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## Forest Preserve Receives Restoration Award for Second Year

For the second year in a row, Chicago Wilderness has honored the Forest Preserve District with an “Excellence in Ecological Restoration” award.

The 2014 award is for restoration work the District performed at its 575-acre Hickory Creek Barrens Nature Preserve in New Lenox. The 2013 award was for restoration efforts at Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve in Braidwood. Both awards were platinum, the highest level.

The District was one of 10 agencies that received the 2014 restoration award from Chicago Wilderness on December 11 at a “Celebrating our Best” banquet at the Mundelein Center for Fine and Performing Arts in Chicago.

Sites chosen for the award exemplify best practices in natural resource management based on rigorous, science-based standards that are reviewed by a panel of regional conservation experts, according to Chicago Wilderness, an alliance of more than 300 organizations that work together to protect the environment.

“We are thrilled to receive an award that recognizes our many years of restoration work at Hickory Creek Barrens,” said Forest Preserve Board President Suzanne Hart. “Restoring



Forest Preserve District of Will County representatives accept an “Excellence in Ecological Restoration” award in December from Chicago Wilderness officials. Pictured from left to right are: Suzanne Malec-McKenna, executive director for Chicago Wilderness; Ralph Schultz, the District’s director of planning and operations; Marcy DeMauro, the District’s executive director; and Arnold Randall, superintendent of Forest Preserves of Cook County, who serves as chairman of Chicago Wilderness.

such a beautiful parcel of land back to its natural state is a long-term project that will benefit the region for years to come. Being acknowledged for this work is truly gratifying.”

The largest Illinois population of the state-threatened savanna blazing star has taken root at Hickory Creek Barrens. The site also includes an experimental reintroduction of the federally threatened Mead’s milkweed. More than 140 bird species live in

the preserve, including the pileated woodpecker, yellow-rumped warbler, brown creeper and hermit thrush.

Restoration efforts at Hickory Creek Barrens began in 1985 and include native seeding and planting, erosion control, vegetation monitoring and prescribed burning. The preserve – located on Schoolhouse Road, north of Route 30 – protects a portion of Hickory Creek as well as a mosaic of savanna, prairie, forest and sedge

meadow that supports a diverse group of plants and animals.

Suzanne Malec-McKenna, executive director of Chicago Wilderness, spoke about the award to the District’s Board of Commissioners during its January 8 meeting. She said her organization has been working since 1996 to protect open space, which now includes 225 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline and 545,000 acres of protected land.

“Will County has been one of the biggest leaders from the very beginning, and we thank you for that,” she said during her presentation.

Malec-McKenna said the Excellence in Ecological Restoration Awards were started two years ago to honor the “best of the best” in restoration work.

“It’s really important to note platinum is the top, and there’s only a couple that are given every year,” she said of the Forest Preserve’s awards.

Marcy DeMauro, the Forest Preserve District’s executive director, said preserve restoration efforts in Will County received a boost when the Board approved a five-year Land Stewardship Program in 2013. The program provides approximately \$1.7 million annually for restoration work from 2014 through 2018. ■



## Hart Elected Board President

Suzanne Hart of Naperville was elected president of the Forest Preserve District’s Board of Commissioners during the December 8 reorganizational meeting.

Hart, who has served on the Board since 2010, succeeds former President Don Gould of Shorewood, who did not seek re-election to the post. Hart is the first female Board president since the late Nora Wipfler held the top spot from 1978 to 1982.

“My goal is to help make sure all of  
*continued on page 3*

## Forest Preserve Foundation Accepts Donations

Friends of the Forest Preserve District of Will County, the Forest Preserve District’s charitable foundation, has received two business donations totaling \$268,400 so far this year.

A \$266,400 donation from Superior, Wisconsin-based Enbridge Energy was received for habitat restoration at Forked Creek Preserve in Wilmington. The check – which is the largest Foundation donation to date – was presented at the March 12 Forest Preserve Board meeting.

The Foundation also received a \$2,000 donation from Lee Werner, owner of Peotone-based Lee Werner Excavating. Werner presented the check to Foundation Board Chairwoman Ann Dralle of Lemont at the January 8 Forest Preserve Board meeting. This is the Foundation’s first donation from a Will County-based company.

“Both of these companies have been extremely generous, and their donations are very much appreciated,” Dralle said. “Financial support from the business community is a key part of the Foundation’s strategy to support the preservation, conservation, education and recreation priorities of the Forest Preserve District.”



Lee Werner, owner of Lee Werner Excavating, presents a \$2,000 check to Friends of the Forest Preserve District of Will County during a January Board of Commissioners meeting. Accepting the check are Foundation Board Chairwoman Ann Dralle (left) and Forest Preserve Board President Suzanne Hart.

The Foundation Board, which began drafting its mission statement and laying the groundwork for its fundraising activities in 2014, met for the first time in April of last year. In addition to Dralle, Foundation Board officers are: Laurie McPhillips-Weglarz of Plainfield, vice chairwoman; Sean Krause of Channahon, secretary; and Ralph Bias of Joliet, treasurer.

Other Foundation Board members are Timothy Brennan of Crete, Ed Garner of Homer Glen, H. Wayne

Poorè of Wilmington and Penny Wakeland of Homer Glen. Non-voting Foundation directors are Marcy DeMauro, the Forest Preserve District’s executive director, and Forest Preserve Board members Don Gould of Shorewood, Mike Fricilone of Homer Glen and Denise Winfrey of Joliet.

For more information on the Foundation, including how to make a donation, call the District at 815.727.8700. ■



**EARTH DAY CELEBRATION!: SUNDAY, APRIL 19 • SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS!**



# Willy's Wilderness



## Leave No Child Inside Initiative

Childhood is changing fast in an ever-changing world. With so many cool gadgets, video games, and other forms of electronic entertainment, kids today have plenty of motivation to stay inside and stay sitting down.

The Chicago Wilderness Leave No Child Inside initiative was created to encourage healthy outdoor experiences and to promote the importance of

interaction with nature throughout childhood. The Forest Preserve District of Will County supports the initiative by providing plentiful access to natural areas and by hosting outdoor programs year-round. The fun activities and information on this page also support the initiative by helping to spread the joy and benefits of playing outside with today's youth.

Please share this page with your children or other youngsters in your life to provide them an opportunity to learn about the natural world around them and to be inspired to spend more time outside. ■

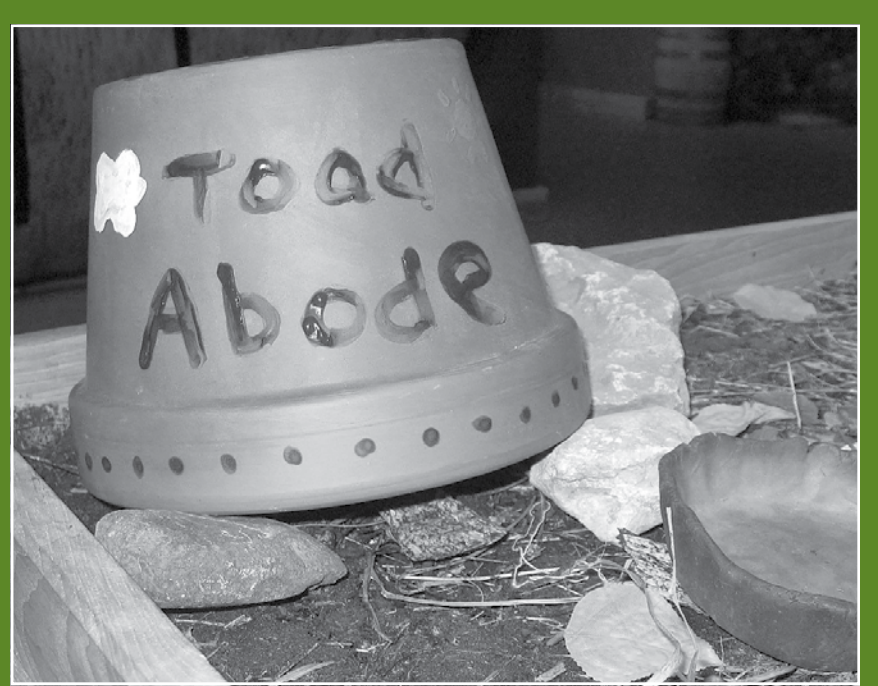
## Awesome Amphibians

### Salamanders

Have you ever seen a salamander? It looks like a lizard but is actually an amphibian! Lizards are reptiles that like dry environments. Lizards have rough skin with scales and have claws. Salamanders are more closely related to frogs in that they like moist, wet environments. They also have smooth, slimy skin and no claws. Salamanders transform through metamorphosis, just like frogs. They start from a jelly egg, to a larva that lives in water, to an adult salamander. One difference is that salamanders keep their tails when growing into an adult. Want



to find a salamander? You have to go outside! Spring is the perfect time to find a wet area with leaves and logs. Gently flip over logs and search through the leaves for this amphibian. Remember to put everything back just as it was when you are done looking. Creating a safe habitat is the best way to protect the salamanders and other amphibians. ■



## Build a Toad Abode

Toads live in your yard. Help them by making a special house for them to live. A toad abode can be made from something as simple as an old flowerpot and a rock. Follow the instructions below to make one for your yard. Amphibians such as salamanders and frogs might find this a nice home too!

### What you need:

- Ceramic flower pot
- Paint, washable or not (optional)
- Paint brush, child-sized (optional)
- Fist-sized rocks, at least one
- Flower pot saucer

Activity adapted from the National Wildlife Foundation.

### What to do:

**1. Decorate the pot.** (optional)  
Decorate the pot with paints, markers or by gluing pebbles to the sides.

**2. Find a place for the house.**  
Find a cool, shady area outside. Arrange the rocks in a semi-circle, with a gap for an entrance. Place the pot on the rocks so it is tipped on the diagonal.

**3. Provide water**  
Dig down into the earth and put the saucer so that the lip is level with the soil. Fill it with water.

Check the saucer regularly during dry weather and add a bit of water as needed. ■

## Frog Jump

Frogs have to jump and leap to escape predators. Can you jump like a frog? It seems pretty easy since frogs are so small. However, for their size, frogs should win a gold medal! A bullfrog can jump 10 times its body length. For a 5-foot-tall girl, that

means she has to jump 50 feet. Whoa! Grab some friends, a rope, a ruler, and get outside. Lay out the rope in a straight line and take turns jumping. Mark how far you go and measure how many feet. If a predator was after you, could you jump to safety? ■

## Nature Jokes

**Where do frogs keep their money?**

*In the river bank!*

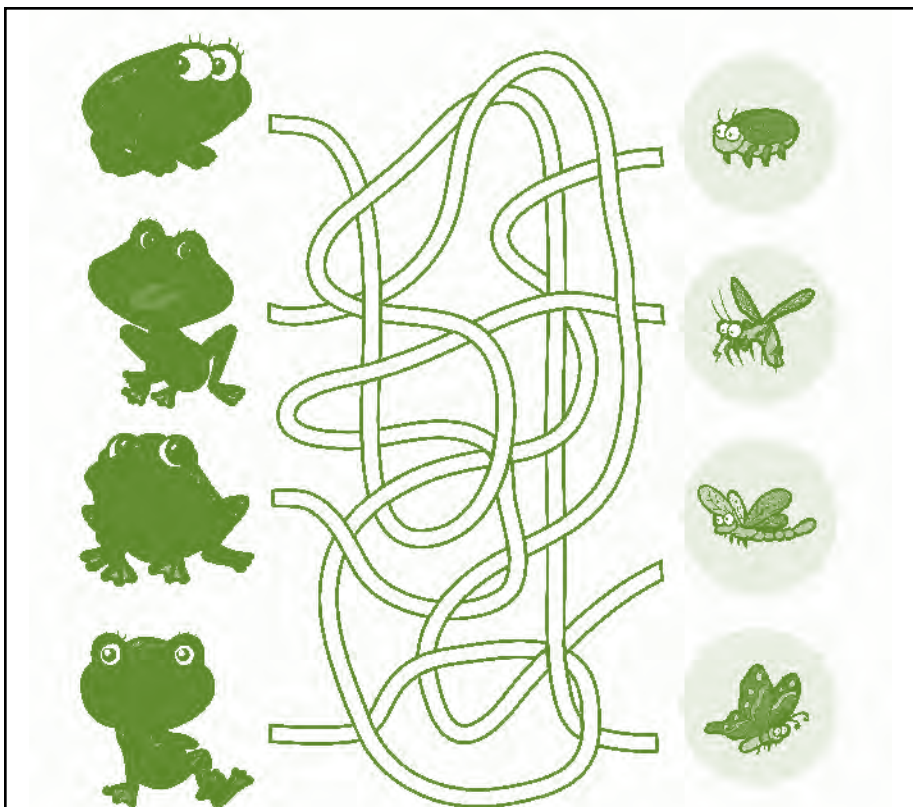
**What kind of shoes do frogs wear?**

*Open toad! ■*

## A Sticky Situation

Frogs can eat many different things like insects, spiders, worms and even small fish. They have a special feature that helps to catch these quick or squirmy prey – a sticky tongue! All frogs have to do is sit and wait until an insect flies into its eyesight. Then, in less than a second, the frog reaches out its tongue and grabs its prey. The frog will swallow the prey whole and then wait until another tasty treat flies on by. Next time you are outside, sit still like a frog and see if you can catch an insect with your bare hands!

Can you help these frogs use their sticky tongue to catch the prey? ■





# District Police Urge Use of “Eyes, Ears and Cell Phones”

The Forest Preserve District’s Police Department is launching a program similar to a neighborhood watch for Will County’s forest preserves. The effort, which is part of a public education campaign, is intended to better inform preserve users on the proper action to take should an incident in a preserve require a police response.

If there is a life-threatening emergency in a preserve, preserve users should always call 911. However, if the concern is not life-threatening, call the Will County Sheriff’s Police Dispatch at 815.727.6191. Calls for Forest Preserve District Police are dispatched by the Sheriff’s Police. Callers should give their contact number to the dispatcher, so that Forest Preserve Police may make contact while en route to obtain additional information, if necessary. To report routine maintenance or obtain general information from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday through Friday, call 815.727.8700.

The new program – which Forest Preserve Police are calling the “Ears, Eyes and Cell Phones” campaign – is intended to encourage the public to use their ears and eyes to detect emergencies and report them quickly on their cell phones. The program also should help alleviate confusion about what number to call.



Because District forest preserves are located all over the county – some in unincorporated areas and others in municipalities – some members of the public assume they should call other police departments, even though an incident is occurring in a forest preserve. That is not the case, explained Forest Preserve Police Chief Robert Murphy.

“For example, someone on a trail on the west side of Joliet might call the Joliet Police to report illegal activity, or a Shorewood preserve user with an emergency might call Shorewood Police,” Murphy said. “These misdirected calls – which should be going to the Forest Preserve Police via the Sheriff’s Police Dispatch or 911 Dispatch – cause delays in response times when seconds can count.”

Having these telephone numbers already programmed into cell phones also saves time. “We really encourage people to put these numbers into their cell phones,” Murphy said. “That way, they are ready should they need them. When there’s any type of illegal activity, it’s important to call while the incident is still occurring or has just occurred, if at all possible.”

In the coming months, the District’s Police Department will be working to educate preserve users further about the program as part of a special outreach effort.

“Remember, if there is something going on in a forest preserve that requires a police response, use your senses to figure out what is happening and use your cell phone to call the correct number,” Murphy said. “When seconds count, using your ‘Eyes, Ears and Cell Phones’ can make all the difference.” ■

## Volunteer Workday Offered in Recognition of Earth Day

Make a difference during Earth Day week by signing up for the Forest Preserve District’s “Community Volunteer Workday.”

The workday will take place from 8 a.m.-noon on Saturday, April 25, at Whalon Lake in Naperville. The event is sponsored by JULIE, Inc. and Homer Tree Service. This is the District’s largest volunteer workday event of the year. Some participants sign up as individual volunteers, while others come from local businesses or organizations. Last year’s event drew 400 volunteers.

Participants will help with cleanup and land management at the 249-acre Whalon Lake, and they will assist with trail maintenance, brush clearing, rubbish removal and wood chipping. These efforts benefit native plants, wildlife and the community.

JULIE has been a generous sponsor of the “Community Volunteer Workday” for the past three years. The workday also coincides with Joliet-based JULIE’s Safe Digging Month campaign in April, which is typically the start of the digging season. The campaign urges homeowners and professional excavators in Illinois to call JULIE at 811 before digging.

“The Community Volunteer Workday’ is a great opportunity to work outdoors with your friends and family to make a difference,” said Kevin T. Chmura, JULIE’s director of public relations. “We are proud to partner with the Forest Preserve District of Will County and volunteers from several area businesses and organizations to make our community a better place to live and work.”

Work will take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain. ■



## District Receives Grant for Crete Dog Park

The Forest Preserve District will receive a \$400,000 state grant to help pay for a new preserve access area and a dog park in eastern Will County, it was announced in January.

The grant is being awarded through the state’s Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) program. The money will help fund Phase II of the Forest Preserve District’s Plum Valley Preserve – Burville Road Access project in Crete.

The grant was announced during an event at the Park District of Oak Park’s Cheney Mansion. Forest Preserve District Board President Suzanne Hart attended the event with Board Vice President Ragan Freitag and Forest Preserve District Executive Director Marcy DeMauro.

“We are so pleased to receive this grant because it will allow us to expand our amenities on the east side of Will County,” Hart said. “Also, it will provide us with the funds we need to develop our sixth dog park.”

Engineering is underway on the Plum Valley Preserve access, which will be located on Burville Road, just east of Route 394 and north of Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve in Beecher. In addition to the off-leash dog park, the access will feature a group picnic shelter and a trail. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of this year or spring of 2016. Phase I of the project will cost \$650,000 and is being paid for through the District’s Capital Improvement Program.

Seventy-five projects in 28 counties will share a total of \$26 million through OSLAD funding in 2015. OSLAD grants are designed to help communities acquire land for parks and improve recreational opportunities.

The Forest Preserve District was one of 10 Will County agencies to receive a 2015 OSLAD grant. ■

## Hart Elected President

*continued from page 1*

the preserves, trails, dog parks and visitor centers remain safe and well maintained so visitors can continue to enjoy all the District has to offer,” Hart said. “I will work with my fellow Commissioners to continue the conservative fiscal policies that the Board has instituted in recent years to make sure every tax dollar we receive is spent wisely and for the

benefit of the citizens of Will County.”

Hart is a graduate of Southeastern University in Florida. She is a past member and president of the Naperville Park District board, and she currently serves as president of the Illinois Association of Conservation and Forest Preserve Districts. Hart and her husband, Leo, have three children, Megan, Gaby and Julia.

Also during the reorganizational meeting, Ragan Freitag of Wilmington was elected vice president, and Judy Ogalla of Monee was re-elected secretary. Both women have served on the Board since 2012. Jim Moustis of Frankfort Township, a 22-year Board veteran, was elected treasurer.

The Board’s reorganizational meeting is held every two years after the November general election. ■



# Blending Old and New at Isle a la Cache

Exciting changes are swirling around the Forest Preserve District's only island preserve – Isle a la Cache in Romeoville.

A new mural will grace the Isle a la Cache Museum's meeting room wall, nature programs will be expanded and a more historically accurate Native American dwelling is being planned for the site.

The mural by Los Angeles artist Jeanine Hattas was due to be installed at the Museum in February or March. The artwork will depict French fur traders and a Potawatomi summer lodge as it would have looked in the year 1750. Passenger pigeons will appear in the mural's background. Passenger pigeons were once very common in this region, explained Isle a la Cache Supervisor Chris Gutmann, who took over management of the Museum in June 2014.

"These flocks were just awe-inspiring and the thunder created by the flocks was deafening," he said. "They were the most abundant birds on the planet until they were hunted into extinction."

Gutmann is on a Forest Preserve District team that is working on plans for a new Native American summer lodge at Isle a la Cache. The team is being led by Public Programs and Recreation Supervisor Jim Nachel. The Forest Preserve learned in June 2014 that it would receive a \$270,000 Illinois



Isle a la Cache Supervisor Chris Gutmann talks with Jenna Newcomb, facility office manager for the Museum. Gutmann, who was hired by the District in June 2014, is working on plans for a new mural and a replacement Native American dwelling at the Romeoville preserve.

Museum Capital Grant to replace the existing longhouse, which has deteriorated due to water and insect damage.

The new summer lodge will be built with Native American input, and it will feature man-made materials that are better able to resist water and pests. More than 4,000 schoolchildren visit the current longhouse annually.

Gutmann also plans to add more bird and nature programs to the 101-acre preserve that shares the Des Plaines River island with the Museum at 501 E. Romeo Road.

"There is a huge bird watching community in this area," Gutmann said.

Gutmann, who grew up not far from the Museum in Wheatland Township, is a bird watcher himself.

"I've been birding since first grade," he said.

In addition to his life-long study of birds, Gutmann has a bachelor's degree in marine science and biology and a master's degree from Illinois State University in ichthyology, the study of fish.

Gutmann worked as a naturalist for the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and in research and development for a pet supply company prior to starting his job with the Forest Preserve District of

Will County. After traveling the world for the pet supply company for several years, "It was time to come home," he said.

He said he's excited about the opportunity to lead Isle a la Cache as it expands its nature and history offerings.

"I like strategic planning and big-picture thinking," Gutmann said. "My goal or vision is to maximize what we have here. I'm a person who likes to reset the bar. I'd like to offer something very unique, very attractive to visitors."

In addition to the new developments at Isle a la Cache, the Museum will continue to offer its popular "Living History Demonstrations" and the annual "Island Rendezvous" in June (see article on this page), which captures an era when French voyageurs may have used the island to cache supplies and goods they traded with Native Americans.

Opening up the preserve to more nature programs while continuing the rich voyageur tradition at Isle a la Cache should make the site even more enticing to the general public, Gutmann said.

"We are in a location that is in a prime position to be a hub for the community," he said. "I see a lot of potential." ■



JUNE  
13-14

## "Island Rendezvous" Returns for 32nd Year

Learn more about fur trade along the Des Plaines River during the Forest Preserve District's 32nd annual "Island Rendezvous."

This free, family-oriented event will be held on Saturday, June 13, and Sunday, June 14, at Isle a la Cache Museum in Romeoville. Activities will take place on both days from 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Three hundred years ago, French voyageurs canoed the Isle a la Cache area on the Des Plaines River to trade for furs with Native Americans. Rendezvous was a time for voyageurs to celebrate the end of the trading season. During the Forest Preserve District's "Island Rendezvous," re-enactors will set up camp and roam the island portraying French voyageurs, colonists and soldiers from this period of American history.

The event will feature live music, falconry, canoe demonstrations, children's crafts and games, vendors and a scavenger hunt. Re-enactors will demonstrate what life was like in the 1700s, and they will compete in a tomahawk toss, skillet toss and other 18th century contests.

"Island Rendezvous" is free of charge, but vendors will be selling clothing, jewelry, tools and other crafts from the period. Food also will be available for purchase.

Free parking and shuttle service will be provided. For more information, call Isle a la Cache Museum at 815.886.1467 or visit [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) for a schedule of activities. ■



APRIL  
04

## "Hugs for Hounds" a Treat for Your Pet

It's not every day that your favorite canine can join dozens of other dogs in search of goodies, just waiting to be claimed. "Hugs for Hounds," the annual doggy Easter egg hunt hosted by the Forest Preserve District and Shorewood HUGS, returns for its seventh year on Saturday, April 4 at 11 a.m., at Hammel Woods Dog Park in Shorewood.

Easter eggs will be hidden throughout the 8.5-acre dog park, and your pet can participate by sniffing them out. Bring a basket to collect the

eggs your pup finds. The eggs contain dog treats or special prizes, courtesy of Shorewood HUGS, JULIE, Inc., and Plainfield Veterinary Clinic and Surgical Center. The program will continue until all of the hidden eggs have been found.

A program fee of \$5 per dog will go to support Jullo, the Forest Preserve District's K9 Officer. Pre-registration for the program is recommended. The program will be held on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

See page 12 for more information. ■



# Hadley Valley's Seasons Captured on Canvas

Joliet artist Maggie Capettini spent more than a year painting the seasons of Hadley Valley. Her artwork will be displayed at three different Forest Preserve District Visitor Centers on a rotating basis from April 1 through October 18 (see schedule on this page).

In a written summary of her artistic endeavor, Capettini, a member of the Lemont Artists Guild, described her inspiration for the exhibit. Capettini said she first moved to Joliet eight years ago and was immediately drawn to the beauty of the "vast and open" Hadley Valley, which was near her home.

"Here and there, cottonwood and burr oak trees stood guard against the strong winds that blow through year-round," the Batavia native said of



the 726-acre preserve that stretches from Joliet through New Lenox and up to the border of Homer Glen in Homer Township.

When a "Notice of Public Hearing" popped up along the Route 6 preserve access in November 2007, Capettini said she was worried that a shopping center might move in across the street from her neighborhood. But when she discovered that the Forest Preserve District was going to develop the site,

she was relieved.

The District installed a pavilion, 5-mile trail and parking lot, and it also continued work on its award winning restoration effort – the largest in the Forest Preserve's history.

"All the while, I enjoyed spectacular sunsets over the valley in the summer and blankets of snow covering the ground and dusting the trees in winter," Capettini said. "Often, the beauty of the landscape took my breath away."

This rich visual landscape sparked Capettini to return to her artistic roots, which she developed while majoring in art in college. At first, she painted landscapes from photos. But she soon became intrigued by the notion of *plein air* painting, which is a French term that means "in the open air," a technique employed by many late 19th century painters.

Capettini decided Hadley Valley would be her outdoor studio and she began painting all of the different seasons and vistas available to her.

"Part of the joy of painting *en plein air* is the opportunity for interaction with other people," she said. "Hadley Valley's trail is well-traveled. Often, people stop to talk, ask questions, or simply observe. These people clearly love the preserve as much as I, so it is fun to talk with them: an instant connection and conversation."

Capettini started her project in August 2013 with her work titled *Late Summer Bales*.

"There were literally hundreds of large, round rolls of hay," she said. "They demanded to be painted – how could I not?"

Capettini continued to paint all of the seasons and she now has almost

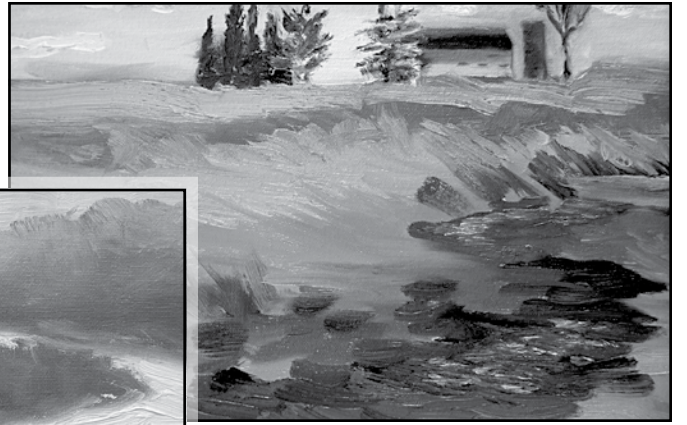


30 oil paintings.

"They span one-and-a-half years and highlight the four meteorological seasons, as well as many of the 'mini-seasons' unique to Hadley Valley," she said, referring to burn season, wildflower season, and time periods when the preserve was cold and deserted or just turning green. "My hope is that this exhibit will inspire others to get outside, to visit Hadley Valley – even to try their hand at *plein air* painting."

"I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to know this preserve so well, and I am grateful to the Forest Preserve District for protecting and developing this and many other wonderful lands to be enjoyed by everyone."

Capettini's paintings have been juried into a number of art exhibits in the Chicago area and many of her works are held in private collections in the United States and Canada. She has received Artist Support grants from the Illinois Arts Council Agency, including one that is paying for a portion of the Forest Preserve exhibit costs. For additional information on the artist, visit [maggiecapettini.wordpress.com](http://maggiecapettini.wordpress.com). ■



## Art Exhibition: Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons

APRIL 01  
THROUGH  
MAY 15

**Sugar Creek Administration Center**, 17540 W. Laraway Road, Joliet, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays.

JUNE 02  
THROUGH  
JULY 12

**Isle a la Cache Museum**, 501 E. 135th Street, Romeoville, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays, and noon-4 p.m. Sundays.

SEPT 05  
THROUGH  
OCT 18

**Plum Creek Nature Center**, 27064 S. Dutton Road, Beecher, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays, and noon-4 p.m. Sundays.

APRIL  
18

A **special reception** will also be held from 2-4:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 18 at Sugar Creek Administration Center. The program will include a talk at 3 p.m. and a demonstration by artist Maggie Capettini.

## Recycled Christmas Tree Total Increases

More than 200 people chose to recycle their Christmas trees through the Forest Preserve District's "Recycle the Holiday Spirit" program in December and January. The total number of trees collected increased slightly from 204 trees in 2013-2014 to 207 in 2014-2015.

The program, which began in 1999, gives Will County residents an option to dispose of their holiday trees in an Earth-friendly way. All of the trees are chipped and turned into mulch that is used for Forest Preserve landscaping and trails. Since 1999, a total of 3,034 trees have been recycled through the program.

While landscaping materials are no longer allowed in landfills, Christmas trees are considered "decorative" and they can still wind up in the waste stream. That is why it is important to check with your municipality to see if its waste haulers compost or mulch discarded Christmas trees. If not, or if you live in an unincorporated area, the Forest Preserve District's program is a perfect way to dispose of a Christmas tree after the holiday. ■

## Music Under the Stars Returns to McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove

McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove in Channahon will come alive with rock 'n' roll at "Music at McKinley Outdoor Concert and Car Show," hosted by the Forest Preserve District and presented by title sponsor JULIE, Inc. Free of charge and open to all ages, this event will be held on Saturday, June 20, from 6-10 p.m.

The evening will begin with a classic car show at 6 p.m. Dozens of classic cars, from Model T's to power machines, will be on display. Walk the grounds to view these amazing automobiles and meet with their owners.

The concert then follows at 7 p.m. Midlife Crisis, a classic rock cover band performing songs from the '50s to the '90s, will provide the evening's entertainment. The band will be performing in an idyllic outdoor setting, surrounded by towering trees and situated alongside the Des Plaines River.

Bring a blanket or lawn chair and a cooler with your favorite beverages, pick out a spot on the lawn



JUNE  
20

and enjoy three hours of music under the stars. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. No reservations or tickets are necessary for the concert. Wearing insect repellent is recommended.

To display your classic car at the event, pre-register online at [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org), or call 815.727.8700. There is no registration fee. Day-of car show registration will be available at the event beginning at 6 p.m. ■



# Frigid “Musher Mania” Draws Siberian Husky Fans

Around 700 die-hard Siberian husky fans bundled up and braved the elements to attend the Forest Preserve District’s 21st “Musher Mania” on January 10 at Monee Reservoir.

While frigid temperatures and a wicked wind chill may have scared off some two-legged visitors, weather conditions were just right for the cold-loving huskies to show off their sledding skills.

In addition to mushing demonstrations, the annual event included an ice sculptor, who carved out “cool cubes” with toys in them for the kids in attendance. S’mores were roasted over a toasty fire. And kids were allowed to “pan” for gold in a warming tent that featured showings of the documentary *Ice Bound, the Greatest Dog Story Ever Told*. The event was held in partnership with the Siberian Husky Club of Greater Chicago. The club brought more than 20 huskies to this year’s “Musher Mania.”

Club member Lee Cera of Manhattan was thrilled to show off her champion Siberian husky, Tally.

“Kids enjoy the event,” she said. “They learn about the dogs and we get to teach them about nature and the world around them.”

Roseanne Tadsen of Chicago brought her grandchildren, Isabella, 8, and Sienna, 6, to “Musher Mania” for the first time this year. Tadsen said she was happy there was enough snow for the dog sleds.

“We want to see the dogs race,” she said as she took a break in a heated tent with her granddaughters.

Frosty conditions didn’t faze Amy Owens of Lockport, who brought her twin sons, Tyler and Adler, to the event.

“We dressed for it,” she said as her parka-clad boys clutched their slippery “cool cubes.”

Kate Swafford of Elk Grove Village brought her three children – Porter, 2, and twins Maddie and



Sammie, both 10 – to Musher Mania for the first time. Kate said she grew up with huskies and the breed is Sammie’s favorite.

“This is awesome,” Kate said as her children took turns petting Cherokee, an 8-month-old husky. “We’re really excited that there is something like this. It’s great that people learn about the breed.”

Cherokee’s owner, Carol Preble of Marengo, has attended all 21 “Musher Mania” events as a member of the Siberian Husky Club.

“We educate people about the dogs so they make sure they get what they want (in a pet),” she said.

“Huskies are not for everyone. They are energetic and they need to be on a leash or in a fenced yard.”

Theresa Przybylski of Crete, who serves as the

“Musher Mania” coordinator for the club, gave tips on how to train huskies to pull, which helps them work off some of their energy. She said it’s best to start with smaller items and let the dogs work their way up to sleds.

“They’re awesome dogs, and it’s absolutely incredible what they can do,” she said. “But it’s good to help people understand what the breed is all about. So many times people think huskies are cute, pretty dogs, but they don’t realize what they’re getting into and a lot of the dogs end up in [a] rescue [shelter].”

To view all of the photos from the Forest Preserve’s “Musher Mania,” visit [ReconnectWithNature.org/photo-gallery](http://ReconnectWithNature.org/photo-gallery). ■

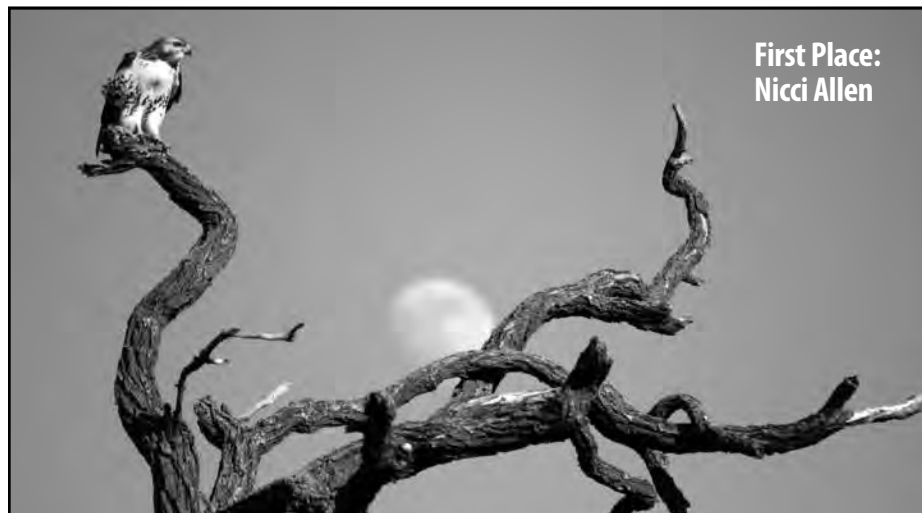
## “Woods Walk” Photo Contest Winners Chosen

A solitary hawk, a preserve teeming with outdoor enthusiasts and a rock ripe with turtles were winning photo subjects during the Forest Preserve District’s 2014 “Woods Walk” Photo Contest.

First, second and third place photos were chosen from among 123 submitted pictures during the District’s fifth annual contest. Judges analyzed the photos based on focus, lighting, composition, impact, creativity and storytelling. The winning picture, submitted by Nicci Allen of New Lenox, depicts a hawk perched against the backdrop of a daytime moon at Vermont Cemetery Preserve in Naperville. Allen won a digital photo frame.

Allen, who said she worked quickly in case the hawk flew away, took several shots from different angles with a telephoto lens.

“I loved the fluidity of the branches



First Place:  
Nicci Allen



in the tree and that it all fit together so beautifully against the bold blue sky,” she said of her winning shot.

Second place went to Greg Dubois of Joliet whose photo captured the lively summer recreation of Whalon Lake in Naperville. His prize was a “Woods Walk” backpack. Connie Secor

of Orland Park won third place with her photo of a group of red-eared slider turtles sunning themselves at Rock Run Preserve – Black Road Access in Joliet. Her prize was a “Woods Walk” travel blanket.

Three additional photos were selected for honorable mention awards. The awards went to: Connie Holt of Braidwood, Brittany Matejko of Lockport and Kevin Kuchler of Joliet. These winners each received a gift card. All 123 photo entries can be viewed on the District’s website, [ReconnectWithNature.org/photo-gallery](http://ReconnectWithNature.org/photo-gallery).

The District’s 2014 “Woods Walk” began on June 1 and ended on October 31. Participants who completed seven of 10 preserve trail hikes earned medals. “Woods Walk” hikers also were encouraged to submit their best snapshots for the photo contest.

This year’s “Woods Walk” program will again run from June 1–October 31. See article on this page. ■



Second Place:  
Greg Dubois



Third Place:  
Connie Secor



## “Woods Walk” Kicks Off June 1

Explore woods and trails throughout Will County this summer and fall by participating in the Forest Preserve District’s “Woods Walk” program.

“Woods Walk” begins on June 1 and runs through October 31. Participants who hike seven of 10 designated trails will earn a medal suitable for attaching to a backpack, hat or walking stick. Hike all 10 preserve trails and receive an additional gift. Don’t forget to snap some photos as you participate in the program. Enter your photos in the District’s “Woods Walk” photo contest by October 31. The top three entries will be awarded prizes and the photos will be published on the District’s website, [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org).

Visit [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) in May for more “Woods Walk” details – including the program’s official *Travel Log* and a list of the trails selected for 2015. ■







WILL COUNTY NATURALIST'S

# SPRINGALMANAC

What does Mother Nature have in store for us in the coming months? In Will County, each season presents new and exciting opportunities to explore and understand our ever-changing landscape and its inhabitants. The weeks between the spring equinox (March 20) and the summer solstice (June 21) can be marked by observing the changes that take place from day to day and week to week. Imagine visiting your favorite forest preserve and creating a calendar of nature's progress from winter's end to summer's onset. What are some of nature's wonders that you can observe and record during this time of year?



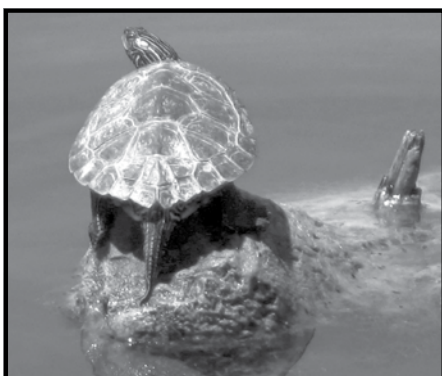
## Timberdoodles

Also known as American woodcocks, this unusual member of the shorebird family has one of the most spectacular breeding displays of all birds. Normally timid and elusive, the woodcock is readily observed during the early spring breeding season when he leaves the safety and cover of the forest to attract a mate.

Gathering in open meadows and prairies at dusk, males perform conspicuous displays, dubbed "sky dances" by naturalist Aldo Leopold. They begin by giving a buzzy, nasal "peent" call while turning in a tight circle on the ground, in an effort to attract all nearby females. Then, suddenly, the bird launches into the air, circling higher and higher until almost invisible, with his wings making a distinctive chittering sound during his ascent. At the apex of his display flight (200-350 feet), the male switches to a series of high-pitched chirps, then tumbles back to earth in a steep dive, where he begins his display anew. Birds land in nearly the same spot from which they took flight, making it possible to quietly approach

for a close view of this amazing bird.

The colorful folk name of "timberdoodle" probably refers to the bird's forest-edge haunts, as well as its erratic, zigzag flight and twittering call notes.



## Vernal Ponds: Seasonal Habitats for Wildlife

Have you ever walked through the woods in spring and found an immense puddle that wasn't there over the winter? You may have discovered a vernal pond. Named from "vernalis," the Latin word for spring, vernal ponds are formed in shallow ground depressions from spring snowmelt, precipitation and rising water tables. Generally less than 40 yards in diameter and no more than 4 feet deep, vernal ponds dry up by late summer and are only temporary woodland reservoirs.

These seasonal ponds are essential as breeding and feeding grounds for many different animals. Uninhabited by fish, vernal ponds enable a variety of amphibians and invertebrates to breed and develop with less chance of being attacked by a predator. Salamanders, frogs, toads and newts

emerge from winter's hibernation and seek out the vernal ponds to find mates and to breed. As young amphibian larvae hatch and develop, they feed on invertebrate species that have emerged from their eggs at the same time. Fairy shrimp, dragonflies, damselflies, caddisflies, mosquitoes, daphnia and other invertebrates drop egg cases in vernal ponds each year. The egg cases lie dormant over winter and hatch the following spring.

As activity inside the pond increases each spring, it attracts other animals to the vernal community. Some turtle species visit these ponds to feed on egg masses, while snakes and raccoons may feed on tadpoles and frogs. Birds like the green heron and red-shouldered hawk also visit the ponds to feed. The huge number of organisms using vernal ponds each year shows how essential these seasonal wetlands are to the life cycles of many woodland species.

## Ants and Spring Wildflowers

Flowering plants have many strategies for disseminating their seeds. Some dispersal methods are straightforward: maple seeds helicopter hundreds of yards, springy jewelweed pods eject their seeds, and tiny willow seeds float miles on watery currents. Many, like the burdock seed, hitch rides on animals.

The herbaceous spring flora of northern forests employ a different scheme. Thriving on the floor of rich, undisturbed woodlands, this verdant, moist environment is the ideal site for *myrmecochory* (mir-meh-ko-chory),

or seed dispersal by ants. Species including the bloodroot, hepatica, trillium, anemone, Dutchman's breeches and various violets grow extra tough seeds capped with fleshy appendages called *elaiosomes* (e-ly-o-somes), from the Greek meaning "oil-bodies." These structures are rich in ant-edible lipids, proteins, carbohydrates and vitamins.

Ants are drawn to the ripening seeds, which are transported to their nests. There, in the relative safety of the colony, the ants feed the elaiosomes to their maturing larvae. The unharmed seeds are discarded to their waste disposal area, which is rich in nutrients from the ant frass (excrement) and dead bodies, where the seeds germinate. A single ant colony may collect as many as a thousand seeds over a season. The plant benefits from seed transport away from the parent (and thereby reduced competition between seedlings) to sites that are protected from predators and often ideal substrates for germination. ■



MAY  
02

## Kites to Fly over Monee Reservoir in May

Raising a kite into the sky, then seeing it dance with the wind, is a fascination that dates back thousands of years. Now you can join with others –whether you have flown a kite before or would like your first kite flying experience – at the Forest Preserve District's "Kite Fly Festival!" on Saturday, May 2, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at Monee Reservoir. Take part in a bol (a parachute-like kite) race, marvel at a falcon demonstration, collect candy that falls from the sky, and add your kite to the colorful display over Monee Reservoir. All of this, and much more, is available at this springtime event. Members of the Illinois Kite Enthusiasts Club partner with the Forest Preserve to host this free annual "Kite Fly Festival!" For a schedule of activities, see page 12. The program will take place on level paths or natural surfaces across uneven terrain. ■



# Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28 <b>Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons</b> Wednesday, April 1 – Sunday, October 18 (SCAC, ICM & PCNC) Hours vary by site. [P.12]	29	30	1 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14]	2	3	4 <b>Morning Bird Hike</b> (PCNC) 8-10 a.m. [P.13] <b>Hugs for Hounds</b> (HWDP) Day-of Registration: 10:30 a.m. Event Begins: 11 a.m. [P.12] <b>Junior Ecologists Club</b> (TCNC) Noon-3 p.m. [P.12]
5	6	7 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14]	8 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Nature Play Day for Parents and Tots!</b> (PCNC) 10-11:30 a.m. [P.13]	9 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14]	10 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14]	11 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Try It! Fishing Day</b> (MR) 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.14]
12 <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Living History Demonstration</b> (ICM) Noon-3 p.m. [P.12]	13	14 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14]	15 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14]	16 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Sustainable Crafts: Forever Flowers</b> (FR) 6:30-8:30 p.m. [P.14]	17 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14]	18 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Migratory Bird Hike</b> (LR) 8-10 a.m. [P.13] <b>Celebrate Girl Scouts</b> (MR) 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. [P.10] <b>Planning a Native Garden</b> (ICM) 1-3 p.m. [P.13]
19 <b>Fishing for Trash</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.11] <b>Recycle Your Bicycle</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-5 p.m. [P.14] <b>Run and Yoga</b> (PCNC) 8-10 a.m. [P.14] <b>Earth Day Celebration!</b> (PCNC) Noon-4 p.m. [P.11] <b>Hidden Ponds</b> (TCNC) 1-4 p.m. [P.12]	20	21	22 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14]	23	24	25 <b>Community Volunteer Workday</b> (WL) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.10] <b>Earth Day Migratory Bird Hike</b> (LR) 8-10 a.m. [P.11] <b>Photography Bird Hike</b> (LR) 8-10 a.m. [P.13] <b>Riverview Farmstead Tour</b> (RF) 10-11:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Earth Day Celebration of a Life: Jon Mendelson and Thorn Creek Woods</b> (TCNC) Noon-4 p.m. [P.11]
26	27	28	29 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14]	30	1	2 <b>Morning Bird Hike</b> (PCNC) 8-10 a.m. [P.13] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Kite Fly Festival!</b> (MR) 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.12] <b>Junior Ecologists Club</b> (TCNC) Noon-3 p.m. [P.12]
3 <b>Living History Encampment</b> (ICM) 9 a.m.-3 p.m. [P.13] <b>Flower Moon Hike</b> (TCNC) 7-9 p.m. [P.11]	4	5	6 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 10-11 a.m. [P.12]	7	8	9 <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Spring Wildflowers Hike</b> (TCNC) 1-4 p.m. [P.14]
10 <b>Mother's Appreciation Day</b> (MR) 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.13] <b>Mother's Day Blooms and Birds Hike</b> (PCNC) 9-11 a.m. [P.13]	11	12	13 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 10-11 a.m. [P.12] <b>Nature Play Day for Parents and Tots!</b> (PCNC) 10-11:30 a.m. [P.13]	14	15	16 <b>Boating Safety and Inspections</b> (WL) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.10] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Ride the Rock</b> (LRR) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. [P.14] <b>Pond Safari</b> (ICM) 1-2:30 p.m. [P.13] <b>Wags, Wine 'n' Art</b> (WL) 5-7:30 p.m. [P.14]
17 <b>Spring Nature Photography</b> (PCNC) 8:30-10 a.m. [P.14]	18 <b>Prairie Sampler Workday at Thorn Creek Woods</b> (TCNC) 9:30 a.m.-Noon [P.13]	19	20 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 10-11 a.m. [P.12]	21	22	23 <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12]
24 <b>Joliet Iron Works Tour</b> (JIW) 9-11 a.m. [P.12]	25	26	27 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers</b> (TCNC) 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 10-11 a.m. [P.12]	28	29	30 <b>Run and Yoga</b> (PCNC) 8-10 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing</b> (LR) 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale</b> (SCAC) 9 a.m.-3 p.m. [P.10]
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

April

May



ReconnectWithNature.org



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
31 <b>Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons</b> Wednesday, April 1 – Sunday, October 18 (SCAC, ICM & PCNC) Hours vary by site. [P.12]	1	2 <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10]	3 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers (TCNC)</b> 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 10-11 a.m. [P.12]	4 <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10]	5 <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10] <b>Take Me Fishing Promotion (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.14] <b>Fun FACT Friday (PCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.11]	6 <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10] <b>Take Me Fishing Promotion (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.14] <b>Adult Fishing Derby (MR)</b> Registration: 7-8 a.m. Fishing: 8 a.m.-Noon Awards: Noon-1 p.m. [P.10] <b>Morning Bird Hike (PCNC)</b> 8-10 a.m. [P.13] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Junior Ecologists Club (TCNC)</b> Noon-3 p.m. [P.12]
7 <b>Boating Safety Week (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10] <b>Take Me Fishing Promotion (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.14] <b>Historic Farm Walk (TCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.12]	8	9	10 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers (TCNC)</b> 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 10-11 a.m. [P.12] <b>Nature Play Day for Parents and Tots! (PCNC)</b> 10-11:30 a.m. [P.13]	11 <b>First Time Fishing (MR)</b> 5:30-7:30 p.m. [P.10]	12 <b>Fun FACT Friday (PCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.11] <b>Thorn Creek Chamber Players (TCNC)</b> 7-9 p.m. [P.14]	13 <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Island Rendezvous (ICM)</b> 10 a.m.-4 p.m. [P.12]
14 <b>Island Rendezvous (ICM)</b> 10 a.m.-4 p.m. [P.12] <b>Birds of Thorn Creek Woods (TCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.10]	15 <b>Prairie Sampler Workday at Thorn Creek Woods (TCNC)</b> 9:30 a.m.-Noon [P.13]	16	17 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers (TCNC)</b> 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 10-11 a.m. [P.12] <b>Discovery Isle (ICM)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.10]	18 <b>Draw to ID: Insects (PCNC)</b> 6-8 p.m. [P.10]	19 <b>Fun FACT Friday (PCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.11]	20 <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Meet the Preserves (RRR)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.13] <b>Paddle the Preserves (RRR)</b> Session 1: 10-11 a.m. Session 2: 11 a.m.-Noon Session 3: Noon-1 p.m. Session 4: 1-2 p.m. [P.13] <b>Private Kayak Instruction (RRR)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.14] <b>Boating Safety and Inspections (RRR)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.10] <b>Music at McKinley Outdoor Concert and Car Show (MW)</b> 6-10 p.m. [P.13]
21 <b>Father's Appreciation Day (MR)</b> 6 a.m.-7 p.m. [P.10]	22	23 <b>Summer Safari: Earth, Air, Water and Fire (TCNC)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.14]	24 <b>Wednesday Morning Walkers (TCNC)</b> 9-10:30 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 10-11 a.m. [P.12] <b>Summer Safari: Earth, Air, Water and Fire (TCNC)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.14] <b>Discovery Isle (ICM)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.10]	25 <b>Summer Safari: Earth, Air, Water and Fire (TCNC)</b> 10 a.m.-2 p.m. [P.14] <b>Riverview Farmstead Tour (RF)</b> 6:30-8 p.m. [P.14] <b>Reptiles of the Dunes (BD)</b> 6-7 p.m. [P.14]	26 <b>Fun FACT Friday (PCNC)</b> 1-3 p.m. [P.11] <b>Meet the Preserves (WL)</b> 2-6 p.m. [P.13] <b>Paddle the Preserves (WL)</b> Session 1: 2-3 p.m. Session 2: 3-4 p.m. Session 3: 4-5 p.m. Session 4: 5-6 p.m. [P.13] <b>Private Kayak Instruction (WL)</b> 2-6 p.m. [P.14]	27 <b>Run and Yoga (PCNC)</b> 8-10 a.m. [P.14] <b>Lake Renwick Bird Viewing (LR)</b> 8 a.m.-Noon [P.12] <b>Bike and Brake for History (GB)</b> 9-11 a.m. [P.10] <b>Midnight Madness (MR)</b> 7 p.m.-Midnight [P.13]
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

# Locations

Events are listed here by location, along with facility addresses and abbreviated codes for each site.

## Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve (BD)

Located on Route 113, east of Route 53 and I-55 in Braidwood. Call 708.534.8499.

- Reptiles of the Dunes

## Four Rivers Environmental Education Center (FR)

Located at 25055 W. Walnut Lane, McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove at Blackberry Lane, south of Route 6, in Channahon. Call 815.722.9470.

- Sustainable Crafts: Forever Flowers

## Gaylord Building National Trust Historic Site (GB)

Located at 200 W. Eighth Street in Lockport. Call 815.886.1467.

- Bike and Brake for History

## Hammel Woods Dog Park (HWDP)

Located at Hammel Woods – DuPage River Access on Black Road, east of Route 59, in Shorewood. Call 815.727.8700.

- Hugs for Hounds Easter Egg Hunt

## Isle a la Cache Museum (ICM)

Located at 501 E. Romeo Road (135th Street), 0.5 mile east of Route 53, in Romeoville. Call 815.886.1467.

- Discovery Isle
- Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons
- Island Rendezvous
- Living History Demonstrations
- Living History Encampment
- Planning a Native Garden
- Pond Safari

## Joliet Iron Works Historic Site (JIW)

Located on Columbia Street, off Scott Street and 0.25 mile east of the Ruby Street Bridge, in Joliet. Call 815.886.1467.

- Joliet Iron Works Tour

## Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve (LR)

Located on Renwick Road, 0.5 mile east of Route 30 (Plainfield Road), in Plainfield. Call 708.946.2216.

- Earth Day Migratory Bird Hike
- Lake Renwick Bird Viewing
- Migratory Bird Hike
- Photography Bird Hike

## Lower Rock Run Preserve – I&M Canal Access (LRR)

Located on Hollywood Road (Houbolt Road), 0.25 mile south of I-80, in Joliet. Call 815.727.8700.

- Ride the Rock

## McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove (MR)

Located on Walnut Lane, east of Blackberry Lane, in Channahon. Call 815.727.8700.

- Music at McKinley Outdoor Concert and Car Show

## Monee Reservoir (MR)

Located at 27341 Ridgeland Avenue, west of Route 50 and south of Pauling Road, 2 miles south of Monee. Call 708.534.8499.

- Adult Fishing Derby
- Boating Safety Week
- Celebrate Girl Scouts
- Father's Appreciation Day
- First Time Fishing
- Fishing for Trash
- Kite Fly Festival!
- Midnight Madness
- Mother's Appreciation Day
- Recycle Your Bicycle
- Take Me Fishing Promotion
- Try It! Fishing Day

## Plum Creek Nature Center (PCNC)

Located at 27064 S. Dutton Road, 1.25 miles east of the intersection Routes 1 and 394 on Goodenow Road, in Beecher. Call 708.946.2216.

- Draw to ID: Insects
- Earth Day Celebration!
- Fun FACT Friday
- Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons
- Morning Bird Hikes
- Mother's Day Blooms and Birds Hike
- Nature Play Days for Parents and Tots!
- Run and Yoga
- Spring Nature Photography

## Riverview Farmstead Preserve (RF)

Located on Book Road, south of Hassert Boulevard/111th Street, in Naperville. Call 815.886.1467.

- Riverview Farmstead Tour

## Rock Run Rookery Preserve (RRR)

Located on Youngs Road, south of Route 6/Eames Street in Joliet. Call 708.534.8499.

- Boating Safety and Inspections
- Meet the Preserves
- Paddle the Preserves
- Private Kayak Instruction

## Sugar Creek Administration Center (SCAC)

Located at 17540 W. Laraway Road, in Joliet. Call 815.727.8700.

- Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale
- Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons

## Thorn Creek Nature Center (TCNC)

Located at 247 Monee Road, in Park Forest. Call 708.747.6320.

- Birds of Thorn Creek Woods
- Earth Day Celebration of a Life: Jon Mendelson and Thorn Creek Woods
- Flower Moon Hike
- Hidden Ponds
- Historic Farm Walk
- Junior Ecologists Club
- Prairie Sampler Workdays at Thorn Creek Woods
- Spring Wildflowers Hike
- Summer Safari: Earth, Air, Water & Fire
- Thorn Creek Chamber Players
- Wednesday Morning Walkers

## Whalon Lake (WL)

Located on Royce Road, west of Route 53, in Naperville. Call 708.534.8499.

- Boating Safety and Inspections
- Community Volunteer Workday
- Meet the Preserves
- Paddle the Preserves
- Private Kayak Instruction
- Wags, Wine 'n' Art



# Descriptions

Programs listed here are intended for individuals and families. Organized groups should contact the Forest Preserve District at 815.727.8700 for information about group programming options. All facilities and events are fully accessible to all unless otherwise noted. In providing programs and services to the public, the Forest Preserve District will make reasonable modifications to ensure that all people have an equal opportunity to enjoy District offerings. Should you require modifications or assistive equipment to participate in a Forest Preserve program, please make your request at least 48 hours prior to the program. For more information, visit [ReconnectWithNature.org/ADA](http://ReconnectWithNature.org/ADA).



## Adult Fishing Derby

**Saturday, June 6**

**Registration: 7-8 a.m.**

**Fishing: 8 a.m.-Noon**

**Awards: Noon-1 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Ages 16 or older; \$10/person.*

*Registration required:*

*708.534.8499. Registration is also available at the program.*

The Forest Preserve is hosting its annual "Adult Fishing Derby" at Monee Reservoir. Find the best spot along the shore and try your luck at catching fish. Prizes valued at hundreds of dollars will be awarded for the most panfish, biggest bass and biggest catfish. A raffle will be held every half-hour to keep things interesting. Registration automatically includes an entry in the raffle; additional tickets will be available for purchase. Pack a lunch and bring your favorite fishing pole – we provide one container of bait! Fishing is from 8 a.m. to noon, and winners will be announced as soon as results are tallied. The first 25 registrants will receive a free giveaway! Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are easily accessible for all participants.

## Bike and Brake for History

**Saturday, June 27**

**9-11 a.m.**

**Gaylord Building National Trust Historic Site**

*Free! Ages 10 or older.*

*Registration required: 815.886.1467.*

Push the pedals and test your mettle on this ride along the historic I&M Canal. We'll share the origins of the waterway, check out the wildlife and visit a former hot spot (literally) of industry. The ride is approximately 4 miles one-way along crushed limestone trails. A water bottle and helmet are strongly encouraged. Please dress for the weather.

## Birds of Thorn Creek Woods

**Sunday, June 14**

**1-3 p.m.**

**Thorn Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Exactly who flies through or nests in Thorn Creek Woods? Learn about the ongoing Thorn Creek Bird Census from master birder and sometimes Thorn Creek Naturalist Sue Zelek. She is conducting the bird survey in Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve,

identifying all of the different species that inhabit and migrate through the woods. She will share her observations with us at this program. Zelek will then lead a hike identifying birds using visual as well as audio cues. Bird ID guides, binoculars and refreshments will be provided. This presentation is sponsored by the Jim Marzuki Memorial Fund, established by the Friends of Thorn Creek Woods to enhance Thorn Creek's public programming. Enjoy a 3-mile hike on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Boating Safety and Inspections

**Saturday, May 16**

**8 a.m.-Noon**

**Whalon Lake**

**Saturday, June 20**

**10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

**Rock Run Rookery Preserve**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Start the spring season off right with a boat inspection by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary at Whalon Lake or Rock Run Rookery Preserve. These inspections will keep you compliant with Illinois Department of Natural Resources safety regulations. After the inspection, you will receive a 2015 decal to put on your boat signifying that you have successfully passed inspection by the Coast Guard Auxiliary. You can also pick up tips on how to be the safest you can possibly be while operating a boat. Staff will be on hand to answer questions you may have about boating in the forest preserves as well as boating safety regulations. Sidewalks and seawall are easily accessible by way of a paved walk.

## Boating Safety Week

**Tuesday, June 2-**

**Sunday, June 7**

**6 a.m.-7 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Here at the Forest Preserve, boating safety is a top priority. Shouldn't it be for you, too? Come out and take part in our interactive exhibit where you will have the chance to become a more responsible and safe boater. Participate for your chance to win a prize. Boat safely and in style courtesy of Cabelas. Shoreline and sidewalks are easily accessible for all participants.

## Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale

**Saturday, May 30**

**9 a.m.-3 p.m.**

**Sugar Creek Administration Center**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

The Forest Preserve and Monee-based Possibility Place Nursery will partner for their third annual native plant sale. More than 100 species of perennials, shrubs and trees grown by the nursery will be available for purchase. Experts will answer questions and help visitors select the right plants for their specific landscapes. The event will be held rain or shine and it will feature exhibitors, artisans and hands-on workshops. Cash, checks and

credit cards will be accepted. No refunds will be given. New this year, the District also is partnering with its charitable foundation, Friends of the Forest Preserve District of Will County, for this event. All proceeds from the native plant sale, above event costs, will be used to support the Foundation and the District's programs and services. The native plant sale will be held on natural surfaces across uneven terrain. See the article on page 16 of this issue of *The Citizen* or visit [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) for more information.



## Celebrate Girl Scouts

**Saturday, April 18**

**9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! Ages 6-12.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Calling all Girl Scouts! This event is just for you! Bring your troop out for some nature-based excitement as we learn to explore and appreciate all that is around us. We promise an action-packed day full of nothing but smiles and good times! The day will include many activities that your troop can rotate through, including a craft and tasty treat! This program fills quickly, so please register your troop early! The program takes place outdoors over uneven natural terrain. Please dress for the weather.

## Community Volunteer Workday

**Saturday, April 25**

**8 a.m.-Noon**

**Whalon Lake**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 815.722.7364.*

Make a difference on Earth Day weekend by joining the Forest Preserve and local area businesses for a community volunteer workday. Volunteers will assist with trail maintenance, brush clearing, rubbish removal and wood chipping. These efforts benefit native plants, wildlife and the community. Work will take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Discovery Isle

**Wednesdays, June 17-**

**August 26**

**1-3 p.m.**

**Isle a la Cache Museum**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Join us every Wednesday afternoon during the summer, starting June 17, for a different activity or demonstration focusing on plants, animals or history. One week we may be scooping critters out of the pond and the next learning about birds or animal tracks. The possibilities and fun are endless! Drop in anytime

between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Depending on the topic and weather, programs may be held indoors in an accessible facility or outside on level paths or natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Draw to ID: Insects

**Thursday, June 18**

**6-8 p.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! Ages 18 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Let's learn more about insects! Are you curious about local wildlife? Study insects or look at them up close to become more familiar with these fascinating six-legged creatures. Come draw insects to learn more about insect body parts, life cycles and identification. Snacks are included. Bring your own chair. Program will be held indoors in an accessible facility and outside on natural surface trails.

## Father's Appreciation Day

**Sunday, June 21**

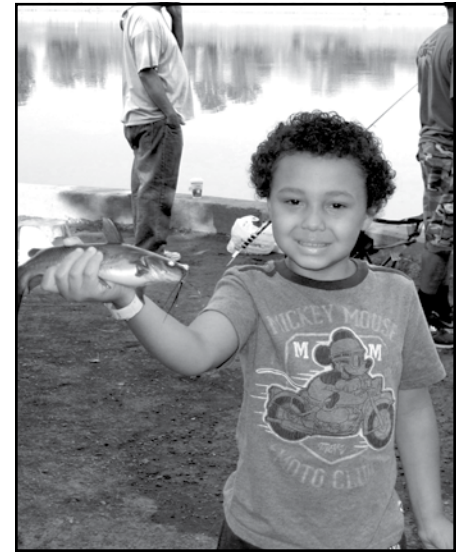
**6 a.m.-7 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Dad, for all your hard work this year, this day is for you! Come out and celebrate not having to do anything but enjoy the day. Should you come ready to fish, you will receive one complimentary container of bait on the house! Make sure to visit the Visitor Center, mention that you are a father and receive your Father's Day gift from Monee Reservoir! Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are easily accessible for all participants.



## First Time Fishing

**Thursday, June 11**

**5:30-7:30 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Ages 7 or older; \$3/person.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Learn the basic skills every angler should know: how to put together a pole, tie a knot, bait a hook and cast. Safety and ethics are also covered. Workshop participants will gain hands-on experience while fishing along the sea wall during the second hour. Everything needed for the program, including bait, is provided. Pre-registration and a fee of \$3 are required. Shoreline fishing and paved trails are easily accessible.



## Earth Day Celebration!

**Sunday, April 19**

**Noon-4 p.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages. Registration required for scheduled activities: 708.946.2216.*

Celebrate Earth Day with exciting activities that highlight ways to enjoy and appreciate nature, whether visiting the Nature Center, your local park or even your own backyard!

Enjoy an interactive program to learn about and search for salamanders! Build your own worm bin! Visit with the Frog Lady and her live frogs, snakes, turtles and lizards! The day's activities include an "Earth Day Adventure Challenge," food and stories at the campfire, nature crafts, a seed and plant swap and an exploration of the Nature Center's outdoor nature playscape! The first 100 visitors will receive a free Earth-friendly gift. Activity areas are easily accessible for all participants. For more information, call Plum Creek Nature Center at 708.946.2216.

### Build Your Own Worm Bin!

**1:30-2:30 p.m.**

*All ages; \$15/worm bin (one bin per family).*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

You, yes you, can construct your own worm bin. Join in on the world of vermicomposting by constructing your very own worm bin. Materials and instructions will be provided for the setup, construction and general maintenance of a worm bin. You will head home with your very own bin. This program will take place indoors in an accessible facility. Participants will be working with some hand tools to complete the construction.

### Family Adventure Earth Day Challenge

**Noon-4 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*Register at the Nature Center's front desk on the day of the event.*

Are you up for a challenge? Learn about Plum Creek Nature Center and Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve by going on a quest. Work as a team as you hike from location to location, read clues and solve puzzles. All participants will receive a prize. This program will take place on level paths or natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

### Food and Fun at the Campfires

**Hourly Programs: Noon-4 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Celebrate the Earth by gathering together in nature's back yard! Friends, food and a crackling campfire will be accompanied by stories, songs and games at our cozy campfire ring just outside the Nature Center. Each hour will feature a fun campfire food.

### Raptors 101

**Noon-1 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

The Illinois Raptor Center will present its "Raptors 101" program, including live raptors. This program will provide the basic information needed to identify raptors seen while driving along the highway, hiking in the woods or mowing the lawn in the backyard. Size, color, feathers, flying,



# EARTH DAY CELEBRATIONS

On April 22, 1970, more than 20 million people nationally celebrated the first Earth Day. The Forest Preserve celebrates Earth Day as a way to bring people and nature together. Earth Day activities entice visitors to go outdoors and enjoy nature while sharing an awareness of how the choices we make can benefit the Earth.

hunting styles, beaks, feet, talons and adaptations will be explored. The program may be held indoors or outdoors, depending on weather. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings may take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

### Restoration Workday

**Noon-4 p.m.**

*Free! All ages. Participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian (one adult for every five children).*

*Registration required: 815.722.7364.*

Try your hand at becoming a steward of Plum Creek Nature Center. Join members of our restoration team and help to remove invasive plants growing around the Nature Center. Loppers, bow saws, gloves and safety goggles will be provided. Closed-toe shoes, long pants and long-sleeve shirts are required to use loppers and bow saws. Bring thick, heavy work gloves, if you have a pair. All participants must sign a waiver. Work will take place on uneven, natural terrain.

### Salamander Safari!

**Noon-1 p.m. & 1:30-2:30 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Did you know that many kinds of salamanders live in Illinois? Learn about these beautiful and interesting creatures and go on a hike to search for some that live right in the preserve. Participants will hike up to 1 mile on natural surface trails across uneven terrain. This program will take place outdoors so please be sure to dress for the weather.

### Seed and Plant Swap

**Noon-4 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*No Registration required.*

This is a great way to introduce new plants into your yard and/or to share your extra plant materials or seeds. Label and bring your items (seeds or plants) to the Nature Center and there will be a designated area to drop off or pick up new plants and seeds.

### Visit from the Frog Lady with Live Animals!

**3-4 p.m.**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

The Frog Lady will present her slimy, scaly friends at this special Earth Day program! Participants will be able to meet and touch live frogs, snakes, turtles and lizards! Join us as the Frog Lady discusses the similarities and differences between amphibians and reptiles in up-close and personal animal encounters. The program will be held indoors in an accessible facility.

### Earth Day Celebration of a Life: Jon Mendelson and Thorn Creek Woods

**Saturday, April 25**

**Noon-4 p.m.**

**Thorn Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages. No registration required.*

On this Earth Day, the legacy of Jon Mendelson, the long-time Governors State University (GSU) professor, field ecologist and chairperson of Thorn Creek Woods Management Commission who died last November, will be honored. A dedicated champion of open space and a force of nature in his own right, he worked tirelessly to acquire land for Thorn Creek Woods and to study and protect local watersheds. He taught courses in ecology to generations of GSU students and was caretaker for the preserve's historic farm. Join us to celebrate Mendelson's life with remembrances by family, colleagues and friends, displays highlighting his work in the woods, photographs, music and a hike to explore the habitat of the salamanders, frogs and toads he studied. His drawings, crafted gourd mobiles and his Thorn Creek Woods T-shirt design, with their whimsical takes on natural flora and fauna, will be available for viewing. Maps and photos from the many ecological field studies he conducted in these woods and his nature essays that graced the pages of Thorn Creek News for many years will be displayed. A new trail bench along the trail he walked countless times will be dedicated to his memory. Enjoy a 3-mile hike on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

### Earth Day Migratory Bird Hike

**Saturday, April 25**

**8-10 a.m.**

**Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve**

*Free! Ages 7 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Celebrate Earth Day by visiting one of the premier birding locations in Will County. Lake Renwick is well known as a nesting location for herons, egrets and cormorants, but it also attracts many different waterfowl and spring migrants at this time of year. This guided hike will begin at the Visitor Center and take place on the trails in the preserve. Beginning birders are welcome. Bring binoculars and a favorite bird guide and be sure to dress for the weather. Participants will hike up to 1.5 miles on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Fishing for Trash

**Tuesday, April 14-Sunday, April 19**

**6 a.m.-5 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! All ages. No registration required.*

Visit Monee Reservoir and help keep our preserve free of trash. Help us fulfill our mission to preserve and protect the natural resources of Will County. Fishing line, as well as other types of debris, poses serious threats to wildlife and obscures the inherent beauty of the preserve. Animals can ingest hooks and monofilament. Many birds become entangled which can be fatal. To participate, please stop by the Visitor Center to pick up a trash bag and gloves, and fill it with any trash you collect. Return the bag to the Visitor Center and receive a free gift! Sidewalks at Monee Reservoir are easily accessible; however, trails are on natural, uneven terrain.

## Flower Moon Hike

**Sunday, May 3**

**7-9 p.m.**

**Thorn Creek Nature Center**

*Free! Ages 10 or older.*

*Registration required by Friday, May 1: 708.747.6320.*

Join us on the night of the Flower Moon. The abundant blooms of spring flowers and trees in May helped the Potawatomi keep track of the seasons. On our hike, we will listen for nocturnal animals and explore the idea that darkness helps predators. Participants can enjoy a 2-mile hike on natural surface trails across uneven and possibly muddy terrain.

## Fun FACT Friday

**Fridays, June 5-August 28**

**1-3 p.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Join us every Friday afternoon during the summer, starting June 5, for a different nature related activity! You never know what adventures await you and your family at our "Friday Activity and Craft Time" (FACT)! Activities may include pond exploration, hikes, nature crafts and more! The possibilities and fun are endless! Drop in anytime between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. Depending on topic and weather, programs may be held indoors in an accessible facility or outside. The program may include hiking preserve trails over uneven terrain.



## Hadley Valley – A Year in Seasons

Wednesday, April 1-  
Sunday, October 18

Hours vary by site.

Sugar Creek Administration Center  
Isle a la Cache Museum  
Plum Creek Nature Center

Free! All ages.

No registration required.

Joliet artist Maggie Capettini spent more than a year painting the beauty of the District's Hadley Valley. Come view her works of art as they are displayed at three Forest Preserve Visitor Centers on a rotating basis this spring, summer and fall. (See details on page 5.) Capettini's works were painted *en plein air*, a French term that means "in the open air." Learn more about Capettini and the preserve that inspired her during a reception from 2-4:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 18, at Sugar Creek Administration Center. Capettini will give an informal talk at 3 p.m. She will discuss the series of paintings and the process of *plein air* painting, as well as related techniques and equipment. A question and answer session will follow. The reception and the exhibit are held indoors in accessible facilities.

## Hidden Ponds

Sunday, April 19

1-4 p.m.

Thorn Creek Nature Center

Free! Ages 10 years or older.

Registration required by Friday,  
April 17: 708.747.6320.

Join us for a guided tour of the wet areas of Thorn Creek Woods. Discover vernal ponds, listen for the return of amphibian choruses and explore the marshes of Owl Lake and beyond. These low lying areas provide vital habitat for woodland creatures and are an integral part of the Thorn Creek ecosystem. Participants will enjoy a 3-mile hike on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Historic Farm Walk

Sunday, June 7

1-3 p.m.

Thorn Creek Nature Center

Free! All ages.

Registration required by Friday,  
May 29: 708.747.6320.

Enjoy a summer day on the historic Hornicek Farm nestled in Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve. Tour the farm buildings and the organic gardens. Wander in the old-fashioned flower gardens. Meet brown egg laying hens and maybe some blue egg layers, too. Sip lemonade and listen to old-time music. Meet at the Nature Center, and carpool to the farm. The program will be held on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Hugs for Hounds Easter Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 4

Day-of Registration: 10:30 a.m.

Event Begins: 11 a.m.

Hammel Woods Dog Park

All ages; \$5/dog.

Registration required: Visit  
ReconnectWithNature.org to pre-  
register or register at the event.

Treat Fido to a fun day outside during the District's canine Easter egg hunt. Shorewood HUGS, a local organization that assists worthy fundraising efforts, is co-hosting the event with the Forest Preserve District. Entry fee proceeds will be donated toward the care, handling and training of the Forest Preserve's K9 officer, Jullo. During "Hugs for Hounds," dogs will search for Easter eggs filled with treats or prizes, courtesy of Shorewood HUGS, JULIE, Inc. and Plainfield Veterinary Clinic and Surgical Center. Bring a basket



to collect the Easter eggs. The event will last until all of the eggs are found. Dogs must be leashed and accompanied by their owners at all times. Dog park permits are not required to participate, but permits will be available for purchase. To purchase a permit, you must have your driver's license and license plate numbers, as well as your dog's rabies tag number and expiration date. Dogs participating in the egg hunt must be current on all vaccinations. The program will be held on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Island Rendezvous

Saturday, June 13-

Sunday, June 14

10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Isle a la Cache Museum

Free! All ages.

No registration required.

Join us for the 32nd annual "Island Rendezvous" at Isle a la Cache! Voyageurs, colonists and soldiers of 18th century Illinois are eager to have some fun and to share their expertise. Re-enactors from all over the Midwest will give modern visitors a feast for the eyes and ears. Hands-on opportunities also abound with skills and games, dancing to music of the era, buying unique quality goods, listening to tall tales or filling your stomachs. This is a free event with free parking and shuttle service. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings will take place on level paths or natural surfaces across uneven terrain. For information, call Isle a la Cache Museum at 815.886.1467.

## Joliet Iron Works Tour

Sunday, May 24

9-11 a.m.

Joliet Iron Works Historic Site

Free! All ages.

Registration required: 815.886.1467.

Discover why Joliet has the nickname "City of Stone and Steel" during this fascinating tour. At the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site, an interpreter will guide you through what remains of this once-thriving industrial plant. Learn about iron and steel production and the stories of the men who worked at the site. Anyone interested in local history will enjoy this insightful tour of the blue-collar origins of Joliet. Paved walks are easily accessible for all participants for the 1-mile tour.

## Junior Ecologists Club

Saturdays, April 4,

May 2 & June 6

Noon-3 p.m.

Thorn Creek Nature Center

Free! Ages 9-12.

Registration required two days before  
each program date: 708.747.6320.

Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve's "Junior Ecologists Club" offers fun-filled nature activities each month for young people. Club members will uncover the mysteries of nature first-hand while exploring the preserve, working on projects and assisting with Nature Center programs. Each month, they will explore

## Kite Fly Festival!

Saturday, May 2

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Monee Reservoir

Free! All ages. No registration required.

Synchronized kite dancing, 90-foot flying kites and candy falling from the sky! Who could ask for more? Remember the nostalgic memories of flying a kite as a child? Be sure to introduce your family to the same experience by participating in Monee Reservoir's annual "Kite Fly Festival!" Monee Reservoir and members of the Illinois Kite Enthusiasts group will host a fun-filled day that will highlight the excitement of kite flying. There will be a lot of fun things to experience at the kite festival! Kite demonstrators will show what magic a kite can create by soaring in the sky. Make sure your kite is out there too! This program will take place on level paths or natural surfaces across uneven terrain.



## Ongoing Activities

### Synchronized Kite Flying

Team 180 GO! from the Illinois Kite Enthusiasts Club will demonstrate synchronized kite flying.

### Giant Kite Flying

Have you ever seen a 90-foot kite?

Observe these kite giants soar through the air over Monee Reservoir!

### Kite Vending

Purchase kites from the experts.

Illinois Kite Enthusiasts Club and KiteSite.net will have kites for sale.

### Kite and Air Exhibit

Walk inside the Visitor Center to learn how birds, bugs, squirrels and kites fly. This unique exhibit reveals the similarities as they soar through the sky.

## Scheduled Activities

(weather permitting)

### 10 a.m. – Kite Fly Kick-Off

Kites rise in the air and fly all day!

### 10:30 a.m. – Bol Races

Participants race against each other as they run with parachute-like kites upwind.

### 11 a.m. – Live Falcon Demonstration

Meet some very unique live raptors! Discover how they soar through the air and witness their very amazing adaptations!

### Family Kite Fly Area

Bring your kite, borrow our kites, or purchase a kite on site! However you get your kite, fly it in the "Family Kite Fly Area!"

### Kids' Area

This area is dedicated to show just how much fun air can be! Hula hoop contests, bubbles, whoopee cushions, Airzookas and so much more will be a part of the enjoyment. Experience the exhilaration of air first-hand!

### Scavenger Hunt and Raffle Drawings

Visit the "Kite and Air Exhibit," participate in a scavenger hunt, and then enter to win some awesome prizes. Raffle drawings will be held frequently throughout the day.

### 11:30 a.m. – Candy Drop

Watch as a kite rises into the air only to drop loads of candy to the ground. Don't forget to bring a bag to collect your candy!

### Noon – Live Falcon Demonstration

12:30 p.m. – Team 180 GO! Kite Performance  
Watch kites dance in the air as they fly synchronized to music.

### 1 p.m. – Bol Races

### 1:30 p.m. – Candy Drop

the woods, track seasonal changes and discover woodland plants and animals. Participants should be prepared to get muddy, wear boots and long pants, and bring a water bottle and insect repellent. Hiking is approximately 1 mile on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Lake Renwick Bird Viewing

Wednesdays, May 6-August 12

10-11 a.m.

Saturdays, May 2-August 15

8 a.m.-Noon

Lake Renwick Heron Rookery  
Nature Preserve

Free! All ages.

No registration required.

From May through August, herons, egrets and cormorants are on their nests and raising their young on the islands at Lake Renwick. During this time of year, preserve visitation is restricted so as not to disturb the birds. The only way to view the birds in the preserve at this time is by attending these special guided viewings of the nesting birds as they go about their daily tasks. Discover how the birds build their nests, see the young as they grow, and learn how Lake Renwick came to be a rookery and a Nature Preserve. Telescopes and binoculars are available for use. The viewing areas are accessible via a level limestone path.

## Living History Demonstration

Sunday, April 12

Noon-3 p.m.

Isle a la Cache Museum

Free! All ages.

No registration required.

In the 1700s, people got what they needed by making things for themselves. No online shopping?! Nope, but a "network" of friends and allies was necessary. The Isle a la Cache Brigade is a volunteer group that consists of re-enactors that represent the full trading community of voyageurs, courier du bois and French women. During this "Living History Demonstration," you may find cooks, seamstresses or craftsmen sharing their talents. It's history up close and personal! Depending on weather, this program is offered indoors or outside. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings may take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.



## Living History Encampment

**Sunday, May 3**

**9 a.m.-3 p.m.**

**Isle a la Cache Museum**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

The Isle a la Cache Brigade is a group of intrepid voyageurs, soldiers and craft-folk. They will be demonstrating cooking, fashion, camp life and many other highlights that will take place on a broader scale at our 32nd annual "Island Rendezvous" in June. See what life was like in the Illinois Country in the mid-1700s. This program takes place outdoors on uneven, natural terrain.

## Meet the Preserves

**Saturday, June 20**

**10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

**Rock Run Rookery Preserve**

**Friday, June 26**

**2-6 p.m.**

**Whalon Lake**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

Do you find the forest preserves intriguing? Would you like to find out more about your favorite preserve or just about the Forest Preserve District in general? This informal program provides an opportunity to learn all that the Forest Preserve has to offer. Discover the District's programs, events and other offerings, while learning about what we do to keep our preserves healthy. Find the best places to fish or bike or fly a kite! This event takes place outdoors on uneven, natural terrain.

## Midnight Madness

**Saturday, June 27**

**7 p.m.-Midnight**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

No anglers, you're not dreaming. The Forest Preserve District is keeping the gates open until midnight for a nighttime fishing opportunity. Fish activity is often greater at night when cooler waters invite our finned friends to be more active. So let the kids stay up late and bring the family out to Monee Reservoir to enjoy fishing under the stars. The parking lot is well lit and the shoreline is accessible; however, anglers are encouraged to bring a flashlight and bug repellent. The concession stand will be open. Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are easily accessible for all participants.

## Migratory Bird Hike

**Saturday, April 18**

**8-10 a.m.**

**Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve**

*Free! Ages 7 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Lakes are excellent stopovers for many migrating birds in the spring. Join a naturalist for this guided hike in search of migrating waterfowl, herons, egrets and an amazing diversity of songbirds. Birding enthusiasts will enjoy the beautiful setting while exploring this special preserve. Bring binoculars and a favorite bird guide and be sure to dress for the weather. A limited supply of binoculars will be available for use. Participants will hike up to 1.5 miles on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Morning Bird Hikes

**Saturdays, April 4,**

**May 2 & June 6**

**8-10 a.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! Ages 18 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Join us on our series of "Morning Bird Hikes" through Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve as we seek out our resident birds and greet our spring migrants. Each hike will have a short introduction on a current bird topic of the season. In April, the topic will be spring migratory birds; in May, warblers; and in June, turkey vultures. Bring binoculars and a favorite bird guide and be sure to dress for the weather. Participants will hike up to 2 miles on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.



## Mother's Appreciation Day

**Sunday, May 10**

**6 a.m.-7 p.m.**

**Monee Reservoir**

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

For all your hard work all year, mom, this day is for you! Celebrate not having to do anything but enjoy the day. There are all sorts of fun things at Monee Reservoir for everyone to enjoy! You can fish, hike, picnic, boat or just lounge in the sun! Make sure you come to the Visitor Center, mention that you are a mother and receive your complimentary Mother's Day gift from Monee Reservoir! Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are easily accessible for all participants.

## Mother's Day Blooms and Birds Hike

**Sunday, May 10**

**9-11 a.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Celebrate Mother's Day by taking a hike with your mom through Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve. Enjoy the flowers and birds of spring with a hike and then return to the Nature Center for juice, coffee and coffee cake. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings may take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Music at McKinley Outdoor Concert and Car Show

**Saturday, June 20**

**6 p.m.**

**McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required to display a vehicle in the car show: 815.727.8700.*

Celebrate summer with a free, all-ages outdoor concert and car show at McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove in Channahon! Hosted by the Forest Preserve District and presented by title

sponsor JULIE, Inc., the evening will begin at 6 p.m. with a car show. There is no car registration fee! To display your vehicle in the show, pre-register online at [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) or call 815.727.8700. Day-of car show registration will be available at the event beginning at 6 p.m. From 7 to 10 p.m., McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove will reverberate with the sound of music as Midlife Crisis, a classic rock, pop and R&B band, will get your toes tapping. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. So pack a cooler with your favorite beverages, grab a lawn chair or blanket and get ready for a thoroughly enjoyable evening of music under the stars. No reservations or tickets are necessary for the concert. Wearing insect repellent is recommended. This event will be held on paved pathways and natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Nature Play Days for Parents and Tots!

**Wednesdays, April 8,**

**May 13 & June 10**

**10-11:30 a.m.**

**Plum Creek Nature Center**

*Free! Ages 1-5, accompanied by an adult.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Once a month, parents or grandparents with young children are invited to come out for a "Nature Play Day." You and your child may participate in a hike, story, game, dancing or playing. The focus will be on free play, which means having activities with no start and end time and that flow from creativity. Be prepared for indoor and outdoor activities. Activities are planned for children ages 3-5, but younger children are welcome to attend. This is an opportunity for parents of young children to meet other parents. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings may take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Paddle the Preserves

**Saturday, June 20**

**Session 1: 10-11 a.m.**

**Session 2: 11 a.m.-Noon.**

**Session 3: Noon-1 p.m.**

**Session 4: 1-2 p.m.**

**Rock Run Rookery Preserve**

**Friday, June 26**

**Session 1: 2-3 p.m.**

**Session 2: 3-4 p.m.**

**Session 3: 4-5 p.m.**

**Session 4: 5-6 p.m.**

**Whalon Lake**

*Ages 12 or older; \$10/person/session. Ages 12-17 must be accompanied by an adult.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Interested in paddling the waters of the forest preserves, but don't have the necessary equipment? Maybe you have already taken a "Kayak Kollege" program and now you are looking for something a bit more adventurous? Here is an opportunity to try out our kayaks and gain more experience while paddling around our preserves. We provide all necessary equipment for you to enjoy yourself out on the water. Staff will be on hand to lead guided tours of the site throughout the day. This program is for anyone 12 years or older who has prior kayak experience. Be sure to wear shoes and clothes that can get wet and don't forget your sunscreen, sunglasses and a water bottle. Pre-registration is strongly recommended, but you can sign up on the day of the program pending kayak availability. The launch area is easily accessible by a paved sidewalk trail from the parking lot.

## Photography Bird Hike

**Saturday, April 25**

**8-10 a.m.**

**Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve**

*Free! Ages 18 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Join other photographers for a special opportunity to view and photograph the egrets, herons and cormorants at Lake Renwick. This is the beginning of nesting season with hundreds of active nesting birds in the area. Share insights into this exciting hobby with other like-minded shutterbugs. A Lake Renwick interpreter/digital camera buff will lead the group. The viewing areas are accessible via a level limestone path.

## Planning a Native Garden

**Saturday, April 18**

**1-3 p.m.**

**Isle a la Cache Museum**

*Free! Ages 12 or older.*

*Registration required: 815.886.1467.*

Join the Forest Preserve District in partnership with the Conservation Foundation to discover how to landscape your yard with native plants. Native plants are adapted to our sometimes unpredictable climate. If planted in proper soil, light and moisture conditions, they can provide hardy, low-maintenance beauty to your yard. These plants can transform your yard into a wildlife sanctuary, attracting songbirds, butterflies and more. This program will be held indoors in an accessible facility.

## Pond Safari

**Saturday, May 16**

**1-2:30 p.m.**

**Isle a la Cache Museum**

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 815.886.1467.*

Join us to see what lives around and in the pond attached to the Des Plaines River at Isle a la Cache. We will use nets to scoop for aquatic critters and take a closer look at them. We may even catch a frog or two! The dipping nets and viewing containers will be provided. Please dress in clothes and shoes that can get wet and/or dirty. All critters will be released back into the pond at the end of the program. This event takes place outdoors on uneven, natural terrain.

## Prairie Sampler Workdays at Thorn Creek Woods

**Mondays, May 18 & June 15**

**9:30 a.m.-Noon**

**Thorn Creek Nature Center**

*Free! All ages; children under 15*

*must be accompanied by an adult.*

*Registration required two days before each program day: 708.747.6320.*

Get down and dirty and help Master Gardeners from the University of Illinois Extension Service care for Thorn Creek's Prairie Sampler. Located in front of the Nature Center, the small prairie that was nurtured by the late Jim Marzuki needs your help with weeding, pulling tall goldenrod and trimming out woody plants. Then, we will plant and water the newly acquired plants. Bring your own work gloves, hand clippers and kneelers if you like. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy shoes or boots. Refreshments will be provided. Outdoor work is on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.



## Private Kayak Instruction

**Saturday, June 20**

**10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

*Rock Run Rookery Preserve*

**Friday, June 26**

**2-6 p.m.**

*Whalon Lake*

*Ages 12 or older; \$40/person/hour. Ages 12-17 must be accompanied by an adult.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Many people are inherently drawn to water for a variety of reasons, including kayaking. Kayaking provides many benefits and has much to offer the individual. Get the most out of this increasingly popular paddle sport with certified instructors as they tailor an experience specifically for you and your individual needs. They will be on hand to offer their assistance, knowledge and expertise in a one-on-one environment. All necessary gear and equipment is provided. Be sure to wear shoes and clothes that can get wet and don't forget your sunscreen, sunglasses and a water bottle. Pre-registration is strongly recommended but you can sign up on the day of the program, pending kayak availability. The launch area is easily accessible by a paved sidewalk trail from the parking lot.

## Recycle Your Bicycle

**Tuesday, April 7-Sunday, April 19 (closed Mondays)**

**6 a.m.-5 p.m.**

*Monee Reservoir*

*Free! All ages.*

*No registration required.*

This program is designed to practice environmental stewardship while helping others. What a win-win! Monee Reservoir will collect bicycles to be given to local recycling nonprofits that refurbish them for youth, handicapped individuals and families in developing countries. The bikes are redistributed to people locally, regionally and globally. Bikes can be in any condition: brand new or beyond repair. Be green – reduce, reuse, recycle! Let the Forest Preserve District be an avenue to make that happen, especially to benefit someone in need.

## Reptiles of the Dunes

**Thursday, June 25**

**6-7 p.m.**

*Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve*

*Free! Ages 5 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Lizards? In Illinois? No way! Yes way! Come to Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve and experience the six-lined racerunner as well as many other reptiles that exist in this diverse ecosystem. Learn of their interesting behaviors and just exactly why they have chosen this place as their home! On this fun adventure, we will explore their habitat and, hopefully, get to see a few unusual reptiles. Feel free to bring a camera! The hike will be approximately 1.5 miles over uneven natural terrain. There are no restrooms or water at this site.

## Ride the Rock

**Saturday, May 16**

**9 a.m.-1 p.m.**

*Lower Rock Run Preserve – I&M Canal Access*

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: Visit ReconnectWithNature.org to pre-register or register at the event.*

Celebrate National Bike Month with a free, family event. Hosted by the Forest Preserve District and presented by title sponsor CenterPoint Properties, "Ride the Rock" is a 16-mile bike ride that begins at Lower Rock Run Preserve –

I&M Canal Access, then proceeds north to Joliet Junior College and Theodore Marsh in Crest Hill, before heading south along the Joliet Junction Trail to where it connects with the I&M Canal State Trail along Larkin Avenue and Route 6. The majority of the trail is paved and includes some sidewalks and street routes. The degree of difficulty is easy to moderate. Four rest stops will be located along the way, providing refreshments and restrooms. The event features music, children's activities and more! Food will be available for purchase. Pre-registration is recommended. The first 1,000 pre-registered riders to check in at the event will receive a free T-shirt. Check-in for pre-registered riders will begin at 9 a.m., and same-day registration will open at 9:30 a.m. The event lasts until 1 p.m., and the last rider should set out on the trail by 10:30 a.m. This event is open to all ages, but it is recommended for individual riders to be at least 11 years of age. All participants are encouraged to wear a helmet.

## Riverview Farmstead Tour

**Saturday, April 25**

**10-11:30 a.m.**

**Thursday, June 25**

**6:30-8 p.m.**

*Riverview Farmstead Preserve*

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required: 815.886.1467.*

Riverview Farmstead Preserve is a historical island in a land of modern suburbia. Take time to tour the buildings and grounds of the preserve. Discover three generations of the Clow family – prominent settlers in Wheatland Township. Visit the Settlement House dating back to the mid 19th century, the Limestone House with its superior construction, and the Timber Frame Barn – one of the largest in Wheatland Township when it was built. An interpreter will share with you stories of this amazing family and their growth of the farmstead from early settlement to that of a commercial farm of more than 200 acres. This program takes place outdoors on crushed limestone trails and indoors with some uneven surfaces.

## Run and Yoga

**Sunday, April 19**

**Saturdays, May 30 & June 27**

**8-10 a.m.**

*Plum Creek Nature Center*

*Free! Ages 18 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

Join us for a run at Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve and enjoy the Plum Creek Greenway Trail. Come run for three or six miles and do a 20-minute yoga program to soothe and stretch your muscles. Participants have their pick of two routes and will confirm when registering so they can train for the distance they choose. No pressure, just a fun run with a yoga cool down/stretching afterwards. The run takes place on limestone screened trail.

## Spring Nature Photography

**Sunday, May 17**

**8:30-10 a.m.**

*Plum Creek Nature Center*

*Free! Ages 16 or older.*

*Registration required: 708.946.2216.*

"Take only pictures and leave only footprints!" Start indoors learning tips on photographing flowers, and discover the types of wildflowers at Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve. Then enjoy a hike to search for the flowers and take photos along the way. The program is recommended for beginners and for technology ranging from smartphone cameras to digital SLRs. The program will focus on technique and composition, not

camera operation. Please dress for the weather, because part of the program will take place outdoors. Indoor facilities are accessible; outdoor settings may take place on natural surfaces across uneven terrain.

## Spring Wildflowers Hike

**Saturday, May 9**

**1-4 p.m.**

*Thorn Creek Nature Center*

*Free! All ages.*

*Registration required by Thursday, May 7: 708.747.6320.*

Even in shady Thorn Creek Woods there is a unique bouquet of wildflowers that thrive here. Join us on a hike to discover which species are in bloom. Learn the names and physical appearance of 10 common woodland flowers. Participants will enjoy a 3-mile hike on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Summer Safari: Earth, Air, Water & Fire

**Tuesday-Thursday, June 23-25**

**10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

*Thorn Creek Nature Center*

*Ages 7-10; \$35/child.*

*Registration and payment required by Monday, June 15: 708.747.6320.*

Did you ever wonder where Percy Jackson's Olympian gods really got their power? They didn't just beg Zeus for help. They relied on the four Greek elements – earth, air, water and fire. Join us for three days of exploring the current science of these ancient "elements" through nature study, stories, games, crafts and investigative hikes. Snacks will be provided. Children should wear play clothes: long pants; a light, long-sleeved shirt or jacket; and sturdy, closed-toe shoes for exploring (not sandals). Insect repellent and sunblock are highly encouraged. Children should bring a lunch and a water bottle. Participants should be prepared to walk 2 miles on natural surface trails across uneven terrain.

## Sustainable Crafts: Forever Flowers

**Thursday, April 16**

**6:30-8:30 p.m.**

*Four Rivers Environmental Education Center*

*Free! Ages 16 or older.*

*Registration required: 815.722.9470.*

April showers bring forever flowers! Learn how to recycle different materials to create unique flower displays. Forever flowers can last a lifetime and are cheaper and more sustainable than real flower bouquets. Please bring in old calendars, magazines, toilet paper rolls and plastic water or soda bottles. Indoor facilities are accessible.

## Take Me Fishing Promotion

**Friday, June 5-Sunday, June 7**

**6 a.m.-7 p.m.**

*Monee Reservoir*

*Free! Age 16 or older.*

*No registration required.*

Has it been a while since you've pulled out the old rod 'n' reel? Then this is the perfect opportunity to grab the family for some quality time out on the water at Monee Reservoir! The Illinois Department of Natural Resources is sponsoring "Free Fishing Days" to help you do just that. One weekend in June has been set aside to sample the action without having to invest in a fishing permit. We have also added our own incentives. On Friday, come out and receive a voucher good for a free one-hour boat rental (excludes paddle boats). Saturday, receive a box of night crawlers and, on Sunday, receive one free fishing pole rental. Regular rules and regulations still apply on rentals,

such as a cash deposit and valid driver's license. District policies also still apply, such as size and quantity limits. Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are paved and easily accessible for all participants.

## Thorn Creek Chamber Players

**Friday, June 12**

**7-9 p.m.**

*Thorn Creek Nature Center*

*Ages 12 or older; \$10/person.*

*Purchase tickets by Wednesday, May 27: 708.747.6320.*

Cellist Ingrid Krizan and the Thorn Creek Chamber Players present a concert celebrating the advent of summer. Join us for a fun-filled evening as the music echoes through the woods. Refreshments will be provided. This program will be held indoors in an accessible facility.

## Try It! Fishing Day

**Saturday, April 11**

**10 a.m.-2 p.m.**

*Monee Reservoir*

*Free! Ages 10 or older.*

*No registration required.*

Have you ever wanted to try fishing, but not sure where to start? Monee Reservoir is giving you the opportunity to try it for free! Dabble with different lures, try your hand at fly fishing, practice casting and learn basic skills and techniques to see if fishing is right for you! Safety and ethics are also covered. Participants will gain hands-on experience while fishing along the seawall. Everything needed to fish, including bait, is provided. Shoreline fishing and sidewalks are paved and easily accessible for all participants.

## Wags, Wine 'n' Art

**Saturday, May 16**

**5-7:30 p.m.**

*Whalon Lake – Konicek Grove Shelter*

*Ages 21 or older; \$30/person.*

*Registration required: 708.534.8499.*

Bring your furry family and experience a nice evening out on the town together. Enjoy "yappy" hour with a wine tasting featuring local and organic wines while refining your artistic abilities on a blank canvas! We will have a local professional artist from Pinot's Palette on hand to instruct you while creating a dog-themed masterpiece. No art experience required and dogs welcome! The program will take place under Konicek Grove Shelter where dogs must be leashed at all times. The walk to the shelter is accessible by way of a paved sidewalk.

## Wednesday Morning Walkers

**Wednesdays, April 1-June 24**

**9-10:30 a.m.**

*Thorn Creek Nature Center*

*Free! Ages 13 or older.*

*Registration required two days*

*before first walk: 708.747.6320.*

Follow the forest's seasonal changes, enjoy light exercise and experience nature firsthand on 2 miles of Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve's winding trails. Trails can be wet or muddy, so please wear sturdy shoes. Hiking is on natural surface trails across uneven terrain. ■



# Volunteer Spotlight

Each year, the Forest Preserve District recognizes volunteers that have made a difference. This year, the District is proud to acknowledge two individuals, Bill Doolin and Bill Kibler.

Doolin, a surveillance manager for Harrah's Joliet, began his volunteer work with the District in 2003. After discovering the need for cleanup efforts at the District's Joliet Iron Works Historic Site, Doolin formed an environmental team at Harrah's. It took him and his team almost a year to locate and remove wire insulation that had been stripped from the wire and left on-site. The team also removed rubber tires, aluminum cans and scrapped paper materials.

Doolin said his appreciation for nature has fueled his passion for volunteering. "I love the outdoors," he explained. "I grew up in a family that camped and traveled through national, state and local parks. I believe it's every citizen's responsibility to keep those parks clean so future generations can enjoy the beauty of the wildlife and scenic views."

The team continues to provide quarterly cleanups at the site.

Bill Kibler came to the District in 2007, having recently retired from Panduit Corporation. He decided to become a resource management



Doolin

volunteer after talking with a friend about his volunteer experiences with the District.

Over the years, Kibler's volunteer work has evolved into more than just invasive species removal. He is a presence at District events, and works recruitment booths where he both recruits new volunteers and advises the public about the many different offerings the District has available. Kibler also has assisted as a section sentinel for District bike rides. An avid bicyclist, he became a trail sentinel in 2008.

Kibler said his volunteer work



Forest Preserve volunteer Bill Kibler, who is being recognized by the District for his years of volunteer service, is pictured with Emily Kenny (center), District volunteer coordinator, and his wife, Jackie Kibler, who is also a District volunteer.

motivates him, both physically and mentally. "Often people volunteer to give back to the community, this is also true for me. Over the years, I have enjoyed hiking and biking on the trails in the preserves. Volunteering gives me an opportunity to do restoration work, meet interesting people and get out of the house. It's good for your physical and mental well-being. On one resource management workday, I worked with a group of Cub Scouts clearing brush. They were so enthusiastic and hard working, I couldn't even get them to take a break until they

completed their task. I was impressed and encouraged by these young boys' dedication."

Kibler's enthusiasm for volunteering has even spread throughout the Kibler household. His wife, son, daughter-in-law and grandchildren also have been assisting the District in a variety of capacities.

In 2014, both Doolin and Kibler were honored by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association with Community Service Awards for their outstanding contributions to the community. ■

## Spring Resource Management Workdays

Spring is here! Stretch those muscles from a long winter and come to a resource management workday. Help us to preserve and maintain Will County's natural areas. Dress for outdoor work and the weather. An RSVP is required by calling 815.722.7364 or e-mailing [rgauchat@fpdwc.org](mailto:rgauchat@fpdwc.org). Workdays start at 8 a.m. and last until noon, unless otherwise noted below. Please RSVP so that enough tools and equipment are available for all.

<b>Sunday, April 12</b>	Joliet Junior College (Joliet)
<b>Wednesday, April 15</b>	Volunteer Training: Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve (Plainfield) 9-11 a.m.
<b>Saturday, April 18</b>	Volunteer Training: Lake Renwick Heron Rookery Nature Preserve (Plainfield) 10 a.m.-Noon
<b>Saturday, April 18</b>	Romeoville Prairie Nature Preserve (Romeoville) Meet at the Isle a la Cache Museum.
<b>Sunday, April, 19</b>	Hickory Creek Preserve – Hickory Creek Junction (Mokena)
<b>Saturday, April 25</b>	Community Volunteer Workday: Whalon Lake (Naperville)
<b>Saturday, May 2</b>	Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve (Lockport)
<b>Sunday, May 3</b>	Kankakee Sands Preserve – Shenk Grove (Braidwood)
<b>Saturday May 9</b>	Hickory Creek Preserve – LaPorte Road Access (Mokena)
<b>Sunday, May 17</b>	Keepataw Preserve (Lemont)
<b>Sunday, May 31</b>	Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve (Lockport)
<b>Saturday, June 6</b>	National Trails Day: Hammel Woods–Route 59 Access (Shorewood)
<b>Saturday, June 27</b>	Sugar Creek Administration Center (Joliet) ■



Call 815.722.7364 or e-mail [rgauchat@fpdwc.org](mailto:rgauchat@fpdwc.org) to start the volunteer process.



## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Interested in assisting with District events? Volunteers are needed for the following opportunities:

### Saturday, April 4

**Hugs for Hounds  
Easter Egg Hunt**  
Hammel Woods Dog Park (Shorewood)  
Day-of Registration – 10:30 a.m.  
Easter Egg Hunt – 11 a.m.

### Sunday, April 19

**Earth Day Celebration!**  
Plum Creek Nature Center (Beecher)  
Noon-4 p.m.

### Saturday, May 2

**Kite Fly Festival!**  
Monee Reservoir (Monee)  
10 a.m.-2 p.m.

### Saturday, May 16

**Ride the Rock**  
Lower Rock Run Preserve –  
I&M Canal Access (Joliet)  
9 a.m.-1 p.m.

### Saturday, May 30

**Bringing Nature Home  
Native Plant Sale**  
Sugar Creek Administration Center (Joliet)  
9 a.m.-3 p.m.

### Saturday, June 13– Sunday, June 14

**Island Rendezvous**  
Isle a la Cache Museum (Romeoville)  
10 a.m.-4 p.m. ■



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[ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org)

Pre-register Now for



**RIDE  
THE  
ROCK**

Saturday, May 16 • 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Spring Family-Friendly Bike Ride on the Rock Run – Joliet Junction 16-mile Loop Trail

**Fun for the Entire Family!**

Check-in for pre-registered riders on the day of the event begins at 9 a.m. Same-day registration opens at 9:30 a.m. All participants are encouraged to wear safety helmets.

See page 14 for more details. To pre-register, visit [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org) or call 815.727.8700.

**Go Native at Third Annual Plant Sale**

Learn how to transform your lawn and garden into a haven for native species by attending the Forest Preserve District's third annual "Bringing Nature Home Native Plant Sale" on Saturday, May 30.

The event will be held rain or shine from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. under tents in the parking lot of the District's Sugar Creek Administration Center in Joliet. Cash, checks and credit cards will be accepted. No refunds will be given.

The plant sale will be chock full of tips, vendors and native plants grown by the District's event partner, Possibility Place Nursery. For 28 years, the Monee-based nursery has grown trees and shrubs that are native to northeastern Illinois. The sale will feature more than 30 species of native trees and shrubs and more than 80 species of flowering plants.

Experts will be on hand to help visitors pick the right plants for their landscapes, and workshops will be held on composting, proper tree planting techniques, conservation at home and monitoring monarchs. Exhibitors and garden artisans scheduled to attend are: the Will County Audubon Society, the Illinois Master Gardeners, Wild Ones of Will County

and the Illinois Native Plant Society, to name a few. Barn in the Sticks will be selling bird feeders, bird houses and gardening items.

The Conservation Foundation will be selling 55-gallon rain barrels made of recycled food-grade plastic. The barrels, which come in a variety of colors, can be pre-ordered for pick-up at the plant sale via the Forest Preserve District's website, [ReconnectWithNature.org](http://ReconnectWithNature.org). A limited supply of rain barrels will be available for sale at the event.

In addition to Possibility Place, this year, the District is also partnering with its charitable foundation, Friends of the Forest Preserve District of Will County. All proceeds from the native plant sale, above event costs, will be used to support the Foundation and the District's programs and services.

The inspiration for the Forest Preserve's plant sale grew out of the book, *Bringing Nature Home – How You Can Sustain Wildlife with Native Plants* by Douglas Tallamy, Professor and Chair of the Department of Entomology and Wildlife Ecology at the University of Delaware in Newark, Delaware. In the book,



Tallamy champions the notion that suburban lawns are poor habitats for native animal species because they don't have the variety of plants necessary to sustain indigenous wildlife.

Native plants provide the food and shelter necessary for

birds and insects to survive and thrive, and they are better at fending off disease organisms and fungal pathogens. Planting a yard filled with native species is better for the environment because it fosters cleaner water and air and a healthier food chain. Even a small increase in the native plant cover can increase the number and species of breeding birds, studies have shown.

See page 10 or call 815.727.8700 for more details. ■