

"i Volunteer" Newsletter

Illinois Department of Natural Resources Volunteer Network Program

Summer/Fall, 2012

Volume 4, Issue 2

IDNR 2012 OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR HONORED AT STATE FAIR

The following received Awards at the Fair:

- **RALPH BUETTNER** of Waterloo, nominated by Debbie Scott Newman, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Natural Areas Preservation Specialist.
- **KEN POLHAMUS AND MARCIA POLHAMUS** of Galena, nominated by Cynthia Brewer, Safety Education Volunteer Coordinator.
- **ILLINOIS BEACH STATE PARK CAMPGROUND HOSTS** of Zion, nominated by Deb Kloss, Illinois Beach State Park Office Coordinator.
- **SCOTT BRYANT AND MIGRATORY WATER-FOWL HUNTERS, INC.**, of Alton, nominated by Chris Hespen, Pere Marquette State Park.
- **GLEN MCNELLY AND JARED MCNELLY**, of Grafton, nominated by Pam Warford, Pere Marquette State Park.
- **JIM TALLMAN and VENTURING CREW 9093**, of Jerseyville and **SHARON KOENIG and VENTURING CREW 9032** of Dow, nominated by Scott Isringhausen, Pere Marquette State Park.
- **DR. BILL ROE and the FRIENDS OF PYRAMID STATE PARK**, of Pinckneyville, nominated by Cha Hill, Pyramid State Park.
- **LORI SPEAR, MARK FLOTOW, AYLAKHAN, AND RUSSELL MCCLELLAN**, all of Springfield, nominated by Beth Shea, Illinois State Museum.

CONGRATULATIONS!

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) honored 13 individuals and five groups as Outstanding Volunteers of the Year for their volunteer efforts on behalf of the IDNR. The awards were presented during a ceremony in Conservation World at the Illinois State Fair on Saturday, Aug. 18th.

"The IDNR is fortunate to have hundreds of volunteers who are doing great work on projects and programs at state parks and on conservation and natural resources stewardship efforts all over the state," said IDNR Director Marc Miller. *"This recognition program is one way we can thank them for the valuable service and expertise they provide to us and to the people of the State of Illinois."*



IDNR Director Marc Miller with the 2012 Outstanding Volunteers of the Year at the Volunteer of the Year Ceremony in Conservation World at the Illinois State Fair

The following **Outstanding Volunteers of the Year** were not able to attend the Ceremony and received their Award in a private ceremony:

- **SALMON UNLIMITED** of Bartlett, nominated by Steve Krueger, Jake Wolf Fish Hatchery.

For more information about the contributions made by our **2012 Outstanding Volunteers of the Year**, please visit our website at: http://www.dnr.state.il.us/volunteer/pdf/2010_Volunteer_Year.pdf.

IDNR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

3RD ANNUAL GREAT ROCK RIVER SWEEP SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2012

Volunteers are invited to participate at any of the registered sections listed on the **Great Rock River Sweep** website at: <http://www.rockriversweep.org>.

*"Invite your friends and family to experience a rewarding experience on the water. They might just be pleasantly surprised how much fun a river clean-up can really be. The annual **Great Rock River Sweep** is not only a river clean-up, but a celebration as well; a celebration of our Rock River."*

As you provide stewardship for this grand and beautiful natural resource on river sweep day, please take a few minutes and pause to reflect on the natural beauty that abounds along the river. Pause to reflect on the national treasure you are maintaining." Frank Masterman, Founder of the **Great Rock River Sweep**

The IDNR Sites that are along the Rock River and are part of the Rock River Sweep, are:

- Lowden State Park, just north of Oregon
- Castle Rock State Park, a few miles downstream from Oregon
- Lowden-Miller State Forest, right across the river from Castle Rock State Park
- and Prophetstown State Park, upstream from Prophetstown

For more information email: contact@rockriversweep.org or phone **Frank Masterman at 815-440-8020**.



Rock River Sweep.org

(A river clean-up... and more)

Good Stream Stewardship Depends On All Of Us

"The official summer recreational season is winding down, and our Rock River will continue to require attention.

You are encouraged to always leave your river or stream cleaner than you found it" ... Frank Masterman

ANNUAL KANKAKEE RIVER CLEAN UP SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2012

Come celebrate Illinois Rivers month!!! Volunteer for the **Kankakee River Clean-up** and/or participate in the many programs offered during the month.

You can volunteer to help keep the **Kankakee River** one of the cleanest in the nation.

Sign up between **8 and 11 AM** at the park's concession stand to clean up litter along the banks of the **Kankakee River and Rock Creek**.

Trash bags and gloves will be provided. Upon return, participants will receive a free lunch.

For more information: Contact **Stacey Johnson**, Site Interpreter at Kankakee River State Park, at 815-933-1383, ext.25 or email her at Stacey.johnson@illinois.gov.

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR

PFD

WHILE ON THE WATER

PUMP UP THE PRAIRIE WORKDAY SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2012 9:00 a.m. - Noon

What better way to celebrate National Public Lands Day than to join the **Salt Creek Greenway Association** in helping to preserve the biodiversity and restore our connection to the land on **Saturday, September 15th**. You can help restore 80 acres of beautiful prairie lands at **Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve**, located just 15 miles west of downtown Chicago. This protected prairie is not only a gift to those of us who love experiencing nature, it is a vital component of sustaining the Midwest. You'll be among fellow nature and prairie enthusiasts clearing buckthorn and collecting seed for re-introduction to restoration areas cleared earlier in the year. Come for an hour or volunteer for the whole morning but don't miss being part of this important restoration effort. **What to bring:** Bring your friends, family and neighbors along with sturdy work gloves. Be prepared to get a little dirty.

For more information contact **Valerie Spale** at stpsspale@aol.com or visit their website at: www.savetheprairiesociety.org.

SUPPORT A FRIEND!

IDNR Friends Groups are dedicated to helping IDNR sites and natural resources. If you think you are interested in becoming an IDNR Volunteer or a member of an **IDNR Friends Group**, check out the following upcoming events where our **Friends** will be providing funds or volunteering to help IDNR. By attending an event, or contacting the **Friends Group**, you can learn how you can be directly involved and support IDNR sites and natural resources. Sponsorships, Memberships and Donations help our **Friends Groups** as well.



You can help leave a legacy for future generations.

The Franklin Creek Preservation Area Committee in Franklin Grove,

is sponsoring **An Evening at the Mill—Saturday, September 15**—After a fine dinner that starts at **6:00 PM**, Roger John will be giving a presentation at 7:00 PM on “Going south for the Winter...To Antarctica”. Reservations must be made in advance. The contact person for tickets is **Julie Hage** at **815.288.5445**. Reservations need to be made by September 11th. Tickets are \$25.00 each which includes the meal and program. Proceeds go toward the on-going operation of the Grist Mill at **Franklin Creek State Natural Area** by the Friends Group.

Also from **10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**, The Nature Conservancy/Nachusa Grasslands (8772 S. Lowden Road, Franklin Grove) will present **Autumn on the Prairie/Bison on the Horizon**. Activities include guided tours, horse drawn wagon ride, live music, kettle corn, live birds of prey, local artist at work, children’s tent, a food vendor and more! The Franklin Creek Grist Mill will be open for tours and corn grinding demonstrations. The address is 8772 S. Lowden Road, Franklin Grove. For more information visit www.nature.org/Illinois or call **815-456-2340**

Franklin Creek Preservation Area Committee website: <http://www.franklincreekgristmill.com/>
or Contact: Julie Hage at 815-288-5445.

The Goose Lake Prairie Partners in Morris,

are volunteers for **Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area**. They are holding their **Annual Prairie Day, Saturday, September 15 at 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** It is a day celebrating the prairie environment normally held in conjunction with **National Prairie Week**. Presentations on the environment and nature play a very important part of the day’s activities as well as playing on the special features of the park itself. Various presentations, educational talks and projects for children are the special offerings of the day.

Also, all special aspects of the park will be open, the Cragg Cabin, the Visitors Center, butterfly barn, nature trails with wagon rides, etc. Prairie Day traditionally falls on the third Saturday of September. Located in and around the Visitor’s Center.



2012 Premier Sponsor of Prairie Day

Goose Lake Prairie Partners website: <http://gooselakeprairie.org/htm>
Or Contact Goose Lake Prairie Visitors Center at: 815-942-2899

MORE WAYS TO MEET FRIENDS....THIS FALL

The Friends of Pere Marquette State Park Foundation in Grafton

have helped the Park plan and provide for the following programs:

Friday, October 5th, 12, & 19th. Meet at the Visitor's Center for an **Owl Program** at 8:00 pm. or 7:30p.m. on the 19th. After the program, join a hike to listen for owls. The hike will start at the Visitor's Center and there will be a considerable portion that will be uphill. You must be able to hike on hilly terrain. The hike will be approximately 2 miles. Afterwards, you can roast marshmallows and hotdogs. Please bring one flashlight per family. Marshmallows, hotdogs, and drinks will be provided by the **Friends Group**.

Sunday, October 7th. Meet at the Visitor Center for the **Pelican Program** at 9:00 a.m. Have you ever seen a white pelican? Soaring on 10 foot wingspans, pelicans are magnificent birds. Learn to identify a white pelican, what they eat, and why they are here this time of year. Meet for a short talk at the Visitor Center, then follow in your vehicle to observe these birds. Dress warm and bring binoculars.

Friday, October 20th. Awesome Autumn! As the season turns cooler and the colors turn warmer, come on a scenic drive as the forest blazes with a beauty unique to **Pere Marquette State Park**. Meet at the Visitor's Center at 10:00 am. There will be a lottery to decide who will ride in the van with the Site Interpreter. The others will follow in their own vehicles; a break for lunch along the way at a restaurant and return back to the Park at approximately 2:00 pm.

Friday, October 26th. Take a walk through the **Colors of Fall**. Take a nature hike to see the brilliant colors and experience the other wonders of nature first hand. Meet at the Visitors Center at 3:00 pm for this 2 mile, 2 hour hike. Don't forget your walking shoes and camera. Marshmallows and drinks will be provided by the **Friends Group**.

Saturday, October 27th. Take a **6 Mile Hike** and explore some of the most interesting trails. We will walk past creeks, 100 year old trees, and stop at 2 scenic overlooks. Wear good hiking shoes; bring a snack, camera and binoculars. Meet at the Visitor's Center at 8:15 a.m. and return approximately at 11:45 a.m.

Don't forget to visit the displays in the Visitor Center, where you can also purchase souvenir items on sale by the Friends Group!

Friends of Pere Marquette State Park Foundation website: <http://www.friendsofperemarquette.org>
or Contact Pere Marquette State Park Visitor Center at 618-786-3323 ext. 1

The Starved Rock Foundation in Utica,

will be helping with **Fall Colors Weekend** at **Starved Rock State Park** in Utica, **Saturday, October 20** and **Sunday, October 21**. There will be free guided hikes to see the spectacular colors of fall. Learn about the geology and history of the Park as you are led to different canyons and overlooks of the Park. Meet at the Visitor's Center at **9:00am and or at 1:00pm** or call the Visitor Center for times.

Before you go on your hike, stop by the Visitor's Center. This center is run by volunteers of the **Starved Rock Foundation**. Here is where you will find, displays, changing showcases, and the Le Rocher Bookstore where you can purchase items to help support the **Friends Group**.

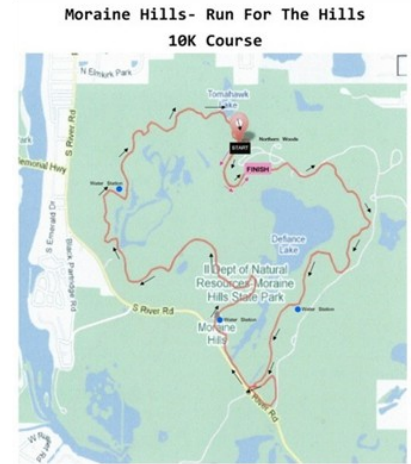


The Starved Rock Foundation website: <http://www.starvedrockfoundation.org/>
Or Contact Starved Rock State Park Visitor Center at 815-667-4726

MORE WAYS TO MEET YOUR FRIENDS

The Friends of Moraine Hills State Park in McHenry

Is sponsoring **Run for the Hills!** on **Saturday, October 20**. This is a **Half-Marathon & 10K Run**. Proceeds will benefit the **Friends Group!** Get ready to **Run for the Hills** in the autumn beauty of **Moraine Hills State Park**. **This is** a spectacular venue that will make your 2012 fall running season unforgettable. Registration is limited to 350 participants. Registration will close when that number is reached or on Saturday, October 13, 2012 at midnight. Register at http://www.morainehillsrunforthehills.com/Moraine_Hills_-_Run_for_the_Hills/Run_for_the_Hills_Main.html
Volunteers are sought to support **Run for the Hills!**
If interested in volunteering, please contact Race Coordinator **Bonnie Sheehan** at camelot1808@sbcglobal.net.



Friends of Moraine Hills State Park website: <http://www.friendsofmorainehillsstatepark.org/>
Or email: info@friendsofmorainehillsstatepark.org

The Friends of Volo Bog State Natural Area in McHenry

conduct **Guided Tours of Volo Bog State Natural Area Most Saturdays & Sundays at 11:00 am & 1:00 pm**. Explore Illinois' only remaining open-water quaking bog, where the trees move with your steps, plants eat bugs and other strange things occur! With the dry, dry summer, the eye of **Volo Bog** is thick with watershield, peat & muck. Natural succession takes us ever closer to the day when the open water eye disappears altogether - though that should still be many years away. For now, watershield, and water lilies are abundant. Ferns and horsetails are thick. Tickseeds and arrowheads are blooming. Frogs seek shade under lily pads standing above the condensing muck below. Dragonflies and damselflies are joined by the songs of meadow grasshoppers and a myriad other insects as summer marches on. All ages are welcome on our guided tours. No reservations needed, except.... Groups of 10 or more, please phone ahead at **815-344-1294** to arrange a *private group tour*. Public tours last about one hour.

~And~

The Annual **Ghost Stories Plus!** will be held Saturday, October 13 from 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Registration is REQUIRED. **Haunted Trail** opens at 5:15 p.m. Stories begin at 7:00 p.m. Minimum age is 5 years.

With *Storyteller Linda Gorham of Aurora*, there is never a dull moment! Her stories are creative and energetic. Her ghost stories range from those that make you giggle to those that make you cringe and even shiver a little - appropriate for a chilly night just over the hill from Volo Bog itself. Contact dnr.volobog@illinois.gov or 815-344-1294 to reserve your space now!

Friends of Moraine Hills State Park website: <http://www.friendsofvologog.org/>
Or email: <mailto:info@friendsofvologog.org>

A complete list of **IDNR Friends Groups** can be found at:
<http://www.dnr.state.il.us/volunteer/FriendsGroups.pdf>

ADDITIONAL LINKS



For more information, to change your email address or to subscribe or unsubscribe to the "i Volunteer" Newsletter you may email: **Dianne Blasa**, the Volunteer Network Program Manager at:

dnr.volunteers@illinois.gov

You can access any of the websites mentioned in this Newsletter or send emails by **Ctrl + left click**

I combined the Summer and Fall "i Volunteer" Newsletters with this Issue because I will be retiring soon. It has been a pleasure getting to know all of you, together with your tremendous volunteer accomplishments. IDNR's volunteers are some of the finest and I will miss working with you. I hope to expand my own volunteer service, so I can work with people as yourself, help solve problems and watch results happen! Thank you for helping IDNR fulfill its mission to manage and protect our natural and recreational resources for our future generations.

Dianne Blasa

Volunteer Network Program Manager

Don't miss the **Illinois Conservation Foundation's (ICF) 2012 Sportsman's Fundraiser /Hall of Fame Banquet September 15, 2012 at 5:30** in E. Peoria at the Stoney Creek Inn, 100 Mariners Way, East Peoria, IL. This is your opportunity to help the **ICF** pass along our hunting, fishing and outdoor heritage to future generations of sportsmen and women. Two new Hall of Fame inductees, *Warren Gale of Orion* and *Allie Lymenstull of Quincy* will be recognized for their dedication to conservation initiatives and work in preserving our natural resources. The purchase of a ticket will help the **ICF** create new opportunities for boys and girls to experience the great outdoors at the *Torstenson Youth Conservation Education Center*; a place where kids never pay to learn fishing camping, hunting and outdoor skills. Attendees will have a chance to win door prizes, hundreds of live and silent auction items. Live auction items include hunts, art and an African safari. \$45 advanced purchase or \$60 at the door per person/\$450.00 per table of 10. Register at www.hall_of_fame/SeptemberBanquet.aspx or call 217/785-2003. The ICF is a 501 (C)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All funds are held in private accounts

"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another."

~Erma Bombeck~



Go Green! Print this only when necessary. Thank you for helping the State of Illinois be environmentally responsible.