



THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

Spring 1994

What To Look For . . . Weeds

Imports... spring blooming flowers that came to North America from abroad... sometimes called aliens, sometimes called Eurasian weeds. Along the most traveled parts of the PATH are these tough, persistent, aggressive plants, producing lots of seed, greening over rough places, moving into any available open space, adapting to many conditions of shade, sunlight, and water.

Everyone knows the dandelion except a visitor from India who said, looking at our lawn one spring, "Americans must love yellow flowers. You plant so many of them." The name comes from the French "tooth of the lion" which describes the sharply cut leaves. There are many uses of dandelions, from salads to wine.

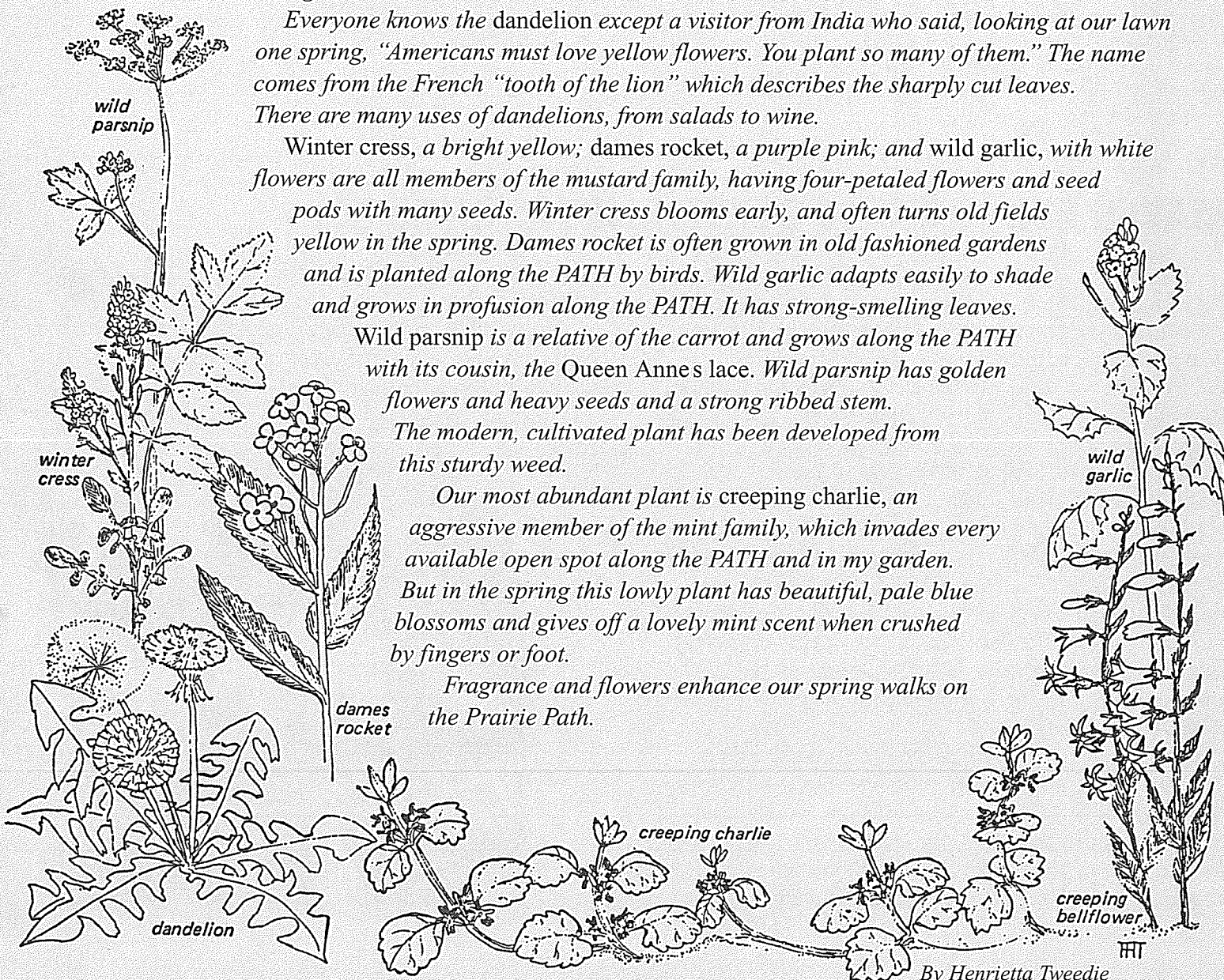
Winter cress, a bright yellow; dames rocket, a purple pink; and wild garlic, with white flowers are all members of the mustard family, having four-petaled flowers and seed pods with many seeds. Winter cress blooms early, and often turns old fields yellow in the spring. Dames rocket is often grown in old fashioned gardens and is planted along the PATH by birds. Wild garlic adapts easily to shade and grows in profusion along the PATH. It has strong-smelling leaves.

Wild parsnip is a relative of the carrot and grows along the PATH with its cousin, the Queen Anne's lace. Wild parsnip has golden flowers and heavy seeds and a strong ribbed stem.

The modern, cultivated plant has been developed from this sturdy weed.

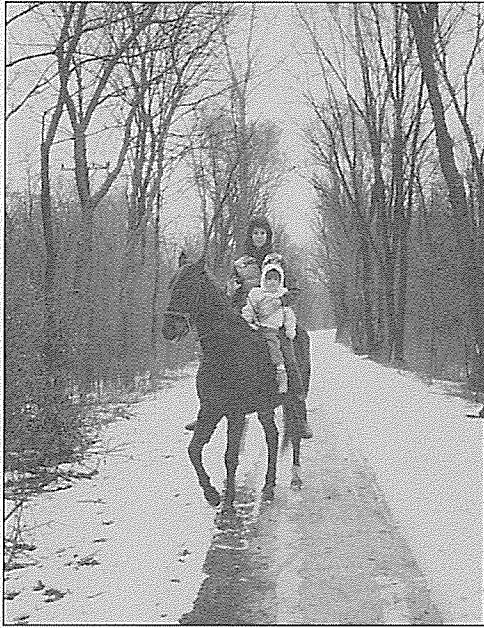
Our most abundant plant is creeping charlie, an aggressive member of the mint family, which invades every available open spot along the PATH and in my garden. But in the spring this lowly plant has beautiful, pale blue blossoms and gives off a lovely mint scent when crushed by fingers or foot.

Fragrance and flowers enhance our spring walks on the Prairie Path.



By Henrietta Tweedie

FUNDRAISER SET FOR SECOND ROUND OF COM ED POWER LINE FIGHT



Connie Schmidt, daughter Sarah and their horse, L'Elegance, enjoy a winter day on the tree-lined Prairie Path in Warrenville, a tranquil setting so far unmarred by high tension power lines.

Connie Schmidt of the Warrenville/ Wheaton-based Friends of the Prairie Path invites us all to "Get ready for a wonderful Spring bash!" She continues, "We are planning our second (and hopefully final) fundraiser to finance the legal battle against Commonwealth Edison's efforts to place high voltage powerlines overhead along five miles of the Illinois Prairie Path.

"The party will be held at the Synergy nightclub in West Chicago just west of Joliet Street on Roosevelt Road. Festivities will begin at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 28. Frankie and the White Boys along with another band to be announced will provide the music in this great nightclub with a large dance floor. Admission is \$12.50 per person and includes a hot appetizer buffet. A number of raffle prizes are being donated for \$1.00 tickets, and blow-up Sumo wrestling may be donated by Miller Lite to test your strength or silliness!

"Synergy Club holds 800 people, so talk this event up with your friends and neighbors. This is a great opportunity to celebrate Spring while helping a very worthy cause. Tickets are available at Synergy beginning March 15th and also at local park districts. For any additional information or to make donations of raffle prizes, call Connie Schmidt, 393-6276."

**Editor's Note. Sounds like fun, Connie. We'll be there.*

MARCH FOR PARKS TO BENEFIT LINCOLN MARSH

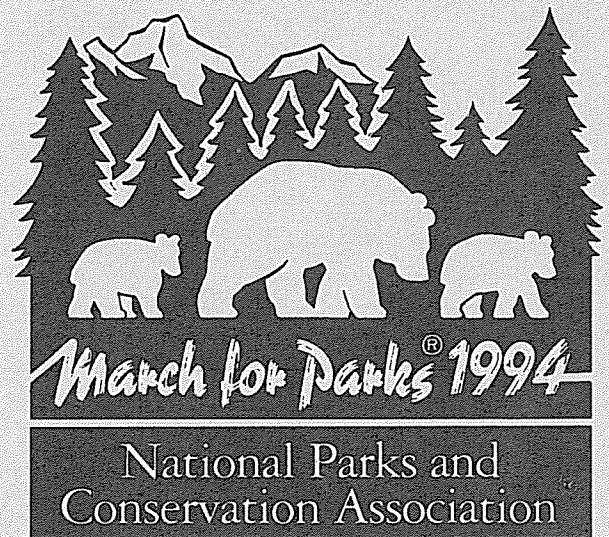
The Partners for the Lincoln Marsh and the Wheaton Park District announce a major new event for 1994 to be coordinated with the national "1994 March for Parks." The purpose is to encourage preservation and development of parklands, conservation and recreation areas across the country. Nationwide events will be held on Saturday and Sunday, April 23 and 24, and will coincide with the annual observance of Earth Day.

John Pence, Events Coordinator, writes, "The Partners for the Lincoln Marsh is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization established to promote the Lincoln Marsh Natural Area, a 130-acre wetland/prairie/oak savanna complex located in Wheaton. The Partners are currently raising funds for the development of an environmental education center to serve local communities and to promote preservation of wetlands for the benefit of people and wildlife alike."

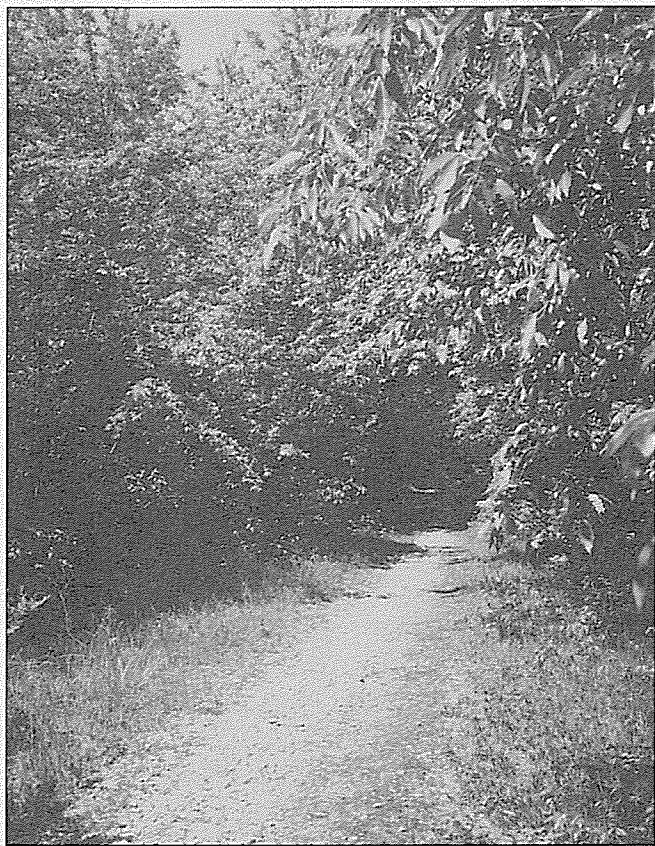
The Lincoln Marsh March for Parks will begin at Northside Park with Registration opening at 8:00 a.m., Saturday, April 23. Participants will pay a registration fee of \$3 and gather pledges from their friends and neighbors before walking the 6-mile (10k) route, which will take them along pleasant city sidewalks and scenic marsh

trails, including the section of the Illinois Prairie Path which runs through the marsh.

There will be prizes, refreshments and good company. Come one, come all, and enjoy a glimpse of Wheaton's most beautiful natural area!



GENEVA SPUR TO BE CONNECTED AT LAST



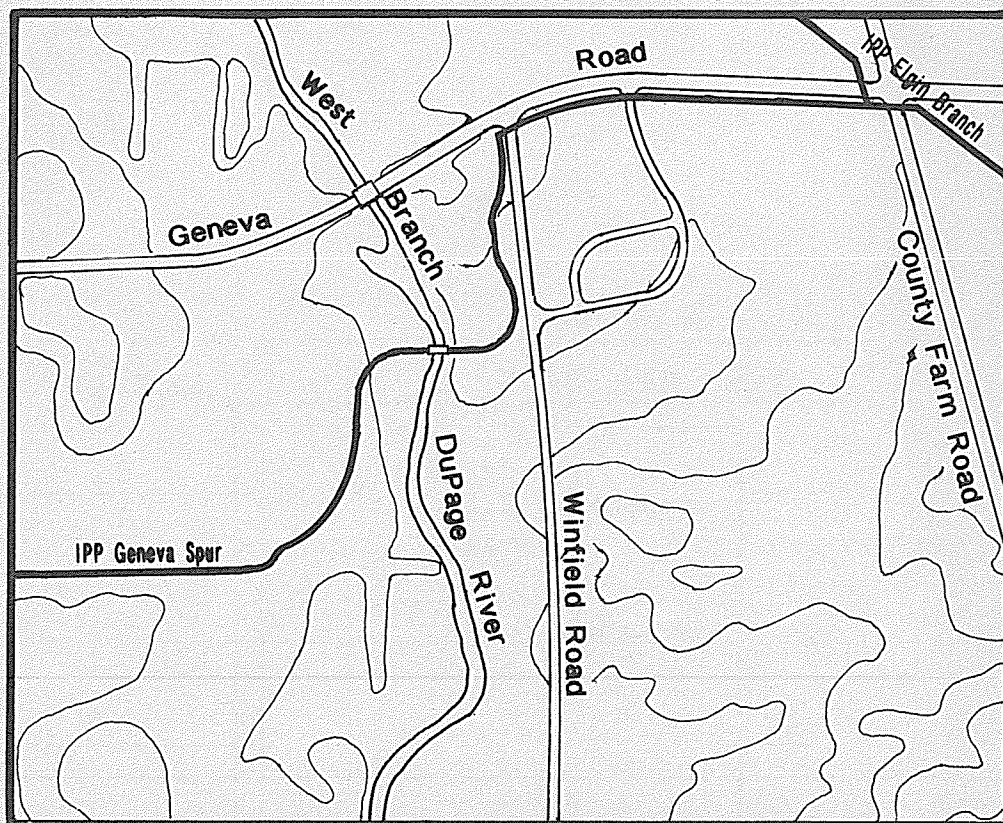
Dirt path on the old Geneva Spur west of the West Branch of the DuPage River disappears into the woods of Winfield Mounds Forest Preserve.

A long-standing dream of the Prairie Path founders was to bring all segments of the old Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railway into a unified trail system. The Main Stem and Elgin and Aurora Branches were not too difficult to convert in the 1960s and 1970s; but the Batavia Spur and Geneva Spur, which had been abandoned many years earlier, proved more troublesome. Because the Batavia Spur had been abandoned before the East-West Tollway (I-88) was built, it was cut off from the Aurora Branch by the tollway; in addition, a section north of the tollway had reverted to the heirs of the original owner, Matthew Poss (as decided in the case of *Schnabel et al. vs. DuPage County*). The DuPage County Division of Transportation eventually solved both of these problems with bypasses, one on a Northern Illinois Gas Company right-of-way and the other on open space provided by an adjacent developer to fulfill zoning requirements.

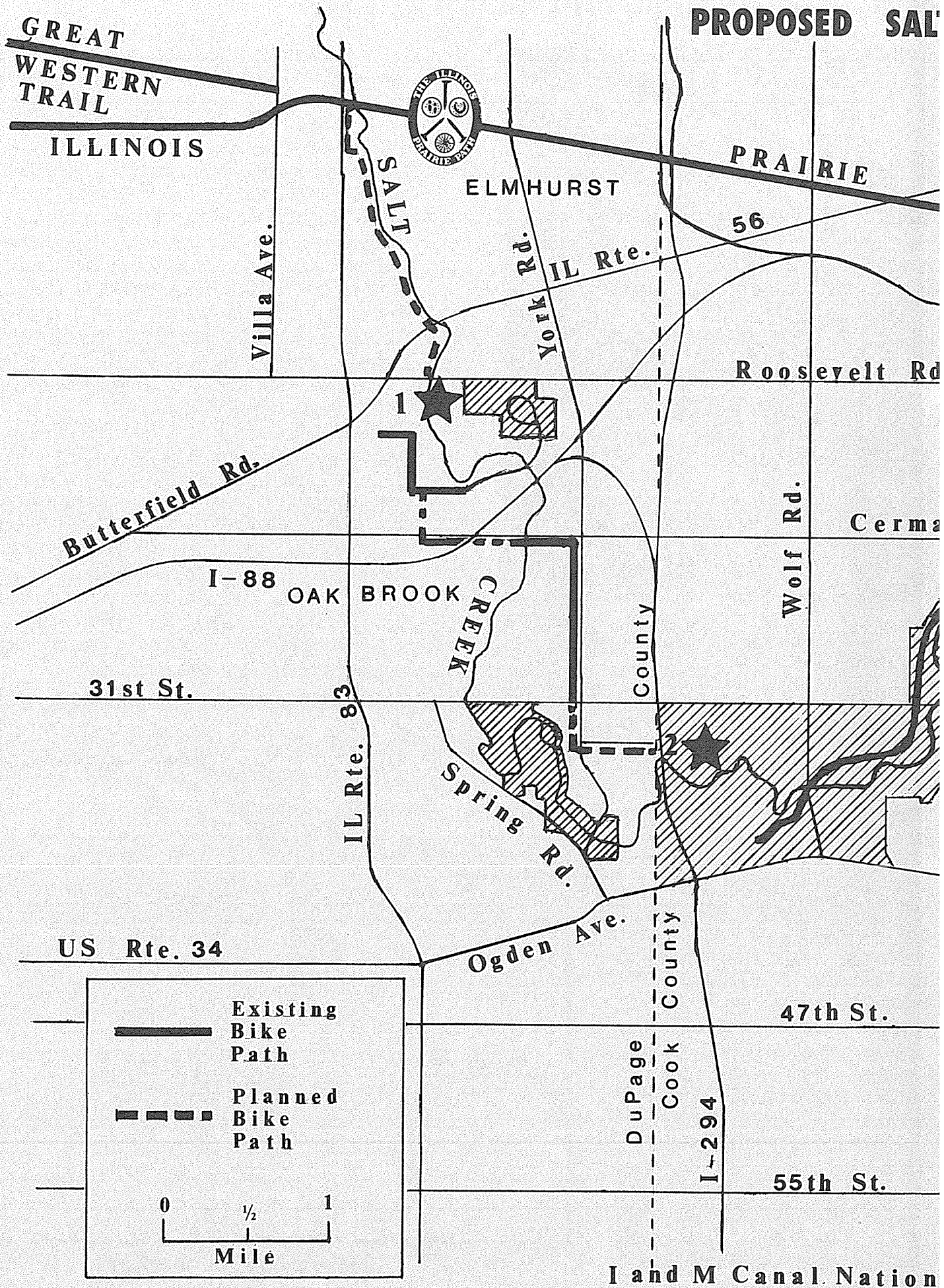
The Geneva Spur was similar in that it was separated from the Elgin Branch by a housing development that usurped the right-of-way between County Farm Road and Winfield Road. This also required a bypass and the cooperation of the DuPage County Forest Preserve District to allow the construction of a multiple-purpose trail in Winfield Mounds Forest Preserve connecting to the existing dirt path on the old right-of-way. Although the agreement was finalized on August 18, 1987, the DuPage County DOT has just completed the engineering plans for a trail along the south side of Geneva Road from County Farm Road to Winfield Road, and a trail in the forest preserve, including a bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River. (See map below). Of the total project cost, \$100,000 is a matching grant from the Illinois Department of Conservation.

The dirt path will be surfaced with limestone screenings as far as Prince Crossing Road in West Chicago. From there the trail will run either on its own right-of-way or on designated city streets past Reed-Keppler Park and the West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve through the DuPage County Airport to Bennett Park on the Fox River in Geneva.

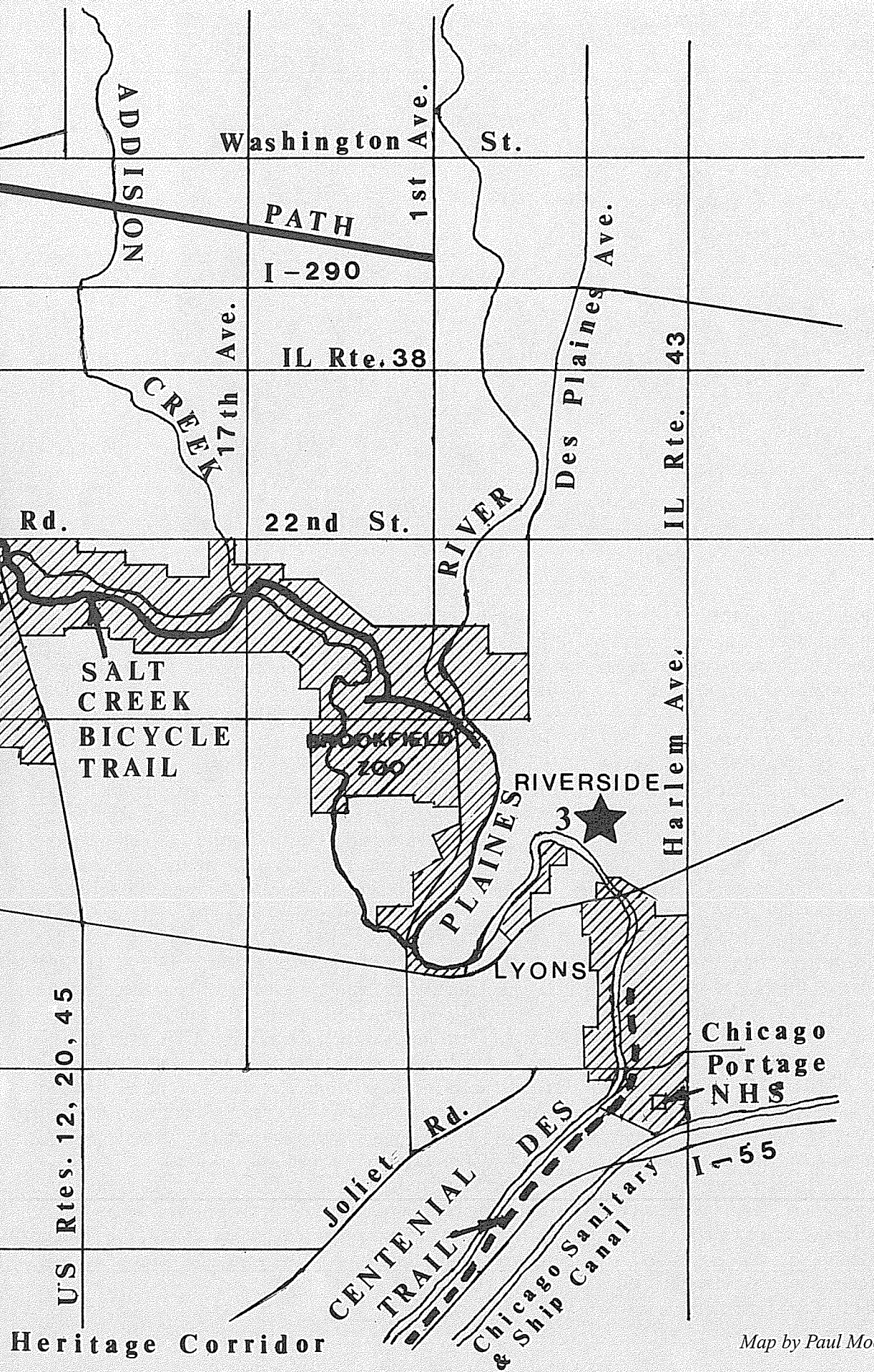
Reports Chuck Tokarski, DuPage County DOT, We anticipate that the construction contract will be awarded in the spring and that the project will be completed late summer or early fall of this year.



Geneva Spur Connection



CREEK TRAIL SYSTEM



TO CLOSE MAJOR GAPS IN TRAIL

- ★ 1 Build bridge or underpass at Roosevelt Road
- ★ 2 Blacktop short section of trail in forest preserve.
- ★ 3 Select and develop best route, preferably along Des Plaines River.

Map by Paul Mooring

SALT CREEK BIKE TRAIL SYSTEM: LET'S MAKE IT HAPPEN!



Trail beside Salt Creek at I-294 underpass.

For many years The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors and the Chicago-based Openlands Project have envisioned a bicycle trail generally following Salt Creek and connecting two great national trail systems: the Illinois Prairie Path/Fox River Trail and the Illinois-Michigan Canal National Heritage Corridor.

Various local governmental agencies share this dream and are now beginning to combine already-developed segments to form one continuous trail joining preserved sections of greenway along the creek. Municipal governments active in this project are: Elmhurst Park District, Oak Brook Park District, Village of Oak Brook, DuPage County Forest Preserve District, Cook County Forest Preserve District, and the Villages of Riverside and Lyons in Cook County. Trail segments already in existence include: the Elmhurst Park District footpath along the east side of Salt Creek from the Illinois Prairie Path to Eldridge Park at Butterfield Road (a state grant for a 1.8-mile paved bike path on the west side is being applied for); a network of paved park district and village trails in Oak Brook; and a seven-mile paved trail along Salt Creek traversing several forest preserves of the Cook County Forest Preserve District Salt Creek Division. One potential obstacle to connecting DuPage County and Cook County trails was eliminated years ago when the I-294 (Tri-State Tollway) bridge over Salt Creek was built with walkways underneath to accommodate a multi-purpose trail on each side of the creek. A local resident and equestrian, Mrs. Dorothy Dean Cavanaugh, who believed that DuPage County trail users

should not have their access to the Cook County Forest Preserves cut off by the toll road, was the forward-looking leader of the successful effort to preserve this important connection.

Grants are pending for additional segments of the Oak Brook Trail system to connect it to the I-294 underpass via York Road and Canterbury Lane. A grant has already been awarded for a major portion of the Centennial Trail, which will begin at the Chicago Portage National Historic Site, the eastern terminus of the I and M Canal in Cook County, and will run eventually for twenty miles west to Lockport in Will County. There is the potential for a hundred-mile-long trail in the I and M Canal Corridor ending at LaSalle-Peru in LaSalle County.

The two principal obstacles to completion of the Salt Creek Trail are: the gap at Roosevelt Road, Elmhurst, which will require a bridge over, or a tunnel under, six lanes of traffic to connect the Elmhurst and Oak Brook trails; and the gap in the Riverside-Lyons area where Salt Creek joins the Des Plaines River east of the Brookfield Zoo on the way to the famous Chicago Portage. A third but less serious gap is just east of the I-294 underpass in the forest preserve. (See map, pp. 4 and 5).

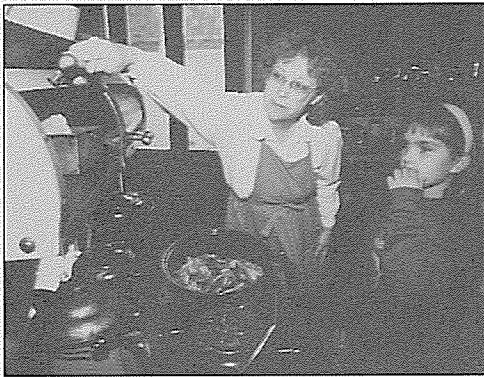
The Salt Creek Trail is doable. It will take concerted action by citizens working with government to get the grants and make it happen. But when it does, the Chicago area will have the basis for the greatest bike trail system in the United States!

DUPAGE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT NEEDS YOU

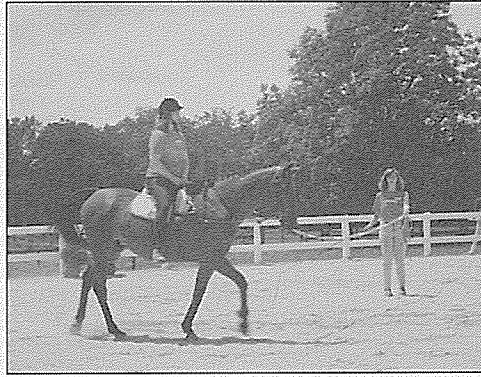
Vicki Mohr, Volunteer Coordinator for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, is recruiting volunteers for many types of rewarding and enjoyable activities in the county forest preserves. Opportunities abound to work with professional staff in caring for injured wild animals or in giving tours and special programs for school children at Willowbrook Wildlife Haven, Glen Ellyn. At Fullersburg Forest Preserve, Oak Brook, you are needed to help with environmental education as Nature Interpreters, Special Events Volunteers or Office Assistants. At Kline Creek Farm adjoining the Illinois Prairie Path in Winfield, you can help construct and maintain typical 1890s farm buildings or you can dress in authentic period clothing and participate in maple syrup

making, cooking on a woodburning stove, or demonstrating various types of handwork. If horses are your passion, you can learn to care for them and also receive free riding time at the Danada Equestrian Center, Wheaton. Prairie fans can be Resource Management Volunteers and find opportunities in several forest preserves to remove undesirable plants from prairie remnants and to assist in re-establishing prairie and woodland vegetation by collecting and redistributing seeds as well as by helping with prairie burns.

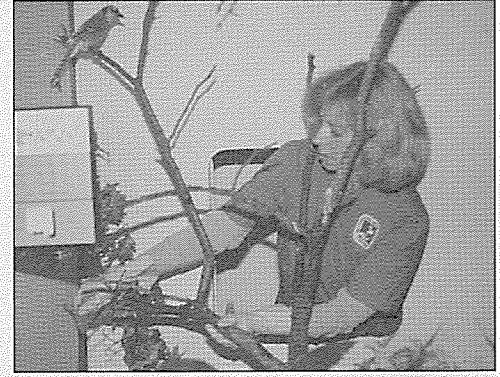
If you are interested in learning some new skills, having fun, and meeting lots of nice people in a beautiful setting where your help is truly needed, call Vicki Mohr at (708) 790-4900, Ext. 315.



Cooking on a wood-burning stove at Kline Creek Farm.



Working with horses at Danada Equestrian Center.



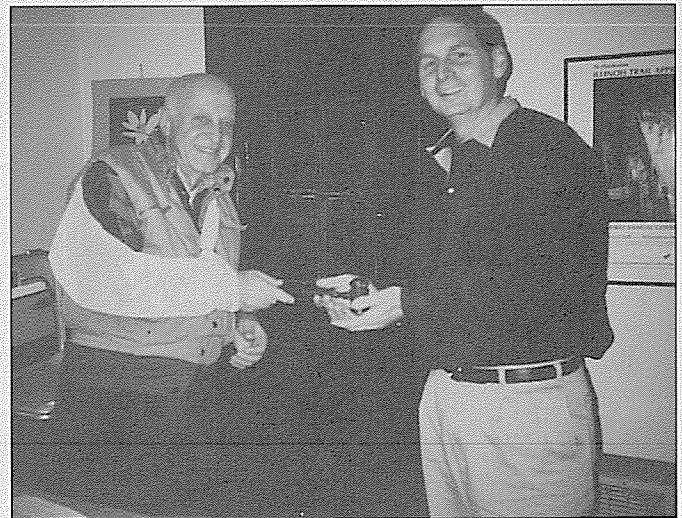
Caring for birds at Willowbrook Wildlife Haven.

Photos courtesy of Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

NEW IPP OFFICERS FOR 1994

At the regular meeting on December 7, 1993, the members of The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors unanimously elected Paul Aeschleman of Oak Park as president to replace Paul Mooring, stepping down after twenty-one years on the job. Aeschleman is a recycling specialist with Waste Management Company in Oak Brook and is providing a smooth transition in leadership. One of his main goals is to complete as soon as possible an updated trail map; he has already negotiated a contract with Waste Management as our sole scavenger and has thus greatly improved at very reasonable cost our trash collection service in the unincorporated areas. Also elected were Susan Wisniewski of Bellwood as vice president and Steve Plumb of Elmhurst as treasurer, replacing Joan Hamill of Wayne, who is turning over the purse strings after twenty-five years of efficiently managing our finances. Joan will continue as chairman of the board. Nancy Becker of Hillside was re-elected as secretary. We also have a new office manager and membership chair, Linda Plumb, wife of Steve. Linda replaces Karen Stewart, who resigned last fall when the Stewarts moved to Shabbona.

Welcome aboard, everyone! The Prairie Path is in good hands.



All smiles, Paul Mooring hands gavel to President Paul Aeschleman. (The sling supported a fractured elbow which mended quickly but was a major inconvenience for three weeks.)

SPRING ACTIVITIES – rain or shine

■ Saturdays, April 16, April 23, April 30

Annual Earth Day Cleanup along entire length of Path, sponsored by the various communities through which the Path runs and by the DuPage County Division of Transportation in the unincorporated areas west of Wheaton. For information call: Susan Wisniewski, Maywood and Bellwood, 493-1316; Nancy Becker, Hillside, 544-7517; John Kacich, Berkeley, 544-7524; Steve Plumb, Elmhurst Park District, 834-2215; Dick Wilson, Villa Park and Lombard, 299-7882 (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.); Jean Mooring, Glen Ellyn, 469-4289; Kay McKeen, Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission, 653-8776; David Tate, Winfield (Elgin Branch from Jewell Road to Rte. 59) 682-1449; Nancy Hesler, Oak Meadows (Elgin Branch from Rte. 59 to Dunham Road), 293-1062; Bob Rawls, Warrenville, (Aurora Branch from Madison Street to Kane County line and Batavia Spur to Butterfield Road), 393-6720; Chuck Tokarski, DuPage County Division of Transportation, 665-1155.

■ Saturday, April 23

Lincoln Marsh March for Parks. See page 2.

■ Saturday, May 21

Bird Walk to look for Spring migrants. Meet at 9:00 a.m. at Pratt's Wayne Woods Forest Preserve. Take Rte. 59 to Army Trail Road; west to Powis Road (about 2 miles); north to forest preserve entrance and drive to far back parking lot. Bring binoculars. Lunch is optional. Leaders: Dick Wilson, (708) 299-7882 (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.); and Paul Mooring, (708) 469-4289.

■ Saturday, June 4

Ten-Mile Hike on the Illinois Prairie Path to celebrate National Trails Day. Meet at 9:00 a.m. where IPP crosses Army Trail Road in Wayne (about 2 miles west of Rte. 59). Bring lunch and drink. Leader: Dick Wilson, (708) 299-7882 (8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.)

■ Saturdays, June 18, July 16, August 20

Work Days. Information: Paul Mooring, (708) 469-4289.

– Jean C. Mooring, Editor –

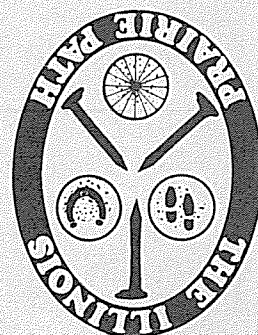
MEMBERSHIP RATES:	Individual \$10
	Family \$15
	Organization/Supporting \$20
	Contributing \$25
	Sustaining \$50
	Patron \$100
	Lifetime \$500



Printed on recycled paper

RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED

DATED MATERIAL



P.O. Box 1086
616 Delles Road
Wheaton, Illinois
60189

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Wayne, Ill. - 60184
Permit No. 7