

DuPage Sierran

Sierra Club, River Prairie Group of DuPage County



Jeff's Jots

Jeff at DuPage Environmental Summit in Naperville, Jan. 25

By Jeff Gahrns

I've been reading *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance, an unflinching look at the struggles of America's white working class, with great interest. You see, I grew up in or near Middletown, Ohio, just north of Cincinnati. By the 1950s, people migrated from eastern Kentucky to work in the mills. As a young boy I remember the cardboard paper recycling plants (yes, they recycled paper even then) and the Armco steel mill, where we saw huge plumes of orange dust as the mill churned out miles of rolled steel. I even remember the drugstore soda fountain mentioned in the book; my father managed the store.

I also remember encountering "hillbilly" culture and learned very young that our society was divided into social classes. Over the years I became increasingly aware that people were being left behind as economic prosperity boomed. A large chunk of America's working class now lives in a different world, which, of course, is a big part of our national discussion today.

I have also learned from personal experience that those of us who are college-educated are not always very good at communication. We like to hang together with like-minded friends, staying in our comfort zone, always wondering why everyone else is so "stupid" and a threat to our planet's future. Certainly, we do see a lot of stupidity in the form of environmental damage, often driven by our broken economic system. We must respond vigorously, but I also wonder about our use of war language as we "fight" for the environment. While we must be

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DuPage Sierran

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For activities, legislative action alerts, and outings information:

Sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie or SCTrips.org

[Click Here for the River Prairie Group on Facebook](#)

eco-warriors to prevent bad actions, we also must win over the hearts and minds of our fellow citizens, not be at war with them. This is the challenging part for me, but ultimately, I desire that we be more inclusive. Most people value the natural world, and if we address the interests of our neighbors as we frame the issues, perhaps we can find solutions that unite us.

Dr. Sabine Marx, a social scientist from Columbia University's Earth Institute, stated during a recent

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“Jeff’s Jots”

(Continued from page 1)

conference call for the Citizens Climate Lobby that “Being part of a solution can lead to greater overall support of a cause and collective action,” and that “leading with solutions is really important.” Do we have some cards up our sleeves? You bet. How about the Future Energy Jobs Act, for starters. Our recent program on solar energy opportunities at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 701 Union in Warrenville was well attended, and included mayors, staff from the public sector, as well as representatives of business interests. The excitement was palpable as we discussed real solutions to environmental problems.

We also need to help get good people elected,

get beneficial bills passed and policies put in place that help all of us, and we need to join together in this effort. It is most pleasing and exciting to see our teams form, consisting of concerned Americans who want to make a difference, and in so doing, learning about issues and new skills needed to influence public policy. This will be my “political year” knocking on doors for pro-environment candidates. Will you join me as we gear up our political team?

Finally, I am proud of our River Prairie Group volunteers as we organize and become leaders in our communities in new ways. There is much to celebrate!

The River Prairie Group could not function without the volunteers who step up to the various jobs and positions.

Officers:

Jeff Gahrns – Chair
Connie Schmidt – Vice Chair
Kathy Franke – Secretary
Bruce Blake – Treasurer

Additional Members of the Ex-Com at Large:

Linda Sullivan – Lobby Chair
Bob Barbieri – Water Research Project
Jeff Gahrns – Solar Energy Liaison
Stacey Salmon – Political Endorsements
Connie Schmidt – DuPage County Issues
Dennis Streicher – DuPage Rivers Salt Creek Work Group Liaison

Additional Committee Chairs:

Open – Programs
Bonnie Blake – Water Monitoring
Paul Saindon – Outings
Andrew Cohen – Webmaster
Joe Pokorny – National Liaison
Sherry Stratton – Newsletter Editor
Dave Blake – Newsletter Layout

Getting to Know Our Volunteers: A Spotlight on Janice Dugan

By Jeff Gahris



The River Prairie Group is blessed by a number of great volunteers. Janice Dugan is a great example, as she is always able and willing to pitch in whenever she can fit it into her busy schedule. You may have met Jan while attending program meetings over the years. In recent months, she has become more active in our newly evolving membership and outreach team. Her thoughtful contributions have been helpful as we begin to feel our way toward better outreach and better ways to serve the interests of our local membership. We always enjoy her company at tabling events as she interacts with the

public, whether at an environmental fair or a farmers market, expressing her concern for the quality of our environment.

When not volunteering for us, Jan frequently uses the trails at Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve to enjoy nature. Being the caring person that she is, Janice also spends time at the Peoples Resource Center assisting their clients.

If you would like to get to know Jan, join our membership and outreach team. You won't be disappointed.



April 22 is Earth Day!

Be sure to take advantage of events and activities planned throughout DuPage in celebration.



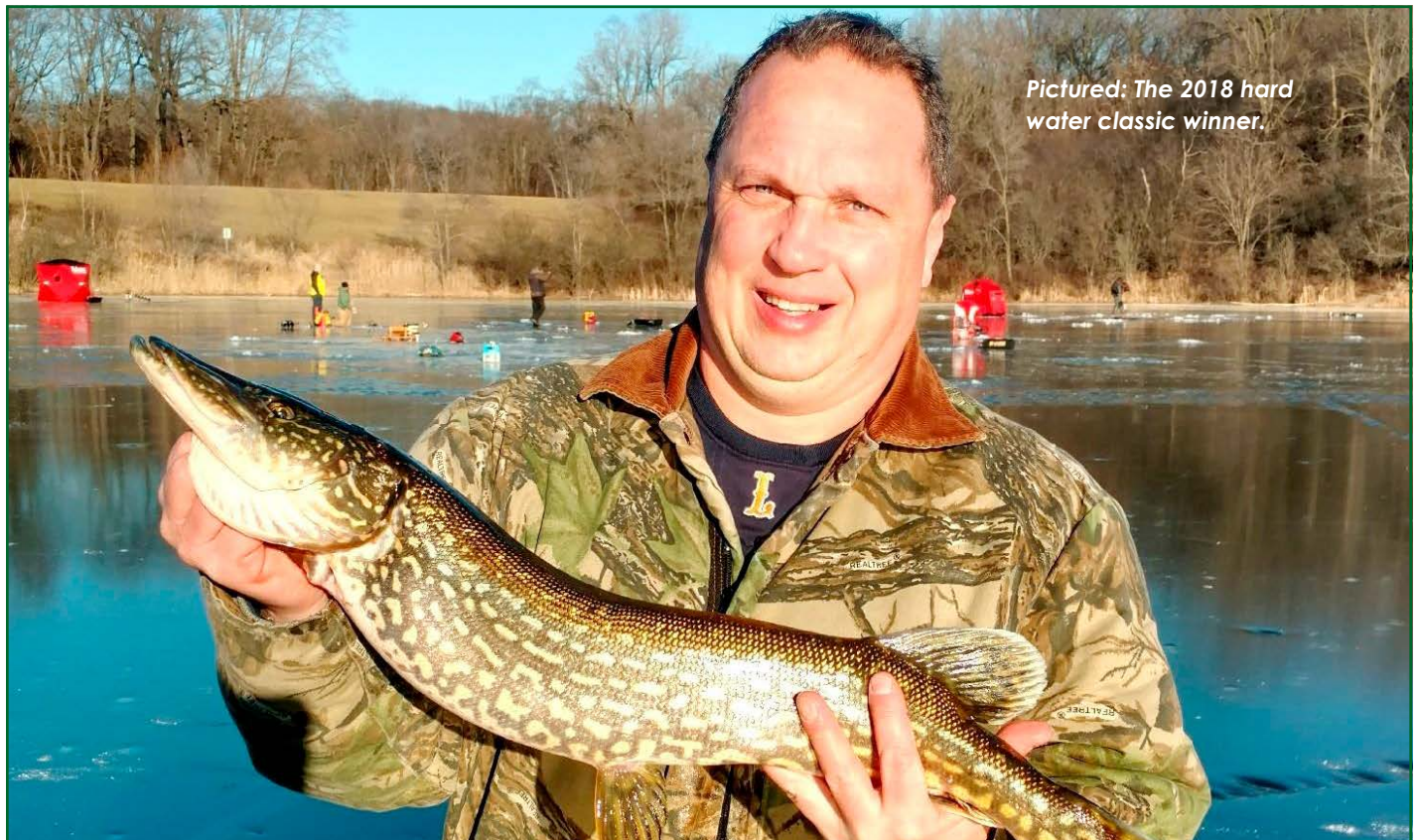
DuPage County Forest Preserve Update

By Ryan Smith, Senior Ranger
Forest Preserve District DuPage County

As with most residents of DuPage, we at the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County are excited to bring in some warm weather in the coming weeks. However, no matter what the season is, finding time to enjoy the outdoors can be beneficial in many ways. This past winter we held our annual ice fishing tournament known better as the "Hard Water Classic," on January 13th. The event saw an attendance of 313 paid participants. The winning fish categories included biggest in crappie, bluegill, and bass species, as well as biggest fish overall. The biggest fish winner reeled in a 29 3/8-inch northern pike. Also, the District was pleased to mark the 17th year of enjoying winter outdoor fun at the annual

"Wonders of Winter" event, held on February 3rd at Mayslake Peobody Estate in Oak Brook. Here, participants enjoyed winter activities like ice fishing and snowshoeing. Attendees were also able to help cut ice and meet live birds of prey from Willowbrook Wildlife Center's raptor educational program.

In January, I was interviewed on a WDCB 90.9 FM broadcast that aired January 14th. My overall message was to help promote the effects winter can have on an individual's mental well-being throughout the barren season. Research has shown us that the simplicity of venturing outdoors, for even a brief moment, can increase our overall well-being, and also benefit our cognitive functions. We at times



Pictured: The 2018 hard water classic winner.

Continued on Page 5...

“Forest Preserve Update” (Continued from page 4)

forget this simplicity in the warmer months of spring and summer, and overlook the benefits the natural world allows us to absorb. So, this spring, I encourage everyone to take a moment and reflect on what nature means to you, and how it can help keep a positive longitudinal benefit to your mental health. The full interview was recorded during my Ice-Fishing demonstration and can be heard at wdbcfirstlight.org/news/2018/1/14/dropping-a-line-through-the-ice.

As winter recedes and the warming of spring approaches in the coming weeks, we will be greeted with the return of budding trees and prominent displays of new blossoms unfurling. The greatest diversity can be found in the middle of May, when some late ephemerals still remain and other mid-May flowers are in full bloom. Wildlife baby season also coincides with the coming of spring; during this time infant wildlife will start to emerge out

in the open. We offer a reminder to view animals from a distance so they will not be disturbed. It is also important to remember that many species of wildlife will hide their infants for safety, and that these babies may not be abandoned. If you have questions or concerns about native wildlife, contact Willowbrook Wildlife Center at Willowbrook Forest Preserve in Glen Ellyn, 630-942-6200. Willowbrook Wildlife Center is a rehabilitation facility that provides care and medical treatment to injured, ill, and orphaned native wildlife.

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has been connecting people to nature for more than 100 years. More than 4 million people visit its 60 forest preserves, 145 miles of trails, five education centers, and scores of programs each year. For information, call 630-933-7200 or visit dupageforest.org, where you can also link to the District's e-newsletter, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

Below: Silver Lake is dotted with shanties for hard water classic (aerial shot)"



Below: Hand feeding baby muskrat at Willowbrook.



Organized People Can Beat Organized Money!

JOIN OUR TEAM!

By Stacey Salman and Linda Sullivan

While the dysfunction in Springfield has made national headlines and the state has failed to pass a budget for almost three years, the General Assembly managed to pass historic clean energy legislation with the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA). In addition to this landmark energy policy, Illinois made progress last year in protecting pollinators and requiring lead testing for drinking water in schools.

These victories were not magic or an accident. Sierra Club volunteers who dedicate their time and talent to the Sierra Club Illinois' strong political and lobby programs can take major credit for that!

Our winning political program consists of three parts: the Political Team, the Political Field Team, and the Lobby Team. The Political Team interviews and endorses strong environmental candidates through a formal, multi-layered approval process. The Political Field Team supports our endorsed candidates through phone banking, canvassing, and voter outreach to ensure a winning campaign. Our Lobby Team meets with Illinois legislators to discuss our legislative priorities, hear from their constituents, and hold them accountable to their commitments to our work.

River Prairie Group's political team has been actively meeting with candidates and preparing for an important and decisive 2018 election year. The spring primary election is March 20th 2018. You can find **your polling place here**.

The significance of political victories in 2018 cannot be overstated. We have seen unprecedented attacks on clean air and water protections, on clean energy policy, on the Environmental Protection Agency, our public lands, and wildlife protection. The best chance we have in the fight for a clean, healthy planet is to elect strong environmental leaders. "When we help an environmental champion win, we have made an investment in sound environmental policy that will bear fruit for years to come. We will have an ally to work with rather than an adversary to lobby," said Sierra Club director Jack Darin.

In addition to county, General Assembly, and

Congressional races, Illinois voters will be casting their vote for Governor in 2018. This race is critical, as the next Governor will have authority over the redistricting of legislative districts. The general election is November 6th, and Sierra Club is determined to elect champions to all levels of government. We have seen hopeful signs across the country in multiple special elections. The message is clear: voters are rejecting the current administration and their harmful agenda.

Who we elect to represent us, our families, our communities, and our future is more important than ever. We know what is at stake, but we are motivated and excited about what we can accomplish in 2018. We know that organized people can beat organized money. The more people we have helping our candidates win and sharing our message with voters, the stronger we will be. We can win, and we will win, but we need you! Join members from our political team for a casual coffee and conversation on March 22nd and learn how you can help win big this November! **Click here if you are interested in learning more.**

Right: Paul Saindon phone banks for Tammy Duckworth.



Sierrans discuss political strategy at Sierra Club office.

celebrating

A Water Warrior

Shared by **Connie Schmidt**

At the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club meeting on January 13, it was learned that long-time esteemed member Fran Caffee of the Valley of the Fox Group had died the previous evening. The Illinois Chapter members had a moment of silence and passed the following resolution:

The Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club expresses extreme sorrow over the loss of our beloved colleague, Fran Caffee.

One of the Illinois Chapter's longest-tenured activists, Fran was an inspiration to generations of people – environmentalists and others – on the most important conservation issues.

Her seminal work in organizing an effective volunteer water-testing program in Illinois which later was adopted by the Sierra Club across the United States is of utmost importance.

Fran's legacy in clean water advocacy is one of her most important and memorable accomplishments. That legacy will fuel the efforts of hundreds of water activists for decades to come.

The hearts of Illinois Sierrans are with Fran's family and friends during this sorrowful time.

In addition, on November 18, 2017, the National board of Directors passed the following resolution celebrating Fran and her long-term efforts with the Sierra Club:

The Sierra Club Board of Directors recognizes Fran Caffee for her leadership at the group, chapter and national level over three decades. She took up local conservation activism in the 1980's with Sierra Club to save a salt marsh near Savannah, Georgia, where she lived. When she moved to Aurora, Illinois, in the 1990's she established the Valley of the Fox group. There in 1995 she started a group of volunteers who monitored the Fox River, and later its tributaries, for pollutants. This group, the Water Sentinels, expanded to over 20 States, and still exists today as a Grassroots Network Team.

Fran also took on a leadership role with the Grassroots Network Support Team where she has served as its primary liaison to the Water Sentinel Team and Chapter Water Sentinel groups. She has also played a vital role in the Grassroots Network grant process. Her insights and constant presence have been invaluable. Fran



National volunteer Clayton Daughenbaugh and national board member Chuck Frank present the national resolution to long-time volunteer and water warrior Fran Caffee.

also served as a national volunteer lead on the Outings team for many years.

In 2006 Fran received Prairie Rivers Network's River Steward award. In 2014 Fran was honored with the William E. Colby Award for outstanding leadership, dedication and service to the Sierra Club. Upon learning about the award she told the Illinois Chapter: "I am indeed humbled by this recognition. I have stated to others that I have not saved a river or removed a dam. And I certainly have not written any great documents. As long as I could keep everyone else working I could be Alpha Cat. But it really started here in IL with volunteers and staff who share my vision that every human being deserves clean drinking water. You made it easy for me to volunteer."

Locally Fran has planted water willows in the river, organized countless cleanups, advocated for rain gardens, natural areas, parks and public ownership of the riverbanks, and organized citizens to speak out on behalf of this vital natural resource. The City of Aurora proclaimed Oct. 28, 2017 as Fran Caffee Day and named the rain garden that she and other Sierra Club volunteers helped plant at RiverEdge Park as Fran's Gardens.

The Sierra Club National Board of Directors recognizes and commends Fran for all that she has done for the Sierra Club, her fellow citizens and the planet and wishes her well in light of her current health challenges. We look forward to a speedy recovery so she can return to the work for which she loves and has dedicated so much of her life.

MEMBERSHIP AND OUTREACH TEAM ESTABLISHED

We are happy to report that our Membership and Outreach Team has formed and we have had our first meeting. We are so new we don't yet have an appointed chair. We plan to focus on engaging and connecting our members, especially those who are new, and to find better ways to add meaning to your membership in the Sierra Club. We also will be focused on making the River Prairie Group more visible in the community, with an emphasis on inclusively recruiting new members of all ages and demographics. Expect to see social events and other creative ideas put into action in the months ahead. We are open to new ideas, so if the work of this team interests you, send an email to Jeff Gahrís at jgahrís@gmail.com.

RPG Executive Committee Chair Jeff Gahrís Receives Award



Above: Rafael Vieyra of Immigrant Solidarity DuPage awards Jeff Gahrís for his dedication and continued contribution to Solidarity DuPage.



Above: On January 6, Jeff Gahrís is congratulated by Bruce Blake for an award presented to Jeff by Immigrant Solidarity DuPage for the River Prairie Group's outreach to the Latino community. Bruce also played an important role in this effort.

Clean Energy Forum

or What FEJA Means for DuPage

By **Connie Schmidt**

Clean Energy is coming to Illinois! We in DuPage County want our leaders to be open to these new benefits and to lead in the transition. The River Prairie Group partnered recently with the Resiliency Institute and the IBEW701 Forward DuPage to present a forum on the Future Energy Jobs Act or FEJA in January. Our partners were chosen for their connection to this topic and relevance throughout DuPage. Power Forward DuPage, led by Karyn Charvat, is a part of the Illinois Brotherhood of the Electrical Workers Union that works to network with business partners, developers, contractors, and individuals and municipalities for further excellence and growth in the contracting industry. The Resiliency Institute, directed by Jodi Trendler, is a non-profit focused on designing resilient communities through education and implementation of sustainable design for daily living, land, and community.

The top experts on FEJA in our region were invited to present different aspects of this new legislation. Jack Darin, Director of the Illinois Chapter of the Sierra Club, gave background on the law and its development through the state legislature. Edith Makra, Director of Environmental Initiatives of the Metropolitan Mayors Caucus, presented policy issues relating to FEJA. Lisa Albrecht, Vice President and Policy Committee Chairperson of the Illinois Solar Energy Association, presented the ease and feasibility of solar. Troy Hammond, President of North Central College, gave an excellent testimonial on the gigantic system installed at the school and currently operating: saving them money and reducing their carbon footprint. And last, Harry Ohde, trainer for the IBEW, presented the programs being implemented by the union to help supply the installers for the vast increase in jobs expected.

Attendees at the event ranged from elected officials and candidates at the state, county, and municipal level, to board members from libraries, school boards, and park districts, all interested in how they could begin to access the benefits of this new law. The law itself contains three "buckets" or areas of content: Energy Efficiency, Clean Energy

Development, and Job Creation. Each area also has a component for social justice as it gears a portion of benefits to areas negatively impacted from fossil fuels or individuals deserving of job training. The disbursement of funds associated with the law has begun, although The Illinois Power Authority is still making decisions about the way many parts of the law will be regulated.

Nearly 150 people attended the event and stayed from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., asking questions long after the presentations had been concluded. Gratitude must be extended to the numerous members of the RPG and the other organizations who were on hand to help the evening run smoothly. With the urging of the RPG and the Resiliency Institute, refreshments kindly provided by the IBEW were served sustainably with a zero waste result!

Residents, business leaders, and government officials now have an introduction to Clean Energy in DuPage, thanks to the leadership provided by this forum. Watch for part two coming soon!





RPG Supports the Illinois Prairie Path

By Connie Schmidt

Did you know that various groups throughout the county adopt portions of the Illinois Prairie Path for regular Cleanup days? The RPG has officially adopted one mile starting at the parking lot in downtown Glen Ellyn and moving east toward Lombard. Unofficially, we go farther on our cleanup days to a bench dedicated to long-time volunteer leaders Paul and Jean Mooring, then on to a bridge over the East Branch of the DuPage River. Because we have been having the cleaning events for several years now, the path is in relatively good shape, and the required four cleanup events become great social activities to meet like-minded environmentalists from the community.

This year, volunteer leader Quinton Jensen is coordinating our part of the county-wide IPP Annual Earth Day Trail Cleanup on Saturday, April 28. Participants will meet at the parking lot along the Union Pacific West Tracks at the IPP. Individuals can sign up on the RPG activity calendar at [https://www.](https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie/activity-calendar)

[sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie/activity-calendar](https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie/activity-calendar). Bring gloves and wear comfortable walking shoes and lots of smiles because you will definitely have fun. Future dates for this year are June 23, August 25, and Oct. 27.

An additional point of great interest along the path is the Glacial Ridge area, where the RPG also holds restoration workdays under the supervision of long-time volunteer Bruce Blake. See our calendar for those dates, as well.

One important plug here is for each of you to also consider joining The Illinois Prairie Path (see IPP link at end of this article). Their organization advocates for path amenities for users, plans events, and coordinates with the DuPage County Department of Transportation, which oversees the path. If you live in a different area along the path and want to participate in a cleanup there, contact Susan Degnan, VP of the IPP and Earth Day Coordinator at <http://www.ipp.org>.

District Seeks Artwork for “The Art of Pollinators” Exhibit at Mayslake in May

DuPage Monarch Project Collaborates on Exhibit

Artists are invited to submit their works inspired by native pollinators beginning Feb. 1 for possible inclusion in “The Art of Pollinators” art exhibit, which opens May 2 at the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County’s Mayslake Peabody Estate, 1717 W. 31st St. in Oak Brook.

Submissions of prints, drawings, paintings, photographs or other wall art that represents pollinators through the artist’s eye are welcome for the exhibit, which is a collaborative initiative between the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County and DuPage Monarch Project. If more artwork is submitted than can be accommodated, a panel of visual artists who teach at Mayslake Peabody Estate will select the pieces to fill the show.

Submissions should be inspired by pollinators but are open to interpretation. Artwork should be appropriate for all ages. Those interested in submitting artwork to the show must contact Kendra Strubhart at kstrubhart@dupageforest.org by April 15.

The Forest Preserve District and DuPage Monarch Project are committed to increasing populations of monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

“As a regional leader in the conservation and protection of imperiled species, the Forest Preserve District is working with several partner agencies to build better habitat for pollinators,” said Forest Preserve District of DuPage County President Joe Cantore. “We hope you will be part of this fascinating art exhibit celebrating the art of pollinators.”

“The Art of Pollinators” exhibit will run May 2 – June 1 in historic Mayslake Hall. An opening reception is slated for May 7 from 6 to 8 p.m.

“We’re thrilled to work with the DuPage Monarch Project to bring this amazing exhibit to Mayslake,” said Forest Preserve District Commissioner Jeff Redick, District 2.

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County has been connecting people to nature for more than 100 years. More than 4 million people visit its 60 forest preserves, 145 miles of trails, five education centers and scores of programs each year. For information, call 630-933-7200 or visit dupageforest.org, where you can also link to the District’s e-newsletter, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages.

One Earth Film Festival

By Jeff Gahris

The Elmhurst Cool Cities Coalition is sponsoring the screening of *Happening: A Clean Energy Revolution* on March 4, 1 pm, at Elmhurst College. The River Prairie Group is a supporting sponsor. *Happening* is the story of inspiring citizens, business leaders, and politicians championing the clean energy revolution. Director James Redford embarks on a colorful personal journey into the dawn of the clean energy era as it creates jobs, turns profits, and makes communities stronger and healthier across the U.S. *Happening* answers our most pressing questions: Can we meet

all our energy needs with renewable energy? How could we do that? And most importantly, will we do that?

Movie trailer: <https://happeningthemovie.com/>. At the conclusion of the movie, a moderator-led discussion will take place. Total program length is two hours. Tickets may be obtained on line at <https://www.oneearthfilmfest.org/>

Note: This event may be sold out at the time of publication of this issue of DuPage Sierran.

RIVER PRAIRIE GROUP OUTINGS FIND THE SNOW

By Mike Davis

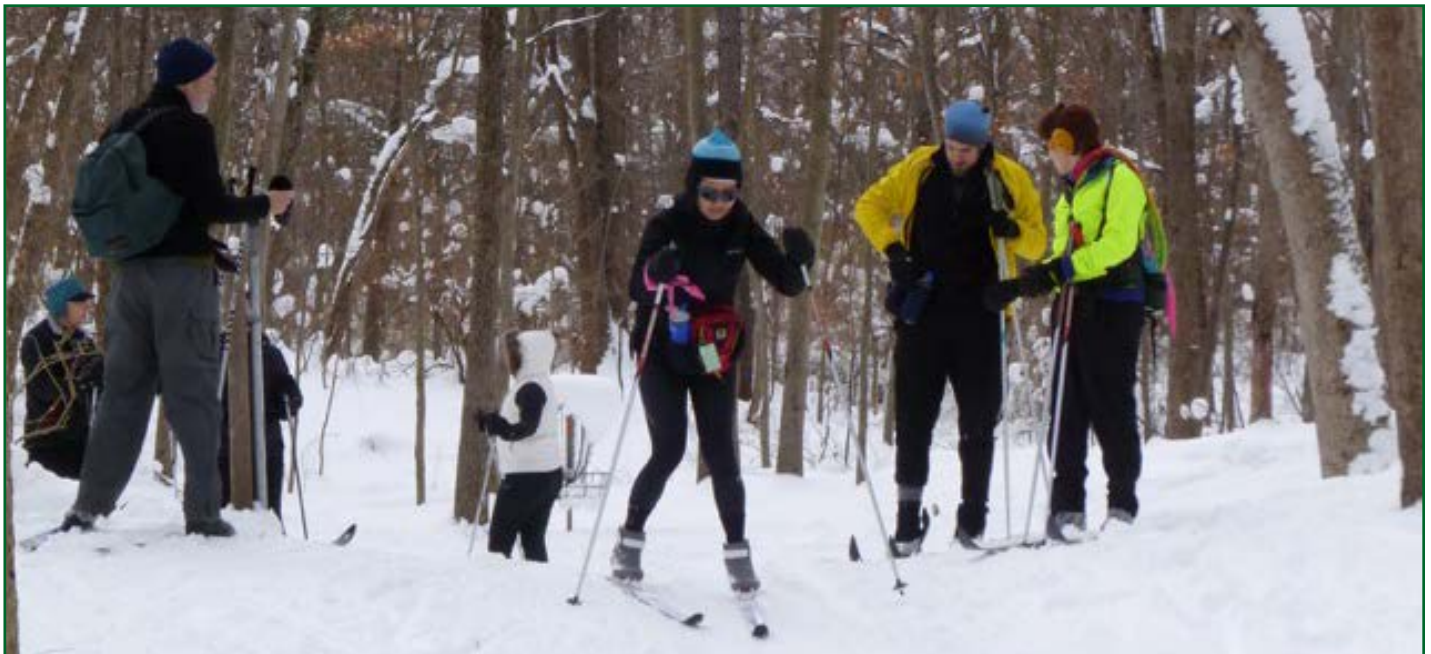
There is an outing run through the River Prairie Group Outings Committee that is quite unique as participants are asked to sign up without knowing where, when, or even if the outing will take place until perhaps a week before it occurs. Yet people who attend always have good things to say about the RPG Cross Country Ski Clinic. Because of the vagaries of the climate in this era of global warming, the event is scheduled with alternate dates in January to maximize the chances that snow will be found somewhere from southern Wisconsin to southwest Michigan.

This winter, Southwest Michigan was the beneficiary of some well-timed lake-effect snow (around 18 inches), so about 10 instructors and students ranging in age from 12 to let's just say comfortably older than that, headed out to Madeline Bertrand County Park near Niles, Michigan, on January 6th. This is a perfect place for beginners, as the trails have a few relatively gentle hills: perfect to learn speed control and turning. There are also ski rentals available.

A short lecture by head instructor Steve Turner took place in the lovely warming lodge with fireplace and picture window looking out at trees and birdfeeders. After that, skis were donned and ev-

eryone shuffled off to our nearby "private" training loop that the park kindly groomed for us in a small field. After learning how to safely fall on the fluffy snow and stand back up, students went around the practice loop several times under the watchful eyes of the instructors, while working on their stride and proper poling technique. After about an hour on the practice loop, it was time for an escorted ski on a groomed and tracked beginner ski trail. Then after lunch in the lodge, more trails including hill climbing and speed control were on the agenda. After dinner and lodging at a nearby hotel in South Bend, on Sunday several students and instructors were ready for the slightly more adventurous Love Creek Park with limited instruction but with guidance and advice still offered.

A core group of RPG leaders run several ski outings annually, forming an informal skiing program, which includes the clinic, a trip to northern Wisconsin in late January, and one to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in early February. Weather permitting, there may be a trip in late February if any usable snow is to be found. So be sure to check the RPG calendar for an outing to match your schedule and abilities--if not this year, then next year for sure!



Flora of the Chicago Region:

A special Program

By Bruce Blake—RPG Conservation Chair

What is the most important thing you can do to stop loss of the native plant and animal communities in our counties?

"Be informed, educated, involved, and volunteer in the programs that many counties, towns, and naturalist groups are doing to support nature" said Dr. Laura Rericha when asked this question.

One of the most comprehensive studies of the biodiversity of the Chicago region is the recent book *Flora of the Chicago Region - A Floristic and Ecological Synthesis* by Dr. Gerould Wilhelm and Dr. Laura Rericha. Or, as it is called in WildOnes, a local group that supports and encourages native flora, "The Bible." It is the definitive compendium on local plants, a means of identifying and understanding the relationship of plants and insects in the 22 counties surrounding Chicago. The book includes insects and other animals that have direct relationships with the 3149 local plant species. In fact, there are more native plants in the Chicago region than in the Great Smokey Mountains National Park or the Grand Canyon National park.

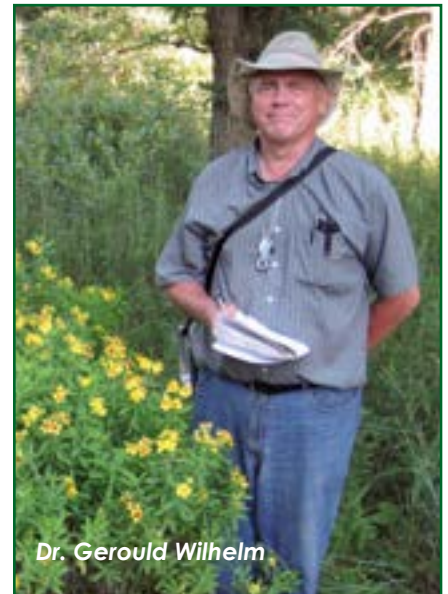
Wild Ones - Greater Dupage Chapter sponsored a program to honor Dr. Wilhelm and Dr. Rericha for their epic study. The Sierra Club's River Prairie Group helped sponsor and promote this event. The program took place on February 10 at DuPage Unitarian Universalist Church in Naperville. The event was limited to 120 seats and was sold out.

Dr. Gerould Wilhelm is a foremost botanist, research taxonomist, and educator. After an undergraduate degree in Marine Biology at Florida State University, and a stint as a conscript in the Army, he joined the staff of the Morton Arboretum, in Lisle, Illinois, in 1974. He received his Ph.D. in botany in 1984 at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. His dissertation focused on the vascular flora of the Pensacola Region in Florida and southwestern Alabama. He is also an authority on the lichens of the Chicago region.

Dr. Laura Rericha has worked for the Forest Pre-

serves of Cook County since 1997, and in that time she has served an important role in protecting and preserving the plants and animals of the Forest Preserve. Dr. Laura Rericha is the quintessential naturalist. Early in life she became fascinated by birds and now is a peerless master of their identity and lover of their natural history. Mentored by Floyd Swink, she has become devoted to the fact that plants and animals do not live in isolation, neither from each other nor from their habitats – a view born from direct observation of plants and their species-specific association.

The study took over 15 years and close to 100,000 hours of research.



Dr. Gerould Wilhelm



Dr. Laura Rericha

Books were available at the program for purchase and signing.

After a brief introduction by Chair Jeff Gahrns and Linda Sullivan about the Sierra Club's opportunities, Dr. Wilhelm talked about his book. Dr. Wilhelm is founding member of the Conservation Research Institute, <http://www.conservationresearchinstitute.org/our-story--a-history.html>.

The book is not just a clinical listing of plants, it is a way of understanding the connection between nature and our world. The remnant areas of prairies, forest, and wetlands that are left have special considerations to be taken. They have existed for special reasons because of their relationship with different soil, moisture, and climate, and because of symbiotic relationships with other insects and animals. We must understand our relationship to nature. Each remnant is unique, with a complex system working together. Some of the Conservation Research Institute's principals are:

- There are natural laws that govern all things, which when understood and attended to, allow us and our relationship with the natural world to prosper.

- In nurturing the circle of life, it is paramount to understand that children are the carriers of innovation and creativity; adults bear the skills, crafts, and memories; the elders keep the wisdom and endow the children with the long view.

- Beauty is fundamental to our well-being. When our surroundings speak to beauty we love them, care for them, and therefore sustain them. That which is loved becomes beautiful; that which is beautiful is loved, cared for, and endures.

Dr. Wilhelm spoke with conviction, sincerity, and a sense of humor. I felt great respect for him and his philosophy.

Dr. Laura Rericha went a little more into detail about the balance between plants and native insects. She has done an amazing study of native bees and how they are adapted to special plants. She has collected information on many rare insects and how they relate to the environment. Many of these insects only feed on one type of native plant. This is why remnant plant communities must be preserved.

Pat Armstrong presented special plaques to Dr. Wilhelm and Dr. Rericha for their work and support of the Wild Ones philosophy - "Healing the Earth one yard at a time."

The plaques were engraved:

"For honoring the memory, carrying on the legacy of Ray Schulenburg and Floyd Swink, and creating the astounding, phenomenal Magnum Opus, Flora



of the Chicago Region, we honor Dr. Gerould Wilhelm as an Original Wild One.

For outrageously overwhelming knowledge of both charismatic and inelegant fauna, as well as the sinister inclinations of rusts, smuts, mildews and other repugnant organisms that interact with the Flora of the Chicago Region, we honor Laura Rericha Anchor as an Original Wild One."

The River Prairie Group would like to thank the Wild Ones – Greater Dupage Chapter for allowing us to be part of this program. It was truly inspiring.

If you are interested in preserving nature there are many ways.

Wild Ones

dupage.wildones.org/

Sierra Club River Prairie

sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie

Forest Preserve District of Dupage County

dupageforest.org/get-involved/volunteer

Conservation Foundation

theconservationfoundation.org/

College of Dupage Russell Kirt Prairie

ensweilerr@cod.edu

Morton Arboretum

mortonarb.org/join-support/volunteer/current-volunteer-opportunities

Glen Ellyn Park District- Renae Frigo

rfrigo@gepark.org

gepark.org/get-involved/restoration-work-days/

Many of our members have expressed an interest in volunteering at natural sites. We have an ongoing restoration effort with the Forest Preserve of Dupage County at the Churchill Woods/Glacial Ridge F.P. in Glen Ellyn. Dates are listed in the Outings section of the newsletter.

If you are interested in forming a group with the Sierra Club that volunteers at different site throughout the year, please e-mail Bruce Blake at rlinstns1@aol.com.

River Prairie Group (RPG) Outings

EXPLORE, ENJOY, AND PROTECT THE PLANET BY DISCOVERING YOUR LOCAL OUTDOORS.

Sierra Club Local Outdoors volunteers lead a range of outings that are as diverse as their interests. Depending on where you are, you can choose from day hikes, bicycling, skiing, paddling, bird-watching, conservation-oriented activities, or forays into the remaining natural areas of our major cities.

For more details on these outings, visit: www.sctrips.org

Film: "Happening: A Clean Energy Revolution"

Sunday, March 04, 2018 1:00 PM

Conservation Efforts to Preserve Cranes

Thursday, March 29, 2018 7:00 PM

Spring Valley Volunteer Day

Saturday, April 07, 2018 9:00 AM

White Pines S.P: Big pines, and a wildflower hike

Saturday, April 21, 2018 9:00 AM

Forest Glen Backpack

Friday, April 27, 2018 to Sunday, April 29, 2018

Spring hike at Indiana Dunes Nat'l Shoreline

Saturday, April 28, 2018 9:00 AM

Illinois Prairie Path Clean-up (RPG Section)

Saturday, April 28, 2018 9:00 AM

Mississippi Palisades Base Camp Hike & Bike

Saturday, May 05, 2018 to Sunday, May 06, 2018

Two-Day 26 Mile Hike Around Lake Geneva

Saturday, May 19, 2018 to Sunday, May 20, 2018

Spring Valley Volunteer Day

Saturday, May 19, 2018 9:00 AM

Fall Forest Preserve Work Days

Churchill Woods/Glacial Ridge

Forest Preserve Service Event Organized by Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Dates:

Sat., May 5,

Sat., May 19

9:00 to 12:00

Meet at Walnut Glen Park, 860 Walnut St, Glen Ellyn, IL. Preregistration, waiver, and proper dress are required.

Interested in some fresh air and a chance to learn and restore nature? Come out and enjoy the special fall colors.

Contact Bruce Blake for more information - rllnstns1@aol.com. Call the FPDDC Volunteer Office at (630) 206-9630 to register and fill out a waiver. If you are under 18, a parent or guardian must sign the waiver for you. Ages 8 through 17 must be accompanied by an adult. Online - <http://www.dupageforest.org> drop down column under volunteer/NRM. Also check "more info" for waiver link. Note: This outing is under the auspices and rules of the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC). This is not a Sierra Club sponsored activity, but we strongly support the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County.

How to Dress: Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and bring your own work gloves, if possible. Dress in layers if cold weather. Shorts are not recommended, as you will be working amidst thorny brush and, occasionally, poisonous plants. Flip-flops, sandals and open-toe shoes are forbidden.



Don't Get Left Out in the Cold... Join Us!



Sierra Club Outings are a terrific way to meet new people and enjoy the great outdoors. Whatever your interests - hiking, canoeing or birdwatching - there is an outing for everyone. If you are new to the area, let your local Chapter or Group give you the lay of the land. Join today and become part of America's largest environmental organization offering the most enjoyable outings.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone _____
 Email _____

YES! I would like to give a gift membership to:

Gift Recipient _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____ / ____
 Signature _____

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to: Sierra Club, PO Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org

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