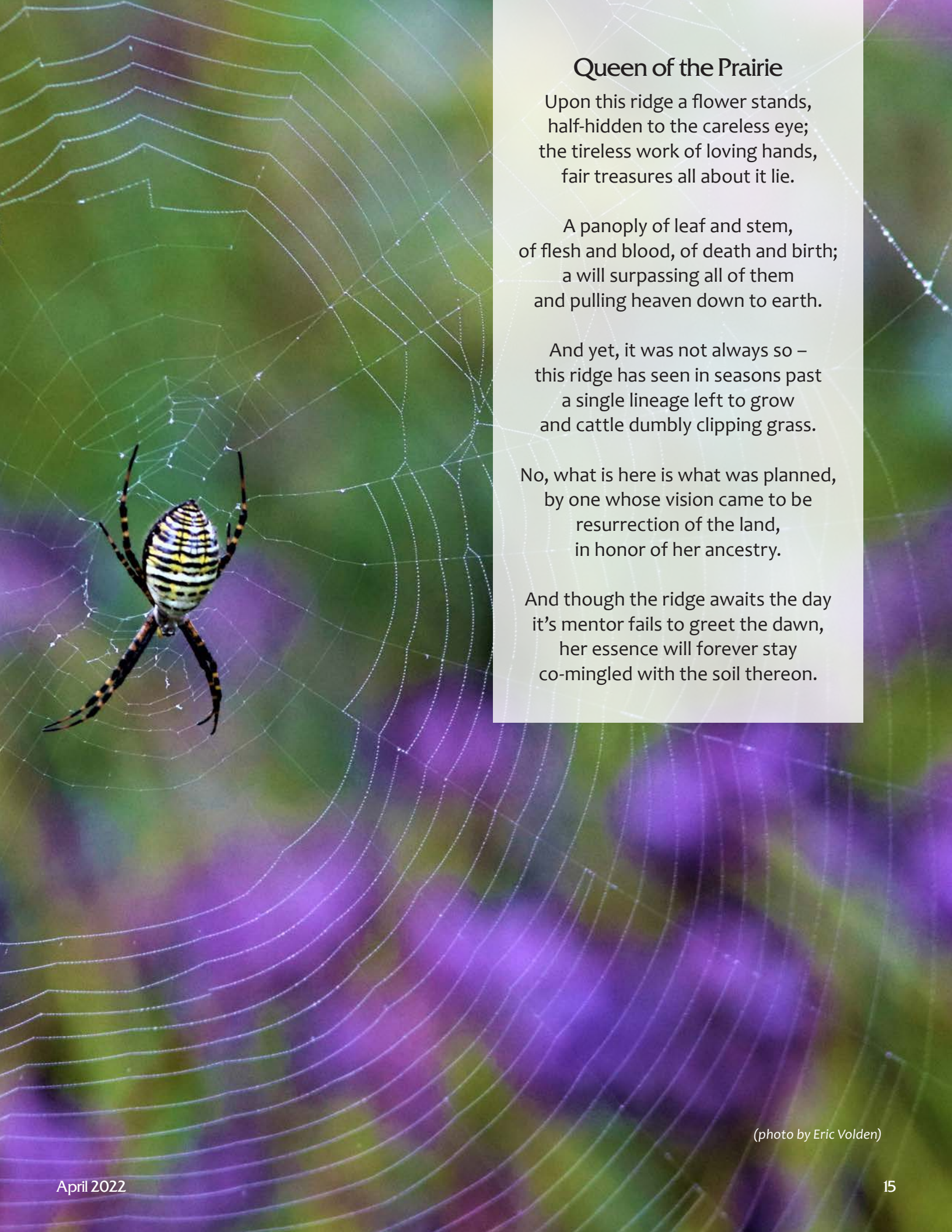
Arena resident and The Prairie Enthusiasts member, **Michael Brandt**, has been given the assignment of "writing" the Mounds View Grassland. For over 30 years, he has contributed poems, essays and other commentary across a spectrum of midwestern news and special interest publications. In 2020, Brandt's work was included in the anthology *Contours, A Literary Landscape*.

Brandt says ideas for Mounds View Grassland are already taking form and he is grateful for the impetus to spend a good part of his spring and summer on the property. However, he has learned firsthand

that any reflection of the land must be inclusive of people. Brandt credits his own affection for prairie ecosystems to the direct influence of his wife Janet's energetic dedication to restoration (see *Queen of the Prairie*). "Writing the Land," he offers, "only works if it illuminates what people have done – and can do – to a place. Mounds View, nature itself, requires no recognition, no honors. What I hope to do is simply confirm the good intentions and hard work with which The Prairie Enthusiasts and others are constantly pushing the envelope." ■

For more information:
<https://writingtheland.org>.





Queen of the Prairie

Upon this ridge a flower stands,
half-hidden to the careless eye;
the tireless work of loving hands,
fair treasures all about it lie.

A panoply of leaf and stem,
of flesh and blood, of death and birth;
a will surpassing all of them
and pulling heaven down to earth.

And yet, it was not always so –
this ridge has seen in seasons past
a single lineage left to grow
and cattle dumbly clipping grass.

No, what is here is what was planned,
by one whose vision came to be
resurrection of the land,
in honor of her ancestry.

And though the ridge awaits the day
it's mentor fails to greet the dawn,
her essence will forever stay
co-mingled with the soil thereon.

(photo by Eric Volden)

2022 Conference in Review – Inspired by Resilience

Caleb DeWitt

You don't have to look far to find examples of the resilience that inspired this year's conference theme: Inspired by Resilience. This spring's burn season was challenging but did it douse our fire? Well, technically, yes—the weather did do that- but we came back! We put on our water packs, marched back up those hills, did what burns we could, and we'll do it all again.

Our resilience has roots in the most essential source – the land. There are prairie plants hiding under the cover of brush, waiting to see the light again. And when they do – they display resilience in spectacular fashion. Butterflies, birds, insects, life returns in droves when we fulfil the simplest act of providing light for fire-dependent ecosystems to bounce back. Prairies and oak savannas teach us the art of resilience and, at this year's conference, we were listening.

Thank you to each and every one of our attendees for making the virtual conference a real community. According to Whova, our virtual conference platform, conference engagement was way above average—through the roof! That's 700 of us connecting, chatting, asking questions – answering questions, even before trivia night started! You created a community. Thank you!

To all attendees, volunteers, presenters, and sponsors – thank you! **You are the spirit of resilience—you inspire us.**

Here's what conference attendees had to say.

I appreciated the blend of very serious science, reports from hands-on work, and the lovely simple camaraderie of being with kindred spirits.

I was really glad to hear the art workshop presenters demonstrate the role of emotions, storytelling, and aesthetics in making connections to the natural world.

I enjoyed all of the various ways that information was exchanged, how many newcomers seemed to really connect with The Prairie Enthusiasts, and trivia night was fun.

The collective, long-term, knowledge gained from actual practice is incredibly valuable.

I feel nourished, rejuvenated, inspired, and motivated to grow my time volunteering.

I love the blend and diversity of science, practical experience, visual and written art, and story. I learned and laughed. Oooh'd and aahhhh'd.

I coincidentally got in touch via chat with a student from a class 50 + years ago. Hooray! Concentric circles are wonderful!



Keynote speaker, Doug Tallamy, and The Prairie Enthusiasts Executive Director, Debra Behrens



	2022 Virtual Conference in Review	
	Inspired by Resilience	
	Thank you to everyone who participated!	
	Title	Speaker
	Tuesday, February 15, 2022	
	Prescribed Burn School	Andy Sleger, Rob Baller, Scott Fulton
	Wednesday, February 16, 2022	
	The Prairie Enthusiasts Oak Savanna Showcase	Rich Henderson
	<i>Oak Savannas and Woodlands on TPE Preserves - Empire-Sauk Chapter</i>	Jack Kussmaul
	<i>Oak Savanna and Woodland of the Southwest Chapter</i>	Video
	<i>Dudley Edmonson: Northern Waters</i>	Evanne Hunt
	<i>St. Croix Valley and Our Oak Savannas</i>	Gabe Ericksen
	<i>De-Afforestation work in the Minnesota Driftless Chapter</i>	Katherine Stahl
	<i>The land, community and people: Chippewa Savannas chapter</i>	
	Oak Savanna Research Session	
	Introduction to Oak Savanna Research Sessions	Stephen Winter
	<i>Restore to what? Savanna Ecosystems are not just "prairie with trees" but complex, dynamic systems worthy of protection and restoration</i>	Mark K. Leach
	<i>Fire and Ice: Deep-time community assembly of the oak savanna</i>	Jeannine Cavendar-Bares
	<i>Connecting the dots: how does oak savanna restoration alter what controls ground layer plant communities, from Toledo to Madison?</i>	Tyler Bassett
	<i>Influence of climate change and fire on prairie and forest biome boundaries in the western Great Lakes region.</i>	Lee Frelich
	<i>An Overview of Adaptive Management Investigations in Northwestern Ohio's Oak Openings Region</i>	Scott Abella
	<i>A comparison of restoration seed mixes and historical plant communities in Midwest oak savannas</i>	Laura Ladwig
	<i>Targeted Grazing to Restore Woody-Encroached Oak Savannas</i>	Austin Yantes
	<i>Examining Land Use Changes to Evaluate the Effects of Land Management in a Complex, Dynamic Landscape</i>	Amanda Martin
	<i>Fire and disease jointly regulate the temperate savanna-forest boundary</i>	Adam Pelligrini
	Thursday, February 17, 2022	
	Lunch & Learn with Adaptive Restoration: Benefits of diversity and prescribed fire - your questions answered	Mike Healy and Evelyn Williams
	Stewardship and Protection Session	
	<i>Use of Herbicides in Restoration Projects for Woody Plant Management</i>	Gary Wyatt
	<i>The Nachusa Grassland's Arsenal of Restoration Equipment</i>	Matthew Nugent
	<i>Introduction to Oak Savanna and Oak Woodland Restoration</i>	Daniel Carter
	<i>Now what? Opportunities for landowners with conservation goals.</i>	MaryKay O'Donnell, Scott Fulton,
	<i>Idea exchange: Quality, sustainable, scalable land management solutions</i>	Chris Hughes, Ginny Moore
	Friday, February 18, 2022	
	The Prairie Enthusiasts Member Connections	Debra Behrens
	Lunch & Learn with Good Oak Ecological Services: Feeling inspired? Find out how to apply	Evan Nelson and Raluca Allen
	Art Inspired by Nature Workshops	
	<i>In Bloom - an introduction to nature writing</i>	Dana De Greff
	<i>Building the prairie conservatoin constituency through storytelling</i>	Chris Helzer
	<i>Cultivating curiosity through nature journaling</i>	Bethan Burton
	Ask the Experts: herbicide use in restoration and management of prairies, savannas, and woodlands	Gary Wyatt
	Poster Sessions	
	Friday Night Live: Trivia fun for all!	
	Saturday, February 19, 2022	
	Inspired by Resilience Keynote - The Nature of Oaks	Doug Tallamy

2023 In-Person Conference

The 2023 conference will be hosted by the Minnesota Driftless chapter in February, 2023 at the Treasure Island Resort and Casino in Red Wing, Minnesota. Stay tuned for more details!

Chapter Support Updates

Maybe you've already connected with these two new members of the Chapter Support team, or maybe you first met them in our December or January eNews. Either way, here's an opportunity to get to know them a little better.



Khris Miller – Administrative Assistant

If there's one thing you should know about Khris Miller, it's that she is a life-long learner. "I'm a question asker!" is how Khris puts it. "What's amazing about The Prairie Enthusiasts community is that anytime I ask a question to anybody – colleague, committee member, volunteer – they are so excited to share their knowledge with me and make sure I understand the answer they're giving me."

Khris joined The Prairie Enthusiasts' Chapter Support team as our Administrative Assistant this January and learning opportunities have abounded. "I'm learning about the importance of burns, and how to start making a difference on my property – making a dent. I had no concept of the urgency needed for protecting our land prior to joining The Prairie Enthusiasts."

The role Khris plays might not be visible, but Khris' role is critical in supporting our community and our mission. "My role is behind the scenes – I make sure everyone else is freed up to work on our mission. I am inspired by the sheer number and dedication of volunteers in The Prairie Enthusiasts. You don't find that in many non-profits. What inspires me most is the pure joy our volunteers have about our mission." And you inspire us, Khris!

Join us in welcoming Khris to the team; feel free to drop her a line at kmiller@theprairieenthusiasts.org or (608) 638-1873.



Freddy Ragan–Outreach and Fundraising Assistant

Freddy Ragan has a deep-rooted reverence for the prairie; it's his natural habitat. "The prairie is a landscape we're supposed to be involved in – that depends on human connection. The land is the original source of energy I come from – it charges me."

And he's spent his whole adult life growing that connection. "My starting off point was getting involved in land management. I started by loving the physical aspect and was drawn the mission behind the work." Freddy joined The Prairie Enthusiasts' Chapter Support team in December. Now, he channels his love for the land in a new landscape – the office.

In his role as Outreach and Fundraising Assistant, Freddy channels his personal connection with the land with the mission of The Prairie Enthusiasts to educate about, protect, and restore prairies and savannas of the upper Midwest. "My next steps are learning how to communicate the mission – working behind the scenes to ensure the persistence of prairies."

What's next for Freddy? "I want to plant more seeds! Literal seeds – and make sure there are opportunities for others to connect to the prairie landscape. It's been great to learn about all the diverse reasons people get involved with The Prairie Enthusiasts. For conservation, for our mission, the beauty of the landscape – we're all brought together by the mission."

Join us in welcoming Freddy to the team; feel free to drop him a line at fragan@theprairieenthusiasts.org.

Book Review

Chuck Wemstrom

I just finished reading *A Healthy Nature Handbook*, edited by Justin Pepper and Don Parker. Every chapter of *The Prairie Enthusiasts* needs half a dozen copies, including the staff in Viroqua.

The director of each of the eleven chapters needs a copy to refresh their skills and perhaps fine tune them a bit. Each staff member needs a copy to review their job description and perhaps take on different responsibilities and pass on others to crew leaders and especially to volunteers. Crew leaders, because there's so little written about their jobs, will find it helpful. Volunteers, especially newbies, will find this handbook especially beneficial. One can learn a lot hands on, out in the field, but this book will give them a concise, easily-understandable overview and then step-by-step information on the whole prairie, savanna and wetlands restoration process.

The book is filled with picture stories, charts, graphs, drawings and illustrations. It is both a helpful guide and an inspiration. Some of the more important sections include the role of a steward and the bios of important stewards, monitoring and recordkeeping, identification of birds and other critters, and growing plants from seed. Bird monitoring is covered in rich detail. The double page graphic alone will move you to get out and look for birds on your property.

The artwork, illustrations and charts are excellent, and at the end of the book are short artists' bios and contact information. I just went to two web pages, Carrie Carlson and Heeyoung Kim, and I'm hooked on their artwork. I know what I'm getting my wife for Valentine's Day!

Sometimes I need something like this book to remind me of the obvious. I've been to Nachusa at least a couple of times. Now I know I need to go again. The part about Nachusa is inspiring and will motivate all of us to think big. Perhaps a TPE chapter could organize an outing and get a behind-the-scenes tour. And for crew leaders and staff working with volunteers,

it is refreshing to know that volunteer education is necessary but that the social aspects, the coffee breaks and lunch after a morning's work, are also important.

One of the most important chapters is a discussion on organizational structures: top down, horizontal or a mix. What works best for your group will depend on the group's dynamics. The authors don't mention this, but a danger can be that often the larger the organization the more hierarchical. However, the authors do stress that every leadership team should push for transparency and inclusiveness.

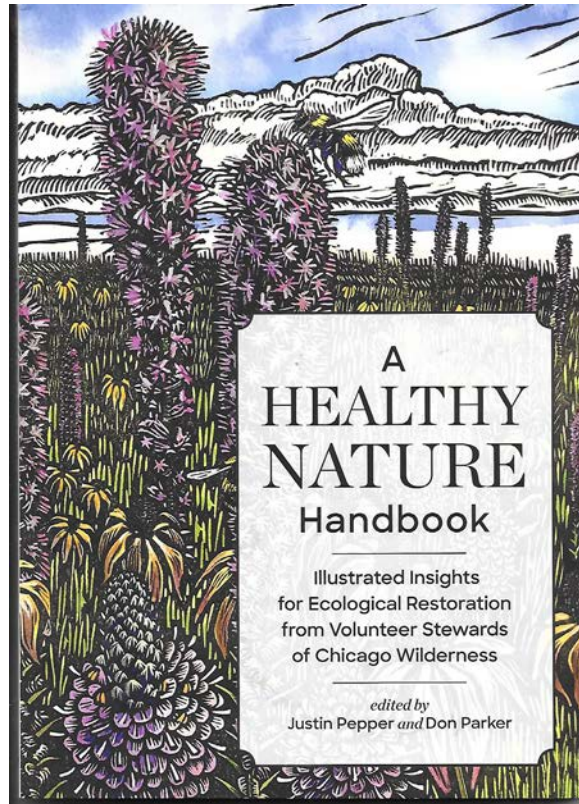
Although the authors stress work over fun, they let Stephen Packard tell his story. When he gets out of his vehicle, he hums "Heaven, I'm in heaven...and it's so wonderful." He continues explaining why he devotes so much time to restoration work: "I love...discovering new things....I go and count all the savanna blazing stars."

I know this is a handbook for boots on the ground and there are other important topics that can wait for another day, but I think that there should have been a short discussion of Climate Change. What will happen, what is happening to our

restorations because of Climate Change, not in some projected future but right now?

Also, *The Prairie Enthusiasts* are an example of how groups can work together. But we need to bring together other groups. And we need to get political. Right now the Natural Land Institute and Severson Dells are working to save an important prairie remnant, the Bell Bowl Prairie located on the Rockford Airport property, which is slated for expansion. It would be wonderful if they had help from the four of five other conservation groups in Northwest Illinois, or even from others in the metro-Chicago area.

Get copies of this book for everybody, but especially for the newbies. And when it's too wet or too cold, get a cup of coffee and enjoy the artwork, including the paintings of the many beautiful wildflowers. And see if you can add those flowers to your restoration. ■



Blue Sky Botany – Buttercups (Ranunculus)

By RS Baller

Wisconsin has at least 15 buttercup species, each in their own habitat. This article presents 6 most likely to be stepped on by the average hiker, and which I have blue sky photos for (so far). All are native except *R. repens*. They are presented in the usual order of flowering. Most can be found blooming in May, some into June. All have 5 shiny yellow petals in their representative sizes, born singly at the end of stems. In the center of each whorl of yellow petals resides a dense sphere of stamens (when in full bloom), which mature into a sphere of flat, circular, often coma-shaped seeds which break apart when you try to collect them. Most leaves are deeply cut or lobed. Watch out for sneaky, renegade species whose stem leaves and ground (basal) leaves are totally different. Always scout for those basal leaves when diagnosing buttercups.

Early or woodland buttercup (*R. fascicularis*)

April-May. Ankle high in the blazing sun of dry, sandy, Spring Green Preserve, or on limey, thin-soiled pasture, partially shaded by wide-armed burr oaks, the early buttercup is a native that survives and seems to adore overgrazing and lawn mowing. Look for it also in southern Wisconsin's open wooded lawns, where it may be confused with dandelions by drivers screaming by at 65 mph in a 55 zone. Usually this is the first of the buttercups, sometimes showing itself before the celebrated and less common pasque flower in April, but normally blooming during the same seasonal window. Leaves always deeply cut and multilobed throughout. Upper and lower leaves about the same. Dry to mesic land, in sun to partial shade, including oak savanna, dry prairie, and rocky outcrops.

Prairie buttercup (*R. rhomboideus*)

April-May. Big toe to ankle high on dry, open prairies, sometimes pretending to be a *R. fascicularis*. My advice is to hunt on your knees, peering into last year's desiccated short prairie grass, until you discover a tiny green basal leaf, less than an inch across and always restricted to the base of the stem; sometimes it is found separately in the grass with no plant, but always on the ground, and it is mildly ovoid; and if you squint, you can imagine it is rhomboid-shaped. Or you

may find no basal leaf even though it is the correct species. This is the uncommon prairie buttercup.

Kidney leaf buttercup (*R. abortivus*)

April-June. Ankle to mid-shin high. A lanky-looking plant whose petals appear to have aborted their development and grown into triangular points a few millimeters long and wide. It's easy to not even notice the flowers on this species. The upper leaves are often entire, the lower leaves are lobed and deeply cut, often presenting the overall outline of a fan-shape, and their margins are gently rounded or scalloped. The lowest leaves are different: they are broad and kidney shaped. This plant seems a ready volunteer in disturbed, sunny, damp sites, venturing occasionally onto mesic ground. Not a choosy plant, it grows about everywhere.

Swamp buttercup (*R. hispidus*)

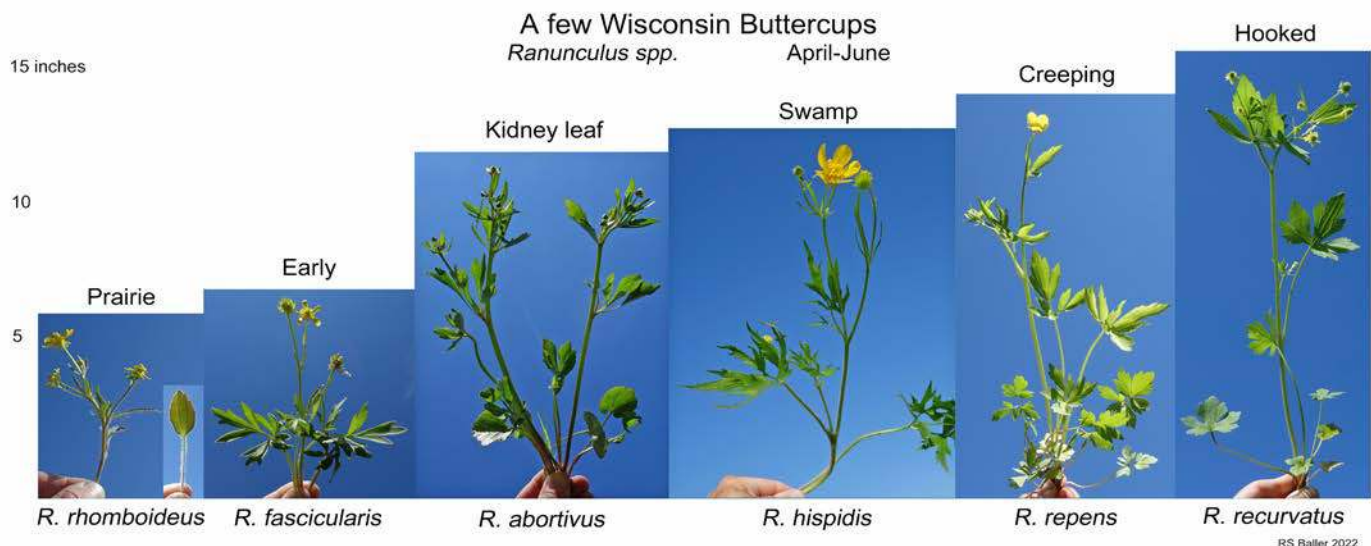
May-June. About a foot high, growing in lax colonies or reclining clumps, appearing dense, and prolific. Its 5 yellow petals each thumbnail size, the petals at least twice the dimension of the much-smaller sepals. Leaves are dissected back to the stem, with sporadic pointed teeth and clearly pointed tips. The stem is coated with fine hairs, earning the name "hispid". Damp sunny ground like at Swamp Lovers in Dane County, on the border of streams and wetlands, like in partly shaded, woody swamps.

Hooked buttercup (*R. recurvatus*)

May-June. Shin high. Wee yellow oblong petals a few millimeters long, about the same size as the sepals. Leaves all the same shape, though reducing as they go lower; all deeply 3-5 lobed but not cut all the way to the stem like the other species. Moist to dry woods.

Creeping buttercup (*R. repens*)

May-June. Alien. Ankle to a foot high, often in colonies sprawling in the partial shade of lawn trees, disturbed sites, usually a little moist. Petals about a thumbnail in size. Upper and lower leaves mostly the same shape, deeply divided into 3 broad leaflets, which in turn have 3 broad, moderately pointed lobes. Note the end-lobe of each leaflet is stalked. ■



RS Baller 2022

Education Committee Spring 2022 Update

Caroljean Coventree

The Education Committee has been working to create some new resources to help you manage and enjoy prairies and savannas including the flora and fauna on them. Check these out!

First, you may already have noticed we have a new feature called Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). We began this feature with basics about prairies and TPE's focus. Later this year we will begin the process of creating FAQs for management practices. In the meantime, you will find this first set of FAQs linked on our Education Materials webpage https://www.theprairieenthusiasts.org/educational_materials. Feel free to send your questions or suggestions to Jim Rogala.

We have also been working on a new online Resources page. This page will have sections covering animals, plants, prescribed fire, management practices, reconstructions, ecology, history, and community. It will provide links to online resources to get you started when there's a topic you want to understand better. This will not be a definitive or exclusive list but its links will have been vetted by experts and will be easily accessible. Again, let us know what you think. It should be up and running by June.

The committee is also working on some "quick guides" for a number of management related topics. The first one we will soon release is a seasonal guide to management. This guide will list activities by season and the restrictions related to weather conditions and plant growth during the year.

Such a guide can help you consider what to work on during the year. There is no season for rest!

Ever wondered what the different ways to cut and treat woody plants is and what might be the best? Well, we are creating a video for that. As part of our efforts to create useful, accessible, expert learning tools, we are working on videos that will show how best to perform common prairie management practices. We've begun with a cut & treat (aka cut & dab) practice. Thanks to David Hamel for getting this started. Watch for the release of this video in the What's New section on the TPE homepage later this year.

Indexers we need you! We have long wanted to have an index for the years of Prairie Promoters so that everyone can find that article they sort of remember. It would also be useful for newcomers to find topics of interest to them. No one on the committee has the necessary expertise to begin this project. If you or someone you know does have that skillset, we would welcome advice and information about the best way forward. Help!

All products coming out of the Education Committee go through review by our Science Advisory Group (SAG). Thanks to the SAG for the great work they've done to date!

We welcome your suggestions and feedback anytime. Contact us at Jim Rogala jrogala58@gmail.com, David Hamel sdhamel@gmail.com, Chris Hughes cjrk@charter.net or Caroljean Coventree wildflow@baldwin-telecom.net. ■

Annual Meeting & Picnic – Save the Date!

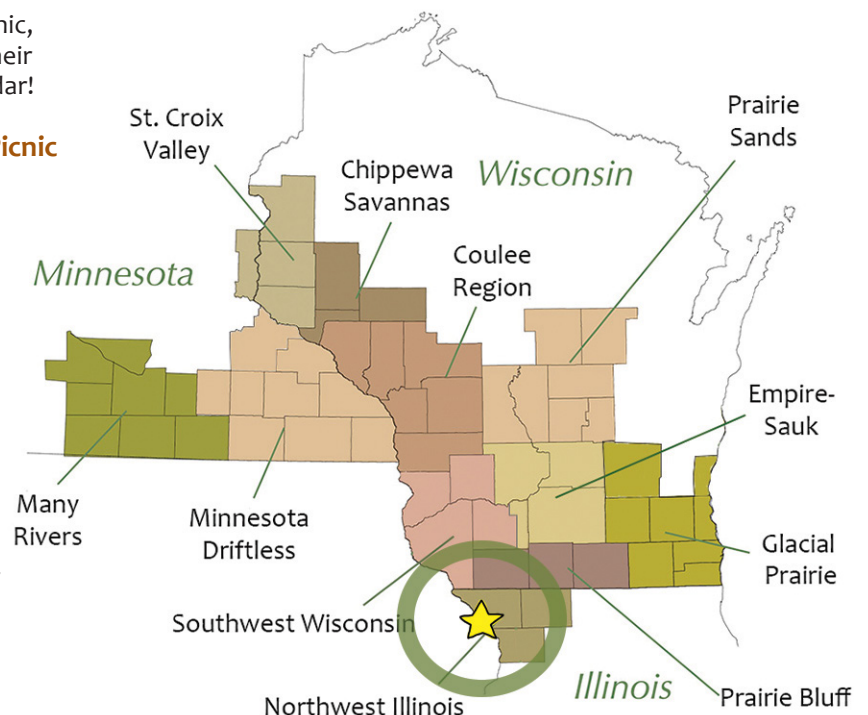
Save the date for this year's annual meeting and picnic, hosted by the Northwest Illinois chapter (NIPE) at their Hanley Savanna site in Hanover, Ill. Mark your calendar!

The Prairie Enthusiasts Annual Meeting & Picnic

Sunday, July 17—noon
Hanley Savanna Preserve
9417 Whitton Rd, Hanover, IL 61041

Hanley Savanna is a 160-acre prairie, savanna, and woodland restoration in rural Hanover, Illinois. Owned by TPE and stewarded by the Northwest Illinois Prairie Enthusiasts since 2003, this site has transformed from row cropland and white pine plantation to several types of prairie ecosystems, including tall grass prairies, oak savannas, fens, sand blowouts, and black oak barrens. Hiking trails throughout the area allow easy access to observe native prairie and savanna plants as well as a variety of grassland and woodland birds.

More details coming to your mailbox this June!



Chapter Updates

Chippewa Savannas

Caroljean Coventry

Chippewa Savannas has had a busy autumn and winter. Before the snow started falling volunteers participated in a number of work days at Dobbs Landing. They removed garbage and buckthorn, collected seed, and worked to maintain firebreaks.

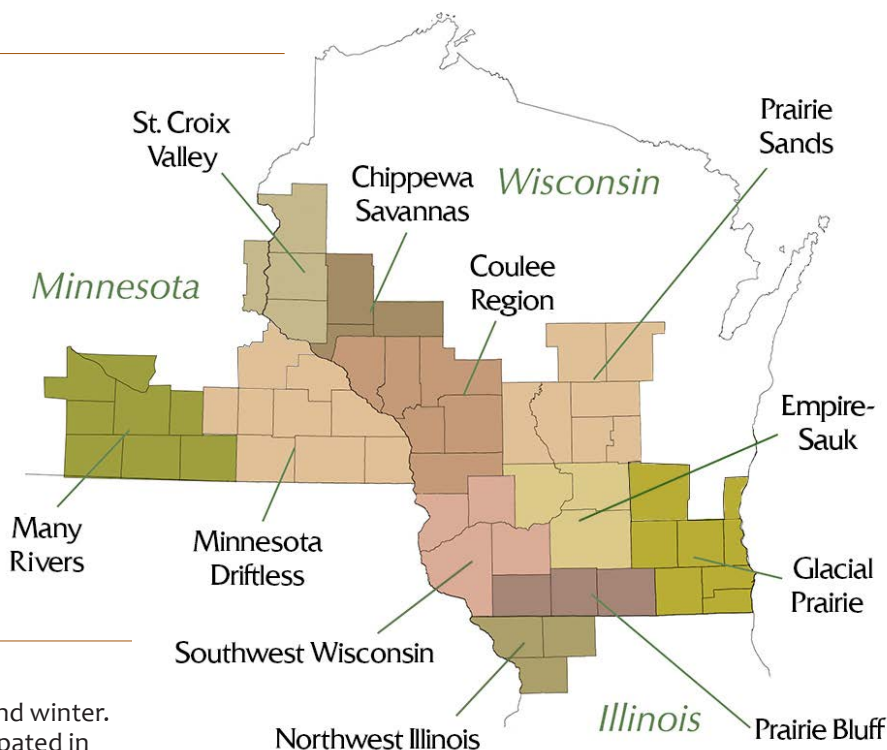
One warm October afternoon we hosted dozens of Boyceville fifth graders at Dobbs Landing. After eating lunch sitting among prairie plants, the children separated into three groups and took turns learning about invasives, prescribed burns, and collecting seeds. Their enthusiasm fit right in. We especially thank teacher Jacob Peterson for organizing the fifth-graders, school buses, and parents. We look forward to more such outings.

Dobbs Landing is owned by the Alliance of Dunn County Conservation and Sports Clubs, of which we are a member. In December 2021 the Chippewa Savannas chapter and other Alliance partners successfully completed the activities associated with a Habitat Partnership Grant we received in 2020. Congratulations to all who made this happen.

Big thanks to Don and Judy Maurer who donated \$5,000 for prairie seed last autumn. After purchasing the seed, in March we gathered for a seeding party at Seymour Prairie



March 2022 seeding party (photo by Joe Maurer)



near Eau Claire. Eleven volunteers planted 3.5 snowy acres with a custom seed mix near where crews had recently dumped 2,000 truckloads of sand dredged from the Eau Claire River. One of our partners, Michele Skinner, Lake Altoona Rehabilitation District Chair, not only helped volunteers gather for the planting at Seymour, but she also organized coverage by two local television stations and the Leader Telegram newspaper. See <https://www.weau.com/2022/03/13/volunteers-gathered-seymour-plant-prairie/> for one of the television spots.

In March we celebrated our annual membership meeting. Chapter Chair, Kathy Stahl, organized a wonderful panel of experts to address Resources for Successful Prairie Stewardship to kick off the evening. Chris Gaetzke from the Lower Chippewa Invasives Partnership, Sunshine Love from Prairie Moon Nursery, Rob Schubert from Quercus Land Stewardship Services, and John Sippl conservationist from the Natural Resources Conservation Services each gave informative presentations. You can view the panel presentations, starting with Chris at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FIj7HHZPwAU&t=44s>

At the business meeting that followed we elected a new Chair, Keith Gilland, a new Communications Coordinator, Julia Chapman, and a new Treasurer, Katie Hahn. Congrats to all in your new roles. We are so grateful to have their expertise as part of our Chapter Executive Board.

On May 21, 2022 we will host our Tiffany Bottoms train ride for the first time since 2019. Tiffany Bottoms is a Wisconsin ecological gem. It includes the Chippewa River, floodplain forest, and native prairie remnants. At 13,000 acres it's the largest intact floodplain forest in the Midwest. We're going in the afternoon so you don't have to get up early to come on board! Birds will be singing to set territory, there'll be spring blooms in the prairies, and it'll be warm enough for the frogs to be about. If you have not yet made reservations contact us at theprairieenthusiasts.csc@gmail.com.

Coulee Region

Transitioning from Caring for People to Caring for the Land

Jim Rogala

Our chapter has seen a “healthy” growth in leadership and members in the last couple years. I’ve noticed a fair number of these active members are, or have been, physicians. These include two new Chapter Board members: Dr. Jon Rigden and Dr. Mike O’Brien, both recently retired from positions at Mayo Clinic in La Crosse. Having more time on their hands, both became more involved in restoration work on prairie remnants in Hixon Forest in La Crosse through the Friends of the Blufflands. That passion has carried over to volunteering with The Prairie Enthusiasts.

During my site visits in the last year, I came across two other physicians who are spending time restoring their lands. Dr. Will Agger is a retired physician from Gundersen Lutheran in La Crosse who has a property with remnants along the Black River that are now getting more attention. Dr. Aaron Olson has started getting serious about restoring family land near Ettrick by working on a couple small bluff prairies and doing large planting in old agricultural fields. Another new member, Dr. Mark Heberlein, has been working with his family on some projects on 147 acres of family land in Vernon County.

I’ve probably missed other physicians in our chapter, and there are other healthcare professionals that have a passion for prairie. For example, Dr. Greg Cochrane, a dentist from La Crosse, is doing restoration work on his property and recently did a large prairie planting. Nearly all people take their own health seriously and rely on these professionals. Hopefully we can have more people follow the lead of these healthcare professionals and take the health of the environment just as serious!

Here are some quotes from some of the healthcare providers I’ve mentioned regarding their interest in working on the land:

Jon Rigden: “Ultimately, caring for the land is caring for the people, especially future generations. What happens to the land will happen to us.”

Mike O’Brien: “I would say for me love of the natural sciences was always a part of being a physician. Learning about and doing prairie and woodland restoration lets me continue to fulfill that need. Not to mention, a couple of hours cutting buckthorn is quite therapeutic.”

Will Agger: “The Agger’s prairie? Not really, after a brief fifty years, it’s become the prairie that possesses the Aggers.”

Aaron Olson: “I just want to be a good steward of the land in hopes that it will rejuvenate and inspire future generations too!”

Greg Cochrane: “Restoring our beautiful Coulee Region and bringing out its full potential is an honor and provides significant joy and excitement for me. Learning from and collaborating with prairie, oak savanna, and forest experts to improve habitat health and diversity is a great opportunity to make a positive impact in our region.”

Prescribed Burning During the Winter Season

Jared Vander Loop

The steep topography of the Coulee Region allows land managers and property owners a chance to perform prescribed burns weeks (and sometimes months) before other areas of the state have even begun to thaw! It isn’t intuitive to think that the winter months can offer a good chance to perform prescribed burns, but it’s in fact one of the best and safest times to do it. The Coulee Region chapter has been able to take advantage of this early burn window by completing 4 winter burns. Two burns took place at Rogala prairies, one at Mathy Bluff prairie, and one at Lookout prairie.



Snow firebreak on Lookout Prairie (photo by Jim Rogala)

The ability to burn while the rest of the landscape is snow-covered is due to the treelessness, aspect, and steepness of the areas being burned. Winter burns are almost exclusively done on south-facing bluff prairies because they are the first aspect to lose their snow cover, followed by west-facing, then east-facing, and last, north-facing. This order is determined by the amount of direct sunlight that the slope gets during the day. Steepness is the next factor that determines when a slope will be dry and ready to burn. The steeper the slope, the more intensely the sun shines on it. So, for our south-facing slopes, this means they get long hours of intense heating over the course of a day which can lead to melting and drying even with temps as

low as 15-20 degrees! After just a few sunny days in the dead of winter, bluffs prairies are often dry enough to burn. It isn't uncommon to do a winter burn in January or February!

We've covered how winter burns are able to occur, but now the question of why consider doing them. There are a few reasons why winter windows for burning are appealing. The first and most obvious reason is the security that comes with burning an area that is completely surrounded by snow. The inherent risk involved is greatly reduced as the fire cannot travel beyond the south facing slope. Second, the amount of work needed to prepare a unit for prescribed fire is almost non-existent. With snow cover as the firebreak, there is no need to prepare a different control line. This is an important point because constructing firebreaks in a steep bluff prairie can be very time consuming and labor intensive! A third reason to do winter burning is to lighten the workload for the spring fire season. As the winter season fades to spring and we lose our snow cover, it's convenient to have a handful of burns done already that don't need to be prioritized in the hustle and bustle that usually comes with a spring season.

For all these reasons, if you have favorable slopes on the property you manage, don't forget to keep an eye on potential burn opportunities—even in the depths of winter!



Lookout Prairie on Feb. 20, 2022. Notice the snow-cover remaining in the woods! (photo by Pat Wilson)

New Coulee Region Chapter Leadership

Jim Rogala

Elections at our March meeting brought us some new volunteers willing to serve as chapter leaders:

Chapter Chair—Justin Nooker—Justin is a DNR employee out of the La Crosse office who works on State Natural Areas among other things. He also has a property in Minnesota with a prairie remnant that he and the co-owners are restoring.

Chapter Secretary—Mike O'Brien—Mike has been a member of The Prairie Enthusiasts since the 1990's when the Coulee Chapter was first getting organized. He has been a board member of Mississippi Valley Conservancy from 2015 to 2021 and on the board of Friends of the Blufflands since 2019. Mike has a mini prairie in his yard which he is

slowly expanding into the neighbor's yard and the Dobson Blufflands tract next door. Mike retired as a physician in 2020.

At-large Board Member—Melinda Knutson—Melinda works part time as a land stewardship consultant for Trillium Consulting LLC. She worked as a wildlife biologist for the US Geological Survey and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for more than 25 years, retiring in 2017. Melinda is passionate about promoting and conserving native plants and she has planted a 'hobby prairie' at her home.

Chapter Board Representative—Jon Rigden—Jon is a retired physician since 2019, member of The Prairie Enthusiasts since 2012, current Board Representative for Coulee Chapter on The Prairie Enthusiasts board, past board member of Mississippi Valley Conservancy 2009-2015, and current vice president of the board of Friends of the Blufflands 2016-present. He owns 93 acres of mostly mesic forest with rich understory of spring ephemerals bordering Eureka Maple Woods State Natural Area (SNA). Jon has been serving as our Board Representative since November, but officially elected in March.

Thanks to outgoing Chapter Board members Scott Cooper and Don Nelson. Also, thanks to Chapter Board members still serving: Ned Gatzke (Treasurer), George Johnston (At-large member), and Jim Rogala (Past-chair). We are always looking for new leaders, so contact Justin at couleeregion@theprairieenthusiasts.org if you are interested.

Empire-Sauk

Karen Agee, Rich Henderson, and Rob Baller

Empire Sauk Chapter Volunteers of the Year

We are pleased to call out two of our long-time volunteers—**Paul Kaarakka and Rob Baller**—for special recognition as our Empire-Sauk Chapter (ESC) 2021 Volunteers of the Year. Thank you, Paul and Rob! Your contributions to prairies and savannas and to The Prairie Enthusiast community are greatly appreciated!

Here's what a fellow volunteer had to say about Paul:

"I know Paul from prescribed burning, a critical necessity for prairie and savanna restoration. He has appeared faithfully for burns, and he's been doing it for years; his dedication is essential to the work that we do. He brings ideas and unparalleled energy to the task, which has earned him respect and the role of line-crew leader."

Paul's contributions extend beyond burns. In addition to helping at various work parties, Paul was instrumental in the "home improvement" work done on the bat houses at Mounds View Grassland and in doing bat surveys. This is part of the chapter's continuing attempt to better understand the resident bats and lure them out of the barn.

Paul is also a site monitor for two sites with conservation easements that are under the ESC's care. Every year he visits



Paul Kaarakka with his autographed copy of Doug Tallamy's book *The Nature of Oaks* (photo by Andrea Gargas)

the sites, walks the boundaries, checks that the on-the-ground practices are within the parameters of the easement, talks with the owners, and reports on the status of the property, all of which are required to maintain The Prairie Enthusiasts' Land Trust Alliance accreditation.

Rob Baller has been contributing to native community restoration and to The Prairie Enthusiasts in multiple ways for decades! (Ever heard of the parsnip predator?) After decades as a core member of the Prairie Bluff Chapter, Rob relocated to ESC territory. In addition to serving on the



Rob, taking a well-earned break from brush cutting (photo Sue Steinman)

ESC leadership committee, he has been a regular at work parties west of Madison in all seasons. Whether it's weeding, seeding, or cutting brush or trees, Rob has been there to cheerfully do whatever needs doing.

Seeing the need for more people to work on burns, Rob created a curriculum for entry-level burn crew members, seeking input from other fire practitioners. In 2018, he led the ESC's first formal burn school for 30 eager learners, drawing in other experienced people from the chapter to help teach. Rob also held burn trainings for the Glacial Prairies Chapter. When COVID hit, the training moved online and in 2021, became affiliated with The Prairie Enthusiasts annual conference, expanding its geographic reach considerably. Over the past five years, about 440 people have attended the training.

Rob takes photos whenever he's in the field, whether working or botanizing. He has been taking portraits of plants against a blue sky, combining his love of botanizing with photography. Check out the articles Rob contributed to the April 2021 (Blue Sky Photography) and November 2021 (Blue Sky Botany), and this current spring issue of The Prairie Promoter. Past issues of the newsletter are available on The Prairie Enthusiasts website under the "About" tab.

And finally, please consider viewing a film made several years ago, in which Rob makes several appearances. It highlights volunteers from across The Prairie Enthusiasts talking about aspects of prairies. Hint: Watch through to the end! <https://vimeo.com/122495317>

Paul and Rob received autographed copies of Doug Tallamy's book *The Nature of Oaks* with gratitude from the chapter.

Empire Sauk Chapter Fire Practicum 2022

The Empire-Sauk Chapter directed two half-day fire practicums for new prescribed fire volunteers on March 20, 2022. The trainings, one in the morning, one in the afternoon, were at The Prairie Enthusiasts-owned Mounds View Grasslands, south of Blue Mounds, Wis. About 14 people attended. They learned basic equipment and burned in black lines through grass. Volunteer teachers were Andy Sleger, Scott Fulton, and Rob Baller. Equipment was gratefully borrowed from Pleasure Valley Conservancy and Mounds View Grasslands. The weather was ideal and the barn was not burned down.



Scott Fulton educates on radio communications, showing improved transmission via hand position (photo by Rob Baller)



Students study the drip torch. Andy Sleger (L), Scott Fulton (R)
(photo by Rob Baller)



Burning a black line (photo by Rob Baller)

Amy Chamberlin Wins The Prairie Enthusiasts Photo Contest

Empire-Sauk Chapter volunteer and co-steward of Moely Prairie, Amy Chamberlin, is this year's overall winner of The Prairie Enthusiasts photo contest! Her winning image is a beautiful photo of prairie smoke which will be featured on the cover of The Prairie Enthusiasts Annual Report in this summer's issue of The Prairie Promoter.

In addition to helping restore Moely Prairie, Amy loves sharing what she sees on the prairie through her posts and photographs on "For the Love of Moely Prairie" Facebook page www.facebook.com/MoelyPrairie.

Here's a link to a slide show she put together that you should be able to see without a Facebook account. www.facebook.com/MoelyPrairie/videos/241554474721961/

You can also see her photos on Instagram at @



Amy Chamberlin, winner of this year's photo contest. (photo courtesy of Chamberlin)

moelyprairie and on TikTok at <https://www-useast1a.tiktok.com/@moelyprairie?lang=en>

Congratulations, Amy, from the Empire-Sauk Chapter!



Amy Chamberlin's winning photo of prairie smoke

Violet Surveyors Needed

Volunteers are needed to conduct surveys of violet presence and density at Mounds View Grassland and Erbe Grassland. The State Endangered regal fritillary butterfly is present at these preserves, and their caterpillars eat only violets (prairie, bird's foot, marsh, common wood, etc.). Thus, knowing where we have them and in what abundance, is critical for assessing habitat quality and our progress in expanding the habitat at these preserves. If you wish to help do violet surveys and/or engage and direct other volunteers in conducting surveys, contact Rich Henderson (tpe.rhenderson@tds.net).

Seed Production Beds Need Your Help

Steve Glass, who has been diligently managing the seed production beds (seed orchards) at Schurch-Thomson Prairie for the past five years, has retired from that position. Having gotten them into good shape with the help of many volunteers, he is passing on the torch. These beds produce hard-to-come-by seed and plants critical to the improvement and expansion of prairie at many of The Prairie Enthusiasts preserves. These orchards need continuous care and attention in establishing, maintaining, and periodically redoing the beds to keep them productive. If you would like to help in any of the following important tasks at the orchards, please contact Rich Henderson (tpe.rhenderson@tds.net).

- Planting and weeding beds (also some collecting of seed), either on your own or in group settings. Training and tools will be provided.
- Growing seedlings from seed provided (especially prairie violet, wood lily, prairie phlox, blue-eyed grass, pale spike lobelia, Jacob's ladder, and wild strawberry). You may keep a portion for your own use. Some skill and knowledge in growing plants from seed required. Specific guidance on the tricky species will be provided.
- Overseeing/coordinating the seed orchards. This includes organizing and directing volunteers in planting,

maintaining, and redoing beds; maintaining records of what is planted where; and soliciting and coordinating seedling growers, including getting seed to them and plantings from them.

Calling All Birders

There are two conservation projects at Mounds View Grassland in need of avid birders. If you would like to help on either of these, please contact Rich Henderson (tpe.rhenderson@tds.net) to learn more.

- People are needed to conduct bird surveys during the breeding season (May 15 to July 10) on the newest addition to The Prairie Enthusiasts' Mounds View Grassland. We are most fortunate to have just added 260 acres to the preserve, which includes excellent habitat for grassland birds, some oak savanna in need of restoration, and a few areas overgrown with trees. Extensive habitat recovery and restoration work is being planned. However, before doing so, we wish to collect qualitative and quantitative data on current bird use to help guide the planning.
- Critical habitat for Bell's Vireo, listed as Threatened in Wisconsin, is at risk at The Prairie Enthusiasts' Mounds View Grassland. Your help is needed to guard against this threat. Bell's Vireos prefer dense, shrubby areas within an open prairie landscape, along with other birds such as willow flycatchers, field sparrows, brown thrashers, etc. Many patches of shrub-thicket habitat have been retained at the preserve for this purpose, but they are slowly being overtaken by trees and non-natives shrubs such as honeysuckle and buckthorn, degrading the usefulness of the patches as productive habitat and resulting eventually in a management concern for the surrounding prairie and grassland habitat. To reverse this process, volunteers are needed in two ways.
 - a. Conduct bird surveys of the thickets. Volunteers are needed to monitor thickets during the breeding season to determine which ones are currently being used by Bell's Vireos and other birds. This was done 10 years ago. Eighteen different thickets were found to have the vireos over a two-year period. Knowing which thickets are currently being used will help set priorities on where to do the recovery and management work.
 - b. Remove the invading trees and non-native shrubs from the thickets. Many hands are needed to get this work done, which is critical to retaining Bell's Vireos at Mounds View Grassland.

Glacial Prairie

Alice Mirk

Successful Fall and Winter Season

The Glacial Prairie Chapter had a very successful fall and winter work season. The weather for was, for the most part, conducive enabling volunteers to do a lot of pre-burn work on the Karow Preserve (see Discovering Allen Creek Fen on

the cover of the Fall 2021 issue of The Prairie Promoter) as well as working on the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources State Natural Areas such as Lulu Lake, Genesee Oak Opening and Fen as well as on Scuppernon Springs. We also had regular work parties at Benedict Prairie and a successful fall burn there. If you have not joined us yet on one of our Saturdays you should try us out. We have a lot of skilled people to answer your restoration and management questions, our volunteers are enthusiastic and very friendly and there are always homemade treats at the end of the morning!



*We start them young in the Glacial Prairie Chapter!
Annie and Carl help build the brush pile! (photo by Dan Carter)*

Our New Truck!

Thanks to the generosity of the Prairie Bluff Chapter, the Glacial Prairie Chapter now has a truck to haul equipment and supplies from site to site! This Chevrolet S10 had already done sterling work as the burn truck for the Prairie Bluffers, and they now have a new used one! We eagerly accepted their offer to give us this 1995 model and Walter and Alice went to drive it from Juda to Southeast Wisconsin.

The Glacial Prairie Chapter is not a rural chapter and so the truck needed a little work to be able to travel major roads in its new home territory. Alice contacted a friend who is a mechanic and has a junk yard. He had several Chevrolet



*Dick Bautz outside his home in Waukesha with the
Glacial Prairie Chapter truck. (photo by Walter Mirk)*

S10 trucks he could cannibalize. The truck now has a “new” windshield (including a rear view mirror), a “new” muffler system, a repaired side mirror, and several strategic screws in the front bumper. The truck will be used by our key Waukesha member who organizes the State Natural Area workdays, manages Adelman-Schwartz Prairie and who is growing rare plants for Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee at Waukesha Field Station.

The Great Shorewood Environmental Group Event!

The Glacial Prairie Chapter recently had the pleasure of hosting a group of 5th Graders from the Shorewood Intermediate School Ecology Club. This event was organized by our member Alison Reinhoffer who volunteers at the school. Alison and teacher Sarah Kopplin each drove a van full of students to the Karow Preserve to help with the glossy buckthorn we needed to remove before a spring burn. Although the morning started off with pouring rain it did not dampen the spirits of the group of students. We gathered in a shed for introductions and we quickly found out how serious these students were about environmental issues.



Picking up the glossy buckthorn (photo by Dale Karow)

They talked about all the projects they are currently involved in and we were seriously impressed!



Toasting Marshmallows for S'Mores (photo by Alison Reinhoffer)

Tom Zagar, Dan Carter, and Walter Mirk explained a little about the Karow Preserve and what the Glacial Prairie Chapter is trying to do there.

We walked the students to the area of glossy buckthorn that we wanted to remove and Alison grabbed the brush cutter and set to work. The adults treated the cut stems and the students carried and carefully and masterfully piled the buckthorn. Dan Carter set fire to the pile and students made S'Mores over the coals and enjoyed hot chocolate. The students had fun visiting around the the hot coals, their clothes steaming gently as they dried off. The morning ended with each ecology club member getting a book about the natural world. There were books on snakes, amphibians, wild flowers and grasses and the students excepted them eagerly. A big thank you to Alison for organizing this event!

Our First Burn of the Season!

The Glacial Prairie Chapter is fairly new to burning. We have a highly skilled burn boss who is very busy and we are fostering a number of people who need burns to become burn bosses, line bosses and regular fire line crew members.



Enjoying Hot chocolate and admiring the cleared area (photo by Alison Reinhoffer)

With the help of Dan Carter and our burn boss, Tom Zagar, we assembled at the Karow Preserve for our first burn of the season.

It was a successful burn, and as one participant mentioned, somewhat boring. **Boring, or at least uneventful, is a good thing on a burn!** The weather was favorable and by early evening the burners declared mission accomplished!



Crew member Nick Gall assessing the progress! Line crew Walter Mirk, Nick Gall, & Jim Bullock with Line Boss Dan Carter (photo by Dan Carter)

Save the Date This Summer

The Chapter's Annual Meeting and Picnic will take place on July 9th from 10am—2pm at the Bluhm Farm Park in Muskego, Wis. In addition to active recreation areas, Bluhm Park has extensive areas with natural resource value. There is a 16-acre oak-dominated forest that contains an ephemeral pond wetland. There are several exceptionally large black oak, bur oak, and white oak trees in these woods—some of which are likely over 200 years old. Prairie vegetation was planted on almost nine acres adjacent to these woodlands with oak trees planted within portions of the park to re-establish the oak savanna cover type. Footpaths traverse the woods and connect to the city-wide recreation trail network

We have reserved the shelter thanks to member Tom Zagar, Conservation Coordinator/ City Forester for the City of Muskego. We will hold the annual meeting, followed by the picnic, then Tom will give us choices for tours of the many sites available in the area. Stay tuned for Chapter enews in May!

Many Rivers

Chris Hughes

Following up on last year's 80-acre 10-spring-burn season and the dry, no-burn, fall season the Many Rivers Chapter held a picnic at The Gaard Farm west of New Ulm, Minn. The members, about 20 of us, gathered in person and shared a wonderful pot luck lunch and tour of the Gaard's beautiful prairie.

Throughout this past winter Jim Lynch has kept our members up-to-date with regular notices, and members have been treated to delightful and informative presentations.

Fire Boss, Tom Romaine, reminded us of our past successes and future work and kept us informed of training opportunities from the National Wildlife Coordinating Group, National Fire Academy and The Prairie Enthusiasts.

Following up on The Prairie Enthusiasts conference burn training we have added some apprenticeship candidates. The Chapter offered to cover the cost of the conference training for first time attendees and those not attending last year.

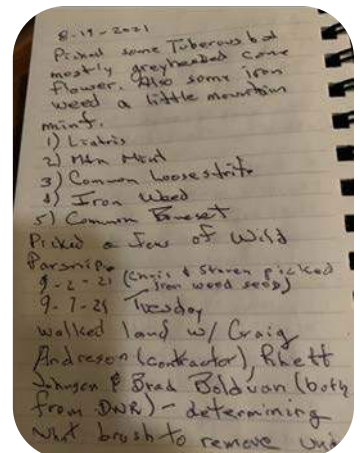
On January 28 Rhett Johnson (Minnesota DNR Prairie Specialist) and Judy Schulte (Minnesota DNR Prairie Biologist) gave informative presentations on Prairie Management and Minnesota Prairie Landowner Network respectively. Then, on March 11 Megan Benage (Minnesota DNR Prairie Ecologist) gave a delightful presentation also on prairie management.



Steven Gamm raking in seed (photo by Chris Hughes)

Throughout the fall, members picked and planted seed. Steven Gamm (above) raked in seed on December 9, 2021 prior to a snowfall at the Hughes remnant prairie on a Minnesota River terrace in Judson, Minn. The planting included Grey Headed Coneflower, Tuberous Indian Plantain, native Common Loosestrife, Mountain Mint, Iron Weed, Common Boneset, False Boneset, Bottled Gentian, Broadleaf Cattail, Whorled Milkweed, Vervain, Smooth Blazingstar and Meadow Blazingstar (Journal Notes right).

The seed for the Judson site was collected by Linda Engstrom, Steven Gamm and Chris Hughes. Lynn Schultz of the Many Rivers



Notes from Chris Hughes' journal (photo by Chris Hughes)

chapter contacted Stephen Winter (of the Minnesota Driftless chapter) about the possibility of working together on brush removal workdays in areas bordering our Chapters. Successful brush removal workdays were held February 12 and 26 with more to follow. Members, including yours truly, plan to help at these sites in the future.

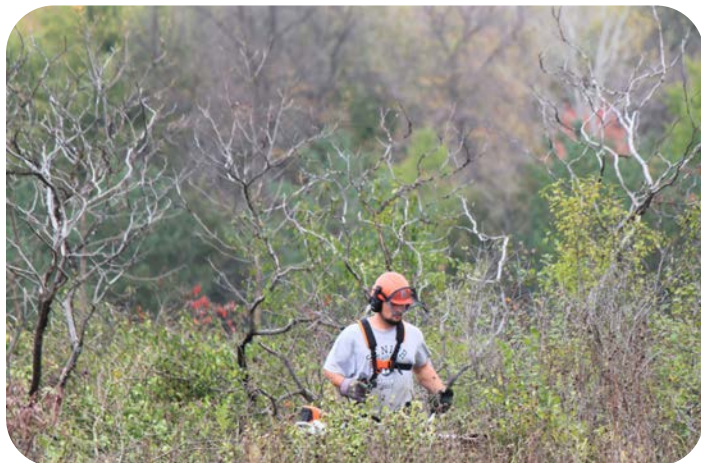


PPE and spray bottle used for cut stump application—Judson Remnant Prairie (photo by Steven Gamm)

Minnesota Driftless

Stephen Winter

Minnesota Driftless Chapter and Many Rivers Chapter Do Good Work in Dodge County



Craig Andreson crew member removing brush at Hughes Remnant Prairie—Judson (photo by Steven Gamm)

On February 12th and February 26th, members of the Minnesota Driftless Chapter worked with members of the Many Rivers Chapter at a remnant prairie in Dodge County to clear invading brush. The remnant prairie in Dodge County, Minn., had been cared for by a dedicated cadre of prairie enthusiasts who are local to the area, but recent years have seen their capacity stretched thin across a multitude of sites that need caring for, and the brush at the Dodge County site had established and spread across a troubling proportion of the site. Hence the motivation for neighboring chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts to collaborate on important restoration work.

On February 12, five hardy souls started work when temperatures were frigid, below 5° F, and there was concern over whether it was too cold to get much work done. But handwarmers were passed out and placed inside gloves,



(all photos by Stephen Winter)

as brush was cut it was stacked into piles, and the physical activity warmed everyone one up in a short time. The group spent about five hours cutting and stacking, and two mammoth brush piles were created (placed on areas that didn't have much herbaceous vegetation to begin with). On February 26, temperatures were more reasonable, and seven prairie enthusiasts got even more work done than what was accomplished on the 12th.

All involved are looking forward to visiting the site in the 2022 growing season to see what herbaceous vegetation might flourish now that sunlight isn't intercepted by shrub canopies. And plans will be made for future workdays at this site and possibly others, to further capitalize on the possibilities when two chapters pitch in to do good work together.

Northwest Illinois

Susan Lipnick

Sometimes, delayed gratification is worth the wait. Per the terms of a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation awarded in March 2019, the Northwest Illinois chapter of the Prairie Enthusiasts (NIPE) had 18 months to complete a two-part grant. The amenities part would allow NIPE to create and install a series of interpretive signs and purchase some benches for Hanley Savanna, a The Prairie Enthusiasts-owned 160-acre nature preserve in Jo Daviess County, Ill. The event part would cover the costs of a related presentation at Hanley Savanna. The signs and benches were all in place when COVID forced the postponement of the event originally scheduled for late June 2020.

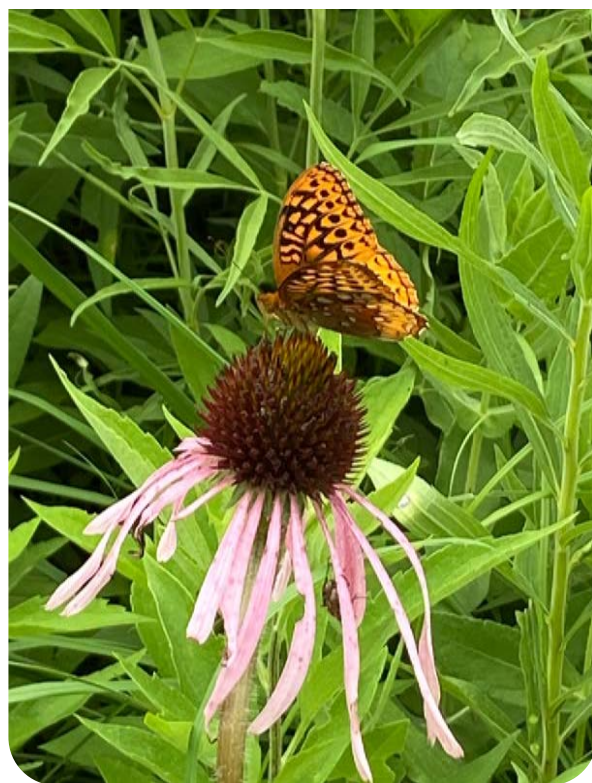
Fast forward to last summer: On June 27, 2021, biologist Bev Paulan, formerly with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and now a pilot with the International Crane Foundation and a citizen scientist, was finally able to give her presentation "Native Plants Need Native Pollinators." And what an informative presentation it was. 19 attendees met at the Hanley Savanna shelter to hear the presentation, ask questions, and explore the prairies to look for native pollinators on the native plants.

Although the presentation took place last summer, the information is still relevant. With the advent of spring, plants will be growing. With them, come their pollinators. Here are some of Bev's tips to keep in mind if you hope to encourage native pollinators in your prairies, savannas, or home gardens:

Value of Native Plants to Native Pollinators: In general, native plants support the life cycles of 10 to 100 more insect species than nonnative plants. Sometimes, a native plant forges so specialized a pollinating relationship with one particular pollinator that the survival on one depends on the survival of the other. In our area, the decline of the Karner bluer butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*) is directly linked to the decline of the wild blue lupine (*Lupinus perennis*), the only plant on which Karner caterpillars feed;

Types of Plant Pollinators: Any creature that can land on a flower, collect pollen on its body, and transport that pollen to another part of the flower or a different flower can be a pollinator. Bees often come to mind as pollinators, but in our area wasps, flies, butterflies, moths, beetles, and birds are also important pollinators. In some areas of the world, bats and people also pollinate plants;

Needs of Pollinators: Appropriate food sources, water sources, and shelter are the prime requisites for pollinators' survival. Shelter includes appropriate cavity and ground-nesting sites in the growing season and, in this area, during the winter. Pollinators nest in a variety of places: dead trees and stumps, log piles, sticks, porous rocks, plant stems, and even bare areas of sand or soil. After the growing season has ended,



Pollinators (all photos by Marilyn Anderson)

gardeners are encouraged leave plant stalks and leaf litter in place until the reemergence of plants the following spring;

“Superfood” Native Plants: Area native plants that provide food for a wide variety of native pollinators can appeal to gardeners as well as prairie enthusiasts. Local “superfood” native plants include non-cultivar coneflowers (e.g., *Echinacea purpurea*), leadplant (*Amorpha canescens*), New England asters (*Symphyotrichum novae-angliae*), purple prairie clover (*Dalea purpurea*), wild bergamot (*Monarda fistulosa*), giant hyssop (*Agastache foeniculum*), and goldenrod (many native species). Butterfly and moth enthusiasts may be interested in planting tree species that support 90% of our local lepidopterans; populus trees (aspens, poplars, and cottonwoods), native willows, native pines, native prunus trees (cherries, plums), and the mighty oaks;

Hidden Retail Plant Dangers: When planting pollinator-friendly gardens, not all retail plants are safe for native pollinators. Nonnative plants present one challenge: the deliberate planting of nonnative plants or subsequent incursion can reduce the food sources and habitat available to native pollinators who cannot adapt to the nonnative plants. Yet even cultivars or hybrids of native plants cause problems for native pollinators, including structural changes from the native plant that reduce or inhibit the ability to access the pollen or nectar or lack of sufficient nectar or pollen to feed the pollinator. Bev gave an example of store-bought milkweed plants treated with a neonicotinoid that killed the monarch caterpillars that munched on the leaves; and

Honey bee problems: Native bumble bees are known to be valuable pollinators not just in prairies and home gardens but for commercial fruit crops including cherries, watermelons, blueberries, apples, pumpkins, and cranberries. Bev estimates these unsung heroes add over a billion dollars a year in crop yields. Unfortunately, efforts to boost the populations of honey bees, a European bee, are contributing to the decline of native bumble bees. Flowers produce only so much pollen, and in areas in which both native bees and honeybees pollinate, honeybees can outcompete native bees. Also, some diseases commercially-raised honeybees carry can spread to native bees. Nationally, native bee populations are declining more rapidly than honey bee populations.

Bev’s 45-minute presentation could necessarily only touch on some of the challenges facing native pollinators and ways prairie enthusiasts and native plants can help address these issues. For further information, Bev suggested the following online sources: <https://xerces.org/>; <https://fws.gov/>; <https://www.prairienursery.com/>; <https://beespotter.org/>; <https://www.bumblebeewatch.org/>; and <https://www.gardensalive.com/>.

Who’s Who on the NIPE Board of Directors

In January, NIPE welcomed John Arndt and Jake Pulfer to NIPE’s Board of Directors. In March, Vicky Wegner, Nancy McMenamin, and Paul McMenamin came on board.(pun intended), NIPE now has 11 Board members, with a wealth of experience and interests. Here is the current Board membership:

Laura Dufford (President)
John Arndt (2nd Vice President)
Rickie Rachuy (Secretary)
Jay Rutherford (Treasurer)
Marilyn Anderson
Barb Siekowski

Nancy McMenamin
Paul McMenamin
Jake Pulfer
Barb Siekowski
Vicky Wegner

The staggered starts of the various members allow NIPE to more easily weather changes that occur when a Board member steps down either at the end of a term or for other reasons. Board members are required to retire from the Board for at least one year after reaching the end of two consecutive three-year terms.

Upcoming Chapter Events

This summer, NIPE will hold two events open to the public: in June, a rare prairie plant garden tour and in August, a Bumblebee Blitz at Hanley Savanna. Read on for details about each event.

Rare Prairie Plants: On Saturday June 25, rain or shine, NIPE will offer an easy walking tour of its rare native prairie plant gardens in rural Stockton, Ill., about a mile southeast of downtown Stockton. Participants will learn why these gardens were created, current plants in propagation, and how these plants assist NIPE’s efforts to restore native prairies in Jo Daviess County. Two separate tours are scheduled for 9am and 10:30am and are limited to 10 participants each. Participants should dress for the weather and bring bug spray and drinking water.

To make a reservation, please send a message to NIPE’s email address: northwestillinois@theprairieenthusiasts.org or leave a voice mail message with Susan Lipnick at 815-908-0483. Please give your name, preferred tour time (9am or 10:30am), and the best way to contact you. Your reservation is not complete until you have received a reply and the address of the gardens. Please allow a few days for a reply.

Bumblebees! On Saturday, August 6, 2022, from 9am to about noon, NIPE will host a Bumblebee Blitz at its Hanley Savanna in rural Hanover, Ill. Starting at 9am, Pam Johnson will give a presentation in the Hanley Savanna shelter. Event participants will learn about the variety of native bumblebees in this area, their life cycle, and some identifying marks. Participants then will go in guided searches of these bees—including the endangered rusty patch bumblebees—in the likeliest prairies in Hanley Savanna. This tour is open to the public, with no reservations required. Participants should dress for the weather and bring bug spray, drinking water, and field glasses. NIPE will provide bee identification guides. The rain date is August 20. (NIPE’s Facebook page will confirm the event date. Please check it before you head out.) The shelter is located close to the intersection of S. Hanover and S. Whitton Roads.

Prairie Bluff

Chris Roberts

Join the Prairie Bluff Chapter for their annual July get-together Wednesday, July 6, at the home of Nick and Linda Faessler; W1156 Stateline Rd, Juda, WI 53550. Meet at the Fessler’s home at 5pm for a tour of Meinert Prairie (we’ll carpool/truckpool to the prairie), followed by dinner back at

the Fessler's starting at 6pm. BBQ chicken, beer, root beer, and wine will be provided, bring a dish to pass if you wish; desserts are welcome.

Prairie Sands

Ray Goehring

Last year, several members of the Prairie Sands Chapter have attended or work with Central Wisconsin's Invasives Partnership sponsored by Golden Sands RC&D. In October, chapter members Chris Schaefer and Fred Wollenberg, helped Marquette County Conservationist, Pat Kilbey, conduct an invasive species workshop.

The workshop helped attendees learn to identify and control invasives at John Muir Park.

In November, a small group of Prairie Sanders met informally to address the missing half of a typical conservation easement: perpetual stewardship, namely, how to maintain on-site stewardship across generations and new owners. They believed conservation easements are invaluable tools to prevent damaging development, but it also takes on-site physical maintenance to protect against habitat invasives or other adverse succession effects which will fall to the new owner – one who hopefully shares the same vision for these special lands. So, they created an independent website: ConservationSellers.org intended to help Conservation Buyers locate announcements of Conservation Land for sale on Land Trust websites. This new website hopes to pull all those Land Trust pages into one convenient state-by-state directory. So far, they've found about forty.

Our chapter has received several generous donations. Last fall prairie phlox seed was gifted by an anonymous chapter member and kept us out on our prairies in late fall scattering seed in appropriate habitats. Many chapter members received a seed packet and left a donation to the chapter. Thanks to Rich Henderson for advice about where, when, and how to best plant those tiny seeds.

Another gift was an extensive library of nature books, academic works, and classical records from the estate of Myrna and Martin Schultz. Again, chapter members picked out books and records of interest and left a donation. We raised \$750 for the cause.

This spring, chapter member, Ken Erickson, was interviewed by Partnerscapes, an organization out of Texas that does podcasts about ecological restoration projects throughout the United States. (info@partnerscapes.org) Congratulations Ken!

To hear his interview, go to <https://apple.co/36nsHmc>

Speaking of Ken Erickson, Ken is planning a Prairie Open House and Second Flight of Karner blue butterflies on July 16 at his Waushara County Prairie located at the corner of Alp Ave and 14th Court in the town of Rose. The event is open to the public. The self-guided walking tour will begin at 9:30am. Prairie Sands chapter members will be available along the route to help identify plants and answer questions. People are encouraged to bring sack lunches and a camera. Additional activities and speakers are still in the planning and will be posted on the Prairie Sands Facebook page closer to the date and The Prairie Enthusiasts website closer to the date.



Ken Erickson (photo by Brendan Woodall)

For more information call Ken at 715-256-0739 or email him at ne6359@att.net.

Several chapter members have benefited from Dan Carter's site visits, and eight more visits are scheduled for 2022.

Finally, we would like to thank Chris Schaefer for her past service as Chapter Membership Chairperson. Jen and Joy Mulder have already taken over her duties of welcoming new chapter members and reminding us of our membership renewal dates. Again, thank you, Chris, for a job very well done. We look forward to seeing you at other chapter events.



Chris Schaefer helping at last year's Johnson Prairie workday (photo by Dale Johnson)

Southwest Wisconsin

Jack Kusmaul

The chapter lost one of its more active members with the passing in Linda Lynch in January. See the full story of her contributions to The Prairie Enthusiasts in the Prairie Enthusiasts Remembered section on page 36 of this issue.

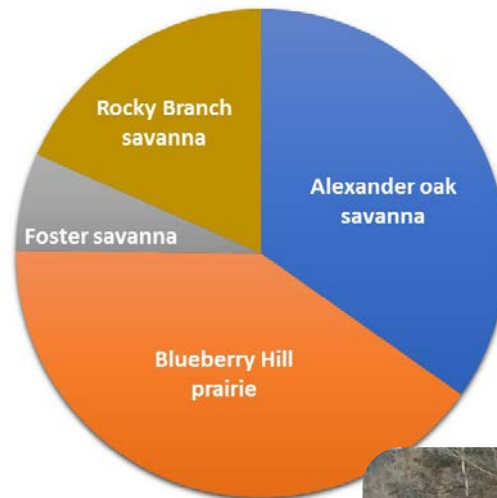
St. Croix Valley

Evanne Hunt

As usual, the winter was spent cutting invasive and non-native brush and trees to open the canopy above the precious savanna plants at the sites we manage. Volunteers spent over 340 hours total since November 2021.

Our wonderful volunteers!

Hours spent at site
from 01NOV2021 -- 31MAR2022



Harvey Halvorsen
on the harmonica
(all St. Croix photos
by Evanne Hunt)



Linda Lynch was the site steward for Sylvan Road Conservancy. She had carried the torch for several years to acquire this gem for The Prairie Enthusiasts. More recently, knowing that the end was drawing near, she arranged with the highly qualified Tom Hunt to succeed her as site steward. Tom has moved in with energy, knowledge and enthusiasm and is making things happen on the site. He is greatly assisted in this endeavor by Jan Ketelle and Kristin Westad, both of whom have long involvement with Sylvan Rad.

Linda left 5% of her estate to the chapter land endowment, though at this time we do not know what that amount will be. In Linda's honor, EC3, with whom she made arrangements to do a fall burn at Sylvan Road, discounted their bill by \$2,000. The chapter greatly appreciates this generosity on the part of EC3.

The chapter land endowment received another anonymous gift of \$35,000 in December, which pushed its value to \$248,000 at the end of the year. The chapter also benefits from a separate endowment for Double Oak Savanna, which had a value of \$101,000 at year end.

The Southwest Wisconsin Chapter of The Prairie Enthusiasts is proud to be offering our first annual Chapter Scholarship, established to provide financial assistance to an individual interested in or currently pursuing higher education in the conservation or environmental fields.

We are offering a \$1,000 scholarship for a student who is a resident or former resident within our chapter counties (Crawford, Richland, Iowa, and Grant counties, Wis.), or currently enrolled in a college or other institution of higher learning in those counties

We have received eleven applications and choosing one is going to be a challenging task for the selection committee since all the applicants are outstanding!

Dan Wallace, who resides in the Empire-Sauk chapter territory, has generously agreed to lead burns at Borah Creek this year and has already been on site with some of his volunteers, preparing breaks and making plans. He is also providing a great deal of equipment. The chapter greatly appreciates his willingness to take this on.

Of course, all the normal work on our sites continues. It slowed during the winter months but is once again beginning in earnest.



Amy Goedert, Steve Querin-Schultz, Gary Adams and
Dan Wallace at Borah (photo by Jack Kussmaul)



The Pasqueflower

Scott Fulton

Inspired by In Bloom: An Introduction to Nature Writing at the 2022 Conference

I sleep, I sleep, I sleep, I sleep
Through the riot of spring and
summer growth
Through the slow cooling of the fall,
and all the others' seeds
Through the cold of winter, when all
around me sleep as well.

And then the sun first begins to come
back and warm the earth,
And I am first up through snow still
hanging on.

I must hurry, must hurry, must hurry,
must hurry,
Must burst into the sky, flower, set
seed, and release to the wind
Before any of the others arise.

When they come at last, I am an old,
white-haired man.
And then I sleep.



(photo by Ron Lutz II)

Prairie Enthusiasts Remembered

They will take me home
the spirits,
the thunders and wind,
They will take me home.

*Excerpt from unattributed Native
American song recorded in the Bureau
of American Ethnology bulletins*

Linda Lynch

February 11, 1953–January 7, 2022

Rose Sime and Jack Kussmaul

The Southwest Chapter lost one of its most active members with the death of Linda Lynch on January 7, 2022.

During her years of service to the chapter, she served as chapter President and chapter representative on The Prairie Enthusiasts Board. In her role as representative, Linda always was willing to express her opinion even when it was at odds with the majority, doing her best to save the board from group think. She had a way of getting her point across, but always managed to fit in a few laughs too! Her dedication to the organization was never in doubt. After her diagnosis of pancreatic cancer, she continued to attend work parties whenever her condition permitted and apologized when she was not able.

Linda's greatest accomplishment was the acquisition of the Sylvan Road Preserve for The Prairie Enthusiasts in 2014. This 99-acre gem, located southeast of Dodgeville, Wis., consists of oak woods, wet prairie and riparian scrub/young forest. The wet prairie consists of wet mesic prairie, wet prairie and sedge meadow. The property contains a number of rare species and is a great spot for birding.

The property had been owned by Iowa County. Negotiations with the county continued for several years.



Linda Lynch (photo by Steve Querin-Schultz)

Others were willing to give up when negotiations seemed stalled, but Linda persevered until terms were reached and the sale was closed. She was instrumental, not only in getting grants to help with the purchase, but subsequently obtaining grants to do work on the property. She was a devoted steward for the site and almost single handedly took on the responsibility of restoring it to its pre-settlement state. Knowing her time was limited, she made arrangements for management of Sylvan Road after she was gone.

Always a conservationist, prior to her involvement in with The Prairie Enthusiasts, she was Executive Director of the Riverland Conservancy at Merrimac, Wis. Linda was not one to let grass grow under her feet and was constantly involved in some project. She was an active farmer, quilter and wood worker. A master gardener, her home was surrounded by extensive formal gardens which were a haven for butterflies, especially monarchs. Her vegetable gardens were prolific and a source of delight for those who received her produce and canned goods.

While Linda will be missed, Sylvan Road will be a permanent memorial to her presence among us.

Robert “Scott” Seigfreid

June 30, 1957–March 2, 2021

Henry Panowitsch

Scott Seigfreid, member of the Many Rivers chapter, passed on March 2, 2021.

Scott was one of the three founders of the Many Rivers chapter. He was instrumental in organizing The Prairie Enthusiasts conference in our third year, held in Mankato at Minnesota State University. His efforts made it possible for us to get our four-wheeler ranger and water tank and equipment to assist in laying wet lines for prairie burns. Our chapter donated a bench in his honor that can be seen in Bluff Park in North Mankato. We thank Scott for his dedication and service.



Scott Seigfreid capturing his favorite ecosystem on camera
(photo by Jim Vonderharr)

William (Bill) Weege

November 28, 1935 – November 2, 2020

Karen Agee

Bill passed away at his home in Arena, Wis. in early November 2020.

When Bill and spouse Sue Steinmann purchased their land in Arena in 1984, they found themselves immersed in oak barrens, steep wooded slopes, with remnant prairie topping the ridge. Over the following decades they worked to restore the natural communities around them.

Bill performed land management tasks with much enthusiasm, especially those that involved tools – chainsaws, winches, landscape rakes, brush hogs, grapples. He performed much of his land management work from the seat of the tractor. Bill loved prescribed burns and volunteered time helping other landowners burn. He also volunteered on trout stream restoration projects with Trout Unlimited.

Because of Bill and Sue’s efforts and generous financial support, the ridge top prairie became The Prairie Enthusiasts’ Rattlesnake Ridge in 2015. They purchased and donated land to add to the protected area and continued as the site stewards.

Bill and Sue were named 2020 Prairie Enthusiasts of the Year in recognition of their service to natural communities and their numerous contributions to The Prairie Enthusiasts.

The Prairie Enthusiasts community knew Bill primarily from Rattlesnake Ridge. Others knew him through his pursuit of the elusive trout, while the larger world knew Bill as an artist, teacher, and artistic collaborator.

The parallels between Bill’s approach to land restoration and to art are explored in an essay by Angela Woodard titled “William Weege: Unfinished Work.” Published in the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters magazine Wisconsin People & Ideas, vol. 67 no. 3, Summer 2021.

<https://www.wisconsinacademy.org/magazine/summer-2021/essay/william-weege-unfinished-work>



Bill with his dog, Pearl (photo by Sue Steinmann)

Welcome, New Members!

October 15, 2021—April 13, 2022

Chippewa Savannas

Julia Chapman
Kate Plachetka
Kathleen Sweeney
and Joerg Kessler
Jennifer Allen
Keith Gilland
Ralph Jacobson

Coulee Region

Alysa Remsburg
David A Carpenter
Donna and Don
Justin
Duane Koons &
Maureen O'Connor
Franciscan Sisters
of Perpetual
Adoration
James Hoffman
Jaydee Nichols
Kathryn Hietbrink
Mark Steingraeber
Jr.
Robert Van Nelson
Shawn Mathys
Steve Eggers
Suzanne Anderson
Zach Millbrand
James Duffrin
Joseph and Barbara
Kruse
Veronica Sannes

Empire-Sauk

Andre Bougie
Ben Nerad
Bob & Jane Pearson
Brian Fairbrother
Dawn Zuengler
Don Neumeyer
Jackie Lathrop
Jeanne Bourdeau
John Barnes & Kelly
Mattice
John, Amanda, and
Tanager Pool
Judi Benade
Julie Hayward
Kevin and Mary
Krysinski
Mayme Keagy
Michelle McCammick
Pamela Mather
Robert Novy

Steven Read
Suzanne and Mitch
Wolf
Bob Schwartz
Carolyn Micek
Chris Russell
Chris Worley
Dana Janusz
Eli Woyke
Erika Eichhoff
Ethan Rose
Evelyn Howell
Gayle Alexander and
Doug White
Guy Martin
Jay Bonnell
Jeff Steele
Karen Czebotar
Karin Eichhoff
Michael Dobiel
Pat and Wilson
Rossman
Paul Smith
Ryan O'Connor
Sara Kehrli
Sara Schlough
Tom Wise

Glacial Prairie

Aimie Vaughn
Eugene and Susan
Ott
June & Jay Fox
Kali Rich
Martina Patterson
Norah Pastorek
Scott Silet
Shelly and Rick
Grothaus
Aaron Menke
Autumn Melnarik
Cory Gritzmacher
Diana Aungst
Emily Helm
Eric Manges
Marcia Buhler
Nick Gall
Stacy Santiago
Teresa Schueller

Many Rivers

Clinton and Kristina
Dexter-Nienhaus
Elliott De St. Croix
Jean Pengra

Julie Gartner
Kimberly Musser
Lee Ganske
Paul and Nancy Seys
Brandon Semel
Jean Pengra

Minnesota Driftless

Dave Overend
and Michele
McCaughtry
Edward Parsonage
Kathy Hovell
Matt Feuerhelm
Alissa Oppenheimer
Ann Gustafson
Larson
Bill and Paula Gregg
Brian Pruka
Caitlin McWilliams
Chloe Peterson
Christine Johnson
Claire Bender
Dawn Tevis
Diane Dingfelder
Don Ramsden
Heather Holm
Henry Feldman
Jaime Edwards
Lindsey Charlton
Nathan Anderson
Neal Mundahl
Patricia Wright
Robert Narem
Shodo Spring
Tim Turner
Todd Ericksen
Zach Dieterman

Northwest Illinois

Amanda and
Matthew Dollinger
John Harris
Kassie Henrikson
Lisa Pajon
Mary Dodd-
Lieberman
Pamela Johnson
Sarah Michehl
Shey Lowman
Jane McBride and
John Mayer
Juanpablo Ramirez
Michael Iacomini

Prairie Bluff

Aaron Glass
Amy Dudley
Brad Guhr
Bret Hunt
Cheryl Deininger
Dawn Byrnes
Diana and Denny
Oostdik
Donna Watts
Ellen Caskey
Janet Johnson and
Donald Amphlett
Mark Weir
Paul Elgin
Richard Watman

Prairie Sands

Ben Grady
Mark A. Pfost
Nicole Shutt
Stephanie Losse
Stuart Boerst
Karen Clyne
Vince Rychtanek

Southwest

Wisconsin

Alaya Hummel
Alexis Azure
Alyson Differt
Alyssa Wilson
Ayriss Modica
Braeden Lentz
Brooke Stover
Brooklynn Hill
Caitlyn Bellock
Carolyn Hamm
Cheyenne Wilson
Chris Baxter
Connor Jones
Dannea Linneman
David Lehman
Deb Joseph
Dylan Zasada
Eli Moore
Emiliy Choinski
Ethan Neumann
Evan Larson
Evelyn Gebhard
Grace Gillette
Haley Pribbenow
Heather Donahue
Isaac Linzmeier
Jacob Zeuske and

Emily, Barbara,
Ray, and Ryan Lehl
Jagger Mess
James Nelson
Jenny Carney
Jeremy Kohler
John Rodwell
Joshua Lambert
Joshua Lovelace
Kevin Dorsey-Notter
Liz Winkler
Lucas Mathews
Lynnette Dornak
M. Kohler-Busch
Madeleine, David,
Henry, Everett and
Anna Chapman
Mary Penn
Matt Rowell
Micah Garvey
Morgan Bradford
Myah Sierens
Natalie Rodriguez
Nicholas Carpenter
Nicholas Niemi
Paul William King
Risper Nyairo
Sabrina Schmitt
Sarah Jahnke
Scott Bensemann
Taylor Hanley
Timothy Blakely
Travis McCoy
Tyler Torstenson-
Harris
Brian Christian
Dave and Jane
Beebe
Paul Klawiter

St. Croix Valley

Amy Waananen
Anna and Peder
Mewis
Bradley and Amy
Lahr
Caleb Ashling
Deb Walters
Elaine Larson
Elizabeth Brackett
Elle Sullivan
Eric Sanden
Ginny Yingling
Jacob Ristow and
Claire Klein

Jeanne Caturia
 Josh Bennett,
 Megan Bennett,
 Mari Bennett, Eleri
 Bennett
 Kathy Sidles
 Lynda Meyers
 Mark and Jean
 Ritzinger
 Natalie and Mitch
 Radcliff
 Renee Clark
 Tessa Ganser
 Valerie Galajda

Unaffiliated

Allison Laurel
 Amanda Weise
 Angela Moreira
 Anthony Pini

Arlene Lueck
 Audrey Heagy
 Barbara A Haselbeck
 Becky Brathal
 Bob Bultman
 Brian Jones
 Britta Petersen
 Bryan Quigley
 Carolyn Miller
 Chelsea Marcantonio
 Chelsea Obrebski
 Chris
 Scvhenkenfelder
 Chrys Cook
 Craig Larson
 Daniel Hildreth
 David Orentreich
 Deborah Rosenthal
 Debra Bolton
 Doug Terrell

Dylan Reich
 Ellen Thomas
 Eric Rieth
 Eugene and
 Khristine Miller
 Gayle Frazer
 Janet Bowers
 Jared Foster
 Jay Johnson
 Jim Burkett
 John Ayres
 John Schroeder
 Joseph Stanforth
 Josh Bendorf
 Judie and Peter
 Storandt
 Kasia Zgurzynski
 Kristy Gallo
 Laurie Robinson
 Lee Farese

Leslie Yetka
 Lisa Bean
 Lisa Mennet
 Matt Craig
 Melissa Weber
 Michael James
 Mike Harr
 Mike Roberts
 Mike Wollmer
 Nick Derico
 Nyra Phillips
 Pat Deacon
 Pat, Tanya, and Riley
 Roberts
 Patricia James
 Penny Niday
 Peter Goodspeed
 Prairie Restorations
 Inc.
 Quinn Palar

Rachel Braaten
 Radek Odolczyk
 Randy Powers
 Sami Schinnell
 Sarah Nagel
 Steve Taylor
 Steven Hunter
 Sue Eagle
 Sydney Finn
 Tammy Domonoske
 Teresa Jenson
 Todd Farrell
 Tucker Lutter
 Tyler Carlson
 Val Deziel
 Yogev Avidar

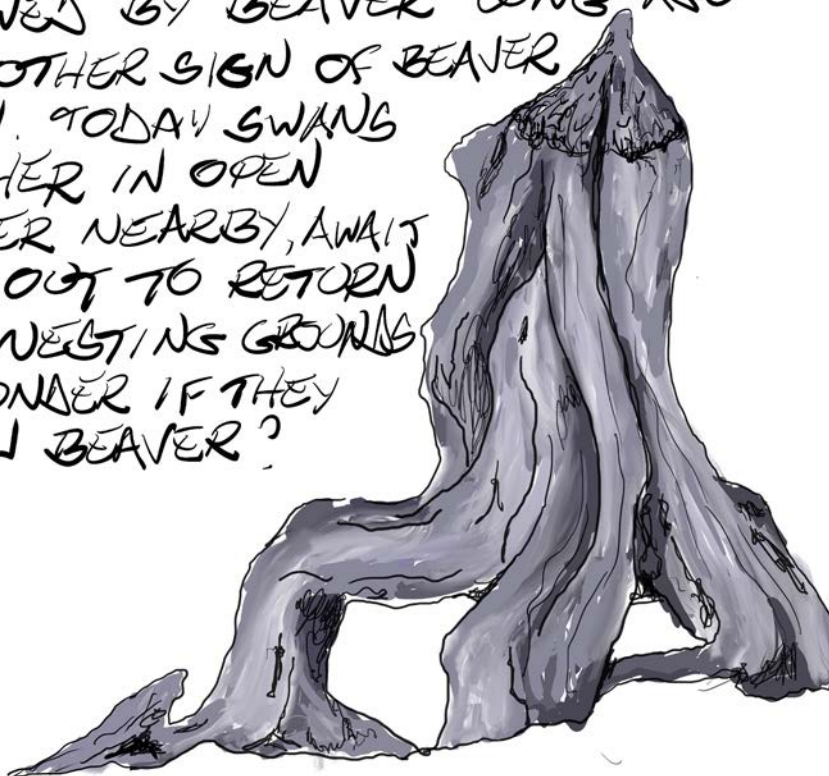
Hudson Stump

John Arthur

Art Inspired by Nature Workshops
 at the 2022 Conference

HUDSON WISCONSIN
 MOUTH OF WILLOW RIVER
 JANUARY 28, 2022

OLD STUMP UP FROM WATERS
 EDGE, LOOKS TO HAVE BEEN
 CHEWED BY BEAVER LONG AGO
 NO OTHER SIGN OF BEAVER
 NOW. TODAY SWANS
 GATHER IN OPEN
 WATER NEARBY, AWAIT
 ICE OUT TO RETURN
 TO NESTING GROUNDS
 I WONDER IF THEY
 KNEW BEAVER?





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TIME TO RENEW?

Your renewal date is

Your annual membership with The Prairie Enthusiasts helps us to carry out our mission of educating about, protecting and restoring prairies, oak savannas, and related natural communities of the upper Midwest. Thank you!

Renew online by visiting www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org or mail a check and the form below to:

The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 824, Viroqua, WI 54665

Questions?

E-mail Caleb DeWitt at cdewitt@theprairieenthusiasts.org
or call us at (608) 638-1873, Ext. 4

Thank you!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Phone: _____

The Prairie Enthusiasts is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization,
and contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law.

The Prairie Enthusiasts Membership Levels:

- ☐ \$35 Little Bluestem
- ☐ \$50 Big Bluestem
- ☐ \$100 Shooting Star
- ☐ \$250 Blazing Star
- ☐ \$500 Monarch
- ☐ \$1,000 Compass Plant
- ☐ \$5,000 Bur Oak
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ I would like to make a
recurring gift of _____