A group of local organizations are celebrating the generous donation of property made by Jack and Peggy Wolf of Belvidere, Illinois. The site is called “The Big Thunder Pavilion,” which is located next to the Culvers in Belvidere.

The project was initiated by Nancy Jacobson, a member of the Boone County Master Gardeners who noticed the site was in need of a little sprucing up. Jack Wolf had created a small park area as part of the Big Thunder commercial development project a number of years ago. The site features a large bronze sculpture titled “He Is, They Are” created by Glenna Goodacre. Ms. Jacobson approached Mr. Wolf to see if the Master Gardeners could adopt the site as a project. Mr. Wolf expressed interest in the idea, but it was soon discovered that the Master Gardeners could not work on a privately owned site.

Mr. Wolf then approached the Boone County Conservation District to see if there would be interest in accepting the property as a donation. A positive response was made with a request that the property be donated to the Parks and Conservation Foundation so the value of the property could be utilized as matching funds toward a grant project at some time in the future. The Parks and Conservation Foundation is eager to announce that it has accepted the property donation on behalf of the Boone County Conservation District. The value of this donation has been appraised at more than $420,000. When used as matching funds it may be possible to double the value of this gift.

The Boone County Extension Office and the Boone County Conservation District have developed an agreement to allow the Master Gardeners the opportunity to manage the landscaping and utilize the site for educational programming. Volunteers from the Master Gardener program toured the Schingoethe Center for Native America Studies at Aurora University to learn more about plants and gardens that were typical during the 1800’s. The landscaping will showcase native plant materials and will be used to educate the community about the important function these plants play in both the natural setting and as a way to provide pockets of habitat, attractively in our own back yards.

In addition to the volunteer support of the Master Gardeners, the Boone County Conservation District will also receive support from the local Culvers Restaurant located next to the Big Thunder Pavilion. Culvers of Belvidere restaurant owner, Todd Kjell has offered to provide the mowing service to keep the grounds around the site looking good.

Pictured above are front row (left to right) Jerry Swinter (MG), Dan Kane (BCCD), Todd Kjell (Culvers), Mick Johnston (BCCD), Judy Hodge (Ext. Program Coordinator), Guadalupe Admed (MG) and Mike Kasper (Parks and Conservation Foundation).

Back row: (Left to Right) Jan Dunham (MG), Bonnie Johnson (MG), Bill Van Dusen (MG), Elaine Lucietto (MG), Charlie Brown (MG), and Nancy Jacobson (MG).

Master Gardeners involved in the project but not pictured include: Minoo Hagshenas, Nancy Stetter, Carl Swanson, Linda Kohut, Barb Wych, and Debbie Willis.
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.

Comings and Goings....

The BCCD would like to thank outgoing Board of Trustee George Thomas for his 5 years of dedicated service to the District. His experience and knowledge will be greatly missed.

The BCCD would also like to welcome Mike Petersen as the newest member of BCCD’s Board of Trustees.

The BCCD would like to wish Tim Craig, former BCCD Education Director a happy retirement. Tim retired on June 21st after working for the District for 17 years. Happy Trails, Tim.

Lead Your Own Hike – Check Out one of our Backpacks

The BCCD has 5 backpacks located at our nature center that you can check out and lead your own hike with your kids, students or scouts. It’s free; you just need to leave a deposit or your driver’s license when you pick up the backpack. Call our office at 815-547-7935 to reserve one.

Four of the backpacks are appropriate for 6 years old and up and the themes includes: Pond Study; Into the Forest; Birds; and Private Eyes. Our Nature Study backpack is appropriate for preschool/Kindergarten. Help us get kids outside!

Attention Teachers, Homeschool Families and Scouts

Our one room schoolhouse is available for programs. Call our office at 815-547-7935 for more information or to schedule a day long program led by BCCD staff, or lead your own program in the schoolhouse. Fees apply.

The BCCD is now an official Preferred Partner of the Girl Scouts! Call the office at 815-547-7935 to schedule a program or for volunteer opportunities.

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 4:00 p.m.,** September 18th, October 16th, and November 20th.

**Gardeners of America**

**Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.,** October 22nd.

No meetings held at the District in September, November, or December.

**District will be Closed On**

September 2nd Labor Day
September 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 30th and October 1st APF set up and take down
November 28th and 29th Thanksgiving
December 23rd—January 5th Christmas and New Years

**Conservation Areas Closed**

Beaver Bluffs Conservation Area (dog park will be open), Distillery Road Conservation Area, Ipsen Road, Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area, LIB, Piscasaw Fen, will be closed to the general public on the dates listed below for archery hunting.

- October 1st & 2nd
- October 12th & 13th
- October 26th & 27th
- November 9th & 10th
- November 30th & December 1st
- December 14th & 15th
- December 28th & 29th
- January 11th & 12th

**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!!

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**Open Pollinated Seed Saving Class**

**Thursday, August 29th**

6 p.m.—8 p.m.

Eat your veggies and save them too! Learn how to enjoy the fruits of your garden not once but twice by saving seeds from your garden. There is more to saving seeds than just drying them and more reasons to save them than you may imagine. Learn how to save seeds from fruits, vegetables, flowers and herbs. Handouts and free seeds will be provided at the class. $5.00 class fee per person. Register at the Roger Gustafson Nature Center, 603 N Appleton Road, Belvidere, IL 815-547-7935

**Fall Color Cruise**

**Thursday, October 10th**

8:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.

We will be visiting Old World Wisconsin’s Autumn on the Farm. Cost is $25.00 per person and includes bus travel, admission and all day tram pass. Lunch will be on your own. Limited space on the bus, so call 815-547-7935 to reserve your spot. Prepayment is required.

**Harvest Fest**

**Saturday, October 5th**

10:00 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.

**Holiday Walk**

**Saturday, December 7th**

6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m.

Stroll along a luminous 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.

**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 beginning August 28—Contact Peggy Doty at pdsoty@illinois.edu

**Winnebago Master Naturalist Program**

Thursdays 2-6 pm Sept. 5—Nov. 14
Contact: Jackie deBatista at jbatista@illinois.edu

**Volunteers Needed for the APF**

The District is in need of volunteers to help at its Autumn Pioneer Festival on September 28th and 29th. If you would like to be a part of the festival, call 815-547-7935.
Autumn Pioneer Festival
Saturday, Sept. 28th  
9:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m.  
Sunday, Sept. 29th  
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 gun smith, 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  
(suggested donation of $5 per family)