

# The Blaze

Winter 2012 / Spring 2013



Byron Forest Presetive District



# from the director



The District has had another successful year with a long, hot and dry summer. Hopefully, the next year will supply our region with some much needed moisture to replenish our very dry soil. The golf course maintenance staff worked very hard to keep the golf course turf from burning out and they applied approximately 330,000 to 500,000 gallons of water daily to ensure that did not happen. Many of those areas had to be hand watered due to slope, wind, and dry conditions. PrairieView had a profitable year because of the hard work and dedication of the maintenance and clubhouse staff.

As many know, the District has made the fiscally responsible decision to close Stone Quarry Recreation Park. Our employees and commissioners were sad to see the facility struggle to support itself. We have been making attempts to relocate some of the amenities as deemed reasonable to be moved. A few people have asked about the playground. Simply, it is not cost effective to move. Moving the playground within the area would entail installing a new concrete pad, new posts, new surfacing and hiring a licensed professional to set it up due to playground and liability regulations. This would result in a cost well over \$100,000 for a playground that may have less than a ten-year lifespan. A brand new playground could be purchased for close to that amount of money. So, the District decided to donate the playground to a non-for-profit organization, Kids Around the World, that assumes the liability and uses volunteer staff and private donations to fund the move to an area that does not require strict liability or playground regulations but will be used by children.

The Restoration Department staff has also been working hard restoring and opening new preserve sites for everyone's enjoyment. The Ripplinger/Gouker Preserve and Wilson Pass Preserve opened this year. The Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve will hopefully open late next year. The Colman Preserve is a 280-acre site that is simply beautiful. Large oak savannas, winding streams, limestone bluffs, and, soon to be, large prairie areas make this site truly a gem for this region.

As always, please feel free to stop in my office or call me if you have any questions regarding the District in any way. I always welcome the opportunity to discuss the District's mission and goals with you.

Todd Tucker  
Executive Director

## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

### President

Dave Breen

### Vice President

Sandy Brooks

### Treasurer

Trevor Hogan

### Secretary

Denny Cravatta

### Commissioner

Jeff Ludwig

## 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 #29

Winter 2012/Spring 2013

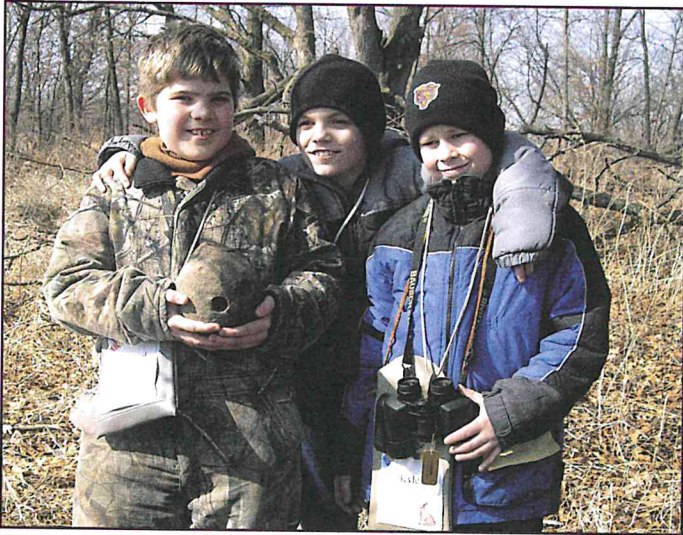
## Editor, Design, & Layout

Michelle Gerke, CPRP

Cover Photo: Heritage Farm Winter  
by Gary Gullet Photography



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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**





# maple syrup festival

**Relax and enjoy this returning favorite!**

**Hayrides ~ Tree Tapping ~ Pancake Breakfast ~ Kids Crafts**

**Tour the Sugar Bush ~ See the Maple Sap Evaporator Process**

Co-Sponsored by Byron Kiwanis. Advance ticket sales at the Jarrett Prairie Center.

**Jarrett Prairie Center ~ Saturday, March 16 ~ 7-11 am**

**Free admission. Fee for breakfast.**

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# annual easter egg hunt

**Saturday, March 30 ~ 11 am SHARP!**

Hop on over to our Annual Easter Egg Hunt! There will be lots of prizes and candy for kids in preschool through fourth grade. This event is co-sponsored by the Byron Lions Club. The exact location of the event was still to be determined at press time but will be held on Byron Forest Preserve District property. Please watch your local newspaper and the District's digital sign for more information.



# going greener

Dear Readers,

This publication, The Blaze, is going "greener" in 2014! Even though the current issues are printed on 100% recycled paper, we feel that it could be greener and more cost effective by going almost paperless.

This year, the District stepped a little further into the virtual world with implementing online program registration. We will take another step into the virtual world in 2014 when The Blaze becomes a virtual newsletter. You will be able to read The Blaze by going to our website, [www.byronforestpreserve.com](http://www.byronforestpreserve.com).

Beginning with the December issue of 2013, you will receive a postcard notifying you that The Blaze is available for you online at [www.byronforestpreserve.com](http://www.byronforestpreserve.com).

If the paperless option will not work for you, please let us know and we will continue mailing a copy to you. Also, if you know of someone who may want to receive a postcard notification or a hard copy issue of The Blaze, please let us know.

Thank you,

Michelle Gerke, Editor



# programs



## Snake and Turtle Show

We'll show you two of our live animals and let you touch them and feed them! Check out how they move around too!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Tuesdays  
Jan. 8, Feb. 12, Mar. 12  
Time: 6:30-7:30 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on 1/7, 2/11, & 3/11.**

## 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. 13, Feb. 10,  
Mar. 10, Apr. 14  
Time: 2 - 4 pm  
Cost: \$2 / person  
Ages: 3 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 25

**No registration required.**



## Art Workshop for Kids

Ever want to make a really big mess but never really had a good place to do so? Let us handle the supplies and the clean up! You just wear clothes you can get dirty and bring your imagination. We'll explore lots of different kinds of art and you'll have some masterpieces to take home!

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Sunday, January 27  
Time: Noon - 4 pm  
Cost: \$10 / person  
Ages: 6 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

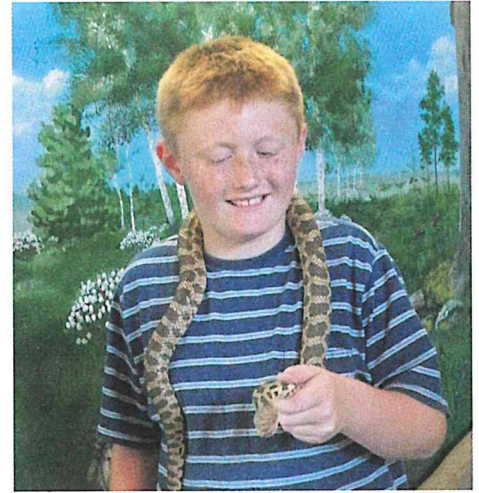
**Register by noon on January 23.**

## Watercolor Workshop

We will supply all of the materials and plenty of paper so you can learn how to make watercolors work for you. From landscapes to portraits, there are tips and tricks that can make a big difference whether you're just starting out or have been painting for awhile.

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Sunday, February 10  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$10 / person or  
\$15 / parent & child  
Ages: 10 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on February 6.**



## Hunter Education

This 3-day class covers ethics, firearms, and archery. Attendance at all classes is required. Certification requires passing a written test.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Mon., Wed., Fri. - February 11, 13, 15  
Mon., Wed., Fri. - April 8, 10, 12  
Time: 6 - 9 pm (M, W)  
6 - 10 pm (Fri.)  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 80

**Register by noon on 2/8 & 4/5.**

## Boater Safety

This 8-hour course covers the basics of boating safety, equipment and requirements, navigation, motorboat registration and titling, emergency measures, and the Illinois boating laws. Students must be able to pass a written test.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Tuesday, March 19 &  
Thursday, March 21  
Time: 5 - 9 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 25

**Register by noon on March 18.**



# outdoor programs



## Ice Fishing

Bring your equipment for this unique outing at the golf course. Call ahead to confirm ice conditions.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Sundays,  
January 13 & 20  
Time: 1 - 3 pm  
Cost: \$5 / person  
Ages: 5 and under - FREE  
Min./Max.: 5 / 50

**Register by noon on January 11 & 18.**

## Winter Explorations

Join us as we see what's up at our newest preserve. We'll meet at the Jarrett Center then head to the Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Fridays  
Jan. 25, Feb. 22,  
& Mar. 29  
Time: 8:30-10:30 am  
Cost: Free  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

**Register by noon on 1/24, 2/21, & 3/28.**



## Cross Country Skiing

Let's hope for an early snowfall so we can head out on the trails! Equipment and instruction are provided. Warm up with some hot chocolate when we're done.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Fridays, Dec. 14, Jan. 18, Feb. 22  
Saturdays, Jan. 19 & 26  
Sundays, Dec. 16, Feb. 24, Mar. 3  
Time: December - Noon-4pm  
Jan.-Mar. - 1-5pm  
Cost: \$5/person & \$10/family  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 18

**Register by noon 3 days before class.**

## Snow Day!

You have the day off school, so spend it doing lots of fun things! We'll sled and play in the snow, make crafts, play games, and keep busy! Morning and afternoon snack is included. Please bring a lunch and dress for the weather.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Friday, February 1  
Time: 8:30 am - 4:30 pm  
Cost: \$10 / person  
Ages: 6 & up  
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

**Register by noon on January 30.**

## Winter Hike

Join us for a walk through the woods and prairie to find some of those special things we can only see in winter. We'll look for tracks, owl pellets, scat, animal nests, and more. Don't miss this opportunity to see the trails at one of the prettiest times of the year. Dress for the weather.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturday, January 26  
Time: 9 - 11 am  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: 6 and up  
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

**Register by noon on January 23.**

## Winter Night Hike

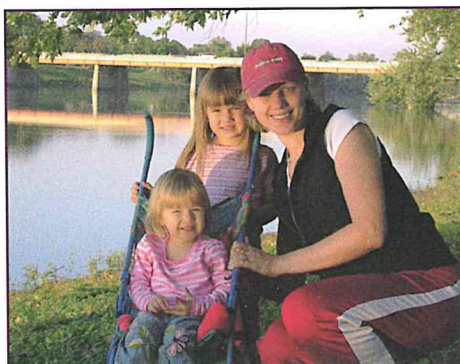
Join us for a hike on the trails just as it starts to get dark and let your eyes adjust to the uniqueness of the woods in winter. We'll make owl calls and seek evidence of other animals, talk about night vision, and take part in activities that will teach you about what goes on during a winter night.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Friday, February 15  
Time: 6 - 8 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: 6 and up  
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

**Register by noon on February 13.**



# outdoor programs



## Canoeing the Rock

Enjoy a gentle paddle down the scenic Rock River. All equipment provided on this fun outing. Pre-registration required.

Where: Meet at Heritage Farm  
When: Saturday, April 13  
Time: 1 - 4 pm  
Cost: \$20 / canoe  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 3 canoes / 12 canoes

**Register by noon on April 12.**

## Barn Party

Take a tour of our Heritage Farm Museum, play games that pioneer children would have played, make a candle, and help prepare a pan of cornbread over a fire that we'll eat with butter and honey. Parents are welcome to attend at no cost.

Where: Heritage Farm  
When: Saturday, April 20  
Time: Noon - 3 pm  
Cost: \$5/person  
Ages: 6 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on April 17.**

## Spring Hight Hike

It will still be a little light as we start this hike. We'll head out to the woods where we'll see lots of owls and foxes. Sometimes we may hear coyotes, too. Then, we'll find a place to stand quietly and listen to the night come alive around us. We might hear owls or turkeys and lots of other animals. On the hike back, we'll play games and take part in activities that teach about animals in the spring.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Friday, April 19  
Time: 7 - 9 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: 6 and up  
Min./Max.: 6 / 20

**Register by noon on April 16.**

## Earth Day Hike

Celebrate the Earth's amazing spring plants and animals as they awake from their winter slumber.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Sunday, April 21  
Time: 10 am  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on April 19.**

## 3-D Archery Shoot

Bring your bows and arrows AND your good aim to shoot at these lifelike targets. Bows and arrows can also be provided if you need them.

Where: Meet at Byron/Oregon Sportsman's Club  
When: Wednesdays  
March 27 & April 24  
Time: 5 - 7 pm  
Cost: \$5 / person  
Ages: 10 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on 3/26 & 4/23.**

## Fossil Hunt

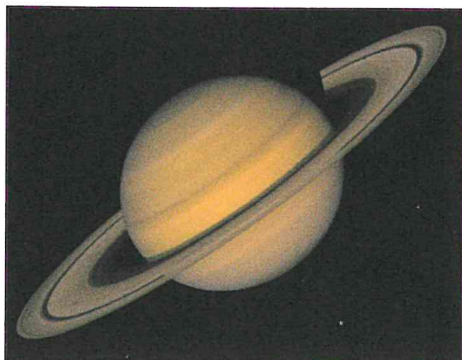
Join us at the quarry any time; stay for a half hour or for the whole event! We'll be digging through the piles before there's any spring growth to see what we can find. Bring a hammer to crack open the bigger ones and a bucket to cart away your finds. Fossil identification and guides provided.

Where: The Quarry  
6845 German Church Road, Byron  
When: Saturday, April 13  
Time: 10 am - 2 pm  
Cost: \$2 / person  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on April 10.**



# outdoor programs



## The Universe

Let's look at all of the stuff out there and find out how far away it is.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory  
When: Saturday, January 12  
Time: 4:30 - 5:30 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: Families  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on January 11.**

## Ski and Scope

The moon will be full for these evening skiing trips. When we get back, we'll have hot chocolate in our Weiskopf Observatory, and the telescope will be ready to look at the moon and stars.

Skis and instruction are included.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Friday, January 25  
Saturday, February 23  
Time: 5 - 9 pm  
Cost: \$5/person &  
\$10/family

Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 18

**Register by noon on 1/23 & 2/20.**

## Owl Prowl / Telescope

Learn about these feathered predators on a hike through the woods and hear stories about them in the observatory.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory  
When: Friday, February 22  
Time: 7 - 9 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: Families  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on February 21.**

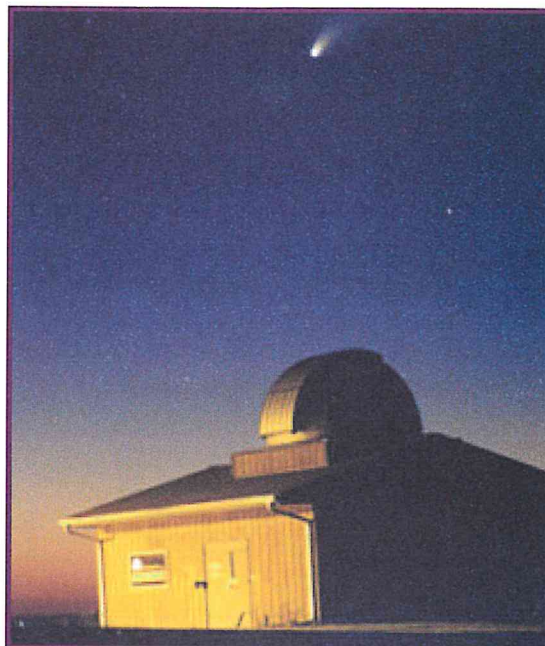


## Space Rocks!

Learn about the most well known of all comets, meteors, and asteroids.

Where: Weiskopf Observatory  
When: Saturday, March 16  
Time: 4:30 - 5:30 pm  
Cost: FREE  
Ages: Families  
Min./Max.: 5 / 20

**Register by noon on March 15.**







LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Chicago



Milwaukee Public Museum

## Milwaukee Public Museum

Join us to this exciting city to see this first-rate museum. Fee doesn't include admission. Exhibits include Native Americans, wildlife, IMAX theater, and more!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturdays, Jan. 26, Feb. 23, & Mar 23  
Time: Depart at 9 am.  
Cost: \$20 / person or \$30 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on 1/23, 2/20, & 3/20.

## Chicago History Museum

### Illinois Discount Day

We'll learn about the devastating 1876 Chicago Fire, Abe Lincoln, Dioramas, and much more! Fee doesn't include admission to special exhibits.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Mondays, Jan. 21, Feb. 4, & Mar. 4  
Time: Depart at 9 am  
Cost: \$20 / person or \$30 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on 1/18, 2/1, & 3/1.

## LegoLand Discovery Center

This is an exciting place to see these classic toys in Schaumburg. Highlights include a 4D cinema, rides, and shops. LEGO-LAND® Discovery Center Chicago - it's like you've just jumped into the biggest box of LEGO® bricks ever!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturdays, Jan. 12 Feb. 9, & Mar. 9  
Time: 10 am - 5 pm  
Cost: \$15 / person or \$25 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on 1/9, 2/6, & 3/6.

## Milwaukee Art Museum

We'll see awe inspiring art at this one-of-a-kind museum. Picassos are just one of the 1,500 pieces on display!

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Thursdays, Jan. 3 Feb. 7, & Mar. 7  
Time: 10 am - 7 pm  
Cost: \$15 / person or \$25 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on 1/2, 2/6, & 3/6.

## Madison RV/Camper Show

This is a great show for those who love the outdoors! Fee doesn't include show admission.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Friday, February 1  
Time: Depart at 10 am  
Cost: \$15 / person or \$20 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on January 30.

## Eagle Viewing at Starved Rock State Park

We're heading out to visit the wintering eagles, the frozen waterfalls, and the Lodge. We'll also stop by the Lock and Dam Visitor's Center.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Sundays Jan. 27 & Feb. 17  
Time: Depart at 11 am  
Cost: \$15 / person or \$25 / couple  
Ages: All  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on Jan. 23 & Feb. 13.



# trips



Diamond Jo Casino



## Geocaching to Aurora

Walk the Gilman Nature Trail, through the Sunken Garden in Phillips Park, and around Mastodont Lake to find some of the area's coolest caches.

Great trip if you've never been geocaching and want to learn, or just want to get to a new area.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturday, April 27  
Time: 9 am - 6 pm  
Cost: \$15 / person  
Ages: 18 & up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 12

Register by noon on April 19.

## Diamond Jo Casino

### Dubuque, Iowa

Think you're lucky? A Diamond Jo bus will meet us and take us to Dubuque for a day of slot and table play. Buffet and transportation are included in the cost.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Friday, April 5  
Time: 9 am - 7 pm  
Cost: \$25 / person  
Ages: 21 & up  
Min./Max.: 30 / 80

Register by noon on April 2.

## EEAI Annual Conference

The Environmental Education Association of Illinois is hosting its annual conference in Dekalb, Illinois on the Northern Illinois University campus.

Where: NIU in Dekalb, Illinois  
When: Thursday-Friday  
April 25-26  
Time: Various  
Cost: \$70/person (members)  
\$100/person (non-mem)  
includes membership

Register by calling 815-234-8535 x200 or visit [www.eeai.net](http://www.eeai.net).



## 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 Richie at 815-234-8535 x217 or Janet at x232. You could also go to our website, [www.byronforestpreserve.com](http://www.byronforestpreserve.com) to email us. We look forward to getting suggestions from you!

## Register Early

PLEASE remember to register early for our programs. So many programs are cancelled due to the lack of participation and then we receive phone calls from disappointed individuals because they "were gonna sign up but forgot." So, get online or call us now to sign up for that hike, or that great trip, or to learn how to ski, or to get that scout badge. SIGN UP NOW!! SIGN UP NOW!!



# scout badge programs



## Junior Girl Scouts - Jeweler

Create lots of jewelry to earn this badge, all from beads and charms you've made yourself! This is a great badge to take away some of the winter blah by creating some bright and beautiful things.

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Saturday, January 12  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$8 / person  
Ages: Junior Girl Scouts  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on January 9.**

## Jr. G.S. - BFPD Fun Patch

Yes, the Byron Forest Preserve District has its own fun patch, and you can earn it by taking a tour of the museum, getting an up close and personal look at our turtles and snake, learning the name of a prairie flower in bloom, and a couple of other fun activities that will be a surprise!!

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Saturday, April 6  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$5 / person  
(includes patch)  
Ages: Junior Girl Scouts  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on October 10.**



## Junior Girl Scouts - Skiing

Learning to ski as a winter sport not only fulfills badge requirements, but it's also fun! Great class for beginners to intermediate levels. Scouts will be accompanied by an instructor and will be welcomed back with hot cocoa. Parents welcome. Includes equipment.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturday, February 16  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$5 / person  
Ages: All Scouts Welcome  
Min./Max.: 5 / 18

**Register by noon on February 13.**

## Junior Girl Scouts - Flowers

This is a wonderful time of year to check out how things grow. You'll see lots of early spring wildflowers and plant a flower of your own to take home.

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Sunday, April 28  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$8 / person  
Ages: Junior Girl Scouts  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on April 25.**

## Brownie Badge - Painter

This is one of the legacy badges, and we'll have a lot of fun completing the steps to earn it. You'll have lots of choices in deciding what you would like to paint, so bring your imagination and clothes that can get dirty!

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Saturday, March 2  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$8 / person  
(includes patch)  
Ages: Brownies  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on February 27.**

## Cadettes - Comic Artist

Part of the legacy series, this badge goes more in-depth with one form of art: comics! You'll have a chance to explore the process in detail, from creating your story to having a finished product. All materials are provided; bring your funny bone!

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Sunday, February 17  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$8 / person  
Ages: Cadettes  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on February 13.**

## Cadettes - Trees

Tree fun, science, crafts, connections, and helping trees thrive; you'll have your choices of activities to complete the steps for this badge. Dress for the weather and bring your sense of fun and adventure!

Where: Keller Education Center  
When: Sunday, March 24  
Time: Noon - 4 pm  
Cost: \$8 / scout  
Ages: Cadettes  
Min./Max.: 8 / 20

**Register by noon on March 20.**



# scout badge programs



## Boy Scout Badge Workshops

### Indian Lore

Far different from the stereotypes or common images that are portrayed on film, on television, and in many books and stories, American Indians have many different cultures, languages, religions, styles of dress, and ways of life. Learn about these different groups, take an exciting journey of discovery and meet some of America's most fascinating people.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Thursday, March 28  
Time: 6 - 9 pm  
Cost: \$9 / scout  
Ages: 10 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 30

Register by noon on March 27.

### Skiing

Learning to ski as a winter sport not only fulfills badge requirements, but it's also fun! Great class for beginners. Scouts will be accompanied by an instructor and will be welcomed back with hot cocoa. Parents welcome. Includes equipment.

Where: Meet at Jarrett Center  
When: Saturday, February 9  
Time: 1 - 5 pm  
Cost: \$5 / person  
Ages: All Scouts Welcome  
Min./Max.: 5 / 18

Register by noon on February 6.

### Astronomy

In learning about astronomy, Scouts study how activities in space affect our planet and bear witness to the wonders of the night sky: the nebulae, or giant clouds of gas and dust where new stars are born; old stars dying and exploding; meteor showers and shooting stars; the moon, planets, and a dazzling array of stars.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Tuesday, January 29  
Time: 6 - 9 pm  
Cost: \$9 / scout  
Ages: 10 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 30

Register by noon on January 28.

### Forestry

Scouts will explore the remarkable complexity of a forest and identify many species of trees and plants and the roles they play in a forest's life cycle. They will also discover some of the resources forests provide to humans and come to understand that people have a very large part to play in sustaining the health of forests.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Tuesday, February 26  
Time: 6 - 9 pm  
Cost: \$9 / scout  
Ages: 10 and up  
Min./Max.: 5 / 30

Register by noon on February 25.

### Webelos

#### Forester

Learn about trees, soil, and sunlight. You'll make a map and learn about different trees that grow in different areas.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Thursdays, February 21 & April 18  
Time: 6 - 8 pm  
Cost: \$7 / webelo  
Ages: Webelos  
Min./Max.: 5 / 30

Register by noon on Feb. 20 & Apr. 17.

#### Naturalist

Learn about the bird flyways closest to your home. Find out which birds use these flyways. Learn to identify poisonous plants and venomous reptiles found in your area. Learn about producers, consumers, and decomposers in the food chain of an ecosystem.

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
When: Thursdays, January 10 & March 14  
Time: 6 - 8 pm  
Cost: \$7 / webelo  
Ages: Webelos  
Min./Max.: 5 / 30

Register by noon on January 9 & March 13.



# preschool, etc.



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

Where: Jarrett Prairie Center  
Ages: 3-5 years  
When: Mon/Wed/Fri or Tues/Thurs  
Time: 9-11:30 am or 1-3:30 pm  
Min/Max: 6 / 20 - M/W/F & 6 / 14 - TU/TH  
Cost: \$100/month-M/W/F  
\$85/month-TU/TH

Registration is ongoing throughout the year.

## Fall Registration Schedule

February 11-15 - Currently enrolled students & siblings

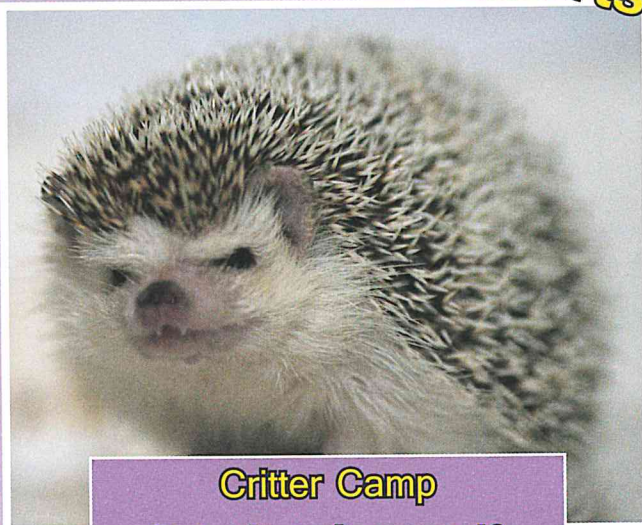
February 19-22 - Byron residents

February 25 - Open registration

Fees: M-W-F-\$100 & Tu-Th-\$85

This is applied to the last month of preschool.

## Kids Concerts



**Critter Camp**  
**Saturday, January 19**



**Measner Magic**  
**Saturday, February 16**



**Exelon Generation**

These FREE concerts are sponsored by Exelon and begin at 3pm. They are held at the Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 North River Road, Byron.





# What a Dry Year!

**By Austin Webb, Restoration Tech.**

We saw crops suffer, the Rock River was diminished to little more than a trickle in some spots, and windshield wiper stock hit an all time low. Here, at the forest preserve, we saw some differences as well. Perhaps the most noticeable difference was the lack in size of our more dominant native warm season grasses. Big Bluestem, sometimes referred to as Turkey's Foot to describe the appearance of its tassel, usually grows to heights of over 6 feet, yet this year it barely reached 4 feet in most places throughout the preserve. However, with well over 100 species of native prairie plants at our site, not all our plants shared the same fate. Some of the deeper rooted forbs, adapted to the arid conditions found on our remnant gravel hill prairies, almost

seemed to prefer the drought, helped in part due to the lack of competition from the tall grasses. In its entirety, the prairie landscape, even in a long succession of dry years, will continue to thrive due its diversity of plant life and thousands of years of adaptation, requiring no sprinklers to keep this system intact.

The lack of precipitation had a significant effect on our woodlands as well. Plants were much shorter and the amount of seed production was also noticeably reduced. Then, somewhat spectacularly, as the growing season came to a close, an aesthetic benefit of the dryness began to show itself in the canopy of our woodlands, not only at the forest preserve, but throughout the river valley. The trees brilliantly lit up, painting the hillsides with their

characteristic scarlet hues and splash of autumn orange and gold. Fall's display of color was in no small part due to the spring and summer climates experienced. The trees prepared for the growing season by casually unveiling their customary amount of foliage, only to become completely parched for water in the months that followed. The response was an early advancement to fall colors by some tree species, while others slowly turned, and still others remained vibrantly green. This staggered progression toward dormancy created a rather amazing, pixilated backdrop to our region. And, at the moment we started to appreciate the colors, the magical winter eraser was unleashed, leaving us to ponder in the months ahead what next year has in store.



# preserve notes



## Winter Slumber

By Katie Sullivan, Asst. Superintendent of Restoration

When the weather starts to turn frosty and the days start to shorten I often think about all the animals of our area and how they endure the long winter months of our Northern Illinois climate.

Some animals go into what is called hibernation - which translates into "winter slumber". Leading up to the winter months the animals that hibernate do a couple of things to prepare for the upcoming winter. First off, they must eat and eat and eat to create a layer of fat that they will live off of during their hibernation period. Secondly, they need to prepare their bed / den for the upcoming hibernation period. Both warm and cold blooded animals hibernate. Some of the hibernators in our area include snakes, bears, moths, chipmunks, squirrels, bats, badgers, raccoons, and woodchucks.

When the outside temperatures drop to a certain degree (varies from species

to species), the animals climb into their nests/ dens for the winter. Then, their heart rate, metabolism, and body temperature drop which results in the animal to fall into a deep slumber / hibernation.

Not all hibernators "sleep" for the entire winter. Some will wake every few weeks when the weather warms. Each species of animal has a "critical temperature;" once the air temperature reaches this, the animal will start to wake. They will walk around, maybe come outside, take a look around, and eat some of the food that they have stored in or near their winter den. If the air temperature stays warm, the animal stays awake and if the temperature drops, the animal will retreat to its den and return to its hibernating state until the weather finally stays warm and spring arrives.

## On The Move...

The Park Maintenance and Land Management Department has relocated. As part of a larger reorganization of the District's maintenance facilities, the park maintenance and land management staff has relocated to the former Stone Quarry Recreation Park site at 6845 German Church Road, across from PrairieView Golf Club. The public recycling station has also been relocated to the same site. The former building housing park maintenance staff has been converted for use by PrairieView Golf Club maintenance staff. For any questions regarding the District's preserves and their uses and management please contact Russell Brunner, Superintendent of Restoration/Maintenance at 815.234.8535 ext 219.

## FIRE!

Forest Preserve land management staff will be conducting prescribed burns at several of our preserves this fall and in the early spring of 2013. 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.



# preserve notes



A population of Heath Aster in full bloom in early October.



Aromatic aster in bloom on the Four Hills Trail at the Jarrett Prairie, notice the honey bee at center collecting pollen and nectar.

## Jarrett Prairie Nature Preserve

The dry summer and fall is evident when walking the Four Hills Trail through the Jarrett Prairie, even the shorter prairie grasses reach 3 to 4 feet in a usual year, this year most of them are less than two feet tall! The tall prairie grasses like Big Bluestem and Indian Grass that usually reach 6 to 7 feet are closer to 4 feet as well. The prairies are adapted to such conditions however and many species still bloomed and seeded as usual, a few were more affected and will wait a year to bloom again. Rains at just the right time this fall still allowed for an enormous bloom of our prairie asters. Barrels of seed have been collected to overseed more degraded prairie areas. The trail is complete and open through the recently acquired 5-acre parcel that connects the Jarrett Prairie and the Stephen J. and Deirdre Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve so a hiker now has access to more than 15 miles of connected trails.

## Stephen J. and Deirdre Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve

Restoration and management are always ongoing throughout the District's preserves. The majority of work accomplished at this preserve this past summer and fall has been the control of invasive species in the prairie remnants and the prairie plantings. Seed is also being collected from our native wildflowers here for new plantings. This fall will see the remainder of the farm fields planted with a diverse mix of native prairie species. At which point, there will be over 500 acres of wildlife habitat at this preserve and 10 miles of hiking/horse riding trails for public use and enjoyment.

## Howard Colman Hall Creek Preserve & Barrick Oaks Homestead Preserve

These recent acquisitions by the District are under development at this time. Restoration is ongoing to remove invasive species from the properties, restore the oak woodlands, install fencing and signage, and to create hiking trails. Both of these preserves have archery deer hunting programs in progress. Only archery lottery drawing winners are authorized to hunt these preserves.

Locations of the preserves are available in the back of this issue or by visiting [www.byronforestpreserve.com](http://www.byronforestpreserve.com).

## Christmas Tree Recycling = Free Mulch!

Byron residents can set their Christmas trees at the curb by 8 am on January 12, 2013, and the Byron FFA will pick them up to be turned into mulch. The mulch will then be free to the public through the spring at the Forest Preserve's Maintenance Department parking lot located at 6845 German Church Road, Byron, across from PrairieView Golf Club. For more information, visit [www.oglecountysolidwaste.org/Christmas\\_Tree\\_Recycling.htm](http://www.oglecountysolidwaste.org/Christmas_Tree_Recycling.htm).





## Turf Notes...

**By: Matt Henkel, Golf Course Supt.**

The golf season is winding down, and every year about this time, golf course superintendents across the region begin to reflect on all that has transpired in the last six to seven months and how it has affected their respective courses' playing conditions. Invariably, weather is nearly always at the forefront of any and all discussions. 2012 would not disappoint.

Each and every month, I submit an Operations Report to our District's Board of Commissioners and always conclude with a short summary. Each of those summaries from the last seven months is included below and gives you a glimpse into the mind of a golf course superintendent and the ups and downs of the golf season.

### April 2012:

April is here and yet we find ourselves wishing for March's weather to return. A very odd start to the season continues. The course is very dry and we have had to rely on the irrigation system quite frequently. The early spring weather has pushed all normal agronomic practices we do a good month ahead of where we should be.

Luckily, we have found just enough days with a light enough wind to get our pre-emergent crabgrass control put down. Our preventative fungicide applications for summer patch diseases are also way ahead of years past. As a result, our budget took on a lot of early expenses this year, but the good news is we had golfers on the course and our expenses should look less imposing come May and June with these critical applications out of the way.

**"...a glimpse into the mind of a golf course superintendent..."**

### May 2012:

Dry weather prevails. We had one good storm that brought us two inches of rain in mid April, but other than that, we have been on the dry side. We have relied on the irrigation much more than we would like, but knock on wood; the last month has only giving us a few minor problems. We are finally up to a full staff and we are

once again able to work on a few projects amidst keeping the course in condition. The new tee on #18 is finished and ready for play. Most of the annuals are in the ground and looking good. The planter boxes and new hanging baskets are out at the clubhouse and our lone "horticulturist" on staff, Kathleen Burke, is keeping busy keeping everything moist. We are looking forward to a great summer golf season in the maintenance department.

### June 2012:

Two very important facts come to mind when assessing the year so far. First, to date, we are running more than 6 inches behind in rainfall for the year. This began with a very dry winter and is holding true going into the heat of summer. Speaking of heat, the second fact is that 2012 is off to warmest start on record. With summer still officially a little over a week away, it sure looks like we are in for our 3rd consecutive difficult growing season for golf course turf.

### July 2012:

Two words.....hot and dry! We knew that coming into the golf season this year that



# prairieview golf club



## 2012: The Word “Drought” Comes to Mind

we were dry. This past winter was one of the driest on records. It was also a very warm winter. It is safe to say that we have stuck to the trend and done it in an impressive, albeit, depressing fashion. Just looking at the months that turf is actively growing this year so far, April through July, the golf course has received only 25% of normal precipitation. Now, take into account that in an entire year, Byron typically has 14 days of 90 degree temperatures. So far in 2012, we have had 20 days of 90 degrees and an additional four consecutive days of 100 degrees plus. The last time Rockford saw four consecutive days of 100 degrees plus was 76 years ago! Combine all these stats and what you are left with is turf grass that isn't too happy. You could add trees, flowers, and golf maintenance workers to the list.

### August 2012:

August has brought with it a breath of fresh air and a big sigh of relief to all those who manage bentgrass playing surfaces in this region. While we have not seen any drought busting rains, we have been on the receiving end of a couple quar-

ter to half inch rains, and we will surely take what we can get. We have also said goodbye to the scorching heat that we had been accustomed to this year. A few days with highs in the 70's and lows in the 50's has made everything look a little bit happier out on the course. While we undoubtedly will have a few days of heat of return, the days are getting noticeably shorter and we are beginning to make plans for turf recovery this fall.

### September 2012:

We are now in the home stretch of the 2012 golf season. We are losing about two minutes of daylight each day and we are adjusting the start times for our crew accordingly. We are still on the dry side by all accounts and hoping that the quarter inch rains we have been receiving about once a week turn into one inch soakers and spaced about a week apart for the next six weeks. We definitely need to do some catch up before winter arrives. Even those who despise winter should be hoping to be buried in snow come December, January, and February after a year like this.

### October 2012:

From here on out, until we begin to be on the receiving end of some frequent and plentiful rain showers, the drought that persists will be at the forefront of all golf maintenance discussions. So much of our operation depends on Mother Nature and the amount of precipitation the course receives is at the top of the list. Yes, too much water at the wrong time can spell disaster for golf courses. However, with our topography and layout, that is seldom the case. At the other end of the spectrum, being nearly shutoff from rainfall has compounding and long lasting effects on the course. The U.S. Drought Monitor (<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>) shows that 6% of the state of Illinois is in an extreme drought as of October 2nd. Byron falls into this category. We were at a 12"-16" rainfall deficit through September 29th. Overall, the data is discouraging and chances for turf recovery this fall have passed us by. Areas of turf that have been lost outside of the irrigation coverage will remain thin and weak well into next spring even in the best case scenario.



# prairieview golf club



Demolition of the old Golf Maintenance building.



Installing the new "Turf Care Center" sign.

## Outings, Parties, & Banquets

Golf outings are not the only type of events held at PrairieView Golf Club. Birthdays, weddings, baby showers, and even corporate parties have been held throughout the season. From small groups to large groups, PrairieView can accommodate any type and size of event. Smaller parties will enjoy the great views from the Prairie Grass Pub. Larger parties are accommodated in our newly decorated banquet hall. Don't miss a chance to have your next event at PrairieView. For information on all of our rooms or to book your 2013 golf outing, party or banquet, call now! 815-234-4653

## VIP Vouchers & Gift Cards Make a Great Gift!!

Instead of or in addition to a season golf pass, PrairieView's VIP program is an outstanding offer. Vouchers can be purchased in two increments—\$300 or \$600. With a VIP Voucher, golfers receive discounts off regular priced green, cart, and range fees. Vouchers can also be used on merchandise, food, and beverages. The following chart lists the discounts received with your voucher.

Voucher Amount	\$300	\$600
Green Fee Discount	10%	20%
Cart Fee Discount	20%	30%
Range Fee Discount	50%	50%

Gift cards are also available year round and make a wonderful holiday gift. Gift cards can be purchased in any increment. If you have any questions regarding VIP Vouchers or gift cards please call the PrairieView pro shop at 815-234-4653.

## Passes On Sale NOW!!

A discounted rate is offered if you choose to purchase your 2013 season golf pass before Christmas. Just look at the HUGE savings you'll receive if you get your pass before Christmas!!

Single Pass	Before 12/23/12	After 12/23/12
Resident Adult	\$585	\$650
Non-Res. Adult	\$630	\$700
Senior (60+)	\$450	\$500
College Student	\$305	\$340
Jr. (18 & under)	\$225	\$250

### Couple Pass

(A couple and up to two children under 12)

Resident	\$990	\$1100
Non-Resident	\$1080	\$1200
Senior	\$720	\$800

## 2013 Golf Fees

18 holes	Weekday / Weekend
Resident	\$23 / \$28
Non-Resident	\$27 / \$33
Senior/Junior*	\$20 / \$16

### 9 holes

Resident	\$14 / \$17
Non-Resident	\$17 / \$20
Senior/Junior*	\$13 / \$17

\*sr. & jr. rates only apply after 1 pm

### Twilight

Resident	\$14 / \$17
Non-Resident	\$17 / \$20

36 holes w/cart	\$68 / \$78
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### Cart Fees (per person)

18 holes	\$16
9 holes	\$10

Visit us online at [www.prairieviewgolf.com](http://www.prairieviewgolf.com)!



## Birthday Parties

Choose the Forest Preserve to organize your child's next birthday party. Call Richie at 815-234-8535 ext. 217 to schedule your next party. Themes include: Tea Party, Native Americans, Sky's the Limit, Goodness Snakes, Insects of Our World, and Where Do Butterflies Go When It Rains?

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

12 children (additional \$30 for more than 12 children)  
(cake, ice cream, tableware, birthday banner, program)

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

12 children (\$5/additional child)  
(program only)

## Field Trips

to the Natural History Museum,

Weiskopf Observatory, & Heritage Farm Museum

Scouts, schools, and senior groups are welcome to the Forest Preserve for an educational and fun guided tour of our great museums. Staff welcome and give tours for the low cost of \$1.50 per person with a minimum of \$30 per group. We offer many sessions to choose from such as prairie ecology, astronomy, and museum tour. Call 815-234-8535 ext. 217 to schedule your next outing with us.

## Let Us Come To You

We offer an outreach of educational programs for any group including retirement homes and nursing facilities for a small fee. Using our nature staff and nature stuff, we can come to you and deliver exciting and educational programs. Call 815-234-8535 to schedule a program for your group. You can choose from the following topics:

~Birds of a Feather

~Indian Life (w/traditional dress)

~Animal Encounter (w/live animals)

Call today to book your next on-site program!

## Recycling Station Relocated

The Byron Forest Preserve District has a mission to provide for preservation of natural resources, to provide education about natural and cultural heritage, and to provide recreation. The District, 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 Maintenance Department area 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.

## Canoe Rentals

We rent canoes. Just call us with your date and number of canoes needed. 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 and include paddles and life jackets. Call Richie at 815-234-8535 ext. 217 for this unique and fun outing. **Three canoe minimum.**

## Ski, Sled, & Snowshoe Rental

For your winter sports needs, we rent skis, sleds, and snowshoes for your enjoyment of our trails, hills, and valleys. Rentals available at \$5 per hour during normal business hours of the Jarrett Prairie Center. You are also welcome to bring your own equipment.



# good stuff

## 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

### 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

### Organized Groups

The Byron Forest Preserve has service and volunteer opportunities. We can arrange times and specific service areas 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.

### Individual and Family

The Byron Forest Preserve has several volunteer opportunities for individuals and families interested in sharing their time for special events, programs of both educational and recreational orientation. These events and programs run throughout the year. For more information, call 1-815-234-8535 ext. 217.

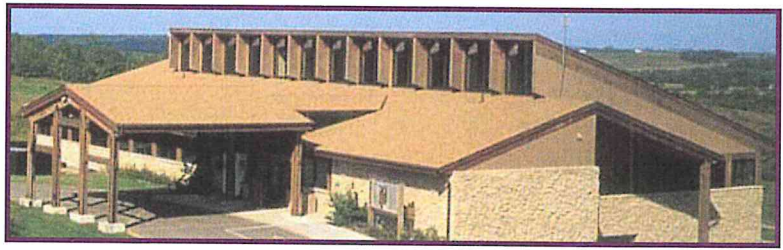
## Name the Colt Contest

A new member of the family has arrived at the Heritage Farm Museum. The Clydesdale colt (below) is in need of a name. The Heritage Farm Committee is asking area residents to submit their ideas of a name for the colt. Please email your idea to [richie@byronforest-preserve.com](mailto:richie@byronforest-preserve.com) or mail it to Richie Wolf, P O Box 1075, Byron IL 61010. All entries must be received by January 31, 2013. The Committee will then vote on their favorite. The winner will have their picture taken with the colt and published in the next issue of The Blaze.





# 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](http://byronforestpreserve.com)

#### Email

[raul@byronforestpreserve.com](mailto: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

Open for wildlife viewing upon request.

Available for rentals.

### 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.



## Trails

### 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.

### Nardi Equine Prairie Preserve

River Road

Byron IL 61010

815-234-8535 x200

Open for horseback riding, walking, jogging, and nature exploration.

### Howard Colman

### Hall Creek Preserve

Walden Road

Byron IL 61010

815-234-8535 x200

Open for walking, jogging, and nature exploration.

### Ripplinger/Gouker/Etnyre Preserve

Townline Road

Byron IL 61010

815-234-8535 x200

Open for walking, jogging, and nature exploration.

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





Byron Forest Preserve  
7993 North River Road  
PO Box 1075  
Byron, IL 61010

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# COMMUNITY BANKING



At the Holiday Season, our thoughts turn gratefully to those who have made our progress possible.

It is in this spirit we say...

Thank You  
and Best Wishes for the  
Holidays and a  
Happy New Year!

## Byron Bank Board of Directors



Davis Junction



Byron



Poplar Grove

- Community banks offer quick decision-making on business loans because decisions are made locally. Megabanks must often convene loan-approval committees in another state.
- Because community banks are themselves small businesses, they understand the needs of small-business owners. Their core concern is lending to small businesses and farms. The core concern of the mega banks is corporate America.
- Community banks pay taxes to support our local economy, credit unions do not.



Davis Junction 815-645-2610



# Byron Bank

Byron 815-234-2561



Poplar Grove 815-323-1452