BCCD ADDS ANOTHER PEARL

Boone County is laced with a ribbon of small streams and creeks, which for the most part are tributary to the Kishwaukee River. Preserving conservation land is something akin to stringing pearls on a necklace. Each gem added has its own character and qualities that make it desirable, interesting, beautiful, and unique. Every pearl added to the string contributes to the beauty of the necklace, and yet each one has its individual charm.

The BCCD recently added forty-acres of property to expand the Funderburg Conservation Area. Another conservation charm threaded to the ribbon of the swift and winding waters along the Piscasaw Creek. We acquired this site with generous financial support from two foundations. The Grand Victoria Foundation’s Vital Lands Grant Program funded forty-thousand dollars toward a conservation easement and the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation awarded eighty-thousand dollars toward the fee-simple land acquisition by the Boone County Conservation District. Openlands, a Chicago based conservation organization, provided technical assistance with nearly all aspects of the acquisition and will hold and manage the conservation easement to further protect the property.

The new property features wetlands, oak-hickory savanna, and aquatic habitats utilized by a very diverse flora and fauna. Such ecological remnants provide a place for a number of rare and declining species including: mussels, birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects and plants. This is a place where you will be able to see an eagle slip down from the sky to catch a fish; take a hike with a Master Naturalist to learn about mussels; or volunteer to suppress invading weeds. Even if you never visit, you can appreciate knowing that this site will always be managed to facilitate and enhance the natural functions that add sparkle to this ecologic gem.
The Mission of the Boone County Conservation District is to preserve and manage natural areas and open spaces for ecological, educational, and recreational benefits of present and future generations.

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Riffles & Eddies is a free newsletter published quarterly. If you know someone who would like to receive this publication, or has an address correction, please call our office at (815) 547-7935.

The Boone County Conservation District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age or handicap in admission or treatment, or employment in programs or activities. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the U.S. Constitution. The Equal Employment Opportunity Officer is responsible for compliance and may be reached at (217)423-7708.

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**Send a Kid to Camp**

**Camp Redwing** is an outdoor environmental education day camp for children ages 6 – 11 years. It runs for 5 weeks. Each week offers a new theme, fishing, crafts, labs, swimming, a family night, field trip and lots of outdoor fun! Camp starts the week of June 23rd. Cost is $100 per week.

**Camp Redtail** is an outdoor adventure camp for youth ages 12 – 15 years. It offers two 4-day overnight camping trips. This year’s trips are camping at Turkey Run State Park, IN and Backpacking in the Porkies. Both trips will be in July. Equipment is provided and no experience is necessary. Cost is $200 per trip.

**Camp Ducktails** is offered once a week on Thursday for Pre-K children ages 4 and 5. Each week a new nature topic is introduced and includes storytime, snack-time, and crafts. Ducktails will start on June 27. Cost is $50 for all 5 sessions or $15/per day.

There are scholarships available to qualifying families for each camp. Check out photos from last summer on our Facebook page!!

**BCCD Summer Camps**
Registration begins April 1st
More information available on our website www.bccdil.org

Help us get kids outside!
Donate to the BCCD’s Send a Kid to Camp scholarship program.
Mail your donation to BCCD, 603 N. Appleton Rd.,
Belvidere, IL 61008

The District wants everyone to discover the benefits of recreation. For families considering any of our programs who have special considerations, such as diabetes, asthma or physical or cognitive disabilities, your participation is welcome too. The earlier you contact us so we can talk with you about how to make your experience safe and fun, the more likely it will be safe and fun!
Monthly Meetings
(All Meetings held at the Roger D. Gustafson Nature Center are open to the public)

BCCD Board of Trustees
Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m., Mar. 19th, Apr. 15th, and May 21st.

Gardeners of America
Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m., Mar. 25th, Apr. 22nd. No meeting in May.

Flora Prairie Clean Up
Tues., March 11th
9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon
Join us for the annual clean up at Flora Prairie. Volunteers will help clear brush and unsightly trash from the prairie. Wear comfortable clothing and bring work gloves.

Long Prairie Trail Clean Up
Sat., April 12th 8:30 a.m.
Join our “Friends of the Long Prairie Trail” group at the junction of the LPT and State Street in Poplar Grove for juice and donuts before tackling the trail clean up. Bring work gloves if you have them.

Wildflower Walk
Tues., April 29th 6:00 p.m.
Join volunteer Brian Hale on a hike through a previously burned woodland and a savannah restoration project to look for spring wildflowers. Meet at Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area, 18388 Caledonia Road, Caledonia, IL. This walk is part of the 2014 Wildflower Walkabout Series sponsored by Severson Dells Nature Center and the Natural Land Institute.

Attention Bow Hunters
Qualifying for the BCCD archery hunt will be held on:

Saturday, May 10th
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Tuesday, May 13th
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Thursday, May 15th
12:00 noon. - 7:00 p.m.
(no make up or additional dates will be scheduled)

Kishwaukee Bend Conservation Area
9416 US Rt. 20
Garden Prairie, IL
For more information visit our website: www.bccdil.org

Bird Hikes
Tues., May 13th 4:00 p.m. and Sat., May 17th 7:00 a.m.
Join BCCD Volunteer John Todt for a walk to view the birds. This is the time when a lot of species of birds might be migrating through the area. Meet at the Lion’s Shelter in Spencer Conservation Area. The shelter is located near the fishing ponds at the end of the park road.

Tuesday Morning Volunteer Opportunity
The BCCD Natural Resource Management Department is looking for a few more hard working volunteers to join with other hard working volunteers every Tuesday morning to help with habitat restoration projects. This is a great learning experience and chance to work with some “unforgettable” people.

For more information or to register for any of the programs, call (815) 547-7935.

Summer Camp Staff
Now accepting applications for Summer camp staff. Applications and job descriptions are available on our website or at the office.

Prescribed Fire Season
Conservation District land management staff will be conducting prescribed burns at several of our conservation areas in the early spring. Prescribed fire is an essential and efficient management practice for the health of our native ecosystems, including prairies, savannas, and woodlands. Fire helps return nutrients to the soil, helps control undesirable exotic weeds and shrubs, increases blooming and seed production among our native plants, and stimulates the growth of our native prairie and woodland plant species. District staff manage the burns to minimize smoke on highways and neighboring properties.

Attention teachers—
Registration for BCCD’s spring programs will begin on Wednesday, March 5th at 7:00 a.m.
November 1st, 2014—
that’s the date to save.

Join us as we celebrate our 50th
anniversary with a celebration dinner
and special presentation.

More details to follow so stay tuned.....