



The Illinois Prairie Path Newsletter

March 2017



Join our Earth Day Cleanup - Saturday, April 29

9 a.m. to Noon

Rain or Shine! All Welcome!



As in the past, volunteers will meet at designated sites along the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail.

Site locations are scattered throughout Aurora, Geneva, Warrenville, West Chicago, Winfield, Wheaton, Glen Ellyn, Lombard, Villa Park, Elmhurst, and Maywood.

Does your civic, private, corporate entity or religious affiliation have an interest in community service, or a passion for helping to keep the Path usable and beautiful?

A location convenient for you or your group will be assigned along with our site coordinator's contact info for more details and meeting location info.

We ask that all volunteers wear work gloves for safety purposes. This event will be held rain or shine! All are welcome!

MORE INFO:

Contact **Susan Degnan**, Vice President of the Illinois Prairie Path at Suelite97@yahoo.com
630-940-4255.

50 Years Ago, in 1967, the FIRST Path Cleanup took place. Earth Day began in April 1970.

Legacy Volunteer **Jean Mooring** wrote:

"... the first thing we had to do after we signed the lease (with DuPage County to build the Path) was to clean up the right-of-way. A group of volunteers began picking up trash on a section of the Path in Glen Ellyn **one Saturday morning in 1967**. Many people used the Path as their own private trash dump. It was a good place to discard an old washing machine or stove. We used every means we could to get junk off the Path..." **Here is a photo of volunteers and the trash they found, courtesy of the North Central College Archives:**



Mark your calendar for a Bike Ride Saturday, June 10th*

When – Saturday June 10th at 10:00 AM

Where – Meet at Volunteer Park in downtown Wheaton

Ride – There'll be two routes. One will be a shorter 10-mile loop, and another somewhat longer 20 mile.

Who – The IPP board will have route leaders. Please join us! Bring your family members and friends.

MORE INFO will follow on our website* regarding the June 10th date. Send questions to info@ipp.org.

(*Details are still being worked out.)

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

Elmhurst Great Western Prairie: A Hands-On Learning Opportunity

By Eric Keeley, Elmhurst Great Western Prairie Volunteer Steward

After a short winter, our precious prairie is coming out of its seasonal slumber and needs our attention! We are about to begin our 41st (or is it 42?) year of dedicated and thoughtful volunteer effort to preserve and protect this **10,000 year-old tiny remnant of the grand Illinois prairie**. And a special thanks to the staff and board of the Elmhurst Park District for protecting this natural gem in the heart of Elmhurst!



Below is a list of our planned monthly volunteer work days for the Elmhurst Great Western Prairie. In addition, we may add a few special work days for larger groups

(schools, service organizations, corporate projects) wanting to do service projects. Might I suggest you get these dates into your smartphones, desk and wall calendars now so you can avoid scheduling conflicts.

LOCATION:

We meet on the west side of Berkeley Ave. @ the Illinois Prairie Path (Prairie Path Lane), three blocks south of St. Charles Road and six blocks east of Rt. 83 <https://goo.gl/maps/3ecednGmMK82>

We meet the third Saturday of each month (plus an extra in June), March through November, 9:00 AM until Noon:

March 18
April 15
May 20
June 17

June 24 (two volunteer dates in June)
July 15
August 19

September 16
October 21
November 18

- **Volunteers should wear** durable work clothes: Long sleeved shirt, long jeans, closed-toed shoes (boots are best) and a hat. If you have work gloves, please bring those as well, but we can provide. You will get dirty and might find a few seed passengers attached to your clothes at the end of the event.
- **Bring** your own water (no drinking water on site), sunscreen and mosquito repellent.
- **Restroom:** Neighboring Grace Bible Church has kindly offered us the use of their restrooms.
- **Tools:** If you have a loppers, bring them along. No power tools are permitted.
- **Hazards to be aware of include:** Thorns and sharp-edged plants, trip hazards, sun exposure. There are currently no known poison ivy or ticks in the EGWP, but the possibility of exposure cannot be ruled out.
- **Children over 12 years old require direct supervision. Children under 12 will require one-on-one supervision during work days.**
- **Groups of more than four new volunteers** are encouraged to contact Eric Keeley (see below) before the scheduled events. Elmhurst Park District staff and our regular volunteers can happily arrange special volunteer work days and educational walks on days other than our usual monthly dates for corporate, school and community groups.

MORE INFO: General information on the **Elmhurst Park District's** site: <http://www.epd.org/elmhurst-great-western-prairie>. **Facebook** (volunteer operated): <https://www.facebook.com/Elmhurst-Great-Western-Prairie-269331223107249/>.

- David Price (Elmhurst Park District) at dprice@epd.org or 630-993-8909
- Eric Keeley (EGWP Steward Volunteer) at keeley.eric@gmail.com or 630-336-1852
- Keith Olson (EGWP Steward Volunteer) at keitholson@usa.net or 630-834-7357

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Visit and/or Volunteer at the Ferry Forest Garden

By Jodi Trendler and Michelle Hickey, *The Resiliency Institute*

The Ferry Forest Garden is waking up for spring! The daffodils and chives have already emerged from the earth. It will be interesting to notice the impact February's warm weather will have on the perennial fruit trees and shrubs. Nature has designed a system of flowering, pollinator hatching/migration, and pollination that may be out-of-sync this year.

Have you noticed the new sign! **Boy Scout Troop 8 constructed and installed the wooden sign frame** last November, and we installed the sign in December. People have already mentioned noticing the garden now because of the sign, so it's doing its job!

Summer will be a great time to visit the garden to notice all of the perennial plants volunteers planted last year. You might discover and harvest **cherries, peaches, and pears** from the trees sponsored by the Illinois Prairie Path, as well as **asparagus, strawberries, lemon balm, chives, serviceberries**, and so much more!

Of course, summer is also a great time to VOLUNTEER! Join our forest garden community and gain the rewards of connecting with nature; time outdoors away from screens; the intrinsic value of a generous act; and a bit of harvest to take home. Does your business, organization, club, group, church, school, or troop organize volunteer days that need a project? **Come out to Ferry Forest Garden for a day, a weekend or "adopt" the garden for a month.**

Location: 30W060 Ferry Rd, Naperville, IL 60563. Along the north side of Ferry Road, just east of Hwy. 59 in Naperville - *before* the Illinois Prairie Path bridge. Parking: Turn right on **Rigi Road** and park in the grassy parking area on the right. **Wear work clothes and bring gloves and garden tools.**

This year we will be adding a living willow arbor, a bug house, path edging and possibly some signage. An apiary is being considered, so if that interests you, contact us.

MORE INFO:

Subscribe to The Resiliency Institute's email list at www.theresiliencyinstitute.net or by following us on Facebook www.facebook.com/TRIsuburbanpermaculture. **If you can help contact Jodi Trendler at 630-477-9910 or at jodi@theresiliencyinstitute.net.**



Michelle Hickey and Jodi Trendler



Summer 2016
Permablitz volunteers



Boy Scout Troop 8 who
built the new sign



Volunteers weeding around the
plants and trees

How about adopting one mile of the Illinois Prairie Path?

By Sid Kenyon, Trail Path Coordinator, Sr. Transportation Planner

In 2014, the DuPage County Division of Transportation initiated an Adopt-A-Trail Program for the Illinois Prairie Path and the Great Western Trail. Participating businesses and organizations help keep local trails free of debris. THIRTEEN groups have joined to maintain one-mile segments:

1. **Advanced Chiropractic:** IPP Aurora Branch / Mile 2 to Mile 3
2. **Bloomington Earth Citizens:** GWT / Schmale to Bloomington
3. **Boy Scout Troop 373:** IPP Aurora Branch / Mile 3 to Mile 4
4. **CDM Smith Inc.:** IPP Main Branch / Liberty to Orchard
5. **Elaine Dow & Family:** IPP Main Branch / Lodge to Lincoln (Lombard)
6. **Elmhurst Bicycle Club:** IPP Main Branch / Monterey to Pioneer Park
7. **Kenilworth Watch:** GWT / Villa to Addison
8. **Metea Valley Eco Club:** IPP Aurora Branch / CN Railroad to Old Molitor
9. **Molex:** IPP Aurora Branch / Ferry to Diehl
10. **Monarch Landing Bike Club:** IPP Aurora Branch / IL Route 59 to Rockwell
11. **Northwestern Flavors, LLC:** IPP Geneva Branch / Yale to MacQueen
12. **Primera Engineers:** IPP Elgin Branch / Jewell to Liberty
13. **Sierra Club River Prairie Group:** IPP Main Branch / Montclair to Hill



Metea Valley High School Eco Club

Adopted trail segments are one-mile long. The County provides work materials (work gloves, safety vests, and garbage bags) and signage. Groups are required to work four times per year between March and November. Groups are asked to notify the DuPage County Division of Transportation if they find large, heavy, or potentially hazardous items, and are asked NOT to pick them up themselves. If you wish to adopt a trail, please **contact Brenda Bielik at 630.407-6900** or Adoptahwy@dupageco.org. Applications and waivers are available on the Division of Transportation's webpage at <https://www.dupageco.org/adoptahighway-trail/>.

Eagle Scout creates new reading garden

Thanks to Troop 41 Eagle Scout Evan Schmitt, the Glen Ellyn Library has a new reading garden.

Evan planned and developed the project. With friends and family his idea became a reality. They donated about 130 hours to complete his project.

The new reading garden is in the center of the library's butterfly garden **along the Prairie Path** and includes a center flower arrangement with garden seating at all four corners.



WELCOME NEWEST MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming the following new members.

Their support is invaluable to fulfill our mission to preserve and improve the Path.

Elise Awwad

Ruud Coster

Ryan & Regina Gibbons

John Marconnet, Lifetime Member

Lydia McKay

Jeanne Pagorek

Pat & Jerry Stratelak

Kristin Tuten

Matthew Wissert