

Summer 1997



THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

Thanks to Volunteers for a Great Earth Day Cleanup!

The annual Earth Day cleanup along the Illinois Prairie Path was a great success, thanks to the help of many volunteers. Here is a report on the Earth Day activities from the IPP Board Members and volunteers.

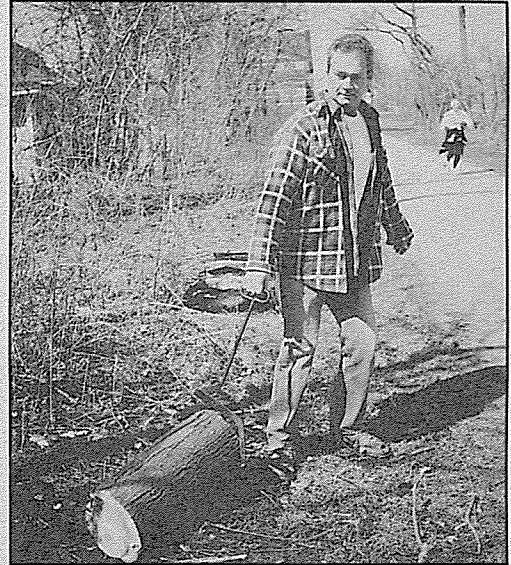
BATAVIA SPUR, Ed Barsotti

Volunteer Paul Ferguson cleaned up the Path just north of Butterfield Road, where winds blew trash from new housing construction. The new housing construction's sales office was notified of the construction debris on the Path by both Paul Ferguson and Ed Barsotti. The Barsotti and Blokland families cleaned up the same area, continuing Paul's work.

BELLWOOD, Susan Wisniewski

April 12 was the original date chosen for the Bellwood cleanup, but we had to cancel due to inclement weather. We rescheduled to sunny May 10, and met at the Boys & Girls Club. There was a very enthusiastic turnout of 40 boys and girls, who were given orange juice, cookies, and donuts prior to the cleanup. I showed them where they were on the IPP map and where the trail went, and told them a bit of history about May Theilgaard Watts, who was 70 years old when she began the IPP movement, and how one person's voice *really can count*.

Officer Jack Bridson of the Bellwood Bike Police gave a very interesting talk and demonstration. Then Pat Gartland and Ed Sheehan, the Directors of the Club, took the volunteers out for the cleanup, beginning directly behind the Club just east of Mannheim and working their way eastward. Loretha Cole, Assistant Program Director of the Boys & Girls Club, helped coordinate the volunteers. Frank Hasman represented the Village Trustees, and Larry Doyle and the Village Streets Department gave us their usual wonderful support which included gloves, garbage bags, trucks, and workers. Afterward, we had a pizza party generously donated by Mayor Lemm of Bellwood, with a discount on the pizzas given to us by Nick's Pizzeria on Bellwood Avenue and St. Paul.

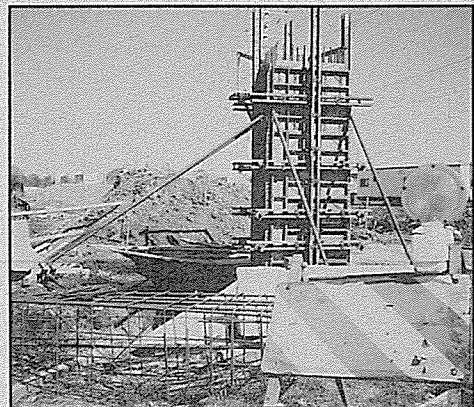


Glen Ellyn: (top photo) Using antique lumber-jack tongs, Mark Newell clears the path by dragging out a log.

Bellwood: (left photo) Enthusiastic members of the Boys & Girls Club volunteered for the cleanup.



*Good News!
Batavia Spur
Bridge Is
Now Under
Construction!
...see page 2*



(Continued on page 5)

Batavia Spur Bridge Under Construction

By Jean C. Mooring

Prairie Path users have been complaining for years about having to cross four lanes of high speed traffic at Kirk Road on the Batavia Spur.

Now at last there is good news! The long-awaited Batavia Spur bridge is under construction and its completion is expected in June, according to Jon Duerr, Director of Field Services for the Kane County Forest Preserve District. He reports that the prefab bridge, made of Cor-Ten steel, will have an arched middle section over Kirk Road 160 feet long and 18 feet high at the center protected by a chain link fence rounded at the top along both sides. There will be a 40-foot span at each end leading to an earthen ramp 250-300 feet long to allow a maximum 5% slope. When Kirk Road is widened to six lanes in the near future, the bridge will comfortably span it. There will also be an access trail between the bridge and the north-south trail along the west side of Kirk Road.

The Illinois Department of Transportation is building the bridge, which will cost \$630,000. Of this 80% is a Federal ISTEAG grant, matched by 20% from the Forest Preserve District, less a \$40,000 Illinois Department of Natural Resources bicycle grant.

The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

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Phone: (630) 752-0120
WWW Site: <http://www.mcs.net/~msc/IPP>

Meetings: The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in Rathje Park, 616 Delles Ave., Wheaton, IL 60189



Bird Watchers Enjoy Annual Illinois Prairie Path Bird Walk



Bird walk leader Paul Mooring uses a spotting scope to identify Sandpipers.

By Dick Wilson

The Magnolia Warbler, the Chestnut-Sided Warbler, the Baltimore Oriole, the Scarlet Tanager and the Rose-Breasted Grosbeak were some of the many spring migrants spotted by 16 Prairie Path members and Audubon Society members on the Illinois Prairie Path's annual Bird Walk in Pratt's Wayne Woods on May 17. The hike is held each year at the best time to see Warblers and this year the group saw eight, along with dozens of other species.

The group also enjoyed a side trip through a Boy Scout Voyageur encampment. The scouts showed the group how people at that time dressed and lived, including how to start a fire with flint and steel.

Two New Members Join IPP Board

By David Tate

• Mike Cross

Mike Cross joined the Illinois Prairie Path Board in April soon after he started developing the IPP's home page on the world wide web. He lives in Naperville near the intersection of the IPP's Aurora Branch and Batavia Spur and routinely bicycles the 30-mile Wheaton-Batavia-Geneva-Wheaton triangle on the IPP and the Fox River Trail. Mike is also an avid rock climber.

Mike developed the IPP's home page on the web as his way of promoting Rails-to-Trails in general and the IPP specifically. It includes IPP Newsletters, trail enhancements, Path events, a map, recommended bicycle rides, trail history and more. To view the IPP's home page that Mike developed, either search on "Illinois Prairie Path" or enter

the following address: <http://www.mcs.net/~msc/IPP>

• Bob Bernero

Bob Bernero joined the IPP board in February. Bob lives adjacent to the Path in Glen Ellyn and is a marathon runner. Bob likes to use the Path for his marathon training due to its surface of limestone screenings. In preparation for the Chicago Marathon, Bob will run 50 miles a week, 25 miles on the IPP and 25 miles on asphalt and concrete.

As a board member, Bob is coordinating the IPP's efforts to better communicate to users the IPP's rules-of-the-road. See the Prairie Path Adventures box on page 4 for an example of the information he is getting out to our members. Additional messages will be posted on the IPP display cases and included on free trail maps.

Thanks to Volunteers for Earth Day Clean Up!

(Continued from page 1)

- **ELMHURST, Steve Plumb**

Along the two miles of the IPP between I-290 and Salt Creek, 140 people picked up lots of trash.

- **GLEN ELLYN (Report #1), Jean C. Mooring**

Having participated in every Glen Ellyn IPP spring cleanup since about 1970, I can say this was one of our best in many years. In three hours on the morning of Saturday, April 19, approximately 70 trail fans, including 32 members of the Glenfield Baptist Church of Glen Ellyn, gathered up two truckloads of debris. Two village employees driving a village truck and front end loader scooped up and hauled the junk away. Besides the expected cans, bottles, paper, and plastic bagged by the willing hands of the many volunteers, one truckload consisted of mainly logs, roots, stumps, and dead bushes carelessly left on the Prairie Path right-of-way between Main and Prospect by employees of the various utilities that have worked on that section of the Path in recent months. Mark Newel, longtime friend of the Prairie Path, hauled out much of that truckload of unsightly wood debris himself and piled it neatly by the trail for pickup.

Warren Senneke, who directed the project on behalf of the Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission from his command post at Prairie Path Park, was enthusiastic about the number of volunteers and what they accomplished. "It was a great cleanup, thanks to all those caring people. Our section of the Path looks neat and clean," he said.

- **GLEN ELLYN (Report #2), Bob Bernero**

Volunteers met at Prairie Path Park on April 19. The village provided trash bags and a truck that picked up the filled bags left at the cross streets. Thanks to volunteer recruiters including Jim Tuinenga who contacted the scouting groups at various local churches and Harley Jordan who contacted youth groups at the YMCA. I contacted 12 volunteers from a list of local members who had expressed an interest in volunteering.

- **LOMBARD, Dick Wilson**

Six people worked for three hours cleaning up the Lombard section of the Path, starting at Main Street and going west to the I-355 bridge.

- **WARRENVILLE, Bob Rawls**

The Warrenville section of the IPP cleanup took place on Saturday, April 19. For the second year, Brownie Troop 305, with Troop Leaders Donna Coleman and Sue Girock, and members of the Rawls Family were there in force to make sure the Path was clean and prepared for the upcoming season. The Brownies worked very hard picking up litter and debris that had accumulated over the past year. They gath-



Wheaton: Girl Scout Pack 306 and Cub Scout Pack 369, both from Wheaton, combine their efforts in cleaning the IPP's Main Stem. Pack leaders were Bernie Ishmael and Mary Schlick.

ered 14 bags of trash. Our thanks to Troop 305 and their troop leaders for their help.

- **WHEATON, David Tate**

Again this year the Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission (WEIC) coordinated a thorough Earth Day cleanup along eight miles of the Prairie Path. Kathy Williamson coordinated the WEIC's cleanup along the Path and had a very good turnout of over 160 people that registered at the table that was set up at Lincoln Street. The WEIC provided recycling bags, coffee, orange juice, and donuts to the volunteers. The IPP, a not-for-profit corporation, funded the table and also gave to each cleanup volunteer its large multi-colored trail map.

The WEIC coordinators Kathy Williamson, Paul Zanke, Ted Witte, Tracy Vought, and Helen Bartlett assigned cleanup teams to the two miles of the Prairie Path Main Stem up to the Glen Ellyn border, the one and a half miles of the Elgin Branch to Pleasant Hill Road, and almost five miles of the Aurora Branch down to Warrenville Road.

- **WINFIELD, David Tate**

I was responsible for the three-mile cleanup of the Prairie Path Elgin Branch from Pleasant Hill Road to Prince Crossing Road.



Bellwood: Cleanup volunteers from the Boys & Girls Club received a bike safety demonstration from Officer Jack Bridson.



ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH MERCHANDISE AVAILABLE



IPP T-SHIRT \$17.00

Be proud to wear the original IPP logo printed on this 100% cotton short-sleeve T-shirt. The silk-screened logo of one of the first rail trails in the United States shows symbols of the biking, hiking, and equestrian-riding its users enjoy. A Burr Oak leaf, the tree of the prairie, is also airbrushed on it. The shirts are machine washable, and available in a variety of shirt colors with black logo. Please specify size (Small, Medium, Large & X-Large) and your first 3 choices of color (depending upon availability).

IPP MAP \$3.00

This popular full-color map shows you where you are and where you can go on the IPP, street by street, suburb by suburb. The photos on the back are highlighted with the history and some interesting facts about the IPP. This map is so much in demand that we can hardly keep copies of it in stock.

IPP GUIDE \$4.75

This informative 32-page guide tells about the history and natural habitat of the Illinois Prairie Path. It's a must for nature enthusiasts.

IPP GIFT MEMBERSHIP \$10.00 Individual/\$15.00 Family

Give a unique and environmentally-conscious gift. The recipient will be sent an announcement and a full color IPP official map. Please be sure to include the full name and address of the recipient along with your own name and address.

IPP BASEBALL CAP \$7.75

This white and green baseball cap with IPP logo will help protect you from the sun while you're out on the trail.

IPP OFFICIAL PATCH \$2.50

The IPP logo on a green and white oval patch can easily be applied to hats, jackets, jeans and whatever you want to put it on. (3-inches high x 2 1/4-inches wide).

Along with your order, include your name, address, phone number, and your check made out to: *The Illinois Prairie Path*. Send it to: Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, IL 60189. (Tax, postage, shipping and handling are included). Allow 3-4 weeks for delivery. For more information, call our Office Manager at (630) 752-0120.



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