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The Illinois Prairie Path **Newsletter**

Winter / Spring 2007

Des Plaines River Bridge Now Ready for Use

The big news in Cook County is that on August 23rd, K&K Ironworks of Chicago connected the east and west sections of the bridge over the Des Plaines River, between Maywood and Forest Park. The decking was laid several days later and the new bridge is now open for use. The sections of the trail leading up to the bridge are also ready to receive Path traffic.

Board Member and former Prairie Path President Paul Aeschleman reports, "The com-

pletion of this bridge closes a gap in the West Suburban trail network, and will provide a much needed non-motorized link between the Cook County Maybrook Courthouse and the CTA Blue Line. I have already received comments from numerous area bicycling commuters who have been using the bridge to travel from their homes in Oak Park, Forest Park, and River Forest to the Court House and Loyola Hospital."

An advantage for Maywood

residents is the additional access east and to Chicago via the CTA. Forest Park Village Manager Michael Sturino mentioned he is looking forward to attracting cyclists to the village's Madison Street shops and restaurants from the west.

The Illinois Department of Transportation oversaw the final construction arrangements, which first required an intergovernmental agreement among Maywood, Forest Park, Cook County, the State of Illinois and the CTA.

Continued on page 6...



A freshly poured concrete ramp greets trail users on the western side of the new Des Plaines River bridge. Photo courtesy of the Oak Park Bicycle Club.

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The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

This newsletter is published by
The Illinois Prairie Path
Board of Directors

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Web Site: www.ipp.org

Meetings: The Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors meetings are held at 7:30PM on the first Tuesday of each month except August and November, at Rathje Park Building, 616 Delles Ave., Wheaton. Members are always welcome to attend.

The Illinois Prairie Path 2007 Board of Directors

Ray Bartels, President
Lombard

Dick Wilson, Vice President
DesPlaines

F. Paul Mooring, Treasurer
Glen Ellyn

Nancy Becker, Secretary
Willowbrook

Dave Watts, Office Manager
and Newsletter Editor
Glen Ellyn

Paul Aeschleman, Oak Park
Bob Bernero, Glen Ellyn
Lennel Grace, Maywood
Jean Mooring, Glen Ellyn
Erik Spande, Winfield
Rob Sperl, Warrenville
Jan Stortz, Villa Park
Susan Terwedow, Glen Ellyn
Nancy Wilson, DesPlaines

Report on The Illinois Prairie Path 42nd Annual Meeting

By Jean Mooring, IPPC Board Member

The Illinois Prairie Path 2006 Annual Meeting was held on November 5th in the spacious gym of the Lombard Community Building. Forty-five IPP members and friends attended.

The meeting was called to order by IPP board member Ray Bartels, who introduced all the current board members in attendance. He then read with regret a resignation letter from President Don Kirchenberg (see page 9). The Illinois Prairie Path has benefited greatly from Don's contributions and wishes him well in his future endeavors.

Bartels briefly summarized the year's events on the Path, including the new designation of the "Special Eight" (Don Kirchenberg's preservation project) as the Glacial Ridge Forest Preserve, the Earth Day cleanup, the replacement of the rusting Helen Turner Memorial Fountain at Volunteer Park in Wheaton, the repairs to the decorative stone walls at Volunteer Park and the replacement of a bench there. Along the Aurora Branch, a vandalized three-mile marker was replaced. A Lexan display case window was replaced at Taft Ave. in Berkeley, with help from LeDonne True Value Hardware Store in Berkeley. The board reconstructed the charming bench on the Batavia Spur originally

built, we believe, by DuPage County Division of Transportation trail fans. The IPP Board celebrated two major events with display tables: DuPage County Bike Day, May 20th, at County Farm and Geneva Roads, and National Trails Day, June 3rd, at Volunteer Park.

Boy Scouts working toward their Eagle rank accomplished several projects: removal of rotting railroad ties at Hoffman Park in Wheaton; construction of railings at a dangerous former cattle crossing on the Elgin Branch east of Prince Crossing Road; and repairs to several older display case stands. Forest Preserve Steward Bruce Blake provided much appreciated assistance in planting native vegetation on the eroded embankment adjacent to the new Glacial Ridge Forest Preserve.

Ray then introduced Treasurer Paul Mooring who presented the annual treasurer's report, seen in detail on page 5. Next on the agenda was Office Manager David Watts who reported on our 2006 membership numbers. See page 6 for his report.

Interim President Dick Wilson, also the chair of the nominating committee, then presented a list of nominees for the board of directors. Members whose terms were expiring included Ray Bartels, Mike Cross, Jean Mooring and Dick Wilson. Ray, Jean and Dick agreed to run again. Nancy Wilson was nominated from the floor. The slate of four was approved. Two board vacancies remain to be filled.

Continued on page 4...

Annual Prairie Path Cleanup Saturday April 28th

We are looking for coordinators for this year's trail cleanup. These individuals will be responsible for certain portions of the path and will be those areas' main contact persons. Coordinators will help organize people or groups that volunteer in their coverage area. Having a coordinator helps keep the event organized and gives people in the area a point of contact. If you are interested please contact Ray Bartels at 630-424-8851 or email Rbartel399@comcast.net.



Of course, the main call is for cleanup volunteers to cover the 62 miles of the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) and the 11½ miles of the Great Western Trail (GWT).

The Wheaton signup tent will be at Lincoln Avenue and the IPP Elgin Branch, one third mile north of Volunteer Park. The tent will open at 8AM. The cleanup is run by the Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission.

The Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission manages the cleanup for the village. Their table location will be Prairie Path Park, across from the train station, open 9AM to noon.

Look for Villa Park's signup table next to the Villa Park His-

Continued on page 6...

Trail Cleanup Volunteers Needed **ANNUAL TRAIL CLEANUP** of the Illinois Prairie Path & the Great Western Trail Saturday, April 28th, 2007 Starting at 9:00AM Rain or Shine!

Let's all pitch in to keep the Path beautiful! To volunteer, please call one of the coordinators listed below

If you, your family and/or co-workers are interested in helping us, please contact one of the cleanup coordinators listed below.

Illinois Prairie Path

Aurora / Aurora Branch
Batavia Spur
Elgin Branch at Rte. 59
Elgin Branch at Army Trail
Elgin Branch at Prince Crossing Rd
Elmhurst

Geneva / Geneva Spur
Glen Ellyn
Hillside
Lombard
Maywood and Bellwood
Naperville
Villa Park

Warrenville
West Chicago / Geneva Spur east end
West Chicago / Geneva Spur west end
Wheaton
Winfield / Geneva Spur

Great Western Trail

Great Western Trail

IPP Coordinator

Ed Barsotti
Still Needs A Coordinator
Dick Wilson
Joan Duma
Dave & Kandy Jedlicka
Raymond Bartels

Tim Klimowski
Don Pellico
Nancy Becker
David Gorman
Paul Aeschleman
Sharon Kirkland
Pride Commission

Doug Henk
Suzanne Burchacki
Steve Sentoff
Helen Bartlett
Erik Spande

GWT Trail Coordinator

Don Kirchenberg
Fndsgtrwtstntrl@aol.com

Phone Number

630-978-0583

847-299-7882
630-205-5312
630-293-7214
630-424-8851

or 630-606-8851

630-232-6304
630-854-5067
630-654-1019
630-620-5700
708-848-6023
630-983-9939
630-834-8500
x6059

630-690-3085
630-550-5147
630-293-1627
630-668-1759
630-871-6640

Phone Number

630-853-7650

For additional locations or questions, call Ray Bartels at 630-424-8851 or 630-606-8851
email: rbartel399@comcast.net

Meeting continued from page 2...

The principal speaker was Deborah Fagan, DuPage County Trail System Coordinator and senior planner with the Department of Economic Development and Planning. Deborah explained the “No Unauthorized Encroachment—Keep to your own property” policy of the State’s Attorney’s Office (SAO). Driven by a concern about public liability for accidents, the DuPage County Board has been advised by the SAO to eliminate encroachments such as footbridges, ramps and steps that provide access to the county trails, but are located on county property. Deborah showed pictures of a

*The County values
the goodwill of its
neighbors, and asks
Path users to
report violators*

few such encroachments and included one bridge that is permitted because it is maintained and insured by a local park district and serves a whole housing development rather than just one household. The principle is that if a municipality or other government agency takes responsibility for maintenance, and provides insurance for such a project, it will be permitted. Some types of encroachments are never allowed, such as dumping, illegal parking, storage of materials, and fencing on parts of the right-of-way. Deborah reported that most of the neighboring property owners have been cooperative

and have voluntarily removed their offending structures. The County values the goodwill of its neighbors, and asks Path users to report violators.



Ray Bartels (left) welcomes members and guests to the 42nd annual meeting of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation held November 5th

Moving on to a happier topic, Deborah outlined new trail-related construction projects: a new Main Stem bridge over the East Branch of the DuPage River between Glen Ellyn and Lombard, a new Aurora Branch bridge over the West DuPage River near Warrenville, and a new Elgin Branch bridge over the EJ&E Railroad near Wayne, all to start in a few months. Other work will include new culverts along the IPP Aurora Branch in Wheaton and Warrenville. Engineering is being done for three bridges in Lombard to carry the Great Western Trail over Grace Street, the Union Pacific Railroad and St. Charles Road. Many other trails are in the planning stages for other parts of DuPage County. New programs include Safe Routes to School which will fund sidewalks and paths and future amenity improvements such as new bike racks. More than four million dollars in federal and state grants has been allocated for bikeway improvements.

Deborah fielded a few ques-

tions and concluded by suggesting that trail users check the county web site, www.dupageco.org, to keep up with the many great trail projects.

Ray Bartels then showed pictures (courtesy of the Oak Park Bike Club) of the new Des Plaines River bridge in Maywood, and the trail continuing east into Forest Park that connects to the CTA Blue Line terminal and provides a long-awaited pathway for IPP users to downtown Chicago. This is the outstanding achievement of 2006 for the Illinois Prairie Path and we thank our friends in Maywood and Forest Park, especially State Representative Karen Yarbrough from District 7 and Maywood Mayor Henderson Yarbrough, her husband. IPPc Board member Paul Aeschleman has been promoting the bridge for ten years and has earned trail fans’ sincere appreciation.

Jean Mooring was next on the agenda and read a brief tribute to the late Jack Knuepfer and Brooks McCormick. Full obituaries of both men are on page 8.

Paul and Jean Mooring presented, with Jean as narrator, their slide show, “History of the Illinois Prairie Path.” People should know that the Prairie Path has not always been here and that it took a lot of work by a lot of people over many years to bring us the treasure we have today.

The meeting concluded with the traditional cider, cakes and cookies provided by board members as attendees reviewed a clothesline of pictures taken by the Moorings, showing some of the year’s major Path events and activities.

Volunteer Park Fountain Replaced

By Jean Mooring, IPP Board Member

On July 6, 2006 Armbrust Plumbing of Wheaton installed a new drinking fountain at Volunteer Park to replace the rusted and leaking Helen Turner Memorial Fountain originally installed in 2001. The replacement fountain was supplied by the manufacturer at no cost because the original should not have failed so soon. The total cost to The Illinois Prairie Path was \$1,051. The new fountain is looking and working fine, but you have to push really hard to operate the jug filler.



July 6, 2006. Armbrust plumber Eddie Blumhofer cuts base of old rusted Helen Turner Memorial Fountain before removing it. Photo by Jean Mooring.

Moving?
Please let us know



The Post Office doesn't
always notify us of your
change of address

The Illinois Prairie Path Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2006

Cash Balance, November 1, 2005

Bank One	\$27,427.62
Office Manager's Account	618.59
Petty Cash	25.22
Money Market – Columbia Funds	108,116.80
Total	\$136,188.23

Revenue

Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$5,900.00
Dues	30,610.00
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	2,101.50
Interest	5,341.51
Miscellaneous	0.00
Total	\$43,953.01

Expenditures

Office Manager (Contractual Stipend)	\$10,300.00
Newsletters (Production and Mailing)	4,180.03
Maintenance and Repairs	2,404.78
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	7,644.83
Post Office	1,319.99
Telephone	548.43
Special Projects	10,219.88
Special Events	499.55
Prairie Restoration	6,205.00
Other Printing	1,984.14
Merchandise for Sale	1,153.25
Donations, Grants, Bequests	2,000.00
Travel/Board Expenses	0.00
Legal and Consulting	0.00
Office Supplies, etc.	99.38
Dues and Subscriptions	0.00
Insurance	829.00
Web Maintenance	404.00
Government Fees	20.00
Miscellaneous	237.22
Total	\$50,049.48

Cash Balance, October 31, 2006

Chase – Checking Account	\$8,282.54
Chase – Savings Account	7,114.98
Chase – Office Manager's Account	1,368.98
Office Manager's Petty Cash Account	54.85
Money Market – Columbia Funds	113,270.41
Total	\$130,091.76

Submitted by Paul Mooring, IPPc Treasurer

Bridge continued from page 1...

While the construction moved fairly quickly, planting the seeds for this project began long ago. Paul Aeschleman has been proactively working toward this goal for the past ten years. He credits state Representative Karen Yarbrough (Dist. 7) of Maywood with finally securing the



In late fall 2006, the newly erected IPP Des Plaines River bridge at the far east end of the Main Stem was already receiving traffic from trail users. Photo courtesy of the Oak Park Bicycle Club.

\$540,000 in funds hastening the bridge's completion.

Groundbreaking for the new bridge was late last winter, attended by many Path supporters and dignitaries (see last issue).

As of this newsletter, a few details remain: the finalization of safety lighting, landscaping and proper signage leading to and from the new bridge. These should be finished soon.

An official bridge Grand Opening ceremony is planned for early this Spring.

Directions to the Bridge...

Eastbound: from the IPP trailhead in Maywood, cross First Avenue at the light and then head east along Maybrook Drive until

it ends. An access ramp has been installed from Maybrook Drive to the bridge. Head east across the bridge through the cemeteries and into Forest Park.

Westbound: (a little trickier) From the north side of the Des Plaines Avenue CTA station, follow the streets and sidewalks west to the large CTA parking lot that occupies much of the old CA&E railroad right-of-way. The trail to the bridge begins on the western edge of the parking lot.

Cleanup continued from page 3...

torical Society Museum on Villa Avenue. Their cleanup is run by the Villa Park Pride Commission, and starts at 9AM.

For all other areas, it is best to call the local coordinator or Ray Bartels.

We suggest you bring some large plastic garbage bags and twist ties just in case the signuptable runs out. Volunteers should wear work gloves and old shoes, as you will be picking up garbage several feet off the groomed trail.

The rights-of-way of the IPP and the GWT vary in width from about 20 feet up to 100 feet in some areas. The trail parking lots should be cleaned, as well as the walkways and other paths that feed onto the trails.

In DuPage and Kane Counties, filled trash bags can be left in or next to the trail trash containers, or if no container is nearby, at the major road intersections along the IPP and the GWT.

In Cook County, trash bags should *not* be left at roadways —these should be disposed of by placing them in trash containers along the Path or could be taken home with you to be put out with your regular garbage.

2006 IPPc Member Statistics

*By David Watts, IPPc Office
Manager*

The average membership contribution in 2006 was \$30.66.

1,139 current members were on the books as of Oct. 31, 2006.

Membership numbers were down by 90 compared to 2005. The average member contribution continues to climb.

Locally, membership is concentrated in these top ten towns, which account for 59% of our total membership.

By Town	Percent
Wheaton	15%
Lombard	7%
Naperville	7%
Glen Ellyn	7%
Elmhurst	6%
Villa Park	4%
Chicago	4%
West Chicago	3%
Winfield	3%
Aurora	3%

DuPage Drainage Projects and a New Aurora Branch Bridge

By Deborah Jan Fagan, AICP, Chief Planner and County Trail System Coordinator, DuPage County Department of Economic Development and Planning

The DuPage County Division of Transportation has undertaken an engineering study to evaluate existing drainage culverts along the Aurora Branch of the Illinois Prairie Path. This project is the continuation of a process started in 1998 to upgrade deteriorating culverts under the entire trail system and protect environmentally sensitive areas along the trail boundary. The engineering study and this resulting maintenance work are necessary due to the age of the trail system and drainage structures. Earlier phases of this work have replaced failing culverts along the Great Western Trail and along the Elgin Branch of the Prairie Path in DuPage.

The first phase of the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Branch drainage improvements is a \$140,000 project to replace two culverts in the vicinity of Wiesbrook Road. That phase was completed in Spring, 2006.

The second phase of the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Branch drainage improvements will include replacement of 3 existing culverts and replacement of the existing trail bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River. The

work begins the week of January 15, 2007 and is expected to be completed by late spring. The culvert locations are as follows:

- Springbrook Creek east of Orchard Road, Wheaton (2600' south of Roosevelt Road).
- West Branch DuPage River tributary, near Warrenville Grove Forest Preserve, west of Winfield Road, Warrenville (1000' east of Batavia Road).
- Ferry Creek, Warrenville (600' west of Warrenville Road).

The project also includes a new bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River with 54" side railings and a brushed concrete deck suitable for all trail users including equestrians.

Lakes and Rivers Contracting Inc. will be constructing this \$883,000 project.

All work will take place within the County's trail right-of-way. This work will be performed during the winter months to minimize impacts to trail users. Temporary closure of the path at these locations will be needed for approximately 60 days. Warning signs are posted for trail closures and detours where available.

If there are any questions or you need more information, please call 630-407-6883. Check out "What's New" at www.dupageco.org/bikeways.



Help Keep the Trails Free of Landscape Waste

By Deborah Jan Fagan

While the vast majority of our neighbors that border the trail system are great stewards of this wonderful facility, each spring and summer we have a few exceptions with residents who dump yard waste, branches and grass clippings over their fences and onto the trail property. Please help us keep the trails enjoyable for everyone by properly disposing of your yard and other household waste.

Under County Board Ordinance #OSW-001-99, Section 30-16: Land Disposal of Landscape Waste, It shall be unlawful for any person to abandon, dump or deposit any waste, including landscape waste, upon the public highways or other public property...

Section 30-26: such a person shall be fined not less than fifty dollars (\$50.00) nor more than five hundred (\$500.00) dollars.

If you witness dumping of such waste on the trails, please call the DuPage County Sheriff's Office at 630-407-2400 (emergencies: Dial 911).

Left: Crumbling culverts, like this one at Ferry Creek, are due for replacement this spring. Photo: Debra Pendell, Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District

In Memoriam: Two Great Visionaries Brooks McCormick and Jack Knuepfer

By Jean Mooring, IPP Board Member

Two of the Prairie Path's greatest friends passed away recently: Brooks McCormick (89) on August 15, 2006 and Jack Knuepfer (85) on September 13, 2006. These two men helped realize our founder May Theilgaard Watts' dream of converting the abandoned right-of-way of the old Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railroad to a recreational nature trail.

Brooks McCormick was the great grandnephew of Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the McCormick reaper and founder of the International



Brooks McCormick

Harvester Corporation. He was also a cousin of the late Col. Robert R. McCormick, famous longtime editor and publisher of the Chicago Tribune. After graduating from Yale in 1940 with a degree in English, McCormick went to work for the International Harvester Corporation, which he later served as director, chairman and CEO until he retired in 1981. He owned St. James Farm, a large horse farm on both sides of Butterfield Road, east of Winfield Road, in rural Warrenville.

For more than 35 years, thousands of Prairie Path users have hiked, biked, jogged or ridden horses on the beautiful trail segment of the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Branch that loops around the St. James property. Brooks McCormick generously allowed a segment of our multipurpose trail to be established on a 20-foot-wide strip

of his land and thus preserved the continuity of the Aurora Branch.

In 2000, Brooks McCormick made the St. James Farm available for purchase at a fair market price by the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (615 acres) so that the farm will always be protected for the benefit of the people of DuPage County and Northeastern Illinois.

Mr. McCormick was a visionary and a believer in the vital importance of open space—fields, forests, wetlands and prairies—to the American quality of life; today we are all beneficiaries of his wise stewardship. In September of 2006, DuPage County Forest Preserve District officials announced Mr. McCormick made a five million dollar donation to support, maintain and preserve his beautiful St. James estate forever.

Jack Knuepfer often said that one of his favorite places was the Illinois Prairie Path, where he enjoyed walking his dog and observing the changing scenery. As a trail user he was keenly aware of problems and possible solutions: When he became chairman of the DuPage County Board (1978-1990), he immediately set to work helping to improve the limestone-screened surfaces of the trail. In the early 1980s at the direction of the County Board, the DuPage County Division of Transportation resurfaced several sections that had been originally improved by volunteers and paid contractors of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation.

Jack Knuepfer was instrumental in suggesting that The IPPc enter into a consultation and service agreement with the county when The IPPc lost its insurance and

subsequently lost its lease with the county during the 1986 worldwide insurance crisis. Jack convinced the County Board that recreation trails are important to county residents'



Jack Knuepfer, Chairman, DuPage County Board with West Chicago Mayor Paul Netzel cut ribbon for new DuPage Co. bridge that will carry users of the IPP Geneva Spur over many R.R. tracks (EJ&E and UP) near Reed-Keppler Park, West Chicago, August 8, 1990. The bridge was named in honor of Jack T. Knuepfer in 1996 when the Geneva Spur was officially opened. Photo by Jean Mooring.

quality of life and deserve active county support. He promoted regular trail maintenance as well as such important projects as the acquisition of the Great Western Railroad right-of-way for a trail, (and Lake Michigan water), the building of a bridge to carry the Illinois Prairie Path Main Stem over the I-355 Tollway, and the building of a prize-winning bridge near Reed-Keppler Park in West Chicago to make possible the completion of the Illinois Prairie Path Geneva Spur.

Jack will be fondly remembered for his famous lederhosen which he wore in 1996 when accepting the plaque naming the new bridge in West Chicago in his honor. Jack's accomplishments will always be appreciated by users and friends of the Illinois Prairie Path.

Stone Wall Repaired at Volunteer Park

Work was recently completed on the stone wall at Volunteer Park. Two of the finished stones were reset and necessary tuckpointing was done. The repairs were completed before Memorial Day. We would like to thank Mike Ahrens of Lombard for doing a great job!



Tuckpointing repairs were necessary to the decorative stonework at Volunteer Park in Wheaton



Got a Question?



**Just call us at
630-752-0120
(Voice Mail)**

September 1, 2006

I am asking the board of directors of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPC) to accept my resignation from the board and as President. It is with regret that I can not continue to serve the organization in these roles. I had hoped to complete my term of office as board member and as President through the end of the year but my work responsibilities have increased to consume many additional hours every week.

I am certain that my ongoing concerns with safe trail access, safe roads and protection of the natural look and buffers along the trails, etc will lead me to stay involved along the way. In addition I will continue to work with the Friends of the Great Western Trail which led me to The IPPC, board membership and eventually the office of President for approximately 6 years.

I know there are several well qualified members of the Board of Directors of The IPPC that can serve as President and lead this important group.

Looking back over the past several years I am very pleased and honored to have been involved in the important work of protecting and promoting the IPP and the related trails in the three county (Cook, DuPage and Kane) region. Specifically the successful efforts like the campaign to stop a new street crossing, protect and save the "Special 8" acres now known as the Glacial Ridge Forest Preserve, stopping Com Ed from cutting down or removing the trees with chemicals along miles of the trails, working with the DuPage County officials to initiate the first ever written and standardized trail maintenance policy, introducing many new amenities along the trails by working with the Boy Scouts, Sierra Club and many different community, bicycle or equestrian groups were very rewarding and fun.

Thank you again to all the volunteers and officials that have supported our efforts. It was that same spirit and collection of dedicated individuals that started the IPP in 1963.

It is clear that we all need to continue to be vigilant in the fight to protect the trails and the way they were intended to be. I encourage all to continue to help in whatever way they can through donations and/or volunteer time to support the IPP, GWT and related trails that are so very important to the quality of our lives and will be to future generations.

Don Kirchenberg

New on The IPPc Board

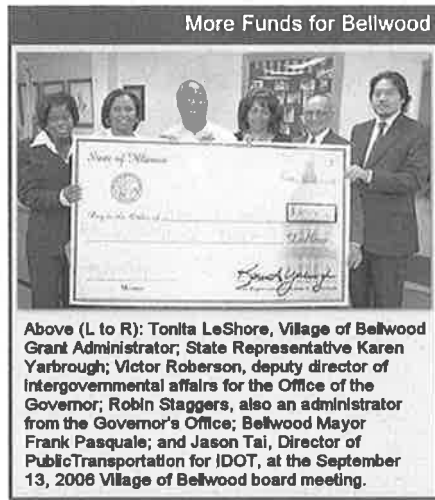
The Illinois Prairie Path welcomes Nancy Wilson of Des Plaines as a new board member. Nancy is not new to the inner workings of The IPPc. Married to Vice President Dick Wilson, Nancy has been attending board meetings for decades and has been an active participant of nearly every important IPPc activity since the 1960s.

Is Your Yearly Illinois Prairie Path Membership About to Expire?

You will receive a renewal letter from us generally the month before your membership expires. We encourage you to take that opportunity and send us back your tax deductible contribution as soon as you receive your renewal notice so you can continue to receive our newsletter and be part of an organization that helps protect, maintain, and expand the trails.

The Illinois Prairie Path qualifies for matching contributions from many corporations. Employees and retirees should check if their employer offers such a program. We thank you for your continued support!

Bellwood Receives Funding



More Funds for Bellwood
Above (L to R): Tonita LeShore, Village of Bellwood Grant Administrator; State Representative Karen Yarbrough; Victor Roberson, deputy director of Intergovernmental affairs for the Office of the Governor; Robin Staggers, also an administrator from the Governor's Office; Bellwood Mayor Frank Pasquale; and Jason Tai, Director of Public Transportation for IDOT, at the September 13, 2006 Village of Bellwood board meeting.

At the September 13, 2006 Village of Bellwood board meeting, State Representative Karen Yarbrough presented the Village with a \$70,000 I.T.E.P. State Grant, which will be used to maintain bike paths on the Village's portion of the Prairie Path, from 25th Avenue to Mannheim Road. The money will cover safety fence installation, route signs and pavement improvement on that two-mile route.

Ray Bartels Elected IPPc President

At the December 2006 meeting of the Board of Directors, Ray Bartels, a board member since 2004, was elected President of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation.

Ray lives in Lombard and has also served on the Village of Lombard Trails Committee.

Never a Bicycle Rack Where You Need One?

By Deborah Jan Fagan

DuPage County will be working with municipalities, park districts and other public agencies to install more racks for bicycle parking over the next two years. The County has received a Congestion Mitigation Air Quality federal grant to assist in funding this \$200,000 project that will fund the approximately 450 new racks around the County.

If you have a suggestion for a location where racks are needed, please email dfagan@dupageco.org or call 630-407-6883.

Request for Prairie Path Photos

The IPPc is always looking to add to our photo collection of your favorite places along the Path. In particular, shots depicting the natural beauty, users, parks and forest preserves located along any portion of the IPP are welcome. Photos should be digital. Please include a description of where the picture was taken, names of people in the shot, date taken and the name of the photographer. These photos might be used for newsletters, our web site, or for other publications. Credit will be given. Photos should be emailed to bikedave1@aol.com.

New Calendars Available

The 2007 Shore Line Interurban Historical Society calendar features historic CA&E railway (now the Illinois Prairie Path) photos along with information about each scene above every month.

In all there are 14 full-page photos, half of them in color. A very limited quantity of these calendars remains available.

Price is \$10.00, which includes postage anywhere in the U.S. To order this calendar, please use the form on page 15 and mention *calendar*.

The mission of the Shore Line Interurban Historical Society is to preserve the history of urban, suburban, and interurban passenger railroads in the upper Midwest. The Society achieves its mission through educating the public on the economic, technical, social, political and cultural impact of the railroads.

For more information about the Shore Line Interurban Historical Society or membership, log on to www.shore-line.org, or mail a request to P.O. Box 425, Lake Forest, IL 60045. Tel. 847-295-8497.



Seeking Volunteers for 2007 Workdays

Workdays are generally on the third Saturday of each month. We usually work in the mornings starting in May and have scheduled projects through September.

Our workdays consist of installing new amenities, fixing aging benches, doing routine maintenance to the IPP display cases and clearing invasive plants or pruning back encroaching trees and shrubs. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Ray Bartels at 630-424-8851 or email Rbartel399@comcast.net.



August 19, 2006. Workday to replace an old bench at Volunteer Park in Wheaton whose supports had rusted away. L to R: Ray Bartels, Mark Newell, Nancy and Dick Wilson, Paul Mooring and Bob Bernero (behind Paul). Photo by Jean Mooring.

Please pass this extra membership card on to a friend...

The Illinois Prairie Path

P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton IL 60189

630-752-0120 www.ipp.org

Membership:

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Apology for the Late Newsletter

This newsletter should have been in your hands several months ago. Ever-evolving commercial printing technologies forced an upgrade in both the hardware and software we use to produce this publication and it took a while to acquire and get used to the new design software.

Cleanup in Maywood

Hi all,

We had a great (but somewhat late) cleanup on the IPP in Maywood between 9th and 25th Ave. The sixty 4th and 7th grade students from Edison school (a magnet school for gifted math/science students), their teachers, and parents were very enthusiastic, and we acquired quite a pile of trash! Note that the kids had Chicago Blue Bags and separated regular trash from recyclable material too. Maybe we could start this on the next IPP cleanup? I think it is a very good idea (even if it does make the cleanup a bit more complicated).

We also had a special presentation on Earth Day, community involvement, and the USEPA by USEPA project manager Erica Islas. She gave out presents too: wild flower seeds and pens made of recycled paper.

It was a great time, and IPP in Maywood is probably the cleanest it has ever been!! Take care,
Erik Spande



Mooring party at pickup site west of Hill Avenue. L to R: Mark Newell, Margaret, Paul, Sam Pyne and Billo Calderon. Note scaffold in pile. Photo by Jean Mooring.

Thanks to all who participated in our 2006 Annual Earth Day Cleanup!

The annual Earth Day cleanup on April 22, 2006 along the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail was a great success. This past year's event was our biggest turnout ever and our annual event continues to grow each year. Your help in keeping the trails clean is very much appreciated and needed. Special thanks go to the Volunteer Coordinators who helped organize and guide groups with our annual cleanup effort. Without your support we would not have been able to cover as much of the 62-mile trail as we did.

To recap the day's event, here are a few of the individual reports on the Earth Day activities from the IPP Board and Volunteers.



Chris Lonnett, Nicolas Lonnett, Susan Lonnett, Ben Hynum, Jill Ellis near Lincoln Marsh in Wheaton.

Batavia Spur Report

A big thank you is in order for the 50 or so volunteers that came out to help with this year's cleanup. This was my first year at this location and I was excited by how many people showed up to help. This was the first time the Batavia Spur was completely accounted for by volunteers and other organizations for the Annual Cleanup. We had the Fox Valley Bicycle & Ski Club, FermiLab Volunteers, Savannah Home Owners Association, local Cub Scouts, Brownies and neighbors whose homes back up to the trail to handle the cleanup from the Fox River all the way to the Aurora Branch. The Batavia Spur had its share of debris but overall the area was cleaner than expected and the trail users of this area should be proud of this achievement.
Ray Bartels

Glen Ellyn Cleanup

Saturday, April 22, 2006 was the 36th anniversary of the first Earth Day in 1970. It was also the day chosen for the annual Illinois Prairie Path/ Great Western Trail cleanup.

The pleasant weather attracted an estimated eighty-five volunteers to clean trail sections in Glen Ellyn (fifty-five who signed in and some thirty others who helped but did not sign in). Jay Kinzler of the Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission manned the registration table in the gazebo at Prairie Path Park. He reported that several Cub Scout packs participated as well as various family and school groups with younger kids. The village provided a front-end loader and a ten-wheel dump truck, which was used to haul away 2/3 ton of debris. Village crewmember Eric Hendrickson reported that the crew hauled two big sheets of scrap metal from the Special Eight Area (now the Glacial Ridge Forest Preserve) which adjoins the Path west of Hill Avenue.

Paul and Jean Mooring led their usual group: Margaret Mooring Calderon and Ovidio Calderon from Madison, WI., Sam Pyne and Mark Newell from Glen Ellyn. The group cleaned the Mooring Family IPP section between Hill Avenue and the East Branch of the DuPage River and picked up the usual cans, bottles and ten pairs of gym shoes that had been dumped in the trail trash container. Jean and Paul later drove them to the household waste recycling extravaganza held the same day at the College of DuPage. The most impressive find was an eight-foot-long heavy waterlogged scaffold that Mark and Sam managed to drag out of the river. Jean Mooring surprised everyone by pushing it 1/3 mile back to Hill Avenue on her walker.

The group met several friends on the trail that morning: bicyclists Joe and Jozan Carlton, jogger Sue Rose (a classmate of Margaret's at Glenbard West) and Deborah Fagan, DuPage County's senior planner and trail coordinator, who was sweeping the loose gravel off the short trail bypass at Hill Avenue.

Altogether it was a satisfying and fun day.
- Jean Mooring



Wide Load. Jean Mooring and her sturdy walker carried waterlogged scaffold from East Branch DuPage River one-third mile across Hill Avenue to pickup site. Photo by Paul Mooring.



Glen Ellyn table. Jay Kinzler and Allie Kinzler



Village crew stops to pick up piece of lumber. Note scaffold in bucket. Photo by Jean Mooring.

Elmhurst Great Western Prairie 2007 Workdays

From Keith Olson, Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Steward

Below is a list of upcoming Elmhurst Great Western Prairie workdays. Keith Olson is looking for additional volunteers to help keep this important natural prairie remnant healthy. One of this year's goals is to remove as much wild parsnip as possible (see sidebar). If you can give some of your time and talent, please contact Keith at 630-834-7357.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity</u>
Sat. Feb. 17	Winter brush cutting
Fri. Mar. 23	Spring cleanup
Sat. April 21	Seeding & brush cutting
Sat. May 19	Spring planting
Sat. June 16	Weeding, pick seeds
Sat. June 23	Weeding, pick seeds
Sat. July 21	Weeding, pick seeds
Sat. Aug. 18	Cut weeds
Sat. Sept. 15	Pick seeds
Sat. Oct. 20	Pick seeds
Sat. Nov. 17	Pick and spread seeds

Wild Parsnip Botanical Basics

Life history: Wild parsnip typically lives for two years. The first year, as a spindly rosette of leaves, it keeps fairly low to the ground while the plant's carrot-like taproot develops. It may live two or more years this way until conditions are right for flowering. The second year, a hollow, grooved flower stalk rises 2-5 feet high, first holding clusters of yellow flowers and later dozens of flat, oval seeds.

Leaves: Pinnately compound, with a main stem and 5 to 15 leaflets.

Flowers: Yellow, in flat-topped umbrella-like clusters at the top of the plant.



Season: Wild parsnip rosettes are among the first plants to become green in spring, and its flowers turn a prominent yellow in midsummer. After flowering and going to seed, plants die and turn brown in fall, but first year rosettes remain green until frost.

Habitat: Roadsides, abandoned fields, unmowed pastures, edges of woods, prairie restorations.

Keep these three points in mind when you encounter wild parsnip: Wild parsnip causes a non-allergic dermatitis that can occur with the right combination of plant juice and sunlight. Everyone can get it. Unlike poison ivy, you don't need to be sensitized by a prior exposure.

You can touch and brush against the plant—careful-

ly—without harm. Parsnip is only dangerous when the juice gets on skin from broken leaves or stems. Fair-skinned people, however, may be extra-sensitive to tiny amounts of juice.

Wild parsnip's "burn" is usually less irritating than poison ivy's "itch." Generally, wild parsnip causes a modest burning pain for a day or two, and then the worst is over. The itch and discomfort from poison ivy, in contrast, can drive people crazy for a long time.

Illinois Prairie Path Store

Show Your Support For The Illinois Prairie Path! Enjoy the IPP in style with our long sleeve, polo or t-shirt styles, all with the distinctive IPP logo. Our denim and polo shirts feature an embroidered logo with green and white thread above the left breast area. For multiple shirt orders, call 630-752-0120 for shipping price. For a current shirt inventory, please visit www.ipp.org/GUI/ipp_store.htm



ton-down pocket. \$40.00 per shirt, plus \$5 shipping and handling. Sizes M, L & XL.



(\$35) plus \$5 shipping and handling.

NEW! Green T-shirt with white logo on front & larger



logo on the back. \$15 + \$5 S&H. Sizes M, L, XL & XXL.

Illinois Prairie Path Color Map 7th Edition. Only \$6 - includes postage and shipping.

(Note: new members are sent one free map when they join The IPPc)

- Full color illustrations and photos
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- Includes suburb/street detail of the 62-mile trail from Cook County west to Kane County
- Discover 26 points of interest along the IPP and 14 recommended bike routes
- Details train stations, prairies, parking lots, restrooms and drinking fountains
- Learn more about The IPPc's management, its history and its founder May Watts. Published by The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation.



The IPPc Patch shows you care. 3 x 2½ in. The patch can be yours for \$1.50 each. Includes shipping.

IPP Guidebook—by Helen Turner. This 32-page guidebook contains information about the history, geology, trees, flowers, birds and animals of the Illinois Prairie Path. Cost: \$5 per copy includes shipping.



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Prairie Path Trail Etiquette



Regulations to Protect People, Animals and Power Lines:

- Cyclists and equestrians should give an audible warning when overtaking another user by calling out “passing on the left.”
- Users should make an effort to stay to the right when traveling on the Path.
- Cyclists should not travel at excessive speeds.
- Care should be given when approaching horses to avoid “spooking” them.
- Cyclists (really all users) should stay on the surfaced portion of the path and not damage native vegetation and landscaped areas.
- Cyclists should wear helmets at all times.
- Pets must be leashed and you must clean up after them.
- No motorized vehicles are allowed (county law). Power-assisted wheelchairs *are* allowed.
- No firearms, kites, or remote controlled toys.
- No hunting.
- No alcoholic beverages or controlled substances.
- We provide trash containers at many intersections—please use them.
- Camping is not allowed on the Path. The Path is adjacent to several county forest preserves. For camping information call the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, 630-933-7200, or Kane County Forest Preserve District, 630-232-5980.