

June 12, 2007

## **MEMORANDUM**

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Activity Report

### **Middle Fork Well**

The Middle Fork well has been installed. We now need to install the bladder tanks and complete the electrical work to finish the project.

### **Vault Toilets Project**

The restrooms have been installed at all of the preserves – four at Middle Fork and one each at Lake of the Woods and Homer Lake. The next step will be to install the concrete sidewalks that lead to the restrooms.

### **Pole Barn Projects**

The Homer Lake barn is nearly complete. The only thing remaining is the installation of the concrete footings under the overhead doors. The Golf Course cart barn is also nearly complete; they have not yet poured the concrete floor.

### **Middle Fork Land Acquisition**

We have commissioned an appraisal by Jim Webster of Urbana. We look forward to hearing what he has to say about the property value.

### **Clean Energy Grant**

We have received notice that our Clean Energy Grant has been approved. As I mentioned last month, the project is simple – we will substitute a more efficient T-8 lamp and ballast for each T-12 lamp and ballast. The grant award is for \$5,904, which will go toward the lighting upgrade. The total cost for the upgrade would then be \$22,000, which would be amortized over a period of three years.

### **Community Foundation Accessibility Grant**

We are making good progress on the Community Foundation Accessibility Grant. We have had a number of meetings, both with the Community Foundation of Illinois and all of the grant partners, as well as with planning staff from Champaign and Urbana park districts. We have come up with some prototypes for design of three fishing pier facilities, one at each of three parks – Kaufman Lake in Champaign, Crystal Lake in Urbana, and River Bend Forest Preserve. The grant application is due July 1<sup>st</sup>.

### **Homer Lake Roads Project**

Matt Zimmerman, Planning Intern, is developing specifications for the Homer Lake Roads Project.

### **CAC**

The CAC did not meet this month. However, as part of the outreach committee effort, we will have a booth at the Farmer's Market on Saturday, June 16<sup>th</sup>. This will be our second Farmer's Market event for the year.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

**Miscellaneous**

Over the past month, the Construction Department:

- continued work on the placement of new sidewalks to the fishing pier and shelter at Middle Fork;
- assisted Middle Fork staff with the site preparation for the new restrooms in the campground; and
- worked on installation of four new concrete restrooms at Middle Fork.

**Early American Museum Annex Project**

Staff completed the replacement of the damaged sidewalk at the west entrance to the building and completed grading around the annex.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Activity Report

**General**

- We are happy to officially welcome Natural Resources Technician Colin Vaughan to the District. I introduced Colin at the last Board meeting. He recently graduated from the University of Illinois and worked with Steve Buck on the UI Natural Areas.
- We have completed the next phase of the Homer Lake wetland. Several internal field tiles were removed, and the berm area has been prepared.
- Rob Kanter's Environmental Almanac showcased CCFPD Master Naturalist volunteer Doug Mills and the work he has been doing with frog call surveys at our sites and other local sites. This story ran on WILL 580 am and in the News Gazette.
- Due to the dry conditions, staff has spent many days watering and fertilizing the large trees that were put in over the last few years.
- Staff planted several prairie plugs and woodland herbaceous plants this month.
- Dan has been doing some miscellaneous work on the possible fishing pier/walkway grant for River Bend.
- We have done quite a bit of equipment repair and maintenance. We are also happy to report that we took ownership of our Bobcat trailer this month. With that available, the Bobcat went in for its first check-up, and all is well.
- Phil Hult and the Grand Prairie interns have been hard at work removing invasive plants from many portions of Buffalo Trace. Phil also donated about a dozen potted prairie plants to the District. In addition, Phil has held some additional workdays on Buffalo Trace.
- Staff spent some time in the garden trimming problem trees, planting grass seed, planting wheat, and putting up a rope barrier around the construction site.
- We did some of the usual Memorial Day work at Tomlinson Cemetery, including some removal and spraying of invasive plants.

- Staff has been putting together a lot of information for the upcoming Foundation filming, and for the interpretive signs being designed by Lise Schools.
- Exotic species control continues to be a large portion of what we are doing. This month, Autumn Olive, Bush Honeysuckle, Garlic Mustard, and Canada Thistle have been targeted. The Bobcat and forestry mower have been at work at Homer Lake. The entrance treeline looks very good after the invasive removal.

### **Meetings**

- Dan has met with Phil Hult on a couple of occasions to plan for future phases of Buffalo Trace.
- Dan met with Bob Craft of the Izaak Walton League to discuss the placement of the fish structure that they have completed.
- Dan and Matt met with John Heider, a Monticello resident who will be helping us restore and repair some of the headstones at Tomlinson Cemetery over the next year. He does this at many area cemeteries. The good news is that John is doing this voluntarily.
- Dan met with Wayne Rittenhouse of Mid America Sand and Gravel about clay for the Homer Lake Wetland and about helping us get the large stumps into Sunset Lake for fish structure. We thank them for voluntarily placing the stumps.
- East Central Illinois Master Naturalist Planning Meetings continue. The students have formed a programming committee to bring more programs to the class participants. We are seeing more and more of the first class doing volunteer work for us.

June 9, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Kim DeLong, Assistant Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden Activity Report

- The wedding season has begun. We had one in May, and three are scheduled so far in June.
- Spraying for weed control continues slowly due to windy conditions and predictions of possible rain.
- The WCIA Best of the Class program was filmed in the garden May 19<sup>th</sup>. It was a beautiful day, and everything ran smoothly.
- We have been having some difficulties with the water feature in the Enabling Garden. Staff met with a representative from Sullivan Plumbing to troubleshoot some problems. We hope to have this visitor favorite operating properly soon.
- A barrier fence was installed as a safety precaution around a large area under renovation next to the annex. Dan Olson reseeded this area with wheat.
- Lindsay Chestnut and Blake Colclasure have started working as garden seasonals. They have already put in a great deal of effort to bring the gardens up to speed.
- The All America Selection garden is planted, and plants will be labeled as soon as they put on a little more growth. This bed is always popular with visitors.
- Visitor attendance seems to be much higher than normal at this time of year. This may be a result of recent advertising by the District, good weather, and the Best of Class spots starting on WCIA. We have seen lots of families, senior citizens, grandparents with grandchildren and many young couples.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Cheryl Kennedy, Director of Museum

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Early American Museum Activity Report

<b>May Comparisons</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>
Visitation	797	868
Year to date	2,139	2,398
Schoolchildren to date	1,945	2,237
Gift Shop	\$2,306.16	\$2,478.06
Year to date	\$3,950.63	\$4,958.01 *
Donations at the door	\$414.88	\$300.99
	\$889.31	\$603.75 *

\*School sales have been very good this year

\*Donations at the door were high during the Fences exhibit last year

**May Education totals 1,100 onsite, 45 outreach (Pre-K – Seniors)**

This was a busy month for Sandy and her volunteers. They served 28 schools with 47 programs. Twenty-one of these programs were in the one-room school with the volunteer school master/school marms. Sandy estimates the volunteers were directly responsible for serving approximately 800 children in the past month.

Schools served include: Champaign, Urbana, Tolono, St. Joseph, Oakwood, Georgetown, Danville, Chatsworth, Macon, Bement, Chenoa, Gibson City, Potomac, Gilman, LeRoy, Normal, Cornell and a special group from Chicago.

<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	<b>317.25 hours</b>
Collections	49.50
Education	120.75
Office Support	70.25
Special Projects	76.75

**Outreach Program**

Barb presented an overview of the baseball exhibit to three senior residence centers – Clark-Lindsey, Windsor of Savoy and Prairie Winds – during the month of May. There were approximately 35 in the audience at each place, and our hope is that it will encourage them to bring their residents out to see the exhibit sometime this summer.

### **Vintage Baseball Game**

Saturday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, the District staff, or the “Forest Preserve Big Trees”, played an 1860s baseball game against the Rock Springs Ground Squirrels. The Big Trees, led by Jerry “Got Magic” Pagac, won the game, although the Ground Squirrels had to educate our players on the appropriate attire and behavior for baseball players of that time period. Our thanks to Jerry, Clint Schaffer, Adam Rex, Lindsay Chestnut, Dave Huber, Chris Edmondson, Tonya Maier, Andee Chestnut, Matt Zimmerman, Barb Garvey, Tess Garvey, Aaron Harper, and various friends and family members who joined us, and especially, thanks to Charlie Tice for coordinating the game and cookout afterward. A fun time was had by all.

### **Annex Grant Project**

I am pleased to report that except for some landscaping features, the annex renovation project is complete. The construction crew completed the smaller District requirements during the month of May, and Charlie has taken on the task of deep cleaning and reorganizing the downstairs area to create meeting and work areas for staff and volunteers. It is like working with a Rubik’s cube; however, we hope to see visible progress by the end of the summer. We can now begin documenting and organizing our report for reimbursement. We thank the Facilities Committee for proposing a method that has made this process efficient and effective.

### **Collections**

While Charlie is working on the public area of the downstairs, Barb and Tom are working to clean, rearrange and resolve storage issues in both the annex and the museum throughout the summer. They will be addressing issues related to risk management concerns with PDRMA as well as accreditation standards.

### **American Association of Museums Conference**

Barb, Charlie, Sandy and I attended the AAM Conference in Chicago during May. All felt they gained some new ideas and insight from the sessions, and after attending the session on interpretive plans, we agreed we are definitely on the right track.

June 8, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Wendy Israel, Environmental Education Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental and Horticulture Education Activity Report

**School Programs**

In May, 638 students were served through Environmental Education programs from the following schools: Calvary Baptist Elementary, Cornell Grade School, Early Learning Playschool, Hugs & Bugs Preschool, Judah Christian, Leal Elementary, Middletown Early Childhood Center, St. Joseph Grade School, St. Paul's Preschool, Unity West Elementary, Urbana Middle School, Wiley Elementary, and Yankee Ridge Elementary. 146 students from Lincoln Trail, Middletown and Thomas Paine participated in Horticulture Education programs. A complete report of spring programs will be included in next month's report.

**Public Programs**

Eighteen people participated in the Frog Walk at the Botanical Garden, and 10 children attended the Nature Hike program at Middle Fork. Upcoming June public programs include: Second Sunday Artisan Series on June 10 and Stroller Strut on June 12.

Summer camp programs begin the week of June 18. Garden Adventures meets Mondays for six weeks and Tiny Tot Garden Adventures meets on Wednesdays for four weeks at the Botanical Garden. Eco-Adventures meets for six weeks on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at Homer Lake and on Thursdays and Fridays at Lake of the Woods. Due to high program demand, we have added a Thursday afternoon camp at Lake of the Woods.

On June 14 and 15, the Environmental Education and Early American Museum staff will co-host Making Good Choices, an educator workshop funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources to 22 classroom teachers.

**General**

May Education Center Visitors: 119 adults and 64 children. The education center is open Monday through Friday 8:30-5pm, and on Saturdays from 10-4pm through October with a public nature hike at 1pm.

May Volunteer Hours: 7.5 hours (Horticulture Ed.) and 6 hours (Environmental Ed.)

All seasonal positions in the department have been filled. Environmental Education seasonals: Aaron Harper (returning), Melissa Vandernoorda, Tess Garvey and Victoria Pennington. Horticulture Education seasonal: Angela DeLong. Middle Fork seasonal: Shelia Daniels. Shelia will be developing Environmental Education programs at Middle Fork to present on Thursday mornings, and Friday and Saturday afternoons and evenings through Labor Day.

Additional staff accomplishments this month include:

- curriculum development for summer camp programs;
- summer staff training curriculum preparation;
- publicity of new Soils Naturalist in the Classroom and scholarship info;
- collaboration with Twin City Garden Club about possible teacher scholarships;
- coordination of volunteers for programs, tending the children's garden, and camps;
- planting and tending of the children's garden;
- working on kiosk and garden benches;
- completion of seating area in between children's garden beds;
- completion and submission of grant application to The Lumpkin Family Foundation;
- organization of camp registrations and sending out of confirmations;
- preparation for educator workshop;
- work on interpretive plan, including EE-EAM collaboration ideas.

June 11, 2007

## **MEMORANDUM**

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

### **Media Coverage**

The District has been in the media a lot over the past month – through news coverage and through paid advertising. In addition to the attached clippings, WICD TV covered the Vintage Baseball game June 9<sup>th</sup>, and the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden is credited every time a Best of the Class spot runs on WCIA TV throughout June. Kim DeLong and staff did an excellent job working with that program. As you can see in the television spots, the gardens looked tremendous.

### **Advertising**

The paid advertising “season” is in full swing. You may have seen the Par Fore Pennies ads for the golf course on WCIA TV. That is a new program similar to the Half Price Haven that the golf course has participated in with WDWS Radio for a number of years. In exchange for providing half-price gift certificates, we get a substantial amount of advertising on both stations. Also new this year is a program with the four stations in the Champaign-Urbana Radio Group. In exchange for paid advertising, their on-air personalities golf our course and then talk about it on the air; and although this was not part of their initial offer, they did agree to allow Dave Huber to go on the air with them as well.

Instead of general advertising for the museum, we are focusing on three specific events – the Second Sunday Artisans Series, the September Prairie Stories program, and the December holiday programs. You will also see ads for the museum in the Central Illinois Families Magazine. We’re fortunate to be able to send flyers through the schools for museum programs as well.

The District television ads for the Summer Youth Programs ran during May. These are the Foundation ads with the voiceover at the end encouraging registrations for summer programs. These were sponsored by Jerry’s IGA and the News-Gazette. The News-Gazette’s sponsorship is a match for every paid ad, which is a tremendous promotional help.

### **Foundation Video**

We are working steadily on the 30-minute video about the CCFPD that will run on cable access channels. The script should be finished anytime, and we will then determine filming locations and address all the little details so we can make this process run as smoothly as possible. Due to production timing, we have a small window in which to complete everything.

### **Freedom Fest**

Sponsorships continue to roll in for Freedom Fest. We are pleased that we were able to add some more children’s activities to the event also, thanks to a local club. Everything is moving along on schedule, and we expect to have another spectacular event on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Included with this report is this year’s winning poster entry by Brittany Clapper of Mahomet-Seymour High School.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Department Activity Report

On June 2, the Trail Stewards attended their third workshop at Homer Lake. In addition to networking and idea sharing, Natural Resource staff Mike Daab, Adam Rex and Colin Vaughan provided a detailed history of the Homer Lake site. They continued with a demonstration of the Bobcat (pictured at right). After the demo the Natural Resources staff and group visited the wetlands currently being developed at Homer (below left). It was a



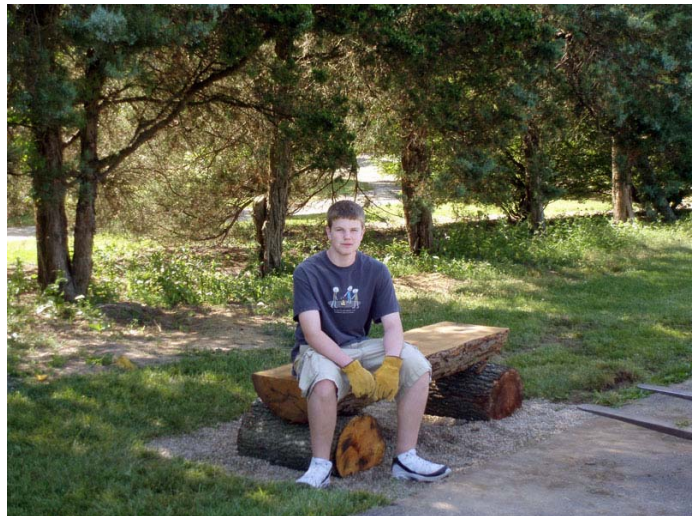
successful workshop that benefits both the stewards and CCFPD staff. The next work-shop is scheduled for October 27th.



I participated in a career session at Edison School June 1st. The presentation focused on volunteer opportunities in the Champaign County area. Over 200 junior high students attended. In addition to volunteer highlights, the students were encouraged to visit the forest preserve sites throughout the summer with their families.

Over 45 volunteer coordinators and staff members will be attending the day-long workshop hosted at Lake of the Woods June 14th. A full report of the event will follow.

We are fortunate to have had Lucas Brunkow complete his Eagle Scout Project at Lake of the Woods. Lucas (at right) used oak trees that were recently taken down from the area to construct four benches that run along the walking trail. He was assisted by several members from his troop. The benches will be a very welcome addition for the many individuals who use the trails.



Total volunteer hours (excluding museum volunteers) - 112

June 11, 2007

## MEMORANDUM

From: Jan Plotner, Deputy Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Headquarters Activity Report

- Over the last month there have been over 30 employees added to the payroll. This entails not only each employee completing over 10 forms, but then staff inputs them into the accounting system, submits a criminal background check and sends the information online to the Illinois Department of Employment Security. We then check their driving records with the Illinois Secretary of State's office.
- With the new minimum wage going into effect on July 1<sup>st</sup>, we are working with staff to review all of the seasonal rates.
- EBay items approved for sale at the May meeting will go live June 11<sup>th</sup>, with 11 items listed.
- The boat operations opened Memorial Day weekend at Lake of the Woods. The District purchased two kayaks to add to the 13 pedal boats and two row boats available for use on Sundays from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. We have one part-time staff member running the boat operations, and we also utilize volunteers. Patrons give donations when they use the boats, and the donations are given to the District Foundation.
- Staff is in the process of reviewing the current staff purchasing guidelines and making recommendations for changes.
- Special use permits being processed include: Forester Fishing Derby at Homer Lake for free-fishing weekend, Cub Scout Pack 94 Fishing Derby at Lake of the Woods, 5K Walk for the Cure at Homer Lake, and Mahomet-Seymour Cross Country.
- Staff is setting up a receptionist area at Headquarters for a part-time receptionist, for which applications are currently being accepted.
- There are now pictures of our buildings on the website for patrons to review. This has been very useful for potential renters to make a decision on which building they would like.
- Our new seasonal shirts have been a hit for the employees (see below). With the large STAFF lettering on the back of the shirt, it makes it very easy for preserve visitors to get assistance when needed. In surveys of last year's seasonal employees, this was a suggestion given many times.



June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Dave Torrens, Director of Golf

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Golf Course Maintenance Staff 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.
- The cart storage building should be finished by end of June.
- The specifications/plans for the entrance drive renovation are finalized.

June 11, 2007

## MEMORANDUM

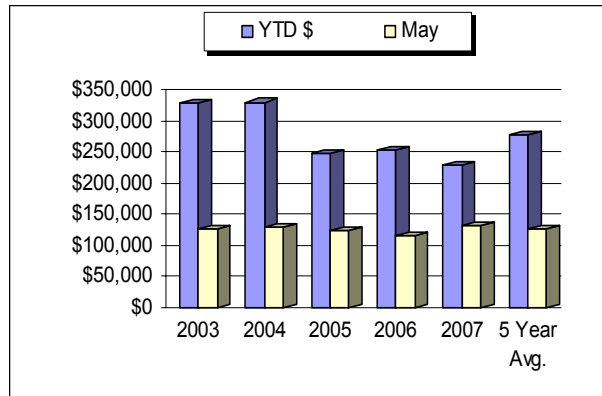
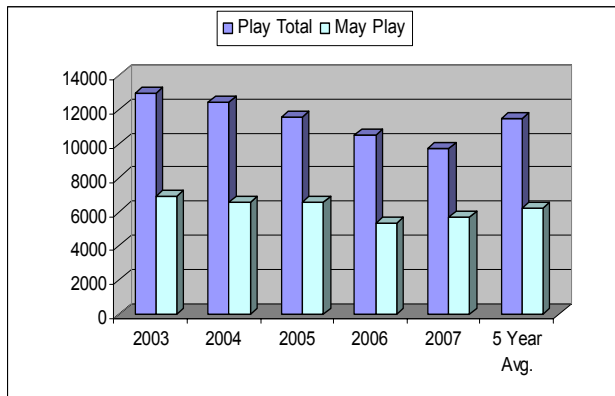
From: Dave Huber, Golf Professional/Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Golf Course Pro Shop Activity Report

### Operations

In complete contrast to April, revenue for May 2007 was our highest ever. We made only a modest comeback on players, but the extra dollar amount per player was in part due to above average merchandise sales and increased season pass sales for May that were shifted forward from April. All in all a very good May.



### Tournaments & Outings

May 12 <sup>th</sup>	Kraft Outing	20 golfers
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	CU Grasshoppers	28 golfers
May 17 <sup>th</sup>	Mahomet Rotary Outing	80 golfers
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	5 @ 5 Golf Outing	10 golfers
June 5 <sup>th</sup>	Uncle Bucks Outing	68 golfers.

### Other Activities

- The second series of District group golf lessons began June 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Additional cabinet work has been completed in the Pro Shop.
- TS Wireless installed a computer for golf course patrons to check email and weather radar.
- The Pro Shop operation is now into busy summer routine activities.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Thomas M. Pike, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

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

- Staff will be getting the new vault toilets this week. We are in the process of digging the new holes.
- Staff has finished grading the three new areas around the new parking lot at Elks Lake Pavilion and are now seeding them with grass.
- A few dying trees around the preserve have been removed and chipped.
- All District cleaning supplies have been received and have been divided among individual departments.
- The mowing season continues.
- Staff has all of the seasonal employees for the 2007 season, and department orientation continues.
- Staff completed ongoing janitorial work at rental buildings and public restrooms.
- We continued with routine scheduled maintenance and repairs on various District vehicles and other equipment.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Matthew Kuntz, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Assistant Superintendent Andy Little attended the spring PDRMA conference in Chicago in May.
- Our PDRMA inspection occurred in May with the representative from PDRMA inspecting our grounds and shop. The inspection went well, and he gave us a lot of good safety advice for the future.
- Middle Fork had a successful Memorial Day weekend with a full house for camping. The Environmental Education Department was able to take some children on a nature hike, and the campers enjoyed the weekend despite rain.
- We have finished the spring class with the Lincoln's Challenge volunteers. They were a big help for us as usual, and we are awaiting the fall class. Special thanks to Joseph Communalei, Volunteer Coordinator for Lincoln's Challenge Academy, for all of his help.
- On Thursday, June 7, the new vault restrooms arrived, and we were able to set all four buildings by the end of the day. The installation went very well, and we are now starting to backfill.
- Special thanks to the construction crew for their help with leveling the holes and setting the grade for the bottoms. With their help we were able to make our deadline for the arrival of the restrooms.
- The remainder of the month has been spent doing routine maintenance around the preserve.

June 11, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- The new shed addition and new roof on the old shed were completed by FS in two weeks. We are now waiting for the overhead doors to be installed.
- Staff has been replacing the lattice skirting on the deck at the Outdoor Recreation Center as we get time.
- Staff planted 17 flats of flowers just before the holiday, and mulching around trees and flower beds continues.
- Other activities include the normal summer maintenance items, weekly mowing, trash collection, string trimming, spraying weeds, pruning trees, and cleaning rental facilities and making repairs to equipment and buildings.