

Conservation Corner

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Each spring the Pocahontas Conservation staff members pause in their busy spring schedule to host our annual School Days and Outdoor Classroom. This year's special day for area Iowa History students from Laurens-Marathon, Newell-Fonda, Pocahontas Area, and Pocahontas Catholic fell on Tuesday, May 16. Though the weather was somewhat unsettled, 105 fifth-grade students and 20 adults enjoyed the warmth of our cultural, natural, and family heritage at Cooper's Cove, Whitetail Ridge, and Wiegert Prairie Farmstead.

At Cooper's Cove, students had a chance to try their hand at canoeing and kayaking on the pond. If you see Leslie Aden, ask her how it went. We also went hiking along Whitetail Ridge, learning about the spring wildflowers and the First Iowans to travel and live along *Wassakapompa*, the River with Lizards. Under the oak savanna, Roger Eichelberger once again shared his knowledge and enthusiasm for black powder muskets and primitive hunting.

Back at the Wiegert Prairie Farmstead, Dick Gruber shared a pictorial map of the various buildings found on a typical 1900's Iowa farm. At the Lincoln No. 5 Country Schoolhouse, Marcia Leu greeted the students and led them through a typical school day of reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic.

In the farmhouse, Dorothy Lamberti and Connie Dallenbach led the students on a scavenger hunt of the kitchen, pantry, parlor, and bedroom as they followed clues to find items from a typical day in the life of a 1900's Iowa farm family. I thought you might enjoy going on the hunt as well. And while I won't be able to provide home-baked rye bread with freshly churned butter, dried apples, or rhubarb dipped in sugar, hopefully a journey back in time will bring back a few of the sights, sounds, smells, and tastes of days now past.

Gather some apples to make a pie. This machine makes the peelings fly.

The horse worked hard, but now he's dead. We'll make a cover for the bed.

There's no indoor plumbing, only a pot. Not much fun, but that's all you've got.

The only running water was when Harry ran with a pail. But you could pump soft water from a cistern without fail.

Rub-a-dub-dub, there's a man in the tub, but only on Saturday night. Come Monday morning, the tub will hold clothes, soaking until they are white.

Did you solve every clue? If so, give yourself an A.

As always, I'm thankful for PCCB staff members Brian, Kyle, Aaron, and Jill as well as our summer staff and our faithful presenters for their efforts and time in upkeep as well as program preparation and presentation. I'm also thankful for the chance to spend a day in the woods or on the farm and for the chance to watch young people interact with history and nature. Lastly, I'm thankful that the large tree, felled that evening by the storm that had been brewing all day, just missed the house. Whew!

