

**ParkLands Foundation  
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Land Steward: Jason Shoemaker  
Admin. Director: Mike Hall



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[www.parklandsfoundation.org](http://www.parklandsfoundation.org)



**Newsletter  
April - May 2014**

**Honorary Directors**

Roger Anderson  
Dale Birkenholz  
Guy Fraker

**ParkLands On The Move**

ParkLands leadership and staff had been discussing office relocation alternatives for several months before the lease ended at the downtown Bloomington location. On Friday, March 7, the ParkLands staff occupied and began office operations at the Ecology Action Center, 202 W. College Ave., next to the Normal Public Library.

The Ecology Action Center (EAC) was selected for the relocation not only based on less costly space available, but also on anticipated improvements to communication, office efficiency, accessibility, available parking, visibility and collaboration with affiliated organizations.

The EAC had previously been providing full business phone service to the Foundation for many years and some postal mail service. In the fall of 2012, Land Steward Jason Shoemaker located his office to the EAC after Michael Brown, EAC Executive Director, was appointed the Foundation's Stewardship Committee Co-Chairman. Also, committees of the Foundation have been meeting in the conference room of the EAC for a few years.

In the past month after relocation, staff has already realized some of the anticipated benefits to the Foundation.

*Mike Hall, Admin. Director*

**HELP  
WANTED**

ParkLands' summer internship program is available to two students enrolled at a university or college or recent graduates. Students should have background in one or more of these areas: biological sciences, ecology, horticulture and related disciplines and have interests in Conservation Biology, Ecological Restoration, and management and preservation of natural areas.

Interns will be hired for 11 weeks of service from May to August.

This work is physically demanding; applicants must be able to walk long distances over uneven terrain and be able to lift 50 pounds. Interns will work with the land steward, who will be their site supervisor, members of the ParkLands Foundation Board, and volunteers.

The full information packet and application form is at [parklandsfoundation.org](http://parklandsfoundation.org).  
**DEADLINE TO APPLY IS APRIL 11**

**ParkLands Loses a Former Board Member and Friend**

Former ParkLands Board of Directors member James (Jim) Mohr died on March 1st at age 73. Jim was elected a board member at the 2005 annual meeting, and he resigned from the Board on 26 April 2011 for health reasons. He was a farmer and grew up on a farm near the Merwin Preserve. Jim received a degree in Agriculture Education from the U. of I. He never taught because the opportunity to farm became available after he graduated.

He watched the ParkLands Foundation grow from a small organization with few land holdings to its current size of more than 3,000 acres in two counties. Jim knew some of our founders, including Stanley Lantz, Emile Rediger, and first ParkLands Board President Clarence Ropp, who was his uncle.

Jim's farming background was a great asset to ParkLands. He knew how to operate and maintain machines and tools we use in restoring lands back to historic prairies, savannas and forests. In some cases he brought his own equipment to work on Parklands projects and also loaned equipment out as well. Jim helped with removing brush and preparing ground for planting trees and prairie, and he said that he liked building fence. His experience with the Conservation Reserve Program was very helpful; he assumed the responsibility of overseeing ParkLands CRP contracts in McLean County, which is no small task. He was a personable, thoughtful Board member, and his sound ideas and reasoning were needed and appreciated. Jim made important contributions, and his service to the Parklands Foundation is appreciated, and those of us who worked with him will never forget that he always greeted you with a smile.

*Roger Anderson, Dale Birkenholz, Jason Shoemaker*



**Wildflower Walks - Sundays, April 20 & May 11**

# Navigating ParkLands in McLean County



Sweeney Woods...this property is mentioned often in the newsletter...and I would like to visit it.

1<sup>st</sup> Attempt – I log on to [parklandsfoundation.org](http://parklandsfoundation.org), where I quickly find an interactive preserves map. Trouble is, Sweeney Woods is not on it (Merwin, Lexington, Chinquapin Bluffs and Letcher Basin are).

2<sup>nd</sup> and Successful Attempt – I log on to [www.mcgis.org](http://www.mcgis.org), a wonder of the Information Age. I could not find a short definition so here's a long one: A geographic information system (GIS) is a system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present all types of geographical data.

I recommend using the tutorial, the brochure, search tips and FAQs, all located under the Resources tab, to begin a search for information.

After seeking out my house (don't we all?) I began my preserve hunt at the home page by clicking on Online Mapping then Recreation where I entered "Sweeney Woods" in the Search field. This took me to a Results box where I clicked on the proper name (Parklands Foundation-Sweeney Woods Preserve) which brought up a box with some tasks that included "zoom" and "pan".

(This box also lets you link to the ParkLands website.) Clicking on the "zoom to feature" took me to the Sweeney Woods location on the McLean County map on the right hand side of my screen.

First, I clicked on Base Maps and the toolbar icon in the upper right-hand corner. Base Maps leads you to "layers" [see tutorial] enabling me to locate the preserve in three views: plain, aerial captured when leaves were down, and aerial with plenty of vegetation; all showing the roads leading to the preserve.

Using the familiar online map tools to pan and zoom, I learned that Sweeney Woods Preserve is on the south side of Co. Rd. 6, aka Kappa Road, between 1725 and 1825 East roads, north of Lake Bloomington. Now I know how to drive there.

A confession: it took a lot of time to master [mcgis.org](http://mcgis.org), although I'm familiar with Earth Google and mapping programs, but it provides more info than you can imagine about our county. Try it one rainy day.

*Gretchen Monti*



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

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## Out and About

### Visit the ParkLands booth @

Ill. Sustainable Living & Wellness Expo

Sat., Apr. 12, 9 am - 4 pm  
IWU Shirk Center, E. Emerson  
[ecologyactioncenter.org](http://ecologyactioncenter.org)

### Audubon Ewing Park Birding

Sundays, 4/13 & 27; 5/11  
Saturdays, 4/19, 5/3  
Towanda Ave. lot, 8 am

### Wild Ones program

"Native Alternatives to Invasive Plants"  
Mon., April 14, 7 pm  
402 N. Hershey, Bloomington  
[illinoisprairie.wildones.org](http://illinoisprairie.wildones.org)

### Bloomington Public Library

"Marvelous Milkweeds"  
Janet Rasmussen

Tues., Apr. 22, 7 pm  
BPL Community Room

### Wildflower Walk

Sun., April 20, 1 pm  
Merwin Preserve South Gate  
Leader: Dale Birkenholz 309-452-8086

### Invasive Species Control

Sat., Apr. 26, 9 am  
Moon Preserve  
Leader: Finn Amble  
309-726-2425

### Invasive Species Control

Fri., May 9, 9 am  
Merwin Preserve South Gate  
Leader: Jason Shoemaker  
309-531-7065  
[shoemaj@hotmail.com](mailto:shoemaj@hotmail.com)

### Wildflower Walk

Sun., May 11, 1 pm  
Merwin Preserve West Gate  
Leader: Roger Anderson 309-452-5728

### Wild Ones program

"Midwest Gardner's Manifesto"  
Mon., May 12, 7 pm  
Mennonite Church W. Hovey, Normal

### Invasive Species Control

Fri., May 23 9 am  
Merwin Preserve South Gate  
Leader: Jason Shoemaker  
309-531-7065  
[shoemaj@hotmail.com](mailto:shoemaj@hotmail.com)

### Wild Ones Native Plant Sale

Sat., May 24, 8 am – 1pm 402 N. Hershey