

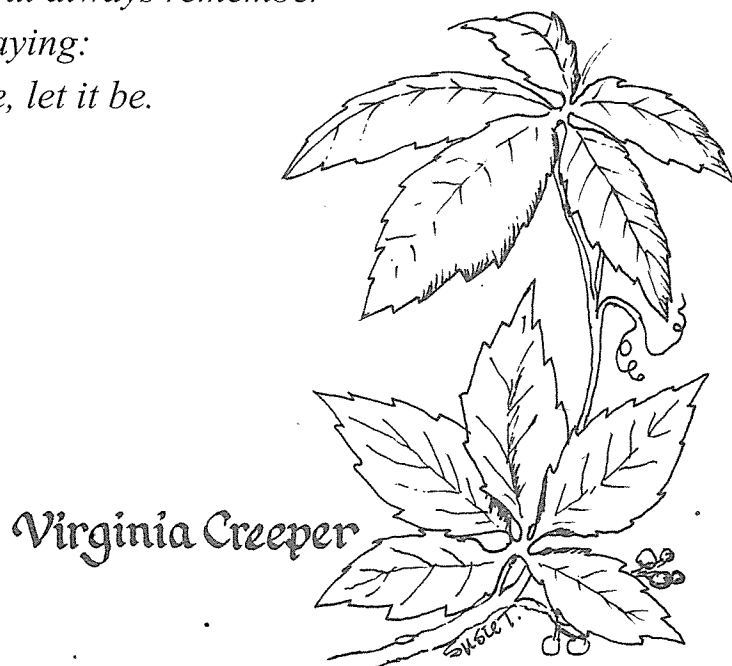
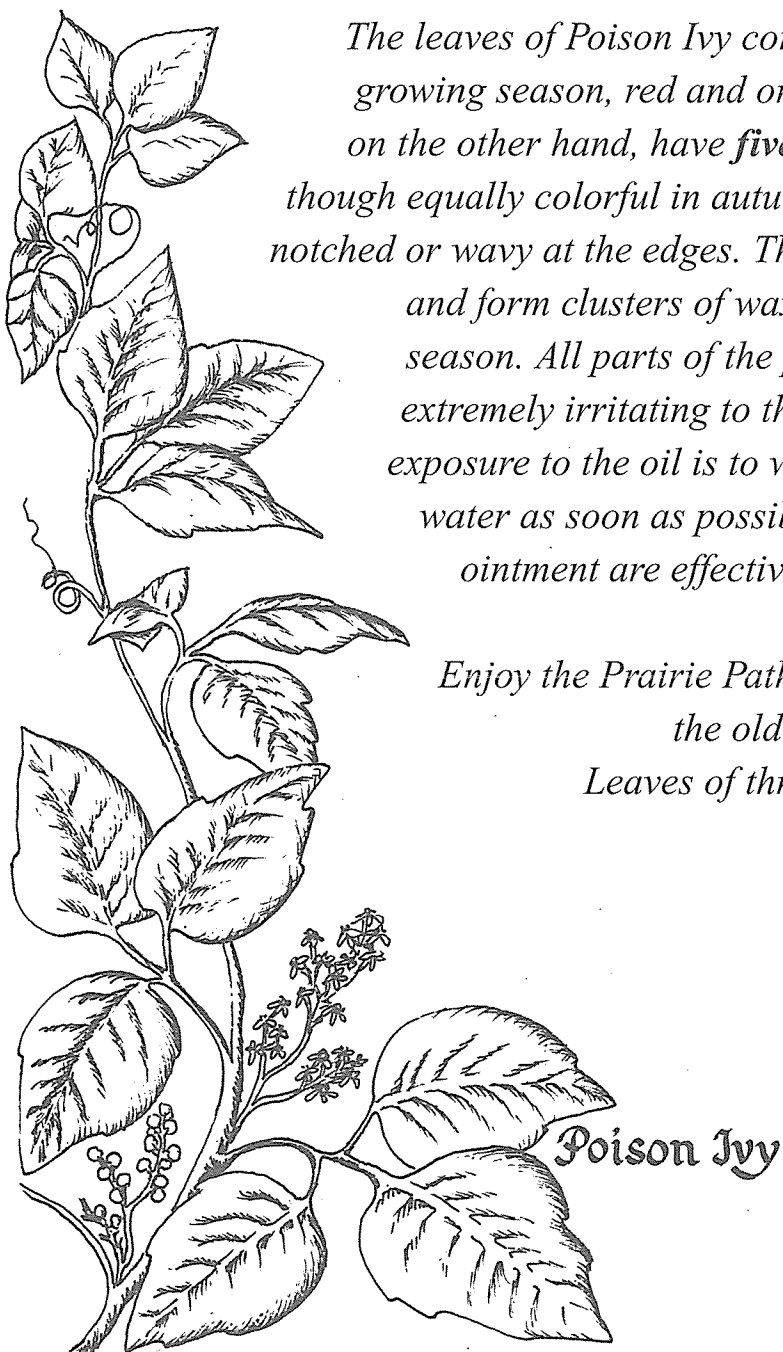
# THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

## *What to look out for: Poison Ivy.*

*Poison Ivy is a handsome plant and grows as a vine or shrub in many places along the Illinois Prairie Path. It is sometimes confused with Virginia Creeper, an equally attractive but harmless vine which is also common along the Path.*

*The leaves of Poison Ivy consist of **three leaflets**, shiny green in the growing season, red and orange in the fall. Virginia Creeper's leaves, on the other hand, have **five leaflets** and are less shiny in summer though equally colorful in autumn. Poison Ivy's three leaflets are generally notched or wavy at the edges. The flowers are greenish and inconspicuous and form clusters of waxy, whitish berrylike drupes later in the season. All parts of the plant contain a poisonous oil which is extremely irritating to the skin. Good first aid treatment after exposure to the oil is to wash the affected area of skin with soap and water as soon as possible. An antihistamine and hydrocortisone ointment are effective if the characteristic blistery rash develops.*

*Enjoy the Prairie Path but always remember  
the old saying:  
Leaves of three, let it be.*



# REPORTS ON SPRING CLEANUP

The weather was good, clear and cool, for the April 17 Illinois Prairie Path cleanup, a fitting start for Earth Week. IPP board members who helped lead the volunteers in various sections have sent in the following reports:

**Jim Stewart, western DuPage County.** "A beautiful sunny day when Dave Martin of Forest Park and I arrived at North Avenue and the IPP Elgin Branch at 9:00 a.m. We found that the path was quite clean until we got to the area behind the K Mart plaza (Oliver Square). At that location we could not believe the amount of trash blown by the wind over the berm and down into the ditch along the Path.\* We made two trips back to the car to separate recyclable items like glass, aluminum and plastic. We got all the plastic bags out of the hawthorn trees (!!!, Ed.) but decided to skip the worst area and get the lightly littered areas first. We pressed on to Rte. 59, where we filled the trash barrel 3/4 full and completely cleared the area and loaded two dumpsters behind the plaza 1/2 full each! After lunch we went to Ferry Road on the Aurora Branch and worked east to the Rte. 59 underpass. The Path was quite clean here and the new Cafe 59 has done a fantastic job of landscaping and drainage. What a welcome improvement from years past. A couple from Naperville (last name unknown) was going to work from Ferry Road to Diehl. We then went to Bilster Road on the Batavia Spur and found it free of the flydumping we have seen there in years past. We picked up trash that had floated onto the road when the ponds overflowed during the spring rains. In all we picked up 20 gallons of plastic and glass and 5 gallons of aluminum cans, all of which was taken home to Shabbona and recycled. Other participants were Ken and Jo Ann Haines and family of West Chicago, who did the Geneva Spur from Reed Kepler Park to Industrial Drive, and also Boy Scout Troop 5 from Geneva who did the Batavia Spur from the Fox River to Kirk Road in Kane County. It was a good cleanup, thanks to all these people who care about the Path."

*\*Editor's Note:* This trash problem is unacceptable and surely violates county and municipal zoning ordinances. We trust our members will complain to the DuPage County Division of Transportation, which maintains the Prairie Path, and also to the DuPage County Zoning Department and the City of West Chicago.

**Bob Rawls, Warrenville.** "The Warrenville section of the IPP Aurora Branch (Winfield Road to Rte. 59) was cleaned up by Mrs. Mary Marzano and her son Billy; Mrs. Sharon Booth and her son Jonathan; and Bob Rawls with his children Greg, Laura, and Meagan. Approximately nine 32-gallon plastic bags of trash, litter and debris were retrieved from the Path. We have noticed that with each

year the amount of ordinary trash has decreased, together with unusual items like toilets, windows, typewriters and bicycles that have been recovered in past cleanups. Path users today seem to be more conscious of their responsibility to keep the Path clean."

**Chris Joyce, Wheaton.** "This year as in recent years Ray Holdsworth and the Wheaton Environmental Commission cleaned the Path in the Wheaton downtown area to Jewell Road on the north, Orchard on the south, and the city limits on the east. It appears that the Path was kept pretty clean during the year, as there were not many bags at the intersections.

Gail McBirney and her Cub Scouts cleaned from Jewell to Geneva Road as they did last year. Larry Rabe and his Boy Scouts cleaned from Winfield Road to Madison by St. James Farm. Debbie Tiernan and her young son covered most of the stretch from Orchard to Wiesbrook. I came across her on Saturday afternoon hauling garbage in her son's wagon. My sons Joel and Patrick and I worked both Saturday and Sunday and covered Wiesbrook to Madison on the Aurora Branch and Geneva to North Avenue on the Elgin Branch. There was probably only half as much litter as last year and a lot fewer cans and bottles."



*Jean Mooring with village employees and brush-filled dump truck near Prospect Ave. during Glen Ellyn's Prairie Path cleanup. Photo by Joe Wark.*

**Jean Mooring, Glen Ellyn.** "More than 30 persons turned out for Glen Ellyn's Prairie Path cleanup this year, including Joe Wark, village trustee; Jim Tuinenga, chairman of the environmental protection commission; Carrie Burrows, new park board member and her family;

12 members and leaders of Cub Scout Pack 381 from Park View School; Margaret Mooring and Roberto Aldana from Madison, Wisconsin; Jeff and Bonnie Gahris, Glen Ellyn; and longtime Path members and faithful cleanup participants Hope and Ed Marsh, Jozan and Joe Carlton, and Jean and Paul Mooring. Two Glen Ellyn

public works employees manned a dump truck and front end loader and hauled away one truckload of mainly brush plus another load of trash bags and other debris. We had a good time as we always do.”

**Susan Wisniewski, Bellwood, Cook County.** “The 1993 Annual Illinois Prairie Path Cleanup in Bellwood was a grand success this year due to the enthusiastic support of several local groups: 1) The Boys and Girls Club of Bellwood, headed by Directors Pat Gartland and



*Roberto Aldana, Margeret Mooring and Jean Mooring with pile of trash collected between Hill Ave. and East Branch of DuPage River.*

Vince Pedro, once again vigorously participated with 19 volunteers; 2) Dave Terrell of the Kiwanis Club came with 2 other volunteers; 3) Doug Leak and Brian Thomas of the “Say No to Drugs” Program at the Memorial Park District organized 16 volunteers to clean from the Bellwood/Hillside boundary to the Field House in Hillside (They had plenty of garbage bags filled at the end); 4) Bellwood mayoral candidate Mrs. Poindexter came with two scouts, 5) And once again Larry Doyle, superintendent of streets and sanitation, Bellwood, was right there for the cleanup with gloves, garbage bags, sticks, and 3 workers to pick up larger debris and collect and dispose of the bags at the end of the cleanup.

We cleaned from Mannheim Road to Bellwood Avenue, avoided the “Prairie View Retirement Home” construction site, then continued east from Eastern Avenue to the “Catacombs” area (Indiana Harbor Belt Railroad overpass) just west of 25th Avenue, where the Path was submerged in mud and diverted by a parking lot.”

*Editor’s Note:* Bellwood is looking forward to a greatly improved trail in the near future when the anticipated trail enhancement grant comes through.



*Pat Garland, Vince Pedro and the volunteers from “the Boys and Girls Club of Bellwood.”*



*Doug Leak with volunteers from “Say No to Drugs Program”, Memorial Park District.*

**Ken Moss, Elmhurst.** “Participants in this year’s IPP cleanup included Keith Olson, Bill Helmick and members of the Great Western Prairie Stewardship Group in Elmhurst; Debbie Doyle and Brownie Troop 211, Elmhurst; Jenu Patel and Cub Scout Pack 47, Addison; Gordon Tozier, Villa Park; Ed Bowry and family of Carol Stream; and Dick and Nancy Wilson, Des Plaines, and Donna Albue, Lombard, who cleaned up at Westmore. The Path is looking good in Elmhurst and Villa Park, but Lombard’s section needs a little more work.”

# POETRY READING ON THE PRAIRIE PATH

On May 1, 1993, the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Prairie Path Founder May Theilgaard Watts, *Newsletter* Editor Jean Mooring read some of Mrs. Watts' poems to a small but attentive audience of Path members and former students of Mrs. Watts. The setting was our own Founders Park in Wheaton, a charming spot for a poetry reading except for the occasional North Western train that rumbled past. One enthusiastic listener, longtime Path member Don Westlake of Wheaton, even brought along a poem of his own composition to read as a tribute to May Watts and the Prairie Path.

May Watts' poems as selected by Jean ranged from short lyrical pieces full of colorful, sensuous



*Don Westlake reads his poem "The Prairie Path".  
Photo by Paul Mooring.*



*Jean Mooring reads May Watts' poetry to an appreciative audience at Founders' Park, Wheaton. Photo by Paul Mooring.*

imagery to humorous or satirical longer works expressing Mrs. Watts' strong opinions about the proper treatment of our natural heritage. Examples of her lyrical style are the autobiographical "To A Porcelain Lady" and the prize-winning "Vision". Two poems about respecting nature's gifts are the rollicking "Arrangements" and the sardonic "On Improving the Property". A collection of poems by May Watts is preserved in the May Watts Archives at the Morton Arboretum. With the permission of the Arboretum we reprint here the last-mentioned poem, because it can teach us something about a better way to maintain our own properties as well as the Illinois Prairie Path and all natural areas.

## *On Improving the Property*

They laid the trilliums low,  
and where drifted anemones and wild sweet phlox  
were wont to follow April's hepaticas - they planted grass.

There was a corner that held a tangled copse  
of hawthorne and young wild crabs  
bridal in May above yellow violets,  
purple-twiggged in November.  
They needed that place for Lombardy poplars - and grass.

Last June the elderberry was fragrant here,  
and in October the viburnum poured its wine  
beneath the moon-yellow wisps of the witch-hazel blossoms.  
They piled them in the alley and made a burnt offering - to grass.

There was a slope that a wild grapevine had captured long ago.  
At its brink a colony of mandrakes held green umbrellas close,  
like a crowd along the path of a parade.  
This job almost baffled them; showers washed off the seed  
and made gullies in the naked clay.  
They gritted their teeth - and planted grass.

At the base of the slope there was a hollow  
so lush with hundreds of years of fallen leaves  
that maiden-hair swirled above the trout-lilies,  
and even a few blood-roots lifted frosty blossoms there.  
Clay from the ravaged slope washed down  
and filled the hollow with a yellow hump.  
They noticed the hump - and planted grass.

There was a linden that the bees loved.  
A smug catalpa has taken its place,  
but the wood ashes were used to fertilize the grass.

People pass by and say: "Just *look* at that grass -  
not a weed in it. It's like velvet!"  
(One could say as much for any other grave.)

*- May Theilgaard Watts*

Reprinted From the May Watts archives with permission of the  
Morton Arboretum.



## SOME RECENT AND CURRENT IPP PROJECTS



*William and Eleanore Payne with their son and grandson behind new bench upon completion of first phase. The remaining boards were installed next day after concrete had set.*

Prairie Path members had a productive work day on May 22, installing a bench just west of Main Street in Lombard and then replacing a vandalized display case in the wooden stand at Westmore. The bench was donated to the Illinois Prairie Path by William and Eleanore Payne of Lombard in memory of their son Kenneth. Mr. Payne came out to help our regular volunteers, Dick and Nancy Wilson, Jim Stewart, Paul and Jean Mooring, and Ken Moss, as they planned the job and set in concrete the steel bench supports. The following day Paul returned to attach the wood slats.

Another instance of vandalism brought Jim and Paul to Bilter Road on the Batavia Spur one wintry day in March to replace the display case which had been pulled out of the wooden stand and simply left on the ground.

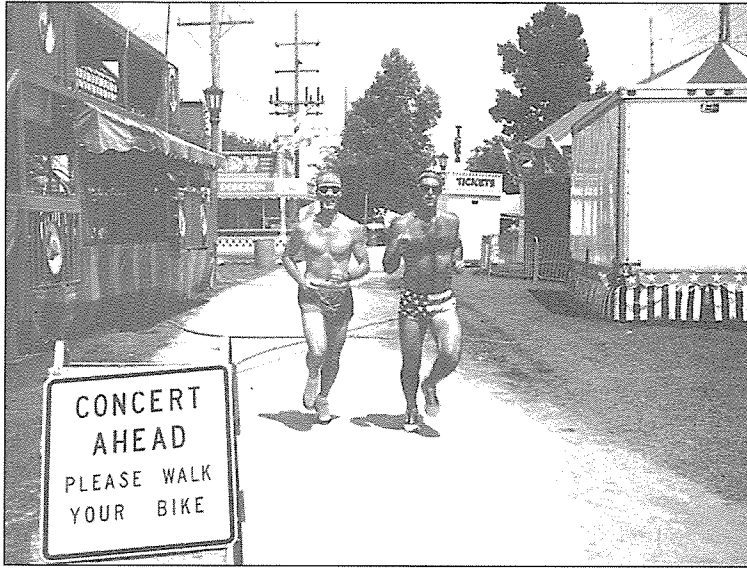
Our next official work day will be June 12 at Army Trail Road in Wayne on the Elgin Branch, where we will replace a vandalized 4x8 panel in the lattice screen hiding the portable toilet. We will also rebuild the wood planter in front of the screen that has been damaged by County DOT mowing machines.



*Dick Wilson, Paul Mooring and Jim Stewart install new display case replacing stolen case at Westmore, Lombard.*

# DUPAGE COUNTY SHOULD BAN ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES FROM TRAIL SYSTEM

Alcoholic beverages should not be sold, possessed or consumed on the Illinois Prairie Path. This has been the policy of the board of directors of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation since the trail's earliest days. At its regular board meeting on June 1, 1993, the board unanimously reaffirmed this position and authorized



*Ticket offices and amusement rides crowd the Prairie Path on both sides for three blocks during Villa Park carnival. Throughout operating hours (not shown) bicyclists had to walk.*

President Paul Mooring and Board Member Jean Mooring to present it to the Transportation Committee of the DuPage County Board on June 7. The committee is considering two proposed ordinances, one allowing and regulating through a permit process the use of alcoholic beverages on the entire DuPage County Trail System and the other allowing and regulating motor vehicles including carnival rides on the trail system. The two ordinances are the unfortunate result of last summer's Villa Park carnival, which proved to be an attractive nuisance that obstructed travel for regular Path users and rendered miserable the lives of neighboring residents with noise, lights, and huge crowds.

Our board believes firmly that the Illinois Prairie Path, the Great Western Trail, and any other trails of the DuPage County Trail System should be managed as peaceful and quiet recreational nature trails for the benefit of all county residents and that careful consideration should be given to the needs of the residential neighbors of the trails, whose good will is essential to the long-range success of the trail system. Carnivals and alcoholic beverages should have no place on these trails even though they make a lot of money for some people. We recognize that appropriate special events on the right-of-way will occur and need to be regulated, but they should never be allowed to harm our neighbors or block the Path itself and deny access and full enjoyment of the trail to our regular path users.

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## GOOD NEWS FROM MAYWOOD!

According to Bill Connerty, Maywood village planner, the village has received a \$369,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Transportation to promote alternative methods of transportation. The grant, one of the largest Maywood has ever received, will be used to develop Maywood's section of the Illinois Prairie Path from First Avenue to 25th Avenue. A \$73,900 village matching fund is required, but the village is confident this will be provided by the Illinois Department of Conservation, probably from vehicle transfer tax funds previously promised for startup.

Included in the Prairie Path development, which is expected to be completed in October, are: a trail head at First Avenue with a paved parking lot and a shelter for hikers and bikers, a blacktop trail with lights and benches along the way, a couple of drinking fountains, and signs and crossing marks at street intersections. Some landscaping will also be done. Future plans include a trail extension east over the DesPlaines River on a new bridge which will connect the IPP to the CTA station in Forest Park, a logical goal for alternative transportation funding.

# FRIENDS OF THE PRAIRIE PATH FUNDRAISER

IPP board member Bob Rawls of Warrenville sends the following report:

"The Friends of the Prairie Path hosted a benefit party at the Courtyard Restaurant in Warrenville April 17th. The party was a huge success with over 600 people attending. The event raised over \$8,000, which will help cover legal fees necessary to convince the Illinois Commerce Commission to deny Commonwealth Edison's request to destroy 3.5 miles of the Prairie Path by erecting high tension power line poles. The construction of this

138,000-volt power line would necessitate the massive removal of trees and plants from the Path.

Donations are still needed to help pay for the defense of the Illinois Prairie Path. Checks can be made out to the Friends of the Prairie Path, 29W465 Albright, Warrenville, IL 60555. Call Bob and Maureen Rawls, 393-6720, for more information.

The formal hearing by the Illinois Commerce Commission is scheduled for June 9th and 10th at the James Thompson Center (formerly the State of Illinois Center), 100 West Randolph, Chicago."

## LEONARD CHABALA

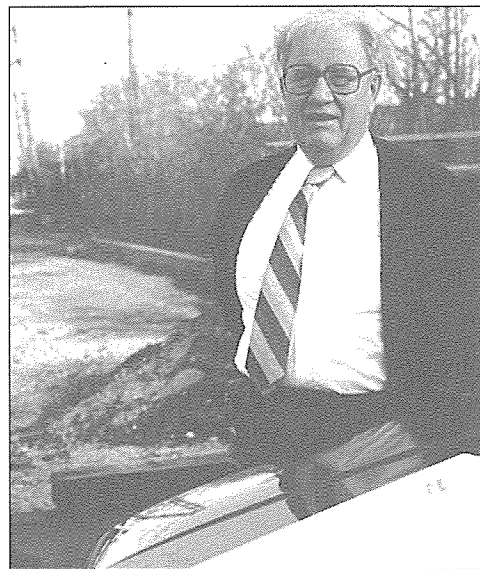
February 14, 1926 - June 7, 1993

The Illinois Prairie Path has lost a dear friend with the passing of Board Member Len Chabala of Maywood on June 7. Len had seemed to be making an excellent recovery from coronary bypass surgery in March, but a heart attack was the probable cause of death. He is survived by one daughter, Nancy; five sons, James, Michael, Paul, Jan Matthew, and David; and three grandchildren.

Len had been the engineering manager for S&C Electric Company, Chicago, manufacturing high voltage switching equipment. He served as Mayor of Maywood from 1969 to 1973 and worked with The Illinois Prairie Path board on the Cook County extension which was finally completed in 1979. He also served as Acting Village Manager of Maywood from July through December, 1992.

In January, 1981, Len joined the board of directors of The Illinois Prairie Path and was appointed Chairman of the Cook County Committee. He assumed the additional responsibilities of Recording Secretary in 1983. His wisdom and political acumen have been extremely valuable to our board in dealing with the many governmental agencies interested in the Cook County section. Even more importantly, however, Len was a fine human being, genial and easy-going, who was much loved and will be greatly missed. We are glad that he lived to see the final agreements that will make possible the development of the Maywood portion of the Illinois Prairie Path as the excellent bike trail he had long envisioned.

*The family suggests that donations in memory of Len may be sent to The Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, IL 60189.*



*Len Chabala photographed during a 1991 inspection tour of the Illinois Prairie Path in Cook County with Illinois Department of Conservation officials.*

# SUMMER ACTIVITIES — RAIN OR SHINE

■ Saturday, June 12

**Work Day.** Repair trellis and planter at Army Trail Road.  
Leader: Paul Mooring, 469-4289.

■ Saturday, July 17

**Work Day.** Graffiti paint-out. Information: Paul Mooring, 469-4289.

■ Sunday, August 8

**Bike Ride, St. Charles to Sycamore.** 40-mile round trip. Swim in municipal pool and return (Bring swim suit). Lunch on your own in Sycamore. Meet at 10:00 a.m. in Dean Street parking lot on Great Western Trail in St. Charles. Leader: Nancy Hesler, 293-1062.

## West Chicago Prairie Events

■ Saturday, June 19

**Birding trip.** Summer residents. Chat and Sedge Wrens. Bring binoculars. 6:00 to 8:45 a.m.

■ Saturday, June 19

**Field Trip.** Good displays of Spiderwort, Spiked Lobelia, Black-eyed Susan, White Wild Indigo, Wild Rose, Marsh Phlox and Purple Coneflower. 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

■ Saturday, July 10

**Seed Collecting (Spiderwort).** 8:00 a.m. to Noon.

■ Saturday, July 24

**Field Trip.** Good displays of Wild Quinine, Flowering Spurge, Purple Clover, Compass Plant, and Blazing Star. 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

■ Saturday, August 21

**Field Trip.** Good displays of Prairie Dock, False Dragonhead, Nodding Onion, Tall Coreopsis, Prairie Sunflower and Blazing Star. 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

All events start from the new West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve parking lot located on the east side of Industrial Drive 3/4 mile south of Hawthorne Lane. Please be on time or you may have difficulty finding us. Information: Mel Hoff, 393-4715.

— Jean C. Mooring, Editor —

MEMBERSHIP RATES:	Individual	\$10
	Family	\$15
	Organization/Supporting	\$20
	Contributing	\$25
	Sustaining	\$50
	Patron	\$100
	Lifetime	\$500



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