

Prairie plains Link

Daybreak over Griffith Prairie and the Charles L. Whitney Education Center. We predict bright days ahead for both in 2011.

2010 marked our thirtieth year, and it has gone by in a flash. It was ushered in on a high note with our first New Year's Day sledding party at Griffith Prairie. The mood of celebration continued through the annual meeting, where we honored Cliff Dill and Colleen Babcock with Outstanding Service Awards, welcomed three new board members – Steve Winter, Bill Snyder and Bill Saeger – and bid farewell to two others who had served the board well and long, Steve Rothenberger and Mike Stewart.

All of the routine programming – prairie and wetland restoration, the Ranch Trek, Bader Park walking tours, SOAR camps, Olson Nature Preserve camps, spring and fall outdoor education events involving area schools – took place and gained strength, maintaining the backbone of mission activity.

Other events and accomplishments of note:

- The new "Prairies Made By Hand" promotional design made its debut at the annual meeting in January and can be seen, among other places, on Prairie Plains T-shirts.
- The first fundraiser banquet and auction was held January 23rd at the UNL East Campus Union – drawing 150 people and raising \$7000.
- The "Ribbons of Prairie through the Great American Breadbasket" concept was unveiled in the March, 2010 *Prairie Plains Link*.
- The first wedding to take advantage of the beautiful landscape of Griffith Prairie took place on May 30th, uniting members Mitch Lyon and Sarah Meyer.
- Research on the rare Ute lady's tresses orchid (*Spiranthes diluvialis*) commenced at the Guadalcanal Memorial Prairie in Sioux County.
- Two new acquisitions, a second combine and a Polaris Ranger utility vehicle, substantially benefitted restoration, stewardship and educational activities.
- Intern Adele Phillips assisted with burning, fencing and harvesting – as well as some Education Center campus planning – from April to July.
- A new concrete floor was a huge improvement to the Blue Barn (Morton building) at Griffith Farm – the place where we process, mix and store all of our seed.
- Sarah Bailey began a one-year internship with Prairie Plains in August. Her duties include all aspects of the restoration program, with emphasis on greenhouse work. She will also participate in all education activities.
- Construction of a solar lean-to greenhouse began (details in November *Link*), closing in the south side of the Blue Barn and enabling us to grow thousands of seedlings every year beginning in spring, 2011.

monthly newsletter
of



December, 2010



Mike Bullerman

Planting began in November. To date, 12 sites in 8 counties totaling 336 acres have been completed. Sarah Bailey is enjoying the planting process; here she's working on a 4.6+ acreage in Saline County.

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MISSION:
Maintaining and restoring Nebraska ecosystems -
Creating opportunities for education, research, stewardship and community development.

Link Editor & Layout
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Photos by Prairie Plains staff members unless noted otherwise.

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Approaching Events

Saturday, Jan. 1st: Annual New Year's Day Hike at Griffith Prairie

(and possibly skating party)

Meet at the Blue Barn at 1:00 p.m.

(For car-pooling, meet at the Prairie Plains office at 12:30 p.m.)

Dress for the weather, please! Bring skates if you wish.

Saturday, Jan. 15th: Annual Meeting of Members

Bremer Community Center in Aurora (Hwy 14 & L Street)

8:30 through lunch with optional outing to Griffith Prairie & Farm in the afternoon.

There will be a brief business meeting, a look at 2010 in pictures, the presentation of the 2011 Charles L. Whitney Outstanding Service Award, a few words from the director, a program by UNL herpetologist Dennis Ferraro, and of course, the great lunch catered by member Fayne Petersen. Please RSVP by Jan. 12th to amyppri@hamilton.net for the lunch count.

THANKS VERY MUCH TO ALL YEAR-END FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTORS!



Bill Whitney

December's greenhouse progress. A big thank-you to Mert Griffith for lots of help and lending of tools!

REMINDER

Past issues of *Prairie Plains Link*, property brochures, aerial photos, *Microcosm of the Platte: A Guide to Bader Memorial Park Natural Area*, and several other Prairie Plains publications can be viewed and downloaded from our website. Click on Publications at prairieplains.org.

This Red-bellied Woodpecker caught Sarah's eye while she was hiking Griffith Prairie one crisp December morning.



Sarah Bailey