



Along The Way...



Spring 2011

Threshold Learning Center

Volume 9 Issue 1

Mission: To provide a place where students of all ages can experience the natural world around them and understand their connection to and responsibility for this planet and this planet's place in the cosmos.

Naturalist's Notes

The final day of our week-long curriculum at TLC is Ecology and Environmental Ethics. Ecology is the study of how living things interact with each other and their environment. Now we're finally heading into my area! This is the day that makes it hard to sell outdoor education to an administrator or board, because it is hard to say "What" we will learn. No Rubrik or Curriculum Outline can encompass all that we might learn. If it's a gloomy and rainy day, we'll be talking weather and its affect on animals. If we find a hawk nest, we're staying awhile. If we say we're hiking to see plant life and a frog or a mouse jump in our path, we're not going to ignore THAT teachable moment. I've actually had students and even teachers ask how I got Nature to "perform" when I was ready to teach that topic. I just look at them in awe and admit my secret: I had nothing to do with it. I just simply took the opportunity and used it. Here's a taste of what we'd like to accomplish on our last day:

½ DAY HIKE— "WHAT?" is usually the response to my telling the students that we will be gone on a 4 hour hike. "I'm going to be so bored." "I'm going to be so tired." "You can't expect us to do that!" are a few of the others. 2 1/2 hours later they don't want to break for lunch and 4 1/2 hours later I have to tell them we're going to be late to our next activity if we don't hurry up and get back. We set off as Nature Detectives: looking for habitat, discovering signs of animals, identifying plants and their value, checking out the landscape and geology of the area, listening, smelling and experiencing the outdoors.

WEB OF LIFE GAME – Students see how we are all connected on this earth, depending on each other and how it affects everything else if something in the web is removed or distorted.

WATER MONITORING – Oxygen, Phosphorous, Nitrogen and pH levels are read as well as a biological and physical assessment of the body of water. The biological assessment is so much fun, seeing tiny nymphs and bugs that give us a better picture than chemical levels on how healthy our body of water is. The dragonfly is usually everyone's favorite—it looks like a monster from a movie, but it's only 1/2 inch long!

***CLIMBING UP TO THE UPPER-CANOPY**– Many of us remember the sheer joy of climbing a tree. In this activity we use our climbing equipment to reach the upper canopy of a forest and experience a world we rarely see. We do several studies that are performed on the upper canopy of rain forests by real Botanists.

***NATURE MAPPING** – Using orienteering and graphing, students keep track of what species are seen and where. The data is then entered into a nation-wide database on-line, where they can check on their results from school or home.

AWESOME EDIBLES – Find out what plants in the area are edible and have been used medicinally by locals in the past.

WRAP UP – Connect everything we have covered throughout the week.

WRITING – Students have been writing in their journals all week. We have the students pick their favorite thing about the week and look into ways they can make a difference: Reducing light pollution so that everyone can enjoy the night sky, going on an archeological dig, volunteering at a local history museum or library, or keeping Iowa's waterways clean. They can start letters to a legislator, write an article for a newspaper, or create a presentation to give to a local group (Kiwanis, Lions, 4-H) back at home.

NIGHT HIKE – Making SENSE of the night, owl calls, etc.

CAMPFIRE – Students discuss environmental issues in the warm glow of the fire.

Since the barn is nearly completed, we are going to really start soliciting schools so we can get students from all across Iowa to experience our curriculum and a great time outdoors. With schools cutting back in everything, I worry that outdoor education and experiential learning will be the first to go, but I am hopeful that we can get some of the local schools who are thinking about ending their trips to centers farther away. All it takes is one time for teachers, parents and students to know it is an important part of a student's education.

I'm looking forward to this year's line-up for summer camps and trips. We have some new things along with the good old camps kids love to do every year. Please see our brochure inserted for something you, your family, your kids or grandkids would like to try.

Happy Spring!

- Gretta Reischauer, Director/Naturalist

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You...

...TO OUR CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS!

GREAT HORNED OWL LEVEL (\$1,000+)

Jeff & Jennifer Cook—Barn Donation
Mark & Gretta Reischauer *****

OSPREY LEVEL (\$500+)

Brian & Sally Larsen
Bill & Sharron Slinger ***
Jayson Slinger & Ana Kaveh-Slinger

REDTAIL HAWK LEVEL (\$250+)

Heart of Iowa Coop—Roland ***
Anonymous Donor 1 ***
Anonymous Donor 2 **

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Pat Black
Jim & Jan Cook *****
Theresa Kenyon**
Jerol & JoAnn Larsen
John & Sharon Liechty ***
Larry & Florence Rhodes *****
Bernadine Schaefer *****
Bill & Sharron Slinger **

PEREGRIN FALCON LEVEL (\$1000+)

Allen L. Kockler Co.
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Carolyn Uhlenhake-Walker
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SHARP-SHINNED HAWK LEVEL (\$50+)

Anonymous Donor 2
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Steve Simpson Family **
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Mark & Connie Tjelmeland*****
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REGULAR MEMBERSHIP (\$35+)

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Mary & Bill Phillips *****
Wayne & Deanne Stansbery **
Jeff, Michelle & Lilly Trager *****
Steve & El Jean Wildeboer***
Rosemary & Donald Ashley
LaVonne Christianson**
Ann Schaad

* indicates renewing members



...TO OUR BARN DONORS!

BOARD LEVEL (\$25/Board)

New boards this quarter:
Lavern Christianson—2 boards from Lavonne
Edith Gogerty Layden—From Donald & Rosemary Ashley
Colby Vincent—From mom & dad
Camdan Vincent—From mom & dad

We've run out of room in this newsletter to print everyone who has donated a board—we are now up to 140 boards! We are working on etching them and putting them up on the walls. Call and stop by any time and we will help you locate your board. Thank you to everyone who has purchased a board so far, it has helped us out tremendously. **We still have a lot of wall to cover, however!**

BUNK BED LEVEL (\$250/bunk)

Matt & Janet Haynes - In Honor of Harrison & Ava
Ron & Dianne Haley/ Nevada
Central State Bank/State Center
Minerva Valley Telephone
Zearing Library
Hertz Farm Management/Nevada
Colo Lions Club
Jerol & Joann Larsen
Jon & Dianne DeBruin - In Memory of Nicholas Hulshizer
Raymond & Carrie Obrecht - In Memory of Nathan Obrecht
Susie Perisho - In Memory of Hank Perisho & Bob Grady
Theresa Kenyon - In Memory and Honor of the Langenderfer Family
Earl & JoAnn Gray—In honor of the Gray Gang
McCallsburg Elementary 2007-2008

ROOM LEVEL (\$2000/Room)

Bruce & Cyndie Heintz Family
David & Peggy Obrecht - In Memory of Nathan Obrecht
Mark & Gretta Reischauer—Reischauer Memorial & Slinger/Arnstedt Memorial
Bill & Sharron Slinger—In Memory of Karina Slinger

...AILENE LIECHTY, FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT, AND THE STORY COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR THEIR VERY SPECIAL DONATIONS!

...AND...

- * Bill & Sharron Slinger for donating our next tank fill of LP. A VERY generous donation that helped keep our dancers warm for several months!
- * Renald Bouchard for his donation of items for the kitchen and his electrical skills for getting things hooked up.
- * Our Board of Directors for all they've done for this project, it has been a lot of their time and their family's time.
- * A special thanks to all of you who have been contributing members for over 5 years—your support from the very beginning and throughout means so much to us!

Wish List Highlights

Classroom needs:

Windows 42" X 48" (5 are needed)
New Roof

Barn needs:

Family Photos (Copies) For Decorating
Old Photo Frames
Shadow Boxes
Antiques

Site Needs:

Riding Lawnmower
Rock for Driveway

Educational needs:

Stereoscopes
Stream Table
Lumber
Scales



Barn Is Open For Business

The barn is officially open for business. The upper level and downstairs lounge and restrooms can be used for any group gathering you may be planning on having this year: family or class reunions, meetings, birthday or anniversary celebrations, dances, parties or weddings. You name it, we can probably do it. Rental of the barn is just \$100/day. Along with rental of the barn you get use of the grounds and all it has to offer: trails, campsites, campfire rings, putt-putt golf. We have party tents for setting up outdoors as well. The Program Center can be rented for additional indoor space for \$50/day. Catering and programming are also available.

If you have guests that need a place to stay, they can rent a room at the barn for \$50. Each room has 4 beds, includes the restrooms with hot showers, our lounge area, use of the grounds and a continental breakfast in the morning. Let us help you plan your next get-together! Call 641-487-7455 for more information.

SPA-TACULAR 4

SUNDAY APRIL 3rd, 2011
710th Ave, Zeoring 1-4pm
Adults: \$30.00

Children: \$15.00 (4th grade and up)
Tired of winter? Want to relax? Need a little girl time? Come join us at TLC for our spa event! Enjoy spa treatments, relaxation methods, refreshments, and local vendors. Your donation also enters you into our raffle for spa and relaxation items. To help mom relax there are children's activities in the program center. *All proceeds will go to the TLC kitchen project*

Please RSVP by APRIL 1st

641-844-4720 (cell) or

darciebouchard@hotmail.com



We lost a dear friend of TLC's this year, Theresa Kenyon. Theresa taught with Bill long ago at Guided Discoveries in California. When we sent her our first newsletter to let her know what the family was up to, she immediately embraced our project and joined. Always 1/2 the country away, she constantly sent words of support along with her contributions. Her biggest "claim to fame" at TLC is the rose garden she wanted in memory of uncles and family members she had lost along the way. It is located on the south side of the barn. You can enjoy it every time you drive by, or stop in any time and enjoy it up close.

Barn Update

Work on the barn the last year has been on the kitchen area upstairs. Since we brought in only \$350 specifically for the barn project last year, however, we are basically where we were last year at this time with great hopes that we can finish it by the time our school groups come in May. We do have a few Family Reunions the end of April that would also like to use the kitchen. We have only \$8,000 left of our \$175,000 project and it can be frustrating to be this close and not be able to reach our goal. When we look at how far we've come and all that we have accomplished with just our hard work and the generosity of our supporters, we know that our goal may not be reached quickly, but we WILL get there.

The barn opened for business last spring and since then has enjoyed housing school kids, campers, families, dance classes, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, hunters, community meals, overnight birthday parties, open houses, dances, performances and has been a part of many good times. We hope this continues and grows! The completion of the kitchen will add a new aspect to people's stay.

We would love for you to visit the barn at any time and see the donation boards (there is still plenty of room to get your loved one on the wall), our sponsored bedrooms (we still have two available), and the progress on the kitchen. You can see us at our upcoming SPA day, the after-school kids' Prairie Café every Wednesday in late April and early May, or simply call and have us run out and show it to you.

Prairie Café Returns

The after-school Kids Club is proud to announce that they will be re-opening the Prairie Café for a few weeks this spring. This is one of their favorite projects—they choose what we will be serving, make a list of supplies, go shopping for the most economical and best quality items, prepare some of the items and greet and serve the customers. It a great way for them to learn public service and culinary skills. They serve on Wednesday nights from 5-7pm on the following dates:

April 20th, April 27th,

May 4th and May 11th.

On May 4th, they will be serving our students from Moulton Elementary in Des Moines and getting to know them. If you would like to meet them too, please join us!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip: _____

Buy a Board Campaign

of Boards (\$25 each) _____

Total: \$ _____

Names to be put on boards:

Buy a Bed Trunk Campaign

of Trunks (\$300 each) _____

Total: \$ _____

Please have Plaque Read:

Dorm Room Sponsorship

of Rooms (\$2,000 each) _____

Total: \$ _____

Name to be put on bedroom door:

I would like a display in the room to honor the above name(s)

Yes _____ No _____

Phone # for gathering additional info:

Membership Donor Levels:

Eagle	\$ 5,000.00
Great Blue Heron	\$ 2,500.00
Great Horned Owl	\$ 1,000.00
Osprey	\$ 500.00
Red Tail Hawk	\$ 250.00
Peregrin Falcon	\$ 100.00
Sharp-Shinned Hawk	\$ 50.00
Regular Membership	\$ 35.00

All donations are Tax Deductible!

Threshold Learning Center
P. O. Box 36
Zearing, IA 50278

TO: POSTAL CUSTOMER

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: *Darcie Bouchard*
Vice-President: *Bill Slinger*
Secretary: *Janet Haynes*
Treasurer: *Matt Haynes*



Directors: *Doug Hulshizer* *Mark Reischauer*
Erin Hulshizer
Ana Kaveh *Jayson Slinger*
David Obrecht
Peggy Obrecht *Sharron Slinger*

Executive Director: *Gretta Reischauer*

Threshold Learning Center
is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

The *Along The Way...* newsletter is published
as a service to supporters and as a record of the
achievements of the
Threshold Learning Center Board.

Upcoming Events @ TLC

APRIL 3
1-4pm

SPA-Tacular 4

Join us at TLC for a Ladies only event. We have almost made it through this long winter and deserve some "me time" before we get busy with spring. Each Spa-Tacular ticket can be purchased for \$30.00 each. This ticket entitles you to a massage, relaxation and beauty techniques, and delectable refreshments. We will have many fun and relaxing vendors at the barn to help make this day extra special. You are welcome to bring your daughter(s) 4th grade & up for \$15.00 each. Vendors: Scentsy, It's All About Me, Tastefully Simple, and more...Please RSVP by APRIL 1st

MAY 13th

SUMMER CAMP PRE-REGISTRATION DUE

MAY 29th

PRAIRIE PUTT-PUTT GRAND OPENING

Come and play a few rounds and help us raise money for our after-school program. Just \$5/adult and \$3/child ages 4-12. Snack House will be available for ice cream and snacks as well.

October 7 & 8

Put the date on your calendars! Roxanne Bappe will be back during our Fall Festival, to do the old-fashioned Heirloom Portraits again this year. Dress up in turn-of-the-century clothes! Single portraits, just the kids, or the whole family if you would like. All portraits will be finished in a Sepia-tone. Call now if you would like us to add you to the list and look for details in our upcoming newsletters.

For more information on any of our upcoming events, please call 641-487-7455 or e-mail info@thresholdlearningcenter.org.