

ParkLands Foundation

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V-P: Angelo Capparella

Secretary: Barry Brenneman

Treasurer: Dan Deneen

Land Steward: Jason Shoemaker



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Mac Arnold

Dale Birkenholz

Todd Bugg

Dan Deneen

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Andy Hedberg

David Jeffries

Jim Mohr

Don Schmidt

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Eric Smith

Find us on the web at:
www.parklandsfoundation.org

**Newsletter
August –
September 2008**

NATURE CONSERVANCY TRANSFERS PRESERVES TO PARKLANDS

ParkLands Foundation has increased its protected natural areas in Central Illinois through the transfer from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of 720 acres in southeastern Woodford County and 60 acres in north-central McLean County, all in the Mackinaw River watershed. This transfer substantially increases our nature preserve acreage while expanding the total reach of restoration capabilities in the watershed by both our organizations.

The TNC Chinquapin Bluffs Natural Area (720 acres) in southeastern Woodford County will add to our Mackinaw Bluffs Corridor Project, a habitat restoration project involving about 1,500 acres located around the Woodford County portion of the Mackinaw River, some 12 miles northwest of Bloomington-Normal. The TNC Henline Creek Natural Area (60 acres) 6 miles southeast of Lexington will add to the Mackinaw River Corridor Project (1,000+ acres) in McLean County. The goals of both projects are to increase conservation acreage in the water-

shed, protect and improve the ecological health of the river corridor, and provide for passive nature recreation and education.

The Nature Conservancy has worked to restore Illinois' freshwater resources, including the Mackinaw River watershed, throughout its 50 years in the state. In the Mackinaw River watershed, the Conservancy has shared goals, management strategies, and resources with partners including the ParkLands Foundation.

After the transfer, the Conservancy will continue activities in the watershed with a renewed focus on the protection of aquatic life by working with local farmers to expand sustainable agricultural practices. In data from the five-year-old Paired Watershed Study, the Conservancy found that such practices, coupled with other preservation and restoration activities, significantly improve water quality.

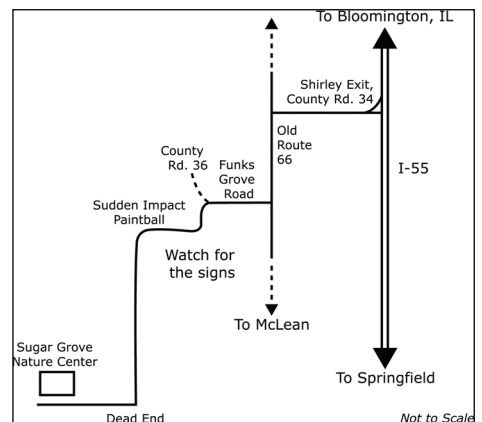
Angelo Capparella

ParkLands 42nd Annual Meeting

The 42nd meeting of our membership has been scheduled for Sunday, September 21, at Sugar Grove Nature Center. Our meal will be catered by CJ's Restaurant and served at noon. The main course will include tossed salad, Au gratin potatoes and fried chicken. However, this year we will also offer a vegetarian option. If you prefer the vegetarian selection, please mark the appropriate box in the registration form. This year we will also be renting plates, glasses and silverware instead of using plastic flatware. This decision was made based upon membership feedback. The cost to rent a place setting averages out to \$1 per person so we will be increasing our fee for the meal from \$10 to \$11. (There is no cost for children under 12.) We hope you understand and support our efforts to reduce environmental waste.

Our guest speaker will be Fran Harty, Director of Lands for The Nature Conservancy of Illinois. He will discuss the work of the Conservancy throughout the State of Illinois including the transfer of Chinquapin Bluffs/Henline Creek nature preserves to the ParkLands Foundation.

Mary Horgan



Sept. 21, 2008 ParkLands Foundation Annual Meeting Reservation Form

Name(s): _____

Total number of Meals: _____ Make mine/ours vegetarian: _____

Payment enclosed: _____ Will pay at the door: _____

(\$11 per meal. Make check payable to ParkLands Foundation.)

Please make your reservation with Mary Horgan by September 2nd

Mail this form to Mary Horgan at 580 Fairway Drive, El Paso, IL 61738 or call Mary at 309.527.5636 or E-mail your reservation to Mary at Horgan@mcchs.org

Meet your ParkLands board member — *Dale Birkenholz*



In 1968 John English told me of Loring Merwin's idea to start a local, non-profit organization to set aside land for hiking, nature study, wildlife habitat, and to simply enjoy nature. The next year he asked me to join the Board of Directors of ParkLands Foundation, and this experience has been an important part of my life ever since.

In 1970 the foundation purchased a tree planter and we began planting seedlings on the Thatcher tract in the north part of what is today the Merwin Preserve. If you walk the trail in that area today first visualize it as the bluegrass pasture it was 40 years ago! Today, the tract consists of hardwood forest, hundreds of maturing oaks, walnuts, and other species. The tulip poplar and sweet gum are out of place, but in 1970 funds were limited and we planted whatever the Ill. Dept. of Conservation could furnish. That year we also established the loop trail from the west parking lot. In the following years we reforested adjacent tracts and sowed prairies in the area that now comprise a 700 acre preserve.

I came to Normal and Illinois State University in 1962 from the University of Florida. Ecology, especially that pertaining to birds and mammals, had always been a first love since my central Iowa childhood. Teaching at ISU and taking part in

Nominating Committee Report

Five directors are completing a 3 year term and are nominated for an additional 3 years: Barry Brenneman, Todd Bugg, Mac Arnold, Jim Mohr and Eric Smith. The nominations committee is also working to fill three positions vacated by resignations. ParkLands members may nominate candidates for director by petition filed with the secretary of the corporation (Barry Brenneman) at least 7 days prior to the annual meeting. Each petition must contain the signatures of 15 members of the corporation. No nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting.

Barry Brenneman

ParkLands development over the years has been a logical and very satisfying adjunct to what has always been a primary interest in my life.

Several of the Board and members have subconsciously considered the Merwin Preserve as our private nature preserve, an area on which we would work yet enjoy in so many ways! I was privileged to serve as President of ParkLands from 1991 to 1996, and I especially enjoyed doing maintenance with Barry Brenneman and John Whitmar. We felt responsible for seeing that benches, entrances, gates, signs, fences, and bird houses were established and maintained. Walking the trails usually included trimming shrubs and clearing fallen limbs and debris.

Now that our organization has increased in size and stature, the opportunities for restoration, stewardship, and more land protection challenge us even more than in the past. I hope that additional volunteers will step forward to continue the mission of our organization and to enjoy it as much as I have.

Dale Birkenholz

Calendar of Events

Annual Meeting

Sunday, September 21, lunch @ noon
Sugar Grove Nature Center
309-527-5636 or Horgan@mcchs.org

Seed Collection

Saturday, Sept. 27. 9:00 a.m.
Cayuga Ridge, Pontiac
Meet @ BP Gas Station, Lexington
Mary Horgan, leader
309-527-5636 or Horgan@mcchs.org

Seed Collection

Sat., Oct. 18, 9:00 a.m.
Cayuga Ridge, Pontiac
Meet @ BP Gas Station, Lexington
Leader: Jason Shoemaker
309-531-7065 or shoemaj@hotmail.com

NOTE: Dates are subject to change. For up-to-date information, check with the leader or log on to www.parklandsfoundation.org.

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