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The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

Winter / Spring 2009

Winfield's Ambitious Riverwalk Project

By Dan Nagel and Gary Bernard,
Winfield Riverwalk Committee members

In January 2007 Winfield Village President Rudy Czech formed the Winfield Riverwalk Committee to evaluate if and how a riverwalk might benefit Winfield. The committee first defined itself: its vision is to make Winfield Chicagoland's most walkable town. Its mission is to serve the community at large—Winfield residents, visitors, retailers, and forest and park districts—by delivering a comprehensive plan for a unique and sustainable riverwalk project. The goal is to create an arterial system of pathways, surrounded by

nature, intermixed with culture, education, recreation, relaxation, and community, created for the enjoyment of all and fueled via the heart of Winfield's town center.

Big plans such as these need a broad team of stakeholders, and so the committee reached out to and got support from the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, the Winfield Park District, Central DuPage Hospital, Winfield residents, and The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPC). Those of you who came to The IPPC's annual meeting in November will remember Winfield Riverwalk Board Members OnDrew Hartigan and Steve Massie, who unveiled their exciting riverwalk

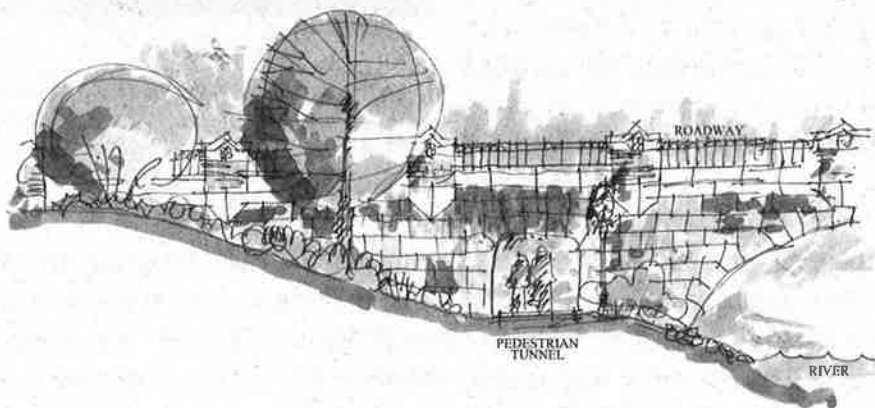
plans.

Among the committee's many efforts, they worked with Landscape Architect Gary R. Weber and Associates, who developed a comprehensive conceptual design. This plan identifies eight distinct sections of proposed pathways, all linking downtown Winfield to neighboring communities. It also outlines plans for an outdoor music pavilion, a pedestrian tunnel under a historic stone bridge, a beautiful overlook by the DuPage

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*Architectural drawing of pedestrian tunnel under stone bridge
as proposed for the Winfield Riverwalk*

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 2009 Board of Directors

Ray Bartels, President
Lombard

Dick Wilson, Vice President
DesPlaines

Rob Sperl, Treasurer
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Marcus Scaggs, Maywood

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Dave Watts, Glen Ellyn

Nancy Wilson, DesPlaines

A Message from the President

By Ray Bartels, IPPc president

I personally thank all of our board members and volunteers for their hard work and dedication this past year in protecting and enhancing the Illinois Prairie Path. Also, I personally thank you, our membership, for your continued support; without your generosity we would not be able to provide new amenities and pay for the upkeep and repairs to the sixty-two miles of trail we all know and love.

In 2008, The IPPc added new park benches and a water fountain, repaired mile markers and display cases, and paid to have the IPP prairies maintained. We also partnered with DuPage County to introduce a new program called "Trees for Trails," which is a proactive approach to plant new trees along the trails system to replace those lost from the infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer or by weather or age. The IPPc provided starting funds of \$5,000 and pledged \$1,000 each year for three years, and some of our members made contributions as well.

Last fall a landscaper planted ten trees along the IPP with our donations: three maple, two linden, three oak, and two honey locust trees in Elmhurst, Villa Park, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, West Chicago, Naperville, Warrenville, and Aurora. This year so far we have received donations to plant three more trees this fall.

Our crowning achievement for 2008 was when the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy inducted the IPP into the Rails-to-Trails Hall of Fame. On September 29, 2008 in Villa Park, the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy presented The IPPc and DuPage County officials with a Hall of Fame plaque and unveiled a Hall of Fame marker, a now permanent fixture along the Path. Of the 1500 U.S. open rail-trails and 750 more in development, the IPP is the sixth one chosen for this honor since the awards program began in 2007. Trails are selected based upon categories such as; scenic value, high use, trail amenities, historical significance, excellence in management and maintenance, community connections, and geographic distribution. It is estimated that 800,000 people use the Path each year. We



Linden tree planted along IPP in Glen Ellyn as part of planting done in Fall 2008 for Trees for Trails program.

Continued on page 8

Join Your Community on April 25

It is heartening to hear that some nonprofit organizations in the area have been getting a record increase in volunteers since President Obama's inauguration message to reach out within your community in this "new era of responsibility." Earth Day activities offer great opportunities to pitch in locally and accomplish what seems impossible without a shared purpose, without numbers of others. Working to clean up our Path says that we respect and treasure the earth and that feels good to our hearts.

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation has scheduled its annual trail cleanup for Saturday, April 25, 2009. Your help is needed for an hour, two hours, or a morning to clean up litter on the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP), its rights-of-way, and trail parking lots.

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.

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

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Trail Cleanup Volunteers Needed ANNUAL TRAIL CLEANUP of the Illinois Prairie Path

**Saturday, April 25th, 2009
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.

<u>Illinois Prairie Path</u>	<u>Trail Coordinator</u>	<u>Phone Number</u>
Aurora / Aurora Branch	Ed Barsotti	630-978-0583
Batavia Spur	Bob Sobie	630-253-6173
Elgin Branch at Prince Crossing Rd going north	Dick Wilson	847-299-7882
Elmhurst	Bob Hoel	630-279-8510
	bob.hoel@comcast.net	
Glen Ellyn	Christina Collison	630-469-5000
Hillside	Nancy Becker	630-654-1019
Lombard	David Gorman	630-620-5700
Maywood and Bellwood	Lennel Grace	708-601-0483
	Marcus Scaggs	773-615-3925
Naperville	Sharon Kirkland	630-983-9939
Villa Park	Pride Commission	630-834-8500
		x6059
Warrenville	Jennifer McMahon	630-514-3040
	jam690201@yahoo.com	
West Chicago / Geneva Spur	Steve Sentoff	630-293-1627
Wheaton	Tracy Vought	630-510-1450
Winfield	Erik Spande	630-871-6640

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

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy Inducts IPP into Hall of Fame

By Jean Mooring, IPPc board member

Rain was predicted for Monday, September 29, 2008 when the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy was scheduled to recognize the Illinois Prairie Path as the sixth inductee into its Hall of Fame.



Horseback riders, joggers, and officials in front of new Hall of Fame sign in Villa Park.

Under the direction of Deborah Fagan, chief planner and DuPage County trail system coordinator, and with the cooperation of the Village of Villa Park and its Chamber of Commerce, the celebration



Longtime Wheaton friends of the Prairie Path attended. From left: Don & Helen Westlake; Bernie Hurley in kelly green, leprechaun and unofficial good will ambassador; Helen Jones, Midwest Cyclery.

began at 10 AM. An estimated one hundred attendees gathered near the historic Chicago, Aurora, and Elgin railway station at Ardmore Avenue in Villa Park. The crowd included officials of the DuPage County Board and local municipalities as well as members of local and regional user groups (see list on page 12).

A few drops of rain began to fall as Jeffrey Redick, Chairman of the DuPage County Board Environmental Committee welcomed the crowd and introduced various officials. The next speaker was Eric Oberg, a native of Alaska but now based in Columbus, Ohio and



From left: Bev Moore (Illinois Trails Conservancy), Eric Oberg from Columbus, Ohio (National Rails-to-Trails Conservancy), and Paul Mooring (former IPPc president) in front of IPP folding display table

representing the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Rob Sperl, treasurer of The IPPc, followed, but kept his remarks short as the rain fell faster. DuPage County Board Chairman Robert J. Schillerstrom presided over the unveiling of the impressive wooden Hall of Fame sign, which commemorates the honor bestowed upon the Path. The crowd snapped pictures, and then most of the attendees scurried for home before the rain turned

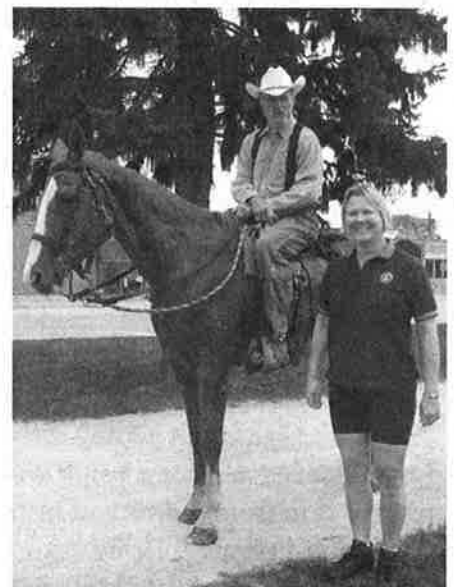


Hall of Fame sign flanked by Jeff Redick, Paul Mooring (IPPc board member), Jean Mooring (IPPc board member) and Robert Schillerstrom (DuPage County Board chair)

into a downpour.

User group members had agreed to lead walks, bike rides, and equestrian rides after the ceremony to demonstrate some of the ways to enjoy the trail. Only a few waterproofed bicyclists departed for their scheduled ride.

This soggy and shortened event did not dampen spirits of those who celebrated our historic and well-loved recreation and transportation amenity, the Illinois Prairie Path.



Deborah Jan Fagan, dressed for a bike ride, standing next to former Trail Riders of DuPage President Richard Hargreaves

New on The IPPC Board

The Illinois Prairie Path welcomes Dennis Clark of Winfield as a new board member as of February 2009.



New IPP Board Member Dennis Clark

Dennis has lived in unincorporated Winfield for over twenty years and is active in the area as president of the West-Win Homeowners' Association, commissioner on the Winfield Plan Commission, and director of Winfield United. He owns Clark Property Consultants, Inc., which primarily provides construction and real estate services to banks and insurance companies nationwide. As if that weren't enough, he's also a practicing broker, teamed with broker Christine Markley, his domestic partner, through Weichert Realtors. Last year Christine's fourteen-year-

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The Illinois Prairie Path Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2008

Cash Balance, November 1, 2007

Chase – Checking Account	\$11,910.24
Chase – Saving 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

Revenue

Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$6,770.12
Dues	32,449.00
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	1,375.75
Interest	3,935.71
Miscellaneous	100.50
Total	\$44,631.08

Expenditures

Office Manager (Contractual Stipend)	\$10,800.00
Newsletters (Production and Mailing)	4,607.89
Maintenance and Repairs	0.00
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	8,305.86
Post Office	1,688.67
Telephone	653.84
Special Projects	6,000.00
Special Events	0.00
Prairie Restoration (Contract)	5,621.75
Scout Projects	776.44
Other Printing	1,053.67
Merchandise for Sale	0.00
Donations, Grants, Bequests	2,000.00
Travel/Board Expenses	115.20
Legal and Consulting	0.00
Office Supplies, etc.	240.70
Dues and Subscriptions	0.00
Insurance	0.00
Web Maintenance	0.00
Government Fees	20.00
Miscellaneous	75.50
Total	\$41,959.52

Cash Balance, October 31, 2008

Chase – Checking Account	\$8,281.04
Chase – Saving Account	10,215.15
Chase – Office Manager's Account	506.68
Petty Cash	145.69
Money Market – Columbia Funds	123,161.33
Total	\$142,309.89

Submitted by Rob Sperl, IPPC treasurer

Winfield Riverwalk

Continued from page 1

River, a gateway monument. In February 2008, the Village of Winfield unanimously resolved to adopt this design.

Next, the committee decided to focus its efforts on Section 8, the West Branch Winfield Riverwalk. Section 8 includes the Core Riverwalk through downtown Winfield and the Forest Preserve Riverwalk, which covers the area on the east side of the DuPage River from Jewell Road to the Geneva spur of the Illinois Prairie Path. After much preparatory work, the committee, along with representatives from the DuPage County Forest Preserve District, Gary R. Weber Associates Inc., and Central DuPage Hospital, were ready to walk through the length of Section 8 to help determine path location and potential

environmental and engineering issues.

On the afternoon of November 13, the brisk temperatures, wind, and mud did not diminish the enthusiasm of the twenty-plus participants as they anticipated uncovering rarely-seen areas and envisioning how certain locations would become exciting places of adventure for future riverwalk users. On the walk-through, the planners did come across unexpected beautiful bends in the river and many spots where future visitors could breathe in the beauty of the natural surroundings. Additionally, the experience turned out to be much more than imagined.

There is something magical about taking a long trek through thick brush relatively untouched by man. You want to share its riches with humanity. And the experience is enhanced by hav-

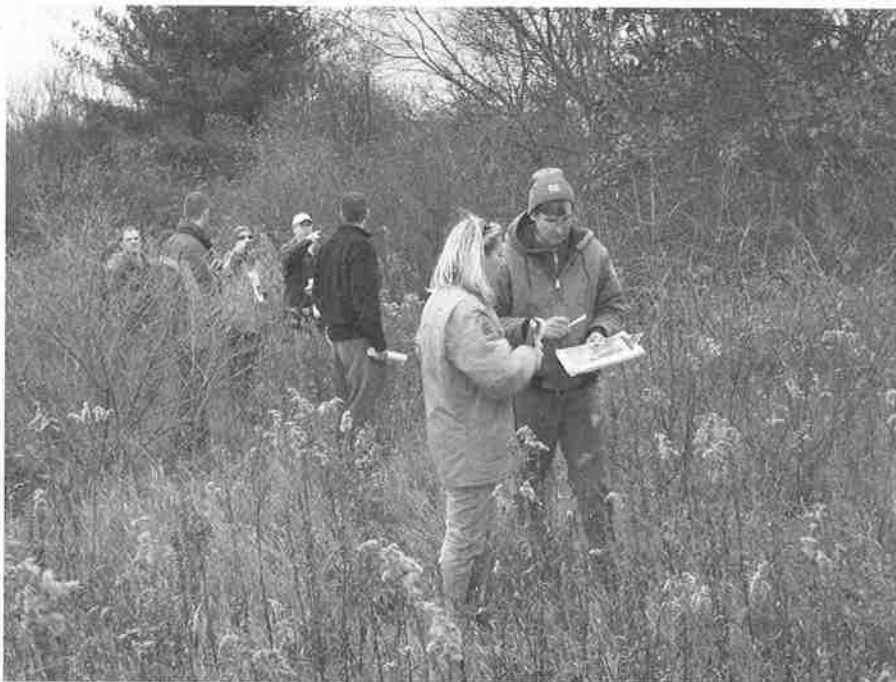
ing that very purpose—from dreaming about it and planning its realization over the course of a couple years. Seeing the exact location, stepping on a conceptual path with a team of others, it smacks your consciousness that you are making it happen. The Winfield Riverwalk is really going to be more than a dream, more than a plan. It's going to become a reality. On that blustery November day, many felt that amazing moment well up from inside of themselves.

They also understood the hard work ahead; parts of Section 8 will need a major, coordinated clean-up effort because of their isolation inside the forest.

Soon after, the forest preserve's and Gary Weber's teams retraced the initial Section 8 walk-through to provide a more comprehensive path plan. They presented their findings to the Winfield Riverwalk Committee in December and later to the village board. The board responded positively to plans and was enthusiastic to keep the momentum of this project moving forward. Recently, the DuPage County Forest Preserve District has initiated grant applications to fund construction of Section 8 and other sections. In the best case scenario, the Forest Preserve Riverwalk of Section 8 could be complete within four years.

The Winfield Riverwalk Committee is a registered not-for-profit organization. Donations are welcome. For additional information, please visit website:

winfieldriverwalk.org.



On the Section 8 walk-through, Andrea Hoyt and Scott Kobal are examining a plot where an orchard was planted twenty years ago.

Got a story idea?



Drop an e-mail to the editor, Diana Lund: sprocketbecane@aol.com.

2008 IPPc Member Statistics

By Diana Lund, IPPc office manager

The average membership contribution in 2008 was \$35.66.

952 current members were on the books as of Oct. 24, 2008.

The average member contribution continues to climb.

Locally, membership is concentrated in these top ten towns, which account for 63% of our total membership.

By Town	Percent
Wheaton	17%
Glen Ellyn	7%
Naperville	7%
Lombard	7%
Elmhurst	7%
Chicago	4%
West Chicago	4%
Villa Park	4%
Winfield	3%
Downers Grove	3%

DuPage County Adds Significant Trail Improvements in 2008; Big Plans for 2009

By Deborah Jan Fagan, chief planner and county board trail system coordinator

At The IPPc annual meeting in November 2008, DuPage County's Chief Planner and County Trail System Coordinator Deborah Fagan presented a summary of trail improvements, ongoing projects, and new activities for 2009. The most significant items for 2008 included:

- Phase 2 of the IPP Aurora Branch culvert replacement project completed, including a new bridge in Warrenville over the West Branch of the DuPage River at a cost of \$883,000. This project included returning the Nagel Court prairie area back to The IPPc for its prairie maintenance program.
- IPP Geneva Spur culvert at Kress Road completed for \$1.3 million
- completion of Montclair parking lot and IPP improvement project, Village of Glen Ellyn lead agency
- completion of Wheaton's Clocktower Commons (teen park) connection, Wheaton Park District lead agency
- replacement of the brown You Are Here signs along the path system
- Grand Illinois Trail signage installed in Elmhurst and Wheaton (special thanks to Openlands Project and private donors)
- induction into Rail-Trail Hall of Fame, September 2008
- 2008 update of the DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan (copies of the plan and new user map available by contacting dfagan@dupageco.org or 630-407-6883)
- extension of the cooperative agreement with The IPPc
- adoption of a new ordinance providing penalties for removal of vegetation along trail system; report complaints on illegal removal or dumping in DuPage County to 630-407-6883
- amendment to DuPage County Board's Healthy Roads policy expanding opportunities for the DuPage County Division of Transportation to look at on-street bikeway options and lower cost improvements, such as re-striping roadways and paving roadway shoulders that will make it easier for bicyclists.

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Cleanup Details

Continued from page 3

supply extras.

The cleanup begins at 9AM and wraps up around noon, with the exception of the Wheaton IPP cleanup, 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.

In DuPage and Kane counties, full trash bags can be left at major road intersections along the IPP. 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 2009 spring, summer, and fall Path usage. Together we can make a difference!

President's Message, continued from page 2

are humbled and proud to receive this award, and we share it with all of the users of the path system.

Our 2008 annual membership meeting took place in November at the Lombard community building. About one hundred people attended. I gave a brief overview of what we achieved and what was on the horizon for 2009. Guest Speaker Deborah Fagan, trail system coordinator for DuPage county, discussed their 2008 trail maintenance projects and 2009 maintenance and construction plans. Two big upcoming projects are replacing the bridge over the East Branch of the DuPage River (located between Lombard and Glen Ellyn) and starting a bridge replacement over the railroad tracks and Manchester Road in Wheaton at mile marker zero. Our other speakers, Steve Massie and OnDrew Hartigan from the Winfield Riverwalk Committee, unveiled the group's plans to create a riverwalk through downtown Winfield and presented how the riverwalk will link to the IPP. We also presented the membership with the Hall of Fame plaque.

In closing, we hope those of you who are members continue to help support our cause and help us reach out to people who may know who we are, but may not know how to become a member. Think about all of the joy the Path has brought you over the years—whether it was a casual walk with a friend or a loved one, a Sunday afternoon spent with your family riding your bikes along the trails, or being part of a running group training for a marathon or just to stay in shape, or even enjoying the change of colors from summer to fall. Besides donating, we would also like to encourage you to volunteer for our workdays and let us know if you have a special talent or skill that could help out the organization. I look forward to warmer weather and seeing you out on the trail.

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

The Illinois Prairie Path

P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton IL 60187

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

Prairie Flowers in Bloom

By Susan Terwedow, IPPc board member

I walk, run, and bike on the Prairie Path. While getting some exercise, I enjoy the sun, moon, stars, birds, butterflies—all kinds of nature. Sometimes it's nice to stop and smell the flowers.

Yes, there are some invasive weeds out there. But I look past them and enjoy the good things in the prairie areas and the treeline. Many are plants with historic uses, even if today people only look at them and breathe in their sweet aromas.



*Prairie Rose
in Hoffman Park, Wheaton.*

A common prairie sight is the bright blue flowers of Spiderworts, which got its name because it was originally thought to cure spider bites (also, American Indians used the stems as cooking herbs). The flowers grow in clumps at the stem's end. On a sunny afternoon, if you look at



*Indian Hemp
in Hoffman Park*

the petals, three to a flower, they might look shriveled with a clear drop of jelly dripping from it. That's why people call them other names—Job's Tears and Widow's Tears.

Solomon's Seal is a member of the lily family. The low growing plant has several pairs of yellowish flowers dangling from the leaves' axils. It's fun to spot them hiding among the grasses and other prairie plants.

Prairie Rose started blooming in June and will continue flowering all summer long, dotting the landscape in shades of pink: from almost white to brighter pink shades. Unlike the thick clusters of garden variety roses, Prairie Roses only have five petals. In earlier times, generations used its berries, called rose hips, to make nutritional syrups for stomach ailments and sore eyes. The blooms and scent can brighten any day.

Daisy Fleabane, in the aster family, also gets a spring start;

whereas most other asters pop out in the fall. Compared to daisies, the Fleabane's petals are smaller and more numerous. Almost hairy looking, the flowers and even the stems feel a little fuzzy.

Forget not Puccoons, with small orange flowers related to forget-me-nots. The Menomini people used the seeds in special ceremonies and the roots to make a bright dye.

Elderberry hangs out close to the trees at the edge of the prairies. This cluster of white flowers attracts birds, even before the plant matures and produces berries, which are also a natural feast.

Most flowers attract butterflies, dragonflies, and other enjoyable bugs (is that an oxymoron?). On a run last weekend, I saw some butterflies sitting in the middle of the star-shaped flowers of Dogbane. It's that wonderful time of year when, yes, I will stop to admire and smell the flowers.



*Spiderwort,
another Hoffman Park prairie flower*

New Board Member
Continued from page 5

old niece, Alyssa, moved here from Atlanta. Dennis has always wanted a daughter and says, "It is a new experience everyday when a teenager pops into your life that you are responsible for."

Dennis leads an active life swimming, biking, whitewater and sea kayaking, cross country skiing, sailing, hang gliding, running, camping, and playing tennis—a lot of tennis. He holds memberships in the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy, Chicago Whitewater Association, Morton Arboretum, and WDCB (to support the jazz community). He believes that if you want to make a difference, then you need to get involved.

Getting

involved with The IPPc, he has participated in the annual clean-ups and recently, attended board meetings. Dennis' civil engineering and business education background will be put to good use and his planning and development experience should help in

the improvement of the IPP that May Theilgaard Watts had the foresight to start. You might see Dennis on the west end of the trail system on skis, on a bike, or on foot. Or maybe, he'll find a way to fly past.

**Mail form and donation to:
(payable to The Illinois Prairie Path)**

Trees for Trails
c/o The Illinois Prairie Path
P.O. Box 1573
Wheaton IL 60187

630-752-0120
www.ipp.org

Name _____

Address _____ City _____

Zip _____ Phone # _____

Email _____

**Tree/Shrub preference
(check one):**

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Maple | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hackberry | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honeylocust | <input type="checkbox"/> Serviceberry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffeetree | <input type="checkbox"/> Hawthorn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oak | <input type="checkbox"/> Viburnum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Linden | |

**Trail preference
(check one):**

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Illinois Prairie Path | <input type="checkbox"/> None |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Great Western Trail | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Southern DuPage County Regional Trail | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other DuPage County Trail (specify): | |

Community Location Preference _____

_____ if any

Donation Amount \$ _____

Any amount acceptable

Full cost of one TREE: \$525
one SHRUB: \$475

IPP Connections: Kane County's Fox River Trail from Elgin to Geneva

By Charlie Johnson, IPPc board member

The Illinois Prairie Path has the unique status of being a DuPage County highway, and like a highway, there are many "roads" that connect to it. These connecting trails form an extensive network over several counties in the Chicago area. So, we really can't talk about the IPP in isolation; it's rather nice to talk about the many opportunities these connecting trails give us.

Traveling along the IPP westward, the Path splits in Wheaton making two branches—the Elgin Branch and the Aurora Branch. Each branch splits, adding two spurs—the Geneva Spur and the Batavia Spur. All four of these sections extend into Kane County, where they come under the jurisdiction of the Forest Preserve District of Kane County, with the exception of the Aurora Branch, which is under the jurisdiction of the Fox Valley Park District. Nonetheless, these four sections connect with the Fox River Trail in Elgin, Geneva, Batavia, and Aurora. These connections make for some scenic biking riding triangles, such as the thirty-mile Wheaton-Geneva-Batavia-Wheaton triangle or the thirty-two mile Winfield-Elgin-Geneva-Winfield

triangle.

Starting at the Poplar Creek Forest Preserve crossing, at the intersection of the IPP Elgin Branch and the Fox River Trail, you can take the Fox River Trail north through Elgin's riverfront and ultimately into McHenry County, or you can go south and take a delightful ride on a series of short, steep hills along the river. In South Elgin, the trail crosses the river, goes past the trolley museum (which is open during restricted days and hours: www.foxtrolley.org), then through the Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve. At the beginning of the Fox River's "Big Bend," a long bridge, for non-motorized traffic, diagonally crosses the river; it is the most remote bridge along the Fox River Trail between Elgin and Aurora. Prior to the bridge, the Silver Glen Trail branches off from the Fox River Trail and passes another occasionally-in-service trolley stop.

After the bridge, there is a long and steep climb through Tekakwitha Woods, with the reward of a Nature Center and lovely resting spot at the top. Coasting on a long descent along a road, the trail meets the river again and follows it through the red oaks of the Norris Woods Nature Preserve. In St. Charles, the bike route ascends out of the woods and goes along 3rd Avenue, passing Pottawattomie Park on the right, a riverfront area with large paddleboats, a mini-golf course, and bathrooms. The route then crosses IL 64.

About a block south of 64 and before Langum Park, the trail parts from the street and is between the river and Route 25. If you want to

cross the river to get to the shops and restaurants on the other side, use the pedestrian bridge here. Otherwise, continue traveling south. For a while, you are open to the elements and close to 25 until the path veers closer to the river in Bennett Park. At the south edge of the park, the IPP Geneva Spur intersects the Fox River Trail from a ramp with switchbacks descending from Oak Hill Cemetery. About a mile south is the quaint town of Geneva proper.

We should all be grateful to the Kane County government for developing the Fox River Trail and linking it to the IPP. It is with these links we can leave our cars in our garages and be more green, taking alternative modes of transportation on our "trail highways."

Driver Damages Downtown Wheaton Path Improvement

By Rob Sperl, IPPc board member

Recently, the Wheaton Park District has improved one of the worst sections along the IPP, the gap between Cross and Reber Streets in downtown Wheaton. DuPage County required that the park district improve this section of path as a part of the lease to construct the adjacent Clocktower Commons Park. Additionally, the park district negotiated with Union

Continued on page 14

Hall of Fame Appreciation

*By Deborah Jan Fagan, chief planner
and county board trail system coordina-
tor*

Wonderful people,

Thank you all for your fabulous help and participation in the Hall of Fame celebration in September. We were so pleased to have so many citizens attend along with representatives from our partner agencies and user groups. A special thank you goes out to our clubs and organizations that held rides and notified their group members to attend. Although it got a bit soggy and we had to cancel the post event ride and walk, we did get the ceremony in with a little help from umbrellas.

Thanks to our agencies for helping us prepare for the event and to Villa Park and the Villa Park Chamber of Commerce for hosting us at the old railroad depot.

Hall of Fame Program

Jeff Redick, DuPage County
Board District 2 and chairman,
DuPage County Board Environ-
mental Committee

Eric Oberg, Rails-to-Trails
Conservancy

Rob Sperl, The Illinois Prairie
Path not-for-profit corporation

Chairman Robert Schiller-
strom, DuPage County Board

County Improvements and Plans, continued from page 7

- DuPage County trail maintenance policy—latest implementation status report posted on the county's website at www.dupageco.org/bikeways under Maintenance section.
- Southern DuPage County Regional Trail—construction completed on 59th Street bikeway, Clarendon Hills Road bikeway, 91st Street bikeway and “Old” Hobson Road
- Safe Routes to School Program—11 grants totaling over \$530,000 went to seven local agencies in DuPage

The most significant plans for 2009 are:

- IPP bridge replacement over the East Branch of the DuPage River in rural Glen Ellyn, construction to begin Spring 2009
- new IPP Elgin Branch EJ&E bridge in Wayne, construction planned 2009
- Wesley Street/Manchester Road bridge replacement project (Volunteer Bridge) by City of Wheaton, planned 2009-2010

Attendees at Hall of Fame Celebration

The following is a list of the groups with representatives in attendance at the Hall of Fame ceremony in Villa Park in September.

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation board and members
Joe Cantore, Forest Preserve District 2 Representative and FPD staff

City of Warrenville Bicycle Advisory Committee

Village of Lombard Ad Hoc Bicycle Committee

Trail Riders of DuPage (equestrian group)

Elmhurst Park District Board and staff

Bikeable Roads and Trails supporters

Lombard, Mayor Mueller and staff

Villa Park Chamber of Commerce

Villa Park Village Board and staff

Chicagoland Bicycle Federation

Downers Grove Bicycle Club

League of Illinois Bicyclists

Illinois Trails Conservancy

Elmhurst Bicycle Club

Chicago Walkers Club

City of Aurora

Glen Ellyn's East Branch Bridge Replacement Begins in March

*By Deborah Jan Fagan, chief planner
and county board trail system coordina-
tor*

Bidding is complete and IDOT has awarded a contract to D Construction to replace the aging single-lane bridge along the IPP just west of I-355 in Glen Ellyn with a new, safer, two-lane bridge. Construction is expected to begin in March and to complete by early summer 2009. As suggested by IPPc members at the annual meeting, and with the cooperation of the Villages of Glen Ellyn and Lombard, the Path will detour onto Hill Avenue going east from Glen Ellyn, over I-355 and Route 53, and then turn right onto Vance Street, where it will connect back up to the Path. Construction crews will post detour signs for trail users and signage for motorists. The law requires motorists to "share the road" and give cyclists at least a three-foot berth while passing them. For safety while the bridge is out, we ask motorists to slow down on this section of Hill Avenue and apply the three-foot rule of passing. If there are any questions, please contact DuPage County (dfagan@dupageco.org or 630-407-6883).

*On right: Former IPP West Branch
bridge now over Ferry Creek in
Warrenville*

Warrenville's Former West Branch Bridge Relocated

By Rob Sperl, IPPc board member

Last year DuPage County replaced the IPP bridge over the West Branch of the DuPage River in Warrenville with a bridge that meets the current standards for a multi-purpose trail. The 1976 prefabricated bridge, erected by a contractor for the IPPc for \$30,000, was in deteriorating condition, too narrow for equestrians and could not support maintenance vehicles, but it was still adequate for pedestrians. This circumstance turned out to be a blessing in disguise. The County graciously offered the bridge to the community and Warrenville accepted it.

City staff had a great location in mind and applied for a state grant

to improve the area where it would go. Unfortunately, the state grant never came through. However, the city council chose to use their limited funds to refurbish and make use of the bridge.

It now rests above Ferry Creek and connects the Edgebrook subdivision to Kiwanis Park and a commercial area on Home Avenue north of the intersection of Route 59 and Butterfield Road. The only way to get between these areas before was a long walk on a relatively busy road. I had the opportunity to jog over the relocated bridge during a brief reprieve in the winter weather and was pleased to see many people using it. With the bridge's new decking and the location's new landscaping and street lighting, these aesthetics fit right in with the neighborhood.

I am very grateful that the City of Warrenville put the bridge to good use! I am also delighted with the new and improved West Branch bridge.



2009 Detours

With all the improvements going on this 2009, you will need to plan your routes carefully. The distance from point A to point B along the detour route will be longer than the path route. Also, the detour might be on roads without adjacent sidewalks. Here is a list of projects that might impact your hike, run, or ride.

IPP Main Stem in Lombard/Glen Ellyn: bridge replacement over the East Branch of the DuPage River. Path will detour onto Vance Road in Lombard to Glen Oak Road, which becomes Hill Ave. in Glen Ellyn. Detour will start in March and end in June.

IPP Batavia Spur on Warrenville/Aurora border: Eola Road widening and new interchange to I-88 will begin in April. IPP underpass will be closed. The Path will detour onto Bilter Road.

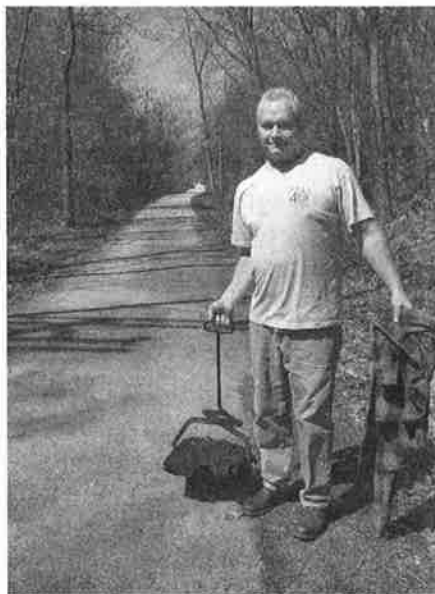
IPP Elgin Branch in Wayne: Stearns Road project will impact the IPP. Contact Kane County Department of Transportation for detour.

IPP Main Stem in Wheaton: Volunteer Bridge replacement at mile marker zero will begin in late fall and end by early Spring 2010. Detour yet to be announced.

To volunteer for a workday,
please contact Dick Wilson at
(847) 299-7882,
Nancy60018@yahoo.com.

Remembering Mark Newell

By Jean Mooring, IPPc board member



Mark Newell is carrying debris with his antique ice block tongs on the 2007 Annual Trail Cleanup.

The Illinois Prairie Path lost a good friend and longtime trail supporter when Mark Newell of Glen Ellyn died unexpectedly in August 2008 at the age of 54. Mark collected antiques and was proud of the fact that, according to genealogical research done by his father, his family was descended from John Alden and Priscilla Mullens, passengers of the Mayflower. In 1620 they landed at Plymouth Rock on Cape Cod. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow memorialized their love affair in his long narrative poem, *The Courtship of Miles Standish*, in which Priscilla guesses John's true feelings for her and famously asks, "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

An expert carpenter like John

Alden, Mark enjoyed working on virtually every Illinois Prairie Path project done by The IPPc during the last twenty-five years. He never missed an Earth Day cleanup where his skills with ax and saw made quick work of dead wood removal. He helped install and repair benches, mile markers, display case stands, and bridge railings and was especially good at safely operating a gasoline-powered post-hole digger. A cheerful perfectionist, he was always careful to see that no one got hurt and that the job was done properly. We, his Prairie Path friends, will greatly miss him. In his memory the Moorings are donating a bench. The IPPc will install it on the Path just west of Hill Avenue in rural Glen Ellyn, a section he often worked on during cleanups.

Path Improvement Damage Continued from page 11

Pacific Railroad and obtained permission to install a fence and improve the Path's surface on the UP easement.

Unfortunately, soon after completion, a driver damaged several sections of the new fence. That person's insurance agent was quick to make amends, and the replacement sections are on order and should be repaired in time for the spring thaw. Union Pacific was also pleased that the new fence may have averted a larger accident by preventing the vehicle from swerving and getting stuck on the tracks.

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 a current shirt inventory, go to www.ipp.org/GUI/ipp_store.htm.

Shipping and handling for shirt orders is:
\$4 + \$1 for each shirt ordered.



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 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, XL,

(\$30) and XXL (\$35) plus shipping and handling.

Green T-shirt with white logo on front & larger logo on the back.



\$15 + S&H. Only one size left: M.

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
- Large 18" x 24" size (folds to 3½" x 9") on tear- and water-resistant paper
- 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, rest rooms 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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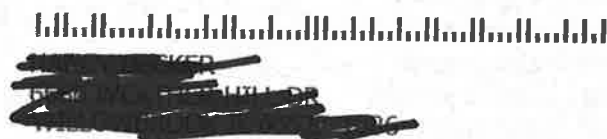
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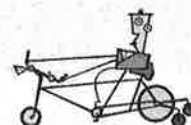
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Prairie Path Trail Etiquette



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.