



RIVER PRAIRIE GROUP

DuPage Sierran

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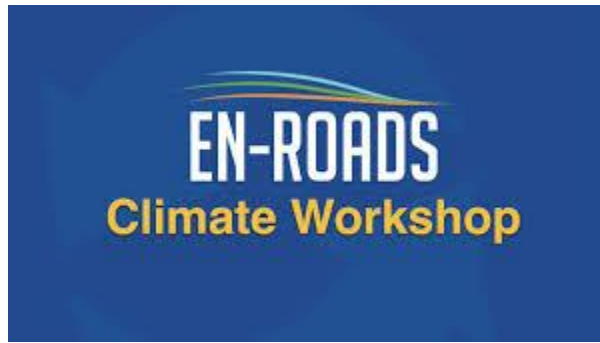
Chatter From the Chair

Well.....as they say in the movie...."I'm BAAAAACK" and very happy to be serving the River Prairie Group again as Chair. Jeff was amazing the last four years and NOW is representing us as a Forest Preserve Commissioner in DuPage for District 4. Go Jeff, and Congratulations!

We are thrilled with the first actions of the Biden administration as the environmental regulations are being reinstated to protect our land, air, and water. COVID-19 has changed how we operate with the Sierra Club but has not shut us down! Our water collectors are continuing with their work as documented in their amazing report on our website. Bruce is hoping to set up some workdays at our site in Glen Ellyn in late March if the Forest Preserve allows, but that effort may be on break. Our clean energy advocacy continues, so check out the article in this issue for news on the reintroduction of CEJA to the state legislature. Educational programs are back and virtual, so look for re-caps from January and February and check out the new listings in the following pages. Finally, if you are a member of the Sierra Club, watch your mailbox and email for election materials for the National Sierra Club Board of Directors in March.

So onward, my friends. Welcome to 2021 and a whole new era!

Connie Schmidt
Chair River Prairie Group
Sierra Club



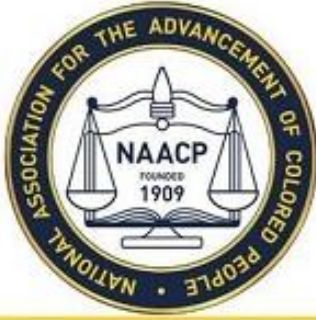
Upcoming Virtual Program Meetings

Monday, March 15, 7pm – Join Mark Ailes as he facilitates the En-ROADS Climate Workshop. In this 60 minute workshop, participants propose climate solutions such as energy efficiency, carbon pricing, fossil fuel taxes, reducing deforestation, and carbon dioxide removal. Mark will then test these approaches separately or as a package in the [En-ROADS Climate Solutions Simulator](#), so participants can see the impact on global temperature and other factors. What better way is there to see what works to solve the biggest challenge of our generation?

Wednesday, April 7, 7pm – Kay McKeen, SCARCE, explains the challenges and opportunities for recycling (scheduled for last year, but we had postponed it due to COVID).

Wednesday, May 12, 7pm – Susan Wilson, Naperville Astronomical Association, will introduce us to observing the stars, planets and other wonders of the night sky. A great program for the whole family!

See our events listing at <https://www.sierraclub.org/illinois/river-prairie> for more information, including how to register.



DuPage County NAACP

Serving: DuPage, Kane, Kendall, Will & NW Suburban Cook
Counties

Unit 3012

VOTE IT'S YOUR RIGHT

MEETINGS EVERY 3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH

By Connie Schmidt

The River Prairie Group and members of Valley of the Fox and Sauk Calumet Groups are banding together to support the efforts of the DuPage County NAACP (which truly covers 5 counties) in their effort to Get Out the Vote. Municipal elections are so very important to residents' daily lives, but RPG just does not have the resources to endorse and work for campaigns in the Spring election cycle. This gives us a chance to support an effort by the local NAACP in getting residents to the polls. If you would like to join in, there are a number of activities: learn to register people, phone bank, letter writing, and possible texting. You can do a lot or a little. Here is a link to support this important effort: <https://forms.gle/MxPZUPnkJTtRs6b8A>



Clean Energy Jobs Act; *Here we go again!*

On February 9, 2021, the Clean Energy Jobs Act was re-introduced in Springfield by the same marvelous co-sponsor we have had for the last two years, IL State Senator Cristina Castro. State Rep. Ann Williams, House sponsor of CEJA and chair of the House Energy & Environment Committee said, “The days of the big utility companies meeting in back rooms to shape energy policy to benefit their bottom lines are over. CEJA is a product of the most grassroots-intensive energy policy development effort in the history of Illinois. It was put together after over 100 ‘Listen. Lead. Share.’ community meetings were held across the state. As a result of this grassroots effort, the bill addresses head on the issues most important to communities: it tackles climate change, creates equitable jobs in every part of Illinois, and holds utilities accountable. This is what the people of Illinois want, and we’re working to make it happen on behalf of all Illinois communities.”

There was an amazing on-line presence with tweets, Facebook, and Instagram all focused on the hash tag #CEJACantWait. Members of the Sierra Club IL Chapter and groups from all over the state will lobby our elected officials in Springfield to pass CEJA this spring. You can help, by e-mailing your state representative, senator, and the governor. In addition, we are making calls to the governor’s office every Thursday. To get on the reminder list for calling the governor, please send Jeff Gahris jgahris@gmail.com an e-mail and he will sign you up.

[Read more...](#)



Photos: Connie Schmidt presents awards to park district officials

DuPage Monarch Project Presents Awards

The DuPage Monarch Project recognized the Fox Valley and Naperville Park Districts at a virtual awards ceremony on January 19th for their outstanding commitments to the recovery of monarchs and pollinators. While many things came to a standstill during the coronavirus pandemic, the Fox Valley and Naperville Park Districts continued on with their mission of providing islands of nature where both people and pollinators find safe refuge from the challenges they're facing.

Fox Valley Park District is the recipient of the Jane Foulser Habitat Award for the addition of over 19 acres of habitat during the past year. The District has been developing additional pollinator habitat within the 548 acres classified and managed as natural areas since 2016 when they joined the DuPage Monarch Project. As the evidence of pollinator decline grows and the critical role pollinators play in ecological and human health becomes clear, Fox Valley Park District is to be commended for steadily increasing the amount and quality of suitable habitat available to bees, butterflies, and the many species of pollinating insects.

[Read more...](#)



What the heck is that strange plant coming up this spring?

By Bruce Blake, RPG Conservation Chair

As we are getting into the early spring months of March and April, we will start to see some strange plants poking up in the forest preserves and woodlands. Some of the woodland natives can't wait for the snow to be gone. When visiting our woodlands, please stay on the trails: respect nature. Don't disturb the plants so that you and others can enjoy them. Probably the first native plant you might be seeing is *Symplocarpus foetidus*, or Skunk Cabbage. Yes, this plant does have an odor to attract pollinators. It also creates heat to melt snow around itself.

[Read more...](#)

Photo: NPS/Gordon Dietzman



Janice Guider brings experience and expertise to RPG ExCom

By Linda Sullivan

Janice Guider says she was inspired to become more involved in public service by the 2019 death of the great civil rights leader and long-time Maryland Congressman Elijah Cummings. Cummings' death motivated her to become active in the NAACP serving DuPage, Kane, Will, and NW Cook Counties. There she put her long-time interest in healthcare to good use. She joined the NAACP's Health Committee, taking it from an essentially dormant status to a committee with eight people. The committee promotes healthcare literacy, works to mitigate existing healthcare disparities in the U.S., and does outreach to community partners. [Read more...](#)



Kathleen Fischer's love of science and water a good fit for Chapter Ex-Com

By Linda Sullivan

Kathleen Fischer says she has always loved everything to do with water. She fell in love with science her senior year in high school, she said, inspired by her chemistry teacher. She combined her two interests by first earning her B.S. degree in chemistry from the University of Illinois Chicago and later a Ph.D. in oceanography from Oregon State University, specializing in marine sediment geochemistry. [Read more...](#)



Thank you, Linda Sullivan

By Lonnie Morris

In January of this year, Linda Sullivan stepped down from the executive committee of the River Prairie Group after being in the position for over 20 years. During her tenure with the group, she served as chair of the political and lobby committees as well as chair for the statewide Sierra Club lobby committee, transforming all of them into powerful agents of change.

In the movie *Garden State*, Sam (Natalie Portman) offers Andrew Largeman (Zak Braff) her headphones, urging him to listen to a song she says will change his life. I don't know if songs can change a life, but people certainly do, and Linda Sullivan is one of those people. [Read more...](#)



Thank You, Stacey Salman

By Connie Schmidt

Stacey Salman is stepping down from the River Prairie Group Executive Committee, but she is definitely not leaving her work with the Sierra Club. National Sierra Club employs Stacey now, and she is a previous employee for Illinois Chapter. We are not totally saying good-bye to Stacey, she is just changing her role and, frankly, making space for valued new members on our executive committee. She promises to continue to be a dedicated volunteer for both chapter and our group activities. I recently interviewed her and had the following conversation. [Read more...](#)

Volunteer Wildlife Research Malawi Africa 2018



February Meeting Recap: Service Trip to Malawi, Africa Presented by Peter Gore

By Connie Schmidt

In 2018 Peter and his wife, Sue, set out on the trip of a lifetime. Although they were in Africa nearly two months, two weeks were as a service project in Malawi. Peter's power-point presentation gave us a view of their accommodations, the neighboring village families and children, and fascinating details of their research activities. From insects to elephants, they observed, categorized, and took notes on behaviors to gain an insight on the residents in the wetland they studied. Although they did pay for the experience, their fee covered all their costs along with donating to the research base in this area. Neither Peter nor Sue seemed daunted by the impending danger of hippos, snakes, or elephants, and they spoke with admiration of this very special opportunity that will remain with them always. A recording of this program is available, and may be viewed [here](#). You may be asked to enter passcode Z#v7Rm9i. Contact me if you are unable to view it: twenstr111@msn.com (Connie Schmidt).



January program meeting recap: Riding In and About DuPage Presented by Ryan Kadolph

By Connie Schmidt

A HUGE thank you to Ryan Kadolph of Glen Ellyn for the exciting January program on Biking in and Around DuPage. Ryan shared his interest in music and photography in combination with adventures on his bicycle throughout DuPage. We enjoyed amazing pictures and videos from various times of the year, night and day. You can check out Ryan's photos here: **Twitter or Instagram: Radiohead83 or Facebook: Ryan Kadolph.**

Last Word

"Once a year, go some place you've never been before."

- Attributed to the Dalai Lama

GET OUTSIDE

Enjoy the outdoors by joining our upcoming local outings! [Sign up here.](#)



[Facebook](#)

Follow us on Facebook for news, events and updates on the work we do to keep our communities green!

[Donate to Sierra Club Illinois Today!](#)