We deliver! PWELC outreach is booming

In the past several years PWELC has seen an explosion in requests for outreach programs and we are happy to deliver! The YES! program, Big Canoe, Mobile Climbing Wall, Enviro-puppet theatre, the Wright and Stearns County Parks Project and, most recently, the Yellow Boats Project have helped us to reach many thousands of people who would likely never make it to our campus. We are enjoying meeting people where they live. Paddling trips on the Sauk River, Crow River, and Mississippi along with rock climbing at Quarry Park in St. Cloud, Yellow Boats pop-ups, and school programs in the parks throughout Wright and Stearns Counties has challenged our staff to elevate their game and they have excelled. Dream it! Do it! We deliver! Give us a call to schedule an adventure learning delivery to your community.

Upcoming Events

Music Under the Prairie Stars 2018 .............................................. Friday, September 7, 2018
Annual PWELC Membership Meeting & Potluck .......... Monday, 5:30pm October 15, 2018 (please RSVP)
YES Fall Summit ................................................................. Wednesday, October 3, 2018
Halloween Haunt ............................................................... Friday, October 26, 2018

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center
12718 10th St. NE
Spicer, MN 56288

Thank you for your support.

Join Us!

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center
Annual Membership for 2018

- New Member
- Renewing Member
- Individual Membership ............... $30.00
- Family Membership .................... $45.00
- Donation of _______________ amount to the Sustainability Endowment $100 to $499
- $100 to $499
- $500 to $999
- $1000

1 / we are interested in volunteering at Prairie Woods.

Name(s) ________________________________________________________________
Address __________________________________________________________________
City/State/ZIP __________________________________________________________________
Email __________________________________________________________________

Please enclose payment to Prairie Woods ELC, and send to:
Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center
12718 10th St. NE
Spicer, Minnesota 56288

Questions or comments? Please call us 320-354-5894 or e-mail us at pwelc@cs.kandiyohi.mn.us
This newsletter is all about County Community Corrections. Let’s celebrate the progress that so many have worked for and prepare for the challenges ahead. As we walked in parades the promise of winter to follow. PWELC has something for everyone in every season.

We had a super summer getting people into the great outdoors and now we turn our thoughts to two more of our four favorite seasons at PWELC, fall and winter. We’ll kick off fall with our annual Prairie Stars event on Fri., Sept. 7th, and jump into the return of groups from schools, scouts, FFA, churches, and corporate retreats. We will cherish warm weather while it lasts and then embrace crisp fall days and stars event on Fri., Sept. 7th.

PWELC was hopping at home and on the road this summer. The Yellow Boats Project pop-up events, paddling the Sauk & North Fork Crow River, constructing a composting restroom at the pavilion site, Spicer 4th of July parade, New London Water Days, Bonanza Valley Days, Summertime by George, Rockin’ Robbins, rock climbing at Quarry Park, Forkhorn Camp, YES! AIS summer projects, Tommy Swenson Youth Sporting Clays Day, weddings at the Pavilion and on and on.

Compost Happens! at Prairie Woods
Thanks to Kandiyohi County Public Works & Kandiyohi County Community Corrections Sentence to Serve, PWELC has added a composting restroom facility at the farm site adjacent to the pavilion. The facility features four uni-sex stalls including one handicap accessible unit and one unit with a diaper changing station. The Clivus Multrum composters will save thousands of gallons of water each year for decades to come and will also help to educate our visitors about waterless waste management systems.

Notes from the Executive Director
by Dave Pederson, Executive Director

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Come out and enjoy a walk through the woodland, wetland and prairie trails this fall and get ready to ski, snowshoe and kickstarted your way through winter.

I look forward to seeing you at our Prairie Stars Fundraiser on Sept 7th and our annual membership meeting and potluck on Oct 15th. Let’s celebrate the progress that so many have worked for and prepare for the challenges ahead. As we walked in parades this summer people would call out “we love Prairie Woods!” Our response: “we love you too!” Thanks for all that you do for PWELC to help get kids outdoors and connected to a lifetime of healthy outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship.

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Thank you for remembering PWELC in your end-of-year giving and estate planning.

YES! Updates

Youth Eco Solutions (YES!) has been busy with presenting 2018 Awards, attending the MN Twins Game for our second annual State Competition, working with Kandiyohi Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force, and planning for the next YES! season.

Regional and State Awards: Congratulations to the West Central YES! Teams for yet another amazing year of hardworking students completing complex projects. The 2018 Awards were presented to the following teams:

- 1st Place Award Recipient – Sartell YES! Team
  - Project – Creating an educational waste reduction website
- 2nd Place Award Recipient (tie) – New London-Spicer High School YES! Team
- 2nd Place Award Recipient (tie) – ROCORI YES! Team

The YES! State Championship was awarded to the West Central YES! Team.

The YES! Awards Gala was held on Friday, September 7th, 2018 at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. The evening included a dinner, awards presentation, and live music. The gala was a success and the YES! community came together to celebrate the hard work and achievements of our YES! teams.

The YES! Youth Energy Summit was held on May 20th, 2018 at the MWRC in Saint Cloud. The summit brought together YES! teams from across the state to learn about renewable energy, climate action, and leadership skills. The summit featured guest speakers, workshops, and hands-on activities.

The YES! Stewardship Challenge was held from June 1st to July 1st, 2018. The challenge encouraged YES! teams to complete as many projects as possible during this period. The challenge was a success and many YES! teams were able to complete a variety of projects.

The YES! Water Quality Challenge was held from May 1st to August 1st, 2018. The challenge encouraged YES! teams to complete as many water quality projects as possible during this period. The challenge was a success and many YES! teams were able to complete a variety of water quality projects.

The YES! National Summit was held on September 10th, 2018 at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. The summit brought together YES! teams from across the country to learn about renewable energy, climate action, and leadership skills. The summit featured guest speakers, workshops, and hands-on activities.

The YES! Graduation Gala was held on Friday, June 22nd, 2018 at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. The gala included a dinner, awards presentation, and live music. The gala was a success and the YES! community came together to celebrate the hard work and achievements of our YES! graduates.

The YES! Community Climate Action Day was held on October 20th, 2018 at Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center. The action included a variety of hands-on activities and workshops.

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Nearly 600 students have had a taste of pioneer life so far this year. For a few lucky students the taste was genuine as they created their own pioneer lunch. A hearty potato soup was made after chopping potatoes, cheese, bacon and onions. Apples and carrots were sliced to be eaten on the side. Bread and apple butter was also served. Of course the meal wouldn’t be complete without coffee and homemade ice cream. I wish the parents could hear the delight as the students exclaim “This is the best meal ever!” “I normally hate potatoes.” “Coffee is disgusting!” Not only do the students get to prepare the meal, they also experience what goes into getting the lunch started—saving wood and keeping the fire going, planting and weeding the garden, doing dishes, churning and churning and churning. What would have been every day drudgery to a pioneer is thrilling to children now. Time goes so quickly at the Pioneer Cabin. They’re always surprised when the day is done and it’s time to hop on the bus.

If you know a class or organization that would benefit from a living history experience, please reach out. Contact Mari at 320-354-5894.

There will be more opportunities to climb this fall because there are still plenty more stops scheduled along the Mobile Wall tour. Here are some of the venues where the mobile climbing wall has appeared or will appear this year: Rockin Robbins Assn, Summer Time by George in St. Cloud x2, Monticello Walk & Roll, Kandiyohi County Fair (4 days), Meeker County Fair, Brooten Bonanza Valley Days, Quarry Park, 1M employee picnic in Alexandria, Raymond Harvest Festival, Alexandria Viking Sportsmens Day, Prairie Pothole Day, University of MN Morris, and more. Do you have an event that could use a bit of PWELC adventure? We deliver! Dates early in the year are already filling in.

The mobile climbing wall has been a big hit at home as it has been on the road. On rainy or hot/sunny days the mobile wall is set up in the Pavilion which provides shade and shelter as needed. A huge thanks to all who helped fund the mobile climbing wall and the pavilion! Also, now is a great time to schedule your group for a challenge course experience in September and October. And when the weather turns cold you can plan to join us for climbing throughout the winter at our indoor climbing facility.

Please feel free to contact us to set up your next PWELC adventure!

**Be sure to check our website and Facebook to follow the mobile climbing wall.**
Have you heard about the Yellow Boats Pop Up events? They’re only the “Newest, Mostest, Funniest” thing yet—according to my 6 year old. On July 5th we hauled 20 kayaks down to the Mill Pond Swim Beach in New London and 47 people were able to enjoy an impromptu free paddle. At a Yellow Boats event following the New London Water Days parade on July 21st we had over 100 people get a taste of kayaking. We’ve had many questions about when we will host the next one. We don’t know! We consider the weather, the available staff and our schedule. If everything seems to line up, we might just Pop Up somewhere.

Keep updated by checking Facebook, Instagram and our website.

A big thanks to our sponsors of the Yellow Boats Project: The Berneck Family Foundation, Tebben Enterprises, New London Spicer Area Fund of the Willmar Area Community Foundation and Leo’s Legs Fund.

Home on the Range

Forkhorn Camp started with a bang this year. It seems like it’s become tradition to have thunderstorms the first night of camp; the first night many of the campers have ever slept in a tent. That night was followed by a day of nearly 100 degree heat index. Ten.

Using muzzle control as they hike to the Westby Shooting Range. Forkhorn Camp at the Shooting Range.

RENEWABLE NEWS AT PWELC

Energy Update: Over the past 12 months PWELC has been a net energy producer having put over 2000 kilowatt hours out to the grid beyond what has been required to run our main campus. In 2004 PWELC started to work intensively on converting to renewable energy sources, reducing our carbon footprint and reducing our energy costs. Along the way we have added solar pv, solar air heating panels, solar hot water systems, wind power, heating with renewable fuels, and a whole host of energy efficiency and energy conservation measures. It feels good, it is good.

Thanks to a Legacy Amendment grant through the Greater MN Parks and Trails Commission PWELC is busy offering a great slate of experiences in the parks of Wright and Stearns Counties this summer, fall and winter. Check the websites for Wright and Stearns County Parks or give us a call to check out climbing, paddling, skiing and kicksledding programs scheduled for the parks this fall and winter.

KICKSLEDS! Several winters of low snow and brown ground have sent us searching for fun alternative winter program activities. Kicksleds can be used on bare ice on our sloughs or also on snow w/ the addition of snow-runners. In the last newsletter we put out a call for kicksleds and we are pleased to report that four families stepped up to donate kicksleds bringing our total to five and we are at 25% toward our goal of 20 kicksleds by winter.

By this winter we hope to have a fleet of kicksleds in service for winter programs and available for weekend rentals. The kicksleds, which are imported from Norway and Finland come in several sizes to suit our small to XL sized participants. The kicksleds cost approx. $240 each and our goal is to acquire 20 sleds in order to outfit one group and have the sleds available for rent on weekends. If you would like to donate a kicksled with your name or the name of your business or organization attached please give Dave a call at 320-354-5894.

Please remember Prairie Woods in your estate planning and annual giving.
PRAIRIE WOODS ENVIRONMENTAL LEARNING CENTER PRESENTS...

MUSIC UNDER THE STARS
AN EARTH CONSCIOUS BENEFIT FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION OF OUR YOUTH

FRIDAY
SEPT. 7TH
2018
5:30PM

PRAIRIE WOODS
ELC
SPICER, MN

JOIN US FOR OUR 11TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
* COCKTAILS
* LOCALLY GROWN DINNER UNDER THE STARS
* "GREEN" SILENT AUCTION
* AN EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT

GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY:
ONLY $50 EACH
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WEB: WWW.PRAIRIESTARS.COM
VISIT: PRAIRIEWOODS.ELC

LIVE MUSIC BY THE HIGH 48

PARTY IN THE NEW PAVILION!

THIS EVENT GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY:

Lakeland Broadcasting

PRAIRIE WOODS ELC BOARD OF TRUSTEES
**Pioneer Crafts**

Ages: 1st-6th Grade

Come to the Pioneer Cabin at Prairie Woods! Dress as a pioneer and make several different crafts. Learn which crafts would be done for fun (corn husk dolls, buzz saws) and which ones would be done for necessity (chipping candles, sewing). All for you to take home! Each date will have different crafts. (meet at the Pioneer Cabin on the Farm Site)

**Game Day at the Pioneer Cabin**

Ages: 1st-6th Grade

Who’s up for some friendly competition? After dressing as a pioneer, unplug for an afternoon of blind man’s bluff, a three legged race, a game of graces (hoops & sticks), kubb and many more pioneer games. If it’s raining out we’ll see how you do at jacks, pick up sticks, and card games. (meet at the Pioneer Cabin on the Farm Site)

**PWELC Sampler**

Grades: 1st and up

Come experience what Prairie Woods ELC has to offer. We will visit the Pioneer Cabin to see how people lived “back in the day”, do the Flying Squirrel, Climb the wall, track some animals, and learn some outdoor survival skills. Bring a sack lunch. (meet at main building)

**HALLOWEEN HAUNT**

Grades: K-5

Talk with the creatures on the enchanted trail to find out what they are doing to get ready for winter, carve a jack-o-lantern, and climb on the wall in costume.

Children must be accompanied by an adult. (meet at main building)

**AFTER SCHOOL ARCHERY CLUB**

Grades: 4 and up

It is a lot of fun learning and practicing the skill of archery. We will be using compound bows to improve our skills. We shoot Olympic style archery, 3-d targets, and use the Native American atlatl’s. All while aiming to have a great time. (meet at farm site)

**Indoor Rock Climbing Gym**

All Ages

Climbing offers a chance to challenge yourself both physically and mentally at your own pace. Rock Climbing is a true adventure sport. Beginners can learn about the sport, exercise and have fun! Experienced climbers can come train and refine their skills. The Prairie Woods ELC instructors are here to help every climber reach new heights! Equipment will be provided. Meet at the main building. Sign up for one or more (Registration required).

**Kayak the Crow River**

Join the Guides from Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center for an exciting adventure on the water. Kayaks, gear and instruction will be provided. Registration required. Max of 18 participants.

**Save the Date!**

**AN EVENING UNDER THE PRAIRIE STARS**

Date: Wednesday, September 12th 2018

Time: 5:00pm – 7:00pm

Fee: $15.00 per Kayak