



The Blaze

Winter 2016 / Spring 2017

from the director

Well it's been a long time waiting from the beginning stages of planning to the completing of the new museum renovation. I am very excited about the potential educational experience that awaits everyone! We have a whole new experience to showcase in many ways, including the new Byron Bank Immersive Theater, the exhibits, the remodeled kitchen and new rentable area plus the addition of a 2600 square foot observation deck that will be the icing on the cake for people who visit the Jarrett Prairie Center. The views will be second to none for our region. The deck will be finished in late spring early summer 2017.



I would like to give a very generous Thank You to the Byron Bank for their gracious sponsorship of the new Immersive Theater. We look forward to growing the educational videos within the theater's library over the years to come. I would also like to thank the Prairie Forge Group for sponsoring the kitchen renovations and OSF Medical Group for their kind donation as well.

I would also like to make a shout out to the Byron High School Boys Golf Team for their repeat performance being Class 2A State Champs. Coach Andy Gramer, PrairieView's PGA Golf Professional, is very proud of what the team has accomplished. The entire staff at PrairieView is so proud of how the boys represented Byron High School, the City of Byron, and their home course, PrairieView Golf Club. As far as that goes, kudos to the girl's 2015-16 basketball team for their State Championship victory as well. It makes me proud and I feel very fortunate to live in such a great small community, it truly shows the opportunities that are offered for our youth.

Please visit the Jarrett Prairie Center and take a look at the new museum, it's quite impressive!



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 #41 – Winter 2016 / Spring 2017
Please refer to this issue thru April 2017.

Editor, Design, & Layout

Michelle Gerke, CPRP

Cover Photo:

**Newly Renovated Museum
at the Jarrett Prairie Center**

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Maple Syrup Festival - Page 4

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



maple syrup festival



***Relax and enjoy this returning
favorite at a new location!***

Saturday, March 18 ~ 8-11 am

**Heritage Farm Expo Building
8059 N. River Rd., Byron**

Hayrides ~ Tree Tapping ~ Sugar Bush Tours
Pancake Breakfast with 100% Pure Maple Syrup
Kids' Crafts ~ Maple Sap Evaporator Process

Free admission ~ Fee for breakfast



annual easter egg hunt

Saturday, April 15 ~ 11 am SHARP!

New this year! Breakfast with the Easter Bunny! 7-11am

Come have a hearty pancake breakfast with the Easter Bunny before the hunt! There is a small fee for breakfast. There will be lots of prizes and candy for kids in preschool through fourth grade. The event will be held at the Jarrett Prairie Center, 7993 North River Road, Byron and is co-sponsored by the Byron Lions Club and Byron Kiwanis Club.



Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

programs



Cherokee Purple Heirloom Tomato

Snow Moon Stroll

Whether we have snow at this time of year or not, we can still enjoy a winter walk through the woods. Along the way, learn why Native Americans gave special names to the moon for each month. Please dress for the weather.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Friday, February 10
Time: 7 - 8 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: 6 and up
(families welcome)

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by February 8.

Spring Tea Party

We'll have spring-themed games, crafts, and goodies to go with our tea. These events are always fun and entertaining, whether you choose to dress casually or get fancy!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, March 25
Time: 12:30 - 2 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 3 - 9

(adults are encouraged to join us!)

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by March 22.

Sunset Hike

There's so much to see and hear at this time of day and this time of year! We'll take an easy walk on a paved trail behind the Jarrett Center, stopping in a few places along the way to look for deer, rabbit holes, and examine emerging spring prairie flowers.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, April 29
Time: 6 - 7 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 6 and up
(families welcome)

Min./Max.: 6 / 20

Register by April 26.

Do You Have Any Idea?

Do you have a great idea for a program 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. We look forward to getting suggestions from you!

Heirloom Tomatoes

An Heirloom is generally considered to be a variety that has been passed down, through several generations of a family because of valued characteristics. Since Heirloom varieties have become popular in the past few years there have been liberties taken with the use of this term for commercial purposes. Join Master Gardener Phil Bratta to learn more about the 4,000 different varieties of Heirloom tomatoes, the benefits of eating Heirloom tomato products, uses for Heirloom tomato products, and sources of Heirloom seeds and transplants for these wonderful fruits. The differences between Hybrid tomatoes, GMO tomatoes, and Heirloom tomatoes will also be discussed.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sunday, March 26
Time: 2pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All

No registration required.

programs



Harris Hawk



Eastern Box Turtle



Introduction to Falconry: Hunting with Hawks

Learn about falconry, "the Sport of Kings," from Cris Manzano who has been active in the sport for 15 years. He will be bringing his Harris hawk (a hawk native to the southwestern United States) and a European goshawk. Acquiring and training birds of prey for hunting will be discussed in detail.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center

When: Saturday, February 18

Time: 1 pm

Cost: Free

Ages: All

No registration required.

SAVE THE DATE!

Illinois Association for Advancement of Archaeology Annual Meeting

On Saturday & Sunday, April 22 & 23, 2017, at the Jarrett Prairie Center Museum, join archaeologists from all over Illinois for special programs regarding Illinois archaeology. This special gathering will have programs and tours of area archaeological sites for the public. More details will be made available in early 2017.

Special Guided Tour of the New Jarrett Prairie Center Museum

Come for a special guided tour of our recently renovated and expanded prairie history museum with Superintendent of Education, Mark Herman. 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 museum interactive exhibits were designed and the process involved in constructing this state-of-the-art museum. The new Jarrett Prairie Center Museum was designed to serve as the jumping off point for eco-tourism 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 Prairie Center

When: Sunday, January 22

Times: 1 pm

Cost: Free

Ages: 6 and up

Min/Max: 5/20

Register by January 19.

Introduction to Drones

This class will cover the latest technology surrounding consumer-end drones. Learn how drones are being regulated, how recreational pilots are using them and how businesses are benefitting from this new sector in technology that is booming. We'll talk about the most popular models and have plenty of time for Q&A. Taught by Trevor Hogan, owner of Fly Flick Media Products, a Byron based business specializing in agricultural field scouting, promotional video editing, golf course flyovers, and real estate photography.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center

When: Tuesday, February 7

Time: 7 - 8 pm

Cost: Free

Ages: All

Min/Max: 4/20

Register by February 3.



programs



Cross Country Skiing

Let's hope for some good snow and warmish weather so we can start the skiing season! There will be hot chocolate waiting for us upon our return. Skis and instruction included. All ages and levels welcome.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When:
Thursdays

Jan. 12 & 26, Feb. 9 & 23, Mar. 2

Time: 9 - 11:30 am

Fridays

Jan. 13 & 17, Feb. 10 & 24, Mar. 3

Time: Noon - 3 pm

Saturdays

Jan. 21, Feb. 18, Mar. 4 & 11

Time: 1 - 4 pm

Cost: \$2/person

Ages: 6 and up

Min./Max.: 3 / 12

Register two days in advance.



Evening Ski and Scope

Evening is a beautiful time to ski--winter is at its most peaceful and human-made sounds don't interrupt. We'll head out on the trails at a great time to see deer, owls, and other wildlife. We'll have hot chocolate in the observatory when we get back and an opportunity to look through the telescope. Skis and instruction included, all ages welcome.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When:

Fridays, Jan. 13, Feb. 3 & 24

Saturdays, Jan. 21, Feb. 11, Mar. 11

Time: 6 - 9 pm

Cost: \$2/person

Ages: 6 and up

Min./Max.: 3 / 12

Register by the previous Wednesday.

Please note: If the dates and/or times (or the snow) for skiing don't work for you, we have skis you can rent at any time. If you have a group interested in a guided outing, please call and we can most likely accommodate you.

Metal Detecting Day

We normally don't allow metal detecting on forest preserve properties, but today is the exception! Our heritage farm house is a reconstruction, but some of the barns have been there since the Wilburs first built in 1862. The house attached to our Ripplinger Preserve dates back to 1865. Neither area has ever been metal detected, though we are, of course, likely to find a lot of "junk" metal as well as potentially great items! We will have a few extra metal detectors if you don't have your own--please mention if you need one when you sign up. You may keep what you find, with few exceptions (extremely high value or great historical significance). Our morning detecting will take place at the Heritage Farm Museum and across the road by the river, where soldiers from Camp Grant set up for summer training during the first World War. Rumor has it that several solid nickel (or copper?) Lincoln-shaped hood ornaments are buried on the farm property. We'll have a break for lunch from 11-12 and meet again in the afternoon at our Ripplinger property to dig around the house and barns. You may attend the morning or afternoon session, or both. Call for directions or if you have any questions.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center

When: Saturday, April 22

Time: 9-11am and/or 12-2pm

Cost: Free

Ages: 8 and up
(families welcome)

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by April 19.

programs



Beginning Fly Fishing

Learn the hows and whys of fly fishing. Bob Piros, a 50-year plus student of the art and science of fly fishing will teach a two-day class at the Jarrett Prairie Center. 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 the 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. When you register, we will need to know if you are right or left-handed. You will also need to view some basic fly fishing instructional videos prior to class.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Tues. & Thurs, May 9 & 11
Time: 6 - 8 pm
Cost: \$10 / person
Ages: 12 & up
Min./Max.: 4 / 8

Register by May 4.



Introduction to Fly Tying

Join fly fishing expert, Bob Piros, and members of the Rock River Fly Casters for an introduction to the art of tying flies for fly fishing. They will be doing demonstrations and talking about the basics of what type of equipment and supplies you will need to get started on this great fishing related hobby during the cold winter months.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Thursday, February 23
Time: 7 - 8 pm
Cost: Free
Ages: 12 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 15

Register by February 20.



Hunter Education

This 3-day class covers ethics, firearms, and archery.

Where: Jarrett Center
When: MWF, April Dates TBD
Time: MW-6-9pm, F-6-10pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: All

(Must be able to pass written test)

Min./Max.: 5 / 60

Please call 815.234.8535 x200 for dates and to register. Or, check online at www.byronforestpreserve.com.

Beekeeping Workshops

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

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
When: Sundays
Jan. 8, Feb. 12,
Mar. 12, Apr. 9

Time: 2 - 4 pm
Cost: \$2 / person
Ages: 3 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 25

No registration required.

homeschool



To the Stars

Take a tour of our solar system, explore seasonal constellations, and map the night sky. We'll hear myths about the Big Bear (Ursa Major) and Hercules and learn how things get named. Even though it will be day time, we can use our telescope with the solar filter and observe the sun! We'll be inside most of the time, but bring warm clothes for the dome upstairs, which is unheated, and so that we can step outside to set up a sun dial.

Want more? Our observatory is open for free, guided viewing every Saturday night from 6-9 pm. Saturn and Jupiter will be visible, and of course our winter constellations. Ask to see the Orion Nebula and the star clusters in Sagittarius!

Where: Weiskopf Observatory
When: Thursday, January 19 or
Friday, January 20
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by January 17.

Paper and Canvas

Today, we'll explore all kinds of artistic mediums including watercolor, acrylic, pastels and oil pastels, pencil...you name it, we've got it! Of course, we'll learn some good ways both to train our eyes and convey ideas. Everyone can get better at art; it just takes practice (plus knowing some tips and tricks, like with any subject). If we have snow, we'll also create art with it, so dress for the weather. If you are serious about art or just want to have fun and explore, this day will be a blast!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thursday, February 16 or
Friday, February 17
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by February 14.

Mix It Up

Chemistry is everywhere! Spring is near and plants are sending sap into buds to become leaves (and sometimes we collect the sap and eat it! Yes, it's maple syrup time). We'll create some concoctions that will help us understand chemistry in nature, plus we'll create some concoctions that we can eat! If we have gotten a lot of sap, this will certainly include cooking with maple syrup. Dress for the weather--we'll walk into the woods to visit our sugar maple tree, look at buds, and see what's getting ready for spring (and how).

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thurs., Mar. 23 or Fri., Mar. 24
Time: 10 am - 2 pm
Cost: \$5 / person
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by March 21.

Roll the Dice

We all love playing games, but who invents them? We'll explore the history of games from the Greeks onward and talk about what makes a game fun and long-lived, as well as the importance of rules, fair play, balance, and challenge. You can guess what this is leading toward: we're going to make our own games! We'll have blank cards, dice, boards, spinners, and everything you could need to make your own board, dice, or card game. More into outdoor games? You can use our huge collection of balls, nets, balance beams, and cones to come up with your own way to play. The last hour will be spent "beta testing" our games to see how they work!

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

Register by April 18.

scout badges



Jr. Girl Scout Badge - Drawing

We'll play with all kinds of materials, draw from life, and learn about concepts like perspective to earn this badge. All materials and patch included, plus take home a portfolio case to protect your artwork. You may also leave a drawing of your choice behind to be displayed through February in our new museum.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, January 28
Time: 1 - 4 pm
Cost: \$8 / scout (inc. patch)
Ages: Jr. Girl Scouts
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

Register by January 25.



Snow Day for Girl Scouts

We will be busy with plenty of outdoor and indoor activities with a snow theme. You'll have a chance to cross country ski, sled down our big hill, look for animal tracks, build snow sculptures, capture snowflakes, and lots more! Hot cocoa, snacks, and all equipment provided. Dress for the weather!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Monday, March 6
(No school in Byron)
Time: 12 Noon - 4 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout
Ages: All Scouts Welcome
Min./Max.: 5 / 18

Register by March 1.



Boy Scout Badge - Snow Sports

We'll discuss winter preparedness and first aid, as well as safety and wilderness use ethics. Then we'll head out to earn the Cross Country Skiing option for this badge workshop, return to warm up inside with hot cocoa. All requirements for the merit badge will be met; bring the proper clothing and be prepared to be out on the trails for about two hours.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Saturday, February 4
Time: 12 Noon - 5 pm
Cost: \$5 / scout
Ages: Boy Scouts
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by February 1.

Winter Sports!! Come Play!!

**Cross Country Skiing ~ Sledding ~ Snowboarding ~ Snowshoeing
Ski/Snowshoe Rental-\$5/person/hour ~ Hot Chocolate For Sale Too!!
Jarrett Prairie Center, 7993 N. River Rd., Byron**

let's walk



Saturday Morning Hikes

This winter and spring we're offering several fantastic opportunities to join us for a themed walk and get to know our beautiful preserves. We'll observe winter birds, discover spring wildflowers, collect fossils and geodes, and much more! Whatever your outdoor interest, whether you're a beginner or expert, we have something for you! These are subjects that are also hobbies and interests of our staff, so we will be happy to talk and answer questions as we walk. Please dress for the weather.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center
(unless otherwise noted)

When: See below

Time: 9 - 10:30 am

Cost: FREE

Ages: 8 and up

Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by the Wednesday before.

February 11th:

Hidden Animal Signs in Winter

Have you ever wondered what animal makes those tracks you see in the snow or dirt, or if it's been walking or running? Or what critter has been chewing on your bushes? Become a nature sleuth by learning the difference between a bush chewed on by a deer, rabbit, or vole. Also what is a snow flea, or an insect gall, or what signs do animals leave behind to give us clues to their presence? You, too, can become a tracker.

February 18th:

Winter Trees and Shrubs

You can tell the trees apart in the winter without leaves? Yes, you can. There's bark, buds, twigs, and growth shape clues! Why do some trees grow in a spiral? Can trees freeze? Open up a whole new world.

February 25th:

Winter Birds

Though we feed the birds that stick around for the winter, having a healthy woods and prairie draws a lot of winter residents. We'll find the places where they roost and feed and talk about the importance of diverse habitats. Bring binoculars or borrow a pair, and please dress for the weather.

March 4th:

Geocaching

Geocaching is a fun, high-tech scavenger hunt that's played with a smartphone or GPS unit. More than two million geocache containers are hidden all over the world! Some containers only hold a log book to mark your find while others contain small trade items. We'll walk out to find a few of the geocaches at our main site. All equipment included; you may download the free geocache app to enhance your experience.

March 11th:

Skunk Cabbage at Hall Creek

We'll head out to our Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve to find the first flower of the spring. This plant uses respiration to melt through the frozen ground, and is pollinated by early insects. We're sure to find at least a few and enjoy the last of winter while we're out. *Meet at Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve, 12749 North Weldon Road.* The walk this Saturday will be over potentially rough and muddy/wet terrain. Please wear sturdy shoes.

March 25th:

Spring Ephemerals

For a brief time each spring, early wildflowers bloom in the sheltering woodlands. We'll find and identify several, and discuss how these plants can bloom and seed before the weather warms.

April 1st:

Geology of the Jarrett Prairie Preserve

Did you know that this area of Illinois used to be covered by a warm, shallow sea? That there are no dinosaur fossils in Illinois, and that tall sheets of ice stood here during the ice age? We'll take a walk along the Four Hills Trail behind the Jarrett Center to find the signs, including fossilized coral and glacial erratics.

let's walk



April 8th:

Gullies, Creeks, and Geodes at Howard Colman Hall Creek

This area has been shaped by erosion for the past 100,000 years--but that's a short amount of time, geologically speaking (the Grand Canyon probably started around 80 million years ago, for example). What does that mean for our topography, water flow, and seasonal pools? We'll explore that and more at Howard Colman Hall Creek, where we'll hike back to a deep erosional gully, look for fossils and geodes, and cross Hall Creek on our way back. *Meet at Howard Holman Hall Creek Preserve, 12749 North Weldon Road.* The walk this Saturday will be over potentially rough and muddy/wet terrain.

April 22nd:

Returning Migrant Birds

At this time of year, the woods will be full of birds returning from their winter locations to find nesting sites in the north. Some are just passing through and will only be in our area for a short time. It's a great opportunity to see rare and interesting species, as well as our own more common ones.



April 29th:

Rock River Archaeology at He-Leo Two Rivers Wetland Preserve

Beloit College has confirmed the presence of Indian Mounds on this property. We'll walk to them and discuss their potential age and contents (though we don't know for sure) and then continue along the river. We might even find artifacts that have washed out of the eroding bank (anything outstanding will be sent into the Illinois State Museum). *Meet at He-Leo Two Rivers Wetland Preserve.*

Owl Walk

We know where the owls are! Well...we think we know where they will be. Owls are one of the only birds that nest in the dead of winter, which makes this a great time of year to go out and listen for them! Join us as we head out to find evidence of screech, barred, and great horned owls on the preserve. Please dress for the weather!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Friday, January 27
Time: 6 - 7:30 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: 6 and up
(families welcome)
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

Register by January 25.



Hike--After The Burn

The month of March is when we usually conduct our prescribed burning of our prairie and oak forest undergrowth if the weather conditions are just right. Come out to the Jarrett Prairie Center for an after the burn hike to go off trail to explore our natural areas to find what has been left behind after all of the plants have been burned off. We will find animal bones and dens as well as some glacial rocks and other interesting items that are not usually seen under the thick vegetation. Wear shoes and pants that you won't mind getting sooty.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center
When: Thursday, March 30
Time: 4 pm
Cost: FREE
Ages: 6 and up
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

Register by March 27.

winter lecture series



February 12th



February 19th



February 26th



March 12th

“Cure your cabin fever”

Take some time during the cold winter months to get out and join us for this captivating and informative lecture series. Discover the wonders of nature and some of the history of our region. These presentations are designed for life long learners from older elementary students to senior adults. Lectures will be held on Sunday afternoons starting at 2 pm at the Jarrett Prairie Center. The programs are free. Please call 815-234-8535 x200 for more information.

February 12 - Rachel Carson: The Woman Who Launched the Environmental Movement

In her ground-breaking book *Silent Spring* (1962), Rachel Carson warned the world about the environmental impact of chemical pesticides. In this living-history program, Carson shares stories about her love of nature, her passion for writing, her three books about ocean life, and her work to awaken the world to the beauty and fragility of nature. Carson was not only an early environmental activist but also a gifted writer whose words revealed the power of language to change how we view our place in the world. This program will be a historical portrayal of Carson by Chicago actress Leslie Goddard.

February 19 - Natural History of Odonata: Dragonflies and Damselflies

The origin of the insect order Odonata dates back over 300 million years to a time when dragonflies with two and a half foot wingspans ruled the air. Today these successful aquatic insects represent a diverse group of animals with a complex life cycle. The 100 plus species known from Illinois can be excellent wetland indicators and are truly fascinating to observe. Presented by Marla Garrison, biology faculty member at McHenry College in Crystal Lake. She is also a member of the executive council of the Dragonfly Society of the Americas and author of *Damselflies of Chicagoland*, a local field guide.

February 26 - Hidden Natural Treasures of Illinois

Illinois is a large state, north and south from Wisconsin to Kentucky and east to west from Indiana to Iowa and Missouri with fourteen natural divisions and a vast array of natural community types. Join Christopher Benda botanist, photographer, author and president of the Illinois Native Plant Society for this program about the rare natural areas of the Prairie State. He will take us on a journey sharing stunning photographs and stories about the many little known natural areas of Illinois and the unique plants and animals found in each.

March 5 - Prairies: Now and Then

Learn more about the history of prairies in North America and how glaciers, climate changes, herds of grazing mammals and fire brought about these unique ecosystems. Man has been interacting with prairies for thousands of years, but the success of modern agriculture has made local prairies some of the most endangered ecosystems in the world. Photographs of prairie remnants along with recent restoration efforts of natural areas in Ogle County by a variety of both public and private groups will be featured. This program will be presented by Austin Webb, Assistant Superintendent of Restoration with the Byron Forest Preserve District.

March 12 - Sterling, Illinois' Pipestone and Its Use by Prehistoric Native Americans

Investigations by both amateur and professional archaeologists working near Sterling, Illinois document the presence of an important pipestone source, a special type of mineral that was used for prehistoric Native American tobacco pipes and other ceremonial objects. Used throughout Midwest prehistory, Sterling pipestone appears to have been particularly important during the Middle Woodland period (ca 50 BC-AD 400). Pipes and other objects made from Sterling pipestone are now recognized at sites throughout the Midwest, and provide intriguing evidence of prehistoric relationships linking regional communities. Presented by Midwest archaeologist Shannon Fie, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Beloit College.

preschool



Mrs. Crystal



Miss Crystal



Mrs. Tara

Give your kids a jumpstart for kindergarten by enrolling them in our structured preschool classes. We offer Tuesday/Thursday sessions for 3-year-olds and younger 4-year-olds. Children must be at least three years old to attend. These preschool sessions prepare the children for the transition to a school setting by being away from home two days per week for a two and a half hour session. They have fun making friends, and following a schedule and curriculum.

The Monday/Wednesday/Friday sessions are for older 4-year-olds and younger 5-year-olds. Children must be at least four years old to attend the three-day class. In these sessions, children learn letter recognition and sounds, handwriting, and pre-mathematic concepts. 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.

First days of school will be August 28th and 29th.

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
6/18-TU/TH
Cost: \$110/month-M/W/F
\$90/month-TU/TH

Registration is ongoing throughout the year.

Fall 2017 Registration Schedule

February 6-10 - Currently enrolled students & siblings

February 13-17 - Byron residents

February 21 - Open registration

Fees: M/W/F-\$110 & Tu/Th-\$90

Payment at registration is applied to the last month of preschool.

Meet the teachers night will be August 24th!

4:30-6 pm for Tuesday/Thursday classes

6-7:30 pm for Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes

Free Kids Concert! Jason Kollum Juggling Show January 28, 2017



It's the Super Hit, Total-Participation, Interactive Program where kids of ALL ages become the "Rock-Star" jugglers and balancers just like Pro Juggler Jason Kollum! The show will WOW all ages of kids and families, as balls, clubs, rings, spinning balls, giant beanbag chairs, and much more will all be sent flying through the air, all leading up to the big balancing and juggling finale that will have everybody on the edge of their seats! Then, it's the total-participation, hands-on workshop where kids of all ages get to actually try out skills they got to see in the show! They become the rock star circus artists! They can do it! There will be lots of comedy, audience participation, action, and excitement! Kids learn how cool it is to use their imagination, do their best, and try something brand new!



The show begins at 2:30 pm at the Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 North River Road, Byron.



Sponsored by
Exelon

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

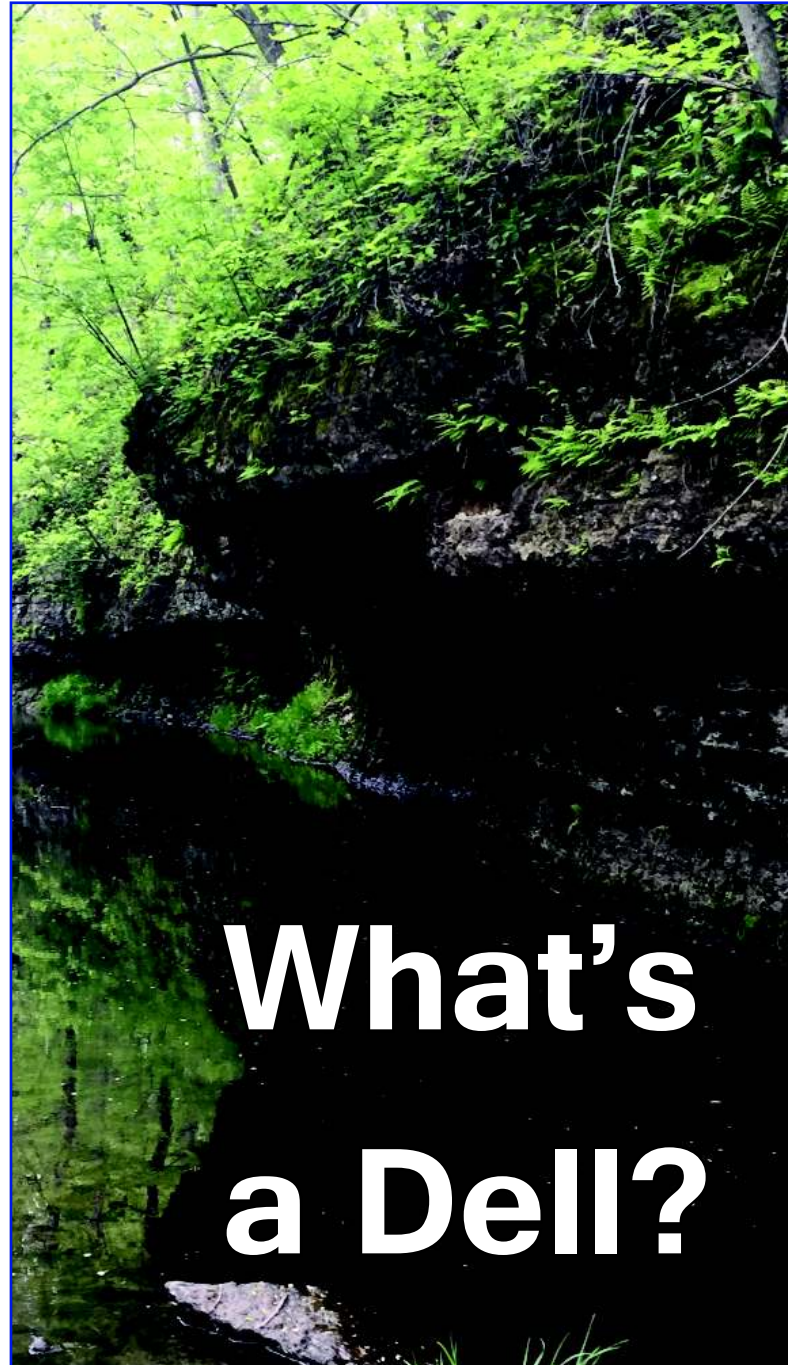
land management



By Austin Webb,
Assistant Superintendent of Land Management

In this case, we are not referencing the popular recording artist, but instead the very general term given to the secluded valleys that occur amongst the rolling terrain of the Rock River Valley and elsewhere. Many of us in the Midwest are familiar with Wisconsin Dells and the iconic images of the sheer rock faces and bluffs. Our Colman Preserve is home to some dells which have small cliff faces. Aside from the tranquility of a stream coursing below a steep bluff, these rock faces provide niche habitat for many plants and animals due to their rare occurrence and uniqueness. Things such as directionality, aspect, contour, and height determine sun exposure, and the type of rock dictates the ability of root growth depending on its permeability and acidity. Historically, a small meadow called a hill prairie was found atop the bluffs, while just below, a starkly different micro-habitat hung on to the rock walls.

At Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve, the signature limestone cliff tucked into the dells is a steep and shaded curtain of ferns and spring ephemerals, looming below the sunny opening of an oak savanna. Odd wetland plants, such as skunk cabbage, line the base of the bluff where they are not cut off by the meandering Hall Creek as it continues to scour a trench into the base of the rock wall. Above in the open sunlight, sedges and shooting stars proliferate amongst the litter of oak leaves. Lurking behind the curtain of plant life on the cliff face are slugs and snails, only able to exist here because of the damp and cool conditions provided by overhanging plants trapping humid air which becomes condensed and refrigerated in the crevices of the rock. Many different spiders build webs along the cliff, hoping to intercept the various insects that are swept along the creek by tiny air currents. Bats also wedge themselves into the rock crevices, waiting for nightfall to arrive so they may emerge and gorge themselves with mosquitoes. In the daylight, a Pagoda dogwood, dangling atop the peak of the bluff, provides nectar to a Spring Azure Butterfly hovering effortlessly in the updraft of the cliff. These are just some of the amazing occurrences that take place at our Colman bluff (at right), and hopefully someday you can see it for yourself.



land management



By Lauren Marks,
Restoration Technician

Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*-Araceae)



Spring is right around the corner and it will be here before we know it. Once we have spotted this amazing wetland plant known as Skunk Cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*), the restoration staff believes that spring will soon be here. This perennial plant can be seen at the Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve in late winter to early spring. Basal leaves can be spotted as early as February or March, making this plant one of the first native wildflowers to bloom in the spring ultimately creating a rosette, a circular arrangement of leaves. Skunk Cabbage is a unique plant because it is one of the few plants that have the ability to regulate its own temperature, thermogenesis. This means that it has the ability to create its own heat to melt away snow and ice in order for it to push itself above the frozen ground to begin its growing cycle.

Skunk Cabbage prefers to grow in areas that has partial sun to light shade. It also desires to have wet soils, but can tolerate shallow standing water if it is temporary. This cabbage dislikes excessive heat from strong sunlight. Skunk Cabbage can be seen in wet woodlands, swamps, edges of a low and marshy or frequently flooded area of land, and near springs.

The leaves of Skunk Cabbage (below) are the most important characteristic for our restoration crew in determining the type of plant. The leaves are 24 inches long and 12 inches across that are medium to dark green in color and are hairless. They reach their maximum size early in the summer and disappear by the end of summer. The foliage contains crystals of calcium oxalate, which makes them toxic to most vertebrate herbivores. Not only do the leaves help to distinguish the plant, but its flower heads do too.



The flower heads, or inflorescence, of the Skunk Cabbage consists of a spadix which is a spike of minute flowers closely arranged around a fleshy axis. The spadix is typically enclosed in a curved spathe which is a large sheathing bract, or modified leaf, enclosing the flower cluster of certain plants. This flower head is located close to the ground. The spathe is about 4 to 6 inches long and 2 to 3 inches across. The outer surface of a spathe has stripes, streaks, or spots of purple and green. The spathe is also smooth and hairless. On one side of the spathe, it is open to reveal the spadix. The spadix is approximately 2 inches long and it varies from pale yellow to dark purple in color. It is also covered with small perfect flowers that are 1/4 inches and consists of four sepals, one of the individual leaves of the flower.

The compound fruit of the Skunk Cabbage grows to be 4 inches tall and 3 inches across. The fruit is initially green and dark purple, but as the season goes on, it becomes dark brown or black as it disintegrates back into the ground. The fruits from the Skunk Cabbage are mature by late summer to early fall. Each fruit contains a single seed, which is about 1/3 inch across or a little larger. The seeds generally fall to the ground near the mother plant and will germinate there if they are not eaten or carried away by an animal.

Although the flowers of the Skunk Cabbage are beautiful in their own way, they have a terrible smell. They emit an odor similar to the decaying flesh of dead animals that flies can detect. Interestingly the flies are beneficial to the plant. Flesh flies, carrion flies, and various gnats pollinate Skunk Cabbage. Slugs and snails occasionally feed on the leaves of the cabbage as well. Spiders often live within the spathes to feed on insects that visit the flowers. Even though the leaves of the plant are toxic to certain animals, it is beneficial to others.

The restoration staff is managing the areas where the Skunk Cabbage is located within the Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve to ensure its survival as well as the survival of other native plant species. As some researchers believe Skunk Cabbage can live for thousands of years, therefore they need to be protected. We are managing the areas by controlling and removing invasive species, such as Honeysuckle and Wild Parsnip, to give our native species a chance to thrive and reproduce within our natural areas.

Black Locust:

An invasive tree in our natural areas



By Russell Brunner, Superintendent of Land Management

The District's restoration staff is always busy fighting back against invasive species throughout our preserves. The majority of these invasive plants are herbaceous species (what we call "weeds") and include Garlic Mustard, Sweet Clover, Wild Parsnip, Red Clover, and Bird's Foot Trefoil. Two other major invasives are Bush Honeysuckle and European Buckthorn, both aggressive woody shrubs that primarily grow in the understory of our woodlands and along trail edges next to woodlands. There are also a couple of tree species that are invasive in this area, one is the Siberian Elm that was planted on purpose throughout the United States and can be problematic in disturbed woodlands and old fields. The Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve had big populations of Siberian Elm in the south end of the preserve, but we have removed almost all of these trees and have this species under control. A larger management problem for our natural areas is another tree species, the Black Locust.

Black Locust, *Robinia pseudoacacia*, is a tree native to the southeastern United States, it was primarily found in Appalachia before being introduced to other regions of the Midwest including northern Illinois primarily as a landscape tree. The tree is a legume, producing showy and very fragrant white pea like flowers for about a two week period in the late spring. The flowers are

primarily pollinated by bumblebees, but also visited by honeybees, butterflies, moths, and the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. The white flowers arranged in racemes, or flower cluster, are replaced by 2-4" dark brown seedpods in the summer. Aside from the flowers and seed pods, another good identifying characteristic of this species are the stout thorns (about ½" long) arranged in pairs along the branches and twigs. Like many other legumes, the leaves are compound pinnate meaning one leaf is made of many smaller oblong leaflets, 7 - 19 leaflets for this species.

Why is Black Locust a problem? Black Locust loves sunshine and has an amazing ability to spread via root runners to produce large clonal colonies, especially as a result of cutting a mature tree. If you cut one down, you may soon find you now have 20 or more. If you remove 100s of these trees, you could end up with 1000s of small sprouts! This species can become a big problem in prairies, oak savannas, and open oak woodlands where the dense clonal stands will suffocate all the native vegetation underneath them. This species is a management problem at three of the District's preserves. The trees have spread from fence lines and roadsides out into prairie plantings very aggressively over the last 10 years.



Pictured left: A good identifying characteristic of this species are the stout thorns (about ½" long) arranged in pairs along the branches and twigs. Above: The showy pea like flowers of the Black Locust in the spring. Right: Black Locust clonal resprouts following the cutting of mature Black Locust trees. Quite a mess!



The good news is that Black Locust can be controlled. However, it does require herbicide. Cutting alone actually makes the problem much worse because of the root sprouting as mentioned earlier. Prescribed burning is effective at top killing smaller locust trees in our prairies and woodlands but they will resprout from the roots. The best management strategy is to use backpack sprayers and apply a basal bark herbicide to the bottoms of the stems during the growing season and let the tree die before removing it. This is a labor intensive method but is effective in problem areas where 100s or 1000s of locust trees are present.

The District's worst infestation of this thorny tree is at the Ripplinger-Gouker Prairie Preserve. Black Locusts were growing all through the oak savanna area, old fields, and along Route 2 when the District acquired the property. They later spread out into our new prairie plantings. With thorough and repeated basal bark treatments and foliar spraying of resprouts following prescribed burnings, we have reduced the Black Locust by about 90%. We should be able to further reduce this invasive with one more round of control next year. It is difficult to ever fully eliminate an invasive species from our preserves as they are present off site along highways and on adjacent private properties. This is the case

with Black Locust; it has become very common up and down the Rock River corridor and in old fields throughout our area.

As with all of the invasive species in northern Illinois, without an aggressive long-term approach from all landowners to control Black Locust on each of our properties we can expect it will always be around and is here to stay. As a Forest Preserve District committed to restoring and managing our public lands for the diversity of native plants, we will continue to do our best to control Black Locust and other invasive weeds on all of the District's preserves. Our preserves are home to many plants and animals that are likely found nowhere else within the Byron area and fighting invasive species is key to protecting our rare native plant communities and all of the wildlife that depend on them.

Any questions about invasive species or management at our preserves? Interested in helping control brush, pulling weeds, or in collecting native seed? Feel free to contact me at Russell@byronforestpreserve.com or 815.234.8535 ext 219.

prairieview golf club

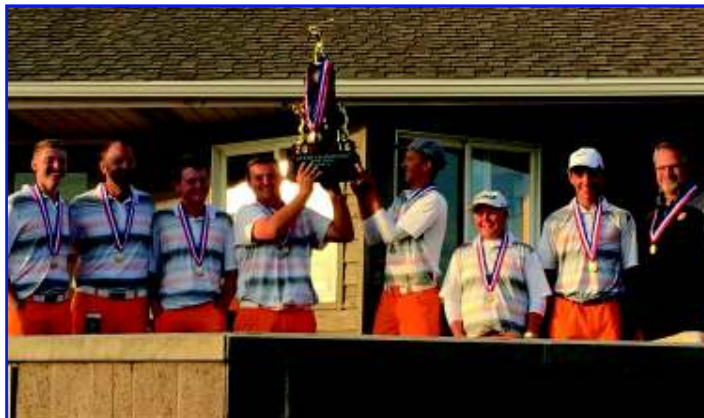
Byron Tiger Golf

PrairieView is the home course of the Byron High School Boys' and Girls' golf teams. These teams utilize the first-class practice facilities and golf course at PrairieView to take their golf games to the next level. If you were to look at the names of the players on these teams, you will notice that these players have participated in numerous junior programs offered by the staff at PrairieView. From junior developmental lessons to competitive leagues and individual instruction, the facilities and staff at PrairieView provide the back drop for years of individual and team success.

After capping off the 2015 season with a Class 1A Boys State Championship, the Tigers came into the 2016 season with lofty expectations. Second year head coach, Andy Gramer (Head Professional at PrairieView GC) knew his team had a great chance to do something very special. This year, the boys did not disappoint, exceeding their expectations far and wide by winning, yet another, Class 1A State Title in 2016, besting Aurora Christian Academy (2nd overall) by an 8-stroke margin at Prairie Vista GC in Bloomington, IL. The first back-to-back golfing titles in the school's history and third state golf title overall (2007, 2015 & 2016). Not only did the team capture it's second title in as many seasons, senior Trent Snodgrass finished his high school career in tremendous fashion, winning Individual Medalist honors at this year's state tournament by firing a 2-over par, 146 (70-76).

The boys began their postseason run with a Regional title at the Oregon Regional hosted by Silver Ridge GC. They then proceeded to finish second at the Elgin (Westminster Christian) Sectional at Randall Oaks GC to qualify for the 2016 State Tournament. The boys finished their Big Northern regular season undefeated with a record of 10-0 while also capturing another Big Northern Conference Tournament title at Timber Pointe GC in Poplar Grove, IL. The team also captured invitational victories at the Lena-Winslow Invite, the Sally Wessels Invitational, and the Byron Tiger Shootout. They also finished second overall at the Brad Fowler Invitational at Aldeen GC in Rockford.

The Lady Tigers had a great season this fall as well. The team finished the season with a 9-2 overall record, and a 7-1 conference record. They finished as Co-Champions of the Big Northern Conference after winning the BNC Tournament, sharing the title with Rockford Lutheran.



L-R: Drew Morgan, Coach Andy Gramer, Will Beesing, Connor Hurd, Trent Snodgrass, Jon Silvers, and Tony Eddy.

The Lady Tigers also managed to win the Princeton Regional Championship and had five girls earn All-Conference honors (Kaley Mumma, Abby Richardson, Regan Larson, Kathleen Rock, and Mary Rock). They finished fourth in the Rock Falls Sectional tournament, missing the state tournament by three strokes. Abby Richardson qualified as an individual for the state tournament and ended up finishing 52nd overall.

Congratulations to both teams on all of their success in this 2016 IHSA golf season!!

Spring Fling

Save the date for our Annual Spring Fling. After a long, harsh winter, what better way to kick the rust off your game than with a casual and relaxed 4-person scramble event? That is exactly what the inaugural Spring Fling is intended to do! Get your three best golfing friends together and join us on Saturday, April 29, 2017, for this laid back event. The event will begin with an 9 am shotgun start. The cost is \$35 per person (\$20 for pass holders and \$10 for All Inclusive pass holders) and includes golf w/cart, lunch and prizes. The deadline to register for this event will be Thursday, April 27th. Registration forms can be found at www.prairieviewgolf.com. Call 815-234-4653 for more information.

prairieview golf club



Turf Notes

from the Turf Care Center

Matt Henkel
Golf Course Supt.

A very busy 2016 golf season necessitated pushing the bunker reduction project on hole #2 back towards the end of the season. As you may recall from our summer 2016 update, we discussed the removal of the first two fairway sand bunkers on hole #2. These two hazards served an important role in PrairieView's early years. With a few small trees present shortly after opening, the bunkers presented a challenge for golfers taking the ball down the left side of the fairway and they helped to catch wayward balls from interfering with play coming up hole #3. Fast forward 25 years and PrairieView now has large oaks and evergreens protecting that left side. In essence, a shot coming to rest in either bunker leaves the golfer faced with a double hazard. One being the bunker itself and the other being the large trees now between them and the fairway. In a day and age where golf courses should be doing more things to become more player friendly, this project fits perfectly. Not only will it possibly help shave a stroke or two off of the average golfer's score, there will also be valuable cost savings realized in the maintenance department. These two bunkers are two of the hardest to maintain on the entire course. Any substantial amount of rain will end up washing out the bunkers and leaving them unplayable. Reconstruction of the bunkers and the surrounding terrain could help alleviate the problem, but when taking into account the benefits of their removal for the overall customer experience, the decision became quite easy to make.

The scale of the project required bringing in approximately 450 cubic yards of soil to properly contour and shape the project area to allow for surface drainage to occur successfully. This meant a significant amount of traffic coming onto and off of the golf course as we hauled in the soil excavated from the district's river bottom dig site located just north and east of the golf course. Special thanks go to the City of Byron and Director of Public Works, Jeff Ludwig, for the use of an additional dump truck that expedited the project and limited interference to golfers playing the course. The strong intergovernmental ties that exist in the Byron community have been of great benefit to everyone and this project is another great example of how the sharing of resources between

entities can lead to successful results. Golf Maintenance staff members Terry Minard and Frank Noffsinger were able to move all the soil in a little over a day's worth of work. At this time, the initial grading of the area has been completed. If conditions remain favorable, we hope to finish grade the project area and have sod laid prior to winter.

If you would like more information about the projects taking place at PrairieView Golf Club, please give Golf Course Superintendent Matt Henkel a call at 815-234-8535 ext. 211.

Golf Lessons

At PrairieView GC, our professional staff is available to help you take your golf game to the next level, or, for beginners, get you started on the right foot. We offer a variety of lesson rates and packages to help you tweak your game throughout the season. From full swing to short game, our professional staff can help you in every aspect of your game. At PrairieView GC, we have access to V1 video software so that each student can see their swing on video, frame by frame, to assist in your game improvement. If you are interested in booking a lesson or purchasing a lesson package, please contact the PrairieView Pro Shop today at 815-234-4653 and PGA Head Professional, Andy Gramer or Assistant Golf Professional, Tyler Weik, will be happy to assist you.

Lesson Rates: Adult (1 Hour) - \$50
Adult (1/2 Hour) - \$25
Junior - 18 & under (1 Hour) - \$40
Junior - 18 & under (1/2 Hour) - \$20

What a deal! Buy any 4 lessons (1 hour or ½ hour) and get the 5th lesson FREE!

Connect with us!



Register online at www.byronforestpreserve.com

prairieview golf club

2016 Season Golf Passes

Now on sale! Buy before April 15 and save \$\$!

Single Pass	Before 4/16/17	After 4/16/17
Adult	\$600	\$660
College Student	\$325	\$360
Senior (60+)	\$500	\$550
Jr. (18 & under)	\$225	\$250

Couple Pass

Adult	\$1000	\$1100
Senior (60+)	\$800	\$900

All Inclusive Pass

(includes golf, cart, & driving range)

Adult	\$1100	\$1160
Couple	\$1750	\$1850
Senior	\$1000	\$1050
Senior Couple	\$1550	\$1650

Family Pass \$1250**

(Includes mom, dad, & all kids under 18)

**add cart pass-\$750

Range Pass \$125

(unlimited use of driving range for 2017 season)

Corporate Membership

Any business / corporation with at least five affiliated employees, board members, or stakeholders seeking a season pass, may purchase the pass collectively through their employer at a \$100 discount off the pass rate, regardless of when the program was initiated. Please contact andy@prairieviewgolf.com for more details.

Corporate Foursome Pass - \$3000

This pass allows a business / corporation one foursome every day of the week (excluding some tournament & group outing days) throughout the entire golf season, complete with carts and range balls. One member of the foursome must be a designated employee, while the others may be guests, vendors, customers, etc.

Clubhouse Winter Hours 12/23

Monday-Friday - 9am-4pm

Saturday - 10am-2pm

2017 Golf Fees*

18 Holes	Weekday / Weekend
Walk Rate	\$18 / \$28
w/Cart	\$29 / \$40

9 holes	
Walk Rate	\$9 / \$20
w/Cart	\$23 / \$30

Miscellaneous Fees

Pull Carts -	\$3
Range Balls -	\$5 (40 balls/basket)
Rental Clubs -	\$8 (9 holes)
	\$16 (18 holes)

*Special Weekday or Weekend rates will be offered throughout the year.

Customer

Appreciation Week

Come on out for FREE GOLF

April 17-21, 2017

Carts are only \$16 per person. Tee times go fast so call early! 815-234-4653

Great Gift Ideas!!

What better gift to give your loved one this holiday season than a gift card to the PrairieView Pro Shop? Our shop is stocked with the latest and greatest Titleist and Srixon equipment. We also carry a wide variety in bags, balls, men's and women's clothing/outerwear and accessories.

Gift cards can also be used towards golf lessons with our PGA Head Professional, Andy Gramer or Assistant Golf Professional, Tyler Weik, as well as, any food and beverage in the Prairie Grass Pub or concessions area. Stop in today to purchase your gift card for any desired amount!

PrairieView's VIP program is also an outstanding gift idea to be purchased instead of or in addition to a season pass. Vouchers can be purchased for \$400. With a VIP Voucher, golfers

receive discounts off regular priced green, cart, and range fees.

Vouchers can also be used on food and beverages. Other rules and provisions apply. Discount percentages shown below: Pro Shop Merchandise 10% - Food & Beverage 10% - Green Fee Discount 15% - Golf Cart 25% - Range Balls 50%. If you have any questions regarding VIP Vouchers, please call the PrairieView pro shop at 815- 234-4653.. Vouchers can be purchased for \$400. With a VIP Voucher, golfers receive discounts off regular priced green, cart, and range fees. Vouchers can also be used on food and beverages. Other rules and provisions apply. Discount percentages: Food & Beverage 10%; Green Fee Discount 15%; Golf Cart 25%; Range Balls 50%.

If you have any questions regarding VIP Vouchers, please call the PrairieView pro shop at 815- 234-4653.

prairieview golf club

Winter Junior Golf Day

Attention parents and junior golfers. You are invited to attend the 3rd Annual Winter Junior Golf Day at PrairieView Golf Club. This event is a huge success thanks to you and the great turnout year after year. We have once again planned a day full of activities for all to enjoy. Join us for a complimentary hot dog lunch available from 12 Noon – 1 pm followed by games, activities and instruction.

We will also have a drawing for a 2017 junior golf pass, a 2017 unlimited range pass, and private lessons with our PGA Head Professional Andy Gramer and Assistant Golf Professional, Tyler Weik. Parents are encouraged to at-

tend as we will have an informative meeting to discuss the 2017 Junior Player Developmental Programs and the very successful PGA Junior League. The PGA Junior League is aimed at presenting golf in a fun and social environment for boys and girls, ages 13 and under. No prior playing experience is needed, teams are co-ed and every participant gets a chance to play. This is a great way to get your child involved in the game!

Date:	February 19, 2017
Location:	Turf Care Center
Time:	12 Noon – 2 pm
Age:	13 and younger
Cost:	Free

Please RSVP by Wednesday, February 15th, call 815-234-GOLF or email andy@prairieviewgolf.com.



- Food
- Prizes
- Games
- Activities
- Instruction
- Movie



good stuff



District Receives Green Practices Award

On October 21, 2016, the Byron Forest Preserve District received a Best Green Practices Award from the Illinois Association of Park Districts at the Best of the Best Awards Gala at the Wheeling Park District's Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling, Illinois.

The Illinois Association of Park Districts Best Green Practices Award is presented to a park district, forest preserve, conservation district, or special recreation agency that has taken the initiative to incorporate and encourage environmentally-friendly business practices and policies. Winning organizations have demonstrated practices that could include recycling and solid waste reduction; education and advocacy; conscientious purchasing, green buildings; and energy and materials conservation.

"We are proud to be recognized by the IAPD for our organization's green practices," said Todd Tucker, Byron Forest Preserve District Executive Director. "We are dedicated to preserving the open spaces and natural resources in our region and this recognition is a great honor and a sentiment to our commitment."

The District has implemented several initiatives over the last five years that have helped with energy efficiency. At PrairieView

Golf Club, hand watering practices and the reduction of "mowed space" has led to 25 percent less water usage. In addition, PrairieView changed-over its fleet of 80 golf carts from gas to all electric carts which has reduced noise, air pollution and the need for fossil fuel.

The Keller Education Center, which houses the District's 85-student preschool education program, is a 2013 Platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building with a wind turbine, solar panels, a geothermal well and many other energy conservation features. Students at the preschool use iPads and a Smartboard to reduce paper consumption in the classroom.

The Jarrett Prairie Center which houses the District's administrative offices and newly renovated Natural History Museum has had roof-top solar panels for more than ten years which have saved thousands of tax payer dollars in reduced energy costs.

Above photo, l-r: Peter Murphy, President/CEO of IAPD; Trevor Hogan, Byron Forest Preserve Board Commissioner; Todd Tucker, Byron Forest Preserve Executive Director; and Ken Collin, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of IAPD.



By Mark Herman, Superintendent of Education

After two and a half years of planning and construction, the new Jarrett Prairie Center Museum opened to the public on October 20, 2016. The expanded museum space boasts expanded views of the Jarrett Prairie Nature Preserve and more than 4,000 square feet of new exhibits and hands-on learning opportunities for visitors of all ages. Just a few of the exciting new exhibits include an immersive theater that teels visitors about local prairie ecology, several large natural history dioramas and historical artifacts, fossil exhibits, prairie restoration information, a prairie agriculture exhibit that lets visitors design their own farm. Also included in the renovation will be a new 2,600 square foot wrap around outdoor observation deck to enhance the already unique rental space. The deck will be completed in the spring of 2017.

The museum's new immersive theater which features the beloved children's "wolf den" bur oak tree from the old museum is sponsored by Byron Bank. The new state-of-the-art renovated kitchen is sponsored by the Prairie Forge Group of St. Charles, Illinois who served as architects for the entire renovation project.

OSF Medical Group is also a generous sponsor of the newly renovated museum.

The new museum will serve as a resource for learning and a center for eco-tourism promoting an understanding about the importance of our natural lands in the Rock River region. Admission to the Jarrett Prairie Center Museum is free and open to the public seven days a week. For more information about museum education programs or to set up a guided tour, contact Mark at 815-234-8535 ext. 217. If you are interested in reserving the museum for a private rental, contact Raul at 815-234-8535 ext. 200.



good stuff



Prescribed Fire Season

Forest Preserve land management staff will be conducting prescribed burns at several of our preserves in the spring of 2017. Most burns are conducted between March 1 and April 15 but some small units may be burned in the late spring to help control invasive weed infestations. Prescribed fire is an essential and efficient management practice for the health of our native ecosystems, including prairies, savannas, and woodlands. Fire helps return nutrients to the soil, helps control undesirable exotic weeds and shrubs, increases blooming and seed production among our native plants, and stimulates the growth of our native prairie and woodland plant species. District staff manage the burns to minimize smoke on highways and neighboring properties.

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.

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 located at the Land Management Center, 6845 German Church Road in Byron.

The station accepts glass, aluminum, plastic #1-#5, & #7, tin, steel, mixed paper, cardboard, and newspaper. 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.

To recycle electronics, Ogle County Solid Waste Management hosts 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.

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 topics of Birds of a Feather, Animal Encounter (with live animals), and more! Call Mark at 815-234-8535 x217 today to book your next on-site program!

Visit us online at:

www.byronforestpreserve.com

www.byronpreschool.com

www.prairieviewgolf.com

or find us on Facebook!



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
The Forest Preserve's Preschool program utilizes this building for classes.

Weiskopf Observatory

7993 North River Road
Byron IL 61010
815-234-8535 x200
Open for free public viewing every Saturday night from dark until three hours after dark.

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
815-234-8535 x200
Open from dawn to dusk for walking, jogging, and nature exploration. Trail system available.

Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve

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

Howard Colman

Hall Creek Preserve

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

Ripplinger/Gouker/Etnyre Preserve

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

He-Leo Two Rivers Preserve

6065 North Illinois Route 2, Oregon IL
815-234-8535 x200
Boater's rest area with docks, picnic shelter, sand volleyball, and restrooms. Trail system being developed. No motorized board 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
7993 North River Road
P O Box 1075
Byron IL 61010

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