

# Agassiz Environmental Learning Center Newsletter

## EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

### LET'S TALK HIKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

You may have never considered taking your young child for a hike through the 12 miles of trails that wind through the Fertile Sand Hills, but hiking with your child can be both rewarding and educational to both you and your child. The trails of AELC offers access to woodlands, prairies, sand dunes, and riverine ecosystems ready for your child to discover.

## YOU SHOP, AMAZON GIVES TO AELC WITH AMAZON SMILE

Amazon Smile is an easy way to shop and support your favorite charitable organization at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same selection and experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase price to AELC. Search Agassiz Environmental Learning Center and link us with your account. Your purchases will automatically give back to AELC.

That's a lot to smile about!

Of course hiking with an elementary age child is different than hiking with adults. Don't expect a steady pace. Children will alternate between bursts of energy and slow tired walking. Don't rush them along, but enjoy the pace they set. It will provide you with the opportunity to enjoy nature with a fresh set of eyes. Encourage your child to lead the hike, show you what they see and hear. Children have a different perspective of the world, let them share that with you. Stop and play! Enjoy the ride.

Sticks become fishing poles, fallen logs pirate ships, and leaves pretend food. Along your hike you may transform into woodland fairies, wild animals, or nature's superheroes.

When hiking with kids a little preparation can go a long way. Be prepared to help them explore nature up close. Some tools that may enhance your child's experience are magnifying glasses, binoculars, paper and pencil, guidebooks, a camera, and clothes they can get dirty. Just remember to have fun and enjoy nature.

CALL OR VISIT US AT  
218-945-3129 OR  
AELCFERTILE.ORG

miles

# 3D BOW HUNT QUILT RAFFLE

Win this beautiful handmade quilt by entering the AELC quilt raffle. To enter the raffle you can attend either our Winterfest event (February 20th), the 3D Bow hunt, or mail in your entry. Each raffle ticket is \$5.00 and multiple entries are allowed. You can mail your entries to **Agassiz Environmental Learning Center, P.O. Box 388, Fertile MN 56540**. If you wish to mail in your entry, please mail checks only with your phone number so we can contact you if you are the winner. The winning ticket will be picked the day of the bow hunt.

This years prize is a handmade quilt donated by Nancy Fellman of Thief River Falls. The quilt features a nature scene with a white tailed deer. It has a cotton front with soft flannel backing. The quilt measures 67"x74", perfect for any twin sized bed or as a throw! Make sure to enter so you have a chance to win this beautiful quilt.

## HAUNTED TRAILS 2015

October is one of the busiest times of year here at AELC thanks to our annual Haunted Trails event. Throughout the weeks leading up to the event our staff and volunteers are busy preparing costumes, setting up the trails, and gearing up for the event.

This year's haunted trails was our biggest ever with over 1,100 visitors walking through trails. Erickson's Smokehouse was there to provide thrill seekers with delicious food and drink, while the younger children enjoyed a safe area in the afternoon to trick-or-treat and enjoy Halloween themed games and crafts.

We would like to thank our sponsors, volunteers, and Haunted Trails committee for their support. Without them haunted trails wouldn't be possible!

## FEBRUARY 20TH WINTERFEST

Join us as we enjoy all that winter in Minnesota has to offer during WINTERFEST! During this fun event you will get the opportunity to cross country ski, snowshoe, and enter in a fun quilt raffle.

## AUGUST 2016 SUMMERFEST

Summerfest is a free annual event to thank our community for their continual involvement in making AELC a must see destination . Free food, and programming!

## OCTOBER 2016 HAUNTED TRAILS

Throughout the month of October the trails of AELC transform into a spooky playground for ghouls, goblins, ghosts, and of course Bubbles the clown. Enter if you dare!

# COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The University of Minnesota Crookston began their removal of creeping juniper this fall in Death Valley 1. This vital restoration project will continue for several years as students at UMC learn how their juniper removal affect DVI. The goal of this project is to open up the dune and allow wind to move more efficiently through the dunes. This will help maintain and keep open the dunes. We hope that by creating more wind erosion the dunes will remain open and we can help save this endangered ecosystem.

## AELCHAS A NEW TEAM OF ANIMAL AMBASSADORS TO BRING FUN ANIMAL EDUCATION INTO THE CLASSROOM

Agassiz Environmental Learning Center staff now travel to schools, libraries, and education centers throughout northwest Minnesota and eastern North Dakota area to bring animals, artifacts, and learning opportunities to a wide range of audiences.

Outreach programming is another way for the Nature Center to fulfill its environmental education mission. Not all groups can afford to send their class out to the Nature Center, or they want to increase environmental awareness in their own classrooms, workplace, and AELC provides an affordable way to do that. AELC educators provide content knowledge to schools, community centers, libraries, scout groups, and partner organizations.

Many AELC outreach programs incorporate live animals such as snakes, mice, and amphibians. An array of topics are offered: reptiles and amphibians, nature's engineers, plants and medicines, etc.

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## JOIN US FOR WINTERFEST 2016!

This year AELC will start a new tradition. We will be hosting Winterfest. This event will feature fun family friendly activities in the snow. If you have always wanted to try cross country skiing or snow shoeing now is the perfect time to try. If you would rather enjoy the beauty of winter indoors we have plenty of activities inside, and a roaring fire just outside the Nature Center to keep you warm.