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# The PRAIRIE PROMOTER

VOL 21, NO.2 Summer 2008

*Grassroots Conservation at Work*

## 20 Years at Honey Creek

By Rob Baller

In 1988, Kay and George Barry began planting a small prairie in Honey Creek Park, Monroe, Wis. The Barrys sowed seeds onto the floodplain soils of the park with help and sponsorship from the Kiwanis, Monroe Parks and the early Prairie Enthusiasts (then Wisconsin Prairie Enthusiasts). A drought struck that year, so in 1989 and 1990 they replanted. For the next decade Kay led volunteers who weeded the field and introduced new native plugs. She designed informational signs, visited schools and made pamphlets describing the flowers. The Barry's plea for stewardship motivated the Prairie Bluff Chapter to create a new tool for removing wild parsnip. The Parsnip Predator was first tested in Honey Creek Park.

Today the prairie occupies about four acres, has at least 30 native species, and grows seven feet tall in August. The community seems to have accepted the prairie; in recent years the Barry Prairie was on the Historic Monroe Garden Walk.

The Barrys celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Honey Creek planting and their 90th birthdays on Saturday, April 26, 2008. Jenny and Tom Mitchell of Monroe organized the celebration at the Honey Creek Park shelter. Rich Barry drove his parents to the potluck from their home in Madison. Gale-force winds and cold temperatures cancelled the post-celebration burn and forced the party to move to the basement of City Hall. About two dozen admirers enjoyed a banquet of brats, sauerkraut, and marble cake and made a few speeches. Then, George and Kay returned to Honey Creek Park. Holding on for dear life, they symbolically handed the

drip torch to the next official stewards of the planting: Tom and Jenny Mitchell.

Thank you, Kay and George, for your years of dedication, and thank you, Tom and Jenny, for arranging this wonderful celebration.



*From left to right: Tom and Jenny Mitchell, Kay and George Barry. Photo by Rob Baller.*

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*TPE was incorporated in Wisconsin in 1987 as a private nonprofit, tax exempt corporation under section [501(c) 3] of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.*

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*The Prairie Promoter is a quarterly publication of The Prairie Enthusiasts. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without permission. We welcome submissions of articles, announcements, artwork and photographs that are relevant to prairie and savanna ecosystems. Mail to local chapter editorial volunteers or e-mail submissions to [jesse@nasw.org](mailto:jesse@nasw.org). Use MS Word and do not format. Letters and articles may be edited for length or style. Computer disks, art, and photographs will be returned. Deadlines for submission of material are March 4 (Spring issue); May 23 (Summer issue); August 22 (Fall issue); and November 28 (Winter issue).*

*If you would prefer to receive electronic notification of the newsletter please email Victoria at [TPE@TDS.net](mailto:TPE@TDS.net).*

## Tools and Techniques: Preparing an NRCS Burn Plan

by Don Nelson, Coulee Region Chapter

Many of us have established our prairies through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) program. This past spring, I found out about a new “string” associated with prairie burns on CRP acres. When I contacted the Monroe County Farm Service Agency Office about the initial burn on my prairie, I learned that I had to complete, submit, and have approved a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Prescribed Burn Plan.

The Farm Service Agency sent me the three-page NRCS form along with guidelines for conducting a prescribed burn. In general, the form asked me to detail specific aspects of my plan including the objectives for the burn, site information, a list of pre-burn notifications (neighbors, sheriff, fire department, etc), the names of the folks helping with the burn, and a list of the available burn and safety equipment. I was also asked to provide a burn plan map and an aerial photo of the site.

I was asked to lay out the burn site’s boundaries, firebreaks, roads, water resources and escape routes on the burn plan map. I also was instructed to draw in the burn sections along with the sequence of the burn including projected head, flank and back burns.

I received a critique of my plan after it was reviewed at the county, regional, and state level. The NRCS folks helped me rework some aspects of the plan before I resubmitted it. The approval process took about six weeks from beginning to end.

As I had never burned my prairie restoration before, I felt as anxious as a first-time parent. However, I successfully completed the burn with plenty of professional and volunteer help.

I found the process of developing my NRCS burn plan helpful but somewhat contrived. Without the practical experience that comes with burning a particular site, I struggled to provide the specific responses called for by the NRCS form. However, after completing the initial burn I feel more confident that my future plans will be more realistic and more useful.

## Wetland Restoration Project in Grant County

By Bill Wisler, Trout Unlimited

The Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter of Trout Unlimited, along with the DNR and other partners, is

engaged in year six of a multiple year restoration project on the Big Spring Branch of the Blue River in Grant County. The project includes more than 40 acres of riparian vegetation along one and a half miles of stream.

The groups are stabilizing eroding banks and installing in-stream structures as well as addressing broader issues impacting the entire ecosystem. Trout Unlimited works to protect amphibians, reptiles, macro-invertebrates and native vegetation, as well as trout habitat. For example, structures that benefit of snakes and turtles have been installed. Thanks to a generous seed donation from Prairie Enthusiasts, we are seeding the stream corridor with over 30 native wetland species.

The Wisconsin DNR owns the property located west of Highland and south of County Rd. Q on Big Spring Rd. near the Spurgeon Winery. We at Trout Unlimited invite TPE members to visit the site.

## **TPE Receives Grant**

By Rich Henderson

The Prairie Enthusiasts received the largest single Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund grant in 2008. The \$200,000 grant will be used for education and restoration at the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area in south central Wisconsin.

The Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund program aims to promote and implement State Wildlife Action Plans. The US Fish & Wildlife Service pays for states to identify species on their way to the endangered species list. The states then develop Wildlife Action Plans that outline actions that will help protect these at-risk species.

The Prairie Enthusiasts will use the new grant to help implement Wisconsin's Wildlife Action Plan at the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area (MRPHA). TPE will improve, restore and create grassland and savanna habitat critical to several of Wisconsin's at-risk species. TPE will also help teach landowners, the general public and public officials about at-risk species, the Wisconsin State Wildlife Action Plan and the great significance of the MRPHA to the implementation of the plan.

Military Ridge includes over 50,000 acres of grassland in Iowa and Dane counties. The Wisconsin DNR calls the area the state's best opportunity for managing an upland prairie ecosystem on a landscape scale. A dozen private and public conservation organizations are working together with the local community and private landowners to maintain, enhance, create and protect critical grassland/prairie habitat. The new grant will further this conservation on TPE owned and eased land, land protected by other MRPHA partners and land held by private individuals.

The Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund was created by The Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and is administered by the Wildlife Conservation Society.

## **Students Design ATV Bridges**

By Jesse Boyett-Anderson

Three UW-Platteville students designed bridges across creeks in Iowa County, Wis. for The Prairie Enthusiasts. The bridges will facilitate access to Shea Prairie, part of TPE's Mounds View Grassland near Barneveld, and Kalschuer Oak Savanna near Hollandale.

Seniors C.J. Brooks, Kyle Carr, and Dustin Schopen designed the bridges to safely support the weight of a six-wheel ATV. The bridges will facilitate visitor access to the two natural areas. They will also allow ATV access for land management, particularly prescribed burns.

Rich Henderson, who spearheaded the project for TPE, calls plans for building the bridges tentative. Although the students designed cost-effective bridges, Henderson says construction depends on raising the needed money.

## **Natural Cemeteries**

By Joy Hanneman

A Madison non-profit aims to change burial practices in Wisconsin. The Trust for Natural Legacies is working to bring natural burial to the Midwest.

The natural burial process rejects the notion that burials require permanent caskets and vaults, toxic embalming, artificial headstones, and endless use of large quantities of pesticides and fossil fuels for cemetery maintenance. Conservation cemeteries use biodegradable caskets, no vaults, no toxic embalming and no artificial headstones. Graves are widely spaced and blended into the landscape. The resulting natural area protects and enhances native plants and wildlife, can be used for education and research, and provides a sacred space for contemplation.

Natural burial is hardly a new idea. Many people have ancestors who were laid to rest in the prairies of North America as the pioneers fought their way west across the American wilderness. Memorial nature preserves combine the old-fashioned values of simplicity and love of the land with the latest scientific practices in land conservation and land stewardship.

Currently, eight states offer green burial sites—South Carolina, Florida, New Mexico, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Texas, California and New York.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Prairie Enthusiasts' Annual Picnic

*Sunday, July 13, 2008*

The Empire-Sauk Chapter will host this year's annual potluck picnic and meeting of the membership at Schurch-Thomson Prairie, part of TPE's 500-acre Mounds View Grassland complex. The meeting will include guided hikes at regional attractions before and after the picnic. Local attractions include Cave of the Mounds as well as the Military Ridge Bike Trail.

Mounds View Grassland, located within the Military Ridge Prairie Heritage Area, supports a diversity of flora and fauna. Over 250 native plant species have been found at the preserve so far. Rare and uncommon species of note include regal fritillary butterfly, red-tailed leafhopper, pickerel frog, Henslow's sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Bell's vireo, red-headed woodpecker, federally-endangered prairie bushclover, Hill's thistle, thousands of prairie turnip, marble-seed and tuberous Indian-plantain.

The remnant upland prairie, degraded but improving sedge meadows, extensive springs and seeps and two cold-water trout streams call for cameras and fishing gear. Bring binoculars to view the diverse and robust grassland bird community and close-focusing binoculars to observe the prairie and savanna butterflies.

Even with this level of diversity, the preserve is still very much a work in progress. Significant renovation and restoration has been started, but much more is planned to bring back the land's former glory of prairie, oak savanna and prairie streams and wetlands on a landscape scale.



*Shooting star blooms at Schurch-Thomson Prairie.  
Photo by Rich Henderson*

The Empire-Sauk Chapter will provide brats, hamburgers and soft drinks. A port-a-potty will be available and a canopy or two will be set up for shade in the open air. The newly renovated barn will also be available in case of rain. There is well water on site.

#### Schedule:

#### Saturday

Guided tours (more in field trip flier and on web site)  
9:00 AM – Noon - Butterflies, birds and flowers at Schurch-Thomson Prairie  
2:00 – 3:45 PM - Pleasant Valley Conservancy  
3:00 – 6:00 PM - Pleasure Valley Conservancy  
4:00 – 5:30 PM - Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie  
4:00 – 5:00 PM - Goplin Seed Orchard

#### Sunday

9:30 – 11:30 AM - Guided tours (more in field trip flier and on web site)  
\*Schurch-Thomson and Underwood Prairies (on site)  
\*TNC Thomson Memorial Prairie (3 miles away)  
10:00 AM - TPE board meeting  
12:00 Noon - Potluck picnic  
1:00 PM - Meeting of the membership  
2:00 – 4:00 PM - Guided tours (start at picnic area)  
\*Schurch-Thomson and Underwood prairies (on site)  
\*Shea Prairie (2 miles)  
\*Goplin Seed Orchard (3.5 miles)

**What to Bring:** Dish to pass, eating utensils, lawn chairs and shoes, hats and insect repellent for hiking.

**Overnight:** There are hotels in Mt. Horeb and Barneveld. Camping is available at Blue Mounds State Park and Brigham County Park (6 miles away). People are also welcome to put up tents at Schurch-Thomson Prairie preserve in the shade of walnuts and bur oaks in the mowed lawn areas (first come, first served). The coyotes may even provide an evening serenade. Badger watching is also a possible evening activity. Contact Rich Henderson at 608-845-7065 or tpe-rhenderson@tds.net about camping on site.

**Directions:** From the intersection of US 18/151 and County F, on the south side of Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, on the western edge of Dane County, take F south for 4.5 miles (be sure to stay on F, it makes a sharp right turn at 1 mile south of 18/151). At 4.5 miles on F look for Reilly Road on the right side. Take Reilly Rd to the preserve (Reilly is a dead-end road).

## 21<sup>st</sup> North American Prairie Conference

*August 4-8, 2008*

A meeting for prairie enthusiasts, biologists, community members, botanists, and businesses specializing in prairie seeds and restoration held at Winona State University in Winona, Minn.

A link to the NAPC can be found on the TPE website: [www.ThePrairieenthusiasts.org](http://www.ThePrairieenthusiasts.org)

### New Business Manager Hired

Carol Winge was hired as The Prairie Enthusiasts Business Manager in June. She will support the Board of Directors and TPE committees, assist with the annual report and budget, update policies and procedures documents, and serve as central point contact for TPE.

Carol lives in Cottage Grove, WI, with her husband Bill, and will work in the TPE office in Madison and out of her home.

Carol has served on her church council, is a member of the church choir, and plays in the Trinity recorder consort.

Carol also works as a volunteer at the Cambridge Historic Museum in Cambridge, WI. Her experience includes writing grants, developing fundraising programs, promoting the museum, managing the budget, and working with the Board of Directors. Carol was also the business manager for the North American Lake Management Society.

You can reach Carol at [carolwinge@yahoo.com](mailto:carolwinge@yahoo.com) or 608-577-0584.

### TPE Membership

*TPE has 1091 members!!!*

In response to requests for more visibility to renewal dates, we have added your membership renewal date above your address on the cover of this newsletter. If you have any questions regarding this renewal date or other membership information, please email Victoria Oberle: [TPE@TDS.net](mailto:TPE@TDS.net)

Membership expires: May 2009  
Evanne Hunt  
484 Prairie Lane  
Hudson, WI

## Reminders Sent Via Email

Many notices for field trips and meetings are sent out via email. If you would like to be added to our email list, please send your email address to [TPE@TDS.net](mailto:TPE@TDS.net). Also, let us know if you'd like to receive a notification for the Prairie Promoter when it's posted online instead of receiving a hard copy of it in the mail.

Thank you for your continued support and enthusiasm for prairies.

### New NIPES Website

TPE has a new website at [www.nipes.org](http://www.nipes.org). The site is designed for TPE members. It provides users with a library, gallery, event calendar, a newsroom, a forum for discussions and polls, and a virtual office for the NIPES Board of Directors. An interactive map room is in the works.

Various kinds of users can register on NIPES:

**Readers** can access content, add comments, vote in polls, and write their own blog,

**Authors** can also add content using a high-level editor which works through a normal browser,

**Stewards** can also record and maintain information about the sites they manage,

**Editors** can also rearrange and update content, and

**Publishers** can manage the site software, users, and databases.

Files (texts, maps, spreadsheets, images,...) can be uploaded and attached to most types of content. Again, no special software is required.

All Prairie Enthusiasts may register on the website. We look forward to some interesting TPE-wide projects. For example, a group of authors could collaborate on the next version of the TPE Prairie Primer—online. Someone could write a blog on prairie insects, or prescribed burns, or TPE board happenings.

To request an account, or send suggestions on how the site should be used, go to [www.nipes.org](http://www.nipes.org) and click on "Contact Us."

If you have material you wish to share, you can email it to [info@nipes.org](mailto:info@nipes.org) and we'll put it online for you.

### Prairie Remnant Data and Data-Entry Wanted

We need information about the prairie remnants regionwide for the TPE Prairie Remnant database. Please send any remnant inventory data to John Harrington via the post or email. John also needs help entering the data.

Please contact John if you have time, computer access, and the desire to become more involved.

John Harrington  
25 Agricultural Hall  
1450 Linden Dr.  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Madison, WI 53706

[jaharrin@wisc.edu](mailto:jaharrin@wisc.edu)

## TPE Merchandise Available on Website

Now you can order all of your TPE merchandise in one convenient location. Parsnip Predator and No Mow signs, as well as TPE hats, tote bags, and notepads are now available on the TPE website.

[www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org/Merchandise.htm](http://www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org/Merchandise.htm)

Send the completed order form and payment to:

TPE, P.O. Box 1148, Madison WI 53701.

All proceeds will still go to the originating chapter, but now you can order any item using a single order form and payment. Some of these items previously were available only at selected TPE events.

Contact Evanne Hunt at [eahunt@pressenter.com](mailto:eahunt@pressenter.com) with ideas for additional products.

### COULEE REGION CHAPTER

Please check chapter newsletter for announcements.

### EMPIRE – SAUK CHAPTER

## Calendar of events

**Tuesday, July 22, 2008, 6:00 p.m.**  
Empire-Sauk Chapter Picnic and Annual Meeting of the Membership

**Thursday, September 11, 2008, 6:45 p.m.**  
Empire-Sauk Chapter board meeting at Middleton Public Library. All members are welcome.

## Chapter Elections

Nominations are being sought to fill the positions of chapter treasurer and chapter representative to the TPE board. These are two-year terms. The election will be held at the annual meeting of the chapter membership on the evening of Tuesday, July 22 (see chapter picnic for details). We hope you are able to attend the meeting and help us fill these positions.

## Chapter Picnic and Annual Meeting of the Membership

*Tuesday, July 22, 2008*

This year's Empire-Sauk Chapter picnic and annual meeting of the membership is being hosted by Jerry Goth and Lee Swanson (Swamplovers) at their preserve west of Cross Plains. Swamplovers will provide brats, and the Chapter will provide soft drinks.

After the meeting, we will explore a remnant bluff prairie with a large natural (residual) population of the state-listed pale purple coneflower. We will also have opportunities to see extensive and successful deep soil prairie plantings and oak savanna/woodland restoration work.

### Schedule:

6:00 PM - Potluck picnic

6:45 PM - Brief meeting, review highlights of past year, answer questions, elect chapter treasurer and chapter representative to TPE board

7:15 PM - Hike prairie remnant and prairie plantings

**Bring:** A dish to pass, eating utensils and hiking shoes

**Directions:** Go west from Cross Plains on US Hwy 14. At 0.25 mile outside of town, take County KP north from 14 (a right hand turn). Go 0.3 miles on KP to Cowling (Scheele) Rd. (on the left). Go west on Cowling (Scheele) 0.4 miles and turn right (north). Proceed to parking area at the base of the bluff.

## Abbreviated Burn Season

By Rich Henderson

Record snow depth, a late spring, wet weather and high winds when it was dry made for an abbreviated burn season. However, dedicated volunteers put in very long

days and took vacation days from work, to burn nearly two-thirds of what we had planned to burn.

The Blufflands Project (a joint project of TPE's Empire-Sauk Chapter and the Aldo Leopold Foundation) was the most successful. They accomplished 29 burns totaling 390 acres with the help of volunteers and staff putting 515 hours. The rest of the chapter completed another 32 burns on 19 properties for a total of 214 acres. The latter burns were accomplished with the help of 55 volunteers putting in 595 hours!

Thank you to the many volunteers out there. You're helping keep our prairie and savanna heritage alive and well. A special thank you to the Brocks, Hendersons and Oberles for generously letting their trucks be used once again as pack horses for the pumper units.

## Schurch-Thomson Prairie Barn

By Rich Henderson

Thanks to the endowment created by Joan and Denny Schurch-Thomson and donations from the Endres Manufacturing Company Foundation, State Bank of Cross Plains, Prairie Unitarian Universalist Society and Denny Connor, the repair and renovation work on the barn at Schurch-Thomson Prairie is nearing completion. These organizations and individuals recognized the conservation potential of TPE's Mounds View Grassland and the important role the Schurch-Thomson barn will play in seed cleaning and storage and land management equipment maintenance and storage once it becomes fully functional.

Donations are still needed to finish the interior work and to provide match to the Schurch-Thomson endowment funds. Our goal is to raise \$10,000. Please send donations with a note specifying what it is for to:

TPE  
c/o Rich Henderson  
2845 Timber Lane  
Verona, WI 53593

## ATVs Arrive in Time for Burn Season

The Empire-Sauk Chapter used a Turkey Stamp grant from the Wisconsin DNR to purchase two new ATVs for conducting prescribed burns. Each Honda Foreman 4x4 carries 38 gallons of water and has a 4 HP pump engine and 100 feet of hose. David Feutz, who has been doing custom work on prescribed burn equipment for The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin for many years,

customized the ATVs. We are very grateful for his assistance.

The ATVs were used on two dozen burns this spring. This mechanized equipment will make our burns far more secure and will allow us to burn more challenging and larger areas in woodlands, savannas and grasslands. These burns improve and increase habitat for turkeys and protect rare and declining natural areas. The ATVs will also be used to apply herbicide, plant seed and other land management work. Thank you to the Wisconsin DNR for recognizing the importance of the work we do on the land.



*Newly customized ATVs. Photo by Rich Henderson.*

## Dane County Grant to TPE

by Rich Henderson

This spring, the Dane County Environmental Council awarded TPE's Empire-Sauk Chapter a \$4,990 match grant to purchase equipment to be used for land restoration and management on Dane County sites. The chapter currently manages, or helps manage 623 acres of prairie, grassland, oak savanna, oak woodland and sedge meadow habitat spread across 21 sites in the county. These sites support remnants of rare and declining ecosystems. The 43 rare and declining plant and animal species found at these sites include 13 state-threatened, 10 state-endangered, and one federally-endangered species.

TPE volunteers and student interns conduct over half of the management/restoration work done on these lands. They put in thousands of hours each year. Activities include tree and brush clearing (35% of time), 20 to 25 prescribed burns per year (30%), weed control (18%), seed collecting, and cleaning and planting (12%). We average approximately 50 work parties per year, and

## Rare Plant Nursery

By mid May, NIPE will have begun installing another 3,000 plugs at the Hanley Savanna Rare Plant Nursery. Altogether, that will make 16,000 plugs of 26 species. If you can help (and we hope so), talk to Ed Strenski.

This year's species are: *Amorpha canesens* (leadplant), *Aronia melanocarpa* (black chokeberry), *Asclepias sullivantii* (prairie milkweed), *Baptisia bracteata* var. *glabrescens* (cream indigo), *Cacalia plantaginea* (tuberous plantain), *Lilium michiganense* (meadow lily), *Ruellia humilis* (prairie petunia), *Solidago missouriensis* var. *fasciculata* (smooth goldenrod), and *Triosteum aurantiacum* var. *illinoense* (shaggy horse-gentian).

The Rare Plant Nursery provides seed for restoration projects. It has also taught us much about growing prairie plants from seed. If your chapter could use plugs grown from your own seed, contact Jim Rachuy, 815-947-2287, [Andropogon@NIPES.org](mailto:Andropogon@NIPES.org).

## Annual Picnic

The NIPE Annual Picnic will be held on Saturday, June 7, at Hanley Savanna. The festivities will begin at noon and include grilled bison, birding, botanizing, and tours of the 200 acre site. This is our 15th year, so come and join the fun. All you'll need is a chair. RSVP to Rickie Rachuy, 815-947-2287, [rr.lonetree@verizon.net](mailto:rr.lonetree@verizon.net).

## Trailer Available—Seed Center Facelift

The NIPE seed processing center will get a facelift this summer. The 60'x40' building needs a cement floor, new wiring and lighting, and general repairs. We will also build a new platform around the hammermill, install a dust ventilation system, and build a work bench for a new platform scale.

As a result, we will no longer need a 2001 H&H trailer which currently serves as a work platform. It measures 8.5'x18', has two 7,000 pound axles, drive-over fenders, numerous options and is essentially new. If your chapter could use this trailer, contact Jim Rachuy, 815-947-2287, [Andropogon@NIPES.org](mailto:Andropogon@NIPES.org).

several volunteers put in time on their own schedule as well.

The grant will help TPE acquire communication radios, which are crucial to conducting safe and efficient prescribed burns; a professional grade DR brush mower for heavy-duty work on rough terrain and large diameter brush; and brush cutters for brush and weed control. These additions will greatly increase the productivity of our volunteers and interns, thus allowing us to improve and maintain more acres per year.

This grant requires a 50% match from TPE in the form of in-kind volunteer labor and cash. We need to raise \$700 in cash for the equipment purchase and generate at least 430 volunteer hours over the next year to earn the grant dollars. If you are interested in donating cash to match this grant, send donations with a note specifying what they are for to:

TPE  
c/o Rich Henderson  
2845 Timber Lane  
Verona, WI 53593

If you wish to contribute volunteer time, look for listings of work parties on the Empire-Sauk page of the TPE web site: [www.theprairieenthusiasts.org/chapter/empire/empire.htm](http://www.theprairieenthusiasts.org/chapter/empire/empire.htm), and contact the chapter's volunteer coordinator, Lois Komai ([lakomai@chorus.net](mailto:lakomai@chorus.net) or 608-238-2503), to receive work party notices by e-mail.

## Summer Help Needed

As always, help is needed through the summer to collect seed and to cut or pull sweet clover, parsnip and knapweed. This summer, we again have grants for land management work that require a match of in-kind volunteer time to earn the grant money. For every hour of volunteer time that you put in, you generate between two and three hours of paid work for control of weeds, trees and brush on our project sites. This summer, we will work at Underwood Prairie, Schurch-Thomson Prairie, Shea Prairie, Ripp Prairies, Kalscheur Savanna, Koltes Prairies, Smith/Egre Drumlins, Mazomanie Bluff, Schluckebier Prairie, Black Earth Rettenmund Prairie and other sites. If you wish to be on the contact lists to help with these activities, please contact our chapter volunteer coordinator, Lois Komai, 608-238-2503 or [lakomai@chorus.net](mailto:lakomai@chorus.net).

## Hanley Savanna

Although we've completed the initial restoration work at Hanley, there is still much to do. This spring, we will put up some fancy signs at the park house (the TPE banner and site rules). During the summer, we will harvest 17 acres of pine, which will create a unit to restore next year.

## 2008 Inventory Project

This year, we plan to re-inventory the vascular plants at all NIPE sites. We will visit each management unit four times during the growing season. If you'd like to help, and learn more about our native plants, call Jim Rachuy, 815-947-2287, or email [info@nip.es.org](mailto:info@nip.es.org).

## Truax Drill Rehab

The TPE drill is back in action. The Southwest Wisconsin chapter purchased the drill which the northeast Iowa Fish & Wildlife Service recently housed. This winter, the drill was collected, repaired (\$1,000 in new parts), recalibrated, and put back into service here in Illinois. This spring, we will use it to seed grasses and sedges (no forbs). We plan to install five acres of little bluestem this year. In time, this planting will make a great place to run the combine.

## PRAIRIE SANDS CHAPTER

No information submitted

## ST. CROIX VALLEY CHAPTER

### Prescribed Burn Training Completed

The chapter provided a four-hour class on prescribed burn techniques on February 17. Fifteen people attended the class at the Warren Township Hall.

Bill Ramsden, a burn boss for the Minnesota chapter of The Nature Conservancy, presented a condensed classroom session on fire. He covered topics including planning and preparation, equipment, how a typical burn is carried out, and effects of fuels and weather on fire.

On April 20, 10 trainees with little to some experience attended the outdoor portion. Bill led the

group assisted by Patrick Fleming, Kurt Blanchett, and Kevin Menken.

With these 10 people, the St. Croix Valley Chapter has 22 trained and experienced burn crew members. This makes an impressive burn crew.



*Ginny Gaynor demonstrates proper technique.  
Photo by Burt Levyt.*

## Simon Prairie Management Plan

Work on the management plan for the Simon Prairie continues. On May 29, Ginny Gaynor led a small group through the prairie between cloud-bursts. Bird's foot violets were everywhere! Afterwards, the group gathered at Carol Benish's cabin to discuss what to do next in restoring this five acre prairie.

The next step is to find a contractor to carefully remove the numerous trees and extensive brush without disturbing the precious prairie sod. We also need to create permanent fire breaks on all sides to protect neighboring property.

If you can help girdle aspen and pull spotted knapweed, contact Ginny Gaynor at 715-246-2746 or [ginnygaynor@presenter.com](mailto:ginnygaynor@presenter.com).

## Anniversary Hike

On May 20, the St. Croix Valley chapter invited the entire River Falls, WI, community to hike through the remnant prairie and oak savanna known as the Foster Conservation Area.

The chapter has actively managed this concentration of remnants for 10 years. Starting with Foster Cemetery in 1998, management efforts expanded to neighboring private properties using US Fish & Wildlife Private Land Stewardship & Wisconsin DNR Landowner Incentive Program grants.

Wayne Huhnke, chapter land manager, led 20 people through the Kinnickinnic River canyon. Despite the cool, wet season, the group found many spring flowers, including ground cherry and bird's foot violet.



*Hikers identify violets. Photo by Burt Levy.*

## Field Trips

*Playing with Prairie for Wildlife and Aesthetics*

**Date:** July 24 (Thursday)

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

**Location:** Emerald, WI

**Level of walking difficulty:** Easy - trails available

The prairie is small, but includes an assortment of soil conditions and many species. The owners are using a variety of management options to maintain and diversify the habitat value and aesthetics of the prairie.

Directions: From Baldwin take HWY 63 North to County Road G. Turn right or East on G and continue 3 miles to 240th Street (old Emerald town hall on left). Turn left onto 240th Street heading North. The prairie is the first on the right (1511 240th Street, Emerald, WI)

Contact: Troy Meacham 715-265-4887 or [stmeacham@cltcomm.net](mailto:stmeacham@cltcomm.net)

## SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN CHAPTER

### Work Parties

For directions, see website or call the contact person.

**July 13 (Sunday)** Eldred Prairie, fighting invasives  
10:00 – 1:00. Contact Jesse or Jay at 608-778-2832

## PRAIRIE SMOKE CHAPTER

No information submitted

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The following people have joined since March 1, 2008.

Jesse Boyett Anderson, Middleton, WI  
Brian Becker, Hayfield, MN  
Richard Biske, Spring Valley, MN  
Tom Ellington & Tiffany Lodholz, Montello, WI  
Clint Estle, Winona, MN  
Gladys Eternicka, Onalaska, WI  
Evergreen Acres Association, Rochester, MN  
Pat and Madeleine Fleming, Lake Elmo, MN  
John Harford, Rochester, MN  
Monica Kaner, Menomonie, WI  
Dale & Kim Karow, Fort Atkinson, WI  
Marjorie Karschnia, Saint Paul, MN  
Mike Keefe, Grand Meadow, MN  
Chris Kendall, Waltham, MN  
Fred & Sandy Kiel, Lanesboro, MN

Tom Lawinger, Platteville, WI  
Eric Lindquist, Winona, MN  
Howard & Margaret Marklein, Spring Green, WI  
Mike & Cindi Martinovic, West Dundee, IL  
Jane Richard, Middleton, WI  
Katie Roth, Madison, WI  
Ann Schmidt, Wautoma, WI  
Jeanne Siekowski, Park Ridge, IL  
Sarah Swanson, Verona, WI  
Steve and Betsy Wallman, Middleton, WI  
Neil & Ellen Wenberg, Almond, WI  
Beth Whitaker, Madison, WI  
George Wilbur, La Farge, WI  
Julie Woodis, Madison, WI

## THANK YOU, DONORS!

We thank everyone who has made a donation this spring\*. These gifts above and beyond membership dues are truly generous and appreciated.

### *Under \$100*

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Craig & Jean Anderson  
David & Karen Bakken  
Robert & Ann De Mars  
Dianne & Bill Eisenhuth  
Clint Estle  
Wayne & Bonnie Feyereisn  
Marsha & Mark Gorman  
Cora Hunt (*memorials from Carol & Bob Benish and Rich & Kathy Henderson*)

Mike Kraszewski  
Jeff & Sandy Larson  
Mike McGrath and  
Steph Jakim  
Linda Nelson and  
Mike Larsen  
Mike & Roxanne Schlasner  
Pat Tabor  
Glenn Teschendorf and  
Mary Anne Derheimer

Lynn & Barbara Teska  
Brian & Michelle Wagner  
Phil & Sue Wheeler  
Ruthann Yaeger  
Gail Vick and Joel Peterson (*gift from Craig Argall in honor of their marriage*)

### *\$100 - \$499*

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Evanne Hunt  
IBM Corporation

Tim and Sally Plum  
QBE Regional Insurance

Jim & Rose Sime  
Charles Wellington

### *\$500 - \$1000*

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Cuna Mutual Group Foundation  
Sharon Foster  
Barbara & Brad Glass  
Jack Kussmaul

Scott Sauer  
Keith & Karen Solimar  
State Bank of Cross Plains  
Olive & John Thomson

### *Over \$5000*

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The Savanna Oak Foundation, Inc.

## BUMP-UP CAMPAIGN

Thank you to everyone who BUMPED UP their membership to a higher level during this same period!

Julia Bathon  
Michael Derouin and Gail Harty  
Fred Faessler  
Sharon Foster  
Richard & Loretta Mattas

Joel and Barb Mielke  
Renee and Wayne Nation  
Jonathan Schultz  
Bill & Karen Weber

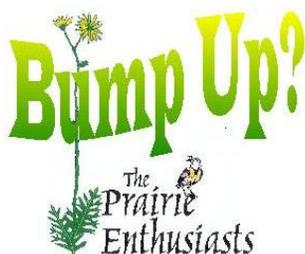
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\* For the period March 21-May 23

THE PRAIRIE ENTHUSIASTS  
PO BOX 1148  
MADISON WI 53701  
[www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org](http://www.ThePrairieEnthusiasts.org)

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*The Prairie Enthusiasts needs you to bump up your membership to a higher level so we can enhance our member and volunteer services and continue our mission of protection, restoration and education.*

*We are asking that you pledge to continue at this new level for three years so we know we can count on your support!*

*Thank you, Your TPE Endowment & Fundraising committee*

I/We name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ will bump up from a current membership level of \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ level. Enclosed is a check for the difference of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for 2008.

The Prairie Enthusiasts Membership Levels:

**\$15 Student, \$25 Individual, \$40 Family,  
\$100 Shooting Star, \$200 Blazing Star, \$500 Compass Plant,  
\$1,000 Monarch, \$5,000 Benefactor**

Please send form and check to:

**The Prairie Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 1148, Madison, WI 53701**