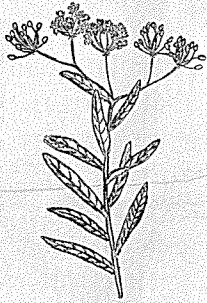
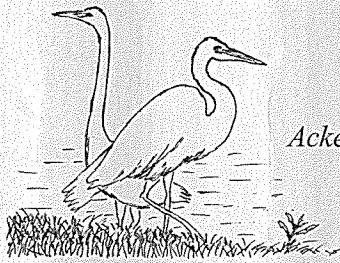


THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

What to look for and try out: the Great Western Trail in DuPage County.



Butterfly
Weed

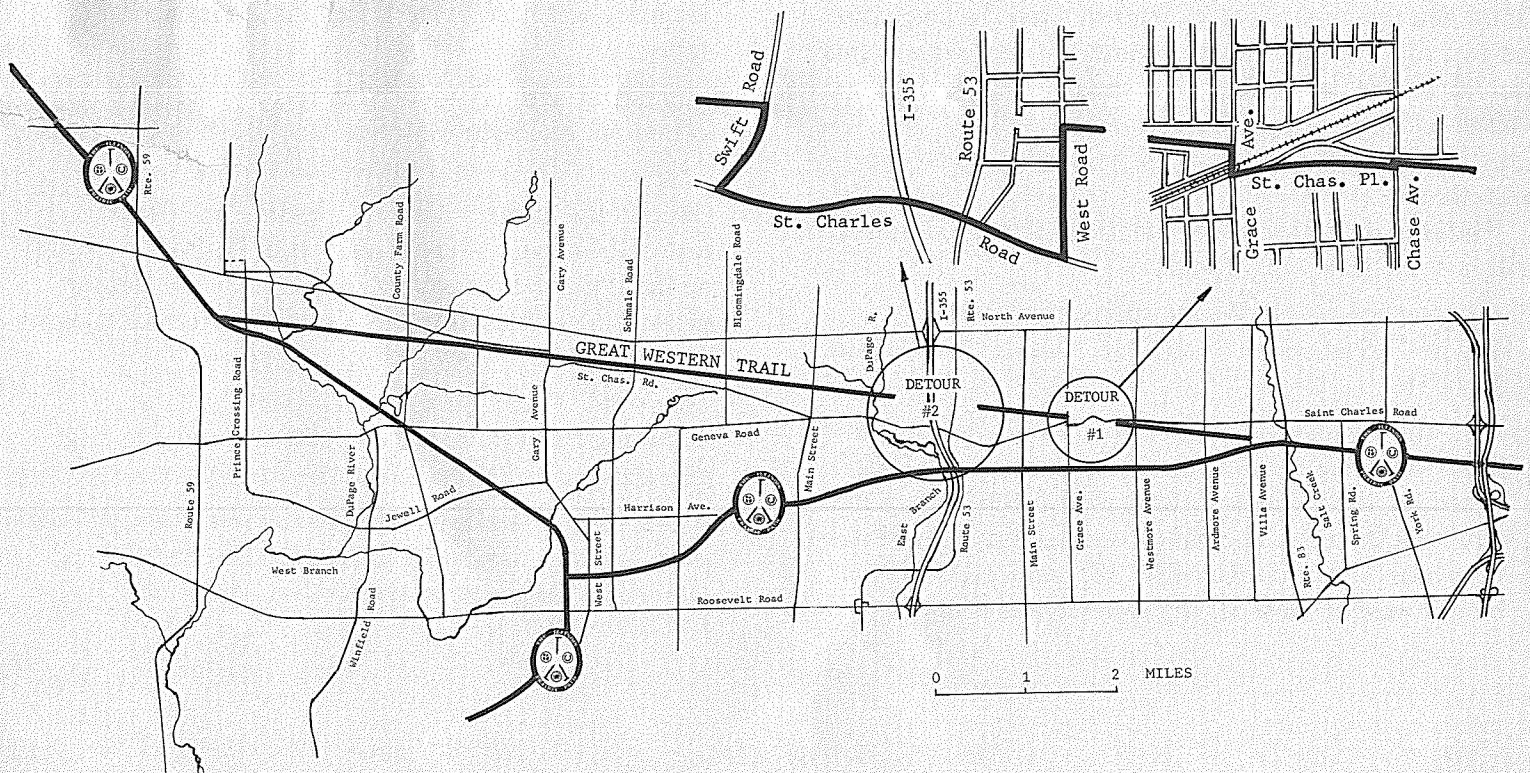


Great Egret

The DuPage County Trails System now boasts its second trail, officially opened on June 17, 1992. The spanking new Great Western Trail is 11.4 miles long and connects to its big sister, the Illinois Prairie Path, at Villa Avenue in Villa Park and also just west of Prince Crossing Road in rural West Chicago. The DuPage County Division of Transportation is responsible for major maintenance and development of both trails while The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation offers consultation and various other services provided by its volunteers.

The new trail is not continuous yet. Gaps which should be bridged to provide safe grade separations occur in the Lombard area at St. Charles Road, the Chicago and NorthWestern Railroad, Grace Street, Park Street, and I-355. The map shows suggested bypasses. The trail also crosses numerous residential streets at grade and seven four-lane arterials.

Points of interest adjoining the trail include the Villa Park Historical Museum and old Ovaltine plant, Community Park in Lombard, the Commonwealth Edison generating station at Swift Road, Ackerman Park in Glen Ellyn, and bridges over the East Branch of the DuPage River, Klein Creek, the West Branch of the DuPage River, and a small tributary. Colorful prairie flowers are seen at Churchill Forest Preserve in Lombard, the old St. Stephens Cemetery west of Schmale Road in Carol Stream, and in Timber Ridge Forest Preserve between County Farm Road and Prince Crossing Road. Great egrets abound in the forest preserve wetland west of Prince Crossing.



GOVERNOR JIM EDGAR TO BIKE ON ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH

The first annual Governor's Bike Ride will be held on the Illinois Prairie Path on Sunday, October 11, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Word of this great honor for our trail has come from Rick Pietruszka, trails coordinator for the Illinois Department of Conservation. The bike ride will highlight Illinois Trails Appreciation Month, set for October this year.

Governor Edgar, a long-time bicycling enthusiast, will ride the Prairie Path from Wheaton to Elmhurst in recognition of the historic part our trail has played in the rail-trail movement. The idea began right here in DuPage County when our founder, May Theilgaard Watts, wrote her famous letter to the editor of the Chicago Tribune in 1963 proposing conversion of the abandoned Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railroad

right-of-way into a recreational nature trail.

Many local citizens will want to ride with the governor to learn more about the tourism potential and the quality-of-life benefits of a great multipurpose trail such as ours and about the natural and historic sites it links. Among these are: Volunteer Bridge and Prairie, the Lincoln

Marsh, Founders Park and the old County Courthouse in Wheaton; Prairie Path Park and the Valparaiso Moraine in Glen Ellyn; the historic district in Lombard; the Historical Museum, Ardmore Avenue Station and Ovaltine plant in Villa Park; and the Great Western Prairie and restored Great Western station in Elmhurst.

Watch your newspaper for further details of this event. ■



Outdoorsman Governor Jim Edgar gets ready to walk in Glen Ellyn's Fourth of July parade.

FIRST NATIONAL RAIL-TRAIL CELEBRATION SET FOR OCTOBER 3

The National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy announces that the 500th rail-trail in the United States will open on October 3. Dozens of trails are vying for the Magic 500 honor and the winner will be known soon. To celebrate the day, rail-trails across the country are planning events including hikes and bird walks, speeches and ribbon-cuttings, bridge dedications, historical reenactments, wheelchair races, horseback rides, and bikeathons.

The Illinois Prairie Path, America's first great rail-trail, will host the following events:

1. A horseback ride in Wayne sponsored by the Wayne-DuPage Hunt Pony Club. Leader: Joan Hamill, 584-3567.
2. A 12-mile round trip hike on the Illinois Prairie Path Elgin Branch beginning at 9:00 a.m. at Rathje Park in Wheaton, led by Dick Wilson, (708) 299-7882 (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) The park is located on the northwest corner of Roosevelt Rd. (Rte. 38) and Delles St., two blocks west of West St. Bring lunch and drink.

3. A wheelchair ramble along the IPP through Lincoln Marsh to County Farm Road and back. Approximately five miles round trip. Meet at 9:30 a.m. at Lincoln Avenue and IPP, Wheaton. Parking on residential streets.

Leaders: Marianjoy Athletic Team, the "Free-Wheelers".
Information: Maureen Mausser, head of sports program at Marianjoy Fitness Center, 462-4148.

4. Open house at the Villa Park Historical Museum (a restored Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railroad Station) on the IPP at Villa Avenue. The IPP Visitor Center, located in the museum, has a folding screen displaying scenes of Path history, people and places.
5. Tour of the Great Western Prairie in Elmhurst, adjoining the IPP; also seed gathering and planting, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Leader: Keith Olson, 834-7357.
6. A free bike repair clinic at Hillside Schwinn Cyclery, 4049 Washington Street, Hillside, between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m. RSVP to Instructor Jim Abenante, (708) 544-7200. ■

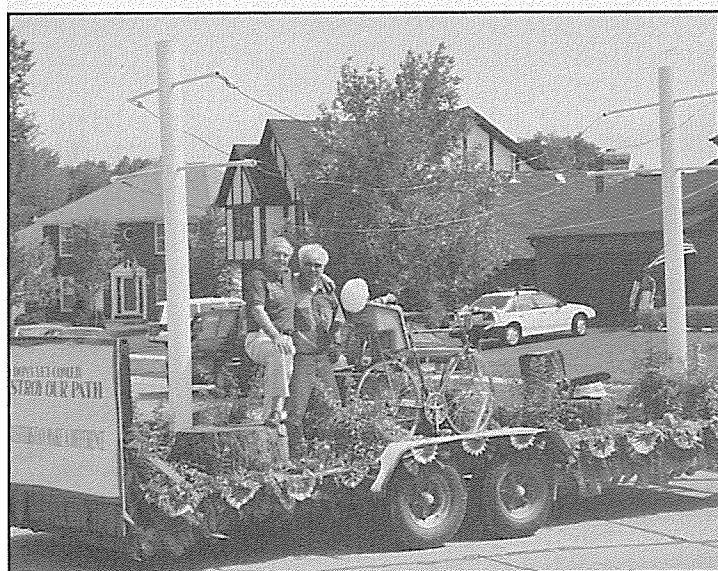
WARRENVILLE COMPLETES NEW CONNECTING TRAIL

In August the City of Warrenville put the finishing touches on a two-mile-long and eight-foot-wide concrete trail along Batavia Road connecting the Illinois Prairie Path to the extensive Fermi National Laboratory trail system. It also provides a safe route for children to walk or ride their bikes to school and for local residents to get to shopping centers or workplaces. This major improvement in the regional trail network was built for the city in two stages, by Triggi Co. of West Chicago and Alliance Contractors, Woodstock. The project cost approximately \$350,000, of which \$175,000 was a matching grant from the Illinois Department of Conservation Bikeways Fund.

Surprised trail users are beginning to discover this new trail (it needs some signs to identify it); and they are

delighted to learn that the trail opens up a loop trip approximately fourteen miles long utilizing the Illinois Prairie Path and the scenic Fermilab Trail via connecting links along Batavia Road and along Kirk Road in Kane County. Kudos to Mayor Vivian Lund and the City of Warrenville and also to the Illinois Department of Conservation (Batavia Road trail), the United States Department of Energy (Fermilab Trail), the Kane County Forest Preserve District, Kane County Highway Department, and the U.S. Department of Transportation (Kirk Road trail), and the DuPage County Division of Transportation and Kane County Forest Preserve District (Illinois Prairie Path in DuPage and Kane Counties)! This loop trail must be one of the best examples in the entire state of intergovernmental cooperation. ■

FOURTH OF JULY PRIZES AND HONORS FOR IPP VOLUNTEERS



DuPage County Board Chairman Aldo Botti (left) congratulates nurseryman Bob Siebert, who donated the truck and flatbed trailer for the float. The sign reads: "Don't let Com Ed destroy our Path. Your letters can make a difference."

The Warrenville-based "Friends of the Prairie Path" designed and built a float that enlivened the Fourth of July parades in Warrenville, Lisle and Wheaton. Displaying two tall home-made utility poles draped with simulated high-tension power lines and surrounded by tree stumps and small shrubby undergrowth, the float showed how the Illinois Prairie Path in Warrenville will look if Commonwealth Edison installs its proposed 138,000 volt lines. DuPage County Board Chairman Aldo Botti liked the float so much he walked beside it in all three parades. The parade judges also liked it because it received the "First Place for Private Citizens" Award in Warrenville and a second place award and \$75 prize in Lisle. (Unfortunately the float got to Wheaton too late for the

judging.) Friends of the Prairie Path members who contributed their time and talent to the float project and who have been leaders in the Com Ed struggle are Kathy Bamber, John and Diane Bengel, Linda Davis, Bob and Maureen Rawls, Mike and Connie Schmidt, and Bob and Bev Siebert. Since the controversy is not ended, they ask defenders of the Prairie Path to contact Rep. Lee Daniels, (708)530-2700; Sen. "Pate" Philip, (708)941-0094; and Com Ed, 1-(800)EDISON-1.

Illinois Prairie Path volunteers were recognized in Glen Ellyn too, where Jean and Paul Mooring served as Grand Marshals for the parade. "Governor Jim Edgar and his wife were walking a short distance behind our car," said Jean. "It was a beautiful, exciting day and a lot of fun." ■



Glen Ellyn Grand Marshals Jean and Paul Mooring. A green-and-white Illinois Prairie Path logo sign graced the front bumper.

VILLA PARK CARNIVAL RAISES QUESTIONS

Is the Illinois Prairie Path running through a quiet residential area the appropriate location for a large-scale carnival? The neighbors don't think so nor does The Illinois Prairie Path board of directors. The carnival, sponsored by the Village of Villa Park and the local Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, was held July 16 to July 19 to benefit various local charities including a playground for handicapped children. The neighbors have reported to public officials, to The Illinois Prairie Path board, and to the newspapers that the Prairie Path has always been a peaceful and beautiful recreational nature trail, which enhances their quality of life, and that it was never designed to accommodate thousands of beer-drinking carnival-goers or their high-decibel rock music, which caused dishes to rattle until late at night in nearby homes. The flashing lights from the many rides were another irritant as was the fact that two adjoining streets and a part of the Prairie Path itself were blocked to accommodate either rides or the beer tent. At all times Path bicyclists had to walk their bikes on a wood chip path around one ride which was located right on the limestone trail; and during the hours the carnival was in operation they had to walk their bikes through the entire three-block section. The neighbors also expressed concern about the damage that was being done to the grass on both sides of the Path as well as to the Path surface by the heavy carnival trucks.



"Music Fest" ride completely blocked the trail. All path users had to walk around it on wood chips.

The Illinois Prairie Path board joins our friends and neighbors in Villa Park in strongly urging the DuPage County Board Transportation Committee and staff to work with the Village of Villa Park and its public-spirited service organizations to find a more suitable location for this event next year. ■

VILLAGES OF MAYWOOD AND FOREST PARK PROMOTE DES PLAINES RIVER BRIDGE

In July the Villages of Maywood and Forest Park in Cook County adopted a Joint Resolution advocating development of a pedestrian/bicycle/shuttle bus bridge over the Des Plaines River to link the Illinois Prairie Path in Maywood with the Des Plaines Avenue CTA Rapid Transit station in Forest Park. According to William J. Connerty, Maywood village planner, the project could be funded under the Operation Green Light program of the Illinois Department of Transportation, which is a program designed to alleviate traffic congestion in Northeastern Illinois. It will link up the Greenway corridors lying throughout the region into a combined linear trail system connected to the regional transit facilities.

The resolution emphasizes the need for this connection because bicycle trails and mass transit facilities help relieve traffic congestion, improve productivity for business and industry, conserve fuel and reduce air pollution by reducing auto trips.

This project has the enthusiastic support of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation, the Chicagoland Bicycle Federation, and the Openlands Project of Chicago through its forward-looking Greenways program. Says Betsy Otto, Openlands Greenways Director, "The Maywood connection is a critical gateway west, east, north and south along the Des Plaines River. It's a hub where all trails could come together." ■

FALL ACTIVITIES, rain or shine

■ Saturdays, September 19, October 17

Work Days. Leaders: Jim Stewart, 231-8870, and Paul Mooring, 469-4289.

■ Saturday, October 3

First National Rail-trail Celebration. See page 2 for listing of special IPP events. Coordinator: Ken Moss, 833-9159.

■ Sunday, October 11

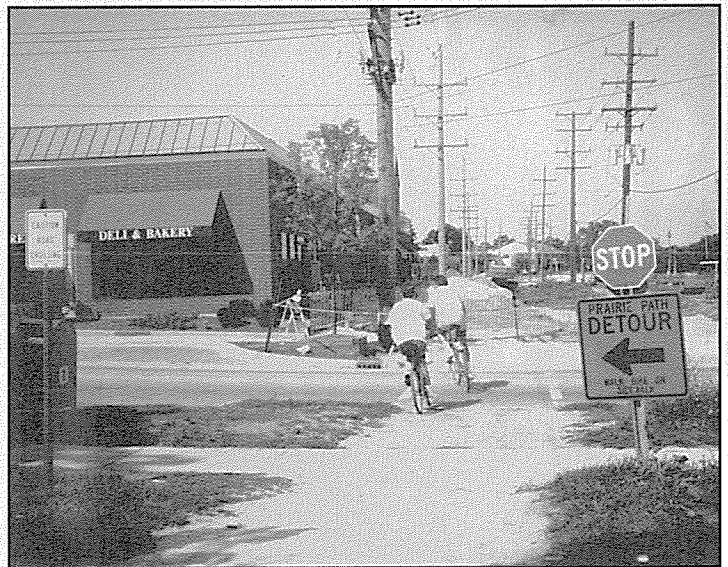
First Annual Governor's Bike Ride. Information: Jean Mooring, 469-4289.

■ Sunday, November 1

Illinois Prairie Path Annual Meeting. 2:00 p.m., Student Resource Center, College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn. Master of Ceremonies Ken Moss promises "a very special speaker this year to be announced later." Watch the mail for your invitation.

GLEN ELLYN IMPROVES DOWNTOWN SECTION OF IPP

This summer Illinois Prairie Path users have been patiently detouring around the two-block section of the trail in Glen Ellyn between Main Street and Park Blvd. south of the Chicago and NorthWestern station. They are eagerly awaiting the opening of the renovated trail which is scheduled for completion by the end of October. This major village project includes complete removal of the old parking lot surface on Stewart Avenue, new storm sewers and some water main improvements and redesign of the parking lots to provide more spaces. The contractor is Martam Construction Co. of Glen Ellyn, and the cost is \$450,000 for the parking lot improvements plus \$100,000 for landscaping, which includes construction and landscaping of the Illinois Prairie Path. The Prairie Path will be enhanced by new lighting (decorative streetlamps similar to those used in the rest of the central business district) and a smooth curvilinear blacktop surface. The ten-foot-wide paved trail will wind through a twenty-five-foot-wide strip landscaped with shade trees, ornamental trees, evergreens, deciduous shrubs, groundcovers, and perennials. The new trail segment will be surfaced in time for Governor Edgar to use it during his October 11th bike ride. ■



IPP cyclists detour south along Park Blvd. to Duane Street to bypass construction.

WEST CHICAGO PRAIRIE EVENTS

Meet at the West Chicago Prairie parking lot, located on the east side of Industrial Drive between Western and Downs. Be on time! We often go to other parts of the Prairie and may be difficult to find. Information: Mel Hoff, 393-4715.

Date	Event	Time	Description
Saturday, September 12	Seed Collection	9:00 a.m. to noon	General seed collection, mostly forbs.
Saturday, September 26	Field Trip	9:00 a.m. to noon	Good displays of asters (5 species), Goldenrods (4 species), Bottle Gentian and tall grasses in seed.
Saturday, September 26	Seed Collection	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	General seed collection, mostly forbs.
Saturday, October 24	Field Trip	9:00 a.m. to noon	"What flower was this?" We will be looking at seed heads instead of flowers (just as striking and interesting) and enjoying the subtle fall colors of the prairie.
Saturday, October 24	Seed Collection	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	General seed collection, mostly grasses.
Saturday, November 7	Restoration workday	8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Dogwood Destruction Day.
Saturday, November 21	Restoration workday	9:00 a.m. to noon	Clearing invading brush and/or raking in seed. Also rain date for 11/7. In that event time is 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, December 12	Restoration workday	9:00 a.m. to noon	Clearing invading brush and/or raking in seed.

– Jean C. Mooring, Editor –

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 Family \$15
 Organization/Supporting \$20
 Contributing \$25
 Sustaining \$50
 Patron \$100
 Lifetime \$500



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