

PRAIRIEWOODS

A Place of Peace and Transformation

2023

GRATITUDE REPORT

Message from Our Director

What a year it has been! I transitioned from Board Chair to Director just over a year ago. Time has flown by. It has been a year of new beginnings in many ways—as former staff members left, five new staff members have joined us. We have updated our interior spaces and launched new programs. It has been a season of returning—we returned to in-person programming after two years of Covid restrictions and brought the Garden Party back to the land where it was first launched. We also have been cultivating a host of new relationships and connections throughout the year—attending 20 local college and university events and festivals such as Juneteenth and the Iowa Women Lead Change conference. (That's four times the number of festivals we attended in the previous year!) It has become increasingly clear to all of us here at Prairiewoods that the need for this place and all that it offers is great. Our focus in this coming year is to continue to build our networks of connection broad and deep and to open our arms wide to offer sanctuary and transformation to all who need it here on this beautiful land.

—Leslie Wright, Director



Message from Our Board Chair

I first encountered Prairiewoods through the *Spirituality in the 21st Century* conference when Marcus Borg was the speaker. He was a top-notch theologian, and I thought anybody who could get him to come to Cedar Rapids must be doing something right.

And of course that led to other encounters with Prairiewoods, including workshops, yoga and spiritual direction. And now, thanks to Land Sustainability Coordinator Aaron Brewer, I've seen Grandmother Oak. It must have been something like Moses felt when he saw the Burning Bush.

So I am happy to be on the Board of Prairiewoods. I believe in its mission, especially taking care of our environment from a spiritual point of view. It's too important to be left to the politicians, some of whom don't even believe we have a problem.

Thank you, Prairiewoods. I'm glad you are here!

—Charles Crawley, Board Chair



PRAIRIEWOODS OPERATING BOARD

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2023 Prairiewoods Gratitude Report

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.” —Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

This past year, we've continued to see the healing power that nature has provided to our guests and also witnessed the impact of the services and community space that we've provided. Our mission is to provide opportunities for ongoing personal transformation, for exploring and nurturing relationships with the Source of All Being, Earth, self and others. We're so grateful that we've been able to walk beside our guests as they grow or heal in their life's journey. We've also hosted groups that are making very meaningful changes in their communities, and we're inspired watching them do their work with so much passion. Prairiewoods' staff are incredibly thankful that you've invited us into your lives and feel privileged to serve you.

volunteers

427

individual volunteers including 15 different service groups contributed

6,891

hours of volunteer time.

Fabiola and her team spend a fun evening "Growing Our Roots" at the Garden Party.



Our office and media center volunteers and dedicated Knitters & Stitchers give so much to Prairiewoods—not only their time but also their care and kindness. Our land care volunteers help tend our 70 acres and make our land the beautiful, welcoming place that it is. Finally, we're grateful to companies like Pure Mean Clean who regularly volunteer at Prairiewoods. Fabiola Ziadeh, owner of Pure Mean Clean, says, "We donate our time and money to Prairiewoods because it is part of our values. Volunteering and supporting our community are what strengthens our ties by meeting new people, learning new skills and bettering our wellbeing. The services and programs Prairiewoods provide are all valued and crucial for mental wellness as well as physical health. The organic gardens that produce the fresh produce donated for our community are essential. Just being at Prairiewoods is our favorite. We are always so joyful and grounded when we are there. We are reminded of our sense of responsibility for our planet, ourselves, our families. It is important to volunteer because it is the very core of being a human being!" If you would like to volunteer, visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Volunteer.

programming

We welcome thousands of visitors every year, each here for a different reason. We host many organizations who are having meetings; we welcome guests who attend our own programs and retreats; we guide many individuals through spiritual direction sessions; and we strive to improve the health and wellbeing of our visitors through our holistic services. Many of our guests tell us how coming to Prairiewoods has improved their lives. Lori Tofanelli says, "For me, spiritual direction has been life affirming. It is comforting to have someone walk beside you on your journey as you grapple with the different questions and events that you encounter, all the while nudging you to be in closer relationship with God. It has been a balm for my soul."



Guests relax at a Healing Sound Bath & Yogic Sleep class.

5,029

people participated in

69

unique Prairiewoods programs & retreats and a total of 676 sessions.

1,787

total holistic services were provided by our massage therapists and spiritual directors.

locust in winter,
by Andi Lewis

2023 Prairiewoods Gratitude Report

the land

For 27 years, the land at Prairiewoods has provided people of all beliefs, backgrounds and cultures opportunities to reflect on their relationship to the Creator, Earth, themselves and others. Our land also feeds those in need through our food pantry donations, feeds our guests through meals prepared in our kitchen, and provides our visitors a place to walk or have time for quiet contemplation. The beauty and peacefulness of our 70 acres of land is here for guests to explore. That might include hiking our trails that meander along creek beds, through the prairie or in the woods; walking the labyrinth; or participating in a sweat lodge ceremony. Our hope is that everyone will find healing, restoration or solitude as they explore our spaces. We invite you to walk our trails, open every day of the year from sunrise to sunset. "We welcome you to come often, to walk the trails, to admire the strength of the trees, to engage with the residents, the denizens of prairie and woods," wrote late Prairiewoods foundress Betty Daughtery, FSPA.



A peaceful place to sit and enjoy all that the land has to offer.

2,304
pounds of produce grown at Prairiewoods was shared with those in need through Metro Catholic Outreach's food pantry.

601
pounds of produce grown here helped our chefs serve

6,651
healthy meals at Prairiewoods.

our community

1,937
people attended events hosted in meeting spaces at Prairiewoods.

250
people came here on personal retreat, contributing to

1,739
total overnight stays in our Guest House or Hermitages.



Day of Caring volunteers from Collins Aerospace helped heal the land.

Prairiewoods thrives because of our amazing community partners. The Prairiewoods community is made up of big and small organizations, but also all of the many individuals who come to our programming or support us in so many ways. From bringing employee teams for Day of Caring to working on our grounds to sponsoring our events with donations, we are grateful to everyone who helps make our work possible. Additionally, each donation from an individual or family allows us to provide programming that supports our mission. We are continuously grateful for Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration (La Crosse, Wisconsin) who provide endless support and guidance to us. Our community is so generous, and because of their support, we are able to do work that impacts people's lives and the environment and makes our supporters proud.

*crab apple in spring,
by Jenifer Hanson*

2023 Prairiewoods Gratitude Report

highlights

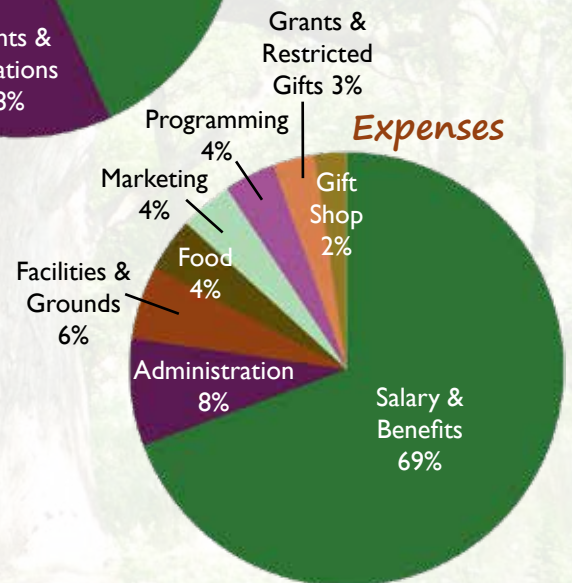
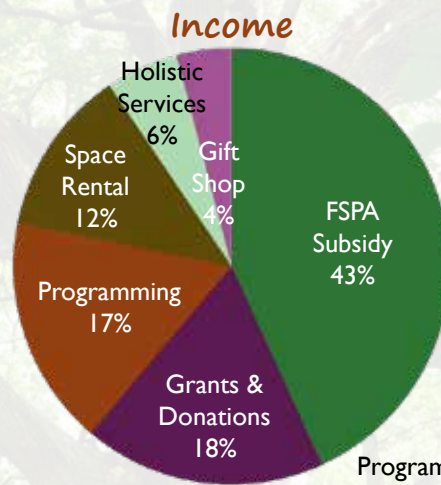
- July 2022:** Hosted 23 people for one of two annual Silent Directed Retreats
- Aug. 2022:** Got limbered up mentally and physically at Women's Mindfulness & Yoga Retreat
- Sept. 2022:** Kicked off our fifteenth annual Spiritual Exercises in Everyday Life (SEEL) Retreat
- Oct. 2022:** Welcomed several dozen pets and their people for our annual Blessing of the Animals
- Nov. 2022:** Saw 633 people through our doors at our annual Holiday Bazaar
- Jan. 2023:** Launched our *Spirituality in the 21st Century 2023* event with a Jeremy Lent book study group
- Feb. 2023:** Helped educators find holistic healing through mindfulness and self-compassion
- March 2023:** Welcomed 16 for Restoring Balance in Times of Change Retreat
- April 2023:** Hosted 85 people for a Concert Under the Stars with nationally-renowned world flute musicians
- April 2023:** Welcomed author Jeremy Lent and musician Sara Thomsen for the 23rd annual *Spirituality in the 21st Century* event
- May 2023:** Rekindled an old favorite with Y.O.L.O. (*Your Other Lunch Option!*), a monthly healthy themed meal made by our chefs
- May 2023:** Began offering qigong, which is meditative, healing energy work and movement
- June 2023:** Raised \$26,257 through our annual Garden Party: Growing Our Roots fundraiser

Grandmother Oak
in summer, by Joni
Reed Cooley

financial report

July 2022–June 2023

Income	Expenses
FSPA Subsidy \$357,291	Salary & Benefits \$625,414
Grants & Donations \$148,565	Administration \$72,168
Programming \$140,860	Facilities & Grounds \$49,624
Space Rental \$102,062	Food \$35,941
Holistic Services \$44,616	Marketing \$35,542
Gift Shop \$33,654	Programming \$34,414
Total Income \$827,048	Grants & Restricted Gifts \$28,158
	Gift Shop \$21,536
	Total Expenses \$902,797



Thank you for being part of the deep roots we are forging at Prairiewoods! For a complete list of donors, visit www.Prairiewoods.org/Donate.