

— SPECIAL EDITION —
NATURE'S APPEAL
CHAMPAIGNFORESTS.ORG

Contribute to Help Our Community
Get Closer to Nature

GIVING TUESDAY
December 3, 2024

FOREST PRESERVE FRIENDS
FOUNDATION
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

Conservation Education Recreation
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES



Forest Preserve Friends Foundation

The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation is a not-for-profit (501(c)3) organization that supports the mission of the Champaign County Forest Preserves.

The Foundation's role and mission is to secure the resources needed to provide educational opportunities, restore and preserve native habitats, and promote a greater connection to nature through learning and recreation. We believe that connecting the people of Champaign County to their natural and cultural resources is vital to building a happier and healthier community. We cannot accomplish that goal without the generous support from our community of donors.

In the last year, donors, like you, to the Forest Preserves made a significant impact

on our community's ability to engage with and enjoy nature. You built and restored accessible trails to ensure everyone can connect with our habitats. They installed a new accessible dock at Homer Lake Forest Preserve to allow people with disabilities and mobility limitations to participate in a variety of outdoor recreational activities. And you created a new Dark Sky Trail at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve to help stargazers from across the country better engage with the night sky at our International Dark Sky Park.

Education is a crucial element of our mission. Donors provide important support to the Forest Preserves' educational initiatives by providing funds to host programs, provide transportation to the

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preserves for underfunded schools, and make needed improvements to our exhibits and programs. By making a gift to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, you can ensure that residents of all ages have opportunities to learn and connect with our natural world.

Champaign County's forest preserves offer valuable opportunities to learn about and enjoy nature. We provide these opportunities by acquiring, restoring, and preserving the cultural and natural resources of our county. These actions would not be possible without the support of our dedicated and generous donors and volunteers. Every year our supporters clear invasive species, collect seeds, plant trees, and restore prairies across our county. The

care and conservation of native habitats in Champaign County requires the support of people like you.

As we enter the Giving Season, please consider a gift to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation. Your support will make a difference by providing greater opportunities to learn about the natural and cultural resources in your community, connect with nature, and protect native habitats for all to enjoy. With your support, we can inspire a love for nature and preserve Champaign County's unique habitats.

Visit champaignforests.org to learn more or make a donation.



Scan me

Growing Stable Roots for the Future



It has been said that "a society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they will never sit in."

This is the goal of the Stable Roots Endowment Fund. The Stable Roots Endowment Fund, created by the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, exists to build a stable and sustainable future for the Champaign

County Forest Preserves.

What exactly is an Endowment Fund? Simply put, it's a sustainable revenue source for our organization. Thanks to the generous contributions from our donors, we have developed this fund whose roots will continue to grow, building a stable foundation for the future. This endowment will be used to support the work of the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation and provide the people of Champaign County a closer connection to nature

for generations to come!

This endowment will aid in funding new, exciting projects for the Champaign County Forest Preserves, day to day operations and maintenance of our facilities, and supporting our education and conservation efforts. Every dollar contributed to Stable Roots Endowment Fund is an investment in our collective future to help us continue making a positive impact in our community.

Three Rivers Society



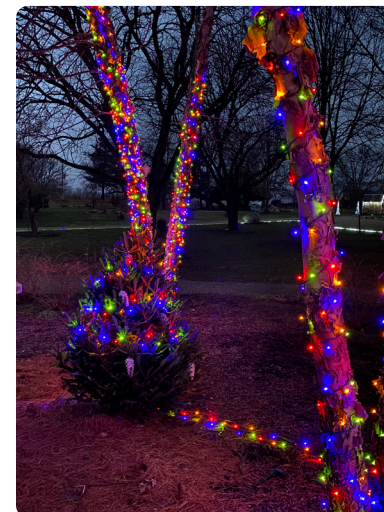
In 2023, the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation launched the Three Rivers Society. The Three Rivers Society is a giving society created to protect and preserve Champaign County's natural and cultural resources via a strong, proud, and generous group of people who consistently donates funds dedicated to our mission. This group of dedicated supporters have made a significant impact on the Preserves over the last two years. With the funds raised through their membership the Three Rivers Society members have supported educational and

public programs throughout the district, including the Lincoln Lecture Series, the Night Lights display, and the Summer Concert Series. Members funded the planting of a new 75th Anniversary Grove at Middle Fork River Forest

Preserve, contributed to crucial habitat restoration and management activities throughout the preserves, added accessible trails and amenities across the county.

The Champaign County Forest Preserves are deeply grateful for the support offered by these generous members of our community.

Donors receive membership with an annual unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more. Members receive access to a special bi-annual newsletter, invitations to special members-only events, early access to Forest Preserve events and project openings, and will be featured in a special category in our yearly donor recognition in our Leaflet. **For more information, contact Ryan Anderson at randerson@ccfpd.org.**



PROGRAMS & EVENTS

See the full program descriptions online at champaignforests.org

December 2024

**Fridays & Saturdays,
December 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 24** **FREE**
NIGHT LIGHTS

*Museum of the Grand Prairie,
Mabery Gelvin Botanical Gardens, 4-8 p.m.*

Join us every Friday and Saturday evening from 4-8 p.m., starting November 29 through December 21, with a special viewing on Tuesday, December 24!

Friday, December 6 **FREE**
**SIPS & SERENADES LIVE MUSIC
WITH GEARL GREY**

Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 5-7 p.m.

Saturday, December 7 **FREE**
TO GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE WE GO!
Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 4-7 p.m.

All ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Friday, December 13 **FREE**
SIP & LEARN: HOT CUPS OF CULTURE
Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 4-6 p.m.

Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Saturday, December 14 **FREE**
OUTSIDE IN CHAMPAIGN FORESTS
Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m.

Join us every second Saturday of the month for a unique opportunity where nature and community unite. For more information about these monthly hikes, co-hosted with Uniting Pride, email Chelsea at cprahl@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, December 14 **FREE**
HOMER FOR THE HOLIDAYS
Salt Fork Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 1-4 p.m.

All ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Sunday, December 15th **FREE**
**17TH ANNUAL LINCOLN LECTURE SERIES
VOICES OF OUR PAST: ABRAHAM LINCOLN**
Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.



December 20 **FREE**
MEET THE CRITTERS
Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11 a.m. or 2-3 p.m.

School's out, so come by the Homer Lake Interpretive Center and see what's new with our resident animals!

Friday, December 20 **FREE**
CAROLERS AND HOT CHOCOLATE
Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 5:30-7 p.m.

Enjoy some winter-themed carols by choir students from Rantoul Township High School. Hot chocolate will be provided while supplies last!

January 2025

Friday, January 3 **FREE**
WALK WITH A NATURALIST
Locations vary, 10-11:30 a.m.

Join a Naturalist to explore the beauty of the Champaign County Preserves! This guided hike invites you to uncover the wonders of local ecosystems.

Saturday, January 11 **FREE**
OUTSIDE IN CHAMPAIGN FORESTS
Locations vary, 10-11:30 a.m.

Head OUTside in Champaign Forests, every second Saturday of the month where nature and community come together.

Register here for programs



Scan the QR Code or go to champaignforests.org.

Programs may be altered or canceled due to weather or health-related concerns.

SNOWFLAKE SEARCH

January 17-February 28, 2025

Find Snowflakes throughout the preserves!

Share a pic and tag us when you find a snowflake

This year, we are incorporating elements of exploration via the

Goosechase app!

Join Code:
WICA9Q



#SNOWFLAKESEARCH

champaignforests.org



Champaign County Forest Preserves

Visit champaignforests.org for more info on open/closed times

Get out and explore your local winter wonderland in search of snowflakes! We've hidden creative snowflakes painted on tree slices throughout the Champaign County Forest Preserves. Bundle up and find as many as you can! Take a picture

of your finds and share them with us on our Facebook and Instagram pages using the hashtag #champaignforests. Download a checklist to help with the search on champaignforests.org. For more info: (217) 586-3360 or hq@ccfpd.org.

Additional Resources

For disability-related accommodations

for all programs, contact Chelsea at cprahl@ccfpd.org or (217) 586-2612.

Special Programs

Want to schedule a special program for your group? The Champaign County Forest Preserves welcomes all and is happy to provide programs that offer unique, hands-on opportunities to experience nature and history. We are happy to work with you to design a program that fits your needs - visit champaignforests.org to fill out the form to plan your program.

Group Visits and Special Tours

(Educational programming and resources)

These visits can be a club or special interest group. Ex. Scout Group, Retirement community or senior living center, Church group, Library, Bus Tours, and more! Visit champaignforests.org to fill out the form to plan your program.

