

BY - Ronnie Raccoon News

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FALL ISSUE

Byron Forest Preserve District

300 N. Lafayette

Byron, Illinois 61010

WHERE WE ARE

The District has spent the past 12 months organizing. Areas of interest have varied from developing an office, purchasing equipment, constructing nature trails, and planning trips and programs.

Presently, the Board has 90 acres of land that it maintains and supervises. The Commonwealth property, named BY COM, now hosts a new parking area, tree nursery, orchard (restored), one-half mile nature trail, prairie restoration projects, maintenance center, and new restrooms.

Several programs have been tried, and several new ideas for programs have been submitted and requested.

The Commission has proposed a long term master development program to its 30 plus member Advisory Committee. The Commission has also introduced many innovative ideas to improve the Preserve District's service to the resident. These are being studied by the Advisory Committee and Board.

A new slide show has been compiled to show residents what the District has planned to date. Request for programs to community groups can be made by phoning the District's Office, 234-8535, Monday through Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

Your Director,
Jack F. Philbrick

FOR THE BIRDS

The Sinnissippi Audubon Society will be taking orders for bird seed towards the end of October. The Byron Forest Preserve District will purchase some seed for resale from the society. No markup will be added. Please contact the District after October 15 if you are interested in acquiring seed.

BONSAI EXHIBIT AT THORNHILL

The annual Bonsai Show will be held September 24 and 25, 1983, from 11:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. at Morton Arboretum's Thornhill Conference Center.

The event is co-sponsored by the Triton College Bonsai Club and the Morton Arboretum Bonsai Society annually.

Learn about the ageless method of creating miniature ornamental plantings of standard trees. See trees one foot tall and hundreds of years old.

WHERE TO GO AND WHAT TO SEE

In our newsletters, we will attempt to tell you of an interesting place to visit. Most areas will be within a three-hour drive from Byron and will be family oriented.

This month, we will mention Amish Acres in Napanee, Indiana.

The quick way is to take our Interstate 90 to 294 to Indiana and exit South past Gary, Indiana on Interstate 65. Then approximately 20 miles South to Indiana Route 6. Head East on 6 to Napanee and you will see Amish Acres on the left as you approach the town.

The facilities include restored and original farm and support buildings that have been collected on an original Amish farm. Food processing, gardens, farm equipment, and all areas of Amish living are preserved.

Guided tours run throughout the summer and you can tour the settlement by Amish horse-drawn surreys. Two highlights are the restored shops that sell hearth bread and cookies, cheese of all types, and an Amish family-styled meal that you'd best eat before the tour. The menu includes all you can eat:

Navy Bean Soup

Fresh Hearth Bread w/apple butter

Sweet and Sour Slaw

Mashed Potatoes

Sage Dressing

Giblet Gravy

Green Beans

Smoked Ham and Turkey

Beverage

Homemade Pie

The cost for the meal this year is \$8.95 for adults.

While sitting under an apple tree, listening to the costumed guides, you slip into a period and way of life characteristic of what our forefathers faced. You feel a calmness, yet some sadness in viewing what has passed. The guides bring you up to the present in their review of Amish life in their own community.

Windbreak Design and Planting

This past August, an excellent presentation was sponsored by the University of Illinois at Severson Dells on planting and maintaining windbreaks. Windbreaks can save you up to 18% of your fuel usage and raise the value of your property.

... The prevailing winds in Illinois are from the northwesterly direction. Therefore, the windbreak, to give the best protection, should

be located on the north and west sides of the farm or homestead . . .

L-shapes and variations of L's tend to work best.

Distances from buildings greatly affect the savings you will gain on heat. General rules include variables such as roads, feed lots in the case of farms, and neighbors in the case of cities.

Maximum benefits occur when wind screen are planted 8 to 10 times the distance away from the building as the height of the buildings being screened. This frequently means distances of 50 to 125 feet. Windbreaks are most effective when they extend past the end of the buildings.

Over the years the number of rows, distance between trees, and varieties have changed a little. Today, a three (3) row offset planting, not closer than 14 feet apart, has proven best.

The Byron Forest Preserve District will provide on-site advice and guidance for any District resident desiring to improve or initiate a windbreak.

PROPOSED MEMORIAL TREE PROGRAM

Earlier this year, the Board approved the establishment of a memorial tree program. This permits anyone, whether a resident or non-resident, to make a tree planting donation of \$30.00 or \$50.00 to the District in memory of a deceased loved one or friend. In return, the District will select a tree, (native or hybrid), and plant it in one of the designated memorial areas of the Preserve District, in memory of the designated individual.

The family of the deceased will be notified at the time the gift is given, and again when the planting is completed.

Such memorial plantings are tax deductible and the District will insure the planting for a minimum of two (2) years.

What better tribute to a passing friend than a beautiful living memorial!

A philosophical person once said, "The true measure of anyone is that they are concerned enough to plant a tree they may never sit beneath."

YOUR LAWN NEEDS HELP

This summer's high temperatures were hard on bluegrasses and all other grasses, and were the highest our area has experienced in some time. Now is the time you should do the most to insure grasses come back in the spring.

Surprisingly, many people tend to feel their lawn is improving and well, as the 90 degree days slip by and a little green reappears. This is not totally so. Now is when the quality of regrowth is determined and repairing for next spring occurs. Your lawn needs all the help you can give, and now is the time.

Fertilizing with a good organic fertilizer, adjusting the PH, and proper watering mean more now than in the Spring.

What has occurred this summer, that man and nature has caused?

1. Many people have removed most, if not all, of their lawn clippings. This has

caused a shortage of organic material in the soil.

2. Most have used non-organic water soluble fertilizers that have killed off important microorganisms.
3. Humus levels in lawns are below good soil content, by virtue of constant grass survival demands placed on the soil by plants under heat and humidity stress.
4. Finally, PH levels are out of balance, restricting microorganism regeneration so important in a proper nitrogen cycle.

What to do?

- A. Re-establish PH balance (5.5 to 7.0).
- B. Apply organic fertilizers.
- C. Mow at reasonable and consistent height (all year).
- D. Leave short grass clippings (mowing three times a week is three times better than once every two weeks).
- E. If thatch is 1/4" or greater, remove or discontinue non-organic fertilizers high in phosphorus and potash.
- F. If roots are short, start using wetting agents and soil looseners to promote penetration.

COMING EVENTS

September

25th Boone County Conservation District -
Autumn Pioneer Days
Boone County Office All Day

October

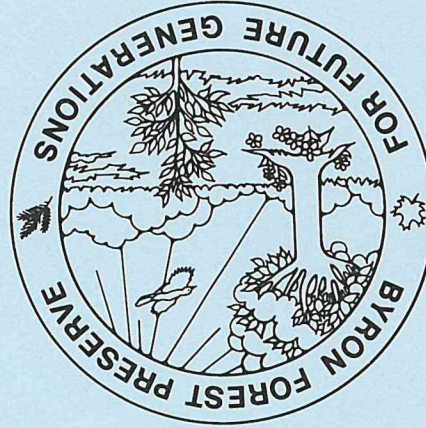
4th Byron Forest Preserve Board Meeting 9:00 A.M.
4th Photography Class (first meeting) -
Forest Preserve Office 7:30 P.M.
8th Prairie Tours w/Mary Young 8:00 A.M.
18th Byron Forest Preserve District Board Meeting 9:00 A.M.

November

1st Byron Forest Preserve District Board Meeting 9:00 A.M.
15th Byron Forest Preserve District Board Meeting 9:00 A.M.

December

7th Tour at Milwaukee Domes - Forest Preserve Office 9:00 A.M.



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BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS
PERMIT NO. 4464

Ranger Rick says: "If you haven't heard, bees return to their hive taking the shortest and straightest line." A BEE LINE

YARD SOIL PH TESTING

District resident home owners may call in for a requested PH soil test on their yards, starting September 30, 1983 through October 30, 1983.

A District staff member will come to your home and make a general analysis of the PH level of your soil. We will then offer advice on the use of lime.

Yards should be mowed and not watered 24 hours in advance of testing. Yards that have been fertilized within two weeks will reflect a false test if fertilizers were not watered in well.

New Equipment Addition Will Provide Expanded Services

The District will purchase this leased chopper in September. The unit will be used in trail development for the District plus in cooperative service to other governmental agencies within the District to assist in areas such as storm damage.

