

May 12, 2022

## MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Commissioners  
From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Manager  
Re: May Staff Report

### Executive Director (Lorrie Pearson)

- Presented with Tim Bartlett on the KRT to the Champaign County Chamber of Commerce's Public Policy Committee, which is comprised of business representatives.
- Mike Daab and I met with prospective candidates for appointment to the Board of Commissioners.
- Attended quarterly meeting of the Central Illinois Directors Roundtable, hosted by Urbana Park District.
- Served as a host for garlic mustard removal volunteer event on 4/22 and 4/23. Encouraged other staff to participate to show support of the Natural Resources Department and learn more about what they do at the 4/27- 4/28 volunteer events.
- Emily Williams (Natural Resources), one Foundation member, several other volunteers, and I volunteered at the Illinois Race Weekend Expo on behalf of the Foundation. As a result of everyone's generous gift of time, we met the minimum volunteer threshold required to be a charity partner.

### Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)

- Bridgette Moen met with the UIUC chapter of Design for America, a national organization that partners college students with local organizations to encourage "design-thinking for social good", to pitch CCFPD as a potential project partner for academic year 2022-2023.
- Bridgette Moen presented to Champaign County Planning and Zoning Board of Appeals to request a Special Use Permit and variances for KRT construction. Permits were approved with conditions similar to phase one of the trail and CCFPD planning staff made new connections to residents interested in KRT development during the meeting.
- Entrance signs at Lake of the Woods were installed by the Construction team and are a great improvement.
- Construction staff also installed a new bottle filler water tower with spigot for use at the Lake of the Woods kayak and canoe launch. Construction worked with Operations staff to make improvements to the launch site, including top dressing the pea gravel at the main canoe launch. Due to the nature of water level fluctuation and sediment deposition from the Sangamon River, this will become part of a routine maintenance program.
- Willow Pond Renovation has been on a temporary hold due to wet weather. The contractor has recently upgraded the hauling route to work more efficiently in wet conditions and keep the project moving.
- Sealcoating at Lake of the Woods is scheduled for May 12, 13, 16, 17 (weather dependent). The preserve will remain open but expect delays travelling main roads.



- Construction staff worked with Middle Fork staff to install nine water fountains at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve.
- Sustainability members attended the Land Trust Alliance's webinar on Communicating Climate Change, which had some practical advice on how to talk to the public about this important issue.
- Michael Daab was interviewed by University of Illinois “Community Psychology 239 - Social Issues” students regarding climate change, environmental equity, and organizational development and structure. The students presented information from their project through a virtual poster presentation on May 3.

### **Business and Finance (John Baker)**

- Received notice of new PDRMA requirements for cyber-threat insurance. For insurance renewals beginning in July 2023, PDRMA will require its member agencies to address ten specific IT-security requirements. The IT Committee met April 25 to assess these requirements and begin addressing these in time for the District to maintain its PDRMA cyber insurance.
- Attended a City of Champaign webinar on its Diversity Advancement Program (CDAP) which seeks to develop, sustain, and strengthen the use of a diverse pool of socially disadvantaged businesses providing goods and services to the City. The program focused on the City of Champaign’s certification process for socially disadvantaged businesses. Staff posed specific questions related to other districts participating in the CDAP program and are reviewing the City of Champaign ordinance that established CDAP.
- Attended the May 3 IMRF rate meeting webinar. IMRF’s 2021 investment gain was 16.6%, or \$6.5 billion. The CCFPD employer pension reserve increased in 2021 from \$3.97 million to \$5.13 million. The CCFPD pension contribution rate will decrease from 7.37% this year to 5.92% for 2023. The CCFPD pension funding rate (active members only) at year end was 98% on an actuarial basis.
- Finished preparations for and engaged with the District auditors for the 2021 audit field work, including explanation of variances in financial activity between 2020 and 2021, fraud interviews, and testing of internal controls. As occurred the past two years, all communications and documentation were electronic.
- In preparation for the basement office build, prepared and submitted records retention request to the State of Illinois for shredding and disposal of District records dated earlier than retention requirements.
- Renewed County and State liquor licenses for the Golf Course.

### **Human Resources (Dara Edgington)**

- During the month of April HR processed a total of 24 hires and zero separations, resulting in a turnover rate of 0.00% for the month.
- As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, our total headcount was 100 employees including 43 FT, 17 PT, and 40 seasonal.
- Round one interviews for the Homer Lake Site Superintendent commenced May 9<sup>th</sup>.
- The District documented just one incident (an employee injury) with PDRMA over the month of April.

### **Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)**

- Here is a link to the completed [2021 Annual Report](#).
- Attended American Trails: Advancing Trails seminar - Increasing Community Engagement on Local Trails during National Trails Day®.
- Media coverage last month included:

**Celebrating Earth Day in Champaign-Urbana**

o <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/04/18/champaign-urbana-earth-day-with-kids/>

**Lyrid meteor shower 2022 brings fireballs to the Illinois skies**

o <https://patch.com/illinois/across-il/lyrid-meteor-shower-2022-brings-fireballs-illinois-skies>

**Talk of the Town, April 23, 2022**

o [https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/community-events/talk-of-the-towns-april-23-2022/article\\_af157489-5950-529c-a9c4-edc358319bde.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/community-events/talk-of-the-towns-april-23-2022/article_af157489-5950-529c-a9c4-edc358319bde.html)

**Celebrate International Dark Sky Week through April 30**

o [https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/celebrate\\_international\\_dark\\_sky\\_week\\_through\\_a\\_pril\\_30th/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/celebrate_international_dark_sky_week_through_a_pril_30th/)

**CiLiving Champaign County Forest Preserve District**

o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4QK1ZYk6LQ>

**Where to take spring photos on Champaign Urbana**

o <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/05/02/family-photos-champaign-urbana-spring/>

**Have the Ultimate Outdoor Summer with Kids in the Champaign Urbana Area**

o <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/05/03/ultimate-outdoor-summer-kids-around-champaign-urbana/>

**Hiking Trails for Families in Champaign-Urbana**

o <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2022/04/28/hiking-trails-champaign-urbana-families-children/>

- Social media numbers continue to increase.

	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	6,171	+46	2,874	+34	568	-4
KRT	4,153	+27	140	+3	136	
MGP	4,605	+9	1,244	+17	261	-1
HLIC	3,039	+16				
GC	1,808	+6	331	+0	111	+2
FPPF	542	+32				

- April Facilities Rental Report

April 2022 Rental Summary		
# Rentals	Facility	\$
7	Salt Fork Center	\$2,000.00
1	22 Garden Wedding	\$995.00
7	Elks Lake Pavilion	\$2,300.00
4	Izaak Walton Cabin	\$420.00
8	Lake of the Woods Pavilion	\$3,826.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>\$9,841.00</b>

### **Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)**

- April Numbers: 8 new applicants, 293 hours in Volgistics, 9 group events (2 for Botanical Garden, 1 for Golf Course, 6 for Natural Resources) for approximately 160 people and about 350 additional hours not in Volgistics.
- The inaugural Earth Day Garlic Mustard Event (numbers include above) engaged 74 searching volunteers and 15 volunteer hosts for a total of 89 volunteers over two days and three sites. The event did not have as large an ecological impact as desired due to a late growing season for GM. Much was learned to make this event more educational and impactful for potential future years.



- Special Thanks to Joie, the NR team and the BG team for making most of these events possible!
- Attended a remote event titled “Building Staff Buy-In” that shared experience and ideas about helping staff better support working with volunteers.
- It was National Volunteer Appreciation week, which overlapped with Earth Day this year. Volunteers were sent a thank you email and an offer to receive 20% off purchases at the Museum store. Many thanks to Pat and Barb for being willing to offer this to the volunteers!

### **Grants and Development Specialist (Ryan Anderson)**

- We sent out a physical mailer on April 20 to 325 donors from 2021 to inform them that we planted a tree in their honor at Old Homer Park. We have received positive feedback via email.
- The Foundation has developed a pamphlet to educate the donors about the options available for leaving the Legacy Gifts to the Foundation.



## Legacy Giving

Planting the Seeds for Future Generations

### What is Legacy Giving?

You can leave a lasting legacy to Champaign County's forest preserves by naming the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation in your will or trust. These gifts allow you to make a significant future contribution to the forest preserves without affecting your current quality of life. Your legacy gift will help to restore wildlife habitat, fund educational programs, provide recreational opportunities in nature, and support the mission of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District for generations to come.

Have you already named the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation in your will or trust? Contact us at the Friends Foundation and let us know. This helps us plan for the future and keep you informed about what is happening across the preserves.

**FOREST PRESERVE FRIENDS FOUNDATION**  
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY


### Legacy gifts can be made

- With language in your will or trust
- By naming the Foundation as a beneficiary of retirement assets or insurance policy
- By transferring real estate or farmland
- Or by establishing a charitable remainder trust

### Sample language for your will

"I give to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, with Tax Identification Number 37-1111088, a charitable organization located in Mahomet, IL, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ [or \_\_\_\_ percent (\_\_\_\_%) of the rest of my estate] to be held and applied for the use of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District for its general purposes [or to be applied for the following purpose: \_\_\_\_\_]"

*There are many legacy giving options available to achieve both your present and future goals. We recommend that you consult your tax attorney for guidance on the best option for your situation.*



Have questions?  
Contact [foundation@ccfpd.org](mailto:foundation@ccfpd.org)

**ccfpd.org**  
P.O. Box 1040  
Mahomet, IL 61853  
217-586-3360

## Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- In April, NR staff wrapped up prescribed burn season with the completion of the following burns:
  - LOW Buffalo Trace Phase 11 3<sup>rd</sup> year prairie restoration (9.3 acres)
  - LOW Buffalo Trace South 47 prairie restoration (11.8 acres)
  - MF Point Pleasant Weber prairie restoration (45 acres)
- The total number of prescribed burns done by NR and MF staff this spring was 14, totaling over 222 acres of woodland and prairie ecosystems.
- Staff began integrated pest management of herbaceous invasive plant species with the following activities:
  - Sprayed garlic mustard rosettes in heavily infested areas throughout the preserves
  - Sprayed reed canary grass in restorations at HL Collins Pond, HL Old Homer Park Expansion, and LOW Stidham Woods
  - Pulling bolting and flowering garlic mustard in high-quality woodlands throughout the preserves
- NR staff hosted two volunteer garlic mustard pulling events in April:
  - HL Spillway floodplain woods (7.3 acres)



- LOW North bike path woods (14.4 acres)



- Staff and several volunteers planted 325 bare-root seedling trees in the Old Homer Park Expansion reforestation project in honor of Foundation donors for the year 2021.
- In mid-April staff began adding the eggs of Canada geese around LOW Stidham pond and the MF campground ponds. Controlling the goose population in these areas protects the investment in purchased native seed and plugs for recent and near-future revegetation projects. NR staff follows Human Society guidelines for egg adding.

#### **Lake of the Woods Golf Course (Chris Edmondson and Joie Torres)**

- It has continued to be a tough “spring” when it comes to the weather and outdoor activities. April was cold and wet, for the most part, which really hampered golf rounds. We had 2 days of complete closure, along with 10 days we were unable to allow golf carts on the course. Still, we managed 2,611 rounds for the month. This is above the 5-year average of 2,168 but much below last year’s total of 3,804. Our revenue for the month was \$66,047. Again, this is well above the 5-year average of \$51,789, but below 2021 revenue of \$75,348. These are really good indicators of how weather can affect our numbers, with last year having an unseasonably warm and dry month of April.
- David and Jason taught the afterschool BLAST Golf Program at Lincoln Trail Elementary in April. This program is a great way to teach juniors about the game of golf, using oversized plastic clubs, tennis balls, and targets in the gym. The class was held each Monday and Wednesday, from 3:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. This is a very popular program amongst the students. The director of the afterschool program sent the following in an e-mail to David prior to the first class:  
 “Thank you for teaching a class with us this session! Your registration hit the cap with a number of 10 students in the first minute and was the most popular class offered for Lincoln Trail on registration night! I did send some of the parents who did not make it in the class to your junior golf information on your website”.
- We held our first tournament of the year on April 23-24. The 2-Person Season Opener is held each year on the last full weekend of April. This year, we renamed the event and a trophy (pictured)



was created in honor of Ben Sieg. Ben, along with his partner, was a 4-time Champion in the event and unexpectedly passed away earlier this year. We had 56 teams participate, and every team completed at least 27 holes before we had to stop play, due to unplayable weather and course conditions, on Sunday afternoon.

- On Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, our Men's, and Women's 9 and 18 Hole Associations began play. These associations are held every Wednesday through the end of September, with a different game scheduled each week. We currently have 23 women and 95 men registered to participate this season.
- Also on April 27<sup>th</sup>, David, along with Srixon Cleveland Golf, held a "Wedge Clinic." This event was \$140 to participate and we had 7 participants. The fee included David giving a wedge lesson for the first portion of the clinic and the Cleveland rep fit each participant for a new wedge, to finish. We also have upcoming fitting days scheduled with Mizuno and Callaway in May.
- Maintenance crew aerated the greens and tees, top dressed and fertilized.
- Assistant superintendent sprayed pre-emergence around the bunkers and spray the first fungicide application on the greens.
- Golf course front 9 sprinkler heads project is completed.
- Larry Denton started the renovation on the front 9 bunkers project.
- Golf superintendent and Sue Gallo (Volunteer Coordinator) reached out to Lincoln Challenge Cadets to help clean up the course.
- Golf course maintenance crew has a full staff: 10 seasonal and 3 full time!

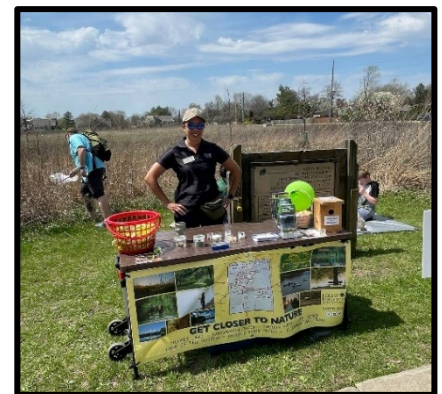
#### **Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Stacey Clementz)**

- Jennifer Wick hired Jeremy Cagle as our first ever Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) Office Specialist. He will begin mid-May.
- The Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) welcomes Rob Diehl as our collections intern who will assist all summer with retrieving artifacts from the Sangamon River storage location.
- Lorrie Pearson, Dara Edgington, and Barb Garvey led a listening session with Museum and Education (M and E) Department staff to determine direction for department staffing.
- The M and E Department welcomes Pat Cain back from paternity leave.
- HLIC received a live eastern box turtle for our educational animals collection (pictured).
- Cathy Schneider took the rat snake and Painted Turtle 2 to the vet for wellness checks. The snake has cataracts in both eyes and probably cannot see.
- Collections priorities at the MGP have shifted to upcoming disease exhibit install. Jen Grove has been processing loans and pulling artifacts.
- Jen Grove, Mark Hanson and our great volunteer team have continued to move large artifacts from HQ Basement. Processing artifacts into Rankin also continues.
- Jen Grove and Rob Diehl have laid insect traps to determine what pests they are dealing with at Sangamon River before they attempt to return pieces to the museum complex.
- The MGP's *A History of Healing: Disease and Community Response in Champaign County* exhibit is set to open May 20, 2022. Mark Hanson has been focusing on content development and exhibit graphic design. Exhibit installation has begun. Loans have been acquired from Champaign-Urbana Public Health, the Champaign County History Museum, the Pearson Museum of Medicine, the Illinois Department of Public Health and many private individuals.





- Marina Montez-Ellis led a workday for volunteers to plant seeds for our in-process Healing Garden, with three volunteers. The Healing Garden will take place in the Discovery Garden space and is connected to the upcoming exhibit. The Healing Garden will eventually have three components: Medicinal Plants, Meditative Space and Healthy Foods.
- Katie Snyder curated an exhibit for the Boneyard Art Festival, with an opening on April 1, with the nature-inspired paintings in both acrylic and watercolor, of local painter, Shannon Percoco. Percoco's works will be in the central hall of the Education Center until the end of May.
- Katie Snyder and Marina Montez Ellis, together with three rotating school marm volunteers, facilitated a series of School House and Garden Walk fieldtrips for all second graders from Middletown Elementary. 219 students, 21 adults. One of those school marms was a new volunteer! Welcome, Cheryl Modzelewski!
- Marina Montez Ellis lead a program called, "Homeschoolers Create Repurposed Masterpieces for Earth Day," with 12 patrons. Homeschoolers aged 5-14 created art using left over materials from the last few years' programs, thereby keeping these materials out of the landfill. Marina offered the same program to the general public with 10 patrons.
- Katie Snyder attended a meeting of the Herb Society of Champaign-Urbana to learn more about medicinal plants for the healing garden.
- Katie Snyder and Stacey Clementz did a flip day program of Frog Follies and Museum Discovery with Calvary Baptist School, 14 students, 3 adults.
- Cathy Schneider created a Google Map for the public showing current wildflower conditions around Homer Lake Forest Preserve.
- Bat surveys started up again this month. One group of volunteers surveyed the new transect at Homer Lake, and they reported detecting lots of activity.
- Cathy Schneider scheduled 22 Counselor in Training interviews at LOW, HLIC, and over Zoom. She has conducted 14 interviews so far.
- Jennifer Wick's April *Walk with a Naturalist* had 7 people in attendance.
- Jennifer Wick placed the *Around One Log* by Anthony D. Fredericks StoryWalk on the Timberdoodle Trail at Homer Lake; it will be up until May 30.
- Cathy Schneider and Quinn Powers taught 15-7<sup>th</sup> graders at Campus Middle School in Urbana about animal classification, and 12-preschoolers from St. Paul Pre-K in Gifford about trees.
- Cathy Schneider and Stacey Clementz taught 90-preschoolers from the St. Joseph Spectrum about insects, and 15-1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> graders from Calvary Baptist Christian Academy in Urbana about frogs.
- Jennifer Wick and Stacey Clementz staffed a booth at the Urbana Park District's *Earth Day for Everyone* event at Meadowbrook Park. We saw 169 people and shared information about the preserves and allowed people to insect sweep through the prairie. This was a new format for this event, and we hope to continue being involved in the future. Pictured: Jennifer staffing the table at the event.
- Jennifer Wick set up the self-guided Wildflower Walk signs at Rayburn-Purnell woods at Lake of the Woods. The signs were made last year and placed at Flicker Woods at Homer Lake, but were designed to be able to be moved to any preserve location.
- The Dark Sky event at Middle Fork was canceled due to weather. Unfortunately, with the cloud cover no stars would have been seen.
- A local American Heritage Girls group visited the HLIC as part of a badge.





- Stacey Clementz (and Anna from Natural Resources) shared information about our careers to two hundred Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> graders at Pleasant Acres in Rantoul.
- Cathy Schneider attended a Raptor Entice Workshop by the IDNR in Yorkville, IL.
- Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey and Pat Cain hosted a virtual program titled “A Closer Look at A History of Healing: Talking Tuberculosis” on May 5, 2022. The program was the first in a series of virtual programs previewing content from and promoting the museum’s upcoming exhibit on infectious diseases.
- Pat Cain hosted a guided tour at the museum with a group of nearly 50 seniors from Christian County.
- Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey spoke at Windsor of Savoy on May 6, 2022, giving a sneak preview to the exhibit with a talk about the upcoming disease exhibit (12 participants).
- Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey submitted corrections and additions to the American Alliance of Museums as part of the self-study exercise. She also scheduled the visit for the AAM reviewers who will be on site on August 2 and 3, 2022.
- The Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area is producing a series of promotional videos for important sites. Filled to the Brim: Towns, Tales and Tours. One has been created for the Museum of the Grand Prairie’s Lincoln exhibit, and is viewable on YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iE-1GFAYhxE&t=31s>
- The Lincoln Legacy Committee met on April 25 after a long hiatus. Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey, Chair of the committee and Barbara Wysocki have just produced a white paper on the accomplishments of the committee over the last 15 years. The committee will begin strategic planning in May.
- Stacey Clementz attended the Environmental Education Association of Illinois (in-person) conference held at Hoover Forest Preserve in Yorkville, IL. She also attended a strategic planning session for the EEAI Projects.
- Jennifer Wick had her final meeting for the NAI leadership Institute. Her final project is to create a leadership development plan where she will work with the instructor on an individual basis to determine how she can continue this work on our own.
- General attendance at the museum is up from the last few years now that the museum is back open 7 days a week. Attendance numbers are steadily climbing with the hope of reaching pre-pandemic museum attendance within the next year or so. Attendance in April over the past five years 2018-696; 2019-609; 2020 closed; 2021-288; 2022 540.
- Pat Cain has begun asks for sponsors of this year’s Summer Concert Series. The full slate of concerts includes New Souls, Aces ‘N Rhythms, Candy Foster, Hot Iron String Band, One Foot In, and the Hood Family Band.
- Staff finished coordinating a full slate of public programs for the months June/July with many in-person programs returning while still providing virtual, self-guided, and “program in a bag” options.

### **Lake of the Woods (Rusty Maulding)**

- The new Site Superintendent began work the last week of April and is acclimating. Rusty has received a warm welcome from all and appreciates the thorough onboarding experience and willingness of all staff to share information and stories from within the district. He has noted that there is a strong desire to do the right thing and work collaboratively within Lake of the Woods and hopes to continue to strengthen relationships with other departments.
- There is a struggle trying to find seasonal staff currently. We are working with HR and considering adjustments that may need to be implemented.

- Staff installed a drain and small berm at the entry door to the Rankin Collections Center to prevent the water infiltration that has occurred during heavy rain events.

### **Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)**

- This year's spring weather is not faring well for the start of the camping season. Camping numbers are much lower compared to last year at this time, hopefully we will be seeing warmer drier weather in the weeks to come.
- Weather is also affecting the Willow Pond project. Not much progress has been seen due to the amount of rain we have received over the past month.
- Middle Fork staff continue to prep the campground for its opening season. We welcome back our hosts from last year.
- Thanks to the construction crew for helping us with our new water fountain placement. They were able to pour the new pads for the fountains and Middle Fork crew installed them just before opening weekend. All fountains now meet current ADA standards and some include filtered bottle fillers.
- Staff at the Middle Fork River Forest Preserve would like to wish a happy and wholesome retirement to Brian Taylor, Site Superintendent of Homer Lake Forest Preserve. His work and dedication will continue to resonate within the CCFPD and we thank him for his incredible efforts as Superintendent. Good luck Brian, you will be missed.

### **Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)**

- We purchased and installed a new grill at Walnut Hill shelter, and we also installed new toilets that have pressurized water flow in an effort to reduce the amount of blockages that have been occurring.
- The high winds this spring have caused a great deal of additional work with several trees breaking off or blowing over. Roy and Colton have recently been working on a large oak that fell over into our neighbor's horse pasture that borders Flicker Woods.
- We hired Drayke Lannert for the season to cover our Wednesday to Sunday schedule. He lives in the subdivision on the north end of the lake and his family operates the kayak and canoe rental. We really appreciate Joe Hopper returning for his 16<sup>th</sup> year of service.



### **District Cultural Competency Initiatives**

- Katie Snyder attended a workshop put on by the Community Coalition Sub Committee called, "Train the Trainer, Facilitating Dialogues on Contentious Issues Around Race"
- Plans were finalized with the Smith Internship (Smithsonian National Museum for African American History program). Mark Hanson attended Smith internship supervisor orientation. Barb Oehlschlaeger-Garvey and Mark Hanson met with DeBorah Ault (Smith intern) to assist with arrangements for housing and transportation.
- Lorrie Pearson attended the annual Legacy Project conference in Naperville, including attending two sessions on DEI. The Legacy Project is a program to advance women in government in Illinois.