Valley Creek has resident self-sustaining populations of brook, brown, and rainbow trout.

Restoring a Floodplain Forest

This winter, we restored five acres of floodplain forest along Valley Creek. The change has been remarkable.

See page 3.
SPRING TRANSFORMS THE LAND. Ice and snow melt, bare twigs leaf out, brown grass becomes green, and the earth wakes up, again! Change is always with us, but for some reason it's easier to see in the springtime. As with nature, spring has brought other changes to the Belwin Conservancy. As of June 4th, there will be a new executive director taking the baton from Tara Kelly – and that's me!

It’s kind of hard to write about yourself, so how about we focus on the Belwin Conservancy and some of the work we will be pursuing together over the next several years? For some time now, the board of the Belwin Conservancy has expressed an interest in expanding the reach of conservation by enriching the experience people have of the natural environment. Mind you, we’re not exactly sure what this means and we hope to include you in the discovery process! We do know that in order for people to take an interest in the natural world, there have to be a variety of experiences that help us grow to love and understand this amazing world in which we reside.

We want the Belwin Conservancy to include other experiences that enrich this understanding. That might be through including artists and their interpretations of the natural world, it might be through a variety of events, we do believe that being able to tell the story of a place, an object, a stream, a tree, a light switch, a building can foster understanding – and understanding sometimes makes big things happen.

So we invite you to participate with us. We’ll continue our prairie restorations, welcome the bison grazing on the land, making the prairie more fertile and productive; serve as a host site for students from St. Paul; enjoy the many feet and voices of soccer players and their families and keep a watchful eye on the night sky!

As for me, I am very excited to meet you, to work with the staff and to discover new ways of engaging more people in this extraordinary world of nature. Growing up on Como Lake in St. Paul, I always felt like I had the perfect place to learn about nature. A lake, a conservatory, a zoo… Give me my dad’s tackle box, a bicycle and a canoe! Those pre-dawn canoe paddles with a good friend, ducks and geese scolding us for disturbing their morning were enough to set the stage for a future that included helping other communities create parks and protect the places that were important to them. I’ve had the great privilege to work for the Trust for Public Land as its New England urban program director, and most recently to be the southern region conservation director for the Minnesota Land Trust, a long standing Belwin partner.

We look forward to seeing you soon at the upcoming events.

In the meantime, please join me in thanking Tara, Ned, Eric, Martin, Lynette and Margie for their incredible good work and patience throughout the search process!

Nancy Kafka
Executive Director, Belwin Conservancy
At the Belwin Conservancy we have floodplain forests along Valley Creek, particularly along the north branch after it leaves Lake Edith.

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT PRAIRIE RESTORATION is our low-hanging fruit. With relatively little effort a field can be seeded to prairie and maintained, especially if it was recently in agriculture. Barring a few recent acquisitions, most of the open fields at the Belwin Conservancy’s preserve have been planted to prairie.

In recent years, we have focused on oak savanna restoration. The energy input for these types of restorations is high, but oak savanna is the most endangered ecosystem on Earth and protecting it is very important to us. This winter we had the opportunity to work on yet another type of community: the floodplain forest.

**Floodplain Forests**

Floodplains forests are exactly what they sound like. They are forested areas along waterways that are regularly inundated in spring and after periods of extended rainfall. They can be found along smaller streams or large rivers such as the St. Croix or Mississippi.

In a floodplain forest, you expect to find evidence of regular flooding including piles of debris, ice scars on trees, high-water channels, and recently deposited silt and sand. Trees such as silver maple and cottonwood are common. Other species include green ash, hackberry, bur oak, basswood, box elder. Underneath, the ground layer can be quite diverse including many vines such as wild grape and Virginia creeper.

This occasional but regular flooding means that floodplain forests are generally unsuitable for building. They are also too poorly drained for agriculture, and have low commercial value for timber. This has acted in their favor and these areas can often still be found along our rivers and streams.

Even so, many floodplain forests have been degraded in recent years through logging, grazing, filling, and by fragmentation. Dams have also hurt these areas by altering the flood cycle. In many cases floodplain forests simply suffer from neglect.

Nonetheless, as some of the last remaining intact habitat, floodplain forests are a vital refuge for wildlife that are losing habitat elsewhere. In some cases these long, linear woodlands are important corridors for the movement of wildlife between other higher quality habitat areas.

Of course, rather than just passing through, some species of wildlife call the floodplain forest home. One example is the Louisiana Waterthrush, a special concern species in Minnesota, and a particular focus of our current restoration project.

**Louisiana Waterthrush**

Although the Belwin Conservancy’s Preserve is located on the northwestern edge of the Louisiana Waterthrush’s range, this migratory bird has historically been heard along Valley Creek. The small brown and white striped warbler breeds throughout the eastern United States and overwinters in Central America and the West Indies. In recent years, this species has become very uncommon in Minnesota, possibly due to nest parasitism by the brown-headed cowbird and the degradation of stream habitat.

The Louisiana Waterthrush typically inhabits mature deciduous forests near swift-flowing streams with rocky beds. They have very specific preferences for nesting sites including small hollows, cavities within eroded stream banks, and exposed root masses along streams. Waterthrush forage among the exposed emergent rocks at the edge of the water. They require streams with submerged leaf litter, and shallow areas within the stream. Their food source is mostly aquatic invertebrates, but they have also been known to forage in the forest litter layer, tree bark, and even catch on the fly.

These birds are one of the earliest nesting warblers. Once they return from wintering in Central America in mid-April the males sing...
vigorously all day long to establish territory in their breeding grounds. Once a mate is found, they restrict their singing to just the morning hours. After the breeding season, singing becomes uncommon altogether. Due to its early breeding time, this species is often overlooked in traditional breeding bird surveys. Females lay an average of five eggs that hatch after 13 days. The young fledge about nine days after hatching.

The Louisiana Waterthrush is well known for the constant motion of its tail, teetering as it walks along the ground. In fact, the genus and species name (*Parkesia motacilla*) means “tail wagger”. The reasons for this habit are not known but it is thought to possibly be a means of communication with other waterthrushes. Other evidence suggests that tail wagging may camouflage the bird against a riffled water surface or even help them detect prey items below the water.

**The Project**

The north branch of Valley Creek first crosses onto Belwin Conservancy property near our main entrance at 1533 Stagecoach Trail. In this area, the floodplain is low and wide and covered by a dense canopy. This area, along Valley Creek and adjacent to Stagecoach Trail, is where we began our restoration.

Unlike similar forests along larger rivers, this section of Valley Creek floods less frequently and experiences fewer disturbances from these events. As a result it is perhaps more properly referred to as a “terrace” forest than a floodplain forest but shares many of the same characteristics. In forests such as this, we see flowers like Virginia waterleaf, touch-me-not, blue violets, jack-in-the-pulpit, and Virginia bluebells. Or we would expect to see them, if you could see anything at all.

Like most forests in this area, the restoration area was so choked by buckthorn that you couldn’t see a foot in front of you. It truly felt like a jungle with only a tunnel cut through it for a trail.

Still, we could see what trees were above us in the canopy and a little of what was growing on the ground. We knew it would take a lot of work to remove the buckthorn but that it would be worth doing. We also knew and that it would look quite different once all the buckthorn was removed.

The Belwin Conservancy received a grant from the Washington Conservation District that assists in the removal of buckthorn along important streams such as Valley Creek. The grant made it possible to work with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota, and Washington County Sentence to Serve. By combining all our efforts, we were able to restore 5 acres of this important habitat.

Rather than cut the buckthorn into pieces and leave it on site, we wanted to remove it from the project area. This left us two viable options: chipping and burning. We did both in the course of this project.

The Conservation Corps started working on the project in October of 2011 by cutting and chipping the buckthorn that was closest to the entrance road. Belwin Conservancy staff, with the help of Sentence to Serve, continued to push towards the south – along the Creek.

Our bizarre snowless winter allowed us to use our chipper well into 2012. It’s a loud, smelly beast of a machine, but I can’t describe the satisfaction of sending a huge gob of buckthorn through it and watching it spit out tiny pieces. Priceless.

Eventually it was not snow or cold that forced us to stop using the chipper, but accessibility. We had cleared everything on one side of the creek and there was no good access point for the chipper on the other. Luckily we had a great back up plan: the Fire Sled.

In Belwin’s 40 years, we have amassed a huge and sometimes surprising collection of tools to do restoration work. Belwin has also been blessed by inventive and capable staff. I didn’t realize the Fire Sled even existed until I was shown it by Belwin’s longtime caretaker, Eric Palmen this fall. Essentially the Fire Sled is nothing more than a steel plate raised off the ground and sitting on two metal skis. The whole contraption can be towed around by a tractor. What it does is allow you to build a bonfire and move it around from place to place while you work.

It might sound like something from a strange dream: seeing a fire zipping down the road behind a tractor, but it’s real and it’s incredibly useful. Using the Fire Sled, we were able to finish the project much faster than we otherwise would have. It could be moved to wherever we were working, and because the fire is not on the ground, it doesn’t leave the sterile scars in the soil that regular brush piles do.

Now that the buckthorn is removed we can finally see the forest and the transformation has been remarkable. It’s fascinating to watch and see how the wildflower populations are responding this spring. We’ll definitely be watching this area throughout this year and next.

We’ve been enjoying sitting along the creek at lunchtime and listening for the elusive Louisiana Waterthrush. We’ll keep you posted as to our progress as we continue to restore this beautiful spot and encourage you to visit it at our next member event!

Belwin staff Lynette Anderson and Martin McGough tend a brush pile on the Fire Sled.
Phenology, Citizen Science and Climate Change Literacy

by Josh Leonard, Education Director, Belwin Outdoor Science

“We had not peas nor strawberries here till the 8th of this month. On the same day I heard the first whip-poor-will…Tell me when you shall have peas up…when every kind of tree blossoms and puts forth leaves, when each kind of flower blooms…Yours tenderly, my dear Maria, TH. J.” – From a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to his daughter (May, 1790)

TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON. From deciding when to conduct a prescribed prairie burn, plant corn or apply fertilizer, to deciding where to go to fish for trout, see spring wildflowers or fall colors – timing is everything. Phenology is the study of the timing of seasonal biology. It is a critical way we can understand ecological process and ensure the health, productivity and integrity of our world.

The city of Kyoto, Japan celebrates the Cherry Blossom Festival every year. Ancient court records, including the dates of the festivals, extend back over 1,000 years. The festival always occurs when the cherry tree's blossoms are at peak, providing an excellent phenological data set. In recent decades flowering times have become earlier than in the past (Primach and Higuchi. 2007. Climate Change and Cherry Tree Blossom Festivals in Japan. Arnoldia. 14–22.).

This simple thing, the timing of cherry blossoms, provides an elegant teaching tool and alleviates much of the confusion surrounding climate change. It is simple to point to a flower and say to a student, “that is blossoming earlier every year,” and then to proceed with a discussion around why that happens. Now if we only had an equivalent to cherry blossoms records in Minnesota…

I grew up in the City of Medicine Lake, just 10 miles west of Minneapolis. Medicine Lake has kept ice-out dates for over 70 years. Putting those dates into an Excel spreadsheet and using any of its best-fit line analysis tools shows the average ice-out date today is a full seven days earlier now than it was in the 1940s when the record began.

At Belwin, we have been informally tracking nature through the seasons since the beginning. Unfortunately, not a lot of that knowledge was recorded. From 1992-1998 1,113 phenological observations were recorded. After 1998 the phenology record is mostly empty until March 2010 when Belwin Outdoor Science (BOS) staff attended a conference on Minnesota Phenology at Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center.

This conference inspired us and resulted in a flurry of observations. For example, just last month BOS staff made 81 observations noting an ice-out date, when lily pads first emerged, when migratory birds returned, when bugs appeared, and when mammals came out of hibernation.

Now, for the first time Belwin Outdoor Science has formalized our phenological observations in order to understand and interpret the effects of climate change in our own backyard. The ultimate goal is to enable the students at Belwin to become citizen scientists able to record their own observations in their neighborhoods.

To do this, we are introducing a new class this coming fall. Students will be scientists and contribute their own phenological observations. When students leave Belwin they will then be fully equipped to record their own observations at home.

To help store all our newly acquired data, Belwin has just acquired an incredible new tool for analyzing our phenological observations. Minnesotaan Rod Kuehn developed a database called Tracker that automatically calculates average dates for phenological observations like “first bluebird sighted.” The Tracker program is tailored to Minnesota phenomena and connects the data to visually appealing pictures that readily engage students.

Belwin Outdoor Science isn’t alone in using phenology as a tool for climate change education. The Will Steger Foundation recently released a phenology-based curriculum called “Minnesota’s Changing Climate” which includes journal entries from Will Steger himself as a 10-year-old. While at Wolf Ridge ELC, they have successfully incorporated fifth and sixth grade student observations for the past five years in their phenology class.

Phenology observations, like any climate change data, are more valuable when they cover a longer period of time. This makes the phenological record from the 1990s invaluable. It gives us a 20-year head start. Now that Belwin has celebrated our 40th anniversary it’s hard not to be wistful for data collection to have started in 1971. However, we look forward and hope that today’s data collection will be an invaluable resource for Belwin in the next 40 years.

To keep up with Belwin’s current phenological observations, please visit our website: http://belwin.spps.org/Valley_Branch_Phenology2.html

To learn more about phenology in Minnesota, please visit the Minnesota Phenology Network (MnPN) website: http://phenology.cfans.umn.edu/.
Join us as we welcome the fifth 2012 and 2013 members are
When the sun goes down, the Belwin
Join us on the Bison Buggy to see bison
The Minnesota Astronomical Society's
6
[Image 46x62 to 259x189]
Restored Oak Savanna at our Lake Edith Natural Area. Since the removal of invasives, the area
were harvested from the Lake Edith Natural
Department of Natural Resources. In 2009 and
Bioenergy" project through the Minnesota
restored with the “Linking Habitat Restoration to
Pam's research was focused on areas that were
extremely rare.
the encroachment of development they are now
scattered bur oak trees. Although once very
common in this area, due to farming, over-
grazing, fire suppression, invasive species and
the encroachment of development they are now extremely rare.
Pam's research was focused on areas that were
restored with the “Linking Habitat Restoration to Bioenergy” project through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. In 2009 and
2010, over 4,920 tons of invasive woody species
were harvested from the Lake Edith Natural Area. Since the removal of invasives, the area
was seeded using native flower and grass seed.
Restored Oak Savanna at our Lake Edith Natural Area.

As part of her capstone, Pam took plant surveys
of the recently restored area to determine what plant species are growing on this site. During her
survey in the summer of 2011, she found there
was an average of 59 plants per 1m plot. Of those 59 plants, 13 (22%) were identified as
non-native or invasive species. When grouped
into categories, there were 53% flowers (forbs),
28% grasses (graminoids), and 18% woody species.
Pam determined that given the presence of
non-native seed in the soil, the abundance of non-native species she found is not surprising.
It will take several years for the native species to
germinate, grow and outcompete these non-
native species.
Using her analysis, the Belwin Conservancy is
using herbicide and mowing to keep these non-native plants in check. This regime will be
replaced by periodic burns as the native species mature.
It's very early following the initial restoration of this area, but already
many native species were present and blooming last summer. As the seasons progress, more blooming
native species will grace the hills and valleys of the Lake Edith Natural Area.

UPCOMING MEMBER EVENTS

We have several events planned this year to welcome our 2012 members to the Belwin Conservancy's preserve. Experience this irreplaceable spot – protected through the annual membership support of all our members.

Bison Release  Join us as we welcome the fifth bison herd to the Belwin Conservancy! The release will take place at the bison observation platform on Division Street. Park in the Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields at 15601 Hudson Road.
Saturday, June 16: 11 a.m. Release at noon sharp.

Fall Event and Annual Meeting  2012 members are invited to take in the splendor of fall and join us for our Annual Meeting, with an exciting speaker, updates on recent projects and plans for 2013.
Saturday, October 13

Winter Event  2012 and 2013 members are invited to get out and enjoy a winter walk, ski, or snowshoe on the trails at Belwin.
Saturday, January 19, 2013

RESEARCH ROUNDUP

Assessing and Surveying an Oak Savanna Restoration
Research Summary by Pam Larson Frink

Pam Frink, a graduate student at Hamline University, completed part of her capstone field studying oak savannas including our restoration at Lake Edith. Oak savannas are plant communities containing forbs and grasses with scattered bur oak trees. Although once very common in this area, due to farming, over-grazing, fire suppression, invasive species and the encroachment of development they are now extremely rare.

Pam's research was focused on areas that were restored with the “Linking Habitat Restoration to Bioenergy” project through the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. In 2009 and 2010, over 4,920 tons of invasive woody species were harvested from the Lake Edith Natural Area. Since the removal of invasives, the area was seeded using native flower and grass seed.

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It's very early following the initial restoration of this area, but already many native species were present and blooming last summer. As the seasons progress, more blooming native species will grace the hills and valleys of the Lake Edith Natural Area.

A REGULAR SURVEY OF RESEARCH OCCURRING AT THE BELWIN CONSERVANCY

Tours and Workshops for Supporting, Sustaining & Benefactor Members
For 2012 supporting, sustaining and benefactor members ($100 or more), we offer additional free tours and workshops. If you’re a basic member and would like to participate in any of these events, you can step up your membership at any time. RSVP required 48 hours in advance. Space is limited; reserve your space online at www.belwin.org, call (651) 436-5189 x100, or email events@belwin.org to reserve your spot today!

Frog Walk  When the sun goes down, the Belwin Conservancy’s preserve comes alive with frogs and other creatures. Take an evening walk with naturalist Lynette Anderson and find out what makes night the best part of the day. Ages 8+.
Saturday, June 1: 8 p.m.

Bird Walk  Belwin's location in the St. Croix Flyway makes it a fantastic spot for bird watching. Join naturalist Lynette Anderson on a walk to spot our fall migrants. Suitable for all skill levels; participants must be comfortable walking on uneven terrain. Bring binoculars. Ages 10+.
Saturday, September 15: 7-9 a.m.

Bison Safaris  Join us on the Bison Buggy to see bison from a new perspective. The Bison Buggy is our custom-built vehicle designed for touring the tallgrass prairie and visiting the bison in comfort. Bison Safaris are our most popular member activities, please RSVP right away!
Saturday, July 7: 1 p.m.
Adults only: Friday, August 3: 6 p.m.
Saturday, September 8: 1 p.m.
Friday, September 29: 1 p.m.

Prairie Flower Tour  At the Belwin Conservancy there are over 500 acres of restored and remnant prairies and no two are exactly alike. Join Director of Ecological Restoration Tara Kelly on a tour of some of her favorite spots when the prairie is in full bloom.
Saturday, July 21: 1 p.m.

Lake Edith Oak Savanna Tour  We've been working to restore the oak savanna at our Lake Edith Natural Area for many years. Please join us for an extensive tour of this part of our preserve, not normally open to the public.
Saturday, August 4: 1 p.m.

Photography  Hone your photography skills while using the Belwin Conservancy's preserve as a backdrop. During this workshop, one group will focus on how to operate your camera while another group, led by Deanna Utter Grigus, will focus on skills.
Saturday, October 6: 10 a.m.

Astronomy  The Minnesota Astronomical Society's Joseph J. Casby Observatory is a hub for astronomical pursuits almost every night. Join us for an evening of astronomy using the 10" telescope. An experienced MAS member will help us explore the cosmos.
Saturday, September 15: 8:30 p.m. (if needed, backup nights are September 18 and 20)
Thank you!

Last fall, we came to our members and asked for help to protect the trout spawning grounds of Valley Creek. Protesting this one spot was essential and within only a short while, we reached our goal! Thank you to everyone listed below for making it happen.

2012 Members (as of 5/15/2012)

As always, we relish any opportunity to recognize the members who work to make the Belwin Conservancy a success year after year. We couldn’t protect any land, restore any prairies, immerse any kids to nature, or work with any bison if it wasn’t for the support that our members provide year after year.

What follows is a preliminary list of all our individual 2012 members to date (current as of 5/15/2012). If you’re not on the list and you’d like to be included as a 2012 member please consider joining today!

Benefactors
Nancy Gibson & Ron Stenral
Sharon Glennan
Douglas Johnson
Alis & Frank Wilson
Sustaining Members
Anonymous
Nancy Brooks & Tom Youngblood
Eric Foster & Danielle Bell
Lee & Lori Kissing
Joseph Leary
Tamara & Lawrence Morrisey
Joseph & Constance Paiement
Anne Simpson
Jean Marie & Peter Ulland
Lawrence Waite
Gregory Westphal & Wendy Lee Baker
Supporting Members
Ines Alonso & Clayton Lindsay
Elizabeth Anderson
John Andrus
Daniel Batchuber & Todd Maitland
Caroline & John Baillon
Rene & Douglas Barley
Camilla & Robert Beattie
John Bischoff
Colleen Bjerke
Kurt Casby
Julia & Christopher Charansen
Dan & Danielle Christensen
Tony & Heather Colten
Kellie & Richard Conlow
Mark Connolly
Mary Lee Dayton
Jennifer & Tim Otemba
Ralph & Helen Pennie
Frank & Nancy Petersen
Edmund & Sarah Phillips in honor of Steve Hobbs
Susan & Donald Place
Laurel Porter
Marion & Stephen Potyondi
Isabel & Gale Qualls
Irene Qualters
Lori & Patrick Rafferty
Mr. & Mrs. Myron Reubendale
Mary & Patrick Rugiiski
Sherrill & Paul Schattler
William Schroer
Greg Zeitz
Stanley Shepard
Robert Snyder
Judith Steitler
Valerie Stoel & Carol Iwata
Carol Sansone
Rebecca Swanson
Davidson & Carol Tanner
Graham & Anna Marie Thatcher
David & Rita Thollem
James Way & Kathleen Thomas
Hal Timney
Jean Marie & Peter Ulland
Mark Vargo
Mavis & Robert Voigt
Lawrence Waite
Laurie Waterman
Steve & Sharon Wonfer
Kathy Winid
Shawn Witty
Nancy Brooks & Tom Youngblood
Jill & Robert DeMalter
Allan & Diane Dettmann
Lizabth & Steven Emerth
Georgia Entenza
Carol & Frederick Entwash
Ann Fallon & Agger Enyedast
Tim Fischer
Caroline & Dutton Foster
Allen Fuechstall & Laura Fischer
Rebecca Gauker
Roger Gay
Mike & Mary Pat German
John & Cynthia Gilpin
Randy & Kathy Graham
Georgia Hart
Joe & Barbara Halligan
Sally & Peter Harris
Scott Havley & Holly Melroe
Elizabeth & William Heegaard
Frances Coyer & Constance Hilllard
Susan & Charles Hillo
Diana & Greg Hippe
Steve, Michele & Madison Hobbs
Thomas Scanlan & Corinne Hoefelt
Jean & Hugh Huestler
David & Robin Husebye
Bruce & Jean Johnson
David & Pamela Johnson
Andrew Jones
Kathryn Kent in honor of
Paul Watson
Julie & George Kinney
Douglas & Betsy Lake
Josh & Stephen Leonard
Margaret & Dave Lillo
Patricia & John Love
Doreen Lynch & William Ramsden
Howard Marks
Sheila Maybanks
Cameron McConnell
Bryan & Karin McGinnis
Richard & Deborah McNeill
Ronald & Cynthia Meier
Chester & Miriam Meyers
Judith & Robert Michaels
Leonard Miller
Rebecca Morris
Tamara & Lawrence Morrisey
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Newmark
Mario Ordway
Caroline & John Baillon
Rene & Douglas Barley
Camilla & Robert Beattie
John Bischoff
Colleen Bjerke
Kurt Casby
Julia & Christopher Charansen
Dan & Danielle Christensen
Tony & Heather Colten
Kellie & Richard Conlow
Mark Connolly
Mary Lee Dayton
Jennifer & Tim Otemba
Ralph & Helen Pennie
Frank & Nancy Petersen
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Mary & Patrick Rugiiski
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William Schroer
Greg Zeitz
Stanley Shepard
Robert Snyder
Judith Steitler
Valerie Stoel & Carol Iwata
Carol Sansone
Rebecca Swanson
Davidson & Carol Tanner
Graham & Anna Marie Thatcher
David & Rita Thollem
James Way & Kathleen Thomas
Hal Timney
Jean Marie & Peter Ulland
Mark Vargo
Mavis & Robert Voigt
Lawrence Waite
Laurie Waterman
Steve & Sharon Wonfer
Kathy Winid
Shawn Witty
Nancy Brooks & Tom Youngblood
Bob & Mattilda Rupp
Sherill & Paul Schottlen
Stanley Shepard
Dick & Ella Stade
Phillip & Gloria Smith
James Stahinke
The Steury Family
Jerome Stransky
Dean Stynsberg & Kurt Rentchler
Steve & Colleen Swedberg
Graham & Anna Marie Thatcher in honor of David Hartwell
Joan Thompson
Hal Taylor
Caroline Vernon & Bruce Holcomb
Mavis & Robert Voigt
Patricia Walker & Rebecca Enos
Clayde Allen Weekley
James Wells
Kathy Winid
Steve & Susan Woods
Lucia Wroblewski
Jeff & Patricia Zais

Basic Members
Rick Ahern
Gilbert George Ahlstrand
Bruce Albright
Lynette Anderson
Virginia & James Anderson
Anonymous in honor of
James Wells
John Beard
Thomas & Judy Behr
Michael & Elizabeth Belair
Mr. & Mrs. C. Meredith Bend
Denise Bergan-Pirro
Len Bohrer
Lisa Brenner
Karen Buggs
Annabelle Bush
Mariana & Robert Callery
Jane & Eric Carlson
Elizabeth Covie
Mary Croft
Frances Czaja
James & Susan Davis
Rick Davis
Aram debovien
Christine DeRose
Ann Diekier
Joanne & Timothy Drahok
John G. Erickson
Jokon Facente
Kathy & Edward Fagerlund
Collene & Peter Findlay
Barbara Ford
Paul Gade & Kathy Sidles
Don Getttinger
Joelene & Michael Goertz
Richard & Carol Gross
Howard Guttmann
Marty & Laurie Halverson
Jon Hayman
Mark & Sheryl Henly
Sonja Hietala
Caroline Hoefelt & Thomas Scanlan
Jean Howell
Jean & Hugh Huestler
Louise Huestler
David & Robin Husebye
Tara & Collin Kelly
Kathryn Kent
John Kimberly
Bradley & Joanne Kletscher
Ken & Anne Knutson
Barb Kopp
Susan & Malley Kasel in memory of
Dr. & Mrs. Valentine O’Malley
Kenneth & Jayne Kurtt
Robert Lane in memory of
Connie Lan
Lauren Lappone
Richard & Linda Law
Roderick Lawson
Scott Ledy & Helen Baker
John & Steph Leonard
Thomas Leonard
Patricia & John Love
Laurie Mahler & Sherwood Johnston
James & Nancy Maloukovich
Laurel March
Richard & Deborah McKeell
Ronald & Cynthia Melzer
Phyllis Merrif
Alida Messinger
Judith & Robert Michaelis
Doreen & Dean Miller
Anna Mackenhaupt
Diane & Dale Nichols
Douglas Nienhuis
Margaret Nimmo
Erin & Ron Oram
Carol Peterson
Sally Pal
Laurel Porter
Rick Radder
Lori & Patrick Rafferty
Deena & Steve Petikan
Mr. & Mrs. Myron Reubendale
Margarita Rist
Donna Savage
Virginia Spenbom
Robert Schmaucher
Thomas Shepard
William Simmons
Cennie & Dill Simpson
Robert Snyder
Mark Stedman & Nancy Bode
Ladonna Sticlan
Mickey Sticlan
Stanley & Lavenere Suring
Bruce Swanson
Connie Tallon in honor of
Tara Kelly
Davidson & Carol Tanner
David & Rita Thollem
Doris Wambach
William Webster
Steve & Sharon Winer
Mary & Thomas Wilren
Margie & Paul Wilson
Lisa Winkler

7
The mission of the Belwin Conservancy is inspiring our connection to the natural world.

New Observation Tower

As detailed in the previous issue of The Meadowlark, a year ago we found that the observation tower which stood above Kettelkamp Prairie for 40 years was beyond repair.

Over the winter we began to construct a brand new tower. In April, after months of preparation, we hired a crane to lift the legs of the tower into place. Within minutes, the new tower rose to its perch 24 feet above the prairie. We anticipate one more day with the crane and we expect to open the tower in early June.