MISSION

The Forest Preserve District of Will County is dedicated to protecting, conserving, enhancing and promoting Will County’s natural heritage for the educational, recreational and environmental benefit of present and future generations. Six distinctive values guide the District in fulfilling its mission.

QUALITY
Committing to excellence in every endeavor.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS
Respecting, valuing and mentoring those who serve the District.

CUSTOMER SERVICE
Being responsive to the needs of a diverse community.

COOPERATION
Working together to achieve the District’s mission.

LEADERSHIP
Leading in the community and the workplace by inspiration and example.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS
Promoting and practicing environmental stewardship.

CONTENT
Board of Commissioners | 1
From the President | 2
From the Chief Operating Officer | 4
Milestones of 2018 | 6
Programs and Events | 24

Partnerships | 26
Awards | 29
Financials | 30
Volunteers | 34
Staff Roster | 40

Sunflowers @ Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve
DISTRICT 1
Judy Ogalla, Monee – Secretary
Laurie Summers, Crete

DISTRICT 2
James G. Moustis, Frankfort – Treasurer
Cory Singer, Frankfort

DISTRICT 3
Donald A. Moran, Romeoville
Elizabeth Rice, Bolingbrook

DISTRICT 4
Kenneth E. Harris, Bolingbrook
Jacqueline Traynere, Bolingbrook

DISTRICT 5
Darren Bennefield, Aurora – Operations Committee Vice Chair
Gretchen Fritz, Plainfield

DISTRICT 6
Donald Gould, Shorewood
Debbie Militello, Channahon

DISTRICT 7
Steve Balich, Orland Park
Mike Fricilone, Homer Glen – Operations Committee Chair

DISTRICT 8
Herbert Brooks Jr., Joliet – Ad Hoc Rules Committee Chair
Denise Winfrey, Joliet

DISTRICT 9
Annette Parker, Joliet – Vice President
Lauren Staley-Ferry, Joliet

DISTRICT 10
Gloria Dollinger, Joliet
Tyler J. Marcum, Joliet

DISTRICT 11
Suzanne Hart, Naperville – President
Charles E. Maher, Naperville

DISTRICT 12
Ray Tuminello, New Lenox – Finance Committee Chair
Tom Weigel, New Lenox – Finance Committee Vice Chair

DISTRICT 13
Mark Ferry, Plainfield
Tim J. Kraulidis, Joliet

Board members listed here served the majority of 2018.

NEARLY 22,000 ACRES OF LAND PRESERVED
In 2018, the Forest Preserve provided more than 900 public programs introducing children and adults to the wonders of our natural world and the immediate environment. These programs served to educate, inspire and cultivate an appreciation of our natural landscape as well as bring about a better understanding of our relationship to it. Whether biking while learning about the history of the I&M Canal and early industry, paddling our rivers and lakes while observing local wildlife, recording preserve visits in photographs or paintings, or trekking across the county to visit different preserves in the Woods Walk challenge, the opportunities are endless to improve health and wellness in both body and spirit through our forest preserve system.

We will continue to focus on offering you ways to interact with your preserves and to protect and restore the natural resources they contain. I’m proud of what we have accomplished together, honored to be trusted as a steward of our Forest Preserve District and I look forward to enhancing our quality of life with a continued emphasis on expanding and improving our forest preserves. If you haven’t already, I encourage you to visit local forest preserves near you and see for yourself how special they really are – go ahead, get out and go wild!

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Laurie Summers
SUNSET @ HICKORY CREEK PRESERVE (courtesy of Michael Fagan)
The Forest Preserve’s core mission is to protect and restore Will County’s natural resources, provide public access to preserves and interpret what they contain. In 2018, the Forest Preserve continued to manage its highest quality habitats across the county and to initiate restoration of degraded sites and agricultural areas. These efforts were supported by a number of grants and unique partnerships as well as hundreds of volunteers who devoted thousands of hours working to restore Forest Preserve landscapes and improve the health and resiliency of our natural areas. We also completed construction and renovation of several access areas and trails throughout the forest preserve system, making sure to maintain the high quality that our visitors have come to expect of their Forest Preserve. Thousands of you also enjoyed our education and recreation programs as well as the special exhibitions held at our four visitor centers.

In 2019, we will continue to invest in renovating and enhancing existing forest preserve access areas and trails. We will also complete new trail linkages that connect our communities and preserves, and we will continue planning for others. In addition, you will also be able to enjoy a number of free special events and educational exhibitions of national and regional significance throughout the year. I hope you’ll take the opportunity to visit our website, ReconnectWithNature.org, and follow us on social media to plan your next adventure in your forest preserves.

Sincerely,

Ralph Schultz
TRAIL @ LAKE CHAMINWOOD PRESERVE

by Glenn P. Knoblock
MILESTONES OF 2018

PLUM VALLEY DOG PARK OPENING (by Chad Merda)
SUMMERS ELECTED NEW BOARD PRESIDENT

The Forest Preserve’s Board of Commissioners elected Laurie Summers as president during its reorganization meeting in December 2018. Summers of Crete Township is a registered nurse who has served on the Board since 2016. She succeeds former President Suzanne Hart of Naperville.

A lifelong resident of Will County, Summers has resided in District 1 her entire life. She attended Zion Lutheran School in Beecher, graduated from Beecher High School, and is a graduate of the Prairie State College nursing program. Summers and her husband, Michael, have three children and four grandchildren.

Commissioners elected Kenneth Harris of Bolingbrook as vice president, Amanda Koch of Frankfort as secretary and Tyler Marcum of Joliet as treasurer.
Two partner organizations agreed to contribute $682,200 to Forest Preserve restoration efforts at four preserves located in the Crest Hill and Braidwood areas. An existing agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides an additional $560,000 for ongoing restoration work at Prairie Bluff Preserve in Crest Hill. And a southern Will County preserve region known as the Braidwood Sands Area received a $122,200 grant from the Illinois Special Wildlife Fund.

Through the existing agreement, the Army Corps previously provided $2.3 million to restore 367 acres at Prairie Bluff and the adjacent Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve. Groundwater that flows from Prairie Bluff is critical for the survival of rare and endangered species living at Lockport Prairie. The extra funds will restore an additional 67 acres at Prairie Bluff. The Army Corps is funding the work as part of its aquatic ecosystem restoration project, which began this summer.

The wildlife fund grant will be used for continued savanna restoration work at two preserves located in Custer Township near Braidwood: Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve and Sand Ridge Savanna Nature Preserve. These are two of the five preserves that make up the larger Braidwood Sands Area, which also includes state-owned land. An additional $265,000 in local funds will be combined with the wildlife fund grant to accomplish this portion of the ongoing restoration work.
ONLINE OPTION LAUNCHES FOR DOG PARK PERMITS

Forest Preserve dog park patrons looking to purchase 2018 calendar year permits had the option for the first time to do so online.

With the addition of this new convenience for the public, dog owners can now purchase a permit by visiting a District visitor center, mailing in an application or going online to ReconnectWithNature.org.

More than half of all dog park permits sold in 2018 were purchased utilizing this new customer-friendly offering.

BUY A PERMIT ONLINE

VISITORS FLOCK TO EXHIBITIONS

In 2018, the District hosted five exhibitions that attracted visitors throughout the region. The Forest Preserve’s most expansive exhibit to date, “Inspired by the National Parks,” invited the public to celebrate the National Park Service’s centennial anniversary by viewing 177 quilts showcasing 59 National Parks. Unique works of art, each quilt incorporated materials and/or objects reflective of the park it represented. The collection was displayed simultaneously at four District visitor centers. In all, 5,500 National Park Service fans, quilt enthusiasts and art lovers traveled from around the region and beyond to enjoy this special exhibit.

Additionally, the Forest Preserve’s Plum Creek Nature Center hosted four other exhibitions that brought in nearly 15,000 visitors! These traveling exhibits included: “A Salamander Tale” and “Bee-lieve It or Not! The Secret Lives of Bees” – both organized by the Purdue Agriculture Exhibit Design Center – and two art exhibitions featuring local artists Don Sala and Cheryl Holz. Exhibits were on display for several weeks to several months throughout the year.
FOREST PRESERVE SAVES $905,000 WITH BOND REFUNDING

In November 2018, the Forest Preserve's Board of Commissioners approved the refunding of $10 million in general obligation limited tax bonds, saving taxpayers $905,000.

The yield on the bonds fell from 4.18 percent to 2.95 percent. The refunding opportunity came about because the credit market continues to look favorably on the District's bond offerings, said John Gerl, the Forest Preserve's chief financial officer.

The transaction took place in December, and the bonds will mature in 2027. Proceeds from the original bond sale were used to acquire land.

THERAPY DOG PERMIT FUND ESTABLISHED

A $500 donation from Sheet Metal Workers Union Local 265 allowed the Forest Preserve District to offer free dog park permits for therapy dogs, including five canines that work for the Will County State's Attorney's Office.

District Commissioner Don Moran, who facilitated the donation and serves as a representative for the union, presented the donation check to the Forest Preserve during the Board's November meeting.

The funds offset the cost of dog park permit fees for qualifying therapy dogs that assist at Will County related service agencies and not-for-profits. The permits will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis until the fund is depleted.

The first free dog park permits were issued to three canines assigned to the Will County Children's Advocacy Center, which was established by State's Attorney James Glasgow in 1995 to improve investigations into cases involving the sexual abuse of children.
NEW PROGRAM, PRESENTATIONS HIGHLIGHT THE VALUE OF COMPOSTING

“Pumpkin Smash!,” a program offered in partnership with Glen Ellyn-based SCARCE, School and Community Assistance for Recycling and Composting Education, was a new offering at the Forest Preserve’s Plum Creek Nature Center in 2018. This program encouraged the public to keep fall pumpkins out of landfills by instead smashing them into a compost dumpster located on-site. The dumpster was then hauled away and the pumpkins went to their new destination – a local composting facility in Peotone. In total, more than 1,200 pounds of pumpkins were collected and smashed by 77 participants in “tons-of-fun-of-pumpkin-smashing” activities around the nature center.

Composting at Plum Creek Nature Center also was highlighted in 2018 thanks to the Link and Leverage Initiatives for Sustainability in the south suburbs. Two local conferences invited the Forest Preserve District to present on the Plum Creek Nature Center’s composting successes with area schools.
PLUM VALLEY PRESERVE OPENS

The Plum Valley Preserve – Burville Road Access, which includes the Forest Preserve District’s sixth off-leash dog park, opened in November in Crete Township. The access area, located at the southeast corner of Burville Road and Route 394, includes a picnic pavilion that can accommodate up to 50 people, a 9-acre dog park and a latrine. The site provides the first access area for the 455-acre Plum Valley Preserve.

In addition to the picnic shelter and dog park, the preserve also will eventually include a 1-mile section of the Plum Creek Greenway Trail. The crushed limestone trail will extend south from the new access area.
The District’s Willy’s Wilderness kids’ webpage was transitioned to its own website – WillysWilderness.org – to shine an even larger spotlight on the value of nature for children and their families.

At the same time, Willy the Woodchuck, the Forest Preserve’s mascot, received his own Facebook page to further promote environmental education.

The District also experienced a 24 percent increase in website visitors when compared with 2017.
A ribbon-cutting held in July unleashed a new era for small dogs at Hammel Woods in Shorewood. Canines weighing 35 pounds or less were given their own 2.3-acre off-leash play area at the dog park, which is located at Hammel Woods – DuPage River Access.

Hammel Woods Dog Park was the District’s first off-leash play area for canines when it opened in 2002 with one 8.5-acre enclosure for dogs of all sizes. Feedback from dog park users made it clear that one large area wasn’t going to work for all dogs, said Ralph Schultz, the Forest Preserve’s chief operating officer. The new small-dog enclosure is located adjacent to the original dog park.

A new water fountain was also dedicated at Hammel Woods for use by campers, trail users and dog park patrons. Elkay Manufacturing of Oak Brook, working in conjunction with The Nature Foundation of Will County, donated the fountain. Company owner Ron Katz made the donation in honor of his late wife, Sandy, who was a dog lover. A plaque was placed on the water fountain to honor her memory.
The Forest Preserve District acquired three parcels of land in 2018, extending existing open space. The District accepted the donation of a 28.13-acre parcel containing a portion of Thorn Creek and surrounded by publicly owned property, including Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve in Park Forest and University Park.

The Village of Homer Glen, as part of an annexation and development agreement with the District, also transferred two properties, totaling 7.83 acres. These parcels close the gap between the Forest Preserve’s existing holdings at Fiddyment Creek Preserve in Homer Glen.

Fiddyment Creek Preserve protects a diversity of habitat, including forest, prairie, savanna and wetland. Wildlife found at the preserve includes bird species such as the horned lark, turkey vulture, sharp-shinned hawk and ovenbird.

These acquisitions help to accomplish the District’s goal of connecting open space throughout Will County. Working in conjunction with local park districts, municipalities, federal and state conservation agencies and others, the Forest Preserve continues to piece together greenways that improve the quality of life, provide access to public recreation, protect and restore habitat and provide sanctuary for wildlife.
Three key developments were completed in 2018.

**DUPAGE RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION**

A newly constructed 1.25-mile section of the DuPage River Trail that connects Whalon Lake preserve in Will County to Greene Valley Forest Preserve in DuPage County opened to the public. The new segment begins in the northeastern corner of the preserve and travels east along Royce Road and north on Greene Road to Greene Valley in Naperville. The project was a collaboration between the two forest preserve districts and Elmhurst-Chicago Stone Company, which operates a quarry adjacent to Whalon Lake. The company constructed and paid for most of the new trail segment in exchange for permission to build a floodwater diversion channel in Whalon Lake preserve as previously planned.

**PLUM VALLEY PRESERVE – BURVILLE ROAD ACCESS**

Construction was completed for a new preserve access, shelter and dog park at Plum Valley Preserve in Crete Township. Work also began to develop a 1-mile section of the Plum Creek Greenway Trail at this location. Both projects were supported by an Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant.

**VETERANS WOODS IMPROVEMENTS**

Enhancements were made to Veterans Woods that included the refurbishing of the parking lots at the preserve’s two access areas – Roy F. Hassert Grove and Traders Corner – and work to improve sidewalks and the small trail connection between the two access areas. Portions of each parking lot were removed and reconstructed. The remainder of the lots had the top layer of asphalt replaced. A paved 0.33-mile trail was also built to link the two picnic groves, and internal walkways were upgraded.
Land that is preserved must be nurtured and protected. Stewardship of Forest Preserve lands is a major focus of the District’s mission. Cultivating native plant species, protecting and enhancing waterways, restoring our natural heritage of woodlands, prairies and wetlands, and studying the ecological health of the region are all important priorities as Will County’s landscape continues to change. In 2018, land management activities were conducted on more than 4,700 acres of the District’s holdings, with efforts focused on 14 preserve locations.

One of the most significant projects is the ongoing restoration of 1,423 acres of sand savanna, prairie and wetland communities located at Kankakee Sands Preserve in Custer Township, Sand Ridge Savanna Nature Preserve in Wilmington/Custer Township and Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Nature Preserve in Braidwood. In 2018, this restoration project involved invasive species control as well as the collection of seed from approximately 300 species of local native plants for use on site.

Kankakee Sands Preserve is home to a variety of plant species, including swamp milkweed. The site is managed with invasive species control, prescribed burning and habitat restoration to protect and enhance its natural resources.
Land Management Program Coordinator Floyd Catchpole @ Kankakee Sands Preserve
(image by Glenn P. Knoblock)
BAT MONITORING @ FORKED CREEK PRESERVE
(by Glen Buckner)
WILDLIFE RESEARCH PROJECTS

Each year, wildlife research projects are conducted to monitor local flora and fauna. In 2018, one project included the completion of wading bird nesting surveys at Lake Renwick Nature Preserve in Plainfield and Rock Run Rookery Preserve in Joliet.

The District also cooperated with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in the removal of Asian carp from the Des Plaines River system at Rock Run Rookery Preserve in Joliet, and partnered with the organization to continue monitoring the spread of chronic wasting disease in deer in the southern part of Will County.

Aerial deer population surveys also were completed at 25 preserves and the impact of deer browse was documented at 12 preserves.

Another project included bat monitoring at 13 forest preserves with the assistance of volunteer citizen scientists.

There are remote bat detectors at a number of preserves to monitor the migration paths of bats throughout the area.
In 2018, nearly 125,000 people spent time at one or more of the District’s visitor centers, while permitted activities such as picnicking, camping or enjoying a dog park brought more than 50,000 people out to the preserves. In addition, the Forest Preserve hosted programs and events, and participated in a variety of outreach opportunities to engage with Will County residents.

Monee Reservoir is the place for fishing in the summer. During the District’s “Kids’ Fishing Derby,” prizes are awarded for the largest fish, smallest fish and most fish caught in three different age categories.
Two agencies received Appreciation of Partners awards for 2018 during the Forest Preserve District’s Board of Commissioners’ meeting in March 2019. Each year, the District selects its award honorees from dozens of partnering organizations, and the recipients are recognized and awarded a plaque by the Forest Preserve’s Board.

**PIECES ’N PATCHES QUILT GUILD**

The Appreciation of Partners award presented to Pieces ’n Patches was earned by the Steger, Illinois, quilt guild for its assistance with the “Inspired by the National Parks” traveling quilt exhibit hosted at Forest Preserve visitor centers during the summer of 2018. Members of the guild served as docents for the portion of the collection displayed at Plum Creek Nature Center in Crete Township. The volunteers guided visitors through the exhibit, answering questions and sharing information about the process of creating these colorful and unique works of art. The guild’s help was critical to ensuring that visitors to the exhibit made the most of their experience.

**ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH**

St. Mary Catholic Church of Mokena was selected for an Appreciation of Partners award for its ongoing volunteer restoration efforts at Hickory Creek Preserve – LaPorte Road Access. For the past two years, this volunteer group has worked to remove invasive plants such as honeysuckle and buckthorn from this Mokena preserve to allow native species to thrive. The Forest Preserve is grateful and relies on dedicated groups such as this for their assistance in helping to accomplish its land management goals.
ALTERNATIVE REVENUE INITIATIVES

The following grants were awarded to the Forest Preserve District in 2018. Grants expand local tax dollars to enable the District to provide more amenities to Will County citizens.

GRANTS AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS

Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation....$1,602,140
Land Acquisition Grant
Hadley Valley

Army Corps of Engineers.................................$560,000
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Projects
Lockport Prairie Nature Preserve and Prairie Bluff Preserve

Illinois Department of Natural Resources.........$122,200
State Wildlife Grant
Braidwood Sands Natural Area

ComEd and Openlands.................................$10,000
ComEd Green Region Grant
Prairie Bluff Preserve

Open Land Trust........................................$10,000
Grant for Native Prairie Restoration
Prairie Bluff Preserve

The Nature Conservancy..............................$2,210
Volunteer Stewardship Network Grant
Volunteer Supplies for Natural Area Restoration

ONEOK, Inc..............................................$1,100
Program Development Grant for Water Quality Field Trip
Four Rivers Environmental Education Center

TOTAL GRANTS FOR 2018..........................$2,307,650
The Forest Preserve received a total of $27,714 in 2018 through sponsorships and donations. Thank you to the following sponsors and donors.

Barbara A. McCafferty Family Foundation
Chevron Corporation
Chew on This/Bentley’s Pet Stuff
Chicagoland Speedway
Colette Doner
Douglas Darin
Family of Mary J. White
Frankfort-New Lenox Running Club
Friends and Family of Officer Brad Veerman
Goldman Sachs
Harvest House Quilting
Madison Gill
Richard Wachenheim
Shorewood HUGS
The Nature Conservancy
The Nature Foundation of Will County
Trisha Ludeman

* Sponsorships and donations listed exceed $250 cash or in-kind value.
AWARDS OF 2018

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE
National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials

The Forest Preserve’s digital marketing efforts were recognized with an Award of Excellence from the National Association of County Park and Recreation Officials. Presented during the association’s summer meeting in Nashville, the award acknowledged the achievements of the District in developing and growing a following across a number of social media platforms, two digital newsletters and its website. More than 100,000 people follow the Forest Preserve on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram combined. The Forest Preserve’s main Facebook page has more followers than any other forest preserve district in the state. And videos produced by the District’s Marketing and Communications Department were viewed 2.5 million times from March 2016 to February 2018.

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN FINANCIAL REPORTING
Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA)

The Forest Preserve District received the Certificate of Achievement in Financial Reporting in 2018 for the 23rd consecutive year. The award recognized the Forest Preserve’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2017. The Certificate of Achievement, awarded by GFOA, is the highest recognition given in governmental accounting.

OUTSTANDING FINANCIAL SUPPORT
Special Olympics Illinois

The Forest Preserve’s Police Department raised $7,246 in 2018 for the Law Enforcement Torch Run, a fundraising campaign which benefits Special Olympics Illinois. This not-for-profit organization recognized the efforts of the Forest Preserve with a plaque for outstanding financial support. District Police plan to ramp up their charity work in 2019 to benefit Special Olympics. Officers will take part in several fundraisers with the goal of raising even more money than they have in the past several years for the agency.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

MONARCH CATERPILLARS @ PLUM CREEK NATURE CENTER
(by Suzy Lyttle)

30
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

In 1926, voters approved a referendum to establish the Forest Preserve District of Will County as a separate taxing body of county government. Even then, when Will County was overwhelmingly rural, its citizens realized the importance of preserving its natural treasures. Today, the Forest Preserve District Board of Commissioners, made up of 26 members from the county’s 13 elective districts, oversees all District business and approves property purchases and District expenditures. The District currently owns, manages and leases nearly 22,000 acres of land.

The Forest Preserve is organized financially into two operating funds. The Construction and Development Fund supports new site improvements and associated staffing costs, maintenance of existing facilities and properties, and infrastructure improvements. The Corporate Fund is used for employee salaries, benefits and general administrative costs of the Forest Preserve.

BOND ISSUES

In 1999 and 2005, voters approved referendums to preserve land and improve Forest Preserve properties for public use. In both cases, voters recognized that the county was changing at an unprecedented pace and that special properties needed to be preserved before they were developed. The 1999 referendum provided $70 million and the 2005 referendum $95 million for land acquisition and development. These funds have led to thousands of acres preserved and dozens of properties improved.

In 2007, the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners authorized $50 million in general obligation limited taxable bonds for the purpose of acquiring land for future use. In 2007 and 2008, the Forest Preserve issued $10 million and $30 million, respectively, of limited taxable bonds. The remaining $10 million in bonds was issued during 2010. During 2012, $66,775,000 of the 2005 referendum bonds was refunded, with approximately $4.8 million saved in interest costs over the life of the bonds.

In May 2016, $16,705,000 of series 2008A bonds was refinanced, with an estimated savings of $2 million in interest costs over the life of the bonds. Also, $1,495,000 of general obligation limited taxable bonds series 2016B were issued during late 2016 to finance the early retirement incentive that occurred during 2015-2016.

In December 2018, $10 million of series 2007 bonds was refunded, with an estimated savings of $905,000 in total costs over the remaining life of the bonds.

DEBT SERVICE

Each of the bond issuances requires debt service. These are scheduled to be paid down over 20 years for each.
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

**DEBT SERVICE**
- $34,476,750

**CAPITAL OUTLAY**
- $3,578,492

**OPERATIONS**
- $4,474,953

**OTHER FINANCING USES**
- $632,356

**POLICE**
- $1,475,595

**GENERAL GOVERNMENT**
- $4,349,874

**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**
- $2,654,936

**VISITOR SERVICES AND MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS**
- $2,203,008

**TOTAL**
- $53,845,964

Leopard Frog @ Centennial Trail (courtesy of Kevin Keyes)
source of funds

- Property Taxes: $38,382,495
- Licenses & Permits: $704,958
- Investment Income: $381,970
- Bond Proceeds Utilized: $10,123,718
- Grants & Other Intergovernmental: $1,544,548
- Miscellaneous Other: $3,376,890
- Total = $54,514,479

Levy Year

- Corporate/C&D
  - 2014: 0.0710
  - 2015: 0.0728
  - 2016: 0.0722
  - 2017: 0.0702
  - 2018: 0.0687

- Debt Service
  - 2014: 0.1260
  - 2015: 0.1249
  - 2016: 0.1215
  - 2017: 0.1242
  - 2018: 0.1208
Volunteers help the Forest Preserve District to accomplish many goals. In 2018, a total of 15,219 hours of service were generously donated by 1,168 volunteers. Of these, 192 were Prairie People volunteers. These loyal citizens regularly support the Forest Preserve year after year. The remaining 976 individuals participated in District volunteer opportunities for the first time or intermittently throughout the year. Time and talent given by these dedicated individuals contributed to monitoring the county’s flora and fauna, restoring natural areas, assisting with District programs and events, beautifying gardens and shorelines throughout the preserves, and more. Without these volunteer efforts, the Forest Preserve could not accomplish all that it does in support of its mission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division or Department</th>
<th>Total Volunteers</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration and Financial Services</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law Enforcement</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance and Operations</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Development</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>8,893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Services</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>2,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,168</strong></td>
<td><strong>15,219</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS

Diane Aigner
JoDell Albi
Brooke Anderson
Gilbert Anderson
Jason Andre
Linda Andrews
Julie Arvia
Erik Attaway
Jim Avila
David Babich
Nicholas Bain
Amanda Baird
Michael Barna
Frank Basile
Gail Beauchamp
Brandon Beddigs
Georgia Benson
Mark Bettin
Barbara Biel
Sebastian Biel
June Blackburn
Greg Bluhm
Claudia Boothe
Brad Bosch
Bradley Brajkarich
Marc Brajkarich
Julian Branzon
Brian Briese
Chloe Briese
Kristin Briese
Ally Brooks
Amber Brooks
Linda Brncick
Kay Bryant
Ardella Burkes
Arkayla Burkes
Kristin Busirk
Reese Butta
Robert Butta
Katialla Buzzard
Scott Carevic
Olive Carlisle
Pete Caldwell
Therese Caldwell
Vanessa Caldwell
Carol Chiasson
Melissa Chiasson
Jo Chenell
Jean Christensen
Carol Cooley
Kerri Counts
Anna Craig
Jimmy Craig
Joel Craig
Reese Crate
Scotland Crate
Tiffany Crate
Joe Dabe
Rodney Dabe
Paul Dacko
Ian Dahl
Georgeann Davis
Judy Dehm
Emma Dickenscheiat
Joan Dietrich
Joanne DiNovo
Matt Dolege
Benjamin Donahue
Dawn Downey
Brian Duffie
Frank Dunck
Robert Eakright
Lee Ecker
Scott Ellis
Nicholas Epley
Corey Evans
Danielle Fary
Joan Fasanella
Nicholas Feracuti
Betty Ferguson
Barbara Friat
Barb Ferry
Joyce Flanagan
Adam Ford
Tammy Forrest
Elaine Foster
William Foster
Bill Frankenberger
Dave Fuller
Mary Gaffney
John Gantz
Jim Garrison
Sharon Gerdes
Amy Gibson
Anthony Gibson
Steven Gibson
Ben Gilmore
Hannah Giroux
Amy Godbey
Jeanne Golec
Jan Gonzales
Jon Grainger
Yvonne Greer
Amy Hargis
Tim Hayes
Aiden Heffner
Allison Heffner
Jan Heideman
Greg Hejner
Bryan Henderson
Sabrina Hines-Greer
Pat Hoffman
Lisa Hohl
Peyton Hohl
Liesel Honer
Cindy Hostert
Bill Huish
John Hull
Nancy Humbert
Karen Gail Ishii
April Johnson
Brooke Johnson
Glenn Johnson
Mari Johnson
Marina Johnson
Nate Johnson
Reegan Johnson
Sloan Johnson
Debbie Jones
Jill Juban
Andrew Kaspa
Hayley Kelleck
Jessica Keller
Phil Keller
Efty Kelly
Emily Kenny
Bill Kibler
Jackie Kibler
Scott King
Kristin Kirby
Maggie Kirby
Liam Kirschbaum
Kistinger Family
Ed Klama
Karen Klama
Sydney Koehne
Gale Kozlowski
Tori Kozlowski
Trevor Kozlowski
Mary Lee Krall
Eric Kuehl
Lucas Kuehl
Matthew Lee
Rhonda Lelice
Kathryn Lewellen
Ken Lewellen
Krystal Lewellen
Carol Lewis
Robert Lewis
Wayne Lezon
Dave Libby
Phil Liput
Keith Listermann
Valarie Loekle
David Lowe
Ryan Mahoney
Susan Malkowski
Carol Malnar
Stan Malnar
Becky Martinez
Noah Martinez
Stella Martinez
Victor Martinez
Sharon Martinus
Wyatt Martinus
Riley Masterson
Mohammad Mazi
Thomas McCafferty
Peter McIenighan
Abby McNally
Melissa McMillian
Jeanne Meeks
Elle Melishi
Jimmy Melishi
Kim Melishi
Ruth Meyer
Jas Miller
Megan Miller
John Mittelbrun
Christopher Moulton
Haley Moustis
Bill Morris
Kent Munro
Joe Murphy
Swathi Narayanan
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brian Nelson</th>
<th>Emma Parrish</th>
<th>Phyllis Schulte</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Nelson</td>
<td>Jodie Payne</td>
<td>Michael Schury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Nelson</td>
<td>Allison Perry</td>
<td>Max Scott-Schroeder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Nelson</td>
<td>Mike Perry</td>
<td>Samuel Scott-Schroeder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espie Nelson</td>
<td>Carol Picciolo</td>
<td>Dave Sesterhenn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heather Nelson</td>
<td>Andrea Pleske</td>
<td>Kim Sesterhenn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Nelson</td>
<td>Gloria Pollack</td>
<td>Ray Setzke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisa Nevins</td>
<td>Denise Pollworth</td>
<td>Stephanie Shoaf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave Nordin</td>
<td>Diane Pool</td>
<td>Larry Skisak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael O’Brien</td>
<td>Courtney Primus</td>
<td>Sally Skoff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John O’Lear</td>
<td>Jessica Prince</td>
<td>Carol Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael O’Leary</td>
<td>Prince Family</td>
<td>Bob Soukup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Izzy Opiola</td>
<td>Skip Pronger</td>
<td>Jeff Spanbauer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bernard O’Reilly</td>
<td>Phillip Pursley</td>
<td>Ashley Staszak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicole Ormsbey</td>
<td>Adyta Rajan</td>
<td>Bailey Stevenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Panozzo</td>
<td>Amrita Rajan</td>
<td>Dakota Stevenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jon Panozzo</td>
<td>Dennis Reed</td>
<td>Linda Stevenson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlie Parrish</td>
<td>Rita Renwick</td>
<td>Amanda Still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy Resman</td>
<td>Danny Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carrie Rock</td>
<td>Alan Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Isabel Rodriguez</td>
<td>Alex Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roger Ross</td>
<td>Chris Sunday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Michael Rusnak</td>
<td>Mary Svitk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rene Russell</td>
<td>Grace Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arel Rutter</td>
<td>James Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mike Rzepka</td>
<td>Jerry Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tyler Samec</td>
<td>John Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joe Sanchez</td>
<td>Kathy Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Santangelo</td>
<td>Max Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tamara Santangelo</td>
<td>Molly Swift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lauren Saszak</td>
<td>Chase Tabor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Midge Saunders</td>
<td>Daryl Tabor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dan Schatzman</td>
<td>Nancy Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beverly Scheidt</td>
<td>Karen Tellef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jim Schleck</td>
<td>Steve Titre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Janet Schleeter</td>
<td>Al Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jim Schllele</td>
<td>Al D. Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jennifer Schmuhl</td>
<td>Dick Thomas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Schroeder</td>
<td>Brianna Toman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Max Tomczak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meg Tornatore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bernie Twait</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drew Ullberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Penny Vanderhyden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Delia VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Huck VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Linus VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Oliver VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Patrick VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zoe VanZyl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bruce Vasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dave Vasa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sean Villicer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank Voltatorni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Richard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wachenheim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nicole Ware</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jacob Weber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Dave Wendt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Marie Wendt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mark Wieclaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sally Wieclaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bill Willis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Gretchen Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob Wilson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Connie Witkowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lee Witkowski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Carter Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Katherine Wrobel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jack Wszolek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jeff Wszolek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nick Wszolek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reese Wszolek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reese Young</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>John Zalanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue Zelek</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Boy Scout Troop 13
Boy Scout Troop 49
Boy Scout Troop 75
Boy Scout Troop 318
Boy Scout Troop 444
Boy Scout Troop 889
Channahon Music Boosters
Earth Week Naperville Volunteers
Girl Scout Troop 70398
Girl Scouts of Greater Chicago and Northwest Indiana
Joliet Catholic Academy
Joliet Central High School
Joliet Junior College
Joliet Kiwanis Club
Joliet West High School
Joliet Montessori School
Lewis University
Lincoln-Way East High School Key Club
Lincoln-Way High Schools Asset Team
Lincoln-Way West High School Air Force Cadets
Lockport Township High School
Neuqua Valley High School
Pieces from the Heart Quilt Guild
Pieces ’n Patches Quilt Guild
Plainfield East High School
Plainfield Central High School
Pride of the Prairie Quilters
Providence High School
Romeoville High School
Sertoma Centre
ShareFest Volunteers
St. Mary Catholic Church, Mokena
University of St. Francis
Western Illinois University
Will County Trail Riders

CORPORATE VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Goldman Sachs
JCPenney
Xylem

15,219 TOTAL HOURS OF SERVICE FROM VOLUNTEERS
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCIAL SERVICES
John Gerl, Chief Financial Officer

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE
Lisa Lukasevich, Director
Mary Borgra
Meredith Clavenna
Renee Gauchat
Diana Jaworski
Leisa Nevins
Donna Suca

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Denise Steffen, Director
Sheri Bembenek
Jackie Kibler
Tom Mancari
Michael Prybell
Barb Sudsberry
Eleanor Wagner

OPERATIONS AND PROGRAM SERVICES
Ralph Schultz, Chief Operating Officer

LAW ENFORCEMENT
Tracy Chapman, Chief of Police
David Barrios Jr., Lieutenant
Jason Allbert
Robert Baikie
Anthony Balsamo
Steven Bettenhausen
James Burnette
Russell Burroughs
Vincent Cimino
Cody Columbus
Jeffrey Cowe
Jack Ellingham
Steven Formenti
Eric Gabrielson
Donald Gardiner
James Gerdich
Jessica Glecier
Bradley Greenup
Jennifer Hemmeger
Brandon Hermann
Gregory Hidlebaugh
Mark Houlihan
Shane Kelly
Steven Kirsch
Dean Klier
Eric Kobe
Joshua Lane
Richard Lewandowski
Darrell Mayle
Jeffrey McKenzie
Daniel Olszewski
Dan Rankovich
Michael A. Reilly
David Starcevich
Bradley Veerman
Nicole Veerman
Robert Veron
James Wendt
Matthew Yates

MAINTENANCE AND OPERATIONS
John Fay, Director
Calvin Anderson
Tracy Bianco
Cole Biltgen
David Blaskey
Elise Brazzale
Tyler Brown
Jason Buss
Scott Carevic
Justin Casillas
Rina Cheney
Steven Crobie
Gerald Dawson
Paul Doran
Christopher Dowell
Kelsey Eckstoedt
Ian Eskridge
Cedric Foster
Sara Frederick
Terrence Garvey Jr.
Ben Gauchat
Austin Guglielmucci
William Hibler
Eric Hummitsch
Brian Krabbe
Jeff Kure
Eric Latz
John Latz
Brian Likar
Amanda Mackay
Brian Mackey
Edward McDermott
Arthur Moeller
Christopher Moeller
Craig Newberg
Ryan Nichols
Adam Oestmann
Ryan Osman
Jon Panozzo
Justin Parks
Daniel Parthun
Kimberly Pasch-McQuen
Alex Pasteris
James Patnoudes
Brendon Phillips
Isaiah Romo
Kyle Siegel
Roy Smith
Denzil Smothers
William Suca Jr.
Gabe Suhadolc
Colin Talkie
Dane Thayer
Richard Therkildsen
Charles Thomas
Nicholas Vella
Thomas Watson
Jonathan Wychocki
Robert Zinkiewicz

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS
Laura Kiran, Director
Cindy Cain
Bruce Hodgdon
Glenn P. Knoblock
Katie McCollum
Chad Merda
Rose Scofield
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
Andrew Hawkins, Director
Juanita Armstrong-Ullberg
Michelle Blackburn
Allison Borecky
Glen Buckner
Nick Budde
Floyd Catchpole
Corinne Crawford
Wendy Leonard
Julianne Mason
Colleen Novander
Matt Novander
John O’Lear
Karen Rinke
David Robson
Matthew Ruhter
Barbara Sherwood
Judith Wallace
Kelli Parke
Jessica Prince-Sharrar
Angela Rafac
Tina Riley
Sara Russell
Mike Speller
Dakota Stevenson
Jason Stevenson
Mary Thomas
Heather VanZyl
Allen Ward
Erin Ward
Melissa Zanzola

RETIRED
Lori Green
Greg Griffin
Reginald McCrary
Michael Milligan
Donald Thayer

VISITOR SERVICES
Lynn Kurczewski, Director
Matthew Briggs
Bob Bryerton
Catherine Caldwell
Diane Carson
Mallory Fischer
Cylee Fuller
Ashley Grynienc
Jen Guest
Christopher Gutmann
Ben Hecke
James Hurd
Mark Loekle
Nicholas Lusson
Suzy Lyttle
Jenna Newcomb
Angela Opiola

Photo credits: Juanita Armstrong-Ullberg, Mandy Bellamy, Glenn Buckner, Jackie Bueschel, Alan Bulava, Jason Buss, Cindy Cain, Lane Cameron, Paul Dacko, Mike Daley, Lisa Dinges, Michael Fagan, Barb Ferry, Renee Gauchat, Mark Hanna, Nancy Havener, Kevin Keyes, Laura Kiran, Glenn P. Knoblock, Suzy Lyttle, Chad Merda, Ron Molk, Barbara Parisi, Nathan Taylor, Joe Traina
The 2018 photo contest, the third annual, began May 1 and ended December 31. Almost 1,000 photos were entered, compared to 704 in 2016 and 724 in 2017. Winners were chosen each month, and the eight monthly finalists competed for overall contest honors via online voting in January.

Photo contest fans went nuts over the picture of a mother squirrel embracing her kit snapped in September by Channahon resident Barbara Parisi at McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove. The fuzzy duo had the highest vote total on the Forest Preserve’s Facebook page with more “likes” and comments than any of the other seven monthly finalists’ photos. Almost 1,500 votes were cast to select the top three photos.

Second place in the contest went to Naperville resident Nancy Havener for a soothing sunset photo taken at Whalon Lake in December. And third place was nabbed by Romeoville resident Mark Hanna for his July photo of a green heron sporting a funky Elvis-like hairstyle at McKinley Woods – Kerry Sheridan Grove.

Contest prizes were made possible through the generous support of The Nature Foundation of Will County.
The other photo contest finalists were:

- Joliet resident Joe Traina’s photo of two cedar waxwings playing tug of war with a piece of vegetation at Rock Run Preserve in Joliet.
- Lemont resident Mike Daley’s photo of a moist mink perched on a half-submerged log along Centennial Trail in Romeoville.
- Frankfort resident Michael Fagan’s close-up of a carnivorous cannibalfly at Hickory Creek Preserve in New Lenox.
- Lockport resident Lisa Dinges’ snapshot of a snake slithering through silvery bridge slats on the I&M Canal Trail in Lockport.
- Lowell, Ind., resident Mandy Bellamy’s photo of shelf fungi hanging around at Goodenow Grove Nature Preserve in Crete Township.

All of the contest’s photo entries can be viewed on the District’s Flickr page (www.flickr.com/willcoforests).
Forest Preserve District of Will County
ReconnectWithNature.org

SUGAR CREEK ADMINISTRATION CENTER
17540 W. Laraway Road
Joliet, IL 60433
815.727.8700

FOUR RIVERS ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER
25055 W. Walnut Lane
Channahon, IL 60410
815.722.9470

ISLE A LA CACHE MUSEUM
501 E. 135th Street
Romeoville, IL 60446
815.886.1467

MONEE RESERVOIR
27341 Ridgeland Avenue
Monee, IL 60449
708.534.8499

PLUM CREEK NATURE CENTER
27064 S. Dutton Road
Beecher, IL 60401
708.946.2216

RECONNECTWITHNATURE.ORG