Our Mission
The McHenry County Conservation District exists to preserve, restore and manage natural areas and open spaces for their intrinsic value and for the benefits to present and future generations.

Our Vision
McHenry County Conservation District will be a premier public agency in the country for preserving, protecting and managing open space. Residents will have developed a personal responsibility for their local environment, gained a greater appreciation for their natural world and invested into ensuring its future protection. Achieving this vision will:

- Inspire respect for the land;
- Promote sound environmental practices;
- Promote the long-term viability of the county’s biodiversity;
- Provide opportunities for responsible use of the land in concert with natural resources;
- Promote environmental stewardship;
- Provide quality experiences that promote green, healthy and balanced lifestyles;
- Connect children to nature and;
- Foster public and private partnerships.

From the Executive Director—

Since 1971, the McHenry County Conservation District has protected just over 25,570 acres representing some of the rarest and most diverse natural areas and ecosystems in the Chicago region. These natural resources are critical for protecting the quality of our air, land and water and providing ecosystem services, wildlife habitats and recreational spaces while contributing to our quality of life and supporting a vibrant economy.

Effectively managing McHenry County’s public lands for current and future generations requires an interdisciplinary team of professionals and volunteers. Each operational area of the District is dynamic and comprised of many moving parts and amazing people who are dedicated to the District’s conservation mission and vision. As we move forward with developing our three-year strategic plan, fiscal year 2021 budget and responding to the needs of ALL our residents, it is imperative that we keep our eyes on the conservation future we are aspiring to create and that we ensure our water, wildlife and way of life is maintained in a sustainable manner.

Citizens of McHenry County are fortunate to reside in a county where our natural resources are unique and treasured. Where people of all ages, cultures and abilities can live in harmony with nature and contribute to conservation in impactful ways. Where the wildlife habitats preserved, restored and protected by the McHenry County Conservation District and our partners serve as priceless refuges for multitudes of living things. Where investments in conservation, parks and open space present a cost-effective solution to combatting many of the critical issues we face as a society and as a county. Where community is represented with shared vision and personal responsibility for the natural world. Where through the support and advocacy of our conscientious citizens, volunteers, appointed/elected officials, board of trustees and staff, the state of conservation on McHenry County public lands is both promising and optimistic.

We have a powerful vision and a small and mighty team that works effectively together each and every day to carry out the District’s statutory mission. As we strive to accomplish our ambitious conservation goals, we remain focused on why conservation is key to the makeup of McHenry County as a whole and understand that leveraging resources and continued public input are critical to our future success!

Yours in Conservation,

Elizabeth S. Kessler, MBA, CPRE — Executive Director
Safety in Our Sites: BE SAFE BE SEEN
Reminder about hunting and safety during this time of year. McHenry County Conservation District’s hunting seasons begin October 1st.

For your safety:
- Obey posted signage
- Stay on marked trails
- Wear bright colors
- Remember dogs are always required to be on a leash.

In general, hunting hours are from ½ hour before sunrise, to ½ hour after sunset.

The District’s hunting program locations are selected and set up to prevent site users from having any interference with hunting zones. If you see a hunter in an area you believe may not be open to hunting, contact the District’s Police Department at (815) 338-6223, ext. 1210.

#bikeMC
Have you wanted to ride the Prairie Trail but don't own a bicycle? Now, you don't have to! Bike sharing is the latest trend in easy and eco-friendly transportation. McHenry County Conservation District teamed up with McHenry County Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to sponsor one of the county’s six #bikeMC stations. Hop on and off as you please and only pay for what you use! Stop by to give it a try starting. For more information about the bike program visit http://bit.ly/2K9ClAy.

SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST
ENTER...VOTE...
Deadline to enter is August 15.
Three finalists will be chosen from three categories: Water, Wildlife, and Way of Life.

Voting begins the week of August 19.
Finalists’ photos will be posted to our Facebook page (facebook.com/DiscoverMCCD).
Our Facebook followers will have a week to vote for their favorite. The photo with the most likes in each category wins!

Complete rules: bit.ly/MCCDPhoto

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American with Disabilities Act
McHenry County Conservation District welcomes the participation of all individuals in our programs, including those with disabilities. We are fully committed to complying with the ADA and providing reasonable accommodations to facilitate participation in our programs.

It is the responsibility of participants, parents/guardians to contact the District to make arrangements for any accommodation at the time of registration; no later than two weeks prior to the start of a program or special event.

Safety is a Priority
Safety is a top priority to all who visit our sites and facilities. If, while on a Conservation District site, you see or witness something that appears to be unsafe, please call the Conservation District and let us know (815) 338-6223.

Behavior Code of Conduct
1. Show respect to other participants, staff and volunteers.
2. Follow instructions by staff and volunteers and show proper group behavior at all times.
3. Show respect to the environment, facilities and supplies.
4. Use appropriate language at all times.

Photography
Participants in McHenry County Conservation District programs and visitors at our sites may be photographed, videotaped or filmed for use in District publications, promotions, and on the District web site or social media channels. All photos taken on District property are the sole property of the District.
McHenry County Conservation District 2019 Conservation Award Winners

William Howenstine
Bill is the living, breathing, embodiment of a Conservation Champion. Bill was instrumental in creating and founding the McHenry County Conservation District. He was one of the first District Trustees and served on the board for two terms. Bill also wrote the District’s Conservation Ethic statement which is read at the beginning of every board meeting to remind current board members of what we represent and why we do what we do. He taught Environmental Science at Northeastern Illinois University and served as head of the Geography and Environmental Studies department until his retirement.

For many years, Bill and his wife Alice have operated an organic Christmas Tree and hardwoods nursery, open to the public where they continue to educate the public on environmental topics. Bill and Alice were also involved in the creation of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County as well as ongoing promotion of conservation in McHenry County including recycling, the support of alternative energy, waste reduction, native plantings and restoration, renewable resources, and environmental education. In addition, much of their property has been placed in permanent conservation easements to preserve the land for future generations of residents including the flora and fauna which inhabit it.

Dave Miller
Since 2005, Dave has contributed hundreds of hours of volunteer bird survey work for the District across multiple natural communities. Dave enthusiastically committed himself to this project. The data he collected provided valuable information on our impact to grassland bird communities through restoration efforts, development impact, grassland bird re-nesting, bird use by seed mix, and a better understanding of the Henslow’s sparrow—habitat relationship. This work provided the foundation for data-based planning for establishment of the grassland venture program, growing season burning, and third and fourth generation grassland bird seed mixes at North Branch and Goose Lake Conservation Areas.

Beyond his contributions to the District’s scientific data and land management plans, Dave also has a passion for sharing his knowledge and his time to teach others. Dave has lead multiple bird walks over the years for all ages, assisting both the Education and Natural Resources Departments. His birding teaching has stimulated the creative minds of many, and the ripples of his passion will undoubtedly be felt in future generations.

News & Noteworthy:

Nominations for 2020 Conservation Awards

McHenry County Conservation District is seeking nominations of individuals who are and have been Conservation Champions for the Public Open Space of McHenry County. The two awards, Conservation Champion and Conservation Legacy, will recognize exceptional contributions of individuals who have made extraordinary impacts to the conservation movement through their continued dedication and support of the mission of the Conservation District.

The Conservation Champion Award recognizes individuals who have made one or more contributions of extraordinary significance or impact to the conservation movement through their continued dedication and support of the mission of the Conservation District. Significant contributions can include leadership, innovation, environmental legislation, community building, restoration fieldwork, citizen science and volunteering, donations of money and land.

The Conservation Legacy Award recognizes contributions that transcend time. Whether the award winner dedicated ten or fifty years towards the local environment, their work should live on well past their earthly lifetime. Their legacy should be a gift to their community, as well as the plant life and wildlife within it. Regardless of how many lives they touched, Conservation Legacy Award winners need to have inspired others to become stewards of the land.

To nominate a Conservation Champion or Legacy Award, download and submit an electronic nomination form from the District’s website (www.MCCDistrict.org). Nominations will be accepted through December 31, 2019.
Eagle Scout Candidate Gavin Conner of Scout Troop #128 of McHenry, IL, worked with McHenry County Conservation District and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Region to construct and install wood duck nesting boxes at Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge Tuner Trac in Genoa City, WI.

Under the guidance of Restoration Ecologist Nathan Groh and USFWS Hackmatack Project Leader Todd Boonstra, 17-year old Conner coordinated the project and supervised his troop to install a total of eight boxes.

Once threatened with near extinction, populations of wood ducks are now stable or increasing. Wood ducks require a cavity in which to nest, adjacent or within one to three miles of a wetland habitat that contains some trees and shrubs, and provides quantities of aquatic insects for ducklings. Thus, there is a greater need for the use of nest boxes in this region because there are fewer natural tree cavities.

“Each year McHenry County Conservation District tries to assist these future leaders by coming up with a list of worthy projects,” said Ben O’Dea, Land and Facilities Supervisor for McHenry County Conservation District. “We have high respect for those individuals desiring to reach this rank in the Scouting program and value the work they do. We typically work with 5-10 Eagle Scout candidates per year. They have constructed trail bridges and wetland boardwalks, built and installed trail benches, as well as taken on multiple restoration and erosion control projects.”

**Bee Blitz** — The 2nd Annual Bee Blitz was held at Glacial Park on June 22 as part of National Pollinator Week. Twenty people representing ages 7 to over 70 years of age took part in the event. Over 1,110 photos were taken where 80 different species were identified, including 21 bee species. Participants also learned about the importance of our native key pollinators and how they can become citizen scientists on their own. Bumble bee photos were submitted to Bee Spotter, a collaborative citizen science organizations those efforts track and help conserve North America’s insects declining populations.
Financial Highlights 2018–2019

Our Strengths: The 5Rs of Sustainability —
McHenry County Conservation District prides itself in being both an innovator and early adopter in the region for both conservation and fiscal stewardship. We anticipate needs, take well-calculated risks and create synergistic relationships for local and regional conservation impact. We are responsive, responsible, resilient, resourceful and respected in all that we do.

Responsive
The Conservation District continues a long history of being responsive to the needs of our residents by holding ourselves fiscally accountable.
This has been accomplished through:

Property Tax Relief General fund tax levies were frozen in four of the last seven years. From 2012 to 2018 the District levied $2.8 million dollars less in property taxes than what would have been statutorily available under PTELL, which is equivalent to 30% of the FY 2020 General Fund Budget.

Property Tax Reduction Total property taxes levied by the District were reduced for four consecutive years from 2014 to 2017.

Property Tax Abatement The 2017 tax levy increase as allowed under PTELL was permanently abated.

Sound Fiscal Management In 2014, the Conservation District refinanced General Obligation Bonds for a $14 million-dollar savings over the life of the bonds—a direct savings to the tax payers.

High Value Services at Low Costs For every dollar a resident pays in property taxes, approximately two cents go to fund the McHenry County Conservation District.

Responsible
The Conservation District fulfills a statutory mandate to steward public lands which represent McHenry County’s natural and cultural heritage - the inheritance for current and future generations.
We can meet this obligation in the most responsible manner by:

Restoring Ecological Health Restoring our natural areas, farmland, wetlands and waterways to ensure their future viability.

Preserving Iconic Places We are the generation that has the opportunity and responsibility to preserve those places that clean our air and water, protect wildlife habitat, and add to our county’s natural beauty before they disappear forever.

Safeguarding Our Health Nature is a source of food, potential medicines, and critical lands for outdoor recreation, relaxation and reflection. These same natural resources provide an opportunity to address human health concerns like obesity, mental illness, depression and cardiovascular disease. If we protect our land, we safeguard our health.

Creating Memorable Experiences Conservation District sites provide local and accessible places for families, friends

Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
All Funds—Summarized, Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2019*

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<th>Revenues:</th>
<th>FY 18/19 Revenues</th>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>Farm &amp; Property Leases</td>
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<td>Investment Income</td>
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<td>Programs &amp; Services</td>
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<td><strong>Total Revenues</strong></td>
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<td>Capital Outlays:</td>
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<td>Land Acquisition</td>
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<td>Sites &amp; Trails</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>171,540</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$22,347,700</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Other Financing Sources: | | |
|--------------------------|------------------|
| Transfers in             | 432,523          |
| Transfers (out)          | (432,523)        |
| Sale of Capital Assets   | 19,934           |
| **Total Other Sources**  | **$19,934**      |
| **Net Change in Fund Balances** | **$(125,238)**  |
and neighbors to share and celebrate a love of the outdoors. Hiking, fishing, hunting, boating and camping traditions are passed from one generation to the next.

Resilient
Natural areas under protection by the Conservation District help to ensure that the County is prepared for natural and man-made disasters such as floods, drought, groundwater contamination, and pollution via the protection of our land, air and water.

Resilience is possible through:

**Groundwater Protection** Natural areas, wetlands, and grasslands help filter pollutants from and help the quality of our drinking water. McHenry County is dependent upon this valuable resources and access to clean drinking water will become increasingly important as we move into the future.

**Clean Rivers & Streams** Grasslands and wetlands act as natural surface water filters preventing pollutants, pesticides and fertilizers off lawns and farmlands from running directly into local waterways.

**Healthy Productive Pollinators** Protecting and restoring natural areas is critical to the survival of insect pollinators which help to ensure productive crops vital for our food supply as well as healthy ecological systems throughout the county.

**Resourceful**
The Conservation District strives to produce the most cost effective and efficient budget possible while providing residents with the highest quality sites, services and experiences. The District actively pursues intergovernmental collaboration opportunities and innovative partnerships to maximize its effectiveness and plays a vital role in assisting the County to implement its long-range plans, including its GIV, Transportation Plan, Emergency Management Plan, Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and Mobilizing for Action through Planning & Partnerships (MAPP).

This strategy of resourcefulness allows the District to:

**Promote a Shared Strategy for Conservation** Conservation groups throughout the county are working together to protect our land, air and water, with the Conservation District serving as the primary agency, to ensure large, connected natural areas are protected.

**Collaborate to Protect Additional Acres** To remain a healthy, breathtaking and economically viable place to live and work in the decades to come, additional lands need to be protected in McHenry County that link existing preserves, safeguard agricultural production, protect water supplies and remain resilient in the face of growing climate variability. The District continues to collaborate with other agencies to meet this shared vision.

**Provide Exceptional Stewardship** With a highly effective, exceptionally talented and dedicated staff, the Conservation District stewards more than 25,570+ acres, 34 public sites, 836,120 linear feet of trails and welcomes nearly 1 million visitors each year. These responsibilities are augmented by an equally committed and passionate volunteer workforce that contributes endless hours to the District’s overall mission.

**Respected**
The natural areas preserved and protected by the McHenry County Conservation District bring local, regional and national recognition to McHenry County, attract businesses and consumer spending, and are part of the way of life for people who choose McHenry County for its natural setting and outdoor recreational pursuits. We have earned the respect of McHenry County residents and partners through basing our land stewardship decisions on good science and financial decisions on sound fiscal stewardship.

The District is recognized for its:

**Environmental Stewardship and Scientific Expertise** From ecological restoration, rare plant discoveries, scientific research, innovative management strategies, wildlife reintroduction and experiential educational programs, the Conservation District is recognized locally, regionally and nationally as a leader in collaborative conservation and public engagement efforts underway in our region.

**National Leadership and Regional Collaboration** The District played a key leadership role in establishment of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. The District is also a founding and active member of Chicago Wilderness, a regional alliance to preserve, improve and expand nature and quality of life in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan. The alliance connects leaders in conservation, health, business, sciences and beyond to tackle challenging issues to ensure a resilient region.

**Community and Business Partnerships** By the very nature of providing recreational spaces for hiking, biking, paddling, camping, fishing, hunting and enjoying wildlife, the Conservation District is a big part of McHenry County’s local economy; whether it be a bike ride along the Prairie Trail or a paddle down Nippersink Creek, visitors often include a stop for lunch or refreshing drink at a local establishment. In addition, the District has many partnerships with local communities and businesses.

**Conservation Ethic Standards & Principle** The District champions a conservation ethic that inspires respect for the land; promotes sound environmental practices; provides quality experiences that promote green, healthy and balanced lifestyles; and moves McHenry County toward an ever more environmentally sound future.

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**Award Recognition**

Under the leadership of Director of Finance & Administration Andy Dylak, Accounting Supervisor Jean Gerstbrein and Accounting Assistant Linda Bryant, the Conservation District receives National Award for Financial Excellence in Financial Reporting for ninth consecutive year from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. This Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of government accounting and financial reporting and recognizes agencies that go beyond the minimum requirements to prepare comprehensive annual financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency and full disclosure. The Government Finance Officers Association is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals.
Scientific Studies & Research

- The District recorded a total of 757 individual Blanding’s turtle occurrences since 1994 and PIT-tagged a total of 656 individual turtles; 415 released from the ongoing Head Start program.
- Two Osprey platforms were installed in Glacial Park near Lost Valley March and Nippersink Creek with the assistance of ComED.
- Dr. Thomas Simpson published *Oak Reproduction in Midwestern Savannas & Woods* which outlined the results of several years of research into the problems of oak regeneration and acorn dispersal.
- A Freshwater Mussels Propagation Project was conducted with DuPage County Forest Preserve District involved searching Nippersink Creek for gravid freshwater mussels, transporting them to the Urban Stream Community Research Center where larvae were released in a controlled environment, cared for overwinter, and released back into Nippersink Creek to supplement existing populations.
- A water control structure was replaced at Sticky Run Conservation Area, a key to providing marsh habitat for native wildlife; funds provided by McHenry County Conservation Foundation.
- Two new survey techniques were introduced; the first, a Song Meter SM4, is a dual channel acoustic recorder capable of capturing a large amount of data in the field. The second technique was the development of a McHenry County Singing Insects Sonogram Guide to aid volunteers and citizen scientists in identifying these species in the field.

New Unusual Sightings & Rare Plant Monitoring:

- The federally endangered Rusty patched bumble bee was observed in Glacial Park. The protection and survival of this rare and important pollinator is critical to help sustain food sources and native plant species.
- Monitoring and hand pollination was completed on five subpopulations of the Eastern prairie fringed orchid at four District sites. Several non-pollinated flowers were plump, indicating a naturally occurring population of the Hermit sphinx moth in the area; the only confirmed pollinator of the species in Illinois.
- Glacial Park’s Bat Barn that housed 1,229 bats in 2014 saw a 96.2% decline by 2018 when just 47 were counted - most likely due to high mortality rates from White-nose Syndrome during winter months.

Hunting & Fishing:

The District’s recreational hunting program for white-tailed deer and waterfowl opportunities permitted 270 hunters on 21 sites, harvesting 144 deer. The District also maintains fishing opportunities; these include places to accommodate riparian, lake and pond fishing. Trout are stocked annually at two sites and a pond fish ecosystem is maintained at several ponds. The Lee Wulff Chapter of Trout Unlimited continued work to restore the scenic ponds at Fox Bluff Conservation Area and reintroduce brook trout.

Outdoor Recreation Amenities Completed

- Brookdale Equestrian Parking Lot
- Ridgefield Trace

Social Media Engagement & Outreach

Social Media efforts included developing content and strategies to increase followers and engagement, build traffic to our sites, and augment registrations and reservations.

Facebook — Reach: 253,231; Likes: 5,341
Audience Engagements: 113,483
Video Views: 84,223

Instagram — Followers: 1,063
Audience Engagements: 12,092

Twitter — Followers: 1,932;
Audience Engagements: 1,440

Snapchat Filters —
Nippersink: 856 uses /22k views;
Glacial Park: 579 uses /25.3k views

Enhanced and expanded Google listings.

TOTAL SITE USE VISITORS ...over one million!

1,040,963

Visitor Services = Total Guests Served

| 113 Wildlife Programs = 3,365 |
| 112 Picnic Shelters Reserved = 5,554 |
| 314 Education Programs & Events = 6,162 |
| 690 Camp Sites Reserved = 7,702 |
| 205 School Programs = 9,008 |
| 173 Special Use Permits Issued = 9,437 |

Volunteers Donated 9,444 hours — representing a value of $240,161
(based on the national average of $25.43 per volunteer hour.)

Awards & Recognition

- Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting — 9th Consecutive Year
- Intergovernmental Collaboration Award:
  Ridgefield Trace — IAPD Best of the Best
- Tamarack Award —
  Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge
- Community Partnership Award —
  Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association
- Northwest Herald Reader’s Choice Awards —
  Voted One of the Top Small Employers Under 100 to Work for in McHenry County; AND One of the Top Educational Institutions to work for in McHenry County
- Executive Director Elizabeth Kessler named Chair of the Chicago Wilderness Alliance
- Sergeant Ryan Stewart received Rising Shield Award from the Illinois Chief of Police Association
2018–2019 Special Event Sponsors

Grants & Contributors

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<tr>
<th>Grant/Project</th>
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<tr>
<td>IL Clean Energy Community Foundation Parcel Purchase</td>
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<td>IDOT Ridgefield Trace Bike Path/Oak Street Crossing</td>
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<td>USFWS YCC Grant</td>
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<td>Friends of Hackmatack Part of ICECF Grant</td>
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<td>Urban &amp; Community Forestry via Morton Arboretum</td>
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<td>IDNR Recreational Trails Program Equestrian Parking Lot</td>
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<td>IDNR Green Snake Grant</td>
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<td>NA1 Education Play Station</td>
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Donations:

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<td>General Donations Total</td>
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<td>MCCF Brush Mulcher</td>
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<td>Big Woods Reforestation Program</td>
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<td>Wildlife Resource Center</td>
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Festival of the Sugar Maples

2018 Seed Collection Results

- 9 Volunteers
- 145 Native Species Collected
- 290 lbs of Seed Collected
- 807 Collective hours
- $68,218 Value and Savings to the Conservation District!

2nd Annual Run Wild... Race for Open Space 5K

BIG WOODS Donations

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<td>AVOCA School District 37</td>
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<td>Randi &amp; Bob Rewoldt</td>
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<td>Bellois/Berkshire Hathaway via</td>
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<td>John Oldenburg</td>
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<td>Ernest Chmura</td>
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<td>Lara Dunbar</td>
<td>Timothy &amp; Nora Zeller</td>
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<td>Brandie Dunn</td>
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<td>Adam Gardner</td>
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<td>Craig Butler</td>
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<td>Cross Roads Community Church</td>
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<td>Debra Franzone</td>
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<td>Forrest Hastings</td>
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<td>Mary Jo Lucas Healy</td>
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<td>Sarah Micheli</td>
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<td>Cindy Rendl</td>
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<td>Merle Smith</td>
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<td>In Memory of Bob Tirk:</td>
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<td>Travers &amp; Lorraine Smith</td>
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<td>In Memory of Gordan Van Bergen:</td>
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<td>Patricia Von Bergen</td>
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To Honor:

- In honor of Kay & Jack Grossman
- In honor of Susan Guenzel
- The wedding of Bill & Karen Schmuel
- In Memory of Eva Louise Armes:
  - The Brit Family
  - Karen Gais
  - Francis Gotanco
  - Valerie Hendrickson
  - Leonard and Shelley Jones
  - Marcia & Brian McCloud
- In Memory of Edward Gorka
  - Karlith Gorka
McHenry County Conservation Foundation’s Annual FRIENDraiser Raises $10K

This summer, more than 120 people came out to Glacial Park for McHenry County Conservation Foundation’s 17th annual Pedal, Paddle, Saddle across the Prairie. Together, event sponsors, donors, and attendees helped raise nearly $10,000 to support Conservation District efforts to maintain, protect, and preserve our county’s many conservation areas.

While the weeks leading up to the event were extremely wet—there was nothing but clear skies and perfect weather for everyone who participated in and volunteered for Pedal, Paddle, Saddle.

McHenry County Conservation Foundation has spent more than a decade championing the conservation efforts of the McHenry County Conservation District and its partners. Originally just Pedal the Prairie, this event started as a way to raise community awareness of the District and to highlight just one of the many opportunities available to both residents and visitors of McHenry County at District sites. Now in its 17th year, the event has grown to include the popular paddling and saddling portions and attracts a number of returning participants as well as new visitors to Glacial Park, one of the crown jewels of both the District and McHenry County.

Every person involved helps ensure the vitality and longevity of District sites and programs simply by coming out and spending a day on the prairie. We look forward to seeing you at next year’s event!

MCCF thanks the 2019 Sponsors for their commitment to conservation:

**SHOOTING STAR**

**PRAIRIE DROPSEED**

**BLUEBIRD**

Curran Contracting Company
McConnell Environmental Natural Therapy Wellness Center
Upland Construction & Maintenance LLC
Dave’s Bait, Tackle & Taxidermy
Ed’s Rental & Sales, Inc.
Inland Bank
Prairie Moon Nursery
Ray Eisbrener
Woodstock Powersports
We need YOU to take the...

**Glacial Park Oak Stewardship Challenge**

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation recently awarded a Community Stewardship Challenge Grant to McHenry County Conservation Foundation. This grant offers an opportunity for members of our community to get involved and raise funds to help protect Glacial Park’s critical oak habitats.

**Part 1: Matching Donations 3:1**

Raise and meet the $7,000 fundraising goal that will be matched 3:1. These private contributions, plus the $21,000 matching grant will equal $28,000 in land management support. This includes the District’s purchase of native trees, shrubs and hand tools, as well as overall site upkeep and stewardship.

A $25 gift becomes a $100 gift… A $100 gift becomes a $400 gift. Every dollar makes a direct, on-the-ground impact right here in McHenry County!

**Make a Gift:**
- Check: Payable & Addressed to — McHenry County Conservation Foundation
  Lost Valley Visitor Center
  7210 Keystone Rd, Richmond, IL, 60071

**The clock starts now...**
The Foundation has until October 31, 2020 to raise $7,000 and record 400 hours of volunteer work. Help us reach this goal by making a gift or signing up to volunteer today!

**Part 2: 400 Volunteer Hours**

Encourage McHenry County residents to get outside and sink their hands into the soil by stepping up and stepping out into the field as a volunteer who plants trees, collects seeds, or assists in other numerous ways. Your time will be converted into cash! An additional bonus payment of $4,000 will be awarded if volunteers log a combined 400 hours or more toward the stewardship project at Glacial Park.

**Sign Up to be Alerted about Glacial Park Volunteer Opportunities:**
Contact: Volunteer Coordinator, Jackie Bero, Jbero@MCCDistrict.org,
(815) 338-6223 ext. 1201

**Upcoming Events:**
- Public Planting Party, October 12: plant and cage oak trees;
  Fall Seed Collection — TBA;
  Spring Public Planting Party — TBA; Bee Blitz — June 2020

Help us count you in...

**Volunteer at the Public Planting Party**
Saturday, October 12
Drop-in 1–4 p.m.
- Glacial Park — Wiedrich Barn Parking Lot, 6313 Harts Rd, Ringwood

Interested in becoming a McHenry County Conservation Foundation Member?
Contact Executive Director Shawna Flavell at 815.678.4532 ext. 8204 or by email at sflavell@mchenryconservation.org.
While many people do legitimately have arachnophobia, a fear of spiders that has been played up by society, spiders are actually fascinating and important creatures. While out walking the trails, pay attention to the spaces between grasses, flowers and among the leaves. Where there is a web, there is a spider. A close examination of a web, its patterns and intricacy of the design, can help identify the family of spiders that created it, as webs vary among different spiders.

**Orb weavers** are spiders that weave the intricate and amazingly strong spoked wheel web. An outer frame has spokes headed to the middle, while additional outlines parallel the outside border. These internal silks are sticky to help hold an insect once caught. These webs have to be able to withstand a fast flying insect headed straight into it. The strength of the silk and the design of the web help trap passing insects. There are dozens of genuses and thousands of species of orb weavers that come in all colors and sizes, but the most recognized ones are those with the larger, bulbous abdomens.

A garden spider or banana spider, the argiope is a big, beautiful, black and yellow spider. It too is in the orb weaver family but it adds an extra twist to the spoked wheel web – it puts a zig-zag pattern in it. Scientists speculate that this may help prevent birds from running into the web or help camouflage the spider when it sits on top of it. In any case, like all orb weavers, the argiope depends upon design, strong silk, and stickiness to catch its prey. It will then immediately rush to the caught insect, insert its venom and wrap the prey in silk. Later the spider will basically suck the insides of the insect out after they have liquefied due to the venom.

**Tangle web spiders**, also called cobweb spiders, chiefly belong to the family Theridiidae and are known for building three-dimensional space webs. The most well-known spiders in this family are the common house spider and the black widow. Tangled webs are meant to be a jumble of threads that insects cannot help but get caught up in. Struggling only ensnares the insect more securely in the sticky mess.

**Funnel weaving spiders** create just as their name implies, a funnel shaped web. They lie in wait inside their lair and if they feel a vibration on the outside, they rush out to bite their prey. In order for the spider to be successful, it must be a very fast runner. It is believed that the funnel also acts as safe place hidden from predators and a location for mating.

Spiders are important to ecosystems all over the world for their role in keeping insect prey populations in balance, as well as a food source for their predators. Rather than being afraid of the next spider you see, perhaps take a closer look and notice the intricacy of their webs and the beauty of the differently colored spiders. They really are fascinating creatures.

**Spiders Shouldn’t Scare Us**

_by Education Program Coordinator Kim Compton_
Spiders Among Us

Eeek! Spiders can give us the heebie-jeebies, but did you know that they are an important part of our world? Spiders help keep our insect pest populations in balance by using some insects for food. By helping control pest populations, this also helps keep unwanted diseases pests can carry under control. Learn more about the cool and unique characteristics of spiders with the activities down below.

**Spider Webs**

Spiders have many ways for us to tell them apart. One way is by looking at the type of web they make. Just like with birds’ nests, not all webs are made the same way. Try to match the type of spider with the web it makes.

- Common Cellar spider
- Black and Yellow Garden spider
- Orb Weaver
- Grass spider
- Orb web
- Funnel web
- Tangle web
- Orb web with zig-zag

**Spider Scavenger Hunt!**

Now it’s time to go outside in your own yard or come to one of McHenry County Conservation District’s sites and go on a Spider Scavenger Hunt!

Here is your spider scavenger hunt check list:

- A spider with yellow on it’s body
- A spider with spots
- A spider web in the ground
- A spider with red on it’s body
- A spider web that looks like a bicycle wheel
- A spider web in the grass
- A spider on a tree
- A spider web with bugs in it
- A spider making its web
- An animal that would eat a spider
- A tiny spider
- A spider on the ground
In 2015 Jerry Sapp, Pete Koenig and Bob Becker from Lee Wulff Chapter of Trout Unlimited contacted the Conservation District to offer their assistance to restore the stream and small ponds that run through the Fox Bluff Conservation Area in Cary.

Although the ponds were overgrown, and terraced down a ravine with a series of spring seeps above them, they looked promising as a suitable site for the introduction and sustainability of trout, due to the presence of crystal clear water with watercress and algae. After a series of meetings and water temperature and chemistry studies over several months, the chapter and the Conservation District agreed that the ponds could sustain native brook trout.

The Lee Wulff Chapter already sponsored a program called Trout in the Classroom with special needs students from Algonquin and Dundee Middle Schools who were raising Brown Trout. It was decided to have these students raise Brook Trout instead. The first batch of eggs were placed in classroom tanks in November 2016.

In early 2017, Jerry registered with the Conservation District to be the Volunteer Site Steward for Fox Bluff Conservation Area. As part of his stewardship role, Jerry has a thorough understanding of the site’s ecological restoration needs and guidelines as identified by staff, knowledge of native and invasive species, complete chainsaw and herbicide training, and adhere to all safety practices.

Jerry started hosting a series of restoration workdays at Fox Bluff, supervising his volunteer team which started with members of Lee Wulff Chapter of Trout Unlimited as they removed buckthorn, cleared brush, secured dams, and cleared the stream and ponds of debris. By May the ponds were ready for students to release their first brook trout and on a nice sunny day they released 250 trout fingerlings with great care. Fish were spotted throughout the summer and continued to grow.

Volunteer restoration workdays continued in the fall to remove more dead trees and debris from the ponds in preparation for their first winter with thriving 5” brook trout. Volunteers returned several times in 2018, to clear buckthorn and dead trees found in and around the ponds and in the overlook area. District staff installed limestone boulders at the outflow of the lower pond to help raise the pond six inches. A stream survey was also conducted in 2018 that rated the streams and ponds as high quality with a high population of amphipods which contributed to the rapid growth of the brook trout.

The students from Algonquin and Dundee Middle Schools raised and released their second and third batch of trout fingerlings in May of 2018 and 2019. They had a great experience watching their fish hatch from eggs in their classroom, raising them to fingerlings and gingerly placing them into their new home. While on-site at Fox Bluff they learned about other macro invertebrates in the pond and to their delight found several adult fish that they had raised and released the year before.

The students listen to Jerry as he explains pond ecology and discusses the variety of invertebrates and vertebrates that thrive in the healthy ponds. He also discusses the need for invasive species removal, points out some of the wildflowers that can be found, such as white trilliums and cardinal flowers, and discusses the importance of the oak forest that surrounds the ponds.

“I really enjoy working with children and having the opportunity to educate them about raising trout and introducing them on a site that is the only one in McHenry County with brook trout. Especially as habitat for brook trout has been decreasing,” said Jerry who is the Vice President of the Lee Wulff Chapter of Trout Unlimited and is on the Illinois Leadership Council of Trout Unlimited.

Jerry Sapp and the members of Lee Wulff Chapter continue to watch over Fox Bluff and host restoration workdays to maintain a healthy environment for pond life both in and around the water. The group completed 335 hours of volunteer service hours in 2017 and another 192 hours in 2018.

Please Note: All stream access and fishing at the Fox Bluff ponds is allowed by special use permit only. All fishing is catch and release. More information contact Gabe Powers at gpowers@MCCDistrict.org.
Registered District Volunteer—Perks Program
You give so much of your time, talent and energy to the District—when we can, we want to be able to show our appreciation with a few perks. The big perk for registered volunteers this fall is:

FREE registration to our award-winning Weekend of Restoration program
October 12–13 — Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park
The weekend includes a visit to Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge and oak tree planting. See page 24 for information!
Interested? Contact Jbero@MCCDistrict.org for special registration code.

BECOME A SEED COLLECTION VOLUNTEER
Seed Collection Volunteer Orientation
Tuesday, August 20 • 7–8:30 p.m.
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park
A few hours of your time spent collecting seed on District sites this fall can make a real difference in preserving and restoring native plant species to McHenry County. No experience necessary. New volunteers can attend the training session given by Plant Ecologist Laurie Ryan and seed collection seasonal employees. We hope to see you there!

Chainsaw Training for Registered Volunteers
Thursday, Sept. 19, 8 a.m.—12 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 21, 8 a.m.—12 p.m.
Locations TBA
Learn or get a refresher course on the basic set-up, maintenance, and trouble-shooting of using a chainsaw, perfect for larger habitat restoration projects. Hands-on practice time included. Volunteers need to be registered with the District and provide their own chainsaws. Program is FREE.
Interested? Contact Jbero@MCCDistrict.org, (815) 678-4532, ext. 8144 to sign up.

Interested in volunteering? Contact Volunteer Coordinator Bob Menard at (815) 338-6223 x1201 or Volunteers@MCCDistrict.org.

Environmental Education — Assist District Educators with public programs, classroom outreach, field trips and special events. Bilingual volunteers translate at programs and special events or translate written material.

Habitat Restoration — Individuals, small groups and families help Site Stewards restore native habitat at District sites. Prescribed burn volunteers assist in spring and fall.

Historical Volunteers — Keep local history alive through historical interpretation at programs, special events and historical open houses. Or assist in the restoration of the historic Powers-Walker House in Glacial Park and the McConnell Farmstead in Richmond.

Plant Monitoring — After training, volunteers go out into the field to collect data on native plants. Native prairie plant seed is collected in fall. Phenology volunteers assist with on-going research.

Recreation & Public Safety — S.W.E.E.P. (Safety Watch Education & Environmental Program) volunteers tour the Prairie Trail by bike or hike the trails at various conservation areas. Glacial Park Ski Patrol members (trained by National Ski Patrol) assist cross country skiers.

Scout & Group Service — Outdoor projects vary each year and are geared to adult and youth groups, including Eagle Scouts and Girl Scouts.

Wildlife Monitoring — After training, volunteers go out into the field to collect data on bluebirds, butterflies, bees, and/or grassland birds.
HABITAT RESTORATION DAYS —
Scouts, Students, Families and Individuals are invited!

Drop in and make a difference! This is a great outdoor service opportunity for scouts and high school students, as well as individuals and families with children over age six. Dress for weather and off-trail activities; including sturdy footwear (sandals not allowed). Bring drinking water and insect repellent. Tools and equipment are provided. Contact the Site Steward from the list below for site-specific instructions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCATION — MAP ON INSIDE BACK COVER</th>
<th>MONTHLY SCHEDULE</th>
<th>SITE STEWARD — CALL BEFORE YOU GO!</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturdays</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alden Sedge Meadow South, Alden/Harvard</td>
<td>Third Saturdays, 1–3:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Judy and Jack Speer (815) 648-1372; <a href="mailto:smallwatersNFP@yahoo.com">smallwatersNFP@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boger Bog, Bull Valley</td>
<td>Fourth Saturday, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.</td>
<td>Ders Anderson (815) 455-1537; <a href="mailto:danderson@openlands.org">danderson@openlands.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dufield (McConnell Rd. Entrance), Woodstock</td>
<td>Second Saturday, 9 a.m.–12 p.m. (Note: Spring, Summer, Fall only)</td>
<td>Jeff Schumacher (815) 337-9315; <a href="mailto:schumacherjeff1@gmail.com">schumacherjeff1@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exner Marsh, Lake in the Hills</td>
<td>Third Saturday, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.</td>
<td>Len Bannon (847) 669-1381 or <a href="mailto:lennsandy@gmail.com">lennsandy@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Creek Marsh, Island Lake</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates.</td>
<td>Mike Bouska (815) 759-0731; <a href="mailto:MikeBouska@att.net">MikeBouska@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coral Woods, Marengo</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates. Opportunities most weekends</td>
<td>Bonnie Leahy (815) 923-2208, <a href="mailto:bh.leahy@att.net">bh.leahy@att.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Point, Harvard</td>
<td>Second Tuesdays, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.</td>
<td>Orrin Bangert &amp; Randy Stowe, (815) 943-6333; <a href="mailto:glaggan@yahoo.com">glaggan@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake in the Hills Fen, LITH</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates.</td>
<td>John Scott (847) 658-6241; <a href="mailto:janetescott@yahoo.com">janetescott@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marengo Ridge, Marengo</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates.</td>
<td>Kevin Kucharski (815) 715-3231; <a href="mailto:kucharski.kevin@comcast.net">kucharski.kevin@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer Fen, Johnsburg</td>
<td>Second Tues. 2:30–4:30 p.m. &amp; Second Sat. 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Pat Sullivan-Schroyer (815) 347-9005; <a href="mailto:psullivanschroyer@gmail.com">psullivanschroyer@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pleasant Valley, Woodstock</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates.</td>
<td>Greg Rajsky (815) 814-5055; <a href="mailto:quirkaceae@yahoo.com">quirkaceae@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stickney Run, McHenry</td>
<td>9/8; 10/27; 11/17, 9 a.m.–12 p.m.</td>
<td>Pete Jackson (224) 612-1803; <a href="mailto:beepjackson@comcast.net">beepjackson@comcast.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hollows, Cary</td>
<td>Contact Site Steward for dates.</td>
<td>Margie Szymanskyj (815) 479-0988; <a href="mailto:szymansky@earthlink.net">szymansky@earthlink.net</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Variable</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>EXNER MARSH, Lake in the Hills, 9 a.m.–Noon</td>
<td>Len Bannon, (847) 669-1381 or <a href="mailto:lennsandy@gmail.com">lennsandy@gmail.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOGER BOG, Bull Valley, 10 a.m.–Noon</td>
<td>Ders Anderson, (815) 455-1537 or <a href="mailto:danderson@openlands.org">danderson@openlands.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLEASANT VALLEY, Woodstock, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.</td>
<td>Greg Rajsky, (815) 814-5055 or <a href="mailto:quirkaceae@yahoo.com">quirkaceae@yahoo.com</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARENGO RIDGE, Marengo, 10 a.m.–1 p.m.</td>
<td>Kevin Kucharski, (815) 715-3231 or <a href="mailto:kucharski.kevin@outlook.com">kucharski.kevin@outlook.com</a></td>
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</table>

Hey Volunteers! Stay Connected...
Join the Conversation! We hope to get more of our volunteers connected and communicating with not only us, but with each other!

Our Natural Resources Volunteers can join our Group on the McHenry County Conservation District Facebook page. This is a great place to receive updates, events, announcements, training opportunities, and to share your amazing experiences with our volunteer community!

Request to join the group—and you’re in!
https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverMCCD/
If you love sampling good craft beer and spending time outdoors, this event is for you!

Walk the one mile partially wooded trail while visiting various regional brewers along the way. Play a pick up game of bags, sand volleyball or basketball and visit outdoor recreation retailers.

For more information, visit bit.ly/TGOBT2019Tickets

**$45** 18 – 4oz. pours plus Commemorative Glass

**$55** Gold Pass – enjoy early entry 1 hour before the crowds

**$15** Designated Driver (21+) Water / Soda & Commemorative Glass

Get your tickets early — prices increase day of event.

**Live Music by Lara Bell**

Great Eats by: Your Sister's Tomato (wood fired pizza), Fork n Fry (poutine)

Note: Ticket sales end at 5 p.m. day of the event. You must be 21 or older to attend. The site will be closed to all other visitors during the hours of the event. The trail is paved and wheelchair accessible. This event is dog friendly—leash required.
Special Guest Speaker —
**Tallgrass Conversations**  *Ages 14+

**Saturday, September 7, 2–3:30 p.m.**
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood
*Fee: R $5.00/NR $5.00  Code: 6271*

Meet author Cindy Crosby as she leads us on a search for the “Prairie Spirit”.
Poetic, beautiful, meditative, and informative. Through short writings and photographs, Crosby and Thomas Dean enter a conversation to inspire new understandings of the Midwestern tallgrass prairie through word and image. Tallgrass Conversations encourages looking and listening to the prairie through the heart and mind as well as other senses, advancing both conservation and creative efforts on behalf of the tallgrass prairie. A superb look at how to best learn to live with the tallgrass prairie, or anywhere you call home.

The author will be doing a few readings from her previous book, “The Tallgrass Prairie: An Introduction”. We are hoping to get out to the prairie and spend some time with her readings. The author will have books for sale at the end of the program *(cash or check only).*

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**Star Party**
hosted by
Northwest Suburban Astronomers
**Saturday, October 5**
6:00–10:00 p.m.
Marengo Ridge, Marengo

This year Jupiter with its four moons, Saturn with its beautiful ring system, and even the distant gas giants Uranus and Neptune will be observable in the southern sky. NSA members will also be aiming their telescopes at globular and open star clusters in the Milky Way as well as at planetary nebulae and the Andromeda Galaxy.

Dress for evening and bring a flashlight covered with red plastic or cellophane (red light preserves everyone’s night vision) as well as insect repellent.

You are welcome to bring your own telescope or binoculars. NSA members will be happy to provide guidance in their use. In the event of inclement weather the event will be canceled.
Living History Events
Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park

No registration required
Drop in any time during event hours.

Archaeological Awareness
Sunday, September 15
Noon–4:00 p.m.
See a stone grinder, flintknapper, and other demonstrations of prehistoric skills. Try your hand at throwing an atlatl while pretending you are on a prehistoric big game hunt. A mounted cavalryman will also be on hand to explain archaeology of the Little Big Horn site. Archaeologists will describe how prehistoric technologies are discovered and interpreted. Examples of artifacts will be on display, including those found at the Powers-Walker House. Bring your own arrowheads or prehistoric tools for identification by professional archaeologists.

Harvest Time in 1858
Sunday, November 3, Noon–4:00 p.m.
Step back in time to the 1850’s at harvest time. Try your hand at corn shelling, grinding corn into flour, or making a corn husk or yarn doll. Witness harvest activities like the baking of bread in the wood-burning cookstove and grinding herbs for winter use. Tour the historic farmhouse to learn more about its restoration, or visit with a Cavalry sergeant and his horse as they demonstrate the weapons of the era used to protect these frontier lands.

Twilight on the Farm
Wednesday, October 9, 6–8:00 p.m.
Enjoy the twilight ambiance of this 1850’s house by candlelight and lamplight while enjoying a fall evening viewing the ever-changing colors in the Lost Valley Marsh. Smell the aromas and see what is being baked in the wood-burning stove. We think of candlelight at the end of the day as peaceful, but have you tried doing detail work in dim lighting? See how the early settlers tried to get the remains of their work done at the end of the day.
The **Big Sit** Bird Watching Event

**Sunday, October 13, 6:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m.**
Powers-Walker House—Glacial Park

*Hosted by Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge & McHenry County Audubon Society with support from Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

Celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week at The Big Sit, an annual, international, noncompetitive birding event. The concept is simple: find a good spot for bird watching, sit in one spot for a designated time period, and count all the bird species you see or hear. The Big Sit falls in October when fall migration is in full swing.

Gather your closest bird-watching friends for a bird-a-thon, a perfect excuse to share good stories, meet new friends, enjoy the outdoors and appreciate our fine feathered friends. Stop by for a few minutes, stay a few hours or join the whole 12-hour sit. Bring a lawn chair and your binoculars and layered clothing. For more information visit [Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge - hackmatacknwr.org](http://hackmatacknwr.org).

**Migration Madness**

**Migratory Madness Evening**  
*Ages 14+
Wednesday, September 11, 5:30–8 p.m.*  
Glacial Park, Kettle Parking Lot, Ringwood  
**Fee:** Free   **Code:** 6261

Join volunteer bird enthusiast Dave Miller on a search for migratory birds stopping over at Glacial Park. After the hike we’ll gather to compare notes and tally up all the species we spotted. Bring binoculars and field guides if you have them.

**VIP Sandhill Crane Experience**  
*Ages 14+
Sunday, October 6, 5–8 p.m.*  
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Overlook Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood  
**Fee:** R $30.00/NR $40.00   **Code:** 6266   **Register by 10/3.**

Sunset in the valley below the Lost Valley Visitor Center is made even more spectacular this time of year when the sandhill cranes gather on their migratory route southward. Graceful and majestic with a haunting call, these birds are perfectly situated below the windows of the Lost Valley Overlook Room. We will start your special evening with a presentation on the natural history of cranes, followed by plenty of time to watch and listen to the birds. Finally, we will cap off this wonderful evening with a catered dinner and camaraderie.
3rd Annual

Run Wild...

Race for Open Space 5K

Saturday, October 5

Hickory Grove Highlands | 500 Hickory Nut Grove Ln., Cary

Race Day overflow parking, Fel-Pro RRR, 1520 Crystal Lake Road, Cary

7–8:00 am On-site Registration (cash or check only)
8:30 am Race Start
9:30 am Awards (overall & age group)

Connect with your wild self on this run through wide open spaces in McHenry County!
Journey through woodland, prairie and wetland habitats. Enjoy the colors of fall with stunning views of wildflowers, grasses and towering oak and hickory trees along the wooded trail. This timed event features moderate terrain to provide an exciting and challenging experience for runners of all skill levels.

$35 (by 5p.m. Oct. 4) • $42 (Race Day) • $20 Youth 5–13 Includes t-shirt, race bib, and race day snacks.

To register, or for more information visit bit.ly/RunWild5K-2019

Find us on Facebook

Sponsored by:
Donate a native tree or shrub in celebration, in memory, or in love of the woodlands. Through this program, we plan to restore and recreate the “big woods” of McHenry County. Just over one-third of the County’s land mass or approximately 143,000 acres was covered by some type of oak ecosystem in 1837. Today, less than 18,000 acres remain—an oak loss of over 87%, according to The Oaks of McHenry County.

Your donations of $50 will purchase and plant 2 native shrubs and/or trees.

Donation details at: bit.ly/BigWoods

BIG WOODS
A LIVING GIFT FOR TOMORROW’S WOODLANDS

Donate a native tree or shrub in celebration, in memory, or in love of the woodlands. Through this program, we plan to restore and recreate the “big woods” of McHenry County. Just over one-third of the County’s land mass or approximately 143,000 acres was covered by some type of oak ecosystem in 1837. Today, less than 18,000 acres remain—an oak loss of over 87%, according to The Oaks of McHenry County.

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Nature at Night

**Storytelling at the Amphitheater**
*Ages 7+
Thursday, September 26, 6:30–8 p.m.
Glacial Park Amphitheater, Ringwood
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6263

Have you ever wondered how the stars came to be in the sky? Or why the coyote cries at night? Come on out to Glacial Park as we gather around a campfire to hear some Native American folklore and learn about the cultural history of storytelling. S’mores will be served towards the end of the program.

**Full Moon Hike**  *All Ages
Friday, September 13, 6:30–8 p.m.
The Hollows Lake Atwood Shelter, Cary
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6249

As the sun sets and the full moon rises, join us for a hike around Lake Atwood. Discover full moon stories from cultures around the world, and learn what we know about the moon today. Leave your flashlights at home and let the moon light the way. Stick around after the hike to enjoy a tasty treat.

**Nocturnal Discovery Walk**  *Ages 8+
Friday, October 11, 7–8:30 p.m.
Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6288

Take the time to enjoy a fall evening at the Prairieview Education Center, where we’ll explore the wonders of nature at night. Even the familiar might look different with moonlight shadows! We’ll go for a hike and play a few games in the outdoors, so dress for a walk and the weather.

**Nature at Night: DROP-IN**
**Nocturnal Animals**  *All Ages
Friday, November 1, 6:30–8 p.m.
Brookdale Shelter – Paulson Rd. Entrance, Woodstock
Fee: Free  Code: 6273

Here’s your chance to enjoy one of our sites after sunset, when it would normally be closed. Come out for a self guided night hike on a designated trail. A staff member will greet you and provide you with some information about the site and what you can expect to see and hear on your hike. During this time, nocturnal animals will begin to emerge to explore the night!

**Coyote Campfire**  *Ages 8+
Friday, November 8, 7–8:30 p.m.
Prairieview Education Center Fire Ring & Patio, Crystal Lake
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6289

Gather around the campfire to find out more about the adaptations and social life of the “prairie wolf”. We will hike to listening spots and enjoy a favorite campfire snack. Dress for the weather.

**Winter Is Coming**  *Ages 7+
Friday, November 15, 6:30–8 p.m.
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6277

Winter is coming soon and animals are gearing up to endure the cold months ahead. Come to Glacial Park to learn about the unique adaptations that allow animals to survive out in the harsh elements. After a short indoor introduction and presentation, we will head out on a guided hike, weather permitting.

**Owl Walk**  *Ages 14+
Sunday, October 20, 5–7 p.m.
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6270

Search for sights and sounds of the owls that reside in Glacial Park. The evening begins with a guided hike to listen for owls. Then head inside where a slide presentation and a visit from a live owl will introduce you to these magnificent creatures. Dress for the weather and for walking one mile over hilly terrain.

Change of plans? Contact Prairieview Education Center at (815) 479-5779 to allow registrants on the waiting lists to be contacted. Unless otherwise noted, an advance notice of five business days is required to receive a refund.

No registration is required for free drop-in programs but, Check Before You Go, cancellations may occur due to weather or staff emergencies. Check for the most up-to-date information under Site Advisories at MCCDistrict.org or in the online registration system.

Youth 13 & under must be accompanied by an adult, except Just for Kids programs. Register online at MCCDistrict.org.
Hike the Ridge, Woods, & Prairie

**Vultures on the Ridge**  *Ages 8+

Saturday, September 14, 1:30–3 p.m.
Marengo Ridge Shelter #2, Marengo
Fee: R Free/NR $2.00  
Code: 6281

Visit one of the highest points in McHenry County and also one of the most scenic. Our vultures use the thermal winds blowing up and down Marengo Ridge to soar and hunt for their food. Vultures hunt using their amazing eyesight and sense of smell. We'll read a story, do a quick craft and spend time practicing our observation skills! Join us to find out more about this amazing creature!

**Autumn Wildflowers on the Move**  *Ages 5+

Thursday, September 19, 5:30–7 p.m.
Kishwaukee Headwaters, Woodstock
Fee: Free  
Code: 6280

Come out and enjoy some of the last blooming wildflowers of the season. We will hike the trail in search of these autumn wildflowers while also learning about how different plants get their seeds to disperse. Is it a Dropper? Plopper? Popper? Note: Flower picking and seed collecting is prohibited in District Conservation Areas unless authorized by staff.

**Family Scavenger Hunt**  *All Ages

Saturday, September 21, 1:30–3:30 p.m.
Boone Creek, Bull Valley
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6262

Bring your family out for an autumn scavenger hunt adventure! Meet us at the shelter for an introduction and to pick up your map and scavenger hunt sheet. Bring your completed worksheet back to the program leader for a prize!

**Fall Color Hike**  *Ages 7+

Saturday, October 12, 1:30–3:30 p.m.
Coral Woods, Marengo
Fee: R $3.00/NR $5.00  
Code: 6267

Come out to Coral Woods and experience fall colors as they start to emerge. Be prepared to hike about 1.5 miles around the Conservation Area. We will also be collecting colorful fall leaves during the hike to create a fall candle luminary that you can take home with you!

**Tracking Trails**  *All Ages

Sunday, November 17, 2–3:30 p.m.
Pleasant Valley Shelter #2, Woodstock
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6254

Learn how hunters, naturalists and animal enthusiasts discover where an animal has been and how to find them as you solve a natural mystery! You will learn how to identify different types of animal signs such as tracks, scat, markings and fur.

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**Century Hikers Club**  *Ages 14+

Looking to get outdoors and enjoy the natural areas of McHenry County Conservation District? The Century Hikers will motivate you to hit different milestones and receive a variety of rewards!

Members can participate in exclusive programs. Hike with others by joining “The Trail Pack.”

Enrollment is easy! Enroll online at bit.ly/RegActive, enter code 5122.

Want to pay with cash or check? Email the club coordinator at education@MCCDistrict.org or call (815) 479-5779.

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**Cache Your Way Across McHenry County**

July 27–November 30

**Cache your way across McHenry County July 27–November 30**

Complete your sheet and claim your 2019 GeoCoin. This year’s theme is SNAKES.

All caches will be live on geocaching.com.

Note: This is a separate program from the GeoSeries. There are a limited number of coins—first-come, first served; one coin per household.

**Get started at:** bit.ly/CYWAMC2019

Find us on Facebook @CacheYourWayAcrossMcHenryCounty

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Nature Exploration

**Discovery Days**  
*Ages 2–6 with Adult*  
**Thursday, September 12, 10–11 a.m.**  
Shelter, Coral Woods, Marengo  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6248

**Wednesday, October 16, 10–11 a.m.**  
Shelter #1, Marengo Ridge, Marengo  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6207

**Tuesday, November 5, 10–11 a.m.**  
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Tallgrass Classroom, Glacial Park, Ringwood  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6276

Try your survival skills against the elements. This is considered a beginner class.

**Nature Exploration**  
**Thursday, November 14, 10–12 p.m.**  
We will be learning the basics of fire building, shelter building and water filtration.

**Coral Woods shelter**, Marengo  
**Rush Creek campground**, Harvard  
**Lost Valley Visitor Center**, Tallgrass Classroom, Glacial Park, Ringwood  
**Prairieview Education Center**, Crystal Lake

**Insect Investigations**  
*Ages 3–8 with Adult*  
**Saturday, November 2, 10–11 a.m.**  
Coral Woods shelter, Marengo  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6253

Did you know there’s a hidden world right at our feet? Learn how to use nets to catch insects, pay a visit to an insect log home and play an insect themed game. Come get your hands dirty while exploring a world often unseen!

**Make Your Own Paper**  
*Ages 5+*  
**Saturday, November 2, 1:30–3 p.m.**  
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Tallgrass Classroom, Glacial Park, Ringwood  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6274

Learning to make your own paper is easy, fun, and environmentally friendly. Discover how you can reduce, reuse, and recycle all in one afternoon. Take your samples home and amaze your family and friends! This is considered a beginner class.

**Nature Play Open House**  
*Ages Infant–5 with Adult*  
**Thursday, November 14, 10–12 p.m.**  
Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6280

Parents and tots are invited to experience the fun and learning available at Prairieview Education Center. Play with nature puzzles, games, puppets and more. There is a guided hike at 11 a.m. and a craft table open throughout the program. If you plan to join the hike, dress for the weather.

**Fort Building Fun**  
*Just for Kids Ages 6–12*  
**Saturday, November 16, 1–3 p.m.**  
Coral Woods, Marengo  
Fee: Free  
Code: 6278

Take advantage of this special opportunity! Kids are invited off-trail to use their creativity and ingenuity to build forts using the natural materials around them.

**Big Teeth Beware!**  
*Ages 8–12 with Adult*  
**Saturday, November 23, 10:30 a.m.–12 p.m.**  
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood  
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  
Code: 6282

Gather round to share in the discovery of the tools animals have that indicate if they are a predator or prey. Get your facts straight about who eats who in the natural world. We will be both inside and outside during this program.

**Natural Wreath Making**  
*Ages 5+*  
**Sunday, November 24, 3–4:30 p.m.**  
Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake  
Fee: R $5.00/NR $7.00  
Code: 6255

Impress your Thanksgiving guests with a handmade wreath created from natural materials found in our prairies and woodlands. Take a short guided hike to discover what the prairie looks like in the fall, and to collect materials to incorporate into your creation. Bring home the beauty of these natural areas through your hand-crafted product. Instruction and basic wreath making materials will be supplied.  

**Lost Valley Nature Detectives:**  
**Self-Guided Explorations at Glacial Park**

It’s a beautiful day for hiking, bird watching, and wildlife tracking! Start your adventures at Lost Valley Visitor Center where each month a new topic is featured. Indoor displays and activities will get you ready for an outdoor exploration.

Check out the free exploration backpack to borrow binoculars and field guides and grab a scavenger hunt to help you search the wild spaces of Glacial Park. Come any time the visitor center is open!

**September — Life Underground**  
**October — Fall Color**  
**November — Wild Turkeys**

**The FOX Club**

**Families Outside eXploring** is a free opportunity designed to help families spend quality time outdoors while learning about nature. As a member of the FOX Club, families receive an exploration backpack, Conservation District site and trail maps, fun seasonal activity ideas, a log book to journal activities, and a bimonthly newsletter. The club offers six gatherings a year, hundreds of outdoor exploration ideas, and a chance to meet other outdoor-loving families.

Join online with Code 5123. For more information, contact the FOX Club coordinator at (815) 479-5779.

Did you see this symbol? Conservation District programs that are designed as free exploration outings are marked with the Leave No Child Inside logo. For more information on Leave No Child Inside, visit www.childrenandnature.org.
After School Adventures

Geocaching Mini Adventure
Just for Kids Ages 8–13
Tuesday, September 17, 4:15–5:30 p.m.
Prairieview Education Center Gazebo, Crystal Lake
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00 Code: 6250
It’s time for an after school adventure! Learn to use a GPS unit while discovering nature. After a short lesson, we will use the GPS units to find clues on the trail that will lead to a hidden treasure! Participants will take home a prize at the conclusion of the program. Register by 9/13.

Fire Building Mini Adventure
Just for Kids Ages 8–13
Thursday, October 24, 4:15–5:30 p.m.
Prairieview Education Center Gazebo, Crystal Lake
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00 Code: 6252
It’s time for an after school adventure! Learn about the ingredients necessary for a fire, three different ways to build them, and classic ways to light them. Test your skills by building a fire and lighting it yourself. If you can build a big enough fire, we will even roast and enjoy some marshmallows as a reward for our hard work!

Mythbusters: Animal Edition
Just for Kids Ages 6–12
Friday, November 22, 4:15–5:30 p.m.
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Savanna Room, Glacial Park, Ringwood
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00 Code: 6279
Do bats really get tangled in your hair? Do snakes really chase after you? Drop your kids off at Lost Valley Visitor Center to help us bust some famous myths you’ve likely heard about animals. Should you believe them or not?

Weekend of Restoration XVI
Camp Hackmatack—A Geological Perspective
October 12–13 • Saturday 8 a.m. – Noon Sunday
Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park
Cost: $25 per person; $15 Seniors (60+); $20 Students (16–22); Code: 6285
Free for Registered District Volunteers (Call (815) 678-4532, ext. 8144 for Discount Code)
Ages 16+
Register by 10/7
Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge sits on an ancient landscape wrought over hundreds of millions of years by inland seas, glaciers, and the work of water and wind. The beautiful woods, wetlands, and prairies around which the Refuge is built are a direct response to the land formed by these primeval forces.
Participants will travel a short distance north to look closely at the geological forms of Hackmatack and the events of the last Ice Age. To make the refuge a more beautiful place, the group will plant native trees and shrubs, and build protective cages around the young oak trees to protect them from deer browse. Come make a difference to a place that will one day be a jewel of the region and the NWR system. Find us on Facebook: http://on.fb.me/WkndofRstor.

Fee includes continental breakfast, lunch and dinner on Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday. Several motel options are within 15 minutes of Glacial Park or camp for FREE exclusively for this event. BYO camping equipment. Shower facilities available.
Cast Iron Cooking: Fall Favorites  Ages 14+
Saturday, September 21, 9–1 p.m.
Prairieview Education Center, Crystal Lake
Fee: R $8.00/NR $10.00  Code: 6292  Register by 9/12.

Learn to cook some tasty Dutch oven autumn recipes while also learning about cast iron use and care. Most importantly, we’ll be preparing lunch that we’ll enjoy together. Leave with new knowledge as well as recipes! Taught by the one and only Dutch Oven Diva, Lesley Tennessen.

Fall Photography  Ages 14+
Sunday, September 22, 5:30–7 p.m.
Hickory Grove Highlands Shelter #1, Cary
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6251

Fall is here and brings with it beautiful colors. Learn how to capture the magic of the “golden hour” and changing seasons with some tips and tricks on how to use your camera phone. Are you more advanced? Feel free to bring your own equipment and take advantage of this opportunity to photograph the park “after hours”. Enjoy reviewing photos together and warm up afterwards with a cup of tea or hot cocoa.

Intro to Campfire Cooking  Ages 8+
Thursday, October 3, 6–7:30 p.m.
Lost Valley Visitor Center Patio, Glacial Park, Ringwood
Fee: R $5.00/NR $8.00  Code: 6265

Learn how to use a variety of tools to cook over an open fire. Try your hand at making foil packets and using pie irons to create delicious meals and treats perfect for your next camping trip. You will not only enjoy the food that we cook but will also take home a recipe booklet so you can continue practicing your new skills.

Yoga with Colors  Ages 14+
Wednesday, September 25, 6–7 p.m.
Coral Woods Picnic Grove, Marengo
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6286

Join us for an evening of color and calm. The instructors from the Cultivate Studio in McHenry will lead us in a sequence designed to soak up the colors and enjoy the forest. This class is suited for all levels and everyone should feel welcome. Dress to be outside!

Yoga with Gratitude  Ages 14+
Saturday, November 23, 2–3 p.m.
Pleasant Valley Shelter #2, Woodstock
Fee: R Free/NR $5.00  Code: 6287

As we begin the holiday season join us to take these moments and immerse ourselves in gratitude for all that the natural world has shared with us. We will be outside in a moving practice that can be shared by all. Our leader from Cultivate Studio in McHenry has designed a class to include everyone at all levels. Please dress to be outside!

Fall Kayak Trip  Ages 14+
Saturday, September 28, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Meet at Pioneer Rd. Landing, Richmond
Fee: R $20.00/NR $25.00  Code: 6264

If you are already skilled in basic river paddling techniques, this kayak trip on Nippersink Creek is for you. Paddle eight miles from Pioneer Road Landing to Nippersink Canoe Base and enjoy the beautiful fall scenery along the banks. Bring a sack lunch, plenty of water, sunscreen, bug spray, and wear shoes suitable for wading. All equipment is provided, single kayaks only. Note: If conditions on this portion of the Nippersink Creek are not suitable, we may still offer the trip on the first seven mile section of the creek instead, from Keystone to Pioneer Landing. Registrants will be notified.

Youth 13 & under must be accompanied by an adult, except Just for Kids programs. Register online at MCCDistrict.org.
Education Program Registration Procedures

Choose one of the following convenient ways to complete your registration.

If you are registering by mail or drop off, make sure you sign the participant waiver at the bottom of the registration form, download at bit.ly/Online-Reg. Copies of the form are acceptable as long as they are legible. Payment must accompany your registration. We accept checks payable to McHenry County Conservation District and cash. Payment by credit card is accepted via online registration only.

Online: MCCDistrict.org
Fax (no fee programs only): (815) 479-5766
Phone: (815) 479-5779

Drop off locations/hours:

Prairieview Education Center
2112 Behan Road, Crystal Lake
Mon.-Fri.: 9 a.m.–5 p.m.
Sat.: 12:30–4:30 p.m., Sun.: Closed

Lost Valley Visitor Center
Route 31 & Harts Rd., Ringwood
Nov.–Mar.: Daily 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Apr.–Oct.: Daily 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.

Cost: R $140/NR $180 ($50 deposit required) for up to 10 children. $10 for each additional child with a 15 person max, including birthday child and siblings.

Nature Detectives
Ages 4–7 and 8–12:
There’s so much to explore as kids take part in a scavenger hunt and earn a Nature Detective badge.

Letterboxing
Ages 4–7:
Simple clues lead to special birthday letterboxes. This is a great introduction to Geocaching and just as much fun!

Geocaching
Ages 8–12:
Use GPS coordinates to find birthday caches in this popular treasure hunt adventure.

Get Your Game On
Ages 4–7 and 8–12:
Play classic party games with nature-themed twists.

Nocturnal Critters
Ages 8–12:
Head outdoors for a night hike to discover the critters that are active at night. We’ll end the hike around a warm, crackling campfire.

Celebrate your next birthday with us!
Nature-Themed Birthday Parties!
Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Rd., Crystal Lake

Choose one of five different party themes to help celebrate the special day!

Each 2-hour party includes one hour of staff-guided activities and one hour use of the party room on your own for 10-15 children. Note: Outdoor activities are weather dependent and may be replaced with alternative indoor activities.

Book a Party: Saturdays 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Sundays between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.
Friday or Saturday from 7–9 p.m. for Nocturnal Critters

Call (815) 479-5779 no more than 60 days in advance.

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Nature Detectives
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Letterboxing
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Nocturnal Critters
Ages 8–12:
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Celebrate your next birthday with us!
## SEPTEMBER

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<td>Labor Day</td>
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<td>Migratory Madness Evening, pg. 18 5:30–8 pm, Glacial Park</td>
<td>Discovery Days, pg. 23 10–11 am, Coral Woods</td>
<td>Full Moon Hike, p. 27 6:30–8 pm, The Hollows</td>
<td>Special Guest Speaker — Tallgrass Conversations, pg. 16 2–3:30 pm, Glacial Park</td>
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<td>Autumn Wildflowers on the Move, pg. 22 5:30–7 pm, Kishwaukee</td>
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<td>Vultures on the Ridge, pg. 22 1:30–3 pm, Marengo Ridge</td>
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<td>Yoga with Colors, pg. 25 6–7 pm, Coral Woods</td>
<td>Storytelling at the Amphitheater, p. 27 6:30–8 pm, Glacial Park</td>
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<td>Family Scavenger Hunt, pg. 22 1:30–3:30 pm, Boone Creek Cast Iron Cooking: Fall Favorites, pg. 25 9–1 pm, Prairieview</td>
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<td>Fall Kayak Trip, pg. 25 9 am–3 pm, Pioneer Rd. Landing</td>
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### OCTOBER

#### Calendar:
- **Weekend of Restoration—“Camp Hackmatack: A Geological Perspective”** Saturday, October 19, 1–4 p.m. FREE. Marengo Ridge, Marengo. (Page 20)
- **The Big Sit** 6:30 am–6:30 pm, Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park, p. 18
- **Off Mice and Oak Trees,** pg. 20 7–8:30 pm, Glacial Park
- **Twilight on the Farm** 6–8:00 pm, Powers Walker House, Glacial Park, p. 17
- **Nocturnal Discovery Walk** 7–8:30 pm, Prairieview
- **VIP Sandhill Crane Experience,** pg. 18 5–8 pm, Glacial Park

#### Events:
- **Run Wild 5K** Race for Open Space 5K Saturday, October 5 8:30 a.m. Start, Hickory Grove, Cary Details on page 19.
- **Blowing in the Breeze: How to Build a Campfire** Mini Adventure, pg. 24 4:15–5:30 pm, Prairieview
- **Cast Iron Cooking:** Fall Favorites, pg. 25 9–1 pm, Prairieview
- **Survival Challenge,** pg. 23 2–3:30 pm, Rush Creek Owl Walk, p. 21 5–7 pm, Glacial Park
- **Sites Seldom Seen: Community Research Forest,** pg. 16 1–3 pm, Harvard

#### Celebrate Oaktober
- **3rd ANNUAL Run Wild... Race for Open Space 5K** Register online by 5 pm Oct. 4, race day is cash/check only. Saturday, October 5 8:30 a.m. Start, Hickory Grove, Cary Details on page 19.

### Oaktober:
- **Stoked About Oaks** 1–3 pm, Glacial Park
- **Of Mice and Oak Trees** 5–8 pm, Glacial Park
- **Autumn Wildflowers on the Move** 5:30–7 pm, Kishwaukee
- **Nocturnal Discovery Walk** 7–8:30 pm, Prairieview
- **Fall Colors Hike** 6:30–8:30 pm, Glacial Park
**Living History Events**

**Sept. 15, Oct. 9, Nov. 3**

**Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park**

Details on page 17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Harvest Time in 1858 Noon–4 pm, Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park, p. 17</td>
<td>Discovery Days, pg. 23 10–11 am, Glacial Park</td>
<td>Nature at Night: Nocturnal Animals, p. 27 6:30–8 pm, Brookdale</td>
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<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Insect Investigations, pg. 23 10–11 am, Coral Woods</td>
<td>Nature Play Open House, pg. 23 10–12 pm, Prairieview</td>
<td>Winter Is Coming, p. 27 6:30–8 pm, Glacial Park</td>
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<td><strong>9</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coyote Campfire, p. 21 7–8:30 pm, Prairieview</td>
<td>District offices closed.</td>
<td>District offices closed.</td>
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<td><strong>12</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Nature Play Open House, pg. 23 10–12 pm, Prairieview</td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Is Coming, p. 27 6:30–8 pm, Glacial Park</td>
<td>District offices closed.</td>
<td>Fort Building Fun, pg. 23 1–3 pm, Coral Woods</td>
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<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>19</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tracking Trails, pg. 22 2–3:30 pm, Pleasant Valley</td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>21</strong></td>
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<td>Thru November 30 Details on page 22.</td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
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<td><strong>24</strong></td>
<td><strong>25</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural Wreath Making, pg. 23 3–4:30 pm, Prairieview</td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
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<td><strong>29</strong></td>
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**Site & Seasonal Closures**

- **Hunting** – site closed for short periods of time to ensure maximum safety for our visitors.

  - Marengo Ridge/Kelly Hertel Nature Trail, Silver Creek/East Trail Loop South of Behan Rd.*
  - Brookdale/Paulson Rd. Multi-Use Trail, High Point, Fox Bluff
    - Nov. 1–Jan. 19 parking lot remains closed; trail reopens to walk-in traffic after hunting season ends Jan. 19
  - Winding Creek/Main Parking Lot & Wooded Trail, Hebron
    - Nov. 1–Jan. 19. Early parking & prairie loop remain open; site reopens to walk-in traffic after hunting season ends Jan. 19
  - Glacial Park*
    - Dec. 5–8 *Lost Valley Visitor Center & Prairie Trail (W Solon south to School Rd.) also closed.
  - Hickory Grove Riverfront*, Hickory Grove Highlands, Lyons Prairie & Marsh, Silver Creek, Stickney Run
    - Oct. 18–20, Nov. 1–3, Nov. 8–10 *Open for fishing until first ice, campground closed.
  - Marengo Ridge, Rush Creek
    - Nov. 22–24

- **Weather Related** – most sites reopen March 31. Check the website for updates.

  - Trails open to walk-in traffic. Parking lots close with 2” of snowfall (reopen if temperatures become mild.) After Jan. 2 & a significant snowfall, lots close for the season.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beck’s Woods &amp; Piscasaw North, Chemung</th>
<th>Dufeld South, Woodstock</th>
<th>Prairie Trail: Meyer &amp; Hillside Parking Lots, Algonquin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boger Bog, Bull Valley</td>
<td>Elizabeth Lake N. Varga Archaeological Site, Richmond</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Boone Creek, Bull Valley</td>
<td>Exner Marsh/Lakewood &amp; Miller Road, LITH</td>
<td>Lake in The Hills Fen, LITH</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brookdale, Paulson Rd. Entrance, Woodstock</td>
<td>Huntley-Union-Marengo (HUM) Trail, Marengo</td>
<td>North Branch, Richmond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Research Forest, Harvard</td>
<td>Kishwaukee Headwaters, Woodstock</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Seasonal Closures or Special Conditions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coral Woods, Marengo</th>
<th>Feb. 27–Mar. 20; open for Festival of the Sugar Maples, Mar. 7 &amp; 8 and 14 &amp; 15, 10 am–3 pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Line Road Access, Marengo</td>
<td>October 1 trails closed, parking lot remains open for canoe launch access and may close as weather conditions dictate; site reopens to walk-in traffic after hunting season ends Jan. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hickory Grove Riverfront, Cary</td>
<td>Closed at first ice; trails open to walk-in traffic, except hunting weekends: Oct. 18–20, Nov. 1–3, Nov. 8–10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nippersink Canoe Base, Spring Grove</td>
<td>As conditions dictate (ice formation and/or cold temperatures).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pioneer Rd. Canoe Landing, Richmond</td>
<td>Nov. 1–Jan. 19; then as conditions dictate (ice formation and/or cold temperatures).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
McHenry County Conservation District manages over 25,500 acres of open space graced with woodlands, prairies, wetlands, and savannas. Trails and other recreational amenities have been added within 35 conservation areas where the public can enjoy hiking, biking, fishing, canoeing, picnicking, horseback riding, camping, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling and hundreds of opportunities to attend outdoor environmental educational programs and events.

**Lost Valley Visitor Center**
Route 31 and Harts Rd.
Ringwood, IL
815.678.4532
April–October Hours:
Daily, 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m.
November–March Hours:
Daily, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

**Wildlife Resource Center**
815.728.8307

**Police**
Report suspicious activity:
815.338.6223
If no answer call:
815.338.2144

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Socialize with us and other outdoor enthusiasts just like you!

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Special Events, pages 15–20

The Great Outdoors Beer Trail
Saturday, August 17, 2–6 p.m., Fel-Pro RRR

First Fridays Concert —
Fox Crossing Stringband
Sept. 6, 7–8:30 p.m., Lost Valley Visitor Center, Glacial Park

Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park:
Archaeological Awareness
Sunday, September 15, Noon–4 p.m.

Twilight on the Farm
Wednesday, October 9, 6–8 p.m.

Harvest Time in 1858
Sunday, November 3, Noon–4 p.m.

The Big Sit—Bird Watching Event
Sunday, October 13, 6:30 a.m.–6:30 p.m.
Powers-Walker House, Glacial Park

Run Wild 5K—Race for Open Space
Saturday, October 5, 8:30 a.m. Race Start
Hickory Grove Highlands, Cary

Celebrate OAKtober! Come to a Planting Party:
Oak Stewardship Challenge
Saturday, October 12, 1–4 p.m.,
Glacial Park, Ringwood

Bring Back the Big Woods
Saturday, October 19, 1–4 p.m.,
Marengo Ridge, Marengo

Weekend of Restoration XVI—
Camp Hackmatack: A Geological Perspective
Oct. 12–13, 8 a.m. Sat.–Noon Sun. Glacial Park, p. 24