

The Blaze

Fall / Winter 2016



from the director



Prairiemon GO!

Wow, do I wish I could invent this game and get followers to visit our sites without looking down at their cell phone in their hand! The very popular Pokemon Go game has brought many new visitors of all ages to the Byron

Forest Preserve District's preserves and facilities including the Jarrett Prairie Center, the Weiskopf Observatory, and PrairieView Golf Club. From what I hear about the game, we have a "gym" in our observatory. I guess that's a good thing in the gaming world, because with names like Jigglypuff, a gym sounds like what that character needs.

There seems to be a large number of Pokemon characters on Forest Preserve properties. Our golf course staff said they found a teenager walking on the golf course at 5 o'clock in the morning. Staff commented about how they could not believe that this teen was up so early. My response was, having a couple teenagers myself, he probably never went to bed!

I do have to commend the game's creators since many of the usually sedentary kids and adults are outside walking or riding their bikes to destinations otherwise unknown to them.

It would be nice if I could have one of the rarest and strongest Pokemon characters positioned inside of the newly renovated museum at the Jarrett Prairie Center that will tentatively be completed by the first week of October of this year. Please check inside this issue for photos and more information on the renovation.

Whether you are looking for Pokemon characters or not, I encourage everyone to come out and see what's new at the Jarrett Prairie Center.

Todd Tucker
Executive Director

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 #40

Fall/Winter 2016

Please keep this issue thru December 2016.

Editor, Design, & Layout

Michelle Gerke, CPRP

Cover Photo:

Blanding's turtle in the wetland diorama to be installed in the new Jarrett Prairie Center Museum.

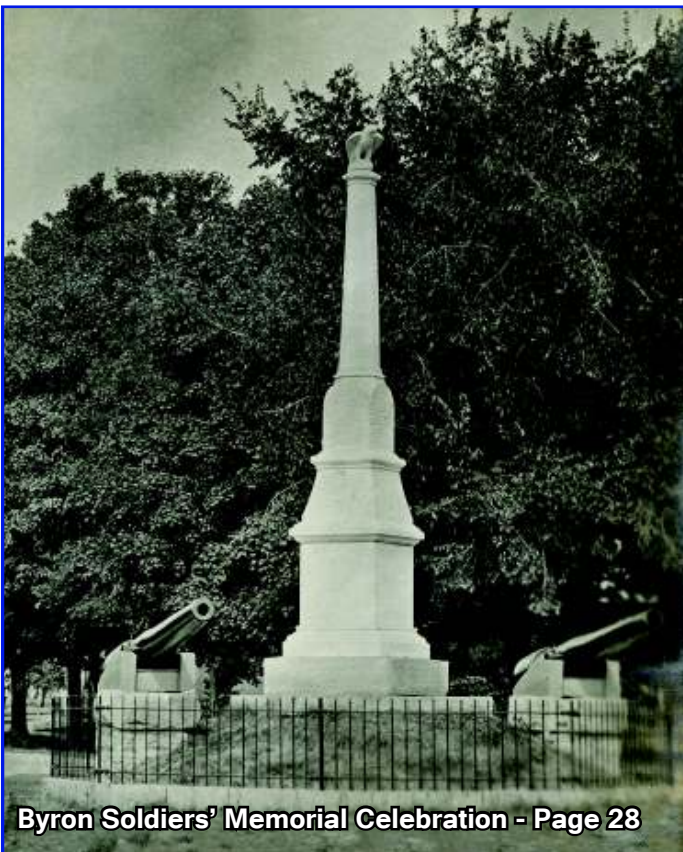
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Byron Forest Preserve District

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 23 ~ Noon - 4 pm

Free admission ~ Fee for games

Co-sponsored by the Byron Park District.

Family Friendly Hayrides ~ Weiskopf Observatory Tours ~ Bounce House

Face Painting ~ Kids Crafts ~ Costume Parade ~ Games

Tour the newly-renovated Jarrett Prairie Center Museum!

Free Customer Appreciation Lunch All Day

Byron Fire Protection District Equipment Display

Fun for kids of ALL ages!!



Live Birds of Prey!

Featuring live owls, hawks,
and falcons presented by
Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab
and Education.





25th annual holiday gift sale

Saturday, November 5, 2016

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!

There is no admission fee for the event. 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 newly-renovated 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!
\$25 All Booths!
Call Michelle at
815-234-8535
x224

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

programs



Beekeeper Jeff Ludwig with hives at the Jarrett Prairie Preserve

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. 11*, Oct. 9*
 Nov. 13, Dec. 11
 Time: 2 - 4 pm
 Cost: \$2 / person
 Ages: 3 and up
 Min./Max.: 5 / 25

No registration required.

Researchers at the University of Illinois report findings that indicate exposure to natural settings in the course of common after-school and weekend activities may be widely effective in reducing attention deficit symptoms in children.

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 Grand 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 24

Castle Rock State Park to Grand Detour

Saturday, October 8

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

Register by noon on 9/21 & 10/5



Guided Tours of the New Jarrett Prairie Center Museum

Come for a special a guided tour of our recently renovated and expanded prairie history museum with Mark Herman, Superintendent of Education. He will explain the many features of this project which has been over two years in the making. Learn the details of how the many interactive exhibits were designed and the process involved in constructing this state-of-the-art museum. The new Jarrett Prairie Center Museum is designed to serve as the jumping off point for ecotourism along the Rock River Valley and to educate students of all ages throughout northern Illinois about the history of our rare local prairie ecosystems.

Where: Jarrett Center Museum

When: Sundays
 Oct. 16 & 30

Time: 1 pm
 Cost: FREE
 Ages: 6 and up
 Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 13 & 27..

Winter Lecture Series

Back for its third season! The Byron Forest Preserve's 2017 Winter Lecture Series will be held on Sunday afternoons starting on February 12. Lecture topics will include *Dragonflies and Damselflies of the Northern Illinois Region* by Marla Garrison; *Rachel Carson--The Woman Who Launched the Environmental Movement*, a historical portrayal by Chicago actress Leslie Goddard; *Hidden Natural Treasures of Illinois* by botanist Chris Benda, and more! Look for a detailed schedule with more information later in December.

programs



White Pelican Program

White pelicans (pictured above) are one of the largest birds in North America with a wingspan diameter of over nine feet. These native pelicans winter along the southern coasts and have become more common along the Rock River in recent years as they migrate north. Learn more about these unusual birds as the Hoo Haven Wildlife Rehabilitation Center brings their rescued White Pelican, Marshmallow, to the Jarrett Prairie Center for a special pelican education program.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., November 12
Time: 8 - 10 am
Cost: FREE
Ages: All

No registration required.



Baking cornbread over the fire at Heritage Farm

Oak Savanna Tours

Join us as we celebrate oak trees and oak ecosystems during the month of "Oaktober," October is Oak Awareness Month in Illinois. Take a guided tour of our oak savannas and learn about the many plants, birds, mammals and insects that make these vanishing Illinois ecosystems their home. Learn more about how our northern Illinois woodlands are changing due to being over-run by invasive species that are killing our native oak trees.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., October 8 & 22
Time: 8 - 10 am
Cost: FREE
Ages: 6 & up
Min/Max: 5 / 25

Register by noon on October 6 & 20.

Heritage Farm Day

Stop in any time during the program and stay as long as you like! We'll have stations set up to tour the farm buildings, bake cornbread to eat with honey or maple syrup, dip candles, and hear about the voyageurs and pioneers who settled the region. Registration is required so we can be sure we have enough supplies.

Where: Heritage Farm Museum
8059 N. River Rd., Byron
When: Saturday, November 5
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 6 and up,
families welcome
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 2.

Free Kids Concert Jim Kanas - December 11 ~ 2 pm

He will be playing an assortment of instruments all related to the roots of American music. Jim has been featured on WTTW11/public television and he's been performing in the area and throughout the Midwest for decades. This is a concert for the whole family. Jim sings and plays guitar, fiddle, banjo, Native American flute, harmonica, spoons, and more!

Connect with us!



programs



Monarch Butterfly Caterpillar



Insect and Spider Survey

We'll head out with nets and guides to identify as many different insects and spiders as we can! Learn some of the characteristics that separate these invertebrates into families, and which are common in our region. We'll catch, photograph, and release what we find.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, September 17
Time: 10 am - 12 Noon
Cost: Free
Ages: 8 and up,
families welcome
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 14.

Night Hike

Learn about nocturnal animals, night vision, and camouflage, hear stories about the constellations, and celebrate being out in the dark! We're sure to hear lots of insects and see bats, and we might encounter some other animals that stay up late!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, September 30
Time: 7 - 8 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 6 and up,
families welcome
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

Register by noon on September 27.

Monarch Tea Party

We're having a tea party for the butterflies! The monarch may be the king of butterflies, but we can be princes and princesses. We'll learn about monarch butterflies and see some caterpillars, too. Some might even be in a cocoon and ready to come out! Special butterfly crafts and games will add to the fun...and did we mention tea? Of course, we're serving tea and cookies!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Saturday, September 17
Time: 12:30-2 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 3-9 (parents welcome)
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 14.

Fossil Hunt

Join us at the quarry any time; stay for a 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 the Land Management Center located at 6845 German Church Road, Byron
When: Saturday, October 1
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$2 / person
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 28.

Rock Hounds

Start your rock collection or expand it! Learn to identify the most common minerals and how they combine into rocks you'd find in your yard and landscaping. Bring a bag or bucket, and keep what you find. Magnifying glasses provided. *Want more?* Stay and grab some fossils during the Fossil Hunt right after this program.

Where: The quarry near the Land Management Center located at 6845 German Church Road, Byron

When: Saturday, October 1
Time: 9 - 10 am
Cost: Free
Ages: 6 and up,
families welcome
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 28.

programs



Sunflowers and Sunspots

Come for a hike in the fall prairie to see the wild sunflowers and then visit the observatory to see sunspots through a special filter on the telescope.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Sat., September 10
Time: 10 – 11:30 am
Cost: FREE
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 8.

Supermoon Hike

We'll go for a moonlit walk under the "Hunter's Moon" on the prairie and then take a look at the moon through the telescope. Participants will also make a moon clock to take home.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Friday, October 14
Time: 7 – 8:30 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 12.



Autumn Constellations

This will be the last chance to see the summer stars and our first look at the winter stars. Participants will make a star clock to take home.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Friday, November 18
Time: 6:30 – 8 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 16.

Meteor Watch

Bundle up! Let's brave the cold to watch the skies for Geminid Meteors. Bring your own blankets, chairs, and sleeping bags.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Friday, December 16
Time: 7:30 – 10:30 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All

No 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 Prairie Center
When: MWF, Nov. TBA
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 TBA.

Spook Me! Night Hike

We'll start by hearing some spooky stories around the campfire, then head into the woods for a "haunted" hike and scavenger hunt. We'll end back by the fire for s'mores and not-so-scary tales. *Note to parents: We're not into jumping out with chainsaws; our brand of spooky is a glow stick lighting up "animal eyes" off the trail. We want more fun than fear and for everyone to have a good time.*

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, October 28
Time: 7 – 8:30 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 8 and up, families welcome

Min./Max.: 6 / 20

Register by noon on October 25.

programs



Beginning 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

Cost: \$10 / person

When: Tuesday, September 27 and
Thursday, September 29

Ages: 12 and up

Time: 6 - 8 pm

Min./Max.: 4 / 8

Register by noon on September 22.



Sunset Hike

There's so much to see and hear at this time of day and this time of year! The insects will be trilling and the deer will be coming out for the evening. We'll take an easy walk on a paved trail behind the Jarrett Prairie Center, stopping in a few places along the way to look for rabbit holes and examine the last prairie flowers.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When: Saturday, October 8

Time: 6 - 7 pm

Cost: Free

Ages: 6 and up,
families welcome

Min./Max.: 6 / 20

Register by noon on October 5.

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 forgot to register.

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.



Plein Air Painting

This is a gorgeous time of year to paint the prairie landscape! Drop in whenever and for as long as you like, but it's recommended that you stay for at least two hours if you plan to complete a painting. You'll have your choice of oils, acrylics, or watercolors, as well as whatever level of instruction you're looking for. Paint the landscape or from a still-life of prairie plants and flowers. Beginners and advanced painters are welcome! All materials are included, as are snacks and non-alcoholic drinks. If you plan to stay the day, please bring a sack lunch.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When: Saturday, October 15

Time: 9 am - 3 pm

Cost: \$15

Ages: Adults

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 12.



homeschool programs



The Little Things

Small things can have big connections! We will catch and examine insects, arthropods, and more, and figure out how they have adapted to be important parts of forest and prairie ecology. But that's not all--after lunch, we'll travel to Hall Creek to survey macroinvertebrates that live in the water. Please wear shoes that can get wet and muddy! Older students can use dichotomous keys to identify insects down to families, and learn how invertebrate species are indicators of water quality and pollution. *Want more?* Join us for an insect and spider survey on Saturday, September 17th from 10am-12 noon (it's free!). As a bonus, we'll have some monarch butterfly caterpillars that will be getting close to pupation...this will be the last of the summer-born generation and will be the monarchs that fly to Mexico for the winter. If you have milkweed in your yard, you may take one or two caterpillars home to observe.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thurs., Sept. 15
or Fri., Sept. 16
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on September 13.

History of the Rock River

We'll meet at our He-Leo Preserve and head out in a Voyageur Canoe for a journey on the Rock River! We'll also look at the glacial deposits in the hills on the property, walk to the vernal pools that create vital wetlands in the spring, and examine the Indian burial mounds that were found on the property. It all ties into the river that has flowed through Illinois for thousands of years and is still an important part of our communities.

Where: Meet at He-Leo Preserve
6065 N IL RT 2, Oregon
When: Friday, October 7
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 45

Register by noon on October 4.

The Big Picture

Everyone seems to know most of the animals that live in the prairie and forests around them, but does anyone know why they're here? Why does Illinois have prairie, and how is it different from the Great Plains? We'll explore how the natural history of the region resulted in grasslands and savannas as well as farmland, how animals and plants need each other, and what the soil, water, and air cycles have to do with it. *Want to know more?* Our new museum is a great resource! Stay after the program for a special tour. Explore different kinds of prairie, and how soil type and moisture affect which plants grow where; play the farm game, and figure out how to maximize native plants and insects for better crops and increased conservation; and find other resources in our region to learn about our native ecosystems.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thursday, October 20
or Friday, October 21
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on October 18.

Connections

We've learned about little things and big things (and lots in between), so it's time to explore some ways that they're related. From pollinators to soil recyclers, the little things can have a big impact on the larger, and of course the larger (including humans) can affect things we can't even see. Our beekeeper will be on hand to give a closer look at our hive as it prepares for winter. *Want to know more?* How do other living things prepare for winter, and how are they adapted to live here? We'll collect seeds while we're outside, as well as insect galls and acorns that might have mother caterpillars inside. Take them home with a guide to dissect and examine.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thursday, November 17
or Friday, November 18
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 15.

Makerspace (Part Two)

We love Makerspace! We'll have lots of activities available; students are free to build, make, and manipulate with staff guidance if needed. Paint, build electronics, fly a quadcopter, and more! This is a great opportunity to try new things and get hands-on with lots of crafts and materials.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thursday, December 15
or Friday, December 16
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on December 13.

scout badges



Walking Stick



Compass Plant

Brownie: Bugs

There will be insects galore to catch and examine at this time of year! Don't be afraid to get hands-on to earn this badge. Nets and jars provided (though we'll leave the bugs in the prairie). We'll also have monarch caterpillars to examine.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., September 17
Time: 2:30 - 4 pm
Cost: \$5 / brownie
(includes patch)
Ages: Brownies
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by noon on September 14.



Brownie: Painting

Pick up a brush and make your strokes! We'll try all kinds of materials and create works of art to earn this badge. Dress to get messy!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., December 3
Time: 1 - 3:30 pm
Cost: \$5 / brownie
(includes patch)
Ages: Brownies
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by noon on November 30.

Boy Scout: Astronomy

We'll learn about stars, planets, nebulae, and more! We'll spend some time at the observatory looking through the telescope at the amazing night sky to fulfill the requirements for this badge.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Fri., December 2
Time: 6 - 9 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout
(includes patch)
Ages: Boy Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by noon on November 30.

Jr. Girl Scout: Flowers

Learn how flowers grow and why there are so many kinds. We'll take a hike through the prairie to watch pollinators in action, draw and photograph flowers, and then return to the building to try some experiments. Dress for the weather.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sat., October 8
Time: 1 - 4 pm
Cost: \$8 / scout
(includes patch and materials)
Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by noon on October 5.

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.byron-forestpreserve.com to email us or find us on Facebook. We look forward to getting suggestions from you!

preschool



Miss Crystal



Mrs. Crystal



Mrs. Tara



New Teacher Hired!

The Byron Forest Preserve District is happy to announce that Crystal Prue has been hired as the new head preschool teacher for our preschool education program. She grew up in Freeport, Illinois and now lives in Byron. She attended Northern Illinois University to pursue her passion for working with children and their families and received a Bachelor's of Science Degree in Child Development. This major prepares professionals who work with infants, toddlers and young children in early childhood education settings.

Crystal worked as the Assistant Center Director for KinderCare in Rockford for the past eight years where she prepared lesson plans, supervised children, trained staff, and oversaw center operations and parent communications. She also has been active in both coaching and judging cheer-leading and gymnastics for many years. Some of her other interests outside of work include crafting, crocheting, reading, and cooking.

"I am excited to begin this new adventure with the Byron Forest Preserve Preschool Program. I chose the field of child

development because I love to observe and provide guidance for children to learn and grow. I am grateful for this opportunity to be a part of Byron Forest Preserve Preschool Program. I am confident that we will have an exceptional experience together as we introduce your child to a lifetime love for learning."

The Byron Forest Preserve offers one of the best preschool education programs and facilities in the area. Get your children ready for kindergarten by enrolling them in our structured preschool classes. 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. 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: 6/25-M/W/F morning & afternoon
6/18-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.

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

Behind the Scenes

Community Support is the Key to a Great Museum

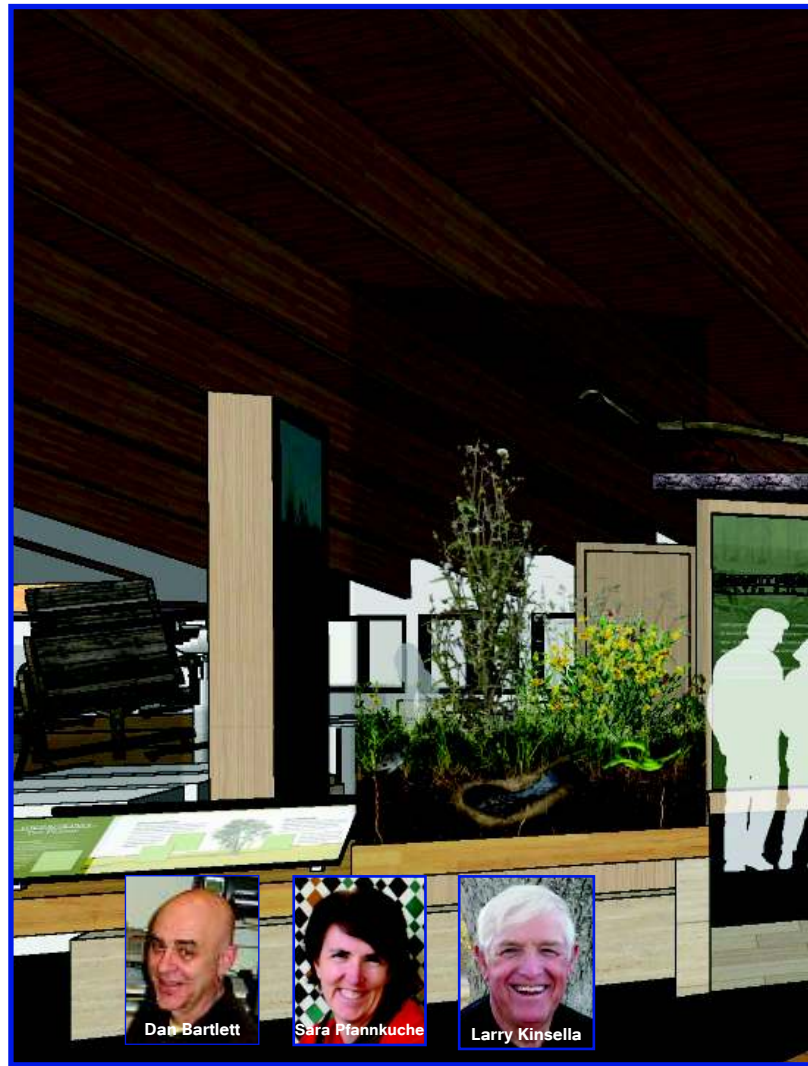
By Mark Herman, Superintendent of Education

It's the support from the community and their attention to details that turns a good project into a great project. Our new Jarrett Prairie Center Museum renovation is a prime example of this. After over two years of thoughtful research and planning, the new expanded Jarrett Prairie Center Museum will be installed starting in early September...and it will be worth the wait.

The project began back in April 2014 when Split Rock Studios of St. Paul, Minnesota and ObjectIDEA of Boston, Massachusetts were selected to design, fabricate and install a new museum that would tell the story of our unique prairie ecosystem and how people have interacted with it for thousands of years. Matt Kirchman, Director of ObjectIDEA, served as the designer for this project. He started out his career as a Museum Educator with the Jarrett Prairie Center Museum back in 1993 so he knows our prairies very well.

During the planning process, it was determined that one of the main purposes of this project was to attract more school groups to use our facilities and have them experience a new hands-on science and social studies curriculum. Elementary school teachers were brought in from the Byron, Oregon, Meridian, and Rockford School Districts to get their feedback regarding the new exhibit content and design. A new science and social studies curriculum was developed to go along with the new museum themes and interactive exhibits.

Members of our Restoration Department helped select the species of plants that would be depicted in bloom for three life-sized prairie ecosystem dioramas (dry prairie, bur oak savanna, and wetland prairie). Education Department staff provided re-



search and materials relating to specific plants, insects, birds, and mammals for the Split Rock Studios' artists to use to make the dioramas more realistic. The Forest Preserve staff also gathered, cut and dried several species of prairie grasses and plants for use in the dioramas.

For the new museum's Prairie Lifestyles exhibit, we consulted with Dan Bartlett, Curator of Exhibits and Education at the Logan Museum of Anthropology at Beloit College, and Sara Pfannkuche, a PhD archaeology student at UW-Milwaukee, to help us accurately portray a prehistoric Native American hunter who would have lived in the Rock River valley. Based on local archaeological research, they provided us information for the life-sized hunter model right down to the type of clothing, weapons and body tattoos. Emma Kravig, a Beloit College senior design major, was contracted to design and make the hunter's deerskin clothing and accessories. Larry Kinsella of Collinsville, Illinois, a nationally known expert in flintknapping, reproduced an authentic (circa 5,000 BC) spear and atlatl (spear thrower). Beloit College students and faculty also helped us identify and date a collection of locally found Native American artifacts that were donated to the museum by Howard Fox. These artifacts are part of the display.



John Barnhart, Natural Resources Manager with the Oregon Park District, acquired and donated a vintage steel moldboard from an early 1900s plow for students to be able to touch and experience as part of the exhibit. He also helped restore some early agricultural equipment that will be on display in the new museum's Prairie and the Plow exhibit.

Byron High School agriculture teacher Eric Triggstad and some of his Future Farmers of America students were consulted to give their input regarding a custom made computer farm interactive exhibit feature that allows visitors to make environmental choices on how to best manage the land on parts of a demonstration farm.

Byron Forest Preserve District Board Commissioner Trevor Hogan used his drone to film several hours of our Restoration Department's controlled prairie burns to be used in a film to teach museum visitors about the role of fire in prairie preservation in the new immersive theater. Professional photographers, Gary Gullett of Photo Safari Network in Byron and Dr. Michael Jeffords of the Illinois Natural History Survey also provided free use of their photographs of local flowers, animals, and prairie landscapes for the immersive theater.

In June and July 2016, the 20-year-old museum exhibits were removed by our Maintenance Department and over 70 taxidermy animals were loaned out on a long-term basis to a dozen natural history museums and nature centers located throughout the northern Illinois region. The wall dividing the PrairieView banquet room and the museum was removed along with old light fixtures and carpeting. Two new windows were installed overlooking the prairie and the beloved "Wolf Den" tree was given a makeover and relocated to a new room that will serve as an immersive theater for visitors.

The new museum will have over 4,000 square feet of museum space along with glass doors that open up to a new 2,600-square-foot outdoor observation deck that will overlook 400+ acres of the Jarrett Prairie Nature Preserve. The museum's state-of-the-art exhibit designs will make better use of the building's high vaulted ceilings and the new look will be striking.

The Jarrett Prairie Center Museum will be the center of prairie education for area school children, a starting point for eco-tourism in the Rock River valley for out-of-town visitors, and a source of community pride for District residents for many years to come.

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

Butterfly Milkweed

(*Asclepias tuberosa* - Asclepiadaceae)



By Lauren Marks,
Restoration Technician

The Butterfly Milkweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*) is a beautiful vibrant orange perennial plant that can be seen in bloom from June through September. Its rather small but brilliant orange clustered flowers makes this plant stand out among the other species of plants that are in bloom during this time and it is also the only milkweed in Illinois that has orange flowers. This native milkweed can be seen in our natural areas that have full sun. It can be located in upland sand prairies, hill prairies, cemetery prairies, sandy savannas, shale and sand stone glades, and open rocky woodlands. This species flourishes in acidic soils that are sandy and/or rocky. It will also adapt to other soil types, such as loam or clay that are well drained. The Butterfly Milkweed also has an excellent tolerance to hot dry weather. An occasional prescribed fire that reduces the competition from woody vegetation and taller herbaceous vegetation is beneficial in maintaining the populations of Butterfly Milkweed.

The Butterfly Milkweed is a herbaceous perennial plant that stands 1 to 2 ½ feet high. The central stem is light green to dull reddish purple in color and it is covered with spreading hairs. The alternate leaves along the central stem are narrow and are between 2 to 6 inches long and ½ to

¾ inch across with margins that are entire (toothless). The upper leaf surface is medium to dark green, while the lower surface is light to light-medium green in color. The short petioles grow up to 3 millimeters long. This is an unusual Milkweed because when the leaves are bruised, instead of having a milky textured sap, it has a watery clear textured sap.

Between June and September, the flat clusters of bright orange flowers are in full bloom. Sometimes people can also see this flower bloom a second time during the late summer to early autumn. These clusters are about 2 inches wide with up to 25 individually stalked flowers. This flower is about 3/8 inch wide and less than ¾ inch long with 5 petals. The central crown is divided into 5 erect heads. The Butterfly Milkweed usually has orange flowers, but it can also range between pale yellow to deep red as well. Even though these flowers are incredibly beautiful, they do not have a fragrance. Later in the season these flowers are replaced with a hairy pod, known as a follicle, which grows up to 6 inches long and ½ to ¾ inch across. The pods are light green at first but later turn brown. The follicles will split open along one side to release their seed, which will be

land management

dispersed by the wind. These brown flattened-oval shaped seeds are about 4 millimeters long and they contain large tufts of white hair.

The Butterfly Milkweed attracts Ruby-throated Hummingbirds and many different insects, such as bees and butterflies. One species of butterflies that benefit the most from this Milkweed is the Monarch Butterfly. Milkweed species are known to contain cardiac glycoside, which is a chemical that is poisonous to both humans and livestock. Cardiac glycoside is a useful chemical defense for Monarch Butterflies. These chemicals make the flesh of the Monarch caterpillar distasteful to most predators. Milkweeds are also the only species of plants that Monarchs lay their eggs on. Their eggs are laid on the bottom side of the leaves. The larvae will then feed and mature into a chrysalis on this plant as well.

Not only is the Butterfly Milkweed beneficial to butterflies; it is also beneficial to humans. The tough fibers from the thick woody taproot are used for making cords and ropes. The fibers are also used for weaving a coarse cloth from the dried stalks in late fall to early winter. Warning! Milkweed may be toxic when taken internally without sufficient preparation. Its tough root was chewed by Native Americans to treat pleurisy and other pulmonary ailments.



This treatment was how the Butterfly Milkweed received another common name, the Pleurisy Root. Not only is the Butterfly Milkweed used for treating pleurisy, but it is also used for other medicinal uses. These treatments include ointment for scrofulous swelling, medicine to treat diarrhea, a cure for snow blindness and other forms of blindness, relief of a sore throat, applied the chewed root for swelling and rashes on skin, to expel tapeworm, to treat colic, to act as a contraceptive, and a cure for a snakebite.

The Restoration Department staff is managing the areas where the Butterfly Milkweed is located on District properties 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 natural areas.

Butterflies of the Jarrett Prairie Preserve



Great Spangled Fritillary on Prairie Dogbane



By Russell Brunner
Superintendent of Land Management

The Monarch butterfly has received a lot of attention over the last few years and for good reason. The overall population of this once very common butterfly has declined sharply in a relatively short time. Many efforts are underway to help protect and increase the Monarch population including planting native milkweeds and pollinator plots of wildflowers. The Monarch is a migratory butterfly and this makes their protection a great challenge as they need good habitat available to them all along their long journey from their wintering grounds in Mexico to their summer homes in the Midwest and other regions of the country. The Monarch, however, is only one of many butterflies that inhabit our preserves and the Jarrett Prairie Nature Preserve in particular.

Some of the other species of butterflies are still pretty common and can be found along roadsides, around our homes, and in some open fields, such as Red Admirals, Tiger Swallowtails, and American Painted Ladies. Although, some common butterflies seem to be in decline in many

areas as suitable habitat continues to shrink or degrade. Other species are already uncommon and becoming even more rare and tend to be found only at high quality natural areas like the Jarrett Prairie Preserve and other managed, protected preserves. Many of these butterfly species are called “remnant dependent” or “remnant associated” species. This means they are found almost exclusively in natural area remnants, areas where the original native vegetation occurs, like the Jarrett Prairie. These butterflies tend to be found only in these remnants because they lay their eggs on, the larva feed on, or they nectar on a rare prairie plant found only in these remnants.

In 2015, Dr. Wayne Schennum conducted several site surveys at the Jarrett Prairie identifying all butterflies we came across but, in particular, in search of a number of these rare remnant dependent or associated species. A few were found, many were not. He has found that many of the species known to be remnant dependent are probably even

land management

rarer than we had thought. Most of the high quality prairies he visited in our area were similar to our Jarrett Prairie; they contained a few of these rare butterflies but not most. A few very nice species that we did find on our preserve include the Meadow Fritillary and the Coral Hairstreak. These are two species associated with high quality prairies but can sometimes be found in other areas.

One species we hoped to find on those surveys was the Regal Fritillary (pictured below). This remnant dependent species needs to have prairie violets for the larva to feed on. The Jarrett Prairie has these rare violets in several areas and the Regal Fritillary was known from the preserve in the early 1990s but we did not find any during our surveys. This doesn't mean they aren't still present here, as the Jarrett Prairie is a fairly large preserve and we certainly weren't able to cover all of it. We hold out hope.



By protecting land in our area and restoring land to the original native plant communities that settlers encountered in the early 1800s, we are increasing the habitat on which all of the butterflies of our region can survive and hopefully flourish. Future steps to help some of the rare prairie species could be to reintroduce them to our preserves from other preserves where they still exist. This could be the case for a rare butterfly like the Regal Fritillary that was once known from the Jarrett Prairie or the Karner Blue, a federally endangered butterfly, that needs Wild Lupine for survival, a plant we now have thousands of in our prairies.

On your next visit to the Jarrett Prairie, be on the lookout for these winged critters and be sure to let us know what you find. You may help us learn of a species we didn't know inhabited our site or you may be the one to track down the Regal Fritillary, not seen for years at the Jarrett Prairie.



Butterflies most likely to be seen at our preserves:

- Monarch
- Viceroy
- Meadow Fritillary
- Great Spangled Fritillary
- Red Admiral
- American Painted Lady
- Pearl Crescent
- Common Wood Nymph
- Cabbage White
- Clouded Sulphur
- Coral Hairstreak
- Tiger Swallowtail
- Giant Swallowtail

For more information, check out
<http://www.illinoisbutterflies.com/butterflies.htm>

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

Why Land Restoration?



By Austin Webb,
Assistant Superintendent
of Restoration

As people, we often think of ourselves first, asking how things benefit us. With plants and animals we have a tendency to wonder, "what is the point of some species?" The answer to those questions is actually quite simple. First, realize everything that benefits our natural systems is beneficial to us. We come from nature, just like every other living thing on the planet, so we are inherently dependent on it, whether we want to believe that or not. Secondly, the

point of life seems like more of a philosophical question, but the mundane truth is, the point of all life is simply to exist or to continue to live. For all life, that means doing everything you can to ensure your own survival in order to create future generations which will perpetuate your species. As a species, human beings have seen many things go extinct during our short stint on Earth. When conditions favorable to a species change too rapidly, the threat of extinction increases, which is why our interaction with the planet is so important.

With most articles, we describe the processes involved in ecological restoration or discuss some plant or animal in detail, this time, I thought maybe we'd get into the valuable unseen benefits of restoration work. By taking on landscape-scale ecological restoration projects, we're essentially repairing our natural areas to become more diverse and higher functioning quality habitats. Having diversity leads to a higher density of various plant species, which benefits all kinds of insects, birds, and other wildlife. That diversity, when compared to a parking lot, or even our lawns, does a much better job of capturing carbon. Photosynthesis is trading carbon for oxygen, and that naturally-occurring process makes our air more breathable, which is a good thing if you live on this planet.

When we burn our prairies or woodlands, there is obviously a carbon release. However, the amount of carbon captured during the following growing season in the above-

Mountain Mint (small white flower-lower right of photo), Rattlesnake Master (the other white flower), Yellow Coneflower, Bee Balm (small purple flower), Pale Purple Coneflower (the other purple flower)



Yellow Coneflower, Prairie Blazingstar (purple flower), Rattlesnake Master (white flower)



Wild Quinine (small white flower), Bee Balm (small purple flower), Pale Purple Coneflower, Yellow Coneflower-Jarrett Prairie Preserve (main site)

ground structures of the plants, along with increased root mass, more than makes up for the carbon lost, resulting in a gain of natural carbon storage. Those large root masses, much larger than any mowed lawn at up to 14 feet deep, act as a massive underground filtration system for our water. As silt, carrying nitrates and other pollutants, is swept by water towards our rivers, streams, and drinking aquifers, root mats help to slow the erosion of our soil and trap harmful nitrates and pollutants from entering our waterways. The process doesn't end there, the nitrate-filled silt becomes intermixed with dead or dying root matter and nitrogen-fixing bacteria found in native legumes breaks down harmful pollutants, which combines with dead organic matter, forming a brand-new, highly fertile soil layer. Drinkable water and fertile soils are both good things if you live on this planet.

Not everyone is going to hike or walk their dogs or cross-country ski in our natural areas. Everyone isn't going to enjoy the wildflowers or go bird-watching either. However, realize everyone needs to breathe air, eat food, and drink water at some point in order to exist. Although the immediate goal of restoration is to see the native species of our natural areas flourish, the fundamental goal is to encourage our natural areas to function at a level which is exceedingly supportive of all life, which includes us. Land restoration is a good thing if you live on this planet.



Prairie Blazingstar at Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve



Cream False Indigo and Pale Purple Coneflower at Jarrett Prairie Preserve

prairieview golf club



Congratulations to Mark Rottler (left) & David Jacobs (right) on being crowned the 2016 Spring Ultimate Champions. Mark and David have participated in the Spring and Fall Ultimate for the last 7 years with a lot of close finishes before winning this year's title. Mark & David were able to shoot a net score of -12 under par. Second place finishers were the father-son team of Brian & Jon Silvers at -10 under and 3rd place finishers were the father-son team of Greg Welker Sr. and Greg Welker Jr. at -8 under par.



Congratulations to the 25th Annual Gold Medal Classic Overall Winner Jason Wombacher shooting a two day total of 151. This was Jason's first time participating in the Gold Medal Classic. Second place was Brian Silvers (154), 3rd place was Trent Snodgrass (156) and 4th place was Andrew Canfield (156). Thanks to all this year's participants for bearing the elements and grueling it over the two days of competition.

Customer Appreciation Week

Mark your calendars for Monday, October 17th through Friday October 21st 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!



Congratulations to the team of Quinn Virgil, Logan Cann, Matthew Wennmaker & Andrew Canfield on their first place finish in the 2016 ByronFest Open. Thank you to all the teams that competed in this year's event. Be sure to mark your calendars for ByronFest Open 2017!

PrairieView Patriot Golf Day

The 4th Annual Patriot Golf Day is scheduled for Saturday, August 27th. 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 \$55 per person (\$35 pass holders and \$25 for All Inclusive pass holders) and includes golf with a cart, lunch and prizes. The deadline to register is Thursday, August 25th. Contact the golf shop at 815-234-4653 and book your foursome to pay tribute to our armed forces.

prairieview golf club

PGA Junior League

The PGA Junior League at PrairieView had a record year for participation in its second season. PrairieView had 55 juniors who are 13 and under make up 4 coed teams. Their season includes weekly practices with 6 regular season matches. A special thanks to parent coaches Mike McHale, Brent Baker, Ryan Challand, Drew Schilling and all the parent volunteers who helped out during practices and matches and play a large part in the success of this program.



The Fall Ultimate

This competitive two-person team event is scheduled for Sunday, September 11th. 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 8th. 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!

2017 Passes will go on sale in November. Purchase your pass early and save 10%. Passes will be discounted through April 15, 2017, then passes will be sold at full price. A complete listing of pass fees, VIP fees, and green fees for 2017 will be published in the next edition of the Blaze.



Matt Johnson Scholarship Fund & Junior Golf Outing

The Byron Forest Preserve along with PrairieView Golf Club will host a golf fundraiser on September 25th to benefit the Matt Johnson Scholarship Fund and junior golf programs. This event will feature a "Big Cup" four-player scramble format. The cost is \$50 per player or \$30 for pass holders and includes golf with a cart, lunch and prizes. The deadline to register is Friday, September 23rd. 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.

pro golf tips



Andy Gramer,
Head Golf Pro

Golf Tip #1 - Pre Round Warm Up

Arrive early to the course to give yourself the best opportunity to have a great round. Your game actually starts before you pull into the parking lot. Instead of hustling into the golf shop to check in and arriving at your first tee nearly out of breath, give yourself some extra time to warm up.

1. Start with a short stretching routine to help prevent injuries, especially for the lower back and hips, because the back is the area that tends to get hurt the most.
2. Hit a small bucket of balls starting with your higher lofted clubs working up to your driver. Remember you are just trying to get loose and not trying to perfect your swing. That is what practice is for.
3. Visit the putting green and roll 5 minutes' worth of putts to get a feel for the speed of the greens. It will also help to slow you down.
4. If you head into your round understanding that you won't be perfect, you'll have a much more relaxed attitude, which is what you need to play the game.

Check out the tips in action at prairieviewgolf.com under the game improvement tab.

Golf Tip #2 - Get Teed Off...Properly

The most difficult club to hit straight is the driver. Teeing your ball up properly will help to eliminate your inconsistent drive and lead to a straighter tee shot. I would recommend a three-point checklist: ball position, stance and weight.

1. Place the golf ball on the tee with half of the ball above the driver face when it is resting on the ground. The sweet spot on the driver face is the top half.
2. Position the ball forward in your stance, off the inside of your left heel if you're a right-hander.
3. Stand further from the ball to account of the extra length of the driver. Your arms should be straight at address.
4. Your feet should be a little wider than shoulder-width apart, slightly wider than how you would stand with your irons.
5. Setup with about 60 percent of your weight on your right foot, if you're right-handed.
6. Once you're set up, keep in mind that the swing you'll take with your driver is different than your iron swing. A driver swing is more of a sweeping motion, where you connect with the ball on the upswing.

PrairieView Golf Club 2016 Outstanding Business Achievement Award



Byron Forest Preserve's Executive Director Todd Tucker, PrairieView's Food & Beverage Manager Saro Costa, and Head Golf Pro Andy Gramer accepted the award from the Byron Chamber of Commerce.

pro golf tips



Tyler Weik,
Assistant Golf Pro

Golf Tip #3 - Executing a Flop Shot

A "Flop Shot" is a delicate, lofted shot executed around the green. It is a shot that is intended to rise quickly and land softly on the green. Typically used when a player is short-sided with not much room between the edge of the green and the pin.

1. Use the highest lofted club in your bag (ie 60 degree wedge).
2. Position the ball forward in your stance.
3. Open the club face and your stance. (It is important that you rotate the club in your hands to lay the face open and not rotate your hands to open the club face.)
4. Maintain a light grip pressure throughout the swing.
5. Your swing needs to be upright, long and consistent; as opposed to flat, sudden and quick.
6. Pick a spot on the green where you would like to land. Focus on that spot rather than the pin/hole.
7. Keep your club face open throughout the swing. (Your clubface should point towards the sky on your follow-through.)
8. Right-handers - swing left; Left-handers - swing right. It is important to swing across the ball rather than at your target. Swing in relation to the direction your body is aiming.
9. Complete your swing. Stopping your follow-through will decrease the amount of loft you will put on your shot.

Golf Tip #4 - The Bump and Run

A "Bump and Run" shot is a low-lofted, running shot that acts as a "long putt". This shot can be effective on windy days when lofting the ball into the air can be very inconsistent. Typically used when there is much distance between the edge of the green and the pin.

1. Use a mid-lofted club. (7-9 iron)
2. Take a narrow, open stance.
3. Choke down on the club (more towards the shaft).
4. Press your hands slightly forward towards your target. This will keep the sole (bottom) of the club flat on the ground.
5. Position your weight towards your target. This will prevent you from hitting the shot "thin".
6. Minimize your wrist movement. Your hands should lead the club head; not follow it.
7. Treat the shot like a "long putt". Essentially, the shot is exactly like a putting stroke.
8. Pick a spot on the green where you would like the ball to land. Focus on that spot rather than the pin/hole.
9. Complete the stroke. Do not hesitate or stop your swing. Your club head needs to accelerate through the shot at impact.

prairieview golf club



Turf Notes

from the Turf Care Center

Matt Henkel
Golf Course Superintendent



Bunker Renovations Complete on 15th Hole

You may have noticed during one of your rounds in early June the work that was being completed on the greenside sand bunkers on the 15th hole. If you have played PrairieView a few times before, you are likely aware of the maintenance headaches these two bunkers presented following a moderate to heavy rainfall event. If these two traps were all that staff had to be concerned with following a washout rain event, the need to renovate the bunkers would probably not be as important as it is. However, there are 51 other sand bunkers spread out across the course, including two located near the pitching green at the practice center. Currently, three staff members can expect to spend the majority of a day putting the sand back in place and making the bunkers playable again after they have become washed out from rainfall. The goal of the project was to restore the bunkers back to a condition that would be playable before, during, and after almost any amount of rainfall. The result will be a more enjoyable round of golf that will also provide significant cost savings for the golf maintenance department.

To complete the renovation and test bunkers on the 15th hole, we chose to implement the Better Billy Bunker method in reconstructing the bunkers. The key to success of any bunker renovation is being able to provide sufficient drainage and the ability to keep sand in place on the flashed slopes of the bunker. Initially, a cloth liner like the Sand Trapper, was used as a synthetic liner to allow the water to pass through while keeping the sand in place. Over the years, staples used to hold the liner down would come loose and soon be caught by the machine raking the trap. The result is a compromised liner that would soon no longer do the job it was intended to do. At PrairieView, our bunkers were constructed following the standard method at the time, which was simply sand placed on top of the native soil with no lining system in place. That method has proven to provide an average of a 7-10 year lifespan. Our bunkers are in their 25th season and many are in need of a renovation. The most recent technology is the Better Billy Bunker, which has installations that are going on 10 years old that are still performing as advertised.

The Better Billy Bunker system involves the application of a polymer spray that is applied over the top of an evenly spread 2" layer of pea gravel. This combination dries to form a solid but permeable surface that will allow water to easily pass through and exit the bunker through the subsurface drainage tiles. Twenty-four hours after application, sand

is able to be reinstalled and the project is complete. These two traps are about as maintenance free as they can get. You may notice that initially these traps will play much softer than others on the course. This is due to new sand being installed. The sand we are using is an exact match to what exists in all the other bunkers. The only difference is sediment contamination that has occurred over the past 25 years in the other bunkers. As the two renovated bunkers mature, the sand will continue to firm up and more closely match the existing bunkers throughout the course. Throughout the end of the 2016 season, we will be monitoring the success of the project and hope to continue renovating other problem bunkers in 2017 and beyond. If you have any questions about this project or anything else happening out on the course, feel free to give me a call at 815-234-8535 ext. 211 or by e-mail at matt@prairieviewgolf.com. You can also stay up to date on what we are doing by following my twitter feed @mph_turf79 for updates on ongoing projects.



commissioners

We asked our Board of Commissioners the following question: "What perception did you have of the Byron Forest Preserve District that changed after you were elected to the Board of Commissioners and learned more about the District's mission, operations, and staff?" Please enjoy reading their responses below.



Sandy Brooks,
President

Commissioner
since 1999

Perception: I believed that the Forest Preserve was a great agency that served the community well.

Truth: I found that my perception was true, thanks to an excellent, professional staff who cares greatly about their work. I have learned a lot from the staff over the years and am proud to have been able to serve our community by being on the Forest Preserve board.



Brad Auker,
Vice President

Commissioner
since 2013

Perception: Being a lifelong resident of Byron, my perception was pretty much spot on.

Truth: I was surprised by the number of employees when we are at full staff over the summer months. I'm amazed at the dedication and passion that most all of the staff have. They love their jobs, are extremely loyal and hardworking, and never hesitate to go above and beyond their duties.



Frank Conry,
Treasurer

Commissioner
since 2015

Perception: The Forest Preserve has too many employees.

Truth: I discovered that the Forest Preserve is a much larger operation than I ever thought. I'm very impressed with the department heads' knowledge in their areas of responsibility and the scope of work that's accomplished.



Trevor Hogan,
President

Commissioner
since 2011

Perception: Land and prairies bought by the forest preserve are maintenance free parcels and ready-to-use.

Truth: There is an incredible amount of time and work spent restoring land and prairies back to their natural habitats. Restoration work takes years, if not decades, to complete. [Being a Commissioner] has shown me the patience that restoration workers have. It takes an [entire] career to physically see the rewarding changes they've made and produced on a large scale.



Jeff Ludwig,
Commissioner

Commissioner
since 2003

Perception: The Forest Preserve wasn't staying true to the first part of the mission of "preservation" of land and open space

Truth: Land preservation takes priority at the Forest Preserve. Land preserving opportunities are presented and discussed very often even though many do not come to fruition.

Upcoming Election

The Byron Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners will have two openings for the April 2017 election. Commissioners Brooks' and Auker's terms will expire May 1, 2017. The openings are 4-year terms.

If you are interested in running for the Board of Commissioners, please go online to www.oglecountyclerk.org for more information on candidate petitions and filing dates.

good stuff

Byron Soldiers' Memorial 150th Anniversary Celebration Saturday, October 15, 2016 ~ 10 am - Noon

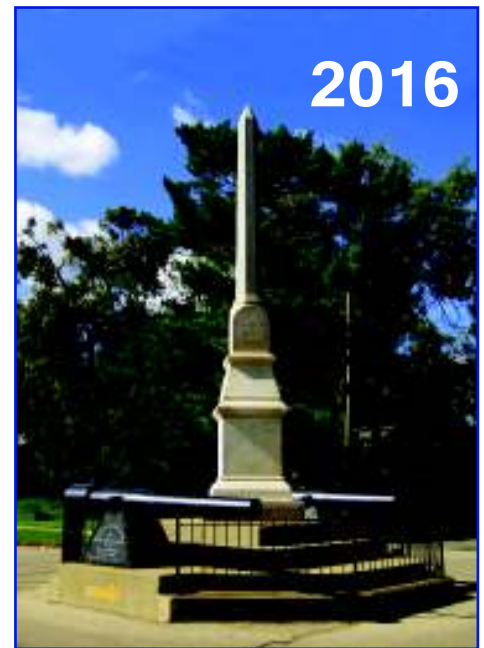
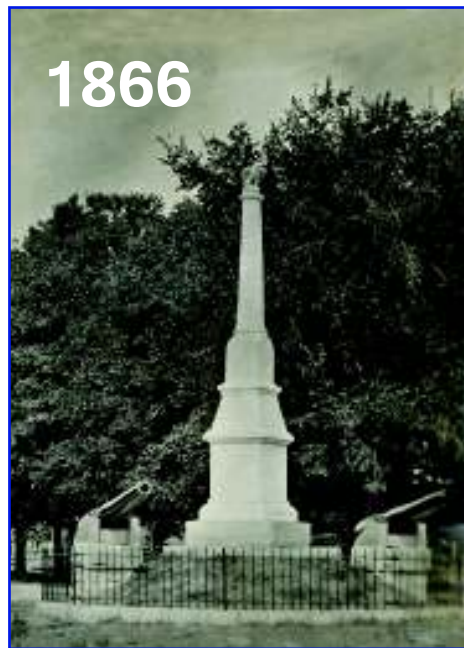
Byron citizens began erecting the Byron Soldiers' Memorial monument before the end of the Civil War in honor of their fallen soldiers with the original dedication on October 18, 1866. Despite having been struck by lightning and toppled by a tornado in 1918, at 150 years old, it is the oldest Civil War monument in the State of Illinois and one of the oldest in the country!

Through the cooperative efforts of the Byron Museum of History, Byron Chamber of Commerce, City of Byron, and the Byron Forest Preserve, a celebration is planned to honor this unique monument's 150th anniversary.

The event will begin at 10 am at Hamas Park at the corner of Diamond Street and Route 72, Byron, with the firing of a Civil War era cannon followed by a parade that will end at the Byron Soldiers' Memorial monument. A brief re-dedication ceremony will be followed by a reception at the American Legion Hall on Union Street.

Call the Byron Museum of History for more information at 815-234-5031 or visit byronmuseum.org.

Byron's Annual ChiliFest is immediately following this event at noon. Please come and enjoy!



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 ext. 217 for additional 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.

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 ext. 217 to schedule a program for your group. You can choose from a variety of topics including Birds of a Feather and 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.

Did you know?

- Over a 50-year lifetime, a tree will generate \$31,250 worth of oxygen, provide \$62,000 worth of air pollution control, recycle \$37,500 worth of water, and control \$31,250 worth of soil erosion (US Forest Service, 2011).
- Trees save US communities \$400 billion in storm water retention (American Forests, 2015).
- In the year 1867, approximately 21 million acres of Illinois was covered in prairie. Today, only 6,000 acres remain.

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, prairie/woodland restoration, and special events. 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

Volunteer Opportunities Abound!!

If you or your group are looking for ways to help in the community, then the Byron Forest Preserve may be the place for you.

We offer many year-round opportunities to help outdoors both managing our natural landscapes with our Restoration Department and at PrairieView Golf Club with golf course operations. We also need help with behind the scenes operations by helping with administrative jobs such as preparing bulk mailings and material support for our preschool programs and special events. If you are handy with tools, our Wednesday morning woodshop volunteers are always looking for extra help. Operating the telescopes at the Weiskopf Observatory is another opportunity to help out on public viewing nights all year round. Want to learn more about bluebirds and their nesting patterns? You can keep records on how many bluebird nesting boxes are being used. We need help monitoring the dozens of nesting boxes at several of our preserves that are used to increase the populations of eastern bluebirds, tree swallows and other songbirds. Help is needed with many other projects. Call Volunteer Coordinator Mark Herman at 815-234-8535 for additional details on how to get started.



Bill Walters checks a Bluebird house for activity

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

6065 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 FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT
P O BOX 1075
7993 NORTH RIVER ROAD
BYRON IL 61010

PRESORT STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
BYRON IL 61010
PERMIT NO. 4



Our Roots Run Deep

Our roots run deep in the Byron community. Volunteering, donations and sponsorships is what makes our community strong. Byron Bank is a family owned business with the third generation working at the bank. If we asked several people "what is important to you at your bank"; there would be many different answers. Some might say convenience, security, services, rates or fees.



However, everyone would say that to be "known" at their bank is important. Banking is about people who are professional, knowledgeable and can help me with my financial goals and listen to my concerns, ideas and dreams. This is what community banking is about and that is what Byron Bank strives to achieve.

Stop by one of our locations and experience for yourself what banking should feel like.



Like us on Facebook



Byron Bank

200 N Walnut, Byron
815-234-2561

11159 Hwy 76, Poplar Grove
815-323-1452

5653 N Junction Way, Davis Junction
815-645-2610

www.byronbank.com

