



# the Meadowlark

A PUBLICATION FROM THE BELWIN CONSERVANCY

FALL 2017/WINTER 2018

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## Belwin Is Growing!

Help us meet our goals, including doubling our membership by our 50th anniversary in 2021.

*Photos by Belwin Members: Greg Seitz, David Truchot.*



## Fun Fact

Turtles, like this snapping turtle, winter under the ice in lakes and ponds. Instead of relying on their lungs, they absorb oxygen through the linings of their mouth, cloaca and their skin.



**BELWIN  
CONSERVANCY**  
*Inspiring through Nature*



# Evolution + Decay = Growth

CHARLES DARWIN AND ABRAHAM LINCOLN were born on the same day of the same year – February 12, 1809. Each lost their mothers early in their lives – Darwin was eight and Lincoln ten. Both of these remarkable people succeeded because they worked to grow their knowledge. They learned from everything they experienced, and they changed the world.

These two important individuals are reminders that growth takes work, and it's not always pretty. It must happen when the world is ready, though there will often be resistance. Sometimes growth can even look like decay: for example, when snakes shed their skins, birds their feathers, bison their winter coats, deer their antlers, flowers their petals, and prescribed burns rid the prairie of duff thwarting the march of invasives.

## *Decay doesn't just happen in the prairies, savannas, wetlands and woodlands.*

For most of Belwin's existence, growing by acres has been our primary work, starting with 225 acres and a public-school program in 1971 to the current 1,364 acres that host bison, an astronomical observatory, miles of walking trails, and thousands of St. Croix Valley youth playing sports.

In addition, Belwin has 56 buildings and structures and hundreds of pieces of equipment. Over time, everything decays and needs to be restored, replaced, or eliminated. We cull items from our inventory every year, with a goal of a leaner Belwin. We're very strategic in purchasing, and the team is amazing at keeping things working long after an item's expiration date.

Speaking of the team, Belwin's seven full-time, one part-time, and two seasonal employees perform the vast majority of the work needed to keep Belwin functioning. On big or complicated jobs, we contract out for the initial work, but are responsible for the ongoing year-to-year management.

Lately, Land and Facilities Manager Justin Sykora and crew have been busy cataloging everything from tractors and chainsaws to wells, windows, doors and trucks. Program Manager Susan Haugh has been managing the creation of conceptual master plans for Belwin's primary sites. Development Director Marta McCormack has been organizing events as well as getting the Belwin member and donor database into tip-top shape.



The Belwin team watches tadpoles from the newly constructed bridge over Bulrush Slough.

We've been doing this painstaking work to identify what we have, learn what needs to be replaced or removed, and to put in place the conditions that will lead to Belwin's healthy growth.

Which brings us to you: our past, present, and future members.

## *Your investment in Belwin yields impressive results.*

People who donate to Belwin are the backbone of our work and provide the basic operating support needed to sustain our work. Belwin has doubled its number of supporters since 2012, and we are working to double it again by our 50th anniversary in 2021 – our goal is 1,000 members who support and enjoy the fruits of this work.

Last year, 467 members gave \$87,000. This year we have our sights set on 527 members donating \$115,000. Each dollar you give to Belwin Conservancy leverages additional funds from the Belwin Supporting Fund, and new members who donate \$1,000 or more have their gift matched dollar for dollar from an anonymous supporter.

## *Growing members and donors is critical for our long-term sustainability.*

As you read on, I hope you see that your investment in Belwin makes sense and keeps giving back to you, to other members, to the 10,000 public school students, to the 150,000 visitors to the athletic fields, to the 3,500 and growing folks who hike the trails at Stagecoach Prairie, and all the wildlife habitat protected in perpetuity.

Our growth takes hard work and community support. Please become a member and support Belwin today!

**Nancy Kafka**

Executive Director

(651) 436-5189 x10

nancy.kafka@belwin.org





## EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF “Evolution + Decay = Growth”

By Nancy Kafka, Executive Director

### Belwin’s Living Values

- Protect land and use the land to support the organization’s mission.
- Create partnerships that play to one another’s expertise, don’t overlap and are specific to Belwin.
- Restore the land so people can have a unique experience discovering tall and mixed grass prairies, savannas, wetland complexes, woodlands and forests.
- Always aspire for the highest quality and give people more than they expect.

### Protect the land and use the land in support of mission.

Belwin’s founders fell in love with 50 acres of land in Afton, purchased them, built a modest family cabin and spent hours of leisure time with their family enjoying Valley Creek and the pine trees surrounding their cabin. They felt strongly that the area had unique qualities worthy of permanent protection and set about acquiring additional land. One day they said, “We need to find a use for the land we’re protecting.”

### EVOLUTION

#### Belwin does what it does best and seeks partners whose missions fit with Belwin but whose expertise is unique.

The founders forged a relationship with Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS). In 1970, they set up a private family foundation to hold 225 acres for exclusive use by SPPS and built classrooms so students could have a place to assimilate what they experienced outdoors learning about science in nature. The partnership relies on SPPS providing educators and students while Belwin sustains the land and facilities. In 2007, the private foundation was ready to become a public charity and Belwin Conservancy was born.

### DECAY

#### Restore the land so people can have a unique experience discovering tall and mixed grass prairies, savannas, wetland complexes, woodlands and forests.

As the founders began adding land, the invasives of today (buckthorn, spotted knapweed, garlic mustard, grecian foxglove, amur maple, locust, prickly ash, Japanese knotweed...) had not penetrated Afton. Much of the land was plowed and dominated by row crops. As a result, in the plowed areas, the invasives were kept at bay. Somehow, however, Washington County became ground zero for amur maple and grecian foxglove. Our woods and open fields were easily dominated. When Belwin began converting agricultural fields to prairies, we spent years controlling invasives and we continue that work

today. However, there are many places on Belwin lands where one can experience a taste of the land as it might have been before the waves of settlement conquered the forests and prairies that were once so prevalent.

#### Always aspire for the highest quality in what we do and give people more than they expect.

People who come to Belwin often ask why we have an astronomical observatory, host bison, and own athletic fields? They want to know how these activities fit with Belwin’s mission of inspiring our connection to the natural world. People don’t expect an organization primarily established to protect land to be so active in engaging with diverse audiences.

Belwin understands that to be useful to the public, we have to engage the public, and not just the portion of the public that cares about protecting land. A public school district isn’t going to care if land is permanently protected, they just want to have a safe place conducive for discovery and learning. Youth athletes don’t think about the status of land, just whether or not the fields exist – and are in good shape for playing. Bison are happy to flout borders in search of food and water – the status of the land is irrelevant. Astronomers just want a dark clear sky, where they can explore and learn about space.

In the East Metro, none of these experiences would take place without Belwin Conservancy at the heart of each. The key for Belwin’s future is how we grow and how lives are influenced by experiences of and at Belwin Conservancy.

### GROWTH

#### Growth through Support: Members and Donors

Belwin’s goal for support from individuals in 2017 is \$115,000. Our analysis shows that we’ll have doubled our membership from 2012 to 2017 (263 to 526) with the average gift size increasing from \$130 in 2012 to \$211 in 2017. The big push going forward is to double Belwin’s membership again by our 50th anniversary in 2021. Our goal is 1,000 members providing \$220,000 in unrestricted annual operating support. Our goal for individual donations outside of membership will be closely tied to on-the-ground needs. For example, in the past five years we have updated parts of the Education Center (flooring, gables, plantings around the entry), built a new bridge to cross Bulrush Slough, and replaced some critical equipment. We know there are bigger ticket items in the queue – a full-scale capital campaign will be needed.

#### Corporations

Belwin has been methodically pursuing support from corporations. Our largest contributor to date has been the Saint Paul Pioneer Press/TwinCities.com, which provides advertising for our annual bison release each spring. Most of the event’s participants say they found the event because of the Pioneer Press.

Belwin’s partnership with NorthStar Bison is beginning to leverage support from EpicBar (Epicbar.com), which is owned by General Mills. Northstar Bison and EpicBar have a supply relationship in which Belwin plays a supporting role. The General Mills Foundation, like many corporate foundations, tends to support nonprofits where their respective purposes intersect.

Belwin is working to cultivate targeted relationships with 3M, Andersen Corporation, H. B. Fuller, Xcel Energy, General Mills, U.S. Bank, SuperValu, Mosaic and Hubbard Broadcasting. Belwin’s mission and its growing capital needs provide us with an opportunity to strategically target corporations whose interests and goals mesh with Belwin’s needs. This list is by no means exhaustive – and we encourage you to suggest and/or connect us to others that might be receptive.

#### Foundations

Belwin’s most supportive foundation for unrestricted operating funds has been the Hugh J. Andersen Foundation. Belwin has also been fortunate to capture the attention of the Donald Weesner Foundation, which has provided key capital investments for three projects since 2013. Both foundations provide a working example of the relationships Belwin needs to expand for our continued success. Unrestricted operating and dedicated capital are critical components. Each year we work to introduce Belwin to new foundations. If you know of or are connected to a foundation that you think might be interested in Belwin, please let us know.

– Continue reading “Evolution + Decay = Growth” on page 5.

# Inspiring Connections Across Belwin

By Susan Haugh, Program Manager

## WHEN I APPLIED FOR THE AMAZING JOB OF PROGRAM MANAGER AT BELWIN,

I was asked to review our 21st Century Master and Strategic Plan and recommend next steps using the arts to help Belwin communicate its mission: Inspiring our connection to the natural world.

The Master Plan focuses on four sites where programming exists and where Belwin would like to develop new programming: Bell Oak Savanna, which contains the Education Center that is visited each

year by more than 10,000 Saint Paul Public School and Stillwater School District students; Croixview Prairie, site of the bison prairie and the Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields; Stagecoach Prairie, our beautifully restored, publicly accessible walking prairie; and the Creative Center, which will be located on Belwin's land between Shephard of the Valley Church on Hudson Road and Indian Trail South.

Making recommendations was daunting at first but quickly taught me a lot about Belwin. Specifically, it helped me see what's different about Belwin from other land management nonprofits: Belwin doesn't just focus on protecting and restoring ecologically important lands; it aims to restore these lands in order to help people make meaningful connections with the natural world around them.

At Belwin, we have 1,364 acres and a wide array of potential experiences for the public. The challenge for the staff at Belwin is helping to communicate the larger purpose of Belwin to the visitors who only know us from visiting one of our properties.

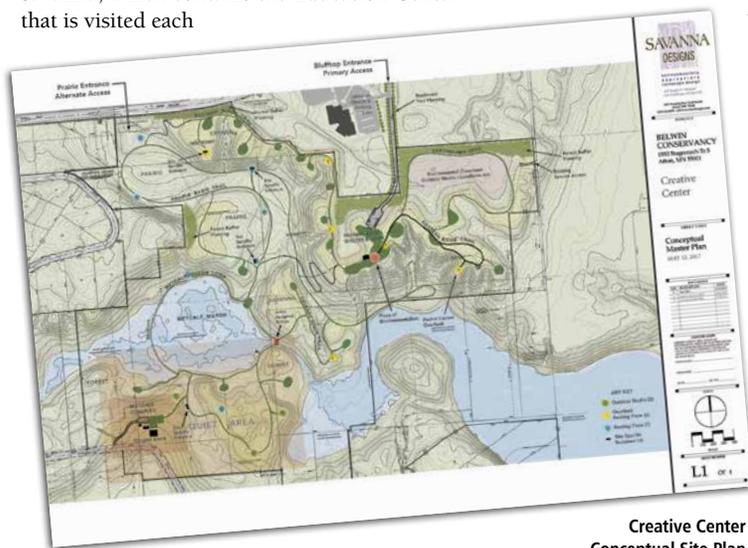
Take the Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields (LWBAF) as an example. Each year, there are an estimated 150,000 visits to these fields

to play sports like football, baseball and soccer, or watch athletes compete. When they drive into the complex, however, it is not at all clear that they are at Belwin Conservancy, nor do they see how the fields are related to our larger purpose. We commonly hear from LWBAF visitors that they had no idea the fields were owned and supported by Belwin, or that the fields are surrounded by restored prairie with walking trails and a bison herd!

We have traditionally talked about Belwin in a way that compartmentalizes the experience: bison are on the prairie to perform restoration; education takes place only at the Education Center. In fact, bison are not just about fulfilling our mission to perform land restoration; they're also part of the educational experience for people of all ages.

So what are our next steps? This year I had the good fortune to work with landscape architects Jim Hagstrom from Savanna Designs and Regina Flanagan, also a public art advisor, to complete a Conceptual Site Plan for the Creative Center. Now I am completing funding plans for all four sites and, together with the staff and board, prioritizing facilities so we can move forward with design and development. I am excited to begin working on enhanced programming and looking at ways to ensure that all visitors to Belwin have an informed and complete picture of who we are and what we do, right from the moment they enter one of our spaces.

I invite you to learn more at our Winter Solstice Bonfire on December 20, 2017. (See the Calendar of Events on page 5 for more information.)



Creative Center Conceptual Site Plan



## A FORCE FOR GOOD

# Meet Steve Martin, Belwin Volunteer



Like many people, Steve Martin first learned about Belwin by attending the annual bison release. Two years ago, the former executive director of Family Pathways witnessed the crowds, felt the excitement, heard the Belwin story at the release, and wanted to learn more.

Today, he's an active member and frequent attendee at Belwin events, especially those involving the Joseph J. Casby Observatory and the Minnesota Astronomical Society.

Steve is more than just a member, however; he is currently developing and structuring an active volunteer program, one that we've needed for several years as interest in volunteering at Belwin has grown.

A career of working with nonprofits taught Steve a lot about the importance of volunteers to the success of an organization. When he learned that Belwin needed someone to help manage the people who are interested in volunteering, Steve felt that he could give back to the organization that he was enjoying so much.

Since he started last spring, Steve has helped to organize the volunteer positions at Belwin into two categories. "If you have a skillset and can commit to a project for a period of time, say three months to a year, that's a staff volunteer," he said. "If you can periodically participate in activities or want to be on a general call list, that's a situational volunteer."

"Almost any talent, skill or interest you have, we can put to use," he continued, sharing why he thinks it's so important to give back by volunteering. "Getting involved in your community is the greatest way to make a difference in our lives and in the lives of people around us."

### Interested in volunteering at Belwin?

Current volunteer opportunities include trail and brush clearing, removal of invasive species, grant writing, database entry, public speaking and presentations, athletic field greeter, and more.

Contact the Belwin office at 651-436-5189 x12, email Steve Martin at [sjm2882@gmail.com](mailto:sjm2882@gmail.com), or complete the Volunteer Interest Application at [www.belwin.org/volunteer/form/](http://www.belwin.org/volunteer/form/). Thank you!

## “Evolution + Decay = Growth”

### Expanded opportunities to discover Belwin

Belwin has added member and public programming in several areas. The property that public school students attend on weekdays is open to all Belwin members on the third Saturday of each month. To give members new experiences, we added guided trout fishing, opened the Joseph J. Casby Observatory for solar scope viewing, provide bison buggy rides at Croixview Prairie, offer a series of guided walks and talks by Naturalist Lynette Anderson, and installed an exhibit of large-format photographs of the flora and fauna of Belwin at LWBAF. These are ongoing examples of expanded programming and opportunities to discover Belwin. Each year we will be adding more for you to discover.

### Growth by engaging new audiences in Belwin

Is it enough to just serve Belwin’s membership? We don’t think so. Our members are fantastic – but we also know that Belwin’s mission means inspiring our (collective) connection to the natural world. Not just people who already care about the natural world. This goal requires Belwin to really stretch. Engaging new audiences means creating reasons for people to want to discover Belwin – solstice bonfires, places where people can gather to celebrate – whether that be an athletic event or an art opening. Intentionally using our 1,364 acres to inspire our connections to the natural world. Inspiration comes in many forms: teachers, musicians, people in search of silence, sculptors, artists, people who like art, birders, and people who use the land to communicate ideas, concepts and understanding.

A new kind of Belwin is taking root.

**Do you have a lead on a foundation or corporation that you think should learn about Belwin?**

Contact Nancy Kafka at 651- 436- 5189 x10 or [nancy.kafka@belwin.org](mailto:nancy.kafka@belwin.org).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Wednesday, December 20, 2017 Winter Solstice Bonfire

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.,  
short program at 7:45 p.m.  
Celebrate the Winter Solstice at Belwin with a roaring bonfire, warm cider, cookies, night hikes and special guests to usher in the return of the light. Bring your family and friends to this event, and don’t forget a mug for cider and a flashlight. RSVP via [www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org) or contact Belwin Program Manager Susan Haugh: 651-436-5189 x11, [susan.haugh@belwin.org](mailto:susan.haugh@belwin.org). Location: Belwin Outdoor Science Lower Classroom, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S. Open to everyone. Suggested donation \$5 per car.

### Saturday, February 17, 2018 Annual Open House

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m., talk at 7:00 p.m.  
Star gazing, woodland walks and campfire with s’mores. Talk at 7:00 p.m. features painter Lindsay Halleckson and composer Mary Ellen Childs, two Minnesotans partaking in The Arctic Circle expedition program next fall. Learn about their work and this unique interdisciplinary residency program in the Svalbard Archipelago just 10 degrees from the North Pole. Location: Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S. Free and open to everyone.

### Open Third Saturdays

11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Once a month (on the third Saturday of the month), we open the Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center to our members. Come explore the trails, participate in programs, meet Belwin staff and connect with nature.

**NEW!** Starting this fall, Open Third Saturdays will include one-hour guided experiences from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Topics through May include: Signs of Winter, Winter Tracks, Winter Tree Identification, Birding Skills, Migration Begins and the Bison Release. No RSVP necessary. Location: Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S. Open to Belwin members, non-members \$10.

### Date To Be Announced NEW! Spring Galaxy Party

Did you know spring is a good time to view other distant galaxies? This is because our Milky Way galaxy is at or below the horizon, giving us an unobstructed view of intergalactic space. Join Minnesota Astronomical Society members to view galaxy superclusters like Markarian’s Chain in the Virgo, Leo and Coma Berenices constellations. Visit [www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org) for event date or contact Belwin Program Manager Susan Haugh: 651-436-5189 x11, [susan.haugh@belwin.org](mailto:susan.haugh@belwin.org). Location: Joseph J. Casby Observatory, 1553 Stagecoach Trail S. Free to Belwin Members, non-members \$10.

### Saturday, May 19, 2018 Bison Release

12:00 p.m. release with new events all day  
Come and welcome a herd of juvenile male bison from NorthStar Bison to their summer home. There will be new events scheduled for the day of the release! Watch [www.belwin.org](http://www.belwin.org) for details. Location: Bison Observation Platform. Park at Lucy Winton Bell Athletic Fields, 15601 Hudson Road, West Lakeland, and follow signs. Free and open to everyone.

All Belwin members are invited to participate for free in any of the events listed. Non-member charge is listed by event. Some events require pre-registration or have limited space. Check website for most up-to-date information.

Visit [www.belwin.org/events](http://www.belwin.org/events) for the complete list of events and to register.

## Stay connected with Belwin online!



Like @belwinconservancy



Follow @belwin\_org



Follow @belwinconservancy



## Q & A with Marta McCormack, Belwin Development Manager

One year ago, Marta McCormack joined Belwin Conservancy as Development Manager. In that time, she's learned a lot about the organization and its members, including the one thing that every member seems to have in common: a passion for the work that Belwin is doing.

### What's been the most rewarding part of your job so far?

The most rewarding part has been coming to understand Belwin's history and sharing the organization with anyone who will listen to me. Belwin is special and unique, and there's nothing else like it.

I wanted to work at a place where I wake up and enjoy spreading the word of something I really believe in. I want to help explain to people why it's important to support Belwin so we can still enjoy open spaces; so that rare and endangered species have protected land; so that kids can continue to learn about nature first-hand.



I love this job. I love talking to people, engaging with members and setting up appointments to talk with others about why Belwin is important.

### Why is supporting Belwin Conservancy important?

For many reasons! Because Belwin has so many unique features, and depending on people's passions and interests, I can make a connection to what's important to them. If people are interested in undeveloped land and endangered species, Belwin supports that. If they are interested in youth education and athletics, we support that, too.

We have forests, restored prairies, creeks and oak savanna. We also have bison, athletic fields and an education center for public school children. Our 1,364 acres of protected land is beautiful! It's spectacular, with amazing vistas and topography. It has something for everyone.

### What's been the most challenging part of your job?

A big hurdle, especially when I started, is that we're such a diverse organization. We have ball fields, bison, kids who come here, land we're protecting and restoring; unique and special things. It was hard for me at first to explain that. Now I find that it works to my advantage.

### How can Belwin members help you make connections with potential new members?

I love to be invited to business events to share our message. If you work at a business that hosts environmental organization days or nonprofit fairs, I'm happy to come and meet with people.

We want to be a 1,000-member organization by our 50th anniversary in 2021. A great way to grow our membership is to have current members connect Belwin to people and organizations that could become future members.

## MAKING CONNECTIONS

### Meet New Member Wade Wenzel

We're pleased to welcome new members to the Belwin family and look forward to introducing you to some of them in each issue of The Meadowlark. Read on to learn about Wade's special connection to Belwin, as told in his own words.

"I'm a creative director at a small ad agency in downtown Minneapolis. I live in Oakdale with my wife, Audrey, and our two cats, Baker and Mogli. My hobbies include kayaking the St. Croix River, camping, cycling, illustration, and tinkering with electronics.

"I first came to Belwin when I was a student at Prosperity Heights Elementary School in St. Paul. I was fortunate enough to attend several field trips to Belwin, where we received hands-on education about science and nature.

"I loved science and animals as a child and dreamt of becoming a veterinarian, so the Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center was a fascinating place for me. We did nature walks through the woods and prairies, collected and studied

insects, dissected bird pellets, and played games. My mom would always pack me an awesome lunch, too! It was definitely my favorite day of the school year.

"I recently reconnected with Belwin when I was asked to help pull together Belwin's Meadowlark newsletter. I was able to revisit the property, meet Nancy Kafka, the executive director, and learn about the many programs and events held at the property. It all came back to me, all of the great memories I had of this place. It was an emotional reunion for me.

"I became a member because Belwin is still working with Saint Paul Public Schools, continuing and expanding their efforts to use the property for education. I knew I needed to be a part of it, to give back somehow.

"My favorite thing about Belwin is hands-on education. The opportunity for children to receive hands-on science education is critical for developing an appreciation for nature and an understanding of what conservation is. We live in a fast-paced world of computers,

mobile devices, virtual experiences and noise. It's easy to forget about the natural world around us, and how vulnerable it is. Especially if you've never experienced it up close.

"The collaborative efforts of Belwin, Saint Paul Public Schools, and the institutions and foundations Belwin works with to bring nature conservation education to the youth of Minnesota is why I'm investing in it. Belwin enriched my life and I hope it will continue to enrich the lives of children and adults for many years to come."



## Members are the heart of Belwin

Whether you're a new member or someone who has supported Belwin for years, we thank you for believing in our work and helping us fulfill our mission of Inspiring Connections Through Nature.

The following is a list of those who made donations to Belwin Conservancy between February 23, 2017 and September 29, 2017. Thank you!

## Give to the Max on Nov. 16

Thursday, November 16, 2017 is Give to the Max Day (GTMD), the biggest giving day of the year in Minnesota. Please make a donation to Belwin Conservancy and your gift will be matched!

Give to the MAX connects people with nonprofits working to make Minnesota a great place to live, work and play. If you're thinking about making a contribution to Belwin, join the GTMD movement and schedule your gift now via [www.givemn.org/organization/Belwin-Conservancy](http://www.givemn.org/organization/Belwin-Conservancy).



<b>What</b>	Give to the Max event
<b>When</b>	November 1–16, 2017
<b>How</b>	Go to <a href="http://www.givemn.org/organization/Belwin-Conservancy">www.givemn.org/organization/Belwin-Conservancy</a> and make a donation
<b>Why</b>	Your donation will be matched, increasing your impact!

### Individual Donors

Byron Adams & Tara Reddinger-Adams  
 Viki, Timothy & Mirand Ailport  
 Bruce Albrecht  
 Madeline Allan  
 Ines Alonso & Clayton Lindsey  
 Dennis Amoth  
 C. William & Evaughn Anderson  
 Rolf Anderson  
 Anonymous  
 Lee & Bake Baker  
 Maya Balle  
 Douglas & Rene Barclay  
 Don & Jeanne Barrett  
 John & Nan Beard  
 Ford Bell  
 David Bergland  
 Mark Bergland  
 Lorelee Bergmark  
 Mrs. & Mr. G. C. Bird  
 Lindell & Sandra Blanchette  
 Dawn Boernke  
 Laura & Carl Bracklein  
 Lois Brenner  
 Erica & Wiley Buck  
 Karen Buggs  
 Alberta Burns & Adelia Roesler  
 Robert & Susan Burns  
 Lori Callahan  
 Jeanne Caturia  
 Julia & Christopher Charlsen  
 Paul & Linda Chimzar  
 Danley & Dianne Christensen  
 Carol Clark  
 Eileen & Gary Classon  
 Ann Conzemius  
 Jim Cox  
 Pat & Steve Cox  
 Marsha & Larry Croes  
 Barbara Dacy & Jodie Belknap  
 Susan & James Davis  
 David & Diana Dawkins  
 Kevin & Kristin Denis  
 William Eisendrath  
 Cynthia Elder  
 Ken & Lynne Engberg  
 Rebecca Enos & Patricia Walker  
 Georgia Entenza  
 Laura Fairweather  
 Peter & Colleen Findlay  
 David Fink  
 Shann Finwall  
 Regina Flanagan  
 Silas & Olivia Ford  
 Caroline & Dutton Foster  
 Lynn Gallandat  
 Roger Gay  
 Cathy Geist  
 Cynthia & John Gilpin  
 Sharon Glasrud  
 Susan Green & Armand Cohen  
 Carol & Richard Gross  
 Colette & Dan Hagen  
 Barbara & Joe Halligan  
 Rob Hanson  
 Paul & Nancy Harris  
 Holly Heaser  
 Melanie Henriksen  
 Connie Hess  
 Wendy Hill

Susan & Charles Hipp  
 Diana Hippie  
 Christy & Douglas Hlavacek  
 Beth Honetschlager & Donald Greenebaum, Jr.  
 Philip Hoversten & Patricia Sausser  
 Mariae Hunter  
 Joel & Laura Jensen  
 Lynne Johnson  
 Mary Johnson  
 Sarah Johnson & Jill Dawe  
 Sheila & Ron Johnson  
 Trena Johnson  
 Sherwood Johnston & Laurie Maher  
 Shelly Kafka  
 John Kaul & Gloria Gunville  
 Cindy Kinde  
 George & Julie Kinney  
 Ann Kooiker  
 Paul Kotz & Susanne Holderried  
 Beth & Robert Kroening  
 Gregory & Peg Kroiss  
 Valerie & Jeffery Kubal  
 Betsy & Douglas Lake  
 Russell Lake  
 Kevin & Mary Landgrebe  
 LeeAnn Landstrom  
 Richard & Linda Law  
 Charles & Hope Lea  
 Ann Ledy  
 Michael Leimer  
 Jeanne & Mitch Leppicello  
 Drake & Kim Lightner  
 Richard Loe  
 Amanda Lundgren  
 Kim Makie  
 William Mann  
 Laurel March  
 Beth McLaughlin  
 Joan & Rick Meierotto  
 Steve Mesmer  
 Alida Messinger  
 Lynda Meyers  
 Mary Miller  
 Meleah Miller  
 Roger Miller & Mary Beata Zweber  
 Victoria Miller & Jim Carter  
 Rebecca Morris  
 David & Sharon Mrozinski  
 Ross Mumford  
 Dave & Tricia Munter  
 Alice & Stan Musiak  
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard Newmark  
 Douglas Nienhuis & Twylla Erickson  
 Randy Okan & Dennis Kearney  
 Mary Olson  
 Catherine Olyphant & Bart Hoekstra  
 Doug Parker  
 Erin Pavlica  
 Annie & Mary Perkins  
 John Pundsack & Joe Briol  
 Tierney & Marc Putman  
 Patrick Rafferty  
 Todd & Anne Ringgenberg  
 Tamsie Ringler  
 Kathryn Roberts & James Hiniker  
 Lucy Rogers & Larry Grant  
 Kari & Daniel Rominski

Melissa & Jeff Rones  
 Amanda Rudolph  
 Dan & Nancy Ruh  
 Kathy & Ted Saltzman  
 Lee Ann & Dr. Stephen Schmitz  
 Sherrill & Paul Schottler  
 Andrea Schotzko  
 Denise Schullo  
 Dan & Sue Schultz  
 Kate & Greg Seitz  
 Beth & John Sevenich  
 Marjorie Sigel & Richard VanDeusen  
 Anne Simpson  
 Connie & Charles Simpson  
 Adam & Christine Smerud  
 Erin & Steve Smillie  
 Chris Smith  
 Robert Snyder  
 Kathy St. Peters  
 James Stahnke  
 Sue Steinwall  
 Judith Steltzner  
 Ron Sternal & Nancy Gibson  
 The Steury Family  
 Ladonna & Fred Stickan  
 Court Storey & Pam Neary  
 Jill Tammen & Dave Long  
 Nick Temali  
 John Daniel Thoma & Kate Cummings  
 Hal & Beverly Tiffany  
 Valts Treibergs  
 Jean Marie & Peter Ulland  
 Michele Vaillancourt  
 Mary Lou & Paul Volkert  
 Donna Von Lehe  
 Nancy & Dan Voss  
 Doris Wambach  
 Colleen Watson & Mary McDougall  
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# BELWIN CONSERVANCY

1553 Stagecoach Trail South  
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## *Inspiring through Nature*

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

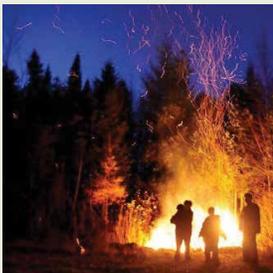
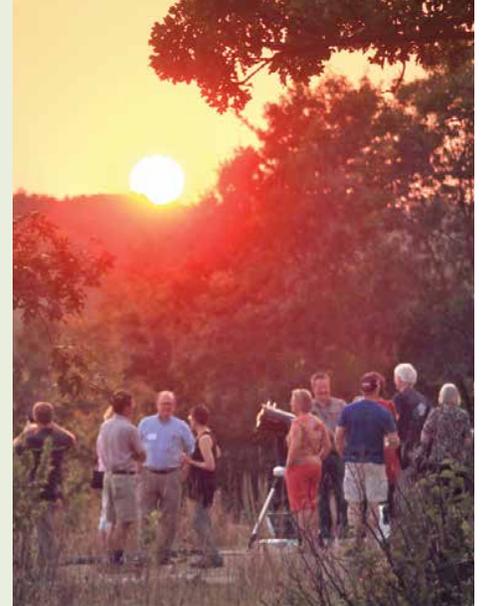
### Night in Nature

On a warm and clear night in mid-September, we opened the gates of Belwin to members and friends for our annual Night in Nature event. Billed as an evening to experience Belwin and fall in love with it, the perfect weather and gorgeous sunset did not disappoint.

The Belwin team and event co-hosts welcomed guests to the Belwin Outdoor Science Education Center. Attendees explored the center and its trails, sipped beer and wine donated by Lift Bridge Brewery and Swirl, and munched on appetizers and desserts from NorthStar Bison, The Wedge & Wheel, Cafe Latte and Great Harvest Bread Company.

Executive Director Nancy Kafka spoke to the guests about Belwin's history, the desire for new members, and partnerships that help us fulfill our mission. Members of the Minnesota Astronomical Society were present to show guests sunspots and the rings of Saturn via several telescopes, and Western Wisconsin Photography Club photographs were displayed across the landscape.

Other sponsors helped to spread the word about the event and cover operating expenses: Afton Old Bank, Bryan Rock Products, First State Bank and Trust, Holz Real Estate Group, Mantyla Well Drilling, Navigator Search Advisors LLC, Prairie Restorations, and Squire House Gardens. We're grateful to all the sponsors, to our new members and to everyone who supported Belwin at Night in Nature.



### Save the Date: Winter Solstice Bonfire — December 20

It was such a success last year that we're making it an annual event! **Join us on Dec. 20 for our second Winter Solstice Bonfire at the Belwin Outdoor Science Lower Classroom.** Bring the whole family for night hikes, cookies and warm drinks, as well as a short program. Come ready to connect with nature and celebrate the longest night of the year! *See page 5 for more details, and other upcoming events at Belwin.*