



THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

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IPP Presentation to the Winfield Area Gardeners

Thank you to the Winfield Area Gardeners for hosting IPPc President, Erik Spande, and his presentation on "The History and Value of the Illinois Prairie Path." WAG were gracious hosts, and the IPPc applauds their continuing efforts to beautify Winfield.



Members of the Winfield Area Gardeners (WAG)

2021 IPP Annual Meeting Cancelled



Every year the Illinois Prairie Path Board of Directors looks forward to hosting our annual meeting the first Sunday of November. This meeting allows us the opportunity to reconnect with our members and legacy volunteers, share updates on path projects and enjoy a guest speaker presentation. Due to COVID-19 we had to cancel our 2020 event and with the continued uncertainty, it is our sincere regret that we will once again have to cancel our 2021 annual meeting as well. We hope that we will be able to hold our 2022 meeting and resume our normal activities such as our Earth Day path clean-up and work days.

IPP Elgin Branch Workday

On June 12, IPPc Board Members, Erik Spande and Dennis Terdy spent the day cleaning up the bench and kiosk area on the Elgin Branch at the intersections of Geneva and County Farm Roads.

At this heavily traveled path location, they removed heavy brush, cut back trees, and trimmed over grown areas around the path park bench and kiosk displaying a detailed IPPc Map. While cleaning, several path users made grateful comments in appreciation of the "work crew" and the finished results.



The before, during and after photos of the IPP Elgin Branch Workday



IPP Director Dennis Terdy & IPP President Erik Spande cleaning up the path

Honoring Bill Booth – IPP Tribute Ride

In August, I returned to visit Illinois for a tribute trip for my dad, Bill Booth, who passed away last winter at age 93 from COVID-19. He wished for a memorial service to be held in a garden at his retirement center in Arizona, but due to numerous factors associated with the pandemic, our family had not yet been able to conduct a memorial service. So I brainstormed a pandemic-safe trip to honor him on the Prairie Path. I currently live in Seattle, WA, and had not been to the Prairie Path in 16 years, so it was quite a journey for me, and turned out to be the perfect way to honor my dad.

Dad was born and raised in Chicago, and moved our family to Glen Ellyn in 1963, shortly after I was born. He soon, thereafter, became involved in local volunteer efforts to work on the abandoned Chicago, Aurora and Elgin rail corridor and establish the Illinois Prairie Path as a trail.

We lived just over one block from the Prairie Path, so it was very easy for me to access as a kid, and it became my second home. As a 7-year old, the path was bikeable crushed limestone only in Glen Ellyn and Lombard, as far as I knew. The remainder to the west was coarse rocks and not bikeable, but that stretch was long enough to be a whole universe to me. I spent countless hours on it.

My dad and mom, Jean, got to know the Mooring family* well and participated in many volunteer activities to lengthen the trail and enhance the Prairie Path experience, including planting a native prairie wildflower meadow in Wheaton. As I grew, I went on longer and longer bicycling and cross-country skiing trips with my parents. The trail comprised more and more of our identity.



Pictured above and below: Brian Booth on the IPP back then (left) vs now (right)



In the early 1980's, Dad & I met Phil Hodge and got involved in refurbishing "Volunteer Bridge" in Wheaton. Phil was a "super-volunteer" and the driving force behind the project. Trail users of today may not realize that when the railroad was decommissioned, not only were the rails, ties, and planking removed from the bridge, but the earthen ramp up to the bridge trestle was also demolished, leaving the trestle not only impossible to cross, but impossible even to climb up. Dad and I helped build the retaining walls for the new earthen ramp that exists today, using sledge hammers to pound spikes made from rebar to pin the railroad ties together. We also bent rebar and helped make forms for pouring concrete to refurbish the tops of the pillars on the north of the trestle, which had started to crumble.



*Brian Booth on his tribute ride at Volunteer Park Bridge
Photo credit: Ralph Covert*

So on my tribute trip, I teamed with my wife Laura, sister-in-law, Cathy Seasholes, and high school friend, Ralph Covert, to do a 28-mile ride from Glen Ellyn to Wayne in honor of Dad. We passed the wildflower meadow and crossed over Volunteer Bridge, which brought back a lot of great memories and a renewed recognition of how tremendous the bridge project was. It was amazing to see what great shape the path is in, and how the network of trails has expanded.

(Story cont'd on page 3)

Honoring Bill Booth – IPP Tribute Ride (cont.)

On our ride we got drenched in an afternoon thunderstorm, but it really didn't matter. It actually enhanced the trip, as it was a reminder that such weather would not have stopped Dad or myself on our rides. We even re-created a couple photos of myself on the Prairie Path that I had found in the family photo bin – one of them prophetically showing me in front of the trestle, many years before work commenced in rebuilding it. With the Prairie Path being such an integral part of our lives, it was a fitting way to remember Dad. If he was watching us I'm sure he would have been pleased.

Written by Brian Booth

*Paul and Jean Mooring were parents, grandparents, great grandparents, life-long learners, builders, and doers. Paul, president of the IPPc Board from 1971 through 1992, led the Path through decades of growth, significant challenges and triumphs. Many people believe if it wasn't for the Moorings, there wouldn't be an Illinois Prairie Path. They guided the Path through the 1986 insurance crisis; DuPage County agreed to maintain the Path, and the IPPc agreed to focus on advocacy, infrastructure and amenities. The Moorings remained on the board as determined, resilient, courageous and inspiring volunteers until their last days.

*New Raymond Street
Forest Preserve tunnel
located in South Elgin
(Kane County) connecting
the Illinois Prairie Path
and Fox River Trail*



IPP Presentation at the Rotary Club of Glen Ellyn

A big THANK YOU to the Glen Ellyn Rotary for being such gracious hosts for our presentation on "The History and Value of the Illinois Prairie Path" on August 12th!

The Rotary not only treated IPPc President, Erik Spande, and Director, Dennis Terdy, to a great lunch at the Glen Oaks Country Club, but they also donated a book in our name to the Glen Ellyn Library entitled "A Walk in the Deciduous Forest." How thoughtful!

The Glen Ellyn Rotary is an impressive group, and we can see why they have a robust membership. It was an honor to get to talk with them!



Director, Dennis Terdy (top left), and President, Erik Spande (top right), presented the IPP presentation at the Rotary Club



"A Walk in the Deciduous Forest" was donated to the Glen Ellyn Library



*Illinois Prairie Path main stem,
just west of Main Street in
Lombard*



*IPP Geneva Spur Winfield -
DuPage River bridge*



*IPP Elgin branch - Lincoln Marsh
Wheaton*



*IPP main stem - Wheaton. View
of the iconic Volunteer Bridge -
converted to IPP use in 1980's*

TALKING TRAILS | WITH DUPAGE COUNTY



The County has kicked off the DuPage Trails Plan! The Plan, which began at the beginning of July, represents a cooperative effort between the County, its partners in trail management, and trail users. The goals of the Plan are to address ongoing issues with regards to management, operation, and enhancement of the County's existing regional trail network. Naturally, the Illinois Prairie Path will be front-and-center in the Plan, though we will also be addressing the Great Western Trail and the Southern DuPage Regional Trail. We will be engaging trail users in various ways throughout the duration of the project, which is anticipated to take 18 months. We look forward to hearing from you—supporters of the Illinois Prairie Path—throughout this project, and we are excited to continue to make the Prairie Path a fantastic asset to DuPage County.

If you should have any questions or concerns in the meantime, send us an email at TrailPathCoordinator@dupageco.org or call the Division of Transportation at (630) 407-6900.

Invest in the IPP

The Illinois Prairie Path would like to publicly thank the Village of Villa Park in support of the IPP. In partnership with Brian Roche, Superintendent of Parks, Buildings and Grounds, at Villa Park, the IPP recently hung a banner to encourage path users to become members of our organization. The IPP supports the beautification of the path, provides maintenance of various established prairies, coordinates clean-ups and much more. You can learn more about our organization, and how to become a member, by visiting ipp.org. Thank you Villa Park, we greatly appreciate your support!



Invest in the Illinois Prairie Path banner



Pictured left: Village of Glen Ellyn Public Works employees "caught" repairing bicycle repair station. It took only four days for this crew to respond to the request for this needed repair! Nice job guys!! Thank you Ganime Nazif for reporting the issue. The IPPc encourages all path users to send amenity and maintenance suggestions to info@ipp.org. We will work with DuPage County, Kane County, the appropriate municipality or Forest Preserve as necessary. The IPP is 61 miles long. We need your eyes! Please let us know of enhancement opportunities! Thank you!

May | June | July | August 2021

Thank you

Your membership and donations are used to provide services and fund improvements benefitting Illinois Prairie Path members and users.

Lifetime Members

Jane E. Moore

Donations

AT&T Employee Match
Jacqueline Fritz (via Fidelity)
Jan Paluga
J.A. Poole
Kasia Byne (matching grant)
Lester Caltvedt
Patrick Henkel
Steve Hyett
The Good Coin Foundation
Warrenville Park District

New Members

Rob Adams
Jeff Alvis
Sean Armbruster
Grzegorz Baran
Emily Caffee
Timothy Combs
Joseph Davis
Tristan Dolik
Matthew Gilbert
Ron Heger
Laura Kippen
David Partain
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