

June 8, 2020

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Coordinator

Re: June Staff Report

Executive Director (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- As we moved to Phase 3 of the governor's Restore Illinois plan, the Middle Fork campground was able to reopen and the golf course began allowing foursomes and cart rentals. Most office and museum/education staff are now working at least a couple days a week in the office, and we are making plans to open both the Museum of the Grand Prairie and Homer Lake Interpretive Center in some limited capacity when we move to Phase 4.
- The Forest Preserve District took the pledge at ChampaignCountySafe.org to show that we are doing our part to maintain the well-being of our community. Our HR and risk management staff continue to take the lead in ensuring that all staff understand the risks posed by COVID-19 and the precautions we all need to take to protect ourselves and our visitors. Taking necessary precautions will be especially important now that we are reopening facilities and sharing common spaces again.
- Interviews for the grants and development officer position are currently taking place. We did end up with a well-qualified pool of applicants.
- I reached out to OSF Heart of Mary Medical Center's CEO to propose a partial forgiveness of the past years' property tax liability owed by the District to the hospital. OSF would receive recognition of a donation to the Lake of the Woods' peninsula project corresponding to the level of its contribution, should it accept our proposal. To date, I have not received a reply.
- With the cancellation of the joint meeting of the three boards held each year in June, both the CAC and Friends Foundation met separately in June. An individual who expressed an interest in joining the CAC attended the June meeting of that group as a guest. The CAC recruitment team will conduct an interview prior to asking her to fill a seat vacated by a member who relocated out of state.
- Mike Daab, Bridgette Moen, Angela Whitlock, and I worked on a Rebuild Illinois Fast-Track grant last month to acquire funds through the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity for the Willow Pond reconstruction project. Before we could complete the grant, the application process was halted due to the large number of proposals submitted. We will instead seek to apply under the competitive version of the same grant.
- The Rebuild Illinois program requires the submission of a board-approved Minority Inclusion Plan that outlines our intent to attract minority- and women-owned businesses to the project. Specifically the document should include a goal to award contracts to a percentage of minority contractors equal to their percentage prevalence in the community. I am drafting a plan for board review at a future meeting.
- I recently took a third public comment regarding opening up another District lake to swimming. I promised this last individual I would pass her suggestion along to the Board of Commissioners. Cost, liability, decline in usage, and concerns about water quality led to the closure of the beach and swimming at Lake of the Woods in 2003.

Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)

- Another Illinois Clean Energy Foundation grant-funded accessible shelter was completed at Oak Ridge-Homer Lake.
- The work to construct barriers for employee safety continues as more people return to work.
- Prep work for the OSLAD peninsula project is underway. The accessible kayak/paddle boat dock installation has been completed.
- The Salt Fork River Crossing sign, in recognition of Jimmy John's donation to the KRT, was installed over the trail. Currently it is covered awaiting the unveiling date to be determined.
- Tim Sullivan completed his LEED AP BD&C certification. LEED is a green building certification program. He will be able to help identify opportunities for sustainable building practices and register projects for LEED certification.
- Lighting at the peninsula restroom has been changed to reduce the number of exterior lights by half, and further increase efficiency by replacing them with LED fixtures.
- We continue to assist the Museum with retrofitting an unused restroom to office space. This will improve staff safety by providing greater separation between staff offices.



Business and Finance (John Baker)

- With the help of other administrative staff, we completed pre-interviews and first round interviews for the Assistant Finance Director position. The District has several excellent applicants for the role. The pre-interviews determined, in part, whether candidate's salary requirements would fall within the District's minimum and maximum requirements for this role. As a result of the pre-interview one candidate withdrew, but five remained.
- Liquor licenses from the State of Illinois and Champaign County for the golf course snack bar and beverage cart have now been received. The licenses are valid from June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020. Thanks to Mary Beck for her assistance with the application process.
- We continue to respond to auditor requests for financial background and documentation for the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation audit.

Human Resources (Dara Edgington)

- Staff from the HR department attended the following webinars over the last month: The Nuts and Bolts of Handling Covid-19 Personnel Issues within Your Agency from IAPD, Intro to

Systemic Racism from Arts Alliance Illinois, and the Cannabis Act & Worker's Compensation in Illinois sponsored by CIHRG.

- In compliance with Illinois' re-opening guidance, we developed COVID-19 safety training, internal procedures for potential exposure, and a safety practices & protocol one-sheet for employees
- Dara has been creating process flow documents and checklists for every aspect of employee life cycle (job posting requests, recruiting, onboarding, benefits enrollment, termination).
- Mary attended IAPD's webinar regarding virtual open meetings during Phase 3 of Illinois' re-opening plan.
- Mary ordered Spanish training materials from PDRMA for our seasonal employees.
- Mary also helped coordinate the effort to procure and distribute face masks to all staff working onsite; at this time, the District has distributed over 130 masks.

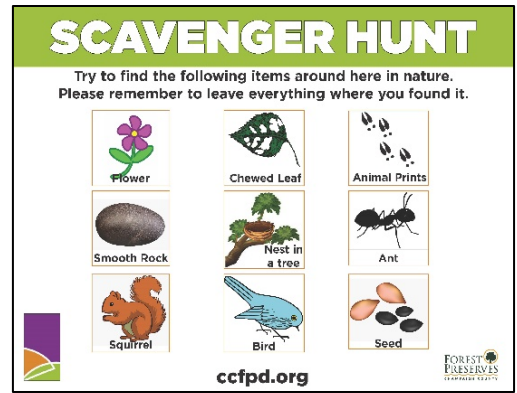
Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- 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	4,336	+134	1,625	+79	529	-4
KRT	2,844	+69	64	+6	121	+3
MGP	3,372	+70	1021	+12	207	+5
HLIC	1,531	+122				
GC	1,360	+5	246	+10	74	+0
FPPF	221	+11				

- We received 74 photos from 28 photographers as part of the first CCFPD Photo Contest. The judges, Emily Williams, Matt Kuntz, Stacey Clementz, Pat Cain, Angie Clayton, and Lisa Sprinkle, will vote on the top 13 photos. The winning photos will be showcased in a 2021 CCFPD wall calendar.
- Homer Lake Forest Preserve made *Enjoy Illinois'* list of six Illinois' parks to explore during Great Outdoors month.
- Chambanamoms.com features the District in their Ultimate Outdoor Summer In and Around Champaign Urbana guide, <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2020/06/03/ultimate-outdoor-summer-champaign-urbana/>
- The Citizens Advisory Committee is working on ways to promote the District during Phase 3 of Restore Illinois since many of the events that members typically attend are not being held. They are investigating several ideas for social media including: making short testimonial videos about their favorite preserve, developing a post about the small amount of property taxes they pay annually to the District, commenting or sharing posts from the CCFPD, Homer Lake Interpretive Center, Museum of the Grand Prairie, or Lake of the Woods Golf Course Facebook, Instagram or Twitter.

- I developed several yard signs for the golf course in preparation for its reopening on May 29 and a banner with the new rules and regulations for the campground. I also worked with Stacey Clementz to develop activity signs for Lake of the Woods, Homer Lake, and Middle Fork River. The signs encourage visitors to do a scavenger hunt, explore nature with their senses, learn to walk silently, and help identify birds at the Homer Lake Interpretive Center bird feeders.



Explore Nature With Your Senses

Sight: Sit or lay on the ground (or even stand) and use your hands to create binoculars around your eyes. Stay still with the binoculars around your eyes and see what you can see. You can look up, down or straight ahead. What do you see?

Sound: Make deer ears; cup your hands around the back of your ears and stay very still. What sounds do you hear? Crunching of leaves? Wind blowing? People walking through?

Smell: Close your eyes and use your nose to sniff around. What do you smell? Use words to describe what you are smelling - stinky, minty, earthy, flowery, etc.

Touch: Go up to the trees and gently touch their bark. Do all the trees feel the same? Are they bumpy or smooth? Anything soft, like moss growing on them?

If you have a nature journal, draw or write what you see, hear and smell.

SCAVENGER HUNT

Try to find the following items around here in nature. Please remember to leave everything where you found it.

Y shaped stick	Butterfly	Spiderweb
Animal hole in ground	Anthill	Leaf bigger than your hand
Hole in tree	Tree stump	Moss on tree

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Birds at the Feeders

Can you find these birds at the feeders?

Blue Jay	Chickadee	White Breasted Nuthatch	Cardinal
American Goldfinch	House Finch	Red-winged Blackbird	Downy Woodpecker

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- Developed new ads for the following social media sites: Chambanamoms, Smile Politely, Mahomet/SJO Daily, and St. Joseph Record.



Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)

- We investigated the application of Mandated Reporter Training practices at other Forest Preserves and Park Districts. I discussed information with Dara Edgington and collectively we

decided that not all volunteers need this, but it should be considered for camp and education volunteers.

- The Nature Conservancy's Stewardship Network grant for tools is due soon. I worked with Angela Whitlock to shared perspective and data for the grant application. A new TNC grant application for stewardship volunteer costs or losses related to the COVID pandemic is also available. Work on that grant is underway.
- I re-worked individual adult volunteer application and waivers in accordance with volunteer committee and PDRMA suggestions and re-did trail steward reporting forms.
- Working with the last volunteer coordinator, I now have a better understanding of the volunteer data and database.
- I have also been coordinating with Julia Guth to cross-reference the volunteer database with donor database. This will be a multi-step process as the data in both databases are being updated.
- Conversations with local Master Naturalist staff are underway about how best our programs can support each other, since they already offer many of the enticements or 'rewards' that successful volunteer programs might use.

Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- In May, staff spent the first half of the month pulling and removing garlic mustard from woodland natural areas.
- While pulling garlic mustard, staff participated in the annual Bird-a-thon by partnering with Urbana Park District and Champaign County Audubon Society to record the number of bird species observed in Champaign County between May 9 and May 18. Staff observed 58 species throughout our preserves and all of the partners counted a total of 137 species throughout the county.
- To prepare for a busy growing season, staff conducted maintenance on the tractor, UTVs, backpack sprayers, pumps, and the skid steer.
- The cover crop was terminated at the newly acquired property adjacent to Old Homer Park in preparation for a tree planting.
- For the tree planting, bare root seedling trees and shrubs arrived at the shop and were heeled in to prolong dormancy and to keep the roots cool and moist. (see photos)
- Staff continued to deter Canada geese at Stidham pond during the nesting and egg hatching season. By the end of May, the geese abandoned the site entirely, ensuring greater success of the prairie planting there.



- Staff began to control invasive species including reed canary grass, Canada thistle, poison hemlock, wild parsnip, and sweet clover.
- Toward the end of May, the department welcomed our new Seasonal Technician, Charlee Thompson. Charlee originally intended to work for the Education Department but because of COVID-19, Natural Resources accommodated her employment here. She brings to the department environmental engineering expertise and has been working on a sustainability project, in addition to supporting the other technicians in the field.

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

- May saw a return of a bit of normalcy to the golf course, especially toward the end of the month. The course was allowed to reopen on May 1, albeit with some restrictions that continued to hamper the ability to generate revenue. Restrictions were as follows:
 - Tee time required
 - Twosomes only, with tee times spread out every 15 minutes
 - Walking only, unless a cart was needed for disability purposes
 - Pro shop, snack bar, locker rooms, clubhouse remained closed to walk-in business
 - No practice areas were to be used (driving range, putting and chipping greens)
 - No golf lessons permitted
- These restrictions allowed for only eight players an hour, with a maximum of 104 per day. Our first tee time was at 6:30 a.m. and the last of the day being 7:00 p.m. The majority of these times were taken by season pass holders, so green fee revenue was at a minimum. In this time, we had 2,350 players (average of 84 players per day) and had \$16,670.89 in revenue.
- On May 29, we moved to Phase 3 of the Governor's plan, and were allowed to ease many restrictions. The restrictions we are now under are as follows:
 - Foursomes allowed, with tee times being a minimum of 10 minutes apart (we are at 12 minutes for golf cart use and pace of play purposes)
 - Tee time required
 - Golf carts are allowed (single rider per cart; family/household members may share)
 - All practice facilities open at 50% capacity
 - Pro shop and locker rooms open
 - Snack bar open for carry-out food and beverage
 - Beverage cart usage allowed
 - Individual golf lessons permitted
 - No tournaments, outings, or shotgun starts allowed
- With these eased restrictions, we definitely saw an increase in play and revenue. For the period of May 29-31, we had 653 players, and had \$14,294.20 in revenue. Essentially, we made the same amount of money in three days, as we had in the 28 days prior. We continue to use caution and enforce social distancing precautions. We have reduced the hours and days of snack bar operation, so only one employee is working inside the facility per day. We have scattered starter, ranger, and maintenance shifts to keep a sufficient amount of employees throughout the day, but still keeping personal interaction to a minimum.
- Also, with the restrictions, all lesson programs were canceled for June, along with all scheduled golf tournaments and outings.

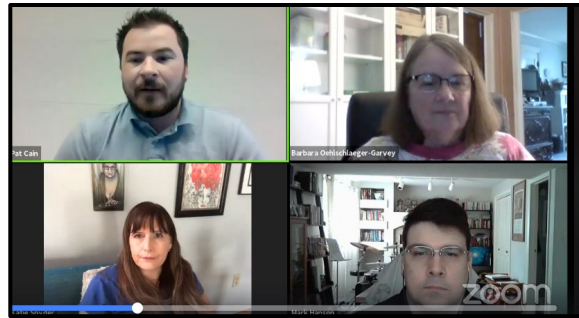
- For perspective, while we were excited with the final weekend's numbers, our last five years average for May revenue is \$91,403.
- Another point of good news, as of the last week of May, the Par 3 course has reopened for play. Joie and staff have done an amazing job of rehabbing the greens and getting the course back in playable shape. This additional option has allowed us to ease some of the burden placed on tee time availability on the 18-hole course.
- Finally, Sunset Landscaping and CCFPD Maintenance staff completed the first phase of the Tee Box Sponsor project. We currently have 9 of the 18 holes sponsored. We believe that as patrons see the work that has been/is being done, they will be interested in having their business as a sponsor moving forward. I have attached a photo of the completed tee area on Hole #1.
- Golf course maintenance crew continues to do excellent work out on the course. All bunkers have now been weeded in preparation for our bunker renovation project scheduled for July.
- Maintenance crew has repaired eight irrigation leaks on the par three course and removed five bad irrigation sprinklers on the 18-hole course.
- We are currently down two pieces of equipment. The 4000D rough mower and our small multi-pro Toro sprayer. Both have been sent to the main distribution site for repair.
- The golf course superintendent hired three maintenance crew members for the summer. We are fortunate to be fully staffed at this moment.



Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- Work on the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) conceptual plan project has begun; staff compiled background information to send to the architectural firm to help them prepare for stakeholder input sessions.
- During this time with an unoccupied Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) annex, George Groschen is working with the Construction crew to retrofit the women's restroom into an office. Stalls and plumbing have been removed, the former utility closet is gone, and the linoleum has been removed. All work can be completed in house. The men's room will become a non-gendered restroom for all staff who also have access to the restrooms in the Education Center.
- The Construction Department also cleaned out the Homer Lake Interpretive Center's gutters and installed gutter guards.
- George Groschen assisted Doug Sanders by gathering up the museum's 18 fire extinguishers for annual inspection.
- Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter have attended meetings of the new district-wide volunteer committee formed by Sue Gallo.
- Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter developed a plan for a return of staff to their facilities during Phase 3 of Illinois' COVID-19 response plan. We are also working on plans for reopening facilities during Stage 4, although under restrictions suggested by public health experts.

- The MGP has been awarded the 2020 Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board grant for \$1,914 to hire a paid intern to transcribe the East Frisian Oral History Project audio. The bulk of the transcription will be done by this intern.
- The MGP welcomes a new intern for the summer. Dean Kempf is a Masters in History student at Illinois State University. Dean will be doing his work, in part, remotely. Because the museum experience is so intensively hands-on, and many of those experiences will be curtailed because of COVID, it was decided that Dean would work with a free guided tour software called Clio to develop tours of the museum viewable on smart phones.
- The museum also welcomes Pat Cain for another internship this summer, on top of his full-time employment with us. Pat will be researching oral history transcription, developing guidelines for same, and then beginning to transcribe the East Frisian oral histories in the museum collection.
- A COVID-19 Emergency Grant was submitted to the Illinois Humanities Council by the MGP. We applied to cover lost revenue for the months of March, April and May. We are preparing another grant application to Illinois Humanities for hardware to replace intensively interactive exhibits with digital content.
- Barb Garvey and Katie Snyder attended an IAPD webinar entitled, *Planting Seeds for Success: Promoting Community and Victory Gardens*, on May 28.
- Barb Garvey attended Cuseum's *The "Contactless" Future: Reimagining the Visitor Experience in the Age of Coronavirus* on May 27.
- Mark Hanson completed the PDRMA training, *Coping with Stress and Uncertainty during COVID-19*, and *Acute Respiratory Illness During Pandemics* on May 6.
- Mark Hanson viewed the AASLH conversation, *Guidelines and Procedures for Reopening your Historic Site*, on May 20.
- Mark also completed the following American Alliance of Museums webinars, *Copyright and Licensing* and *Collections Conundrums*, on June 2 and May 18 respectively.
- Pat Cain webinar hosted by Cuseum titled *Preparing to Reopen: Experimenting with New Digital Revenue Streams on the Road to Reopening* on May 13. He also participated in an IAM webinar "Museum People Helping Museum People" with a focus on museum advocacy in Illinois and rapid response collecting on that day. Barb Garvey attended that session as well as one on *De-escalation Training for Frontline Personnel* (in preparation for re-opening to the public).
- Pam Leiter, Jennifer Wick, and Cathy Schneider attended the online *National Association for Interpretation InterpTech Conference*. Pam Leiter attended other webinars including: *Leading in a Time of Crisis*, *CIHRG CI-19 COVID*, *Preparing to Open Your Site*, *Media Relations during COVID*, and *Mushrooms of Illinois*.
- Pat Cain hosted four online Facebook Live events, *Mornings at the Museum*, featuring both museum and Interpretive Center staff. The topics included Our Favorite Things and Our Favorite Places. Below left: Cathy Schneider on the program; Below right: MGP staff on another showing of *Mornings at the Museum*.



- Pat led a Facebook Live virtual tour of the One-Room Schoolhouse on May 21.
- Pat hosted two lectures, which were to have been in person, through the wonder of Facebook Live. Jeanne Schultz Angel gave the talk, *Casting a Historic Vote: Suffrage in Illinois* on May 30 and Laura Keyes appeared as a first-person interpreter in *History Brought to Life: Elizabeth Cady Stanton* on June 7.
- Katie Snyder and Stacey Clementz read books for Chambana Moms on their feature, *Goodnight Chambana*, a Facebook event.
- As part of the museum's social media calendar, Katie read three books in May: *L is for Lincoln*, *You Forgot Your Skirt Amelia Bloomer*, and *The Lorax*.
- Museum of the Grand Prairie together with Krannert Art Museum, chambanamoms.com, KOOP Adventure Play, and Urbana Arts and Culture Program collaborated to create *Art in a Time of Quarantine: Virtual Art Showcase*. K-12 students from throughout the area submitted works to be displayed in this online visual showcase. *Smile Politely* featured an article on the online exhibit.
- Cathy Schneider researched and confirmed that the resident box turtle is an Ornate Box Turtle which is a threatened species in Illinois. Appropriate permitting to hold the turtle for educational purposes has been acquired from IDNR.
- Stacey and Katie are exploring several ways to offer alternatives for summer camps. Stacey put out a survey to the parents who registered their kids for camps this summer and last to gather feedback. From the survey (which got over a 50% return rate in less than 12 hours), the department is going to focus on three projects: 1) signs with activities that need no materials dispersed throughout the forest preserves, 2) videos and activities on our social media pages, and 3) Camp-In-A-Bag, a themed bag with materials for hands-on activities and crafts that kids get to keep. At least two Camp-in-A-Bag offerings per facility will be developed.
- In-person school and public programs were put on hold through the end of May. Stacey Clementz and Cathy Schneider continued to create videos for school programs requested by local teachers. There are now seven school program videos for area teachers; find them on the CCFPD's YouTube channel. (Ecosystem Factors and Interactions, below left).





- Jennifer Wick created a video about feeder birds at Homer Lake Interpretive Center, with help from AMT Photoworks (also on CCFPD's YouTube channel, as well as HLIC's Facebook page). (Above, right).
- Many thanks to Doug Mills for his excellent video series on American Toads, and to Fred Newport for all his amazing photos – your help has made the Interpretive Center's Facebook page so wonderful for our followers! (at right).
- Jennifer Wick is leading the department in developing a virtual volunteer event for June 11, to replace the department volunteer luncheon that was to happen in April but had to be cancelled.
- Jennifer Wick, Sandy Osborne, and Pat Cain are developing videos in lieu of their regular in-person programs at libraries this summer. The material will be offered free to the libraries with donations encouraged.
- Sandy Osborne, Katie Snyder and Marina Montez are working on creating videos to replace their summer camps. Those will begin airing June 8.
- Pam Leiter wrote an *Inside Out* article about the Homer Lake Interpretive Center and nature sights in spring. It was published in the *News-Gazette* on May 24.
- The MGP is featured on the Governor's ALLINILLINOIS page of the Enjoy Illinois website, with activities labeled Kid Approved. Go to <https://www.enjoyillinois.com/allinillinois> to see the items offered.
- MGP and HLIC staff appeared on a Facebook Live event with *Mahomet Daily* editor Dani Tietz to talk about all the ways that the Museum and Education department has been reaching out to audiences in this time of closures.
- Department staff involved in social media decided we needed to be taking a harder look at what we are reporting not only now but at the end of the year because our normal way of measuring our success, by counting the heads of our visitors and program participants is currently at zero. Instead, we have elected to report below our Facebook daily reach and engagement. These numbers include folks we have reached who might not necessarily have gone to the trouble of 'liking' us but nevertheless have looked at our posts. Daily engagement is defined as the number of people who engaged with your Page. Engagement includes any click or action taken on a post. 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.

- HLIC Facebook stats: May 1-31: Average Daily Organic Reach: 1,152 (Sum: 35,705); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 91 (Sum: 2,811)
- MGP Facebook stats: May 1-31: Average Daily Organic Reach: 2,391(Sum: 74,150); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 193 (Sum 6,004)

Lake of the Woods (Doug Sanders)

- As part of the phase three reopening efforts, five restrooms are back in operation with several strategically placed garbage cans. In addition, the preserve's hours of operation have been expanded to 7:00 AM – 9:00 PM.
- Due to COVID-19, the Champaign Park District donated 85 flats of plants (approx. 1500 plants) to the BG department. These plants are normally used for the *Flower Island Program* throughout Champaign, but with seasonal/summer staff layoffs, CPD decided not to plant all of the flower islands. It took CCFPD staff two and half days to get all of these flowers planted at LOW.
- Cacti don't only grow in the desert! The south end of the greenhouse has been converted into a walk thru viewing area with over 100 different succulents and tropical plants. There is also a small pond that contains some young koi fish that staff are training to be hand fed.



- Even with the limited services and programs, there remains an increase in visitor attendance at the preserves. It is rewarding knowing that we play a vital role in providing the public with a crucial outlet during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- The Harry L. Swartz campground officially opened on the last weekend of May. Several temporary rules and regulations have been put in place for the foreseeable future including two night maximum stays, online reservations only, and booking the campground at half capacity. These rules were set to reduce the interaction between staff and public, how long the public would be staying at the campground, and of course limiting the number of people while the campground is open.

- Jacob Pruiett and Matt Kuntz were able to meet with Julie Pryde, director of the CUPHD. Several topics were discussed including cleaning procedures, person to person contact, proper PPE, and staff training. We thank her during this crazy time for coming out to Middle Fork to offer her guidance. Being Julie's first time at Middle Fork, she absolutely fell in love with the preserve.
- It is good to see how most of our visitors are following guidelines, including our camping guests. Everyone has been very understanding of the situation and are appreciative of the services we are able to offer.
- The two new shelter projects (storm replacements 2019) are halfway done. Due to shipping issues the structures should be arriving in mid-July.
- The new campground hosts are adjusting well to their new jobs this summer. Training continues with them on a daily basis, focusing a little more on the complications posed by the COVID pandemic.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- Roy assisted the natural resources department as they planted trees with the tree planter at the new addition to Old Homer Lake.
- As I mentioned last month the old metal shelter that was removed for the new one at Oak Ridge has been repurposed for an area to split and store firewood.



Kickapoo Rail Trail

- On May 26, the KRT Steering Committee held a Zoom meeting for individuals from Champaign and Vermilion Counties that are interested in starting a Friends of the KRT group. Pat Dullard and Doug Oehler from the Friends of the Constitution Trail in Bloomington-Normal joined the discussion to share best practices from their highly successful group. The local individuals will meet again later this month to continue the discussion about forming a KRT Friends group.
- KRT intersections and visibility triangles have been mowed and string trimmed.
- With the funding for completion of the Kickapoo Rail Trail now in the approved state budget, the urgency has increased to reach agreement with Union Pacific for an at-grade trail crossing east of St. Joseph. In the last month, UP agreed to our underlying rights to the crossing but still maintains that no at-grade construction will be allowed. The trail partners are now seeking intervention from the Surface Transportation Board.

District Cultural Competency Initiatives

- The National Association for Interpretation InterpTech Conference included an awesome panel discussion about Interpretive Technology and its role in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.
- Barb Garvey and Mary Ellen Wuellner participated in a debriefing by the American Alliance of Museum's *Facing Change* team member Ann Hernandez about our progress in that initiative.
- In the wake of a turbulent couple of weeks in America, several staff have signed up for an online course entitled *About Race and Cultural Diversity in American Life and History*. The

four-week course is taught by Dr. James D. Anderson, Gutzgell Professor of Education at University of Illinois. From the course overview “learners will deepen their understanding and appreciation of ways in which race, ethnicity and cultural diversity have shaped American institutions, ideology, law, and social relationships from the colonial era to the present.” We plan to share our own impressions through discussions on Slack, an online chat program.

CCFPD Sustainability Committee

- Sustainability committee is picking up where it left off before COVID-19. The team is focusing on creating a sustainable purchasing policy for the District, while Charlee Thompson, natural resources summer seasonal, will be further compiling the District’s greenhouse gas emission records.