

June 7, 2021

MEMORANDUM

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

Executive Director (Mary Ellen Wuellner)

- A focus group meeting was held on May 24 with staff and volunteers who played key roles in the education and advocacy campaign for the November 2020 referendum. The researchers from UIUC, EIU, and SUNY Brockport are reviewing notes from the meeting and will schedule one-on-one interviews with these and other individuals to gather more in-depth information for their study.
- Owing to efforts of the Friends Foundation, the full amount has now been raised to match the OSLAD grant for the Lake of the Woods peninsula accessibility project. Thanks to everyone who made a donation to get us to the last \$45,000 that was needed.
- The Friends Foundation is now working to raise \$7,000 in donations that will be triple-matched by a grant from the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation. Funds will be used to support habitat restoration along the Kickapoo Rail Trail.
- Will Timmons, Ryan Anderson, and I met via Zoom with a representative from CCS, Inc., a national fundraising consultant with an office in Chicago. The Foundation board is considering whether to hire a consultant to help with the capital campaign efforts for the new Homer Lake nature center. Urbana Park District hired CCS, Inc. to assist with its fundraising for the health and wellness center it is planning to construct. UPD staff has been very complimentary about CCS' efforts and results so far. We plan to make inquiries to another couple of firms before the Foundation makes a decision on how to proceed.
- IAPD reports that this year's state budget contains a \$28 million appropriation for new OSLAD grants. As a reminder, the governor threatened to sweep the funds for that program despite it being a dedicated funding source. Also HB 1760 passed both houses and is on its way to the governor for signature. It would allow IDNR to extend OSLAD grant agreements for a period longer than two years to allow grantees to complete approved projects and receive reimbursement. This is all good news and we thank IAPD for their advocacy efforts.
- I submitted a notice to the Champaign County Board of the District's intent to request funds allocated to the county under the American Rescue Plan Act. In late May, the county board held a public meeting to solicit input on the use of ARPA funds. Finance staff prepared a list of potential projects which will form the basis of a specific request once the county board has determined exactly how and when it will accept proposals.

Planning and Construction Department (Mike Daab and Mike Fry)

- The Homer Lake Interpretive Center garage was delivered this month. The Construction Department added interior and exterior LED lighting. Lights were placed to increase safety and to illuminate maps and marketing material. We were able to incorporate the old kiosk materials onto the new building, thus eliminating the old kiosk which needed repairs and was not dark sky compliant.
- Heron View Forest Preserve has a new small parking lot at 401 County Road 2650 North, Mahomet. The large oak that fell on the very edge of the property was used to create a natural

boundary for the lot. We were able to use the natural terrain without excavation to provide a solid base and reduce the amount of material needed for completion. By using a geotextile fabric, and two layers of varying size rock, we were able to reduce the amount of rock needed by almost thirty percent. The surface has been compacted, and once fully settled, a layer of fine material will be placed to make the lot fully accessible.

- Some exciting odds and ends have been happening at the Lake of the Woods Peninsula. Interpretive signage has been going up. Construction assisted Operations with final touches at the boathouse so it could open. Natural Resources has done multiple plantings. It truly has been a group effort, and we appreciate the other departments working with us, and around us. Feedback has been very positive. One small group we talked to meets at the new shelter every week because of its location, and ease of accessibility. A couple with kayakers reported they were excited to use the new dock, and were concerned it would be closed once the pedal boats arrived. They were very excited to hear otherwise. It is always nice to know our work helps facilitate people's enjoyment of our preserves.
- Michael Daab and Commissioner Hays attended the Illinois Department of Natural Resources State Water Plan Task Force public outreach event on May 26. We spoke in favor of increased water quality - including goals for more designated fishable and swimmable waters and biologically significant streams, more clarification and freedom for paddlers to recreate on IL waterways, and state funding support for dredging in order to improve water quality and recreation in our lakes.
- Michael Daab attended IAPD Boot Camp on May 24. It was an informative three hours that included segments addressing boardmanship, finance, ethics, legislative advocacy and board/executive director/staff relations.
- The River Bend Forest Preserve road and trail resurfacing project is complete. Before and after pictures of the path and road are included below.



Business and Finance (John Baker)

- Finance staff responded to several auditor information requests as CLA followed up on the District field work, Foundation 990 report, and began preparing for two grant audits which must be completed before the Rankin Collections Center and OSLAD Peninsula projects can be reimbursed. We received and commented on District audit report prior to finalizing, and prepared the Management Plan and Discussion analysis and statistical sections which are dependent on information from the financial statements.
- At Mary Ellen's request, John identified lost revenues and general costs for several eligible projects to prepare the District for potential future pandemics and possible reimbursements through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. Among these are restructuring public reception areas, improving HVAC systems for better ventilation and improved air filtering, tech improvements for self-guided trail and exhibit tours, adding contactless public and employee access at District facilities, upgrading broadband connectivity for telecommuting and public access to programs, increased facility cleaning, and increasing distance between campsites and other public-use amenities.
- Internal planning has begun with the Executive Management team for the 2022 District budget preparation, and the Treasurer's and Assistant Treasurer's review of the schedule and general plan has been requested.
- The IT committee met to discuss dearth of adequate applicants for part-time IT position and alternate solutions to implement the 2021 IT plan. We discussed the same with Furat Ibrahim as to which pieces may move forward and how. In the meantime the IT technician posting remains open.
- Finance worked with HR and Grants to develop the Fundraising and Accounts Payable Assistant job description, reporting structure, and key tasks.
- John documented current cash management, banking and related procedures to train the Assistant Finance Director for this aspect of the Business and Finance section work.

Human Resources (Dara Edgington)

- Michael Dale and I virtually attended Unit 4's One Big Career Fair on May 12. Despite not generating as much interest as I would have liked, we were still successfully matched with a student in the Youth Employment Services program. He will be starting work in the Botanical Gardens effective June 14. Thanks to Michael for partnering with HR to make this happen!
- Mary Beck oversaw the District's most recent eBay sale; cumulative sales for this go-round total \$19,694.53.
- 2021 hiring continues, YTD 55 offers have been extended and 51 employees have been successfully onboarded.
- The Compensation Committee reviewed the preliminary results of the compensation and classification study on May 13. While there are several features of the plan that we appreciate, we are not wholly satisfied that we received enough salary data for some of our positions. Furthermore, the differences between Hay Group's methodology and GovHR USA's methodology raise some questions that need to be further explored before we move ahead with a presentation to the Board.
- On May 27, I attended "Bystander Intervention to Stop Anti-Asian/American and Xenophobic Harassment" training, as have a handful of others from the DEI Committee. Like my fellow

committee members, I found this to be an engaging, timely, and highly valuable training. HR will keep this on the list of future potential trainings for the larger CCFPD employee population.

Marketing (Lisa Sprinkle)

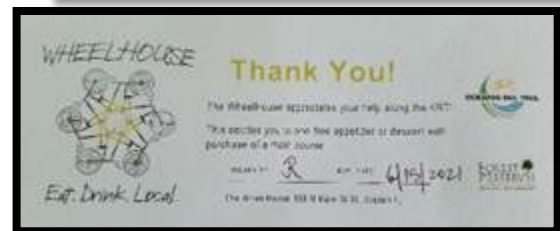
- Media coverage last month included:
 - Freedom Fest Being Held at Lake of the Woods**, <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/freedom-fest-being-celebrated-at-lake-of-the-woods-forest-preserve/>
 - Family Fun Footgolf at Lake of the Woods**, <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/family-fun-footgolf-at-lake-of-the-woods/>
 - Champaign County Farm Bureau brings agriculture to area classrooms**, <https://www.wcia.com/ciliving-tv/champaign-county-farm-bureau-brings-agriculture-to-area-classrooms/>
 - Please watch this baby fox video**, https://www.smilepolitely.com/splog/please_watch_this_baby_fox_video/
 - CCFPD to hold Freedom Fest celebration on July 2**, <https://mahometdaily.com/ccfpd-to-hold-freedom-fest-celebration-on-july-2/>
 - What to do in Mahomet**, <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/06/07/what-to-do-mahomet-kids/>
 - Freedom Fest in Mahomet moved to a Friday for 2021**, <https://www.chambanamoms.com/2021/06/03/freedom-fest-in-mahomet-moved-to-a-friday-for-2021/>
- Planning for the 2021 Freedom Fest is underway. We are trying a new date this year, Friday, July 2. We hope the change will help us get more volunteers for the gates and parking that day along with more help cleaning up the following day. To decrease the potential for milling around and gathering in small spaces, no food vendors will be on hand this year. Gates open at 4pm. The boats will be open from 4-7pm that day.
- Interpretive signage was completed for the Lake of the Woods Accessibility project on the peninsula. Five interpretive signs were developed as part of the project. The signs include: a map of Lake of the Woods, Creating Lake of the Woods, Parking to Prairie, Let's Go Fishing, and The Peninsula at Lake of the Woods.
- Social media numbers continue to increase.



	FACEBOOK	+/-	INSTAGRAM	+/-	TWITTER	+/-
CCFPD	5,353	+57	2,453	+46	553	+0
KRT	3,233	+10	97	+11	126	-2
MGP	4,357	+34	1,175	+3	242	+0
HLIC	2,777	+29				
GC	1,705	+12	318	+7	97	-1
FPPF	446	+6				

Volunteer Coordinator (Sue Gallo)

- Sue has been thinking a lot about volunteer accessibility recently. To that end, she tweaked our on-line volunteer applications by adjusting font type and size to ensure they were meeting ADA standards. Sue has been reaching out to volunteers who work with individuals with different abilities to learn more about what organizations I might connect with and about adjusting volunteer opportunities to open up possibilities for volunteers of different abilities. Some Freedom Fest positions are suited to persons who use wheelchairs, as an example, and we are promoting those and other opportunities broadly.
- Sue wrote up the 2020 Stewardship Network grant report submission, helped with wording and budgets for a National Environmental Education Foundation grant application, and started planning for fulfillment of a volunteer component for an ICECF Amenities Grant at the Riverview Retreat Center.
- Emily and Sue hosted the postponed Earth Day event along the KRT on May 15. Approximately 50 individuals were signed up but only about 30 attended on the gloomy day, but folks made a noticeable difference in reducing the trash and invasives along the KRT. Special thanks to The Wheelhouse for providing a coupon for a free appetizer for these volunteers (Ryan and Sue worked on that)! Thanks to Walmart for sending out staff to help and providing some garbage bags; Sue is in conversation about setting up a Walmart-only clean up event. We ‘christened’ the new CCFPD tents that Lisa and Sue got – they look great!!
- Dara, Pam and Sue continued to evaluate and revise the volunteer COVID guidelines.
- Sue met with Jennifer Grove about data keeping and reporting with Volgistics and implemented some changes to help make this most effective.
- Lastly, Sue has been trying to network with Mahomet area service organizations to recruit volunteers for Freedom Fest.



Grants and Development Specialist (Ryan Anderson)

- IDNR OSLAD Peninsula Project
 - The Foundation successfully reached its \$70,000 goal for the Lake of the Woods Peninsula. This money will be used to provide match for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources OSLAD grant, which is funding accessibility improvements at the Peninsula.
- National Environmental Education Foundation- Restoration & Resilience COVID Recovery Grant- \$2,377.89
 - We submitted a letter of intent for a grant to cover the purchase of supplies to create 20 Trail Steward Kits. The Trail Stewards Program is made up of trained volunteers who assist in the maintenance of the various trails within the District. The help pick up litter,

assist in invasive species removal, and report damage along the trails. This grant is for units of local government, so it will be go through the District, not the Foundation.

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

- As we continue to emerge from the pandemic and its restrictions, the golf course continues to see strong numbers in play and revenue, and this was certainly reflected in the month of May. We had 4,902 players in May, which is the highest player count since 2007, and well above the previous five-year average of 3,307. The revenue for the month was \$121,736. This greatly surpasses the five-year average of \$75,638 and is the highest total for May in 10 years.
- As the weather improved, we also completed some projects around the facility in May. The Par 3 pavilion roofing materials arrived and installation was finished in mid-May. Thanks to the construction crew for getting this completed and ready ahead of the summer! We also laid the final pallets of sod on the golf course around the newly renovated bunkers and in those areas where bunkers had been removed. The sod has established quickly, thanks to the damp and cool May weather.
- David and Jason began the newly formed Junior Golf Academy in May. There are two sessions on Thursday evenings, split into an hour each for middle school and high school age players. There are eight youth per age group and the focus is on developing their games in preparation for high school golf team competition. The first session will be wrapping up mid-June and a second session will begin late-June and run through July.
- Our Monday Night League started in May, as well. We did not have the league in 2020 due to COVID, but started it up this year again, with different parameters. Instead of an evening shotgun start, we are doing tee-time from 5:00 – 6:00 p.m., thus allowing us to fill the other times around the league, since the demand is there. We also reduced the league from 24 teams to 12, to fit into this time frame. The league will run through July, with playoffs following into August.
- On May 22, we held a Callaway Fitting Day. Golfers were required to sign up for a 30 minute time slot between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. to be fit for irons or woods. The intent behind this is to hopefully sell an iron set or a driver/fairway wood. This year we sold two sets of irons (\$1200 retail each) and also a 3-wood (\$300) as a result of the Fitting Day!
- Finally, in early May, WCIA reached out about filming a segment on Foot Golf for their Memorial Day special. The special was highlighting summer activities around the area. I spent about an hour with the CI Living cast discussing the game, cost, hours, etc. while watching them play a couple holes. Since it aired on Memorial Day (the final day of May), we are interested to see if there is an increase in interest/play on the Foot Golf course moving forward. Stay tuned!
- On the golf maintenance side of the course, the crew verticut the golf greens, top-dressed the greens with sand and rolled them. The bunker project has been completed and looks great.
- Golf Superintendent applied herbicide and insecticide on the tees and fairways. The new irrigation control system is up and running, which allows the superintendent to program the watering at night.



- The maintenance staff has a total of ten crew members for the summer. The course condition is in excellent shape, and patrons continue to compliment the course. Joie Torres could not be more proud of the hard work his crew has performed!

Natural Resources (Peter Goodspeed)

- Natural Resources staff spent time in May procuring and planting native plant material. This included planting memorial trees and container trees for Sangamon River, the peninsula at Lake of the Woods, and in a CRP tree planting at River Bend. In addition to container trees planted at River Bend, staff and volunteers planted 1,700 bare root seedling trees at the site to become compliant with the CRP contract for the site. Furthermore, over 1,800 native plugs were planted around picnic table platforms at the peninsula with the help of volunteers.



- Our annual Canada goose control program came to conclusion in mid-May when staff did not notice any new eggs being laid. There were no new goslings at Stidham Pond and noticeably fewer goslings around the ponds at Middle Fork.
- Garlic mustard pulling also concluded in May as the seed pods on the plants began to harden. We had a very successful garlic mustard season with staff and volunteers combing through high quality woodland areas.
- Staff cleared trees and brush to make space for the parking lot at Heron View Forest Preserve. Additionally, staff utilized a forestry mower and chainsaws to blaze a loop trail through the preserve.
- Integrated pest management was well underway as staff began to mow new prairie plantings at Stidham Woods and at Buffalo Trace. Mowing helps prevent invasive biennial and annual plants from producing seed, allowing the native perennials to better compete at the sites. Furthermore, mowing allows more light to reach the newly established, native seedling plants.
- Herbicide application began in a few select areas, targeting reed canary grass with a grass-selective herbicide. A new broadleaf-selective herbicide was also used to spot treat mainly wild parsnip, poison hemlock, and Canada thistle along the Kickapoo Rail Trail.

Museum and Education Department (Barb Garvey and Pam Leiter)

- During Bridge Phase, the HLIC is using the honor system for visitors – we are asking anyone who has not been vaccinated to wear a mask indoors, but vaccinated visitors can be un-masked. Because visitors spend an average of an hour in the museum, in close quarters, and the capacity restrictions have been lifted, the museum entry requirements are somewhat stiffer. MGP offers those who have been vaccinated the option to show their vaccination card or wear a mask. MGP no longer requires registration or takes names, however we do adhere to cleaning and distancing protocols. We await the governor's next expected mid-June announcement.
- The Construction Department & HL Operations installed the new garage and electrical for the Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) van. This protects the van from the consistent & costly

squirrel damage we have had for years, and was partially funded by a grant from PDRMA. Concrete work yet to come (funded by a separate grant) to increase accessibility of the sidewalk and to install an ADA parking spot in front of the Center. Work on that is slated for mid-June.



- The HLIC and Museum of the Grand Prairie (MGP) wish lists are now live on the Foundation page; HLIC received a \$100 donation so far, as well as multiple in-kind donations of birdseed this year. MGP received a donation from the Women's Executive Club this month.
- Stacey Clementz & Cathy Schneider worked with HL Operations on sprucing up the HLIC's Outdoor Classroom and getting new pea gravel. Brian Taylor also leveled out the pathway to the classroom.
- Pam has been working with Bridgette Moen and Ryan Anderson to strategize for getting funds for the outdoor classroom shade structure.
- The Rankin Center continues to proceed. Jennifer Grove and Mark Hanson ordered many supplies over the course of April and May. Shelving and pallets are in place, the heat tent and vacuum has arrived; the washer and dryer and sink have been installed. Mark set up the laptop so that collections processing can occur. F.E. Moran has done some, but not all, of the work required for the building to be fully armed. We are waiting on Ameren to connect the permanent supply of electricity before it will be safe to hook up the heat tent and sanitize items before placing them in storage. Board members were given a tour before the last board meeting. Those who were unable to come at that time are welcome to give us a call and come visit.
- Jen Grove and Mark Hanson have sorted items in the basement of headquarters in anticipation of the move to the Rankin Center.
- Jen and Mark returned Sue Ellen Brya-Fink's loan. The MGP was fortunate to receive permission to use scans from Frank Brya's World War II era (D-Day plus five) photo-journal and letters.
- The Museum Advisory committee met in May and approved the accession requests as included in the attached memo. Pam Leiter presented the department's Strategic Plan to the committee at that time, which they also approved with minor changes. This will be brought to the board later in the summer.
- Mark hosted blacksmiths from Flood Plain Forge to look at forged artifacts from our collection.



- Mark worked with ISHRAB (Illinois State Historical Records Advisory Board) on extension and expansion of the East Frisian transcription project.
- Cathy Schneider put up the Animal Advocate donor wall; this replaces the many small donor signs on each aquarium (pictured). She also started a new volunteer program for animal enrichment; two families have already been trained and have started volunteering. Cathy also made a shell-scratcher for turtle enrichment (they love it! - pictured), and is developing plans for a new improved snake enclosure since he has grown so much since we first acquired him.



- Stacey Clementz was on CiLiving with Sarah Kaper, Ag in the Classroom, to show off the 2nd grade At-Home Exploration Kit they distributed to schools earlier this year.
- Stacey's Fairy Houses StoryWalk was a great success in May; it came down June 1. Her Summer Activity Guide went out June 7.
- Stacey & Cathy continued to do a few in-person school programs in May. Eric Roth, Maintenance Worker II at Middle Fork, shadowed them during a school program at Middle Fork. He is interested in a career in environmental education. He did amazing and was a great help! In addition, teachers are contacting us to set up field trips for the fall in hopes that they will be allowed to take students off campus.
- On May 2, Pandemics as a Portal to Change opened virtually, with an exhibition in the afternoon and a reception the next evening. This is an all ages art show with the theme of how the pandemic could change lives, was cohosted by Krannert Art Museum and MGP. There will be programming throughout the summer to discuss this topic. In addition, all pieces created will become part of the MGP COVID-related permanent collection.
- Katie Snyder and Sandy Osborne provided a Homeschool Class with an online class/tutorial on butter churning on May 3.
- Marina Montez-Ellis created and provided a bag give-away and program with free seeds to coordinate with her online Seed Safari program.
- Katie Snyder delivered a Zoom fieldtrip on immigration to students from Carrie Busey in Champaign and Pleasant Acres, Rantoul. Katie also did a new program using Ox-Cart Man and original artifacts with the 2nd grade in Rantoul.
- Jennifer Wick held a virtual program with guest speaker (and CCFPD Natural Resources Director) Peter Goodspeed on prescribed burns, *Fire: A Vital Tool for Land Management*. The live program streamed on the HLIC Facebook page and the CCFPD YouTube channel. Jennifer also worked on a video about removing sweet clover for Sue Gallo to use for volunteer training.

- In place of the annual Bird Migration Festival public program, Jennifer Wick offered other activities and videos, plus a take home activity kit featuring a DIY bird feeder and bird seed. (Many thanks to the Champaign County Audubon Society for providing a sponsorship!) Jennifer also worked with a team of ornithologists from UIUC to record a mist-netting and bird banding demo and published the video on our Facebook page on International Migratory Bird Day.
- Jennifer's Family Fishing Day at Middle Fork campground was a success. While this was a scaled-down version of Take Me Fishing, it was well received by everyone involved.
- Jennifer Wick & Katie Snyder are exploring a partnership with Mahomet Public Library for a permanent StoryWalk installation at Lake of the Woods.
- Stacey is partnering with Rantoul School District on a 21st Century grant application that would provide STEM afterschool programming for all four elementary schools. If the grant is approved, CCFPD would partner to teach one 6-week program at no cost.
- Youth volunteer Gwen Happ is once again submitting nature journal entries this summer as a volunteer project. These are always a favorite on our Facebook page! Jennifer Wick has already received submissions from Gwen.
- Pam Leiter did a WCIA Morning Show Whys Guys presentation on maple seeds, worked on a new HLIC brochure with Lisa, and helped with the IT Tech interview.
- Pat Cain met with Heather Wickens and others associated with Looking for Lincoln as part of a new committee in the Abe Lincoln National Heritage area. The group will produce educational videos surrounding Abe Lincoln's involvement with lesser known folks in the regional communities.
- MGP and Mary Ellen worked together to handle a guest complaint associated with the suffrage & women's rights exhibit. The museum has developed the following message in an effort to circumvent such problems in the future. *The Museum of the Grand Prairie interprets the local history of Champaign County and East Central Illinois. We strive for objectivity and historical accuracy. Please recognize that topics covered in our exhibits may be uplifting or disturbing for certain patrons or age groups. All of our exhibits are aimed at adults. While most exhibits have elements that children will enjoy, the Discovering Home exhibit is designed specifically for children.*
- Pat and the CSRAs have resolved a problem with a new barcode scanner and inventory entries for the museum store which has plagued them for a few months.
- Marina Montez Ellis, Sandy Osborne and Marina's children filmed videos of Hoops and Sticks, Potato Sack Races, Jump Rope, Quoits, and Graces for Thomas Paine Summer School.
- Katie and Sandy filmed *Dying Wool and Weaving Wool* videos for library programs. These will be distributed to area libraries that are still not having in-person visitors.
- Pat met with Taylor Bauer of Visit Champaign County at MGP to shoot some video for Visit Champaign County's TikTok page.



- Pat Cain and Mike Dale are planning a “Chalk the Garden” event tied to an upcoming summer concert.
- Pat hosted a Garden Speaker Event “How-To Start Your Own Tea Garden” on May 25.
- Pat hosted a Mornings at the Museum event, “Staff Favorites” on May 22 at 10:00 a.m.
- Pat has solicited sponsors for the Summer Concert Series. The Champaign County League of Women Voters has come forward to be the lead sponsor with a sizeable donation.
- Marina planted plots in Discovery Garden for Solidarity Garden (ongoing collaboration with various organizations working on food insecurity in Champaign County).
- Barb gave her lecture 19 Suffragists, 19 Historic Homes for Windsor of Savoy to an excited crowd of 25! This is the first return since February 2020.

Staff:

- Katie attended the Welcoming Interactive Conference, a free conference provided by the Welcoming America organization (who sponsors the New American Welcome Center) on May 18-20.
- The museum welcomes three new interns for the summer: Connor Monson, Allie Love and Bridget Hammond. Bridget and Connor will be working with the Doris Hoskins archive. Connor and Allie will be assisting with summer programming both online and limited in person.
- In addition, collections volunteers returned this month! We are excited to have our collections inventory started again by Ruth and Ray Landry. In addition, Darlene DuFrain is cleaning up data entry for letter transcriptions and East Frisian oral history transcriptions that occurred during the pandemic. And finally Charlie Smith has returned and is cataloguing collections again!
- Pat wrapped up his ISU Grad Class for the semester. The class was titled “Global History of Forced Migration, Refugee, Asylum, and Human Rights” which culminated with Pat submitting a final research paper titled “The Impact of Community Based Organizations in Creating a Welcoming Community for Immigrants & Refugees: Featuring a Case Study of Champaign-Urbana, Illinois.”

News of Note:

- Pam Leiter presented the Museum and Education Department Strategic Plan to the Citizens Advisory Committee and introduced the HLIC/HL positive messaging idea to begin building a foundation for a future nature center capital campaign.
- Pam attended the FPFF Fundraising Committee meeting this month, where we talked about fundraising strategy for a new nature center.
- Pam developed a Let’s Go Fishing interpretive sign for the LOW Peninsula project.
- MGP Facebook stats, May 1-31: Average Daily Organic Reach: 1189 (36,869); Average Daily Page Engaged Users 54 (1697).
- HLIC Facebook stats, May 1-31: Average Daily Organic Reach: 2,118 (Sum: 65,671); Average Daily Page Engaged Users: 167 (Sum: 5,177)

Lake of the Woods (Doug Sanders)

- I am pleased to announce that Tyler Courson has filled the fulltime landscape/garden worker position. Tyler joined the CCFPD team in 2016 and has returned for six seasons. During that time he obtained an Illinois Pesticide Operator’s License, volunteered in the development of the Sangamon River Greenway Park, maintained the Mahomet United Methodist Church’s

landscaped beds, and completed his degree in natural resources and environmental sciences at the University of Illinois. Tyler has proven to be a dependable and hardworking team member and we are grateful to have him on board fulltime.

- The rental boat program kicked off its season over the Memorial Day weekend. We could not have asked for nicer weather to debut the new boathouse and dock. Over the three day period there was a steady stream of patrons coming to check out the new features and we had a total of 162 boat rentals. There were even a few parties that used the accessible transfer station to launch their own kayaks. Compared to years past, the new water feature provides a completely new experience!
- We had two awesome volunteer groups this past month help out in the botanical garden. The University of Illinois' Phi Gamma Nu fraternity assisted staff with one of the largest mulching projects in the garden. While Ryan Dallas Real Estate's staff helped plant canna lilies and marigolds. Both of these groups saved our staff quite a few hours of labor and were great to work with.
- Over the last month, visitation and activity throughout the preserves has been on the rise. Activities consist of boating/fishing, picnics, graduation parties, special events, and increased facility rentals.



Middle Fork River (Matt Kuntz)

- Natural resources, Middle Fork, and volunteer staff started a shoreline restoration effort at Emerald Pond. Nearly 3000 plugs were planted along the shoreline. The effort was the subject of a News-Gazette article on Thursday, June 10.
- The campground continues to be booked solid. Unfortunately, each weekend numerous campers must be told that there are no campsites available.
- Middle Fork staff continues to work on prairie restoration areas when we have time.
- New doors were installed at the shower house under a contractual arrangement. Thanks to the construction department for painting them.

Homer Lake (Brian Taylor)

- I was approached by the leader of the Dragon Boat crew about the possibility of installing some kind of grab bar on the docks at the Salt Fork Center so that crew members could get in and out of the boat more safely. Fortunately for them we have Roy who is a great metal fabricator and enjoys this type of challenge, so he welded some pieces and parts together and came up with a great system for them to use. We know they like it because we have received donuts and cookies from them for the past two weeks. We still need to paint it but we will wait until their season is over to remove it.



- We are extremely grateful to have hired Colton Carr to fill the Maintenance II position. He worked for us as a seasonal since 2018 while he worked towards his bachelor's degree in kinesiology and sports management from Saint Ambrose College in Iowa. Over the years he has proven to be a hard worker and quick learner with a can do spirit.



Kickapoo Rail Trail

- The Friends Foundation ran a fundraising appeal on June 6th (National Trails Day). We sent out four email communications to our newsletter and KRT contact lists. These communications discussed ongoing projects at the KRT, KRT news, the new KRT Triple Match grant from Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, the KRT Friends Group, and volunteer activities. Along with these activities we ran related posts on the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation Facebook page. Funds from this appeal will be dedicated towards the 3x Match to fund habitat restoration work along the KRT. As of June 10, the Foundation has raised more than \$2,300 toward the \$7,000 that will be triple-matched by ICECF.

District Cultural Competency Initiatives

- As noted in the HR report, several staff participated in a webinar called: Bystander Intervention Training to Stop Anti-Asian/American and Xenophobic Harassment and found it to be highly valuable.
- Katie Snyder worked with Prairie Winds Memory Center and brought over the Women's Tub for residents to explore.
- The MGP has contracted with a researcher through the Frieda Mumm internship funds to update and enhance the *This Legacy is Yours* online exhibit. Jamila Appleby is a long-term teacher at Stratton Elementary who has worked with the MGP on projects in the past, completing a fellowship through the American History Teacher's Collaborative here. Jamila will be conducting oral history interviews with members of the African American community to complete this project. Mark, Katie, Barb, and Jamila met to develop parameters for the project and learn how to use the technology involved.
- Museum and Interpretive Center staff discussed collaborating this year on Welcoming Week with Stratton ESL and dual-language populations.
- Museum staff researched and pulled from the Hoskins archive early African American families for Tracy Parsons from City of Champaign.