



ParkLands Foundation / PO Box 12 / Normal, IL 61761-0012
(309) 454-3169 / Address Service Requested



<http://smile.amazon.com>
Shopping at smile.amazon.com can benefit the ParkLands Foundation. You must begin at the previous web address specifically for AmazonSmile. Be sure to select ParkLands Foundation (Bloomington, IL) as your charitable organization.



Newsletter

SUMMER 2019

Follow Us On [facebook](#) [twitter](#) [Instagram](#) www.ParkLandsFoundation.org

Officers, Board of Directors and Staff

Jessica Chambers President	Directors Cristina Almeida Finn Amble	Honorary Directors Roger Anderson Guy Fraker
Eric Smith Vice President	Michael Brown Bethany Evans Campbell Angelo Capparella	Staff Jason Shoemaker Land Steward
Krista Kirkham Secretary	William Davison Dan Deneen Matt Fraker Given Harper	Erin Herbez Administrative Director
Nancy Armstrong Treasurer	Nathan Hinch Douglas Kaufman-Dickson Mark Larsen Maria Lemke Paul Van Ness	

ParkLands welcomes spring with a Wildflower Walk on Mother's Day

Forty-five hikers joined us on a seasonably cool and muddy Sunday on May 12th to enjoy the Merwin Preserve wildflowers with a tour from one of our volunteers.



Dr Roger Anderson, Jan Turner, Mary Jo Adams, Kristi Shoemaker and Jason Shoemaker gave visitors a tour of the property with special detail to the blooming wildflowers.

Thank you to our tour leaders and those of you that braved the elements to spend a little time outside on Mother's Day. If you missed out this year please keep an eye out for future hikes and events at our website: <http://www.parklandsfoundation.org/eventscalendar/>



ParkLands Meets the Mudpuppy

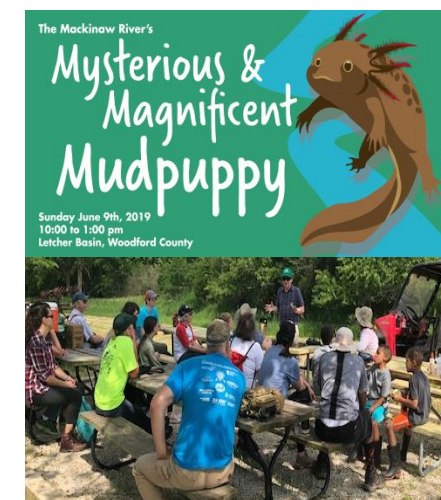
Over forty community members joined us on a strikingly-beautiful Sunday morning on June 9th at Letcher Basin to learn all about Illinois' one-of-a-kind species that resides within the Mackinaw River: the Mudpuppy.

Angelo Capparella gave our curious crowd a run down about all the amazing properties that make the Mudpuppy such a special species in our local ecosystems.

Shortly after, visitors were taken down by the river where they met up with Eric Smith and Krista Kirkham to learn all about the various species of mussels and invertebrates that live in the Mackinaw alongside the Mudpuppy. Showcases of both mussels and invertebrates were presented along with a discussion on the threats that mussels have faced, making them go from a plentiful creature in riverbeds to almost a rarity.

After this, our visitors were brought back to enjoy multiple stations where they were able to interactively learn about the Mudpuppy's diet through a snack table (i.e. GoldFish Crackers and Gummy Worms), its slipperiness and sliminess by making Slime, and lastly its marvelous looks through an arts & crafts table.

A big thank you to our Board Directors and everyone involved that made this event possible.



Take a Friend on a Hike

My late spring/summer request for ParkLands Foundation members is one I have plagiarized from a NY Times article: take a friend on a hike.

ParkLands Foundation has been trying to get more people out to the Mackinaw, and you can help. You probably have dozens of family, friends, and acquaintances who would love to take a hike at one of our properties along the Mackinaw River but will not get around to it unless they get an invite from a member like you.

We would like to double our membership in the next few years. Facebook, emails, Pantagraph articles, and WJBC segments, and regular mailings will not be as effective as our members asking friends to join them for a hike. Be ready to hand them an application or give them our website information to join. Please let them know if they join by about September 1 they can join you at our annual meeting on September 8 at our new Hayes tract.

Thank you, in advance, for taking a friend on a hike! I will be taking multiple friends on hikes, and hope to see you out there.



Dan Deneen and his son Patrick at the 2018 ParkLands Ride

ParkLands 3rd Annual Bike Ride is June 29th.

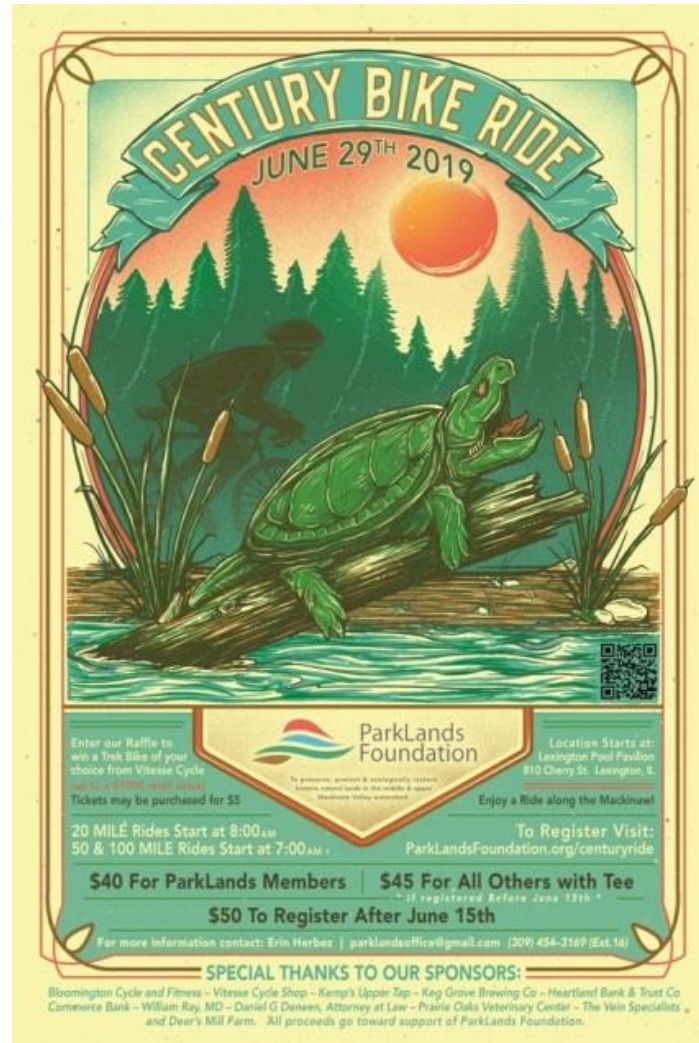
Our third annual Bike Ride registration is LIVE!

We will be offering 20, 50 and 100-mile routes

To register please visit: <https://raceroster.com/events/2019/22165/parklands-foundation-century-bike-ride>

We would like to extend a special thank you to all of our sponsors:

Vitesse Cycle Shop, Bloomington Cycle and Fitness, Kemp's Upper Tap, Keg Grove Brewing Company, Heartland Bank and Trust, Commerce Bank, Prairie Oaks Veterinarian Center, The Vein Specialists and Deer's Mill Farm.



Did you know that many companies will match your gift to ParkLands Foundation? For example, State Farm provides a generous match for donations given to ParkLands. They will also donate money for volunteer time. Please follow the link below for more information.

<https://www.statefarm.com/retirees/matching-gift>

Meet the ParkLands Board: Jessica Chambers, ParkLands President

by- Christopher Guethoff

Speaking with our new President, Jessica Chambers, it is easy to get caught up in her energy and passion for ParkLands Foundation.



Being a force of nature herself, Jessica also works as the Director of the Horticulture Center at ISU where she not only grows many plants, but also plans fundraisers, recruits new members and even does a little bit of teaching. Jessica has grown up with the Foundation as a part of life since childhood, with her father taking her on hikes through the preserves. Having a deep love for the natural wonder of Illinois landscape, Jessica accepted an offer of board membership from Don Schmidt and has been critical ever since. During her presidency, Jessica hopes to focus on community outreach while encouraging the public into respectful and interactive experiences with the land that she has spent most of her life in. She wishes that she had known sooner about all the incredible wildlife that exists in Illinois and is devoted to spreading the foundation's knowledge and pride in the state. It is safe to say that she will not rest until she has helped as many people as possible experience a meaningful connection to the land that surrounds them every day. We are both excited and proud to have her as President and wish her all the best.

Learning the Language of Nature at the Merwin Preserve

By Cristina Almeida

At the end of April, a group of Illinois State University Students, accompanied by Academic Advisor and French/Italian instructor Dr. Laura Edwards visited Merwin to experience the spectacle of the Bluebells in full bloom and other wonders of the preserve.

The students are part of *The French Club* at ISU. The club hosts regular conversation hours and social events to promote conversational practice of French outside of the classroom and an appreciation of Francophone cultures. During their time at Merwin, the students utilized a French vocabulary word bank with relevant flora and fauna. This helped them identify and learn about the different species, while supporting their French conversation.

On their walk around the preserve, the students continuously expressed awe of the woodland's beauty, the views to the Mackinaw River, the calls of tree frogs, and the

magnificent blue carpet of Bluebells. They were heard remarking, "I never imagined that there would be a place like this so close to campus." Often though, there were moments where the surrounding nature invited everyone to remain silent, contemplating the splendor and peace of their setting.



Dr. Edwards, a nature lover herself, explained that the French conversation hour in the woodland of Merwin was started four years ago, together with another ISU French instructor Dr. Sandra Keller. Their aim was to bring students to an inspirational setting that puts students at ease, allowing them to be relaxed and motivated while conversing in French.

The annual visits by *The French Club* are a perfect example of how Merwin and other ParkLands Preserves are there to support the quality of life in the community.