



Friends of Thorn Creek Woods

Thorn Creek News

Fall 2017

Americorps Trail Work at Thorn Creek Woods

For three days this summer, eight young adults with the Village of Park Forest Americorps program worked on Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve trails. Naturalist April Richards directed their work with able assistance from volunteer Mark Bass. April had worked with an Americorps group last year. These experiences were so successful that April hopes to utilize Americorps for five days in 2018.

-The young people corrected 13 water drainage bars on the steep slope going uphill after crossing the North Bridge. The work included digging and relocating the water bars/steps. This trail section is now easier to walk and erosion will be reduced.

-All our existing water bars—which serve as steps and, more importantly to direct water off of our trails—need to be “dug out” each year. This means that soil that collects along the uphill edge of each waterbar needs to be “dug out” leaving a nice clear channel for rain water to follow OFF the trail. Americorps dug out over 25 existing waterbars on about one mile of Woodland Trail. They also cleared vegetation back on this section of trail.

-Americorps cleared and widened about 1/2 mile of Nature Center Loop Trail.

-They also realigned and cleared a 1/4 mile section of damaged Woodland Trail uphill from the North Bridge. Trail arrow signs will be mounted on permanent posts in this area.

In other trail news:

In October a local Boy Scout troop will build a 6' x 8' new boardwalk section on a very muddy portion of the Nature Center Loop Trail.

We have more boardwalk, small bridge construction and trail clearing projects which would be just right for scout or community groups.

Contact April Richards at the Nature Center.



A Simple But Complicated Woods

Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve is a simple, wonderful, large, preserved oak woodland. The Woods and its Nature Center exist and are open to the public because of some complicated technical arrangements.

It's 985 acres of land preserved for hiking and nature study, preserved with the highest protection possible—dedication of the land as an Illinois Nature Preserve.

It's 985 acres with four different entities owning acres: Villages of Park Forest and University Park, Forest Preserve District of Will County and Illinois Department of Nature Resources (IDNR).

These 985 acres with different owners are managed as **one whole nature preserve**—not as 4 separate places—by the Thorn Creek Management Commission.

The last piece of the complicated puzzle is an arrangement where all the land in the preserve owned by IDNR is represented by the Forest Preserve District of Will County. IDNR purchased the land, dedicated the land, but did not wish to manage the land locally. So IDNR had a 30 year agreement with FPDWC to do just that. This successful agreement expired July this year (who knew that so many years had passed!) and was just renewed. The renewal is for one year while the agencies are figuring out a long term arrangement.

So the technical complicated stuff that allows Thorn Creek Woods to exist and delight its visitors continues with stability.

But actually the real final piece of the Thorn Creek Woods puzzle is Friends of TCW.

Friends helped establish and guide all these complicated but effective aspects. Friends—which is not a land holder—is privileged to serve on the Management Commission. Friends members donate money and items. Most importantly Friends volunteers do all sorts of chores, tasks and projects to make the Nature Center and Preserve possible.

Come join Friends and celebrate
the complicated wonderful Thorn Creek Woods.



Fall Events at Thorn Creek Woods

247 Monee Rd
Park Forest
708-747-6320

Thorn_creek@att.net

Nature Center open

Friday & Sunday, noon to 4 pm

Closed:

November 24-26

December 22-24

Wednesday Morning Walkers	Wednesdays 9-10:30 am Ends Dec. 13
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Autumn Night Hike	Thursday October 5 7-9 pm Ages 16-adult
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Fall Colors Walk for Kids	Saturday October 21 1-3 pm Ages 12 or younger
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Owls & The Moon: Pat Moore Art Program	Sunday October 29 All ages \$5/person 1-2 or 2:30-3:30 pm
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Foxes & Coyotes: Afternoon with Friends	Sunday November 5 12-3 pm Ages 12-adult Pot luck
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Animals in Autumn— For Kids	Sunday November 12 1-3 pm 9-12 yrs old
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Story of the Landscape	Sunday December 3 1-3 pm All ages
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Woodland Carols: Annual Food Drive	Saturday December 9 Noon-2 pm, \$10 or bag of groceries
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Newsletter editor:
Judy Dolan Mendelson
Friends: P.O. Box 159,
Richton Park, IL 60471,
dolanmendel@aol.com

Open Hours Volunteers are Special & We Need More of You!

They greet nature center visitors—usually lots of visitors in fall and spring.

They answer phones and allow the Nature Center to have regular hours on Fridays and Sundays from noon to 4 p.m.

And, just as importantly, these volunteers do regular chores—feed the birds, empty garbage and recycling containers and the like—that are necessary in operating a nature center and preserve.

And then they do additional and varied assignments as needed. Anything from decorating the nature center to mopping floors to creating databases, painting signs, hauling boxes, updating our library, sorting posters or slides or photos—just about any task where we need help and expertise.

Volunteers from Thorn Creek Audubon Society come once a month for Open Hours and create our displays.

Sign up now to give us one day a month as an Open Hours Volunteer.

We provide training, snacks and a variety of fun tasks.



Thorn_creek@att.net
708-747-6320

CALL NATURE CENTER TO VOLUNTEER!

Nature Center Needs

We Need:

- ▶ **Helpers for Nature Center Open Hours,** Friday and Sunday, noon-4 pm
- ▶ Batteries—C and D
- ▶ Middle sized plastic storage boxes with lids
- ▶ Large plastic boxes—about 1.5 ft x 3 ft
- ▶ Hand clippers
- ▶ Loppers
- ▶ Hoes

Always needed:

- “ **Birdseed (mix or black sunflower seed—no corn)**
- “ **Suet cakes**
- “ 1” x 2 5/8” address labels – ink jet or laser
- “ Stamps you saved for Audubon Society
- “ 3M Command medium Picture Hanging Strips
- “ 6” x 9” mailing envelopes

Improvements at Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve

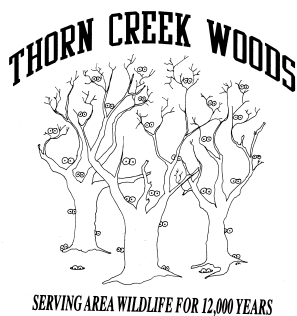


Repair and paint
Nature Center exterior
IN PROCESS

Funded by Friends Capital Fund.

Thank You

Get your Thorn Creek T-Shirts– Perfect Holiday Gifts



Long sleeve -
Sagestone with Green Design
Short sleeve -
Blue with White Design



Short sleeve Garlic
T-Shirts
Dark Brown with Blue Garlic
Scape Design

Short Sleeve Thorn Creek Woods = \$ 8 + \$3 per shirt shipping/handling
Short Sleeve Garlic Fest = \$10 + \$3 per shirt shipping/handling
Long Sleeve = \$15 + \$3 per shirt shipping/handling

Please make your check to:

Thorn Creek Nature Center
247 Monee Road
Park Forest, IL 60466
708-747-6320

Or stop by the nature center Friday–Sunday
Noon-4 pm

Prairie Chapel

The perfect gift for a

*Nature Lover

*Art Lover

*Thorn Creek Supporter

A quiet and haunting image of the prairie...

Inspired by the Thorn Creek Nature Center, *Prairie Chapel* is an original graphite drawing by artist Marikay Peter Witlock. Through a generous donation by the artist, the *Prairie Chapel* print is available with a donation to Friends of Thorn Creek Woods of \$75 or more. 100% of donated dollars will benefit Thorn Creek Woods Nature Preserve.



Intrigued by a promise of a patch of prairie, Witlock visited Thorn Creek Nature Center in the late summer of 1988. She left that visit with a vision of prairie and chapel woven as one, and a profound sense of the sacred in the land. *Prairie Chapel* became the first in a series of over 35 drawings combining architectural elements with the grasses and forbs of Illinois.

A local professional artist and tireless volunteer for the arts, Marikay's current artwork is available through The Illinois Artisans' Shop, Chicago, Illinois, and Union Street Gallery, Chicago Heights, Illinois.

The *Prairie Chapel* print is a limited edition of 300 signed and numbered prints, with image size of 13" x 17" and finished size of 18" x 21". It is printed on acid free 80 lb. paper. Friends of Thorn Creek Woods is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to Friends, over the value of the *Prairie Chapel* print (valued at \$75) are tax-deductible.

For more information please contact: Thorn Creek Nature Center, 708-747-6320 or thorn_creek@att.net. To view a framed *Prairie Chapel* print, visit Thorn Creek Nature Center Friday through Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

Be a FRIEND OF THORN CREEK WOODS

Membership.....\$20 Organization & Business.....\$50 Life Membership.....\$200

New Member _____ Renewing Member _____

I'd like to help as a volunteer at Thorn Creek Nature Center, please call me.

I am donating \$_____ to the **Thorn Creek Woods Capital Fund** for improvements in the Nature Center building & in the Preserve.

In memory of _____ In honor of _____

I am donating \$_____ to the **Jim Marzuki Memorial Fund** - to make a difference in Thorn Creek public programming.

I am donating \$_____ to **Friends** general purposes.

\$_____ Total Enclosed

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____

Make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF THORN CREEK WOODS,
Box 113, Richton Park, IL 60471

NOTE NEW P.O. BOX NUMBER: NEW = P.O. Box 113



Annual Renewal Date is May 1st

Woodland Carols



Our Annual Food Drive

Saturday, December 9 Noon-2 pm
\$10/person or 1 bag groceries/person

Savor all-you-can-eat homemade soups
while listening to
tunes by the pop band Northside
and
eclectic and improv pieces by
cellist Ingrid Krizan.

The afternoon concludes
with our annual sing-along.

All proceeds donated to
Rich Township Food Pantry
Call Nature Center 708-747-6320
to register by Thursday, December 7

Friends of Thorn Creek Woods Board

Voting for Officers will be at our Annual
Meeting November 5

Currently the Board includes four elected
officers and up to five appointed Directors.

*We are looking for a Membership Coordinator
to keep track of memberships and dues.*

*Also we need a person to assist with our
webpage tcwoods.org. Volunteer Mike O'Neil,
our wonderful webpage person,
could use some assistance.*

Interested in serving ??
Come join us!

The Friends Board meets the 4th Monday of
each month at 10:30 a.m. at the nature center

For info email dolanmendel@aol.com or
call the nature center 708-747-6320.

Friends of Thorn Creek Woods
Box 113
Richton Park, IL 60471

No Garlic Fest

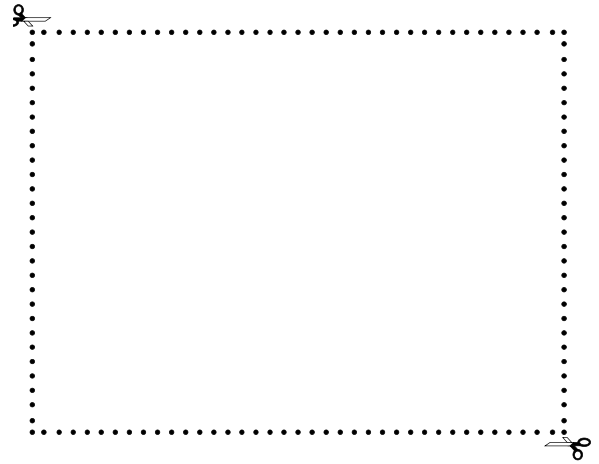
We are sorry to say that Thorn Creek will not hold Garlic Fest.

Over many years our Garlic Fest provided lots of fun, information, delicious garlic food and, of course, garlic. Many, many wonderful volunteers and enthusiastic participants made it all possible. Thank you!

This year Thorn Creek Garlic is for sale during Open Hours Fridays & Sundays, noon-4pm while supplies last.

Our staff and volunteers have planned a full schedule of nature programs for this fall and winter. Come join us.

Please clip commemorative stamps
& bring to Nature Center for
Audubon Stamps
for Wildlife Habitats



Renew Now!



FOXES AND COYOTES: AN AFTERNOON WITH FRIENDS OF THORN CREEK WOODS Sunday, November 5 Noon-3 p.m.

Join us for a discussion of gray and red foxes and coyotes in our northeastern Illinois region featuring John Yunger, professor of Biology at Governors State University.

At our annual gathering of nature lovers, there will be a short Friends meeting, which will be open to the public, and pot luck refreshments.

The event is open to the public ages 12-adult.

We'll find out what's going on in the preserve and learn about ways to help. "Old" supporters of Friends, bring someone new as a guest. New folks will find out what makes Thorn Creek unique.

Slate of Friends Officers: Sue Zelek, President; Jim Pisani, Vice-President; Allison McCray, Secretary; Dan Moore, Treasurer.

Registration required: 708.747.6320 or thorn_creek @att.net.

Bring a dish to share.

