

# BYRONNIE RACCOON NEWS

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1988 Vol. 1

WINTER ISSUE

Byron Forest Preserve District

7993 River Rd.

Byron, Illinois 61010

## LAND ACQUISITION AND PLANNING UPDATE

In 1982, shortly after the Byron Forest Preserve District was formed, the forest preserve board solicited suggestions from the public on what activities they would like to see provided in the community by the district. This was done again in 1984.

A list of over thirty items was compiled and subsequently ranked by public preference. The majority urged the board to consider acquisition of land as their first goal. For that reason, and after many discussions, the board has concentrated on acquiring a site that could accommodate many of the activities the citizens requested. The prairie preserve site, located at the south end of the Route 72 bridge and bounded on the north by the river and the east by German Church Road, was one that reflected the ability to provide the broadest public use.

To date, the board has successfully acquired 220 acres through two separate negotiations with local owners. A third parcel of approximately 340 acres is being acquired.

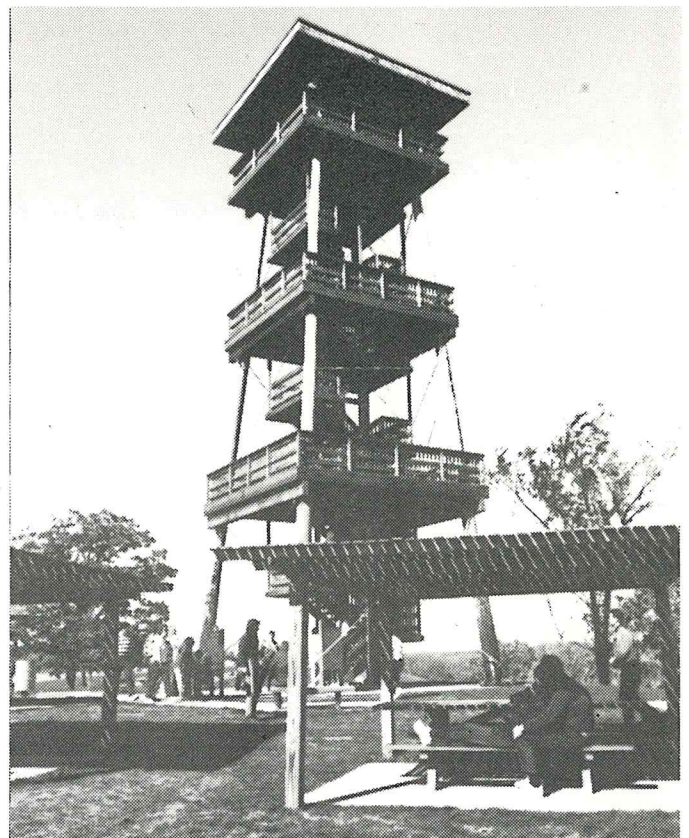
Due to the failure of repeated offers and negotiations with the absentee owners of the third parcel over the last four years, the board has initiated action that can provide a third-party decision being rendered to resolve the purchase price for the 340 acres.

It should be noted, the owners of this third parcel have always been willing to sell the land, and the only problem has been establishing a price both the district and owners agree upon.

Presently, the Byron Forest Preserve District Board is selecting a professional firm to come to the existing site and study the economic effects and environmental concerns surrounding development of the citizen wishes. A national search of consultant planners has been narrowed to two firms at this point. By January the staff expects the board will select one of these firms.

The goal is to develop a Master Plan that will guide the district's activities and operations over the next decade. As all good plans, it should permit flexibility that will insure the goals of preservation, education, and recreation. Once the plan is drafted, considerable public exposure will be sought to insure it meets their needs.

The board is seeking a management tool beneficial to all the citizens of the district before development expands. (If you have suggestions you wish to have included, the board asks you to submit them.

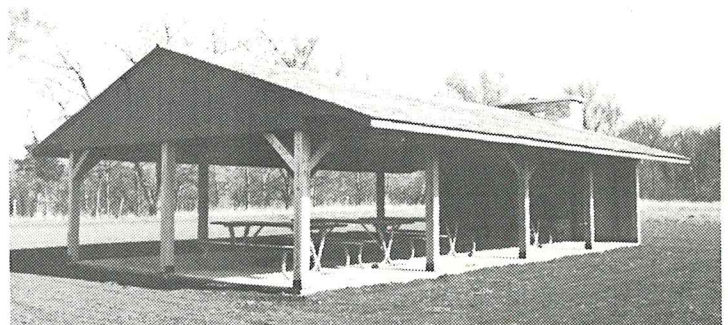
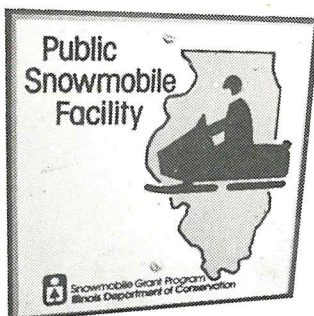


This 75' tall tower is located on IL Route 20 and one is being considered for erection at the Byron Prairie Preserve.

## SNOWMOBILE TRAIL

The Byron Prairie Preserve has opened a four mile snowmobile trail thru assistance from the Illinois Department of Conservation Funding.

The trail may be used by permit only. Call 234-8535 to acquire a permit, or come to the prairie preserve office 7993 River Rd., Monday thru Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30 p.m.



Snowmobile grant from I.D.O.C. paid for one-half of the new shelter, parking lot, and fireplace at Byron Prairie Preserve



## DEER TICK SPREADING LYME DISEASE

The following article was prepared by Raymond A. Schwartz, Superintendent of Conservation for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, and authorized for reprint by the editor, Ronald Losew, for the Byron Forest Preserve District's Newsletter.

Veterinarians as close as Oregon and Pecatonica have diagnosed this disease this year.

### LYME DISEASE

Lyme Disease was first found in Lyme, Connecticut, the summer of 1975. Children living in the area developed arthritic conditions which led to an investigation by Dr. Allen Steer of Yale University Medical School. Dr. Steer found that thirty-nine children in Lyme and nearby towns had been diagnosed as having juvenile rheumatoid arthritis - 100 times the normal incidence for the size of the population. Twelve adults also developed a form of inflammatory arthritis.

In 1976, Dr. Steere announced a new disease which he dubbed "Lyme Arthritis." During 1982, researchers discovered that the infectious agent was a spirochete, *Borrelia burgdorferi*. Lyme Disease has now been reported in thirty-two states and five different continents. It is sometimes called the "suburb disease", since - at least in the northeast - it usually occurs where houses are near woods or other areas where White-Tail Deer proliferate. Lyme Disease seems to be prevalent where White-Tail Deer are overpopulated. The Disease is transmitted to people and animals by the bite of the Deer Tick, *Ixodes dammini*.

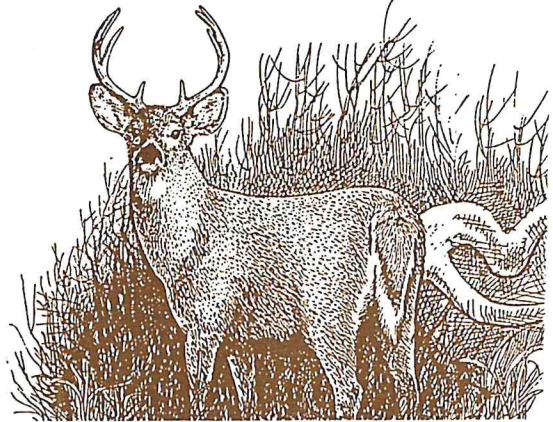
The Symptoms during the First Stage of infection are any-one of the following or a combination of them: headache, chills, nausea, fever, rash, aching joints and fatigue. Thirty percent of the people do not develop a rash, making diagnosis more difficult. The Second Stage (weeks or months after initial infection) may exhibit various degrees of heart blockage, irregular heartbeat, meningitis, encephalitis, facial paralysis (Bell's palsy) and other conditions involving peripheral nerves.

Painful joints, tendons, or muscles may also be noted during this stage. During the Third Stage, arthritis is the most commonly recognized symptom. Years after the initial infection, repeated attacks of arthritis may occur.

If a person has developed any of the symptoms common to the first stage of infection, and recalls being bitten by a tick, or has been in an area where ticks are found, consulting your physician would be wise. Prompt treatment with antibiotics can cure the infection and prevent later complications. Treatment during later stages of the disease often requires more intensive antibiotic therapy. There have been fourteen cases of Lyme Disease recorded in the Chicago area, most of which contracted the disease in other areas such as Wisconsin. However, there is suspicion that three of these cases evolved from the Chicago area. The Federal Government's Center for Disease Control in Atlanta lists 1498 confirmed cases nationwide in 1984 versus only 599 in 1983 and 226 in 1980. The effects of the disease on humans are variable and rather baffling. Some people who have been bitten

by infected deer ticks, for example, do not seem to get the disease. Their bodies' natural immune systems overcome the microbes invading their bloodstreams - sometimes temporarily, sometimes permanently.

Tiny, six-legged, Deer Tick larvae hatch from eggs deposited in the spring and attach to small mammals or to birds (which carry the disease great distances) for their first blood meal. After over-wintering, the larvae molt into a second juvenile stage, the eight-legged nymph. The nymphs of the Deer Tick, which are about the size of a pinhead, attach to larger animals such as dogs, horses, deer, and to man for their second meal sometime during spring or summer. The final stage occurs when the nymphs molt and attach again, as adult ticks, to larger mammals, usually deer. They mate on the host and after another blood meal, the females drop off and lay their eggs to complete the cycle. Lyme Disease is clearly a summer disease, with about ninety percent of all cases occurring from early June through September.



Take precautions while outdoors. Never go barefoot or wear shorts in areas that are suspect or known to harbor ticks. Tuck your pants inside socks or tape the bottoms around the ankles. Avoid tall grass and bushes. Wear light colored clothes so that ticks are easy to spot. Use "Off" or "Cutter" insect repellents before venturing outdoors in suspect areas. The latter repellents do just that, repel the ticks. There is a new product called "Permanone", which has not been approved in Illinois as yet, that kills ticks instead of just repelling them.

One should also be aware that your pets can contact Lyme Disease. If your dog should exhibit symptoms of lameness, fever or poor appetite, contact your veterinarian.

### USED BUT GOOD

The Byron Forest Preserve District has been quietly building the initial services that will be needed to maintain the 500 acre prairie preserve. The need for some specialized equipment has been dealt with by acquiring donations, purchasing used industrial equipment, grants from the state of Illinois, and outright purchases from the federal government and state prison.

The photo below shows the following left to right:

	New Cost	District Cost
1. D12U.S. Navy Grader	165,000.00	10,000.00
2. GMC 6x6	70,000.00	Fire District Grant
3. Commonwealth 44 Bucket	60,000.00	4,000.00
4. Chevrolet Dump Truck	27,000.00	Donation plus repairs 1,200.00
5. GMC 3/4 Ton Pick-up	6,000.00	Menard Prison 400.00
Totals	328,000.00	15,600.00
Maintenance last 12 months		1,300.00
Total Department Expenses to date:		16,900.00

Several of these items will be maintained by the district. Some will be sold when their operating costs exceed their service to the district.



Byron High School students watch while owners of the Rockford Wayne's Feed Store release a rehabilitated fawn at the Byron Prairie Preserve.

## CAUTION:

Using soapy water sprayed on box elder bugs will kill the bug but can also kill plants if accidentally coated.





## HUNTER SAFETY COURSES



As urban growth expands and rural areas disappear, the need for safety training for new hunters has grown rapidly in the past five years. Illinois met this challenge well with a statewide network of certified instructors. A twenty-year tested, ten-hour mandatory program for new hunters is in effect.

Your forest preserve district has provided leadership in this area for the past four years and, for the first time this year, has added a familiarization-live-firing session to insure that students have been exposed to the actual handling of firearms.

Eight Daisy air rifles were purchased at reduced prices to permit student participation.

If you know a youth who does not know how to safely handle a firearm, we recommend you consider enrolling him or her. Even if a youth does not wish to hunt, knowing not to play with firearms can save a life.

## BOOK REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS

Peter Loewer wrote *The Annual Garden: Flowers, Foliage, Fruits, and Grasses of One Summer Season* for novice and advanced gardeners. The text includes cultural information and directions for creating 14 gardens. It is illustrated with many of the author's pen-and-ink drawings and 32 pages of color photos. The hardbound volume, published by Rodale Press, has 256 pages and costs \$19.95.

## HERITAGE FARM COMMITTEE GIVES RECOMMENDATION TO FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT BOARD

Members of the Heritage Farm Committee have been evaluating the possibility of establishing a small Heritage Farm program on a portion of the land currently being acquired for the Byron Prairie Preserve.

Mrs. Margaret Adams, Chairwoman of the committee and member of the Byron Forest Preserve District board, submitted the committee's recommendation to the preserve board in October. The report concluded the preserve should take advantage of the value of restoration of the small farmhouse and other buildings found on the site.

The committee requested the board of commissioners set aside \$6,000.00 for 1989-90 to assist in restoration efforts.

The board has placed this sum in their budget at the committee's request.

## SALT KILLING YOUR YARD?

The Steelcase Corporate Development Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan, is planting blue gramma, buffalo grass, and Dawson's creeping red fescue *Festuca rubra* in the curbside area and has shown good survival against salt damage.

• Summer or winter, day or night,  
• The woods are ever a new delight;  
• They give us peace, and they make us strong,  
• Such a wonderful balm to them belong;  
• So, living or dying, I'll take my ease,  
• Under the trees, under the trees.

R.H. Stoddard

## INNOVATIVE DESIGNERS CREATE A NEW CORPORATE LANDSCAPE THAT'S AS OLD AS THE HILLS

Deliberately set fire to hundreds of acres of unique landscape, and what do you get? A jail sentence for arson, most likely--unless you're acting on a particular cultural principle for a special kind of plant community: in order to grow, prairie must burn.

This precept, knowledgeable naturalists insist, is essential to the survival of the Native American wonder called prairie, a combination of grasses and forbs that can endure for decades, if a few simple needs are met.

Prairie can be established successfully in growing zones 2 thru 8. Sites may be 10' x 10' to hundreds of acres. Soil can be dry to moist.

Your Byron Forest Preserve District Prairie Preserve Site is in the fourth year of re-establishing a large, 100 acre plus, prairie. Much of it has never seen a plow or hoe. However, it had been downgraded over the years due to a lack of periodic burning and extensive pasturing.

Two new 10' x 10' prairie plots have been started in the City of Byron this past year in private lawns, to demonstrate what prairie plots can look like. One is located adjacent to the *Tempo* newspaper office on land owned by Mr. Bob King, the True Value Hardware owner, and the second is in the front yard of Mrs. Helen Debnam.

When deciding what to use for decorating your yard, we hope you will consider the natural beauty prairie gives.

By the way, you don't need to mow or do much maintenance to establish and maintain prairie. It can save you a lot of work and provide beautiful flowers and unusual grass form all year long, for a very small investment. It further perpetuates itself when given only a little attention.

If you want to know more about naturalizing your yard or establishing a wild flower plot, call the preserve at 234-8535. We want to help you.

## RANGER RICK CLUB REPORT

This year saw a good increase in the number of Ranger Rick Club members. Thirty-six paid members are participating in once-a-month activities.

This past month, the club hosted a jack-o'-lantern trail with carved pumpkins for the Halloween on the Prairie program.

Activities planned and dated for the club thru May include:

Devil's Lake Hike	Nov. 12
Horseback Riding	Dec. 10
Tobogganing	Jan. 14
Museum of Science & Industry	Feb. 11
Maple Syrup Making	Mar. 11
McCormick Camp Out	Apr. 21
Bird Banding	May 13

## BIRD FACTS:

Research has shown that a typical feeding woodpecker's bill strikes a tree trunk at the rate of 20 to 23 feet a second, or about 15 miles per hour. This means that one stroke takes less than one-one thousandth of a second.



Photo shows Byron Forest Preserve District cross-country skis ready for winter rental.

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Byron, Illinois

## ADULT OUTDOOR EDUCATION COMING ATTRACTIONS

JANUARY	Danger, Prevention, and Treatment of Lyme's Disease
FEBRUARY	Mississippi River Bald Eagle Viewing Trip
MARCH	Maple Syrup Collection and Processing
APRIL	Geology of Byron Area
MAY	Spring Wildflower Class
JUNE	"Farming, Here and Now" Bus Tour of Dairy, Beef, and Hog Farms
JULY	Rock River Cruise
AUGUST	Local Prairie Bus Tour Visits

## MAINTENANCE SHOP NEARING COMPLETION

Three years ago, the forest preserve district initiated the construction of a maintenance service center to provide a single central operation. It was to be built in three phases over the three years. With the use of the two full-time staff members, various part-timers, and dozens of weekend public service workers, the building is nearing completion.

You may enjoy studying the construction if you are considering building a home or garage.

Made totally of a fiber styrofoam material, the walls have no wooden supports except a two-by-four cap at the top, bottom, and doorways.

Walk-in doors were installed by cutting out the openings with a chain-saw, placing in a two-by-four frame, and mounting the door.

One section has a foam ceiling.

The walls have an R-factor of 30, and one section of ceiling has an R-factor of 38. This permits the smallest household furnace possible to heat 1800 square feet with little effort. One heated section has an eleven (11) foot ceiling, while the other a nine (9) foot.

Developed from a walk-in freezer principle, this building can have all the walls erected in one day, ready for roof trusses. A firm in Milwaukee is constructing homes using this material, with various exterior finishes, at a rate of one each day. Even basement walls are being built without cement and two-by-four framing.

You are invited to stop in and see how the facility is constructed. The cost was approximately \$7.50 per square foot. This did not include electrical work and plumbing.

*Happy  
Thanksgiving*

From the  
Byron Forest Preserve District Board

