



**PRAIRIE WOODS  
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**

12718 10th St. NE  
Spicer MN 56288  
1-320-354-5894  
www.prairiewoodselc.org  
pwelc@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
TWIN CITIES MN  
PERMIT NO. 3876

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**PRAIRIE WOODS** *Warbler*  
www.prairiewoodselc.org 320-354-5894  
pwelc@co.kandiyohi.mn.us Spicer, Minnesota

**WHY BE A MEMBER?**

- ♦ Know you are supporting programs you believe in at an organization that is important to your community.
- ♦ Receive information and invitations to special events at Prairie Woods.
- ♦ Benefit from discounts on equipment rentals and programs.
- ♦ Continue to receive the *Warbler* newsletter three times a year.

*Thank you for  
your support.*

**PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**

*Annual Membership for 2012*

*Join Us!*

- ☐ New Member  
☐ Renewing Member

**SUPPORTER'S MEMBERSHIP**

- ☐ Individual Membership ..... \$30.00  
☐ Family Membership ..... \$45.00  
☐ Organization/Business Membership .... Please call for rates.  
☐ I / we are interested in volunteering at Prairie Woods.

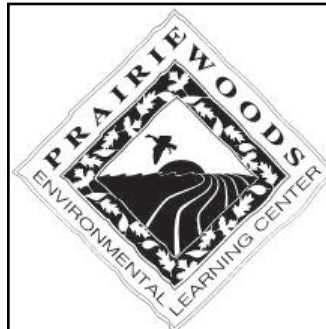
Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Please enclose payment to Prairie Woods ELC, and send to:

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center  
12718 10th Street NE  
Spicer, Minnesota 56288

Questions or comments? Please call us at 320-354-5894 or e-mail us at pwelc@co.kandiyohi.mn.us

10



**PRAIRIE WOODS**

*Warbler*



VOLUME 20

FALL 2012

ISSUE 2

**BOARD MEMBERS 2012**

**Governing Board**

Ron Erpelding, President  
Joel Schmidt, Treasurer  
Mary Merlin, Secretary  
Jeff Danielson, Vice President  
Dr. Robert Kaiser  
Jim Butterfield- Kandiyohi  
County Commissioner  
Richard Larson- Kandiyohi  
County Commissioner  
Jim Tetzloff  
Mike O'Brien  
Justin Bos

**Trustees**

Luke & Allison Geiger  
Sara Bos  
Steve Hage  
Bob Haines  
Bob & Pauline Halvorson  
Kathryn Kelly  
John & Mary Lindstrom  
Dr. Steve Martinka  
Dr. Jim & Colleen Michels  
Brad Michelson  
Karen Schneider  
Denise Smith  
Paul & Sandra Vollan  
Dr. Roger & Kay Strand  
Dennis Peterson- Kandiyohi  
County Commissioner

**Staff**

Dave Pederson,  
Executive Director  
Kory Klebe, EE Coordinator  
Deb Anderson,  
Challenge Course Coordinator  
Ann Phillips,  
Office Manager  
Teri Wermerskirchen,  
Time Travel Project Leader  
Shelli – Kae Foster  
LCCMRYES! Grant Project  
Leader  
Jonathan Morales,  
YES! Unit Coordinator  
Kathy Lutz,  
Program Facilitator  
Paul Hellenschmidt,  
Building & Grounds Steward  
Danny Kulset,  
Building & Grounds Assistant

**Get Ready for Music Under the Prairie Stars 2012!!**

It's almost time for the biggest fundraiser of the year at Prairie Woods. Please plan to join us the evening of Friday, September 7th for a night of great food, lively bluegrass music with the High 48's, fun silent auction items



*Music by the High 48's*

and great conversation. Treat yourself to a good time for a great cause! Please help spread the word by putting up the poster insert (center page of the *Warbler*) in a prominent location in your community or workplace. If you are not able to attend the Prairie Stars Event you can still join in the fun by purchasing Prairie Stars raffle tickets. Contact the Prairie Woods office today for your Prairie Stars tickets and raffle tickets.



*Join fun people like Mike and Linda Bundy at Prairie Stars 2012 (Jeff Schultz lurks in the background to up the bids on silent auction)*

**Bernick Outdoor Classroom Dedication**

Over 120 people helped to celebrate the Bernick Outdoor Classroom dedication on Friday, May 18, 2012. We were pleased to have the student construction crew from NL-S in attendance along with their instructor Jeff Gabrielson, Superintendent Paul Carlson and representatives of the NL-S school board. Other honored guests included Jason Bernick of the Bernick's Family Foundation, PWELC Trustees & Staff, County Commissioners Dean Shuck and Dennis Peterson, volunteer extraordinaire Deb Schmitzerle and 4th grade students, staff and parents from Yellow Medicine East. Thanks everyone who was able to join us for the event. Our honorary ribbon cutter for the event was Hayden Klebe "assisted" by his mom Mari. Actually, Hayden may have slept through his historic moment but he earned his place in the record books by being the youngest person in attendance.



*Students from YME help Mari and Hayden Klebe celebrate ribbon-cutting at Bernicks Outdoor Classroom dedication*

**Partners in the The Bernick Outdoor Classroom project included:**

- The Bernick Family Foundation- \$25,000 grant award
- New London-Spicer Schools FFA students led by instructor Jeff Gabrielson,
- Deb Schmitzerle- planning, coordination and plantings
- PWELC Staff-
- Stacy's Nursery- donated labor & equipment
- Kandiyohi County- site prep and matching funds
- Kandiyohi Power Cooperative
- Duininck Corporation
- Zimmer Bros. Concrete,
- JME New London Concrete Products- donated steps
- Orson Electric
- Jeff Nagel- architectural consult
- Monson Corporation

*Upcoming Events at Prairie Woods*

Music Under the Prairie Stars.....Friday, Sept 7, 2012 - 5:30pm start  
Annual Special Deer Hunt.....Call Prairie Woods for details  
Halloween Haunt .....Friday, Oct. 26, 2012 from 6-9pm



*Notes from the Executive Director*

by Dave Pederson, Executive Director

It seems the fun never stops. Just when we think we are ready to send the Warbler to print, more good things keep happening that we want to include: Marc Reese and Paul Hellenschmidt have been making good progress on some restoration work on the log cabin; a team of Master Naturalists coordinated by Dori Moudry and Colleen Thompson are investing some precious time in re-vitalizing the Indian History Village as are Phil Hahn and members of People First; our Prairie Stars Committee, chaired by Mary Merlin, is going great guns and enjoying the influx of new energy from the likes of Laura Nelson & Amanda Toutges; Jennie-O Turkey Store increased their Prairie Stars Underwriter status to a premier level of \$5000 and Lakeland Broadcasting is once again serving as a Prairie Stars Underwriter at \$2500 plus airing Prairie Stars ads 5 times per day throughout August through the Community Spotlight Program co-sponsored by Anderson, Larson, Hanson & Saunders; Deb Anderson has orchestrated three appearances of the big canoe in area parades this summer; the list of donated items for the Prairie Stars silent auction keeps growing.... and the list goes on.



So please sit back and enjoy a quick read to catch up with some of the good things happening at Prairie Woods and please give us a call if you would like to get involved as a volunteer, member or contributor. With your support, each issue of the Warbler Newsletter, for generations to come, will continue to report good news about how Prairie Woods is promoting environmental stewardship and enjoyment of the great outdoors.

Thanks for being a partner with Prairie Woods!

*P.S. I hope you can join us for the 5th Annual Evening of Music Under the Prairie Stars on Sept. 7th!*

Sincerely,

*Dave***THE BILL JOHNSON FIRE RING--- A HOT NEW ADDITION TO THE FARM SITE!**

In the last Warbler we reported plans for the construction of a fire ring and picnic area in memory of Bill Johnson, longtime friend and Trustee of Prairie Woods. We are pleased to report that the project was completed in June and is already proving to be a very popular addition to the farm site. Be sure to check out the fire ring during your next visit to Prairie Woods. Please make a point of thanking DeeDee and the rest of Bill's family for this great gift in memory of Bill. Every time a joke is told, good food enjoyed with friends, and stories shared around the fire it will be a perfect tribute to Bill. Thanks to Stacy's Nursery for the nice work completing the project.

*Raffle tickets for the Prairie Stars raffle are available at the PWELC office. Please contact the office if you are interested in purchasing or selling raffle tickets.*

**LIVE UNITED- THANKS UNITED WAY!!**

We were delighted to receive two grant awards from United Way of West Central Minnesota totaling \$16,000 for 2012-2013. United Way funding has been a huge part of keeping our youth programs available and affordable. PWELC projects funded by United Way include Everyone Outside! and Serious Fun!

The United Way grant to Prairie Woods has a large ripple effect for the many schools, social service agencies, church youth groups, scout groups, families and youth treatment programs coming to programs at PWELC from throughout west central Minnesota. Thank you to all of you who generously contribute to United Way of West Central Minnesota.

**RECYCLED OUTDOOR GEAR SALE MAKES A STRONG RETURN!**

The return of the Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale was a big success. The event raised \$2000 to support youth programs at Prairie Woods and lots of people walked away with some great deals on good used gear.

Following the tradition of recent years, our larger items were placed on silent auction and the remainder of the items were offered on a free-will donation basis. The bigger items on silent auction this year included a very nice aluminum swim raft, an aluminum boat, motor & trailer, and a two person kayak. Thanks to the Dan Rauenhurst Family for donating the boat package and the swim raft. Thanks to David Moody and Mary Catherwood for their donation of a nice two-person kayak. Thanks also to Rick Pederson, Danny Kulset and Gary Kulset for helping out on the day of the sale. Gary not only was a generous buyer he also helped load and deliver items and, on top of it all, he fed the help his now famous home-made cinnamon rolls.

As you get around to cleaning out the garage, basement and closets, please keep Prairie Woods in mind for the Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale next year. Energy and raw materials will be saved because someone can re-use the equipment vs. purchasing something new and your donation helps support outdoor recreation and environmental education opportunities for the next generation of outdoor enthusiasts. And to top it off, your donation is tax deductible.

That's a Win-Win-Win!

**EARTH DAY 2012- ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL EVENT!**

The theme at Earth Day this year was Toon Into Your Water. Once again the event attracted hundreds of people for a morning of education, entertainment and pancakes!! In spite of rainy weather a good time was had by all.

Tricia and the Toonies provided entertainment with a message for all ages in a packed Earl B. Olson Addition. Some of the crowd favorites included the wood duck display by Roger Strand, archaeology artifacts w/ Larry Levin, a live hawk demonstration w/ Bruce Gilbertson, lots of kid activities, the indoor climbing wall, the DNR Laser Shot tent, Little Crow Archers, and the opportunity to talk one on one with natural resource experts about invasive species, shore land restoration and watershed issues.

Many thanks to our long-time partners in the event: Chippewa River Watershed Project, Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project, CROW, Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District, Hawk Creek Watershed Project, Minnesota DNR, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kandiyohi County Water Taskforce Board, Jennie-O Turkey Store, Luke Geiger Creative, Kandiyohi County Soil & Water Conservation District, NL-S National Honor Society, Kandiyohi County Dairy Princesses, YES! and the many other volunteers who helped with the day.

*Plan to join us for Earth Day 2013 at PrairieWoods!*

**ANOTHER RADIO-ACTIVE AUGUST-**

We were thrilled to learn that Prairie Woods has been selected for the Community Spotlight program on 106.5 FM (The Train). A radio ad will run 5 times per day throughout August to help publicize the Prairie Stars fundraiser thanks to the generous sponsorship of Lakeland Broadcasting and the law firm of Anderson, Larson, Hanson & Saunders PLLP. Increased radio publicity last year through the Community Spotlight grant helped us to realize the most productive Prairie Stars fundraiser to date. A huge thanks to Anderson, Larson & Saunders and 106.5 the Train for this great public service.

**RAFFLE REPORT- SPECIAL HUNT RAFFLE WINNERS**

The special hunt raffle raised \$2487 after expenses. Thanks to all who helped support the Annual Special Hunt by selling and purchasing raffle tickets.

Winners this year were:

\$500 - Bob Mithun  
\$400 - Shelly Lottman  
\$300 - Stacey Cornell  
\$200 - Jeff Christenson  
\$100 - Aaron Cross





## YES! WELCOMES JONATHAN MORALES TO THE ROLE OF YES! AREA COORDINATOR

I said “yes” to YES! My name is Jonathan Morales and I will be the new Area Coordinator for the YES! Project. I was born and raised in Willmar, MN and studied at the University of Minnesota Duluth majoring in Environmental Studies with an emphasis in natural sciences. I currently live in Olivia with my wife Holly and our new baby Ameila!

I have been fortunate to work with some great organizations such as the Center for Sustainable Community Development while in Duluth, promoting community scale wind development. For the last two years I have been employed at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. Working at PWELC has allowed me to teach a variety of classes, from rock climbing to pond studies. When I am not teaching you will find me out at the “shop” trying to get dirty. I am excited to work with the YES! teams and look forward to what we can accomplish this year. With the expansion of YES! into new regions, and the fantastic projects completed last year, we have nowhere to go to but up.



## YES! UPDATES

YES! had a fantastic season in 2011-2012 with 27 teams actively engaged in energy action projects. Student projects ranged from designing and developing original inventions to solve “real-world problems,” hosting Blackout Days, composting a total of 4,055 pounds of food waste, growing organic produce for their school lunch program to installing hydration stations and vending misers on vending machines. Find out more about each team’s accomplishments and awards at [www.youthenergysummit.org](http://www.youthenergysummit.org).

If you know of a school that would like to join YES! give Shelli-Kae or Jonathan a call. We are excited to grow the program to over 30 schools next year along with our YES! super-partner Southwest Initiative Foundation.

Major funding for YES! is from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR). Major funding and organizational assistance is also provided by Southwest Initiative Foundation. We also want to thank Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation for providing funding for teams in their service area.

Note: Anne Dybsetter has left PWELC and YES! to accept a position as the Regional Program Manager with the Minnesota Education Corps. We are grateful to Anne for her seven years of service to Prairie Woods in the positions of Environmental Education Coordinator and YES! Coordinator. Best of luck, Anne! Thanks for the great work!

## ~ NEEDS AND GIVING OPPORTUNITIES ~

- Used Diesel pick-up (3/4 or 1 ton) for plowing snow
- Utility tractor (diesel) w/ loader
- Table and chair replacement fund (\$25/chair, \$100/table)
- Contributions for outdoor equipment replacement fund (examples: tents \$300 each, replacement skis \$100/set, ski poles \$15/set, canoe paddles \$30, pfd \$30)
- Donations of good used gear for the Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale
- 3 Archery targets - \$215 each
- 5 Brock magiscopes - \$129 each
- 13 Bow strings - \$25 each
- 4 two way insect viewers - \$11 each
- 12 Macroinvertbrate nets - \$8 each
- 20 bug box magnifiers - \$1.25 each
- Hunting and bow fishing bows that are in good shape for use at Forkhorn II camp



Look for the YES! electric vehicle (EV) and solar boat designed by the Royaltan YES! team at this year's State Fair.



## FORKHORN CAMPS 2012- A TRADITION CONTINUES By Kathy Lutz

Another year of Fork Horn Camps (I & II) have come and gone... all that remain are flattened grass where tents sheltered young snores, crumbs of pancakes and bits of sandwich bread being searched out by grateful chipmunks, sweat and insect repellent soaked clothing in Mom’s laundry pile, empty shells in the range buckets, and tired bows with equally tired firearm and bow instructors. Fork Horn I Camp (MN DNR Firearm Safety Instruction) was held July 8 – 12 at PWELC and Fork Horn II



"Cooking up some grub at Forkhorn Camp"

Camp (International Bow Safety Instruction, MN DNR sanctioned) was held July 15 – 19. Hot, muggy weather accompanied us, but so did in-depth instruction in the disciplines of firearm and bow safety, tree stand set-up and procedure, survival training, white tail science, hunter planning, emergency response planning, tracking and signs, ethical behavior, laws and regulations, classroom with our Conservation Officer, and much more. The campers were also able to take advantage of the resources at PWELC, such as the climbing tower, flying squirrel, shooting range, 3-D bow course, hiking trails, as well as a swim at Lake Andrew.

Generous Scholarships from MN Deer Hunters Association helped 24 youth participate in the Forkhorn Camps this year. Thanks to all of the MDHA local chapters who sent youth to camp this year at Prairie Woods.

Boys from the near and far reaches of Minnesota attended our camps this year. Girls are very welcomed, and were in attendance last year. We are very wonderfully blessed with great DNR certified instructors and staff (our DNR certified staff of Prairie Woods include Kory Klebe, Mike Bundy, Kathy Lutz, Chad Lien and Jim Tetzloff).

The Hunter’s Safety Camps demand rigorous preparation and planning, and meet the requirements of our Minnesota DNR. We have produced skilled and confident young hunters that are fine examples of ethical and legal Minnesota Hunters. They realize the responsibility they now have... that of positively representing and promoting our great opportunity and privilege - Minnesota hunting.



## RUN REPORT: 8TH ANNUAL JJM VICTORY RUN By Deb Anderson

On June 16th we marked the 8th annual JJM Victory Walk/Run on the trails at Prairie Woods. It was a glorious day with sun, warm temps and about 250 amazing folks that came to walk, run, cheer, support and encourage. The Victory Run was started by family and friends of Jesse John Mithaugen to celebrate the memory of Jesse and also to raise money for youth programs here at Prairie Woods. The Run quickly expanded to include all comers who want to celebrate life and those who enjoy running wild on the trails at Prairie Woods. It is so great to see such a range of participants from tough competitors to leisure walkers. The thing I love best as I stand at the finish line is watching multi-generation families that finish together. A little boy crosses the line with mom and grandma holding his hands. A dad slows down just enough to let his daughter finish the race before him..... and so many more awesome family experiences.

This year, the 1 mile first place winner was Parker Schwinghammer and the over-all 5K winner, for the second year in a row, was Grant Bell of Belgrade. Check out all the times and category winners at [www.pickleevents.com](http://www.pickleevents.com)

A Big **THANK YOU!** to all who helped make the 8th Annual JJM Run so successful:

- Chad Mithaugen for water
- The Country Stop for watermelon
- Lake Region Bank for money toward T-shirts
- Halvorson Ag, Bayer Built, Prairie Woods, and more for door prizes
- Precise Ice for the ice for COLD water
- Kevin Vanderstelt for being the “pick up man”
- All the other volunteers that helped out

*We hope to see you next year on Saturday, June 15, 2013. Mark your calendars now for the 9th Annual JJM Victory Run!!!*

*A gift to the Prairie Woods Sustainability Endowment lives forever.*



*Challenge Course Notes* Deb Anderson- Challenge Course Coordinator**HIGH POINTS FROM THE CHALLENGE COURSE**

Here we are at the end of August already. It has been a busy summer with a lot of good things happening. I would like to take a minute to highlight the Community Education programs all around the area. As always, NLS and Willmar are sending out great kids to take part in programs we offer jointly with community education. High Adventure Day was a big success again as well as our Splash Bash with 19 kids. It was a wet and wild day.

It is very exciting that Benson and Sauk Centre community ed. offered programs this summer. Sauk Centre doubled what they thought and sent out 33 kids for a High Adventure program. It was an awesome day. Benson followed up with 60 kids coming one day and 49 coming the next day. We are very excited at the great job our community ed. partners are doing with their programs.

Other groups that kept us busy on the challenge course this summer have been sports teams, summer schools, YMCA, day camps, Bible camps, birthday parties, and more. Although very hot...it has been a great summer. Now we turn our attention to Fall.

Fall is an excellent time to bring your group out to experience the challenge course at Prairie Woods. Call today to discuss programs for your school, athletic team, church youth group, family reunion or corporate group. We specialize in "Serious Fun!" to help your group get off to a great start in the new school year.

*"Serious Fun! We know the feeling!"***SOME OF THE NICE THINGS DONE FOR PRAIRIE WOODS *by People Like You***  
*(please make a point of thanking these folks when you see them out in the community!)*

- \* Dan Rauenhorst & family donated literally a boat load of gear for the Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale.
- \* David Moody and Mary Catherwood donated a kayak for the gear sale.
- \* Thanks Gary and Danny Kulset & Rick Pederson for helping out with the Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale.
- \* Thanks, Kathy Lutz, Mike Bundy, Kory Klebe, Deb Anderson, student interns- Anna Fontanetta and Ellie Dittes and all other PWELC staff for putting together two great Forkhorn Camps and putting in many long hours.
- \* Minnesota Deer Hunters Association provided scholarships for Forkhorn Campers.
- \* Kandiyohi Power Charitable Trust and Pheasants Forever assisted with funding for PWELC student interns.
- \* The Prairie Stars Committee has been working away to put on a super enjoyable Evening of Music Under the Prairie Stars.
- \* Luke Geiger designed the posters for Earth Day and the Prairie Stars Event
- \* Cashwise Foods allowed us to raise funds and promote PWELC by selling brats at their food stand on July 28 & 29
- \* Bob and Shirley Caine, Co-CEO's of the PWELC West Coast Fundraising Division, hosted another successful golf outing for Prairie Woods in Santa Rosa, California.
- \* Thanks to the many folks who purchased special hunt raffle tickets and supported the outdoor gear sale and JJM Victory Run.
- \* Thanks to Ryan Newville and Dave Meutzel for all of the great work to raise funds for the special hunt.
- \* Thanks Deb Anderson and Kory Klebe for getting the big canoe into parades in Melrose, Sauk Centre and Glenwood this summer.
- \* Thanks to the peanut throwers-Aubry, Hayden, Megan and Tripp.
- \* Thanks to Lakeland Broadcasting, 106.5 the Train, and Anderson, Larson, Hanson & Saunders PLLP for the 2012 Community Spotlight Grant.
- \* Over 60 volunteers assisted with our 2012 Earth Day. Special thanks to Sara Jacobson and Family for leading a group of volunteers and feeding a pancake breakfast to over 360 people in two and a half hours!!
- \* Thanks to CURE and the Bush Foundation for inviting PWELC to participate in the Art of Hosting workshop held in May at Prairies Edge Casino.
- \* Little Crow Darkhouse Anglers Association donated funds to purchase tents for Forkhorn Camp.
- \* DeeDee Johnson, Harlan & Sharon Meester and Ted Olsen helped with landscaping and placed a granite memorial rock at the Bill Johnson Fire Ring.
- \* Thanks to everyone on the Prairie Woods staff for going the "extra mile" during a very busy summer!

*Thank You!***INTERN REPORTS- ANNA FONTANETTA**

My name is Anna Fontanetta. I'm originally from Romeoville, Illinois, but I came to Minnesota to go to school at the University of Minnesota Morris. I just graduated this spring with a degree in biology. When I was in elementary school, I had the opportunity to attend some really wonderful outdoor education programs, and it was these programs that inspired me not only to study biology, but also to go into environmental education myself.

My internship at Prairie Woods has been invaluable. I am really thankful I had this chance to get my foot in the door and gain some experience in the field. I have learned so much about teaching others and about my own abilities. I've really enjoyed getting to know all sorts of different people and learning all sorts of new things. From going back in time and pretending to be a young bride emigrating from Sweden, to watching chickens come running when called, to discovering new insects during Ponds class, Prairie Woods has given me the opportunity to learn and experience more than I ever could have anticipated.

This fall, I will be leaving the great State of Minnesota and heading for Ohio, where I will be interning at the Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center. I can only hope that my experience there will be every bit as wonderful as my experience here at Prairie Woods!

**SITE UPDATES- A RUN OF TOUGH LUCK**

PWELC sustained significant damage from a hail storm on the evening of May 18th. 2" hail pelted our roofs, siding and window frames resulting in the need to re-shingle nearly every roof on campus as well as replace dozens of windows. The hail also damaged the solar air heating panel on the indoor climbing room. Fortunately all of our solar electric panels and the Solar Skies hot water panel withstood the hail test. The wind turbine was also knocked out of commission for over two months by a lightning strike.

In spite of all of the problems, we have still managed to produce more electricity than we have used so far this year. Now we are working to recover our wind and solar capacity before the Fall winds begin and heating season returns. Rarely a dull moment at Prairie Woods!

**ELLIE DITTES: INTERN FROM RIDGEWATER COLLEGE**

Hi There! I'm Ellie Dittes, an intern here at Prairie Woods for the summer of 2012. I was born and raised in Willmar, MN by my parents, Jenny and Kurt Dittes. I am an only child, so I grew up with dogs as my only form of siblings. I graduated from Willmar Sr. High School in 2010. During high school, I was involved with FFA and became president my senior year. That gave me fun opportunities through out high school, and it also got me more involved with Natural Resources and the outdoors. But I have my father to thank for most of my love for the outdoors. He started me off with gun safety at Prairie Woods when I was 13 and I fell in love instantly. From there I got my first gun and my first duck then it grew into an interested career path for me. Along with my passion for the great outdoors, I love my time with my family, friends, and some good country music with a Minnesota sunset.

Another group I have to thank for my interest in the outdoors is the Prairie Pothole Chapter of the Minnesota Waterfowl Association. My family is very much involved with the chapter and we have a lot of fun and neat experiences through out the years with this great group of people. I have met interesting people I can now call mentors, like Roger Strand, that have taught me a lot about the outdoors as well, which also made me more interested in it. From changing career paths of all sorts through out my life, I settled with Aquatic Biology with a Wetland emphasis. My love for waterfowl and sloughs was the deciding factor. I am going to college at Bemidji State University starting this fall and will meet that goal in my second hometown, Bemidji.

Thanks to Prairie Woods, I got experience with things I never expected to have experience in. From being an intern over the summer, I now know how to belay, tie fancy knots, teach children of different ages, team build, make kids fly 40 feet in the air, and many more different things; but over all, I am much more appreciative for the entire natural world. Including the tiny bugs you find in the grass, to the howling coyotes that wake me up in late hours of the night. It was a great experience that I will never forget, and I will always carry it with me.



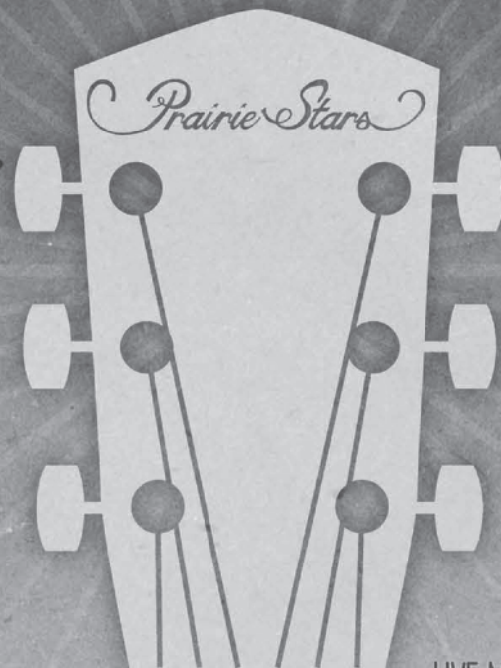


PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER PRESENTS...

# MUSIC UNDER THE *Prairie Stars*

AN EARTH CONSCIOUS BENEFIT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF OUR YOUTH

FRIDAY  
SEPT. 7TH  
2012  
5:30PM



PRAIRIE  
WOODS  
ELC  
SPICER, MN

JOIN US FOR OUR  
5TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

- \* COCKTAILS
- \* LOCALLY GROWN DINNER UNDER THE STARS
- \* "GREEN" SILENT AUCTION
- \* AN EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT

GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY:  
ONLY \$50 EACH

CALL: 320-354-5894

SURF: [WWW.PRAIRIESTARS.COM](http://WWW.PRAIRIESTARS.COM)

VISIT: PRAIRIE WOODS ELC  
12718 10TH ST NE SPICER, MN 56288

LIVE MUSIC BY THE TWIN CITIES' OWN



RAFFLE DRAWING - CASH PRIZES UP TO \$1000

RAFFLE TICKETS - 1 FOR \$10 - OR - 3 FOR \$20

PURCHASE AT PRAIRIE WOODS ELC

THIS EVENT GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY:

PREMIER UNDERWRITER



UNDERWRITER

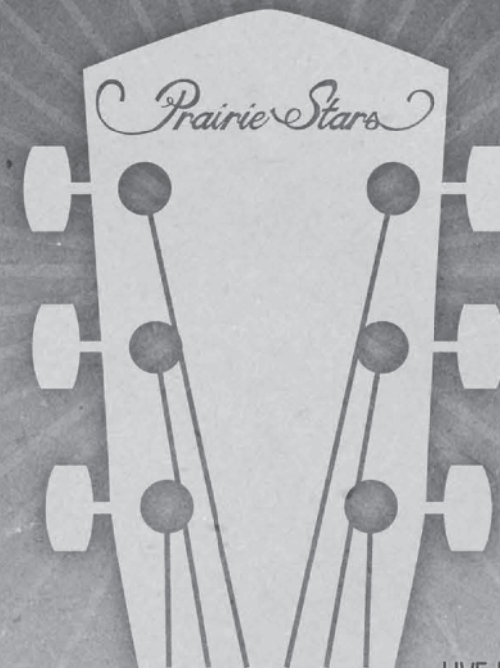


PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER PRESENTS...

# MUSIC UNDER THE *Prairie Stars*

AN EARTH CONSCIOUS BENEFIT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF OUR YOUTH

FRIDAY  
SEPT. 7TH  
2012  
5:30PM



PRAIRIE  
WOODS  
ELC  
SPICER, MN

JOIN US FOR OUR  
5TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

- \* COCKTAILS
- \* LOCALLY GROWN DINNER UNDER THE STARS
- \* "GREEN" SILENT AUCTION
- \* AN EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT

GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY:  
ONLY \$50 EACH

CALL: 320-354-5894

SURF: [WWW.PRAIRIESTARS.COM](http://WWW.PRAIRIESTARS.COM)

VISIT: PRAIRIE WOODS ELC  
12718 10TH ST NE SPICER, MN 56288

LIVE MUSIC BY THE TWIN CITIES' OWN



RAFFLE DRAWING - CASH PRIZES UP TO \$1000

RAFFLE TICKETS - 1 FOR \$10 - OR - 3 FOR \$20

PURCHASE AT PRAIRIE WOODS ELC

THIS EVENT GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY:

PREMIER UNDERWRITER



UNDERWRITER





## PWELC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES

### FALL 2012

#### ***PIRATES OF THE CARABINER CLUB***

Grades 3 and up

Rrrr Maties!! This is your chance to come to Prairie Woods and become a Pirate of the Carabiner. We will be sailing in the pirate ship, climbing the cargo net, walking the plank, and searching for (and hopefully finding) pirates treasure.

**Date: Mondays, Oct 1, 8, 15, 22**

**3:30-5:00**

**\$25 per person**

#### ***FAMILY CLIMB***

For families of all ages to come and climb together and spend some quality time. (Adults not required to climb) Parents, Grandparents, kids all welcome!

**Date: Oct 5**

**6 to 8:00**

**\$10 per climber**

#### ***SQUIRREL SOCIAL***

Grades 1-6

We are going nuts at Prairie Woods so we need squirrels...Flying squirrels. Come join us at Prairie Woods and get your chance to try the ride that lets you swing through the treetops like flying squirrels. We will also learn something about teamwork, safety and trying our best. We will end the class with a "nutty" snack time for the squirrels!

**Date: Thurs, Sept 20**

**3:30-5:00**

**\$10 per person**

#### ***AFTER SCHOOL ARCHERY CLUB***

Grades: 4 and up

It is lots of fun learning and practicing the skill of archery. We will be using compound bows to improve our skills. We will play games, shoot 3-d targets, do Olympic style archery, use the Native American atl-atl's, all while aiming to have a great time. Equipment will be provided.

**Date: Tuesdays, September 11, 18, 25**

**Time: 4:00-5:30pm**

**Cost: \$30/person**

#### ***NIGHT HIKE***

Grades: 4 and up

Find out what goes bump in the night. During the hike we will learn how animals, including people, rely on their senses in the dark. We will also cover other topics that come up...like (hopefully) the stars.

**Date: Friday, September 21**

**Time: 7:00-9:00PM**

**Cost: \$7**

#### ***HALLOWEEN HAUNT***

Grades: K-5

Talk with the creatures on the enchanted trail, carve a jack-o-lantern, and have a creepy critter painted on your face. Climb the Wall in costume. This Halloween party is most fun of the year! Children must be accompanied by an adult.

**Date: Friday, October 26**

**Time: 6:00-9:00pm**

**Cost: \$8**

#### ***Volunteers Needed***

- Help with ongoing building & maintenance projects
  - Weekend hosts for facility rentals & special events
  - Trail Crew- work on ski and hiking trails
    - Sign making
  - Program facilitators- Challenge Course, Environmental Ed., archery, shooting range, and Time Travel.
  - Join the Prairie Stars Planning Committee.
  - Assist with newsletters, marketing or grantwriting.
- Contact the Prairie Woods office if you would like to volunteer!**



## PWELC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES

### FALL 2012

#### ***PIRATES OF THE CARABINER CLUB***

Grades 3 and up

Rrrr Maties!! This is your chance to come to Prairie Woods and become a Pirate of the Carabiner. We will be sailing in the pirate ship, climbing the cargo net, walking the plank, and searching for (and hopefully finding) pirates treasure.

**Date: Mondays, Oct 1, 8, 15, 22**

**3:30-5:00**

**\$25 per person**

#### ***FAMILY CLIMB***

For families of all ages to come and climb together and spend some quality time. (Adults not required to climb) Parents, Grandparents, kids all welcome!

**Date: Oct 5**

**6 to 8:00**

**\$10 per climber**

#### ***SQUIRREL SOCIAL***

Grades 1-6

We are going nuts at Prairie Woods so we need squirrels...Flying squirrels. Come join us at Prairie Woods and get your chance to try the ride that lets you swing through the treetops like flying squirrels. We will also learn something about teamwork, safety and trying our best. We will end the class with a "nutty" snack time for the squirrels!

**Date: Thurs, Sept 20**

**3:30-5:00**

**\$10 per person**

#### ***AFTER SCHOOL ARCHERY CLUB***

Grades: 4 and up

It is lots of fun learning and practicing the skill of archery. We will be using compound bows to improve our skills. We will play games, shoot 3-d targets, do Olympic style archery, use the Native American atl-atl's, all while aiming to have a great time. Equipment will be provided.

**Date: Tuesdays, September 11, 18, 25**

**Time: 4:00-5:30pm**

**Cost: \$30/person**

#### ***Volunteers Needed***

- Help with ongoing building & maintenance projects
  - Weekend hosts for facility rentals & special events
  - Trail Crew- work on ski and hiking trails
    - Sign making
  - Program facilitators- Challenge Course, Environmental Ed., archery, shooting range, and Time Travel.
  - Join the Prairie Stars Planning Committee.
  - Assist with newsletters, marketing or grantwriting.
- Contact the Prairie Woods office if you would like to volunteer!**