

ParkLands Foundation

Officers & Staff

President: Todd Bugg
Vice Pres.: Jim Franks
Secretary: Julie Elzanati
Treasurer: Nancy Armstrong

Land Steward: Jason Shoemaker
Admin. Director: Mike Hall

www.parklandsfoundation.org



Directors

Finn Amble	Nancy Armstrong
Michael Brown	Angelo Capparella
Jessica Chambers	Matt Fraker
Given Harper	Matt Hickman
Nathan Hinch	Krista Kirkham
Maria Lemke	Les Luginbuhl
Mike O'Grady	Eric Smith

Honorary Directors

Roger Anderson
Dale Birkenholz
Guy Fraker

Newsletter October - November 2013

Conservation Easement Protects Merwin Preserve



Bottomland and timber adjacent to Merwin Preserve will be protected forever with a conservation easement.

Jason Shoemaker photo

In the “good news” part of the agenda at the September 22nd annual meeting, President Todd Bugg announced that ParkLands has agreed to hold a conservation easement on a 140-acre parcel on the north and east sides of the Merwin Preserve. The donors are sisters Susan Sears and Sarah Butler, descendants of Judge David Davis, who originally purchased the land.

“This completes Merwin, the crown jewel of our efforts,” Hon. Director Guy Fraker said. By placing a conservation easement on the timber and bottom land along the Mackinaw River, Fraker explained, “it will be preserved in perpetuity” and remain in its natural state. The easement will also permit restoration but not development.

The family will continue to own the property. “A conservation easement is a very useful tool,” Fraker says, “their action encourages other landowners to do the same”.

Gretchen Monti

Don't Wait — “Shades of Summer” Closes October 26

One of the highlights of holding the Annual Meeting at the McLean County Art Center was viewing the amazing variety of artist interpretations of ParkLands beauty on exhibit in the Armstrong Gallery. Juror Donald K. Lake, Professor Emeritus of Parkland College, reviewed entries by professional and amateur artists and selected 21 watercolors by 13 artists. He states, “In its finest works, this show employs the range of techniques that medium offers, and it offers fresh and individual expressions about the natural affinity of watercolor and the natural landscape.”

Artists represented in the exhibition are: Carol Boerckel, Edward Burton, Herb Eaton, Dale C. Evans,

Erin Hayden, Jan Holder, Cindy Lawson-Kester, Jeff Little, Michael J. McNeil, Deana Moore, Denise O'Brien, Peg Schickedanz, and Ellen Zauke.

Merit Awards were granted to Dancing Tree by Dale C. Evans and Summer With Silence #4 by Herb Eaton. The Juror's Choice was awarded to Controlled Burn by Jeffrey A. Little.

Charles Thompson is the winner of our raffle conducted to support our share of the expense. He received a \$250 credit to purchase exhibition art.

Thanks to all who supported the raffle and bought a watercolor.

Meet A New Board Member — *Nathan Hinch*



Hi, my name is Nathan Hinch and I am a new board member for Parklands Foundation. I'm a Yooper, born and raised along the Wisconsin/Upper Michigan state line (God's country, eh?). I earned a B.A. in Economics from Wheaton College, but more importantly that's where my wife Sarah and I met; we celebrated 14 years this past May. We have two children, Harry (7) and Josie (4).

So growing up in the U.P., I was constantly outdoors. My dad is a forester, so conservation and an appreciation for stewardship and outdoor recreation (hunting, fishing, skiing, skating, and just general rough-housing) was instilled in me from a young age. At Wheaton I had the opportunity to take some classes in environmental economics, and from that got a job at a small water/wastewater engineering firm in the Chicago area that did work around the country. I did permitting and compliance work and eventually became operations manager for them during my nine years there.

About half way through those nine years, I did law school via the evening program at the Illinois Institute of Technology's Chicago-Kent College of Law, where along with the J.D. I obtained a certificate of completion in Environmental and Energy Law.

I am a member of the Illinois Bar (licensed to practice law in Illinois) and have been admitted to practice before the United States District Court for the Central District of Illinois.

In 2010 my family and I moved to Bloomington/Normal from the Chicago area. I joined a local law firm, where I became a partner earlier this year, such that the name of the firm is now Mueller, Reece & Hinch, LLC. We are located in downtown Bloomington and are a general practice firm with particular emphases in business and commercial law, commercial real estate and litigation, and estate planning and probate areas. I also continue to help clients with environmental law issues.

I am active in the MCBA, the ISBA, and the ABA [law groups], and got to know Parklands through Dan Deneen and Todd Bugg. I am honored to join the distinguished line of members of the Illinois Bar who have served faithfully and effectively on the Parklands Foundation Board.



Roger Anderson has been researching the Merwin Preserve prairie from its youth. He was one of the volunteers along with John English and Dale Birkenholz who seeded one portion with local flowering plant seeds in 1988. He reports 2013 has been a great year for Purple Coneflowers, as these photos indicate.

Roger Anderson photos

47th ParkLands Annual Meeting Highlights

Honor Society At the September 22nd annual meeting President Todd Bugg gave special recognition to outgoing board members, who have dedicated so much of their attention and time.

He cited Dan Deneen as being instrumental in revamping the organizational structure and for his help with crucial financial matters.

Mary Horgan is ending her board service after leading multiple efforts that benefit ParkLands (keep *after that garlic mustard, Mary*).

Pres. Bugg noted that Don Schmidt had served two terms as president, and reported that the board had honored longtime leader Barry Brenneman earlier in the year before he moved from Illinois.

* * * * *

Keeping with an initiative approved two years ago, Roger Anderson was elected to an honorary director position. “Honorary” doesn’t mean retirement, however, and ParkLands will continue to draw on Roger’s expertise and contacts with other scientists for years to come.

* * * * *

Grassroots Democracy Members at the meeting elected new directors who are filling four of the five board vacancies: Finn Amble, Jessica Chambers, Nathan Hinch and Mike O’Grady. You’ll get to know them in this and succeeding newsletter issues.

* * * * *

Immediately following the membership meeting, the new board met and elected their 2013-14 officers: continuing are Todd Bugg, president; Jim Franks, vice president; Julie Elzanati, secretary. Interim treasurer Nancy Armstrong assumes the treasurer position.

* * * * *

Business of the Foundation New treasurer Nancy Armstrong reviewed the financial status, which the board believes is unsustainable for the future. She then spoke of one of the foundation’s leaders’ dreams – a separate land acquisition fund. “We want you to think about development and open your wallets,” she said wryly.

* * * *

ParkLands As Laboratory ISU Prof. Angelo Capparella entertained the crowd with his ongoing survey of “herps” – reptiles and amphibians. Aided by students and interns, he is scouring ParkLands properties and other natural areas to determine types and numbers of, among others, salamanders, newts, frogs, toads and snakes.

He was excited to report that the endangered mud puppy salamander has been found in the Sweeney Woods and Lexington preserves. To seek out the underwater dweller, Capparella finds Pepper Ridge Farm white bread makes good bait.

Smooth green snakes, in need of conservation, have been found in the Lexington Preserve, he also reported.

Angelo invited us to be citizen scientists and assist in the research. Send him photos of the herps; “head shots” and both top and bottom of the animals are best.

Gretchen Monti



Parent eagles have been seen poking around the nest at Letcher Basin Preserve. Eagles, including 1st year “Elvis”, are frequently seen at Evergreen Lake.

Mary Jo Adams photo



P. O. Box 3132
Bloomington,
Illinois 61702-3132
(309) 454-3169

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Bloomington, IL
Permit No. 113

Address Service Requested

ParkLands Receives Community Foundation Grant

The Illinois Prairie Community Foundation recently awarded ParkLands a \$1275 grant. The funds are being used to purchase protective pants, shirts and masks that volunteers will wear when assisting with prescribed burns.

Prescribed fire is a carefully planned and controlled fire conducted to manage natural areas such as prairie, oak savanna, wetlands and oak woodlands.

Fire benefits native plant growth by burning off dead accumulated plant material. Fire kills the above ground parts of unwanted shrubs and small trees. For example, prairie plants grow more vigorously when built-up plant materials and shade are removed.

Have a story idea or want to submit an article or photo for the newsletter? Contact editor Gretchen Monti at 309-829-2450 or gretchenmonti@gmail.com.

Out and About

Seed Collection

Fri., Oct. 18 & Oct. 25,
9 - noon

Letcher Basin

Workdays Leader:

Jason Shoemaker

309-531-7065

shoemaj@hotmail.com

Seed Collection

Sat. Oct. 26 9 am

Cayuga Ridge (Pontiac

Meet @ Lexington BP

Station

Bring gloves, sacks

Workdays Leader:

Mary Horgan

309) 824-5636

mhorgan@mcchs.org

"Shades Of Summer"

McLean Co. Art Center

601 N East St,

Bloomington

ParkLands Watercolor
Exhibit

Closes Sat., Oct. 26

Seed Cleaning

Fri., Nov. 1, 9 am

ISU SLB Greenhouse

Workdays Leader:

Jason Shoemaker

309-531-7065

shoemaj@hotmail.com

Bird Research Program

Tues., Nov. 5, 7 pm

JWP Audubon

Center for Nat. Sciences,

Beecher St., IWU

Preserves Closed

Deer Management Hunt

Nov. 15-16-17

NOTE: Work dates are subject to change. Join Jason's e-mail list or log on to