

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Activity Report

Golf Course Entrance Renovation

The asphalt stamping project will be complete by next week's Board meeting. It looks great, and it was fun to watch them during the process.

River Bend Accessible Fishing Pier

The contract for the Accessible Fishing Pier was awarded to Superior Seawalls and Docks. We are currently investigating causes of and solutions for the high water levels at Sunset Lake at River Bend; however, pier construction will proceed.

CAC Outreach Subcommittee

I coordinated arrangements and staffing for the CAC Outreach Subcommittee at the Farmer's Market as well as the Sweet Corn Festival.

Sangamon River Forest Preserve Entrance Sign

Jerry Pagac and Mary Ellen Wuellner chose a rock to be used for the entrance sign at the Sangamon River Forest Preserve. Mark Nepermann, our planning intern this summer, developed a graphic design for the sign, which I have modified and cleaned up for the final sign construction process. Below is a photo of the rock with the sign graphics superimposed on it.



September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

Miscellaneous

Over the past month, the Construction Department:

- with Lake of the Woods staff, completed the installation of the Route 47 entrance sign;
- continued work on the Middle Fork shop office renovation; and
- hauled fill material to the old cart barn excavation site at the Golf Course.

Middle Fork Residence

Staff completed the installation of electrical outlets and light fixtures, and poured the concrete approach to the new garage.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources
Michael Daab, Assistant Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Department Activity Report

- Seed collection has begun for the year. We are in need of a great deal of seed stock for several upcoming forest and prairie restoration projects.
- We have been spraying honeysuckle and autumn olive seedlings and resprouts in areas we have cleared with the Bobcat and by hand.
- Site preparation continues on the west side of Homer Lake. This is the final spraying of old field succession weeds before planting of a prairie seed mix later in the year.
- We watered young memorial and other recently-planted trees during a dry period in August
- We have been weeding our prairie seed beds. The prairie plants are growing well, and we will collect a lot of seed from them this year.
- We have worked to control teasel at all sites.
- Staff attended the 21st North American Prairie Conference in Winona, MN. The conference had many good sessions including several on planting techniques and invasive species control.
- Master Naturalist classes have begun and will continue on Tuesdays throughout the fall.
- We thank Colin Vaughan for his contributions to the CCFPD and wish him the best in his new position as a police officer with the McHenry County Conservation District.

Cream gentian (*Gentiana alba*) seed was collected from the Tomlinson Cemetery prairie remnant and now blooms at Buffalo Trace.



September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Larry Beckett, Botanical Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden Activity Report

- A leak in the primary water line from the well to the garden has been discovered, and repairs are scheduled to be completed as soon as possible with the help of the Lake of the Woods Operations staff. At present, we are watering planters and containers in the garden with a 100-gallon tank.
- We planted fall mums and perennials at the entrance to the museum.
- Shrubs and perennials have been removed along the brick walkway leading to the schoolhouse within the garden. These will be replanted after the sidewalk renovation has been completed.
- Plans have been made for a new prairie sampler to be located on the south side of the children's Discovery Garden. The garden will showcase a wide range of selected prairie plants commonly found in a tallgrass prairie. This area will be prepared and partially planted by mid-October.
- The picnic area between the Discovery Garden and the Museum was remulched with wood chips for the fall school programs.
- Preparations have been made and materials purchased for resurfacing the block wall of the lean-to greenhouse. This will greatly improve the appearance and help conserve energy.

September 6, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Cheryl Kennedy, Museum Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Early American Museum Activity Report

<u>August Comparisons</u>	2007	2008
Visitation	1,160	1,197
Year to date	5,838	5,303
Museum Store	\$1,018.72	\$1,116.94
Year to date	\$8,294.53	\$8,372.87
Donations	\$550.10	\$592.93
Year to date	\$2,293.40	\$2,318.36

<u>Volunteer Hours</u>	155.75 hours
Office Support	67.50
Collections	30.50
Special Projects	57.75

Education

The education staff shared in the delivery of brochures to the teachers this month. They have also worked together to develop the fall roster of participants in the annual Prairie Adventures program this fall. This program is highly valued by area teachers, and we recently learned from the Champaign School District curriculum director that they have included both the CCFPD Prairie Adventures program and the Urbana Park District Prairie Mary program as recommended resources for their science unit. As a result, Prairie Adventures will be expanded this fall to serve 16 additional classes from five schools in Champaign.

Public Programs

Approximately 55-60 people took advantage of the opportunity to visit with Jan Chandler from Heartland Gallery, and about 75 people came to listen to Banjulele during the final offering of the Second Sunday Artisan series. Charlie also provided a program for the senior day care group, Circle of Friends.

Coming next: *Prairie Stories*, September 13th from 8 to 5 p.m. This program will offer an afternoon featuring work and play from an earlier time. We will have a number of area blacksmiths demonstrating and selling their work. Visitors will dip candles, carry water, taste hush puppies and fresh churned butter, sample apple butter cooked over an open fire, quilt, learn embroidery and do laundry. Kids will help build a dog house that will be raffled off to one of our young builders at the end of the event. In addition to the sound of the blacksmith's hammer, visitors will enjoy Illinois folk music by Banjulele.

September 21st at 2 p.m., Professor Ron Keller from Lincoln College will speak on *Lincoln, Slavery, and the Legacy of Race*. Professor Keller will trace the imagery and documents that present Lincoln either as a progressive emancipator or a reluctant anti-slavery man. This program has been funded by the Illinois Humanities Council.

On November 9th at 2 p.m., Ellen Swain, Archivist for UI Student Life and Culture will present *Soldier, Sailor, and Student: Collecting World War II Stories from the University of Illinois*. Ms. Swain will describe the current oral history project of the University Archives capturing recollections of campus life during this pivotal era.

Education Department Interpretive Plan

Sarah Elm, EIU Historical Administration Program intern, recently completed ten interviews with representatives within the education, natural resources, construction, maintenance and administration departments to gather thoughts on the draft of a Districtwide interpretive plan. Sets of standard questions as well as several tailored to each individual's duties were used. Sarah presented her findings to the Marketing Committee, and the committee shared ideas on how to develop and implement an internal marketing plan specific to the District's needs.

This past month, Sarah led the education staff through a brainstorming session to develop overall themes, common themes and stories within the plan. Staff will next look at how best to tell these stories and define the likely audiences for each media format.

Lincoln Exhibit Activities

Barbara Wysocki and District staff met with Taylor Studios to provide them with the details of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant, the proposed timeline and funds available. At the September 2nd meeting, the Lincoln Exhibits Committee voted to work to raise additional funds to support the project design element so the grant funds awarded by IMLS could be used to support fabrication and installation costs. Once the contract has been formalized, work will begin on the exhibit design. The contract will provide for adjustments and/or project phasing should the committee fall short of its fundraising goal.

Cheryl met with Heather Tucker, Communication Specialist for the IMLS grant, to confirm the proposed format and timeline for marketing and evaluation. Heather will begin gathering data through focus groups with teachers and mothers between 30 and 50 with children at home. This information will be used to develop the evaluation plan, evaluation tools and marketing plan.

As a member of the Looking for Lincoln Coalition Board, Cheryl participated in an orientation meeting on the National Heritage Area with a representative of the National Park Service.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Pam Leiter, Coordinator of Environmental Education and Interpretation

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental and Horticultural Education Activity Report

School Programs 65 students

Environmental Education programs served 65 students in August from the following schools/agencies: Chesterbrook Academy (Oak St.), Prince of Peace and Troop 25 Boy Scouts. Staff scheduled fall school programs, sent confirmations to teachers, and has been prepping supplies.

Public Programs 221 participants

Environmental Education:

- Sunset Paddle: 8 people participated.
- Campground: 153 people participated in naturalist programs (20 programs total).

Horticulture Education

- About 75 people attended the concert portion of Second Sunday Artisan program.
- Tomato Time was canceled due to low enrollment.

Staff is developing the 2009 public program schedule.

Environmental Education Center Visitation: 131 (78 adults, 53 children)

Pam contacted several UI professors to see if their classes would like to do a planting design around the Education Center; we have no takers yet. Inside, we are working on developing new ideas for the rotating exhibits. We received \$21.72 in the donation box this month.

Volunteer Hours 49.5 hours

Environmental Education: 14.0 hours Stacey is recruiting volunteers for fall school programs.
Horticulture Education: 35.5 hours Rachel hosted a volunteer appreciation evening, Dessert in the Garden. She continues to recruit and train more volunteers.

Summer Camps

Summer camps concluded the last week of July. Below is a summary of responses from evaluations completed by the parents of Garden Adventures campers.

	Yes	No
Met expectations	18	0
Recommend to others	18	0

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Camp Registration Process	15	1	1	0	0
Day Camp Staff	17	0	0	0	0
Weekly Topics	16	2	0	0	0
Check in/out process	9	0	0	0	0

	Too Short	Just Right	Too Long
Daily Program Length	1	17	0

	Yes	No	Maybe
Would you be interested in attending Garden Camp 8 weeks instead of 6?	13	4	1

Comments from parent evaluations:

- Excellent program! It was so fun and educational!
- We love the new garden this year.
- I always rave about this program to anyone with small children.
- Thank you so much Rachel and staff for your hard work to make the experience fun for the children. You guys are enthusiastic and make learning things in the garden fun! Can't wait until next year!

A few pictures from Garden Adventures:



Campers prepare treats for the Open House.



A camper in front of the gourd trellis



Campers pose in front of the Discovery Garden sign.

Environmental Education – General

- We interviewed candidates for the Fall Environmental Educator positions.
- Cathy Littrell started work on Aug 21. We are glad she is able to help us out this fall!
- The Insect Investigation Loan backpacks are almost ready. One each will be housed at the Education Center, Early American Museum and Headquarters, and will be available for the public to borrow.

Horticulture Education – General

- We interviewed candidates for the Horticultural Education Program Specialist position.
- Pam met with Rachel, Mary Ellen and Larry to discuss options for getting grant money to help pay for the proposed Grand Prairie Plot.
- Rachel donated extra produce to a food pantry.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

Publications

The fall/winter issue of the District newsletter went out last week. We also are focusing on increasing our e-mail list to cut down on paper and postage costs. We tried this after the last issue, and the system was not very user-friendly. We have switched e-mail hosts, and this time around, the response is already four times what it was, and we just started this within the past few days. We will continue to encourage people to subscribe to our publications electronically if they are able.

Sangamon River Grand Opening

Staff is working on details for the Grand Opening which will take place 2-4 PM, September 21st. Invitations will go out this week, and we look forward to a fun afternoon on the 21st.

Miscellaneous

- The wayside exhibits received quite a bit of coverage this past month. Cheryl Kennedy has done a wonderful job in helping communities with this effort.
- Advertising focus right now is on Prairie Stories September 13th at the museum. Ads will run in the Citizen and the News-Gazette, and the program is listed in all the community calendars. Flyers distributed to the local elementary schoolchildren always help considerably as well.

September 6, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Activity Report

The volunteer focus continues to be the painting at the Museum Complex.

- Caleb Tonkinson, a Life Scout from Mahomet has chosen a phase of the painting project for his Eagle Scout project. He will begin work September 10 on the Annex. Caleb has organized a crew of scouts and adults to assist with the project. They will begin with building prep, scraping, etc. and then move on to painting. The anticipated project completion date is by the end of September or early October, depending on weather.
- On September 20th, a group of UI Resident Hall Assistants will add their support to the painting project. Approximately 20 students will be working on the museum.

The Volunteer Recognition Event is scheduled for Thursday, October 9th, 6-9 pm. The event will be at Homer Lake and follow last year's format. The evening will begin with a tour of the Education Center by Pam Leiter and staff. Appetizers and punch will be served at the center 6-7 pm. The guests will then proceed to the Salt Fork Center for dinner, presentations and volunteer recognition 7-9 pm. Invitations will be mailed mid-September. Be sure to mark your calendar for a great event!

Thank you to the UI Incoming Freshmen who spent a morning of service at CCFPD on August 30th. Their projects included painting the museum and litter control of several areas at Lake of the Woods. In addition to their volunteer support, the focus of this day was also to introduce them to the District, since they are new to the area, and highlight all that is available for them to enjoy and utilize at the preserves. Pictures of the group are included with this report.



Volunteer Hours for August:	
Horticulture Education	35.5
Trail Stewards	43.0
Group Projects	64.0

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Mary Ellen Wuellner, Grants Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Grant Activity Report

Grants Approved/Denied

No new grant decisions have been received since the August board meeting.

New Grant Applications Submitted

- A full grant proposal was submitted September 15 to the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation for \$22,000 to assist with the purchase of a parcel of land adjacent to the existing Patton Woods site. This is the second step in a two-step application process. A final decision is expected by the end of October.
- An application was submitted to the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois August 29 for \$1,500 to assist with the development of a Grand Prairie Educational Plot near the Children's Discovery Garden in the Botanical Garden. The educational plot will be used by environmental, horticulture, and museum education staff to teach about the landscape that once covered most of this region and its importance in the environment, as well as in the lives of Native Americans and early settlers. Grants will be awarded at the end of November.

Grant Applications Previously Submitted – Decision Pending

- A Bank of America Charitable Foundation grant proposal for \$15,225 is pending. The application requests funding for the museum's Lincoln exhibit and an accompanying educational curriculum. Award notification is expected within 60 days.
- A grant application for the amount of \$4,500 is also pending with the American Hiking Society's National Trails Fund. The grant would allow the District to purchase and install two new interpretive signs and six directional markers for a 1.2-mile extension of trail through the Sangamon River Preserve. Award notification is not expected until spring 2009.
- A grant application to the Target Corporation in the amount of \$1,500 is pending for the 2009 *Sunday Artisan Series and Family Concerts* at the Museum and Botanical Garden. The decision is expected by the end of this month.
- A grant application is also pending from the Motorola Foundation in the amount of \$19,500 to cover expenses related to the Lincoln exhibits at the Courthouse and the Museum. A decision is expected this month.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: John Baker, Administration

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Administration Activity Report

- The past month has been one of preparation for Headquarters staff, getting ready for fall and planning the 2009 Action Plan and 2009 budget development.
- The District received the \$542,192.50 OSLAD reimbursement for the Cook Property purchase.
- Martin, Hood, Friese & Associates LLC completed preparation of the Foundation's 2006 and 2007 tax returns, which have been forwarded to the IRS and to the Illinois Attorney General.
- Mary is coordinating an update of all full-time job descriptions so they are current. We have received several compensation studies from like organizations or for the local area to determine if our current jobs are compensated equitably when compared with similar positions.
- The Foundation Financial Committee met and agreed to help prepare Foundation financial statements for 2008 to be included in the next District audit. This will allow the auditors to provide an opinion on the overall health of the District. The committee also reviewed restricted donations, discussed future investment strategy and budget preparation for the Foundation.
- I've continued to investigate a connectivity solution for Lake of the Woods, including receiving an estimate of \$40,000 to \$50,000 for installing cable to connect the Museum and Westside facilities to Headquarters. The estimate assumes that District staff will trench for cable along the shortest, least invasive route.
- Work continues on the coordination and planning of the Foundation's Mindy Harrington Memorial Golf Outing & Canoe Trip scheduled for Friday, September 12, 2008.
- Facility rental bookings continue to come in. More than 435 rentals have been booked and paperwork sent out for 2008. This covers both in-house as well as paid rentals. In addition, staff has begun to send out 2009 rental paperwork. Rental facility income projections and comparisons have been drafted for review.
- Staff is planning the Employee Recognition Dinner scheduled for Friday, November 7, 2008.
- Recently issued Special Use Permits were: Prairie Cycle Club Bike Ride, and Prairie Harvest Cluster Crop Walk.
- The District's audit contract for 2005-2007 is completed, so I'm preparing an audit bid document for the next three years. A recommendation will be forthcoming at a future Board Meeting.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Dave Torrens, Director of Golf

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Golf Course Maintenance Activity Report

Over the past month, staff has:

- performed routine maintenance on equipment;
- prepared for FY 2009 capital equipment purchases;
- continued with the topdressing program; and
- continued with routine golf course maintenance.

Aerification of the greens is scheduled for Sept. 15th and 16th.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

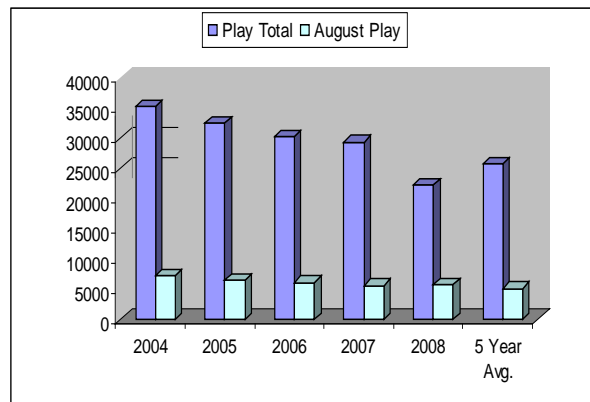
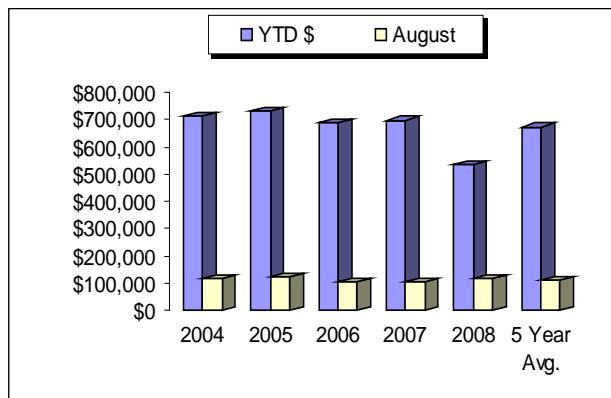
From: Dave Huber, PGA Golf Professional

To: Board of Commissioners

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

Operations

August 2008 revenue was up over last year! August 2008 pro shop revenue was \$114,163.00 and August 2007 was 106,135.00. August 2008 play total was 5,781 players compared to 5,589 in 2007.



Tournaments and Outing Activity

August 9 th & 10 th	Naughtin Open Tournament	80 golfers
August 17 th	Wolf Family Outing	24 golfers
August 22 nd	5 @ 5	2 golfers
August 23 rd & 24 th	Club Championship	39 golfers
August 26 th	Judah Christian High School Meet	20 golfers
August 28 th	Champaign County Association of Realtors	112 golfers

Other Activities

- We began using the new tees August 8th, one day before the Naughtin Open Tournament.
- I helped six Boy Scouts on their way to getting a golf merit badge.
- We recorded a new radio spot for WDWS and did two email blasts letting people know the new tee boxes are open.
- We are starting a new fall tournament this year, a Two-Person Best Position (scramble) Match Play format. I played in this event as an amateur in Bloomington-Normal. It is a lot of fun and very popular.

September 9, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Thomas M. Pike, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods / River Bend / Sangamon River Preserves Activity Report

- Staff has been busy sealing the cracks that have developed over time in the Buffalo Trace section of the Lake of the Woods Bike/Pedestrian Path.
- Crews string-trimmed the guardrails on both sides of the dam at Lake of the Woods, removed the remnants of black landscaping film that had been used there and spread fresh wood chips.
- Staff researched and received bids for a new gooseneck trailer.
- Crews also spent time hauling accumulated scrap metal into Champaign for recycling.
- Thank you to Larry Beckett for helping us spray the grounds around the West Maintenance facility with Roundup.
- Despite slowing some due to the dry weather conditions, mowing has continued.
- 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.

September 8, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Matthew Kuntz, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- We have started research for 2009 capital equipment and capital projects.
- Work is being done at the superintendent's residence. We are building a driveway and filling black dirt in the yard in the front and back of the house.
- We had a great Labor Day weekend this year with a packed campground.
- Lincoln's Challenge continues to do volunteer work at Middle Fork. We have had them bundling wood, picking up litter, and helping staff clear downed trees inside the timber areas.
- We have received new directional signs for the preserve. One sign will be on the highway describing where the front entrance is, and the other shows the campground host's location. We arranged for these in response to campers' requests for better signage.
- The week after Labor Day weekend we received five inches of rain in a two-day period. This was much needed after six weeks of drought.
- The remainder of the month has been spent doing routine maintenance throughout the forest preserve.
- We are now preparing for fall projects.

September 7, 2008

MEMORANDUM

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- Mike Daab and I met with an Eagle Scout to discuss a reforestation project he will be completing this fall.
- Staff has been working on trails with the Fecon in an attempt to widen areas that have been overcome with autumn olive and bush honeysuckle.
- A 6 x 6 border was installed around the new swinging bench at Walnut Hill Shelter.
- Low water levels have finally allowed staff to clean out rip rap from the spillway discharge pool. The high water this spring caused a large amount of rip rap to be washed away from the wing walls and bank.
- We picked up the Looking for Lincoln Wayside Exhibit and began preparations for installation. We poured a concrete slab with colored concrete and imprinted a cobblestone pattern in it (see picture).

