

The Leaflet



Homer Lake Woodland Habitat Restoration

Did you know that many of the trees at Homer Lake Forest Preserve were planted in the late 1960s? Trees were planted in rows in areas around the lake by the Illinois Department of Conservation (now the Illinois Department of Natural Resources), which used to own and manage the land. The Champaign County Forest Preserve District began managing the preserve in 1971 under a lease and in 1992, the District received full ownership of the lake and surrounding land. In many areas throughout the preserve, you can observe long rows of large trees of the same species growing tightly together.

Unfortunately, because of a lack of resources for early timber management, these areas are in desperate need of selective thinning. These dense stands of trees and invasive shrubs are preventing a healthy amount of light from reaching the ground. Selective thinning will facilitate the regeneration of oak trees and will transform this landscape into one that contains a rich and colorful variety of songbirds, butterflies, wildflowers, shrubs, and other ➤

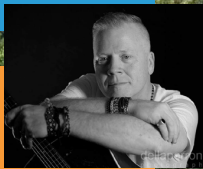


KRT at Sleepy Creek

Sleepy Creek Vineyard's Dragonfly Venue
Wednesday, November 8, 2023
6:00 - 9:00pm

Silent Auction ends at 8:30pm
The Live Jukebox Show with David Howie

Tickets: \$50; couples \$100
includes dinner and one drink
Sponsor a table of 10 for \$450



All proceeds benefit the continued development/enhancement of the KRT!
Call for event tickets: 217-586-3360 or 217-442-1691
www.oneKRT.org

HABITAT RESTORATION continued from cover

abundant forms of life.

The first phase of the Homer Lake Woodland Habitat Restoration Project includes 10–20 acres of oak woodland/savanna that will be selectively cleared in the Timberdoodle Trail area.

If you'd like to help us accomplish our goal, donate today at:



<https://secure.qgiv.com/for/ccfpff> or scan this QR code.

Direct your support to: **Homer Lake “Timberdoodle Habitat Enhancement Project.”**

Every dollar donated to this project will be matched 3 to 1 by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation.



The Forest Preserves are pleased to engage our third cohort of Lincoln's Challenge cadets in natural areas stewardship!



Lincoln's Challenge Academy is a program of the Illinois National Guard for youth between 16 and 18 that provides high school and workforce instruction. One of their eight core objectives for their cadets is to learn Service to the Community. The Forest Preserves have long benefited from occasional volunteer service from the cadets help cleaning up after Freedom Fest, or spreading gravel in the Middle Fork River campground sites, but last year we fostered a new relationship with Lincoln's Challenge, whereby the same team of cadets return weekly to steward a natural area. Many of the cadets have expressed that this type of volunteer work is their favorite — they get out in nature and they see the impact of their labor. Indeed, their efforts have been tremendously

impactful! Two cohorts of cadets have hand-cleared over two acres of invasive shrubs and undesirable woody plants from an area of the Timberdoodle restoration at Homer Lake!

Not only are these accomplishments ecologically beneficial, but “the additional value of the program is that it exposes younger, more diverse youth to the field of natural resources”, says Peter Goodspeed, Natural Resources Director. Moreover, the repeating service allows our staff to help interested cadets develop some stewardship skills and to encourage the youth, who attend the Academy from all over Illinois, to be comfortable and competent in natural areas.

“We all benefit from this collaboration” our Volunteer Coordinator states. “The cadets can see the changes they made through their own labor and learn the meaning of their impact. They are exposed to more time in nature which is known to be beneficial for health and cognition, and they learn of career pathways that might not have been on their radar. Lincoln's Challenge gets a meaningful service opportunity that requires less coordination than single events. And, of course the cadets save our Natural Resources staff a couple hundred hours of time. It is a really positive thing.”

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

See the full program descriptions online, ccfpd.org

● OCTOBER ●

Sunday, October 1-Friday November 3 NOT SO SPOOKY SELF-GUIDED NATURE WALK

Oak Burl Trail, Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, daily during preserve open hours

This self-guided activity involves signs set up along the Oak Burl Trail where visitors are invited to walk and read one sign at a time along the trail. FREE. All Ages.

Friday, Oct. 6 (6 p.m. CST) - Sunday, October 8 (12 p.m. CST) WILDERNESS LIVING SKILLS WORKSHOP

Burr Oak Group Campground,
Middle Fork River Forest Preserve

Spend 3 days camping in the hardwood forests of Illinois where you will learn to make use of the landscape around you. Our instructors for this workshop are the highly experienced co-founders of Wild Nature Project. They have led this workshop at our location for 9 years, and we know you will enjoy them while learning so many new skills! \$220 per person. Adults only. Space is limited.

Note: To help keep costs down, we do not provide food in this course.

Saturday, October 7 HARVEST FEST

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 1-3 p.m.

Register by October 4 at ccfpd.org to reserve a pumpkin. Pumpkins will be \$5 each and quantities will be limited. All other program activities will be free of charge. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Saturday, October 14 FALL STAR WATCH

Sugar Creek Shelter, Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, 7 p.m.- 11 p.m.

No cloud date. Call (217) 351-2567 for weather updates. For more info: (217) 896-2455 or jwick@ccfpd.org.

Sunday, October 15 16TH ANNUAL LINCOLN LECTURE SERIES VOICES OF OUR PAST: FREDERICK DOUGLASS

Museum of the Grand Prairie,
Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

Learn about this important figure in U.S. history as Bob Davis, first-person interpreter, brings Douglass to life with an interactive and engaging presentation portraying the notable abolitionist and orator. FREE.

Friday, October 20 WALK WITH A NATURALIST

Flicker Woods Trail, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m.

FREE. All Ages. Space is limited; registration required by October 19 at ccfpd.org.

Saturday, October 21 (Rain backup Oct. 28) TREE PLANTING WORKSHOP

Interpretive Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.

All tools will be provided, but attendees should dress appropriately. Rain backup date is October 28. FREE. All Ages.

Saturday, October 21 SUNSET SHOW: EMILY ANNE & CLAYTON BURKE

Harry L. Swartz Campground, Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, 4:30-6 p.m.

This acoustic songwriting duo brings you some country, folk, originals, and other songs about making the most of the simple pleasures life has to offer. FREE.

Saturday, October 28 HOOT 'N HOWL: HALLOWEEN FUN AT MIDDLE FORK

Harry L. Swartz Campground, Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, 3-7:30 p.m.

Find many tricks and treats during this all ages event at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve! Take a self-guided hike on a Not-So-Spooky Nature Trail to learn more about what goes on in nature in the fall and some of the tricks that nature plays on itself. Bring your best costume and enter for a chance to win prizes during a costume contest! From 3-5 p.m., enjoy hayrack rides around the campground, apple peeling, mask making, and other hands-on activities. Costume

contest winners will be announced at 5:30 p.m. and an outdoor movie for all ages will be screened immediately after. Children must be accompanied by an adult. FREE.

● NOVEMBER ●

Friday, November 3 WALK WITH A NATURALIST

Main Entrance, Sangamon River Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m.

For this month's Walk with a Naturalist, we will explore Sangamon River Forest Preserve. This preserve Parking is limited; carpooling is encouraged. FREE. All Ages. Space is limited; registration required by November 2 at ccfpd.org.

Saturday, November 4 EXPLORE ARCHAEOLOGY OPEN HOUSE

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 1-4 p.m.

The presentation will focus on the importance of stone in tribal mythology and the daily lives of past peoples. FREE.

Thursday, November 9 or Saturday, November 11 PLANTS THAT SHAPED HISTORY

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 10-11:30 a.m.

Through interactive games and hands-on activities, participants will uncover the plant-powered history of Central Illinois like never before! \$5 per child. Ages 6-10. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Space is limited; registration is required by November 3 at ccfpd.org. Register for the Thursday or Saturday session.

Tuesday, November 14 (rain backup November 16) 2023 OWL NIGHT: AN UP-CLOSE EXPERIENCE WITH OUR ROUND-EYED, FEATHERED FRIENDS

Salt Fork Center, Homer Lake Forest Preserve, 5:30-8:30 p.m.

Drop in anytime between 5:30-8:30 p.m. on November 14 to learn about owl life history, ecology, behavior, and learn what you can do to help conserve these unique animals. Rain backup date is November 16. FREE. All Ages.

Sunday, November 19 16TH ANNUAL LINCOLN LECTURE SERIES VOICES OF OUR PAST: ANN BRADFORD STOKES

Museum of the Grand Prairie, Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, 2 p.m.

In a fascinating reenactment, Marlene Rivero will breathe life back into Ann Bradford Stokes story, captivating audiences and informing new learners. FREE.