

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Department Activity Report

**Golf Course Entrance**

Staff shot elevations and staked the site. Construction has installed signposts and will be bringing in topsoil to meet staked elevations. After topsoil is brought in, we will place the rocks.

**River Bend Drainage Swales**

Staff shot elevations, did calculations, and developed drawings for drainage swales at the River Bend parking lot. We will install these swales immediately prior to sealcoating.

**Greenways and Trails Committee**

Matt Deering has reviewed the Contract for the Greenways and Trails Committee Agreement. Planning will incorporate his comments into the contract and forward it the committee.

**Middle Fork Campground**

We are working with a well drilling contractor to carry out the tests recommended by Sodemann and Associates. Construction will handle the negotiations with the contractor.

**Big, Small, All**

I attended the Natural Resources section of the fourth stakeholders meeting for the Big, Small, All countywide planning effort sponsored by the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission. We are nearing completion of this portion of the planning process. The concepts, objectives and proposed actions we have developed will go out for public review soon.

It has been interesting to observe the distillation of 2000 diverse ideas and comments into a much smaller, more focused and accessible format.

June 1, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

Over the past month, the Construction Department has:

- installed new screen doors and fascia boards; and is the process of repairing siding at Riverview Retreat Center;
- assisted golf course staff with the construction of the new storage bin and installed the posts for the new entrance sign; and
- repaired leaking water lines in the walls of the natural resources and botanical garden office building.

June 6, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Department Activity Report

**General**

- We have completed the site preparation and the planting for phase one of Point Pleasant. This included about 45 acres of wetland and prairie plantings.
- We have planted a couple of balled and burlapped trees at Middle Fork.
- We continue to cut, treat and dispose of exotic and invasive species. Much effort has been put into prepping and treating the Collins Pond area following the removal of a large portion of the exotics.
- Equipment repair continues.
- Staff (with the help of Middle Fork staff) mowed and trimmed portions of Tomlinson Cemetery and placed a U.S. flag for the Memorial Day Weekend. This year was the first year that Garlic Mustard and Autumn Olive were removed from within the cemetery.
- We have begun to make our seed beds for prairie seed collection.

**Meetings**

- Dan continues to attend Big, Small, All meetings.
- We have had a couple of organizational meetings for The East Central Illinois Master Naturalist Program.
- Dan met with Kim Horbas to discuss upcoming grants and volunteer needs for the department.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Larry Beckett, Botanical Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden Activity Report

- The garden pond acquired a pond weed last year that has been difficult to eradicate. I think we have it under control, and without damaging our water lilies and marginal water plants around the pond. We are still removing other weeds around the outer edge of the pond, which is mostly done by hand pulling.
- We have begun mulching the shrub beds in the landscaped areas in the preserve. We are still in the process of mulching beds in the garden.
- All of the annual flower plantings are complete in the garden and throughout the preserve.
- The garden staff is in the process of removing the chain link fence that surrounds the Botanical Garden. When completed, all of the fencing material will be taken to the recycling center.
- The roses in the bed adjacent to the north parking lot at Elks Lake Pavilion are mostly dead for unknown reasons. We will soon be removing all the roses and replacing them with other plant material.
- Kim DeLong has been training our new employees in weed identification, and they have been getting experience in the preserve and garden beds.
- We started our wedding season Memorial Day Weekend and have had three weddings thus far.
- After talking to Dave Torrens, we have decided to try “Black Onyx” pond dye in the garden pond to help reduce algae bloom. Since we only turn on the waterfall for special events and weddings, the water is not getting circulated, and if left alone, would soon begin to have an odor from too much algae.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Cheryl Kennedy, Museum Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Early American Museum Activity Report

<b>May Comparisons</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<i>Visitation</i>	906	797
<small>(65% Champaign County residents, 21% other IL residents, 9% other states, 4% other countries)</small>		
<i>Year to Date</i>	2,215	2,139
 <i>School Children to Date</i>	 1,781	 1,945
 <i>Gift Shop</i>	 \$1,780.45	 \$2,306.16
<i>Year to Date</i>	\$5,030.72	\$3,950.63
 <i>Donations</i>	 \$283.97	 \$414.88
<i>Year to Date</i>	\$632.63	\$889.31

<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>324.70 hours</b>
Office Operations	80.55
Collections	46.50
Education	84.15
Public Programs (including Fences Guides)	34.00
Special Projects	79.50

**Education 970 schoolchildren**

Schools served were from Champaign, Mahomet, Forrest, Fairbury, Danforth, Piper City, Hoopston, Georgetown, Chenoa, Normal, LeRoy, Macon and Maroa.

As is typical with spring classes, many were large groups numbering from 60 to 75. The education volunteers and the schoolhouse are critical to the success of these programs as classes are divided into 3-4 groups and rotate between Sandy and her volunteers. Sandy's first group of 100 schoolchildren was managed with four rotations thanks to the help of the environmental educators.

Sandy reports she used the Fences exhibit as much as possible with her school groups this spring. Approximately 250 students and 70 teachers/chaperones were able to tour the exhibit. They briefly discussed types of boundaries, and Sandy gave the chaperones a quick overview of the panel layout. Students shared that they learned there were many kinds of barbed wire, that there actually were "fence wars" and that they had seen Mexicans waiting to cross a fence.

### **American History Teachers Collaborative (AHTC)**

We met with three teachers in the AHTC program to determine potential projects that might benefit both the teacher and the museum, with two deciding to work with us – one will expand on her work on immigration, and the other plans to develop lessons to help teenagers today compare their lives/activities with teens in the 50s. They will complete their projects in June and July.

### **Library Summer Reading Program**

Lynn Ege, EIU Historical Administration Program intern, did a great job designing activity sheets and kit ideas for this year's Summer Reading Program, *Voyage to Book Island*, around our Tom Sawyer theme. This kit is made available to every library in Champaign County, and the activity sheets are mailed to all the libraries of the Central Illinois IGA towns. This kit has been very popular over the past several years; however, this year librarians seem to be focused on exotic islands rather than the islands in the Mississippi. The intern's time will not be wasted, however, as the kit will be a focal point of our Tom Sawyer Days activities at the Taste of Champaign.

### **Fences Exhibit**

Fifteen volunteers signed up for the special training as guides to the Fences exhibit. Doug Bosworth had an opportunity to interact with the schoolchildren visiting the exhibit, and everyone who has worked so far has been enjoying the interaction with the public.

### **Public Programs**

The May 25<sup>th</sup> Senior Moment program – a lecture about fences - was held at the Windsor of Savoy. We scheduled the Illinois Humanities Council historian for the Fences program (EIU Professor Nora Pat Small) as their speaker and had about 45 seniors in attendance – 6 or 7 of them from the general public. After the program, Barb said they commented on how impressed they were with the speaker and noted they were surprised that fences could be so interesting. On June 2<sup>nd</sup>, Rita DeVore, Activity Director at Windsor, brought about 12 residents to the museum to see the exhibit.

There were about 50 people at the May 27<sup>th</sup> program on the Irish and the Railroad. Despite the fact that this program had to be placed in the Discovery Room downstairs and it was very hard to hear due to the noise of footsteps overhead and people talking in the stairwell area, Barb again received comments about how knowledgeable the speakers were and how much they had learned. This program was followed with Irish music by *Bloomsday*. The musicians were amazingly good, and there was no doubt that everyone, seated or not, enjoyed them.

### **Looking for Lincoln**

We are closing in on the final text and graphics for the Looking for Lincoln panels. We have found our work with historic photos to be very frustrating in this instance as we struggled to meet the resolution quality required for approval. I understand this is a common occurrence, however.

June 2, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Wendy Israel, Environmental Education Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental and Horticulture Education Activity Report

**Environmental Education**

Since the last activity report, 495 students were served through in-class and on-site programs. Schools include: Judah Christian, Middletown Early Childhood Center, Montessori Discovery, Pinecrest Elementary (Georgetown), St. Joseph Elementary, St. Matthew, Urbana Middle School Waterworks, and Wiley Elementary. A complete summary of spring programs will be included in next month's activity report.

**Education Center**

May Visitors: 96 adults and 27 children.

**General**

Pam is processing summer registration forms and continuing to develop curriculum. Staff training began on June 1, and our summer seasonals include: Stacey Clementz (returning for 3rd summer), Beth Marcoot, Aaron Harper, Kate Slemer, and Erica Schneider. Jennie Bunde, a part-time staff member for the past two years, will be leaving the department this month.

**Horticulture Education Spring 2006 Progress Report**

<b><u>Program (Audience)</u></b>	<b>Proposed (minimum)</b>			<b>Actual (through May 2006)</b>		
	Programs	Participants	Income	Programs	Participants	Income
<b><u>Botany Basics (School)</u></b>	10	250	\$250	8	219	\$242
<b><u>Garden Friends (Pre K)</u></b>	3	60	\$60	2	32	\$32
<b><u>Houseplants (Adult)</u></b>	1	5	\$10	1	5	\$10
<b><u>Wildflower (Adult)</u></b>	1	5	(Free) \$0	1	17	\$10
<b><u>Growing Up Wild (Pre K)</u></b>	2	10	\$50	1	5	\$25
<b>Totals</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>\$370</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>278</b>	<b>\$319</b>

The horticulture education program served schools from across the county this spring including: All God's Children Preschool, Kenwood Elementary, KIPP Charter School (Chicago), Lincoln Trail Elementary, Ogden Grade School, and Sangamon Elementary.

In addition to providing programs, staff is working with Kim Horbas to recruit volunteers. As we continue to build our volunteer base for horticulture education, the environmental education staff has been providing additional support. A total of 40 volunteer hours were contributed this spring during a garden workday and for school programs. Though volunteer support was limited for spring, we are continuing to recruit volunteers for fall school programs and summer camp.

Additional horticulture education accomplishments this spring include:

- Contact to area schools to promote horticulture education school programs;
- Promotion of volunteer opportunities through press releases to newspapers, contact with RSVP and local garden clubs, posting on CU Volunteer website and attendance at the District Garden Club meeting in Rantoul;
- Meetings with Kenwood Elementary about an on-site school garden project;
- Development of self-guided map of garden with graphic design professor from University of Illinois;
- Attendance at Easter Egg Hunt at the Botanical Garden for distribution of information about children's gardening and promotion of Down and Dirty Garden Camp as well as school and public programs;
- Receipt of Audubon Mini-Grant for \$75 to purchase garden tools and gloves;
- Preparation of Children's Garden for summer.

June 6, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

**Program Promotions**

Summer program guides were distributed to elementary schoolchildren throughout the county. Focus now is turning to the fall program brochure, and the school program booklet for teachers. Promotions continue for the Fences exhibit as well as the opening of River Bend.

In addition to brochures, press releases were sent out for:

- PGA Free Golf Lesson Month
- Fences of Ethnicity Lecture & Musical Performance
- Jerry Pagac New Director – Sent to IAPD and NRPA magazines
- Fences of Race Lecture & Performance
- River Bend Grand Opening

**Freedom Fest**

Plans for Freedom Fest continue. Ryan Durdle of Mahomet won our poster contest; his winning design is currently being distributed. A copy is attached.

**Design-an-Ad**

Thank you letters went to all the Design-an-Ad entrants, and displays were made to show off the many wonderful entries we received. The winning entries were framed and are being displayed at the museum and the golf course.

**River Bend**

Executive Director Pagac is scheduled to be on the WCIA Morning Show at 5:45 a.m. Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> to talk about River Bend. Later that morning, the News-Gazette has scheduled an interview to do a preview feature story. The Citizen did a feature story in last week's issue, which is included in this month's clippings.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Department Activity Report

Over the past month, staff:

- participated in the Urbana Farmer's Market with the CAC Outreach Subcommittee;
- met with the Twin City Garden Club to encourage volunteer participation with the District. We have asked them to assume "ownership" of the Blue Star Memorial on Route 47 that was begun by the Mahomet Garden Club, which has recently dissolved, leaving the memorial unattended. A decision will be made at their June board meeting.
- coordinated local youth groups in volunteer activities.
- continued networking local agencies and clubs to share volunteer opportunities available at CCFPD.
- worked with Dan Olson in submitting application for a VSN (Volunteer Stewardship Network) grant to cover costs of tools and equipment utilized by volunteers.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Jan Plotner, Deputy Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Administration Activity Report

- Staff went to Middle Fork to assist with employee orientation and paperwork.
- Staff has been involved in starting the boat operations this year at Lake of the Woods Sundays 1-5. Champaign Surplus is again providing kayaks and canoes. The first two weekends were quite busy.
- We are starting the process of scanning our permanent documents and putting some on CD for better storage.

June 6, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Dave Torrens, Director of Golf

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Hartwell C. Howard Golf Course Maintenance Activity Report

- Seasonal staffing is now full.
- Spring aerification went well. The putting surfaces are healing nicely.
- Routine maintenance of equipment continues.
- Staff is edging the sand bunkers. This task is done twice a year.

June 5, 2006

## MEMORANDUM

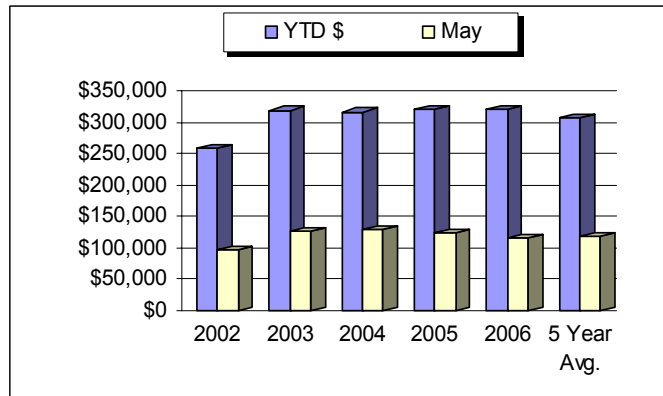
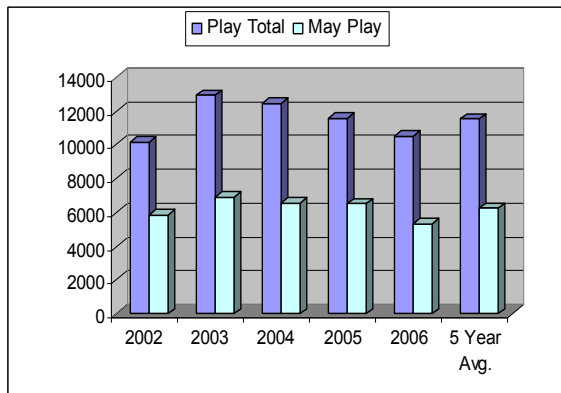
From: Dave Huber, Golf Professional/Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Hartwell C. Howard Golf Course Pro Shop Activity Report

### Operations

We did not have our best May. We were more than 1,100 players down from the average on the 18-hole course and over 200 on the Par 3. Our dollar per player, and therefore total revenue, was much better at only \$3,000.00 off the average for May.



### Tournaments & Outings

May 13 <sup>th</sup>	Grace Church Outing	48 golfers
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Mahomet Rotary Outing	72 golfers
May 19 <sup>th</sup>	Five @ Five Golf	6 golfers
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	WICD Beat the Pro	50 golfers
May 31 <sup>st</sup>	Mahomet Jr. High	24 golfers
June 3 <sup>rd</sup>	CIDGA Golf Outing	40 golfers
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	CIDGA Golf Outing	40 golfers

### Other Activities

- Thursday, June 8<sup>th</sup> I will be on WDWS Sports Talk with Steve Kelly from 5 to 6 PM promoting the golf course and other District events.
- We have a large group of youngsters for the District Junior Golf Clinics scheduled every Tuesday in June from 1 PM to 3 PM.
- I participated in a CIPGA Pro Am in Danville with three other golfers from Lake of the Woods. We finished tied for 5<sup>th</sup> place.

June 2, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Thomas M. Pike, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve / River Bend Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Crews have started to paint the rental buildings in Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve.
- Two new trucks have been delivered. One went to Middle Fork, and the second one went to Lake of the Woods Operation. We are still waiting on one van for Headquarters.
- Crews spent time at River Bend installing new directional signs on Mid-America Road. They also started getting the preserve ready for the June 10<sup>th</sup> Grand Opening.
- Staff spent time at the boathouse getting it ready to open up for business on Sundays.
- Crews installed 6" x 6" posts at the Swiss Valley service drive and at a parking lot by Izaak Walton cabin. This was done to prevent vehicles from going beyond the marked areas.
- Staff completed ongoing mowing and janitorial work at all rental buildings and public restrooms.
- We continued with routine scheduled maintenance and repairs on various District vehicles and other equipment.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Matthew Kuntz, Assistant Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- The campground was full and extremely busy for Memorial Day Weekend. We received many compliments about the new host site. More reservations are flowing in for future weekends and holidays.
- A quick storm passed through on May 30 and brought some trees and limbs down in the preserve. No structural damage or other incidents occurred.
- Simms Well Service has been out to check out our well situation inside the forest preserve. A report will follow on their findings.
- Natural resources staff was here for a couple of weeks working at Point Pleasant and in the preserve. They also helped us take some invasive species out of the preserve such as autumn olive and locust trees. Many thanks to them for the work they accomplished.
- We have been training a new seasonal, and he is going to be a big help around the preserve.
- The rest of the month has been routine maintenance in and around the user areas of the forest preserve.

June 5, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Most of the maintenance activity was centered on getting the park ready for the season kick off -- Memorial Day Weekend.
- Visitation during the holiday weekend was outstanding, and the only problem we encountered was a loss of electrical power at the Outdoor Recreation Center for two hours. We provided the rental with flashlights and water to flush toilets during the outage.