



Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve, Inc.

Dedicated to Service in Conservation

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To our members and friends:

May 2019

Robert “Bob” Ahlf Feb 14, 1942—April 17, 2019

The recent passing of Bob Ahlf, our president from 1972 until 2013, has been widely reported locally on the internet and elsewhere. Those of you who receive our newsletter via email have already received this sad news that we sent out the same day that Bob died, but many of you may be learning this for the first time. Included in that email was a link to the obituary that was sent out by the Tews-Ryan funeral home:

<http://www.ryansfuneralhome.com/obituary/tobert-bob-ahlf> This is a very carefully written summary of Bob’s life and accomplishments which deserves a close reading.



Above is a classic pic of Bob from 2011 out marking the repositioning of the trail near the new wetlands area. Now we provide a brief history of Bob’s involvement in the Preserve:

The Preserve was formed in 1946. It was named the Memorial Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America in honor of the veterans of both World Wars. At that time, Bob Ahlf was 4 years old. At the age of 26 Bob began employment with the Illinois Central Railroad, moved to Homewood, and became a member of The Preserve. Then, and now, The Preserve was an all-volunteer organization dedicated to service in conservation. Bob was happy to volunteer along with the WWI and WWII generations as The Preserve became a haven for outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds including fishermen, picnic-goers, hikers, and youth groups. Constant volunteer improvements have been the rule from the beginning.

In 1972, at the age of 30, Bob became President of The Preserve and he was most effective in that position for 41 years, until 2013. Bob was a constant advocate for The Preserve and he recruited volunteers from young and old alike. Many current members recall their teenage years when, at the urging of Bob, they volunteered for projects, which came one after another. As President he chaired monthly Board meetings during which the overall scope of projects were proposed and approved. He also worked very effectively with local government and businesses when their cooperation helped The Preserve and /or the community as a whole.

So how do we honor and remember Bob's remarkable contributions to our Preserve ?

May General Meeting:

A TRIBUTE TO BOB AHLF
Thursday May 23rd, 21019 7:00pm

The Board has decided to devote an entire general meeting to this legendary person in our history. After some regular business and announcements we will celebrate Bob's life by sharing memories of Bob. Up first we will show the brief interview of Bob that was done in 2016 which is included in the longer video about the Preserve that was created by Marcus Mims. Following that we will share "Bob Ahlf stories." Current board members, ex board members, long term volunteers, friends of Bob, and anyone else with a good story are invited to attend and share their memories. Each speaker will be limited to 2 minutes. It is likely that we will videotape the entire meeting. So please join us for a very, very special evening of celebration and remembrance.

Electing Officers and Directors Thursday May 23rd 7:00 PM

As required by our constitution, "At the May general meeting each year, the Spokesman, chosen by and from among the Nominating Committee, shall read that Committee's list of candidates for the various offices. This will be immediately followed by the Presiding Officer calling for nominations from the floor. The candidate for each office receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected." The new officers will take office at the beginning of our coming fiscal year on September 1st

HF Cleanup Day

Once again this year we contributed a project for this community wide cleanup campaign organized by the HF Park District which took place on Saturday May 6th. Ours was one of about 14 projects and included 13 enthusiastic volunteers who picked up garbage around the perimeter of the Preserve: Jason Baldauf, Debbie Baldauf, Brad Jerit, Shawn Badar, Mark Leschuck, Alicia Hoefler, Steve Wlodarski, Adrienne River, Pam and Ron Tomek, Scott and David Schlismann and Carolyn Bury. Many thanks for your cleanup efforts ! Also special thanks to Board member Mark Leschuck who managed this project.

New Trail Signs, Trail Maps and Brochures

During the last few weeks, you may have noticed some new color coded trail signs, including indicated mileage, on our trail system. Representing the culmination of a two year effort that began with the installation of the Help Code signs in late 2017, at long last we are completing the trail marking part of this effort. Four trails will be marked on our trail system with unique colors: the traditional 3.6 mile loop trail (white), the 1.25 mile Lake Trail (blue), the 1.4 mile Prairie trail (orange), and lastly the 1.3 mile eastern trail (gold). The first three of these trails are loops and are marked in a clockwise direction. Our colorful new brochures that include our new trail map and ground rules are now available in the trail map box outside the cabin and will be posted on our web site. The ground rules have been updated and slightly changed but not materially. In a few weeks, large water and vandal proof placards of our trail maps will be placed at our three entrances: Ridge road, Ashland avenue and the south end of Manny Hoffman Way. Once again, our thanks to the Village of Homewood for their grant money that helped make this all possible.

Recycling at the Preserve

Last year we began a recycling effort from spring through fall. Results were mixed as many visitors to the Preserve placed regular garbage in the recycling receptacles though they were clearly marked for recycling only. But we are encouraging recycling again this year but limited to bottles and cans only—no paper. Three recycling receptacles have been placed adjacent to our existing trash containers which will be maintained by volunteer members without incurring pick up costs from Homewood Disposal. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Thorn Creek Audubon Native Plant Sale

We have described this opportunity in detail in our last two newsletters so this is a reminder that the sale takes place the morning of Saturday May 18th from 9am to noon. The deadline for pre orders has long passed but organizer Judy Johnson will accept late requests. Just text her at: jajtlp@hotmail.com

Your President, John Brinkman

A Tribute to Bob Ahlf

We will gather in our historic cabin on this evening to remember our long time former President and to celebrate his contributions to our Preserve. We will show a video of an interview of Bob from 2012 followed by “Bob Ahlf Stories” as many of us will take the microphone to share our best memories of Bob. Please find more details in this newsletter. So please join us for a very, very special event.

Date: Thursday May 23rd 2019 7:00pm

Senior Hall 1100 Ridge Road Homewood