

# SEASONS



## Marshall County Conservation Board Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 26, Issue 4  
Winter 2011

## Changes in the Reflections

by Mike Stegmann, MCCB Director

As the calendar year draws to an end many of us take time to reflect on the past years events. These reflections may be thoughts running through our minds or documents such as a photograph or an annual report. 2011 had its share of reflections through the eyes of the MCCB.



We said goodbye to Administrative Assistant of 22 years, Ruth Pearson, as she announced her retirement last January and in the same motion we welcomed Emily Herring to fill that position. In 2011 construction of the connection trail between the Linn Creek Recreational Trail and the American Discoveries Trail began as soon as warm weather set in. This trail work was complete in November and an official dedication/appreciation day is planned for spring 2012.

Improvements throughout MCCB managed areas in 2011 ranged from the beginning stages of a complete renovation of Gander Lookout Shelter House to extending one of the fishing jetties at Green Castle to the annual maintenance including: prairie burns, mowing, invasive species control and construction of Wood Duck nest boxes. Law enforcement duties were also restored within the ranks of the MCCB staff in 2011 to ensure public safety in the parks. Volunteers planted trees at Green Castle and assisted with MCCB events & programs. Boy Scouts made improvements for equestrians at Grammer Grove,

Many reflections were made through MCCB public programming with not only school age persons attending field trips, but adult groups too. For example the annual MCCB sponsored Photo Contest challenges people in Marshall County to take photos throughout the year and share their outdoor experiences with all.

Weather extremes played havoc with the MCCB in 2011 as well. As many central Iowans experienced, trees took the brunt of the damage during the wind storm in July. Structurally, only minor damage

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occurred to the dock at Sand Lake, Observation Tower at the Grimes Farm and a swing set at Van Cleve County Park. The most costly repairs incurred as a result of weather were repairs of the heat swells or buckled sections of concrete along the American Discoveries Trail.

On the flip side of the coin is what the future brings with the new year upon us, the reflections that have yet to be made. MCCB work planned for 2012 include things like installation of new playground equipment at Timmons Grove Campground and completion of the renovation to Gander Lookout Shelter House at Green Castle. A new corral system will be worked on to aid in management of the bison herd at Green Castle. So in your travels through the Marshall County managed areas take note of not only how things are, but how they are being improved.



## WINTER HOURS AT NATURE CENTER

The Grimes Farm & Conservation Center will be changing to winter hours for the months of December, January, and February. Week day hours will be Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. On Saturday the center will be open from 9:00 a.m. - Noon on December 10, January 14 and February 11 & 18 only.

## Making an Outdoor Tradition this Holiday Season

By Emily Herring

Ever since I was a little girl, I can remember bundling up and going Christmas tree shopping. I'm not talking about driving to a store and purchasing a pre-cut tree. Instead, my Mom, Grandma, uncles, sister, and I would pile into the truck early in the morning the day after Thanksgiving and make our way to a neat Christmas tree farm in Pella, Iowa. The mission was simple: find that perfect tree --- not too short, not too tall, full, no dead needles, perfectly shaped, and very green. Now this several hour, outdoor adventure occurred whether it was warm, cold, or a blizzard. In fact I remember trudging through deep snow a few times, which inevitably ended in snowball fights and snow angels. In the end a perfect tree was found, cut down with a hand saw, and drug back to the truck where hot cider warmed us. For the next four weeks the tree filled our home with the scent of evergreen. It has become one of my family's most cherished traditions.

The hustle and bustle of the holiday season is upon us, so I am challenging you to make your own outdoor holiday tradition this year. A simple task to get some fresh air, make some memories, and reconnect with the real world around you. Go ice skating, sledding, build a snowman or fort, rent snowshoes or skis from the conservation center, go star gazing, take a hike after Thanksgiving, go hunting, just get outdoors. Demanding, aren't I?! There are many benefits to this act of stepping out your front door. For starts, being outdoors helps to remind us that we need to care for the earth because it provides food, fuel, and sustenance for us to live. On top of that fresh air and sunlight are powerful medicines. They lower our stress levels, improve our concentration, improve our moods, boost our immune systems, aid in digestion, lower blood pressure, aid in weight loss, benefit your heart, lungs, and skin, help you to sleep better, and help to prevent and fight cancer!! If we could only bottle it! But wait, all YOU have to do is step out that front door.

Friday morning the day after Thanksgiving you can find me with my family searching for that perfect Christmas tree. Family members have been added and some have left us, but those memories and the benefits of time spent outdoors will always remain. From me to you, I wish you a very happy and healthy holiday season. See you outdoors.



# Reclaim Your Holidays

By Susan Salterberg, UNI Center for Energy & Environmental Education

Take three minutes to think about and write down your answers to these quiz questions:

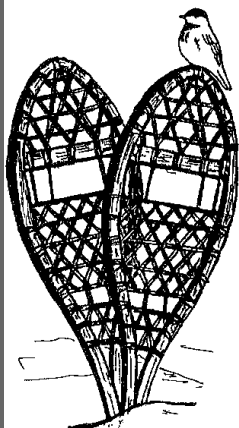
- 1) What are your favorite parts of the holiday?
- 2) What traditions are important to you?
- 3) What parts of your holiday routine deplete rather than restore?

By answering these questions—and then heeding the insights from your answers—you can begin to reshape your holiday so it is less stressful and more meaningful.

Reclaiming the holidays means doing things you love, it means making decisions according to your values, and it means nurturing and celebrating relationships. Here are a few tips to help you:

- 1) **Communicate expectations with your family/friends.** You must be clear about what you want and ask your family and friends what they really want; no one is a mind-reader.
- 2) **Identify a few favorite activities.** Focus on making sure you do a few things you love at the holidays.
- 3) **Take care.** Self-care may be more critical during the holiday season than any other time of the year. And care of others is also important—whether it's limiting your gift list so you have the time to give thoughtful gifts, or whether it's singing carols at the community nursing home. After all, isn't "caring" what the holiday is about?
- 4) **Consider gifts of experience.** Studies show they hold more value and are remembered longer than material ones. A list of ideas is available at [www.ceee.uni.edu/reclaimyourholidays.aspx](http://www.ceee.uni.edu/reclaimyourholidays.aspx).
- 5) **Consider giving share-checks.** Write a check with everything filled in except the "pay to the order of." Intentionally leave it blank, and allow the recipient to give the money to a charitable cause they are passionate about. Great for teaching kids the value of sharing.
- 6) **Help children prioritize their wants and cherish gifts.** Ask "Which do you want?" Help children make decisions between two or more items.
- 7) **Pay as you buy.** You'll have plenty of time to consider whether the gift—or purchase for yourself—is truly important. If you do buy, you'll save plenty on interest. If you make a \$1,000 purchase on a credit card charging 18% interest, and make only minimum payments monthly, the item you are buying will cost about \$1,400—40% more than the purchase price!

Many more tips, and more information about UNI Center for Energy and Environmental Education's Reclaim your Holidays project, is available at [www.ceee.uni.edu/reclaimyourholidays.aspx](http://www.ceee.uni.edu/reclaimyourholidays.aspx).



## Ski & Snowshoe Rental

Chase away the winter blues by getting outside! The Marshall County Conservation Board has cross-country skis and snowshoes available for rent at \$5 a day per set plus a \$50 deposit per set. A waiver of liability must also be signed. The deposit will be returned when the equipment is returned in good condition.

Rented equipment may be used on the GrimesFarm trails or off site, but must be returned within 72 hours. The Marshall County Conservation Board offers many trails where cross-country skiing is allowed including: Grimes Farm, Green Castle, Timmons Grove, and Grammer Grove.

During Marshall County Conservation Board sponsored events the equipment will be available for use at no charge. See the Special Events listing on page 3 for ski and snowshoe program details.

# SEASONS

**Marshall County Conservation Board**  
**2349 - 233rd Street**  
**Marshalltown, IA 50158**

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## Thank You!

**Newsletter Collation:** Edna Kirse, Dorothy Christensen, Doris McCarty, Delores York, Dena Graff, Jan Neisses, Ruth Pearson, Dean and Ivadeen Proffitt, Kay Russell, Sharon Depew

**Programming:** Karen & Max Bach, Carrie Barr, Anita Gummert, Dale Weston, Sally Wilson, Howard Messerer, Jolene Jebson, Mark Proescholdt

**Reception Desk:** Janet Johnson, Mary & Lawrence Stewart, Linnette Tuttle, Ann Kent, Jan Williams, George Hinshaw, Delores York, Sheila Geraghty, Marvis Drew

**Prairie Heritage Day:** Dena Graff, Edna Kirse, Delores York, John Sievers, John Hall, Charlotte McGinty, Kayann Lowry, Ed Moore, Allison & Nicholas Stegmann, Cole Langenbau, Sharon Witty, Marylou Miller, Sam Scafferi, Dianna Freiboth, David & Carla Young, Anita Gummert, Margaret Kroener, Tricia, Stone, & Faith Schossow, Phyllis Kirse, Jan Jensen, Sheila Geraghty, Judy Wasco, Ed Savage, Jim & Michael Fitz, Zack Johnson, Phil Cox, Paul Sams, Brandon Roberts, Wayne Judge Sr., John VanNordstrand, Keith Niedermann, Irene Elsberry, Ed Mason, Don Dass, Richard & Wilma Allspach, Prairie Creek String Band, Cornflake Cloggers, David & Joyce Bollhoefer, Bonnie Ohrt, Linnette Tuttle, Marilyn Willits, Ray Steveson, Joe & Susie Pratt, Leroy Jero, Jerry & Cheri Gaffney, Brenda Lindholm, Bill Martin, Ray Schult

**Iowater Testing:** Gary Fulton, Sally Wilson, Melody Bro, Matt Moffitt, Norm Charlton, Lydia Par, Iang Bor, Jose Ramirez, Dulce Garcia, Wendy Aquino Morales

**Donations :** Curtis Loney, Doug Troutner Memorial, Depew Family, Tom Wolter Memorial, Chapter 675 of the EAA

**If we inadvertently missed someone, our thanks to you also.**



## MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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(641) 752-5490

[mccb@co.marshall.ia.us](mailto:mccb@co.marshall.ia.us)

[www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us/departments/conservation)

### Conservation Center Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Designated Saturdays 9:00 a.m. - Noon

### Board Members

James Fitz  
Jeffrey Mathis  
Julie Stahl  
Jerry Gaffney  
Ray Helland

### Staff

Mike Stegmann	Director
Diane Hall	Naturalist
Marty Malloy	Maintenance Supervisor
Jeremiah Manken	Maintenance Technician
Emily Herring	Administrative Assistant
Editor, Diane Hall	

# Brown Bag Bunch

Bring your lunch and join the fun, fellowship, and fantastic programming at the **GrimesFarm & Conservation Center from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**

**Tuesday, December 6 - "Sprucin' Up"**

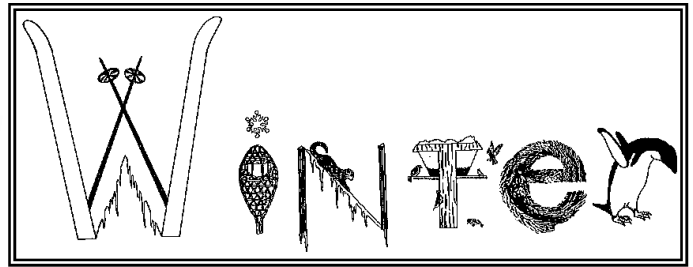
Learn about evergreens and create a swag to take home. Bring gloves and pruners.

**Wednesday, January 18 - "Kauai Adventure"**

Explore the Hawaiian island of Kauai with Emily Herring.

**Tuesday, February 7 - "Caring for Wildlife"**

Discover the new Iowa Wildlife Center with Marlene Ehresman.



# Nature Story Hour

**December 7 & 21 10:00 - 11:00a.m.**

**January 4 & 18**

**February 1 & 15**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**

Preschoolers and their adult(s) are invited to listen to fun nature stories, take a walk and explore nature's wonders. Join us on the first and third Wednesdays each month.



# Uncle Ike Nature Program

(Grades 1-5, family members welcome)

Celebrate 28 years with Uncle Ikes! This award-winning program is FREE and is co-sponsored by the MCCB and the Izaak Walton League to provide enjoyable environmental learning experiences.

"Woodland Wanderers" is the theme for this year's program that meets monthly October – April.



**"Sprucin' Up"**

**Saturday, December 10 9 – 11 a.m.**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center (2359 233rd St.)**

Discover what's special about evergreens...pines, spruces, firs. Create your own candle to spruce up your holidays.

**"Wild and Woodsy"**

**Saturday, January 14 9 – 11 a.m.**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**  
From owls to deer and more, discover who calls the forest home.



**"It's a Tree-mendous World"**

**Saturday, February 11 9 – 11 a.m.**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center**  
Is every forest the same? Discover woodlands around the world.



# Junior Conservationists

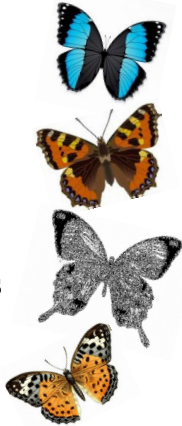
**Grades 6-8**

**Thursday, December 22**

**10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

**Meet at GrimesFarm & Conservation Center (2359 233rd Street)**

No school today... come hangout with hundreds of butterflies at the Reiman Garden Butterfly Dome in Ames! Space is limited; cost is \$5 (scholarships available). **Pre-register and complete permission slip by December 16 by calling 752-5490.**



# Full Moon Tower Hike

**Saturday, January 7**

**6:30 p.m.**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center (2359 233rd Street)**

Enjoy a moon lit hike up to the observation tower and take in the view of a moonlit country side from the observation deck. Dress warmly. If conditions are appropriate, we'll use snowshoes on our hike; supplies limited. **Pre-register by January 3 by calling 752-5490.**



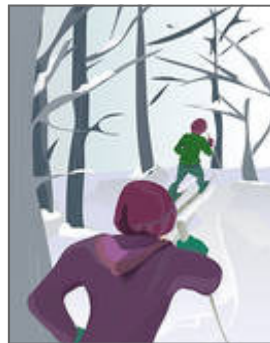
# Cross-Country Skiing

**Saturday, January 14**

**1:00-3:00 p.m.**

**GrimesFarm & Conservation Center (2359 233rd Street)**

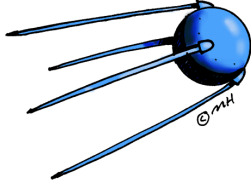
Enjoy an afternoon on the trail in the winter wonderland on cross-country skis or snowshoes. Bring your own or use ours: supply limited. Basic instruction and hot chocolate will be provided.



## Robots in Space

Thursday, February 9 7:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Explore the history of robotic ambassadors in space with Evan Zerby of Ames and Jim Bonser of the Central Iowa Amateur Astronomers. From the launch of Sputnik in 1957, discover trials, tribulations, and successes that are out of this world.



## 11th Annual Photo Contest Awards & Chili Supper

Wednesday, February 15 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Join us for a hot & tasty bowl of chili, an amazing array of nature photo entries, & (drum roll, please) announcement of this year's winning entries! Advance tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for children 12 and under. Don't miss the fun!



### Calling All Junior Naturalists

Do you qualify for this year's nature badge and certificate?

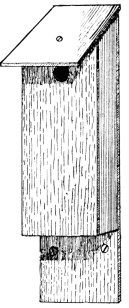
- Are you aged 6 – 12 years?
- Attended three conservation programs in 2011 anywhere in the U.S.
  - Read a nature book, went hiking/camping/fishing or any other nature activity with family/friends
- Completed a Jr. Naturalist log sheet (find at the GrimesFarm Conservation Center)

Contact Diane Hall, MCCB Naturalist at 752-5490 to register for the special 2011 Award presentation to be held on Saturday, December 10 at 9:00 a.m. at the GrimesFarm & Conservation Center.

## Woodworking for Wildlife

Saturday, February 18 9:30-11:30 a.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center  
(2359 233<sup>rd</sup> Street)

Think spring, bring your hammer and make a difference for wildlife! Participants can build a wren, bluebird, wood duck, or bat house. **Pre-register by Wednesday, February 15 by calling 752-5490 and specify type of house wanted.** Donations for materials will be accepted. Space is limited.



## Bald Eagle Days

February 26 Saylorville Lake  
Noon - 4:00 p.m. 515-276-4656

March 3 Lake Red Rock & Central College in Pella  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 641-828-7522

Discover more about this majestic national symbol and view eagles, which may be in the area. Sponsored by DNR Wildlife Diversity and Army Corp of Engineers.



## Deer Antler Scoring



Tuesday, February 21 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
GrimesFarm & Conservation Center

Bring in newly harvested or old whitetail deer antlers to be measured by an official scorer. Learn general guidelines for antler measuring and work one-on-one with a scorer to find out if you have a set of trophy caliber antlers.

### Save Me!

Can you help? The Marshall County Conservation Board is looking for a few materials for a future craft program. We've had a bright idea and need some burnt out bulbs to teach about the 3R's.

- Large, old style Christmas light bulbs with screw ends
  - Small ceiling fan or vanity light bulbs

Please bring burnt out bulbs to the GrimesFarm & Conservation Center by February 1, 2012.



### Photo Contest Reminder

Remember, youth and adult entries are **due by noon Friday, February 3, 2012!** Think Scenic (Natural Resources), People and Natural Resources, and Native Wildlife and perhaps you could win one of the \$20 gift certificates. For contest details call 752-5490 or visit [www.co.marshall.ia.us](http://www.co.marshall.ia.us) click on Departments then Conservation Board.