

ALONG THE WAY...



Our 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.

Naturalist's Notes

By Gretta Reischauer, Director

For twenty years we have always started the year off playing catch-up with fingers crossed. Thanks to many donations at the end of last year and grants from United Way, Memorial Lutheran Church in Nevada, and Story County Community Foundation, we were able to start 2022 off WITH funds. It made for a much more enjoyable year. We took the after-school kids on trips and did little projects without worrying about whether we could afford it. We were able to offer some trips for affordable prices again. We paid the bands at our annual Fresh Air Concert fundraiser a little closer to what they deserve. It was nice. I have all of you to thank for that!

After over a year of very little activity, it was a very busy year again. Thank goodness! We started seeing some schools coming back for field trips. We've stayed busy with our faithful Homeschool Association and have added a few others. Thanks to Jacobus, Savanna, and Kaleb, we started working with Ellsworth Community College's Conservation students at the site. They have done everything from helping teach programs to burning and working on our prairie to being extra hands during our annual celebrations for the public. It has been great to have extra help and see them grow into future conservation colleagues!

Summer flew by once again. We started with Overnight Camp in early June. I love this camp, because some of the kids are so excited that they are finally old enough to stay a night in the barn! They also get to meet kids from all over central Iowa, canoe the Skunk River, and work on their Special Places out in the woods. Then, we were off to Minnesota with another great group of kids. We saw sinkholes, Lake Superior, waterfalls, drawbridges, amazing geological spots, wolves and their babies, lighthouses, the sites of downtown Minneapolis (which is not like downtown New Providence), played minigolf, enjoyed Mall of America, had fantastic food, and found nature in the middle of the Twin Cities. Daycamp Time! First came Building Camp, where we built 2 picnic tables, benches, and a new garden shed out of pallets. Thanks to Alan and Rylan, our high-school campers, it was well-built and the younger campers had a couple really great guys to look up to. The rest of the summer was filled with stomping in the creek, getting muddy, learning archery, canoeing, singing, campfires, working on our Survival forts, making new friends, and a lot of crafts and glitter. We wrapped up the summer with our high school+ trip to the East Coast. I just love this group. I know they have to grow up and eventually can't do our trips, but "I Don't WANNA!" I want them to join me every year. Man, have they had to expand their minds in the last 6 years and have graciously put up with a lot of stuff outside the itinerary. Nothing could top the RV trip from hell, but this year's trip was kind of a nightmare traveling by train. We started our adventure sitting and waiting 4 hours in Osceola and then missed our connecting train in Chicago, so we got to enjoy a night in Chicago on Amtrak's bill. I loved it, but my non-city slickers wanted to get going. It was just as bad coming back home. The trip itself was incredible: Ocean, mountains, our own little house, a ferry ride where we saw dolphins, a night on the Boardwalk, Duck Donuts, weird animals, Washington D.C. and sites where the history of our country were lived. While we were in D.C. we got to watch Marine One come in for a landing and the Chicago and San Diego Honor Flight veterans arrived just as we were at the WWII Memorial. We saluted and welcomed every single one!

In mid-June we held our annual Fresh Air Concert, our one and only fundraiser that we do outside of our donor membership. We were able to raise over \$2000 while paying a little more for the acts and putting a little more into the stage and sound equipment which can be used not only for concerts, but other productions, weddings, etc. It was so much fun and I was blown away with the talent this year! We had many of our favorites back and were joined by DK Imamu Akachi and friends from Des Moines and the 2021 Iowa Blues Challenge Winners, Buckmiller/Schwager Band. It was an incredible day of music played for a very small crowd, which was disappointing. After a day of feeling upset that so few came to support us and these talented people, I thought of the few people who were there. The ones who had a lot going on too, but fit us in, and had a blast, and thanked us. I thought of all the people who helped and gave of their time and talents and equipment because they believe in us. I thought of the people who sent notes and donations because they knew they wouldn't be able to make it, and our wonderful sponsors who really came through for us this year, allowing us to expand. Those are the people who matter. I decided to go the route that maybe people really did want to come but were actually just too busy. We started wondering if maybe we should try a series of concerts throughout the summer, so that will be our plan for 2023. We will start the summer off with an all-day bash and hold evening concerts at the end of each month until Labor Day. We'll see if it works. My hope is that people enjoy all of our acts all summer long.

This fall, we had another successful Fall Festival. Around 200 people enjoyed hayrack rides, hikes, apple baseball and games, the prairie maze, face paintings, and crafts on a gorgeous October Day. A few joined us for a meal afterwards. One adorable little girl and her daddy enjoyed the movie with me that evening. The next weekend was one of the most beautiful weddings I've ever been to at TLC. I'm a little partial, of course, since it was our oldest Cameron and his sweet Caitlyn. If you have anyone getting engaged this holiday season, tell them about us, it's just such a lovely and peaceful place to get married. *(Article cont. on NEWS page)*

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT! IT MEANS SO MUCH TO US!



TLC NEWS



NATURALIST NOTES CONT...

Our new and inspired board members think we should try to have a program of some kind once each month to get people out to the site. I agree. We will share our 2023 events calendar with you once it gets set and approved. Coming up, we have the Thanksgiving and Christmas Prairie Cafés that are run by the after-school Kids Club. If you haven't been to one of our Cafes, you're missing a great night out. We do the cooking and cleaning, the kids do the serving, you can meet people from the community and support the kids' annual shopping trip for Project Angel. On January 22nd from 1-4 we will have a Family Sledding Day. Join us for Sledding, Games, Crafts, Snacks, and a Hot Cocoa Bar. At 4pm that day will be our Annual Board Meeting, if you are interested in joining our Board of Directors, stick around...we'll let you have more cocoa!

Another focus of mine for 2023 will be finishing the barn. The new lean-to is up and secure, thanks to a grant from Story County Community Foundation and Mark doing all the work. Now, we need to transform it into our storage room, learning museum, and store. Also, we have some projects that were never completed like baseboards in the bathrooms, the hallway ceiling, parts of the kitchen and dining hall floor, and the wall of donor boards. Now, after 15+ years, we need to update quite a few things that are worn out like flooring, lights, heat, paint, curtains and blinds. It is my hope that we can rent out the barn more now that we're past the pandemic and we need it to look nice for our guests. If you'd like to help us with these projects, see our inserted donation form or contact us to volunteer.

HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON!

CALLING ALL MUSICIANS

On June 10th, TLC will be holding another Fresh Air Concert. It will be a day of fun in the sun with great talent, great food, and great friends while supporting a great cause. We are interested in expanding it to kick-off a monthly series of concerts in case people can't make it on that day. We would like to have a variety of artists to fill an afternoon and evening of music. If you belong to a group or know of a group that would be willing to help us raise funds for TLC, please contact us on Facebook, or email: nclittle@gmail.com. We will start lining up acts and food trucks the first part of February, so if you are interested in joining us, get ahold of us soon!

WISH LIST

We still need a camp van! We have had to rely on our squeaky old car and volunteer drivers to cart around our after-school kids. We always have to rent a van for our youth trips, which increases the cost by \$50-\$100 per student. It would make such a huge difference in our outreach to have a new/dependable van.

New carpet/flooring for the barn and lean-to.

Cabinets and shelves for our store and museum displays
Wallboard, paneling, boards, lumber for various projects.

Volunteers! We need help with everything: manual labor, carpentry help, extra hands during summer camp, grant writing, fundraising, website design, mowing, cleaning, painting, gardening, and more.

TLC's BARN - A GREAT PLACE FOR YOUR HOLIDAY GATHERING

If you have guests that need a place to stay this holiday season, they can rent a room at the barn for \$75/night. Each cozy room has 4 beds, and includes the restrooms with hot showers, our lounge area, and use of the grounds. Also keep us in mind for your holiday gatherings or company parties. The barn can be rented for anything you may be planning: Family Christmas/Reunion, meetings, birthday or anniversary celebrations, graduations, or weddings. Catering is also available. Rental of the barn is just \$150/day. Let us help you plan your next get-together!

Contact us: nclittle@gmail.com or 641-487-7455



TLC CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS

Tired of filling the kids'/ grandkids' rooms up with toys they will ignore after a month? Why not consider giving them the gift of knowledge along with memories of a really great time outdoors? Contact us today for one of TLC's unique Christmas gift ideas:

- We have certificates that can be purchased in any amount for a "Wild Birthday Party" at TLC. The package includes a nature hike, program or craft; a hayrack ride (weather permitting); a campfire meal or a pizza party; and a movie on the big screen all for \$10/person. Add an overnight in the barn and breakfast to the package for just \$15/person.
- Our weeklong summer day camps, overnight camps and trips for youth are also a big hit that your child will remember his/her whole life.
 - * A \$40 certificate will cover a weeklong camp of their choice for grades K-6.
 - * A \$75 certificate will cover the Overnight Adventure Camp for grades 4-6.
 - * A \$150 certificate will cover most of the Jr. High Trip to Wisconsin for grades 7-9.
 - * Gift Certificates in any amount will help your high schooler enjoy one of our amazing trips to South Dakota or New Mexico next summer.
- Finally, if you have someone on your list that is hard to buy for, maybe they would like the gift of enduring recognition. You can **Buy-A-Board** for the barn dormitory in their name. These boards have made people a permanent part of our project, and they LOVE looking around and trying to find their names on the wall.

Become a "Friend" on Facebook – it's the best way to keep up-to-date with TLC's upcoming events!

THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU!!!

... TO OUR BUY-A-BOARD CAMPAIGN DONORS...

Mary Tymeson and the Yarn In The Barn Gals – In Memory of their dear friend, Julie Cloud
Gary & Lori Shaffar – In Honor of their awesome kids, Zander & Hope

...TO OUR CONCERT SPONSORS...

We would like to thank the following businesses and individuals who helped us raise over \$2,000 at this year's fundraiser!

Center Grove Orchard
Al & Kerri Doering – Doering Farm
Mid-State Milling INC
Minerva Valley Telephone Co.
NESCO Family Medical Clinic

State Farm – Brandon Geise
Upchurch Feeders
Wonders Plumbing
Chris Barten
Gary & Kelly Hendrick

Gene Johnson
Jerol & JoAnn Larsen
Florence & Larry Rhodes
Sharron & Bill Slinger
Carolyn Uhlenhake-Walker

*...and the wonderful acts who shared their time, equipment, and talents to help us make it a great day. As if that wasn't enough, several of the bands and some band members wouldn't let us pay them in the end, they donated it back to Threshold!
Thank you soooooooo much!*



... AND TO...

- * Cam Reischauer who spent all day getting the sound ready for all the acts at the Fresh Air Concert.
- * Mike & Dalene Whitney/Comfort Food Catering in Huxley for their donation and again providing food for the Fresh Air Concert.
- * Everyone who contributed to the Travel Fund this year – Christa Anderson & Terry Potter, Arvon Glaser, Dan & Stefani Wonders, Julie Slinger, Larry & Florence Rhodes, Bill & Sharron Slinger, Deena Cavendar, and the Mosher Family – it was much needed!
- * Hertz Management and Greater Iowa Credit Union for their help in cleaning up trails and trees that were destroyed in this year's Derecho. Yes, you read that right...after last year's clean-up, this year we suffered another Derecho in August here in Zearing. As a part of United Way of Story County's Day of Caring, each group brought around 8-12 volunteers each. We couldn't believe how much they accomplished! The trail is again cleared from one end to the other, piles of brush are ready to burn. Thank you to Hertz, GICCU, and United Way for all of the help. We NEVER would have been able to do it all without the help
- * Jackson Wonders for tilling up our new garden area. We had a beautiful sunflower and Zinnia garden until the Derecho hit. We couldn't believe how well it took off this first year! Must have been that expert tilling 😊 Thanks to Dan & Stefani Wonders who supplied the gas it took to get here and get the job done.
- * United Way of Story County and the Nevada Memorial Lutheran Church for believing in the importance of our after-school programs. Their grants help us re-start the program each year, while giving participants a big break. We've had a lot of fun so far!
- * Chris Kayser, from our favorite Hipcamp family, who is having Wellmark match his volunteer hours with a donation to TLC!
- * Bill Slinger, Jacob Reischauer, Kaleb Ruffcorn, and Savanna Ellsbury for their help in planting trees again this spring.
- * Story County Community Foundation for the grant that helped us add the new lean-to to the front of the barn!
- * Larry & Florence Rhodes for the use of their hayrack and tractor for hayrides this Fall.

**Remember us on Giving Tuesday!
Check us out that day on Facebook
for details on how to donate via Paypal.
Hopefully Facebook will match all donations from that week!**



TLC
PO Box 36
Zearing, IA 50278



*Look deep into Nature,
and then you will understand everything better.*

-Albert Einstein



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: *Hannah Reischauer*
V. PRESIDENT: *Bill Slinger*
SECY/TREAS: *Sharron Slinger*
DIRECTORS: *Savanna Ellsbury*
David Obrecht
Peggy Obrecht
Jacob Reischauer
Kaleb Ruffcorn
Carolyn Uhlenhake-Walker

EXEC.DIRECTOR: *Gretta Reischauer*

If you would like to help our cause, contact us about volunteering or joining our Board of Directors.
nclittle@gmail.com



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

UPCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL PRAIRIE CAFÉS

November 17 THANKSGIVING-TO-GO 5:30-7pm
Don't let the name fool you! You don't have to get your food and get out! (although we do offer "To Go" if needed) We want you to stay, sit, talk with the kids, talk with each other and enjoy an entire Thanksgiving meal in one sandwich. Don't knock it until you try it! It's become a Prairie Café must-have.

Dec.6 CHRISTMAS-AROUND-THE-WORLD 5:30-7pm
The after-school Kids Club will be serving a buffet of traditional Christmas favorites from around the world that they have researched. Proceeds from both Cafes will help them with their shopping trip for Project Angel.

FAMILY SLEDDING DAY

January 22, 2023 1:00-4:00pm
Join us for an afternoon of Sledding. No snow? No prob! We'll still have winter hikes, games, crafts, & Hot Cocoa.

FRESH AIR CONCERT

June 10, 2023 1:00-10:00pm
Put the date on your calendars now for our 5th Annual Fresh Air concert. If you would like to recommend a band or act or food truck, please contact us as soon as possible!



CHRISTMAS @ TLC

Let Threshold Learning Center make your holidays a little easier!

PARTIES

You can rent the barn for anything you may be planning: Family Christmas or Reunion, company meetings/ holiday parties, birthday or anniversary celebrations, graduations, or weddings. The upper level is handicap-accessible and can be rented for just \$150/day.

If you have guests that need a place to stay this holiday season, they can rent a room at the barn for \$75/night. Each cozy room has 4 beds, and includes the restrooms with hot showers, our lounge area, use of the grounds and a continental breakfast.

We also can cater any event you may be holding, whether it is at the TLC site, or off-site. Let us help plan your next get-together!

CATERING

| | | |
|-------------------|--|------------------|
| Breakfast- | Egg Bake or Rolls | \$7/person |
| | Ham, Sausage, or Bacon | |
| | Fruit or Juice&Cereal | |
| | Milk/Coffee | |
| | Rolls/Coffee Cakes | \$6/doz |
| Lunch- | Choice of Entrée * | \$10/person |
| | Soup & Salad | Soup & Sandwich |
| | Spaghetti | Pizza |
| | Taco Bar | Quiche |
| | Build-Your-Own Sandwich Bar | |
| | BBQ Pork/Beef/Chicken Sandwich | |
| | *Includes a side item, dessert, drink. | |
| Dinner- | Choice of Entrée * | \$12/person |
| | Lasagna | Spaghetti |
| | Enchiladas | Taco Bar |
| | Pork Roast | Beef Roast |
| | Ham | Turkey & Fixin's |
| | Mac N' Cheese | Chicken Marsala |
| | Christmas Cookies/Cakes/Treats | \$6/Doz. |
| | Appetizer Trays | |

GIFTS

Tired of filling the kids'/grandkids' rooms with toys they will ignore after a month? Give them the gift of knowledge, travel, & memories of a really great time outdoors! TLC has several Christmas gift ideas:

- * "WILD BIRTHDAY PARTY" CERTIFICATES. Parties include a hike, program, or craft; a campfire meal or a pizza party; and a movie on the big screen all for \$10/person. Add an overnight in the barn and breakfast to the package for just \$15/person. Certificates are available in \$10 increments.
- * A \$40 certificate will cover a weeklong day camp of their choice for grades K-6.
- * A \$75 certificate will cover the Overnight Adventure Camp for grades 4-6.
- * A certificate for \$100-\$500 would help greatly with any of our Jr. High and High School trips.

To order or for more info. Contact Gretta Reischauer at nclitlc@gmail.com or 641-487-7455.

...AND Don't Forget To Join our After-School Kids Club out @ the Barn for their

Christmas-Around-The-World Buffet

December 6th 5:30-7pm

FREE WILL donations. Proceeds benefit their Project Angel shopping trip!

The students have been researching how countries around the world celebrate Christmas. They will share traditions & holiday foods with you: pastas, pastries, sandwiches, and goodies from around the world, and some favorites from here at home.



BECOME A FRIEND OF "TLC"

***WON'T YOU PLEASE
CONSIDER JOINING US OR
RE-NEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP?!?***

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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 |

Buy a Board Campaign

of Boards (\$25 each) _____ Total: \$ _____

Names to be put on boards:

Complete form & send donation to:

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



PHOTO GALLERY



THANK YOU...THANK YOU...THANK YOU!!!

...TO OUR CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS...

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

Pat Black
Jeff & Jennifer Cook**
Mark & Gretta Reischauer*****+
Bill & Sharron Slinger*****+
Wonders Plumbing Inc.



OSPREY LEVEL (\$500-\$1,000)

Christa Anderson & Terry Potter
Glen & Vicki Downing **
David & Peggy Obrecht ****
Larry & Florence Rhodes ***+

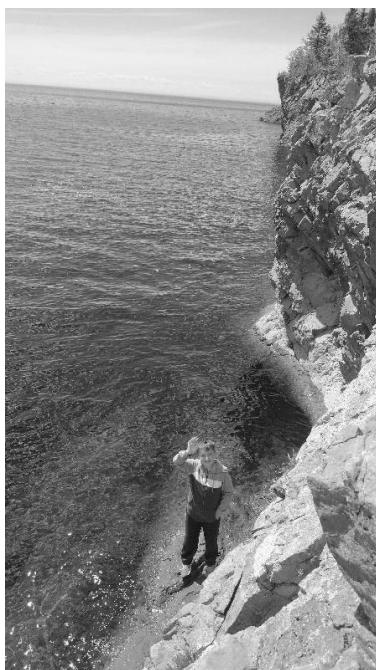
REDTAIL HAWK LEVEL (\$250-\$500)

Pat Black***+
Renald Bouchard*****
Anonymous Donor 1*****
Anonymous Donor 2*****
Steve Black & Center Grove Orchard*+
Jim & Jan Cook*****+
Arvon Glaser****
Brian & Sally Larsen *+
Jerol & JoAnn Larsen*****
John & Sharon Liechty **+
Julie Slinger*****
Tom Snutjer
Carolyn Uhlenhake-Walker****+
United Church of Christ Congregational ****
Upchurch Feeders ****



PEREGRIN FALCON LEVEL (\$100-\$250)

Emily & Matt Banks **
Jean Basinger*****
Gregg & Mary Cameron +
Matt & Janet Haynes +
Gary & Kelly Hendrick***+
Randy & Janet Herink*****
Larry & Barbara Howard**
Doug & Erin Hulshizer*****
Gene Johnson****+
Dorothy Loudon***
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Catherine Mein**
Lorene Mein**
David & Peggy Obrecht*****
Wyatt & Breann Perisho
Scott Perisho
Doug & Mary Phillips*****
Andrew & Dawn Short **
Joe Toot*****
JoNan Twedt***



SHARP-SHINNED HAWK LEVEL (\$50-\$100)

Breer Builders
McCallsburg Lions*****
Chris Barten*****
Jerry & Leola Britten*****
Lynn & Mary Coen***
Al & Kerri Doering ***
Dan & Angie Dunlap*****
Max & Jackie Dunlap*
Virginia Edel*****
Mary Lou Fleming*****
Cynthia Heintz*****
Ron & Gloria Jacobson***+
Mike & Sharon Justice***+
Carol Madsen*+
Mosher Family***
Jim Oakes**
Jeremy & Nadine Patzer **
Steve & SueAnn Peck *+
Mike Peterson*****
Kathy Reischauer*****
Ethan Robinson**
Nate & Nikki Ruffcorn**
Kristin Shields ****
Nate & Nicole Skaar Family****
Sue Terrell & Rich Hanson**
Anne Thayer**
Mark & Connie Tjelmeland**+
Michelle Traverse ***
Brian & Janet Wildeboer*****+
Steve & ElJean Wildeboer*****
Dan & Stefani Wonders/Wonders Plumbing*****



REGULAR MEMBERSHIP LEVEL (\$25-\$50)

Christa Anderson & Terry Potter*****
Cheryl Binzen
Lori Bishop
LaVonne Christiansen***
Jon DeBruin*****
Phillip Ellingson***
Kerry Fisher
Mary Frahm*****
Rex & Kathleen Gogerty*****
Peyton Hall
Kim Heidemann
Barbara Kenney*****
Pat Knutson
Tamar Krantz & Mike Putney*****
Amy Lennie
Clint & Melissa Miller
Muntz Family
Steve & Janet Olson*****
Bill & Mary Phillips****+
Gary & Lori Shaffar**
Scott & Trudy Slinger**
Loretta Wheelock ****



* *Indicates renewing member*

+ *Indicates renewing member for 10 or more years!*