



Summer 2023

# THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

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## Annual Illinois Prairie Path Cleanup in Brief

This year's trail-wide cleanup took place on April 29th. Although the weather was not ideal, many groups started early and cleaned their designated areas before the rain started at midday. With planning for this Earth Day cleanup beginning in January, we are elated to say we had 18 site coordinators and their "crews" covering primary sections across the 62-mile Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trails. Groups included volunteers from DuPage County's Adopt-a-trail program, community organizations, small and large businesses, municipalities and other incredible individuals who love the Prairie Path. Site coordinators wore special Illinois Prairie Path 60 year anniversary sweatshirts; the cleanup was the first of several anniversary celebrations this year. We estimate these crews consisted of well over 400 volunteers making valiant efforts to clean the pathway in less than ideal conditions. Thank you for keeping our path safe and clean for all users!



ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH



EARTH DAY CLEANUP





## IPP April Cleanup in Hillside

The IPP annual clean-up was a success all across the trail! In Hillside, we had Steve Pellicori (pictured right) and Amber Pooran volunteer their time and effort with site coordinator Vito Ippolito. While the team collected over 4 bags of trash in the Hillside area, the comradery and shared passion for the trail was what won the day!

As a reminder, the IPPc supports local clean-ups year-round. So, if you and a group of friends have a passion for the trail and would like material support to form your own clean-up day, please send an email to [info@ipp.org](mailto:info@ipp.org)!

By: Vito Ippolito



*Vito Ippolito, Amber Pooran and Steve Pellicori cleaning up the IPP in Hillside*



*The cleanup crew in Aurora*

## Aurora Prairie Path Cleanup

In advance of our event, the forecast looked rainy and cold but the group was unfazed and some 15 people showed up including a couple from Mokena. In addition to bagfuls of soda bottles, food wrappers and beer cans, we found an “antique” computer keyboard, an old weed wacker, and the lower limb of a deer. Two guys also relocated a large (and heavy!) SONY television from the tree line to a nearby dumpster. The weather held out UNTIL the very end when we reassembled to tell tales and enjoy donuts and then the sleet began! On April 30th, at that point, the work was complete, and we all laughed it off.

By: Amy Reeter

## Glen Ellyn Bike Rodeo

The IPPc was represented at the recent Glen Ellyn Bike Rodeo on May 20th. Sponsored by the Glen Ellyn Park District, the day's events included children-oriented bike safety activities and maneuvers. Plus, there were displays by the Illinois Prairie Path and Ride Illinois, the East Branch River Trail, Go-Green Glen Ellyn, the GE Public Library, and the GE Police Department.



*IPPc display at the Glen Ellyn Bike Rodeo*

## April Cleanup in West Chicago

This year, at our 8th annual Prairie Path Cleanup, many coworkers brought their spouses & children. Even though the weather wasn't forecast to be great, we had one of the largest turnouts ever!

As usual, we held our "Strangest Thing Found" contest, and this year, the winner was our Unit Manager for finding a "Little House on the Prairie"! (See right. Pictures REALLY don't do it justice. The log wall is about 4' high, & about 5-6' high on the sides!) I had to climb over the deadfall and up on top of the front wall to take more pictures!

Past winning finds for the "Strangest Thing Found" have included:

- A live rooster that took a couple of days to catch
- A mummified gecko/lizard of some sort
- A dog collar & leash snagged deep in the brush, but no dog
- A bag with multiple unopened full size shampoo & conditioner bottles

By: Rachel Miller



*West Chicago - Little House on the Prairie*

## Forest Park Arbor Day



*Arbor Day participants in Forest Park*

On Friday, April 28th, a representative from the Illinois Prairie Path corporation participated in Forest Park's Arbor Day event. It was a great event that included singing by the local grammar school, speeches about the importance and value of planting trees, and concluded with an actual tree planting that can now be seen on the south side of the Forest Park Library.

As the IPPc continues to advocate for a path extension east to the Forest Park Blue Line CTA Station, we look forward to one day having a potentially new trail connection. Chicago riders would be able to take the train to Forest Park to enjoy the Illinois Prairie Path's 60+ miles of trails, where they can do so beginning in an Arbor Day certified community: Forest Park!



*IPP Main Stem - Billy Graham Center - Wheaton College*



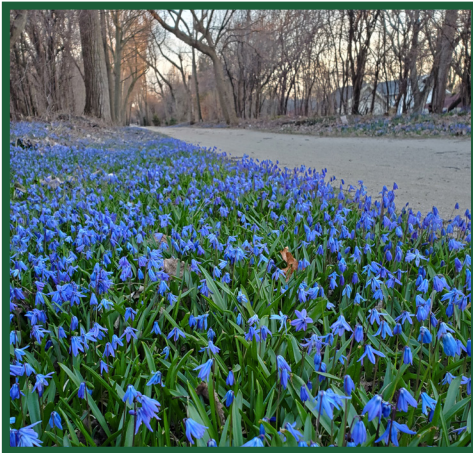
*IPP Geneva Spur at West Branch DuPage River in Winfield*



## An Engaging Prairie Path Experience

An exhibit entitled “The Bicycle: Two Wheels to Adventure” will be on display at the Elmhurst History Museum from June 9-September 17, 2023. Part of the exhibition dives into the ‘Rails to Trails’ movement in the 1950s and 1960s, the Illinois Prairie Path being a successful example of that movement. Enjoy an interactive Prairie Path experience, where guests can sit on a vintage Schwinn and enjoy 2-3 minute videos of the IPP Geneva Spur and Fox River Trail.

<https://www.elmhursthistory.org/exhibits/current-exhibits/>



*IPP Aurora Branch in Wheaton*



*IPP Geneva Spur in Winfield*



*IPP Geneva Spur at the West Branch Dupage River in Winfield*



*IPP Aurora Branch in Aurora*



*IPP Geneva Spur at the West Branch DuPage River in Winfield*



*IPP Elgin Branch at Volunteer Park in Wheaton*

### April | May



If IPP members have Prairie Path photos they would like to share with the IPPc for newsletter consideration, please send them to [info@ipp.org](mailto:info@ipp.org).

*Thank you*

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

**Donations**  
**Rebecca C.**  
**Hamill Family Foundation**

#### New Members:

Alec B.  
Joe C.  
Charlie D.  
Melanie E.

Victoria L.  
John M.  
Tom M.  
Angie P.  
Adam R.  
Stephanie R.  
Trevor R.  
Karen V.