

October 5, 2020

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- The last month has been spent preparing educational mailings, conducting presentations, and responding to inquiries about the upcoming referendum. I cannot say this enough, but thank you to all the board members, staff, and the many dedicated volunteers who have been doing their part to get the message out.
- We averted potential disaster when the initial sample ballot came out with below-the-ballot information missing from the Forest Preserve referendum. You will recall that this language contains the information that is most easily understood and needed by voters - the impact on an individual taxpayer. Fortunately the error was caught early and fixed quickly, and thus only affected those 1,400 ballots cast in person on the first two days of voting at Brookens county offices. Mailed ballots were able to be revised before going to post.
- The Friends Foundation is working to expand its board size. According to its by-laws, the board can have up to eighteen members, and it currently stands at ten. At least two of those members have indicated an interest in stepping down. We are developing a more formal process for recruitment this time around. If you know of anyone who would make a good addition to the Foundation board, please ask them to get in touch with Will Timmons or me. The board has indicated a strong interest in expanding its diversity of backgrounds and perspectives.

Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)

- The OSLAD Peninsula shelter building permit has been submitted to the County. Once received, work on the large and small open air shelters will begin. Furnishings have been delivered and will be installed soon.
- Demolition of the Museum's Large Artifacts Storage is complete. (see photo) Staff are reviewing submittals. Change Order #1 (\$2124.56) has been approved to install an additional floor drain which will manage the Blacksmith Wing HVAC condensate.
- Mike Daab attended Ride Illinois' 2020 Illinois Bike Summit on Tuesday, September 15th. Themes of the Summit included infrastructure, education and inclusion.
- Dig It of Champaign has begun the initial excavation for the installation of a water control structure so that we can maintain the Point Pleasant wetland at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve.
- Mike Daab attended PDRMA's Certificates of Insurance - What You Need to Know on Wednesday, September 23rd.
- Mike Fry, Bridgette Moen, and Mike Daab have continued to meet with department heads and discuss projects to better plan for capital projects in 2021 and beyond.
- Progress continues on the Peninsula OSLAD project. The new boathouse is almost complete. It will be one hundred



percent accessible and will provide a more flexible and safe environment for staff and patrons. Grills, tables, and benches have begun arriving, and will be in place soon.

- Farm Credit volunteers and the Golf Committee provided volunteers to work with the Construction Department as we painted the Pro Shop building. Six volunteers and three employees were able to apply two coats of paint to the building in less than a day.
- Mike Fry completed a brief course on canoe and kayak launch design. It focused on design aspects that make the areas more user friendly when dealing with difficult design locations.

Business and Finance (John Baker)

- Met with the IT committee to finalize the 2021 IT budget request. The discussion included possible changes because of the COVID impact, the need for dedicated IT staff support, and continuing connectivity challenges at remote sites. ClientFirst redrafted the 2021-2025 IT budget plan based on the conversation.
- Received an update from Champaign County on the District's projected 2021 EAV which now exceeds \$4.5 billion. Based on the EAV, the 2021 property tax extension will be in the neighborhood of \$150,000. John reported this to the compensation committee along with \$15,000 in 2021 reduced personnel costs over 2020 because of the 27 payrolls issued this year.
- Met with Chris Edmondson, and David Sebestik regarding 2021 golf fees and current golf financials.
- Visited Middle Fork River Forest Preserve to discuss 2021 budget and camping fees, camp store operations, and tour the preserve.
- Met with Commissioners Goodman and Herakovich and Mary Ellen on District budgeting, including evaluating program budgeting as a model and agreeing upon a goals and outcomes framework for future budgets.
- Met with Ryan Pnakovich and Tim Bartlett regarding the benefits of participation in the Illinois Parks Association Risk Services (IPARKS). Two years ago the Board asked staff to consider IPARKS as an alternative to our current PDRMA membership. Because our PDRMA contract does not renew until next April, we are now reviewing current IPARKS and PDRMA benefits in order to bring the Board a recommendation at the November meeting. Note: The PDRMA contract automatically renews unless the Board of Commissioners passes a resolution at least 180 days before the contract term ends.
- Discussed with PDRMA their appraisal of District facilities and preserves. PDRMA periodically assesses the cost replacement basis of its member facilities to estimate with some accuracy the claims potential. The District's capital assets data is incomplete from inconsistent reporting in past years. PDRMA will make its appraisal available to the District which can then be used as a basis to correct and update our capital assets information. John discussed with Brett Davis the procedure for terminating PDRMA membership and will be meeting with him on PDRMA benefits in the next month.
- Prepared the District's 2020 pay 2021 tentative tax levy ordinance based on current and future District operating needs and upon projected cash balances for affected District funds.
- Participated in thirty-one hours of GFOA training on Advanced Accounting and Budgeting Fundamentals. Blair and John both attended and started good discussions of potential improvements to both internal accounting and budgeting.
- Began entering the proposed budgets into MSI database, including reviewing for any duplicate requests and missing items. Provided guidance to departments on writing their narratives, particularly on the need for aligning department budgets with the District's strategic plan.

- With many recent new hires in headquarters, we updated and posted the Open Meetings Act compensation report on the District website, ordered purchasing cards and updated the purchasing card approval hierarchy.
- Wrote and updated procedures as needed for training Blair and the new purchasing assistant (when that role is filled). Blair is trying out and clarifying each procedure as needed for best implementation.
- Interviewed three applicants for the part time purchasing assistant position. An offer is pending as of this writing.

Human Resources (Dara Edgington)

- With Mary Ellen's assistance, HR polled the Forest Preserve District Round Table regarding their plans for general wage increases in the coming fiscal year. Of the nine responses received, the majority (four) are not planning to increase/decrease their typical salary increase pool. Three of them are planning minor decreases (0.5%-1%) to their salary increase pool with the final two still deciding. A survey was also sent to the Downstate Safety Group via PDRMA, however we were not successful in getting responses.
- At the September compensation committee meeting we discussed the need for a District-wide organizational efficiency study to determine where we may be overstaffed, understaffed, and where we are staffed appropriately but would benefit from new equipment, processes, etc. The committee agrees that our next compensation study should be prioritized over any efficiency study we conduct, but plans have been put in motion to explore this idea for 2022.
- Benefits 101 sessions, launched last year as an in-person training, will take place again this year via Zoom due to staff interest. General preparations for 2021 open enrollment have also been keeping me busy as I hope to put out a "Benefits Booklet" for employees, something we currently do not have.
- Mary has been assisting the District's eBay koi sale efforts by listing and compiling sale data. Who knew koi could be so much fun?

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

- The 2021 Calendar of Board Meetings will be on the November agenda. Please let Mary Ellen, Lisa, and Mary know if any third Thursdays may present a conflict.
- Lisa was on CiLiving to talk about prairies in Illinois and the upcoming Virtual Prairie Stories at the Museum of the Grand Prairie.
- We developed sandwich boards for the Museum of the Grand Prairie and Homer Lake Interpretive Center to promote upcoming virtual programs.
- A 30-second radio ad was developed and voiced on Mix 94.5 to promote community engagement.
- We also developed a 15-second TV script for WCIA to promote community engagement.
- Lisa worked with Five Foot Productions to develop a revised video to provide educational information to the public about the referendum question on the ballot in November.
- Lisa did an educational presentation with Mary Ellen for Chambanamoms and with Sarah Livesay for the Interfaith Council.
- New ads were developed for Smile Politely, Chambanamoms, Mahomet Daily, SJO Daily and St. Joseph Record.

- Mary Ellen and I attended Second Friday Coffee with Mahomet Chamber of Commerce members, seated outdoors at Yoyo’s in Mahomet.
- A poster was created for the Museum’s Fall Exhibit Speakers Series.
- We sent out press releases for Museum and HLIC new hours, the fall exhibit Speakers Series, and the fall Lincoln Speaker Series.
- Lisa developed a program flyer for the Urbana Free Library. The flyer will also be distributed to the Silverwood neighborhood in east Urbana through the Urbana Rotary’s work in the neighborhood.
- Social media monthly numbers continue to increase as individuals seek online outlets to learn about District offerings and share information.

	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	4,762	+79	1,981	+75	531	+1
KRT	3,018	+45	80	+0	124	+2
MGP	3,886	+35	1103	+12	223	+4
HLIC	1,789	+50				
GC	1,547	+8	273	+4	80	+0
FPPF	256	+4				

Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)

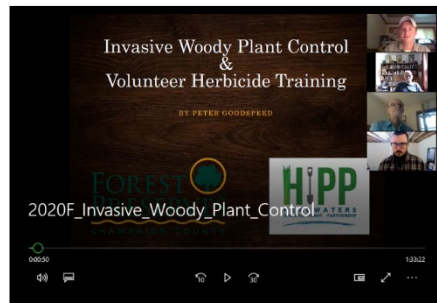
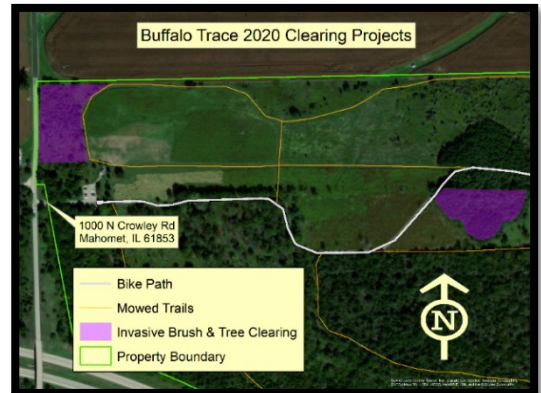
- Sue attended two webinars. The first was offered by the Illinois Association of Park Districts titled “Returning to Play with Background Screenings” which identified shortcomings of different background screening methods, and clarified that CCFPD background screens might only be necessary for volunteers who will work repeatedly with the same children. The second was “State of the State of Volunteerism in Illinois - Civics and Service Learning" offered by Serve Illinois. This webinar focused on the benefits of service learning to both the students and the institutions receiving the service.
- Sue connected with the U of I Office of Volunteer Programs and now has another outlet to connect with U of I students.
- Farm Credit volunteers helped with two golf course service events - re-sodding greens and clubhouse painting. Kudos to Golf staff and Golf committee member Gordon Salm for making these events happen! Also, thanks to Natural Resources staff who will support Farm Credit volunteers in removing woody invasives this week.
- Data of zero time, zero involvement volunteers have been removed from the Volgistics database and stored on our server. The next stage of database tidying along with a few structural changes will begin. Once the database is reflective of our current volunteers, Sue hopes to enter long-time volunteer data from prior to 2017. This will allow for more structured awards for volunteer appreciation and more accurate and detailed reporting of volunteer engagement.
- Sue organized a Zoom volunteer appreciation event, which really prompted her thinking about parameters for appreciation awards and setting data goals for future appreciation events as reflected in the previous paragraph.

Grants and Development Specialist (Ryan Anderson)

See attached report

Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- Because of the dry conditions in September, Staff began clearing invasive brush and trees in two areas at Buffalo Trace - the NW corner next to Crowley Road and south of the “tree tunnel”. These areas amount to 4 acres and will be prepped and planted to native prairie in two years.
- On September 15th, NR Staff attended a webinar titled, “Growing through Change: Sourcing Climate-Resilient Seed in Ecological Restoration”. The webinar emphasized the need for biodiversity at the species and genetic levels to ensure ecological stability in an uncertain climate future.
- Staff continued to collect native seed this month and even collected at Loda and Prospect Cemeteries, two remnant sites that are managed by Grand Prairie Friends. Seed from these sites will be stockpiled and ultimately planted along the edges of the next phase of the Kickapoo Rail Trail.
- Emily and Peter attended a two-day class and passed the exam for our FAA Commercial Drone Licenses.
- On September 23rd, I hosted a Zoom volunteer training that covered woody plant identification and control for our new site stewards.
- On September 26th, the NR Department celebrated National Public Lands Day by hosting a volunteer seed collection event at Buffalo Trace. The event attracted more than 30 attendees and was a great success!



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

- September was another great month for the golf course when it comes to play and revenue. Our income for the month was \$114,385 and we had 5,244 players. Considering we had rain and minimal play the first 2 weekends, aerated the greens, and had cooler than normal temperatures to finish out the month, we were very happy with the end result. In comparison, we considered September of 2019 to be a good month, with income of \$77,894 and a player count of 3,623 players.

- September marked the end of Women’s and Men’s Association play for 2020. Given that we thought league play may not even occur this season with the pandemic, we were very happy we were allowed to provide the opportunity beginning in June. League play was held every Wednesday, with the women in the morning and the men in the late afternoon. We had 24 women and 94 men participate in league play this season.
- We held several events in September. With COVID restrictions put in place, we have needed to become creative with how events can be held. All of the organizations and participants were very helpful in pulling this off and we are very appreciative of their assistance and efforts to follow the guidelines we were given. With all events being tee-time based, it allowed us to have regular public play surrounding the events. With the larger shotgun outings (same time start, utilizing all 18 holes) in the past, we would essentially be shut down all day for these events. Below is the listing of events we hosted, along with the player count, revenue, and merchandise sales for each event.

Outing	# of Players	Revenue	Merchandise
Piatt County FS	17	\$680.00	\$170.00
Mahomet Chamber of Commerce	74	\$3,224.00	\$592.00
Mahomet Rotary Club	53	\$2,514.00	\$424.00
Bulldog Gridiron Club	60	\$2,630.00	\$480.00
AMBUCS	80	\$3,510.00	\$660.00
Mahomet Lions Club	96	\$3,723.98	\$843.98
Apollo Girls Conference Tournament	48	\$960.00	\$0.00

- Several projects were completed around the Pro Shop and on the golf course in September. The Front 9 bunker project was officially completed with the installation of the final pallets of sod around the bunkers. This was completed with help from the maintenance staff, Pro Shop staff, and numerous volunteers. We needed to replace the sod around the bunker on hole #6 (burned up) and lay the sod on the remaining holes (8 and 9) for completion. This has really improved the look and playability of these golf holes. We are looking forward to improving the back 9 bunkers in the coming year or two.
- Mike Fry and crew tore down and replaced the residence fence and entryway door by the circle drive on the north side of the facility. The old fence was in disrepair and beginning to collapse, which was an obvious safety hazard. They also painted the exterior of the lower level of the Pro Shop. We had volunteers assist with taping and trim painting, while the Construction crew sprayed the building. Short of re-siding or rebuilding the Pro Shop, this was the best thing we could do to improve the building’s appearance at this time.
- We have developed plans for another “Anniversary Pass” type membership for the coming year. We are anxious to get going with the sale and see what kind of response and retention we get from previous pass holders and those who had missed out on the prior sale! We are aiming for advertisements and sales beginning in mid to late October.
- The golf course superintendent will be applying fall fertilization to the greens, tees and fairways this month. Turf growth has slowed down tremendously with the cold spells in the evening.
- Our staff has done a great job staying late to complete its assignments while we were short on staff this past month. We are currently mowing tees and fairways once a week and greens every two days.

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- Mark Hanson and Barb Garvey virtually attended the keynote address for the Southern Illinois Conservation Workshop, “Traces on the Land: The Importance of Managing Cultural Resources on Private Property,” on September 21.
- Mark Hanson viewed a “Basics of Collections Photography” and an “Archival Processing” webinar from Connecting to Collections Care.
- Jennifer Grove completed her “Moving Museums Collections,” course provided by Museum Study.
- Taylor Studios conducted a half-day interpretive theme workshop to help in planning for a new nature center at Homer Lake. We are grateful that they waived the fee for this workshop! Most Museum and Education staff attended. See attached 4-page theme workshop document deliverable that outlines the central theme, subthemes, and storylines that came out of the creative exercises their staff led us through.
- After 14 years on the board/committees of the Environmental Education Association of Illinois, Stacey Clementz has handed off the reins to others. In that time, she served as president/immediate past president, treasurer, public relations chair, awards chair, 2009 Midwest Environmental Education Conference chair, committee chairs for various EEAI annual conferences, East Central Regional Director, and helped lead the organization in hiring its first executive director. Wow!
- Stacey Clementz attended the virtual Association for Nature Center Administrators conference. There were many great sessions including, “Nature and Learner-Centered Online Experiences,” “Virtual Environmental Education: What Do We Know About How To Do It Well,” and “Building Morale in the Workplace,”
- Pam Leiter attended a webinar for non-profits entitled “Financial Health in Difficult Times,” the Champaign Center Partnership roundtable for non-profits, and a webinar about the Leadership Illinois Fellows program.
- Mark Hanson and Jennifer Grove have removed all remaining artifacts from the old Large Artifact Storage building. Additionally several non-artifact items (tables, chairs, file drawers) were taken to Habitat for Humanity’s ReStore. Thanks to help from the Construction and LOW Operations departments for assistance in moving the cultivator to the basement of headquarters.
- Mark and Jennifer also moved all artifacts from the south wall of the Blacksmith Wing of the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) to accommodate the installation of an HVAC system for that area (separate from LAS; the systems were once shared) and also the inevitable vibrations



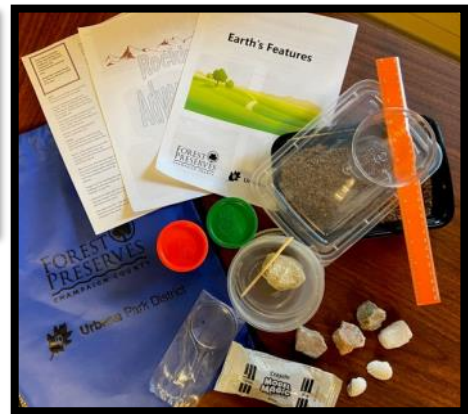
from destruction of LAS, particularly its slab. This has meant indefinite closure of the Blacksmith wing to the public.

- HVAC, plumbing, sprinkler system, security and electrical systems have been removed. Asbestos removal has been completed. The fence, LAS building, and the slab have all been demolished and removed. (photos above)
- The Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC)'s van needed further repairs this month due to rodent damage deep inside the wire harness apparatus (third time in three months for repairs related to rodents). We submitted a Risk Management grant application in Sept to PDRMA to help fund a garage for the van next year.

- Stacey Clementz has been working with partners at Urbana Park District this month to assemble the environmental education kits,



entitled Earth's Features (*pictured*). These will go to 4th graders at Champaign Unit 4, King Elementary in Urbana and Prairieview Ogden North and South (approximately 1000 students). Kits have been translated to Spanish and French.



- The team raised \$10,000 through organizations and individuals which will cover the first round of kits. \$2200 of that was from the Education for the Underserved Fund in the Forest Preserves Friends Foundation. Ellen Kirsanoff, of UPD staff, has applied for the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois grant to cover round two of the kits which will go to 2nd graders.
- All materials have been ordered and most have come in (*pictured*). The team created 1000 mock rocks, and started assembling the bags.
- Stacey created a video for the Environmental Education Association of Illinois on Forest Ecology to be used in its virtual Project Learning Tree teacher workshops.
- The Storywalk featured this month was The Lorax, and it was very popular! (*pictured*) Jennifer Wick is brainstorming for more of these now that we know they are a hit!
- On September 12th, the museum premiered its first ever virtual edition of the popular annual event, *Prairie Stories*. Throughout the day, videos were published to MGP Facebook and YouTube pages featuring popular activities that occur each year at the event, including a virtual tour of a historic blacksmith shop, short concert from the folk group *Banjulele*, video of Sandy Osborne demonstrating rope-making, video of museum volunteer Sandy Finnerty demonstrating candle making and much more.
- On September 17th, the museum hosted another virtual concert in its "Soloists for Suffrage" series. The concert featured prominent local artist, Rebecca Rego, performing an intimate

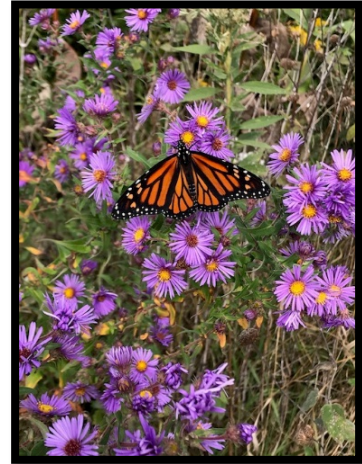


acoustic set from the special exhibit “How Long Must Women Wait? Woman Suffrage and Women’s Rights in Champaign County.”

- On September 24th, the museum hosted another event in its Special Exhibit Virtual Speaker Series. Live on the MGP Facebook and YouTube pages, Dr. Kyle Ciani, historian, activist, and professor of history at Illinois State University presented the program titled “From the Lobby to the Street: Strategies Used by Voting Activists in the 20th Century.”
- On October 4, the museum hosted its first in the 14th Annual Lincoln Lecture Series, virtually. Christina Hartlieb, Executive Director of the Harriet Beecher Stowe House in Cincinnati, Ohio, presented, “Harriet Beecher Stowe: the Road to Anti-Slavery Advocate.” We had viewers from Chicago, Toronto, and Missouri - a first!
- Emma Fleming, UI honors student majoring in archaeology, is work with Pat Cain to continue the museum’s digital interpretation project on the app known as Clio. Emma is creating digital entries for cultural and historic sites at Homer Lake Forest Preserve.
- Marina Montez-Ellis, our garden educator, celebrated Take a Child Outside Week with a scavenger hunt for signs of fall in the Botanical Garden. This was a virtual garden hunt with a video and activity sheet published on Facebook.
- Pat Cain reprised the videos of museum schoolmarms on Facebook as a way to celebrate the way that we use public lands for National Public Lands Day, September 26.
- Mark Hanson continues to monitor progress on several offsite projects that can be done by volunteers and paid interns during the pandemic. He has been successfully monitoring the progress of the East Frisian Oral History intern as well as the Busey transcription volunteers.
- Mark Hanson hosted a visit by the Jesse Dowell family this month. The Dowell property became Buffalo Trace, and the Dowell family donated Jesse’s World War I uniform and related artifacts to the museum. The family has remained engaged with the museum for many years.
- The Museum of the Grand Prairie participated in this year’s “Ask a Curator” day. Curator Mark Hanson spoke about the collections and answered questions from the public on a Facebook/YouTube live stream. Begun in 2010 as a twitter event, this year it moved to real time. Museums all over the world provided this opportunity for engagement.
- Pam Leiter appeared on the Whys Guys segment of the WCIA morning show, to talk about the wildlife of Homer Lake.
- On Sunday September 27, the News-Gazette published an Inside Out article about the museum entitled, “Museum of the Grand Prairie's Harvest Programs Producing Fruit.”
- The museum was featured in Looking for Lincoln’s Flat Lincoln’s Road Trip, a virtual adventure through Champaign County to visit Lincoln-related locations and other notable sites.
- The museum gift shop has been featuring women’s suffrage merchandise on the MGP Facebook page this month, discounting a new item each week.
- With the dry weather this month, the birds have gone crazy over the water feature! Even warblers like the redstart and yellow-rumped have been observed taking baths. And winter birds like the red-breasted nuthatch have already arrived.
- HLIC Facebook statistics, Sept 1-30: Average Daily Organic Reach: 791 (Sum: 23,725); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 61 (Sum: 1,826)
- MGP Facebook statistics, September 1-30: Average Daily Organic Reach 1408 (Sum:42,245); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 69 (Sum:2076)

Lake of the Woods (Doug Sanders)

- Staff took the department’s trucks and trailers in for their six month safety inspections. This assessment involves checking various parts of the vehicles and trailers, such as brakes, lights, horns, mirrors, windshield wipers, and tire tread. The State has moved the trailer inspections to a one-year requirement so truck inspections will be all that is required in May 2021.
- Doug Sanders escorted consultant Tom Hatala of Duff & Phelps from Southfield, MI around LOW, RB, and SR Forest Preserves. Tom was hired by PDRMA to perform a grounds improvement assessment. This included evaluating such items as buildings, playgrounds, well pump houses, and property fences. The District’s previous assessment was over ten years old. The photo of the monarch butterfly was taken at the SRFP while assessing the accessible shade pergola that overlooks the prairie.
- Due to the abundant amount of koi fish in the renovated waterfall pond, staff held a two-day koi sale. This sale was promoted on eBay and the District’s social media. Everyone we talked to was happy to see us doing this and excited to receive their fish. Approximately 180 fish were sold for a total of \$900.
- The garden staff are currently installing a “Spooky Trail” on the short nature trail bordering the east side of the botanical garden. A family-fun trail is sure to put a smile on your face when you see the painted pumpkin faces, smiling ghost, and wildlife skeletons.
- As colder temperatures arrive, staff are starting to make several seasonal transitions. Dependent on the temperatures, several facilities without heat will be closed down within the next 30 days. In addition, plants are being moved into the greenhouse and the grounds are being cleaned up and prepared for the winter season. Note, 5:00pm closing time will begin on November 1st when daylight savings time ends.

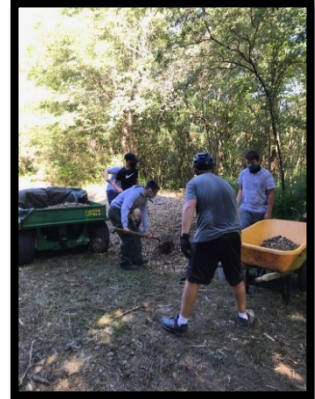


Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- The campground continues to stay quite busy through the cooler weeks this fall.
- Invasive treatment and removal has started slowly through the user areas and natural areas of the preserve. Attention is currently focused on honeysuckle and autumn olive.
- Dark sky visitors continue to stream into the park, especially with the cooler nights and low humidity.
- The Pt. Pleasant restoration project has begun. We have met several times with the contractor and his staff to provide all the assistance they have needed.
- I would like to thank Middle Fork's Environmental Educator Christy Wallace. She has been able to help fill much needed operations shifts on the weekends throughout the summer due to the coronavirus limitations on her usual weekend programs. Thanks to Pam Leiter for allowing us to borrow her staff member to assist with our operations. It was a huge help!

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- September turned out to be trail improvement month as Eagle Scout Eric Roth and several other scouts took on the job of improving segments of the Oak Ridge trail system by installing nearly 20 tons of aggregate in some of the wettest areas. These improvements will be greatly appreciated by our trail users next spring when these areas are nearly impassable for weeks at a time. (see picture) We have been extremely fortunate to have so many trail improvements done by the St Joe scout troop over the last 20 years. This is the eighth Eagle Scout project to be completed on the Oak Ridge and West Lake trail system. Along with addressing many wet areas along the trail other projects included installing osprey nest platforms, constructing shallow water crossings and installing the Oak Ridge trail head display.



- Trail work continued with Roy and Joe installing new deck boards on one of the Oak Ridge trail bridges, and installing a culvert on the Flickerwoods Trail. Our trails get the heaviest use during the fall so the timing of these improvements worked out very well.



- IDNR stocked 13,500 red ear sunfish for the first time since the first stocking in 1969. Assuming a few thousand fish survive, fishermen will be pleasantly surprised in about three years. Fishing has been excellent this season.

Kickapoo Rail Trail

- The site survey, existing conditions plan, and Environmental Service Request are complete for the KRT Amenities grant and have been submitted to IDOT. ERA is working on cost estimates for CCFPD review. April bid letting is still the target deadline, but ERA noted that IDOT reviews are processing slower than usual due to COVID. CCFPD staff coordinated with the KRT Steering Committee on the location of mile markers.

District Cultural Competency Initiatives

- For Welcoming Week this year, MGP and HLIC staff premiered short videos in English, Spanish, and French welcoming all visitors to the museum, interpretive center, and other forest preserve sites. These videos were published on Facebook as well as YouTube
- Barb Garvey, Mark Hanson, and Pat Cain attended the American Association for State and Local History Virtual Conference on September 24 through 29. They virtually participate in sessions such as: “Me Too and Black Lives Matter”, “Black Women Leaders Overcoming the Double Burden”, “Combatting Generational Bias”, “Intersecting Pandemics”, “Inclusive History” and “Hosting Difficult Conversations.”

- Barb Garvey, Mark Hanson, Pat Cain, Katie Snyder, Mary Ellen Wuellner and Pat Miller (from the Museum Advisory Committee), attended this year's virtual retreat for the American Alliance of Museum's *Facing Change* initiative on September 15 and 16. In the next two months the Museum Advisory Committee will be working with all department staff to develop a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion statement and plan for the Museum and Education Department.
- Katie Snyder attended a webinar from ArtSpace entitled, "Teaching as a Tool for Change,"; a webinar by Cuseum, "Education Programs in the Time of COVID-19.;" and a webinar, Illinois Holocaust Museum "Armed Resistance: The Case of the Minsk Ghetto." She also attended the Smithsonian's "Think Me/We" event on Facebook.
- Katie Snyder continued her read-aloud series. This month she read, *Miss Paul and the President: The Creative Campaign for Woman's Suffrage*, by Dean Robbins, illustrated by Nancy Zhang.; *I Dissent: Ruth Bader Ginsburg Makes Her Mark* by Debbie Levy; and *Dolores Huerta: Hero to Migrant Workers*, by Sarah Warren.