Illinois Association of Conservation Districts
Selects Milt and Mary Jo Brown to receive the
2012 Burton H. Atwood Award

Each year the Illinois Association of Conservation Districts (IACD) considers nominations submitted for this prestigious award. The Burton H. Atwood award may be presented annually to not more than two individuals, agencies, or organizations, public or private. It shall be awarded for exceptional achievement in the field of natural resource conservation. The determining factor shall be the degree of sustained proficiency or the excellence of a single achievement, which may be in the area of policy development, administration, public affairs, physical planning/design, program, finance, research, education, intergovernmental relations, public information/public relations, or another area. Recipients need not be IACD members to be nominated for this award.

This award recognizes the generous contributions of time, effort and energy that Milt and Mary Jo committed to the process of designing, developing and dedicating the Brown Conservation Park to the Boone County Conservation District. The Browns were involved in every phase of the project and are responsible for creating a really wonderful facility. Features at the site include a five car parking area, a picnic shelter, restrooms, water well with a hand pump drinking fountain, kiosk and a path connecting the park to the Long Prairie Trail.

Mary Jo and Milt were both very interested in preserving the site’s unique plant ecology and worked closely with the Boone County Conservation District’s natural resource staff to ensure everything went as planned. The site features a blend of native plants including: aspen, oak and hickory trees inter-mixed woodland wildflowers and some prairie forbs and grasses. Their donation of land and facilities represents more than a $176,000 dedication, and is the only fully developed park located on the Long Prairie Trail.

In addition, the Browns are in the process of setting up an endowment that will completely cover all of the costs associated with the care and maintenance of this park. The Illinois Association of Conservation Districts congratulates Mary Jo and Milt Brown for being selected to receive the 2012 Burton H. Atwood Award and recognizes their effort in achieving conservation excellence! The Brown Conservation Park can be accessed off of Caledonia Road just north of the intersection with Quail Trap Road in rural Boone County.
Good-bye....

The BCCD would like to thank outgoing Board of Trustees President Karl Winkler for his 5 years of dedicated service to the District. His experience and knowledge will be greatly missed.

and Welcome Back

The BCCD would also like to welcome back John Todt as the newest member of the BCCD’s Board of Trustees. John has previously served as a BCCD Trustee.

Drought Tolerant Plants

It’s really amazing the plants that can grow in very hot, dry conditions. In fact, certain plants seem to thrive in the hot, dry weather. As a gardener, I have tried to use drought tolerant plants, whenever possible. Here are some plants that have worked well for me over the years.

The old standard annuals seem to do best for me in drought years. These include nicotiana, celosia, marigold, zinnia, and petunia. These plants can be watered a couple times a week and they do fine, considering the conditions.

Nicotiana is also called flowering tobacco. It is easy to grow and especially valuable for hot, humid areas. Plants are seven to ten inches tall. Flowers are one to two inches across with five distinctive petals. ‘Avalon Bright Pink’ was an award winner in 2001 and the nightily aromatic variety ‘Perfume Deep Purple’ won in 2006.

Celosia are also heat and drought tolerant. I’ve grown both the plume and crested types. Celosia are so drought tolerant that they rot if the plant is too wet (or too cold), so they need to be planted in a non-irrigated area.

Marigold and zinnia grow in all types of situations, as long as there is full sun. The Profusion zinnias are particularly nice, especially the Fire and Orange varieties.

My perennial bed in particular is not uniformly watered and the plants doing well there include black-eyed Susan, purple coneflower, yarrow, and sedum. This makes a lot of sense since these are native plants that do well in our dry prairie conditions.

I also have been particularly impressed with a new variety of purple coneflower that has been added this year. Each of the double, pompom-like flowers is sturdy and last for several weeks.

I can also see a difference in the various shrubs in my yard, particularly those where the irrigation heads don’t reach. The burning bush doesn’t like the hot, dry weather and needs additional water. I also have several lilacs that are drying up. My red twigged dogwoods develop yellow leaves very quickly if not watered almost every day. And, my new hydrangea collection must have extra water to prevent daily wilting.

Hopefully, you have some plants in your yard that look good in this year of extremes and may consider planting more of these in years to come. Keep watering your plants, remembering that thorough deep watering is better than daily sprinkles. Don't forget the established trees, especially evergreens that will need water going into the fall to assure they don't have major winter injury.

As a rule of thumb, most plants need 1 inch of water per week during the active growing season. But when temperatures climb past 90 degrees, plants may need at least 2 inches of water per week.

The following websites are excellent resources for the latest news and tips on dealing with drought:
http://web.extension.illinois.edu/drought/ and http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/newsdetail.cfm?NewsID=27622

University of Illinois Extension Boone County
915 Alexandra Drive Belvidere, IL 61008
815-544-3710
www.facebook.com/northwestillinoishorticulture

Kathy Guyer, Extension Program Coordinator kguyer@illinois.edu

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 are held at the Roger D. Gustafson Nature Center and are open to the public)

BCCD Board of Trustees
Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m., September 19th, October 17th, and November 21st.

Gardeners of America
Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., October 23rd. No meetings held at the District in September, November, or December.

Heirloom Tomato Tasting
Wednesday, Sept. 6th 6:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
Sample more than 20 varieties of heirloom tomatoes. Participants will learn how to process and store seeds for next year’s planting and also how to use this year’s bounty. Cost is $5/person. Prepayment and preregistration is required. Space is limited so call (815) 547-7935 to reserve your space. Meet at the Roger D. Gustafson Nature Center.

District will be Closed On
Sept. 3rd Labor Day
Sept. 18th, 20th, 21st, 24th, 25th
Autumn Pioneer Festival
Nov. 22nd and 23rd Thanksgiving
Dec. 24th and 25th Christmas

Thank you
The BCCD would like to extend a big thank you to all the people and organizations who donated to our summer camp scholarship program. You are awesome!!

Color Cruise
Tuesday, October 9th 8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.
Join us for a visit to New Glarus, WI—America’s Little Switzerland. We’ll tour the Swiss Historical Village, spend some time downtown where you can grab lunch and do a little shopping or hop the trolley for more sightseeing. On the way out of town we’ll stop at the New Glarus Brewing Company, home of the famous Spotted Cow, a favorite regional beer. Call for the cost. Space is limited, pre-payment is required. (815) 547-7935

Master Naturalist Class
The Boone & Winnebago County Extension Services are offering a Master Naturalist Program. This excellent program is designed for adults of any age that desire the opportunity to learn about and positively impact our local environment. This innovative program combines classroom and field learning experiences. Registration is taking place now and space is limited. Visit Boone or Winnebago’s U of I Extension websites for more information, or contact the Extension Master Naturalist coordinator.

Boone Master Naturalist Program
Wednesdays 5-9 pm August 22—Oct. 24. Contact Peggy Doty at psdoty@illinois.edu
Winnebago Master Naturalist Program
Thursdays 1-5 pm Sept. 6—Nov. 15 Contact: Jackie deBatista at jbatis-ta@illinois.edu

Harvest Fest
Saturday, October 13th 8:00 a.m.
Enjoy a full day of activities in Belvidere Park where you can vote for your favorite scarecrow, shop at the vendor booths, marvel at the giant pumpkins, listen to music, listen to a story, enjoy a wagon ride, enjoy great food, visit the beer garden and take a walk back in time by viewing antique tractors. Proceeds benefit the Riverfront Development Committee’s efforts to provide walking/biking paths throughout Belvidere and along the river.

Volunteers Needed for the APF
The District is in need of volunteers to help at its Autumn Pioneer Festival on September 22nd and 23rd. If you would like to be a part of the festival, call the Volunteer Coordinator at 815-547-7935.

Conservation Areas Closed
Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area, LIB Conservation Area, Distillery Conservation Area, Beaver Bluffs Conservation Area (dog park will be open), Newburg Village Conservation Area, Rainbow Gardens Conservation Area and Piscasaw Fen Conservation Area will be closed to the general public on the dates listed below for archery hunting.

October 1st & 2nd
October 13th & 14th
October 27th & 28th
November 10th & 11th
November 24th & 25th
December 8th & 9th
December 29th & 30th
January 5th & 6th

Holiday Walk
Saturday, December 8th 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.
Stroll along a luminary lit pathway and visit our authentic log cabins, eat popcorn popped fresh over an open fire, and see how Christmas was celebrated in the past. There is no cost for the evening and it is held at the Roger Gustafson Nature Center Festival Grounds. Call (815) 547-7935 for information.
Autumn Pioneer Festival
Saturday, Sept. 22nd
9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 23rd
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Travel back to the 1800's for a look at the lifestyles and crafts of the day. Visit with a flintknapper, watch a gunsmith, eat buffalo stew, pioneer fries, sample bean soup and apple butter. Visit the harvest table to purchase fresh vegetables or just wander through the 5 ethnic gardens, the voyagers’ encampment, and 2 historic log cabins.

BCCD Festival Grounds, 603 N. Appleton Rd., Belvidere, IL
(815) 547-7935

Admission is free, but donations are cheerfully accepted