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The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

Winter / Spring 2010

Open Forum on ComEd's Tree Trimming Practices

By Ray Bartels, IPPc president, Erik Spande, IPPc board member, and Diana Lund, IPPc board member

On January 12th DuPage County held an open forum to continue discussions with Commonwealth Edison on their tree trimming practices. About a hundred people attended, including The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit Corporation



ComEd executives admit to error of cutting some trees to stumps. Picture taken in March 2009 along the Path in Glen Ellyn after Asplundh executes ComEd's tree maintenance program

Board Members Ray Bartels, Paul Mooring, Jean Mooring, Bob Sobie, Alan Bergeson, and Charlie Johnson. Paul Mooring, Honorary Chairman of the IPPc Board and an original member of the DuPage County Trail Maintenance Policy Task Force, read a prepared statement encouraging ComEd and its contractor Asplundh to “refrain from leaving the notorious ‘standing stumps,’ to remove immediately all cut vegetation, and never to use any sprayed herbicides—only painted on—near the trails.” IPPc President Ray Bartels also spoke and delivered a heart-felt speech on our position, the gist of which is recounted below.

The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation works closely with DuPage County, mainly on matters concerning the Illinois Prairie Path, but also on matters involving nearby trails, such as the Great Western Trail. We are advocates for trails and trail users and strive to improve, maintain and protect these trails, which are a singular asset.

During the past several

years, ComEd's tree trimming and tree removal practices have resulted in butchered trees, dying trees, unsightly trees, and unhealthy trees along the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail through the towns of Villa Park, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Wheaton, and many others. This aftermath has been nothing short of an embarrassment, and surely is not in keeping with recognized tree pruning and removal practices. The IPPc realizes that ComEd is mandated by the federal government to keep all electrical

Continued on page 8

In This Issue

President's Message	2
Cleanup '10 Details	3
New Law	4
New Board Member	5
Treasurer's Report	5
Member Statistics	6
Eagle Scout Project	7
Resolving ComEd Issues	9
County Accomplishments	10
Construction Projects	11
Elmhurst Prairie Workdays	13

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 in Wheaton at 7:30PM on the first Tuesday of each month except August and November. Members are always welcome to attend. Contact Ray Bartels at rbartel399@comcast.net or (630) 606-8851 for the location.

The Illinois Prairie Path 2010 Board of Directors

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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 2009, The IPPc reconstructed port-o-let screening in Wayne, repaired various display cases, repaired existing benches, did some minor pruning of vegetation along the Path and replaced map boxes. Now all of our display cases have attached map boxes, and we even got permission to install boxes on other community display cases along the Path as well. As part of this project, we revised and updated the free map, which turned out much clearer and more informative than the old one.

Some of the projects we paid for over the past year include: the installation of a metal bench in Glen Ellyn, the repainting of a water pump in Wayne, repairs to a water fountain in Wheaton, and maintenance of the established prairies along the Path. Of note, the board approved a well-written Eagle Scout proposal to install several backless, wooden benches along the IPP and Great Western Trail, which we paid for costs not covered by fund-raising. The scout and his troop completed building and installing the benches before winter set in.

We continue to support local organizations, such as the League of Illinois Bicyclist and the Illinois Trails Conservancy, as well as our copartner (with DuPage County) program, "Trees for Trails," which is a proactive approach to replace trees lost on DuPage county trails due to weather, age, disease, or the infestation of the Emerald Ash Borer. Our donation of \$1,000 was added to public donations and DuPage County planted four trees, two in Aurora and two in West Chicago. All ten trees planted last year through this program survived and continue to thrive. If you would like to donate, then fill in the form on page 14 and send it in.

As always, we held our annual Earth Day trail cleanup in the spring. The IPPc Board thanks all of our volunteers and especially our cleanup coordinators, who help schedule and direct volunteers to Path areas in need of cleanup. Once again we were able to clean the majority of our selected locations.

In the fall we attended a ceremony for the official opening of the First Ave. IPP entrance in Maywood. This project was part of the Des Plaines River Bridge project that extended the Path from Maywood into Forest Park. Bold in nature, the grand columned entryway accentuates the Prairie Path and in high style, leads Path users into the Maywood community.

Continued on page 4

Help Clean Up the Path on April 24

Forty years ago, U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson from Wisconsin founded Earth Day in response to the growing awareness around the globe of environmental issues, such as the loss of wilderness, various types of pollution—oil slicks, factory emissions, toxic waste dumps—and wildlife extinction. His original idea was education based, as reflected in the name he selected for the event: “National Environment Teach-In.” However, the press called it simply, “Earth Day,” which stuck.

Today, Earth Day is recognized in 184 countries whereby government agencies and over 5,000 environmental groups organize events from political gatherings to recycling drives to cleanups. Even Illinois’s Cash for Appliances program, aimed at replacing the biggest energy hogs in our homes with more efficient models, is scheduled to kickoff on April 22, Earth Day. On a more personal note, the day also signals each of us to examine our own habits and to make long-lasting changes to lessen our impact on the earth, be it to burn cleaner energy, to reduce consumption of fossil fuels, or to reduce non-biodegradable waste.

In this earth-respectful spirit, The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit Corporation has scheduled its annual trail cleanup for Saturday, April 24, 2010. Your help is needed for an hour, two hours, or a morning to clean up litter on

Continued on page 6

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

**Saturday, April 24, 2010
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	Alan Bergeson	630-?????
Elgin Branch at Prince Crossing Rd going north	Dick Wilson	847-299-7882
Elmhurst	Bob Hoel bob.hoel@comcast.net	630-279-8510
Glen Ellyn		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 skirkland@wideopenwest.com	630-983-9939
Villa Park	Pride Commission	630-834-8500 x6059
Warrenville	Jennifer McMahon jam6902001@yahoo.com	630-514-3040
West Chicago / Geneva Spur		630-293-1627
Wheaton	Tracy Vought	630-510-1450
Winfield	Erik Spande	630-871-6640

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

With this upgrade, the Village of Maywood has increased police presence along the trail, has committed resources to maintain the landscaping and has become active in promoting the Path and educating its citizens on what a true asset the Path is. The community responded positively and formed groups who weekly clean the trail of glass and other debris. To add to this momentum, The IPPc recently voted to financially contribute to a new prairie development project designed by Prairie Master Larry Schaefer to further enhance the First Ave. entrance. Schaefer, Paul Aeschleman, Lenel Grace, Marcius Scaggs, Loretta Brown, and I presented the plan to the Maywood Beautification Committee, who accepted it, and then to the Village of Maywood Board of Trustees, who approved it. Work will begin in 2010.

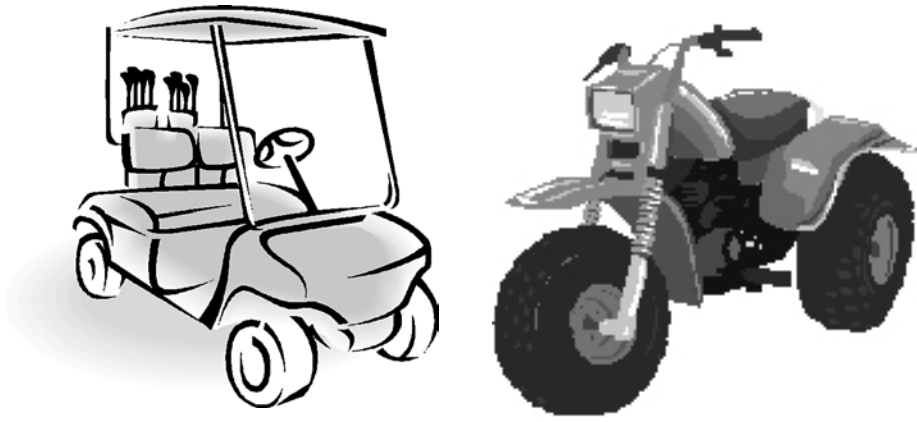
Additionally in Cook county, the Village of Bellwood installed new lighting and emergency call boxes along the trail. With these Cook county changes, Cook

Continued on page 14

Got a Question?



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



Despite New Law, Neither Golf Carts nor All Terrain Vehicles are Allowed on the Path

By Bob Sobie, IPPc vice president

Governments enact new laws every year. But did you know that as of January 1, 2010, Illinois has more than 270 new laws! For example, Feb. 5 is now Adlai Stevenson Day, April is Parkinson's Awareness Month, and American flags flown at state and local government buildings must now be made in America. Also starting in 2010, if the local government allows, a licensed driver may legally drive a licensed, regulation golf cart or four-wheeled ATV on roads with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less.

We want to take this opportunity to remind everyone that the local governing bodies of the Illinois Prairie Path (DuPage County for the section in DuPage county, Kane County Forest Preserve for the Batavia Spur and Elgin Branch in Kane county, and other organizations) have banned all motorized vehicles from the Path except as needed for law enforcement, emergencies, and maintenance. Additionally, motorized wheelchairs are allowed, and in DuPage County require approval by permit.

If you see any unauthorized motor vehicles on the Illinois Prairie Path, we ask that you report the time of offense, the vehicle's and offender's description, and the location to the local police department or the DuPage County sheriff's office. We all need to protect our forested treasure.

By the way, when you are not out enjoying the Path and are inside recreating at a bowling alley instead, we want you to be aware of another new law; if bowling alley owners post warning signs about the dangers of slippery bowling shoes, then they have some protection from lawsuits. Know the laws and be safe out there.

New Board Member

The Board of Directors of The Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit Corporation welcomes Alan Bergeson of Wheaton as its newest member. Alan's roots with the Path go back to his childhood in West Chicago when his family traveled by rail to Elgin and Aurora on the Chicago, Aurora, and Elgin line. He remembers how big those cities seemed and the long trek through seemingly endless cornfields. Like the cornfields, the CA&E disappeared. But it was replaced by one of the real treasures of the western suburbs—the Illinois Prairie Path, a multi-use trail that walkers, cyclists, and equestrians of all ages can enjoy.



New IPPc Board Member Alan Bergeson posing at a most apropos spot, mile marker zero

Since his retirement as a librarian at the College of DuPage, Alan has pursued one of his passions, cycling, by riding hundreds of miles each year on the IPP and other local trails, such as

Continued on page 9

The Illinois Prairie Path Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2009

Cash Balance, November 1, 2008

Chase – Checking Account	\$8,281.04
Chase – Saving Account	10,215.05
Chase – Office Manager's Account	506.68
Office Manager's Petty Cash Account	145.69
Money Market – Columbia Funds	123,161.33
Total	\$142,309.89

Revenue

Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$4,767.24
Dues	29,780.00
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	1,049.25
Interest	924.93
Miscellaneous	0.00
Total	\$36,521.42

Expenditures

Office Manager (Contractual Stipend)	\$11,050.00
Newsletters (Producing and Mailing)	4,558.44
Maintenance and Repairs	705.40
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	8,092.32
Post Office	2,025.06
Telephone	537.51
Special Projects	325.00
Special Events	0.00
Prairie Restoration (Contract)	3,302.21
Scout Projects	0.00
Other Printing	806.39
Merchandise for Sale	0.00
Donations, Grants, Bequests	1,000.00
Travel/Board Expenses	27.00
Legal and Consulting	0.00
Office Supplies, etc.	149.23
Dues and Subscriptions	0.00
Insurance	850.00
Web Maintenance	255.35
Government Fees	25.00
Miscellaneous	70.00
Total	\$33,778.91

Cash Balance, October 31, 2009

Chase – Checking Account	\$10,043.44
Chase – Saving Account	134,286.10
Chase – Office Manager's Account	696.99
Office Manager's Petty Cash Account	20.87
Money Market – Columbia Funds	0.00
Total	\$145,047.40

Submitted by Rob Sperl, IPPc treasurer

2009 IPPc Member Statistics

By Diana Lund, IPPc office manager

The average membership contribution in 2009 was \$37.58.

847 current members were on the books as of Oct. 24, 2009.

The average member contribution continues to climb.

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

By Town	Percent
Wheaton	16%
Glen Ellyn	8%
Lombard	7%
Elmhurst	6%
Naperville	6%
Chicago	3%
Villa Park	3%
West Chicago	3%
Winfield	3%
Downers Grove	3%



Cleanup Details Continued from page 3

the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP), its rights-of-way, and trail parking lots.

You can call one of our cleanup coordinators (see list on page 3) to ask where your help is needed most, which is highly recommended for large groups. Or, simply show up to work. See list on right for what to wear and bring.

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 and the IPPc.

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

Maywood: at the rock by the Cease Fire building at 1100 S. 11th Avenue, operated by ????

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 2010 spring, summer, and fall Path usage. Join the millions of other Earth Day participants, and together we can make a global difference!

Trail Cleanup Volunteers should

wear

1. comfortable shoes that you won't mind getting muddy
2. long sleeves and long pants to protect from thorns and rash-producing plants
3. clothing appropriate for the weather that you don't care about getting dirty

bring

1. work gloves
2. two or more large garbage bags with twist ties. If you forget to bring the bags, we will supply extras.

Eagle Scout Project

By Erik Spande, IPPc board member

The Illinois Prairie Path exists because of volunteers who had vision and were willing to put in a lot of hard work to make it a reality. This statement was true back in early 1960 when the IPP was created and it is still true today. Recently, Gerald Gaughan, an impressive young man, exemplified this spirit of planning and determination.

Last summer he came before The IPPc Board with a proposal to install sturdy benches along the IPP and the Great Western Trail as part of his Eagle Scout project. He came up with this idea after he had completed a long day hike on the IPP, during which he found himself dreaming for a bench to sit down upon.

It was clear to us from the beginning that Gaughan had done his homework. He knew quite a bit about coordination with the board and DuPage County, and his well-thought-out, written proposal showed he knew quite a bit about design as well. Gaughan proposed making seven

benches, all with the same design. After doing research by looking at benches on other trails, he settled on a backless, wooden bench and modified the design. What appealed to the board is that the Gaughan benches were not only low cost, but quite functional, and their similar counterparts on the other trails had a good track record of longevity. Also in the plan, he wanted to install the benches in areas not well served with amenities, including IPP sites: by Prince Crossing Road on the Geneva Spur in West Chicago



Boy scout Gerald Gaughan tightens bolt to finish installation of bench on the IPP.



?? and Gerald Gaughan in the background and ?? and ?? in the foreground brace themselves to control a four-man power auger to dig a hole for the post of the new bench.

and by Diehl Road on the Aurora Branch in Naperville. The Great Western Trail sites are by Swift Road, Glen Ellyn Road, Bloomingdale Road, County Farm Road, and Prince Crossing Road.

Based on The IPPc's long his-

tory of what has worked and what has not when installing amenities, the board gave him constructive feedback. They suggested (1) moving the cross members in the design so that the posts and cross members were mutually reinforcing and (2) adding cross members between the posts to improve stability. Then Gaughan, sixteen scouts from Troop 98, and eight friends raised \$337 dollars, purchased materials, prefabricated the benches, called JULIE for locating

underground utility facilities (and discovered a pipe under one of their original sites), applied for the County permits and got approval. Across four weekends, they then

Continued on page 13

ComEd Tree Trimming

Continued from page 1

transmission lines clear of potential interference so that they can ensure integrity of the electrical grid. And we applaud ComEd for adhering to the federally-mandated law. But, their execution of their tree maintenance program is severely flawed and results in a negative impact on the environment and the communities through which these trails run.

Trail users and environment-friendly organizations have been voicing their growing concerns. In response, over the past several months, the DuPage County Board has renewed its efforts to hold ComEd and its subcontractor Asplundh accountable for their conduct while implementing their tree maintenance program. DuPage County Board Chairman Robert Shillerstrom formed the DuPage County Trail Maintenance Policy Task Force, which includes

members from the DuPage County Board, the Conservation Foundation, and ourselves, to name a few of the involved organizations.

We are pleased that the task force, Robert Shillerstrom, and ComEd have made some progress, which included having ComEd remove tree trimming debris, cut standing stumps, and replant low-growing task-force-approved species in sections along the Illinois Prairie Path in Glen Ellyn and Lombard. However, we still feel that more progress needs to be made.

The IPPc strongly urges that current pruning and tree removal methods cease and that guidelines be enacted which adhere to best practices for tree management. ComEd claims to follow the National Standard guidelines for tree maintenance, but it is apparent that they are not holding their contractor Asplundh to this standard. The IPPc would support a tree maintenance program whereby the County and ComEd identify areas that are in need of maintenance, agree to best practices and guidelines, and where the County holds ComEd accountable to meet the agreed-upon guidelines via County pre and post inspections. ComEd should also be required to have a set number of certified arborists on site when performing tree maintenance to ensure that the crew follows the best practices.

We understand that instances exist where trees will need removal so that the power lines are reasonably free of obstructions. And we support the planting of low-growing replacement species which will not endanger these lines. A tree replacement program is a good first step in meeting ComEd's goals of a low-maintenance power grid and the public's desire for a functional and aesthetically pleasing trail system. Therefore, we strongly urge that the recently proposed tree replacement program be expanded to include more areas than the recent replanting of 750 trees and shrubs. Keeping a tree replacement plan as part of the long-term tree and power management plan gives ComEd the opportunity to demonstrate their corporate initiative to protect the environment.

In conclusion, we advocate that ComEd work with the state, county and local municipalities to come up with a practical, safe and environmentally-friendly tree maintenance program.

In response to the multitude of voiced concerns, including the Trail Maintenance Task Force Chairperson Brook McDonald's statement, "These trail systems are these people's Yellowstone," ComEd executives did admit to an error when they cut some trees to stumps. Since then, they have

Continued on page 10



A new shrub on the IPP in Glen Ellyn, one of ComEd's 750 plantings to replace removal of "standing stumps."

DuPage County Working To Resolve ComEd Issues

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

the Fox River Trail, the Old Plank Road Trail, and the I&M Canal Trail. He has also toured the Elroy-Sparta Trail (Wisconsin), the KATY Trail (Missouri), and the Erie Canal Trail (New York) with an unofficial bike club he co-founded at the College of DuPage called the Friday Riders. An outdoor enthusiast and a supporter of advocacy groups for environment preservation—DuPage Conservation Foundation, Morton Arboretum, Rails to Trails, and The Nature Conservancy—Alan welcomes the opportunity as a board member to promote and improve the Path.

He says, “The Path is more than a recreational trail. It joins communities together in a common belief that a linear park is good, not just for the soul and the waistline, but that it brings neighbors together in a common purpose to make our communities a better place to live and raise our families.”

The Path is also an important endowment for the future, a time he envisions his grandchildren enjoying the IPP as much as he does now. Having served on many professional and nonprofit boards, most recently the DuPage Youth Services Coalition and the College of DuPage Annuitants Association, Alan has the experience to help fulfill the goals and vision of The IPPc Board. With enthusiasm for his new roles, Alan will serve as recording secretary for The IPPc and chair of the Publicity Committee.

DuPage County has been working with Commonwealth Edison to address maintenance trimming issues under power lines along the Illinois Prairie Path (IPP) and the Great Western Trail (GWT). There are three separate areas which County officials and the DuPage County Trail Maintenance Task Force have been addressing since May 2009. The status of each is summarized below.

Project 1: “Standing Stump” Removal and Replanting Plan

As a result of ComEd maintenance trimming in spring 2009, they created a number of what we have termed “standing stump” trees. To rectify, from July to September 2009, County staff identified the “standing stumps” and ComEd removed them and planted 750 tall shrubs and small trees in their place, thus re-establishing screening along areas of the IPP and GWT in Wheaton, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, Glendale Heights, Carol Stream, Winfield, and West Chicago. ComEd funded both the removal and planting.

Project 2: Vegetation Management Focus Area Demonstration Projects

We have selected two areas for more extensive management under power lines: a section of the IPP adjacent to the West Chicago Prairie Forest Preserve (south side of trail) and a section of the GWT adjacent to Timber Ridge Forest Preserve (north side of trail west of County Farm Road). The goal is to restore prairie and natural areas along the trail in a manner that is consistent with the habitat management goals for the adjacent forest preserve. In February, through close coordination with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, reclamation of the areas (removal of invasive species—primarily buckthorn and honeysuckle) began. Reseeding and planting of native plants, including wildflowers, will begin in the spring. During work days, the trail may be temporarily closed. More information on these closures will be available through flyers and informational signage along the trails.

Project 3: Future Maintenance Trimming Policy

In January, we held a public forum to solicit citizen input. The IPPc was well represented, and Ray Bartels and Paul Mooring presented official statements. Discussions continue with ComEd.

Continued on page 12

Accomplishments in DuPage County

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

At the annual meeting, DuPage County presented a report summarizing major activities and accomplishments for 2008-2009 involving the Illinois Prairie Path and other bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects. Major excerpts are listed below. To obtain a full copy of the report, call 630-407-6883.

- Continued extensive coordination with Commonwealth Edison to address maintenance trimming issues (see article on page 9).
- Constructed IPP replacement bridge over the East Branch of the DuPage River.
- Began Volunteer Bridge replacement with Wesley/Manchester Bridge project through a partnership between the City of Wheaton, DuPage County, and Union Pacific.
- Planned new bridge on IPP Elgin Branch over EJ&E/CN railroad tracks—construction begins 2010.
- Completed IPP Batavia Spur re-route for the I-88 Eola interchange project.
- Began City of Elmhurst IPP roadway crossing improvements—completed crossing at Berkeley Ave.
- began DuPage County Bicycle Parking Program and started installation of 500 bicycle racks for local agencies throughout the county with \$200,000 grant.
- Received \$83,000 from a federal stimulus grant to develop TrailQuest, a trail routing application for bicycle users that will be similar to MapQuest.
- Published a new version of the “DuPage County Regional Bikeway Plan,” a bikeway users map.
- Continued work on Southern DuPage County Regional Trail. Construction completed on 59th Street Bikeway in unincorporated Lisle, Downers Grove Township, and Downers Grove, and on Old Hobson Road, east of Belmont connection to Village of Woodridge system. Engineering underway on last remaining section along Madison Street to connect to Village of Hinsdale system.



ComEd Tree Trimming *Continued from page 8*

removed the stumps and spent \$41,250 on a tree replacement program along a close-to-three-mile Path section. Going forward, they promised to work with county officials to trim trees in a more aesthetically pleasing fashion.

However, ComEd did not agree



to a long-term program of replacing trees that grow into power lines with low-growth species, citing costs. Instead, they suggested that DuPage County pay for this program.

County Board Member and Environmental Committee Chairperson Jeff Redick replied that ComEd would financially benefit from having far less trees to trim;



the program, “in essence, would be a windfall.”

No agreement was reached. However, Redick proposed to the DuPage County Board to seek changes to state statutes that would require ComEd to undertake such replanting, which the County approved and has made a 2010 goal. Discussions will be continued.



Path Construction Projects

Never in the life of the Illinois Prairie Path have there been so many Path projects happening at the same time. This busyness can be attributed to many factors, including the availability of federal grants, the counties' focus on Path improvements, and road and highway work which intersects the Path. Planning your routes can be tricky with all the Path detours and closures. But these temporary restrictions will result in vast improvements that are needed. See below for the 2010 construction plans.

New Bridge on IPP Elgin Branch in Wayne

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

In February, DuPage County Division of Transportation, using contractor Lorig Construction, began work on a new Illinois Prairie Path bridge in Wayne. For years IPP Elgin Branch pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians crossed the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern (EJ&E)/Canadian National (CN) tracks using a primitive wood-plank crossing without signals or gates, saw a sign telling bicyclists to dismount, and then struggled up a steep, crushed-limestone-covered embankment or long steps to continue on the trail. Since last year when CN Railway acquired EJ&E Railroad and began increasing train traffic in this area, the crossing became even more of a concern. The new 330 foot bridge will solve both the railroad crossing and incline safety issues, making this a significant improvement of the Path.

As with all construction, there is some down time; between Army Trail and Smith roads, the



IPP Elgin Branch closed in Wayne while new bridge is constructed over EJ&E/CN railroad.

Stearns Road Project

By Mike Sullivan, regional planning liaison, Kane/Kendall Council of Mayors

It took longer than expected, but the Illinois Prairie Path Elgin Branch detour route through the Stearns Road project, from Lamplight Trail to IL Route 25, is now in place (and has been since Thanksgiving). The Path follows the old Path on the west side of Dunham Road and then crosses the CN railroad tracks on the existing bridge on Dunham Road. The new Path alignment continues along the edge of the Elmhurst-Chicago Stone property, then crosses the proposed new roadway and connects to the existing bridge over IL

Volunteer Bridge Replacement in Wheaton

The City of Wheaton's Wesley/Manchester Bridge project is underway. West of the downtown area, detours direct motorists and Path users around the construction sites. Motorists snake around the roads south of the tracks, whereas Path users bypass the IPP construction site (north of mile marker zero) via West Street. The spans of Volunteer Bridge which were over Wesley Street and Front Street have been dismantled and removed. The historic portion over the railroad tracks will remain. When the weather improves, contractors will construct the concrete piers and then drop in the new bridge.

Paul Redman, director of engineering for the City of Wheaton, spoke at The IPPc annual meeting in November and presented the City's full plans for this project. HDR Engineering, Inc.'s Jay Chiglo, vice president, and David Wong, transportation engineer, accompanied Redman at the meeting and fielded additional questions. See website <http://www.ippc.org>

Continued on page 12

Continued on page 12

Continued on page 12

Wayne Bridge

Continued from page 11

Path will be closed through May. Be aware that no detours are posted since, due to the rural nature of this location, one is not feasible. However, informational signage at the site will show streets in the area. At their own risk, bicyclists who wish to continue along the Path will have to reroute themselves. Be aware that the country roads in this area may have high speed limits and no shoulders, making travel perilous at times.

The cost of this project is \$1.2 million. A \$960,000 federal High Priority Project grant, sponsored by former Congressman Dennis Hastert, covers a majority of the construction costs. DuPage County, the project coordinator, has funded the rest.

For updates on construction status, please see the DuPage County Division of Transportation website at www.dupageco.org or e-mail Deborah Jan Fagan,

Stearns Road

Continued from page 11

25. Note that the Fox River Trail from South Elgin to the Jon Duerr Forest Preserve is closed until late fall; so, at the intersection of the IPP Elgin Branch, IL 25, and the Fox River Trail, the only direction to proceed along the river is toward Elgin.

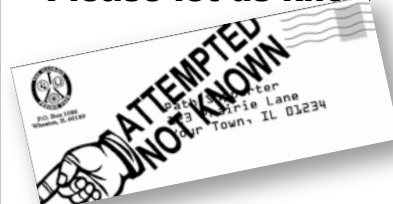
This is not the final configuration of the Path and the temporary surface, in places, may not be optimal for biking, hiking, or horseback riding. Kane County does warn that they will need to close this section of Path from time to time this year. Please check <http://www.stearnsroad.com> for the most up-to-date information.

Volunteer Bridge

Continued from page 11

wheaton.il.us/Departments/engineering/bridge.aspx?id=2440 for more information. The projected completion and re-opening of Volunteer Bridge is May 20.

**Moving?
Please let us know**



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

DuPage County/ComEd

Continued from page 9

For more information on the Commonwealth Edison issue, see the County's website at www.dupageco.org/bikeways or e-mail Deborah Jan Fagan at dfagan@dupageco.org to be added to the e-mailing list on this topic.

Please pass this
extra membership card
on to a friend.



Got a story idea?



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

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 _____

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Address _____ City _____ State _____

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|-----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| <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



installed the benches on the trails. Each bench is between 50 and 150 feet from the road. Gaughan logged over 278 hours of his own time in planning and execution, so this was no trivial task.

We have seen many good Eagle Scout projects over the years, but what made Gaughan's stand out is that he raised almost all of the money via a fund-raiser and dona-



The final product, a four-slat wooden bench securely attached to the ground and stable.

tions. He was also able to get local businesses to donate the loan of equipment for the project.

Gaughan's planning, coordination, and hard work paid off in many ways. Gaughan learned how to comparative shop, saving close to \$200, that there are different types of soils in the area, some more rocky and harder to dig through, and that there are things he can do to more efficiently manage his time. For example, taking the time to plan, such as deciding to use a drill press, saved time in execution. Because of this experience, he values the environment more and has discovered an interest in carpentry.

The benches are excellent, and

Seeking Volunteers for Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Workdays

Generally on the third Saturday of each month at 9AM, volunteers meet in Elmhurst at Berkley Ave. and the Illinois Prairie Path to work on the prairie. Projects are scheduled starting in the spring and ending in the fall.

The work consists of cutting brush, planting plants, weeding mostly parsnip and ragweed, and spreading and picking seeds. This year our tentative schedule is:

April 17	May 15
May 20 (Thursday, 6:30PM)	June 19 (no backup)
June 26 (no backup)	July 17
August 21	September 18
October 16	November 20

The crew won't go out for all dates since bad weather postpones the workday. In those cases the workday is moved to the following Saturday.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact David Price at dprice@epd.org or Keith Olson at keitholson@usa.net or call David at (630) 993-8909 or Keith at 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.

To volunteer for a workday where we install new amenities, fix aging benches, do routine maintenance to the IPP display cases, clear invasive plants, or prune back encroaching trees and shrubs please contact Bob Sobie at (630) 858-1730, BobSobie@aol.com.

After a day of hard work, the crew can finally take a rest. From left to right: ????????, ??????????, Gerald Gaughan, ??????????, ??????????, ????????

they will be a lasting tribute to his diligence and civic spirit—traits that helped bring the IPP into existence almost fifty years ago. I predict that Gaughan will go far, and the skills that he has developed in this project will serve



him well. He certainly has the admiration of the IPPc Board and the gratitude of the many people who use the IPP and GWT for his

President's Message

Continued from page 4

county Path usage has noticeably increased since last year and in my eyes, is the most transformed section of the IPP in 2009.

At our annual membership meeting in November, close to a hundred people attended. I gave a brief overview of what we achieved and what was on the horizon for 2010. Guest Speaker Paul Redman, director of engineering for the City of Wheaton, spoke about the Volunteer Bridge project. Jean and Paul Moor- ing presented a slide show about the ups and downs of the East Branch Bridge, an IPP bridge that connects the towns of Glen Ellyn and Lombard. And guest speaker Deborah Jan Fagan, trail system coordinator for DuPage County, gave an update on the County's completed and upcoming projects that impact the Prairie Path. The biggest Path improvement that the County undertook in 2009 was the replacement of the East Branch Bridge; it went from a one-lane bridge to a two-lane one, a huge enhancement to the trail from a safety and an aesthetic standpoint. We thank DuPage County for providing the funds to make this improve-

ment possible.

Over the next year, we will be revamping our website. In the beginning stages of development, our goal is to create an interactive website with a variety of updates. If you have any suggestions for improvement, please e-mail them to IllinoisPP@aol.com. Another technical enhancement, we will be considering an option to send

newsletters via e-mail.

In closing, we hope you continue to support our cause and help us promote our organization to those who may not be members. If you are interested in volunteering, or if you have a special talent or skill that could help out the organization, then please contact us by e-mail or phone. We look forward to seeing you out on the Path.

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"/> Serviceberry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honeylocust | <input type="checkbox"/> Hawthorn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coffeetree | <input type="checkbox"/> Viburnum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oak | |
| <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

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.



a button-down pocket. \$35.00 per shirt, plus S&H. Sizes M, L & XL in blue. Only XL left in natural.



Sizes S, M, L, XL, (\$25) and XXL (\$30) plus S&H.

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



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

SALE

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

SALE

This 100% cotton polo (medium brown) features an embroidered IPPc logo (green and white thread) with three wood-tone buttons.

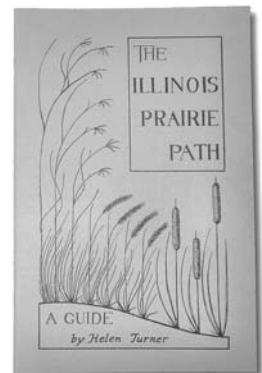
Illinois Prairie Path Color Map 7th Edition. Only \$6 - includes postage and shipping. (Note: new members are sent one free map when they join The IPPc)

- Full color illustrations and photos
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- 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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Item(s) Requested _____ Size _____ Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Send this order form and check to: The Illinois Prairie Path, P.O. Box 1086, Wheaton, IL 60187



www.ipp.org

The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter
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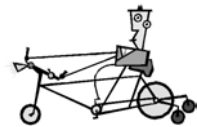
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Prairie Path Trail Etiquette



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, not even golf carts, 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.