



**PRAIRIE WOODS
ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER**

12718 10th St. NE
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- ◆ Continue to receive the *Warbler* newsletter three times a year.

*Thank you for
your support.*

PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER
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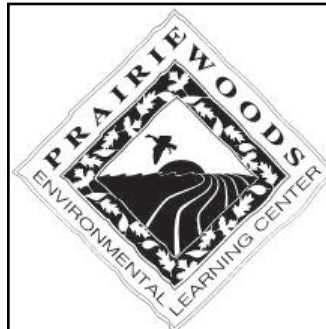
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Spicer, Minnesota 56288

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

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PRAIRIE WOODS
Warbler



VOLUME 22

SUMMER 2013

ISSUE 2

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YES! Recognized as Outstanding Environmental Education Initiative for 2013.

A happy group of YES! Coordinators, Coaches and Students accepted the Environmental Initiative Award for Outstanding Environmental Education Program of 2013 at an awards ceremony held in May at the Nicollet Island Pavillion. Check out the YES! article on page 3 and visit the website: youthenergysummit.org to read about the outstanding accomplishments of 32 YES! teams.



Top Row: Karin Davey (Mankato West Student), Aleta Kolan (YES! Coordinator and Communications Assistant), Shelli-Kae Foster (YES! Coordinator and Grant Project Leader)

Middle Row: Kimberly Colgan (Apollo Student), Cheryl Glaeser (SWIF Program Officer), Eric Koser (Mankato West Coach)

Front Row: Jonathan Morales (YES! Coordinator), Tami Bennett-Tait (ACGC Coach), Jasmine Nieto (ACGC Student), Kathryn Herrbolt (Apollo Coach), Teri McCarthy (NLS Coach)

Front and Center: Emma Murray (Mankato West Student)

***SAVE the DATE- An Evening of Music Under the Prairie Stars
Sept. 6, 2013.***

It's hard to believe but it is almost time for our 6th Annual Prairie Stars Fundraiser. The Prairie Stars Committee, chaired by Laura Nelson, has been working all year to put on another great night of food, fellowship and fundraising. Back by popular demand, the High 48's will provide musical entertainment under the big tent in the farmsite. Please join us for wonderful local food, enticing silent auction items and an all-around good time with great people like you who support the important work of Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. Call today to reserve your tickets for Prairie Stars and please post the center insert of this newsletter in a prominent location and encourage family, friends and business associates to join the fun and fundraising on the evening of Sept. 6th

Upcoming Events at Prairie Woods

The Big Canoe will be at the New London Music FestivalSat. Aug. 17th.
An Evening of Music Under the Prairie Stars.....Fri. Sept. 6, 2013
Big Canoe at Sibley State Park Open HouseSat. Sept 7th
2nd Annual ZOMBIE RunSat. Sept. 28, 2013
Halloween HauntFriday Oct 25 6-9pm
12th Annual Wheelchair Accessible Deer Huntcall PWELC for details



*Notes from the Executive Director*

by Dave Pederson, Executive Director

Each time we sit down to compile material for the Warbler Newsletter it becomes an exercise in counting our blessings, appreciating the many gifts of time and talent given to Prairie Woods and reflecting on our history which grows deeper and richer with each day. "All of sudden," we realize that Prairie Woods is no longer a newbie on the environmental education scene. Our programs are reaching thousands of young people each year and receiving statewide recognition in the process (see YES! article on page 3).

Recently, Trustee Denise Smith gave voice to the need for Prairie Woods to do a better job of recognizing and recording our history. We have all been working hard to create our history and now it is time to try to recognize and record some of the important events and people who have helped to shape Prairie Woods. Please read Denise's article in this newsletter and then contact Denise with items that you feel are important pieces of the history of Prairie Woods.

In the meantime, staff and volunteers at Prairie Woods are busy "making history" on a daily basis. YES! is getting ready for another gangbuster year(our 7th), still riding high on being named as the 2013 Minnesota Environmental Education Initiative of the Year. Our YES! teams are achieving some fantastic results in 32 communities across the lower half of Minnesota and we've had recent interest from NE Minnesota as well as Wisconsin. Project Eco-Voyageur, now in it's 7th year, has also had a banner year keeping Kory, Jonathan and Mike busy traveling with the 34' voyageur canoe. The challenge course (started in 1996) continues daily to resound with shouts of encouragement, grunts of effort, and exclamation points of all sorts when challenges are overcome. The youth sporting programs and range programs have also been hopping with two Forkhorn Camps, DNR Field & Range Days, archery clubs, sporting clays and the rifle range. By the time you receive this newsletter another Bowhunter 3D-60 event will be in the record books and we will be just weeks away from our 6th Annual Evening Under the Prairie Stars fundraiser.

By the end of fall we will have sent another busy season into the record books and we can all say "Whew!" & "Yahoo!" and take satisfaction in knowing that outdoor experiences at Prairie Woods have become part of the "history" of thousands of young lives.

Thank you for all that you do to make our history at Prairie Woods something that will inspire generations to come.

Sincerely,
Dave**PRAIRIE WOODS HONORED TO RECEIVE A COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT GRANT THANKS TO KWLM AND WEST CENTRAL SANITATION.**

Thanks to the Community Spotlight grant program PWELC will air an ad on KWLM throughout the month of August to help promote Prairie Woods and our major fundraiser of the year- An Evening of Music Under the Prairie Stars. The ad campaign is valued at \$2500! Thanks so much to Lakeland Broadcasting and West Central Sanitation for providing this great community service and a great opportunity to get the word out about Prairie Woods.

THANKS UNITED WAY OF WEST CENTRAL MINNESOTA FOR HELPING US TO GET THOUSANDS OF KIDS UP OFF THE COUCH AND INTO THE GREAT OUTDOORS!!

**VOLUNTEER AND PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR FALL.**

Prairie Woods is seeking volunteers and occasional part-time staff to assist with fall and winter programs. If you are a fun, outdoors, people person and would like to help inspire kids to live well with self, others and the environment give us a call.

**LOOK WHO'S COMING TO PRAIRIE WOODS:**

We thought you might enjoy seeing some of the groups and activities at Prairie Woods over the past several months. Schools and groups attending included: Comfrey, Litchfield, Paynesville Soph. Retreat, Marshall 7th grade, St. Johns/St. Andrews School, Springfield, Lakeville Jr. National Honor Society, Glacial Hills, Miliona, Cedar Mountain, Hope Presbyterian Youth Group (NL-S), Cedar Mountain gr7&8, Minnewaska, Girl Scouts, Willmar area 4H, Willmar Chamber Leader Perspectives, Buffalo Lake-Hector, Cold Spring Elementary, Starbuck Day Treatment, Glencoe-Silver Lake, ACGC, NL-S Pre-school, Sauk Home School, Cyrus Elementary, West Lutheran H.S., Eden Valley-Watkins, ROCORI, BOLD, Dawson-Boyd (3days), Hutchinson Ecology Class, ACGC, YME, Duinink Birthday Party, Boy Scouts overnight in yurt, Gould b-day party (archery), Newtyn b-day party (climbing), Community Ed. Archery club(4 wks), B-day party (ICW & archery), DNR All Day Field and Range Days, Earth Day, Area 2 Envirothon, Faith Lutheran confirmation class, Climbing wall b-day party, Melrose, Starbuck Day Treatment, Litchfield's Ripley Elementary (3 days), Paynesville 5th gr., SAFE Avenues staff retreat, NL-S 2nd gr., Long Prairie Grey Eagle 4th gr., Sauk Centre gr 3&4, BOLD 4th gr., Redwood Summer School, Green Lake Lutheran Ministries staff, Benson, Madison Elementary (St. Cloud), Gomm B-day party, Sleepy Eye FFA, Lavyn Rada Post Secondary Ag. Group, Prairie Lakes Detention Center teaching staff, multiple Green Lake Lutheran Ministries camper groups, Jennie-O Turkey Store Intern program, Nature Days (3days), BBE Migrant School, Upward Bound, Ridgewater College, JJM Victory Run, High Adventure Day Camp, YMCA, Hoogeveen Reunion, Community Ed. 3D archery program, University Minnesota Morris, Community Christian School, Calvary Church (Willmar), Lecy Groom's Dinner, Greater Mn Family Based Services, Kandiyohi Power Co-op Strategic Planning Meeting, Shakopee Creek Headwaters Project meetings, Spring Sporting Clays League: Great River Energy (2 teams), Jennie-O Turkey Store, Kandiyohi County Highway Dept, Pheasants Forever (2 teams). Life Science Innovations (2days), Pheasants Forever, Willmar Area Multi-Cultural Business Center, Dean Lindquist group, East wedding reception, Safe Avenues, Bell groom's dinner, Lydia Kieft graduation party, Willmar Cub Scout campout, Jennie-O Turkey Store national sales staff, MN DNR Prairie Work Group (2days).

In addition: Eco-Voyageur traveled to Melrose, Hutchinson

(4days), Starbuck, Cold Spring, Lake Carlos, Shores of St. Andrew Bible Camp, Sibley State Park and Ringo Lake. YES! teams were active in 32 communities.

Midwest Outdoors Unlimited conducted two turkey hunts for disabled hunters.

Forkhorn I Camp was held June 16-20. Forkhorn II was held June 23-27.

Spring and summer are busy times at Prairie Woods!!

RAFFLE RESULTS!

Congratulations to our **lucky winners from the Limited Hunt Raffle.** Thanks everyone who purchased raffle tickets to support the annual wheelchair accessible deer hunt and youth programs at Prairie Woods.

Prize winners: \$500- Scott Hovland, \$400- Ruth Fairchild, \$300- Ashley Oldfield, \$200- Randy Kardell, and \$100- Keith Klassen.

Thanks to Ryan Newville and Dave Muetzel for organizing the raffle, all who sold raffle tickets and all who purchased tickets. We really appreciate your support!!!

You may have missed out on the special hunt raffle but take heart... **you can still get your raffle tickets for the Prairie Stars raffle** to be held on Sept. 6 at the Music Under the Prairie Stars Event. Join the fun and help support youth programs at Prairie Woods.

Tickets can be purchased from any PWELC board member, Prairie Stars Committee Member or just call the PWELC office. Tickets are one for \$10 or three tickets for \$20.

CHECK THIS OUT!!***Prairie Woods Winter Sleigh and Ski Festival.**

Fred & Joy Zwart and Gary Stai approached PWELC with the idea of a winter sleigh festival event. We are moving forward with the plan to combine the annual Winter Fun Day at Prairie Woods w/ the Sleigh Festival in February. Please contact the PWELC office if you are interested in helping with this event.





Kandiyohi Power Charitable Trust awards a \$1500 Operation Round-Up grant to upgrade challenge course equipment at Prairie Woods. Kandiyohi Power Co-op and Kandiyohi Power Charitable Trust have been tremendous supporters of Prairie Woods over the years. This most recent grant will help us to upgrade and replace challenge course equipment which is used by thousands of kids each year. Thanks so much to all of the members of Kandiyohi Power Co-op who participate in Operation Round-Up.

West Central Chapter of Minnesota Darkhouse Anglers Association donated \$500 to help purchase new field microscopes for our environmental ed.

programs. *Jeff Johnson of West Central Chapter of MN Darkhouse Anglers Association presents a check to Dave Pederson.* Other gifts in recent years from our Darkhouse Angler friends have allowed us to purchase tents and outdoor



recreational equipment to help kids get connected to the great outdoors. The Darkhouse Anglers have also been generous supporters of the Prairie Stars fundraiser with cash contributions and really cool silent auction items including hand-painted decoys and guided ice fishing experiences.

United Way of West Central MN awards two grants to Prairie Woods totaling \$14,500 for Serious Fun! and Everyone Outside! We are grateful for the longstanding partnership between Prairie Woods and United Way. Support from United Way really helps to keep programs available and affordable for thousands of kids each year. Thanks everyone for supporting the United Way.

Cargill Employees donate time and financial support to Prairie Woods- *Nicole Johnson presents a Cargill Cares check for \$250 to Dave Pederson.* A group from Cargill also painted picnic tables and benches at Prairie Woods as part of the United Way Day of Action. Thanks, Cargill!



Kandiyohi County Chapter of Pheasants Forever continued their longstanding support with a donation of \$1000. Pheasants Forever has been a tremendous partner since the very early days of Prairie Woods. Check out the community program listing for the date and time of the Pheasant Forever Youth Sporting Clays Event.

Minnesota DNR awards grant to Prairie Woods for Archery Equipment. Thanks to the National Archery in the Schools Program administered by the DNR, Prairie Woods is able to acquire another set of archery equipment (10 compound bows, 5 Olympic style targets, backstop and arrows). Each year Prairie Woods is able to introduce well over 1000 youth to the lifetime sport of archery through archery classes, camps and clubs. Matching funds for this grant were provided by Limited Hunt Raffle, Little Crow Archers Association, MN Deer Hunters Association and Pheasants Forever.

EARTH DAY 2013 WAS A BIG HIT!

Thanks everyone who volunteered to help out with this great day. This year we had cars parked along the driveway all the way back to County Rd. 29! Free pancakes, the MN Zoo Mobile, lots of great kid activities and interesting exhibits for adults along w/ a beautiful sunny day contributed to a great event.

Thanks to CROW, Middle Fork Crow River Watershed, Kandiyohi County Soil and Water Conservation District, Minnesota Pollution Control, North Fork Crow River Watershed, Prairie Woods ELC, Hawk Creek Watershed Project, Green Lake Property Owners Association Jennie-O Turkey Store and Luke Geiger Creative for sponsoring Earth Day 2013 at Prairie Woods.

A big thanks also to The Jacobsen Family, Cub Foods, Cashwise Foods, George Lake Association, Kandiyohi County Dairy Association, NL-S National Honor Society and many others as well as dozens of exhibitors. Earth Day is a huge collaborative effort and we greatly appreciate everyone's participation. Highlights this year included Lloyd Bakke & Diane Hoffman letting people get up close and personal with live reptiles; Bruce Gilbertson showing his live Red-tailed Hawk; the DNR laser shot booth; flint knapping w/ Joel Osmond; the indoor climbing wall; and of course----- the pancakes flipped by the amazing Jacobsen Family and Friends. Earth Day at Prairie Woods has become a big deal! Make a point to check it out next year.



THE 1ST ANNUAL PADDLE THE CROW

No we're not talking about some form of avian abuse, we are talking about a great little canoe excursion on the Middle Fork Crow River. This June 1st event was a collaborative effort of CROW, Middle Fork Crow River Watershed District and PWELC to highlight one of the great recreational resources of Kandiyohi County. 27 people signed up for a 3 hr. canoe trip on the Crow River ending on the scenic mill pond in New London. Equipment and instruction was provided by Prairie Woods staff. CROW and MFCRWD provided box lunches and a bus shuttle to the put-in point. Everyone involved agreed that this event is worth repeating and expanding for next year. Thanks to Palmer Bus Service of New London for providing a very reasonable price for the shuttle service and thanks also to Green Lake Bible Camp for allowing us to use one of their canoe trailers. Put "Paddle the Crow" on your to-do list for next year.



YES! Updates - Jonathan Morales - YES! Unit Coordinator "YOU JUST CAN'T SAY 'NO' TO YES!"

The Youth Energy Summit Program has a lot to celebrate. With 32 teams and more than 470 students engaged in the YES! program, the 2012-2013 season was full of creative and inspiring work. We can hardly wait to get started with the 2013-14 season!

To top off a great 2013 season, YES! was honored to receive the Minnesota Environmental Initiative Environmental Education award. The Environmental Initiative awards are an annual celebration of the individuals, organizations, businesses, and communities who have worked together to create a better environment for all Minnesotans. YES! was recognized in particular for the recent expansion of teams in west central Minnesota. We'd like to thank Jason Tiedemann from the Minnesota DNR for nominating YES! Jason has worked closely with the YES! program through the current LCCMR grant administered by the DNR and we are honored by the nomination. We are also thankful for all of the great comments and wonderful support we received at the awards banquet attended by over 400 at the Nicollet Island Pavilion in Minneapolis.

During the 2012-2013 season YES! students worked directly with over 350 community members and 140 businesses and impacted an additional 30,000 students and community members! With great enthusiasm we presented several deserving teams with YES! Awards in May. The awards totaled nearly \$10,000. Award funds will be invested back into these schools and communities, continuing to support YES! projects led by students in the coming year.

Recently YES! has been in the process of developing a new partnership with East Side Oil Company of St. Cloud. Through East Side Oil's recycling program, several YES! teams have been able to provide the public with a convenient way to recycle used oil and also generate funding for local energy action projects. YES! is excited to explore this opportunity with East Side Oil and we hope this is just the beginning of a program supported by its community and carried out by its Youth!

Major funding for YES! comes 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, as well as AgStar Financial Services, Central MN Initiative Foundation, the Initiative Foundation and Kandiyohi

Power Cooperative for sponsoring cash awards for outstanding YES! teams in their respective regions.

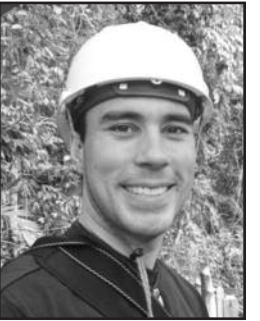
YES! awards were presented within *each* of three geographical cohort groups. Unless otherwise noted, Grand Prize winners received \$1,000; Second Place winners received \$750; Third Place winners received \$500; and all Category Award winners received \$250 each. Prize awards will be applied to future YES! projects by the winning teams.

\$1000 Grand Prize winners in their respective co-hort groups were: Westbrook-Walnut Grove, Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City and Royalton

\$750 2nd Place winners included: Sleepy Eye, New London-Spicer and Tie St. Cloud Apollo/Rocori (\$625 each)

\$500 3rd Place: Mankato West & Litchfield

It should be noted that all of our YES! teams did important work in their communities and they deserve our applause and recognition. Please visit youthenergysummit.org to see a complete list of prize awards and a very impressive list of accomplishments from the 2012-13 season.



THE 2013 RECYCLED OUTDOOR GEAR SALE RAISED OVER \$3000 FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS AT PRAIRIE WOODS.

Thanks so much to the many people who donated items as well as those who purchased items. As you get around to cleaning out those storage closets or the garage please keep the next Annual Recycled Outdoor Gear Sale in mind. The Gear



Sale is a win-win-win. Good used gear is put back into circulation, all donors get to de-clutter (and receive a tax deduction), and funds are raised to support youth programs at Prairie Woods. That's a good deal for everyone!



Challenge Course Notes- Deb Anderson- Challenge Course Coordinator

Oh how we love the summer season at Prairie Woods. The calendar is full of such a variety of groups and it is great to be outdoors taking in all that nature has to offer. Summer groups are usually our greatest variety for a season. We are seeing sports teams working to strengthen their bodies and team, family groups in the area for some fun and challenges, and all types of community groups taking advantage of the nice weather. A highlight of our summer has been our interns—Angie and Cameron!! They are fantastic and we are panicking as we are starting to realize how close we are to the end of their time here. They have both been amazing and it will be hard to let them go.

This morning's cool air makes us realize how quickly fall will be here and thus begins a whole new busy season on the challenge course. It is the time of year that we have lots of large groups of all ages scheduled to come out. As always, I am looking forward to each and every day here at Prairie Woods. There are dates open yet on the calendar for the end of summer and the fall so give me a call if you have a group that would benefit from a teambuilding experience on the challenge course at Prairie Woods.

Climb On!



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!)

- * **Mark Ranney**- donation of boat, motor and trailer
- * **Jim Kulset**- donation of boat, motor and trailer
- * **Lori Carrigan**- donation of boat, motor and trailer
- * **Eagle Scout candidate Dakota Tjaden** completed five benches to replace benches at the Challenge Course.
- * Thanks **KWLM** for the opportunity to be on **Todd Bergeth's** Open Mic program to promote Earth Day and Prairie Woods programs.
- * **Paul Stagg** of KWLM Radio has done a nice job of periodically featuring Prairie Woods on his Live@Five radio show. Please say thanks to Paul when you see him in the community.
- * Thanks **Bev Ahlquist** of K95 for having Dave and Kory on her Community Connections radio program prior to Earth Day.
- * Thanks to **Luke Geiger** for creating another great poster for Earth Day 2013 as well as designing posters, postcards and registration cards for Prairie Stars 2013!
- * A big shout out to the **West Central Tribune** for doing several nice articles and pictures both before and after Earth Day. The Tribune also did a nice front page article and picture when the solar heating panels were installed on the indoor climbing wall.
- * We received **several generous anonymous donations**. Thanks!! You know who you are!
- * Ten years ago- The **Huff and Ballenger Families** donated Alvig Pond to Prairie Woods.
- * **Southwest Initiative Foundation** continues to be a great partner with the YES! project. Many thanks to **Cheryl Glaeser** for the passion and energy that she brings to the YES! program.

Thank You!

~Memorial Gifts~

We are deeply grateful to have received Memorial Gifts from the friends and family of
Richard L. "Rick" Pederson
Eric David Pederson
Dr. Robert McAfee
Raymond O. Thompson
Don Knudsen

THE 9TH ANNUAL JJM VICTORY RUN

Race Director- Deb Anderson

The 2013 JJM Victory Run was another great success. We had runners and walkers of all ages and in a couple of cases we had three generations of the same family running together. It was a wonderful event and we have many people to thank. I would like to thank the family of Jesse Mithaugen for the support and all of the help the day of the event. I would like to thank Prairie Woods staff for all of their help preparing for the big day. Thanks to the Joe Borgerding family for providing chocolate milk, Chad Mithaugen for the water, Precise Ice for the ice to keep the water cold, Country Stop for the watermelons, as well as Bayer Built and many others who provided door prizes.

And most of all, Thanks to all of the run participants and their fans. You all did great and we appreciate all of you coming out.

The top place winners for the mile run in 2013:

- 1st—Brady Schwinghammer
- 2nd—Morgan Schwinghammer
- 3rd—Dacia Szczesniak

The top place winners for the 5K in 2013:

- 1st—Ian Thompson
- 2nd—Chris Strand
- 3rd—Michael Marquardt
- 4th—Brady Ascheman

It is hard to believe but next year will be the 10th anniversary. Mark your calendars now for **June 21, 2014**.

See you next year!



ANGIE PRICE: INTERN FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA MORRIS

Hello! I'm Angie Price, one of the two interns here at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center for the summer of 2013. I was born in Manistique, Michigan, but moved around until high school because my father, Lawrence Price, was an Army man (we were blessed with the opportunity to live in Kentucky, Hawaii, Missouri, Germany, Kansas, and our final homestead, Wisconsin). While he was away at work, my mother, Melissa, was a stay at home mom with myself and my younger brother, Larry. All through our childhood my mother insisted we play outdoors and develop an appreciation of the animals and plants that our various homesteads brought to us. My childhood shaped me into a nature lover, avid bug catcher, and expert tree climber.

During my senior year of high school in Merrill, Wisconsin I caught wind of a small town in Minnesota near the South Dakota boarder that had a university. After some research, I decided that the University of Minnesota Morris was to be my next great adventure post graduation from Merrill High School in 2009. In August of that year, I packed up my bags and made the great move out west to my new life in a new state. I began my journey at Morris as a Studio Art and Theatre Art major, with an emphasis in theatre lighting design and live light board operation. Now, college is interesting, because it gives you opportunities to learn new subjects that you would have never thought you would be interested in, or had interest in but did not know that it was a possible subject to study for a college degree (which might be the greatest benefit I gained from my time at Morris). I had always loved the environment, biology, and ecology, but I also knew I did not want to saddle myself with strictly science based courses for the next few years. That's when I discovered Environmental Studies as a major; a beautiful blend of the social sciences, politics, anthropology, ethics, geology, biology, chemistry, and ecology.

In my time as a student taking environmental studies classes I became quite acquainted with the Minnesota biomes and wildlife, and now, four years later and finally graduated with a BA in Environmental Studies, truly love this state and hope to make a career for myself teaching environmental education to people of all ages, with even greater hopes of giving people a better appreciation and understanding of their natural environments.

Thanks to Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center, I was able to gain the most wonderful experience in environmental education for different age groups, curriculum building, belaying, team building, helping other people



challenge themselves (and myself) at the rock wall and flying squirrel, and so many other things. I could not have anticipated my short time here at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center to be so influential and helpful in pushing me towards a potential career path that I truly love. Prior to my experience here, I had thoughts that environmental education was what I wanted to do as a potential career, but now, three months after the first day, my first pond studies, my first time belaying, I can say I am quite certain that environmental education is exactly what I want to be doing with my life, that it is my calling; and Prairie Woods helped me discover that. So many thank yous to a wonderful place, wonderful staff, and a wonderful experience I will take with me through future endeavors.

CAMERON KALKBRENNER

Hello! My name is Cameron Kalkbrenner and I am one of the 2013 summer interns at Prairie Woods ELC. I was born and raised south of Paynesville, Minnesota on our family farm.

Growing up on a farm gave me a love for animals and the outdoors early on in life. However, my interests changed from cows, chickens, and corn to the wild animals I encountered while playing in the woods surrounding my house. It was the little experiences in my childhood; feeding acorns to chipmunks, watching a deer graze across the front lawn, or startling up a rabbit in the woods that got me most interested in the outdoors and the environment. This respect for the environment has carried on throughout my life.

I graduated from Ridgewater College earlier this spring with intentions to transfer to a University in the near future. I have yet to decide what career I would like to pursue after college, but my internship at Prairie Woods has definitely narrowed the playing field. I left Paynesville High School thinking I wanted to be a biology teacher. From working out here I have learned that I want to be an educator, but not one that drives to a school and stands in front of a chalkboard.

My internship at Prairie Woods has awarded me with priceless experience in many areas. I know more about the environment and nature then ever before, but also have learned to be a better instructor, public speaker, and team player. I know these experiences I've gained during my internship with help me where ever life takes me. I would also like to thank all the staff and friends of Prairie Woods for making this internship possible. Thank You.



PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER PRESENTS...

MUSIC UNDER THE *Prairie Stars*

AN EARTH CONSCIOUS BENEFIT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF OUR YOUTH

FRIDAY
SEPT. 6TH
2013
5:30PM

PRAIRIE
WOODS
ELC
SPICER, MN

JOIN US FOR OUR
6TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

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

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LIVE MUSIC BY THE TWIN CITIES' OWN

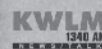


RAFFLE DRAWING - CASH PRIZES UP TO \$1000

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

PURCHASE AT PRAIRIE WOODS ELC

THIS EVENT GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY:



PRAIRIE WOODS ELC BOARD OF TRUSTEES



PWELC COMMUNITY EDUCATION CLASSES

YOUTH SPORTING CLAYS SHOOT SPONSORED

BY PHEASANTS FOREVER....Ages: 11-16

This is a great opportunity to shoot for the 1st time or to improve your already existing shooting skills. Included in the class will be instruction on safe gun handling and shooting technique. Firearms, shells, and targets will be provided. You may bring your own 12 or 20ga shotgun. (meet at Westby shooting range)

All levels of shooters are invited (never held a firearm to advanced shooters). **Shooting to be followed by a hotdog cookout. Program cost greatly reduced due to contribution from Kandiyohi Pheasants Forever.

Date: August 24th • Time: 3:00-5:00

Cost: \$5

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. (meet at the barn)

Date: Tuesdays, September 10, 17, 24 • 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 the stars(hopefully). (meet at the barn)

Date: Friday, September 20 • Time: 7:30-9:00PM

Cost: \$5

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. (main building)

Date: Friday, October 25 • Time: 6:00-9:00pm

Cost: \$8 per child- no charge for adults. Pre-registration necessary to reserve a pumpkin.



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 19 • Time: 3:30-5:00

Cost: \$10 per person



HELP MAKE HISTORY AT PRAIRIE WOODS!

-Denise Smith, Prairie Woods Trustee

As one who has been involved with Prairie Woods for many years – even before there were buildings – it is evident to me that many new friends of Prairie Woods may not know about the rich history of this beautiful place and the many volunteer hours that went into making it a jewel amongst the prairie grasses and kettle lakes of Kandiyohi County.

In response to this need to “tell the story” of our past, I invite you to help us to document the milestones of Prairie Woods and to name (to the best of our ability) the many passionate individuals that gave time and talents to make it what it is today.

Our history begins all the way back to 1973 when the Minnesota Legislature created 13 Regional Environmental Education Councils (REECs). Our hope is to document from that date how Prairie Woods grew to encompass 500 acres of native prairie grasses, kettle lakes, the Gary Westby Observatory building, an education building with five classrooms, a trailhead, trails, a shooting sports range, a 30-foot indoor climbing wall, challenge ropes course and much more.

If you have any historical notes on highlights and challenges of the Learning Center over the years, please let us know. Send us your top ten Prairie Woods milestones or any memories that you think deserve a mention in the history of Prairie Woods.

Please send your stories and historical notes to Denise Smith at smithjdb@frontiernet.net

Our initial goal is to construct a simple timeline of significant events at Prairie Woods. A more involved project would include a compilation of Prairie Woods’ history. If you would like to help with either project please contact Denise Smith or call the Prairie Woods office (320-354-5894).