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The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

Winter / Spring 2008

Moorings Recount Historic Creation of Volunteer Bridge

Jean and Paul Mooring, charter members of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation board, gave a wonderful slide show presentation at the 2007 annual meeting in November. In her introduction, Jean said, "Today we are celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of Volunteer Bridge in Wheaton. In 1984, our board of directors gave the iron truss bridge this name after volunteers had finished restoring it for use as a trail bridge."



What we started with: Old Chicago, Aurora and Elgin Railway bridge, three abandoned concrete piers, plus old north abutment (lower portion of picture).

Prior to becoming a recreational amenity, the Chicago, Aurora, and Elgin electric commuter train used it. The bridge first began as a temporary wooden structure over the steam-powered Chicago and Northwestern line. Then on October 11, 1907, a replacement steel bridge opened for service. Jean added, "Three additional spans to the north carried the 'Roaring Elgin' over Front Street, Wesley Street, and a small park in between."

Jean continued, "CA&E operated for more than fifty years. But in 1961, largely because of competition from the Eisenhower Expressway, the line went bankrupt. It was abandoned, the tracks torn up, and most of the bridges sold for scrap, except for the old iron truss bridge. If there had been a strike on the Northwestern, that bridge would have almost certainly been removed and sold for scrap too."

"From 1963 until 1983, the first twenty years of the existence of the Illinois Prairie Path, the bridge stood unconnected and useless. Kids loved to play on it, but Path users had to detour around it on dangerous streets. This was the situation until June 1982 when

Phil Hodge, a structural engineer, became our vice president. When Path President Paul Mooring suggested that The IPPc should do something about this gap in the Path, Phil said, 'Let's build a bridge!' And so began the greatest achievement of your Prairie Path volunteers."

It is hard for today's trail users to imagine the work done by eighty-eight volunteers—ordinary folks—to convert donated labor, equipment, materials, and \$25,000 into a restored steel bridge with three new spans 373 feet long, worth an estimated \$250,000.

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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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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 2008 Board of Directors

Ray Bartels, President
Lombard

Dick Wilson, Vice President
Des Plaines

Rob Sperl, Treasurer
Warrenville

Nancy Becker, Secretary
Willowbrook

Diana Lund, Office Manager
Glen Ellyn

Paul Aeschleman, Oak Park
Bob Bernero, Glen Ellyn
Lennel Grace, Maywood
Charlie Johnson, Lisle
F. Paul Mooring, Glen Ellyn
Jean Mooring, Glen Ellyn
Marcius Scaggs, Maywood
Bob Sobie, Glen Ellyn
Erik Spande, Winfield
Susan Terwedow, Glen Ellyn
Dave Watts, Glen Ellyn
Nancy Wilson, Des Plaines

2007 Annual Meeting President's Report

By Ray Bartels, IPPc President

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation enjoyed a successful 2007. I thank all of our current and past board members for their dedication and hard work at coming up with new ideas and ways to improve our path. I also thank our membership for continued support through generous contributions, good suggestions, and help with our annual cleanup and scheduled workdays. Without your support, our organization would not be entering its 44th year.

In December 2006, I was elected IPPc President. Since becoming a member of The IPPc board of directors in early 2003, I have been active in many projects. A Lombard resident, I also serve on the Ad Hoc Trails Committee in Lombard.

Since the 2006 Annual Meeting, The IPPc has gone through some changes. We had a few board members move on and we elected the following new members in 2007: Nancy Wilson, Charlie Johnson, Lennel Grace, and Marcius Scaggs. Each new director brings a fresh perspective and new ideas which will aid us in continuing our mission as an organization in preserving and improving the IPP.

Over the past year we accomplished a lot. In March, Maywood and Forest Park held the official

grand opening of the Des Plaines River Bridge, and the Path now extends to the CTA Blue Line in Forest Park, making it 62 miles long. In April, our Annual Clean-up was a huge success with over a thousand volunteers. Once again, our biggest push was in Wheaton, and I thank Helen Bartlett for heading up the efforts there. She has now retired after many years of outstanding service.

I list other accomplishments. We completed installation of three new memorial benches: one for Kurt Zoellner in Lombard, another for Ken Moss in Elmhurst, and a third for Lillian Lasch in Hillside. The IPPc and the Village of Winfield partnered to install a new water fountain at Geneva and County Farm roads; The IPPc donated the fountain and the Village of Winfield installed it. In Wayne, along Army Trail Road, we paid for initial chlorination of the hand pump mechanism and wound up rechlorinating the entire well, installing new seals and tethers on the pump, and painting the pump in order to pass the Health Department inspection. Along the Aurora Branch, we replaced Mile Marker 8, and in Wheaton, we repaired Mile Marker 3, again. At Main St. in Lombard and at County Farm Road in Winfield, we resealed the display cases. Along the Batavia Spur, we made repairs to a wooden bench. In Wheaton and Warrenville, DuPage County rebuilt several culverts.

The Illinois Prairie Path received special recognition in 2007 when the Founder of the Illinois Prairie Path and two long-tenured and current board members were

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April 26 Cleanup Info

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPC), in cooperation with the Southern DuPage County Regional Trail Coordinator and the Friends of the Great Western Trail, has scheduled its annual trail cleanup for Saturday, April 26, 2008. Your help is needed!

What is a trail cleanup?

Members of the community volunteer for an hour, two hours, or a morning to clean up litter on community trails, their rights-of-way, and trail parking lots.

How do I get involved?

You can call one of our cleanup coordinators (see list on right) to ask where your help is needed most, which is highly recommended for large groups. Or, simply show up to work.

What should I wear and bring?

The trail might be muddy, so wear comfortable shoes and weather-appropriate clothing that you don't care about getting dirty. Long sleeves and long pants will protect skin from thorns and rash-producing plants. Bring work gloves and two or more large garbage bags with twist ties. If you forget to bring the bags, we will supply extras.

Where and what time do I show up?

We will begin at 9AM and wrap up around noon, with the exception of the Wheaton IPP cleanup

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Trail Cleanup Volunteers Needed

ANNUAL TRAIL CLEANUP

of the Illinois Prairie Path, Great Western Trail & Southern DuPage County Regional Trail Saturday, April 26th, 2008 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, 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
Glen Ellyn
Hillside
Lombard
Maywood and Bellwood

Naperville
Villa Park

Warrenville

West Chicago / Geneva Spur
Wheaton
Winfield

Great Western Trail

Southern DuPage County Regnl Trail Deborah Fagan

Trail Coordinator

Ed Barsotti
Bob Sobie
Dick Wilson
Joan Duma
Dave & Kandy Jedlicka
Raymond Bartels
Rebecca Stephan
Nancy Becker
David Gorman
Lennel Grace
Marcius Scaggs
Sharon Kirkland
Pride Commission
Jennifer McMahon
jam690201@yahoo.com
Steve Sentoff
Tracy Vought
Erik Spande

Don Kirchenberg
Frndsgtrwstntrl@aol.com

Phone Number

630-978-0583
630-253-6173
847-299-7882
630-205-5312
630-293-7214
630-424-8851
630-942-8607
630-654-1019
630-620-5700
708-601-0483
773-615-3925
630-983-9939
630-834-8500
x6059
630-514-3040
630-293-1627
630-510-1450
630-871-6640
630-853-7650
630-407-6883

For additional locations or questions, call Ray Bartels at 630-424-8851 or 630-606-8851
email: Rbartel399@comcast.net

Bridge continued from page 1

School teachers, businessmen, scientists, lawyers, homemakers, members of many civic groups like scouts and garden clubs—trail lovers all—joined the project together with several classes of high school welding and woodworking students at DAVEA, the DuPage Area Vocational Education Authority in Addison. The students' outstanding work of building three new steel truss bridge sections earned them educational credits.

The achievement of this "Impossible Dream," took place over a two year period, from 1982 to the 1984 Volunteer Bridge grand opening. Important early milestones, according to chief engineer Phil Hodge's plan, included: securing permits from the City of Wheaton, from DuPage County

(owner of the CA&E right-of-way in the county), from the C&NW Railroad, from Illinois Bell, and from Commonwealth Edison Company, which has an easement in perpetuity on the CA&E right-of-way; and obtaining business donations of steel for the new spans, of lumber for decking four bridge sections, of chain link fencing, of a crane and operator to pour concrete to cap two piers



In 100 degree heat, Phil Hodge welds steel pipe, attaching it to bridge trusses to hold chain link fencing and prevent Prairie Path users from falling onto Northwestern Railroad.



Only way to do this: Phil Hodge carries buckets of concrete up the 20-foot-high embankment at south end of old bridge for new cap to old bridge abutment. DuPage County DOT built the present ramp AFTER the bridge restoration was complete.

and remodel the north abutment, and of trucks to haul the three new spans from DAVEA to the site. Under Phil's supervision, volunteers built and installed forms to hold new concrete pier caps. In Phil's garage, they welded steel support beams for the wooden bridge decking, and in Phil's three



Two schoolteacher volunteers connect rebars to forms for cap on pier south of Wesley Street.

welding classes at DAVEA, they welded three new bridge sections. After the concrete was poured for the pier caps, volunteers redecked the old bridge and installed chain link fencing over the still very ac-

Sitting on new steel support beams, volunteers work on decking over C&NW Railroad.



tive Northwestern Railroad. This only happened after the volunteers had hauled tons of wood timbers, concrete, and chain link fencing by hand up a steep, twenty-foot embankment. Lastly, community activist Phil Hodge persuaded the DuPage County Division of Transportation to build an earthen ramp at the south end of the bridge.

Current IPP board members who worked on the Volunteer Bridge project are Vice President Dick Wilson, Nancy Wilson, Paul Mooring, Jean Mooring, and Susan Terwedow. Dick even wore his "Let's Build the Bridge" T-shirt to the 2007 annual meeting (it still fits). Phil Hodge now runs a steel and concrete construction business from his home in Tennessee. He can be reached at phil@joistdesign.com



What we accomplished: Three new bridge sections have been installed. Note new access ramp built by volunteers in upper left of photo.

New on The IPPC Board

The Illinois Prairie Path welcomes Bob Sobie of Glen Ellyn and Diana Lund of Glen Ellyn as new board members as of January 2008.



New IPP Board Member Bob Sobie

Bob, married for almost twenty-six years and with two grown sons, recently retired from the College of DuPage after teaching for thirty years. At the college he was primarily a professor of automotive service technology, but he also taught bicycling, kayaking, and canoeing in the Field Studies Department. Besides being involved with The IPPc, Bob currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the American Lung Association of the Upper Midwest, which represents citizens in seven states—including Illinois. Bob co-founded the American Lung Association's Lake Tour Bike Trek in 1986 and has volunteered on each of twenty-two tours; this event has raised over 1.5 million dollars since its

inception. Bob is a member of the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy, Brookfield Zoo, Prairie State Canoeists, and Old Wayne Golf

Continued on page 9

2007 IPPc Member Statistics

From David Watts, former IPPc Office Manager

The average membership contribution in 2007 was \$33.44.

1,145 current members were on the books as of Oct. 31, 2007.

Memberships were up by 6 compared to 2006. The average member contribution has increased by 3 dollars.

Locally, membership is concentrated in these top twelve towns, which account for 58% of the total.

By Town	Percent
Wheaton	15%
Lombard	7%
Naperville	6%
Glen Ellyn	6%
Elmhurst	6%
Villa Park	3%
Chicago	3%
West Chicago	3%
Winfield	3%
Aurora	2%
Downers Grove	2%
Warrenville	2%

Winfield Fountain Dedication

By Erik Spande, IPPc Board Member

Some good ideas take a while to catch on. Such was the case for the newly installed Winfield water fountain on the southeast corner of the intersection of Geneva and County Farm roads. This area is a heavily-used portion of the Illinois Prairie Path since it is where the Elgin Branch, Geneva Spur, and Timber Ridge trails meet—a true crossroads. The small IPP parking lot is always full (and many times too full), and the existing amenities include benches at the southeast and northwest sides, a display case and trash container on the northwest side, and county trail map on the southeast side.

The IPP not-for-profit-corporation (IPPc) Board of Directors noted years ago that this would be a great place for a water fountain due to the heavy traffic, central location and the distance to other water fountains. Some research and “Are you interested?” proposals were made a number of times, but to no effect. It seemed that the idea’s time had not yet come.

All that changed in 2006. The IPPc made a novel proposal to the Village of Winfield: The IPPc would pay for the water fountain hardware if the Village would install and maintain the fountain. The Winfield Trustees were very receptive and asked that the Winfield Environmental Concerns Commission (ECC) review the

proposal and that Bill Barlow, the Village Manager, work with the city’s engineers to determine where a fountain could be located for a reasonable cost. Although The IPPc would have preferred the fountain to be located near other amenities on the northwest corner, it was clear that the southeast corner was better due to space constraints and (more importantly) ready access to a city water line. Tapping the water line in the northwest corner of the intersection would have been prohibitively expensive due to the depth of the existing water main and the large diameter storm sewer pipe.



Carri Tullier, Christine Petitti, Deborah Fagan, Paul Mooring, and Jean Mooring at the dedication of the Winfield fountain.

The Village Trustees were pleased to approve the revised IPP fountain proposal since it was a win-win situation. The next hurdle was getting a permit to install the fountain from DuPage County since, after all, the fountain would be installed on County land. Deborah Fagan, Chief Planner and Trail System Coordinator for DuPage County, was more than happy to assist the Village in getting all the required permits and plan reviews, and she proved invaluable

in making sure the permitting process went smoothly.

By the time the plans and permits were in place, the construction season for 2006 was over and winter had set in. Setting water lines during freezing weather is generally not a good idea. In April 2007, with a break in the weather, the Village installed the fountain over a period of a few weeks—just in time for the IPP Spring Cleanup! The green enamel-coated stainless steel fountain has two water fountains in addition to a spigot for filling water bottles at its base. On the side of the Path near the bench and County trail sign, it rests on a concrete pad surrounded by asphalt. The Village Public Works Department made provisions to properly drain the fountain’s unused by-pass water.

On May 24, 2007, representatives of the Village of Winfield Trustees (Village President Rudy Czech, Trustee Christine Petitti, Village Development Coordinator Carri Tullier), Winfield ECC members (Barry Dredze and Erik Spande), DuPage County Senior Planner and Trails Coordinator Deborah Fagan, and The IPPc board members (Jean and Paul Mooring, Erik Spande, and Dave Watts) held a dedication of the Winfield fountain.

The fountain is yet another asset for the IPP, which is a 62-mile jewel for Cook, DuPage, and Kane Counties. Residents should be proud of their path system that links many of our forest preserves, parks, public spaces, and communities together!

Cleanup continued from page 3

which starts at 8AM. Each area will have a sign-up table for registration and for assignment to an exact location. Some tables will be located at:

Wheaton: Lincoln Avenue on the IPP Elgin branch, operated by the Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission.

Glen Ellyn: Village commuter parking lot just west of the Glen Ellyn Library, operated by the Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission.

Villa Park: next to the Villa Park Historical Society Museum on Villa Avenue, operated by the Villa Park Pride Commission.

Where do I put my filled trash bags?

In **DuPage** and **Kane Counties**, full trash bags can be left at major road intersections along the IPP and GWT. The trash will be collected at the beginning of the next week. In **Cook County**, full trash bags should be placed in trash containers along the Path or can be taken home for disposal with your regular garbage.

Come take part with your community to beautify the area for the 2008 spring, summer, and fall Path usage. Together we can make a difference!



The Illinois Prairie Path Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2007

Cash Balance, November 1, 2006

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

Revenue

Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$4,354.00
Dues	32,445.00
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	1,548.00
Interest	6,078.08
Miscellaneous	30.00
Total	\$44,455.08

Expenditures

Office Manager (Contractual Stipend)	\$10,765.00
Newsletters (Production and Mailing)	2,434.45
Maintenance and Repairs	1,461.71
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	7,666.18
Post Office	1,784.63
Telephone	572.09
Special Projects	2,074.33
Special Events	0.00
Prairie Restoration	3,391.45
Other Printing	365.67
Merchandise for Sale	0.00
Donations	1,200.00
Travel/Board Expenses	1,226.37
Legal and Consulting	0.00
Office Supplies, etc.	332.62
Dues and Subscriptions	0.00
Insurance	829.00
Web Maintenance	0.00
Government Fees	740.00
Miscellaneous	50.00
Total	\$34,893.50

Cash Balance, October 31, 2007

Chase – Checking Account	\$11,910.24
Chase – Savings Account	7,170.94
Chase – Office Manager's Account	1,274.36
Petty Cash	25.65
Money Market – Columbia Funds	119,272.15
Total	\$139,653.34

Submitted by Rob Sperl, IPPC Treasurer

NEW AURORA BRANCH BRIDGE IN WARRENVILLE

News from Deborah Fagan, Chief Planner and County Trail System Coordinator

DuPage County is nearing completion of drainage improvements along the Illinois Prairie Path Aurora Branch. This \$1,115,000 project includes this new trail bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River which is wider than the old bridge, has taller side railings, and a safer surfacing for equestrian users. The project is expected to be completed this Spring.



New IPP Aurora Branch bridge in Warrenville nearing completion

HELP PROTECT THE SCENIC VIEW ALONG THE TRAILS

*By Deborah Fagan, Chief Planner and
County Trail System Coordinator*

While the vast majority of our neighbors that border the trail system are great stewards of this wonderful facility, each spring and summer there are a few ex-

ceptions of residents who dump yard waste, branches, and grass clippings over their fences and onto the trail property. Be aware that this activity is illegal and subject to a \$50 to \$500 fine.

It is also illegal to remove trees, bushes, grasses, and other plants along the County trail property without permit or agreement by the County. This offense is subject to a fine of \$1000 plus the cost of replacement plants and related expenses to restore the right-of-way.

President's Report *continued from page 2*

named among the Top 10 Most Influential Environmentalists in DuPage County history. Path Founder May Theilgaard Watts was listed #1 for her inspiring work as an ecologist, naturalist, teacher, artist, and author of poetry and prose. Paul and Jean Mooring made the list for their lifelong achievements and dedication to the Illinois Prairie Path. These two honors once again show how successful our organization has been and how lucky we are to have this treasure that we can all enjoy.

We have many new challenges coming our way in 2008. We are preparing for the Annual Trail Cleanup in the spring, and at the end of fall, we are expecting the closure of the Manchester Road Bridge in Wheaton for bridge improvements which will include widening and realigning the current span and raising the bridge. We have upcoming culvert work to be done on the Geneva Spur, and we have a bridge replacement project going on in Warrenville south of Butterfield Road. We will also continue planning our monthly workdays to add, improve, or repair amenities along the trail. I thank all of you for your support and I look forward to another great year.

If you witness either dumping of landscape waste or removal of vegetation along the trails, please file a complaint with the DuPage County Sheriff's Office at 1-630-407-2400 (emergencies: Dial 911).

New Board Members

continued from page 5

Club. He also wrote the Elroy Sparta Trail Guidebook, www.ElroySparta.com.

Bob grew up in Glen Ellyn, a half block from the IPP, where he learned to love the Path. Before the limestone screening surface was laid down, the area which would become the IPP was his playground. His brother, a friend, and Bob would build forts, throw rocks, and pretend to be in the wilderness. Then one day a work crew drove down the trail and told them that the trail was about to become a bicycle trail. "I was thrilled," Bob recalls. He also remembers running home and asking his parents for a new bike. Ever since, he has been riding bicycles on the trail.

After retirement, Bob decided to spend more time volunteering for not-for-profit organizations as a way to give back to the community. Bob started attending The IPPc board meetings on a regular basis, participated in a regularly scheduled workday, and then joined the board.



IPP Office Manager Diana Lund

Diana has been a trail lover ever since she was a teenager in Riverside and discovered the Salt Creek Trail a couple miles from her home. Since then, she has hiked and biked dozens of nature trails throughout the country where she has faced various obstacles: paths so narrow that the only way forward was sideways, heels hanging over the edge, fingers clinging to the rock's slight hand holds; a rattlesnake sunning itself, stretched across the only passable portion of path; a herd of cattle with pointy horns, milling on the path; a frozen waterfall across the path where one slip meant falling down the crevasse. She managed, despite unmarked trails, inaccurate maps, or no map at all, to discover remarkable jewels—hidden caves, petroglyphs, and once, a ghost town with several abandoned buildings.

Eighteen years ago she settled in Glen Ellyn, steps away from the Illinois Prairie Path. "I love the sense of adventure that trail exploration provides," Diana said, then added, "The Illinois Prairie Path offers so many options—to interesting places, like Blackwell Forest Preserve, Indian Mounds, Kline Creek Farm, or my favorite nature spot, Lincoln Marsh, where the cattails sway in unison, turtles sun themselves on logs, and spring peepers croak. The Path hooks up to so many other nature trails, which makes it easy to get around the area safely by bike. And The IPPc has created a great map of the Path, so I never question where I'm at. Of course, by now, most of the trail is committed to memory."

A frequent user of the IPP, she walks to the library, bikes to the Farmer's Market or Geneva, or cross-country skis to the golf course. She has participated in several Earth Day cleanups, and is a longtime member of The IPPc. A free lance writer, she is also the new IPPc newsletter editor and office manager.

Remembering Lady Bird Johnson

By Jean Mooring, IPPc Board Member

The former first lady passed away on July 11, 2007. She had a lifelong love of wildflowers and the rolling hill country of her native Texas. She also had an important connection to the Illinois Prairie Path. As a trusted adviser of her husband, President Lyndon B. Johnson, she lobbied her husband to send to Congress "A Message on Natural Beauty of our Country." Published Feb. 8, 1965, a section of this message promotes a system of national trails for hiking, biking, and horseback-riding, and states as one example, "In Illinois, an abandoned railroad right-of-way is being developed as a 'Prairie Path.'" This was the first national recognition of our beautiful trail; many such natural areas around the country have been preserved because of Lady Bird Johnson's vision. See page 11 for a larger excerpt from the president's message.

Seeking Volunteers for Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Workdays

Generally on the third Saturday of each month, volunteers meet in Elmhurst at Berkley Ave. and the Illinois Prairie Path for a workday. Projects are scheduled starting in the spring and ending in the fall.

The work consists of installing new amenities, fixing aging benches, doing routine maintenance to the IPP display cases, clearing invasive plants, or pruning back encroaching trees and shrubs. This year our tentative schedule is:

April 19	Brush cutting, cleanup
May 17	Spring planting
June 21	Weeding and seed picking (porcupine grass)
June 28	Weeding (mostly parsnip)
July 19	Weeding (mostly parsnip and ragweed)
August 16	Weeding (mostly ragweed)
September 20	Seed picking
October 18	Seed picking
November 15	Seed spreading and picking, brush cutting

The crew won't go out for all dates. Based on conditions, the actual activity may differ from what's listed. Bad weather postpones the workday.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Keith Olson at keitholson@usa.net or call 630-834-7357 to sign up and to get information such as actual activity, time to meet (usually in the morning), and what to bring.

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:

- ☐ I am applying for a new membership
☐ This is a gift membership from _____

Name _____
(Please Print)

Address _____ City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Phone # _____ Email _____

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Society | \$1,000.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron | \$100.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting | \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime | \$500.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining | \$75.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family | \$30.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor | \$250.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization | \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual | \$20.00 |

All contributions are tax deductible



Canadian National Railway Company Looking to Acquire Elgin, Joliet and Eastern Railway Company

The Canadian National Railway Company has applied to the United States Surface Transportation Board to acquire control of the EJ&E West Company. Their plans include track connection improvements and a rerouting of trains that currently travel through downtown Chicago to instead travel on the EJ&E railway. This proposed usage would impact the Illinois Prairie Path users.

On behalf of the IPP users, IPPc Board Members Jean and Paul Mooring have supplied a formal response to the Surface Transportation Board:

The EJ&E crosses the IPP Elgin Branch at grade south of Army Trail Road in Wayne. It crosses the Geneva Spur just west of Reed-Keppler Park in West Chicago. Here there is a prize-winning bridge built by DuPage County DOT that carries the trail over the multitude of railroad tracks at this

location. There are two more at-grade crossings, one on the Batavia Spur just north of interstate I-88, and the other on the Aurora Branch west of Frontenac Road and south of Diehl Road.

All three at-grade crossings are at present

dangerous. But the infrequent use of the EJ&E makes the situation tolerable. The proposed extensive use of the railroad by dozens of CN freight trains every day would make our National Recreation Trail very unpleasant and extreme-

ly dangerous for our users. In addition, our National Recreation Trail status might be in jeopardy. Therefore, we feel that grade separations at all three of the at-grade crossings would be essential.

"A Message on Natural Beauty of our Country" Excerpt

To the Congress of the United States:

For centuries Americans have drawn strength and inspiration from the beauty of our country. It would be a neglectful generation indeed, indifferent alike to the judgment of history and the command of principle, which failed to preserve and extend such a heritage for its descendants.

Yet the storm of modern change is threatening to blight and diminish in a few decades what has been cherished and protected for generations.

A growing population is swallowing up areas of natural beauty with its demands for living space, and is placing increased demand on our overburdened areas of recreation and pleasure. . . .

The forgotten outdoorsmen of today are those who like to walk, hike, ride horseback, or bicycle. For them we have trails as well as highways. Nor should motor vehicles be permitted to tyrannize the more leisurely human traffic.

Old and young alike can participate. Our doctors recommend and encourage such activity for fitness and fun.

I am requesting, therefore, that the Secretary of the Interior work with his colleagues in the Federal Government and with State and local leaders and recommend to me a cooperative program to encourage a national system of trails, building up the more than hundred thousand miles of trails in our national forests and parks.

There are many new and exciting trail projects underway across the land. In Arizona, a county has arranged for miles of irrigation canal banks to be used by riders and hikers. In Illinois, an abandoned railroad right-of-way is being developed as a "Prairie Path." In (New) Mexico utility rights-of-way are used as public trails.

As with so much of our quest for beauty and quality, each community has opportunities for action. We can and should have an abundance of trails for walking, cycling, and horseback riding, in and close to our cities. In the back country we need to copy the great Appalachian Trail in all parts of America, and to make full use of right-of-way and other public paths. . . .

The beauty of our land is a natural resource. Its preservation is linked to the inner prosperity of the human spirit.

The tradition of our past is equal to today's threat to that beauty. Our land will be attractive tomorrow only if we organize for action and rebuild and reclaim the beauty we inherited. Our stewardship will be judged by the foresight with which we carry out these programs. We must rescue our cities and countryside from blight with the same purpose and vigor with which, in other areas, we moved to save the forests and the soil.

THE WHITE HOUSE, February 8, 1965

LYNDON B. JOHNSON

Dick and Nancy Wilson Report on the Cleanup on the Elgin Branch

Among the volunteers who came to the cleanup on the Elgin Branch, there were two large, organized groups. Approximately twenty volunteers from Quaker-Tropicana-Gatorade in Barrington, led by Katie Bridge, helped us clean from Smith Road to Diversey Parkway and part way to North Ave.

The second group, Cub Scout Pack 51, Den #3 from Horizon Elementary School in Hanover Park, under the leadership of Larry Fleig, cleaned from Army Trail Road to Smith Road. The scouts' last act of goodwill was to turn an IPP trash barrel at Smith Road so that the logo faced the Path. Well done!

Back row: Larry Fleig, Den Leader; Eric Edgren, Assistant Den Leader; Mark Noesen, former Eagle Scout; Don Lenart, Committee Chairperson. Front row: Nathaniel Fleig, Brendan Edgren, Billy Noesen, Logan Lenart, Chelsea Lenart



Jean Mooring's Glen Ellyn Report

The Glen Ellyn Environmental Commission scheduled the IPP cleanup to coincide with the annual Recycling Extravaganza and also with the Wheaton IPP Cleanup. At the last

minute, the location of the registration table was changed from Prairie Path Park to a spot just west of the library for the convenience of Environmental Commission personnel who oversaw both the IPP table and the Recycling Extravaganza in the adjacent village parking lot. Kristen Denney, Village of Glen Ellyn administrative intern, and Rebecca Stephan, student member of the Environmental Commission, cheerfully helped register the volunteers and answered questions. Don Pellico, regular commission member, was in charge of the Recycling Extravaganza.

Approximately sixty volunteers turned out and picked up enough miscellaneous junk to fill a one-ton village truck. The most unusual find of the day was two ten-pound weights discovered by a young family just west of the library.

Jean and Paul Mooring led their regular group. They noted that even before the cleanup began the Path was cleaner than anyone could remember. Between the East Branch of the DuPage River and just west of Hill Avenue, they nevertheless filled several forty-pound garbage bags and hauled out a pile of logs. They also cleaned up the Path in the vicinity of the new Wheaton College Avenue train station.

Don Pellico, a longtime Illinois Prairie Path volunteer, reported that the Recycling Extravaganza was a great success and that everyone deserved the thanks of the village for a job well done.

A Lookback to Earth Day 2007

The annual Earth Day cleanup on April 28, 2007 during Earth Week along the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail was a great success. We can't say this enough: 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.

Erik Spande's Report on the Winfield Cleanup

We had a beautiful, warm and sunny day for the spring Earth Day cleanup in Winfield. The assembled volunteers were all smiles and eager to get going on the cleanup of the Geneva Spur from Winfield Road to Prince Crossing at the eastern edge of West Chicago. We had a terrific turnout from the industrious folks at Winfield United, who have for the last three years donated their time for the IPP Spring Cleanup events. In previous years the enthusiastic bunch pulled out an amazing amount of barbed wire, old rusty metal farming debris, and general trash.

This year was no different. After distributing gloves and garbage bags, we set to work, my lawn cart in tow. A good number of the cleanup crew went west and then down to the Winfield Mounds area, which had never been cleaned up before. It is a long walk, but more than worthwhile to see the spring growth in this picturesque portion of the IPP, and to ensure this rather neglected portion of the IPP gets a little TLC.

On my way to meet up with the Winfield Mounds cleanup crew, I met another group of IPP cleanup volunteers from the West Chicago High School. An absolutely enormous number of students and teachers were scouring the Path of all trash and debris. Because of their rather large group, they had decided to expand their territory.

Next, I met the rest of the Winfield cleanup crew as they returned from the Winfield Mounds trail. We decided to explore the unmaintained spur of the old railroad alignment that goes east from the Mounds trail toward the West Branch DuPage River. Many of the volunteers had never been down this overgrown area of the old rail right-of-way. It ends at the river by some old concrete abutments that formerly supported an old bridge, long since removed. The location is a surprisingly scenic area of the river: another little-known gem in the forest preserve. Impromptu, we began picking up trash along the river even though it was awkward to reach. We are so fortunate to have both the wide expanse of forest preserve and features like the IPP nearby and so accessible.

Around noon, the group returned to the Geneva Spur trail head. As when we started, people were all smiles and I think everyone had a great time. We didn't have an enormous pile of debris that we had to strain to get out, but all the same we got a good amount of trash off the Geneva Spur. The Path was now ready for a summer of use by thousands of citizens,

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Lots of trash and debris hauled away during the 2006 cleanup! Unfortunately I neglected to take any photos for 2007. Pictured are: Rock Rocket, Tom Magnavita, Jon Bickel, and Deborah, Andy and Alex Birutis.

Lease with Union Pacific Railroad Negotiated for IPP Section in Downtown Wheaton

By Rob Sperl, IPPc Board Member

It's full steam ahead for path improvements.

Several years ago, one of the worst sections of the IPP was between Cross and Washington Streets in downtown Wheaton. This is on the main stem about three-quarters of a mile east of Volunteer Park. Prior to 2003, the Path consisted of a narrow section of gravel that was shared by a row of maple trees. As a part of the construction of the Clocktower Commons Park, the Wheaton Park District relocated and improved approximately 800 feet of this section of path. However, the Path remained incomplete between Cross and Reber Streets. Improving this last two hundred



Improvements are coming to a formerly narrow section of path in Wheaton that was sparsely covered with large gravel.

feet of path required a lease from the Union Pacific Railroad since the Path sits on their right-of-way. UPRR representatives from both the Chicago office and the headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska were initially apprehensive about permitting pedestrians to use the edge of their right-of-way.

Consequently, after several years of negotiation, they have finally permitted the Path to be improved. Wheaton Park District staff will be constructing the improvements during the summer

of 2008. The limestone aggregate path will be shifted to the south and widened to ten feet in addition to two-and-a-half-foot-wide shoulders. The north edge of the Path will have a short wrought iron fence that is similar to the style of fence throughout the downtown Wheaton area. We appreciate UPRR's willingness to allow this section of the Path to be improved. Letters of thanks can be addressed to: Michael Payette, 101 N. Wacker Drive, Suite 1910, Chicago, IL 60606.

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Winfield Cleanup continued from page 13

and we felt gratified to have improved a small section of the trail system. Many thanks to the ever-reliable volunteers at Winfield United that have helped make the 2007 Winfield IPP Spring Cleanup such a success: Jed Skillman, Jon Bickel, Tom and Janice Magnavita, Jack Bajor, and Deborah, Andy and Alex Birutis.

IPP makes news in Rails-to-Trails Conservancy newsletter. The article can be read at: www.railstotrails.org/newsand-pubs/news/features/2008_02_TellUs.html

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 color pictures of items for sale, please visit www.ipp.org/GUI/ipp_store.htm



The 7.26 oz. 100% cotton long sleeve denim shirt is available in both natural (light khaki) and light blue denim colors. It features wood-tone buttons, double-needle stitching and a button-down pocket.

\$40.00 per shirt, plus \$5 shipping and handling. Sizes M, L & XL in blue. Only XL left in natural.



This 100% cotton polo (medium brown) features an embroidered IPPc logo (green and white thread) with three wood-tone buttons. Sizes S, M, L, (\$30) and XXL (\$35) plus \$5 shipping and handling.

Kelly 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)



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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.