

November/December 2011

# Prairiewoods

THE NEWS AND ACTIVITIES OF PRAIRIEWOODS, AN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER



*If you have been to Prairiewoods only in the summer, you don't know what you're missing! Find natural beauty in every season at Prairiewoods.*



## *"O Come All Ye Faithful" to the Holiday Bazaar*

The radio stations soon will start playing Christmas favorites, your neighbor's lawn will be decked with elves and sleighs, and you will make your holiday shopping list—and check it twice! The holiday season is almost upon us, and you can get a jump on your holiday shopping the weekend before Thanksgiving at the annual Prairiewoods Holiday Bazaar.

On Saturday, November 19, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., Prairiewoods will be the place to get into the holiday spirit! Come to the Holiday Bazaar to find baked goods and gifts for friends and family on your Christmas list.

In addition to special items from the Prairiewoods kitchen and gift shop, vendors with an array of craft items will be

present. The Holiday Bazaar will feature fresh baked breads and pies, Trappistine caramels, greeting cards, jewelry, mittens, baby items and many more handcrafted goods. And if you wear yourself out with too much shopping, take a break in our Coffee Café with a hot drink and a cinnamon roll or other tasty treat.

If you would like to help with the bazaar, please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or email Helen Elsbernd, FSPA, at [helsbernd@prairiewoods.org](mailto:helsbernd@prairiewoods.org). We welcome any help in making fresh baked goods, donating craft items to sell or volunteering your service during the bazaar.

We hope you will join us in kicking off this festive season with the Holiday Bazaar!

## PRAIRIEWOODS OPERATING BOARD

### **Fred Althoff**

Administrator for Cedar Rapids  
School District (Retired)  
Robins, Iowa

### **Lois Bartelme**

Consultant in Human Resources  
Coralville, Iowa

### **Cecilia Corcoran, FSPA**

CEO for The Christine Center  
Willard, Wisconsin

### **Katie Mills Giorgio**

Marketer for Linn County  
Nonprofit Resource Center  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Bruce Hamous**

Architect for OPN Architects  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Cecilia Harmeyer**

Accountant at Rockwell Collins  
(Retired)  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Jeff Kaiden, Secretary/Treasurer**

Financial Planner for Principal  
Financial Group  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Theresa Keller, FSPA**

Faculty Practice/Lecturer for  
University of Iowa College of  
Nursing  
Hiawatha, Iowa

### **Alan Kessler**

Corporate Vice President for  
Rheem Manufacturing Company  
(Retired)  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Carol Lensing, Vice Chair**

Administrator for Anamosa Schools  
(Retired)  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

### **Suzanne Rubenbauer, FSPA**

Liaison for FSPA Leadership Team  
La Crosse, Wisconsin

### **Rev. Barbara Schlachter**

Pastoral Counselor  
Iowa City, Iowa

### **Mike Thome, Chair**

International Offset Manager for  
Rockwell Collins  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

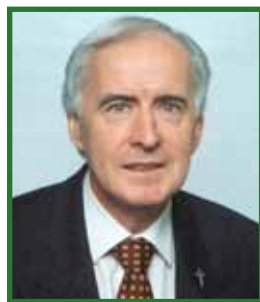
### **Donna Venteicher, FSPA**

Nursing Home Administrator  
(Retired)  
Monticello, Iowa

### **Jean Wenisch**

Community Volunteer  
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

## DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Barry Donaghue, CFC

I don't know about you, but for me the fall realization that summer is gone and winter is coming is quite a reality check.

Rainer Maria Rilke puts it like this:

*Summer was like your house: you knew  
where each thing stood.*

*Now you must go out into your heart  
as onto a vast plain. Now*

*the immense loneliness begins.*

*The days go numb, the wind*

*sucks the world from your senses like withered leaves.*

"Ice-cream and jelly and a punch in the belly," goes an old children's rhyme ... How true is that? Good times are always followed by tough times, but the (somewhat) infuriating thing is that the more experienced we become, the more we realize that this progression provides a wonderful spiritual opportunity.

Family and friends, money, prestige, our church culture—on what do we really depend? We might say "God," but in realizing his absolute oneness with God, Jesus of Nazareth had to go out into the immense loneliness of which Rilke speaks. Sweating blood, he had to trust God not only to death but through death; everything else was sucked away. The resulting realization that there is no dichotomy between the material and the spiritual; that God is with us—Emmanuel—loving us and calling us to continue becoming who it is that God gifted us to become ... that is redemption. That let us realize that we *are* in the heart of God, to accept that fact and to live in ways that make it manifest. "Do this," Jesus said on Maundy Thursday. "Be me!" There are no *ifs*, *buts* or *maybes* about that statement. It is not rhetorical.

So, reality checks are good! We must move past our ego controls; realize, acknowledge and retrench our personas; thus clearing the obstacles on our path into our own true heart and onward to fullness of life. Again, Rilke finds words for what is needed:

*Through the empty branches the sky remains.*

*It is what you have.*

*Be earth now, and evensong.*

*Be the ground lying under that sky.*

*Be modest now, like a thing*

*ripened until it is real,*

*so that he who began it all*

*can feel you when he reaches for you.*

May I recommend our fall and winter retreats and programs in helping you take the steps you need to take? Spiritual masters down through the centuries acknowledge that at least one retreat a year is needed if we are serious about growing spiritually. Prairiewoods exists to assist you in your journey toward salvation, so please feel welcome to use us. May fall and winter prove to be a blessed time for us all!



Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center is a sacred space where people of all faiths and cultures are invited to explore and nurture their relationships with the Source of All Being, Earth, Self and Others within an expanding understanding of the Universe Story.

Prairiewoods is an ecospirituality retreat and conference center in the Franciscan tradition. It is a nonprofit ministry sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Prairiewoods publishes this newsletter bimonthly. Content focuses on happenings and opinions that support Prairiewoods' mission and vision.

Please address all correspondence to:

Prairiewoods  
120 E Boyson Rd  
Hiawatha, IA 52233  
319-395-6700

[www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org)  
[Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org](mailto:Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org)



## Sacred Circle Helps Women on Spiritual Journey

Where are you on your spiritual path? Seldom a short journey, it may begin with a simple spiritual question and move ever-so-slowly toward developing awareness, to discovery and finally to embracing realizations. One encounters bumps, sharp curves, switchbacks and obstacles all along the way. It may help to know that there are many others like you, on their own demanding spiritual journey. Through conversation, comparing notes, and sharing struggles and discoveries, we often can find solutions for ourselves through others.

Sacred Circle is a safe, non-judgmental forum for



women seeking answers to spiritual questions. We are a group of women, each on our own particular journey, searching and observing, while enjoying the presence and stories of one another.

In Sacred Circle, we explore and examine our paths through a variety of means. Each month we learn from spiritual directors, film, books, alternative healers and more. There is no beginning and no end, and new seekers are always welcome.

Sacred Circle meets the first Wednesday evening of each month from 6:30–8 p.m. The cost is \$5 per session. For more information, contact Andrea Jilovec at Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700, ext. 202.

## Flood Recovery Workers Learn Mind Body Skills

The Cedar Rapids flood of 2008 had many long-lasting repercussions. Compassion fatigue—a secondary traumatic stress disorder—is just one result of flood recovery efforts. Compassion fatigue results when caregivers focus on others without practicing self-care, and it can lead to destructive behaviors. It is on the rise and is nondiscriminatory. It has invaded all aspects of our educational systems, faith communities, governmental agencies, social services venues, law enforcement agencies and health care providers ... and it can lead to burn out.

Now there is help for caregivers suffering from compassion fatigue. Prairiewoods and the Iowa State University Linn County Extension are offering an eight-week program geared toward professionals in the helping and healing professions. The Mind Body Skills Training will be held each Friday, October 14 through December 9, from 1 to 3 p.m. Participants are encouraged to attend all eight sessions. This is an interactive, research-based educational model of self-care and self-awareness that encourages individuals to focus on their strengths, experiment with their abilities and enhance their sense of control.

Mind Body Skills Training will be taught by the Mind Body Medicine Coalition, which is comprised of highly trained facilitators from St. Luke's Hospital, Iowa State University Extension, Cedar Rapids Library Substance Abuse Information Center, Linn County Veterans Affairs, Abbe Center, Community Mental Health for Mid Eastern Iowa and Discovery Living.

Thanks to a grant from the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation, this training is free to anyone who has been involved in flood recovery in the last three years. For more information, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org).

## Dream Your Way to Health and Wholeness

Do you ever wonder about nighttime dreams that seem to make no sense? Many historical figures have ruminated on the meaning of such dreams. For example, Jeremy Taylor, one of the founding members of the International Association for the Study of Dreams, says, "All dreams come in service of health and wholeness." A third-century theologian named Origen spoke of *Somnia Deo*, or "dreams sent from God." Rabbi Hisda, a third-century Babylonian sage, said, "A dream uninterpreted is like a letter (from God) unopened."

Our nighttime dreams have a language all their own. Learn to translate the language of dreams and to unpack the meaning of dreams in a series of Dream Workshops in the coming year at Prairiewoods.

The first program in this series will be a weekend workshop/retreat held Friday evening, June 8, to Sunday, June 10. It will be facilitated by Olga Wittkind, OSF, a clinical

psychologist and Jungian analyst. She will teach participants about the language of dreams in an engaging, entertaining and instructive manner.

Please watch for details about other opportunities to learn about dreams in future newsletters and on the Prairiewoods website.



# THE SPIRITUALITY OF SPACE



We all have them ... those places that are  
*special,*  
*sacred,*  
*holy.*

Perhaps something tremendously *significant* happened there. Perhaps we were gifted with a glimpse into the *mystery* of ourselves, struck suddenly and deeply with a new realization. It could have been as simple as a sense of *connection* with something beyond us. These are the sacred spaces in our lives. These two pages feature the voices of some of the people who have reflected and written on what we might call “*the spirituality of space.*”

“This experience gave to my life something that seems to explain my thinking at a more profound level than almost any other experience I can remember. It was not only the lilies, it was the singing of the crickets and the woodlands in the distance and the clouds in the clear sky ... this early experience has remained with me ever since as the basic determinant of my sense of realities and values.”

~ Father Thomas Berry



“*Tin Man*: What have you learned, Dorothy?  
*Dorothy*: Well, I think that it wasn't enough just to want to see Uncle Henry and Auntie Em ... and it's that if I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any further than my own backyard; because if it isn't there, I never really lost it to begin with!”

~ from *The Wizard of Oz*



“Suddenly, from behind the rim of the moon in the long, slow motion movements of immense majesty, there emerges a sparkling blue and white jewel, a light, delicate sky blue sphere laced with the slowly swirling veils of white rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery. It takes more than a moment to fully realize this is the earth—home.”

~ Edgar Mitchell  
while walking on the moon



## Place and the Spiritual Life

by Fred Darbonne, pastor and friend of Prairiewoods



Humans shape the places we are in to adapt to our needs and to express our individuality. Often overlooked, however, is how places also shape us as persons and become important reference points as we journey. We experience life in places. As meaning-making creatures, we seek to understand how our experiences connect. Considering how God has used these experiences for our good is ultimately a spiritual discipline. Going beyond simply reminiscing, we look for the purpose of our experiences, how they have contributed to who we are now and how they might continue to unfold for us. Places are memory markers that help connect us to this deeper meaning and purpose.

Ira Progroff, in his work *At a Journal Workshop*, noted that in this careful attentiveness to the meaning of the events and relationships of our lives, “We find that a connective thread has been forming beneath the surface...carrying the meaning that has been trying to establish itself in our existence.” He calls this the “inner continuity of our lives,”

something Christians understand as the continually unfolding work of God—God’s work of grace—of which we are not always conscious.

Places form us as much as other people and our experiences do. Places mark where circumstances enlarged our worldview, where life-changing insight emerged, where we encountered the Divine. These places imprint deeply within us and link us to formative milestones. To revisit these old wells is to reconnect to things that ground us as persons. Perhaps longing for place is at heart a spiritual hunger.

I considered this again as I visited Kansas City, my hometown, recently. I had the opportunity to reconnect with a nephew, the son of our beloved late older sister. We spent an entire day visiting meaning-filled places. We stopped at Planters Seed Company, a favorite place of our father’s. We walked through the Market area where we spent many Saturday mornings, and later the Plaza, important for visits to see the Christmas lights and other things. We wandered through newer places like the Crossroads Arts District and visited a gallery there, and later the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art.

I did not expect the emotional intensity I experienced in this visit, even though I have had many one-day personal retreats for reflection and journaling in Kansas City before this. I felt as if I remembered every person and place, and each was incredibly important. Every marker connected me to these people, and the experiences associated with these places revealed patterns that I previously missed. I noticed that I did not want to leave Kansas City for home. This intense longing for my hometown surprised me. I know that even events I thought I wanted to forget have contributed to my development in some way. A place I wanted to leave in my early twenties is now filled with markers where I have been shaped for good, or that remind me of struggles overcome through God’s grace.

My faith is always seeking understanding. I do know that with each visit to significant places I see more of the tapestry of God’s unfolding work of grace in my life. I become more thankful as I see the divine connections more clearly. I grasp more shades of meaning in Paula D’Arcy’s words: “God comes to you disguised as your life.”

Our lives are inseparable from the places in which they have been lived. These places are part of the fabric of our spiritual lives, rich with threads woven, connected, and even repaired by a providential Hand. It seems every piece has meaning, if we will have the eyes to see.

“ I am sitting on a big rock overlooking the West River, which has been a constant companion over the past year and a half. It is tumbling joyfully in the early morning sun, gurgling its deep and continuous mantra: ‘All is flow.’ The river and the silence are setting me down and already I am feeling open and receptive. ”

~ Sister Gail Worcello, co-founder of the Green Mountain Monastery



# 2011 Environmental Film Festival

Cedar Rapids Area



**November 5, 2011**  
**Hickok Hall, Coe College**  
**FREE ADMISSION**

## 1:00 pm **What's On Your Plate?** (kid friendly film)

A witty and provocative family documentary about **kids and food** politics. The film follows two eleven-year-old city kids as they explore their place in the food chain. Sadie and Safiyah take a close look at food systems in New York City and its surrounding areas. With the camera as their companion, the girl guides talk to each other, food activists, farmers, and many others, in their quest to understand What's On Your Plate?!!

**Kids' activities led by Coe College Environmental Club**

## 3:00 pm **The GreenHorns**

This documentary film explores the lives of America's young farming community - its spirit, practices, and needs. It is the filmmaker's hope that by broadcasting the stories and voices of these young farmers, we can build the case for those considering a career in agriculture - to embolden them, to entice them, and to recruit them into farming.

**Panel Discussion with Local GreenHorns**

## 7:00 pm **Green Fire: Aldo Leopold and a Land Ethic for Our Time**

The first full-length documentary film ever made about legendary environmentalist Aldo Leopold, *Green Fire* highlights Leopold's extraordinary career, tracing how he shaped and influenced the modern environmental movement. Leopold remains relevant today, inspiring projects all over the country that connect people and land.

**Paul Johnson from the Green Fire Team will speak**

## Be Inspired and Take Action



### Recycling Available

- Household Batteries
- Plastic Bags
- Cellular phones



### Donations being accepted

- Non-Perishable Food Items for the Linn Community Food Bank

This year's event made possible due to support from the following:



The following are descriptions of some of our upcoming retreats, programs and continuing programs. For a complete list, please visit [www.prairiewoods.org](http://www.prairiewoods.org).

## Meditation Retreat

**Friday, Nov. 4, 5:30 p.m.–Sunday, Nov. 6, 1 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** Judith Edwards; Zuiko Redding; Nancy Hoffman, FSPA; Ann Jackson, PBVM

The Meditation Retreat at Prairiewoods is for those just learning about meditation and for those who desire to deepen their present practice of meditation and spend a weekend in prayer and silence. This weekend will include presentation and practices of Zen meditation, mindfulness meditation, chanting and sounding, and centering prayer. Optional holistic energy work and spiritual direction are also available.

This retreat will be facilitated by Judith Edwards; Zuiko Redding; Nancy Hoffman, FSPA; and Ann Jackson, PBVM. Judith, a “regular” at Prairiewoods, has facilitated Prairiewoods Centering Prayer for twelve years and enjoys spending time with her five super grandkids. Zuiko, resident teacher at Cedar Rapids Zen Center, is a Zen Buddhist teacher, trained and certified in Japan as a Soto Zen Buddhist teacher. Sister Nancy is on staff at Prairiewoods and is involved in holistic energy work, outdoor development, maintenance, and spirituality. Sister Ann is also on staff at Prairiewoods, where she designs and coordinates retreats and provides spiritual direction and retreat facilitation.

For more information, go to [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org). Registration is required, so please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$200 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

**Commuter Fee:** \$150 includes presentations, Friday dinner, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



## A Wintry Reading Weekend Retreat

**Friday, Jan. 20, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Jan. 22, 1 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Ann Jackson, PBVM

Do you enjoy a wonderful wintry day filled with a good read, great snacks, a warm fire and a periodic snooze? This weekend is just for you! Come spend the weekend with your favorite read, whether it be poetry, prose or periodicals. The time will be filled with lots of quiet, individual, reading time and a few hours together to share our insights.

**Fee:** \$175 includes lodging and all meals

## The Zen of Baking: Bread and Blessing Retreat II

**Monday, Jan. 30, 11 a.m.–Friday, Feb. 3, 1 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** Jill Jones; Ann Jackson, PBVM

The February blahs are a great time to shake the dust from your apron, saddle up alongside a good friend and create blessing. It’s amazing how a small handful of dough can invite us to reflection. Participants will ask themselves: *What am I kneading in my life? What is rising within my life, offering nourishment? How am I called to be leaven for others?*

Join Prairiewoods Chef Jill Jones and Retreat Coordinator Ann Jackson, PBVM, in the retreat kitchen at Prairiewoods for lots of recipes, baking, fun and healthy inspiration around wholesome nutrition. We will spend an afternoon visiting Stringtown Grocery in Kalona, Iowa, and an organic garden.

For more information, go to [www.prairiewoods.org](http://www.prairiewoods.org). The retreat will be limited to 8 people, so please register early by contacting Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$375 includes presentations, cooking materials, lodging and all meals

**Commuter Fee:** \$300 includes presentations, cooking materials, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



## Forgiveness: A Gift to Give Yourself Retreat

**Friday, Feb. 24, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Feb. 26, 1 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Vince Hatt

Forgiveness is a key to happiness for oneself. It is not simply a one-time event; rather, one enters into the process of forgiveness, which takes time. This retreat will assist participants with learning and practicing the steps in the forgiveness process as well as discovering how to maintain a spirit of forgiveness in one’s life. The weekend will hold a wonderful balance of input, individual reflection and prayer.

Vince Hatt regularly reflects on the gifts and challenges of forgiveness to concretely name the specifics of his life’s purpose. A life-long learner, he has presented programs for 40 years around the Midwest with rave reviews from a variety of audiences. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Notre Dame, a Master of Theology degree from Aquinas Institute and a masters degree in religious education from the Catholic University of America. Vince also is an experienced, trained spiritual director and a certified Mid-life Directions Consultant. He enjoys life with his wife, Janice, and is a recovering Cubs fan.

**Fee:** \$200 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

**Commuter Fee:** \$150 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



## PROGRAMS

### **AARP Driver Safety Program** **Thursday, Nov. 10, 8:30 a.m.–1 p.m.** **Facilitator:** Connie Sjostrom

The AARP Driver Safety Program is the nation's first and largest classroom course for motorists age 50 and older. Prairiewoods is pleased to partner with AARP to offer this four-hour refresher course, which will present a review of driving skills and techniques. It will also teach strategies and tips to help us adjust to normal age-related physical changes that may affect our driving ability. For more information or to register, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$14 (\$12 for AARP members, free for veterans with valid documentation)

### **Memorial Service for Friends of Prairiewoods**

**Thursday, Nov. 10, 7–8:30 p.m.**  
**Facilitator:** Marj English, OSF

All are invited to remember our beloved dead with a memorial service on November 10. We at Prairiewoods are deeply appreciative of donations made in honor of lost loved ones. This evening will honor those individuals and other friends of Prairiewoods who have died. Please bring a picture or a symbol of your loved ones to be used during the service. Light refreshments will be served. Please feel free to invite other family and friends! For more information, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** Free

### **Forming a Healing Practice, ISHA Course 104** **Saturday, Nov. 12–Sunday, Nov. 13,** **8:30 a.m.–6 p.m. daily** **Facilitator:** Margaret Leslie

Do you want to deepen your heart-centered healing ministry practice for your self, family or friends? The Institute of Spiritual Healing and Aromatherapy (ISHA) is hosting a two-day course that presents advanced methods to help with specific healing needs, such as intake interviewing and documenting client sessions. Emphasis is on models of present-day healing and on integrating Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry into a church/parish healing ministry.

Instructor Margaret Leslie is a certified Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry practitioner/instructor with 25 years experience as a School Psychologist.



Participants will receive Continuing Education Credits (Nurses: 14.5 CEs, Massage Therapists: 16 CEs). *Please note that this program will be held at Prairiewoods but is not hosted by the Prairiewoods staff.* To register or learn more, contact ISHA at 303-467-7829 or [www.ishahealing.com](http://www.ishahealing.com). To add lodging and meals, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$300 plus lodging and meals

### **Day of Self Renewal** **Mondays, Nov. 21 & Dec. 19,** **8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Andrea Jilovec

Come for a day of rest and relaxation to rejuvenate your body and spirit! For just \$90, participants receive a private guest room, a nutritious lunch, a group Guided Meditation and two 30-minute holistic services of their choice. Choose from Massage, Head and Shoulder Massage, Reflexology, Healing Touch Spiritual Ministry, Foot Spa Treatment, Paraffin Bath for Hands, Spiritual Direction or Counseling. The day will begin and end with a brief group gathering; the rest of the day is open for quiet reflection. For more information, go to [www.prairiewoods.org](http://www.prairiewoods.org). Registration is required at least a week in advance, so please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$90 includes group session, two services, room for day and lunch

### **Sweat Lodge (Inipi) Ceremony** **Saturday, Nov. 26, 4:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Mike Maynard

Prairiewoods offers a monthly Sweat Lodge Ceremony focused on prayer, purification, recognition and healing. The Sweat Lodge is a small, dome-shaped structure in which participants sit on the earth around heated, steaming stones.

Please note that the lodge is a small enclosure that is dark and extremely hot inside. *If you have claustrophobia or any medical conditions that prevent you from going into a sauna, you should not participate in this ceremony.*

Registration is required and participants need to be notified of proper protocols, so please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** Free-will offering

### **Winter Bird Feeding** **Thursday, Dec. 1, 6:30 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** Jim Durbin, Emy Sautter

Do you want to attract beautiful red cardinals, showy woodpeckers and bright goldfinches to your snowy winter lawn? Join local bird expert and Audubon member Jim Durbin for an informative evening that's for the birds! Jim will teach you about various types of birdseed and the birds that they attract, as well as the best types of feeders. Prairiewoods Ecospirituality Coordinator Emy Sautter will discuss ways to decorate your outdoor trees for the season in a way that is not harmful to birds.

For more information or to register, contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org).

**Fee:** \$5

### **Gourd Bird Houses** **Tuesday, Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m.**

**Facilitators:** Andrea Jilovec, Emy Sautter

Throughout history, gourds have been used for food, as storage containers and for decorations. Now you can learn to turn a gourd into a beautiful and functional bird house!



Whether it's a gift for someone you love or simply a gift for the birds, join us for this fun and creative evening making bird houses out of gourds. All supplies will be provided.

Registration is required by December 9. For more information or to register, please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700 or [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org).  
**Fee:** \$15

**Winter Solstice Celebration  
Wednesday, Dec. 21, 6:30 p.m.**

Earth's tilt on its axis causes seasons on our planet. On December 21, the northern hemisphere will be tilted as far from the sun as possible. This date is known as the winter



solstice, and it marks the longest night and the shortest day of the year.

Many cultures throughout history have celebrated this day of rebirth with gatherings and rituals. You can honor the official start of winter with the Winter Solstice Celebration. This evening party will be hosted by Prairiewoods, Linn County Conservation and Indian Creek Nature Center.

Watch Prairiewoods Planner emails or our website for more details, such as location and cost, as the date draws near.

**Fostering Unity and Oneness Within, With Others and With All of Life: A New 12-Step Path for All Spiritual Seekers  
Friday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Feb. 5, 1 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Gary Egeberg

This program focuses on the themes of unity, oneness and centering love as the ultimate reality upon which we can firmly ground ourselves and co-create a better world for ourselves and others. Individuals can use these steps as a spiritual resource in their daily lives; groups—such as the church, unchurched, formerly church, seasoned 12 steppers and 12-step neophytes—can use these new steps as a framework around which they can come together on a regular basis to process their spiritual journeys.



This new 12-Step path was created by Gary Egeberg. His program is unique

in that it does not require a person to be addicted or codependent in order to participate and experience a deep sense of belonging, although those who are addicted or codependent are very welcome. This weekend is geared toward spiritual growth and interpersonal support that fosters an experiential sense of unity and oneness based on what he refers to as *centering love*.

Gary is a former lay Catholic prison chaplain and recovery veteran. He is the author of several books, including *The Pocket Guide to Inner Peace*. His retreats blend wisdom from several spiritual traditions, including Christianity, Taoism and the 12-Steps. He also incorporates recent findings from neurobiology and psychology to help us understand why we feel the way we do and what we can do about it.

For more information as the dates draw near, visit [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) or subscribe to the Prairiewoods Planner, a weekly email that keeps readers up to date with current Prairiewoods programs.

**Fee:** \$225 includes presentations, lodging and all meals

**Commuter Fee:** \$175 includes presentations, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

**Prairie Seed Stomp  
Tuesday, Feb. 7, 6:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Emy Sautter

Prairie seeds are funny—they like cold weather. Learn more about prairie seeds and help us add new plants to our 30 acres of tall-grass prairie in a Prairie Seed Stomp on February 7. This will be fun for the whole family! Please dress appropriately for the weather, as you will be outside.

Watch [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) for more details as the date approaches!

**Fee:** Free-will offering to support purchasing prairie seeds for Prairiewoods



**Women's History Month at Prairiewoods**

**Thursdays, March 1, 8, 15 & 22, 6:30 p.m.**

March is Women's History Month, and Prairiewoods will celebrate with four evening sessions focused on women. These programs will be tailored to women as a creative, joyful, healing, sharing group. Please join us and invite your family, neighbors and friends to attend. The weekly topics are:

March 1: *An Introduction to Tribal Fusion Dance*, in which participants will learn and participate in a modern form of belly dance

March 8: *Full Moon Ceremony and Cultural Potluck*, in which attendees will honor International Women's Day by bringing foods significant to their historical or family traditions

March 15: *Holistic Healing*, in which participants will learn about and discuss holistic healing practices

March 22: *The Phases of Womanhood*, in which attendees will look into the legend of the Great Goddess and take away lessons to integrate and embrace in all phases of their lives

For more information, visit [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org). Registration is recommended, so please contact Prairiewoods at 319-395-6700.

**Fee:** \$10 per session or \$32 for the four-week series if paid in advance

**Almost Full Moon Owl Hike  
Tuesday, March 6, 6:30–8:30 p.m.**

**Facilitator:** Chuck Ungs

Bring the whole family for an evening owl hike. Begin inside the Prairiewoods center with an educational period. Linn County Conservationist and expert owl caller Chuck Ungs will teach you about Iowa's native owls and how to call to them. Then take your new knowledge to the woods on a moonlit hike and owl-calling escapade. You may even see owls sitting on eggs or hatching owlets! This will be a great event for the whole family. For more information as the date draws near, visit [www.Prairiewoods.org](http://www.Prairiewoods.org) or subscribe to the Prairiewoods Planner emails.

**Fee:** \$5 per person or \$10 for a family

# CONTINUING PROGRAMS



## Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers

**2nd Tuesday monthly, 9:30–11 a.m. & 4th Wednesday monthly, 7–8:30 p.m.**

Do you knit or stitch? Prairiewoods has a group called Knitters & Stitchers that meets on the second Tuesday and the fourth Wednesday of every month. Knitters and crocheters of all skill levels are welcome, and donations of materials are gratefully accepted! For more information, contact Andrea Jilovec at 319-395-6700, ext. 202.

**Fee:** Free

## Evening Centering Prayer

**2nd & 4th Tuesdays monthly, 5:30–7 p.m.**

Evening Centering Prayer is a prayer/support group for people who enjoy centering prayer. You may join at any time. The group meets in Room 113 of the Prairiewoods Guest House and is facilitated by Judith Edwards. For more information, contact Ann Jackson, PBVM, at 319-395-6700, ext. 203.

**Fee:** Free-will offering

## Women's Sacred Circle

**1st Wednesday monthly, 6:30–8 p.m.**

Sacred Circle is for women who are interested in gathering, sharing and supporting spiritual growth. Everyone is welcome to share the conversation and warmth of the group, and participants may join at any time. For more information, contact Andrea Jilovec at 319-395-6700, ext. 202.

**Fee:** \$5 per session

## Green Living Group

**3rd Wednesday monthly (except Dec.), 6:30–8 p.m.**

The Green Living Group meets the third Wednesday of every month at Prairiewoods. Facilitators Maggie Anderson, Emmy Ball and Emy Sautter help participants explore the subject of a sustainable and healthy environment through books, articles, films and speakers. This group is ideal for educational purposes as well as for an ongoing support system for happy and healthy green living, and participants may join at any time. The November meeting will focus on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), and there will be no December meeting. For more information, contact Emy Sautter at 319-395-6700, ext. 222.

**Fee:** Free-will offering

## Wednesday Women

**Every Wednesday, 10–11:30 a.m.**

A group called Wednesday Women meets weekly to be spiritually enriched, updated, inspired and challenged. On October 26 and November 2, the group will view and discuss *Writings of Sojourner Truth*. Beginning November 9, Wednesday Women will focus on *Volume 1: The Book of Ruth* taken from a DVD series called *Uppity Women of the Bible*. This DVD series features Rev. Dr. Lisa Wolfe, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and Associate Professor of Hebrew Bible at Oklahoma City University. Dr. Wolfe's DVD about Ruth will lead Wednesday Women through topics of loyalty, bitterness, courage, poverty and seduction. The weekly topics are:

Nov. 9: *Bittersweet*

Nov. 16: *In Case of Emergency*

Nov. 23: No Wednesday Women because of the holiday.

Nov. 30: *The Go'el?*

Dec. 7: *A King's Ancestry*

Dec. 14: *Understanding Ruth*

Dec. 21: Wednesday Women will have a Christmas luncheon at 11:30 a.m. at Prairiewoods.

Dec. 28: No Wednesday Women because of the holiday.

Jan. 4: *An Uppity Woman?*

Jan. 11: *Grace and Hospitality*

Feel free to join this stimulating and supportive group at any time! For more information, contact Marj English, OSF, at 319-395-6700, ext. 216.

**Fee:** Suggested free-will offering of \$10 per session

## Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton

**Every other Thursday (including Nov. 10), 6:30–8 p.m.**

The practice of contemplative living helps us respond to our everyday experiences with greater awareness of our connections with God and others. It becomes a positive force in our lives and provides direction for our journey, enabling us to embrace our truest selves. On these Thursday evenings facilitated by Betty Daugherty, FSPA, we use the series *Bridges to Contemplative Living*, which includes excerpts from the writings of Thomas Merton and other authors, to help us explore the truths of our human existence. The process involves readings, reflections and contemplative dialogue. For more information, contact Sister Betty at 319-395-6700, ext. 205.

**Fee:** \$5 per session

We have a great problem at Prairiewoods: we have too many donors and volunteers to name in our newsletter! Starting next issue, this page will not feature our recent donors and volunteers. Instead, we have dedicated a page on our website to chronicle our generous supporters. For a complete, up-to-date list, go to [www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate](http://www.Prairiewoods.org/Contact/Donate).

## VOLUNTEERS

Sandie Allen  
Casey Bardwell  
Mary Ann Barry  
Doug Beadle  
Dian Boysen  
Dianne Brenneman  
Jessica Brerit  
Carole Butz  
Michelle Cook  
Debbie Crane  
Bill Davis  
Donna Davis  
Marie Diebold  
Norine Drahazol  
Ann Duder  
Helen Elsbernd, FSPA  
Alysha Gould  
Ashley Gould  
Rita Heires, FSPA  
Kathy Henriksen  
Ronell Hughes  
Shirley Jekerle  
Marjorie Jensen  
Jill Jones  
Shawna Kahler  
Sandy Kelly-Taylor  
Kent Kinion  
Barb Lebsock  
Jerry Mach  
Jan Monk  
Shyla Morrow  
Mount Mercy University Freshman Class  
(31 students)  
Carol Nilles

Vince O'Connor  
Pam Pasker  
Joellen Price, PBVM  
Memphis Reeves  
Cheyenne Ringwald  
Megan Rood  
Jeanette Rops  
Mary Schneider  
Sheila Siegel  
Cindy Strauch  
Noreen Tonkin  
Shirley Tudor  
Harlan Wagner  
Judy Weers

## ENDOWMENTS

Mary Morrow  
Kenneth & Kathy Nathan

## HONORARIUMS/MEMORIALS

*In memory of Joann Downey*  
Michael & Nan Martin  
John & Diane Sweeney  
*In memory of Adrian Foecke*  
Marj English, OSF  
*In honor of Maryann Gossling, FSPA*  
Marj English, OSF  
*In memory of Sandi Heires*  
Marj English, OSF  
*In memory of Maggie O'Connor*  
Donna Avis  
Richard & Wanda Balster  
Thomas & Janet Beckman  
Joyce Dougan  
Mary Lou Hale

Marilyn Hart  
Mary Houlahan-Badger  
Hollis & Ann K Hunter  
Tom & Jan Knott  
Eldon D Kurth  
Jerry C & Theresa E Miller  
John C & Donna J Niebuhr  
Larry Pillard  
Paul E & Judy E Pospisil  
Gary T & Mary Jane Rath  
Steven C Robinson  
Irma Wendt  
Terry Wenger  
David H & Nancy S Wittenburg  
Paul & Amie Womachka  
Janet Wood  
*In honor of Prairiewoods' 15 years*  
Sheila Rouse  
*In honor of Nina Shepherd, FSPA*  
Marj English, OSF  
*In memory of Kathy Symonette*  
Barb Lebsock

## IN KIND DONATIONS

Arlene Blazik  
Buffalo United Methodist Church  
Molly Cook  
Lillian Connolly, RSM  
HACAP  
William & Patricia Kennedy  
Gretchen Koehler  
Arlene Mineck  
Helen Mulligan  
Newman Catholic Student Center  
Theresa Politowicz Heires



Mount Mercy University Freshmen Volunteering on August 30

Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration  
Prairiewoods Franciscan Spirituality Center  
120 E. Boyson Road • Hiawatha, IA 52233

Nonprofit  
Organization  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit #47  
Cedar Rapids, IA



Want to save  
Earth, one tree at  
a time? Get our  
newsletters  
via email instead  
of in print.

Just email Andi at  
[alewis@prairiewoods.org](mailto:alewis@prairiewoods.org).

**Phone Extensions/Email  
319-395-6700**

**Betty Daugherty, FSPA . . . 205**  
[bdaugherty@prairiewoods.org](mailto:bdaugherty@prairiewoods.org)

**Barry Donaghue, CFC . . . 204**  
[bdonaghue@prairiewoods.org](mailto:bdonaghue@prairiewoods.org)

**Marjorie English, OSF . . . 216**  
[menglish@prairiewoods.org](mailto:menglish@prairiewoods.org)

**Joann Gehling, FSPA . . . . 215**  
[jgehling@prairiewoods.org](mailto:jgehling@prairiewoods.org)

**Nancy Hoffman, FSPA . . . 212**

**Ann Jackson, PBVM . . . . . 203**  
[ajackson@prairiewoods.org](mailto:ajackson@prairiewoods.org)

**Andrea Jilovec . . . . . 202**  
[ajilovec@prairiewoods.org](mailto:ajilovec@prairiewoods.org)

**Jill Jones . . . . . 210**  
[jjones@prairiewoods.org](mailto:jjones@prairiewoods.org)

**Linda Koehler . . . . . 209**  
[lkoehler@prairiewoods.org](mailto:lkoehler@prairiewoods.org)

**Andi Lewis . . . . . 206**  
[alewis@prairiewoods.org](mailto:alewis@prairiewoods.org)

**Nancy Rood . . . . . 201**  
[nrood@prairiewoods.org](mailto:nrood@prairiewoods.org)

**Emy Sautter . . . . . 222**  
[esautter@prairiewoods.org](mailto:esautter@prairiewoods.org)

**Clifford Schueler . . . . . 211**  
[cschueler@prairiewoods.org](mailto:cschueler@prairiewoods.org)

**Lucille Winnike, FSPA . . . 221**  
[lwinnike@prairiewoods.org](mailto:lwinnike@prairiewoods.org)

Prairiewoods celebrated its 15th anniversary with Nature Fest on October 2. More than 300 people and their pets celebrated with crafts, games, face painting, storytelling and a Blessing of the Animals. For a peek at all the pictures and videos from the day, visit [www.Facebook.com/PrairiewoodsFSC](http://www.Facebook.com/PrairiewoodsFSC).

