

July 8, 2020

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Board of Commissioners  
From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Coordinator  
Re: July Staff Report

**Executive Director (Mary Ellen Wuellner)**

- Phase 4 of Restore Illinois saw the limited opening of both the Museum of the Grand Prairie and Homer Lake Interpretive Center. As we did prior to opening the campground, staff met at both facilities with representatives of the C-U Public Health District for guidance. Playgrounds and rental facilities are also back in use with restricted capacities. If I have not said it recently, I want to take this opportunity to thank all District staff for their flexibility, creativity, and good spirits as we navigated our way through these uncharted times.
- A second round of interviews for the Grants and Development Officer has just wrapped up this past week. Three members of the Friends Foundation board assisted me in interviewing the two finalists for the position. A decision is imminent.
- As I mentioned last month, I reached out to OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center's CEO to propose a partial forgiveness of past years' property tax liability owed by the District to the hospital. I received a cordial reply from the CEO indicating that the lawsuit had not been transferred from Presence to OSF, and that he had forwarded my letter to the decision makers at Presence, which is now part of AMITA Health. Shortly thereafter, I received a letter from an attorney at AMITA indicating that the health system had turned down my proposal. Given that AMITA's nearest provider is in Kankakee, their lack of interest in a local project partnership is not altogether surprising.
- Last week the Friends Foundation was approved for a Nature Conservancy COVID-relief grant to cover the cost of two new laptops and the purchase of native plant seed. The grant is intended to allow agencies to continue their volunteer stewardship efforts during the pandemic. One of the laptops will be used by our volunteer coordinator allowing her to work more efficiently from home, the other would be available to loan to a volunteer who is doing data entry or other volunteer work from home on our behalf. The seed purchase would supplant the seed we would typically gather during large seed collection events, which are not being held this year due to COVID-19. Total grant award is \$3,400.
- I am serving on a short-term working group with IPRA devoted to the educational interests of the conservation and forest preserve districts served by the agency. With park districts being their largest constituent group, IPRA administrators are seeking feedback on how to improve their services to their non-park district partners. Other members of the working group represent Will, McHenry, Rock Island, Kane, DuPage, Lake, and Cook Counties' districts. The effort is expected to wrap up by year end.

**Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)**

- We held the first stakeholder input session for the Homer Lake Interpretive Center concept design on June 23. Lake Flato and MKSK architects led the discussion of approximately 25 participants from CCFPD staff, the Forest Preserves Friends Foundation, the CCFPD Board of

Commissioners, and the Citizens Advisory Committee. The meeting was held online, utilizing Zoom, and the session went smoothly from full group participation to break-out rooms, and back, for 3 hours of valuable conversations and idea sharing. We now look forward to the public input session on Wednesday, July 8, at 6:00 p.m.

- A request for quotes for sealcoating to improve the roads and parking lots at Homer Lake Forest Preserve was sent out, and we plan to award the contract to Illiana Construction Company as the sole quote. We appreciate the effort of Roy Woodmansee to break the project up into materials and application in order to coordinate with local township sealcoating projects and fully utilize the capital project budget allotted.
- We have begun meeting with Engineering Resource Associates (ERA), the Village of St. Joseph, and the IL Department of Transportation in regard to design engineering of amenities on phases 1 and 2A on the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Bridgette Moen has been coordinating this process for CCFPD.
- The Expanding Access at Lake of the Woods OSLAD project continues to develop. Construction and LOW operations staff worked together to remove seven ash trees, as well as a couple of other declining trees, in preparation for shelter and sidewalk construction. An old parking lot has been removed from the site of a new large, open-air structure. The asphalt materials have been recycled into additional storage and road surfacing at the LOW maintenance area. The first section of new concrete sidewalk has been poured, with concrete work continuing throughout the summer.
- The Construction Department installed safety barriers at the Museum of the Grand Prairie reception area and offices to minimize the potential spread of COVID-19.
- The purchase of 93.81 acres surrounding the 5-acre CCFPD Schwartz-Clapper property in Newcomb Township (north of Mahomet) was finalized on June 22, 2020. We are thankful to Sean Tabeling and Brian Keigher of Hidden River LLC for their donation of \$125,000 worth of land value toward the purchase, as well as the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for their \$432,786 Land Acquisition Grant award toward the purchase. With the generous inputs of these great partners, we will forever protect this stretch of the Sangamon River and associated natural area.
- Bridgette Moen has utilized her park planning experience in helping us to advance the Lake of the Woods Peninsula OSLAD grant project, including improving the sidewalk layout and shelter purchase preparation.
- We responded to a request from IDNR regarding our Bike Path Grant application for the LOW path through Stidham Woods. We hope this additional information helps to secure grant funding for the much needed resurfacing of the multi-use trail.

### **Business and Finance (John Baker)**

- Finished providing information to CliftonLarsonAllen for the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation audit. We requested and received an extension for filing the state and federal 990s which CLA will be preparing along with the audit report.
- Requested and received audit filing extensions with the State of Illinois and the Government Finance Officers' Association, and requested an extension for filing the audit for EMMA, the federal bond disclosure system. The District audit field work is expected to begin July 20.

- Prepared the 2019 Public Funds Notice, filed with the County Clerk and published this in the News Gazette as required when audit reports cannot be filed before the six month deadline after the fiscal year.
- Conducted a second round of interviews for the Assistant Finance Director role. Of the six candidates interviewed, three withdrew, two because of compensation and one because of another job offer which was a better fit. Of the three remaining candidates, the interview team deemed one unsuited for the position, one too expensive and we are negotiating with the third.
- Worked to resolve vendor payment issues with Metlife, Viasat, Harris and Ameren. In the latter two cases the vendor overbilled or failed to explain unexpected expenditures. Staff also persisted in resolving the Carle tax repayment to the County which threatened to reduce District 2020 tax disbursements and in arranging the wire transaction for the Hidden River purchase.
- Worked with Paylocity over several weeks to resolve a tax underpayment issue. Paylocity had been applying Family First Coronavirus Response Act credits to District tax payments. While the District is required under the statute to provide FFCRA leave to employees who meet the act's criteria, as a government agency the District is not eligible to receive the FFCRA credits. Thankfully Paylocity finally corrected the error in time to file accurate federal quarterly reporting for the second quarter.
- Focused on training and close oversight of all financial transactions with so many relatively new hands assisting, particularly the temporary staff. The challenges continue as one temporary employee has been in quarantine for fourteen days because of contact with a COVID-19 family member. So we have spent significantly more time on reconciling and month end close issues. Including an unusual \$6,840 variance caused by a payment that did not transfer from our AP batch to our general ledger. We have resolved that and identified the error's cause.
- Many thanks are due to Mary Beck, Angela Whitlock, and George Groschen for helping with resolving vendor issues, grants, and technology priorities this past month.

**Human Resources (Dara Edgington)**

- Phases three and four of Illinois' re-opening plan sparked an uptick in hiring, which had been previously stalled. Thus far in 2020 we have filled 43 seasonal positions, two part-time positions, and five full-time positions.
- Dara joined Mary Ellen for first round interviews for the Grants and Development Officer.
- June did not see much activity from a risk-management standpoint, with the exception of two vandalism incidents: graffiti at the Sangamon River Forest Preserve and damaged golf course greens [from a patron riding an unauthorized, private golf cart].

**Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)**

- Social media monthly numbers continue to increase as individuals are finding more online outlets to learn about District offerings and share information.

	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	4,481	+145	1,695	+70	525	-4
KRT	2,881	+37	69	+5	120	-1
MGP	3,935	+563	1056	+35	210	+3

HLIC	1,584	+33				
GC	1,491	+131	254	+8	80	+6
FPPF	234	+13				

- I worked with Museum and Education department to develop signs and banners for the reopening on July 8.
  - We finalized the 14 winning photos from our First Annual Photo contest. Twelve of the pictures will be in the calendar and two on the covers. Thank you to the following staff that helped as judges: Pat Cain, Angie Clayton, Stacey Clementz, Michael Dale, Matt Kuntz, and Emily Williams.
  - The YES (community engagement) Committee developed educational marketing materials using the CCFPD vision statement as the tag line: Protecting Nature. Creating Connections. You will soon see yard signs and banners throughout the preserves promoting this message with the following facts about CCFPD: More than 720 acres of restored prairie; Over 22,000 children served in education programs last year; Forty-six miles of hiking trails; Thirteen lakes and ponds including the largest lake in Champaign County! The ads on the MTD busses will be updated to these messages for the rest of our contract term, which runs through August.
  - New giveaways have arrived! We'll be handing out Frisbees, sunscreen and bug spray to visitors enjoying the preserves this summer.
  - The *Birding in the County* webpage on the CCFPD website was updated. Pam Leiter developed content and pictures. Many bird species are highlighted, as well as favorite birding spots at the preserves.
- <https://www.ccpd.org/Natural-Resources/Birding-in-Champaign-County>
- Marketing and golf course staff developed new hole sponsorship signs for CIBM Bank, Dan and Marcia Carlier, and Sunset Landscaping.
  - I was live on CiLiving for the first time since February! Discussion centered around promoting Camps in a Bag and the public meeting for the Homer Lake Interpretive Center.



**Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)**

- Sue met with scouts for a socially-distant, mask-wearing, fewer than 10 people work event at Sangamon River Forest Preserve.
- New volunteers have been applying without any recruitment efforts. (Recruitment has been on hiatus with COVID-19.) I have been able to get about a third of applicants placed and volunteering in independent, outdoor positions like trail stewarding and invasives removal. These placements take a bit more time right now as I am individually meeting with prospective volunteers who need the support to get started rather than having group meetings or asking existing volunteers to train folks.
- I created a quick volunteer application and waiver that should take about two minutes to read, sign and submit. It can be linked through a QR code sticker and placed on the new Headwaters Invasive Plant Partnership (HIPP) signs and can be used with future spontaneous volunteering and invasive plant pulling media blitzes. The volunteer committee of Barb Garvey, Pam Leiter,

Emily Williams and Mary Beck (Chris Edmondson and Doug Sanders were absent) contributed comments.

- I have reworked the Volgistics database to stage new volunteer applicants to better separate out the prospective volunteers who sign up but never really follow through. This will help me to better follow up with all applicants and also to better understand when and possibly why we lose some volunteers.
- I started the long process of reconciling the database with staff volunteer lists. Museum and Education volunteer data is in progress and M&E staff have been very helpful!

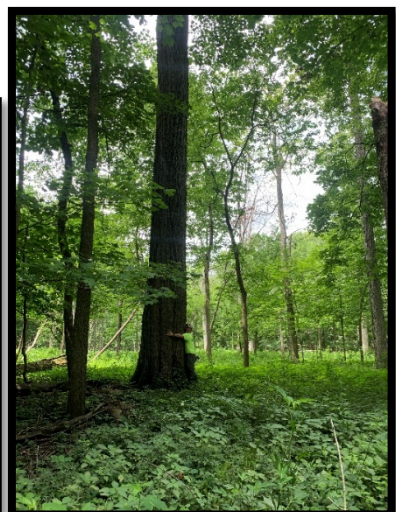
### Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- With our bare root seedlings beginning to bud burst, we were eager for ideal planting conditions at the newly acquired Old Homer Park Expansion. However, because of later than usual river flooding, the trees were not able to be planted until early June. Planting took us a week and included the planting of 3,400 bare root seedlings and 1,225 plugs.



- Invasive species control picked up in June with the emphasis on wild parsnip, poison hemlock, sweet clover, Canada thistle, Japanese hops, reed canary grass and common teasel. Areas of focus include the KRT, the north prairie at Homer Lake, Point Pleasant at Middle Fork River and several early prairie plantings at Lake of the Woods. Further, Sue and I have been doing our best to mobilize volunteers in some of these areas for independent hand-pulling of invasive species.

- Our spring container tree order was delayed this year because of shipping issues with our usual vendor so we were late in planting 39 trees and shrubs – seven memorial trees [left photo], 23 shrubs for the Clean Energy Foundation grant-funded K-12 Pollinator Project at Homer Lake and nine at the Old



Homer Park Expansion. For the Old Homer Park expansion, more container trees will be planted in the fall.

- After closing on the new 93-acre property adjacent to the Hidden River development, we conducted a baseline floristic quality assessment of the property on the west side of the Sangamon River. During the survey, we recorded 80 different plant species, 20 of them being trees. [right photo above] We plan on doing another survey next spring to document the spring ephemerals. The property is also home to a heron rookery, a very old red oak tree and a nice pawpaw thicket.

### **Lake of the Woods Golf Course (Chris Edmondson and Joie Torres)**

- June was a much better month at the golf course. We returned to a sense of normalcy, as we moved into Phase 3 at the end of May and eventually into Phase 4 of Governor Pritzker's Restore Illinois plan on June 26. Phase 3 allowed for more standard golf regulations, such as foursome groupings; range and practice areas being allowed; the Par 3 Course being open; the use of golf carts allowed (single rider only in Phase 3); the snack bar open for carry-out; and the ability to teach golf lessons. Phase 4, our current phase, allows for two unrelated riders in a cart (optional); indoor seating in the snack bar and clubhouse (with number limitations and social distancing guidelines); and outings and group events of 50 people or fewer.
- With the limitations in other areas of recreation and socialization, the golf course became a very popular place to be in June. We had 5,706 players, well above the five-year average of 4,400. Our revenue for the month was \$125,472, also well above our five-year average of \$100,200. We hope to continue this trend, so that we can make up some of the ground lost in April and May when we shut down and restricted in Phase 1 and Phase 2.
- With no shotgun starts allowed during Phase 3, we were forced to cancel or postpone all of our golf outings and tournaments scheduled for the month of June. We were allowed to start up our Women's and Men's Association play for the 2020 season. These are tee time based leagues; members are required to call and reserve their time to play to avoid having a crowd waiting around the shop. We have had approximately 20 ladies and 70 men play each week in league so far.
- Jason Troyer has registered for his PGA Teaching Certification classes. These classes will be held virtually and will require him to spend a week working through the online seminar. He is in the process of scheduling that virtual seminar, looking at possibly the second week of August.
- The greens are in great shape, despite the hot, dry weather. Greens 8, 9, 17 and 18 developed a few dry spots due to satellite station failure. Joie and his crew resolved the issues and were able to provide water on the greens.
- Finally, Larry Denton has begun work on the front nine bunker project. This is a much needed update that will make the course more player-friendly while easing some safety and maintenance issues. The majority of these bunkers had very steep edges and were nearly impossible to maintain. With the



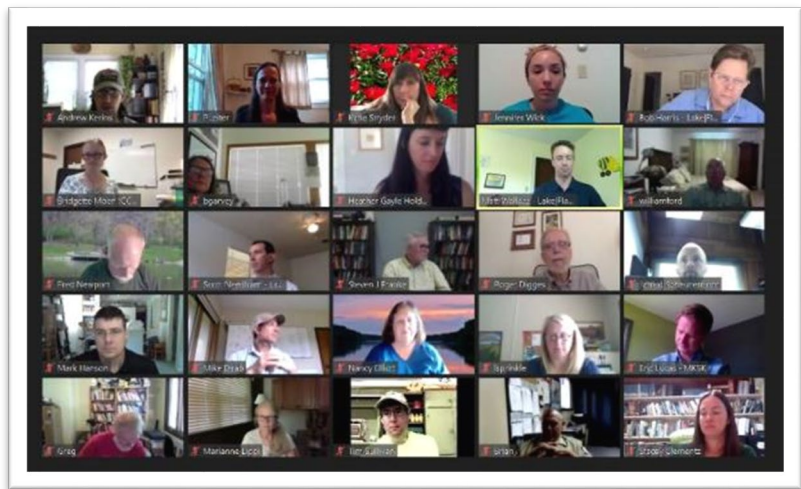
renovations, many of these will be reshaped, made smaller and more accessible, and a few will be eliminated and made into grass areas. Pictured above is the renovated greenside bunker on hole #1. The sod had just been put down, so that is the reason for the varied grass colors. Larry began working on June 15 and has completed over half the bunkers scheduled for renovation to this point.

- The maintenance crew assisted with the bunker project by laying out the sod on the new bunkers while Denton was filling in the bunkers with sand.
- The par three course is in the best shape it has seen in years. Compliments continue to come every day at the course. The players are very pleased to see the course turn around in two years. Hat off to the golf crew maintenance team and to the team at the pro shop!

**Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)**

- Work on the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) conceptual plan project continues. Several staff conducted a site visit for Lake Flato on June 22, and Lake Flato conducted an online workshop for various stakeholders (including CCFPD boards and staff) on June 23.

An online public input session is planned for July 8 in the evening. Here is a screen shot of the June 23 workshop underway.



- With the institution of Phase 4, the Governor’s *Restore Illinois* plan has allowed museums and nature centers to be open to the public with precautions in place. Starting July 8, the HLIC and the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) will be open to the public on a limited basis for the time being. The HLIC will be open Wed-Fri, 1-5pm, ten visitor limit at any one time, while the MGP will be open same days and hours with timed ticketing. Masks and social distancing will be required.

- The MGP staff has removed interactives, created dozens of cautionary signs, purchased fans for circulating air, blocked off certain restrooms and drinking fountains, and bought gallons of hand sanitizer in accordance with the recommendations made by CUPHD.

- The MGP staff thanks the Construction Department for doing such a great (and speedy) job on



creating barriers at the MGP front desk and in our offices to protect staff from potential COVID exposure.

- The MGP was fortunate to be able to advertise its reopening with an article in the News-Gazette *Inside Out* section, entitled, “We’re Ready to Go, But Slowly.” The Abraham Lincoln figure in the lower level of the MGP is shown masked but holding an OPEN sign to advertise our new status.
- The HLIC box turtle that was staying with Cathy Schneider during the quarantine came back to HLIC.
- The Museum and Education (ME) Department is offering several alternatives to summer camps: 1) lawn signs with activities that need no materials dispersed throughout the forest preserves; these will take the form of scavenger hunts or interpretive information to adjacent features, 2) videos and activities that replace the content broadcast on Facebook and YouTube, and 3) hands-on opportunities called *Camp in a Bag*. These are themed bags with materials for children to do interactive activities and crafts.
- Stacey Clementz has created Facebook posts to correspond with each week of Eco-adventures, with activities kids can do from home.
- Sandy Osborne has created videos to replace her Grand Prairie Kids camp; these are initially played on Facebook and then saved to the MGP YouTube channel and feature several different areas of the museum and gardens. Katie Snyder similarly created how-to videos for

Mischievous Kids, as did Marina Montez for garden camp. One of the Mischievous Kids videos was actually created by Teo, one of our youth



- Stacey created five different interactive lawn signs (Lisa designed) and placed them around all six of the forest preserves. Katie, Marina, and Sandy will be designing others as well.
- Staff has created, advertised and sold first ever CCFPD summer camp in a bag. The first bag’s theme is *Wildlife Biologist* and includes hands-on activities and crafts on that topic. Kids need very little extra to do the activities in the bag. As of June 23, we have sold 18 and have a total of 60 bags. We started publicizing to just our current camp kids but will be opening up the bags to the general public soon. Katie Snyder has just completed creating *Old Time Toy Time*, a bag containing old fashioned toys and activities on how to create more homemade fun. Tops, jacks, ball and cup are included along with information on how to play them and create other fun. Two more bags will be made including *Amazing Pollinators*, and *Miniature Gardens* (Marina Montez).
- Mark Hanson has been featuring *Collections Corner* pieces on Facebook, which highlight aspects of the collection they may not have otherwise seen. He has also been turning the East

Frisian oral histories into short videos, using the narrators own voice with images illustrative of farm life among this cultural group.

- Katie Snyder organized and the MGP Facebook page hosted *Art in the Time of Quarantine*. This was a collaborative initiative to gather youth art created in the midst of COVID-19 closures and stay-at-home orders. It invited entries from K-12 students throughout Champaign County. On Thursday, June 11 at 4pm, the Virtual Youth Art Showcase video was premiered live on Facebook with an additional broadcast through UPTV/Urbana Public Television. The virtual exhibit is now housed in the historical collections the MGP. The virtual exhibit was also featured on Chambanamoms.com. *Art in the Time of Quarantine Virtual Youth Art Showcase* was a collaboration between Chambanamoms, Krannert Art Museum, KOOP Adventure Play, Museum of the Grand Prairie, and the City of Urbana Arts and Culture Program.
- In collaboration with the Sola Gratia Farm and the Urbana Free Library, Katie Snyder also collaborated for the MGP in a program called *From Victory Gardens to Solidarity Gardens* which premiered simultaneously on the MGP and Urbana Free Library Facebook pages on July 2. Katie Snyder recounted the history of Victory Gardens in Champaign County, a tradition that goes back over a century. The program also featured information about Solidarity Gardens with Traci Barkley and MJ Oviatt of Sola Gratia Farm. Solidarity Gardens is the new local community gardening initiative that brings together our schools, park districts, farmers, the Cunningham Township and more. The Urbana Free Library supports the initiative with a seed library.
- Despite the pandemic, the MGP has opened an internship for an audio transcriptionist for the East Frisian oral histories as part of the Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board Grant received earlier this year.
- Pat Cain, Barb Garvey and Angela Whitlock worked together to apply for an Illinois Humanities grant for video equipment to replace interactive experiences, for \$5000. We received word on July 3 that that award was granted.
- Pat Cain is hosting his *Museum Mondays* as Facebook Live events this year. He appears live and talks about pieces in the museum's collection that are related to a topic, shows relevant video from other sources, and then does an activity related to the topic. Thus far the topics have been Art in Nature, Adventures in Clay, Cars and Trucks and things that Go, and Fun with Fossils.
- Pat Cain has also continued to host the Facebook Live Event, *Mornings with the Museum*. During two sessions he collaborated with other museums to talk about what they are doing during the COVID 19 lockdown: Julia Kelly from Krannert Art Museum, Perry Morris from the Champaign County History Museum, Dave Leake representing the Planetarium, Scott Schwartz from the Sousa Archives, Savannah Donovan from Anita Purves, and Kim Sheahan from Spurlock all joined him.
- Pat Cain created a video about archaeology for a previously scheduled program for the Tolono Library. Marina Montez created a video called *Seed Safari*, replicated an in-person program we

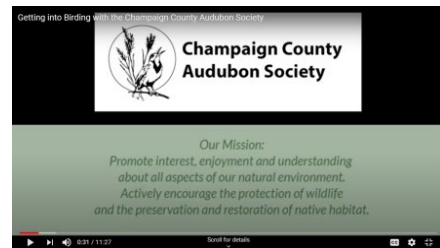


already have also for the Tolono Library. Sandy Osborne created a video for the Library programs around the one-room schoolhouse experience. All of these videos were shared not only with the Tolono Library but also with all the local libraries that the department normally serves (between 15 and 20) to supplement their summer reading programs.

- Jennifer Wick created a video about *Nature Investigation* for local libraries' summer reading programs, in lieu of in-person programming this summer, as well as a video interview with Champaign County Audubon Society board members about birding. Jennifer also researched and ordered tech equipment for creating videos more efficiently. A Dark Sky promotional video is also in the works. Again, many thanks to AMT Photoworks for their continued help.



- Jennifer Wick organized the ME Department virtual volunteer event that occurred on June 11. Many thanks to Dr. Holly Tuten (Vector Ecologist/Risk Analyst at the Medical Entomology Lab at the Illinois Natural History Survey), who was our guest presenter; she spoke about her tick research, and it was enjoyed by all.



- Pam Leiter did a *Whys Guys* segment for the WCIA morning show about raising monarch caterpillars.
- Many thanks to volunteer Doug Mills for the video series on dragonflies he is developing for us this summer, in lieu of the in-person program he would have offered.
- Christy Wallace (Campground Naturalist) is providing self-guided activities at the campground this summer, in lieu of in-person programs. She is also working for Middle Fork operations to help out as needed.



- Pam Leiter attended several webinars including: IAPD Leadership Institute series, Race & Social Justice in Interpretation, and re-opening considerations for nature centers. Barb Garvey and museum staff attended several webinars as well. Most pertinent were those on reopening museums during Phase 4, as presented by the Illinois Association of Museums.



- Stacey was asked to mentor a new employee, Mariah Myers, at Sugar Grove Nature Center by Director Angela Funk. For now, they are working together over the phone and via email.
- HLIC Facebook stats: June 1-31: Daily Organic Reach: 946 (Sum: 28,375); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 96 (Sum: 2,870)
- MGP Facebook stats: June 1-31: Average Daily Organic Reach: 5789(Sum: 173,687); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 214 (Sum 19282)
- Daily Organic Reach is defined as: The number of people who had any content from your Page or about your Page enter their screen through unpaid distribution. This includes posts, stories, check-ins, social information from people who interact with your Page and more. (Unique

Users) Daily Page Engaged Users is defined as: the number of people who engaged with your Page. Engagement includes any click or story created. (Unique Users)

### Lake of the Woods (Doug Sanders)

- It is with great sadness that we must report that staff found a large section of the Lincoln Ash tree broken off on the trail this past month. Around 200 years old, this tree is believed to be one of the oldest in the State of Illinois. Unfortunately, it is nearing the end of its life cycle. Thanks to Commissioner Hays for using his 2015 blog posting “An Old Tree and a New Year” to pay tribute to the lessons this old tree has passed on. <http://sangamonriver.org/an-old-tree-and-a-new-year/>
- As part of the continued sustainability efforts, this past month additional sets of the new garbage/recycle cans were put out at LOW. Unfortunately as seen in the photo, someone decided to dump four bags of their home garbage in one of the cans within hours of it being set at the entrance of the LOW Pavilion.
- Even with moving into Phase 4 of the state’s Restore Illinois efforts, there remains a constant increase in visitor attendance at the preserves. For the most part everyone has been adhering to public health guidelines and are appreciative of the services we are able to offer. This past month rental facilities expanded their occupancy levels, additional restrooms, the HI Tower, and playgrounds were opened, and additional garbage/recycle cans were placed throughout the preserves.



### Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- The campground remains quite busy this summer. Our guests have adapted well to our new regulations concerning the pandemic.
- We are prepping for the Pt. Pleasant rehab project scheduled for later this summer. Rock, clay and other materials will be shipped within a couple of weeks.
- It is great to see so many Dark Sky enthusiasts visiting Middle Fork this summer. On the night of July 4th, I spoke with folks from four different states. It was a full moon night, so I explained to come back on a new moon for the best viewing.
- After discussion with administration, the swim beach will remain closed until further notice. This is due in part to health concerns but also due to the deteriorating condition of the pond. Campers are disappointed but seem to understand the dilemma. Water quality samples will continue for record keeping.
- We hope to see our new shelters arriving this month to replace the last of the metal shelters at Middle Fork. They were delayed due to shipping issues.

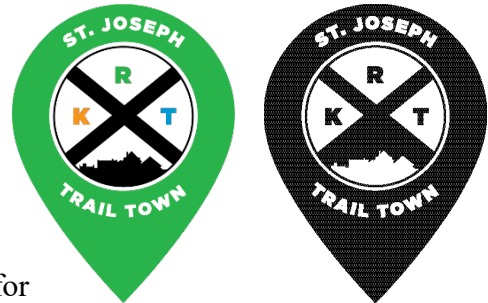
## Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- In late June, we received 4½ inches of rain in less than 6 hours which caused some serious flooding. The drainage work at the entrance was put to the test; even though the road was flooded for a few hours it did recede much more quickly than in the past when it would take a few days. We had one trail bridge that split in half during the rain event. (See picture)
- We had another month of extremely high visitation and many folks were happy to finally have the pit toilets available for use.
- Participating in the stakeholder Zoom meeting hosted by Lake Flato for the HLIC concept plan was a very interesting experience. There were a lot of opportunities to share ideas in all the break out rooms, and it seems like the Lake Flato team received some good information to assist them in the design.



## Kickapoo Rail Trail

- We finally had an opportunity to mow the edges of KRT with the sickle bar mower and also mow the visibility triangles at the rural intersections. This normally takes a full week to complete this phase of trail maintenance.
- Staff collaborated with graphic designer Adrienne Kizer to develop a KRT Trail Town logo. Logos can be customized with the town name and use the colors of the logo or just be black and white. These will be made available to and customized for the towns along the KRT for their use on signage, bike racks, etc.



## District Cultural Competency Initiatives

- Many district staff continue to participate in a free online DEI course: *Race and Cultural Diversity in American Life and History* conducted by a UI professor.
- The MGP staff has been posting rich material from the Doris K. Wylie Hoskins Archive for Cultural Diversity on social media this month. It has been highly successful. One post, about Frances Nelson (for whom the health center was named), reached 82,700; engaged 14,094; had 1000 likes; and 880 shares. The post was also reshared by Smile Politely who said, “The Museum of the Grand Prairie, which is a facility of the Champaign County Forest Preserves, continues to do such amazing and powerful work, and its post about the history of Frances Nelson, for whom a piece of our public health clinics are named, is no exception.”

## CCFPD Sustainability Committee

- Several staff and board members are representing CCFPD on the Champaign County Climate Coalition: Stacey Clementz, Tim Sullivan, Greg Walburg (CAC and Sustainability committee member), and Pam Leiter. The group was first developed by staff at the Urbana Park District

and is looking for ways to engage the community in discussions and action to understand and address the impacts of climate change. The group, which also consists of community members and representatives of several non-profits, is considering the types of programs and plans that will be most effective in furthering its goals. Goal setting and mission development are the first tasks being undertaken by the working committee now.