

The Leaflet

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES



With the support of Champaign County residents,

work on improvements funded through the recently approved tax referendum is continuing into the spring. Crews are wrapping up work on the peninsula accessibility project at Lake of the Woods. The new boathouse replaces an aging structure and is fully accessible for visitors. The new dock offers opportunities to access the water for individuals of all abilities. There is nearly ¼ mile of new pathway through the peninsula, connecting several picnic areas with tables and grills. One of the most exciting improvements is the new large shelter, “Lakeview.” This shelter, which is over 1000 sf. will be great for gatherings and, as the name implies, overlooks the lake. Amenities include ample parking, adjacency to restrooms, a large grill, electrical outlets, and lighting. This spring, work to finish up sidewalks, plant native landscaping, and install interpretive signage will commence. As noted on the front cover, grants and donations helped leverage tax dollars!

Picnic Shelter



Accessible Dock



Lakeview Shelter



Thank you to our good friends at **AMBUCS of Champaign County** for their generous donation to the accessibility project at Lake of the Woods. The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation president Will Timmons accompanied staff members Mary Ellen Wuellner and Ryan Anderson to a luncheon in early March to accept the \$10,000 contribution. Two new shelters with ADA-compliant picnic tables and grills along with the area’s first accessible kayak and canoe launch will provide an immersive nature experience for visitors at the “peninsula” section of the preserve. A grant from the State of Illinois’ Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) program must be matched dollar for dollar from the local

community. Along with this gift from AMBUCS, contributions were also provided by Representative Dan Caulkins, the Rotary Club of Champaign, the Community Foundation of East Central Illinois, and many individual donors. District tax revenue makes up the balance of the project cost. Learn more on the back cover.



2020 An Award Winning Year for the Museum of the Grand Prairie



Despite a year checkered with closings because of the pandemic, the Museum of the Grand Prairie brought home a record six awards for 2020! While the staff was quietly transitioning to online presentations and behind the scenes adventures for visitors, they were garnering public support. In October 2020 the museum was voted *Best Museum* in the News-Gazette’s 2020 People’s Choice Award. Then, in December, it was announced that the museum won the gold medal for the Illini Radio Group’s 2020 Best of CU, as *Best Museum*. Both are awarded through public support.

In addition, the Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) received several awards, juried by museum professionals, from the Illinois Association of Museums for 2020. A Superior Achievement Award, the only one in the exhibit category, was given to the exhibit, *How Long Must*

Women Wait: Woman Suffrage and Women’s Rights in Champaign County. The committee noted that the exhibit was remarkable in its comprehensiveness. Not only does the exhibit discuss the struggle of women during the suffrage era, but also delves into the before and after—putting that struggle into the context of the universal struggle for human rights. The museum also won two Awards of Excellence—one for its COVID Response: *Connection, Community and Care* and one for Special Projects: *The Sisterhood Mural*. The Sisterhood Mural, a collaboration with Franklin Middle School’s Sisterhood group to reflect the doors open and closed to young women of color, is part of the suffrage exhibit. Finally, an Award of Merit was given for *Soloists for Suffrage*, wherein the museum brought solo female artists into the exhibit to give live online concerts in lieu of our popular outdoor concert series.

Celebrating Staff: Stacey Clementz

This spring one of our amazing staff, Stacey Clementz, Environmental Education Program Specialist II, received the Environmental Education Association of Illinois' most prestigious honor: the Malcom D. Swan Award for Outstanding Service. This award is presented for long-term, outstanding service and contribution to the field of environmental education in Illinois, and recognizes the efforts of those who have had a large-scale impact in the field.

And that large-scale impact is exactly the level at which Stacey operates. Stacey served for 14 years on the board and various committees of the Environmental Education Association of Illinois. In that time, she served as President/Immediate Past President, Treasurer, Public Relations chair, Awards Chair, 2009 Midwest Environmental Education Conference chair, committee chairs for various EEAI Annual Conferences, East Central Region Director, and helped lead the organization in hiring its first Executive Director.

And these are just a few things she has done in addition to her work here at the Champaign County



Forest Preserves where she has expanded outreach and led in so many capacities with excellence and creativity. All told, Stacey has touched the lives of more than 50,000 people in her time here at the Forest Preserves. Because of her leadership, the Forest Preserves are recognized as a leader in environmental education in Illinois, the region, and even beyond. She even got to meet Richard Louv once!

We are so excited to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our staff! Please join us in congratulating Stacey for this recognition of her achievements. And if she has touched your life in some way, we would love to hear from you!

Two Join Forest Preserves Friends Foundation



Matt Hausman grew up in Champaign County and graduated from the University of Illinois. He then attended graduate school in Colorado where he began to get interested in the outdoors. This interest grew during his time in California, where he worked for Boeing and SpaceX and as a high

school government teacher, while spending much of his free time hiking, camping, and visiting national parks. After getting a certificate in nonprofit management from UCLA-Extension and travelling around the world with different nonprofits, he returned to Champaign County where he currently serves as Executive Director of Feeding Our Kids. He has a new appreciation for the local natural resources that he took for granted while growing up here, and wants to help promote and protect these special places, and the Friends Foundation Board is a great opportunity for him to do just that.



Merry Mitchell is a Champaign native who was looking to become more involved with the community. She studied History at Illinois State University and has a minor in French (though don't test her, it's been some time!). While studying at ISU, Merry did some internships, first at the

McLean County Museum of History in Bloomington, and then at the National Hellenic Museum in Chicago. It was through these internships that Merry developed a love for historic—as well as environmental—preservation, and found that the best way to aid in the efforts of preservation was through community engagement. Through her participation on the Friends Foundation board, she hopes that she can help make a positive impact in the Champaign County area.

Merry works as the Community Relations Associate for the Eastern Illinois Foodbank.

PROGRAMS & VIRTUAL EVENTS

See the full program descriptions online, ccfpd.org

APRIL

Monday, April 5

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK: DARK SKY RESOURCE & ACTIVITY GUIDE RELEASE

Guides will be available to download at the CCFPD website or printed copies will be available outside of the: FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, April 7

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK: LIGHT POLLUTION, HOW IT AFFECTS YOU AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT

Online Event, Streaming on CCFPD Facebook and YouTube pages, 7 p.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Friday, April 9 - Friday, April 30

SPRING WILDFLOWER WALK

Flicker Woods, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, daily during open hours

FREE. All ages. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, April 14

MORNINGS WITH THE MUSEUM: NATURAL WONDERS

Online Event, Streaming on the Museum of the Grand Prairie Facebook and YouTube pages, 10 a.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org

Wednesday, April 14

SPRING BEAUTIES: VERNAL WILDFLOWERS OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Online Event Streaming on the Homer Lake Interpretive Center Facebook page and CCFPD YouTube Channel, 7-8 p.m.

Recommended for ages 18 & up. FREE. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Monday, April 19

CALL FOR ART: PANDEMICS AS A PORTAL TO CHANGE

Virtual Art Event

Submission deadline April 19. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, April 21

ZOOM GAMES IN THE SCHOOLHOUSE FOR HOMESCHOOLERS

Online Event via Zoom, 10-10:30 a.m.

FREE. Ages 5-11. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Thursday, April 22

GARDEN SPEAKER SERIES: HOW-TO START YOUR OWN TEA GARDEN

Online Event, Streaming on the Museum of the Grand Prairie Facebook and YouTube pages, 7 p.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

The Forest Preserve District would like to say a huge **THANK YOU** to all the volunteers who helped out over the past few weeks to help prepare the golf course for the season! From stick pick-up to odd jobs, your tireless work is so appreciated!

MAY

Monday, May 3

VIRTUAL EXHIBIT DEBUT "PANDEMICS AS A PORTAL TO CHANGE"

Online Event, Streaming on the Museum of the Grand Prairie Facebook and YouTube pages

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Monday, May 3

BUTTER CHURNING ZOOM FOR HOMESCHOOLERS

Online Event via Zoom, 10-10:30 a.m.

FREE. Ages 5-11. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or ksnyder@ccfpd.org.

Tuesday, May 4

FREE GARDEN SEED SHARE BAG

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 1-3 p.m. or while supplies last

This bag is designed for garden lovers of all ages 3-103! FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or mmontez@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, May 5 - Tuesday, June 1

FAIRY HOUSES STORYWALK®

Homer Lake Forest Preserve

FREE. All ages. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or sclementz@ccfpd.org.

Friday, May 7

MIGRATION FEST IN A BAG

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 1-3 p.m. or while supplies last

FREE. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Tuesday, May 18

MORNINGS WITH THE MUSEUM: STAFF FAVORITES

Online Event, Streaming on the Museum of the Grand Prairie Facebook and YouTube pages, 10 a.m.

FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Tuesday, May 18

SEED SAFARI: HOMESCHOOL ZOOM EDITION

Online Event via Zoom, 11-11:45 a.m.

Register by May 11 at ccfpd.org. FREE. Ages 5-11. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or mmontez@ccfpd.org.

Wednesday, May 19

FIRE: A VITAL TOOL FOR LAND MANAGEMENT

Online Event Streaming on the Homer Lake Interpretive Center Facebook page and CCFPD YouTube Channel, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Recommended for ages 18 & up. FREE. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, May 22

CU LOCKDOWN TRIVIA WITH THE MUSEUM OF THE GRAND PRAIRIE

Online Event via Zoom, 7 p.m.

FREE to play with donations suggested to help support the Education for the Underserved Fund at the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. Register at <https://forms.gle/prD2i9wo7gfV8wpg9> to receive the Zoom meeting information. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.

Saturday, May 29

VINTAGE BASE BALL JAMBOREE

Washington St. & Hayes St, Philo, IL, 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Join us and Summit Station, Champaign County's newest Vintage Base Ball Club, for an afternoon of America's favorite pastime, 1860s style! Food may also be available for purchase. FREE. For more info: (217) 586-2612 or pcain@ccfpd.org.