

*Welcome*

to The Prairie Club's  
114th Annual Meeting



June 4, 2022

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## 114th Annual Meeting Agenda

### June 4, 2022

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New Member Meet & Greet

Call to Order

Welcome, Opening Remarks, Recognitions ..... Douglas Elrick, *President*

Financial Reporting..... Mark Sever, *Treasurer*

Message from Nominating Committee.....Dan Gapen, *Nominating Chair*

Memorial for Departed Members ..... Barb Burton, *Membership Chair*

Door Prizes ..... Hope Little, *Activities/Annual Meeting Chair*

Closing Remarks/ Adjournment..... Douglas Elrick, *President*

Lunch

Guest Speaker from Chikaming Open Lands



## The Prairie Club Treasurer's Report – 2022 Annual Meeting

The Prairie Club continues to be in a strong financial position. We ended the year 2021 with approximately \$274,000 of cash and investments, of which \$179,400 is unrestricted and \$94,600 has been reserved for future long-term capital improvements and other uses. The Club does not have any debt except for routine expenses in the process of being paid.

Primarily due to the resumption of rental operations, net profit for the year (after the depreciation charge) was net income of \$6,370 compared to a loss in 2020 of \$46,486, an increase of \$52,856.

The Club's tax return (Form 990) for 2021 was filed on a timely basis with the IRS.

Mark V. Sever  
Treasurer  
The Prairie Club

### The Prairie Club 2021 Financial Summary

	End of Year 2021	Beginning of Year 2021	Increase (Decrease)
Unrestricted cash	\$179,433	\$163,900	\$ 15,533
Restricted cash and investments	94,546	208,099	(113,553)
<b>Total cash and investments</b>	<b>\$273,979</b>	<b>\$371,999</b>	<b>\$( 98,020)</b>

	2021	Prior Year 2020	Increase (Decrease)
<b><u>Rental Fees</u></b>			
Buena Vista	\$ 50,855	\$ (50)	\$ 50,905
Family Cottage	32,148	1,475	30,673
Farmhouse	34,650	3,874	30,776
Spring Grove Lodge	4,635	1,400	3,235
	\$122,288	\$ 6,699	\$115,589

<b><u>Membership Dues</u></b>	\$ 92,475	\$ 92,544	\$ (69)
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	2021	Prior Year 2020	Increase (Decrease)
<b><u>Net Profit (Loss)</u></b>			
Buena Vista	\$ 25,871	\$(13,224)	\$ 39,095
Family Cottage	9,503	(21,559)	31,062
Farmhouse	1,348	(19,600)	20,948
Hazelhurst	20,584	56,050	(35,466)
Prairie Club Office	36,005	7,076	28,929
Improvement Funds	23,956	23,041	915
Spring Grove	0	0	0
Subtotal - before depreciation	117,267	31,784	85,483
Less Depreciation	(110,897)	(78,270)	32,627
Net Profit (Loss) after Depreciation	<b>\$ 6,370</b>	<b>\$(46,486)</b>	<b>\$ 52,856</b>

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## Membership Count for 2021

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771	- Category 1 (Active)
2	- Category 2 (Honorary)
4	- Category 3 (Senior Active)
2	- Category 4 (Hiker/Walker)
14	- Category 5 (Student)
45	- Category 6 (Senior)
<b>838</b>	<b>- Total Prairie Club Members</b>



## Members & Friends Who Passed Away in 2021

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Patrick Maguire	passed away on March 1, 2021
Van Ness Simmons	passed away on March 12, 2021
Cynthia Roberts Burton	passed away on March 16, 2021
Clark Miller	passed away on May 3, 2021
Nancy Cook	passed away on July 18, 2021
Sue Krusack	passed away on August 14, 2021
Charlene Calkins	passed away on August 27, 2021

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## Members & Friends Who Passed Away in 2022

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Michael Freehling	passed away March 9, 2022
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## New Members 2021

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**Ray Braden & Kim Jensen**

Spring Grove, IL 60081

Sponsors: Connie Davies, Mildred Hanson

Interviewed by: Paula Kiehm

**Bruce & Lynn Buschick**

McHenry, IL 60050

Sponsors: Jeff Fink, Mildred Hanson

Interviewed by: Paula Kiehm

**Claire Einhorn**

East Dundee, IL 60118

Sponsors: Jacia Pearson, Barb Burton

Interviewed by: Paula Kiehm

**Sheila Shearon "CeCe" Ely**

Wilmette, IL 60091

Sponsors: Susan Enright, Barbara Warren

Interviewed by: M.P. McKenzie

**John & Stephanie Epperson**

Chicago, IL 60618

Sponsors: Connie Cranford, Barbara White

Interviewed by: M.P. McKenzie

**Martha Feldman**

New Buffalo, MI 49117

Sponsors: James Chandler, Susan M. Taylor

Interviewed by: Barbara Burton

**Ann Flood**

Des Moines, IA 50312

Sponsors: Wyatt Allen Miller, Patrick Gilligan

Interviewed by: Barbara Burton

**David & Jennie Freda**

Chicago, IL 60618

Sponsors: Connie Cranford, Barbara White

Interviewed by: M.P. McKenzie

**Thomas Hackley & Emily Bettencourt**

Kalamazoo, MI 49009

Sponsors: Gary Wood, Tim Wixted

Interviewed by: Frances Kirby

**Steven Henderson**

Three Oaks, MI 49128

Sponsors: Ann Cilla, Mary Ann Aubrey

Interviewed by: Barbara Burton

**Hilary McGrath**

Wheaton, IL 60187

Sponsors: Deb McGrath, Barbara Wittersheim

Interviewed by: Frances Kirby

**Eleanor Ann Nicholson**

Chicago, IL 60615

Sponsors: Nancy Baum, Sarah Nadelhoffer

Interviewed by: Marcelle Gray

**Cindi Sartain**

Libertyville, IL 60048

Sponsors: Connie Wallingford, Rob Burton

Interviewed by: Barbara Burton

**Thomas Wanderer**

Lexington, MA 02420

Sponsors: Steve Clark, Jim Downey

Interviewed by: Terese Clancy

**Marcia Warter**

South Bend, IN 46614

Sponsors: Gina Meyers, Yifei Jaski

Interviewed by: Terese Clancy

**Millie Weir**

Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Sponsors: Jeff Fink, Rose Werner

Interviewed by: Paula Kiehm

**Agnieszka Wiosna**

Schaumburg, IL 60173

Sponsors: Magdalena Warzecha, Ewa Pasek

Interviewed by: Terese Clancy

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## Activities Committee Report

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Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic the Activities Committee had limited activities last year. We had one kayaking outing on the Galien River. We plan to start more activities as for 2022.

Hope Little  
Chair, Activities Committee



Join us on Sunday, June 5th, at 1:00 pm for a kayak/canoe trip on the Galien River.

Rentals are available from Third Coast Paddling (269)468-9399

Single kayaks cost \$25 and double kayaks are \$30.

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## Conservation Committee Report

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Each year the Prairie Club supports two conservation organizations: Chikaming Open Lands (COL) in southwest Michigan and the Nippersink Watershed Association (NWA) in McHenry County, Illinois.

During 2021, Chikaming Open Lands added three new preserves totaling 83 acres to its repertoire: Sugar Wood Preserve (40 acres), Harbert Woods Preserve (16 acres), and Castle Keep Preserve (27 acres).

Altogether, Chikaming Open Lands now manages 20 preserves and land easements totaling 2,000 acres. That is an amazing accomplishment for a small organization with limited resources.

In addition, Chikaming Open Lands, in a program titled Mighty Acorns, conducts environmental education and field studies for 3rd - 5th grade children from three local elementary schools.

COL land stewards planted 3,000 trees during the course of the year.

Nippersink Watershed Association continues to "preserve, protect, and enhance the irreplaceable natural resources found in the Nippersinik Creek watershed". This work is accomplished via environmental studies and numerous volunteer work sessions scheduled throughout the year.

Support by the Prairie Club as an organization and by the Club's individual members establishes us as an important contributor to the present and future well-being of the communities where we are active.

Leo Krusack  
Conservation Chair

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## Buena Vista Report

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Lots of changes to Buena Vista in the past year as renovations have allowed the facility to be rented year-round! Families can now enjoy all seasons at Hazelhurst! Many thanks to all those involved in leading and facilitating these renovations.

Work in October and February included: a purging and reorganizing of kitchens, closets, outdoor cushions, and lamps and furniture. All blankets and rugs were washed. Mattress pads and pillowcases, and pillows were replaced. Re-purposed vintage beach photos were hung and lamps replaced (thank you Deb and Barb).

Current projects include; power washing and painting of the screened-in porch and exterior painting of the building (being completed in May 2022)

As funding was approved in May 2022, we will be moving forward with plans to replace the couch in the sitting area of the old side and to replace seating areas on the screened-in porch.

For summer: new glassware, sheets sets, outdoor pillows and cushions will brighten up the beachy feel of the facility.

As noted in other reports: facility chairs are now enforcing a minimum \$100 fee if renters leave the facility unkept, making it necessary for DeAnna to spend extra time cleaning after they check out. This practice has already been utilized at BV – thank you to Natalie and DeAnna for their support and communication of these expectations.

Again, many thanks to Vern and DeeAnna for the spearheading of contracts and facility improvements and for all the work they do to keep Buena Vista spotless and welcoming to renters. And appreciation to Natalie for her communication, organization, and efforts.

Looking forward to a great summer season!

See you at camp!

Linsey Crowninshield-Ryan  
Buena Vista Chair



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## Family Cottage Report

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The Family Cottage had a very full summer rental season in 2021 and was fully booked through the summer. Thanks to major help from Deb and Barb, the screened in porches in both units received major facelifts with new furniture, cushions and area rugs. My husband, Omar, and I painted the existing orphan wicker that was red and green to match blue and with the cushions that Deb bought, it has a new life. Deb also found a used set of matching wicker love seat and chairs for Windsong, so the transformation was complete. I updated all the bedspreads, pillows and mattress covers linens in 2021, so the bedding has a new look as well. In addition, I purchased memory foam mattress pads for the twin beds in the loft to make them a bit more comfortable.

The major job overseen by Vern in 2021 was the construction of the retaining wall on the Windsong side. This prevented structural damage to the building, as the footing for the Windsong screened in porch was completely exposed due to severe erosion. Vern also had to buy a new refrigerator for Ravinia in August when the current one failed completely. Thanks Vern for all you do!!!

Since funding was approved in May 2022, I am moving forward with the plans for both sides of the Family Cottage to replace the couch and chairs in the sitting areas. We had to add boards under the cushions to give the couch and chairs more stability as the support springs have failed. It was brought to our attention in August by a renter who could not get out of the couch since he was sinking too low due to the failed supports. He actually went out and bought some boards to place under the cushions. I assessed the situation on my fall work day and agreed that the couch and chairs are due replacement and have started looking for replacement options.

As mentioned in the Farmhouse and Buena Vista reports, we had to institute a method to enforce the checkout out procedures that have been in place for two years.

Renters are reminded about the cleaning of the Family Cottage when they leave by listing the "check out procedures" in the paperwork they receive from Natalie and with signs that are clearly posted in all the rental facilities. The check out procedures include : stripping beds and placing linens in laundry bags , clearing leftover food items from the refrigerator, washing the dishes or starting the dishwasher before they leave, emptying the garbage and recycling into cans near the barn and moving any furniture back that was moved by renters.

We are now enforcing a minimum \$100 fee if renters leave the facility dirty, making it necessary for DeeAnna to spend extra time cleaning after they check out.

As mentioned in the Farmhouse and Buena Vista reports, much appreciation and many thanks go to Vern and DeeAnna for the hard work they do to keep the Family Cottage well maintained. Natalie keeps the rental records meticulously and keeps us all informed weekly with updates, thanks Natalie!

Laurel Salvador, Family Cottage Rental Chair

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## Farmhouse Report

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As we enter the summer season for the farmhouse, it is looking very different this year from the last two years. In 2021, due to safety concerns regarding COVID, we only rented “exclusively” to families and groups who knew one another and agreed to share the farmhouse. Now we have opened the farmhouse again to be a shared facility with the rental of individual rooms. This means that a member may be sharing the farmhouse with people that they do not know. They knowingly assume the risk of not knowing if fellow guests are vaccinated or not.

Renters are reminded about the cleaning of the farmhouse when they leave by listing the “check out procedures” in the paperwork they receive from Natalie and with signs that are clearly posted in all the rental facilities. The check-out procedures include: stripping beds and placing linens in laundry bags, clearing leftover food items from the refrigerator, starting the dishwasher before they leave, sweeping floors, vacuuming rugs, emptying the garbage and recycling into cans near the barn and moving any furniture back that was moved by renters.

We are now enforcing a minimum \$100 fee if renters leave the facility dirty, making it necessary for DeeAnna to spend extra time cleaning after they check out.

It is a **shared facility** and it is very important to all of us that it be as clean as possible for the next renters who will be staying there.

Some positive changes we have made this past year are: removing some of the old ceiling fans (there were 5 in the living room) and replacing them with 3 new white ones. Kitchen fans were also replaced and it has made a huge difference in the way that area looks. We also replaced two of the fans with vintage looking light fixtures. Some of the furniture (dressers and chairs) that were worn and scratched were treated to a new coat of light-colored chalk paint. Big improvement!

Future farmhouse projects include freshening up the paint on the front porch, planting native flowers around the outside and adding some shrubs to help screen and provide privacy for guests with the addition of the new pavilion just outside the backdoor to the farmhouse. We hope to build a screen porch sometime in the next few years, so farmhouse guests can enjoy sitting outside in the fresh air.

Now that we are back to an almost normal rental season this summer, we are confident that the farmhouse will continue to be a “home away from home” for many of our Prairie Club members and their guests. We expect a very busy summer and fall rental season as PC members enjoy time with friends, weekend getaways, family celebrations, reunions, bridal showers, girlfriend gatherings, book club retreats and much more.

Much appreciation and many thanks go to Vern and DeeAnna for the hard work they do to keep the farmhouse looking good and staying clean. We cannot thank Natalie enough for all she does in the office to keep the farmhouse rentals organized and up to date. This is a team effort and the communication between all of us is crucial and continues to work very well.

As proud managers of the farmhouse, we continue to look for ways to make this historic and charming farmhouse safer, cleaner, affordable and more up to date.

Respectfully submitted,  
Deborah McGrath and Barbara Wittersheim  
Farmhouse chairs

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## Spring Grove Report

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Despite all the bad news seemingly being reported from everywhere in the world these days, the Spring Grove camp continues to be a respite for members. We survived another winter and the grass and trees are greening up as we speak. The lodge deck repairs have been completed and new lattice was recently installed by siteholders. The paddle boats and swim raft, with new ladder, are ready for use in the beautiful spring fed pond. Also, we still have two permanent trailer sites available in the low lands. Whether you just come for the day, stay overnight in the lodge, pitch a tent next to the pond or use a weekend trailer site, please come explore and enjoy the Prairie Clubs other camp.

Thank you,  
Erin Kiehm, SG Camp Chairman

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## Hazelhurst Report

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As the restrictions from Covid-19 waned, some activities in camp began to be reinvigorated and approach "normal".

Hazelhurst's new Legacy Pavilion opened with a joyful reception. The pavilion was used for both formal and informal gatherings almost every day.

Saturday evening entertainments partially resumed, with most events being staged outdoors.

One week an exhibit of members' art forms inhabited the Red Barn, and visitors could come and go at the convenience. The Kids' Variety Show, traditionally the last Saturday of July, took place at the Legacy Pavilion, with temporary, portable sources of light and amplification.

The Red Barn was relatively quiet in 2021 but stands ready to serve in 2022.

Rentals of the club-owned cottages, (Buena Vista, Family Cottage, and the Farmhouse), resumed, with restrictions on hours of occupation and extra cleaning requirements. Users of camp cheerfully wore masks and maintained social distance, so as to minimize possible spread of the virus.

Beach and boating activities were hugely enjoyed, being outdoors.

The beach path was once again customized for the changing dune, to make for safe entry and exit at the border of the woods and beach. Volunteers are the power of making this happen.

Conservation activities, for the most part, carried on as if the pandemic were a bad dream. Cheerful volunteers gathered on a number of Saturdays, with gloves, bug spray, tools and our famous Prairie Club spirit of rolling up our sleeves for the good of the camp.

Many Hazelhursters supported, with both monetary donations, and advocacy, the purchase of the Harbert Road Woods tract of land which now is protected through Chikaming Open Lands.

This was a great victory for the local ecology!

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## Hazelhurst Report *continued*

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The iron footbridge crossing the creek between Oak Rd and Chestnut Rd needed repair, and the work was accomplished in the spring of 2021.

Building and Sites Committee carried on their important work of studying and authorizing changes to buildings that were proposed.

Junior Activities were ably planned and led, outdoors, and the Hazelhursters of that cohort had a great summer. The ice cream social was a highlight of the entire summer.

Monday Morning Coffee at the Red Barn carried on as usual, giving us all hope that the Covid restrictions just might - might - be temporary. Again, the camp was and is so lucky that our central theme is enjoyment of the natural out-of-doors!

Our camp Library offered interesting reading - with only a few individuals browsing the shelves at a time, cue to social distancing.

Tennis and Pickleball courts were earmarked for resurfacing, which will happen in the first part of the 2022 summer season.

The Pond, home of endless tadpoles, dragonflies, frogs, and toads, among larger creatures such as turtles and otters, offered peace, solace and contemplation to those who visited.

The annual 4th of July Celebration did not disappoint, with traditional patriotic readings and songs, as well as singing from the Prairie Club Songbook - memories of earlier times.

Camp Council performed its functions ably, offering a few rule changes to site holders.

A new "limited term" camp committee was created, named the "Second Century at Hazelhurst".

Its focus is to prepare for the 100th anniversary of the founding of Camp Hazelhurst in 1930

Administrative efforts in 2021 included the re-writing of the employment contract for the Hazelhurst Property Manager position. The contract had not been studied or revised in over a decade and deserved the close examination that it received by an able ad hoc committee. As the PM's contract is legally with the Prairie Club board (not the Hazelhurst site holders), great care was taken to clarify roles and lines of accountability.

The two overarching themes of this report must be what they always are - the love of Nature, and the Nature of service to each other, and the larger community of nature-lovers. The Prairie Club has changed, yes, but it has not lost sight of its founding principles. May it always remain so! Please come and visit Hazelhurst whenever you can. You are all welcome here!

Sharon Lemler, Camp Chair