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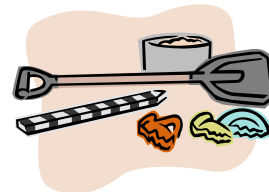
Prairie Land Conservancy receives equipment grant from Volunteer Stewardship Network

On August 11, 2009, the Prairie Land Conservancy (PLC) committee received necessary stewardship equipment from the Volunteer Stewardship Network, (VSN). Items received included hard hats, work gloves, a honey suckle popper, pruners, hand held saws, and chaps.

These items are a great addition to the PLC for necessary upkeep on their current land acquisition and future conservation easements.

The PLC will be adding trails to their current 196 acre land acquisition in Hancock County. These tools will aide in the clearing process for the trails, along with general weed management.

PLC member Margaret Ovitt attended the recent VSN conference and picked up the donated items.



PRAIRIE HILLS

RESOURCE CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT, INC.

Prairie Land Conservancy Receives Land Donation

Special points of interest:

- 30+ Anniversary Open House September 27, 2009 from 3-5 pm at Prairie Hills RC& D Office
- PHRCD Council Meeting September 27, 2009 at 5 pm
- Prairie Land Conservancy meeting October 6, 2009 at 2 pm at Prairie Hills Office
- National RC&D Week September 20, 2009

The Prairie Land Conservancy members are celebrating the donation of a 196 acre tract of land located in Hancock County effective July 5th!

Roger and Gretchen Batz approached the PLC about the donation over a year ago. They have a significant love of this land and have worked hard at protecting and preserving it so that future generations may enjoy this property. They wanted to donate the property to a like minded organization that would continue to monitor, preserve and protect the land under the guidelines they set.

The property is dedicated as a Nature Preserve thru the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission. It is the 2nd largest privately held Nature Preserve in Illinois. These

preserves and buffers help protect some endangered species along with the prevention of future development of the property. They would also like to see areas set up for educational purposes such as trails, plant identification areas, and bird and butterfly observation areas.

The PLC has many plans in the making for this property, which includes kiosks, walking trails, and a parking lot to provide the public an en-



Historic barn located on the donated property.

joyable educational place to come visit. You may find more information on their website at prairielandconservancy.com.



Prairie Hills council and PLC member Charles Gilbert talks with an individual from the Illinois Audobon during a site visit to the Batz property.

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R.E.A.D.Y. Bus Travels to several area events

July has had the R.E.A.D.Y. Bus traveling to many events throughout the counties.

On July 7th, the R.E.A.D.Y. Bus traveled to the YMCA Community Child Care Center and DAY Camp in Macomb Illinois. Mary McMahon with the Nature Quilt Project presented the YMCA Day Camp chil-



Mary McMahon with the Nature Quilt Project speaking to the YMCA Day Camp children about the rain forests of Costa Rico.

dren information about the rain forests of Costa Rico and what the nature quilt project does. Children listened to recordings of different animals in the jungle and were given clues about that animal. The children guessed which animal Mary was describing and viewed pictures of it on the quilt.

Tracy read a rain forest book to the children in the blue jay and green parrot room at the YMCA Day Care. Approximately 100 children stepped aboard the bus to pick a free book to keep and read.

On July 21, Elaine Stone and Tonya Holt of the Fulton County Farm Bureau picked up the bus and did a presentation at the Fulton County Fair. They held an Ag education day and approximately 30 children

were in attendance.

On July 22, Tracy took the bus to the Henderson County Fair where Judy Roessler, Prairie Hills council member, and Wendy Brokaw of Warren SWCD assisted with the event. The bus had a "conserving water" display with informational brochures and fact sheets. There were approximately 80 children in attendance.

Then on July 25, Dave and Tracy took the bus to the Macomb Farmer's Market. The bus was located next to the food initiative group (FIG) tent. To coincide with the READY bus, the FIG volunteers made book marks for the children.

Then July 30, the READY Bus traveled to the Galesburg Public Library for a bug session. Teresa Sanford, Ag Literacy Coordinator for the Knox County Farm Bureau, read a story about the hungry caterpillar and gave educational facts about the caterpillar life cycle. The children also made the life cycle of the caterpillar on a paper plate using different pasta noodles, cut out paper leaves and crayons. The children then came aboard the bus to pick out their book. There were over 30 children in attendance to this event.

After the event was over in Galesburg, Tracy went to the Knox County Farm Bureau to pick up over 500 books in which Teresa Sanford had col-

lected. Then the bus stopped at the Warren County SWCD in Monmouth to pick up over 750 books which the SWCD had collected. The book donations efforts have been excellent and many people have worked hard to collect the books. This support has helped keep this program on the road and is greatly appreciated!

The READY Bus is scheduled to travel to various events in Knox, McDonough, Hancock and Warren Counties in September and October.

This program is currently in need of good quality 6-8th grade level reading books along with funding to purchase educational material and topic oriented books for specific events. If you or your organization would like to sponsor this program or donate cash or good quality new and used books pre-k through 8th grade, please contact Dave King or Tracy Meredith at Prairie Hills office at 309-833-4747. Donations are accepted year round.



Children waiting to step onto the READY Bus to get their free book

Honoring the past, embracing the present and reaching for the future!

Prairie Hills RC&D will be celebrating its 30 plus anniversary this September 27, 2009. This open house/meeting will be held at the Prairie Hills RC&D Office in Macomb Illinois from 3-5 pm.

Planning for the RC&D area began in 1972. Then Prairie Hills was fully authorized by USDA in 1978, making the

RC&D 30 in 2008! But, due to inclement weather, the 30 year celebration was postponed until fall of 2009.

Preparations are being made and all present and past council/board members, and staff will be invited to attend this anticipated celebration. Information will be mailed out

closer to the event.

A regular business meeting will be held directly following the celebration. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend. We look forward to seeing you there and sharing stories of Prairie Hills progress and success over its past thirty plus years!

Prairie Hills celebrates 30+ years!

Small Business Loan Program

Are you a small business owner needing to expand your business, or in need of working capital? Are you an individual looking to start a new business? Prairie Hills Small Business Loan program may be your answer!

This small business loan program is designed for community development of new businesses, expansion of existing businesses, and creation or retention of employment. The funds may be used for

purchase of land, or buildings, new construction or renovation, working capital or the purchase of new equipment and machinery, pollution control and abatement, transportation services, debt refinancing, feasibility studies and educational institutions. The terms are flexible ranging from 5-20 years. The rates are 3 points below prime never to go below 5.5% or exceed 9.5%. Collateral that may be used include but are

not limited to the following: inventory, equipment, land, buildings, vehicles, & personal assets.

This program is offered in Fulton, Hancock, Henderson, Knox, McDonough and Warren counties.

If you are interested in learning more about this program, contact the office at 309-833-4747, or visit the website at www.prairiehillsrcd.org.



Have a safe and happy Fall!

READY Bus receives monetary donation from Macomb Kiwanis

On August 3, Prairie Hills RC&D received a check from the Macomb Kiwanis Club in the amount of \$250.00. This monetary donation was in support of the READY Bus literacy program. The funds will be used to buy new pre-k through 8th grade

children's books and educational material. Donations such as this are extremely important and ensure the READY Bus program may continue to provide the necessary support to the children in Prairie Hills six county area. Prairie Hills RC&D READY Bus program has already given out over 1600 books

to children since April of 2009. The READY Bus will continue to travel throughout the area through late October early November to scheduled events. Donations can be made anytime throughout the year by contacting Prairie Hills office at (309) 833-4747.