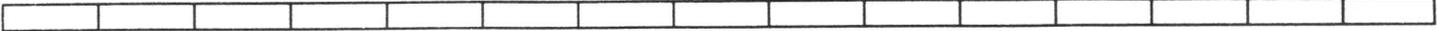




the Prairie News

November 1997

Chiwaukee Prairie Preservation Fund P.O. Box 1802 Kenosha, Wis. 53141



Mary Alice Hammond

"When you have a prairie you don't need TV."
Marisa Crook - age 9

JUST WHEN WE THOUGHT the prairie was safe, the rug was pulled out from under us. Political events during the summer have again left the prairie in danger from developers.

Land inside the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) & The Nature Conservancy (TNC) target areas, which these agencies do not own, will have a zoning change from C-3 to C-1 (less protection). Land already owned by the DNR and TNC will remain C-3 (full protection). In other words, **THE PRAIRIE WON'T BE SAFE UNTIL IT IS PURCHASED FOR PRESERVATION!**

There are 150 lots inside the DNR target area and 149 in TNC target area which are still privately owned. We estimate the cost of these 299 lots at over \$400,000. Preservation of these remaining unprotected lots won't be cheap, but it's **NOT IMPOSSIBLE.**

The DNR has written to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for a match grant which we hope will be forthcoming soon. The Nature Conservancy has its own source of money. CPPF has been receiving donations and working with TNC and DNR in acquiring land whenever owners have been willing to sell.

If you are not a Friend of the prairie, we invite you to become one. Since 1985 our tax-exempt organization has raised tens of thousands of dollars to preserve land in Chiwaukee Prairie. As a Friend of the Prairie your gift will be tax deductible, you will receive our annual newsletter and have the satisfaction of knowing that you are doing your part to protect one of the most valuable prairies in the Midwest. Rest assured that every penny you contribute for land will be spent on land. We will combine your money with that of others and purchase lots as they become available. This is how Al Krampert and Phil Sander first got the project started back in 1965, and look how far it has come!

Please join us as we all move forward together in a last great effort to preserve this piece of our natural heritage not only for ourselves, but **ESPECIALLY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.**



WITH AN ANNUAL GIFT OF \$100 or more, you will automatically become a Blazing-Star, will receive our annual newsletter and will be invited to attend special hikes. In addition, you will receive a handsome print of blazing-stars, suitable for framing, and drawn especially for us by a gifted local artist, Bernice Rosen. More uses of her talent are being planned for us in the near future.

Bernice graduated from Mundelein College and also studied at UW-Parkside. She has exhibited at Anderson Arts Center, Kenosha Public Museum and Wustum. She is a member of the Area Artists Group and taught at Anderson Arts Center Summer Camp. The prairie is fortunate to have such a dedicated and willing helper.

FOR A ONE TIME GIFT OF \$500 you can become a life member. In addition you will receive the same benefits as a Blazing-Star.

CLARIFICATION OF TERMINOLOGY- CHIWAUKEE NORTH is the new term that we are using to describe land north of 116th Street, while CHIWAUKEE SOUTH refers to land south of 116th ST.

OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBER is Tom Becker, retired wildlife manager formerly stationed at Bong Recreation Area. He has graciously assumed the position of stewardship chair for Chiwaukee North and will lead volunteers in that area.

WORK SCHEDULE FOR CHIWAUKEE NORTH will be the second Saturday of each month from 10:00am until 2:00pm. starting in March of 1998. Bring a lunch and wear old clothes. Meet at 102nd St. & 3rd Ave.

WORK SCHEDULE FOR CHIWAUKEE SOUTH will be the third Saturday of each month from 10:00am until 2:00pm. Bring a lunch and wear old clothes. Meet at 121st Street & 2nd Ave.

VOLUNTEERS HAVE ACCOMPLISHED much in 1997. In April we burned three spots and brushed them out later. The prairie responded with an incredible succession of bloom all season long. We also burned and brushed a corner of the prairie at Second Ave and 122nd St. That area also produced a spectacular floral display until October.

OUR FIRST KENOSHA BURN SCHOOL was conducted on Oct. 11th with the Pleasant Prairie Fire and Parks Departments. Unfortunately the wind was very high and burning had to be postponed until later in the fall.

FOUR SEASONS GARDEN CLUB will do its fund-raiser, Door Ways to Christmas on Saturday, Nov. 22nd in three Kenosha homes from 10:00 - 4:00pm. Tickets are available for \$8.00 from the Kenosha Women's Club or Milaeger's in Racine. In the past this club has given a considerable portion of its proceeds from these events to the preservation of the prairie.



SCOUT TROOPS AND SCHOOL groups are invited to pick seeds in the fall for spreading the following spring. It really is a lot of fun! Call Ria Crook at 694-2340 or Donna Peterson 637-3141 if you want to be a seed picker.

PRAIRIE WHITE-FRINGED ORCHIDS were counted this year and we were delighted with the obviously growing numbers. We think the burns were an important factor in producing the wonderful increase in blooms. The ragged-fringed orchid was also found in good numbers. Next year we hope that the Kenosha Orchid Society will volunteer to count our orchids.



KENOSHA ORCHID SOCIETY PRESENTED the prairie with a gift of \$500 for acquisition of land containing orchids. Many thanks for this generous gift!



THE SMALL MAMMAL SURVEY turned up the only 1997 report of a Franklin ground squirrel in the state! All animals are live trapped and then later released where they were found.

GOLDEN BOW AWARD was given to our hard working volunteers at the Nature Conservancy's 1997 annual meeting in Baraboo. This Outstanding Preserve Committee Award consists of a gold painted bow saw which we may keep until next year when it is passed on to another outstanding committee.

THE UNSUNG HERO AWARD for 1997 was given to Joan Rohan and Donna Peterson for their combined efforts over the last fifteen years to bring about change at the prairie.

OUR TREASURER, PETER WILSON has found that his new position is too demanding for him to continue as treasurer. We thank Peter for his valuable leadership and wish him good luck at his new place of employment.

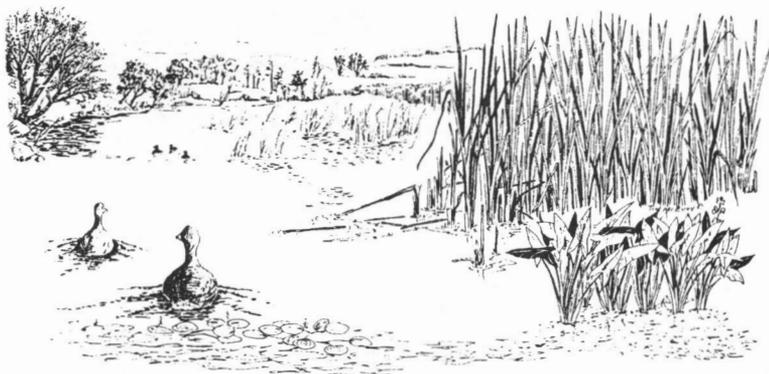
A PICNIC IS A PICNIC, but not when it happens on a beautiful day in September at Chiwaukee Prairie. Our group of volunteers were surrounded by tall grasses, goldenrod, gentians and asters, and had a delicious lunch with homemade salads, cake, ginger cookies, and the makings for foil dinners ready to combine and cook on the grill. THAT'S A PICNIC!!

We spent the morning gathering seeds. Then enjoyed good food in good company. It was there, while gathering seeds and discussing the pleasures of observing things on the prairie with one of our younger prairie enthusiasts, that she gave me the words of wisdom that we have used at the beginning of this newsletter. **THANK YOU MARISA!**

Since the September picnic was so well received, it was decided that a spring breakfast for our volunteers would be a noble idea. Details will come later.

Winter is coming; SO SPRING CAN'T BE FAR BEHIND!





MR. KENOSHA, OUR FAVORITE NONOGENARIAN, Phil Sander has done it again! He has just written an engaging little book called Ripples from the Wetlands.

About the time most people of his generation were leaning back in their rocking chairs and learning to relax, Phil began to write and publish some beautiful little books about his beloved Kenosha: Kenosha Ramblings, Chiwaukee Prairie Memories and now this latest one all about the Des Plaines Wetlands Conservancy. It is a delightful collection of essays and poems about the history, archaeology, plants, birds, insects, mammals and even the men of the area. It is nicely illustrated, and is enriched by the sensitivity of his language. It is also a strong message on conservation.

Phil recently received an Honorary Doctorate of Public Service from Carthage College. His fame grows and grows-

He was also of course one of the prime movers in the preservation of Chiwaukee Prairie and we are pleased that he still serves on our board and keeps us aware of important matters like the water resources that nourish the prairie. We are so glad Phil has never learned to twiddle his thumbs.

CATS AT HOME CAN BE BELOVED PETS, but cats in the wild are another matter.

John Bielefeldt, Racine County Naturalist, recently reported in his newsletter this sad but interesting statistic: "According to Drs. John Coleman and Stan Temple in the Department of Wildlife Ecology at UW Madison, 'rural cats in Wisconsin are killing an estimated 39 million birds each year. That's a significant take,' says Dr. Coleman."

Unfortunately as in other rural areas there are cats on Chiwaukee Prairie. WE ARE LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS! If you have ideas about this call Gus 694-3631 or Joan 634-5245.



OUR CHIWAUKEE PRAIRIE SIGN has been rejuvenated and relocated. It now stands in the prairie east of Marina Road and south of 116th Street thanks to the efforts of Jason Fennema, one of our Scouts, who repainted it, moved it and set it in a strong concrete base to better weather the winter storms.

Watch for the new kiosk which should appear on the Al Krampert trail in the not too distant future, courtesy of Scout, Leo Graf.

We have been most fortunate in having several capable and dedicated Eagle Scouts who have carried out a variety of projects to enhance the prairie.

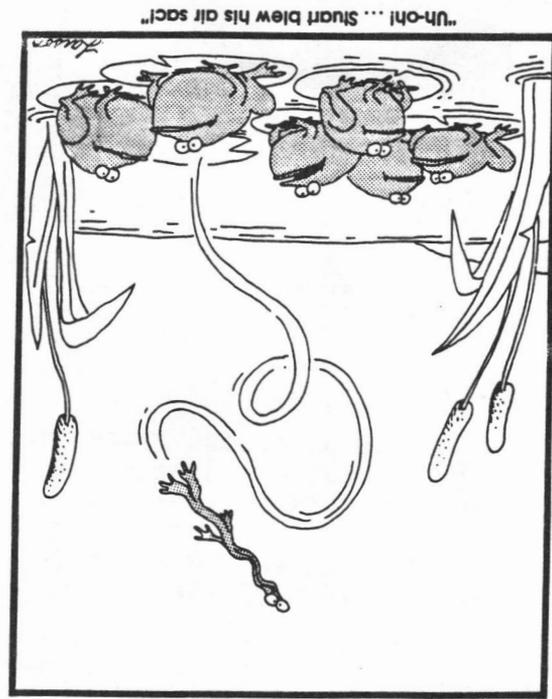
Thank you to Andy Van Strien, Joe Snider, Erin Doil, Jason Fennema and Leo Graf for all your fine efforts!

Exploring nature with your child is largely a matter of becoming receptive to what lies all around you. It is learning again to use your eyes, ears, nostrils and finger tips, opening up the disused channels of sensory impression.

For most of us, knowledge of our world comes largely through sight, yet we look about with such unseeing eyes that we are partially blind. One way to open your eyes to unnoticed beauty is to ask yourself, "What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"

—Rachel Carson





THE FAR SIDE
by Gary Larson

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For us in the minority, the opportunity to see geese is more important than television, and a chance to find a pasque-flower is a right as inalienable as free speech.

— Aldo Leopold

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