

October 10, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Activity Report

**Roads Project**

The roads project is complete. We sealcoated a number of roads and parking areas at Lake of the Woods, in addition to some special projects, including the following – hot mix on the alley between the Golf Course Clubhouse and the westernmost cart shed – a very much needed repair; hot mix patch at the golf course entrance at the culvert location; addition to the Lake of the Woods Maintenance parking area, to accommodate materials storage bins; addition to the parking lot across from the Natural Resources/Botanical Gardens building, paving areas that have been used for parking that were muddy and rutted; a reconfiguration of the maintenance parking area to improve poor drainage between the two storage buildings; addition to the Rotary Hill parking area and road, to aid in turn-around; a reconfiguration of the Elks Pavilion parking area to clarify parking areas and improve the fit; and a reconfiguration of the small parking area at the Botanical Garden entrance.

**Middle Fork Well**

We received the specifications from the engineer for the Middle Fork well, and have bid the project, with the opening scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Accessible Sidewalk at Middle Fork**

The handicapped fishing pier constructed in 2002 at the second pond at Middle Fork needs a sidewalk access, and the picnic shelter constructed in 2004 needs a concrete pad. Plans for the project are complete. The construction crew will do the concrete work.

**Citizens Advisory Committee**

The Outreach Subcommittee reviewed its participation at the Farmers Market, Sweet Corn Festival and Taste of Champaign. This has been very successful.

The CAC approved its recommendation for a new CAC member, and discussed recruitment of other new members. Bob Craft, Dan Schneider and Ann Prisland will complete their term of service at the end of this year, so we will need three new members.

October 9, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

**Miscellaneous**

Over the past month, the Construction Department:

- completed the replacement of cracked sidewalks at the Rayburn-Purnell restrooms;
- started the remodeling of the bathhouse; and
- completed the installation of a new window in the Botanical Garden/Natural Resources Building.

**Early American Museum Annex Project**

The construction crew completed the trenching for the piping of the new heating and air conditioning system. Kyler Bros. Services has completed the installation of the new system. Parsons Electric has completed the electrical upgrade. The contract for the entrance ramps and retaining wall was awarded to Doug Moore Construction; work is scheduled to start in mid-October.

October 6, 2006

## MEMORANDUM

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Department Activity Report

### General

- Work has begun on the Homer Lake wetland complex funded by the National Association of County Organizations grant. Ephemeral (transitory, existing only briefly) pools have been constructed, and large amounts of exotic species have been removed.
- Staff spent several days removing hazard trees and cleaning up at Homer Lake. Many of these were large trees that would have eventually been problematic for the maintenance shop.
- We have begun work on the Middle Fork parcel. Erosion control and cover crop planting are currently in progress.
- We would like to thank Matt Kuntz, Tom Pike and Larry Beckett for helping us with our eBay sales. They took care of many of the sold items when we were at other sites.
- Equipment maintenance continues.
- Staff has spent several days removing exotic species from all the preserves.
- Staff continues to collect prairie seed for future planting.
- We have started prepping for the burn season. Lanes were mowed and some firebreaks were put in at Middle Fork.
- Planning continues on the Point Pleasant wetland.
- We are happy that volunteer Matt Phillippe has collected several walnut seeds for us that will be planted in some of the smaller Lake of the Woods restoration areas.
- We've done some site preparation on the next two phases of Buffalo Trace Prairie plantings.
- Staff helped plant several more trees at Unity Elementary School as part of their ongoing West Woods Project.
- Staff collected prairie seed and organized 50 packets for the Environmental Education Association of Illinois. They are sponsoring an educational training for teachers. The training includes how to make prairie beds at their school or home.

### Meetings

- Dan, Sally, and Jerry attended the last organizational meeting of the Big, Small, All county planning meetings on Natural Resources.
- East Central Illinois Master Naturalist classes continue. Thank you to the staff who helped out when the class was held at Elks Lake Pavilion. Dan taught the section on Herpetology (study of reptiles and amphibians) and the Natural Resources of East Central Illinois.



*Andrea Consalus wins first place in the PDRMA chainsaw workshop plunge cut contest and is awarded a new forestry helmet package!*



*Jeremy Shafer checks over the ephemeral pool construction at the Homer Lake wetland complex area.*

October 6, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Larry Beckett, Botanical Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Botanical Garden Activity Report

- We have been making job lists and priorities for fall clean-up of the Botanical Garden and the landscaped areas of the preserve.
- We have been reseeding small, bare areas in the turf around the garden.
- Two 2" caliper Sugar Maples were planted along the west tree line in the Botanical Garden.
- We are still operating the waterfall three afternoons/early evenings each week. This is mainly for weddings and weekend visitors. Garden weddings will come to an end October 14th.
- Because of rising energy costs, we have decided to operate the north greenhouse only from March 1<sup>st</sup> through mid-May. We will purchase new plant material each year, in larger sizes, for displays in the garden. There should be a considerable savings. We will be shutting down and draining the water heater and the irrigation system in this greenhouse for the winter.
- Golf and garden staff met with Director Pagac to look at the area adjacent to the #1 tee, and discuss ideas on re-landscaping this area using shrubs, ornamental grasses, perennials, annuals and possibly one or more small trees.
- During September, there was an irrigation leak that developed along the main trunk line that supplies water to the garden. This is the original steel water line that once supplied the west side of the park with potable water from the Rayburn-Purnell well.
- The Horticulture Education Department held the Family Harvest Day in the Children's Garden, and Prairie Adventures was held the first week of October within the garden and museum.

October 10, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Cheryl Kennedy, Museum Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Early American Museum Activity Report

<b><u>September Comparisons</u></b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>
<i>Visitation</i>	607	754
<i>Year to Date</i>	6,253	6,223
<i>Gift Shop</i>	\$741.66	\$857.14
<i>Year to Date</i>	\$9,373.54	\$8,717.43
<i>Donations</i>	\$212.00	\$256.00
<i>Year to Date</i>	\$2,343.32	\$2,850.23
<i>Friends</i>	\$2,815	\$2,495
<b><u>Volunteer Hours</u></b>	<b>155.00 hours</b>	
Office Operations	72.50	
Collections	31.75	
Education	7.00	
Public Programming	24.50	
Special Projects	19.25	

**Education                    135 students onsite, 80 outreach**

Schools served: Kenwood, Champaign; Wiley, Urbana; Northview, Rantoul. BT Washington in Champaign is using the Illinois Country and Illiniwek kits with all classes within one grade level.

**Public Programs                    84**

We were surprised but pleased that Traintastic attracted a younger audience than usual. Many were first-timers, and all seemed to have a good time. From the evaluations, we learned most were from Champaign-Urbana and learned about the program from the News-Gazette ad.

**Educators Retreat**

The education staff met offsite in September to share program ideas and plans for 2007, explore cooperative ventures and funding opportunities, discuss Summer Series and Education Brochure logistics and timing for next year's work, and interpretive planning ideas gathered during the colloquium that staff attended in Indianapolis in 2005. All are working to finalize program plans, budget and program partnerships for the new year.

**Other**

Staff work continues on revisions to the current policies and procedures, development of new manuals and schedules, and comparisons between them to make sure they complement each other. All will soon be ready for Board review.

Staff attended the joint Illinois Association of Museums/Association of Midwest Museums annual conference in Iowa the end of September. They returned with some new information of the field and lots of new ideas.

October 4, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Wendy Israel, Environmental Education Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental and Horticulture Education Activity Report

**School Programs**

In September, 445 students participated in environmental education school programs. Schools served include Spectrum Pre-K, Urbana Care Center, Ogden Elementary, Heritage Elementary, Dr Howard Elementary, Northview Elementary, Middletown Elementary, Urbana Middle School, Unity West Elementary and Fisher Grade School.

116 students participated in horticulture education school programs in September. Schools include Lincoln Trail and Northview Elementary.

**Public Programs**

Fifty-one people attended the *Night Hike* at Middle Fork on Sept. 2. Horticulture education public programs this month included: *Create Your Own Prairie Plot* at Homer Lake on Sept. 9 (25 participants) and *Garden Harvest* at the Botanical Garden on Sept. 24 (30 participants). Upcoming programs include the preschool program *Growing Up Wild* which meets once a month at both Homer Lake and Lake of the Woods in Oct. and Nov. The September program was canceled due to low enrollment.

**Education Center**

August visitors: 51 adults and 23 children. The education center will continue to be open on Saturdays through the end of October.

**General**

In addition to school programs, staff is also working on a number of projects including renovating the prairie garden outside the Education Center, preparing for fall and winter public programs and developing the 2007 public program calendar.

October 8, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

**Promotions**

With the year's promotions schedule winding down, the major focus right now is the promotion schedule for next year. This includes determining which programs get what types of promotion, how to distribute our advertising dollars most effectively, prioritizing efforts and developing deadlines for all ads, program brochures, news releases, community calendar listings and summer program information. It is important to reach the media and the public in a timely manner in order to be successful.

We are getting a very good response from our fall golf advertising campaign. Listeners of four stations are directed to the website where they can print a coupon for use by the end of the month. In exchange for cashing in the coupon, they need to provide information which includes where they heard the ad. The purpose of this campaign is twofold – we are heavily promoting the fall golf season, and we will learn where our market is, which will help us in future promotions.

**Foundation Membership Appeal**

Work continues with Eric Robeson and our designer, Heather Gillett, on development of our annual membership appeal. We are in the design stage now, with hopes to have the printed piece distributed by mid-November.

October 9, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Activity Report

- September 27<sup>th</sup>, the District participated in the Parkland College Volunteer Fair, where students were introduced to CCFPD volunteer opportunities. More than 50 students signed up to receive information for future activities.
- September 30<sup>th</sup>, 27 students representing UI's I-Help volunteered for projects at Homer Lake. This program was sponsored by Alumni Ambassadors in conjunction with homecoming week. Volunteers assisted with painting the spillway and park benches, as well as cleaning walnuts at Walnut Hill.
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, volunteers representing UI Indian Students assisted at the museum.
- I met with Lynn Peksier of United Way and discussed opportunities for teaming up with United Way and their volunteer base.
- Preparations are underway for the annual Volunteer Recognition Dinner to be held Friday, October 27th at Lake of the Woods Pavillion. Over 110 invites were sent to individuals who volunteered at CCFPD over the last 12 months.

October 12, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Jan Plotner, Deputy Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Administration Activity Report

- All departments are working on preparation for the 2007 Budget. Initial meetings with department heads will be held in the next weeks.
- Many staff members attended the chain saw training offered by PDRMA recently.
- Along with decreasing gas prices we are seeing an increase in investment interest rates. Compared to this time last year, we are seeing a percent-and-a-half increase in our CD interest rates and an almost 2% increase in our Illinois Fund interest rates.
- The first round of selling surplus equipment on eBay was a great success! Not only did it generate over \$27,000 dollars, but we were able to “clean up” some of our departments. We will be bringing further requests to sell our surplus items, probably in the next 3-4 months. Special thanks to Mary Beck for coordinating this project.

October 10, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Dave Torrens, Director of Golf

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Hartwell C. Howard Lake of the Woods Golf Course Maintenance Staff Report

- Work continues with irrigation repairs.
- Staff continues equipment and routine golf course maintenance.
- We are beginning leaf clean up.

October 10, 2006

## MEMORANDUM

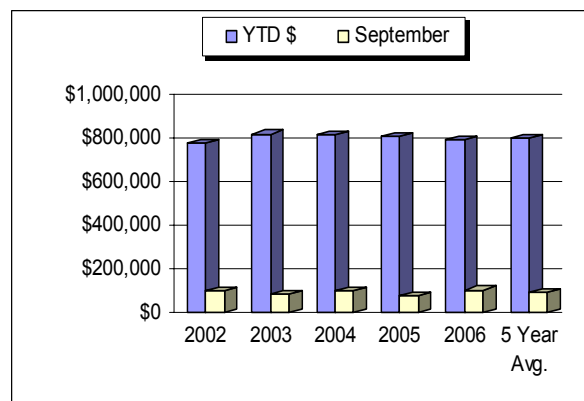
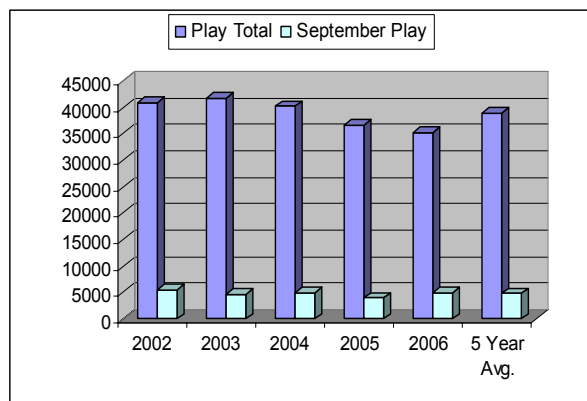
From: Dave Huber, Golf Professional/Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

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

### Operations

September was one of the best for both play and revenue we have had for several years. The weather was great and we had several outings and tournaments.



### Tournaments & Outings

September 8 <sup>th</sup>	Mindy Harrington CCFPD Foundation Scramble	104 golfers
September 15 <sup>th</sup>	Illinois Water Survey Outing	40 golfers
September 16 <sup>th</sup>	Mahomet Christian Church Outing	40 golfers
September 17 <sup>th</sup>	Mixed Chapman Tournament	36 golfers
September 21 <sup>st</sup>	Champaign County Realtors Outing	80 golfers
September 24 <sup>th</sup>	Big Merchandise Scramble	54 golfers
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	Women's Association Fun Day	28 golfers
September 30 <sup>th</sup>	Illinois Business Council Outing	52 golfers
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	PGA (Preachers Golf Association) Outing	24 golfers
October 4 <sup>th</sup>	Boys Class A High School Regional	96 golfers

### Other Activities

- Our current radio promotion is going well; as of today we have 80 coupons redeemed!
- This is the time of year I start meeting with sales reps for 2007 merchandise purchases.
- Dave Torrens, Jan Plotner, Chris Edmondson and I had a wrap-up meeting to review the Mindy Harrington Foundation Scramble details.
- Jan Plotner and I conducted an inventory of the pro shop merchandise.
- Jerry Pagac, Dave Torrens, Larry Beckett, Kim DeLong and I met regarding landscaping at the first tee and some type of shelter for the Par 3 area.

October 10, 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

- The oil-and-chipping at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, especially the West Maintenance complex, looks great!
- The construction crew has helped out by upgrading the old bathhouse restrooms by adding some walls and fluorescent lights. By next spring we will open it back up as a restroom facility.
- We are starting to mulch leaves as they have started to fall from the trees on the grounds and on the bike trail.
- The sale of surplus items has gone very well and we are just about done with the pickup of sold items from the items listed. This has really gone better than I expected.
- Staff completed ongoing mowing and janitorial work at all rental building and public restrooms.
- We continued with routine scheduled maintenance and repairs on various District vehicles and other equipment.

October 10, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Don Humphrey, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Matt is scheduled to attend a prescribed fire training certification course to be held at the end of October.
- A majority of our time has been spent cutting logs and splitting the wood for firewood bundles for next year.
- Lincoln's Challenge has been doing an excellent job for us. They have completed close to 1,300 hours of volunteer time at the preserve.
- We have begun digging out the forms for the new walkway to the shelter at the 2<sup>nd</sup> pond.
- The natural resources crew has been up working at Point Pleasant and inside the forest preserve removing exotics and other prep work for the fall and winter.
- The eBay auction seemed to be a success. All of the equipment at Middle Fork has been picked up with no complaints.
- The remainder of the month has been spent doing routine maintenance and repairs in the forest preserve.

October 9, 2006

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- The weekly mowing continued this month. This season has been extremely unusual in that we have only missed two weeks of mowing since April.
- Staff constructed and installed a new metal gate at the Walnut Hill service drive, and many of the bull nose posts installed throughout the park in the early 70s have been replaced or removed entirely.
- PDRMA members from as far away as Decatur attended the chainsaw safety class held at our site. We used the class to assist us with taking down two dead trees near the Outdoor Recreation Center
- Staff worked with Kim Horbas and 35 UI volunteers on Saturday, September 30th. They assisted us with prepping and painting benches and the spillway railing, and they also raked up walnuts. (see pictures)

