



The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

June / Summer 2017

Paul and Jean Mooring Memorial Bridge dedicated June 13

DuPage County kicked off its annual Bike to Work Week Tuesday, June 13 from a beautiful small bridge crossing the DuPage River East Branch in Glen Ellyn. Erik Spande, President, IPPc led the ceremony to dedicate the bridge to **Paul and Jean Mooring**.



Mooring.

During the DuPage County Board Meeting, with the photo from the morning event displayed on an overhead monitor, Chairman Daniel J. Cronin presented a proclamation to IPP

Board Members Dennis Terdy and Susan Terwedow, recognizing Paul and Jean Mooring for "their dedication to the development and preservation of the DuPage County trail system."



Memories from the Mooring family:

"My sisters, Carol Mooring Larson, Margaret Mooring, and I, (Cecily Mooring) would like to thank DuPage County for the dedication of this bridge to my parents, Jean and Paul Mooring. For close to fifty years we have heard the stories about this bridge and all of the bridges that came before the one that you see here today.



Way back in 1969 there was no bridge here. There was only an unacceptable gap where the Path ran into the East Branch of the DuPage River. The problem needed to be conquered. Thus began what my mom and dad would come to call the Saga of the Bridge. I like to call it the war of the bridges. There have been many bridges here and my parents fought for all of them against many enemies. Vandals destroyed the first bridge that was built in 1969. Mother nature took the second, lower bridge in

1972, when it disappeared downstream after two back to back 100-year floods. The next bridge suffered from the violence of both vandalism and an arsonist. That bridge was completely ruined on the arsonist's second try. The very night the fourth bridge was installed, a vandal with a heavy object beat up the decking. New steel plate decking had to be installed. After years of dedication and perseverance, after hours of hard work too many to count, you can now see by this beautiful new bridge, that the battle of bridges has finally been won. Throughout this struggle my parents had indispensable allies, countless volunteers, Prairie Path members, The Illinois National Guard (who built the first bridge), members of the Sierra Club (who built the second bridge), Forest Preserve workers (who worked on the third), and a Boy Scout Troop (who painted the fourth).

This bridge is on the section of the Prairie Path that lies closest to my mom and dad's house. For decades, they maintained a section of the path just to the west of the bridge. They picked up litter, cleared brush and logs and maintained the garbage can by removing the revolting garbage themselves. They donated a bench that sits just off the trail a little west of here. Maybe, sometime when you ride or walk by or sit for a while, you could take a moment to think about Jean and Paul Mooring and all of the people who have made the dream of this path into a reality." (Photos of the bridges are available in Jean Mooring's article: **The Saga of the Six East Branch Bridges / IPPc Newsletter/Summer/Fall 2009 at www.ipp.org**)



Paul and Jean Mooring were parents, grandparents, great grandparents, life-long learners, builders, doers. Paul, president of the IPPc Board from 1971 through 1992, led the Path through decades of growth, significant challenges and triumphs. Many people believe if it wasn't for the Moorings, there wouldn't be an Illinois Prairie Path. They guided the Path through the 1986 insurance crisis; DuPage County agreed to maintain the Path, and the IPPc agreed to focus on advocacy, infrastructure and amenities. The Moorings remained on the board as determined, resilient, courageous and inspiring volunteers until their last days.



Paul (On how they met...he always emphasized two words): "I was getting my doctorate in physics at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. I was teaching a lab in *electricity* and *magnetism*. Jeannie was in my class. She got an A. One week later, we met at a square-dancing class. I asked her to dance and we started going together."

Jean "It was motherly instinct. The Path was a mess. I felt like it was my child and I had to do something. The first thing we had to do was clean up the right-of-way."



More information about the Moorings is available at the Path's North Central College Archives.

Summer 2017 / Stay connected: www.ipp.org or info@ipp.org, Facebook, or 630-752-0120.

IPPC sponsored bike rides enjoyed by all ages



The weather on June 10 was perfect for IPPC sponsored bike rides that began and ended at Volunteer Park (MM1) in Wheaton. Three routes were offered to provide riders with a distance that best-matched their abilities. Special thanks to IPPC's Membership Team who planned and led the events: Erik Andersen, Heather Mahler, Ken McClurg, Jeff Friedman, and Dennis Terdy. (Maps of these routes and all Path upcoming events are posted on the Path's website at www.ipp.org.)

3.6 Mile Ride (25 minutes): LEADER: Erik Andersen. Illinois Prairie Path and Overpass Trail to Manchester Road and Erie Street, including an interesting winding trail through marsh. Bikers rode past Challenge Courses and had a nice view from the bridge over the tracks of the DuPage County fairgrounds, baseball and soccer fields.

9.2 Mile Ride (48 minutes): LEADER: Dennis Terdy. ROUTE: Illinois Prairie Path Elgin Branch and the Geneva Spur with a nice ride through Lincoln Marsh. They took a new connector route to Geneva Road. They rode over a beautiful stretch of the DuPage River, past Winfield Mounds and saw remnants of the old West Chicago train station

19.8 Mile Ride (1 hour, 40 minutes): LEADER: Ken McClurg; ROUTE: From Volunteer Park they rode through St. James Farm, including the horse and hound cemetery, made a loop through Blackwell around McKee Marsh, proceeded south on the DuPage River Trail through the Warrenville Grove Forest Preserve to the beautiful wetlands just south of I-88 before returning.



Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Work Days:

When:
Second Saturdays of the month, 9 a.m. to Noon

- July 15
- August 19
- September 16

Where: Gather at the west side of Berkeley Avenue at the Illinois Prairie Path (Prairie Path Lane), three blocks south of St. Charles Road and six blocks east of Rt. 83.



THANKS Earth Day Cleanup Volunteers!

On Saturday, April 29, Volunteer teams in Aurora, Geneva, Warrenville, West Chicago, Winfield, Wheaton, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, Villa Park, Elmhurst, and Maywood spent a cold, rainy morning removing trash and rubbish from the Path. Here are some photos of the teams:



Aurora Branch- geo-cachers volunteers



Villa Park volunteers



West Chicago - Mapei Corporation



Winfield volunteers



Maywood citizens and the Mayor and Chief of Police participated



Welcome New Members: Sherrill Reed, Julia Davies, Christine Hotwagner, Sara Burnett, Ellen Bartolozz, Matthew Braden Chmiel, Dru Geraghty

Board Meetings - YOU are invited to attend and stay as long or as little as you like. Meetings are held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month. For locations, check at www.ipp.org.

PHOTO: (L to R) board members Rob Sperl, Heather Mahler, Jeff Friedman, Susan Degnan, John Marconnet. recently hosted an information table at REI in Oakbrook.