

December 10, 2021

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Board of Commissioners

From: Lisa Sprinkle, Marketing Coordinator

Re: December Staff Report

**Executive Director (Lorrie Pearson)**

- As I continue to learn about the District, Lisa Sprinkle and I recorded two Exploring with Lorrie videos (celebrating Take a Hike Day from SRFP and support the Covered Bridge). I also brought our telescope to the North Waterfowl area of MF on a clear night; ran trails at Homer Lake, River Bend; and Lake of the Woods; learned about Point Pleasant at Peter Goodspeed's talk; and attended the Night Lights at the Garden Opening Night event, the pre-construction meeting for the Willow Pond restoration project, and a Museum Advisory Committee meeting.

**Planning and Construction Departments (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)**

- Planning discussed potential partnership project with the Architecture Department at the University of Illinois. Professor Andrea Melgarejo de Berry is leading a design build studio with architect Solano Benitez in spring 2022 and they have expressed interest in partnering with the District to build an open pavilion at one of our preserves.
- Planning and Construction completed the requirements of an Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Public Amenities and Events grant by installing new concrete and adding accessible picnic tables and two new ADA grills at the Riverview Retreat Center.
- Additional progress has been made at the Lake of the Woods canoe and kayak launch. A canoe that was previously used as a rental at Homer Lake has been repurposed with a dual function. A planter for native species, and a barricade marking the boundary of the parking area. Bollards have been installed, along with a bottle filling station with a hose bibb for rinsing gear.



- The Construction Department worked to showcase creative ways to use renewable energy by constructing a solar powered gingerbread house for the Night Lights in the Garden event. The house itself is made from repurposed pallets and materials. Currently, the display system has been powering over one thousand individual lights each night.
- Michael Daab, Brian Taylor, and Pam Leiter met with Amber Lannert of Lunatic Kayak Rental to discuss the first year of the license agreement between the concessionaire and CCFPD. Although the business did not turn a profit in 2021, the Lannert family found the experience to be valuable and would like to continue the operation in 2022. Staff reported that

they did not experience any negative impacts as a result of the rental business, and were happy that the service was offered. A more robust report will be presented to the Board in early 2022.

- Following public comment at the November Board of Commissioners meeting, Planning staff set to researching disc golf courses. A championship level course would require a minimum of 25 acres, and staff will need to further consider available appropriate land with access to amenities such as parking and restrooms. A recreational level course would require less space and amenities and could be located in a wider variety of locations at CCFPD. We will continue to consider this request by the public in our longer-term planning.

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

- Continued refining the Management Plan and Budget document.
- Filed the 2021 tax levy with the county clerk.
- Paid final 2020 bond payment and worked on the issuing of the 2022 bond.
- Reviewed 2021 projected expenses to ensure no 2021 Board appropriations were exceeded or any needed identify appropriation transfers.
- Met with IT Committee to discuss 2022 security and provided update on work with KnowBe4 vendor and internal training for phishing.
- Issued longevity bonus payments to eligible District employees.
- Issued year-end closing instructions for departments and employees on purchasing, payroll, and deposit transactions, including notice of a December 30 payroll due to December 31 being a holiday.
- Received training from CliftonLarsenAllen to report post-employment benefit costs (IMRF pensions and health care) according to governmental accounting standards.
- Prepared Foundation budget for December review and January 2022 approval.
- Attended *Trends in Creative Revenue Streams* webinar through IPRA.
- Updated the District registration in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) to meet new cybersecurity requirements. SAM approval is required for state and federal grant awards and for certain private awards such as the Smithsonian internship.

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

- During the month of November HR processed one hire and sixteen terminations. Our current headcount sits at 74, including 44 FT staff, 15 PT, 14 seasonals, and 1 paid intern.
- The monthly turnover rate for November was 19.05%. This primarily represents seasonal terminations but does include the resignation of one part-time staffer as well.
- The District documented just one incident with PDRMA over the month of November.
- Our annual United Way campaign ended on November 19<sup>th</sup>. The District's total pledge amount increased from \$3,223 to \$4,2962 – an impressive 33% increase. Thank you to all our first-time and repeat donors, as well as to Mary Beck for running this successful campaign!
- Staff executed the separation agreement authorized by the Board on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Staff completed open enrollment for 2022 benefits 11/29-12/3.

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

- This is the third year we've held the KRT @ Sleepy Creek fundraiser event and due to COVID, the first year we've done an online auction. We are very happy to have raised \$1,956.93, which brings the total raised through these events to over \$18,000. That money will go towards the continued development of the Kickapoo Rail Trail in Champaign and Vermilion Counties.

- The Museum of the Grand Prairie and Lake of the Woods Golf Course were both voted the Best of the 217 by the listeners that voted in the 2021 Illini Radio Group contest. The Illini Radio Group is composed of Mix 94.5, WIXY 100.3, Rewind 92.5, WYXY Classic 99.1, Pure Oldies 97.9, Extra 96.9, and Hits 99.7. See the complete list of winners here, <https://www.bestofthe217.com/>



- Lorrie attended the IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala in October to represent the District when Fred and Sandy Lu Newport received their Outstanding Citizen Volunteer Award on behalf of the Champaign Park District, Urbana Park District and the Champaign County Forest Preserve District. We are very appreciative of Jarrod Scheunemann putting the combined nomination together.



- Media coverage last month included:  
**The Mabery Gelvin Botanical Garden will be decorated with lights this year**

[https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/the\\_mabery\\_gelvin\\_botanical\\_garden\\_will\\_be\\_decorated\\_with\\_lights\\_this\\_year/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/the_mabery_gelvin_botanical_garden_will_be_decorated_with_lights_this_year/)

**Champaign County Forest Preserve District to bring ‘Night Lights in the Garden’ to Lake of the Woods in Mahomet**

[https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/11/11/botanical-garden-at-lake-of-the-woods-to-illuminate-during-holidays-for-first-time/?fbclid=IwAR1KyhX1U2DxIGyKV6vkXjWIHXchzP\\_hVg0Fg9GMzZdS5ZVhGRpUzxxij\\_4](https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/11/11/botanical-garden-at-lake-of-the-woods-to-illuminate-during-holidays-for-first-time/?fbclid=IwAR1KyhX1U2DxIGyKV6vkXjWIHXchzP_hVg0Fg9GMzZdS5ZVhGRpUzxxij_4)

**Lake of the Woods to Light Up with “Night Lights in the Garden”**

<https://mahometdaily.com/lake-of-the-woods-to-light-up-with-night-lights-in-the-garden/?fbclid=IwAR0OSuRqBPHhLDuyzEpehykUJUyGJeR6Swmsj6ZI7DVesN7EkFGcskpw15c>

**Pearson looks to build upon the goodness of the Champaign County Forest Preserve District**

<https://mahometdaily.com/pearson-looks-to-build-on-the-goodness-of-champaign-county-forest-preserve-district/>

**Inside Out| Adding to the turtle team**

[https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/parks-recreation/inside-out-adding-to-the-turtle-team/article\\_8f7625f8-767f-5d0d-91a7-ffe9670e80df.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/parks-recreation/inside-out-adding-to-the-turtle-team/article_8f7625f8-767f-5d0d-91a7-ffe9670e80df.html)

**Pearl Harbor programs set Sunday, Tuesday in Urbana, Mahomet**

[https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/community-events/pearl-harbor-programs-set-sunday-tuesday-in-urbana-mahomet/article\\_be7f32be-61ef-5b50-9a94-11dc7a14c1e4.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/community-events/pearl-harbor-programs-set-sunday-tuesday-in-urbana-mahomet/article_be7f32be-61ef-5b50-9a94-11dc7a14c1e4.html)

**Enjoy Mahomet holiday lights at Night Lights in the Garden**

[https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/ciliving-stories/ciliving/enjoy-mahomet-holiday-lights-at-night-lights-in-the-garden/?fbclid=IwAR1WLwuS\\_ISOGIdjRctN7\\_LPp0Hkq6o9A5PnL0bEqnqx7SnOGYtntav3k4M](https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/ciliving-stories/ciliving/enjoy-mahomet-holiday-lights-at-night-lights-in-the-garden/?fbclid=IwAR1WLwuS_ISOGIdjRctN7_LPp0Hkq6o9A5PnL0bEqnqx7SnOGYtntav3k4M)

**Indiana firm wins contract to upgrade pond**

[https://www.news-gazette.com/news/indiana-firm-wins-contract-to-upgrade-middle-fork-preserve-pond/article\\_5226e6cd-8db9-5f25-bf2a-a53a15b8de82.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/indiana-firm-wins-contract-to-upgrade-middle-fork-preserve-pond/article_5226e6cd-8db9-5f25-bf2a-a53a15b8de82.html)

**Tax revenue crossing projects off list**

[https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/parks-recreation/new-tax-revenue-helps-champaign-county-forest-preserve-district-catch-up-on-projects/article\\_1b5e0b4f-b970-5763-a435-c86802fddfce.html](https://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/parks-recreation/new-tax-revenue-helps-champaign-county-forest-preserve-district-catch-up-on-projects/article_1b5e0b4f-b970-5763-a435-c86802fddfce.html)

**Lorrie Pearson is right where she should be**

[https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/lorrie\\_pearson\\_is\\_right\\_where\\_she\\_should\\_be/](https://www.smilepolitely.com/culture/lorrie_pearson_is_right_where_she_should_be/)

- The biggest Facebook post this month was for Night Lights in the Garden. It was posted on December 2, shared 65 times and reached over 6,800 people.
- Social media numbers continue to increase.

	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	5,868	+142	2,708	+48	571	+5
KRT	3,819	+361	131	+5	138	+3
MGP	4,488	+10	1,198	+4	258	+6
HLIC	2,935	+8				
GC	1,764	+9	325	+1	104	+1
FPPF	493	+8				

**Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)**

- New volunteer applications in November – 7 and 4 volunteers gave their first service. Many thanks to volunteer Gene B who is removing invasive honeysuckle from Heron View and was willing to work with some new volunteers.
- Hack 4 Impact helped the Garden staff clean canna bulbs for storage over winter. The seven volunteers had never been to our Forest Preserves previously and enjoyed the short tour and service opportunity: “Thanks for having us today! We wanted to express how much we enjoyed our time at the Botanical Gardens hearing about what you all do and helping out with cleaning canna bulbs (we all feel like canna bulb experts now). The Gardens were incredibly beautiful, and the event was a much-needed break for many of us. If possible, we'd love to visit again in the spring to help out even more. Thank you again!” Many thanks to Michael Dale and staff for providing a fabulous service opportunity and expanding the world for these students! Additionally, twenty-two 10<sup>th</sup> grade students and their chaperones from Academy High helped remove invasive honeysuckle from the KRT, as a part of service learning about global climate change. Peter, Emily and NR crew started the event with a short presentation to help the students understand the importance of their service and how it connects to global climate change. These young volunteers were able to learn more about local ecology, help improve it, and contribute to volunteer hours for a habitat improvement grant! Sue very much appreciates NR staff's willingness to give a short talk and provide this service learning experience for the students! The structure of these two event with the combination of learning about us and our mission and service is Sue's ideal for group service. Thanks too to NR staff for hosting a seed collection event at Point Pleasant with 11 volunteers.
- Sue prepared and gave a presentation about the background of the District to about 40 Fabulous 4Hers of Fisher who collectively steward one of our trails.
- Sue, Ryan and Lisa are now meeting monthly to coordinate message themes for the month. And monthly U of I volunteer coordinator meetings have resumed.



- Sue spent a little extra time this month cleaning our inactive volunteers from the database and assessing reach of the volunteer newsletter. The first e-newsletter was sent to 366 people in April of 2020 with 179 folks who opened it. Last month it was sent to 527 addresses, with 275 people opening it.

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

#### **Giving Tuesday**

- We had a very successful Giving Tuesday, with \$17,596 raised. We also received an additional \$21,000 as a match from an anonymous donor and the Friends Foundation members dedicated to the Lake of the Woods Covered Bridge.
- The Foundation has raised to date (12/9/2021) \$35,494 for the Covered Bridge. The goal is \$55,000.

#### **Grants**

- We are still waiting on award announcements for several large grants for the District. Including 3 grants from the Illinois Department of Resources and a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

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

- November was a more seasonable weather month, with many cold and wet days, which led to us not allowing carts or being closed to play several days. For the month, we had 1114 rounds played, which is above the 5 year average of 891, but half of what we had in November of 2020. Revenue for the month was \$24,685. This includes \$4,250 of early season pass sales for 2022. This is well below the 5 year average of \$80,670, but that number is skewed by various pass promotions (specifically the 2019 and 2021 Anniversary Pass) over these seasons.
- As mentioned, we started our Platinum Pass “Black Friday” sale in November. Anyone purchasing a Platinum (full) season pass for 2022, between November 26<sup>th</sup> and December 23<sup>rd</sup>, will receive a \$50 discount for early purchase. The Platinum pass has many benefits for our most loyal customers: Preferred tee-time booking, complimentary green fees, league green fees included, locker, 10% in-stock merchandise discount, \$10 cart fee any time, and Hubie Cup eligibility.
- On November 15<sup>th</sup>, Mary, Joie and I met with Lindsey Robertson and Tim Lenac from PDRMA. They have developed a golf specific field review and we were fortunate enough to be their test case for the new form. This review was a comprehensive look at our forms, policies and procedures used in the golf department, both Pro Shop and Maintenance. This review will assist us in making much needed updates to forms and adjusting procedures to fit PDRMA recommendations. We all felt this review went extremely well, but as always, we found items to work on and improve moving forward.
- Also on November 15<sup>th</sup>, David attended the Illinois PGA Teaching and Coaching Summit in Woodridge, IL. This event brought golf professionals from the Illinois PGA Section together to share and learn new methods of teaching golf lessons along with developing programs for coaching and development of larger groups. There were multiple guest speakers who discussed their philosophies on teaching the game of golf, as well.
- Late in the month, we setup the golf simulator in the Clubhouse. We will only be using one simulator this winter, since the other simulator we have has become obsolete with upgrades and service. With limited staffing and the rising cost of programs and service involved with

TruGolf, we are looking to be operational during Pro Shop hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Monday through Saturday, once the outdoor season concludes. This will also allow David and Jason to continue to give private golf lessons over the winter months.

- The maintenance crew worked hard on leaf blowing and mulching leaves on the course and around the clubhouse.
- Greens on the 18-hole course were mowed one last time before the cold spell moved in our area.
- All irrigation line has been blown out and the pump house has been serviced and winterized.
- Joie Torres, Mackenzie Drinkwalter, and Gary Williams attended a lift inspection training held by Tammy Fry at Lake of the Woods Operations.

### **Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)**

- In November, the Natural Resources Department wrapped up seed collection season with a seed collection event at Point Pleasant at Middle Fork River Forest Preserve. There were 10 volunteers at the event, contributing 2 hours each.
- Staff also hosted a volunteer brush clearing event along the Kickapoo Rail Trail where 19 high school students from Academy High participated. Peter began the event by giving a talk on climate change and how carbon is stored in remnant prairie soil.
- Staff planted a few more trees at Buffalo Trace and several trees donated by a volunteer at Sangamon River Forest Preserve.
- This fall has been somewhat rainy and unfavorable for prescribed burning, however, the crew was able to burn off dead grass in a 2-acre restoration prep site and a 5-acre established prairie site at Buffalo Trace.
- In 5 prairie restoration prep sites that had been previously cleared and sprayed, staff planted a cover crop of winter rye over a total area of 13 acres. The rye will prevent soil erosion over the winter and will compete with cool-season weeds before they are ultimately planted with native prairie seed.



- The whole NR department spent an entire day in November driving to each preserve to inspect sites and develop the winter project list. Many of the projects involved clearing invasive woody plants and making timber stand improvements in high quality woodland areas.
- Toward the end of the month, the NR department welcomed its newest technician, Anna Scheidel. Anna comes to the district with experience from Nachusa Grasslands and has extensive botanical knowledge of prairie plants.
- Other notable activities in November included the following:
  - Peter gave a presentation to the Champaign County Audubon Society about the cultural and natural history of the Point Pleasant Wetland and Middle Fork River Forest Preserve. Approximately 30 people attended the online event.
  - Nate attended a field day for the S-130/S-190 prescribed fire training.
  - The crew purchased supplies, organized the office, organized cold storage, cleaned seed and replaced the ceiling drop tiles in the office.
  - The crew cleared a couple large trees that fell over the Shadow Lake trail at River Bend Forest Preserve.



### **Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)**

- The Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) is proud to announce that they are gold medal winners in the Best of the 217 competition that is done through the Illini Radio Group (Mix 94.5, WIXY, Rewind, etc).
- It has been about 10 years since the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) did a deep clean. Staff have been purging items we no longer need as well as organizing spaces and improving storage methods.
- The museum and schoolhouse are now decorated for the holiday season inside and out.
- Gutter guards were installed on the museum and Rankin Center where there were previously none to help to address a flooding problem at the door of the Rankin Center. Planning, Construction, LOW Ops and museum staff met to discuss further options for fixing the flooding issue.
- The museum received a pledge of \$10,000 in honor of longtime museum supporter Adella Hodges from her husband Harvey Hodges. This will assist with funding for the renovation of the blacksmith wing.
- One of Doris Hoskins' daughters, Estella Greenfield, has pledged money to place a bench in her mother's honor at the back of the museum. Ms. Hoskins is the donor of the Hoskins Archive for Cultural Diversity.
- Many thanks to Tammy Fry and the LOW Ops crew who helped Mark Hanson and Jen Grove move a load of the largest artifacts out of the HQ basement into the Rankin Center.
- The Museum Advisory Committee met to review new acquisitions, accreditation documents, and Conservation Assessment Program reports (CAP). The Collections Care Plan was edited to reflect information from the CAP reports if that information was not already included.
- Artifact processing has been occurring in the Rankin Center. Almost all collections volunteers are now working there to move large items into the space intended for them.

- Cathy Schneider & Stacey Clementz set up the new aquatic turtle enclosure and moved all three turtles into it. This project was funded by Animal Advocates fund. They also moved the Ornate Box Turtle to larger enclosure (formerly the rat snake enclosure). In 2022 we hope to get another box turtle and a second snake.
- The exhibit committee continues developing the new temporary exhibit, *A History of Healing: Infectious Diseases and the Community Response to Defeat Them*.
- The East Frisian travelling exhibit produced to promote the recent completion of digitization and transcription of 33 oral histories done by the museum, just spent two weeks at Immanuel Lutheran in Flatville and was well received.
- The online Rankin Quilt exhibit is awaiting review by the Rankin family before a tentative February release.
- As a member of the Lincoln Legacy Committee, the Museum of the Grand Prairie put together a small exhibit on J.O. Cunningham, friend of Lincoln, author of A History of Champaign County, and philanthropist responsible for Cunningham Children's Home. It is installed in the Champaign County Courthouse and will be part of his birthday celebration on December 10, 2021.
- Marina Montez- Ellis presented three small in-person programs this month: Seed Scatter for Homeschoolers (16 participants); Seed Scatter for Kids (8 participants) and Potpourri Cabin for Kids (16 participants).
- Stacey Clementz presented with Chelsea Prahl, Urbana Park District, to the Earth Care Team, First Presbyterian Church of Urbana, via Zoom on how to communicate earth care issues with the next generation. This presentation was recorded and being shared with their whole team.
- Stacey's afterschool programs started up once again after a long hiatus due to Covid. Her Nature Explorers program at Middletown Elementary saw 12 students each for 4 days with a different topic each day, and continues into December. In addition, several schools came out for field trips: 134 students total.
- Jennifer Wick worked with students at UIUC to co-host an Owl program at the Salt Fork Center. This is part of a field class at UIUC, and part of the requirement for the class is to host an educational event. The goal was to catch and band saw whet owls; however, none were caught during the event. Even so, it was popular: 51 people attended. Indoor educational activities and crafts were also offered at this drop-in program. We hope to continue this partnership and host the event again next year, as long as it is possible. Her monthly Walk with a Naturalist program also continues.
- Jennifer wrapped up the pilot bat monitoring season and returned equipment to Dr. Tara Hohoff for data analysis. We have hopes to expand this citizen science opportunity next year.
- The museum hosted a successful *Explore Archaeology* event in November. The annual event returned after cancelling last year's and great weather provided an awesome opportunity for many outdoor activities associated with the field of archaeology. Activities included artifact displays, atlatl throwing, mock artifact digs in play sand, a presentation on local cemeteries from Holly Labisky, Secretary of the Illinois Association for the Advancement of Archaeology, and East Central Illinois Archaeological Society and much more. A special thank you to the Illinois State Archaeological Survey and the East Central Illinois Archaeological Society for collaborating again on this program. (75 people)



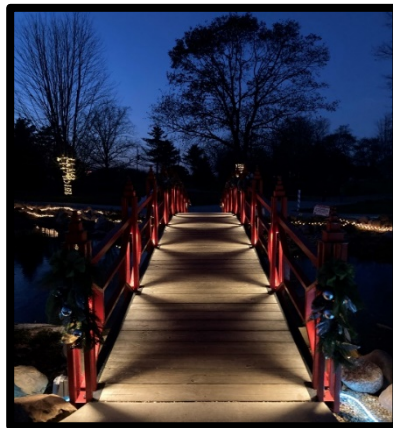


- Barb Garvey gave a talk at Windsor of Savoy on November 30, The Deep Roots of Thanksgiving. (20 residents in attendance).
- Museum staff worked to paint 13 festive & winter-themed boulders to go along with a scavenger hunt set to debut at the kickoff program for “Night Lights in the Garden.”
- The kickoff program for “Night Lights in the Garden” was held on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. Nearly 700 patrons had the opportunity to take in the beautiful light displays and partake in a number of activities including a scavenger hunt, free hot chocolate, free 3D light glasses to the first 50 patrons, holiday carols from the Rantoul Township High School madrigals group, pre-sold Gingerbread House Kits, and more.
- Pat Cain, Jennifer Wick, and Cathy Schneider have begun to plan and organize another #CCFPDSnowflakeSearch set to debut in January 2022.
- Pat Cain completed a class in his work toward a master’s degree in history. The class was a graduate level seminar at ISU titled “HIS 424: History of Crime and Punishment in the US.” Pat’s work culminated by completing a historiographical essay on the origins of policing in the United States with a particular focus on Chicago.
- Mark Hanson completed 12 hours of Mental Health First Aid certification training as required by the Smith Internship grant.
- Seasonal Naturalist Quinn Powers finished his season with us. It was great to have him work for us, as he has been part of the HLIC ‘crew’ since he started attending summer camps at 3 years old. His help was invaluable this year.
- Jennifer Wick renewed her Certified Interpretive Guide certification through the National Association for Interpretation.
- Pam Leiter participated in a PDRMA webinar, "Living in Extraordinary (Stressful) Times and How to Create Supportive Environments."
- An intern from Visit Champaign County job shadowed environmental education staff in November during programs.
- Pam Leiter did a Whys Gals segment on the WCIA Morning Show on winter birds, and an Inside Out article in the News Gazette about our new aquatic turtle.
- Pat Cain worked with Sarah Michaels from WAND-TV for a news story on the museum set to debut in early December
- Pat Cain worked with Looking for Lincoln/Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area to shoot an educational and promotional video on the museum’s exhibit, *Champaign County’s Lincoln*.
- To help promote museum store merchandise during the holiday season, the museum hosted a “Holiday Basket Raffle” on their social media pages.
- After many months of work with the district’s website vendor, Accuraty, museum and district staff are proud to debut a new look for the museum’s website, [www.museumofthegrandprairie.org](http://www.museumofthegrandprairie.org). The new look website will be a place where the museum continues to offer informational and educational content that aligns with the museum’s mission.
- As chair of the Lincoln Legacy Committee, Barb Garvey put together the annual report to the Abraham Lincoln National Heritage Area and attended the ALNHA quarterly Steering Committee meeting.
- The popular weekly FeederWatch Friday posts have started up again on the HLIC Facebook page for the winter season. Also, we posted donation requests for our wishlist items on Facebook in early December.
- HLIC Facebook stats, November 1-30: Average Daily Organic Reach: 483 (Sum: 14,478); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 34 (Sum: 1,028)

- MGP Facebook stats, November 1-30: Average Daily Organic Reach:817 (Sum: 24,518); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 30.6 (Sum:920)

**Lake of the Woods, River Bend, Sangamon River, Heron View (Tammy Fry and Michael Dale)**

- The unusually warmer weather has kept us mulching and clearing leaves even into December.
- We removed a portion of fence at Heron View in preparation for an upcoming parking area.
- Snow poles, weights, plows, and spreader have been added to trucks and equipment in case of winter weather.
- The Christmas tree recycle area is prepped and ready for fence and sign installation.
- After 16 years Larry Devore retired from Lake of the Woods Operations, his knowledge and experience will be missed.
- In November the Botanical Garden staff removed all fall decorations and finished pulling annual plants and cutting back perennials. Volunteers were also utilized to help dig and clean the abundance of Canna lilies and Elephant ears we have.
- The staff started a new project with the light show in the garden, nearly 50,000 lights in addition to all our normal winter decorations including the photo ops at the wagon and giant chair have been put on display.



**Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)**

- Middle Fork staff has started tackling bush honeysuckle throughout the preserve. So far we have applied herbicide covering close to 65 acres.
- Staff will be meeting with the awarded contractor for the Willow Pond renovation project.
- Dark Sky visitation continues to increase through the fall and upcoming winter.
- Capital projects for Middle Fork will be wrapped up in December including the window and floor replacement for the resident house.

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

- We replaced the split rail fence at the Maple Grove and the Interpretive Center. After 28 years the post and rails were deteriorating and becoming a regular maintenance issue in addition to looking poorly.
- Staff continues removing dead ash trees that are in user areas and along road ways.



### **District Cultural Competency Initiatives**

- Staff continue to invest a lot of time in the CCFPD DEI committee, co-led by Dara Edgington & Pam Leiter, as we formulate next steps and priorities.
- Stacey Clementz & Cathy Schneider are partnering with teachers for a program at B.T. Washington Elementary in December called Fabulous Fridays. Each Friday, all K-5 students participate in STEM activities provided by outside organizations. Staff will assist with two of those STEM activities: the *Animal Behaviors in Winter* program for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, and the *Animal Defenses* program for 1<sup>st</sup> graders. On the first day of each program series, staff will teach students about Illinois animals. Each student will choose one native Illinois animal to research. On the second and third days, staff will assist students with their projects (these will include things like: a paper or informational display about their animal, and an art project like a diorama or a model of their animal). The FPF Education for the Underserved (Advancing Equity) fund is covering the program fees for these programs.
- The Fabulous Fridays program also contacted Katie Snyder for programming. It was decided that the staff at BTW could most benefit from the use of our learning tubs: They were able to use one about local Native Americans, 60 students and another recently fashioned one: Old Fashioned Outdoor Games, also used by 60 students at Booker T Washington.
- Barb Garvey & Pat Cain hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final program in the museum's 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Lincoln Lecture Series. The program featured Dr. Matthew Norman, author & Associate Professor of History at the University of Cincinnati-Blue Ash. Norman presented the virtual program titled *Knowing Him by Heart: African Americans on Abraham Lincoln*.
- Katie Snyder attended a Land Acknowledgement Webinar presented by Chicago Wilderness.