THE PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL 11, NO.2 SUMMER 1998

Celebrating eleven years of prairie conservation in the Upper Midwest

TPE ANNUAL MEETING AND PICNIC

David and Kristin Wisnefske will host **THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS' annual meeting** and picnic at N5242 Rat Hollow Road in the town of Adams, Green County, Wisconsin, **ON SATURDAY, JULY 25,1998**. The site is located in the beautiful southwest part of Green County, and David and Kristin will make this a summer outing to remember.The picnic dinner will be at 1:00 p.m. and the meeting will follow at 3:00 p.m. Prairie Bluff Chapter will furnish meat for the picnic, so bring a dish to pass and your own beverages.

Camping is available for Saturday night. Choose to camp at the "Old Indian Village" site, on a high ridge of 20 acres, or in a parking lot with electrical hook-up for your "home away from home".

Try your luck at the trout pond! Catch and release or whatever Dave may decide. Wear your hiking boots as there are acres to explore. A recent check of the area by teacher/naturalist Jean Blum indicates "tons" of lupine and there will be more to see in July. If you just want to relax and socialize, there is room for that also.

Directions to N5242 Rat Hollow Road.

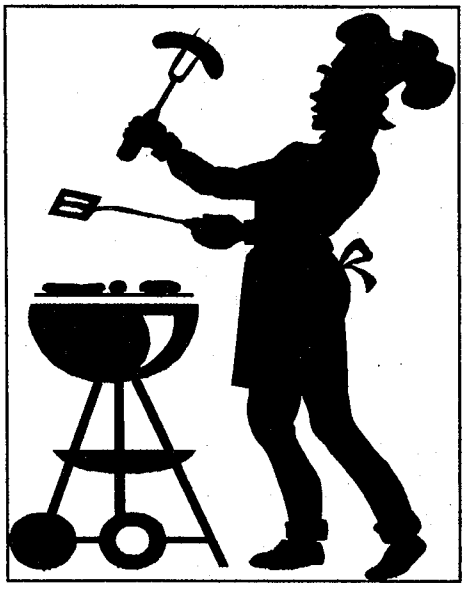
From Monticello: Follow County C west approximately 12 miles, Rat Hollow Road is on the left.

From Monroe: Follow Hwy. 81 towards Argyle approximately 12 miles, Rat Hollow Road is on the right.

From Argyle: Follow Hwy. 81 toward Monroe approximately 1.5 miles, Rat Hollow Road is on the left.

Note: See *The Wisconsin Gazeteer* page 27, C5

SEE YOU THERE!



HOLD THIS DATE!!!

Next year's annual banquet date has been set. It will be on Saturday, March 13, 1999 at the UW- Platteville student center. We had rave reviews about the facility and the extended format of workshops, so we are going to do it again!

So mark off the whole day of March 13, come and mingle with other prairie enthusiasts, go to workshops, hang out at the auction tables and chapter exhibits. We do plan on having children's workshops next year from tots to pre-teens, so make it a family day! See you there!

IN THIS ISSUE

sites will offer a good insight into the difficulties, techniques, and importance of conducting prescribed burning on bluff remnants. From the junction of State Highway 60 and U.S. Hwy 12 (2 miles west of the stoplight at the river in Sauk City), go west for about 7 miles to Cassell Road. Turn south and go about 2 miles to a farm on the north side of Cassell Road. The fire number is E9367 Cassell Road. We will park at the house and walk from there. Questions? Call Jeb Barzen at 608/544-2107.

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

In a co-operative effort between the Monticello Community, students of Monticello High School, and the Prairie Bluff Chapter of TPE, a 30,000 square foot prairie restoration project will become a part of the Montesian Gardens site along State Highway 69. The wet-mesic and dry-mesic prairie restoration project features vegetation that was native to Wisconsin when the first European settlers arrived.

Today we refer to this type of vegetation as prairie or "warm season" grasses and flowers. When settlers first arrived much of the area was a sea of tall waving grasses and colorful flowers, and this diverse community of up to 300 or more species of native grasses and wildflowers was commonly referred to as tallgrass prairie.

Students from the high school and their instructor Bob Voss completed an inventory of the vegetation before herbicide was applied and also completed a soil sample survey for the site. Flats of forbs were purchased from the Friends of the UW-Arboretum, which included a very showy mix that will tolerate wet conditions, as well as a mix for soils that drain quickly after a rain. Grass and wildflower seed was donated by members of the chapter, in addition to a generous donation of seed from Taylor Creek Nursery. Part of the site is rather wet, while some of the area closer to the highway is more of a sandy, dry soil. This project will take some time to complete. We do not expect "'instant prairie," but when the project is complete we will have an opportunity to view a small restored prairie. Then we may realize what little remains of the millions of acres of native grasses and wildflowers that once covered our great land, and the need to protect the remnants that remain.

(Chapter news continued on back page...)

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name_____ **County**_____ **Phone**_____

Address_____

City_____ **State**_____ **Zip**_____

SELECT CHAPTER OR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:

❑ Coulee Region Chapter
LaCrosse, Buffalo, Vernon, Trempealeau, Monroe, Jackson, Winona & Huston Counties

❑ Empire Sauk Chapter
Sauk, Columbia & Dane Counties.

❑ Northwest Illinois Chapter
JoDaviess, Carroll & Stephenson Counties

❑ General Membership
outside chapter areas

❑ Southwest Wisconsin Chapter
Grant, Crawford, Richland & Iowa Counties

❑Prairie Bluff Chapter
Green, Rock & Lafayette Counties

❑West Central Wisconsin Chapter
Barron, Chippewa, Polk, EauClaire, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce & StCroix Counties

❑Donation $_____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

The Prairie Enthusiasts
10052 CTH C
Woodman WI 53827

AREAS OF INTEREST
- ☐ SITE INVENTORIES
- ☐ ORGANIZING/LEADING FIELD TRIPS
- ☐ DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
- ☐ SEED COLLECTING/PLANTING
- ☐ PLANNING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
- ☐ FUND RAISING GRANT WRITING
- ☐ STEWARDSHIP (BURNING, BRUSH CUTTING)

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

❑**$10 STUDENT** ❑ **$15 INDIVIDUAL** ❑ **$25 FAMILY**
❑ **$25 CONTRIBUTOR** ❑ **$50 SUSTAINING** ❑ **$200 IND.LIFE**

Can we provide your name and address to:
Other environmental organizations Y N
Other Prairie Enthusiasts in your area Y N

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

President's Message

A friend and I just recently returned from a trip to southern Texas and on the return trip we decided to look at some prairie areas in the region. My friend David hadn't been exposed to the prairie community, and I was anxious to teach him more. Our first stop was The Nature Conservancy's 30,000-acre preserve near Bartlesville, OK. What a treat! Many large blocks had been burned, producing fabulous floral displays, but what was really noticeable was where some of the wildlife was to be found. There were lots of upland plovers and nearly all were seen on the burned areas. Farther down the road were dozens of dickcissels; all were seen on the unburned areas, calling and establishing their territories from the tops of plant stalks.

Also very noticeable was the bison and their grazing. They definitely liked the burned areas. What was so interesting was to observe these species over such a large area and to see the clear preferences they had. One of the real treats we had was to be witnesses to the courtship of two male scissor-tailed flycatchers competing for the heart of a female. How incredible the mothlike swoops and flutters of the birds' flight, and the delicate but persistent calls as the courtship danced from fence post to fence post.

As we drove north into eastern Kansas, the amount of spring burning for brush control was very clear: at least 70% of the landscape had been burned. Everything one could see was pure prairie: pastures, roadsides, ungrazed areas, stream banks, everything and everywhere fantastic displays of forbs. One of the most noticeable was the blue false indigo, but many other species, endangered in Wisconsin, were very common. These included larkspur, prairie parsley and countless compass plants and many others. What a fantastic landscape!

As far as I'm concerned, this won't be my last trip to southeastern Kansas and its tallgrass prairie. I know there are lots of places to explore and lots of things to discover. Any prairie enthusiast would fall in love with this area.

Clinton Elementary School Native Prairie

by Mrs. Kim Lowman Vollmer,Project Coordinator.

This project began a year ago when Clinton Elementary School was awarded a $4000 grant from the Carl & Virginia Goryckha Fund within the Greater Beloit Community Foundation. We have also had support from Junior Womens, Twentieth Century, Kiwanis, Scot Forge, Bradford 4-H, Clinton Home and School, and the Clinton Elementary School Students (in our "Pennies for Prairie" fundraiser). There has been a great deal of learning and planning that has happened over the past year. The grant was made to estabish a native prairie on school grounds, to be utilized by all students, teachers, and the community, for education and enjoyment. Hopefully the prairie will be intertwined into all subjects, from science to art.

Students are turning a barren area, approximately 40 feet by 120 feet, into what is becoming a rare ecosystem- a native prairie. This project has actively involved students and helps to create school pride. The students have prepared the area, which has meant leveling sand, mixing in leaves, and planning, digging and filling the paths with wood chips. They have also spent time indoors learning about prairies, their history, importance, various plants, and more.

Native prairie plants offer many advantages: they survive better than introduced species because they have evolved over millions of years to adjust to whatever mother nature can dish out in the form of climate, soil, and lack of water; they don't require mowing or chemicals to maintain; and they provide a dynamic landscape with color for all four seasons, not just shades of green and brown. The fourth grade students, with some assistance from other classes, (kindergarten through fourth grade), planted over 2,700 plants, which includes 65 species, four of which are on the Wisconsin threatened species list. The students are preserving Wisconsin's native plant heritage and in doing so are providing a place for animals and birds which will coexist in the environment. They are becoming active stewards of the land and developing an interest in the conservation of natural resources. The fourth graders worked hard, had fun, and learned a great deal. We hope this area will provide a learning center for many years to come.

PRAIRIE NOTES

by Jim Lutes (Biological Technician)

Reprinted by permission of *The Redhead Gazette* (a publication of the Horicon National Wildlife Refuge). The Leopold Wetland Management District manages more than 8,000 acres of Waterfowl Production Areas in 14 southern Wisconsin counties and almost 3,000 acres of Conservation Easements in 33 counties throughout eastern Wisconsin. The district was established in 1993 and shares it's offices with Horicon National Wildlife Refuge.

We are in the process of purchasing more than 100 acres of native grass and forb (wildflower) seed to be planted on private lands and we have already purchased enough seed to plant another 165 acres on Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA). Seeding native grasses and forbs on such a large scale requires the use of specialized native grass drills that are designed to allow the light and fluffy seed to be planted at a very specific depth and then pack the soil firmly around the planting furrows, holding in valuable moisture.

Native grasses such as switch grass, Indian grass, big and little bluestem, and sideoats gramma, along with forbs such as grey-headed coneflower, purple prairie clover, and black-eyed Susan are used in the mix. The forbs in the mix attract the insects, which provide food for pheasant and waterfowl broods, provide nitrogen to the soil in the case of purple prairie clover, and add to the overall diversity and aesthetics of the stand.

We plant native grasses for several reasons. They stand up well to the heavy Wisconsin snows that flatten most other grasses. This residual vegetation provides dense, secure cover that grassland nesting birds need early in the spring. Native grasses are also very adaptable to a variety of climatic and soil conditions so they grow almost everywhere. These grasses are part of the historic tallgrass prairie and oak savanna habitats that covered this portion of Wisconsin. And finally, prairie grasses are adapted to thrive on periodic burning, which leads us to our next spring project, prescribed burning. Leopold WMD plans to burn more than 500 acres of prairie grasses this year.

Detailed plans that outline specific requirements in weather, wind, objectives to be met, local law enforcement and fire department contacts, as well as the role of each person on the crew, are written for each burn. We must pay close attention to detail to prevent smoke problems (traffic congestion, smoking out neighboring homes), to prevent loss of control of the burn, to meet the specific objectives of each burn, and foremost, to provide for the safety of the burn crew.

But why burn?

Besides setting back the development of competitive grasses and invading brush and tree species, prescribed burning also reduces vegetative litter that has accumulated over the years and recycles nutrients back into the soil. Invading species such as bluegrass, brome, reed canary grass, box-elder, silver maple, and dogwood decrease the value of the native grasslands because they provide less secure cover for nesting and brood rearing.

These invasive plants are called cool-season species and begin growing earlier than native grasses which are warm -season plants. As cool-season species grow, they outcompete the native grasses for sunlight, moisture and nutrients.

Burning during the April 1 to May 31 time frame allows the undesirable cool-season species to begin greening up while the native warm-season grasses are still dormant. This initial growth uses much of the cool-season plants stored energy. Burning at this greenup stage severely restricts their development while making growing conditions more favorable for native grasses and forbs.

Litter reduction and nurtrient recycling rejuvenates warm-season grasses by exposing the soil to sunlight, warming the soil, encouraging the new growth of desirable plants, and providing the nutrients needed to support this new growth. The results are a healthier, more productive stand of native grasses.

The historic effects of periodic burning can be seen in the development of the oak savanna and tallgrass prairie habitats that occured in this portion of Wisconsin. These habitats evolved over thousands of years where periodic fires burned across the grasslands.

In some areas, climate reduced the frequency of the fires and a few trees were given the opportunity to grow beyond the effects of fire. Some of these trees adapted thick or flaky bark that further protected them from the heat and the flames. These species thrived on the direct sunlight and reduced competition brought about by the fires and grew into the oak/hickory savannas that extended from southeast to west central Wisconsin. In some areas where the climate was drier and the warmer fires were more frequent, even the fire adapted oaks and hickories did not have enough time to outgrow the flames, and these areas developed into the basically treeless tallgrass prairies of the southernmost portion of the state.

Experience Exchange

Chris Matson

Richard Henderson asked what experiences we had regarding the ways we have attempted to reduce the density of big bluestem in plantings. I have a related experience in this matter.

I was conducting an experiment to observe the shifts (if any) in frequency and cover which a phenologically timed array of burns might have on each of three experimental plots. Included were an unburned plot, a May burned plot, and a July burned plot. Only short term data has been gathered, consisting of cover and frequencies for numerous species. Attention was paid to dominant species of grasses at the highest level, as they were most ubiquitous throughout the remnant, however data was gathered on all species encountered. A February burned plot was not part of the data collection area, but was a firebreak of similar dimension around the west and north borders, adjacent to each of the experimental plots. Like all curious persons, I observed phenomena in these plots, including the February firebreak area, which were not part of the data sets. All the data was collected on the same remnant, which had substantial uniformity prior to the burn with regard to aspect, exposure, slope, soil depth, vegetative cover, soil moisture and species composition.

Data on the plots was gathered in early September, following the burns. Data from the unburned and May burned plots reflected the preconception that unburned plots increase in woody growth, and forbs slightly increase. May burned grounds maximize the metabolism of warm season grasses, especially Indian grass. In September, covers on each of these plots were substantially higher than on the July burned plot.

The July plot was most surprising! Many forbs which had or had not been in flower during the burn flowered well or reflowered. Leadplant and butterfly milkweed reflowered. Western sunflower, birdfoot violet, Leonard's skullcap, and azure aster (which were not blooming during the burn) all flowered profusely.

What was striking, though, was the fact that of the grasses, big bluestem was the species holding the most cover. There was a drastic reduction of Indian grass. Now, you ask, why is this relevent? NO GRASS was so dominant that it crowded or shaded forbs out. Leadplant and western sunflower held good portions of the July plot cover. A lack of duff, a lack of litter, a reduction of grasses, and forbs nearly "holding their own" surprised me greatly. This may be one of the processes we can offer to our prairies to allow natural interseeding to occur, thus increasing the small scale diversity of the managed area.

Even though this one experiment on a relatively uniform goat prairie is not conclusive by any means, the fact that grasses were set back while forbs nearly held their own ought to be viewed as good news. I will keep you updated on the longer term results--the plots have not been burned for two years and examination is due.

So what does this have to do with plantings? Plantings tend to have crowded, densely stemmed bunches of grasses for many years if a cultivated site preparation is used. The relevent observation which is not part of the experiment I am undertaking is the density of flowering stems on grasses. The observations I made to this effect demonstrate only a few flowering stems per bunch on July burned individuals, as opposed to flowering stems dominating the plant overall in May burned individuals.. The resultant change in structure of each grass has given way to a resultant change in larger scale structure of the prairie. In a planting, the grasses have free reign to put down roots in soils, and competition within the sod does not happen for an extended period. Thus, leggy, stem dense, overabundant tallgrasses dominate this style planting. If results of this experiment in a remnant are transferrable to plantings, it means more light to the ground, more open soil when windblown forbs are seeding, and the possibility of the "uneven aged" structure of a remnant becoming reality faster in a planting than present management allows.

Ray Hamilton

I have read with interest about the disappearance and reemergence of the cultivated, re-established Mead's Milkweed planted by the SW Chapter. I have noticed similar findings with the small green milkweed (A. viridiflora), and the purple milkweed (A. purpurascens). Potted as well as reestablished individuals will seemingly wilt and die, only to pop up again a month or so later. I have noticed this associated with the occurrence of small fly-like insects hovering around the plants. I don't see much adult contact on the plant, and I wonder if the damage is from surface or subterranean larval activity, although there are probably other pathogens also. The survival is increased by periodic topical insecticide. After a rain, or every two weeks or so, I use a small hand held spray bottle to apply a squirt or two of insecticide on the leaves. It would be interesting to hear from nursery operators or entomologists on this topic. Good Luck on the Mead's Milkweed project.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

EVENTS

Tues.,	July 21	Marshall Prairie Tour 5:30-6:30pm. See story in chapter news.
Sat.,	July 25	Blackhawk Prairie and Savanna tour, 1:00pm. See story in chapter news.
Wed.,	Aug. 5	Field trip to Koltes Prairie, 5:30pm. See story in chapter news.
Sat.,	Aug. 15	Wild Ones trip to Milwaukee. For more information, contact Joe Powelka at 608/837-6308.
Sat.,	Aug. 22	Cassell Savanna field trip, 1:00pm. See story in chapter news.
Sat.,	Sep. 13	Landowner Wetland and Grassland Restoration Field Day. See story in chapter news.
Thur.,	Sep. 24	Wild Ones Native Grasses, Sedges, and Rushes Identification. For more information call Joe Powelka at 608/837-6308

MEETINGS

Tues.,	July 14	Chapter annual meeting and potluck picnic, 6:00pm. See chapter news for details.
Tues.,	Sep. 1	Chapter board meeting at Cassell Savanna, meeting at 7:00pm., field trip at 5:30pm. See story on Cassell Savanna in chapter news for directions.

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

EVENTS

Wed.,	July 15	Work party at Honey Creek to pull parsnip, 5:00pm. until exhausted. For more information call Kay Barry at 608/325-6147.
Sat.,	Aug. 29	Prairie "Snipe Hunt " and tour, 1:00-5:00pm. Car pool/meet at Monticello Drive-Up Bank parking lot, Hwy 59 and Coates Ave. For more information, call Kathy at 527-2686

MEETINGS

Tues.,	July 7	Prairie Bluff Chapter meeting, Marshall Bluff Clubhouse, Monticello. Potluck at 6:00pm., meeting at 7:00pm.
Tues.,	Aug. 4	Prairie Bluff Chapter meeting, Abe Lincoln School, 2700 13th Avenue, Monroe, at 7:00pm. For more information, call Jean at 325-6858.
Tues.,	Sept. 1	Prairie Bluff Chapter meeting, Marshall Bluff Clubhouse, Monticello. Potluck 6:00pm. Meeting at 7pm.

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

EVENTS

Sun.,	June 28	Work party at Bush Clover Prairie, 10am.
Sun.,	July 12	Work party at Kalscheurs' Savanna, 10am.
Sun.,	July 26	Work party at Vale Prairie, 10am.
Sun.,	Aug. 9	Work party at Heather's Prairie, 10am.
Sun.,	Aug. 23	Work party at Bush Clover, 10am.

note: For directions or further information regarding any of the work parties listed above, call Gary at 608/375-5271.

MEETINGS

Sun.,	Aug. 16	Chapter meeting at the home of Gary and Gail Adams, rural Soldiers Grove. For directions call 608/624-5797
Sun.,	Sept. 20	Chapter meeting at home of Sue Linder, 505, Airport Rd., Boscobel.

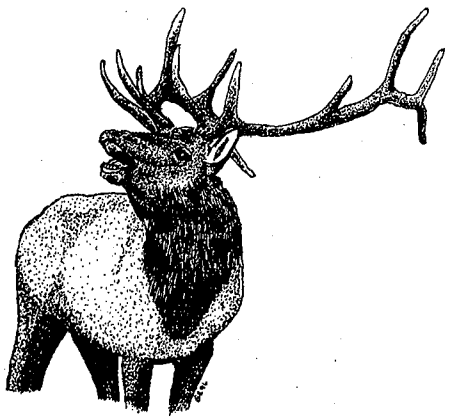
COULEE REGION CHAPTER

EVENTS

Sun.,	July 12	Hixon Forest prairie bluffs tour at 5pm. Discover the essence of a goat prairie, and learn about savanna transition to forest. Botanizing and birding will be highlighted. Call Chris Matson for directions and more details, at: 608/788-0971.
?	July	Emergency move of prairie sod to take place before construction. Call Chris Matson for more details, closer to July, at 608/788-0971.
Sat.,	Aug. 8-9	Overnight tour of Nachusa Grasslands preserve, Franklin Grove, IL. Call Chris Matson for further details at 608/788-0971.

GENERAL CALENDAR

Sat.,	July 25	TPE Annual Picnic (see article on front page).



COULEE REGION CHAPTER

Spring Activities!!!

As president of our chapter, I am truly encouraged by the support in the field our membership has given to conservation. We have succeeded at burning large acreages of restorations on several members' lands this April, and have also burned an oak woodland with an exceptional ground flora, despite the cutover nature of the canopy. We have burned about 60 acres in two states so far. This weekend, we plan to double that.

We have begun to restore the Christie open white oak-burr oak woodland. Brush clearing and plant identification have brought us hope. Several large tops have been disassembled and/or burned, and seedlings and saplings of white oak are marked to be saved as future canopy trees in this cutover wonder.

On the Croatt savanna, several more species are noted which were not apparent last year: fringed loosestrife, early meadow rue, wood anemone, and prairie violet can be counted among them. We are looking at well over 150 species on this remnant. A pine plantation exists on the lower half of the upper elevation prairie opening, but the good news is that numerous trees were removed by a tree service to clear a power line right-of-way (free labor is the best kind). Among the stumps, showy orchis and bottle gentian have been discovered, in addition to other prairie and savanna species. On the upper prairie opening, the birdfoot violets are so thick that they glow just after sunset. The lyre leaved rock cress twinkles so thick one cannot step without bumping it.

Other good news is that an already large population of early buttercup is found in an area once thought to be void of all natives--and some 20 or more other species of natives are present along with it.

The tamarack farm restoration in Trempealeau county is in its infancy. A plant survey of all roadside rights-of-way will yield seed sources. We burned 20 of 43 acres here, during the greenest late April I can remember. Later, we seeded about 90 species onto this burned area, in an oak savanna restoration, on an east slope, and on a mesic stream terrace. This high quality seed mix included early season forbs and sedges found in each of the three habitats, as well as the conventional mix of tall summer species. Blue-eyed grass, rough white lettuce, prairie violet, sand sedge, turk's cap, creamy indigo, wood betony, and dozens more forbs, grasses, and sedges were interseeded to this site with mixed oaks--some measuring almost six feet diameter. The largest black oak I ever saw is here.

The Backup/Turner vineyard, just out of Stockton, MN has a woodland in our care (oral agreement) displaying a ground flora populated with yellow ladyslippers, wood betony, walking fern, hepaticas, wood anemone, poke milkweed, woodland sunflower, springbeauty--all on the same acreage. The more unusual part is that it is a north slope with plants characteristic of numerous aspects. I hope to make a tour trip to this place for TPE soon.

Major restoration will be upcoming as the Coulee Region Chapter helps restore a cutover oak woodland with patches of restorable vegetation at the Aaker property near Viroqua. An upcoming workday will clean this area up a lot. Two of the largest burr oaks in Vernon county and a characteristic huge cottonwood make this place a special treat for breaks between work.

Dairyland Power makes Donation and Plants Prairie

Dairyland Power made a donation of $500 for land aquisition to the Coulee Region Chapter in May. The Company is very interested in tallgrass prairie restoration and preservation.

The company planted a restoration on about 40 acres of its own property adjacent to the Genoa power plant. We utilized the restoration for a burn training exercise, as it is surrounded by roads and the Father of Waters. Sixteen trainees learned the basics of prescribed burning from determining relative humidity using a sling psychrometer to establishing a backburn in the middle of Canada wild rye and little bluestem fuel. The quarter mile long fire line was awe-striking to many of the first timers, as well as to some of us old pros. This site will be of interest to the West Central Chapter as seed came from the Minneapolis area. CRC plans to pick and sell seed from this site as a fundraiser next banquet. West Central Chapter, we are looking for your support, as the seeds are local to you!

EMPIRE-SAUK CHAPTER

Empire Sauk Chapter Annual Meeting and Picnic

The annual meeting and potluck picnic of the Empire-Sauk Chapter will be held on Tuesday, July 14 at Natural Bridge State Park in Sauk County (near Leland on County Highway C,

approximately 10 miles west of Hwy. 12 and the Badger Army Ammunition Plant north of Sauk City). The picnic begins at 6:00pm and is followed immediately by the short meeting. Bring a dish to pass, plus your own eating utensils. Officers up for election are Vice President and Treasurer. A tour of the park will follow.

Nominations sought for Empire-Sauk Officers

Nominations are being sought for Chapter Vice-President and Treasurer. These are two year terms. Elections will be made by the general membership at the upcoming annual meeting on July 14.

Thank You Volunteer Burners

70 people conducted prescribed burns at 18 sites covering 140 acres in Dane and Sauk counties this spring. Jeb Barzen led the Sauk burns and Rich Henderson and Paul West led the Dane burns. Thanks for all your help.

Marshall Prairie Tour

On Tuesday, July 21, there will be a tour of a natural area and restored prairie and savanna near Marshall. The five-acre natural area contains over 250 native species including many prairie species. Nearby is a 16-acre restored prairie that was planted in 1988 and 1989 and a small savanna restored in 1995. We will meet at the Charles Langer Nature Park at 6:30 pm for the tour, or you can bring a picnic lunch and meet at 5:30pm. To find the park, take Hwy 73 north from the Village of Marshall and turn west (right) on Canal Road, which is about five miles north of the railroad tracks. The park is on your right about one mile west on Canal Road. Call Mark or Sue Martin for more information at 608/635-4160.

Koltes Prairie Field Trip

Visit patches of dry-mesic to mesic virgin prairie managed by The Prairie Enthusiasts, Wednesday, August 5, 5:30 - 7:00 pm. Contact Rich Henderson 608/845-7065. Directions: take Hwy. 113 north from Madison and turn east on Bong Road and proceed 3/4 mile to the site on the left-hand side of the road.

Inventory Records

Inventory season is in full swing and the chapter needs your help! If you are visiting prairie or savanna remnants, particularly in Dane, Columbia, or Sauk Counties and are willing to conduct a species inventory, let me know and I will send you a species check-off list and a site description form. You can then send these back to me for entry into the Empire-Sauk data base. If you would like to inventory sites but are not sure where to go, give me a call. We have a long list of sites that need an inventory for the first time, or could use a repeat visit. Call John Harrington at 233-2483 for site forms and species list or to learn of remnants in need of a species inventory. You can also reach me by e-mail at jaharrin@facstaff.wisc.edu. Happy Inventorying!

Landowner Wetland and Grassland Restoration Field Day

Saturday, September 13, 1998. This field day is being held at Goose Pond Sanctuary located near Arlington in Columbia County and is for rural landowners interested in restoring wetlands and grasslands for wildlife on their property. Grassland restoration will focus on planting prairie grasses and wildflowers. Topics include: field demonstrations, site selection, seed selection and collecting, planting, and management.

This event is sponsored by the Department of Natural Resources, Madison Audubon Society, Pheasants Forever, The Prairie Enthusiasts, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, UW-Extension, and the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association.

Registration cost is $15 per individual or $25 per couple and includes lunch and handouts. Contact Mark or Sue Martin, Goose Pond Sanctuary, W7468 Prairie Lane, Arlington, WI 53911, phone 608/635-4160 for a registration form.

Tour: Blackhawk Prairie and Savanna Remnant

Saturday, July 25, from 1:00 to 4:00pm. Jeb Barzen and Mike Strigel will lead a tour of a 60-acre restoration area which spans private and DNR land. Though restoration activities have begun only recently on this site, this high quality remnant offers many exciting prairie species as well as a lofty view of the Lower Wisconsin River. Bob Taylor, who owns and has roamed these hills for most of his life, will also be present to answer questions regarding how the prairie has changed over time. From the junction of Dane County Highway Y and U.S. Hwy. 12 (1.5 miles south of Sauk City), go west 0.5 miles to a farm on the west side of the road. The fire number is 6993 Taylor Road. We will gather cars at the garage/workshop before car pooling up to the top of the hill. Questions? Call Jeb Barzen at 608/544-2107.

Tour: Cassell Savanna

Saturday, August 22, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Jeb Barzen and Mike Strigel will lead a tour through more than 200 acres of savanna and prairie restorations in the bluffs overlooking the Lower Wisconsin Riverway. Restoration activities have been on-going at this site since 1994. These

sites will offer a good insight into the difficulties, techniques, and importance of conducting prescribed burning on bluff remnants. From the junction of State Highway 60 and U.S. Hwy 12 (2 miles west of the stoplight at the river in Sauk City), go west for about 7 miles to Cassell Road. Turn south and go about 2 miles to a farm on the north side of Cassell Road. The fire number is E9367 Cassell Road. We will park at the house and walk from there. Questions? Call Jeb Barzen at 608/544-2107.

PRAIRIE BLUFF CHAPTER

In a co-operative effort between the Monticello Community, students of Monticello High School, and the Prairie Bluff Chapter of TPE, a 30,000 square foot prairie restoration project will become a part of the Montesian Gardens site along State Highway 69. The wet-mesic and dry-mesic prairie restoration project features vegetation that was native to Wisconsin when the first European settlers arrived.

Today we refer to this type of vegetation as prairie or "warm season" grasses and flowers. When settlers first arrived much of the area was a sea of tall waving grasses and colorful flowers, and this diverse community of up to 300 or more species of native grasses and wildflowers was commonly referred to as tallgrass prairie.

Students from the high school and their instructor Bob Voss completed an inventory of the vegetation before herbicide was applied and also completed a soil sample survey for the site. Flats of forbs were purchased from the Friends of the UW-Arboretum, which included a very showy mix that will tolerate wet conditions, as well as a mix for soils that drain quickly after a rain. Grass and wildflower seed was donated by members of the chapter, in addition to a generous donation of seed from Taylor Creek Nursery. Part of the site is rather wet, while some of the area closer to the highway is more of a sandy, dry soil. This project will take some time to complete. We do not expect "'instant prairie," but when the project is complete we will have an opportunity to view a small restored prairie. Then we may realize what little remains of the millions of acres of native grasses and wildflowers that once covered our great land, and the need to protect the remnants that remain.

(Chapter news continued on back page...)

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name_____ **County**_____ **Phone**_____
Address_____
City_____ **State**_____ **Zip**_____

SELECT CHAPTER OR GENERAL MEMBERSHIP:

❑ Coulee Region Chapter
LaCrosse, Buffalo, Vernon, Trempealeau, Monroe, Jackson, Winona & Huston Counties

❑ Empire Sauk Chapter
Sauk, Columbia & Dane Counties.

❑ Northwest Illinois Chapter
JoDaviess, Carroll & Stephenson Counties

❑ General Membership
outside chapter areas

❑ Southwest Wisconsin Chapter
Grant, Crawford, Richland & Iowa Counties

❑Prairie Bluff Chapter
Green, Rock & Lafayette Counties

❑West Central Wisconsin Chapter
Barron, Chippewa, Polk, EauClaire, Dunn, Pepin, Pierce & StCroix Counties

❑Donation $_____

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:

The Prairie Enthusiasts
10052 CTH C
Woodman WI 53827

AREAS OF INTEREST
□ SITE INVENTORIES
□ ORGANIZING/LEADING FIELD TRIPS
□ DEVELOPING EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS
□ SEED COLLECTING/PLANTING
□ PLANNING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES
□ FUND RAISING GRANT WRITING
□ STEWARDSHIP (BURNING, BRUSH CUTTING)

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL

❑**$10 STUDENT** ❑ **$15 INDIVIDUAL** ❑ **$25 FAMILY**
❑ **$25 CONTRIBUTOR** ❑ **$50 SUSTAINING** ❑ **$200 IND.LIFE**

Can we provide your name and address to:
Other environmental organizations Y N
Other Prairie Enthusiasts in your area Y N

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

The night of Tuesday, May 5 was very exciting for several members of the Southwest Chapter. A very unique event occured at a city council meeting in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. This is what happened: members of the chapter had an idea to approach the city with a proposal that Dodgeville officially adopt a rare native prairie species, pale purple coneflower. Then the Southwest Chapter would collect seed from all remaining populations known in Southwest Wisconsin. This seed would be planted on a protected site near Dodgeville and that site would act as a refuge for the genetic information found within these plants and it would also serve as a seed source for future plantings within its genotype.

The City of Dodgeville took the unprecedented step to officially adopt our resolution with a unanimous vote! The chapter hopes to plant the seed on Department of Transportation property east of town as part of an interchange prairie restoration project. The City of Dodgeville deserves a lot of recognition for its conservation minded effort and foresight.

IN MEMORIAM

Donations were made to the Coulee Region Chapter in memory of George Miller, beloved father of Alice Mirk (TPE Treasurer) who passed away on April 19, 1998. The family decided to donate the gifts to the Coulee Region Chapter as George fell in love with the Mississippi River and its environs on his two visits to Wisconsin from England. The Coulee Region Chapter wishes to thank the following organizations & friends for their donations: Sharon & Ken Kampen, Mildred Krahn, Sandy Kampen, Kathy and Richard Reed, LKI Incorporated, Staff of The Center for Delivery Systems Development.

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS
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