



The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter December/Winter 2017

Annual Meeting Focus: Path Improvements, Running Communities

The Path's 2017 Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, November 5 in the Cantigny Education Center in Wheaton. The meeting is always held on the first Sunday in November. About 30 guests came from variety of Path communities including Chicago, Maywood, Lombard, Glen Ellyn, Warrenville, Naperville and Wheaton. Erik Spande, IPPc Board President welcomed guests. Rob Sperl, Treasurer, shared the **Annual Financial Report**.

Path Improvements



For a look at DuPage County's trail and bikeway plans, go to **Sid Kenyon's** informative and downloadable presentation from the Annual Meeting - 2017 *DuPage DOT Presentation to the IPPc*. It's available online at

http://www.dupageco.org/EDP/Bikeways_and_Trails/1146.

It's a **quick reference** to all the County's trail responsibilities and contacts for planning, permitting, maintenance, engineering, and programming, and summaries of their current and future projects.

Running Communities



Keynote speaker **Greg Hipp**,

Executive Director for the Chicago Area Runner's Association (CARA) explained how CARA is devoted to expanding, motivating, supporting and celebrating the running community of Chicagoland. CARA connects runners to resources that enable them to run—farther, faster, better, for life.

"We are about building communities through running. People who participate in our training programs often become life-long friends. We help runners run better, farther, faster and with more fun by clearing paths to a wealth of training, social, outreach and advocacy programs, while promoting friendships and personal fulfillment.

Our Charity Running Program, in partnership with local non-profit organizations, provides run training programs to support fund raising efforts and help runners accomplish their marathon or half marathons goals making their miles more meaningful. In support of our year-round training programs, racing competitions, advocacy and social outreach initiatives, we welcome new members, new sponsors, and new charity partners."

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The Illinois Prairie Path Treasurer's Report Fiscal Year 2017				
Cash Balance, November 1, 2016				
Checking - Chase	\$	15,374.72		
High Yield Savings	\$	40,154.95		
Office Manager's Account	\$	-		
Petty Cash	\$	-		
Community Bank	\$	21,900.29		
Pomerance Trust - Principal \$63020.24	\$	63,029.93		
	TOTAL	\$	140,459.89	
Revenue				
Donations, Grants, Bequests	\$	48,641.97	\$	1,000.00 4864%
Dues	\$	30,004.00	\$	26,000.00 115%
Sales (Maps, Shirts, Patches, Guides, etc.)	\$	12.00	\$	- #DIV/0!
Interest	\$	87.14	\$	85.00 103%
Miscellaneous	\$	(106.66)	\$	- #DIV/0!
	TOTAL	\$	78,638.45	\$ 27,085.00 290%
Expenditures				
Office Management	\$	12,197.88	\$	9,500.00 128%
Newsletters	\$	4,515.00	\$	3,000.00 151%
Maintenance and Repairs	\$	318.00	\$	500.00 64%
Litter Removal and Port-o-let	\$	6,778.09	\$	- #DIV/0!
Post Office	\$	1,512.52	\$	800.00 189%
Telephone	\$	111.07	\$	120.00 93%
Special Projects	\$	8,644.19	\$	- #DIV/0!
Special Events	\$	54.58	\$	1,000.00 5%
Prairie Restoration (Contract)	\$	9,873.00	\$	13,000.00 76%
Sign Replacement	\$	2,678.40	\$	- #DIV/0!
Scout Projects	\$	-	\$	- #DIV/0!
Printing (inc. maps)	\$	2,637.98	\$	1,500.00 176%
Merchandise For Sale	\$	-	\$	- #DIV/0!
Donations	\$	-	\$	- #DIV/0!
Travel/ Board Expenses	\$	40.68	\$	100.00 41%
Legal and Consulting	\$	-	\$	1,000.00 0%
Office Supplies, etc.	\$	-	\$	100.00 0%
Dues and Subscriptions	\$	-	\$	300.00 0%
Insurance	\$	1,458.00	\$	1,200.00 122%
Web Page Maintenance	\$	864.00	\$	1,000.00 86%
Government and Service Fees	\$	33.00	\$	30.00 110%
Miscellaneous (PayPal)	\$	272.82	\$	900.00 30%
	TOTAL	\$	61,989.21	\$ 34,050.00 153%
Cash Balance, October 31, 2017				
Checking - Chase	\$	19,777.34		
High Yield Savings	\$	50,182.91		
Office Manager's Account	\$	-		
Petty Cash	\$	-		
Community Bank	\$	30,466.16		
Pomerance Trust - Principal \$63020.24	\$	66,715.28		
	TOTAL	\$	167,141.69	

Path Membership up 39% in 2017!

If you're reading this article, you are one of the "Most Valued People" for the Illinois Prairie Path not-for-profit Corporation – a highly valued member. You, as a member, are the lifeblood of our organization. Our mission is only possible with your support. A hearty thanks to all of you!!

However, as of last year, membership rolls had been declining. Efforts to reverse this trend were only partially successful, and clearly this trend needed to be fixed.

A team of board volunteers decided to get together and see what could be done. The board members listed below held separate meetings to brainstorm ideas and make plans to bring in new members. The team came up with a number of programs that were executed during 2017. The results have been great! Membership has shown consistent growth during the year, and has now increased by 39% since the beginning of the year. This is a huge reversal and improvement.

Some of the actions the team took included:

- ✓ Contacting past members who did not renew their membership to see if they might rejoin.
- ✓ Holding an organized bike ride from Volunteer Park for members and prospective members.
- ✓ Participating in several meet-and-greets at various locations near the Path, and also meeting with other civic groups.
- ✓ Contacting people whose property adjoins the Path to advise them how Path proximity is considered a very desirable real estate benefit.
- ✓ Putting some creative, fun and interesting signage out on the Path at various times and locations, and leaving path brochures and pamphlets at area retail outlets.

We invite all our members to support this effort. Please let us know if you have any good ideas that could be considered, or if you would like to join the team going forward.

Here is the **2017 Membership Team - Heather Mahler, Ken McClurg, Dennis Terdy, Jeff Friedman, Erik Andersen**

Welcome New Members

Jim Accentura
Mark Bahnfleth
Joseph Biccharella
Jim Boak
Rachel Bollman
Connie & L.G. Bryant
Don Cugler
Tim Filarski
David Fogle
Caroline Foote
Neal & Sharon Halleran
Beth Henry
James & Maureen Herrmann
Dorothy Hiatt
Ralph & Gail Hinkle
Sharon Hupp
Dean Israel
Eric Krull
Jimmy Lynch
Joan Martellotto
David & Malinda McDonald
Doug & Kathy Nagy
Lowell & Helen Olberg
Sarah Olsen
Jesse & Brian Patchick
Pamela Pinkley
Mary Pontikes
S. Louis Rathje
Fuad Saba
Robert & Stacy Stahr
Barbara Steinke
John & Kimberly Thacker
Tyler Tieche
Gary Toomire
Len Tragas
Ravi Vellanki
Michael Vinson
Larry Weithers
John Woodhull
Robert & Patricia Wright
Badar Zulqarni



ENJOY THE PATH IN WINTER

Members and trail users enjoy the Illinois Prairie Path in all seasons. On beautiful winter days, you'll find people of all ages cross country skiing, walking their dogs, bird watching, taking photos and enjoying the quiet of the season. Some think of or listen to songs and poems. You may even find community Madrigals and carolers along the way. Enjoy!

Village of Lombard Wins an Award for their Illinois Prairie Path Historic Railroad Sign Project



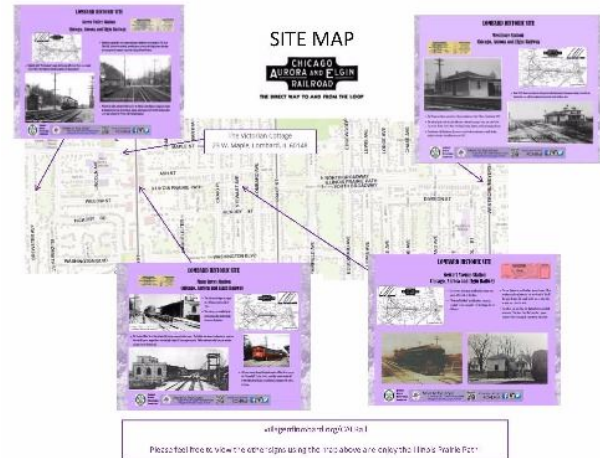
Congratulations to the Lombard Historic Preservation Commission. Their Illinois Prairie Path Historic Railroad Sign Project received a 2017 Historic Preservation Commission Excellence Award for Education and Advocacy.

When you're on the Path in Lombard, be sure to stop and explore the four large lilac colored signs on the south side of the Path. If you don't have time to stop, snap a photo of the QR code with your smart phone and learn more about the railroad that laid the route of the Illinois Prairie Path. All of the information is available online at: <http://www.villageoflombard.org/5086/CAERail>

C.A.E. Rail: Chicago, Aurora, Elgin Railroad

The Lombard Historic Preservation Commission and Local Landmarks Committee in partnership with the Illinois Prairie Path Board and DuPage County, is proud to announce the addition of new historical marker signs along the Illinois Prairie Path Trail that was once the route of the Chicago, Aurora, Elgin Railroad, or CAE Rail.

These signs mark the locations of the Green Valley Station near Brewster Avenue, the Main Street Station, the Steward Avenue Station, and the Westmore Station. The signs include images of the original stations that are no longer standing, and information about the CAE Rail that once traveled from Chicago to Aurora and Elgin.



The Illinois Prairie Path runs east and west through Lombard and is used by thousands of pedestrian and bicyclists each year. The CAE Rail Sign Project was overseen by the Lombard Historic Preservation Commission and is designed to educate residents and visitors to Lombard about the history of the Illinois Prairie Path and its origins as the CAE Rail. The signs also encourage users to share their Illinois Prairie Path experience on social media with #CAERail.

New Look at IPP's Founders Park

Improvement work was completed in late October, 2017 at Founders Park in downtown Wheaton. Updates include:

- The relocation of the park bench with new seating structure
- Additional and extension of flagstone allowing more space for bikes or strollers
- A repainted sign for easy identification of the park.

Constructed in 1977 for the purpose of honoring founder May Watts, distinct Prairie plants enhance and beautify the area along with a large "plaque boulder" located on the east side of the park, with a quote from May Watts: *"Footpaths are defended by their users."* We look forward to Spring, 2018 when the Prairie plant foliage regrows and blooms.

Founders Park is located on Liberty Drive, just south of the Metra tracks between West Street and Wheaton Avenue, east of Mile Marker 0 on the Main Stem in downtown Wheaton. To read more historical and interesting information, please visit our website at ipp.org.

Congratulations Eagle Scout Lynch!

One of the missions of the IPPc is to improve the path. On a regular basis Eagle Scout candidates come forward with an idea for an improvement. The IPPc works with them to hone the concept and then help with permitting, and then we sponsor the project.



One of the best project we've had in years is the Lombard Prairie Restoration project by Eagle Scout Jimmy Lynch. He had an ambitious idea - restore fallow land in Lombard just south of the IPP near Main Street. Jimmy did his research, got expert outside advice for how to plant new prairie plants, came up with a good design, and then completed the prairie restoration in 2017. Jimmy even planned for help to keep the plants maintained and watered in the subsequent year to improve their survivability.

But Jimmy went one step further. When he was done he had excess funds, which he then donated to the IPPc! This is much appreciated since one of our largest costs is prairie maintenance, and the IPPc will in the future be responsible for the costs associated with this new prairie. So congratulations to Eagle Scout Lynch! Thank you for your hard work and for improving the IPP and Lombard!

Illinois Prairie Path Wins Grant

In June of this past year, REI (Co-op) awarded the Illinois Prairie Path a \$5,000 grant entitled: Illinois Prairie Path History and Heritage Initiative. This grant has two primary goals strongly supporting the IPPc mission *To preserve, enhance, and advocate on behalf of the Illinois Prairie Path for current and future generations*.

- Objective 1: Improve awareness of the Illinois Prairie Path, historical information access, and recognition at four prominent Prairie Path sites.
- Objective 2: To increase prairie path users' awareness about the history and cultural heritage of the Illinois Prairie Path and its functions in serving neighboring communities.

During the upcoming winter months, an Illinois Prairie Path subcommittee will be initiating sign design and content plans for four targeted Prairie Path sites that include:

- Volunteer Park – Wheaton Mile marker 0.
- Founders Park - Wheaton
- The Steel Bridge - Wheaton
- Jean and Paul Mooring Bridge - Lombard/Glen Ellyn

Further, outreach efforts for Objective 2, prairie path awareness, were initiated in late summer and will be conducted until the grant period ends in late 2018. Annually through grants, REI Co-op invests in organizations across the country that share a common goal of creating, improving and sustaining access to inspiring outdoor places and other initiatives that encourage the protection of public lands, outdoor stewardship, and life outdoors. We are fortunate to have received this grant and look forward to our continued partnership with the REI Co-op.

New Path History Memorial approved for Warrenville Trailhead

Early in 2017, the Path's Board of Directors approved the development of a plan for a Path History Memorial as part of the new Warrenville Trailhead Addition. Board members worked with Hitchcock Design, architects for the trailhead, to provide a design that would integrate seamlessly into the concept approved by the City. The memorial plans were approved by the board in July 2017, and presented and unanimously approved by the Warrenville City Council at their September 11 meeting. The cost estimate for the project is \$60,000 to \$80,000. The board has pledged to support 20% of the project through its budget. The Path team will work to secure additional contributions through foundation grants. Watch for more details in the March 2018 newsletter.

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