



The Blaze

Fall / Winter 2015

from the director



*Kids, kids, and more kids!
We love it! Thank you, parents!*

I greatly appreciate all of the support from our patrons who participate in our many programs, especially the youth/kid programs. I have started my 21st year here as an employee and I believe this year to be one of the best years for participation in our many youth programs. We have seen our participation and enrollment in our programs take a big jump. I feel that our program success is due to our very talented staff that keep being innovative and researching fresh ideas.

I would like to thank the Education Department's Assistant Superintendent and Camp Director Janet Dahlberg for her outstanding summer camp program. She averaged 34 campers per week this year. We have received many compliments and reviews on the great job she has done. The kids stay very active with many crafts, projects, and field trips. It is never any easy task to keep 34 kids, ages 6-12, busy; and she has managed to do so with flying colors. Thank you, Janet, for such a well-run program. It's employees like Janet that make our District what it is today.

The 2015-16 preschool classes are full (86 kids) for the first time a month before school starts. Mrs. Joni, Mrs. Crystal, and Mrs. Tara are very excited to start educating your children and preparing them for kindergarten. My hat goes off to these three ladies, especially Mrs. Joni, for the time and effort she has put into developing the preschool program into one of the area's best preschools. She is always working on ways to better the experience and facilities. The staff has redesigned the drop-off/pick-up area to better accommodate the people who drop off and pick up the little ones. Thank you once again to the preschool teachers for their dedicated service and expertise.

The last program I would like to give accolades to is the new PGA Jr. League. The golf staff has started this program and it has been a wonder for many kids and families. Last fall, Golf Superintendent Matt Henkel researched this program and initiated it. Head Golf Professional Andy Gramer and Assistant Professional Tyler Wiek both have teams that play other teams from other courses in the area. Once again, I have heard many stories of how great the program is and how much the kids enjoy the team aspect of the league. This is a very well-run program and the children and parents enjoy the respectful competition very much. It is such a great education for your child of what the game has to offer and how to become a gentleman or lady in a lightly competitive game of golf. We really appreciate the parents' help and support for the program. I would be remiss if I did not again acknowledge the staff at PrairieView who make this program a success.

Todd Tucker
Executive Director

P.S. - *Simply Love*...it's in the air at the Forest Preserve! Be sure to check out this summer's edition of the *Northwest Quarterly Magazine*. Mike and Jaimie Swartz share their story of their special wedding day that was held at the Forest Preserve. Their ceremony was held at one of our many outdoor locations and the reception took place on the main floor of the Jarrett Prairie Center. To schedule your wedding or any other event, call or email Raul, 815.234.8535 x200 or raul@byronforestpreserve.com.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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BOARD MEETINGS

Held on the third Monday of
each month at 7pm at the
Jarrett Prairie Center.



THE MISSION

*Preservation ~ Education
Recreation*

To provide for Preservation of
openspace/natural resources,
to provide Education concerning
our natural environment/heritage, and
to provide Recreation
opportunities and enterprise
operations that are consistent
with our District goals.



THE BLAZE

Issue #37

Fall/Winter 2015

Please keep this issue thru December 2015.

Editor, Design, & Layout

Michelle Gerke, CPRP

Cover Photo:

**Beautiful Oak Tree at the
He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve**

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Byron Forest Preserve District

7993 North River Road, P O Box 1075, Byron IL 61010 ~ P-815-234-8535 ~ F-815-234-8635

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com



halloween on the prairie

Relax and enjoy this returning favorite!

Sunday, October 25 ~ Noon - 4 pm

Free admission ~ Fee for games

Co-sponsored by the Byron Park District.

Family Friendly Hayrides ~ Face Painting ~ Bounce House
Snake Wrangler ~ Kids Crafts ~ Costume Contest ~ Games
Free Customer Appreciation Lunch All Day
Byron Fire Protection District Equipment Display
Fun for kids of ALL ages!!



Live Owl Shows

Featuring live Great Horned Owls, Screech Owls, Barred Owls, Common Barn Owls and more!
Presented by Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab and Education.



24th annual holiday gift sale

Saturday, November 7, 2015

9 am-4 pm

You'll find that great one-of-a-kind gift for that special person in your life at this year's Annual Holiday Gift Sale. With over 30 crafters and vendors, there's a wide variety of unique crafts such as quilts, clothing, jewelry, candles, flower arrangements, ceramics, decorations, baskets, birdhouses, furniture, and much more! Along with crafters, vendors will also offer items such as Tupperware, Gold Canyon Candles, Paparazzi Jewelry, and many more!

Bring your children to have breakfast with Santa from 9-11 am. All believers can visit with him and tell him everything they want for Christmas. We'll provide donuts, juice, and milk. Bring your cameras to capture this awesome memory!

There is no admission fee for the event. We'll also be giving away door prizes donated by the vendors. The Jarrett Prairie Center is accessible to the physically challenged. An affordable concession stand will be open all day.

Parents can shop while the youngsters learn about their heritage in the natural history museum at the Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 North River Road in Byron. For more information, please call or email Michelle at 1-815-234-8535 x224 or michellegerke@byronforestpreserve.com.



Vendors & Crafters
Needed!
\$40 - 8'x10' booth
\$50 - 8'x12' booth
Call Michelle at
815-234-8535
x224

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

programs



Beekeeper Jeff Ludwig with the By Y Badger Cloverbuds

Beekeeping Workshops

Did you hear the buzz? These workshops are the place to bee!! You will learn techniques and tools of the trade. *Bring your bee suits!!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
 When: Sundays
 Sept. 13*, Oct. 11
 Nov. 8, Dec. 13
 Time: 2 - 4 pm
 Cost: \$2 / person
 Ages: 3 and up
 Min./Max.: 5 / 25

No registration required.

Join our VIP Text Club...

text CC597 to 36000

to start getting great deals today!

Guided Fall Foliage Canoe Tours of the Rock River

Take a scenic two-hour guided canoe tour down the Rock River from just below the dam in Oregon to Castle Rock State Park and from Castle Rock State Park to Grant Detour. View the area's many unique St. Peter sandstone rock formations and miles of hardwood forest along one of the most scenic stretches of the Rock River. Must have at least one adult per canoe and no more than three people per canoe.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
 When:

Oregon Dam to Castle Rock State Park

Saturday, September 26

Castle Rock State Park to Grand Detour

Saturday, October 17

Time: 8:30 am - 12 Noon
 Cost: \$10 / person
 Ages: 12 and up
 Min./Max.: 3 / 10 canoes

Register by noon on 9/23 & 10/14.



"Your Backyard" Van Tours

Do you know what is in your backyard? The Byron Forest Preserve! We will be visiting not only the District's main site which includes the Jarrett Prairie Center, Weiskopf Observatory, Turf Care Center, and Jarrett Prairie Preserve, but also other sites that include the Heritage Farm Museum, PrairieView Golf Club, the Land Management Center, Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve, Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve, Ripplinger/Gouker/Etnyre Preserve, and the He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve. With all of its preserves and facilities at several sites, there is something for the whole family to experience! Join us for a tour of what you have to take advantage of right in your own backyard!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
 When: Saturdays
 Sept. 5, Oct. 3
 Nov. 7, & Dec. 5

Time: 9 - 11 am
 Cost: FREE
 Ages: All
 Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on 9/5, 10/2, 11/6, & 12/4.

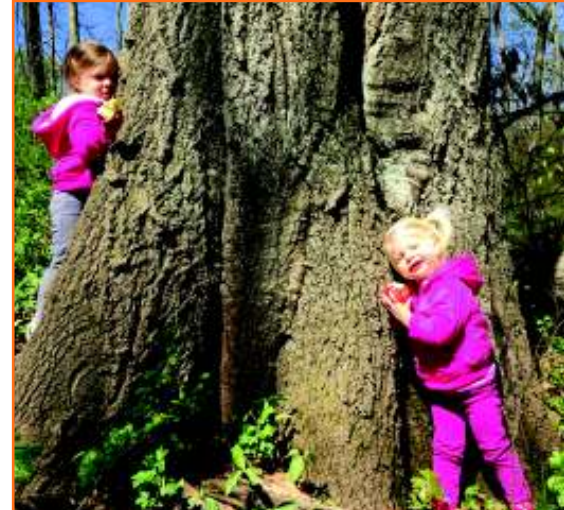
Winter Lecture Series

Back by popular demand! The Byron Forest Preserve's 2016 Winter Lecture Series will be held on Sunday afternoons starting on February 14. Lecture topics will include *The Butterflies of Illinois* by Michael Jeffords and Susan Post; *Return of Bears, Wolves and Mountain Lions to Illinois* by Peggy Doty; and more! Look for a detailed schedule with more information later in December.

programs



Three Oaks Trail at the Jarrett Prairie Preserve



October is Illinois Oak Awareness Month

Join us as we celebrate oak trees and oak ecosystems during the month of "Oaktober." Email us a photo of you, your friends and family next to your favorite oak tree (along with the photo location and explanation of why it is a special oak tree) and we will display them in our next Blaze and on our website. Email your photos to mark@byronforestpreserve.com. Your photo can be similar to the one above right. Pictured are Harper (left) and Madeline Hogan with what is believed to be, at approximately 300 years old, one of the oldest and biggest red oaks at the Forest Preserve's Jarrett Prairie Preserve.

The white oak (*Quercus alba*) is the Illinois State Tree. A single white oak tree provides food, shelter and nesting sites for over 500 species of insects, birds and mammals...more than any other plant species. Today's shadier forests in Illinois (caused by the introduction of new invasive tree and shrub species) are not producing new oak trees to replace the old large trees that we have been enjoying for years. Learn more about the changing forests on one of our Oak Savanna Tours.

Oak Savanna Tours

Take a guided tour of our wonderfully restored oak savannas and learn about the many plants, birds, mammals and insects that make these rare Illinois ecosystems their home. Oak savannas are large oak groves with a unique blend of prairie and woodland plant species that grow underneath. **Register by noon on October 8 & 22.**

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center

Cost: FREE

When: Saturdays, October 10 & 24

Ages: 6 & up

Time: 8 - 10 am

Min/Max: 5 / 25

Fall Night Hike

We'll head into the forest to listen for the sounds of the changing season and the last of the evening insects. We'll learn about night vision and learn some of the ways that our eyes can play tricks on us in the dark. Bring a sense of adventure (and a flashlight, if you must).

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When: Friday, November 6

Time: 7 - 8:30 pm

Cost: FREE

Ages: 6 and up, parents welcome

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 4.

Register Early!

PLEASE remember to register early for our programs. So many programs are cancelled due to the lack of participation and then we receive phone calls from disappointed individuals because they "were gonna sign up but forgot."

So sign up now! Get online or call us now to sign up for that hike or canoe trip or to get that scout badge. Call 815-234-8535 x200 or go online at www.byronforestpreserve.com.

programs



Wild Edibles & Medicinals Hike

Our prairie abounds with plants that have historically been used for food and medicine by both Indians and Pioneers. We'll take a hike and see as many as we can and learn how they were used. We'll grab a few to nibble on or at least smell, and brew a prairie tea prepared from some of the plants we've seen. Please wear long pants and dress for the weather.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, September 19
Time: 9 - 10:30 am
Cost: Free
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 16.



The Pioneer Farm

Experience a bit of pioneer life with hands-on activities and games at our Heritage Farm. We'll make cornbread over a fire and butter to put on it, dip a candle to take home, play a game of marbles, and tour the buildings. This is a great family activity with plenty to do for all ages!

Where: Heritage Farm Museum
8059 N. River Road, Byron
When: Saturday, October 3
Time: 10 am - 12 Noon
Cost: Free
Ages: All, families welcome
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 30.



Fossil Hunt

Join us at the quarry any time; stay for half hour or for the whole event! We'll be digging through piles to see what we can find. Bring a hammer to crack open the bigger ones and a bucket to cart away your finds. Fossil identification and guides provided.

Where: The quarry near
Land Management Ctr
located at 6845 German
Church Road, Byron
When: Saturday, October 17
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$2 / person
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 15.

ATTENTION TEACHERS...Free Field Trips Offered!

In order to increase accessibility to outdoor education for all students, the Forest Preserve is offering field trips to area schools for free! Sessions include prairie ecology, forest ecology, nature center tour, observatory tour, Heritage Farm Museum tour, bird study, Native Americans, insects study, earthwalk, and Earthkeepers.

Field trips are focused on hands-on learning. We guide the students through the various topics indoors and outdoors using first rate facilities. Trips can be organized for an all-day experience or just for an hour. Lunch rooms are available. Souvenirs are available for purchase.

To schedule your next field trip, call Mark Herman, Superintendent of Edu-

cation, at 815-234-8535 x217 so your class can experience outdoor learning at its best this spring. These options are also offered in your classroom for free as well. In addition, we can tailor a session to meet your needs on just about any nature related topic. Give us a call to supplement your students' classroom learning experience. Please visit us online at www.byronforestpreserve.com.

programs



National Astronomy Day Night Viewing

Let's view the night skies with our three telescopes. You can also bring your own telescopes and learn how to use them from the experts.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Saturday, October 24
Time: 4 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All
No pre-registration required.

Total Lunar Eclipse Viewing

We will watch the Moon move into the Earth's shadow. Stop by for a quick look or stick around for awhile.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Sunday, Sept. 27
Time: 7 - 11:30 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All
No pre-registration required.

Hunter Education

This 3-day class covers ethics, firearms, and archery and is required by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Please note that this class fills up quickly!

Where: Jarrett Center
When: MWF, Nov. 9, 11, 13
Time: MW-6-9pm, F-6-10pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All

(Must be able to pass written test)

Min./Max.: 5 / 60

Register by noon on 11/1.

Ideas??

Do you have a great idea for a program or a trip destination that you would like for us to offer? Or, do you need a specific badge offered for your scout group? Please let us know by calling Mark at 815-234-8535 x217 or Janet at x232. You could also go to our website, www.byronforestpreserve.com to email us or find us on Facebook. We look forward to getting suggestions from you!

Beginning Fly Fishing **NEW!**

Have you ever wanted to know the how's and why's of fly fishing? Bob Piros, a fifty-year-plus student of the art and science of fly fishing will teach a two-day class at the Jarrett Prairie Center. He has caught everything from cats to catfish on a fly rod, including trout, large and small mouth bass, sunfish, walleye, northern pike, salmon and salt water fish. The first class session will cover basic understanding of the rod, reel, line, leader and fly. Everyone will be practicing casting by the end of this session. In the second class, you will put your knowledge to work by fly fishing for pan fish and bass in forest preserve waters. Both top-water and sub-surface fishing methods will be demonstrated and practiced. Because the ponds are catch and release only, efficient fish release methods will be demonstrated and practiced. All equipment will be provided. If you have your own fly fishing equipment, please bring it to the class.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Monday, October 5 & Thursday, October 8
Time: 6pm to 8 pm
Cost: \$10 / person
Ages: 12 and up
Min/Max: 4 / 8

Register by noon on October 1.

preschool



Mrs. Joni



Mrs. Crystal



Mrs. Tara



Get your kids ready for kindergarten by enrolling them in our structured preschool classes. We are proud to offer one of the best preschool education programs and facility in the area. The program is housed in the Keller Education Center, a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum Certified building located adjacent to the Jarrett Prairie Center at 7993 North River Road in Byron. The Keller Education Center's Platinum Certification is the highest rating given by the United States Green Building Council and recognizes the building's many energy-efficient and green-design features. Some of these include the following: the use of renewable energy solar panels and a wind turbine; geothermal ground source heat pump; recycled floor tiles, countertops and restroom partitions; use of natural light and interior lighting control systems; use of certified sustainable wood products; improved indoor air quality through the use of low volatile organic paints; reflective metal roofing; low flow water closets and faucets, and many other features. The Keller Education Center is one of only three Platinum LEED Certified education buildings in Illinois and the first and only platinum certified building in Ogle County.

The Tuesday/Thursday preschool classes are geared toward 3-year-olds and younger 4-year-olds. The Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes are geared toward older 4-year-olds and younger 5-year-olds. Children must be at least 4 years old to attend the three-day class. They must be at least 3 years old to attend the two-day class. Children must be potty trained. Immunization records are required. You may register your child at anytime throughout the year if your child's birthday is later in the year. Please call 815-234-8535 ext. 200 for more information.

Where: Keller Education Center
Ages: 3-5 years
When: Mon/Wed/Fri or Tues/Thurs
Time: 8:30-11 am or 12:30-3 pm
Min/Max: 6/30-M/W/F morning & afternoon
6/16-TU/TH morning & afternoon
Cost: \$110/month-M/W/F
\$90/month-TU/TH
Registration is ongoing throughout the year.

Check us out on Facebook or at www.byronpreschool.com.



Mrs. Joni works with a student on the SmartBoard.

homeschool programs



Prairie Survivalist

Have you ever eaten a wild carrot or had sumac lemonade? Made fabric dye from black walnuts or virginia creeper? Can you find water, set a snare, or start a fire without matches? We'll do all of these things and more as we learn about wild plants both edible and useful, build a shelter, and discover ways of living off the land. Bring a sack lunch. Snack and drink provided.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, September 18
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 15.



Savanna

Celebrate the month of "Oaktober" by learning about the natural history of the region from glaciers to the present. We'll head out and hike to one of the more hidden and beautiful oak savannas on our properties. Acorns and animals will abound...we might see some red-headed woodpeckers and other uncommon sights. Bring a sack lunch. Snack and drink provided.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, October 9
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 6.

Fox, Sauk, and Winnebago

This region has an amazing history going back thousands of years. We'll immerse ourselves in it by making tools, throwing spears, trying archery, starting a fire with a bow drill, and more. Along the way, we'll discuss myths and truths about how the Indians lived before European settlers arrived. Dress for the weather. Bring a sack lunch. Snack and drink provided.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, November 20
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 17.

Makerspace

Makerspace is a place to explore and invent...we'll have all kinds of interesting materials out to work with, including canvasses and high-quality paints, electronics, K'Nex building sets, blueprints and materials to make mini-catapults, and everything you need to create and produce your own board game. Staff will guide, answer questions, and help with projects, but this day is all about invention and innovation and making things you want to make! Bring a sack lunch. Snack and drink provided.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, December 11
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on December 8.

Halloween Party!

Come in costume or not--we'll have a ton of games and prizes to celebrate this fall holiday! Some were played by Pioneer children and others are modern; all will be fun! We'll also have face painting, crafts, and cookie baking and decorating. Bring a sack lunch. Snack and drink provided.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, October 30
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min/Max: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 28.

scout badges



Boy Scout: Geocaching

Learn how to use a GPS unit to mark waypoints and find caches; see how a map and compass can be used for the sport; learn about the history and the how-tos of geocaching; head out to find some of the caches hidden at the preserve; and hide a cache of your own! This workshop fulfills all requirements of the badge except for leading an event for your peers...but you'll be well prepared to do so by the end of the session.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sunday, November 15
Time: 12 Noon - 5 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: Boy Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 11.



Boy Scout:

Wilderness Survival

Build a shelter, start fires, and learn how to survive being stranded in the wilderness. We'll cover basic safety and first aid, finding and treating water, useful plants, and how to signal for help. This workshop will cover all of the badge requirements except for sleeping in the shelter, but you will learn how to make one that will keep you dry and warm.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., September 19
Time: 12 Noon - 5 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: Boy Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 16.



Jr. Girl Scout: Gardener

We'll learn how plants grow, plant an herb garden to take home, make a fairy garden, and more! Aside from several planting projects, we'll also visit our Heritage Farm garden to see if there's any produce left to pick and eat.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., September 12
Time: 12 Noon - 4 pm
Cost: \$10 / person
(includes patch and materials)

Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 7.

Join our VIP Text Club...

text CC597 to 36000 to start getting great deals today!

scout badges



Jr. Girl Scout: Geocacher

Geocaching is a global scavenger hunt using technology. There are over two and half million geocaches hidden worldwide! We'll learn how to use a GPS unit to hide treasures for each other, how to read a geocache listing, and ways to stay safe when searching. We'll also make a few trinkets to put in the caches. Then, we'll head outside and find some at the forest preserve, and leave a trackable bag behind that you can follow online as it travels.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, November 14
Time: 12 Noon - 4 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout (inc. patch)
Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 11.



Jr. Girl Scout: Drawing

Even if you don't think you're artistically inclined, you'll see that learning the basics of lines and perspectives is a matter of practice, just like any other skill. There will be lots of materials and mediums to play with, so bring your creativity and we'll provide the rest!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, December 5
Time: 12 Noon - 4 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout (inc. patch)
Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on December 2.

Brownies: Bugs

We'll head out with nets to see what we can catch! This badge promises to be a lot of fun, and if you don't like "bugs" now, maybe you will by the end!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, October 10
Time: 12 Noon - 3 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout
(includes patch and bug jar)
Ages: Brownies
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 18.

Brownies: Making Games

Play some games and learn some new ones, and then create one of your own! We'll have all the materials you need to make a board or card game to take home with you. Make a new version of a game you love, or invent something completely new!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Saturday, November 7
Time: 12 Noon - 3 pm
Cost: \$5 / person (inc. patch)
Ages: Brownies
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by noon on September 18.

Brownies: Painting

We'll play with colors and lots of different materials to create artwork. Bring clothes that can get messy so that we can experiment a lot and have fun.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Sunday, December 6
Time: 12 Noon - 3 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout (inc. patch)
Ages: Brownies
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by noon on December 2.



New Jarrett Prairie Center Museum Design Update

For the past six months, national award winning museum designers, Matt Kirchman of Object Idea and Travis Wood of Split Rock Studios have been working with members of the Byron Forest Preserve Exhibit Development Team to develop a new exhibit schematic design for the 4,000-square-foot museum area at the Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 North River Road, Byron.

The redesign of exhibits for the Jarrett Prairie Center Museum has many goals, one of which is to expand the museum's audience and increase visitation through relevant and engaging content and design.

The final exhibit design development details will take part over the next few months. The on-site installation of the new museum exhibits will begin in the early summer of 2016.

The new museum themes will include:

- *Understanding the unique ecology that defines the prairies and woodlands of our region.*

- *Thousands of years of prairie ecology and peoples' relationship with the land made this region the rich agricultural center that it is today.*

- *Prairies, savannas and woodlands need maintenance to endure - through natural or human efforts*

- *The Byron Forest Preserve District has diverse natural areas, many of which serve both ecological and recreational purposes.*

- *The Jarrett Prairie Center Museum will serve as a new center for prairie understanding in the region that will also feature the successful work of individuals and other conservation organizations such as:*

- The Nature Conservancy
- Natural Land Institute
- Illinois Audubon Society
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources

contest

Who needs \$50?

You do!! You can win a \$50 gift certificate when you identify the location of each of these photos that was taken on Byron Forest Preserve property. The structures could be at any one of our many locations. If you identify all three photos, you could win a \$50 gift certificate!

Contest rules are as follows: 1) Find the location of the structure. 2) Take a selfie or photo with the structure at the location being identified. 3) Come to the Jarrett Prairie Center to submit your identification of the structure locations by September 18, 2015. 4) If there are multiple correct submissions, a drawing will be held on September 21, 2015. 5) Byron Forest Preserve staff, commissioners, and their families are not eligible to participate in this contest. 6) One winner will receive a \$50 gift certificate to be applied towards a facility rental, a golf pass, or summer camp, preschool, or other programs. The gift certificate will be valid for one year (expiration 9/18/2016) and has no cash value.

Check out the directory on the last page of this edition to see all of the possibilities of where these structures may be found. You're next hike, bike ride, museum visit, round of golf, barn tour, or picnic could win you \$50 so pay attention and win!



Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

Pollinator Problems



*Two-spotted bumble bee on
a pale purple coneflower*



By Mark Herman,
Superintendent of Education

This past June, I attended the inaugural Quad Cities Pollinator Conference put on by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Nahant Marsh Education Center in Rock Island, Illinois. Over 270 people from Illinois and Iowa attended this two day conference because of their shared concern regarding the recent dramatic drop in populations of our domestic honey bees, wild bees and butterflies. Conference attendees included university entomologists, farmers, beekeepers, staff from conservation organizations, representatives from chemical companies and back yard gardeners.

An impressive group of speakers from all over the country talked about the environmental and economic impact of losing the insects that pollinate our fruit, vegetable, flower and nut crops. They stressed how serious our pollinator problems are becoming. Theories as to what might be causing the problems and what we need to do to stop them were presented and debated.

One of the biggest areas of concern was the decline in domestic honey bee populations due to Colony Collapse Disorder which now causes 30 to 40 percent of all honey bee hives to die each year. Scientists believe that the combination of an infestation of parasitic varroa bee mites, exposure to chemical fungicides,

pesticides and herbicides, the stresses brought on by climate change and millions of acres planted in herbicide resistant corn, soy beans and short grass lawns appear to be the main factors.

Monarch butterflies were another big area of discussion since their populations have declined by 90 percent over the past ten years. The beloved Illinois State Insect is disappearing due to a combination of the loss of the wild milkweed that they need to lay their eggs, loss of nectar flowers that they need for food, exposure to agricultural and home pesticides and habitat loss at their wintering grounds in Mexico.

The use of neonicotinoids was a hot-button topic at the conference. Neonicotinoids are a group of insecticides that are used widely on farms, as well as around our homes, schools and city landscapes. They are systemic chemicals that are absorbed by the plant and dispersed through plant tissues, including pollen and nectar. Because they target nerve impulses in insects and other invertebrates, neonicotinoids are deemed "safe" since harm to humans and other mammals are minimal. However, they are toxic to bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects. This chemical can linger in the soil for months and even years where they can be picked up by the next season's plants. Neonicotinoid insecticides were recently banned in Europe. Plants sold at many large garden centers and big box stores are routinely treated with this controversial insecticide.

*30-40% of honey bee
hives die each year*

Emphasis at the conference was also placed on the importance of creating pollinator habitats for our many wild bees and butterflies. Illinois has nearly 350 species of wild bees of all sizes, shapes and colors (there are over 20 species of bumble bees alone). Our wild bees do more plant pollination than domestic honey bees. Flowering plants should be planted in as many locations as we can around our homes, schools, businesses and open sections of land. Plant milkweed on your property for Monarch butterflies along with several types and colors of native nectar producing flowers and try to provide different types of flowering plants so that you will always have blooms throughout the growing season. Our native pollinators need to have continuous food from flowers in the spring, summer and fall.

By getting rid of some of our grass lawns, using less insecticides and planting more flowering shrubs, trees and seasonal flowers, we will create an important habitat for our beneficial bees and butterflies and start to be part of the pollinator solution.

land management



By Lauren Marks,
Restoration Technician

Sky Blue Aster

(*Symphyotrichum*
oolentangiense-Asteraceae)

Beginning in late summer and continuing into autumn, the Sky Blue Asters (*Symphyotrichum oolentangiense*) are in full bloom in the northern and western areas of Illinois. Its rather large and showy daisy-like flower heads make this plant stand out among the other species of plants that are in bloom during this time. You can find this Aster in higher quality natural areas that have full to partial sun. It can be found in mesic to dry prairies, sand prairies, hill prairies, rocky upland woodlands, upland savannas, upland sandy savannas, the borders of a woodland, sandy meadows, limestone glades, and roadside embankments. This species flourishes in soil that is loamy, sandy, rocky, or contains clay. This Aster is easy to grow and it is also drought resistant. An occasional prescribed fire that reduces the competition from woody vegetation is beneficial in maintaining the populations of Sky Blue Aster.

The Sky Blue Aster is a native herbaceous perennial plant that stands 1-½ to 3 feet high. The central stem is light green and smooth to lightly hairy. The alternate leaves along the central stem become shorter and narrower as they ascend. The lower leaves on the stem are light green, 3 inches long and 1-½ inches across, oval shaped, and smooth along the margins. The upper leaves are medium to dark green, 1-¼ inches long and ¼ inch across, linear-oblong in shape, and smooth along the margins. The petioles are light green, which can grow up to 2 inches long and they become shorter as they ascend the stem. The Aster's root system is fibrous and rhizomatous.

Between August and October, the daisy-like flower heads are in full bloom. The flower heads are ½ inch across or sometimes slightly larger. There are between 10 and

25 ray florets that surround the numerous disk florets. The flower head rays are lavender and/or light blue in color. The Sky Blue Aster will remain in bloom for about a month for a colony of them. The florets are then replaced by small achenes (immature fruit); about 2 millimeters in length, and then the achenes are distributed by wind.

The Sky Blue Aster attracts many different insects, such as bumble bees, digger bees, leaf-cutting bees, Andrenid bees, and butterflies. There are several species of insects that feed destructively on the leaves, flower heads, and other parts of the Aster. The larvae of Aster Leafminer Fly, Papery Blister Gall Midge, and fruit flies are a few examples of species that are destructive to the plant. The larvae of the Silvery Checkerspot and Pearl Crescent, both species of butterflies, also feed on Asters. Not only do insects affect the Sky Blue Aster, but also do birds and other animals. The Ruffed Grouse and Wild Turkey browse on the leaves and seeds of the Aster. The Tree Sparrow also eats the seeds during the winter. The Cottontail Rabbit, White-Tailed Deer, and Groundhogs browse on the foliage of the plant, whereas the White-footed Mouse only eats the seeds from it. Thus, the Sky Blue Aster is pollinated by numerous species of insects and its seeds are distributed by several different species as well, but it is also affected negatively by the browsing of some species too.

The restoration staff is managing the areas where the Sky Blue Aster is located to ensure its survival as well as the survival of other native plant species. We are managing it by controlling and removing invasive species, such as White Sweet Clover and Yellow Sweet Clover, to give our native species a chance to thrive and reproduce within our prairies.





He-Leo Two Rivers Wetlands Project

Coordinated Effort to Restore Wetland Habitat along the Rock River

This year, in coordination with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Midwest Archaeological Research Services (MARS), the Byron Forest Preserve District is undertaking a proposed wetland reconstruction project at the He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve. The preserve is located at the confluence of the Rock and Leaf Rivers, with about 20 acres of the preserve sitting in a lowland seasonal floodplain, offering a unique opportunity to create useful habitat for amphibians and water fowl. Of the 20 acres in the floodplain, approximately seven acres are currently a solid mat of invasive reed canary grass, choking out any and all native vegetation, contributing virtually no conservation value to wildlife.

After discussions with USFWS and cultural resource surveys conducted by MARS, a preliminary map and project proposal were submitted to USFWS for approval by the Army Corps of Engineers, along with documentation prepared for the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency. Currently, the project is seeking to excavate several vernal pools and create two elevated berm hiking paths with interpretive signs for wildlife viewing overlooking the river and overlooking the new wetland complex. The hope is that the pools created would hold water in Spring and Early Summer, giving

water fowl a place to possibly stop and nest, and provide local frogs and salamanders with desirable breeding habitat. Also included in the proposal is a large parking area for school buses, which would allow the project to be utilized for various educational aquatic study programs for local school districts and colleges.

...giving water fowl a place to possibly stop and nest, and provide local frogs and salamanders with desirable breeding habitat.

The Byron Forest Preserve District is seeking a matching grant from the USFWS to help offset the overall cost of the project, with our Land Management Department planning on providing much of the labor involved in establishing native vegetative cover and eliminating reed canary grass, as well as participating in much of the earth work needed to bring the end result to fruition. If all goes well, the project should be underway by Fall, 2015.

land management

Wetlands Project to Move Forward

On June 9th and 10th, 2015, archaeologists from Midwest Archaeological Research Services Inc. (MARS) conducted a Phase I archaeological reconnaissance survey of seven acres at the He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve in advance of the District's proposed wetlands restoration project. The survey was done to identify possible prehistoric or historical remains on the land that might be disturbed by restoration pond construction. Research by MARS showed that there were 25 prehistoric Woodland and Late Archaic Indian sites known by the Illinois State Museum located within one mile of this section of the Rock River.

MARS archaeologists plotted out a grid over the seven-acre site and conducted 92 shovel probe holes where they dug two feet into the soil and then sifted the contents of each hole through mesh screen. They then used a hand-powered auger to take samples from over three feet into the ground at the location of the deepest part of the proposed ponds. No prehistoric cultural material or evidence of prehistoric mound construction was found during either the shovel probes or the hand-powered auger cores. Project clearance was recommended to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The MARS archaeologists did, however, confirm that there are Woodland Indian Mounds and other Late Archaic/Woodland Indian Campsites located in other sections of the He-leo Two Rivers Preserve that will not be disturbed by the wetland restoration project.

*Our mission:
Preservation ~ Education ~ Recreation*

Connect with us!



Northern Leopard Frog



Prairie Vernal Pond

Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

prairieview golf club



Matt Johnson Scholarship Fund & Junior Golf Outing

The Byron Forest Preserve along with PrairieView Golf Club will host a golf fundraiser on October 3rd to benefit the Matt Johnson Scholarship Fund and junior golf programs. The event will begin with a 9am shotgun start with a four-player scramble format. The cost is \$60 per adult \$30 per junior 17 and under (\$40 pass holder & \$30 all-inclusive pass) and includes golf with a cart, lunch and prizes. The deadline to register is Thursday, October 1st. To register, stop by the clubhouse or call 815-234-GOLF.

The Matt Johnson Scholarship Program was started in 2003 as a fund of money that is available for the youth of the Byron area who are in need of financial assistance to participate in the activities offered by the Byron Forest Preserve, such as golfing, summer camp, preschool, and many other programs. Matt liked to play golf until his life was cut tragically short at the age of 18 in a car accident in 1997. The Byron Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners and staff are grateful for the Johnsons' generosity in the creation of the Matt Johnson Scholarship Program for the children of the Byron area. To qualify for a scholarship award, the child must be eligible for the school's free lunch program and reside in the Byron Forest Preserve District.

Chip and Sip

We are excited to offer this unique golf clinic to be held on Saturday, September 12th, from 4-5pm. You must be 21 or older to participate. The cost is \$20 per person. This golf clinic will focus on your short game paired with a drink of your choice. What better way to work on your short game than with a drink in hand. This one-hour clinic will provide a low stress atmosphere to learn how to take your short game to the next level. To register for this event, contact the golf shop at 815-234-4653.

Outing and Events

Interested in hosting an outing or an event this fall? Look no further than PrairieView Golf Club. Our state of the art facility is perfect for hosting any outing, play day or banquet. Our staff prides itself on providing first class service to make your event as enjoyable and successful as possible. For outing or banquet information, contact Andy Gramer at andy@prairieviewgolf.com or by calling the pro shop at 815-234-4653.

PrairieView Patriot Golf Day

We are excited to host the 3rd Annual Patriot Golf Day. This annual event is scheduled for Saturday, August 29th with an 8am start. This event will pay tribute to the dedicated men and women of the armed forces. The event will kick off with a 30-minute salute to our fallen soldiers that will include a Full Color Guard, 21-gun salute, and an aerial display. The format for this event is a 4-person scramble. The cost is \$50 per person (\$30 pass holders and \$20 for All Inclusive pass holders) and includes golf with a cart, lunch and prizes. The deadline to register is Thursday, August 27th. Contact the golf shop at 815-234-4653 and book your four-some to pay tribute to our armed forces.

Customer Appreciation Week

Mark your calendars for Monday, October 19th through Friday October 24th for our annual fall customer appreciation week. During this week, green fees are free and you only need to pay \$16 per person for an 18-hole cart rental. Don't miss out on this great opportunity as tee times will fill up quickly. Call the golf shop at 815-234-4653 and let us show our appreciation for your continued support of PrairieView!

The Fall Ultimate

This competitive two-person team event is scheduled for Sunday, September 13th. Teams will battle it out over 27 holes while competing in a 9-hole scramble, 9-hole best ball and 9 holes of alternate shot. This unique event is sure to test your golf skills and patience. The cost is \$85 per person (\$60 for pass holders) and includes 27 holes of golf with a cart, dinner, drinks, and prizes. The deadline to register for this event is Thursday, September 10th. For more information, visit our website at www.prairieviewgolf.com or to register, please call the PrairieView golf shop at 815-234-4653.

Season Passes Make Great Christmas Gifts!

2016 Passes will go on sale in November. Purchase your pass early and save 10%. Passes will be discounted through April 24, 2016, then passes will be sold at full price. A complete listing of pass fees, VIP fees, and green fees for 2016 will be published in the next edition of the Blaze.

prairieview golf club

PGA Junior League

The PGA Junior League had a fantastic inaugural season! PrairieView had two teams competing, The PrairieView Putters and The Tee Breakers. These 13 and under coed teams played home and away matches against the Rockford Park District, Rockford Country Club and each other. A special thanks to all the parent volunteers who helped out during practices and matches and who played a large part in the success of this program.



Team Putters: Head Golf Pro Andy Gramer with L-R Shannon McHale, Michael Rock, Abbie Baker, Vance Hunter, Davis Baker, Benjamin Gramer, Brayden Baker, Luke Dallio, Ashlynn Challand, Joe Dallio, Addie Ebersohl, Charley Mershon and Ella Challand.



Team Tee Breakers: Assistant Golf Pro Tyler Weik with (Back Row) Jacob Fitzsimmons, Garrett Schreiber, Alex Cassens, Paige Bukoski, Grace Kultgen, Natalie Ketter, Eric Detig. (Front Row) Jared Fitzsimmons, Neive Schilling, Adam Schreiber, Amelia Dunseth, Nick Cassens. Not Pictured - Caleb Grennan & Carson Grennan

Kudos from a parent:

I'm taking a quick minute to let the Byron Forest Preserve know what a great program the PGA Junior League at PrairieView has been. Our 10 year-old son is registered in the program and our experience so far this season - especially a small event that occurred during yesterday's match - has been so outstanding, I had to let you know.

The teams competing at yesterday's match were both from PrairieView, and the ages ranged from about 7 - 12, and included both boys and girls. One of the younger girls struggled on a couple holes, handling the situation with admirable grace and stick-to-itiveness - so much so that the players from both teams, as well as the parents/spectators, started to really pull for her to put it all together. At the final hole, all that remained between this plucky [brave] girl and a team win for the point and the match was a pretty long putt. She strode right up there, set-up her shot, took a stroke and voila, she sunk it!! Those gathered broke out in spontaneous applause and cheers, excitedly chattering about it as we all headed back to the clubhouse -- illustrating how this program is able to foster the best in sportsmanship from the participants.

It is heartening to head out to our community golf course late on a Sunday afternoon and see not only a beautifully maintained course, but a parking lot packed and children and their families practicing at the driving range and the putting green. When the first practices began, we were really amazed at the number of young kids signed up for this inaugural program (I think due in part to the golf course's excellent promotion of it, starting in the early spring when there was still snow on the ground) and the enthusiasm hasn't faded throughout the season.

The organization of the PGA Junior League plays a big role. Everyone is welcomed and informed, the children learn rules and hone their skills at weekly practices, and parents volunteer to monitor match-play and help keep score -- resulting in competitions that are challenging, but at the same time supportive and fun. I've been impressed with how courteous, supportive and enthusiastic the young golfers are during the competitions, a real tribute to the tone set from the top-down. Also, I think the team element, a cornerstone to this league, also helps these kids develop skills and an appreciation for the game while enjoying themselves.

I know many other parents from this area - from Rockton to Freeport to Belvidere, for example -- have mentioned that they wish there was a similar program nearby, underscoring the demand for these kinds of activities. I'm proud that PrairieView is leading the way in bringing this outstanding (and affordable) opportunity to our community. In addition to serving our younger golfers and involving their families, these programs also pave the way for wider interest in golf at the high school level and beyond - so the immediate success of these kids and the parents today will echo down the road for some time to come.

Thanks for all you do to make this a great community and for your time in reading this letter.

-Maggie Rock, Byron

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

prairieview golf club



Turf Notes

from the Turf Care Center

Matt Henkel
Golf Course Superintendent

USGA - Is Brown Really the New Green?

The past two U.S. Open golf tournaments have featured facilities that have showcased what very well could be the look of golf courses everywhere in the not too distant future. Pinehurst #2 in 2014, and Chambers Bay this past June both featured a color that has not been the norm in American golf for a long time, the color brown. When people see brown turf on a golf course, the immediate reaction is that something is amiss. Maybe the irrigation system is not working properly, the grounds crew forgot to turn the water on, or a chemical or disease has killed the turf. Most golfers, all too often, believe that if it isn't green, something must be wrong. The USGA has been at the forefront of efforts to change that way of thinking and to prepare the golfing public for what lies ahead. While Pinehurst #2 and Chambers Bay may have taken the concept to an extreme, they were after all, hosting a field of the world's most elite golfers in pursuit of the national championship. It is safe to say that soon after the last putts rolled in, the color green surely began to make more of an appearance. However, what the USGA did accomplish was to bring attention to the underlying issue, water use is going to be the number one issue affecting the future of golf. While you won't be encountering conditioning to the likes of Chambers Bay or Pinehurst #2 at PrairieView anytime in the near future; keep in mind that the brown turf you do see, may just be by design.



ByronFest Open Champions

Congratulations to the team of (L-R) Rob Baker, Greg Welker, Neil Hahn, and Jason Wombacher on their first place finish. The team combined to shoot a 16 under par 56 in this year's inaugural event. Thank you to all the teams that competed in this year's event. Be sure to mark your calendars for ByronFest Open 2016!



Spring Ultimate Champions

Congratulations to Lynn Sanders (left) & Mike Winter on being crowned the 2015 Spring Ultimate Champions. This 27-hole event was contested on a tough windy day where Lynn & Mike were able to shoot a net score of -10 under par. Second place finishers were the father-son team of Rick & Trent Snodgrass at -7 under and 3rd place finishers Randy Heeg and Kirk Hosler at -6 under par. Hopefully, the weather will be more cooperative for the Fall Ultimate scheduled for September 13th. See page 20 for details.

commissioners

We asked our Board of Commissioners the following question: *What is your first memory of enjoying the outdoors at a Forest Preserve, Park District, or Conservation District?* Please enjoy reading their responses below.



Trevor Hogan,
President

Commissioner
since 2011

My first memories come from Sunshine Park in Byron. Although it was a city owned park, it provided us a chance to get outside and enjoy the playground equipment with our friends. [Now] as a father of young kids, I'm pretty sure my parents enjoyed the park as much as we did. Getting kids out of the house is always refreshing!



Sandy Brooks,
Vice President

Commissioner
since 1999

As a kid my family, after church on Sunday, often would grab some lunch at A & W or my mom packed a lunch and we'd drive to a state park near where we lived in southern Indiana for hiking and exploring. I have some great memories of the four of us spending hours enjoying the outdoors and then my brother and I sleeping in the backseat on the way home.



Brad Auker,
Treasurer

Commissioner
since 2013

My first experience was at White Pines State Park. When I was growing up we would go to the park, wade through the fords, hike through the monstrous white pines, cook family breakfasts, fish and play baseball. My most notorious experience was falling 18 feet out of a tree into a muddy creek bed!



Jeff Ludwig,
Secretary

Commissioner
since 2003

The fondest memory I have is working with honey bee colonies on the open prairie. I always enjoy watching the prairie flowers bloom and fade into the season, while the honey bees collect all of the nectar to become wonderful honey.



Frank Conry,
Commissioner

Commissioner
since 2015

My first memory [of the Byron Forest Preserve] was being so excited that Byron was finally going to have a golf course. I always wondered why Mt. Morris and Oregon had a course [but not Byron]. We had to travel to play golf at one of these courses or others in the surrounding area.

Way to Go!

Congratulations to Trevor Hogan, Jeff Ludwig, and Frank Conry as our newly elected board members. Mr. Hogan has served as a commissioner for 4 years and Mr. Ludwig has served for 12 years. They were both re-elected this past April. Mr. Conry is new to the board and the commissioners and staff look forward to working with him! Board meetings are held at the Jarrett Prairie Center on the third Monday of each month at 7 pm and are open to the public.

good stuff

Rescued Owlets Update



While assisting Flagg-Rochelle Park District with the cleanup of Skare Park following the EF-4 tornado on April 9th, two baby great horned owlets were found by the Byron Forest Preserve's maintenance staff in a downed oak tree. The owlets have been successfully rehabilitated and released back into the wild. As you can see in the two photos to the left, they were scared and had something to say about it!

Candy Ridlbaur of Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab and Education in Loves Park reported that the rehab center's adult female great horned owl foster "mom," Olivia, did a fantastic job of feeding and raising the two young owls as pictured below left. She also said that the two owls remained very aggressive while they were in captivity at the rehab center (which is very good for the survival of young rescued owls). They were trained to eat live prey and successfully released back to where they were found in Skare Park on July 11th.

Many gathered to watch the release of the young owls as they flew back into the wild. The photos below show one of them taking off right away while the other owl waits a few moments, taking in his surroundings before takeoff.

Please call Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab & Education to report an injured bird of prey at 815-633-9193.



Birthday Parties

Choose the Forest Preserve to organize your child's next birthday party. The cost includes a two-hour room rental. Many different themes are available. Call Mark at 815-234-8535 ext. 217 to schedule your party today!

Deluxe Party ~ \$75 / Tea Party ~ \$100

12 children (additional \$30 for more than 12 children)

(cake, ice cream, tableware, birthday banner, program)

Standard Party ~ \$45 / Tea Party ~ \$60

12 children (\$5/additional child)

(program only)

Attention...

Teachers, Scout Leaders, & Senior Groups

The Byron Forest Preserve District offers free guided tours of our preserve trails and museums. Custom education programs on a variety of topics are available for groups of all ages free of charge. The District also offers a variety of scout badge programs to area boy and girl scouts for a small fee (per person). Special evening use of the Weiskopf Observatory can also be scheduled for a small fee (per person) outside of our regular free public viewing times. Regular hours are year-round Saturday evenings and June, July & August, Tuesday and Saturday evenings. Call Superintendent of Education, Mark Herman at 815 234-8535 extension 217 for additional information.

Let Us Come To You For FREE!

We offer FREE educational programs for any group including retirement homes and nursing facilities. Using our nature staff and nature stuff, we can come to you and deliver exciting and educational programs. Call 815-234-8535 to schedule a program for your group. You can choose from the following topics: Birds of a Feather, Indian Life (with traditional dress), Animal Encounter (with live animals). Call today to book your next on-site program!

Recycling Station

The Byron Forest Preserve, in conjunction with the Ogle County Solid Waste Management Department, has established a recycling station at the Forest Preserve.

The station accepts glass, aluminum, plastic #1-#5, & #7, tin, steel, mixed paper, cardboard, and newspaper. The bin has been relocated to the Forest Preserve's Land Management Center located at 6845 German Church Road in Byron. The station is open during daylight hours seven days per week. Please recycle responsibly by leaving the area cleaner than when you arrived. **You no longer need to separate the items in each bin.**

We are also offering a USAgain recycling bin for clean, used clothing and shoes. The bin is located next to the other recycling bin mentioned above. This bin helps keep textiles out of the landfills.

The Electronics Recycling bin has been removed. Ogle County Solid Waste Management will host an electronics recycling day on the last Friday of each month at 909 West Pines Road in Oregon, from 9am-4pm. Please call or visit the Ogle County website at www.oglecounty.org for more information.

Canoe Rentals

We rent canoes! Please call **at least one week in advance to schedule** a date and time for your canoe trip. We'll haul you upstream on the Rock River and accompany you back to your vehicles at the River Park parking lot on River Road across from Heritage Farm.

Canoes are \$25 each with a 3-canoe minimum per rental. Paddles and life jackets are included. Call Mark at 815-234-8535 ext. 217 for this unique and fun outing.

volunteers

Tuesday Morning Group

Come join us for a time of visiting, refreshments, and fun indoor projects including sorting, collating, preparing preschool crafts and items for graduation, cutting, labeling, and many other projects. To volunteer, call 1-815-234-8535 x217.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: First Tuesday of each month
(September thru April)
Time: 8:30-11am
Cost: Free

Individuals and Organized Groups

The Byron Forest Preserve has service and volunteer opportunities at our golf course and prairie/woodland restorations. We can arrange times and specific interest projects for you and your group. These areas can be related to awards, badges, or just for the benefit of learning to serve your community and others. For info, call 1-815-234-8535 ext. 217.

Wednesday Woodshop Group

Come join the area men for coffee, donuts, and the opportunity to use your skills in carpentry and woodworking. New woodshop volunteers check in at the Jarrett Prairie Center before going to the Woodshop. To volunteer, call 1-815-234-8535 x217.

Where: Expo Building Woodshop
Enter at Heritage Farm
When: Wednesdays
Time: 9-11 am
Cost: Free

Building Two-Hole Mansion Bluebird Nesting Boxes

Our Wednesday morning woodshop volunteers, Chuck Fisher (pictured below) and Dan Tucker have made six new two-hole design bluebird nesting boxes to help increase our local eastern bluebird population at the Byron Forest Preserve District's nature preserves.

The new Two-Hole Mansion Bluebird Nesting Boxes were designed by Linda Violet in 2010 to help stop invasive English house sparrows from out-competing native eastern bluebirds for nesting box space. These unusual nesting boxes feature not one, but two entrance holes that allow a nesting bluebird that is being attacked by an aggressive English house sparrow to easily escape and better defend their nest.

Often a nesting bluebird will be pecked to death by an English house sparrow that blocks the entrance hole and the sparrow will take over the nesting site. Three years of monitoring eastern bluebird and English house sparrow nesting box interaction in



Virginia has shown that the use of the Two-Hole Mansion Boxes produced far more successful bluebird nests and less English sparrow nests than other traditional one-hole bluebird nesting boxes.

Keep an eye out for the new Two-Hole Mansion Boxes at the Jarrett Prairie Nature Preserve and the He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve. Design plans for the Two-Hole Mansion Bluebird Nesting Box (along with the traditional Peterson Bluebird Nestbox) can be picked up for free at the Jarrett Prairie Center front counter.



directory

General Contacts

Jarrett Prairie Center

(Headquarters)

The headquarters office is open Monday through Friday, 8am-4:30pm. The office is closed Saturday, Sunday, and select holidays.

Street Address

7993 North River Road
Byron IL 61010

Mailing Address

P O Box 1075
Byron IL 61010

Website

byronforestpreserve.com

Email

raul@byronforestpreserve.com

Main Phone Number

815-234-8535 x200

Main Fax Number

815-234-8635



Golf Club

PrairieView Golf Club

6734 German Church Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-4653 (GOLF)

Education Centers

Jarrett Prairie Center Museum

7993 North River Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
The museum hours are:
Mon., Wed., Fri.-8am-4:30pm
Tues., Thurs.-8am-8pm
Saturday-9am-4pm & Sunday-1-4pm.
Closed select holidays.

Keller Education Center

7993 North River Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Beginning in May, the Byron Forest Preserve Preschool program will be using this building for classes.

Weiskopf Observatory

7993 North River Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Viewing Conditions-815-234-8535 x216
Open for free public viewing every Saturday night from dark until three hours after dark. Also open on Tuesday nights in June, July, and August.

Heritage Farm Museum

8059 North River Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Open daily April-October. Open upon request November-March. Self-guided tours are free.

Preserves

Jarrett Prairie Preserve

7993 North River Road, Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Open from dawn to dusk for walking, jogging, and nature exploration. Trail system.

Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve

6651 North River Road, Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Open for horseback riding, walking, jogging, and nature exploration. Trail system.

Howard Colman

Hall Creek Preserve

12749 North Weldon Road, Rockford IL
815-234-8535 x200
Open for walking, jogging, and nature exploration. Trail system.

Ripplinger/Gouker/Etnyre

Preserve

1753 East Townline Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Open for walking, jogging, leashed dog walking, and nature exploration. Trail system.

He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve

North Illinois Route 2, Oregon IL 61061
815-234-8535 x200
Boater's rest area with docks, picnic shelter, sand volleyball, and restrooms. Trail system being developed. No motorized boat launch.

NOTE: Some of these addresses are new so they may not show correctly on GPS devices. Please call 815-234-8535 to confirm directions.

The Barrick Oaks Homestead Preserve is not yet open to the public but will be opening soon.



Byron FINANCIAL SERVICES
Located at Byron Bank

Byron Financial Services Implements Award Winning Risk Engineering Technology To Drive Client Success

Gene Hartzell, CFP® with Byron Financial Services, says: "by implementing Riskalyze and working closely with those we serve, together we can take the guesswork out of your financial future". We are available to meet by appointment with clients in Byron, Oregon or our Poplar Grove and Davis Junction bank branches. Markets rise and fall, history has shown that. But with Riskalyze you will immediately be able to visualize where your current portfolio is allocated, and how much risk you are taking".

Contact:

Gene Hartzell/Dan Leonard

815-234-4075

or

Chris Martin

815-732-1528



Securities offered through LPL Financial, member FINRA www.finra.org and SIPC www.sipc.org. Insurance products offered through LPL Financial or its licensed affiliates. The investment products sold through LPL Financial are not insured by Byron Bank deposits and are not FDIC insured. These products are not obligations of the Byron Bank and are not endorsed, recommended or guaranteed by Byron Bank or any government agency. The value of the investment may fluctuate, the return on the investment is not guaranteed, and loss of principal is possible.