

PRAIRIE PLAINS LINK

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

PRAIRIE PLAINS

RESOURCE INSTITUTE

September, 2006

September = full time manual seed harvesting. Late summer rains have ensured excellent harvest for over 100 species. Some days all four of us are in the field, including one beautiful day at Pokorny Prairie on September 5. Our mission that day: rose hips, Canada milkvetch and compass plant.



Pokorny Prairie seed harvest: Mike working on compass plant; Jan & Amy gathering rose hips; closeup of rose hip.



**PPRI Restoration Stats
1980-2006:**
4921 acres
271 planting units
70 project sites
25 counties



Thanks once again to Joe Ford for organizing volunteer seed harvest evenings this month!

New joint venture:

Prairie Plains & Edgerton Explorit Center

We combined forces with Aurora's hands-on science center on September 7 to provide 102 home-schooled children with an afternoon of SOAR activities on the Platte and Griffith Prairie. They came from all over central and eastern Nebraska. Edgerton's Chad Johnson and Rick Brown led activities in orienteering and aquatic life inventory while Bill, Amy and Jan presented a prairie exploration hike, insect netting and Raindrop Relay. Our students, ranging from preschool to high school, seemed to thoroughly enjoy the day - as did we. Looks like another annual event is on our calendar!

Continuing outstanding service

He's really more like a fifth staff member. Eugene "Mert" Griffith wastes no time zeroing in on what needs to be done - or done better - then doing it. Lately he's been busy clearing some trees on the farm in preparation for moving the barn. He also just converted one of our big seed boxes into a portable seed dryer that eliminates a step in the grass harvest/drying process. So once again, our PPRI caps are off to you, Mert!

Please send us your email address and stay up to date on event details and news flashes. If you have not yet provided your address, please do so by emailing amyppri@hamilton.net. Thanks.



Three earn Eagle Scout honors for service to ONP

Drew Bonge, Brad Christo and Bill Kusek from Boy Scout Troop #155 in Albion were among those honored with Scouting's highest rank on September 3. Drew's project was trail building, Brad's was laying rock under the shelter and Bill installed ten benches at various sites on the preserve. Congratulations and thanks to these young men for their many hours of service!



Classic tallgrass prairie, fall aspect
Springer Basin restoration site in Hamilton County.



Home schooled children enjoying Griffith Prairie & the Platte on Sept. 7.

Photo courtesy: Aurora News-Register



Jalan Crossland



The rain didn't dampen the spirits of FAMFest fans. It was a wonderful festival, with over 15 artists participating in the big tent on Aurora's town square. Humbubba, The Waybacks, and Jalan Crossland were moved to the school theater Saturday night, where they put on one memorable night of amazing musical entertainment. Next day we enjoyed ideal hiking weather for the FAMFest outing at Griffith Prairie.



FAMFest hikers and brilliant Canada goldenrod.

Heartland Sophomores at Marie Ratzlaff Prairie Preserve

Heartland teachers Sharon Bishop and Marc Regier brought their students to the prairie on the afternoon of September 20. The preserve serves as outdoor classroom for both language arts and life science students every fall.



Ratzlaff Prairie scene captured by Heartland sophomore BriAnna Epp.

Technology Update

Environmental Systems Research, Inc. (ESRI) has donated ArcView 9.2 (the latest version of their most popular GIS software) and the Spatial Analyst extension that will greatly enhance our GIS capabilities. A gift from member Lana Flagtvet plus ESRI's donation has allowed PPRI to create a contemporary, robust GIS that will serve all of our programs and may help to generate new revenue streams.

Prairie Plains Education Center Groundbreaking Ceremony

Friday, Sept. 29: Forty-two people gathered to help us celebrate. Breaking ground together are, l-r, board members Steve Anderson, Dennis Ferguson and Cliff Dill; center architect Lee Schriever; board members David Meyer and Mitzi Fox; PPRI cofounder Curt Twedt; board member Colleen Babcock; member and Griffith Farm resident Mert Griffith; cofounders Jan and Bill Whitney and board member Charles Whitney. More on this momentous occasion next month.



Approaching Events

Tuesday, October 3:
State Range Judging Contest
Griffith Prairie

Saturday, October 7:
Enchanted Evening
Olson Nature Preserve, 7:00-9:00

Saturday, October 14:
Harvest Festival
Lincoln Creek Prairie, 6:00-9:00

Saturday, October 21
Bader Park Hike, 9:00 a.m.

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