

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF WILL COUNTY**

**2013 PROGRESS REPORT**



## Our Mission

The Forest Preserve District of Will County is dedicated to protecting, conserving, enhancing and promoting Will County's natural heritage for the educational, recreational and environmental benefit of present and future generations. Six distinctive values guide the District in fulfilling its mission.

### Quality

Committing to excellence in every endeavor.

### Employee Wellness

Respecting, valuing and mentoring those who serve the District.

### Customer Service

Being responsive to the needs of a diverse community.

### Cooperation

Working together to achieve the District's mission.

### Leadership

Leading in the community and the workplace by inspiration and example.

### Environmental Awareness

Promoting and practicing environmental stewardship.



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# Board of Commissioners

## District 1

**Robert Howard**  
*Beecher*

**Judy Ogalla**  
*Monee*

## District 2

**David A. Izzo**  
*Frankfort*

**James G. Moustis**  
*Frankfort*  
*Ad Hoc Rules*  
*Committee Vice Chair*

## District 3

**Donald A. Moran**  
*Romeoville*

**Elizabeth J. Rice**  
*Bolingbrook*

## District 4

**Kenneth E. Harris**  
*Bolingbrook*

**Jacqueline Traynere**  
*Bolingbrook*

## District 5

**Reed Bible**  
*Plainfield*

**Lee Ann Goodson**  
*Plainfield*  
*Secretary*

## District 6

**Ragan Freitag**  
*Wilmington*

**Donald Gould**  
*Shorewood*  
*Vice President*

## District 7

**Steve Balich**  
*Orland Park*

**Mike Fricilone**  
*Homer Glen*

## District 8

**Herbert Brooks, Jr.**  
*Joliet*

**Denise E. Winfrey**  
*Joliet*  
*Operations Committee*  
*Vice Chair*

## District 9

**Walter G. Adamic**  
*Joliet*

**Diane H. Zigrossi**  
*Crest Hill*  
*Finance Committee Chair,*  
*Ad Hoc Rules*  
*Committee Chair*

## District 10

**Joseph M. Babich**  
*Joliet*  
*President*

**Stephen M. Wilhelm**  
*Joliet*  
*Treasurer*

## District 11

**Suzanne Hart**  
*Naperville*  
*Operations Committee Chair*

**Charles E. Maher**  
*Naperville*

## District 12

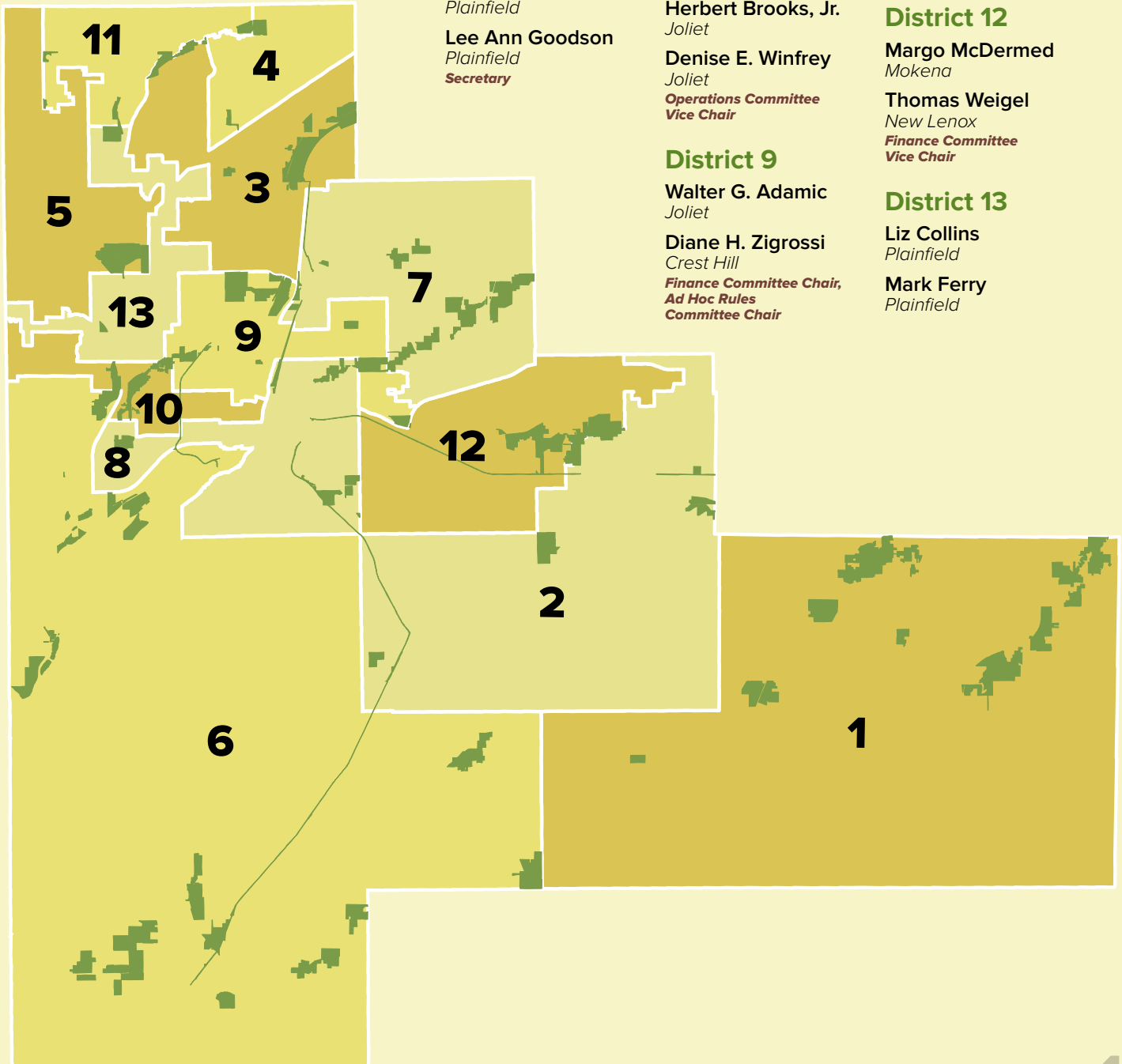
**Margo McDermid**  
*Mokena*

**Thomas Weigel**  
*New Lenox*  
*Finance Committee*  
*Vice Chair*

## District 13

**Liz Collins**  
*Plainfield*

**Mark Ferry**  
*Plainfield*



# From the President



Welcome to the Forest Preserve District of Will County! It is a privilege serving on the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners and, since December 2013, I have had the honor of serving as the Board President. I

routinely receive very positive comments from Will County residents about the beauty, cleanliness and safety of the nearly 22,000 acres of forest preserves, the more than 127 miles of trail and the many other amenities that the District offers. I am proud to be part of an organization that provides these quality services for public use and enjoyment, most of which are free to the public.

On behalf of the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to present the District's *2013 Annual Report* highlighting our services, programs and successes.

Funded by voter approval of two past referenda, the District has continued to acquire land and enhance or open new preserves for public use. In 2013, the Forest Preserve District protected more than 500 acres along the Des Plaines River and DuPage River, and within the Thorn Creek and Trim Creek greenways. These new properties expand and connect existing preserves, and protect environmentally sensitive natural resources.

In 2013, the District opened two new sites for public use, Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access south of Wilmington, and Vermont Cemetery Preserve in Naperville. With the opening of the Ballou Road Access, the District now has four dog parks and a fifth preserve in which camping is allowed. Trails completed as part of Vermont Cemetery Preserve now connect to existing trail systems in Naperville and to the DuPage River Trail which eventually, when completed, will extend from DuPage County to Channahon.

In 2013, more than 167,000 visitors attended programs and special events, stopped into a facility or secured permits for picnics, camping or dog parks. This does not include the thousands of visitors who regularly use the trails and preserves who are not counted or tracked through the District's permit system.

The Forest Preserve Board is committed to keeping the District fiscally strong and responsible in spending your tax dollars through sound management decisions and practices. This was accomplished by closely monitoring our expenses and continuing to secure alternative revenue sources through grants, sponsorships and agricultural

licenses that help improve and expand the services we provide.

Holding the line on expenses has not affected the District's ability to maintain its core services. We have continued to efficiently provide clean and safe preserves, enhance amenities, manage natural resources, and connect with more residents through social media, programs and special events.

Despite a slowly recovering economy, in 2013 the District received \$200,000 through grants, sponsorships and donations to assist with restoration projects, seasonal staff, special events and workdays. Since voters approved the first open space referendum in 1999, the District has received nearly \$27 million in grants and partnership agreements and, since 2005, has secured an estimated \$950,000 in sponsorships. These alternative revenues have very effectively leveraged your tax dollars.

The District also received an unqualified audit opinion indicating that the District's financial statements are in compliance with generally accepted accounting principles, resulting in the receipt of the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting for its *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*. This marked the eighteenth straight year that the District has received this honor. The Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting is the highest recognition given in governmental accounting. The *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report* can be viewed on the District's Web site, [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org).

As President of the Forest Preserve District, I am honored to support and carry on the District's mission to protect, conserve, enhance and promote Will County's natural heritage for the educational, recreational and environmental benefit of present and future generations. By remaining focused on our mission, we continue to support and improve the quality of life for Will County residents.

On behalf of our Board of Commissioners and staff, I extend my sincere appreciation for your continued support of the Forest Preserve District of Will County. To learn more about our preserves and programs or to provide comments about your visit or program experience, please go to [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) or call 815.727.8700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald Gould". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donald Gould, *President*

# From the Executive Director



It is my great pleasure to present the Forest Preserve District's *2013 Annual Report* highlighting our progress and accomplishments over the past year. These achievements result from initiatives established annually to enhance the quality

and value of our preserves, facilities and services to the public. The initiatives also keep District staff focused on our mission in our day-to-day operations. Initiatives for 2013 included: Enhancing Organizational Wellness and Functionality; Continuing Preserve Acquisition and Planned Improvements; Securing the District's Financial Stability; and Enhancing Visitor Experiences with District Services, Facilities and Preserves.

During the past year the District successfully phased in a new phone system to increase the reliability of our telecommunications and provided added service enhancements. The District welcomed its newest police canine officer. Jullo is a German Shepard trained for tracking in all types of terrain and for narcotics detection. Jullo replaces the District's first canine officer, Rosie, who is enjoying her retirement. The District also reached an agreement on a four-year labor contract with its bargaining unit employees and laid out a plan for re-instituting a salary compensation program for all employees after a four-year wage freeze. This will provide stability in both costs and the District's workforce over an extended timeframe.

During 2013 the District continued with planned acquisitions and preserve enhancements funded through the voter-approved Capital Improvement Program. One major accomplishment was the purchase of 326 acres from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District that provides for continuous public ownership along the Des Plaines River north of 135th Street and connects three forest preserves: Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve; Veterans Woods; and Keepataw Preserve. The District also received one of its largest-ever donations – a conservation easement on 160 acres of farmland in Washington Township.

Preserve enhancement and trail projects were completed at four sites: Vermont Cemetery Preserve, Riverview Farmstead Preserve, Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access, and Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access. The District has also continued to make accessibility improvements to its preserves, programs and services. Since adopting its ADA Transition Plan in

2010, the District has removed a total of 621 or 57% of the 1,086 deficiencies noted in the twelve-year plan at a cost of \$1.46 million.

The District has continued work on restoration projects at 12 preserves – Kankakee Sands Preserve, Sand Ridge Savanna Preserve, Hadley Valley, Prairie Bluff Preserve, Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve, Messenger Woods Nature Preserve, Keepataw Preserve, Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve, Lockport Prairie East Preserve, Dellwood Park West, Vermont Cemetery Preserve, and Hickory Creek Preserve – totaling more than 2,000 acres. This work involves the conversion of farmland or the enhancement of disturbed areas to more biologically diverse prairie, wetland and forested habitats that can sustain and benefit native plant and animal species. This total does not include the District's day-to-day management of an additional 5,500 acres of existing natural areas.

The District also made great strides in its educational and interpretive programming. Last year, District staff revised all educational programming to meet the new national Common Core Standards. Each year, the District provides educational services to an estimated 18,000 children in more than 80 percent of the school districts in Will County. In addition, the District began a pilot program at two preserves for self-guided tours that can be accessed from a smart phone. If successful, we hope to expand this program to other preserves in the future.

Volunteers continue to provide a vital public service by assisting the District in many areas of its operations. In 2013, more than 1,000 dedicated individuals and members of corporations, service organizations, churches and youth groups contributed nearly 17,000 hours to District projects and programs, equivalent to eight full-time employees.

I am grateful to work in an organization and with people committed to public service. The forest preserves are truly a gem and offer you a great value for your tax dollars. I hope you will take advantage of all of the opportunities that forest preserves provide you to experience nature. You can learn more about District preserves, trails and offerings by visiting our Web site, [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org), or by connecting with us on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, Foursquare, Google+ and Pinterest.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Marcella M. DeMauro". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marcella M. DeMauro, Executive Director



## Gould Named New President of Board of Commissioners

In December 2013, Donald Gould moved into the president's chair of the Forest Preserve's Board of Commissioners. Gould,

50, has been on the Board for 11 years. A Shorewood resident, he is a graduate of Purdue University and the Northern Illinois University College of Law.

Gould's ascent to president was the result of an agreement reached between Board Republicans and Democrats following the November 2012 election.

Traditionally, the majority party would choose Board of Commissioner officers and committee assignments following every election. But the two parties tied with 13 Republicans and 13 Democrats winning seats.

The parties met to determine how to move forward and came up with a solution. The Democrats would hold the presidency for the first year, and the Republicans for the second year. All other officers and committee chairpersons were split with members from both parties.

With more than 30 years on the Board, Joe Babich of Joliet was selected by fellow Democrats to serve as president for 2013. Gould became vice president. Now Gould will serve as president throughout 2014, with Babich as vice president.

## Record Farm License Revenue

**\$1,099,127** Bidding of farm licenses on 26 Forest Preserve properties totaled \$1,099,127 for 2013, by far the largest amount ever realized for this alternative revenue program. This amount represents a 99 percent increase over 2012 farm license revenue of \$502,691 and resulted from substantially higher bids per acre for row crop licenses.

Farming on Forest Preserve land has been permitted for decades. In June 2012, the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution revising the Agricultural Use Policy and enhancing administrative procedures to assist District staff in managing agricultural use.

The revised policy stipulates that all agricultural licenses not created as part of a land sales contract will be openly advertised to the public. Licenses will be awarded to the highest qualified bidder for each farm license area.

## Renewal of USAgain Contract

The Forest Preserve District continued its partnership with USAgain (pronounced "Use Again") for the third year in 2013. The company provides textile recycling bins at 19 preserves.

USAgain has deemed the recycling service "an overwhelming success." Bins on Forest Preserve properties collected more than 22 tons of textile materials that otherwise may have been disposed of in landfills.

The amount of money the District receives from the program increased from 2 cents per pound of collected textiles during 2012 to 3 cents per pound in 2013. During 2012, the District received fees totaling \$715.08. The 2013 total was \$900.42.

As a result of its partnership, USAgain selected the Forest Preserve to receive an Innovative Community Recycling Program Award. The award was one of 15 that USAgain presented in November 2013.

USAgain collects about one million pounds of clothing per week. These items are then purchased by wholesale buyers, thrift shop chains and textile recyclers. According to USAgain, textile recycling accounts for more greenhouse gas savings than paper, plastics and glass combined. Textile recyclers shred the items to make insulation for dishwashers, housing, the automobile industry and mattress padding.



District 3 Forest Preserve Commissioner Beth Rice (left) and Forest Preserve Executive Director Marcy DeMauro display the Green-T Award presented by USAgain President and CEO Mattias Wallander.



## Island Rendezvous and Isle a la Cache Museum Celebrate 30th Anniversary

Island Rendezvous and Isle a la Cache Museum both celebrated 30th anniversaries in 2013. The popular annual Island Rendezvous, held each June at the Museum in Romeoville, features re-enactors and entertainers from the Isle a la Cache Brigade as well as other re-enactors from throughout the Midwest who portray life as it was in 18th century Illinois. Voyageurs display canoes and other tools that made fur trade possible, and they compete in challenges with blades, fire-starters, muskets and skillets.

Isle a la Cache Museum offers visitors an adventure in 18th-century history, when the "Illinois Country" was home to French voyageurs and native Potawatomi. The Museum features interactive exhibits of the Great Lakes fur trade of the 1700s, in addition to a replica Native American longhouse.

A variety of fun and educational public programs are hosted at the Museum throughout the year, including historical demonstrations and campfire programs.

Isle a la Cache also offers nature and history educational opportunities to school groups and youth groups.

Voyageurs, Natives, colonists, and soldiers of 18th century Illinois are eager to have some fun and share their expertise each June at Island Rendezvous. Re-enactors from all over the Midwest give modern visitors a feast for the eyes and ears, and hands-on opportunities also abound with skills and games, dancing to music of the era, buying unique quality goods, and listening to tall tales.

## Asian Carp Harvest

In March 2013, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) began harvesting invasive Asian carp from the District's Rock Run Rookery Preserve in Joliet. By the end of the year, about 26,000 pounds of Asian carp had been removed from the site.

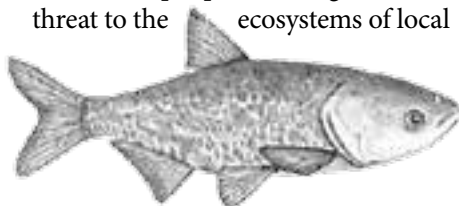
Initially, IDNR planned to remove Asian carp from the lake for one month, but when harvest numbers proved higher than expected, the state agency asked to continue its work at Rock Run Rookery throughout the year.

Asian carp were first detected in the lake in November of 2012. The fish are finding their way into the lake through a channel that connects Rock Run Rookery to the nearby Des Plaines River. The goal was to remove as many of these fish as possible to reduce their ability to move farther up in the watershed toward an electric barrier, which helps to protect the Great Lakes from invasive species.

Asian carp represent a significant threat to the ecosystems of local

rivers and to the Great Lakes should they reach Lake Michigan. The carp can grow to large sizes, weighing up to 110 pounds, and are prodigious eaters, consuming between 10 to 15 percent of their body weight each day. These fish consume phytoplankton and zooplankton, which native fish species rely on, especially when they are small.

All of the Asian carp caught by IDNR harvest were removed by a company that will make liquid fertilizer from these fish.





Taking part in the ribbon cutting to officially mark the grand opening of the newest access to Forked Creek Preserve are (from left) John M. Persic, Jr., Wilmington City Council alderman; Kevin J. Kirwin, Wilmington City Council alderman; Dan and Lee Werner of Lee Werner Excavating; Don Gould, president of the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners; Deborah Rozak, former Forest Preserve Board commissioner; Jim Moustis, District 2 Forest Preserve Board commissioner; Marty Orr, Wilmington mayor; Judy Radosevich, Wilmington city clerk; Ragan Freitag, District 6 Forest Preserve Board commissioner; and Ken Kaupas, deputy chief of the Will County Sheriff's Police.

## Forked Creek Preserve Grand Opening

A grand opening was held in August for Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access, which features the District's fourth dog park. The new preserve access is located on the south side of Ballou Road in Wilmington. It sits along the Forest Preserve's Wauponsee Glacial Trail and serves as the southernmost access to the trail.

The grand opening celebration featured live music by Running Fox bluegrass band, a group dog walk, crafts and dog agility demonstrations. Approximately 500 guests attended the four-hour event.

The new dog park consists of three dog park enclosures, including one designated for small dogs. Each enclosure is 3 acres. The new preserve offers parking for 39 vehicles and 10 equestrian trailers. Horse riders can park at the preserve to access the Wauponsee Glacial Trail, which allows equestrian use.

Other amenities at Ballou Road Access include a picnic shelter, an information board, interpretive signage, a latrine, a drinking fountain, two primitive camping sites, 0.67 mile of crushed limestone trail and access to the 22.29-mile, crushed limestone/paved Wauponsee Glacial Trail.

## Riverview Farmstead Preserve Improvements

In September 2013, the Forest Preserve debuted improvements to Riverview Farmstead Preserve in Naperville with a Harvest Hoedown celebration. Riverview Farmstead is the site of the Thomas Clow Farm. Established in the 1850s, the site preserves the historic settlement house, limestone house and timber frame barn. Visitors to the site can wander the paths through the farm and read the seven interpretive displays that highlight the farm, the Clow family and the history of the area. Several days a year, visitors to the site can tour the interiors of the structures on guided tours.



## Largest Land Donation to District Holdings

In 2013, Lisbet Temple granted the Forest Preserve District a conservation easement on her 160-acre farm. Mrs. Temple has agreed to donate the property to the Forest Preserve when she passes. This will be the first property owned by the District in Washington Township, and it will be the largest land donation ever made to the District.

The conservation easement means that the property cannot be developed at any time in the future. The Forest Preserve will be involved with easement monitoring and site security until the land is transferred to the District.

The agricultural property contains about 60 acres of land that could be restored by the District to wetlands. The remainder of the parcel contains soils that originally supported prairie. The property is large enough to make a viable stand-alone preserve in the future.

In recognition of the donation, Mrs. Temple requested the preserve be named the Tempest Farm and marked with signage to read "Tempest Farm, established 1965, donated by Arvid A. and Lisbet O. Temple." Arvid A. Temple, Lisbet's husband, was a surgeon. He passed away in 2007.

Of the Forest Preserve's 22,000 acres, about 1,400 acres have been donated or are under conservation easements controlled by the District.



## Beecher High School Garden Partnership

The Forest Preserve and Beecher High School worked together to transform what was an abandoned concrete courtyard at the school into an outdoor area to be used for interdisciplinary



studies. The project was led by Heather Horstman, an environmental education naturalist teaching fellow, as part of her one-year education fellowship with the Forest Preserve.

The project team included Beecher High School's principal, counselor and maintenance director, as well as

staff from the Forest Preserve's Public Programs and Education Department and Planning Department. A \$5,000 grant from Beecher School District 200-U's Education Foundation paid for benches, native plants, herbs, a water feature and other materials to transform the cement courtyard.

The initial vision was to provide for a stress-free outdoor space for counselors and students to meet. Soon, students and teachers embraced the outdoor space idea and language arts, food science, biology and fine arts classes were included in the initiative. Students painted inspirational quotes and added birdhouses and artwork to the area. They also planted herbs for use in culinary classes. Seating areas were created for reading or doing homework.

On May 10, 2013, the natural garden courtyard officially opened. The concrete courtyard is now an inviting area of color, inspiration, learning and nature.

## Dial and Discover Preserve Information

In April 2013, the Forest Preserve announced its new Dial and Discover program available for the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site in Joliet and Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve in Plainfield. The program allows visitors to learn more about the cultural and natural heritage of the two sites during self-guided tours. It also provides a means for those unable to physically visit the sites to view images and take virtual tours. This feature is especially valuable to those with mobility challenges.

The tour of the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site guides patrons through the history of the country and the region to provide a context for the industrial culture in Joliet from the 1870s through the 1930s. At Lake Renwick, the tour highlights the unique ecosystem and

bird species that nest at one of the premier rookeries in Illinois. While at these preserves, visitors may take the tour by following the Dial and Discover signs, dialing 815.272.2635 and then



entering the stop number displayed on the sign.

Smart phone owners can go to [myoncell.mobi/FPDWC](http://myoncell.mobi/FPDWC) to hear the

tour, as well as access additional features including photos and MP3 downloads.

For those who cannot make it to the sites, the tours can be accessed using any phone and calling 815.272.2635 and following the prompts. Home computers also can be used to listen to the audio, read the text and see images from the tour.

## New National Learning Standards for Education Programs

Illinois has approved legislation along with 45 states, the District of Columbia, and four territories to move from state learning standards to new national standards. Those Common Core Standards establish clear expectations for what students should learn in language arts and mathematics at each grade level. The goal is to raise learning standards and improve college and career readiness.

Teachers and administrators were required to implement the new Common Core Standards during the 2013-2014 school year. As a member of the education community, the Forest Preserve was a part of this transition.

Forest Preserve staff worked with the Will County Regional Office of Education's Professional Development Alliance over the course of 10 months to acquire a working knowledge of Common Core Standards and apply them to the 42 field trip and in-school programs presented by Forest Preserve education staff to school children. Common Core Correlations are now available to teachers in the Forest Preserve's Education Program Guide and on a one-page, program-specific reference sheet.



Hickory Creek Preserve – LaPorte Road Access

## Board Strategic Initiatives

In 2012, Forest Preserve Commissioners participated in a planning process that culminated in the Board's adoption of the District's first-ever strategic goals and initiatives for staff to focus on over three years (2013-2014-2015). This has provided an effective way to directly align staff's annual work initiatives with the Board's strategic goals.

Most of the Board's strategic goals originally proposed for implementation in 2013 were completed by the Board and executive staff. This included an orientation for all Board members, approval of revised financial policies, approval of revised staff compensation programs, and approval of plans in four key programmatic areas for the District. These include:

- A five-year Land Stewardship Plan
- A 20-year Infrastructure Maintenance and Replacement Program
- A five-year Integrated Marketing Plan
- A five-year Community Partnerships Plan

Each of these plans identifies short- and long-term tasks, targeted outcomes over the next three to five years, and estimated costs and an identified funding source to implement the approved actions.

While the Board's four broad strategic goals remain the same as in 2013, new initiatives that address these goals were identified and approved for implementation in 2014. Commissioners will regularly monitor progress and, if necessary, modify the goals, initiatives, targets or desired outcomes in response to new conditions and opportunities.

### Board's Four Strategic Goals

1. Steward our Natural Resources
2. Enhance Visitor Experiences
3. Secure Financial Stability
4. Improve Organizational Wellness and Functionality

## Working Smart and Working Green

In 2013, the Forest Preserve's Operations Department excelled in working smart and working green.

All of the department's fleet technicians and managers were fully certified by the Institute of Automotive Excellence, and the District's fleet shop was recertified as a Blue Seal of Excellence facility because of its high level of training.

The number of District fleet vehicles that use E-85 ethanol increased from 36 to 39. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency awarded the District \$6,090 in rebates for using E-85 ethanol fuel.

Finally, the District's Isle a la Cache Museum and Four Rivers Environmental Education Center both received lighting upgrades. These improvements will provide a potential energy savings of \$12,400 over the life of the light bulbs. Cooling costs will decline due to a switch from 250-watt light bulbs to 12-watt LED light bulbs.

# Preserve Improvements

The Forest Preserve blended funding from local, state and federal sources with money from its Capital Improvement Program to enhance many of its preserves in 2013. Public access points were added, trails were constructed and buildings were restored. The District's fourth dog park opened at Forked Creek Preserve. A new trail at Vermont Cemetery Preserve links the historic prairie site to area trails. The historic buildings at Riverview Farmstead Preserve were enhanced. Existing facilities were upgraded at Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access. The Route 30 widening project provided a trail segment along Hickory Creek Preserve and a second segment near Hunters Woods.



Forked Creek Preserve –  
Ballou Road Access

## Forked Creek Preserve – Ballou Road Access

This project in Wilmington was made possible through a \$400,000 grant from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Open Space Land Acquisition and Development Program (OSLAD) and funding provided by the Forest Preserve District's Capital Improvement Program. The improvements cost \$935,000 and included the development of a southern access area for the Wauponsee Glacial Trail and an off-leash dog park. The site offers parking for vehicles and equestrian trailers, a picnic shelter, primitive camping and a 0.67-mile trail.

## Hammel Woods – Route 59 Access

This project in Shorewood upgraded existing facilities at Grinton Grove to include new parking, a latrine, accessible concrete pads for family picnics and a new bridge across Hammel Creek. These improvements cost \$345,000 and were funded through the Forest Preserve District's Capital Improvement Program.

## Route 30 Bike Trail

Two segments of bicycle trail – one located along Hickory Creek Preserve in New Lenox/Mokena and another near Hunters Woods in Frankfort – were completed by the Illinois Department of Transportation as part of the Route 30 widening project. The District contributed 20 percent of the \$32,000 cost for a 0.39-mile trail, with the remainder funded through a federal grant for the roadway project. In addition, the Village of Mokena provided a trail connection from the south side of Route 30 to the trail overpass to improve safety accessing Hickory Creek Preserve.



Riverview Farmstead Preserve

## Vermont Cemetery Preserve Access and Trail

This \$670,000 project in Naperville was funded by the Forest Preserve District's Capital Improvement Program and by a \$138,600 contribution by the Naperville Park District (NPD). The project provides parking, a latrine and a 0.73-mile trail connecting to the Tallgrass Greenway Trail, operated by the NPD. The combined trails connect to the DuPage River Trail system. The site offers views of a historic prairie cemetery as well as prairie restoration areas.

## Riverview Farmstead Preserve – Architectural Restoration Phase II and Interpretive Pathways

This project in Naperville, which cost \$415,000, was funded through the Forest Preserve District's Capital Improvement Program and provided exterior and interior improvements to the three historic farm buildings. A path was added connecting the buildings and included fence sections with interpretive panels. The buildings received new windows in some locations and others were covered with decorative window images. Improvements to the barn and limestone house now allow for visitors to pass through the buildings during special programs.

# Land Preservation

The addition of more than 500 new acres boosted the Forest Preserve District's total acreage to about 22,000 in 2013. The newly acquired parcels included an unprotected portion of a pond in Thorn Grove Preserve and formerly leased land in the Des Plaines River Greenway. Two conservation easements also added to the District's holdings. The first easement will expand the DuPage River Greenway and the second will protect a 160-acre farm site within the Trim Creek Greenway. All of the District's land will be preserved for generations to come.

## Centennial Trail

The District has leased land from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) for Centennial Trail, Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve and Keepataw Preserve since 1993. In response to MWRD designating some of this property as surplus in preparation for placing it on the market, the District purchased 326 acres from MWRD with funds from the 2007 Bond Extension Program. The acquisition now connects all forest preserves along the Des Plaines River from 135th Street to the Will-Cook County Line.

326  
ACRES

## Hidden Oaks Environmental Center

The Bolingbrook Park District dedicated conservation easements to the Forest Preserve District on two parcels within the DuPage River Greenway in DuPage Township. The parcels total 20 acres and were given to the Forest Preserve in recognition of its funding assistance in 2007 as part of a local match towards the Park District's land acquisition grant.

20

## Thorn Grove Preserve

The District has been in negotiation to acquire this 21-acre parcel since 2007. Preservation of this parcel protects a previously unprotected portion of a pond and improves police and management access to the preserve. The parcel is located within the Thorn Creek Greenway in Crete Township and was acquired with funds from the 2007 Bond Extension Program.

21

## Tempest Farm

A far-sighted landowner dedicated a conservation easement to the District on her 160-acre farm within the Trim Creek Greenway in Washington Township. The farm will go to the District in the future as part of the owner's will.

160



Tempest Farm

## Centennial Trail

527  
acres

Total  
Preservations  
in 2013



# Preserve Use



Community Workday



Hugs for Hounds



Celebrate Air!



Howloween Hoopla

Thousands of visitors flocked to Forest Preserve events and programs throughout 2013. Dogs howled at Howloween Hoopla, bicyclists ruled Ride the Rock and history buffs roamed Island Rendezvous. Picnicking alone drew 39,000 visitors to District preserves. Monee Reservoir netted 33,000 visitors to its concessions area, and education programs reached another 16,500 participants.

<i>Facility Visitation</i>	<i>People Served</i>	<i>Premier Programs</i>	<i>People Served</i>
Environmental Learning Center	<b>2,800</b>	Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale	<b>500</b>
Four Rivers Environmental Education Center	<b>9,000</b>	Celebrate Air! Let's Fly a Kite!	<b>400</b>
Isle a la Cache Museum	<b>14,500</b>	Earth Day Celebration!	<b>400</b>
Monee Reservoir Concessions/Visitor Center	<b>33,000</b>	Harvest Hoedown	<b>500</b>
Plum Creek Nature Center	<b>16,500</b>	Howloween Hoopla	<b>1,300</b>
Sugar Creek Administration Center	<b>3,450</b>	Island Rendezvous	<b>1,300</b>
		Musher Mania	<b>1,400</b>
<i>Permitted Activities</i>	<i>People Served</i>	<i>Special Events</i>	<i>People Served</i>
Camping Areas	<b>1,400</b>	Community Workday	<b>283</b>
Dog Parks	<b>2,350</b>	Cruise the Creek Bike Ride & Festival	<b>1,100</b>
Reserved Picnic Areas	<b>39,000</b>	Forked Creek Preserve –	
Special Use Activities	<b>5,100</b>	Ballou Road Access Grand Opening	<b>500</b>
<i>Programs and Services</i>	<i>People Served</i>	Goodenow Grove Fall Fest	<b>3,500</b>
Community Outreach Presentations	<b>4,510</b>	Hugs for Hounds Easter Egg Hunt	<b>1,000</b>
Education Programs	<b>16,500</b>	Music at McKinley Outdoor Concert & Car Show	<b>1,300</b>
Public Programs	<b>3,500</b>	Ride the Rock	<b>2,000</b>
		Rosie Retirement Luncheon	<b>142</b>

# Stewardship of Natural Areas

Buying and preserving land is not enough; it must be nurtured and protected. In 2013, the District continued its quest to weed out invasive species ranging from garlic mustard to Asian carp. Woodlands, prairies and wetlands were restored and maintained to provide protected habitat for native flora and fauna. Forest Preserve staff studied everything from bats to butterflies to gauge the health of the District's wildlife. Even the tiniest seeds received tender loving care as they were transported from Ohio to a new home in two District preserves.

## Natural Area Restoration Projects

### Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve

293  
acres

Continued follow-up management of invasive herbaceous and woody species throughout the preserve to facilitate effective control and improve native species recovery. Also continued hydrologic modifications to establish natural water flow patterns.

### Hadley Valley OMMA Mitigation and NAWCA Wetland Restoration Grant

296

Conducted management throughout the O'Hare Modernization Mitigation Account (OMMA) project area including prescribed burning, selective herbicide treatments, and seeding and plant installation. Also expanded the restoration area to include additional wetland and prairie restoration through a North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant.

### Hickory Creek Preserve

211

Continued restoration of woodland, barrens and sedge meadow communities through invasive species control, planting and prescribed fire. Used remaining funds to expand the restoration area to an adjacent 88 acres.

### Kankakee Sands and Sand Ridge Savanna Preserves Restoration

700

Continued restoration of sand savanna, prairie and wetland communities through invasive species control and the collection of approximately 200 pounds of seed from 160 species of local native ecotypes for use on site in community re-creation activities.

### Keepataw Preserve ISTHA Mitigation

18

Continued Hine's emerald dragonfly habitat enhancement and creation efforts through an Illinois State Toll Highway Authority (ISTHA) mitigation and worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to complete habitat use assessments.

### Lockport Prairie East Preserve and Dellwood Park West

103

Continued threatened and endangered species habitat enhancement through follow-up invasive species control within dolomite prairie, sedge meadow and marsh communities throughout the preserves.

### Messenger Woods Nature Preserve OMMA Mitigation

100

Conducted management, including prescribed burning and selective herbicide applications, through a grant from the O'Hare Modernization Mitigation Account (OMMA).

### Prairie Bluff Preserve Prairie Restoration

165

Conducted follow-up management and invasive species control within the areas previously restored to prairie through an agricultural license program.

### Thorn Creek Headwaters Preserve IDOT Mitigation

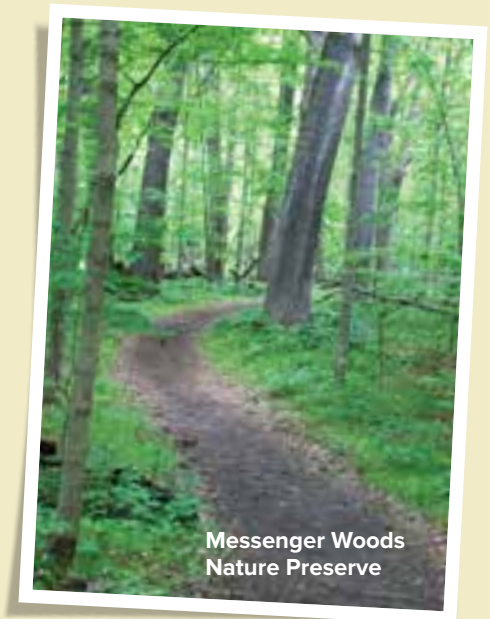
92

Initiated wetland and prairie restoration to satisfy the Illinois Department of Transportation's (IDOT) mitigation requirements.

### Vermont Cemetery Preserve Prairie Restoration

24

Continued prairie re-creation through seeding, plant installation and mowing on former agricultural fields to buffer the adjacent high quality cemetery prairie remnant.



Messenger Woods Nature Preserve



## Wildlife Research Projects

- Continued the herbivory study on the federally endangered leafy prairie clover (*Dalea foliosa*) at two preserves.
- Conducted herbivory sampling on the federally threatened lakeside daisy (*Hymenoxis herbacea*) at two preserves and worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to plant seed collected from Ohio populations as part of a recovery plan implementation.
- Coordinated with the Chicago Botanic Garden's Plants of Concern program to monitor 14 species of threatened and endangered plants at 11 preserves.
- Completed bat surveys at seven preserves.
- Completed butterfly monitoring at three preserves.
- Completed floristic inventory and plant community mapping within 439 acres of Hammel Woods in Shorewood.
- Initiated floristic inventory and plant community mapping within 182 acres of Evans-Judge Preserve in Wilmington.
- Completed invertebrate surveys at Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve, Kankakee Sands Preserve and Sand Ridge Savanna Preserve in Reed and Custer Townships, covering a total of 1,333 acres.
- Continued reptile and amphibian surveys of 1,095 acres within Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve, Kankakee Sands Preserve and Sand Ridge Savanna Preserve.
- Completed a snake survey of 293 acres at Theodore Marsh and Alessio Prairie in Crest Hill.
- Initiated an Asian carp control project with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and removed more than 13 tons of this invasive species from Rock Run Rookery Preserve in Joliet.
- Resumed the deer management program through documenting browse pressure and removing 133 deer from 10 preserves under the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' deer population control permit.

# Partnerships



The Forest Preserve collaborated with dozens of agencies and organizations in 2013 in mutually beneficial partnerships that advanced like-minded goals for all involved. Whether it was the District lending its expertise for events and regional planning efforts or agencies helping

the District with wildlife monitoring and special projects, the partnerships resulted in an improved quality of life and a better return on taxpayer dollars for Will County residents.



*Beecher High School*  
Garden Project

*Biodiversity Project*  
Hine's Emerald Dragonfly Hike and Educational Initiative

*Canal Corridor Alliance*  
Member

*Channahon Park District*  
Reciprocal Use of Facilities for Educational Programming

*Chicago Wilderness*  
Dragonfly Monitoring  
Executive Council Member  
Frog Monitoring  
Leave No Child Inside Coalition  
Plants of Concern

*City of Joliet*  
Green Infrastructure Planning

KidzFest  
Light Up the Holidays Festival

*DuPage River Trail Committee*  
Member

*DuPage River Water Trail Committee*  
Member

*Environmental Education Association of Illinois (EEAI)*  
2012 EEA Illinois Conference

Network for Professional Development and Leadership Opportunities

*Hickory Creek Watershed Planning Committee*  
Steering Committee

*Hine's Emerald Dragonfly Recovery Group*  
Member

*Illiana Expressway Corridor Planning Group and Technical Task Force*  
Member

*Illinois Audubon Society*  
Junior Winter Bird Feeder Challenge

*Illinois Bike Transportation Plan*  
Participant

*Illinois Conference on Volunteer Administration*  
District Staff Assistance to State-Wide Conference

*Illinois Conservation Foundation*  
Member

*Illinois Department of Natural Resources*  
Educator Loan Kit Program

*Joliet Junior College*  
Adopt-a-Preserve Program

Resource Management Workdays

*Joliet/Will County Project Pride*  
Joliet Iron Works Historic Site Workdays

*Kankakee Area Stargazers*  
Cooperative Programming

*KidsWork Children's Museum*  
Cooperative Programming

*Land Conservancy of Will County*  
Technical Advisor

*Long Run Creek Watershed Planning Committee*  
Member

*Lower Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership*  
Member

*Lower DuPage River Watershed Planning Coalition*  
Member

*Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie*  
Cooperative Volunteer Trainings

Local Partnership for Wauponsee Glacial Trail – Hoff Road Access Improvement

*Naperville Park District and City of Naperville*

DuPage River Trail, DuPage River Greenway

*National Weather Service*  
Weather Observer Program

*Natural Areas Association*  
Conference Presenter and Participant

*Northeast Illinois Invasive Plant Partnership*  
Cooperative Management Agreement

*Old Plank Road Trail Management Commission*  
Member

*Openlands*  
Hadley Valley and Messenger Woods Nature Preserve O'Hare Modernization Mitigation Account Restorations

*Pet Supplies Plus*  
Partnership to Sell Forest Preserve Dog Park Permits

*Plainfield Riverfront Foundation*  
Member

*Plainfield Riverfront Steering Committee*  
Member

*Possibility Place Nursery*  
Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale Partner

*Prairie Parklands Ecosystem Partnership*  
Local Partnership Council Member

*RiverWorks Discovery*  
Field Trip Programming at Four Rivers Environmental Education Center

*Route 53 Corridor Planning Committee*  
Stakeholder

*Route 66 Bikeway Planning Group*  
Council Member

*Shorewood H.U.G.S.*  
Hugs for Hounds Easter Egg Hunt

*Siberian Husky Club of Greater Chicago*  
Musher Mania

*Sustainable Agriculture Project*  
Member

*Thorn Creek Management Commission*

Membership on Technical Committee

Secretary for the Commission



# Partnership Awards

Select organizations were singled out for Awards in Appreciation of Partners recognition in 2013. The awards, which are presented by the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners, honored these groups for their commitment to improve the community. Specifically, they were recognized for monitoring bluebirds, documenting rare plants and assisting in a cleanup of a section of Canal Road in Lockport.

## *Thorn Creek Watershed Planning Committee*

District Support to Technical Advisory Committee

## *University of St. Francis*

Freshman Orientation Service Learning

## *U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary*

Free Boat Safety Checks at District Boating Safety Courses

## *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

Hine's Emerald Dragonfly Habitat Conservation

## *Veterans Memorial Trail Planning Group*

Trail Master Planning

## *Village of Beecher/ Washington Township*

Planning for Vincennes Trail

## *Village of Woodridge*

Veterans Memorial Trail – Bluff Road to International Parkway

## *Will County Audubon*

Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Programming

## *Will County Historic Preservation Commission*

Staff Support

## *Will County MAPP Project*

Cooperative Implementation of County-wide Strategic Health Initiative

## *Will County Ordinance Review Subcommittee*

Stakeholder

## *Will County Regional Office of Education*

Professional Development Exchange

## *Will County Resource Work Committee*

Member

## *Will County Water Alliance Study Group*

Membership on Steering Committee

## Chicago Botanic Garden

More than 12 years ago, Susanne Masi of the Chicago Botanic Garden realized that the Chicago region was lacking data on rare plants. Although many organizations were monitoring rare plants, many other areas in our region were being developed or neglected. While no one was sure of the impact of booming development, plant populations and species were decreasing in numbers. To address this, Masi helped develop a Plants of Concern program that has coordinated the monitoring of rare plants throughout the Chicago region. The Forest Preserve District has benefited greatly from this program by increasing the number of plant species monitored to more than 22 additional species at 13 of our preserves. This program has been extremely consistent in providing valuable results annually.

## Thorn Creek Audubon Society

Under the guidance of Aura Duke, the Thorn Creek Audubon Society annually has trained volunteers and monitored bluebirds at three preserves: Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve in Beecher, Racoon Grove Nature Preserve and Monee Reservoir in Monee. The Thorn Creek Audubon has been monitoring bluebirds for 30 years even through preserve improvements and changes in our mowing practices, and they have continued to provide reports that indicate trends in bluebird populations.

## Lockport Township Park District, City of Lockport, County of Will, Waste Management, and Legacy Paintball + Airsoft Park

For the past several years, the Forest Preserve District has been aware of ongoing dumping along Canal Road in Lockport. This roadway runs along the west side of the I&M Canal and is the eastern boundary for Lockport Prairie East, Dellwood Park West, and two private properties south of Division Street in Lockport. In the past, the District had appealed to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as the owner of the property to assist with boundary marking and cleanup, but IDNR was unable to commit due to fiscal and staff shortages.

In 2013, the Forest Preserve was contacted by the County of Will requesting cleanup of the roadway in response to a complaint. At the same time, Lockport Township Park District contacted the Forest Preserve regarding the potential use of Dellwood Park West by Legacy Paintball + Airsoft Park, which was looking to establish a paintball park at the site. Both Legacy and the Park District also desired a roadway cleanup. The four organizations teamed up to remove garbage, tires and other debris along the entire one-mile roadway, as well as to complete some tree and brush removal and limited earthwork. These efforts were assisted by Waste Management which provided dumpsters at no cost for the project. In total, 645 tires and 180 cubic yards of garbage were removed. Legacy Paintball + Airsoft Park provided the bulk of the labor with the Forest Preserve District, the Park District, and the City providing additional labor, equipment and coordination of the tire and dumpster removal. Legacy Paintball + Airsoft Park later upgraded the roadway and is providing ongoing maintenance in conjunction with the Forest Preserve and the Park District.

# Alternative Revenue Initiatives

## Grants and Development Partnerships

The Forest Preserve received \$63,320 in grants and development partnerships in 2013. The grants will be used to employ youth in recreational programming and to restore Dellwood Park West, Lockport Prairie East and Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve.

**Illinois Department of Natural Resources**  
*Employment of Illinois Youth (14-18 years) in Recreation Programming*  
**\$4,320**

**Lockport Township Park District**  
*Dellwood Park West Restoration*  
**\$8,000**

**United States Fish and Wildlife Service**  
*Lockport Prairie East and Dellwood Park West Restoration*  
**\$33,000**

**United States Fish and Wildlife Service**  
*Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve Restoration*  
**\$18,000**

Total Grants for 2013  
**\$63,320**

## Community Partnerships Program

**Sponsorships.** In 2013, the Forest Preserve District of Will County's Community Partnerships Program welcomed both new and returning sponsors. A total of \$74,010.49 was received during the year through the District's Sponsorship Program.

Addus HealthCare	D Construction	Kavanagh, Grumley & Gorbold LLC	Rosario Cibella LTD
Advanced Family Dental P.C.	Darryl Dupre, Inc.	Lee Werner Excavating	Shorewood Home and Auto, Inc.
Applebee's Neighborhood Grill and Bar	Enbridge Energy	Liberty Mutual Insurance	SIKICH, LLP
Arrowhead Tutors	Engineering Resource Associates, Inc.	M&M Bank	Silver Cross Hospital
BMO Harris Bank	Exelon Generation	Manteno Ford	Starcon International
Culver's of New Lenox	For The Good of It	Midwest Generation, LLC	Strand Associates, Inc.
Bear Home Improvements	Heroes West Sports Grill	Northern Illinois Steel Supply	Sumbaum Cycle Co.
Best Buy - Joliet	Hey and Associates, Inc.	NuMark Credit Union	Tallgrass Restoration, LLC
Bill Jacobs Auto Group	Hollywood Casino Joliet	Oak Lawn Blacktop Paving	TransCanada Corporation
Catholic Holy Family Society	Homer Tree Service, Inc.	Patterson Travel Company	Turk Furniture
CenterPoint Properties	Hometown National Bank	Paul Ziemniarski	USAgain, LLC
Charter Fitness of New Lenox	HR Green, Inc.	Pet Supplies Plus	V3 Companies
Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LTD.	John Wright - State Farm Agent	Presence Saint Joseph Medical Center	Voyager Media Group
Claassen, White & Associates	Joliet Bicycle Club	Rainbow Farm Enterprises	Walgreens
Comcast Cable	Joliet Junior College	Republic Services	Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
	Joliet Tent Company	Robert E. Hamilton Consulting Engineers, Inc.	Will County Health & Wellness Center
	JULIE, Inc.		<i>WillCountyGreen.com</i>

**Donations.** The Forest Preserve District of Will County is proud to present our donors. A total of \$63,000.91 was received in 2013 through the District's Donation Program. These generous contributors financially supported the Forest Preserve District of Will County during the year, showing their commitment to the mission, values and vision of the District.

Cabela's	Goldman, Sachs & Co.	Lamar Advertising Company	Silvercrest Veterinary Services
Comcast	Izaak Walton League of America	Linda and Jack Engels	Spay Illinois
Dan Zubenko	James and Karen Kabat	Precious Paws	The Sheridan Family
Enbridge Energy	John Palomino	Realistic Bait	Thomas McCafferty
Feel So Good Canine Massage, LLC		Shorewood H.U.G.S.	TransCanada Corporation

\* Sponsorships and donations listed exceed \$250 cash or in-kind value.



Excellence in Ecological Restoration

## Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting – Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

The Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting, awarded by the GFOA, is the highest recognition given in governmental accounting. This award was presented in 2013 to the Forest Preserve District for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2012. The Forest Preserve has been presented with this award for 18 consecutive years.



Dick Thomas

Chuckie Llewellyn

## Community Service Awards: Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), KidsMatter & Naperville City Council, Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA)

Four community service awards were presented in 2013 to three dedicated District volunteers and one generous sponsor.

Presented by the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) to District volunteer Tom Allison, the Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year award recognizes citizens' volunteer efforts to enhance a park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency program, service, parkland, open space or facility. Allison's volunteer work for the District consisted of assisting in preserving the property now known as the Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve in Plainfield; serving the District as a volunteer interpreter, providing public programs at Lake Renwick every Wednesday and Saturday morning during the summer; and taking on a role as a mentor to other volunteers.

The IAPD also presented District sponsor Comcast with the Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Business Category award, which recognizes honorable support of a local park district, forest preserve, conservation, recreation or special recreation agency. Both awards were presented at the "Best of the Best Gala" banquet in September 2013.

Presented by KidsMatter and Naperville City Council to District volunteer Chuckie Llewellyn, the Naperville Youth Service Award recognizes exceptional volunteer support by Naperville students and encourages youth to get involved in community service. Llewellyn, 10, has offered a helping hand at numerous District events and has become a role model for young people to seek out volunteer opportunities. He was presented the award at the City Municipal Center in Naperville in November 2013.

The Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) awarded the Community Service Award to District volunteer Richard "Dick" Thomas for his lifetime of service. Thomas' volunteer work consisted of being a seasonal ranger in federal parks, educating new Forest Preserve volunteers about native and non-native species present in preserves, and assisting in staffing District events. Thomas has volunteered for the District for 29 years.

## Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program (EERP): Chicago Wilderness

The Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program (EERP), presented by Chicago Wilderness, is a program that recognizes high-quality restoration sites and the organizations that manage them. This award was presented in November 2013 to the Forest Preserve District for its restoration efforts at Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve. The District received a Platinum Accreditation for the restoration at Braidwood, the highest level of recognition. The award was presented at Chicago Wilderness' inaugural "Celebrating Nature" banquet at Loyola University.

## Trail of the Month: Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy selected the District's Old Plank Road Trail as its trail of the month for October 2013. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy highlighted the Old Plank Road Trail as a 20-year effort to convert an abandoned rail line to a recreational trail. The Forest Preserve District was the first organization to recognize the potential of the abandoned rail line as a recreational trail. The creation of the Old Plank Road Trail opened the door for the District to develop other regional trails. Today, it is one of the most popular trails in the state of Illinois.

# Financial Information

## Financial Overview

In 1927, voters approved a referendum to establish the Forest Preserve District of Will County as

a separate taxing body of county government. Even then, when Will County was overwhelmingly rural, its citizens realized the importance of preserving its natural treasures. In 2013, the Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners, made up of 26 members from the county's 13 elective districts, oversees all District business and approves property purchases and District expenditures. The District currently owns, manages and leases 22,000 acres of land.

The Forest Preserve is organized financially into two operating funds. The Construction and Development Fund supports new site improvements and associated staffing costs, maintenance of existing facilities and properties, and infrastructure improvements. The Corporate Fund is used for employee salaries, benefits and general administrative costs of the District.



## Bond Issues

In 1999 and 2005, voters approved referendums to preserve land and improve District properties for public use. In both cases, voters recognized that the county was changing at an unprecedented pace and that special properties needed to be preserved before they were developed. The 1999 referendum provided \$70 million and the 2005 referendum \$95 million

for land acquisition and development. These funds have led to thousands of acres preserved and dozens of properties improved.

In 2007, the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners authorized \$50 million in general obligation limited tax bonds for the purpose of acquiring land for future use. In 2007 and 2008, the District issued \$10 million and \$30 million, respectively, of limited tax bonds. The remaining \$10 million in bonds was issued during 2010. During 2012, \$66,775,000 of the 2005 referendum bonds was re-funded. As a result, the District will have saved taxpayers approximately \$4.8 million in interest costs over the life of the bonds.

## Debt Service

Each of the bond issuances requires debt service. These are scheduled to be paid down over 20 years for each.

## Corporate Fund

	Budget FY 2012	Actual FY 2012	Budget FY 2013	Actual FY 2013 Unaudited	Budget FY 2014
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Taxes	10,186,062	10,149,929	10,187,142	10,180,444	10,391,739
Charges for Services	38,567	26,347	29,000	28,628	26,800
Licenses & Permits	277,195	264,820	261,350	287,904	263,200
Intergovernmental	245,500	398,683	290,500	398,521	290,500
Investment Income	15,000	24,612	19,000	24,328	25,000
Miscellaneous	213,050	314,487	247,200	293,447	248,600
Bond Proceeds	-	-	-	-	-
*OFS	-	-	-	-	359,385
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,975,374</b>	<b>11,178,878</b>	<b>11,034,192</b>	<b>11,213,272</b>	<b>11,605,224</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>					
General Government	4,335,631	3,569,699	4,206,206	3,842,414	4,270,475
Education & Recreation	2,241,309	2,165,469	2,287,955	2,238,260	2,428,186
Operations	2,478,064	2,402,690	2,578,064	2,374,040	2,535,958
Police	1,454,530	1,333,507	1,454,530	1,413,405	1,498,955
Planning & Development	241,648	222,282	237,347	229,533	235,175
Capital Outlay	114,192	95,935	117,090	81,789	481,475
*OFU	110,000	110,000	153,000	153,000	155,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,975,374</b>	<b>9,899,582</b>	<b>11,034,192</b>	<b>10,332,441</b>	<b>11,605,224</b>

\*OFS – Other Financial Sources (Consists primarily of carry-forward balances.)

\*OFU – Other Financial Uses

	Budget FY 2012	Actual FY 2012	Budget FY 2013	Actual FY 2013 Unaudited	Budget FY 2014
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## Construction & Development

### REVENUES

Taxes	2,439,934	2,423,446	2,502,195	2,507,388	2,450,479
Charges for Services	-	-	-	-	-
Licenses & Permits	468,000	606,875	920,000	1,190,026	1,165,120
Intergovernmental	240,000	321,034	290,000	355,895	290,000
Investment Income	3,000	3,018	2,500	2,986	2,000
Miscellaneous	16,000	10,034	10,000	10,190	10,000
*OFS	1,661,971	282,871	1,413,876	260,382	258,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,828,905</b>	<b>3,647,278</b>	<b>5,138,571</b>	<b>4,326,867</b>	<b>4,175,859</b>

### EXPENDITURES

General Government	186,350	56,053	233,048	29,037	58,150
Education & Recreation	72,096	44,724	80,559	32,388	19,900
Operations	1,694,903	1,571,169	1,892,731	1,612,716	1,747,520
Planning & Development	2,402,930	1,886,670	2,415,390	1,845,414	2,157,327
Capital Outlay	472,626	294,610	516,843	247,308	192,962
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-	-
*OFU	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,828,905</b>	<b>3,853,226</b>	<b>5,138,571</b>	<b>3,766,863</b>	<b>4,175,859</b>

## Debt Service

### REVENUES

Taxes	22,069,506	21,053,809	22,354,831	22,358,972	22,767,746
Investment Income	5,000	16,660	5,000	13,471	5,000
*OFS	96,000	**81,599,403	96,000	260,382	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,170,506</b>	<b>102,669,872</b>	<b>22,455,831</b>	<b>22,632,825</b>	<b>22,772,746</b>

### EXPENDITURES

General Government	5,000	707,561	5,000	2,055	5,000
Debt Service					
Principle	15,805,000	15,805,000	16,415,000	16,415,000	9,777,979
Interest	6,360,506	5,519,278	6,035,831	6,035,831	12,989,767
*OFU	-	**80,892,887	-	260,382	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>22,170,506</b>	<b>102,924,726</b>	<b>22,455,831</b>	<b>22,713,268</b>	<b>22,772,746</b>

## Other Funds

### REVENUES

Intergovernmental	1,220,000	1,163,083	2,824,276	1,221,630	1,736,463
Investment Income	12,000	51,964	58,000	35,765	53,000
Miscellaneous	217,562	146,074	852,990	67,896	1,844,030
Bond Proceeds	8,500,000	-	-	-	-
*OFS	21,687,701	131,790	14,920,102	340,943	7,473,497
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,637,263</b>	<b>1,492,911</b>	<b>18,655,368</b>	<b>1,666,234</b>	<b>11,106,990</b>

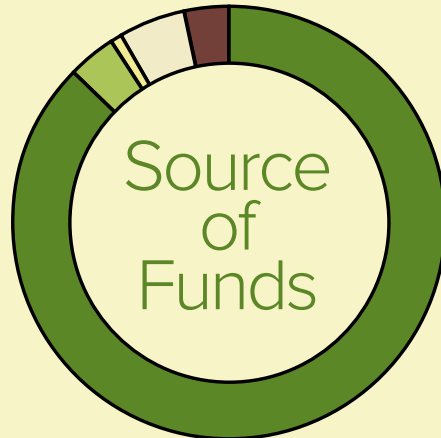
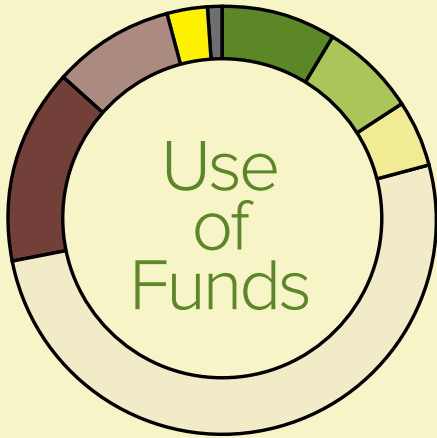
### EXPENDITURES

General Government	12,000	25,973	12,000	22,534	-
Planning & Development	3,510,374	1,380,348	3,208,791	1,038,665	3,134,365
Capital Outlay	28,114,889	8,593,466	15,434,577	6,150,135	7,972,625
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,637,263</b>	<b>9,999,787</b>	<b>18,655,368</b>	<b>7,211,334</b>	<b>11,106,990</b>

\*OFS – Other Financial Sources (Consists primarily of carry-forward balances.)

\*OFU – Other Financial Uses; \*\* Due to Bond Re-funding

# Financial Information



- General Government: 3,896,040
  - Planning & Development: 3,113,612
  - Public Programs & Education: 2,270,648
  - Debt Service: 22,450,831
  - Capital Outlay: 6,479,232
  - Operations: 3,986,756
  - Police: 1,413,405
  - Other Financing Uses: 413,382
- Total: \$44,023,906**

- Property Taxes: 35,046,804
  - Licenses & Permits: 1,477,930
  - Investment Income: 76,550
  - Bond Proceeds Utilized: 0
  - Grants & Other Intergovernmental: 1,976,046
  - Miscellaneous Other: 1,261,868
- Total: \$39,839,198**

## Levy Year

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Corporate/C&D	0.0565	0.0574	0.0599	0.0633	0.0673
Debt Service	0.0880	0.0945	0.0968	0.1060	0.1186
<b>Total</b>	<b>0.1445</b>	<b>0.1519</b>	<b>0.1567</b>	<b>0.1693</b>	<b>0.1859</b>



# Volunteer Support

In 2013, volunteers contributed 16,620 hours of service which greatly assisted the efforts of the District. During the year, the Forest Preserve had a total of 204 Prairie People volunteers. Prairie People volunteers routinely provide programs and services to the District. The Forest Preserve had an additional 858 individuals participate in District volunteer opportunities in 2013. Prairie People volunteers take part in an arduous application, interview, background check, orientation and training process to volunteer. They annually take hours of training to make a difference in the lives of those visiting and participating in District services and programs. The Forest Preserve could not accomplish its goals without this workforce of dedicated volunteers.

<i>Division, Department, or Section</i>	<i>Total Volunteers</i>	<i>Hours</i>
<b>DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE</b>		
<b>Volunteer Services and Administration</b>	<b>91*</b>	<b>1,183</b>
Special Event	75	801
Premier Program	10	313.5
Administrative	6	68.5

*\*Three special events and four premier programs were staffed for Public Affairs and Public Programs & Education by Volunteer Services.*

<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT</b>		
Trail Sentinels	<b>36</b>	<b>2,648.25</b>

<b>DIVISION OF PLANNING AND OPERATIONS</b>		
<b>Operations Department</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>1,885</b>
Full-time volunteers	25	642.25
12 groups	384	1,242.75
<b>Planning and Development Department</b>	<b>420</b>	<b>7,423</b>
Full-time volunteers	66	4,437.5
Interns	5	731.25
16 group projects	230	1,084
Illinois Youth Recreation Corps Grant recipients	3	309
One-time or community service volunteers	116	861.25
<b>Division Total</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>9,308</b>

<b>DIVISION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND EDUCATION</b>		
<b>Public Affairs Department</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>37*</b>

*\*Special events hosted by the Public Affairs Department generated 801 hours of volunteerism. The majority of these hours are reflected under Volunteer Services and Administration.*

<b>Public Programs and Education Department</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>3,444</b>
Environmental Learning Center	15	535
Full-time volunteers	6	499
1 group	9	36
Isle a la Cache Museum	20	1,606
Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve	29	618
Monee Reservoir	28	318
Full-time volunteers	2	12
Illinois Youth Recreation Corps Grant recipients	2	182
Adult Fishing Derby volunteers	4	24
1 group	20	100
Plum Creek Nature Center	11	367
<b>Division Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>3,481</b>

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,062</b>	<b>16,620.25</b>
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## 2013 Individual Volunteers

Diane Aigner	Kerri Counts
Jackie Aikins	Jimmy Craig
Sue Alexander	Joel Craig
Jim Allen	Sean Cronin
Tom Allison	Rodney Dabe
Olivia Amezcua	Paul Dacko
Gilbert Anderson	Georgeann Davis
Linda Andrews	Brandon Deardorff
Jim Avila	Debra Deardorff
Matt Babich	Dennis Deardorff
Ken Babinec	Ian Deardorff
Katherine Bader	Kelly Deardorff
Francis Beck	George Dehm
Mark Bettin	Judy Dehm
Michelle Blackburn	Kathy Dehn
Sydney Blackburn	Joan Dietrich
Greg Bluhm	Bill Doolin
Pat Bluhm	Dawn Downey
Mary Brockmiller	Brian Duffie
Eric Brossman	Aura Duke
Stephen Buckley	Sid Duke
Stan Buhr	Frank Dundek
Alan Bulava	Karen Dundek
Jason Buss	Michelle Dundek
Pete Caldwell	Margaret Dusold
Therese Caldwell	Lee Ecker
Vanessa Caldwell	Kenny Eiermann
Rodney Campbell	Tammy Eiermann
Scott Carevic	Susan Emore
Chad Carson	Jeff Fasanella
Lynne Cassidy	Joan Fasanella
Ron Cassidy	Barb Ferry
Janine Catchpole	The Fish Family
Jesse Chavez	Joyce Flanagan
Jean Christensen	Roger Flees
Carol Cooley	Cathy Foy
Sandy Costa	Pat Foy
Jessye Counts	Carolyn Gann

# Volunteer Support

## 2013 Individual Volunteers *(continued)*

Bob Gaston	Eric Kelly	Tom McCafferty	Joan O'Keefe	Roger Ross	Dave Utermark
Ben Gauchat	Margaret Kelly	Jessica McCarthy	Bernard O'Reilly	The Ruchala Family	Tori Utermark
Judy Glietsman	Emily Kenny	Allison McKay	Jon Panozzo	Rene Russell	Bruce Vasa
Ian Golec	Carol Key	MaryAnne McLean	Michael Palosz	Gary Ruzic	Dave Vasa
Jeanne Golec	Rebecca Key	Caitlin McMahon	Paul Pawlowski	Mike Rzepka	Randy Verink
Trisha Golec	Bill Kibler	Ruth Meyer	Mike Perry	Midge Saunders	Mike Veron
Janice Gonzales	Jackie Kibler	Bonnie Miller	John Peterson	Janet Schleeter	Matt Veron
Kristine Gregory	Kathy Kibler	Jim Miller	Judy Petzinger	Paul Schroeder	Richard Wachenheim
Stacey Harrison	Will Kibler	Tom Miller	Carol Picciolo	Phyllis Schulte	Eleanor Wagner
Tom Hawk	Ed Klama	Lois Michel-Perry	Diane Pool	Sam Scott-Schroeder	Katy Wanner
Pat Hoffman	Karen Klama	John Mittlelbrun	Kristen Pool	Lea Schultz	Joanne Wasz
Cindy Hostert	Kathryn Lewellen	Jack Mizicko	Julie Pope	Tod Shafer	Dave Wendt
Bill Huish	Ken Lewellen	Eugena Moore	Skip Pronger	Greg Siefert	Marie Wendt
The Humiston Family	Sandy Lezon	Bill Morris	Phillip Pursley	Nancy Sinnott	Flo White
Jessica Insprucker	Wayne Lezon	Kent Munro	Karlene Ramsdell	Carol Smith	Mark Wieclaw
Earl Jeffrey	Phil Liput	Don Nelson	Owen Ratliff	Angela Spero	Sally Wieclaw
Eric Johnson	Chuckie Llewellyn	Espie Nelson	Charlie Ray	Pat Strange	Ylanda Wilhite
George Johnson	Richard Llewellyn	John Nerren	Bruce Renwick	Ethan Stocking	Bill Willis
Glenn Johnson	Susan Malkowski	Shelby Ness	Rita Renwick	Barb Sudsberry	Connie Witkowski
Monica Johnson	Carol Malnar	Heather O'Brien	Robert Reynolds	Karen Tellef	Lee Witkowski
Jim Kabat	Stan Malnar	Kathleen O'Brien	Ben Riley	Alan Thomas	Jeff Yackley
John Kavanaugh	C.J. Marshall	Mike O'Brien	Lauren Rinke	Dick Thomas	Earl Zastro
Pat Kavanaugh	George Marshall	Michelle O'Connor	Brooke Robson	Edith Turkington	Laura Zderad
Ron Kaye	Dave Mauger	The O'Lear Family	Carrie Rock	Bernie Twait	Natalie Zderad
Efty Kelly	Art Maurer		Bob Romadka		Sue Zelek
	Alice McBride		Ann Romadka		

## Community Volunteer Groups

Boy Scout Troop 5	Girl Scout Troop 70132	Lincoln-Way North High School Key Club
Boy Scout Troop 19	Girl Scout Troop 70038	Lincoln-Way West High School
Boy Scout Troop 29	Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana Council	Lockport Township High School
Boy Scout Troop 44	Heart Haven Outreach	Montessori School of Joliet
Boy Scout Troop 82	Joliet Catholic Academy Cheerleaders	Plainfield High School Interact Club
Boy Scout Troop 83	Joliet West High School	Plants of Concern Volunteers
Boy Scout Troop 131	Lemont High School Environmental Science Classes	Prairie 4-H
Boy Scout Troop 256	Lewis University	Will County Trail Riders
Boy Scout Troop 276	Lincoln-Way Central High School Special Education Classes	United Methodist Church
Boy Scout Troop 341	Lincoln-Way Central High School Wrestlers	University of St. Francis
Boy Scout Troop 444		
Boy Scout Troop 88954		
Cathedral of St. Raymond		
Family Harvest Church		
Girl Scout Juliettes		
Girl Scout Troop 36		
Girl Scout Troop 137		
Girl Scout Troop 7038		
Girl Scout Troop 70131		

Winter Volunteer Workday



## Corporate Volunteer Groups

Caterpillar  
 CITGO Refinery  
 Covidien  
 Diageo  
 Geek Squad  
 Goldman Sachs  
 Harrah's Joliet Casino and Hotel



# Staff Roster

## Executive Director

Marcella M. DeMauro

## Administration and Finance

John Gerl, *Director*

Lisa Lukasevich,  
*Superintendent of Finance*

Renee Gauchat

Lori Green

Diana Jaworski

Tom Mancari

Kyrsten Muentnich

Karen Odum

Michael Prybell

Denise Steffen

Donna Suca

## Law Enforcement

Robert Murphy,

*Chief of Police*

Tracy Phillips, *Lieutenant*

Jason Allbert

Andrew Anderson

James Antole

David Barrios, Jr.

Steven Bettenhausen

James Burnette

Stephen Cammack

Vincent Cimino

Stephen Dow

Scott Dubs

Jack Ellington

Eric Gabrielson

Donald Gardiner

Gerald Gear

Dennis Goron

Lorie Graf

Gregory Hidlebaugh

Robert Husum

Cameron Kamarauskas

Michael Keigley

Shane Kelly

Dean Klier

Eric Kobe

Terry Kreimeier

Todd Matichak

Reginald McCrary

Jeffrey McKenzie

Daniel Olszewski

Nicholas Reid

Michael Reilly

Bobby Richardson

David Starceвич

Marian VanOoteghem

Bradley Veerman

Robert Veron

James Wendt

## Planning and Operations

Ralph Schultz, *Director*

## Operations

John Fay, *Superintendent*

Ryan Acres

Calvin Anderson

Tracy Bianco

Cole Biltgen

David Blaskey

Scott Carevic

Rina Cheney

Steven Crobie

Ian Eskridge

Cedric Foster

Phillip Gallo

Terrence Garvey, Jr.

Richard Gier

James Glenn

Gregory Griffin

John Janssen

Jeffry Jaworski

Brian Krabbe

Jeff Kure

Eric Latz



John Latz  
Brian Mackey  
Scott Marco  
Edward McDermott  
Michael Milligan  
Arthur Moeller  
Christopher Moeller  
Scott Nielsen  
Adam Oestmann  
Jon Panozzo  
Justin Parks  
Daniel Parthun  
Alex Pasteris  
James Patnoudes  
Richard Princko  
Kyle Siegel

Roy Smith  
Denzil Smothers  
Terry Snyder  
Jeffery Steichen  
Brad Steinke  
William Suca, Jr.  
Dane Thayer  
Donald Thayer  
Richard Therkildsen  
Sara Therkildsen  
Charles Thomas  
Donna VanWert  
Thomas Watson  
Robert Zinkiewicz



# Staff Roster

## Planning and Development

Andrew Hawkins,  
*Superintendent*  
Juanita Armstrong-Ullberg  
Michelle Blackburn  
Allison Borecky  
Elise Brazzale  
Glen Buckner  
Floyd Catchpole  
Corinne Crawford  
Karen Fonte  
Timothy Good  
Julianne Mason  
Larry D. Newton  
Colleen Novander  
Matt Novander  
John O'Lear  
Yvonne Perez  
Karen Rinke  
David Robson



Deborah Specht  
Andrew Stickney  
Richard Wachenheim  
Judith Wallace  
Jason Zylka

## Public Affairs and Education

Cynthia Harn, *Director*

## Public Affairs

Laura Kiran, *Superintendent*  
Morgan Drdak  
Bruce Hodgdon  
Cecelia Kanellakes  
Glenn P. Knoblock  
Jim McFarland  
Rose Scofield

## Public Programs and Education

Lynn Kurczewski,  
*Superintendent*  
Sarah Agent  
Nina Baki  
Bob Bryerton  
Catherine Caldwell  
Diane Carson

Erin Ecker  
Jen Guest  
Harry Klinkhamer  
Mark Loekle  
Terry Lorenz  
Suzy Lyttle  
Jim Nachel  
Courtney Nash  
Angela Opiola  
Kelli Parke  
Jessica Prince-Sharrar  
Angela Rafac  
Tina Riley  
Ray Setzke  
Mike Speller  
Nathan Taylor  
Mary Thomas  
Melissa Zanzola

## Retired

Richard Collins  
Delores Johnson





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# ReconnectWithNature.org



**Forest Preserve District**  
OF WILL COUNTY

*Bringing People and Nature Together*

**Sugar Creek  
Administration Center**  
17540 W. Laraway Road  
Joliet, IL 60433  
815.727.8700

**Environmental Learning Center**  
20851 S. Briarwood Lane  
Mokena, IL 60448  
708.479.2255

**Four Rivers Environmental  
Education Center**  
25055 W. Walnut Lane  
Channahon, IL 60410  
815.722.9470

**Isle a la Cache Museum**  
501 E. 135th Street  
Romeoville, IL 60446  
815.886.1467

**Monee Reservoir**  
27341 Ridgeland Avenue  
Monee, IL 60449  
708.534.8499

**Plum Creek Nature Center**  
27064 S. Dutton Road  
Beecher, IL 60401  
708.946.2216

