

September 1, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Homer Lake Forest Preserve Activity Report

- The solar lights at the Salt Fork Center were stolen so we installed a lower-priced solar unit to get us through the rest of the rental season. We also placed some additional solar lights in the parking lot at Salt Fork Center, but we put them on a twelve-foot pole to prevent them from being stolen.
- We have been conducting interviews to hire a seasonal to replace Collin Price who left for college to study park and recreation management. We were pleased to find out that he chose this field of study as a result of working at the forest preserve for the past three years.
- Mowing in picnic areas has finally slowed down, so we are taking some time to mow Canadian thistle and other exotics along trails and roadsides.

September 1, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Thomas M. Pike, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

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

- Mowing has almost come to a stop because of the lack of rain.
- The painting and upgrade of the HI-Tower is complete, and it is now open.
- Staff leveled out the dirt over the waterline installed last month from the Headquarters to the main area drinking fountain. They will seed the area (pictured at right) about the middle of September.
- Staff replaced a damaged part of the slide at the playground near Headquarters.
- Crews lightly tilled the trails at Sangamon River to help settle the ruts (pictured below).



- We completed ongoing janitorial work at rental buildings and public restrooms.
- Staff continued with routine scheduled maintenance and repairs on various District vehicles and other equipment.

September 2, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Matthew Kuntz, Site Superintendent

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Middle Fork River Forest Preserve Activity Report

- The new water softener has been installed at the showerhouse located at the campground. This replaces an out-of-date and nonfunctioning water softener. We have been monitoring the new softener for pressure issues we had in the past, and the new system is not taking pressure out of the building.
- We recently rented a tractor with boom mower (pictured at right) to manage our pond borders. On our first two ponds, willow had taken over, and little-to-no area was available for recreational purposes. The boom mower has a 20-foot arm with bush hog deck which can cut heavy brush. This machine saved us many work hours and reduced the possibility of injury also.
- The campground has slowed a bit in the last few weeks. This is typical for this time of year with school starting. Also the weather has not been cooperating for the weekends.
- Campground Naturalist Christy Wallace (pictured below) is finishing her season with us Labor Day Weekend. I thank her for all of her hard work and the wonderful impact she has made with the visitors of the Middle Fork.



- The first section of a new trail has been established going toward the recently-acquired property. The trail starts at the bridge over the Middle Fork on County Highway 9 and will extend north through bottom prairie and woods.

September 2, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Daniel J. Olson, Director of Natural Resources

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Natural Resources Activity Report

- Prairie, woodland and tree seed collection is well underway. Our tree seed need is limited this year so we have been concentrating on getting rarer species to help diversify areas. Some of the tree seed is being planted into areas where exotics have been removed or controlled. Additionally, we need to collect enough prairie seed to plant 50 acres of planned restorations over the next year. We are collecting as much woodland forb seed as we can for putting into controlled areas. The golf course swale has been doing well enough for us to collect seed from it this year. Volunteer seed collections and trainings are scheduled for October.
- Staff has spent a lot of time watering trees planted over the past couple of years. The hot, dry weather has been tough on them. We were happy to have some of the recent rains.
- IEPA Lake Monitoring is coming to a close this month. Sampling was done this year at Homer, River Bend and Lake of the Woods.
- With Mindy Allen's help, Natural Resources and Botanical Garden staffs have been working toward completing several safety and security-related issues including updating safety records and video and paper inventories, just to name a few.
- Mike Daab continues to serve on the East Central Illinois Master Naturalist Board. Additionally, the Invasive Plant Task Force on which he serves is making great strides in helping eliminate exotics, educate the public, and propose policy on the issues of exotic and invasive plants.
- Staff spent quite a bit of time getting eBay items out the door. We sold 15 pallets of brick pavers and several other items. We had a pleasant surprise when our tree spade sold for \$10,000.
- We are accepting bids for the new storage building, with people asking for the bid package from as far away as Chicago and Missouri. Two contractors attended the pre-bid meeting. We will have a recommendation for the Board at this meeting.
- We have collected Emerald Ash Borer traps from our sites, and they are being analyzed. Results will come later this year.
- The River Corps of Discovery, a group of Illinois Natural History Survey-trained citizens in the arts centered on local watersheds, will be the guest presenters at the annual Prairie Rivers Network fundraising dinner in November. Many of their items developed for presentation at the dinner are from CCFPD-owned sites.

- We are currently working with the IDNR on two different projects. Additionally, there are four other scientific and collection projects happening on District lands by local agencies and universities.
- We are currently working with two individuals to set up some memorial tree and bench donations.
- We continue to work with Andee Chestnut to develop website and newsletter materials.
- I presented the Herpetology section to the newly-formed Master Naturalist chapter in McLean County at the Sugar Grove Nature Center.
- We continue the upkeep on equipment, buildings and some landscaping.
- Exotic species targets this month included Canada thistle, reed canary grass and teasel.
- I met with Bruce Colravy about results of this year's RiverWatch information from two of our sites.
- I would like to thank Executive Director Pagac and the Board of Commissioners for encouraging me to attend the Director's School at Oglebay. It was a valuable educational and networking program. The days were filled with educational sessions and ongoing discussion and case studies with people from across the nation. As with many of these trainings, I feel there is so much to implement to better serve staff and preserve patrons.



Shamar Young (Cleveland Metroparks) and I were honored to receive the first John Potts Director's School Tuition Scholarships (the Pottsies) awarded to us by the American Academy Foundation.

September 2, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Larry Beckett, Botanical Garden Supervisor

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Botanical Garden Activity Report

- Kim Horbas arranged for different volunteer groups and individuals to remove weeds around the perimeter of the Botanical Garden.
- We have started vegetable plantings for a fall display in the Discovery Garden. These include many “Cole” type vegetables, turnips and root vegetables, and leafy green vegetables such as Swiss chard, kale, lettuce and spinach.
- We constructed and planted two perennial beds along the sidewalk leading to the one-room schoolhouse. These beds total nearly 2,000 square feet in size and are planted with more than 300 perennials showcasing hybrid cultivars of North American native plants. It will take two seasons for the plants to mature; they will have colorful blooms from late spring to late fall.
- Staff has started placing tree guards and wraps on selected trees in the Botanical Garden to protect the tree trunks from deer damage caused by antler rubbing.
- We are in the process of planting grass seed in areas of the Botanical Garden that have been renovated and thinning-out sections caused by the hot, dry weather.
- Four irrigation heads in the Botanical Garden were either repaired or replaced due to damage or leaking.
- The Botanical Garden had four weddings during August and has six weddings scheduled for September.
- Extensive watering and weeding continues with the late summer drought.

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Bryan Stevens, Construction Manager

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Construction Department Activity Report

Over the past month, the Construction Department:

- completed repairs on the concrete steps and handrails at the HI-Tower;
- started pouring the concrete floor for the new shelter at Sangamon River Forest Preserve (pictured below);
- continued roof repairs on West Maintenance buildings; and
- continued site preparation for the new Natural Resources Storage Building.



Lincoln Exhibits Committee

Barbara Wysocki reported on the Constitution Day activities at the courthouse, and the group continued the discussion on Lincoln dates to commemorate locally. They also discussed ways to bring a Lincoln focus to current activities and re-package the way they are promoted. The committee approved the printing of Lincoln bookmarks featuring information on both the courthouse and the museum exhibit. These will be used as program handouts.

Collections

Barb Garvey collected Hobodatologger readings for the summer months to analyze the collection environment. In the blacksmith exhibit area, for example, she found that fluctuations in the temperature indoors followed the fluctuations in the extreme heat outdoors. The internal temperature, however, stayed within a range of 70-78 degrees. Fluctuations in humidity were more drastic. The main museum area range was 70-76 with the humidity level average closer to optimum at the 45-55 range. The museum downstairs temperature and humidity were the most stable. The annex workroom is the area that needs attention. The readings were all over the chart for this area.

The one-room schoolhouse was closed to the public early so the floor could be painted and ready for the beginning of school programs. Elders from the Church of Latter-day Saints are doing the painting for us.

Risk Management

A state-certified inspector with National Elevator Inspection Services out of St. Louis completed a review of the museum lifts, and the applications for Certificate of Operation have been sent to the State Fire Marshal. Recently-passed legislation requires us to secure a Certificate of Operation and to renew this certificate annually.

Staff and the elders took movies of the galleries for security purposes and to document items and location in case of loss through disaster.

New Employee

Jennifer Nadwodney has been hired to fill the lead position of Customer Service/Retail Associate at the museum. We were very impressed with Jennifer's outgoing, friendly nature. Her resume detailed years of customer service. Our thanks to Vickie Thompson; we couldn't have gotten through this period without her. She will continue for awhile to train Jennifer and complete some report forms she has been redeveloping.

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Pam Leiter, Coordinator of Environmental Education and Interpretation

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Environmental Education Activity Report

School Programs 35 students

As usual, August was a slow month for school programs; students served included classes from Chesterbrook Academy and First Baptist. Program requests for the fall and next spring are coming in now.

Stacey Clementz has been invited to work with Kristin Camp, Champaign Schools' Science Curriculum Coordinator, to help develop their new 4th-grade woodland unit. Part of this work includes developing a field trip to complement in-class instruction; the field trip will be piloted this fall. We potentially could see half-to-all of Champaign Public Schools' 4th-grade classes next fall for this field trip.

We have been invited to be a community partner once again this fall for the Community Stewardship class at the UI Natural Resources & Environmental Sciences Department. Each year, students work with area middle-school classes to teach them about aquatic invasive species. Stacey Clementz will be the staff contact.

Public Programs 241 participants (2009: 166)

- Bats at the Bridge continues to be a popular program with 32 people attending again this year. Promotion included an interview with the Mahomet Citizen.
- Other programs this month included the Sunset Paddle (6 participants), an Illinois RiverWatch Open Lab Workshop at the Environmental Education Center (9 participants), and Kids Garden Club: Bugs in the Garden (15 participants).
- Campground Naturalist programs had 173 participants this month. Popular programs included: Roving Naturalist, Starwatch by CUAS (19+ people), Wildlife in Your Backyard, Scavenger Hunt, and more. In addition, Christy Wallace led a nature hike for a local day camp group by special request. Labor Day Weekend is the last weekend for summer Campground Naturalist programs.

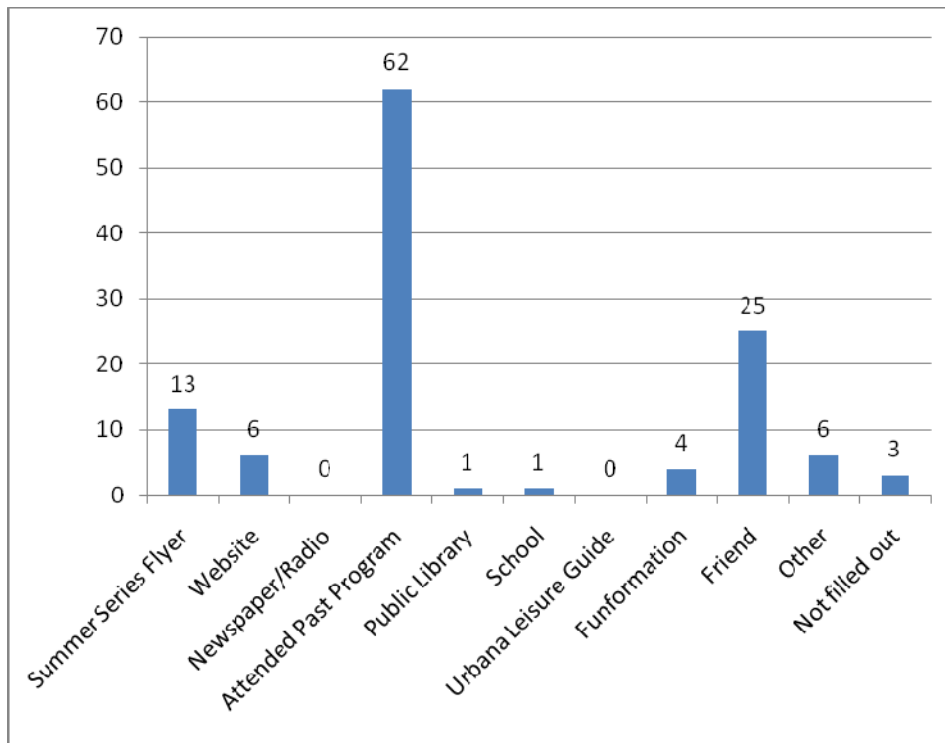
Scout Programs 6 scouts

Staff presented an Environmental Science Merit Badge program at the Boy Scouts' Space Jam Jamboree in Rantoul August 7. We had expected 25-30 scouts to attend, but only 6 showed.

Summer Camps

We rounded out the summer by wrapping up with summer staff, cleaning, and evaluating the summer camp programs. Feedback from parents was overwhelmingly positive once again this year.

To get a picture of where families might be getting information about summer camps, we analyzed responses on Eco-Adventures registration forms. The following graph shows where 121 families heard about the program.



Environmental Education Center Visitation: 133 (August 2009: 125)

General visitation this month was up slightly compared to this month last year. Staff has taken advantage of the planning time between busy program seasons to repair, update and clean exhibits. The fox snake’s “adoption” has been renewed for one year.

Volunteers 11.75 hours (2009: 29.75)

Volunteers helped with Sunset Paddle, Kids Garden Club and weeding at the Environmental Education Center. To aid in recruitment for all our volunteer needs, education staff has put together an Education Department Volunteer Handbook, detailing volunteer opportunities and policies. The handbook is now available online.

Natural Playscape

Sally Prunty and I met with staff from PACE Center for Independent Living to review and get feedback on accessible features in the playscape. Next steps include mowing out the proposed pathways so that we can move toward a final plan, and developing an exhibit in the Environmental Education Center about the planning process thus far to help keep the public informed and excited about the project. Sally’s intern, Darren Leonardi, is continuing with her on a limited basis this fall, and will continue to help with the playscape.

September 3, 2010

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, Golf Course Maintenance staff has:

- performed routine maintenance on equipment; and
- continued with routine golf course maintenance.

Aerification of the greens is scheduled for September 13th.



Irrigation repair of main line to #17 tee.

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

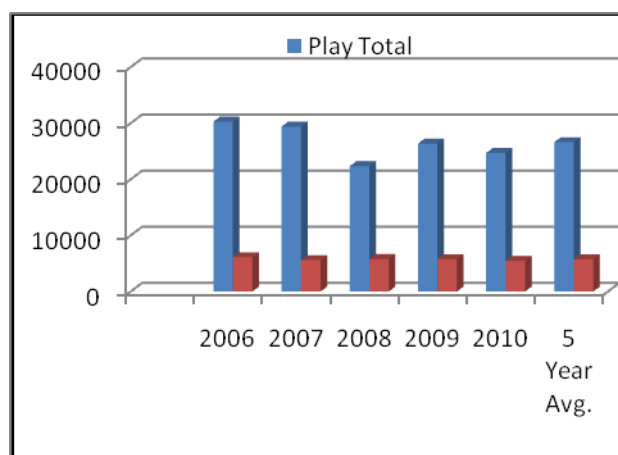
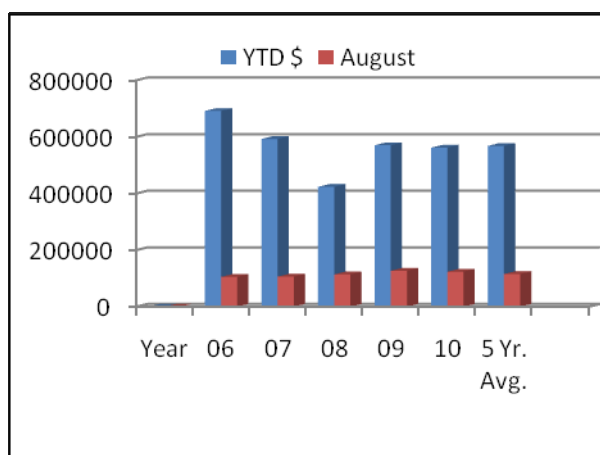
From: Dave Huber, Golf Professional

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Lake of the Woods Pro Shop Activity Report

Operations

Total revenue for August 2010 was \$123,699.00, compared with \$126,996.00 for August of 2009. Player count for August 2010 was 5,445, down 324 golfers from last August.



Tournament and Outings

August 6	Brian Cook Outing	64 players
August 8	Sangamon Valley Christian Center	24 players
August 12	Champaign Rotary West	116 players
August 21-22	Club Championship	36 players
August 28	Local #149 Outing	27 players
August 29	Volition Outing	32 players

Other Activities

- Our last session of the District “Get Golf Ready” adult golf lessons started August 31st with five participants.
- I upgraded our Fore Reservations software on all six pro shop and snack bar computers and installed a new firewall and virus protection program on the secure server.
- We ran a new online promotion in August. The “Dog Days of Summer” players booked online and received the discounted twilight rate with a hot dog and drink at the turn.
- One of the features of Fore Reservations software is a “Comeback Coupon.” We can tie a promotion to any fee, and a coupon is printed on the spot for a future promotion. In August, we gave a coupon for \$5 off a weekday green fee with every full price weekend green fee paid.

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: John Baker, Administration

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Administration Activity Report

- Department heads have spent a great amount of time preparing their budgets and equipment and project requests for FY 2011. They have submitted their proposed operating budgets, and Mary Beck is entering most budget requests into MSI and preparing the picture book for requested equipment and projects. Sally Prunty entered her department's operating budget, trying out the new system, which will be accessible for supervisors to enter and monitor their budgets and payments.
- The August property tax allotment (\$295,413) arrived August 26. The District has received 62% of property tax revenues which is on target with past years' receipts. See attached 2010 Property Tax Distributions worksheet for more information on future receipts.
- The District made an extra IMRF payment in August because IMRF had the 2010 employer pension share set at the phase-in rate of 8.58% instead of the actuarial rate of 10.05%. Last year the Board approved the higher rate to keep employee pensions sound and for long-term District cost savings. The payment of \$13,044 made up the difference in cost between the two rates for January to July.
- The Foundation Fundraising Committee met August 25 to discuss how to maintain regular contact with donors and the need for an annual plan. Ideas discussed included using quarterly post card mailers, an event to thank donors, and expansion of other District events to provide special opportunities for donors.
- Sarah Elm and Andee Chestnut are working on a database for potential donors to the Foundation and their interests in the District. This will help the Fundraising Committee with its outreach to donors.
- Furat Ibrahim from Microsystems will begin transferring the District applications, records and files from the current server to the two new servers the week of September 13.
- Rental paperwork for 2010 has been sent to more than 500 renters; this includes both in-house and paid rentals. Requests are also coming in for 2011 rentals.
- One Special Use Permit has been submitted and approved – MS PTO Dawg Walk School Fundraiser, October 1st on the Buffalo Trace Bike/Pedestrian Path.

CCFPD Property Tax Distributions 2010

FUND	2010 Levy	%	Projections							Collected	% Collected	Balance
			May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Nov-10	difference			
General	\$ 1,714,673	60.51%	\$292,532	\$578,880	\$24,977	\$178,815	\$600,135	\$ 34,293	\$ 5,039	\$1,075,204	62.71%	\$ 639,468
Bonds	\$ 197,295	6.96%	\$ 33,648	\$ 66,585	\$ 2,873	\$ 20,568	\$ 69,053	\$ 3,946	\$ 622	\$ 123,674	62.68%	\$ 73,621
IMRF	\$ 121,964	4.30%	\$ 20,779	\$ 41,138	\$ 1,775	\$ 12,707	\$ 42,687	\$ 2,439	\$ 439	\$ 76,399	62.64%	\$ 45,565
Audit	\$ 28,697	1.01%	\$ 4,883	\$ 9,663	\$ 417	\$ 2,985	\$ 10,044	\$ 574	\$ 131	\$ 17,948	62.54%	\$ 10,749
Liability	\$ 68,156	2.41%	\$ 11,651	\$ 23,054	\$ 995	\$ 7,121	\$ 23,855	\$ 1,363	\$ 117	\$ 42,821	62.83%	\$ 25,335
SSN	\$ 147,074	5.19%	\$ 25,091	\$ 49,651	\$ 2,142	\$ 15,337	\$ 51,476	\$ 2,941	\$ 435	\$ 92,221	62.70%	\$ 54,853
Construction	\$ 556,013	19.62%	\$ 94,852	\$187,699	\$ 8,099	\$ 57,980	\$194,605	\$ 11,120	\$ 1,659	\$ 348,629	62.70%	\$ 207,384
TOTAL	\$ 2,833,873		\$483,435	\$956,671	\$41,277	\$295,513	\$991,856	\$ 56,677	\$ 8,444	\$1,776,897		\$ 1,056,977

Actual/Expected Percent Distributions:	Actual	Actual	Actual	Actual	Projected		
	May-10	Jun-10	Jul-10	Aug-10	Sep-10	Nov-10	difference
	17.06%	33.76%	1.46%	10.43%	35.00%	2.00%	0.30%

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Mary Ellen Wuellner, Grants Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Grant Activity Report

Grants Approved

- The applications for Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant funding through the US Department of Energy were approved. The grants will: 1) replace the five furnaces in the Early American Museum (\$12,900), and 2) replace the furnaces in Lake of the Woods and Elks Lake pavilions (\$4,650). These grants will cover 75% of the project cost and will require a local match of 25%.
- The grant application to The Nature Conservancy and Illinois Nature Preserves Commission in the amount of \$1,671 for the purchase of tools and equipment for the Volunteer Trail Stewards and Herbicide Applicators was also approved.

New Grant Applications Submitted

- An IDOT Transportation Enhancement Program (ITEP) grant was submitted at the end of August for the Kickapoo Rail-Trail project in the amount of \$3.1 million. The grant would cover 80% of the remaining engineering work and 50% of the acquisition cost. The grant deadline arrived before a firm agreement could be reached with the CSX Railroad; therefore an overestimated acquisition amount of \$1.2 million was used to figure the request. A second ITEP grant was submitted for the Lake of the Woods Road multi-purpose pathway that would link Mahomet's Barber Park to the Lake of the Woods Preserve. That grant request is \$1.2 million and would cover 80% of the engineering work and 80% of the construction cost.
- An application was submitted to the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois in the amount of \$2,000 for costs related to the teachers' workshop scheduled for June 2011, *Making Good Choices: Cross-Curricular Teaching of the Environment and History in Champaign County*. Decisions should be made by the end of November.

Grant Applications Previously Submitted – Decision Pending

- An IDNR Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) (\$119,000) grant for the recent purchase of land adjacent to the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve.
- State of Illinois' Public Museum Capital Grant (\$996,750) to undertake Phase I of the Museum of the Grand Prairie project – a 4,400-square-foot single-story addition to the annex that would add both storage and education space and connect the annex to the museum building.
- Illinois Conservation Foundation (\$4,500) for the playscape project.
- North Face - Explore Fund (\$2,500) also for the playscape.
- Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund - Small Projects Program (\$2,000) for the teacher education workshop.

September 2, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Sally Prunty, Planning Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Planning Activity Report

Sangamon River OSLAD Grant Project

- We have bid out the asphalt parking lot and road project, and expect to have the item on the agenda at this month's Board Meeting.
- The construction crew has finished the rough grade for the parking area and picnic shelter area and has installed the concrete pad for the shelter. We expect delivery of the shelter in early-to-mid-October, and are currently soliciting price quotes for shelter construction.

Natural Playscape

- Darren Leonardi is currently laying out the sidewalk routes for the playscape at Homer Lake, to give us an idea of how things will look. He is also working on a display board to place inside the Environmental Education Center.
- Pam Leiter and I met with staff at PACE, the local organization concerned with creating better accessibility in Champaign County and surrounding areas. We discussed the playscape in terms of the accessibility of its elements as designed so far. They had many good comments that we will keep in mind as we finalize the playscape design.

Urbana Sweetcorn Festival

- The CAC Outreach Subcommittee again had a table at the Urbana Sweetcorn Festival on August 28th. It was quite hot, but we did make contact with a number of old friends and made some new friends as well. I am once again grateful to the CAC volunteers for their help with this event, in spite of the heat and humidity that is usually in force on that last weekend in August.

Miscellaneous Planning Tasks

- Planning continues to develop and provide various maps for District staff and members of the public.

September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Andee Chestnut, Public Information Director

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Public Information Activity Report

Publications

- The newsletter is at the printer and is scheduled to be mailed before the Board Meeting. We made a change in artists and are now working with Heather Gillett, who has designed the last few Foundation mailings. She also asked some of the creative people she works with to come up with a name for the newsletter, and thanks to them, we are now calling it “The Leaflet.”
- Final revisions are being completed on the main District brochure. I asked Heather to make the newsletter the priority because of dated information, so now that she’s finished with the newsletter, she’ll go back to putting the finishing touches on the brochure.
- Sarah Elm is developing a design for a new e-newsletter, which we hope to launch in October.
- We now have almost 500 people who have requested to be on our e-list, and more than 200 who “like” our Facebook page (formerly called fans).

General

Work continues on maintaining and updating the website. Recent postings include new natural resources information, an education volunteer handbook, and many new pictures. We were given some exceptional waterfowl pictures (some of which are pictured here) taken at the Middle Fork Waterfowl Management Area by Brian Stearns who only asks for a credit when we use his photos. There are more on the website.



September 3, 2010

MEMORANDUM

From: Kim Horbas, Volunteer Coordinator

To: Board of Commissioners

Re: Volunteer Activity Report

General

Individual volunteer projects completed this month included painting of the vending machine shed at Lake of the Woods; and extensive weeding at the Botanical Garden.

Eagle Scout projects in progress include painting of the Enabling Garden Arbor and construction of planter boxes; installation of a drainage solution on the Buffalo Trace running path; and construction of a footbridge on a trail at Homer Lake.

Upcoming events and group volunteer projects

September 8	UI Volunteer Fair
September 13	Parkland College Volunteer Fair
September 18	UI Alpha Omega Volunteer Group
September 20	Scout Troop 12 Group Project
October 2	UI Marine ROTC
October 16	UI I-Help
October 17	Trail Stewards Workshop

Volunteer Hours

Education	11.75
Museum	138.00
Stewards	63.00
Groups	118.00
Individuals	<u>26.00</u>
Total	356.75



Thirty UI students participated in the Service First project August 21. Together they pulled four truckloads of weeds in the Botanical Garden!