



BYRON FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT NEWS

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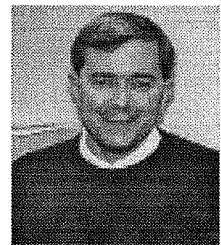
1996

PRESERVATION - EDUCATION - RECREATION

SPRING

A Message from the Executive Director

Over the past month, several citizens have stopped me to ask "What has happened with taxes and why did the Forest Preserve file suit against the Ogle County Board of Review?" Since this is such an important issue to all of us, and many citizens have questions, I wanted to devote time to review the current budgetary emergency that has been created by the Board of Review's recent decision to reduce Commonwealth Edison's 1995 Tax Assessment by 52.6%. Why is this a problem? The State of Illinois sets laws governing all aspects of local government, including the Byron Forest Preserve and all County Boards of Review.



*Edward C. Clift,
Executive Director*

The State Revenue Law outlines the following regulations for all Boards of Review:

1. The Board of Review sets the assessments for all property in their county.
2. This assessment is to be completed from June to September of each year. **(This was completed in 1995 on Commonwealth Edison's property.)**
3. The Board of Review may request a written extension from the County Board if their work is not complete. **(Ogle County Board of Review made no request to extend their legal authority for 1995 for any unfinished work.)**
4. The Board of Review must publish the assessments of all property in one of the local newspapers. **(These assessments were published in the October 28th edition of the Oregon Republican Reporter, setting ComEd's assessment at approximately \$995 million for 1995.)**
5. All Taxpayers have 30 days from the date the assessments are published to file an objection to their tax assessment. **(ComEd did not file an objection to the Byron Station Assessment for 1995, even though they had in previous years.)**
6. The Board of Review then hears each filed objection and renders a decision.

State Codes outline that local governments must follow many laws, but one that deals with the tax assessment situation is that we must file our 1995 Levy with the County prior to the First Tuesday of December. **(We complied with this law.)**

I believe that this all makes logical sense and all the puzzle pieces fall into one clear picture! **WRONG!!** Not when the Board of Review opens new meetings in January and February to lower Commonwealth Edison's Tax Assessment by 52.6%!! Remember, Commonwealth Edison did not file an objection, the Board of Review did not request an extension, and the taxing bodies had already filed their 1995 Levy with Ogle County as required by law. If this is the system, then all of us taxpayers should still be allowed to object to our 1995 assessment and seek relief from the Board of Review. These are the FACTS surrounding the recent decision by the ten taxing bodies to file suit against the Ogle County Board of Review.

This drastically affects all other taxpayers, since the Board of Review's decision shifts the ComEd reduction onto all other taxpayers. We, as taxpayers, will see this shift in our 1995 Tax Bill (that we receive in June), and some of the government bodies will still receive less tax dollars for their 1995 operation year. Our General Operating Fund which should receive approximately \$652,000 dollars, will now lose approximately \$320,000 in our current budget that we are already almost two months into for the year. This would be similar to you being told in October that your salary beginning January 1st would be \$22,000, then on February 6th you were informed that your salary was really only \$11,000 effective January 1st, and that you must pay back half of your pay since January 1st. This outlines as simply as possible the current situation that caused us to implement our reduction in budget and staff on February 23rd. This will result in major changes in our operation, including reduced public hours at the Jarrett Prairie Center, that will be communicated in future newspaper articles.

Natural Explorers

Natural Explorers (formerly Nature Preschool) at the Byron Forest Preserve gives children ages three to five the opportunity to have fun and interact with children their own age while learning about the magic of nature.

Beginning in March, instructor Barb Wingert will offer the usual one-hour sessions every Wednesday and Thursday, plus an extended class for another hour.

Here's how it works: the usual one-hour session will be held from 9-10 am and 1:30-2:30 pm on Wednesdays and 9:30-10:30 am and 1:30-2:30 pm on Thursdays at the Jarrett Prairie Center. The optional extended portion of the classes will be held from 10-11 am on Wednesdays and Thursdays and 2:30-3:30 pm on Thursdays.

The second hour will be more in depth and will include an outdoor activity. Children participating should be dressed for the weather.

The cost for the one-hour class is \$3 per session or \$10 per month, and the fee for the two-hour class is \$6 per session or \$22 per month. Please see further information on Page 6.

Advance registration is required. To register, call 815/234-8535.

Those Wonderful Volunteers

"Come see and participate in our maple syrup processing at the Byron Forest Preserve" was the message repeated over and over by our volunteers who served up more than 1500 lip-smackin' slices of apples dipped in maple syrup to the crowd at the RV Show at the MetroCentre in Rockford Jan. 19-21.

The forest preserve's exhibit, which included nature, museum, and golf course displays and information, drew oohs and aahs from a steady stream of visitors throughout the three days.

The volunteers manned the various posts in the exhibit and kept videos related to the Weiskopf Observatory rewound and playing.

They also answered questions and spoke to interested visitors about the happenings and volunteering at the forest preserve.



Volunteers Ethel DeVore and Evelyn Darby prepare apple slices and maple syrup for visitors at the RV Show at the MetroCentre.

A special thank you goes to everyone who came to volunteer their time.

One of our pet projects during the month of February was making shelf units, a puppet theater and covering pillows for the new kids' room at the Jarrett Prairie Center.

Without the volunteers making these things, we would not have been able to have the room ready or equipped so well. A special thank you to the crew who made the wooden units.

Volunteers are needed not only on Tuesday mornings, but also on weekends. Saturdays and Sundays are some of the times the Gift Shop needs coverage. Volunteers are also needed for many other activities such as special



Bea Hildebrand and Helen Smith collate district newsletters to prepare for mailing.



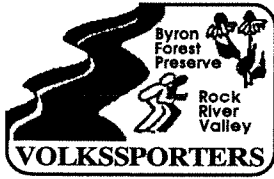
Assistant Golf Superintendent Mike Eytalis interprets the exhibits at the MetroCentre's RV Show that was held Jan. 19-21.

events, serving hot chocolate to Owl Walkers, Ranger Rick programs, and the Saturday Morning Matinees. Thanks to some of the new volunteers for helping with these things.

As more and more activities evolve, we will need more volunteers. Families can help, singles can help, retired citizens can help, youth groups or youth in schools can help. We take all sizes, shapes and ages.

You need not know how - we will train you. To volunteer or for more information about volunteering, call Barb or Hazel at 815/234-8535.

ROCK RIVER VALLEY VOLKSSPORTERS



Did you know that you have a local walking club? If you enjoy walking for fun and fitness and you enjoy walking at different locations for a change of scenery, you are invited to come to the next Volksmarch meeting and to participate in one of our upcoming events. Volkssporting, translated from German as "the sport of the people," originated in the mid-1960's in Europe in response to the need for some type of outdoor sport, free from competition, and for people of all ages.

Your local club, The Rock River Valley Volkssporters, is working hard to plan some beautiful walking events in the local area for your enjoyment. The events planned by the club are generally 10 kilometers (6.2 miles) and are free to all who wish to participate. There is a small fee for the event awards which range from patches and hat pins to elaborate medals, suncatchers, plaques, etc. The events appeal to people of all ages and allow participants to walk, jog, or run at their own pace. Walkers may start an event individually or in a group at any time during a specified 3-5 hour time period and are given more than enough time to finish, even at a leisurely pace. Refreshments are also provided at checkpoints along the route.

For more information on the Rock River Valley Volkssporters, call Debbie Leffelman, RRVV Club President, at (815) 732-3101. Please come to the next RRVV meeting which is scheduled for 7 pm on March 26 at the Byron Forest Preserve District's Jarrett Prairie Center located at 7993 North River Road in Byron. Seniors and singles, couples and families are all welcome to visit at the meeting. Nobody is obligated to join the club but the friendly walkers will make you feel glad that you attended. You will meet other folks who enjoy walking and you will learn about upcoming events in which you can participate.



Stewardship Assistant Lisa Johnson

PRAIRIEVIEW PRAIRIE NOTES

The Nature Department staff and Golf staff are gearing up to swing into our second year of Audubon Sanctuary development. We hope to expand and upgrade existing areas as well as start some new ones.

If the weather cooperates, we will try some controlled burns on some of the naturalized areas this spring, so don't be surprised if you see blackened, scorched areas in the roughs on the course. The darkened earth warms up faster in the spring sun and encourages the native plants to sprout and grow more swiftly. The fire also clears away last year's dead growth and helps to deter non-native, weedy species that are not adapted to it.

This winter, the PrairieView Golf Course was honored by the Environmental Steward Award program. This is a program that is sponsored by four golf course distributors, Ciba Turf and Ornamental Products, Rain Bird, Jacobsen, and Lebanon Turf Products in conjunction with the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America. These companies recommend courses that promote environmental concern.

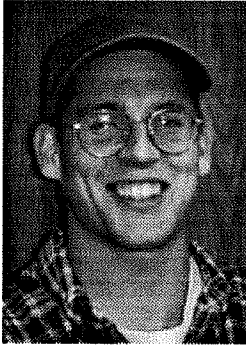
From courses across the country, PrairieView was chosen as one of 19 merit winners. This award honors courses that strive to create habitat for wildlife, reduce chemical and irrigation use, protect water quality, and educate the public.

This award was a pleasant surprise, coming so soon after our enrollment in the Audubon Sanctuary Program. It shows that we are heading in the right direction and, although we have a long way to go yet, it encourages us to keep working toward our goal of an environmentally sound and fun to play course.

We are looking forward this spring to seeing how the new plantings are developing and how much the golfers will enjoy them.

We always welcome comments and suggestions from the public. See you on the greens!

Illinois Nature Preserve Commission



Todd Tucker
Naturalist

This sign (right) may or may not look familiar to you. You have probably seen it if you have taken even a short walk at the Byron Forest Preserve.

This sign is placed on the Nature Preserve boundaries approximately every 330 feet, and says "All plants, animals and other natural features within this area are protected by law. No camping, firearms, vehicles, pets, or horses allowed."

This sign also represents the highest protection that a land can have in the state of Illinois. This means that any plant or flower within the boundaries cannot be picked or taken out of the preserve without the land steward's permission.

Please respect this sign and the land it protects no matter where in the State of Illinois you and your family may be.

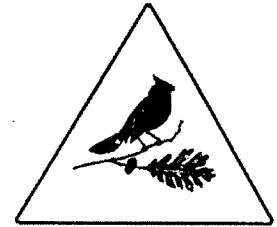
Only the highest quality natural lands and habitats of threatened or endangered species qualify for dedication as Illinois Nature Preserves.

Dedication is a process wherein landowners retain title to their property, but give up the development rights to that property, thereby insuring that it will remain in its natural state forever.

Not all preserves are owned by state or local governments. Twenty are owned by nonprofit conservation organizations, 21 are owned by private individuals and families, one is owned by a homeowners' association and one is owned by a utility company.

The Illinois Nature Preserve System consists of over 236 preserves containing more than 33,350 acres. They range in size from half an acre to 1,940 acres.

The Byron Forest Preserve has a vast variety of rare plant species, and to maintain these plant communities, we do a number of management practices. Because these practices take a large amount of time, I would like to encourage anyone of any age to help by volunteering your time and labor. I promise it will be a fun learning experience.



Attention Mushroom Hunters...

The morels (right) are the cream of the crop in northern Illinois.

To the Byron Forest Preserve, the mushroom hunters are slowly damaging our rare spring wildflowers, such as the showy orchid. Last year, the number of mushroom hunters seemed to be increasing, and in defense of the hunters, most did not know that the hunting of mushrooms is illegal on Nature Preserve property. It is not the district's main concern to protect the morel, but to, more importantly, protect our very sensitive woodland wildflowers.

When people hunt the mushrooms, they wander aimlessly through the preserve, stepping wherever the hunt may take them. This is what leads to the trampling of our flowers.

Again, it's not that the district is against the mushroom hunters, but that we are merely trying to protect our native vegetation. This year and in years to come, it will be our policy to ask mushroom hunters to leave and to confiscate any mushrooms in their possession.

Repeat offenders will be prosecuted by law under the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission's rules and regulations.



Registration Information

Registration Information

I. Mail-In

Byron Forest
Preserve District
P O Box 1075
Byron IL 61010-1075

Registrations received before the first registration day will be processed with the following day's mail.

II. Walk-In

Hours: Monday-Saturday - 8:30 AM-4:30 PM and Sunday - 1-4:30 PM.

Walk-In to the Jarrett Prairie Center, 7993 North River Road, Byron. The receptionist can answer questions and give receipts for cash payments. Registrations are time-stamped in the order they are received.

Note: Walk-In registrations are processed after the drop off registrations.

III. FAX

Faxed registrations are accepted 24 hours per day at (815) 234-8635. When faxing a registration, payment must be made with VISA.

Nonresident Registration Information

Nonresident program registration begins one week after resident registration.

Nonresident trip registration begins the day after resident trip registration. Youth/Family trip registration coincides with program registration.

Byron Forest Preserve District Registration

Registrations close one week before class/program starting date. Minimum registration and payment must be received by closing date or program/class will be cancelled.

Program Registration Information

1. If the program you choose is filled, you will be given your second choice class.
2. If both choices are filled or you did not list a second choice, you will be put on a waiting list and payment will be refunded.
3. If an opening occurs, you will be contacted by phone and re-registration will be required.
4. If the program has been cancelled or changed, you will be contacted by phone and payment will be refunded.
5. All registrations must be completed on the proper registration form with the waiver on the back signed.
6. Early registration will be held until the second registration day.

Payment Information

1. Visa and Mastercard are available for full payments only.
2. The Forest Preserve reserves the right to change a payment fee to reflect the correct fee.
3. If program fees differ between your first and second choice, pay the higher fee. If you are enrolled in the program with the lower fee, the Forest Preserve will refund the difference.

Trip Registration

Youth & Family Trips Registration coincides with program registration dates. Trips that were offered during a previous session have "on-going" registration until filled. Nonresident Trip Registration is the following day.

Refunds can only be given for trips if you notify the Forest Preserve 48 hours in advance and your spot can be filled. All refunds are subject to a \$5/person service fee.

Seating - If you wish to sit with someone on the bus, place both registration forms in the same envelope, or have them attached to each other.

Refunds

1. **Satisfaction Guaranteed** - Participants will receive a full refund if they are dissatisfied with the program after the first class meeting, but before the second.
2. Once a class has met a second time, no refunds will be issued. Exception: Illness or a relocation.
3. If a refund is approved after a second class meeting it is subject to a \$5 service charge.
4. A refund request form must be completed.
5. Refunds take approximately two weeks to process and are mailed in check form or credited to your credit card account.

5/30/95

Upcoming Programs

Special Events

Second Saturday Concerts -
Jarrett Prairie Center
Saturdays 8 pm
March 9 - Pat Donahue
April 13 - Kat Eggelston
May 11 - Small Potatoes
Fee: \$8 per person



Annual Egg Hunt -
Prairie Preserve
Saturday April 6 11 am
Preschool - Third Grade
Free
Co-sponsors: Byron Lions Club



SpringFest '96 - Come join the
fun for the whole family.
Jarrett Prairie Center
Saturday April 27 Noon-4 pm

Heritage Days - Events for the
weekend will include Civil War era
demonstrators, musical entertainment
on the outdoor stage, children's games
and movies, quilt show, art show,
craft/antique show, food vendors, and
much more!

Jarrett Prairie Center
Saturday Sept. 7 10am-8pm
Sunday Sept. 8 11am-7pm
Fee: TBA

Natural Explorers

Natural Explorers - Offers
children the opportunity to have fun
and interact with other children their
own age while learning about the
magic of nature.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Ages: 3-5
Fees:
One-Hour Preschool
\$3 per session
\$10 per month

Two-Hour Preschool
\$6 per session
\$22 per month

Wednesdays
9-11 am & 1:30-2:30 pm
Mar. 6, 13, 20, 27
Apr. 3, 10, 17, 24
May 1, 8, 15, 22

Thursdays
9:30-10:30 am & 1:30-3:30 pm
Mar. 7, 14, 21, 28
Apr. 4, 11, 18, 25
May 2, 9, 16, 23



Youth Activities

Junior Ranger Rick Nature Club
Have fun exploring and discovering
the wonders of nature and find out how
you can help take care of our home,
the earth.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Second Thursdays 4-6 pm
First-Third Grade
Fee: \$6 per month plus field
trip entrance fees
Min. 5/Max. 20

Youth Activities

Ranger Rick Nature Club -
Spend time outside in the wild and
wonderful woods and meadows at the
Byron Forest Preserve.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Second Wednesdays 4-6 pm
Fourth-Sixth Grade
Fee: \$6 per month plus field
trip entrance fees
Min. 5/Max. 20

Ranger Rick Activities -
March 6 & 7 - Alternative energy
- what weird and wonderful inventions
have scientists developed?

March 9 - Field Trip - Local
solar/underground house.

April 10 & 11 - Birds and
migration - who's birds are they?

April 13 - Field Trip - Sand Bluff
Bird Banding Station

May 8 & 9 - Prairie seed planting
- help restore a home for Illinois
Wildlife.

May 11 - Field Trip - Nachusa
Grasslands

Saturday Morning Matinees -
Children will watch a nature movie,
have a snack, and make a take-home
craft project. Admission includes
adult supervision, popcorn, and a
drink. Please dress for the weather.

Jarrett Prairie Center Theater
1st & 3rd Saturdays 9am - Noon
Fee: \$3 - if registered by 4:30
on Thursday

\$5 - if not pre-registered
Age: 4-9 No Min./Max.

The previously advertised mid-
week matinee for April 10 has been
cancelled. Instead, we will hold a
Spring Break Nature Camp, see
Nature Camps on Page 8 for a
description.

More Activities - Page 7

Astronomy

Public Sky Viewing - Explore the constellations all year 'round.

Weiskopf Observatory
Tuesdays Dusk
Fee: Free

Special Programs - Scout troops often reserve special programs in the observatory. Call (815) 234-8535 to reserve a place for your's. See the "Birthday Parties" heading to reserve a party in the observatory.

Walks

Bird Walk - An easy walk takes birdwatchers through the prairie and woods to identify native birds.

Jarrett Prairie Center/Prairie
Saturday March 30 8-10 am
Fee: Free
Min. 3/Max. 15
Instructor: Lisa Johnson

Arts & Crafts

Illinois Art Week - Byron School District Art Students Show - Educational display by Byron School District art students for Illinois Art Week.

Jarrett Prairie Center
March 23 thru March 30
Free

Fun With Flowers - Arrangements For Your Home -

Session one - Fresh flowers for your table.

Session two - Silk or dried flowers for your wall or door.

Session three - Silk or dried flowers for your table.

Session four - Individual choice arrangement.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Thursdays Apr. 4-25 7-9 pm
Fees: \$3.50/session plus supplies (\$10 for supplies - Session one)
Min. 6/Max. 10
Instructor: Selene Seiler

Arts & Crafts

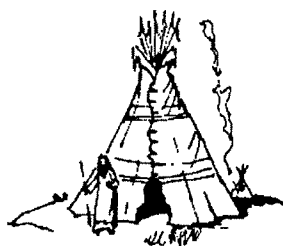
Creative Memories Classes - Learn about organizing and preserving photos. Learn about problems with photo storage. Get some creative tips on cropping, labeling, page layout, etc. Materials available for purchase.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Sat. 10:30am-2:30pm Apr. 13
Fee: \$11
Min. 5/Max. 20
Register by April 6.

Sat. 9am-5pm May 4
Fee: \$15/continuing students
\$20/beginners
Fees increase by \$5 after 4-20.
Min. 5/Max. 25
Instructor: Sonja Valdivieso

Jeanne Rager Art Show - Watercolor artist, best known for her western themes. Cowboys, horses, Native Americans, and landscapes of the west are the most dominant subjects in her paintings.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Sunday, April 21 thru
Friday, April 26
Free



Native American Plains Music/Life Presentation - Learn about Native American Plains Tribes through stories and music with a Lakota storyteller. Native American courting flutes will be on sale.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Sunday Mar. 10 2-3:30 pm
Fee: \$2 Min. 25/Max. 50
Instructor: Spencer Wind
Soldier/Peter Cadmus

Other Activities

Boating Safety - This is a two-part course taught by the Illinois Department of Conservation. Illinois law mandates that persons age 12-17 must successfully complete a boating safety education course before operating a motor boat without an adult present. Participants who successfully complete the course will receive a certificate.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Thursday Mar. 28 6-9 pm
Saturday Mar. 30 8am-Noon
Fee: Free
Min. 5/Max. 25
Instructor: Jerry Zeibert

Landscape Design For Your Home - Introduction to landscape design, decisions and planning, creating the design, and finishing up your landscape are a few of the topics that will be covered.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Tuesdays April 2, 9, 16 7-9 pm
Fee: \$1 per session
Min. 10/No Max.
Instructor: Kent Lewis

"Wild Images" Nature Slide Show - Over 200 breathtaking images of remote areas of North America will bring back visual testimony of the earth's precious gifts.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Sunday May 12 1:30-4:30 pm
Fee: Free
No Min./Max.
Instructor: David Olson

"Wild Images" Photography Class - Demonstrations and techniques of wildlife photography.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Wed. May 15 6:30-8:30 pm
Fee: \$3.50
Min. 10/Max. 30
Instructor: David Olson

More Activities - Page 8

Other Activities

Maple Syrup Sampler - Often the secrets of spring begin before the flowers bloom. Come over for a walk-through of the maple syrup process and enjoy a sample. Please dress for the weather.

Heritage Farm Expo Building
Saturday March 2 or 9
9:30-10:30 am & 11 am-Noon
Fee: \$1/person or \$5/family
Min. 10/Max. 40
Instructor: Todd Tucker

Volksmarch at Stronghold Castle - Looking for a free family sports activity that is non-competitive? A Volksmarch is it!! See article on Page 3.

Stronghold Castle
Saturday May 11 8 am-4 pm
Free
No Min./Max.

Volunteers - Volunteers of all ages are welcome to join this ever-growing group to help process seeds, build birdhouses, assist with golf course maintenance, and many other enjoyable tasks.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Tuesdays 8:30-11:30 am
If you're not available to volunteer on Tuesday mornings, we also need volunteers for evenings and weekends.

If interested, please call Barb at (815) 234-8535 ext. 205

Prairie Restoration

Rock River Valley Wild Ones - A group with a diverse membership interested in natural landscaping using native species. The mission is to share information with members and communities at the 'plants-root' level and to promote biodiversity and environmentally sound practices. Going Wild registration form is on page 10 of this newsletter.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Fee: Membership Dues - \$20

Prairie Restoration

Rock River Valley Wild Ones - "Do it yourself prairie plant propagation". Demonstrations of seed planting and plant care tips. Seeds will be provided or you can bring your own. Soil and flats will be provided.

Thurs. March 21 7-9 pm
Min. 5/Max. 50
Instructors: Todd Tucker & Joe Jonakin

Rock River Valley Wild Ones - Burn tactics and tools. Learn how to conduct a controlled burn, what tools to use, how to judge correct time and conditions. We'll try a small burn if the weather permits. Dress appropriately.

Thurs. April 18 7-9 pm
Min. 5/Max. 50
Instructor: Todd Tucker

Rock River Valley Wild Ones - Tour of Enders Greenhouse, specializing in native plant propagation. See a greenhouse in operation and practice identifying native plant seedlings. Plants will be for sale.

Thurs. May 16 7-9 pm
Min. 5/Max. 50
Instructor: Anne Meyer

School Programs

Earthkeepers - This program teaches ecological concepts. It is a three-day learning adventure that will captivate and motivate your learners.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Flexible Days and Times
Grades: 4th-5th
Fee: \$20 per participant
Numbers: One class at a time

Field Trips - Teachers, please call us to arrange a field trip at the Byron Forest Preserve. We have several field trip programs to offer. Call (815) 234-8535.

Birthday Parties

We now host birthday parties for ages 8 and up in the observatory. View the stars, play games with the stars and planets, and try the computer simulation of our earth and stars. Call now to reserve a party for your young astronomer's birthday.

Weiskopf Observatory
Fee: \$2.50 per child
Numbers: up to 15 children

Nature Camps

School Holiday Nature Camp - Do something fun and different on your next day off from school. Enjoy the marvels and secrets of the natural world. Snacks, games, crafts, and other activities included. Bring a sack lunch. Dress for the weather.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Mondays 8 am-5 pm
March 4 & May 27
Fee: \$20/day
Grades: K-5
Min. 5/Max. 12
Pre-registration Required.



Spring Break Nature Camp - Wondering what to do during your holiday break from school? Come and wander on the prairie and in the woods. Lots of fun, games, crafts, videos, stories, exploring, and nature activities. You may register your child for any number of days. Dress for the weather. Bring a "green" lunch (a lunch that has little waste). Snacks provided.

Jarrett Prairie Center
Mon-Fri Apr 8-12 8am-3:30pm
Fee: \$18/day
Two age groups: K-2 and 3-5
Min. 5/Max. 15 per age group
Pre-registration Required.

More Activities - Page 9

Nature Camps

Summer Nature Camp - Yahoo!!
Summer is just around the corner. Register now to get a place in our new camp. Time spent at the Forest Preserve will be interspersed with trips to natural areas in the region such as Franklin Creek and Castle Rock State Parks or swimming holes at Atwood Homestead or Lake LaDonna. Bicycling or canoeing trips! Would you like to have your own magic spot on the prairie or find a treasure? See how to milk a cow and how ice cream is made and then eat some, of course. Make crafts, create puppet shows, sing songs. Have fun!! Join us!! Each camp meets twice a week. Pre-registration is required.

Nature Camps

Trekkers I
 1st-3rd grade graduates
 Two Sessions (may register for both)
 Mondays & Wednesdays
 June 10-28 & July 8-26
 9 am - 3 pm
 Fee: \$65 for a 3-week session
 Min. 5/Max. 15



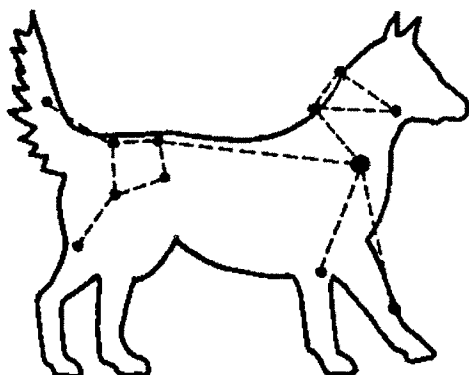
Trekkers II
 4th-5th grade graduates
 Two Sessions (may register for both)
 Tuesdays & Thursdays
 June 10-28 & July 8-26
 9 am - 3 pm
 Fee: \$65 for a 3-week session
 Min. 5/Max. 15

Nature Camps

Explorers I
 Children entering Kindergarten
 Three Sessions (may register for one or more)
 Mondays & Wednesdays
 June 10-28 & July 8-26
 Mini-camp - August 5-16
 9 - 11:30 am
 Fee: \$35 for a 3-week session
 \$25 for the mini 2-week session
 Min. 5/Max. 15

Explorers II
 Kindergarten graduates
 Three Sessions (may register for one or more)
 Tuesdays & Thursdays
 June 10-28 & July 8-26
 Mini-camp - August 5-16
 9 - 11:30 am
 Fee: \$35 for a 3-week session
 \$25 for the mini 2-week session

Star Time



Deep in the middle of winter, the night sky is jeweled with points of light.

Just after sunset, look high in the west, where Venus is playing the part of the evening star now. As the night gets darker, Venus gets brighter, look below it for the fainter, oranger light of Saturn.

On the other side of the sky, low in the west, is the brightest star visible from our hemisphere. Called Sirius, the Dog Star (left), it is part of the constellation Canis Major. It follows along at Orion's heels like the dutiful hunting dog it is supposed to represent.

About 70 people came through the Weiskopf Observatory in January, most of them in private groups. A group of about 20 high school kids from a Chicago school who had been visiting the Lutheran Outdoor Ministries Center in Oregon came for a private tour.

The kids were great, full of interest and questions. It was cold, but we had clear skies and looked at the Moon, Venus, and even the Andromeda Galaxy.

The Observatory has also hosted several scout troops and even a Birthday Party!!!

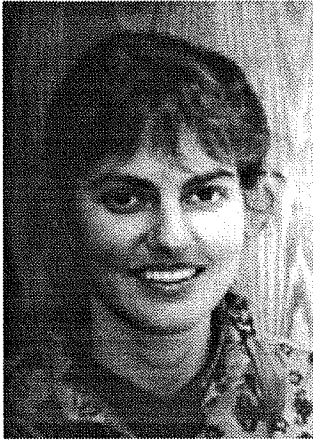
We should start to see Saturn's rings again by the end of February, but we'll have to look early, as it will be setting soon after the sun.

In March, the open cluster known as the Beehive, or Praesepe, becomes prominent and one of my favorite stars, Arcturus, returns. April brings an eclipse of the moon, although we may miss most of it, since it will start before the sun sets.

If any of this piques your interest, please join us for Tuesday Public Viewing Nights. We start about dusk and continue until about 10 p.m., weather permitting. Please dress for the weather as the dome portion of the building is not heated.

You may also want to consider joining the Prairie View Astronomy Club, which presents programs and, if possible, views the stars on the first Thursday of each month. Call (815) 234-8535 for more information.

Earthkeepers Program Update



Education Coordinator
Susan Kleiman

After participating in the main part of the Earthkeepers program this past autumn, the fourth grade students at Mary Morgan Elementary are continuing to learn about what it means to be an Earthkeeper.

They understand how the earth functions ecologically, have deeper feelings for the natural world, and know how they can take care of our home planet. Many of the children have earned their keys and know all the meanings of E.M.

By all accounts, Earthkeepers has been a very good learning experience.

One parent said, "Today is cold, but the kids don't notice. Everyone is too busy exploring and discovering many interesting things in the prairie."

One teacher said it was so well organized and, "What a difference that makes! Students flowed from one activity to another following the same theme. This is truly a well thought out educational experience. It is one worth attending."

Susan Kleiman (left), Education Coordinator, would like to thank all of the teachers and volunteers that made the first Earthkeepers a big success.

Special thanks to the following:

Byron Forest Preserve Volunteers for helping to create teaching props for the activities and donating items.

Verna Seymour for creating two beautiful banners and the children's pouches to carry their things.

Barker Lumber for cutting wooden name tags from tree limbs.

Kobel's Heating and Plumbing for cutting plastic pipe for "connection scopes".

Mike Eytalis for creating the shelves and loaning some props for "E.M.'s Lab".

Parents who came out with their kids to participate in the program, especially our Board Secretary, Gene Smith, who came early, on the day his daughter's class came, to help set up the activities and stayed late to help put things away.

If all this piques your curiosity, good! Call us at (815) 234-8535 to find out how your school can participate. Any fourth or fifth grade level classes are welcome to participate, including home school groups.

GOING WILD!

The Rock River Valley Chapter of the Wild Ones, which is sponsored by the Byron Forest Preserve, has an exciting year full of events for 1996.

Programs range from workshops on plant propagation and controlled burns, to tours and learning about native plants.

Membership costs \$20 per year which includes programs and field trips, a chance to meet other people with similar interests, and a subscription to the bi-monthly newsletter, The Wild Ones Journal.

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month with some special events on Saturdays. Because times and meeting places vary, please call (815) 234-8535 for more information.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State _____

Zip _____ (9 numbers, please)

Phone _____ ext. _____

Meeting Location Preference:

☐ Milwaukee
☐ Milwaukee Wehr
☐ Green Bay

☐ Northern Illinois
☐ Rock River Valley, Illinois
☐ Columbus, Ohio



Wild Ones Membership: \$20 Per Year. Make checks payable to: Wild Ones. Mail to: Wild Ones - Natural Landscapers, Ltd., P O Box 23576, Milwaukee WI 53223-0576

Woodland Destroyer

Well, it's that time of year - spring is about ready to start, and with that comes a wide array of beautiful spring wild flowers. Unfortunately, this is also the time of year that an exotic species rears its ugly head in our woodland savannas. This is a non-native plant called GARLIC MUSTARD (right), which invades and thrives under the woodland canopy.

The plant grows extremely fast and reaches a height of two to four feet in its second year. The plants will then start to displace the spring wildflowers, possibly to the point of extinction.

Our wildflowers cannot compete with the massive growth of the garlic mustard, and the height of the plants shade out many of the shorter wildflower species.

To the ear, garlic mustard sounds like a delicious herb. Its common name refers to the plants strong garlic fragrance when crushed.

The plant was introduced to the United States in the year 1886 from Europe. The Europeans used the plant for a sandwich spread and for medicines.

When a plant is brought here from a foreign land it often has no natural predators/enemies. Therefore, it will flourish without competition, and that can create a hostile takeover.

Garlic mustard is a biennial, a plant which completes its life cycle in two years. The first year it germinates, establishes a root system, and grows into a rosette. The second year it flowers, goes to seed, and dies.

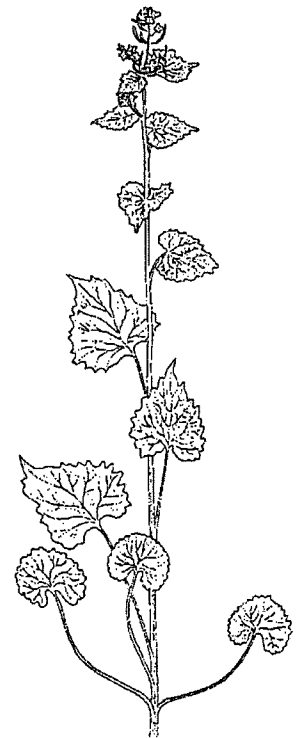
When it seeds out, the plant produces an average of 350 seeds, with some plants producing up to 8000 seeds.

The plant can be controlled a couple of ways. The roots do not grow very deep and are very easily pulled. This method may prove to be somewhat time-consuming but is very effective.

Another way is to burn the garlic mustard in the fall and early spring when the other plants are dormant.

Byron Forest Preserve District Naturalist Todd Tucker greatly encourages those people who own or live on sites which have woodland savannas to control the spread of garlic mustard.

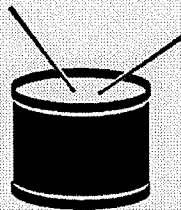
Those of you who do not live on or own woodland areas would most definitely be encouraged to volunteer as garlic mustard exterminators at the Byron Forest Preserve, as we have an endless supply! Please call Todd at 815/234-8535 if you have any questions regarding this woodland killer.



Heritage Days Needs You! September 7-8

Crafts & Antiques

Booths are still available for crafts and antiques. Booths are 10' x 10' and \$25 each. Craft booths will be located on a grassy area outdoors and antique booths will be located inside the maintenance buildings. For more information, please contact Cathie Francis at (815) 234-8535 ext. 203.



Attention Artists!

Booths are still available for artists. The booths are 10'x10' and 8'x8' and are \$25 each for both days. The Art Fair will be inside the Jarrett Prairie Center so your work will be in a climate controlled, securable environment. If you are interested in participating, please contact Michelle Lipps at (815) 234-8535 ext. 224.

New Public Hours for Jarrett Prairie Center

The reduced public hours are the sole result of the recent loss of approximately \$320,000 in tax assessment.

The reduced public hours will not affect any scheduled programs at the Jarrett Prairie Center.

If you have any questions regarding our new hours or any programs, please call (815) 234-8535.

Monday - CLOSED

Tuesday - Noon - 8 pm

Wednesday - CLOSED

Thursday - Noon - 8 pm

Friday - CLOSED

Saturday - 9 am - 4 pm

Sunday - 1 - 4 pm

Annual Egg Hunt

**SATURDAY, APRIL 6, 1996
11 AM SHARP!!**

**7993 North River Road
Byron**

Preschool- Third Grade

New Program!!

*Nature Playtime - A fun time
time to get away from it all and
enjoy nature.*

Jarrett Prairie Center

Every Thursday

10:45-11:15 am

Age: 2 year olds

Fee: \$2

No Min./Max. 6

Instructor: Barb Wingert

INSIDE...



DISTRICT NEWS

- **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**
- **NOTES FROM THE NATURALIST**
- **NEW SPRING PROGRAMS**

PAGE 1

PAGE 4

PAGES 5-9

PRAIRIEVIEW GOLFER

- **PRAIRIEVIEW SET TO OPEN**
- **PASSES, DISCOUNT CARDS, & ID's**
- **TURF NOTES**

PAGE 1

PAGE 2

PAGE 4

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