



Friends of Thorn Creek Woods

# Thorn Creek News

January 2024

## Marva King Retires from Thorn Creek Management Commission



With 18 years of service, our wonderful friend Marva King has stepped down from representing University Park on the Thorn Creek Management Commission.

Since March 2005 Marva brought dedication, curiosity, intelligence and great good humor to the important issues faced by the Commission. Everything from budget and budget crises, hiring our naturalists, creating a Fire Policy, designing preserve boundary signage, public program development, approving deer management and vegetation monitoring, implementing improvements to the nature center plus trail and bridge maintenance.

But before (and during) her years serving on the Commission, Marva and her husband, Art are Friends of Thorn Creek Woods and devoted volunteers. They began as 2000's CICADAS. The Cicada volunteers emerge whenever help is needed with repairs, programs and displays, and the sounds of their efforts reverberate throughout Thorn Creek Woods.

Marva and Art help with just about everything. They have collated brochures, cleaned the nature center, cleaned and planted garlic and attended programs especially the Wednesday Walkers. They are Master Gardeners that helped the nature center liaison with the Cook County University of Illinois Extension Service for programming and for gardeners to maintain the Prairie Sampler at the Nature Center.

Art's gardening and worm composting programs were such a huge hit at the nature center. And Marva brings her creativity to our art programs making banners and teaching braiding at the Garlic Fests. Her baking skills are renowned, especially her Garlic Pineapple Upside Down Cake!

Marva is a joy to know.

The Friends and Management Commission presented an award at the Friends Fall Annual Meeting-

A certificate of appreciation in recognition of volunteer work  
Thorn Creek Nature Preserve hereby recognizes  
**Marva King**  
for generous support and service  
to Thorn Creek Nature Preserve and Nature Center



## Friends of Thorn Creek Woods aka Thorn Creek Preservation Association

Friends of Thorn Creek began in the 1960's as a group of Park Forest neighbors, most living along Monee Road, Stuenkel Road and Oakhill Drive near the woods, that started meeting at each other's houses and urging the village to create a greenbelt around Park Forest. The group explored the woods and came to believe the whole woods, some 900 acres was worthy of preservation.

It was an idea that was immediately challenged since developers, looking to take advantage of new federal tax incentives offered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, had targeted the central and southern parts of the woods for housing, plus an expressway was planned to bisect the woods.

The group, incorporated in 1969 as the Thorn Creek Preservation Association, mounted a multi-pronged campaign to preserve the woods: get agencies to purchase the land; have all local and state agencies include Thorn Creek in their open space planning and to actively support its preservation; and, reach out to experts to confirm what TCPA believed – that Thorn Creek Woods was special and should be off limits to development. And woven through all these tasks was getting public and political support.

TCPA worked with botanists and ecologists from the universities and groups like Open Lands Project, NIPC (Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission), Thorn Creek Audubon Society and Sierra Club. These experts confirmed that the woods represented a rare glimpse of pre-settlement woodland landscape worthy of preservation.

TCPA members donned hiking boots and walked the woods with representatives of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, the Department of Conservation, Lieutenant Governor Paul Simon, Governor Richard Ogilvie, Representative Edward Derwinski, Speaker Robert Blair, many state and village officials and local school groups – guiding and educating them about the woods. TCPA attended meetings, wrote letters and made phone calls to both political parties, local governments, schools and other agencies to bring political and public pressure to preserve the woods. The early support of the Village of Park Forest was critical to these efforts, notably Bernard Cunningham, Ralph Johnson, Mayer Singerman, Bob Pierce and John Joyce.

It soon became clear that no one agency would be able to buy the entire woods, so TCPA focused on convincing a number of agencies to acquire separate parcels, and just as importantly, devise ways that all these parcels could be managed as a unified whole and permanently protected.

TCPA spearheaded the complex negotiations for purchase of the woods, which eventually resulted in the Villages of Park Forest and University Park, the Forest Preserve District of Will County and the Illinois Department of Conservation all owning acreage. The land was acquired over the years utilizing various grants and lawsuits, and some of the acreage was transferred from New Community Enterprises in the HUD settlement.

The Association worked hard to ensure that the woods were managed as one single entity even though there were multiple land owners, and to ensure that the citizen group would be actively involved in whatever management decisions were made. To this end, a Park Forest member whose house bordered

**Celebrate History  
1969-2024**



**Friends  
of Thorn Creek Woods  
55 Year Anniversary**

the woods donated a foot of their land so that the TCPA qualified as a land-owning entity in this new fangled intergovernmental management commission. It took several years to finalize this agreement, and in 1977 the Management Commission took its current form composed of the villages, forest preserve and TCPA - continuing citizen input to this day.

With green streamers flying from the nature center steeple, the woods was dedicated as an Illinois Nature Preserve on June 4, 1978 – permanently protecting the land, its plants and animals for nature study and hiking.

In the 1980's, the Association changed its name to Friends of Thorn Creek Woods to better reflect its ongoing stewardship of the woods. Over the years, 1500 people have worked as volunteers to acquire land, build and maintain three and a half miles of trails, study and record different plants and animals in the woods, and deliver nature education programs to children and adults. In 1972 a civil war era church building was donated and in 1976 was opened to the public as a nature center developed by TCPA and the Village of Park Forest.

What is now an over 1000 acre preserve began with just a handful of Park Forest neighbors who gathered together and looked across the street from their homes and saw something wild, something unique and something worth fighting to preserve. Thanks to their efforts, generations to come will be able to come here and see the very same thing.



Often at events, you'll see t-shirts that read:

***Thorn Creek Woods  
Serving Area Wildlife for 12,000 years***

And since 1969 -- a short time for planet earth,  
but a long time for humans like us -  
Friends of Thorn Creek Woods  
has been doing the same.

## Georganne Higgins

Our wonderful Friend and woods walker Georganne Higgins passed away this past year.

Georganne, her late husband Neil and their daughter Robin have been Friends members and supporters since the 1990's.

They were familiar figures at all our events— hikes, art programs, music program, meetings, lectures. Robin was a Junior Ecologist with naturalist Lily Bormet and performed on our Woods Music stage. Robin continued as a volunteer helping set up our library inventory as she pursued her own library science studies.

Georganne was a keen observer of the natural world. She regularly explored the local natural areas and traveled far afield with her family.

We offer Robin our condolences. And the woods will surely miss Georganne.



## Full Moons



Many human cultures have given names to each full moon throughout the year. Different full moon names can be found among the Chinese, Celtic, Old English, and New Guinea, Indian cultures to name a few. Although many Native American Tribes gave distinct names to the full moon, the most well known names of the full moon come from the Algonquin tribes who lived in the area of New England and westward to Lake Superior. The Algonquin tribes had perhaps the greatest effect on the early European settlers in America, and the settlers adopted the Native American habit of naming the moons. These names were popularized in the 1930's when published in the Maine Farmers' Almanac.

Here are the 2024 full moon dates and some of the Almanac's names for full moons, plus two other charts with names from other traditions. Do explore the many other names and meanings for full moons held by the many Native American tribes, and Celtic, Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, African cultures among others.

### Other Full Moon Names

**Blue Moon:** Occasionally, two full Moons occur within the same calendar month. The first full Moon goes by the name normally assigned to that month's full Moon, but the second full Moon is commonly called a Blue Moon. Blue Moons occur about every 2½ years. Another definition for "Blue Moon" is the third full Moon in a series of four full Moons occurring in a single astronomical season.

**Black Moon:** The term "Black Moon" has a few definitions. Most commonly, it refers to the second new Moon occurring within a single calendar month; by this definition, a Black Moon can *never* occur in February. It has also been used to refer to a month in which there is no full Moon; this can only occur in February because the calendar month has fewer days (28 or 29 days) than the lunar month (about 29.5 days).

**Supermoon:** A full Moon is said to be a "Supermoon" when it is at the point in its orbit closest to Earth. In astronomy, the terms "perigee syzygy" or "perigee full Moon" are typically used instead of "Supermoon."

**Blood Moon:** The term "Blood Moon" is used when there is a complete lunar eclipse. The moon isn't actually "bloody," but it appears orange or coppery like a penny.

Month	Old English	Native American	Buddhist	Other
Jan	Old Moon	Wolf Moon	Duruthu Poya	Ice Moon
Feb	Wolf Moon	Snow Moon	Navam Poya	Hungar Moon
March	Lenten Moon	Worm Moon	Medin Poya	Chaste Moon
April	Egg Moon	Pink Moon	Bak Poya	Waking Moon
May	Milk Moon	Flower Moon	Vesak Poya	Corn Moon
June	Flower Moon	Strawberry Moon	Poson Poya	Planting Moon
July	Hay Moon	Buck Moon	Esala Poya	Thunder Moon
August	Grain Moon	Sturgeon Moon	Nikini Poya	Lightning Moon
Sept	Corn Moon	Harvest Moon	Binara Poya	Barley Moon
Oct	Harvest Moon	Hunters Moon	Vap Poya	Blood Moon
Nov	Hunters Moon	Beavers Moon	Il Poya	Frost Moon
Dec	Oak Moon	Cold Moon	Unduvap Poya	Long Nights Moon

## Moon Names by Month

Month	Name	Description
<b>January</b> <i>Jan 25, 2024</i> <i>1154 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Wolf Moon</b>  Winter	The howling of wolves was often heard at this time of year. Many sources state that wolves howled due to hunger. Rather, wolves use howls to define territory, locate pack members, reinforce social bonds, and gather for hunting.
<b>February</b> <i>Feb 24, 2024</i> <i>631 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Snow Moon</b>  Winter	February is typically a time of heavy snowfall.
<b>March</b> <i>Mar 25, 2024</i> <i>2:01 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Worm Moon</b>  Spring	Traditionally thought to be named after the earthworms of warming spring soil. Alternatively, in the late 1700s, Jonathan Carver wrote that this Moon actually refers to a different sort of “worm”—larvae—which emerge from the bark of trees and other winter hideouts around this time.  There will also be a Penumbral Lunar Eclipse at the same time as the full moon.
<b>Spring Equinox- March 20, 2024</b>		
<b>April</b> <i>Apr 23, 2024</i> <i>6:51 p.m.</i>	<b>Full Pink Moon</b>  Spring	This full Moon heralded the appearance of the “moss pink,” or wild ground phlox—one of the first spring wildflowers.
<b>May</b> <i>May 23, 2024</i> <i>8:55 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Flower Moon</b>  Spring	Flowers spring forth in abundance this month.
<b>June</b> <i>Jun 21, 2024</i> <i>8:10 p.m.</i>	<b>Full Strawberry Moon</b>  Summer	This was the time to gather ripening <a href="#">strawberries</a> in what is now the northeastern United States.
<b>Summer Solstice- June 20, 2024</b>		
<b>July</b> <i>Jul 21, 2024</i> <i>5:19 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Buck Moon</b>  Summer	Now, a buck’s (male deer’s) antlers are in full growth mode.
<b>August</b> <i>Aug 19, 2024</i> <i>1:28 p.m.</i>	<b>Full Sturgeon Moon</b>  Summer	The Great Lakes and Lake Champlain sturgeon were said to be most readily caught during this full Moon.  A Super Moon in 2024  The August 19 full moon will also be a seasonal blue moon as the summer season will have four full moons. As the third full moon in the season, it is considered a seasonal blue moon.

<b>September</b>  <i>Sep 17, 2024</i> <i>9:36 p.m.</i>  <b>Autumn Equinox- September 22, 2024</b>	<b>Harvest Moon</b> (or Full Corn Moon)          Summer	The <b>Harvest Moon</b> is the full Moon that occurs closest to the <b>September equinox</b> . This time also corresponds with the traditional harvesting of corn.  A Super moon in 2024  <b>Partial Lunar Eclipse visible in Park Forest.</b>  **In 2024, the September full moon will be called the Full Harvest Moon because it will be closer to the start of Autumn than October's. In other years, the September Full Moon is also called the Full Corn Moon.
<b>October</b>  <i>Oct 17, 2024</i> <i>6:27 a.m.</i>	<b>Full Hunter's Moon</b> (or Harvest Moon*)       Autumn	This is the month when the game is fattened up for winter. Now is the time for hunting and laying in a store of provisions for the long months ahead. A super moon in 2024  **The October 17th full moon will be the closest full moon of 2024.
<b>November</b>  <i>Nov 15, 2024</i> <i>3:29 p.m.</i>	<b>Full Beaver Moon</b>       Autumn	This was the time when beavers finished preparations for winter and retreated into their lodges.  A super moon in 2024
<b>December</b>  <i>Dec 15, 2024</i> <i>3:02 a.m.</i>  <b>Winter Solstice- December 21, 2024</b>	<b>Full Cold Moon</b>       Autumn	This is the month when the winter cold fastens its grip, and the nights become long and dark.  Black Moon: December 30 is the second New Moon in a single calendar month.



Month	Shamanic	Celtic	Neo-Pagan
January	Frost moon	Quiet moon	Ice moon
February	Starving moon	Moon of ice	Snow moon
March	Storm moon	Moon of winds	Death moon
April	Water moon	Growing moon	Awakening moon
May	Corn-planting moon	Bright moon	Grass moon
June	Honey moon	Moon of horses	Planting moon
July	Raspberry moon	Moon of claiming	Rose moon
August	Gathering moon	Dispute moon	Lightning moon
September	Spider-web moon	Singing moon	Harvest moon
October	Leaf-falling moon	Harvest moon	Blood moon
November	New snow moon	Dark moon	Tree moon
December	Long night moon	Cold moon	Long night moon

## Vicki Schmidt

passed away with on November 24, 2023. She was a lover of the arts and nature – especially birds- as they influenced her life.



Vicki and her husband Dave were staunch supporters, Friends members and volunteers at Thorn Creek. Vicki brought her administrative skills to our nature center and they both assisted April with programs and designed programs for children.

Vicki was lovely to work with. She is missed by everyone who knew her.

Our condolences to Dave, their daughters, family and friends.

## So What Can You Do To Help?

- Trail Watchers are our eyes & ears on the trails. Use the blue Trail Watchers forms or email nature center with concerns.
- Open Hours volunteers staff the nature center Fridays noon to 4 p.m. We'll rain you !!
- 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 monthly Friends Board meetings, the 4th Monday at 10 a.m. at the nature center.

**We need you!**

## Nature Center Needs Things

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

## We need raffle baskets created!

We're setting up a fabulous Spring Raffle at Thorn Creek Nature Center at the **end of February** with the items awarded at our Earth Day: Year of the Cicada program Sunday April 21.

Ideas for basket creations could be: trees, gardening, wildflowers, Insects, birds, coffee, chocolate, kids, Italian/Pasta/Garlic, etc. Let your imagination go wild.

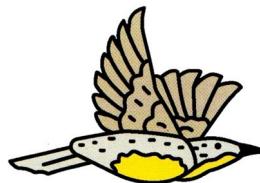
We are **not** looking for nature pictures this year since we have a number of donated framed pictures that we can raffle.



So, if you can create a raffle basket or contribute items to raffle or items for a raffle basket, contact our naturalist April (708-747-6320 or [thorn\\_creek@att.net](mailto:thorn_creek@att.net)) and arrange when to bring them.

We always have wonderful raffles, thanks to you!

## Why birds and their songs are good for our mental health



Birds are a way to connect with nature, which is associated with better body and brain health, research shows

By Richard Sima

May 18, 2023  
Washington Post

"Listening to birdsongs alleviates feelings of anxiety and paranoia"



## Photo Cards in Memory of Aura Duke

*Aura Duke was a force of nature  
who left an indelible mark on Thorn Creek Woods.*

**\$ 5 donation for pack of 5**

*Cards in packs:  
All the Same Bird or **Mixed** 5 birds*

Stop by Thorn Creek Nature Center  
Fridays noon- 4 p.m.

Make checks out to Friends of Thorn Creek Woods  
P.O. Box 32, Richton Park, IL 60471

*Photos by Alice McBride and Emily Howald*



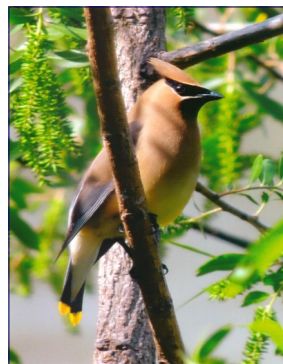
EASTERN BLUEBIRD



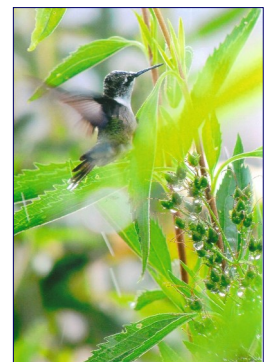
GREAT BLUE HERON



AMERICAN GOLDFINCH



CEDAR WAXWING



RUBY-THROATED  
HUMMINGBIRD

## Get your Thorn Creek T-Shirts

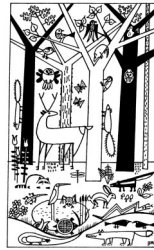
THORN CREEK WOODS



*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  
Long sleeve-  
Regular Maroon with Creme



Short Sleeve = \$ 10 + \$5 per shirt shipping/handling  
Long Sleeve = \$15 + \$5 per shirt shipping/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.

## Wanted

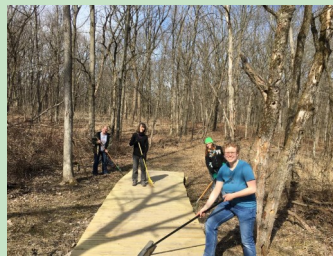
\* People who love Thorn Creek Woods and Nature Center

\* People who would like to spend one morning a month plotting and planning with our Naturalist and other Thorn Creek Friends

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

**Come sit in on a meeting and help us help the nature center**

The Friends Board has open seats available.



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**

<b>Birding By Sight &amp; Sound for Kids</b>	Saturday February 17 1-3:30 p. m. \$10 fee
Ages 7-12	

<b>Make a Gourd Birdhouse</b>	Sunday March 17 1-3 p.m. \$15/house
All Ages	

<b>Wild Animal Tracks</b>	Sunday March 24 1-3 p.m. \$10 fee
All Ages	

<b>Spring Clean Up &amp; Trail Workday</b>	Sunday April 7 Noon-4 p.m.
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<b>Prairie Sampler Workday</b>	Saturday April 13 1-3 p.m.
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<b>Earth Day at Thorn Creek: Year of the Cicada</b>	Saturday April 21 1-3 p.m.
All ages	

<b>Central Park Wetlands Walk</b>	Sunday April 28 10:30-12:30
All Ages	

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

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

### 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.

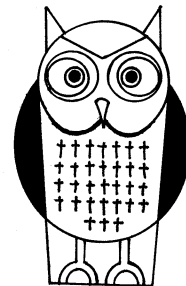
In memory of \_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ 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