

NEWS

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
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LAKE OF THE WOODS FOREST PRESERVE • HOMER LAKE FOREST PRESERVE • MIDDLE FORK RIVER FOREST PRESERVE
SANGAMON RIVER FOREST PRESERVE • RIVER BEND FOREST PRESERVE • KICKAPOO RAIL TRAIL

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Work on Pond Set to Begin!

Reconstruction work on the pond at the south end of the Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden at Lake of the Woods in Mahomet is set to begin next week. Now more than forty years old, both the pond and the waterfall require major structural restoration. The repairs will necessitate shutting down the water feature so that a new pond liner can be installed, the pond walls can be shored up, and the waterfall can be rebuilt. Improvements to the pond will improve water depth and circulation, offering a healthier habitat for fish and other aquatic animals. The pond will be landscaped with native vegetation when construction is completed.

Construction fencing will go up around the pond on Monday, July 16, at which time the water feature will be closed to the public for the season. We expect the work to take 10-12 months to complete but, as with all outdoor construction projects, it is highly weather-dependent.

The bike path through the garden will remain open during construction, as will the remainder of the botanical garden north of the pond. In early August, a new outdoor exhibit, *Vanishing Acts: Trees Under Threat*, will be installed at the garden, adding to the many other features that will not be disturbed by the construction work.

Much of the funding for the pond and waterfall restoration project was raised through private donations to our Forest Preserve Friends Foundation. Rosann Noel, Mabery and HI Gelvin's daughter, provided a sizable lead gift to kick off the fundraising effort, which was then joined by numerous additional donors. Mrs. Noel, along with her husband Richard, continue to support the Gelvin legacy that is the natural beauty of Lake of the Woods. This much needed restoration project would not be possible were it not for their generous donations to our Friends Foundation, along with those of many other dedicated individuals.

The Forest Preserve District appreciates the community's patience while we undertake this work. When it is completed, we think you'll be even more pleased with the appearance and function of the garden's most prized feature.

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