

September/October 2019

Prairiewoods

A CATHOLIC, FRANCISCAN ECOSPIRITUALITY RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Prairiewoods Land Placed in Conservation Easement

Oct. 4 of this year will mark a significant step in the story of Prairiewoods, when most of these 70 acres of woods and prairie will be placed in a conservation easement with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. Through the signing of this easement, the land will be forever protected from future development. This is a guarantee that Prairiewoods will remain as it is now, a place where woods and prairie are protected, where wildlife flourishes and where our human spirits are renewed as we experience the Divine present with us in the constantly renewed heart of creation. Even future buildings that might be needed in the next chapters of the Prairiewoods story will be permitted only within a limited area close to existing structures.

T*he land at Prairiewoods has a story to tell.* Its story stretches back much further than we have the ability to know, since it emerged from the one far-distant, singular and spectacular event that is the source of all life in the universe.

This story has been told by thousands of actors who have taken their place on the stage over the millennia, first by very simple life forms, then through more and more complex and diversified expressions of the love forever flowing from a Creator God, the Source of All Being.

Chapter after chapter, story within story, huge chunks of time were needed to keep the narrative alive and moving. And it was not so long ago, as reflected in the great scope of evolutionary history, that peoples of the First Nations dwelt here; members of the Sauk and Fox (Meskwaki) lived in belonging and harmony with these woods and grasslands. Their spirits remain.

In 1837 the government of the United States acquired this land and opened it for settlement. A survey that followed described topography, soils, tree species and the size of streams. The team conducting this survey noted the *abundance and variety of trees, the enormous size of the oaks and the ample open space between them for ground level sedges and other plants.*

Several families owned the land before 1962, when Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration of La Crosse, Wisconsin, purchased these 70 acres in an undeveloped area of Hiawatha as a possible site for administrative offices for a new province. This plan never developed and, by 1994, members of the community were ready to begin telling a new story about this land and making the choices that eventually came together as *Prairiewoods—a spirituality center based on the Franciscan concept that creation itself is the great arena of life where the voice of God can be heard.*

(continued on p. 3)

PRAIRIEWOODS OPERATING BOARD

Gretchen Bloomberg
IS Business Intelligence Manager,
Mercy Medical Center
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Georgia Christensen, FSPA
Congregational Secretary,
Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual
Adoration (FSPA)
La Crosse, Wisconsin

Noelle Holmes
Spiritual Healer, Illuminations
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Patti Kunz
Director of Development, Cedar
Valley Habitat for Humanity
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Ed Meissner, Secretary/Treasurer
Supervisory Examiner, FDIC
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Mike Morman
Architect, Shive-Hattery
Marion, Iowa

Laura Nettles, FSPA
Religious Studies and Philosophy
Professor, Viterbo University
La Crosse, Wisconsin

Ben Rogers
Vice Chairperson, Linn County
Board of Supervisors
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Lucy Slinger, FSPA
Liaison, FSPA Leadership Team
La Crosse, Wisconsin

August Stolba
AmeriCorps Team, Feed Iowa First
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

John Weber
Managing Director, Energy Data
Resources
Toddville, Iowa

Lisa Wilson, Chair
Administrator, Grant Wood Area
Education Agency (Retired)
Marion, Iowa

Leslie Wright
Vice President, United Way of East
Central Iowa
Cedar Rapids, Iowa



"Praise be you, my Lord, through our sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us."

—St. Francis of Assisi

On Mount Subasio, just over four miles above Assisi, stands the Eremo delle Carceri, a monastery built on a site beloved by St. Francis of Assisi. When our pilgrimage group arrived there, it was still early morning and the view of Assisi and the valley below were enshrouded in mist, adding to the feeling of isolation from the greater world.

After mass in the chapel and a claustrophobia-inducing tour past the small rock grotto where St. Francis often slept on retreat, I stood in the quiet woods, listening to the birds. When Pope Francis took his name, he called Francis of Assisi "the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation." Standing in that mountain forest, I felt a part of creation—not just a random visitor to Carceri or to Earth, but a relative: just as Francis' own words describe.

In Italy, Father Andre, our pilgrimage leader, taught us about Franciscan history, theology, practice. Before my trip I thought of St. Francis as a kindly, holy soul who loved animals. Learning about Franciscan theology and Franciscanism's history within the Church was eye-opening. As Richard Rohr, OSF, says, "Throughout history, the Franciscan School has typically been a minority position inside of the Roman Catholic and larger Christian tradition, yet it has never been condemned or considered heretical—in fact, quite the opposite ... For Franciscans, the incarnation was not just about Jesus but was manifested everywhere once you learned how to see spiritually. As Francis said, 'The whole world is our cloister!'" (*Eager to Love: The Alternative Way of Francis of Assisi*).

This is what lies beneath and upholds the profound joy all of us at Prairiewoods feel as Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (FSPA) enter the land here into a conservation easement agreement with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. If Francis felt the need to go into the woods to escape the demands of civilization in a mountain village in a sparsely populated world, imagine the need today. Here in Hiawatha, FSPA is establishing a protected space where all are welcome to experience peace and space, to find themselves as part of creation. Importantly, the easement carves out space where deer and fox, groundhogs and beavers, birds and pollinators all have a safe place to call home.

The easement signing ceremony and celebration is scheduled for Oct. 4, St. Francis Day. On behalf of FSPA and Prairiewoods, I hope that you will come home and join us for all or part of the events that day! (See p. 12 for complete details.)

Peace and all good,

Jenifer Hanson, Director



Eremo delle Carceri, Italy



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

Mission: 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 with an increasing awareness of the story of the Universe.

The Prairiewoods staff collaborates to publish this newsletter bimonthly. Content, except where otherwise noted, is created by our staff in consultation and with care to offer a uniquely Prairiewoods perspective.

Please address all correspondence to:

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

www.Prairiewoods.org
Ecospirit@Prairiewoods.org



(continued from p. 1)

We tell our stories through the choices we make. This choice, to protect this space from the intrusion of future development, rests soundly on the heritage of those earliest Franciscans, Francis and Clare, both known and loved for their own expressions of joy in creation. The mystic Francis found union with God through all of creation. In his *Canticle of Creation*, he sings the praises of sun and stars, fire and water. He praises Mother Earth with all of her diverse and astounding expressions of life.

This theme is central in the writings of many Franciscan theologians. Early follower Bonaventure spoke of creation as the “speech of God.” Ilia Delio, OSF, writes that, “To stand in creation as the sacrament of God is to stand in mystery” (*Care for Creation*).

In its Mission Statement, Prairiewoods promises to offer a sacred space for those seeking greater intimacy with God, Self, Others and Earth.

The easement ensures that:

- The Franciscan value of protecting the environment will remain a tangible FSPA legacy to the people of the area.
- We, as a community, take a stand for all life in an age of great environmental destruction.
- Most of these 70 acres of natural beauty and ecological assets will remain forever preserved as a habitat for wildlife.
- Even if these acres are eventually sold, the new owner is bound by all terms of the easement “in perpetuity.”

This conservation easement seems even more significant in this time when *the climate crisis we are now in threatens all of life.* Trees and the land itself are our allies as we do what we are called to do. The stakes are high.

We offer this prayer from Pope Francis, who in his encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*, addresses our God who speaks to us through creation:

All-powerful God,
You are present in the whole Universe
and in the smallest of your creatures.
You embrace with your tenderness
all that exists.
Pour out upon us the power of your love,
that we may protect life and beauty.
Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain
at the expense of the poor and the Earth.
Teach us to discover the worth of each thing,
to be filled with awe and contemplation,
to recognize that we are profoundly tied with every
creature as we journey toward your infinite life.
Amen.

*Help us celebrate this huge milestone on Oct. 4!
(See p. 12 for complete details.)*





Earth's Sensuous Eloquence

What is Earth-language? Earth's sensuous eloquence has enraptured artists, poets, musicians and mystics for millennia. Love and loss, terror and awe have been variously interpreted as brilliant sunsets molten with saturated reds and golds; morning mists rolling through ancient moors; dappled, sun-kissed prairie flowers swaying in the summer breeze; lush primeval forest streams springing forth into serene, limpid pools. *Wildly diverse and captivating natural phenomena are synced primordially with human perception and language to reveal profoundly felt experiences.* Poets especially invoke natural metaphors to summon depths of insight about life, love and loss that otherwise elude expression. Witness the metaphorical nature-language of the erotic lyrical poetry of the ancient biblical Song of Songs:

How beautiful you are, my darling,
how beautiful you are!
Your eyes are doves
behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
streaming down Mount Gilead.
Your teeth are like a flock of ewes to be shorn,
that come up from the washing,
All of them big with twins,
none of them barren.

Like a scarlet strand, your lips,
and your mouth—lovely!
Like pomegranate halves, your cheeks
behind your veil ...
Your breasts are like two fawns,
twins of a gazelle
feeding among the lilies.
Until the day grows cool
and the shadows flee,
I shall go to the mountain of myrrh,
to the hill of frankincense.

—Song of Songs 4:1–6

Many elements of our direct experience, our perception and even our language are intricately intertwined with the

scintillating energy and allure of the natural world. This is our Mother-tongue, our common

Earth-language.

Ancient indigenous peoples wove their stories, etched dramas, and danced shades of meaning through metaphors of nature. Pre-literate communities performed rituals that celebrated the language of Earth as it opened paths to the divine. Post-Enlightenment Romantic philosophers and poets had a mesmerizing effect on how we perceived and translated our relationship with Earth and other-than-human kin. (Think Thoreau and Emerson for American perspectives.) *Only in the techno-industrial age have we become desensitized and disembodied in both our perception and language.* Marketing sound bites and internet memes create a need for expedient access and excessive consumption. This world-view espouses a conception of Earth as a repository of disposable consumables, valuable or meaningful mostly as raw material. Earth is no longer perceived as our sacred, mysterious, effulgent Mother, or as a tensile web of interconnected life, but as a fetid waste-station. We cannot learn Earth-language because we cannot hear, see, touch, smell and taste her delights.

Eco-philosopher David Abram laments how “the human mind came to renounce its sensuous bearings, isolating itself from the other animals and the animate Earth” (*The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language*). Abram notes how words have been employed as merely codes of abstracted thought, not an “echo of the deeply interconnected matrix of sensorial reality” (*Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*). *We have all but lost the full spectrum of our animal sensorium, and have preferred a world that is two-dimensional and digital.* Computer codes have re-written our perception and dissected language into tiny bytes, *off* or *on*, *zero* or *one*. Dichotomy reigns and nuance has faded. Our alphabet itself, in which letters stand for sounds, not pictures of elements of the natural world, further widens the chasm between our senses and our perception of meaning and the natural world. We have become communicators of transaction more than conveyors of mysterious truths enshrined in Earth's astounding diversity, energetic dynamism and timeless rhythms. We have all but lost the Mother-tongue.

What might we recover by listening to the deep breathing of Earth's forests and the “icy streams tumbling down granite slopes, by owl wings and lichens, and by the unseen, imperturbable wind?” (Abram, *Spell of the Sensuous*). *Our animal senses can re-awaken us to an ancient eloquence—Earth's own language—if we would listen, see, taste, smell, touch and learn.*

Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival



The festival features *live performances* by eight critically acclaimed musicians playing indigenous and world instruments.

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday afternoon, bring every member of the family—two-legged and four—for Prairiewoods' popular annual Blessing of the Animals at 3 p.m.



Workshops will teach us everything from beginning stained glass to dance to playing didgeridoo. Come play and learn!



Vendors offer handmade flutes, singing bowls, drums, local food, arts, crafts, jewelry, essential oils and so much more!



Sept. 27–29

Native Music Fest Focuses on Nature, Mind, Body & Spirit

Come hear the voice of the land! The fifth annual Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival is coming to Prairiewoods *Sept. 27–29*. This free, family-friendly festival includes live performances by internationally renowned musicians from around the country. We will be mesmerized by the music of Native American–style flutes, world flutes and other indigenous instruments.

Unlike any other event in the Midwest, Sweetgrass offers abundant opportunities to immerse ourselves in indigenous music, nature and mind-body-spirit wellness. A variety of creative workshops for kids and adults are scheduled throughout the festival, so the whole family can experience inner transformation, learning and fun! With a stroll through vendor village, we'll find great food, singing bowls, one-of-a-kind crafts, handmade flutes, essential oils, nature-inspired jewelry and more. For the first time, this year's festival will feature traditional hoop dances by Ronnie Preston on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The festival culminates Sunday afternoon with Prairiewoods' popular Blessing of the Animals at 3 p.m. Every member of the family—even those with fur, wings, scales and fins—are invited to this annual celebration in honor of St. Francis, the patron saint of ecology. This family- and pet-friendly celebration honors our connection with animals, Earth and all of creation!

Entrance to this three-day outdoor music festival is free, and food and workshops are available for a donation or small fee. Visit www.SweetgrassFest.com for complete details, including schedules for concerts and workshops. *This unique, nature-focused music festival is one the whole family will love!*

Sweetgrass Flute & Nature Festival

Friday, Sept. 27, 5–9 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 28, 10 a.m.–9 p.m.

Sunday, Sept. 29, 11 a.m.–4 p.m.

(Blessing of the Animals at 3)

The following are retreats and programs that Prairiewoods is hosting in the next two months. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org or call 319-395-6700.

Active Hope Renewed: Answering Earth's Call for Transformative Healing & Loving Action

Friday, Sept. 13, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Sept. 15, 3 p.m.

Facilitator: Kathleen Rude

"Active Hope is not wishful thinking," Joanna Macy writes. "Active Hope is not waiting to be rescued by some savior ... Active Hope is a readiness to discover the strengths in ourselves and in others; a readiness to discover the reasons for hope and the occasions for love." In this retreat, we will move through the spiral of *The Work That Reconnects* with a rich exploration of our interdependence with all life. Kathleen Rude will help us invite fellow species to speak through us in the beloved ceremony, *The Council of All Beings*. We will spend time in the woods and prairie to hear what Earth is inviting us to embrace and to receive inspiration and healing for our weary, overwhelmed hearts and souls. In supportive community, we will honor our pain for the world, reconnect to active hope and find clarity around how we can play a part in the healing of our beautiful planet. This retreat includes experiential practices, mask making, movement, inspirational readings and simple



rituals. It's engaging, it's invigorating and it gives us tools for dealing with the challenges of living in difficult times.

Fee: \$230 includes sessions, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch

Saturday Soul-Stretch for Lovers of Embodied Spirituality

Saturdays, Sept. 14 & Oct. 12, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Laura Weber & Prairiewoods collaborators

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

—Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Wake up! Wake up! The weekend is here. Saturday Soul-Stretch will get us out of bed and back into our full-spectrum humanity! Come to Prairiewoods once a month to de-stress, reconnect and sink deeply into the present moment. A hot breakfast starts the day, followed by gentle tai chi movement and a sitting meditation to foster deep relaxation. Once we're relaxed and engaged, we'll sip a cup of aromatic tea and enter into a whole new realm of exploration with a different spiritual modality each month, such as working with dreams, journaling, creating mandalas, walking the labyrinth, practicing breath-exercise, sounding, centering prayer, poetry for the soul, singing bowl meditation or drumming. To cap off the morning's spiritual work-out, we'll enjoy a mindfulness walk in the beauty of Prairiewoods' seventy acres of prairie grasses, trees, streams and gardens, with only the owls, squirrels, turkeys and deer as our companion-guides. Finally, we'll return to the Center for a scrumptious lunch and leave happy and refreshed.

Commuter Fee: \$50 includes breakfast and lunch (or add \$25 for an optional afternoon stay with dinner, or \$50 for an optional overnight stay with Sunday breakfast)



Last chance to register for Prairiewoods' twelfth annual S.E.E.L. Retreat!

Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (S.E.E.L.) 12

Saturdays, Sept. 14 & May 16, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.; and Saturdays; Oct. 12, Nov. 9, Dec. 7, Jan. 11, Feb. 8, March 7 & April 4; 9 a.m.–1 p.m.

Facilitators: Ann Jackson, PBVM; Betty Daugherty, FSPA; Lucille Winnike, FSPA; & Karen Skalitsky (Sept. 14 only)

"We long to sense how God reveals God's love within and through daily activity."

"We desire to establish a practice of daily prayer and to deepen prayer."

"We yearn to discern the future of life as it unfolds daily."



Past S.E.E.L. retreatants cite these longings and learnings among the greatest gifts of the S.E.E.L. Retreat. We learn more about St. Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Community, who offered the Spiritual Exercises to help seekers who long to develop a disposition of the heart and the words to articulate the movement of God in daily life. During these nine-months, S.E.E.L. retreatants gather monthly at Prairiewoods to enter into the Exercises in prayer and reflection. Between monthly gatherings, each retreatant receives daily readings to spur prayer and meets monthly with a spiritual director to listen to insights that arise within prayer and to learn the art of discernment. Some retreatants find it so beneficial they participate in S.E.E.L. year after year! If you are interested in going deeper in your spiritual journey, contact Ann Jackson, PBVM, at 319-395-6700, ext. 203 for a registration form.

Commuter Fee: \$450 (payable in September 2019 or in monthly installments of \$50), plus the cost of monthly spiritual direction sessions paid separately (usually \$45 per hour)

Tallgrass Conversations: In Search of the Prairie Spirit

Friday, Sept. 20, 6:30 p.m.–Saturday, Sept. 21, 6:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Thomas Dean

Conversation is perhaps our greatest hope, not only for healing the rifts in human understanding, but also for restoring and reinspiring our relationship with the natural world. If we think of *conversation* as encounter and interaction that creates something new—understanding, inspiration, care, healing—then conversation with our native landscape can nurture a deeper relationship with and sense of stewardship of the tallgrass prairie, one of the most altered and threatened ecosystems in the world. To be in search of the prairie spirit here in this place on Earth, then, means to engage in tallgrass conversations.



The Friday night event—which is open to the public—will consist of Thomas Dean reading and sharing photographs from his recently-released book *Tallgrass Conversations: In Search of the Prairie Spirit*, as well as discussion about how conversation can enhance our relationships with the natural world. The day-long Saturday workshop will continue the discussion but focus greatly on us encountering the prairie, generating creative expression and sharing that creative expression with one another.

Fee: \$195 includes sessions, lodging, all meals and a copy of *Tallgrass Conversations* (or add \$55 for an optional overnight Saturday, including Sunday breakfast)

Commuter Fee: \$165 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and a copy of *Tallgrass Conversations*

Friday-Only Book Reading Fee: \$10

Belonging to Our Longings in Troubled Times: A Seeker's Writing Retreat

Friday, Oct. 11, 6:30 p.m.–Sunday, Oct. 13, 1 p.m.

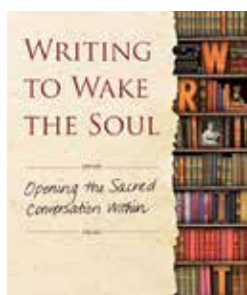
Facilitator: Karen Hering

What transformative power might we discover if we followed our heart's longings while opening our life to the needs crying out in the world today? Perhaps we already have and wish to be encouraged. Perhaps we have just recently heard our heart speak and are wondering how to begin. Perhaps, in the noise of our times and the busyness of our life, we find it difficult to hear our heart's soft voice at all. In this weekend retreat, we'll use guided writing, conversation, gentle movement, and activities both playful and contemplative to listen for the wisdom rising from our own lives and bodies. We will consider how the world's needs today can help us understand our own longings more deeply and clearly.

And we'll join in community, encouraging one another and discovering the transformative power of belonging to our longings in troubled times. For writers and nonwriters alike.

Fee: \$230 includes sessions, lodging and all meals

Commuter Fee: \$180 includes sessions, Saturday lunch and dinner, and Sunday lunch



Introducing the new Prayer Experience Series!

Prairiewoods is pleased to announce a new ongoing series focused on a group prayer experience that is open to all. Feel free to enjoy this as a series or as individual sessions. Registration is appreciated but not required. We will experience walking in prayer in September and contemplative prayer in October. Save the date for Tuesdays in November as this group prayer series continues!

Prayerful Walking

Tuesdays; Sept. 3, 17 & 24; 11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Angie Pierce Jennings

Celebrate the goodness of creation with others as we walk the land and pray together. We will gather in prayer outside and then walk together through the woods and prairie in silence while holding the day's prayer.

Fee: Free-will offering

Contemplative Experience

Tuesdays; Oct. 1, 15, 22 & 29; 11:30 a.m.–12 p.m.

Facilitator: Betty Daugherty, FSPA

Contemplation is both an ancient and new tradition in our search of the Holy One. In contemplation we stop our doing and learn to be; we enter into communion with the God beyond words and with our own deepest essence. We will experience the power of being in contemplation with others and sending peace and love into the brokenness of our world.

Fee: Free-will offering

Field of Compassion Book Study

Mondays; Sept. 9, 16 & 23; 10–11 a.m. or 6–7 p.m.

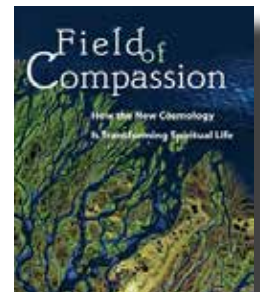
Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA, & Angie Pierce Jennings (*mornings only*)

In the tradition of Teilhard de Chardin and Thomas Berry, Judy Cannato invites us to consider the powerful force of human consciousness in the unfolding of the future.

Through a study of her works, with an emphasis on *The Field of Compassion*, we will examine how we, through our human

consciousness, are crucial participants in the evolution of the universe. Cannato's book is an invitation to root ourselves in the energy of love and compassion that will bring healing and hope to the community of life. Feel free to enjoy this as a series or as individual sessions. Please register for each session by the previous Friday.

Fee: \$5 per session



Qigong for Diabetes & Digestive Issues
Mondays, Sept. 9–30, 1–2:15 p.m.
Facilitator: Gerry Hopkins



Qigong is a gentle exercise involving whole body movement, deep breathing and mental focus. The purpose of qigong is to cultivate energy,

or *qi*, in order to improve health and enhance overall well-being. In this four-week series, we will learn and practice a set of qigong movements designed to improve diabetes, aid digestion and control weight issues. Facilitator Gerry Hopkins has been practicing martial arts for more than 30 years and studying tai chi and qigong for more than 20.

Fee: \$50 for four-week series

Offered in Partnership with Cedar Memorial

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

Information Sessions: Tuesdays, Sept. 10 & 17, 5:30–6:30 p.m.

Eight-Week Series: Tuesdays, Sept. 24–Nov. 12, 5:30–8 p.m.

Combined Extended Class: Saturday, Nov. 2, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.

Facilitator: Chris Klug

Mindfulness is the power of mind to be deeply aware of what's happening—without judgement, commentary or interference. Research reveals numerous benefits to the nervous system, emotions and general sense of well-being. In this eight-week series, we will cultivate the skill of mindfulness through formal meditation practices and informal integrative practices. Chris Klug, a grief counselor, has been an instructor in the mindfulness program at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics since 2001.

Fee: Free for information session, \$400 for eight-week series

(partial scholarships are available through Cedar Memorial)

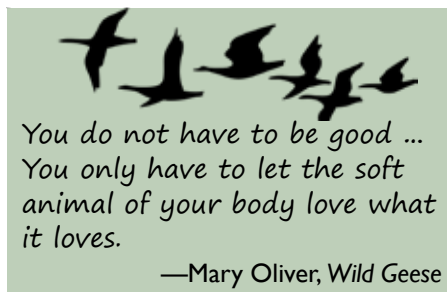


**“You Do Not Have to Be Good”:
 A Celebration of the Life & Poetry of Mary Oliver**
Tuesday, Sept. 10, 6:30–8 p.m.

Facilitators: Carol Tyx & Prairiewoods staff

Mary Oliver's life and words have had a profound effect on many of us—here at Prairiewoods and around the globe. To honor her life and her admonition to, “Pay attention. Be astonished. Tell about it,” we invite you to join us in a celebration of Mary's life and poetry. On Mary's birthday, Sept. 10, we invite you to bring a favorite line or stanza from a Mary Oliver poem to share. This celebratory evening will include time to contemplate Mary's poems out in nature, where she received so much of her inspiration from contemplation; a brief memorial of Mary's life offered by Carol Tyx, fellow poet and Prairiewoods' Artist in Residence; and time for sharing, concluding with a litany crafted from Mary's own poetry. Wine and other refreshments will be served. Registration is appreciated but not required.

Fee: \$10 includes refreshments



—Mary Oliver, *Wild Geese*

Wednesday Women
Wednesdays, Sept. 11–Oct. 30, 10–11:30 a.m.

Facilitator: Ann Jackson, PBVM

Join women seeking spiritual enrichment, inspiration and motivation in the supportive setting of Prairiewoods each Wednesday. Come whenever available! Topics arise from within the hearts and minds of those gathered. We view TED Talks, converse, reflect, support and challenge one another to personal growth, no matter what stage of life.

In September and October, we will explore *The Universal Christ: How a forgotten reality can change everything we see, hope for and believe* by Richard Rohr, globally recognized Franciscan

and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation. Together we will foster deep reflection, learning, lively conversation, laughter, storytelling and inquiry to generate incredible energy and spiritual stimulation! Registration is not necessary.

Fee: \$10 per session

Rock Mandala Painting for the Whole Family

Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Andi Lewis

Spend an evening creating art with family and friends as we learn the art of rock painting with mandalas,



which are sacred works of art in the form of a circle. We will use smooth stones, paints and fine dotting tools to make beautiful, detailed mandalas. Facilitator Andi Lewis will guide us in this fun, relaxing process that can be done by anyone, regardless of age. We will have time to paint several rocks and will be encouraged to take one rock home and leave one as a secret gift for a stranger to find. No experience or artistic skill is necessary, but kids 12 and under must be accompanied by an adult. (It is ideal for ages 10 and over.) Please register and pay by Sept. 9. This class always sells out, so register today!

Fee: \$13 per person includes rocks and art supplies

Day of Self Renewal
Mondays, Sept. 16 & Oct. 14, 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Angie Pierce Jennings

Find rest and relaxation for mind, body and spirit! This tranquil day features two 40-minute holistic services, group guided meditation, a private guest room, access to walking trails and all that Prairiewoods has to offer, a fresh lunch and hours of free time. (Choose from massage, head and shoulder massage, reflexology, healing touch, spiritual direction, dream processing, yoga, chair yoga, guided nature experience or labyrinth meditation.) Please register, pay a nonrefundable deposit of \$25 and let us know your top three services choices

at least five days in advance.

Fee: \$95 includes guided meditation, singing bowl prayer, two holistic services, private guest room and lunch

Labyrinth Meditation

Monday, Sept. 16, 2:30–3:15 p.m.

Facilitator: Angie Pierce Jennings

A labyrinth is a powerful ancient symbol of our journey through life. It has been a part of almost every culture and religious tradition in history. The labyrinth is not a maze; it has a single path that leads to the center of the circle and then back out. This winding path takes us on an inward pilgrimage to our own center and leads us toward the Divine. Walking the labyrinth is a spiritual, prayerful practice. Join us for a guided

labyrinth meditation on our outdoor labyrinth.

(In case of inclement weather, we will walk the indoor labyrinth.) Please register by Sept. 13.

Fee: \$5



Offered in Partnership with Unity Point Hospice

Soul Care: Creative Arts Grief Support Group

Wednesdays, Sept. 18, 5:30–7 p.m.; & Oct. 16, 6–7 p.m. (note changed time)

Facilitator: Jamie Siela, LISW, & Julie Wehner, LMSW, M.Div, BCC

Take time to be with others in grief and engage the creative spark. Jamie Siela and Julie Wehner from Unity Point Hospice facilitate this monthly grief group open to anyone grieving loss through death. On the third Wednesday of each month, we explore a different creative medium. In September, we will use watercolors and ink to explore what has changed in our lives since the death of our loved ones. In October, we will smash paint balls to create art and to experience a physical and emotional release. Please register by the previous Friday.

Fee: Free includes all art supplies



Tallgrass Conversations Book Reading: In Search of the Prairie Spirit

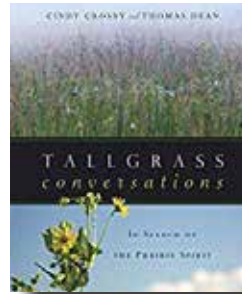
Friday, Sept. 20, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Thomas Dean

Join local author Thomas Dean for a reading and sharing of photographs from his beautiful recently-released book *Tallgrass Conversations*:

In Search of the Prairie Spirit. We will discuss how conversation can enhance our relationships with the natural world. (For a deeper experience of entering into conversation with nature, consider attending the day-long Saturday workshop that follows this book reading. See p. 7 for complete details.) Registration by Sept. 19 is appreciated but not required.

Fee: \$10



Blessing of the Animals Sunday, Sept. 29, 3–4 p.m.

See p. 5 for complete details.

Sacred Space, Sacred Hope: Celebrating a Gift for the Future

Friday, Oct. 4, 3–7 p.m.

See p. 12 for complete details.

The Wisdom of the Celts Prayer Writing Series

Mondays; Oct. 7, 14 & 21; 10–11 a.m. or 6–7 p.m.

Facilitators: Betty Daugherty, FSPA, & Angie Pierce Jennings (*mornings only*)

Both John Philip Newell and John O'Donohue share their own rootedness in the spirituality of the Celtic peoples. They help us listen to the sacredness deep within ourselves, in one another and within Earth. They share their love of poetry, nature and a deep sense of the sacredness at the heart of every moment. We will journey with them by viewing podcasts, using excerpts of their work and writing our own prayers. Be prepared to be refreshed in

Find ongoing support in these programs that take place every month:

- **Bridges to Contemplative Living with Thomas Merton** with Betty Daugherty, FSPA (Thursdays; Sept. 5, Sept. 19, Oct. 3 & Oct. 17; 6:30–8 p.m.)
- **Drumming for Healing** with Sheri Mealhouse (Hawkwoman) (Mondays; Sept. 9, Sept. 23, Oct. 14 & Oct. 28; 6–7 p.m.)
- **Evening Centering Prayer** with Judith Edwards (Tuesdays; Sept. 10, Sept. 24, Oct. 8 & Oct. 22; 5:30–7 p.m.)
- **Flute Circle** (Wednesdays, Sept. 11 & Oct. 9, 6–7:30 p.m.)
- **Going Inward with Sounds & Vibrations** with Kathy Broghammer (Wednesdays; Sept. 4, Sept. 18, Oct. 2 & Oct. 16; 6–7 p.m.)
- **Hatha Way Yoga** with Cindy Hathaway & Carla Brems (Mondays & Thursdays; Sept. 5–Oct. 31; 9:30–10:30 a.m., 10:45–11:45 a.m. & 5:30–6:30 p.m.)
- **Men Exploring Faith** with Bob Davis (Thursdays; Sept. 12, Sept. 26, Oct. 10 & Oct. 24; 7–8:30 p.m.)
- **Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers** (Tuesdays, Sept. 10 & Oct. 8, 9:30–11 a.m.; & Wednesdays, Sept. 25 & Oct. 23, 6:30–8:30 p.m.)
- **Seeing IS Believing: Visio Divina** with Lois Ocenosak (Tuesdays, Sept. 3–Oct. 29, 10–11:30 a.m.)
- **Singing Bowl Prayer** with Kathy Broghammer (Mondays, Sept. 16 & Oct. 14, 12:45–1:30 p.m.)
- **Sweat Lodge Ceremony** with Kerry Batteau (Saturdays; Sept. 7, Sept. 28 & Oct. 19; 5–9 p.m.)

For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org.

spirit through this brief journey with the ancient Celts! Feel free to enjoy this as a series or as individual sessions. Please register for each session by the previous Friday.

Fee: \$5 per session

Fall Root Medicine Series

Root Medicine & Weed Walk

Tuesday, Oct. 8, 6–8 p.m.

Facilitator: Trilby Sedlacek, RH (AHG)

Connect with our plant friends in the first session of our new Fall Root Medicine Series about medicinal uses for plant roots. In this session, we will learn to identify herbs around our home and community. We will learn ethical wild-crafting practices on a weed walk. It will help us feel safe using plants as medicine and will include a plant meditation.

Facilitator Trilby Sedlacek is a registered



herbalist with 30 years of experience in plant medicine. Save the date for the other classes in this series:

- **Nov. 12:** Immune System Support
- **Dec. 10:** Digging Deeper into Winter Health

Please register and pay for each session by the previous Friday.

Fee: \$40 per session (or \$105 for the series if paid in advance)

Introduction to Sacred Dance: Our Sacred Bodies Free Form Dance & Movement

Tuesday, Oct. 15, 6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Adina Joy Levitt

Join facilitator Adina Joy Levitt for an evening introduction to sacred dance. When we hold our bodies as sacred and work on connecting with them during intentional movement, we can begin a personal



reawakening. We will come together with others who are curious to explore using movement as medicine and to surrender into the mystery of the moment. With lights dimmed and our eyes half closed to keep our focus inward, we will begin to unlock the dancer within us and feel free from our cores. No dance experience is necessary and all body types are welcome in this judgement-free space. Let's take a risk, be brave and give ourselves permission to feel joyful in our bodies! Please register by Oct. 14.

Fee: \$15

Dances of Universal Peace Saturday, Oct. 19, 7–8:30 p.m.

Facilitator: Morgan Rivers

Join the circle for simple, meditative, joyous, multi-cultural circle dances! We will use sacred phrases, chants, music and movements from many spiritual traditions to help touch the spiritual essence within ourselves and recognize it in others. Beginners and old hands are all welcome! Please register by Oct. 17.

Fee: \$10

We appreciate all of the generous people who donate their time, money and other gifts to Prairiewoods! For a complete, up-to-date list between Newsletters, visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate.

DONATIONS

Dan & Marianne Arndorfer
Martha Barry
Mary Ann Barry
Julie Billett
Rev. Rose Blank
Dian Boysen
Jim & Dianne Brenneman
Verabeth Bricker
Ellen & Juergen Bruckner
Bob & Lois Buntz
Cindy Chicoine & Morgan Rivers
Tom & Tracy Clasen
Ellen & Everett Collins
Mary & Gary Crandall
Jim & Diane Daubenmier
Donna K. Dennis
F. Dean & Karen Dennis
Wendy Dennis
Ed & Peggy Dettmer
Jo Dillon
Karen M. Dosemagen
Mary K. Doughan RSM

Sara & Mark Eisbach
Bob Engler & Carol Nilles
Farmers State Bank
Michelle Foley
Nancy Footner, Friendship Yoga
Diane Forster, BVM
Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
John Gates
Kate Getty
Marlys Graettinger
Dana Groff
Jenifer Hanson
Cindy Hathaway
Max & Kathy Hawkins
The Helgens Family
Connie Howe, RSM
Kristin Hutson
Kay & Steve Jackson
Jen Kardos
William Kennedy
Alan & Karen Kessler
Linda Kettner

Christine & Roger Kirpes
Mary Kopecky
Becky & Tim Kresowik
Kari Kruger
Kyle & Patti Kunz
Ralph & Rebecca Lewis
Susan Liddell
Pat Lillis
Jane Lonergan-Highley
Linda Lumsden
Jamie & Linda Lundahl
Mark & Pat McCright
Louise McMaster
Ed & Mary Meissner
Mercy Medical Center
Mary Mockler
Dave & Jan Monk
Shirley Morris
Craig & Peggy Murphy
Stephanie & Brad Neff
Margaret & Ron Nelson
Newman Catholic Student Center
Vince & Michele O'Connor

Marlin Oeltjen
Cathy Pedersen
Chuck Peters
James E. Pettitt
Margaret R. Polson
Prairiewoods Knitters & Stitchers
Dr. Linda Railsback
David & Mary Jo Rater
Phyllis Ann Ries RSM
William Schettler
Margaret Schmitz
Jeff & Kathy Schumacher
Kim & Dan Seward
Robert & Alice Shimanek
Sisters of Charity, BVM
Sisters of the Presentation
Libby Slappey & Charles Crawley
Lucy Slinger, FSPA
Bonnie & Steve Sovern
Amy & Randy Spaulding
St. Pius X Catholic Church
Amy Starr

DONATIONS (cont.)

August Stolba
 Carol Sudmeier
 Colleen & Robert Weber
 Lisa & Robert Wilson
 Lucille Winnike, FSPA
 Don & Heather Withers
 Tony & Gaylen Wobeter
 Elizabeth Woodward
 Mark & Maureen Zittergruen

IN-KIND DONATIONS

Jan Aiels
 Almost Famous Popcorn
 Company
 Jean Barbaglia (Wenisch)
 Biaggi's
 Alan & Terry Boyden
 Stephanie Brandenburg
 Kathy Broghammer
 Bur Oak Land Trust
 Cedar Rapids Kernels
 Cedar Rapids Museum of Art
 Tracy Clasen
 Lauren Crippes
 Dash Coffee Roasters
 Dental Touch Associates
 Marie Des Jarlais, FSPA
 Jo Dillon
 EcoVision
 Bob Engler & Carol Nilles
 Lorrie & Bruce Erusha
 Feed Iowa First
 Franciscan Sisters of
 Perpetual Adoration
 The Full Bowl
 Joann Gehling, FSPA
 Cletus & Ines Gerardy
 Gnarly Pepper
 Maryam Gossling, FSPA
 Granite City Food & Brewery
 Great Jones County Fair
 Gumption
 Jenifer Hanson
 Cindy Hathaway
 Peggy & Dennis Hrnccirik
 Hunters Ridge Golf Course
 Becki Jenkins
 Karen Kappell, FSPA
 Diane Karr
 Mary Kopecky
 Patti & Kyle Kunz
 Lake Macbride Boat Rentals
 Carol & Dick Lensing
 Andi & Steve Lewis
 Jonny Lipford
 Linda Martin
 Matthew 25

Ed & Mary Meissner
 Melting Bite
 Mary Mockler
 Mode
 Joanne Moeller, FSPA
 Jan Monk
 Monticello Aviation Inc.
 Monticello Golf Club
 Mike Mormon
 Jennifer Mrkricka
 NewBo City Market
 Vince & Michele O'Connor
 Marlin Oeltjen
 Trish Peebles
 Chuck Peters
 Prairiewoods
 Joni Reed Cooley
 Fr. Mark Ressler
 Diana Rettig
 Dolores Riepe
 Riverside Casino & Golf
 Resort
 Roaster's Coffee House
 Conti Roberts
 Rodina Restaurant
 Roots in Bloom
 Rough around the Edges
 Rev. Mel Schlachter
 Karen Sindelar, LMT
 Sisters of Charity, BVM
 Sisters of Mercy at Sacred
 Heart Convent
 Jan Smith
 Soul Spa
 Jodi Sweeney-Egeland
 Sweetgrass Flute & Nature
 Festival
 The Tumbled Stone
 Amy Valentine
 Linda Vermeersch
 Mike & Barbara Weber
 Rev. Dr. Carolyn Weber
 The WellWoman
 Robert & Lisa Wilson
 WineStyles
 Jason Wright

MEMORIALS

In memory of Jean Gehling
 Marj English, OSF
 Joann Gehling, FSPA
In memory of John Gross
 Jerry & Kathy Gehling
 Joann Gehling, FSPA
In memory of Paul Kitzki
 Wanda Kitzki
In memory of Barbara Lynk
 Jean Barbaglia (Wenisch)

HONORARIA

*In honor of David Coughlin &
 Kristin Hutson*
 Dick & Sandra Hutson
*In honor of John & Kaye
 Coughlin, Richard & Sandra
 Hutson David Coughlin &
 Kristin Hutson*
*In honor of Nancy Hoffman,
 FSPA & Ann Jackson, PBVM*
 Anonymous
In honor of Andi Lewis
 Peg Burdge
In honor of loved ones
 M.L. Folkedahl-Meehleder
In honor of Georgia Rupp
 Sarah Montgomery

VOLUNTEER SERVICE

Jan Aiels
 Sandi Allen
 Mike Ament
 Susan Armitage
 Martha Barry
 Mary Ann Barry
 Kerry Batteau
 Tammy Bayer
 Doug Beadle
 Duane Beaudry
 Martha Beaudry
 Rose Blank
 Arlene Blazek
 Gretchen Bloomberg
 Dave Bowdish
 Rosie Bowers
 Marie Brown
 Vicki Brubaker
 Georgia Christensen, FSPA
 Deb Crane
 Day of Caring
 Norine Drahazol
 Judith Edwards
 Robert Engler
 Shannon Finnegan
 Ginny Fleming
 John Frankhouse
 Jolene Frankhouse
 Pat Frasher
 Lydia Gehling
 Donna Gelski
 Bob Goetzinger
 Christine Gust
 Catrina Havumaki
 Noelle Holmes
 Bill Holtz
 Milinda Hopp
 Becki Jenkins
 Karen Kappell, FSPA
 Jen Kardos
 Diane Karr
 Christine Kirpes

Linda Koehler
 Mary Kopecky
 Adelia Kroupa
 Mary Kroupa
 Julie Kuehnle
 Patti Kunz
 Kay Landuyt
 Ralph Lewis
 Rebecca Lewis
 Pat Lillis
 Jane Lonergan-Highley
 Diane Lynch
 Marion High School
 Linda Martin
 Judy McCarty
 Mark McCright
 Ed Meissner
 Mary Meissner
 Mary Mockler
 Jan Monk
 Mary Moore
 Mike Morman
 Diane Morris
 Bev Mumm
 Pat Myers
 Laura Nettles, FSPA
 Bette Niccolls
 Carol Nilles
 Vince O'Connor
 Diane Olsen
 Esther Olson
 Chuck Peters
 Kathy Petsche
 Bob Pinchotti
 Conti Roberts
 Ben Rogers
 Jeanette Rops
 Jenny Rupp
 Paula Sanchini
 Gian Luc Sison
 Gina Sison
 Lucy Slinger, FSPA
 Ellie Spielbauer
 Georgia Stoeber
 Tom Stoeber
 August Stolba
 Mary Taylor
 Noreen Tonkin
 Katie Tsilosani
 Donna Venteicher, FSPA
 Dorothy Voelkers
 Mary w.d.-Turner
 Gloria Waltke
 John Weber
 Sue Wiley
 Cera Wilkins
 Lisa Wilson
 Geri Wittstruck
 Leslie Wright
 Connie Zenisek
 Tom Zenisek



120 E Boyson Rd
Hiawatha IA 52233

You may send this by mail, email ecospirit@prairiewoods.org or call **319-395-6700**. If mailed, please include this address label.

- Please send your mailings electronically to _____.
- Please take us off your mailing list.
- Please note the address change.
- We receive duplicate mailings; please send only one to this address.

Are you on social media? Find "Prairiewoods FSC" on:



SACRED *space* *hope*

Celebrating a Gift for the Future

Friday, Oct. 4, 3–7 p.m.

On Oct. 4, *St. Francis Day*, Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (Prairiewoods' founding organization) and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation will sign an agreement to enter the majority of the 70 acres of prairie and woodlands at Prairiewoods into a conservation easement, saving this sacred space as a natural oasis for future generations. Please join us for part or all of the day's celebration!

The schedule includes:

- 3–4 p.m.** Guided ecospirituality experiences and tours to connect with the land
- 4–5** Panel discussion: *Sacred Space, Sacred Hope: Perspectives on Meaning & Mission*
- 5:15–5:45** Easement signing ceremony
- 5:45–7** Reception (with heavy hors d'oeuvres)

All are welcome, however, registrations are requested so that we can plan appropriately. For more information or to register, visit www.Prairiewoods.org. *Come celebrate this gift for the future!*