

# Kids sample prehistoric native life

Middle youth of Colby participated in the "Library in Motion" event organized by Children's Librarian Judy Kleinsorge of the Pioneer Memorial Library.

Money to help with the cost of the trip came from the Thomas County Attorney's Special Law Enforcement Fund at the Thomas County Community Foundation and the Friends of the Library.

Students arrived on Saturday morning, Oct. 11, ready for a few hours of travel and the possibility of a cold, wet day. This did not dampen their enthusiasm or spirit. The adults and youths traveled to Wellfleet, Neb., to the Dancing Leaf Cultural Learning Center.

There, we were intrigued by learning about the ancient existence of the paleoindians, prehistoric mammals and dinosaurs. Owner Les Hosick created memorable pictures of how ancient mammals such as elephants and rhino-type animals would have roamed the southwest Nebraska and northwest Kansas area 10,000 years ago. He showed us tusks, teeth, jaw bones and even leg parts from this period.

His story then turned to the Indians known as the Upper Republican Culture. We had the pleasure to sit inside a replica of an earth lodge that evidence shows existed 800-1300 years ago. Hosick made the way of life and traditions come alive for us.

He demonstrated the efficiency of the lodges, the matriarchal traditions of the tribes, the games and ways of hunting. We then took an hour walking tour around the hillside, creek and general area learning about medicinal plants, hunting, water being the source of life and the gift of trees and animals.

The kids were able to make musical instruments and find out about food sources, both plant and animal. We were taken to the top of one hill, where a medicine wheel had been recreated to examine the cycles of life as they apply to the moon and the sun. At the end of the tour, we were invited into the owners' private home, where we pounded yucca leaves flat to make friendship bracelets.

Some of our youths were expert in this, while others like myself needed remedial leaf bashing assistance! Yucca plant fibers become very strong when a natural twist is allowed to form. Even two weeks later, my bracelet shows no sign of weakening.

This was what the lesson was about. Friendship that would remain strong even in the midst of difficult circumstances and hardship. Once our friendship was established, we ate food that might



MELANY WILKS/Pioneer Memorial Library  
Students on a "Library in Motion" trip the Dancing Leaf Cultural Learning Center in Wellfleet, Neb., learned how to pound yucca leaves flat to make friendship bracelets.



**Melany Wilks**  
• Library Links

have been eaten by Native Americans: buffalo stew, raw vegetables, homemade blue corn muffins and hot sliced baked apples.

If you are interested in experiencing this, take an online tour at [www.dancingleaf.com](http://www.dancingleaf.com).

We found out after arriving at the Cornstalk Haunted Festival in Grant, Neb., that they had to close due to flooding. We went bowling! Everyone had fun and some even made strikes. Thanks to all who made this possible!

The library is having a two day Spooktacular Book Sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. today and 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Saturday. And if you loose power or do not have a computer, the library has about 14.

During bad weather, when school has been cancelled, and kids flood into the library (Oh yeah!—that's what we are here for!), we are reserving an area and some computers just for adults.

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