

The Illinois Prairie Path Spring 1999 NEWSLETTER



Join our Earth Day Cleanup

**By David Tate,
IPP President**

In observance of Earth Day 1999, The Illinois Prairie Path has scheduled cleanups on Saturday, April 10, in Wheaton and the weekend of April 24 and 25 for all areas other than Wheaton. Our goal is to again clean all 61 miles of the IPP this year.

Litter on the path is picked up solely by volunteers. Your help on Earth Day is both needed and appreciated. However, it is also important to remember that since all litter on the path is picked up by volunteers, any litter spotted along the path at anytime throughout the year should also be picked up.

To be a participant in the IPP Earth Day 1999 cleanup, you can either take a trash bag to the path and join in at anytime or call one of our IPP Earth Day coordinators listed on page 2. It is recommended that volunteer groups contact one of the coordinators. The coordinators may recommend to some groups that they clean specific sections of the path. Our goal is to assign at least one cleanup group to each section of the 61-mile trail.

The Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission will again manage Wheaton's Earth Day cleanup between 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 10, from a table at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue



This was the scene at last year's IPP cleanup in Wheaton. Come out and join us this year in Wheaton or other communities along the IPP. Your help is both needed and appreciated!

“To be a participant in the IPP Earth Day 1999 cleanup, you can either take a trash bag to the path and join in at any time or call one of our IPP Earth Day Coordinators on page 2.”

and the IPP in Stevens Park. The commission will coordinate trail cleanup sections and also provide free refreshments, trash bags and a multi-colored IPP map. Funding for the table will again this year be provided by The Illinois Prairie Path, an Illinois not-for-profit corporation.

Volunteers will want to wear work gloves and clothing appropriate for the weather.

(Continued on page 2)

Inside This Issue

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Earth Day Cleanup</i> | <i>pp. 1-2</i> |
| <i>1st Avenue Trailhead</i> | <i>p. 2</i> |
| <i>Taylor Avenue Bridge</i> | <i>p. 3</i> |
| <i>Annual Meeting Report</i> | <i>pp. 4-5</i> |
| <i>Boub vs Wayne Township</i> | <i>p. 7</i> |

Join the IPP Earth Day Cleanup

(Continued from page 1)

The entire right-of-way of the IPP, which varies in width from about 20 feet to 100 feet, should be cleaned. In addition, small paths and walkways that feed into the main trail and the IPP parking lots should also be cleaned.

Trash bags should not be left along the IPP

except in Glen Ellyn and Elmhurst. All trash bags should be disposed of by either placing them in or near one of the path's trash receptacles or by taking the bags home and disposing of them with your own recyclables and trash. In Glen Ellyn and Elmhurst, trash bags may be left next to the trail and they will be picked up by the Glen Ellyn Public Works Department and the Elmhurst Park District, respectively.



IPP Clean-up Coordinators

For more information about the IPP Cleanups in the following locations, contact one of our coordinators.

| <u>Location</u> | <u>IPP Coordinator</u> | <u>Phone Number</u> |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Maywood | Paul Aeschleman | (708) 848-6023 |
| Bellwood | Susan Wisniewski | (708) 493-1316 |
| Hillside | Nancy Becker | (630) 654-1019 |
| Berkeley | John Kacich | (708) 544-7524 |
| Elmhurst | Eric Keeley | (630) 691-1413 |
| Lombard | Joelyn Kott | (630) 620-5718 |
| Glen Ellyn | Tom Jomrok | (630) 858-3898 |
| Wheaton | Helen Bartlett | (630) 668-1759 |
| Winfield | David Tate | (630) 682-1449 |
| W. Chicago/Geneva Spur | Tom Yule | (630) 293-1726 |
| W. Chicago/Elgin Branch | Birt Hurlbert | (630) 293-1062 |
| Wayne | Gladys Johnston | (630) 584-2491 |
| Warrenville | Bob Rawls | (630) 393-6720 |
| Aurora | Mike Cross | (630) 416-1415 |
| Batavia Spur | Ed Barsotti | (630) 820-8759 |
| Unincorporated areas | David Tate | (630) 682-1449 |
| General information | Dick Wilson | (847) 299-7882 |

1st Avenue Trailhead Established in Cook County

**By Paul Aeschleman,
IPP Board Member**

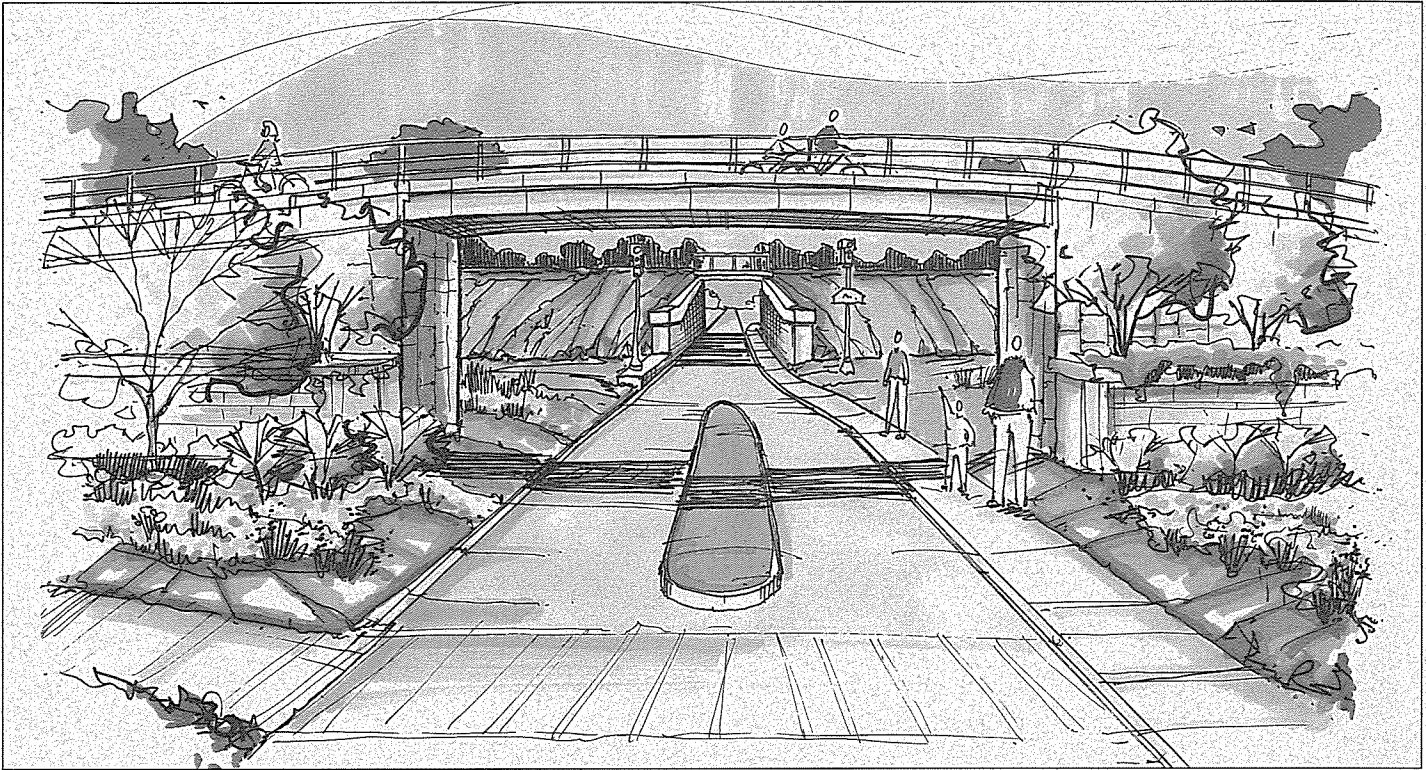
Funding for the establishment of a prairie demonstration garden at the 1st Avenue trailhead was unanimously approved at the October IPP Board meeting. The trailhead plan includes a bench, information kiosk, and a demonstration prairie planting.

The project was kicked off in November when 60 cubic yards of soil

were delivered to the 1st Avenue trailhead. The transportation services for this project were donated by A-1 Transport Inc. of Addison and the soil mix was supplied at a discount by Prestige Nursery of Bartlett. The Village of Maywood supplied the heavy equipment and a crew to help with spreading of the soil. The IPP's prairie consultant, Larry Sheaffer (Prairie Partners), designed the trailhead plantings, supervised the placement and

spreading of the soil, and planted several shrubs and a tree.

The second phase of the project is scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. on Saturday, May 22, when IPP members and students from the Proviso East High School Ecology Club will plant prairie plants and install a bench and an information kiosk. The planting will be supervised by Larry Sheaffer. Volunteers who would like to help should call Paul Aeschleman at 773-693-3800, ext. 270.



Taylor Avenue Bridge Construction Update

**By Jean Mooring
IPP Board Member**

Construction of the Taylor Avenue Bridge in Glen Ellyn is expected to begin this fall. Earlier this year on February 22, the Glen Ellyn Village Board approved the design for a 60-foot-long, 14-foot-wide single span pre-stressed concrete beam bridge to carry the Illinois Prairie Path over Taylor Avenue. The 14-foot width is a new requirement of the DuPage County Division of Transportation for bicyclists' safety.

Because the actual distance to be spanned between the tops of the east and west embankments is approximately 250 feet, a system of long retaining walls and lower decorative terraces will be built to enclose the tons of fill needed to connect the top of the embankment to

"... the bridge project will cost an estimated \$511,000, of which \$100,000 has been raised by volunteers and represents Glen Ellyn's contribution."

the 15-foot-high bridge abutment on each side of Taylor Avenue. The filled area will cover about half of the demonstration prairie developed over a period of almost 25 years by ecology students at Glenbard West High School. The excavation of the fill from outside of the walls will destroy most of the rest of the prairie.

The DuPage County Division of Transportation, owner of the right-of-way, hired Transystems Corporation as the engineering firm for the bridge. According to spokespersons for Transystems, the bridge project will cost an estimated

\$511,000, of which \$100,000 has been raised by volunteers and represents Glen Ellyn's contribution. DuPage County will fund the remainder.

Proposed construction costs include \$69,000 for the actual bridge, \$40,000 for earth work, \$118,500 for retaining walls and "tree" walls (terraces), as well as additional costs for the bikeway, an access sidewalk on the west side, traffic signal modifications, and roadway and bikeway lighting. Design and construction engineering totals \$100,200 and tree/prairie plantings total \$70,000.

IPP Annual Meeting Report

**By Jean Mooring,
IPP Board Member**

The 34th Annual Meeting of The Illinois Prairie Path was held on Sunday, November 1, 1998, at The Abbey, an Elmhurst Park District facility on St. Charles Road. This facility which was remodeled last year is now an even more attractive and convenient venue for our Annual Meeting. Many of the 55 attendees expressed their pleasure with the bright and spacious room. On behalf of The IPP, our board thanks the Elmhurst Park District for inviting us back year after year.

President David Tate called the meeting to order and introduced the board members who were present. After approval of the 1997 minutes, he moved to the nomination of members for the Board of Directors. All the candidates were members whose terms were expiring. Nancy Becker, Eric Keeley, Ken Moss, Su-

san Wisniewski and Tom Yule were re-elected by acclamation.

In his President's Report, David stated that The Illinois Prairie Path is in good financial condition. He listed many of The IPP's accomplishments during the year:

- refurbishment of five display cases along the trail;
- distribution of 25,000 free trail maps (with some funding from the Chicago Area Bicycle Dealers Association);
- revision of the full-color IPP trail map currently being printed;
- donation of four weatherstone trash containers for the Prairie Path by IPP Board Member Jean Mooring and the board's plans to purchase 13 more in 1999 for the unincorporated areas;
- prairie restoration work by IPP volunteers with the help of landscape contractor Larry Sheaffer on several prairie remnants in

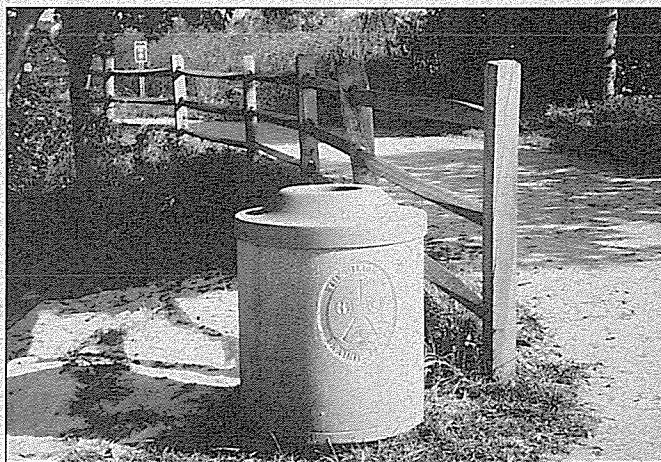
Elmhurst, Wheaton, West Chicago, and near North Avenue;

- donations of \$10,000 to the Taylor Avenue bridge project in Glen Ellyn and \$1,000 to the Conservation Foundation Trails Project;
- coordination of the annual Earth Day trail cleanups;
- sponsoring a booth at the
- annual bicycle show in Rosemont; and
- donation of \$1550 to Allied Archeology to restore the contours of three Indian burial mounds in the Winfield Mounds Forest Preserve near the Geneva Spur, a project to be developed and managed by the DuPage County Forest Preserve District.

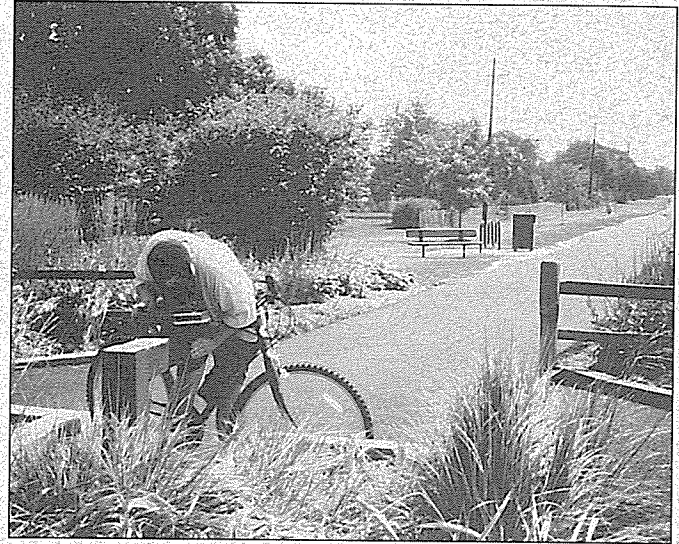
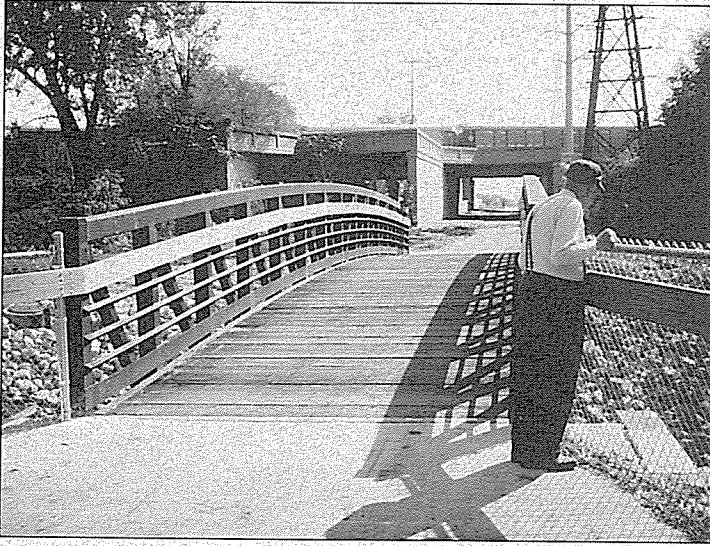
IPP Treasurer Paul Mooring reported total revenue for the year as \$58,667; expenditures of \$38,645; and a cash balance on hand of \$114,129. He said that \$100,000 has been collected or promised for



Dick and Nancy Wilson and David Tate prepare to replace an old display case at County Farm & Geneva Road.



This is one of four trash containers with the IPP logo donated by Jean Mooring. This container is located at the beginning of Timber Ridge Trail at County Farm and Geneva Road.



the Taylor Avenue bridge fund. DuPage County will provide the balance when the plans are finalized.

IPP Cook County Chairman Paul Aeschleman reported on the September 20th Grand Opening of the newly-improved four-mile Cook County section running through the villages of Maywood, Bellwood and Hillside from First Avenue in Maywood to Taft Avenue in Hillside/Berkeley. It was blacktopped and landscaped in 1998 by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources at a cost of \$660,000. The project also included a new bridge over Addison Creek in Bellwood and safety improvements to the bridge over Wolf Road in Hillside. The day was especially happy for those who had been awaiting it for almost 20 years, ever since 1979 when the state acquired the property.

A series of three triumphant ribbon-cuttings beginning at the First Avenue trail head were held. These were attended by the mayors and some staff members of the four villages linked by the improved trail; Illinois Department of Natural Resources representatives Ed Hoffman and Bob Thornberry; Illinois Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Director Mike Ulm; members of The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Direc-

Top left photo: The bridge over Addison Creek in Bellwood was built in 1998 by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

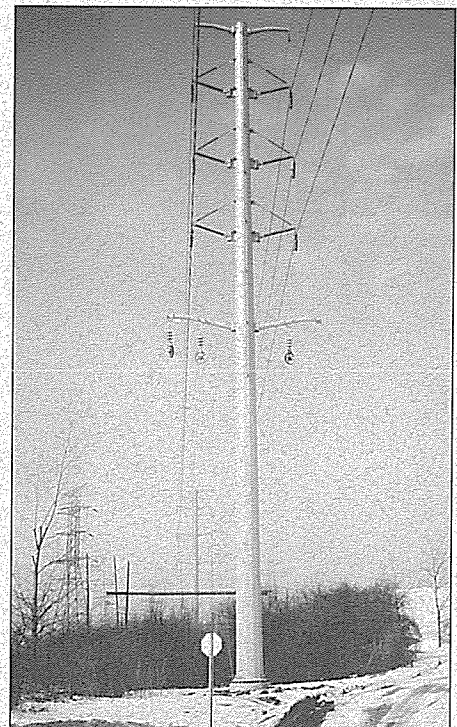
Top right photo: Bicyclist gets a drink of water in a pretty park area at Taft Avenue in Hillside. The newly blacktopped trail extends to First Avenue, Maywood.

tors; and dozens of bicyclists, joggers and other path users.

Paul Aeschleman also mentioned future plans for trails in Cook County:

- a bridge over the Des Plaines River in Maywood;
- a trail along the river connecting various forest preserves and conservation areas which ultimately will extend to the Wisconsin state line;
- the proposed trail along Salt Creek connecting the Prairie Path to the Illinois-Michigan Canal; and
- a trail along Addison Creek in Bellwood.

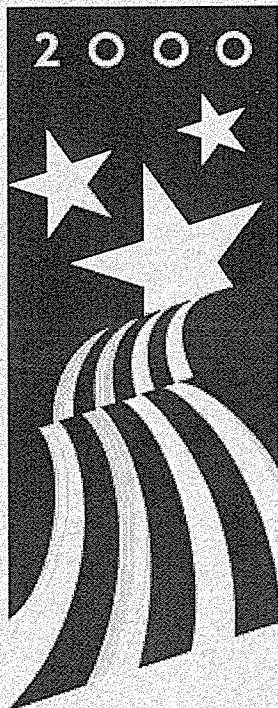
The final speaker was Jean Mooring who narrated the ever-popular annual slide show written by her husband, Paul Mooring. The meeting concluded with a social hour and the traditional cider, cakes and cookies provided by board members and spouses.



Impossible to hide, a newly installed 138 kilovolts ComEd pole towers above the Prairie Path right-of-way west of Frontenac on the Aurora Branch near Warrenville.

The Millennium Trails Program

*By Paul Mooring,
IPP Board Treasurer*



Hillary Rodham Clinton announced to the nation the White House Millennium Trails Program at a ceremony held last October on the new Baltimore and Annapolis Trail. As Mrs. Clinton explained, the program will honor the past and imagine the future. "President Clinton and I want to ensure that we as a country honor our nation's transportation history. Millennium Trails is a wonderful opportunity to showcase, protect, and build on that legacy as we move into the 21st century. Like the railroads that brought us together in the 19th century, these trails will bring us together in the 20th and 21st centuries," she said.

Under the program, which will celebrate, recognize, and be a catalyst for creating trails, more than 2000 trail projects throughout the United States will be recognized. There will be three categories of recognition. They are: (1) **Community Trails 2000**, which will honor 2000 local trail projects across the country, (2) **Millennium Legacy Trails**, limited to one trail from each of the fifty states plus one each from the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and (3) **National Millennium Trails**, recognizing twelve flagship projects that "symbolize America's legacy for the Millennium." At the time this report was being prepared, the formal criteria for determining which trails might be considered in each of these categories had not been released. We hope the Illinois Prairie Path becomes the Millennium Legacy Trail from Illinois.

The program is being managed by a partnership consisting of the White House Millennium Council, the United States Department of Transportation, and other government and some private agencies. The program director is Jeff Olson. He can be reached at (202) 366-4045 or by fax at (202) 366-7660. His e-mail address is trails2k@aol.com. Additional information can be found at the web site, www.dot.gov/mtp/index.htm.

The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

This newsletter is published by The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors. Address correspondence to: The Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, IL 60189

Phone: 630-752-0120 Calls to our voice mail system are monitored several times a week. Depending on the nature of your call, we will get back to you as soon as possible. Please leave your daytime and evening phone numbers.

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 Avenue, Wheaton. Members are welcome to attend.



**Visit us at our
web site:
<http://www.ipp.org>**

Update on Bicycle Safety Restoration Bill

By Jean Mooring,
IPP Board Member

On October 22, 1998, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled 4 to 3 in *Boub vs. Wayne Township* that bicyclists were not intended users of roadways unless the roadways were specifically designated (by signs or painted lanes and striping) for such use and that cyclists could not recover damages for accidents occurring on such roads. The case arose from an accident on September 8, 1992, when cyclist Jon Boub was crossing an old one-lane plank bridge on St. Charles Road in Wayne Township. The bridge had been rendered unsafe by a township construction crew, which had removed the asphalt filler between the planks and then left for the day without providing any barriers or posting any warning signs. Boub's bicycle tire slipped into one of the cracks; he fell and was seriously injured.

The bicycling community was stunned by the Supreme Court ruling that Wayne Township was not liable for damages caused to the bicyclist by its employees' negligence because bicyclists, said the court, are neither permitted nor intended roadway users. Only intended roadway users, such as motorists or motorcyclists, have such liability rights, according to this interpretation.

The remedy for such injustice to the bicycling public is a bill, SB101 – the Bicycle Safety Restoration Bill, now before the Senate Judiciary Committee, sponsored by Senator Kathleen Parker (Northbrook). The bill will add the following language to the Illinois Vehicle Code:
"Bicyclists are intended users of all streets and highways in Illinois except those where bicyclists are le-



This one-lane horse-and-buggy era bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River is where the bicycle accident took place. Note the quaint deck caulked with asphalt.



gally prohibited and signs to that effect are posted." To allay fears that local governments might have to spend millions to upgrade roadways for bicyclists, the bill will also reinstate former Illinois law requiring local governments to give bicyclists *the same – not more – duty of care* as given other road users. Passage of SB101 will bring Illinois law back in line with other states; allow local government to provide bike routes and bike lanes and publish bike

maps of their towns without incurring additional liability; allow the 475-mile Grand Illinois Trail to move forward incorporating some 185 miles on Illinois roadways; and promote good public transportation policy by encouraging bicycling.

IPP members are invited to call Senator Beverly Fawell, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee, at 630-752-1100 to urge her continued support of SB101.

Illinois Rails-to-Trails Office Closes

By Paul Aeschleman, IPP Board Member

Effective January 31, the Illinois Rails-to-Trails (IRTC) field office in Springfield was closed as part of a national reorganization of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The IPP regrets the loss of this organization and recognizes the dedication of its Director Mike Ulm. Over the past several years, Mike has supported the IPP on numerous occasions including several presentations at our Annual Meeting and participation in the 1996 Grand Illinois Celebration and the 1998 Cook County Grand Opening.

During the IRTC's December 1998 Board Meeting, the Board decided to pursue the establishment of a stand-alone Illinois Trails Conservancy organization. The goal of this group is to form a coalition among the numerous Illinois Trail Advocacy groups, and to harness the collective power of these groups into an effective lobbying and advocacy organization. Look for more details on the Illinois Trails Conservancy in future IPP newsletters.

The Illinois Prairie Path



NEWSLETTER

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Work Days & Trail Events

Saturday, April 10

Earth Day cleanup in Wheaton (see Earth Day article on pages 1-2). The sign-up table will again be located in Wheaton at the intersection of Lincoln Avenue and the IPP in Stevens Park between 9 a.m. and noon. Bring work gloves. For more information, call Helen Bartlett 630-668-1759.

**Saturday & Sunday,
April 24 & 25**

Earth Day cleanups along all 61-miles of the IPP except Wheaton (see Earth Day article on pages 1-2).

Saturday, May 15

Bird walk in Pratt's Wayne Woods to look for spring arrivals. Meet at 9 a.m. in the far back parking lot. Directions: from Highway 59 go west on Army Trail Rd. to Powis Rd. in Wayne. Then go north to the Forest Preserve entrance. We will have a picnic lunch after the walk. For more information call Dick Wilson at 847-299-7882 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. or Paul Mooring 630-469-4289.

Saturday, May 22

Planting of prairie plants at 1st Ave. in Maywood. Meet at 9 a.m. at 1st Ave. For more information, call Paul Aeschleman at 708-848-6023.

Saturday, June 5

National Trails Day

**Saturday, June 19 &
Saturday, July 17**

Work days to repair mile markers. Meet at 9 a.m. at Rathje Park, 616 Delles Ave., Wheaton. For more information, call Dick Wilson at 847-299-7882 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.
