



THE ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH NEWSLETTER

North America's first successful rails-to-trails conversion. Founded 1963.
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Thank You! 2026 Annual Prairie Path Cleanup

In honor of “Celebrate Trails Day” and Earth Day, this year’s trail wide cleanup took place on April 25th with various teams participating. The weather for the most part was cool and a bit threatening, but given April’s climactic volatility these days, it was very good. We had approximately 450 volunteers this year. We covered 60 of 62 miles! This was the best coverage to date. A big Thank You to all who participated!!

Our thirty-one (31) site coordinators were invaluable!! As in recent years,

the IPPc offered grabbers, refuse bags, trash pokers, and gloves to cleanup groups, and we definitely received positive feedback for assisting with these supplies. Also, this year, we had more groups than ever including ComEd, International Motors, Mercy Worldwide, Batavia Environmental Commission, Fox River Trolley Museum, Valley Model Railroad Association, Wheaton Environmental Improvement Commission, Advocate Health, Mapei, and ADT LLC. Again, we sincerely thank all volunteers who dedicated

their time this year to our Annual Trail Cleanup.

Although we accomplished quite a bit through this major single-day effort, we encourage your support throughout the year to maintain OUR valuable community resource. With this ongoing goal, we encourage all Illinois Prairie Path users to contact us at info@ipp.org with any interest in path clean-up efforts in your local community throughout the year.



Naperville International



Glen Ellyn West



Geneva



West Chicago



ComEd had over 120 volunteers



Update on a Flurry of Illinois E-Bike Legislation



Comprehensive micromobility safety plan targets dangerous high-speed e-bikes, e-motos and other unregulated electric devices exceeding 28 mph.
(ilsos.gov)

Over the past year, a number of suburbs initiated and even revised local ordinances attempting to regulate electric bikes, scooters, and other electric micromobility devices. Interestingly, in recent weeks, the Illinois State Legislature has been trying to come to grips with how to address safety in this rapidly expanding electric device arena. On April 19, in an attempt to regulate electric device use, improve safety for their use, and set statewide standards, the Illinois Senate, unanimously pass a bill (54-0) that was coordinated through the Illinois Office of the Secretary of State.

The Senate bill directly addresses higher-power, faster devices that fall outside current state definitions, according to a press release from Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias. Under the measure, riders of e-bikes and e-motos that travel more than 28 mph would need a driver's license, title, registration and insurance. Riders of any high-speed micromobility device including electric scooters and skateboards would have to be 16 years of age. They would also be banned from riding over 28 mph on streets, sidewalks and bike paths.

“As these devices become faster, heavier and more powerful, our laws must keep pace to protect riders and the public,” Giannoulias said. We’re replacing a confusing patchwork of local rules with clear statewide standards that prioritize safety.”

In the Senate Legislation, riders of Class 1 or 2 e-bikes, which go up to 20 mph, would need to be at least 15 years of age. This measure now moves to the Illinois House.

Interestingly, earlier in April, Margaret DeLaRosa (IL 42nd) sponsored an E-bike bill initiated on behalf of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). This bill seeks to regulate E-bikes use on IDNR properties Representative DeLaRosa’s sponsored bill is now headed to the Senate. Although not identical to the Senate E-bike legislation, both bills represent the states’ attempt to recognize the complexity of the E-bike issue and to “standardize” legislative, municipal, and other jurisdiction’s policies related to them. More to come.

Have a Safer Prairie Path Experience

Occasionally, over the coming months, we will display reminder bicycling safety signs on the Path addressing:

- Speed Limit 15
- Wear a Helmet
- Announcing when “Passing”

We hope these signs will reinforce simple bicycling safety tips to make the Prairie Path experience safer and more enjoyable for all.



ipp.org

ILLINOIS PRAIRIE PATH
JOIN US! Become a Member



Springtime: Flora and Fauna Along the Path



Batavia



Geneva



Naperville



West Chicago

Vintage Railcar from Defunct Commuter Line to Make Final Stop in Villa Park

The following are highlights of an article found in *Chronical Media* by Igor Studenkov, February 3, 2026, FacebookXShare.

Chronicle Media recently highlighted the anticipated arrival of Car 321 now in its early stages of transport to the Villa Park site. The original article (link below) highlighted a bit of early history of the 1914 passenger rail car along with details of this multi-organizational cooperative effort.

It cited how Villa Park plans to bring an original CA&E railcar, known as Car 321, to the former train station near the intersection of Ardmore Avenue and Park Boulevard. Union laborers plan to restore the exterior and rehab the interior so it can be used to host community events. The village plans to build a short stub track to mount the railcar on, and a pavilion to protect it from the elements. Further, village officials are working with county government to finalize permitting and to arrange transportation to the Villa Park site.

The *Chronical* article noted, “The railroad had a turbulent history — several branches came and went, and it survived multiple bankruptcies and changes in ownership. Ultimately, the interstate highway expansion and the boom in car ownership proved to be the final nail in the coffin. The passenger operations ended abruptly at noon on July 3, 1957.”

Ralph DiFebo, a board member of the Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit corporation (IPPC), told *Chronicle Media* that he’s been collecting toy trains his whole life, and he long thought it would be “really neat” to have a train

somewhere along the Prairie Path. So, when Fox River Trolley Museum member Eric Zabelny attended a meeting last spring, DiFebo jokingly asked if they happened to have a CA&E railcar lying around. That offhand joke led

to a conversation about who might have an available CA&E railcar. Zabelny connected him with the Illinois Railway Museum. “Everything started to mushroom from there,” DiFebo said. He reached out to the Village of Villa Park about hosting the railcar. Kevin Patrick, Villa Park President liked the idea.

“I think Car 321 helps tell the story of innovation, and the labor and growth that went into it,” he said. “I think, unlike a sign or a plaque, it’s interactive, you can walk around it and understand it the way a textbook can’t do.”

DiFebo said that the IPPC plans to donate at least \$20,000. Members of The Fox River Valley Museum and the Ironworkers and Carpenters labor unions will volunteer their time, and DiFebo said Prairie Path volunteers agreed to pitch in. Patrick looks forward to Car 321’s arrival.

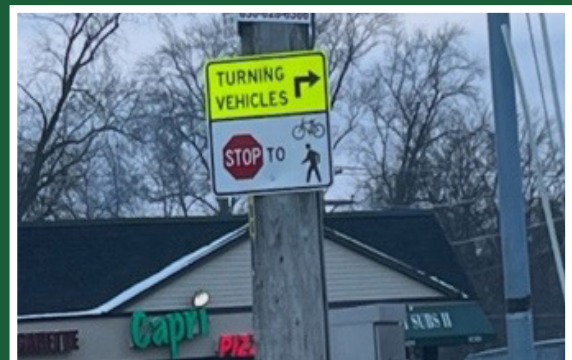
For the complete, original article please visit:

<https://chronicleillinois.com/news/vintage-railcar-from-defunct-commuter-line-to-make-final-stop-in-villa-park/>



Safer Prairie Path Crossing at Roosevelt Rd. in Wheaton

A new sign has been installed at the corner of Carlton and Roosevelt to enhance crossing safety for IPP users. The Wheaton Bicyclist & Pedestrian Commission, established in 2011, was instrumental with this sign installation in cooperation with the City of Wheaton. It took three years and required three proposals to IDOT to be successful. Despite challenges, persistence succeeded, reminding vehicles to stop for IPP users.



Safer Prairie Crossing sign

Great New Resources for Suburban Cycling

Neil Holdway, former Daily Herald columnist, has an awesome suburban cycling website, suburbanchicagobicycling.com. We highly recommend this new resource. Other government trail sites include:

- [Cook County bicycling](#)
- [DuPage County bikeways and trails](#)
- [Kane County DOT bicycle and pedestrian resources](#)
- [McHenry County Conservation District bicycling](#)
- [Lake County DOT non-motorized paths](#)
- [Forest Preserve District of Will County biking](#)

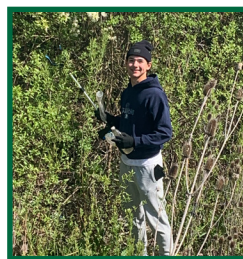
Prairie Path Cleanup Photos



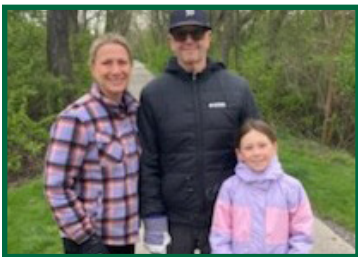
Aurora Farnsworth



Aurora Geocachers MVHS



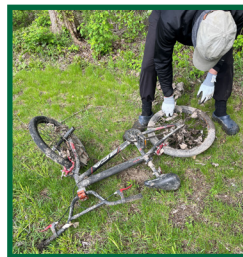
Aurora Farnsworth



Batavia



Bellwood Gatheing



Aurora Route 25



Hillside



Lombard



Wayne



Maywood



West Chicago



Warrenville

January | February
March | April

Thank you

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

Donations

- Brian C.
- Lester C. (bench)
- Liz & Bruce F.
- KPMG G.
- Richard G.
- Janet A/ Paul H. (bench)
- Dick L.
- Jim S.
- Erik S. in honor of his Mother (bench)
- Nancy W.
- John W.
- Katherine & Frank Z. (bench)
- Anonymous Donor

New Members

- Mark A.
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- Bart L. & Fran K.
- Mark R.
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