



Friends NEWS

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Don't raise dam — lower water level

Jean Sellar, Retoration Programs Director

In 2006 Friends started a campaign to protect Busse Woods Forest Preserve from a flood-control plan promoted by DuPage County and Elk Grove Village that would have resulted in catastrophic damage to a site that supported at least eight plants listed by Illinois as endangered or threatened. Rare amphibians have also been observed on the site.

The plan, created by consultants that ignored the rare species and flood frequencies, would have resulted in flooding the area, where these species live, approximately 32 times every year. The high quality area in Busse forest preserve has also been recognized as a National Natural Landmark and dedicated as an Illinois Nature Preserve. The Illinois Nature Preserves Commission unfortunately caved to pressure, approved the plan, and denied the listed species still occupied the site, even though District and Friends staff had observed some of the species recently.

Friends challenged Northwestern University engineering students to come up with an alternative plan that would control the floods but cause less damage to the environment. Their brilliant suggestion: don't raise the dam — lower the reservoir before a rain. Elk Grove Village leaders and engineers took it seriously and, after a number of engineering studies, determined that it would work to prevent floods. In addition, Friends requested a thorough examination of the environmental consequences to the forest preserve. Elk Grove responded by hiring Dr. Gerould Wilhelm, Conservation Design Forum and others to study the biota.

Dr. Wilhelm and Eric Parker, a botanist from Stantec, not only confirmed the presence of eight of the nine listed species (the ninth, a fern, was a questionable identification) but have now compiled a list of high-quality species for the site confirming Busse Woods among the



Bob Kuraszek

A push to raise the Busse Lake dam, a man-made reservoir in Busse Woods near Elk Grove Village, for stormwater detention would have increased flooding in the nature preserve where 20 rare species are found. Friends plan is to lower the reservoir ahead of big rains to help with stormwater and still protect the nature preserve.

finest natural areas in the region. The high plant diversity is integral to the ecological health of soils and water. Parker found a second orchid species in July to add to the list, and the two found a big patch of the rare and beautiful twin-leaf, a flowering perennial.

Stantec has also mapped swales that connect the important depressions in the nature preserve with the reservoir at high water. Many of the rare wetland plants and amphibians live in the depressions. This helps the engineers and ecologists understand the effects of water-level fluctuations on the woods. Too much or too little water will damage the plant communities.

Ecological management is helping Busse as well. Controlled burns have helped the plants reproduce, and the Forest Preserve District has started to thin invasive woody growth and control other invasives along the perimeter.

Once the reports are complete, Friends' staff will join together with Elk Grove Village and District staff to determine if the plan will help reduce flooding and improve, rather than harm, the condition of the nature preserve.

News from around the District

1 10 acres added to Spring Lake

The Forest Preserve District acquired 10 acres of land at the Spring Lake Nature Preserve near Barrington Hills for \$495,000. The property is located at 158 Algonquin Road and is surrounded on three sides by the preserve.

2 District sells \$110 million in bonds at low rate

The District secured an “extremely favorable” 3.845 percent total interest rate cost, the lowest rate ever obtained by the District on any such deal. Net proceeds from the sale were \$110 million and will be used to acquire land, to address deferred infrastructure maintenance issues, to provide major exhibit renovations at the Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Botanic Gardens, and to fund new projects such as additions to camping and recreational offerings.

3 Laws say no to metal detectors, taking animal parts

It is now illegal to “use, possess or offer for use” metal detectors and similar devices in the forest preserves, and it is illegal to “excavate, remove, damage, alter or deface” forest preserve land as part of metal-detecting activities. The words “live or dead” and “or any part thereof” were added to an ordinance protecting animals in the forest preserves.

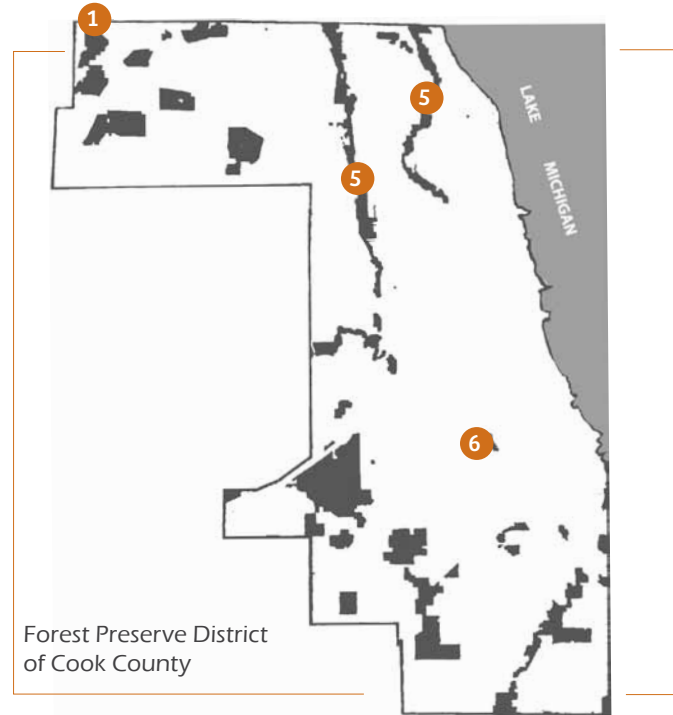
It is illegal to take any plants or animals, or parts thereof, out of the forest preserves, except where fishing is allowed or other specific permission has been granted by forest preserve officials.

4 District Funds Friends’ summer program

The Chicago Conservation Leadership Corps, a program delivered in partnership by Friends and The Student Conservation Association, is being supported for the first time by up to \$300,000 from the District. The program engages 50 youth and 11 leaders in hands-on conservation, ecological awareness education activities, and enjoyment of the forest preserves. The total program cost is approximately \$510,000 for 2012.

5 7 more dams to be removed

Fish and paddlers will benefit when seven more dams are



removed from rivers in the forest preserves. Five dams on the Des Plaines River and two dams on the North Branch of the Chicago River will be removed in partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. Removing dams allows for free movement of fish and paddlers.

6 Golf course no longer viable for preservation

Friends, together with the Beverly Improvement Association, conducted a grassroots advocacy campaign to save an old golf course in Evergreen Park from development and convert it to forest preserve space. Sadly, the campaign failed over Easter weekend when developer Sterling Bay laid waste to all the old-growth trees on the site and began development.

Officials of both BIA and Friends met with state politicians Senator Ed Maloney, Representatives Bill Cunningham and Kelly Burke, and Chicago Alderman Matt O’Shea on how to ameliorate the impact of the development. Improvements include recommendations for visual, environmental and traffic calming measures.



(Left) Guests enjoyed the opening reception, with live entertainment, in Brookfield Zoo’s Great Bear Wilderness exhibit. (Below) Friends President & CEO Benjamin Cox with Perennial Committee Members Liesel Lavery, Mary Zelasko and Jennifer Pfeiffer. Give us a call if you’d like to help with next year’s event, donate an item for the auction or become a sponsor.



All photos this page: Steve Capers



After dinner, Friends enjoyed dancing, more dancing and a little jumping.

Perennial 2012 more of everything

Friends 2nd Annual Perennial Dinner Dance, held at the Brookfield Zoo, was more of everything this year. It was more fun, with more people (150), more money raised (\$26,863), more auction items offered (25), more bears (six), and more awareness of the value of forest preserves to our community’s quality of life (immeasurable). In addition, more sponsors underwrote and guaranteed the evening’s success; our grateful appreciation goes to sponsors Stantec, Modagraphics, Equinix and Kappy Laing. Friends thanks the Perennial Committee, who outdid themselves – Liesel Lavery, Jennifer Pfeiffer and Mary Zelasko. Can’t wait to see what they do next year.



Friends New Board Chair Charles Kierscht and his wife Marion at Friends Perennial.

New Board leadership for Friends

Earlier this year Friends made some structural changes to allow room for the Board to play a more visionary role in Friends’ development, focusing on strategic planning and expanding our important role. Spearheading the changes was new board Chairman Charles “Chuck” Kierscht.

Chuck has served as a Friends’ board member and vice-president since 2008. Chuck also is a Board member of the Grant Park Music Festival, President of the University of Iowa Law School Foundation, and the Director and former President of the University of Iowa Foundation.

Chuck is retired from a distinguished 30-year career at Kemper Financial Services, where he was Chairman and CEO. We’re lucky to have him.

Join us for our new office open house

Friends moved in May. The old office was a bit cramped and the building is going condo. Check out our new digs at 542 S. Dearborn St., Suite 400, Chicago, on Thursday Oct. 18 from 5 to 8 p.m. Please RSVP to Michelle Jaques at (312) 356-9990 or michelle@fotfp.org.



We’ve been nominated — please vote for us! (Sept. 6-19)

Help Friends get a grant of up to \$250,000 and vote for us! Starting September 6, you’ll be able to visit the Chase Community Giving page on Facebook where you can cast two votes for us (four if you’re a Chase customer). Please ask your friends, family and co-workers to cast their votes, too. The 196 charities with the most votes will share in \$5 million in grants – help us be one of them!



A letter from Charles Kierscht, Chair, and Benjamin Cox, President & CEO

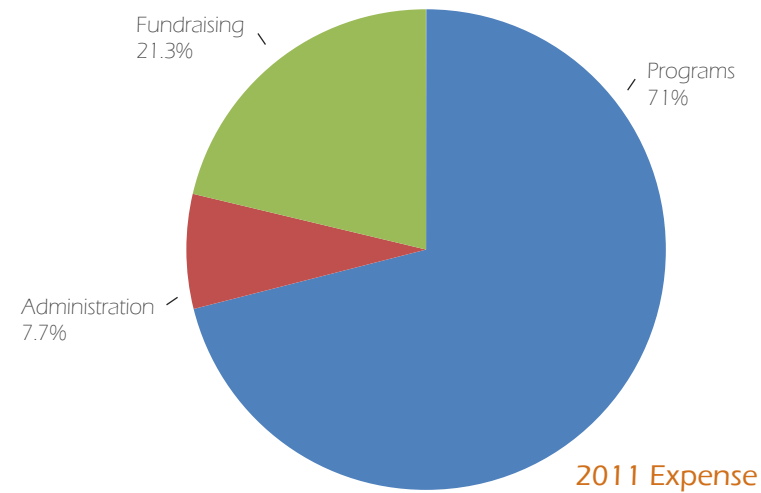
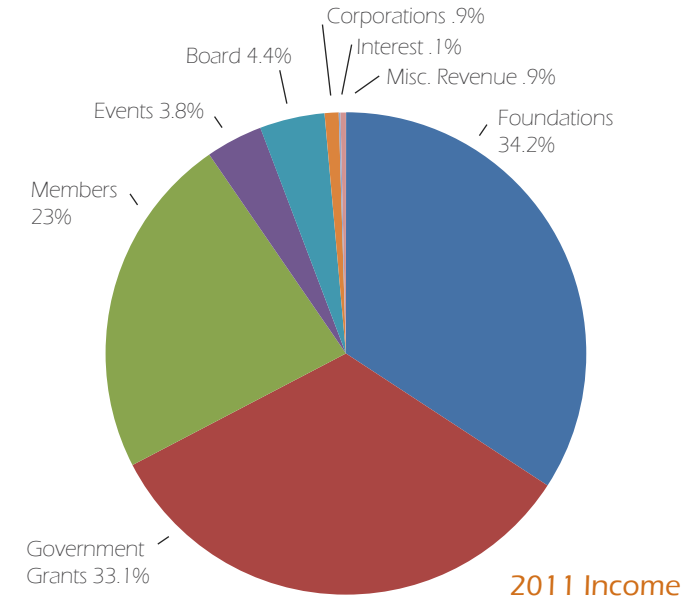
In 2011, Friends of the Forest Preserves began its transition from a scrappy, grass-roots organization to a regional leader on forest preserve issues and a force to be reckoned with. We attribute a big part of that success to you, our supporters, because your voices make ours louder, more respected, and more sought out by district leaders, politicians, conservation organizations and the media. So thank you for your help in 2011 and in 2012. We hope to continue to earn your support and confidence in 2013 and the beyond.

We'd like to share with you the highlights of 2011 here. You will find the results of our 2011 financial audit on the next page. For the full audit report and IRS-990 tax forms, please visit our website at www.fotfp.org.

- Friends' staff collaborates with the new Forest Preserve District administration and commissioners in solving problems and issues facing the forest preserves.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Service grants \$500,000 to Friends to restore nine rare dunes and swales in the Calumet region, one of the nation's top hot spots for biodiversity. We serve as project lead in managing the work of seven organizations to implement this grant.
- The US EPA's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grants \$518,000 to Friends to employ a long-term, five-member adult intern crew to restore key sites in the Calumet region.
- Friends' members give even more generously, with an 18 percent increase in giving – from \$106,000 in 2010 to \$126,000 in 2011. Thank you!



- Friends and its members successfully block a permit that would have granted exclusive use of public forest preserve land to a private gun club.
- The summer high school internship program posts its first-ever 100 percent successful completion rate. This is head and shoulders above similar programs, which typically have 60 percent retention.
- The fall internship program for young adults receives a US Forest Service Award for "Being an Employer of Choice." This is something we work hard at – being a good employer – so we're quite proud of this recognition.
- Friends' first annual Perennial Dinner Dance fundraiser is successfully launched, with 150 guests dancing among the greenery at Garfield Park Conservatory.



Income	2011	2010
Foundations	160,050	139,084
Government Grants	155,094	263,549
Members	107,823	97,233
Events	17,842	23,748
Board	20,430	11,153
Corporations	4,369	5,150
Interest	579	853
Miscellaneous Revenue	1,678	1,053
Total	\$467,865	\$541,823

Expense	2011	2010
Programs	385,646	484,879
Administration	41,848	22,108
Fundraising	115,514	73,311
Total	\$543,008	\$580,298

Assets	2011	2010
Net Assets at beginning year	239,734	278,209
Net Assets at end year	164,591	239,734
Change in Net Assets	(\$75,143)	(\$38,475)

Friends Board of Directors

- Charles Kierscht, Chair – Attorney; Former Chairman and CEO, Kemper Financial Services
- Stephen Schlegel, Vice President – Attorney, Stephen J. Schlegel Ltd.
- Ed Zelasko, Treasurer – President & CEO, Modagrifics, Inc.
- Ronald Milnarik, Secretary – D.D.S., Clinical Assistant Professor of Endodontics, University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry
- Barbara Birmingham – Regional Steward, West Suburban Region, FPDCC; Co-Steward Theodore Stone Forest Preserve
- Stephen Christy, Jr. – Landscape architect
- José Colón – Senior Associate, Jameson Real Estate
- Margaret Frisbie – Executive Director, Friends of the Chicago River
- Barbara Hill – Political Chair, Sierra Club Illinois Chapter
- Jeremy Hojnicky – Attorney, private practice

- Liesel Lavery – Conservationist, Northbrook
- Akilah Martin – Ph.D., Resident Faculty Member, DePaul University
- Stephen Packard – Founding Director, Audubon-Chicago Region
- Jennifer Pfeiffer – Regional Director Travel Supplier Relations, Groupon
- Jay Readey – Executive Director, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights
- Ginger Underwood – President, Friends of the Spring Creek Forest Preserves

Friends Staff

- Benjamin Cox – President & CEO
- Whitney Behr – Development Associate
- Alice Brandon – Conservation Director
- Michelle Jaques – Development Director
- Brian Mann – Calumet Conservation Corps Crew Leader
- Jean Sellar – Restoration Programs Director



First place: Bird's nest fungus, St. Mihiel Woods near Oak Forest, John Denk; Second place: Long-eared owls, Bartel Grasslands near Matteson, Joe Occhiuzzo; Third place: Friends tour, Theodore Stone Forest Preserve near Hodgkins, Greg Lochow; Best fauna: Jumping spider, Crabtree Nature Center near Barrington, Edward Boe; Best flora: White trillium, Thatcher Woods near River Forest, Donna Villa



4th Annual Friends Photo Contest

This year, Friends received more than 100 entries to the photo contest — nearly triple last year's harvest! Thanks to all who took the time to contemplate and capture the best moments in the preserves.

Join us for a reception where you can view the winning entries on Saturday, Oct. 13 from 5 to 8 p.m. at Franklin Framing in Blue Island or at our new office on October 18 from 5 to 8 pm. We are always inspired by the beauty in these photographs. Get your camera out now and plan to enter next year's contest!



RUNNERS-UP
From top left:
Rookery snowstorm, Busse Woods near Elk Grove Village, Robert Callebert; "Calumet Is My Backyard" student monitoring at Beaubien Woods near Chicago, Laura Milkert; Pectoral sandpiper, Orland Grassland near Orland Park, Jeane Muellner; Fisherman kayaking, Busse Woods near Elk Grove Village, Bob Kuraczek; Cedar waxwing, Chicago Botanic Garden near Glencoe, Gerry Rivara; Nature Trail, Little Red Schoolhouse Nature Center near Palos Hills, Mary White; Fringed gentian, Somme Prairie Grove near Northbrook, Eliezer Margolis.



Friends of the Forest Preserves
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Ignite the Night

A nighttime fall festival - Fun for all ages!

5 - 10 PM SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2012
SPRING CREEK FOREST PRESERVE
BARRINGTON HILLS

Cookout Dinner (5 to 8 pm) • Beer & Wine • Great Raffle
Blazing Bonfire • Live Music • Horse-Drawn Wagon Rides
Flashlight Tours for Kids • Stargazing • Live Native Wildlife

Tickets: \$45 by Sept. 27, \$60 at the door • \$25 teens (13 to 20)
\$5 children (12 and under) • tickets and info at www.fotfp.org

Join us for a free tour

- ♦ Spears Woods (Willow Springs) 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 9
- ♦ Theodore Stone Forest (Hodgkins) 1 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 23
- ♦ Somme Prairie Grove (Northbrook) 1 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7

Friends' free fall tours, led by restoration volunteer and student of Chicago area natural history Bruce Davidson, will focus on the natural and human histories of the sites. These sites are prime examples of the good things that happen when we wisely "manage nature," and we'll talk about what that means.



All tours are free, but we must limit participants to 25 on each tour because the trails are narrow and we certainly don't want to damage the preserve! Tours cover about 2 miles over 2.5 hours of walking. Trails are often rough and not suitable for persons with physical disabilities. Registration is required – contact Michelle Jaques at (312) 356-9990 or michelle@fotfp.org.

We look forward to seeing you at one of these tours!