

January 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Department Activity Report

Land Acquisitions

We received the third appraisal for the Middle Fork property, and we were pleased with it.

Interpretive Signage

The signs are ready for production, pending comments from the Board of Commissioners.

Clean Energy Lighting Grant

We have a meeting scheduled with a lighting specialist from Springfield Electric, who will help us make the right decision as to light levels, number of lights, etc. There is not a direct correlation between the T-12 lamps and the T-8 lamps in terms of light intensity and brightness. The new replacement lights actually save electricity and are brighter than the originals.

Golf Course Entrance Renovation

We are gearing up to bid out the project, hopefully in February. We are reviewing the specifications and incorporating last year's addenda into the body of the specs. We also plan to identify a list of qualified permeable paving contractors, for the general contractors' convenience.

Miscellaneous

- Planning Intern - Work Study: Our current intern, Matt Zimmermann, is working on, among other things, a plan for a trellis/arbor for gourds in the Children's Garden. I am completing the internship paperwork, including billing for the 2007 program and application for the 2008 program.
- Lake of the Woods Dam: The Sluice Gate adjustment shaft needs to be replaced. We've contacted the appropriate people and are working on getting a cost estimate for replacement.

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

Miscellaneous

Over the past month, the Construction Department:

- continued construction of the Hensley Hall entrance ramps;
- continued installation of new steel doors at Lake of the Woods and Elks Lake Pavilions; and
- started the repairs and painting of the Lake of the Woods entrance sign on Route 47

Middle Fork Residence

The successful bidder has obtained his performance bond and provided staff the proposal and insurance for the demolition of the existing home. Demolition started the week of December 24th and is expected to take three weeks. The contractor plans to salvage some materials such as copper water lines, wiring, aluminum siding and some framing lumber. Forming and pouring of the new concrete foundation is scheduled for the week of January 14th.

January 3, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Department Activity Report

General

- We completed a final report and were happy to receive reimbursement from the National Association of County Organizations for the Homer Lake Wetland Grant.
- Staff continued to work on the invasives removal along John Potts Arboretum Way and completed this fall's plantings there. In addition, two new bur oak trees were planted in the 9-11 Memorial Woodland at River Bend this month.
- Four new memorial trees have been planted this year, and the donors have been notified. Additionally, one memorial tree that was planted last year was replaced.
- Evaluations were completed for all of the Botanical Gardens Staff.
- Staff has spent a lot of time reviewing the CCFPD website. This is a big task that we will be doing in three steps over the next several months. Step one will be to evaluate the website in general as requested by Andee. Step two will be an evaluation and correction of the existing Natural Resources pages. Step three will be to develop new Natural Resources pages.
- At this time, there are six individual volunteers taking the training and licensing to be certified to use herbicide on District landholdings.
- We have been working closely with Andee and Tonya to revamp the Honorary and Memorial Tree Program information. This information will be available soon on the website.
- A large portion of staff time this month has been dedicated to repairs and regular maintenance on large and small equipment and ordering parts. Adam has developed new spreadsheets and datasheets to help us track and record equipment repairs.
- We collected the remaining seed from the seed collection beds and began to clean them for next year.
- Frog call survey training will be offered this year for interested citizens. We have an initial training date of February 7 and then field training this spring. This program was piloted last year with volunteer and Master Naturalist Doug Mills. We have been granted permission to use the Chicago Wilderness protocol and training materials.

- Dan was asked to review and comment on the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission's draft of the Land Resource Management Plan.
- In addition to the above, we have been working on scheduling Lincoln's Challenge in the Botanical Garden and with Natural Resources at both Lake of the Woods and Middle Fork; completing seed and tree orders for 2008 plantings; distribution of additional Emerald Ash Borer information to local campgrounds; focusing on the CCFPD strategic plan action steps; cleaning of the shop, office and shade house area; updating seed and planting databases; and preparation of job announcements for seasonal help. We loaned the tree spade out to Urbana Park District.

Meetings

- Dan met with Phil Hult to discuss the next two phases of Buffalo Trace planting.
- Dan and Colin have been working with Kim Horbas about Trail Steward trainings. Colin will now be taking the lead on the trainings and is continuing to develop training materials.
- Dan attended the Grand Prairie Friends Board Meeting. The biggest news this month is that 100% of the funds needed to purchase the land around the Loda Cemetery Nature Preserve have been received through donations.
- Master Naturalist meetings continue, and a 2007 summary of the program is attached.



Adam Rex plants a bur oak at River Bend.

January 7, 2008

MEMORADUM

From: Larry Beckett, Botanical Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden Activity Report

- Power equipment has been winterized and stored inside.
- Work orders have been generated for small projects.
- Greenhouse work continues with plant maintenance and repotting of plants to be used in the garden this growing season.
- We are in the process of cleaning and reorganizing work areas for easier access.
- Strategic planning for the Botanical Garden is underway for the coming year.
- Plant orders have been sent to the growers for our annual displays.
- Staff has been pricing and comparing utility vehicles for 2008 purchase.

- Champaign Park District – Jackie Robinson Day
- Parkland College – hosted course “Rivers of the Heartland”
- Chanute and area libraries – summer reading program
- Hardy’s Reindeer Ranch – motor coach tours
- CCFPD Education staff – Prairie Adventures, teacher workshop and school programs

Accreditation

Accreditation paperwork was due in Washington DC in March, 2007. Supplemental requests were due in August, and the review was scheduled for December. This included a larger binder of materials documenting our work within the community with a focused look at how we identify our audiences and how we actually serve them. We submitted details on our governance structure, collection plan, policy and procedures manual, risk management procedures for the museum, and the museum’s institutional plan.

The reviewer was very focused on the museum name and was pleased to see we are moving forward to change it. Although the storage areas were in great shape, the reviewer shared a concern that there was no space for collection growth. I feel confident that the review went well. However, we may not see notification of our results until sometime after the Commission meets in July. Our thanks to all who helped us prepare for, and all who participated in, the review. It was much appreciated, and we are relieved to once again have this behind us.

January 4, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Wendy Israel, Environmental Education Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental and Horticulture Education Activity Report

2007 Environmental and Horticulture Education Summary

In the past year, 4,850 people were reached through Environmental and Horticulture Education programs, compared with 4,768 in 2006. Overall program numbers increased in 2007, though some individual program areas decreased (i.e. school programs). A complete summary of 2007 programs is included at the end of this report. I am very pleased to report that both Horticulture and Environmental Education public programs increased dramatically, due to the addition of the Kids' Garden Club, the reformatted Garden Adventures Summer Program as well as the Middle Fork Naturalist Program.

In 2007, 1,134 people visited the Environmental Education Center, compared with 1,040 in 2006. Of the 1,134 visitors, 742 were adults and 393 were children. In addition to these visitors, 747 students visited the education center while on a field trip to Homer Lake, compared with 574 students in 2006.

In 2007, we began tracking volunteer hours. Volunteers contributed 179 hours to Horticulture Education programs and projects, while 70 hours were contributed to Environmental Education.

Additional department accomplishments in 2007 include:

- Presentation of educator workshop, Making Good Choices: Cross-Curricular Teaching of the Environmental and History in Champaign County, funded by C2000 Grant (\$7,890);
- Development of naturalist programs at Middle Fork reaching 342 people in summer 2007;
- Completion of District-wide Interpretive Plan draft;
- Approval of Children's Garden as a Master Gardener volunteer site;
- Development and implementation of exhibit plan for Environmental Education Center;
- Implementation of new homeschool programs in collaboration with museum staff.

Grants and Donations Received:

- \$1,715 Lumpkin Family Foundation Grant for Education Center Exhibits;
- \$200 Environmental Education Assn of Illinois Grant for updates to animal enclosures;
- \$100 Audubon Mini-Grant for Environmental Education mammal programs;
- \$68.22 Audubon Mini-Grant for improvements to the animal enclosures;
- \$250 Home Depot card from National Gardening Assn for Children's Garden supplies;
- \$200 donation from District IV Garden Club to support Horticulture Education;
- \$94 Audubon Mini-Grant for Horticulture Education Soil Science Outreach program;
- \$70 from Twin-City Garden Club for Garden Adventure scholarships.

Total Grant Funds Received in 2007: \$2,697

Environmental and Horticulture Education Program Summary 2002-2007

School Programs Summary

Environmental Education School Programs Attendance	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Spring	1,476	1,590	1,076	1,992	1,624	1,842
Summer*	18	112	20	218	0	0
Fall	1,274	1,752	1,845	1,040	1,508	1,906
Homeschool	15	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2,783	3,454	2,941	3,250	3,132	3,748

*Excludes Eco-Adventures

Horticulture Education School Programs Attendance	2007	2006	2005**	2004	2003	2002
Horticulture Education Spring	194	251	202	345	NA	0
Horticulture Education Fall	559	540	329	0	NA	42
Homeschool	17	0	0	0	0	0
Total	770	791	531	345	NA	42

**Horticulture Education moved under supervision of Environmental Education Department.

Public Programs Summary

Environmental Education Public Program Attendance	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	2002
Eco-Adventures & Children's Programs ⁺	229	187	214	171	145	138
Scout Programs	25	25	447	70	20	39
Family and Adult Programs	172	196	84	77	118	121
Middle Fork Naturalist Program (Added May 2007)	342	0	0	0	0	0
Total	768	408	745	318	283	298

⁺Growing Up Wild, Winter Wonders and Spring Break Day Camp

Horticulture Education Public Program Attendance	2007	2006	2005**	2004	2003	2002
Garden Adventures	29	10	7	13	NA	42
Family and Adult Programs	297	105	46	0	NA	85
Artisan Series	203	0	0	0	0	0
Total	529	115	53	13	NA	127

**Horticulture Education moved under supervision of Environmental Education Department.

Education Center Visitor Summary (Excludes field trip visitors)

	2007	2006	2005	07 Seasonal Visitation	Weekdays	Saturdays	Total
Weekdays	661	677	342	Jan-March (open 3 Saturdays for programs)	113	45	158
Saturdays	473	363	172	April-Oct (30 Saturdays)	477	428	905
Total	1,134	1,040	514	Nov-Dec (0 Saturdays)	71	0	71
				Total	661	473	1,134

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

Publications

The program brochure and the Foundation mailing coincidentally went in the mail on the same day, so the CCFPD was well represented in mailboxes! We are steadily receiving contributions in response to the Foundation mailing, with a number of names appearing for the first time. There were two pieces designed – one that had a response form – and it is our plan to send out more mailings this year, using the response form and a letter, to people who haven't been on our list before with hopes of broadening our support base.

Community Calendar Listings

Programs for 2008 have been listed on the community calendars for these websites – www.visitcampaigncounty.org (Convention and Visitors Bureau), www.news-gazette.com, www.pantagraph.com, illinoishomepage.net (WCIA TV), www.wicdtv.com, www.wandtv.com, the217.com (Buzz, Daily Illini & WPGU), and www.wbgl.com. We currently have 62 programs scheduled for the year, so that involves entering each program on each website individually. We were fortunate to have a seasonal employee complete this during her winter break. The programs are now being entered into our own website, and are being sent to those places that do not have “do it yourself” websites like those listed here.

District Website

The priority with the website right now is uploading and organizing photo libraries. This is progressing, but as with many things involving a website, there are many steps, and it takes considerable time.

Christmas Tree Recycling

The District again has received significant coverage on our Christmas tree recycling service offered to the public each year. Executive Director Pagac appeared on the WCIA Morning Show as well as the WCIA news to discuss the program, and I was interviewed by the News-Gazette and WICD TV. The tree piles continue to grow!

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Department Activity Report:

Projects in the Volunteer Department over the past month included:

- Coordination of work provided by two community service volunteers
- Coordination of a group volunteer project for a UI student organization.
- Preparation for Trail Stewards Workshop scheduled for February 2nd at the Golf Course Clubhouse 10 AM – 12 PM. Staff has contacted government agencies for printed manuals and CDs, solicited donations for the Trail Steward Tool Bucket; assembled CCFPD Steward folders, prepared letters of invitation to recent Master Naturalist graduates, and put together details for PSAs and website notices.

January 4, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: John Baker, Administration

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Administration Activity Report

Vickie and I worked with Dave Huber on the 2007 golf inventory. The pro shop has about \$45,000 remaining in inventory at the end of 2007. The count found all but \$233 of the computer inventory.

The staff met to discuss all District fees for 2008. Most fees increase at a modest 3% rate each year. Tonya noted one difficulty with fee setting is that pavilion rentals are made a year in advance, which often is 4-6 months before fees are set. We discussed moving up the fee setting to no later than June for fees for subsequent years. We also agreed to go ahead and seek approval for both 2008 and 2009 fees at the January Board Meeting to get a head start.

Jerry and I met with Dave Huber and Dave Torrens on golf fees and agreed to request golf fees at an increased rate for 2008, but to provide discounts valid for merchandise, food or future golf purchases due to the tees not being available for play until later in the season. The discounts will be issued until the turf on the new tees is ready for play.

Staff also discussed systems that could streamline and possibly automate our pavilion, campground and program reservation process. A customer-identified need is the ability to make camping reservations one-year in advance. The group also discussed the potential for making group boat rentals available, which will help make boat rentals cost-effective. We will meet a little later on the boat rentals and the best way to increase revenue sufficiently to justify the staff needed to operate this amenity.

Tonya and Angie met with Jerry and me about contracting with a rental company to provide wedding chairs instead of purchasing new chairs in 2008. This would create some efficiencies for staff and provide a better service to the customer.

Mary is investigating the best options for identifying Champaign County students for the proposed Foundation scholarship/internship program.

Mary also is developing contacts with university placement offices, key departments and key professional organizations that might identify students for future internships or employment with the District. The Coordinator of Environmental Education and Interpretation position has been widely advertised with Illinois universities that have programs applicable to this role, the Environmental Education Association of Illinois and the National Association for Interpretation Region 5, as well as in-house and in the News-Gazette.

Vickie and I have been working on year-end closing for all District accounts, preparing for the 2007 audit, and opening all accounts for the new year. (This has been a major activity for both Vickie and me!) Mary has helped with setting up the new payroll for 2008.

Mary also contacted staff unable to attend either of the two meetings in which we discussed sick leave options. We believe in this way we gained input from all but one full-time staff person.

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Dave Torrens, Director of Golf

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Golf Course Maintenance Activity Report

- Winter maintenance on the golf cars is complete.
- Staff will attend the Illinois Department of Agriculture Pesticide training January 14-15 in Urbana.
- Staff continues with winter service of the equipment.
- Dave Torrens will attend the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America Conference in Orlando, FL. January 27th to February 3rd. Scheduled classes are: Management Strategies for Turfgrass Systems and Modern Lake Management. Many other open seminars involving turfgrass management issues will be scheduled.

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

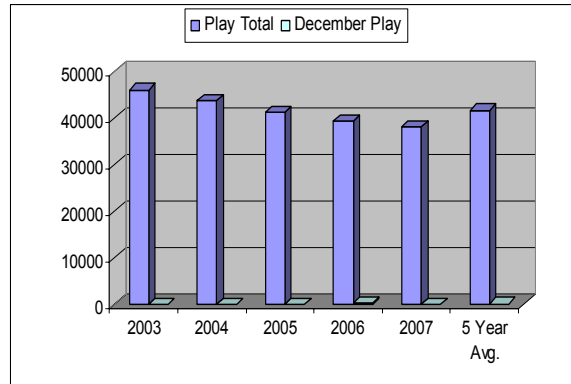
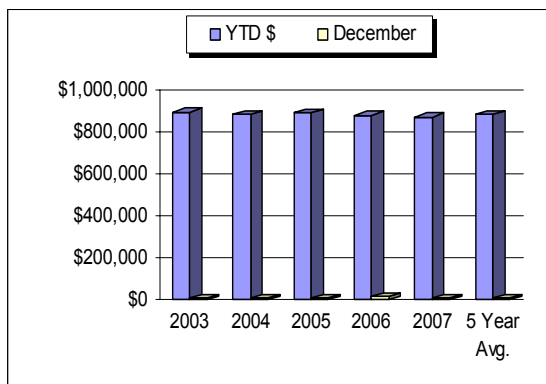
From: Dave Huber, Golf Professional/Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

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

Operations

Overall revenue has been fairly constant over the last five years, in spite of the play numbers going slowly down. Our increases in fees and eye on controlling costs have kept pace with the nationwide marginal downward trend in total play. With the improvements to the golf facility and the point in the curve of the Baby Boomers, I think we are in a great position to benefit from what I believe will be a slow upward movement of total play over the next ten years.



No tournaments or outing activity this month

Other Activities

- We are reviewing and finalizing 2008 golf fees with adjustments built in for the beginning of the season before we can utilize the new tees.
- I replaced the five 300-watt lights in the clubhouse with an energy-saving type; each bulb will save up to \$165.00 per year and considerably reduce our total wattage used.
- Work continues on year-end reporting of merchandise inventory, food and beverage inventory, outstanding credit balances with vendors, and gift cards issued and redeemed in preparation for our annual audit.
- We have completed our input for the National Golf Foundation golfer survey program materials and will begin distributing the survey this spring.
- I have scheduled an online demonstration with "Course Trends" a web/marketing company that integrates with Fore Reservations, our point-of-sale software. I will keep you posted on our effort to improve our communications with our customers.

January 7, 2008

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 has started yearly maintenance on the mowing equipment.
- Staff continues to repaint preserve benches and will start on trash cans before long.
- I have started on the District-wide janitorial ordering process.
- The Kubota RTV900 utility vehicles have been ordered from Birkey's, and we are waiting for them to be delivered.
- Staff continues to change transmission filters and fluids on the District licensed vehicles.
- 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.

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Matthew Kuntz, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Work has begun on the site superintendent's house. The demolition crew has been up to take out piping, boards, aluminum and other pieces for recycling. On January 7, the house was officially brought down.
- Andy Little and I have been planning projects for the upcoming season inside the campground, such as landscaping, building improvements and campsite repairs.
- We have received a good amount of snowfall in the past month. It is good to see visitors enjoying themselves, no matter what the weather is. We have had a lot of cross-country skiers this winter.
- Natural Resources staff has been doing routine yearly maintenance on tractors and other implements located at Middle Fork.
- We would like to thank staff at Lake of the Woods Operations for hosting the annual holiday luncheon in December.
- We are currently making schedules for Lincoln's Challenge in the spring.
- A new information board has been installed at the Activity Center entrance. It will display general information about the building, contact numbers and trail maps.
- The remainder of the month has been spent doing routine maintenance in and around the forest preserve.

January 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Staff developed bid specifications for the new backhoe and conducted the bid opening.
- Roy and Brad installed new toilet partitions at Walnut Hill Shelter, and the new poured floor was installed as well. We also replaced the older, less efficient 3.5-gallon flush toilet with the new 1.6-gallon model in another effort to conserve water. This was a very nice improvement that will be much appreciated by the public.
- We had to plow snow one time this month.