



Friends of Thorn Creek Woods

# Thorn Creek News

March 2023



## Winter Walks Offer Something Special

Most of us don't think about hiking in wintertime. But there are things to be gained from a winter walk in the woods that you can't find in the summer, spring or fall: views that are not obscured by leaves. In winter, the rise and fall of the landscape around us is completely open and visible. Steep rises in the ground, ravines and ridges—all are waiting to be seen in woods that we typically only visit in warmer weather.

Creeks, ponds, lakes and rivers shine and sparkle, calling to us from a distance. We can answer that call by hiking closer. But, if you don't have the time for an extended hike or - like me - you find that ascending and descending trails are more challenging, you can still get the benefit of admiring their beauty from afar. The journey of each tree as it grows to maturity is also completely open to our view and contemplation. Did it grow straight up or did its boughs have to stretch out sideways to reach the sun's rays? Were branches twisted or lost because of storms or fierce wind gusts? Did other trees go down around it? If so, did they change the tree's trajectory? Did drought slow its growth at some point on its journey? Did the tree have to twist and contort itself around a nearby tree that had already claimed the space near it? These, and other events, are visible in the shape, girth and height of every tree that we see. Each tree is the visible embodiment of its personal dance with nature and a portrayal of how it has received the gifts or met the challenges which that tree encountered as it matured. All of these struggles and triumphs are open to our contemplation in winter.

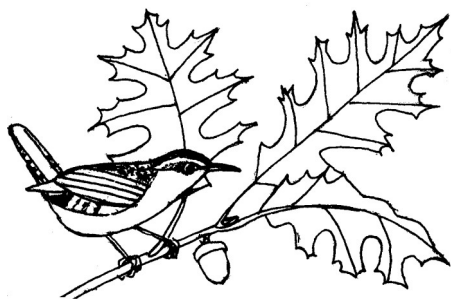
Trees are also a wonderful example of a universal part of life on this planet: the spiral. The next time you pour water down a drain, watch the direction it takes as gravity exerts its pull. Just as water swirls downward in a spiral, so do trees spiral *upward* as they grow. That growth proceeds at such a slow pace that it is essentially invisible to us. However, it can be made visible through the bark that encircles trees. You can see it best in the Burr Oak but it is there in every other tree, no matter how smooth the bark. Begin at the bottom and move up. Examine the bark of the oak as it climbs and encircles the tree. You can follow its path as it spirals around the tree, following/creating the direction of its growth as the great oak stretched up to the sky. The bark is the evidence of the direction of its growth and it is easier to see the spiral when it does not disappear into summer leaves. So, look, trace and admire!

Winter also serves up some unique opportunities for those of us who love seeing the birds and mammals that inhabit the woods. Some birds leave us for warmer climes in the winter. But others, like the tiny *Dark Eyed Juncos*, with their dark gray coloring and pinkish white bills, can only be seen here in the winter. They arrive every year to inhabit our woods and fields because, hard as it may be to believe, it's warmer in Northeastern Illinois than [it](#) is in their northern habitats. Look for Juncos on the ground where they search for the seeds, nuts and grains that help these insect eaters make it through the winter months. It is also much easier, after the trees and bushes have dropped their leaves, to spot our year round avian friends, from the colorful *Cardinals* and *Blue Jays* to the more subtly colored *Wrens*, *Mourning Doves* and *House Finches*. Will County's *Hairy*, *Downy* and *Red Bellied* woodpeckers are also easier to find as they climb the trees and make their presence known with their drumming and unique calls.

There are few better places than **Thorn Creek Woods** to take a winter hike. You can see the dramatic impact of water - in this case Thorn Creek - on the surrounding landscape. Thorn Creek Wood's deep ravine, carved out by the creek, and the curving path of the creek as it winds through the woods, are much more visible in the winter. Walk the longer path as it follows the ridge and look down into the ravine to see the creek below you. Or walk to the bridge and enjoy a close view of Thorn Creek as it moves towards you, flows under the bridge and out the other side to continue its journey through the woods. Take the boardwalk to Owl Lake where you may be lucky enough to see some deer keeping a watchful eye on you without the leaves to give them cover in the daytime. Walk quietly and you may also spot geese or other waterfowl floating serenely on the lake when you arrive.

I strongly encourage you to keep an eye on the weather, look for a sunny day and bundle up to take advantage of the unusual and special views that winter can offer.

-Kendra Reinshagen



## Spring Renewal

With spring's welcome arrival, the Friends of Thorn Creek Woods annual membership renewal date of May 1 is fast approaching!

Memberships are still just \$20 for a regular membership, \$200 for a life membership, and \$50 for organizations or businesses. New and renewed memberships will be valid through April 30, 2024.

Thank you for your past support and we hope you will renew for 2023.

You might find it convenient to buy your 2023 membership on-line.

- Go to: [www.tcwoods.org](http://www.tcwoods.org)
- Click on *Donate* and follow directions to order your membership using PayPal.

Donations of any amount are greatly appreciated and can also be made on-line to:

- The Thorn Creek Woods Capital Fund for improvements in the preserve and in the Nature Center Building. The Capital Fund is focusing on trails – adding more trail improvements, additional boardwalks, boardwalk crossings, water bars and signs.
- The Jim Marzuki Memorial Fund to support Thorn Creek public programming.
- The Friends General Purposes Fund for the purchase of equipment, supplies and displays for the nature center and preserve, plus for Friends mailings and newsletters.

Friends of Thorn Creek Woods is a non-profit, 501-C3 organization and contributions are tax exempt.

FRIENDS volunteers support nature center staff in so many ways—  
staff the nature center, trail work, prepare mailings, displays, assisting  
on hikes, special events, cleaning, typing outlines, updating lists,  
sorting materials, pruning, artwork, research, and on and on.

Help us build on the spring momentum by asking your neighbors and friends to become members. And please spread the word that we always appreciate greater community support in the form of new memberships and attendance at Thorn Creek programs.

**Join us! Call naturalist April Richards to volunteer!**

### 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 Friends **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.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: FRIENDS OF THORN CREEK WOODS, Box 32, Richton Park, IL 60471



Annual Renewal Date is May 1st

## Earth Day at Thorn Creek: Woodland Wildflowers



**Sunday      April 23      1 - 3 p.m.**  
**Free!      All ages**

Earth Day celebrates the spring wildflowers that thrive  
in shady Thorn Creek Woods.

Join us at 2 p.m. for a hike to discover  
which flower species are in bloom.

*There will be lots of fun  
for everyone including  
refreshments,  
exhibits  
wildflower photo displays  
crafts and games,  
a hike  
and our Earth Day Raffle.*

Reservation required by April 17:  
call 708-747-6320 or email [thorn\\_creek@att.net](mailto:thorn_creek@att.net)

This event is sponsored by  
the Jim Marzuki Fund for Public Programming

## Bird Seed

When you buy bird seed or  
suet for your backyard  
feeders, get an extra for  
the nature center.

Bring it Fridays noon to 4  
pm and relax with a cup of  
coffee or tea at our bird  
viewing corner.



Look in our references and wonderful bird books to  
identify and learn more about these winged creatures.

See you soon!

## Nature Center Needs Things

- \*Birdseed (mix or black sunflower seed—no corn)
- \*Suet cakes
- \*Picture Hanging Strips – Command brand, medium  
size, need lots!
- \*Cases of bottled water
- \*Hoes and loppers
- \*1" x 2 5/8" address labels- ink jet or laser
- \*Large plastic boxes with lids 1.5'x 3'
- \*Plastic shoe box size boxes with lids
- \*6" x 9" envelopes

## Nature Center Needs You

- Be an Open Hours Volunteer, one Friday each  
month from noon –4 p.m.
- Trail Watchers are our eyes & ears on the trails.  
Use the blue Trail Watchers forms or email nature center  
with concerns.
- Trail & boardwalk & water bar projects on our  
Workdays and for groups like Eagle Scouts.
- Assist at programs.
- Assist with clerical tasks.
- Become a member of Friends. Come to our month-  
ly Friends Board meetings, usually the 4th Monday  
at 10 a.m. at the nature center.

## Friends Membership

**205**

*Friends of Thorn Creek Woods is 205 members strong.*

**87%**

**82%** reside in Illinois with the other **18%** scattered across America: Arizona, California, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas, Washington and Wisconsin.

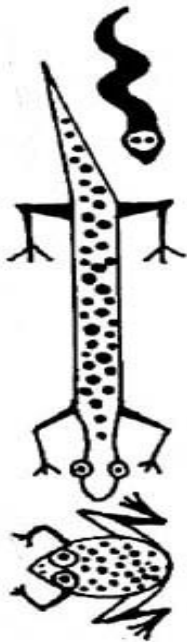


**103**

In Illinois most Friends—**85**—live in Park Forest, Crete or Homewood. And another **84** Friends live in our surrounding communities and, actually, all over Illinois from Algonquin to Champaign, to Rock Island, to Springfield.

**156**

As of January 1, 2023 (before our annual memberships are due May 1st) we have **123 regular members** with currently **0** of these being *gifts* (what a great birthday or holiday gift) and **2** of them being *complimentary*. When a new person donates to our Capital Fund, we automatically include the donor as a Friends member, hoping, of course that they will continue and renew with us.



**3**

*Organizations and businesses* provide us with **3** memberships—a category we hope to increase.

**82**

And we have **82 Life** members, an excellent way to support Friends.

**142**

Today **134** members are *Up-to-Date* on their memberships. This includes all the Life members and all the other members that paid their dues for 2022-23 which were due May 1, 2022.

**71**

We have **71** members that are *not Up-to-Date*.

**Check your mailing label on this newsletter.**  
On the very first line, it shows your renewal date.

**If it says: 5/1/23**

**- you are up-to-date and need to send in your renewal by May 1st**

**If it says 5/1/20 or 5/1/21 or 5/1/22 or ....**

**-you are overdue and need to send in your renewal by May 1st to remain in good standing.**

*Check your label and renew today.*

**Thank you!**



## Get your Thorn Creek T-Shirts

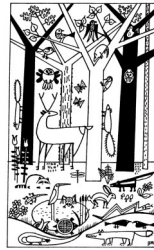
THORN CREEK WOODS



*Serving area wildlife for 12,000 years*

Long sleeve -  
Forest Green with Mint Design  
Short sleeve -  
Blue with White Design

Thorn Creek Woods



*"Serving area wildlife for 12,000 years"*

Short sleeve -  
Heather Maroon with Crème  
Design  
**NEW** Long sleeve-  
Regular Maroon with Creme



Short Sleeve = \$ 10 + \$5 per shirt  
shipping/handling  
Long Sleeve = \$15 + \$5 per shirt ship-  
ping/handling

Please make your check to:  
Thorn Creek Nature Center  
247 Monee Road  
Park Forest, IL, 60466

Call 708-747-6320 or mail or email  
thorn\_creek@att.net your order.



### Friends Board

*Penny Chamberlain-President  
Susan Inman-Vice President  
Dan Moore-Treasurer  
Carolyn Gann-Recording Secretary*

Board Directors appointed  
for one years terms:

*Lisa Bronson, Sue Zelek,, Lisa Camp-  
bell, Judy Mendelson. Karen Taylor.*

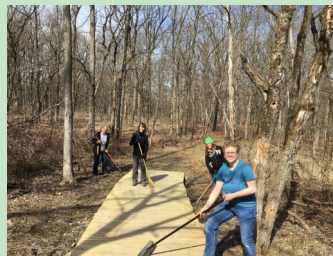
The Board increased the number of  
appointed Board directors from  
five to seven.

*Judy was reappointed to represent  
Friends to the Thorn Creek Woods  
Management Commission.*

*The late Alice Hanes served as a  
Director and a representative to the  
Management Commission.*

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

Come sit in on our meetings!



**If you can help out  
on trail work or  
special projects  
this spring,  
just contact  
April Richards  
at 708-747-6320  
and  
thorn\_creek@att.net.**

### Programs at Thorn Creek Woods

247 Monee Rd, Park Forest  
708-747-6320

Thorn\_creek@att.net  
tcwoods.org

**Nature Center open Fridays  
noon-4 p.m.**

**Trails Open Sunrise to Sunset**

Spring Cleanup & Trail  
Workday  
All ages  
Saturday  
March 11  
noon-4 p.m.

Make a Gourd  
Birdhouse  
All ages  
Sunday  
March 19  
1-3 p.m.  
\$15/house

Seasons at  
Thorn Creek  
Woods:  
Signs of Spring  
All ages  
Sunday  
March 26  
10:30 a.m.-  
12:30 p.m.

Prairie  
Sampler & Trail  
Workday  
Ages 12-adult  
Sunday  
April 2  
1-3 p.m.

Seasons at  
Thorn Creek  
Woods:  
Amphibians  
All ages  
Saturday  
April 8  
10:30 a.m.-  
12:30 p.m.

Earth Day at  
Thorn Creek:  
Woodland  
Wildflowers  
All ages  
Sunday  
April 23  
1-3 p.m.

Prairie  
Sampler & Trail  
Workday  
Ages 12-adult  
Saturday  
May 6  
1-3 p.m.

Seasons at  
Thorn Creek  
Woods:  
Birds  
All ages  
Saturday  
May 13  
10:30 a.m.-  
12:30 p.m.

Newsletter editor:  
Judy Dolan Mendelson  
Friends: P.O. Box 32,  
Richton Park, IL 60471,  
dolanmendel@aol.com



**Hanes Family 2013**

## Alice Hanes

Alice Hanes, from Crete, died on February 9, 2023, at age 91. She was predeceased by her husband Joe, and grandson Mark Barnes and is survived by her 6 loving children, 17 cherished grandchildren, 10 great grandchildren and many nephews and nieces.

Alice's greatest joys were gatherings with family and friends, hosting many dinners and reunions, including friends from her YMCA years. As a swimmer all her life, she was fiercely competitive, broke records and won multiple medals in the National Senior Games and Illinois Masters Swimming Association from her 60s to 80s!

She was a dedicated teacher and taught children from preschool to high school, including years of swimming lessons. An avid motorcyclist with her husband Joe, she drove all over the US and Europe. She loved to work and work hard, from digging foundations to managing reg-

istration at BMW rallies and becoming President of the Chicago Region BMW Motorcycle Association.

Along with raising her family, building a home from the ground up, driving a school bus, baking bread for a co-op, and donating gallons of blood, she still found time to volunteer as a long time member of the Unitarian Church and Thorn Creek Nature Preserve. She also managed to become the first person in her family to complete a college degree at GSU, and then worked at the University in Registration until she retired. She was dearly loved by all and admired for her generosity of time and spirit.

Her other interests were cooking, baking bread, decorating cakes, gardening, recycling, bird watching and scrap-booking.

She lived wholeheartedly with an almost photographic memory.

***Alice's life will be celebrated with a memorial service held Saturday May 13 at 12:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Community Church, 70 Sycamore Drive, Park Forest, IL 60466. (708) 481-5339.***

***In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to Friends of Thorn Creek Woods, Box 32, Richton Park IL 60471.***

I remember Alice as a "doer". Pitch in and get things done.

I remember how proud she was of her swimming medals in a humble way.

A real pioneer woman.

I will really miss her.

Penny Chamberlain, President, Friends of Thorn Creek Woods

Alice always brightened your day. I got to know her as she enjoyed helping at the nature center. She spent many hours with us selling t-shirts, greeting visitors, hosting Earth Day, making raffle baskets, cleaning the center. She was a Friends Board Member and sat on the Thorn Creek Management Commission

She was truly an activist! She did it all with positive energy, generosity and grace. I was fortunate to have known her and will always be inspired by her.

She will be missed by all of us.

Tearfully, April Richards, Naturalist

I am deeply sorrowful due to the passing of Alice J. Hanes.

I met Alice in 1980, when my father first brought me to a nature walk at Thorn Creek Woods. Alice smilingly welcomed us. I have enjoyed Alice's company at many Nature Center events, nature walks, and Friends of Thorn Creek Woods meetings and events. Alice always had a smile on her face. She radiated warmth and love. I fondly remember many talks with Alice where she told me about her life and her many passions and hobbies.

Alice clearly lived a life of purpose. She wisely invested her time, talent and treasure in others, making the world a better place. She is a great inspiration to me.

I last enjoyed spending time with Alice at the Nature Center, where we prepared brochures for mailing. Although she confessed to me that she wasn't feeling well, she put the needs of the Nature Center before her own and lovingly prepared brochures for mailing with a smile on her face the entire time.

I will miss seeing Alice, spending time with her and receiving her wisdom. I take comfort in knowing that her spirit has been lovingly received in heaven where I am certain she is lovingly welcoming others as she welcomed my father and me to the Woods in 1980. I will joyfully think of Alice each time I go on a nature walk at Thorn Creek Woods.

Sincerely,

Elaine Rach, Friend of Thorn Creek Woods

## Thank you for your support in 2022



### FRIENDS

- *Welcome to Friends New Members:* Jane & Ron Schulten, John Hudzik & Lindsay Gladstone, Anthony Rozic, U.S.A. Tools- David Zambon, Pure Performance-Ben Martin, Horizon Acquisition Enterprises-Reginald Thompson, Ann Rosen, Susan Bruederle,
- *Donations to the Friends Capital Fund:* Penny Chamberlain in memory of Marilyn L. Anderson, Mary Ann McLean in memory of Linda Bronson, Mary Green, Mary Lubertozzi in memory of Larry Lubertozzi, Jane & Ron Schulten, Alice Hanes, Susan Klimczak in memory of Andrew Hoffer, U.S.A. Tools- David Zambon, David Gann in memory of Gene Gann, Pure Performance-Ben Martin, Dean & Barbara Zajicek, Margrit Withers, Horizon Acquisition Enterprises-Reginald Thompson, Karen Taylor, Christiran & Linda Whitman, Diane Kozlowski, Terri Morandi in memory of her son Mark, Carol Robinson-Sessions, Jan Harris, Karen Anderson, Terry Medhurst, Mary Ann Transon, Helen Wild in memory of Marian Pike, Network for Good (Anonymous), Network for Good (Anonymous), Penny Chamberlain in memory of Pat Moore, Amitai Schwartz in memory of Eugene S. and Tina Schwartz, Aura Duke, Jeffrey Fortman, Michele Medhurst, Tava Oosterbaan, David Bartlett, Lee Oler, Linda Condro,
- *Donations to Friends General Purposes Fund:* Penny Chamberlain, John Field, Judy Johnson, Terry Parsons, John Hudzik & Lindsay Gladstone, Francine Wendorff, John Brad Pitt Ray, Larry McClellan, Lisa Bronson, Karen Anderson, Nancy Nourie, Anonymous, Carol Sessions-Robinson, Timothy Bainbridge, Michael McGirr, Tava Oosterbaan, Mark Petnuch, John Field, Darlene Obejda, Susan Bruederle.
- *Donations to the Jim Marzuki Fund for Public Programming:* Judy Mendelson in memory of Linda Bronson, Anne Marie Leofanti, John Brad Pitt Ray, Lisa Bronson, Karen Anderson,
- *Many membership renewals.*

### STUFF WE NEEDED

Ice melt, 100' cord and brackets, refreshments-Bob Hernandez; hand sanitizer-Cousandra Armstrong; suet cakes, mixed bird seed, sunflower seed, raffle baskets, cases of water bottles, coffee, bird feeder clamps- Penny Chamberlain; copy paper-Dan Moore; monetary donation-Robin Condro; raffle basket-Elaine Rach; envelops, storage boxes, wall hangers, bird seed, suet-Rotary Club of Homewood; \$50-DAR Sauk Trail chapter, two raffle baskets-Dave Mauger; raffle basket-Alice Hanes; refreshments for Earth Day-Anthony Rozic; refreshments for Trail Workday- Ron Richter; raffle basket-Nicki Bodenhausen; tools, birdseed, water bottles, portable cooler, snow shovel, large 3 ring binders-Mark Petnuch; botany textbooks -Terry Gillespie; Sanding block - Lori Moore; folding step ladder-Giuseppe; sunflower seed & 50 copies of the National Audubon Report-Thorn Creek Audubon Society; garbage bags and \$200 for new bird feeders- anonymous; monetary donation-Dr. Gretchen Norton & Rich Garcia; monetary donation- David and Elaine Rach; tools, ID guidebooks, white board with case and easel--Dave Sheridan; tools, water, bird seed- Ray Setzke; children's books, field guides, activity kits, refreshment supplies-Lisa Bronson; Diane Bedrosian- 2 bags of fossils from Mazon Creek, \$500.00 annual fall donation from Thorn Creek Audubon Society; Audubon Adventures Newsletters -Thorn Creek Audubon Society; \$50 donation-Park Forest Garden Club.

**-Open Hours volunteers:** Tom Gallagher, Penny Chamberlain, Mary Lubertozzi, Anthony Rozic, Judy Mendelson, Alice McBride, Lisa Bronson, Janice Richey, and MaryAnn Mclean.

**Open Hours Volunteers** greet visitors, put up displays, prepare mailing, make calls, prepare materials for programs, fill bird feeders, other clerical/phone tasks, sharpen tools, organize posters, materials and specimens.

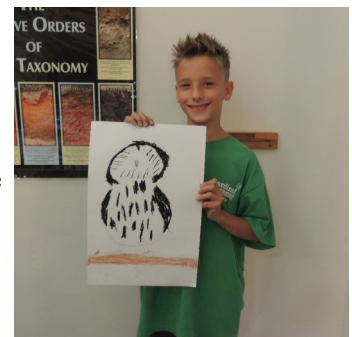
### OPEN HOURS

### PROGRAMS

-April led Trees in Winter, Birding by Sight & Sound for Kids with Dave Schmidt assisting, Earth Day with Nicki assisting, Seasons at Thorn Creek Woods-Spring, Seasons at Thorn Creek Woods-Birds and -Wetlands and - Pollinators and -Insects and -Winter and -Oaks programs with Nicki assisting, Firefly Night Hike with Nicki and Leon assisting; Wild Animal Tracks with Dave Schmidt, Nicki and Bob assisting; Nature Camp with Nicki and Dave assisting, Sounds of Insects with Nicki assisting, How Trees Grow with Nicki assisting, Fall color Hike with Leon assisting.

-Nicki led newly revived Holiday Nature Crafts program

-April held an owl pellet Nature Education program for Richton Park High School, with Nicki assisting.  
-April arranged a bird identification display for the Crete Public Library.





## MORE PROGRAMS

- Sue Zelek led Learn Your Birds by Spring with April assisting, and Seasons at Thorn Creek Woods-Owls.
- Artist Pat Moore led Build a Gourd birdhouse, April assisted.
- Artist Kim Watts-Rayon led Drawing Owls with April, Nicki, Bob and Ann Rosen assisting.
- Friends Board hosted the annual picnic for Friends and Volunteers at Goodenow Grove. Sue Zelek led a bird hike, April assisted.



**Mark Your Calendars—**  
**Annual Picnic with Friends and Volunteers of Thorn Creek Woods**  
**Saturday, June 24, 2023, 11-2 p.m.**  
**at the lovely Plum Creek Picnic Shelter in Goodenow Grove**

-Dr. John Yunger spoke on the “Mammals of Northern Michigan” for the Friends annual meeting. Cousandra Armstrong, Margrit Withers, Karen Anderson, Penny Chamberlain, Mary Ann Ciesielski, Marva King, Alice Hanes, Lisa Horvath and Jeanine Novak provided refreshments. Penny Chamberlain, Susan Inman, Dan Moore & Alice Hanes provided room set up and check in. Village of Park Forest provided the meeting room.

- Mary Lubertozzi updates nature center contact list, programs reports, etc.
- Lori Moore organized library materials, program materials and supplies, updated mailing lists, cleaned/organized specimens & program materials.
- Volunteers regularly deliver flyers to libraries etc.,.

-Alice Hanes, Elaine Rach, Dave Schmidt, Bob Hernandez, Judy Mendelson, Dan Moore prepared program brochure mailing. Lisa Bronson prepared the newsletter mailing.

- April prepared program schedules.
- April, Nicki, Dave Schmidt and Thorn Creek Audubon set up displays.

- Mike O’Neal maintains our webpage [tcwoods.org](http://tcwoods.org)
- FPDWC PR staff created an online video highlighting the preserve.

-Susan Inman, Carolyn Gann, Ian Murphy, Marcy Marzuki, Art and Marva King, Penny Chamberlain, and Judy Mendelson cleaned garlic for farmer’s market sale. Dave Mauger, Judy Mendelson and Toby Talarico, completed garlic harvest. Judy Mendelson, Susan Inman, Marcy Marzuki, Deborah Orr and Dave Schmidt hosted the garlic sale. Garlic planted at Historic Farm by Carolyn Gann, Art King, Tony Talarico, Judy Mendelson and Dave Mauger.

## FARM



## WORKDAYS

-April led the **Prairie Sampler and Trail Workdays** with Nikki and Bob assisting.

**Workday tasks** include: installing trail signs, collecting litter, filling potholes, clean bird feeders, rake bird feeder area, dig out water bars on the trails, bring in old lumber from preserve for disposal, trim back the growth around parking lot and kiosk area, clean boardwalks, remove woody vegetation from the Prairie Sampler, plant flowers in the Prairie Sampler, clear vegetation & mow Nature Center Loop Trail, cut in drainage channels on all water bars, clean/organize tools and supplies in basement, clear basement stairwell.

## TRAILS & BUILDING

-Bob Hernandez shoveled walkway, helps with parking at all programs, trimmed overgrowth in parking lot, cleared under back porch and reorganized the woodpile, helped in preparations for AmeriCorps project; including moving lumber with Leon, mows Nature Center Loop Trail, filled the bird feeders, trimmed vegetation around parking lot, opened drains in parking lot, Bob generally sweeps and mops nature center once a month.

## VITAL CLERICAL OFFICE TASKS



## TRAILS & BUILDING

- Leon Skibinski is a Trail Watcher, assists at public programs, and with trail work including mowing Nature Center Loop Trail. Mark Petnuch is a Trail Watcher and repairs the NS boardwalk. Ron Richter became a trail helper.
- Our wooden trail cart was burned and replaced.
- Bob Hernandez and Leon Skibinski pulled a preserve trail bench out of the creek and set benches upright after the high winds.
- Pete Soltesz, of "Bee All About It," relocated a hornet nest from the Nature Center Loop Trail.
- Anonymous donor arranged for new bird feeder posts and wires and feeders to be installed.
- Anonymous donor arranged for cleaning contractor John Resedene to vacuum entire nature center including ceilings, wall, light fixtures, etc.
- Jim Pisani regularly puts out and takes in garbage and recycling bins.
- Tom Gallagher trimmed hedges on side of Nature Center and cleared overgrowth in the parking lot. George Dalen shoveled the walkway and cleaned and organized the basement and tools.
- Village of Park Forest annually sets nature center thermostat and changes furnace filters.
- Village of Park Forest replaced the front porch flooring and railings, and the overhang of the Nature Center. Also, they removed the garbage can stand, and cement drinking fountain and signpost.
- FPDWC plows and sands parking lot; mowed and cleared the Wetland Overlook Trail, Owl Lake Loop Trail and the Owl Lake Trail, including pine tunnel, mowed a walking path at Camp Pompeii for fall and winter programs, regularly mows and trims Nature Center yard, collected landscape waste and old lumber, removed limbs from preserve trails, installed new cable gate at entrance to old Camp Pompeii, mowed farm meadows and road.



-April, Bob and other volunteers and helpers from FPDWC are replacing the old preserve boundary signs with the new ones— an ongoing project.

Call April to help

Special thank you to Jim Pisani who served for years as Vice President of Friends. And Jim always lends a hand with nature center and preserve chores and maintenance projects including building boardwalks and installing water bars. Thank you Jim for all you do!



-New Lenox Troop 44, Eagle Scout Billy Kozicki, installed two new 24' boardwalks along north side of Woodland Trail.

## AMERICORPS 2022



--April led **AmeriCorps** Team in the preserve in August, Bob Hernandez assisted. The Team painted the entrance sign and the bike rack, cleared brush around the parking lot, driveway, and prairie sampler, painted the posts and installed 3 signposts, removed the 2 old fences and installed 2 new fences, spread and compacted gravel on the walkway and behind nature center, installed new borders on butterfly garden and added topsoil, installed wooden bumper stops in the parking lot and hauled all waste to the road for collection.

As part of AmeriCorps, the Village of Park Forest removed the old railroad ties from the parking lot edges, drilled the fence posts holes for the new parking lot fence and assisted with the installation, graded and leveled the surface of the parking lot, created and installed wooden bumper stops for the parking lot, and delivered 3 loads of gravel and provided a compactor for the walkway upgrade.

Americorps is a grant through the Village of Park Forest. Friends of Thorn Creek Woods purchased all the materials and supplies needed.

Thank you for your kindness

Friends of Thorn Creek Woods  
Box 32  
Richton Park, IL 60471

Renew Now!

Want to receive  
*Thorn Creek News*  
only via email-  
then email editor  
Judy Dolan  
Mendelson at  
dolanmendel@aol.com



## SPRING CLEANUP & TRAIL WORKDAY

**Saturday, March 11, noon-4 p.m.**

Shake the winter blahs and come help in the annual spring cleaning of Thorn Creek Nature Center and Nature Preserve

There will be indoor & outdoor work to be done.

Come help repair boardwalks

and maintain the trails throughout the preserve.

Or come weed and nurture our Prairie Sampler and butterfly garden.

Bring a lunch and gloves and dress for the weather.

Refreshments provided

**Mark Your Calendars!**

**TRAIL WORK DAYS**

Sunday, April 2

Saturday, May 6

Saturday, June 17

1-3 p.m.

Free! All ages  
Children under 15  
must be accompanied  
by an adult.

Registration required  
by March 6

Call Nature Center 708.747.6320 or email  
thorn\_creek@att.net

