



To our members and friends:

June 2022 Newsletter

ANNOUNCING THE RETURN OF OUR TRADITIONAL JULY 4th VILLAGE PICNIC ! GAMES FOR EVERYONE

As previously announced in our May newsletter, after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, we enthusiastically bring back to the community, our traditional July 4 picnic which has been a local favorite in Homewood for decades. The event immediately follows the Village's 4th of July parade which steps off at 10am from downtown and ends at the Preserve's Ridge Road entrance shortly after 11am. Preserve volunteers will provide the facilities and offer food and refreshments for sale (cooked brats, hot dogs, corn on the cob, soft drinks, water etc.) In past years, the Park District sponsored a July 4th Family Fun Fest on our grounds but the Park District prefers not to continue that partnership and so, our Board came up with alternative plans for family-fun activities.

We'll sponsor *Games for Everyone* in the middle of our east meadow. We'll conduct foot races for young age groups (and a crawling race for the youngest ones), and for all age groups we will conduct 3-legged sack races, water balloon toss, egg toss and catch contest, a bag toss tournament (\$100 for winning team; \$50 for second place team) and others games that we come up with between now and then. The volleyball net will be available for informal use. The games will start at 12:30p except the bag toss tournament which will begin at 11:30p. All events will conclude at approximately 1:30p. You can sign up in advance on our website for all games. You can also "walk on" and participate in the games at the event. ALL winners will receive prizes; adult and older kids will receive free T shirts; goodie bags will be available for the little kids.

Also, we'll have *Activity Stations* sponsored by local organizations and businesses that will offer fun things for kids to do. Participants so far include Homewood Science Center, Serendipity Yoga, Homewood Baseball, Goodspeed Cycles, John Harrell State Farm Insurance (free Face painting) and perhaps others. We have strong support from Board members to manage the event including Sam Casella, Jay Eagle, Shawn Straney, and Greg Busler. We are calling on a loyal group of volunteers from past July 4 events to help with the event and we're always looking for more volunteers. If you'd like to volunteer, please send an email to info@homewoodizaakwalton.com. You could also leave a message on our voice mail at 708-798-1850.

HOMEWOOD PRAIRIE RESTORATION ACTIVITY

We have previously reported on our multi-year efforts at restoration of the Homewood Prairie. Over the past 5 years we have been steadily removing and burning invasive woody species (mostly buckthorn and gray dogwood) on the northern edge of the prairie, just south of the old railroad right of way and just east of the curvy bridges. This spring our restoration efforts turned to the southern border. Again, the invasive culprits were mostly the same buckthorn and gray

1100 Ridge Road • Homewood, IL 60430



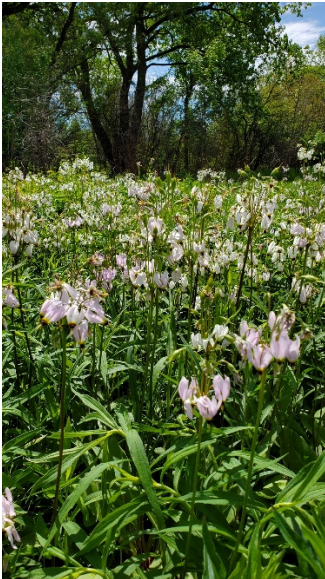
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dogwood and a fair amount of honeysuckle. On numerous days this spring volunteers including Dan Galen, Clayton Wassilak, Greg Busler, Sam Casella, Dave Zaber Yan Deng, Gordon Pearce, and John Brinkman cleared a large area just north of the trail such that one can now view the prairie extensively (to the north) from that area which is basically the southeast corner perimeter of the prairie. In the fall we intend to continue the work moving west and north along on the north side of the trail.

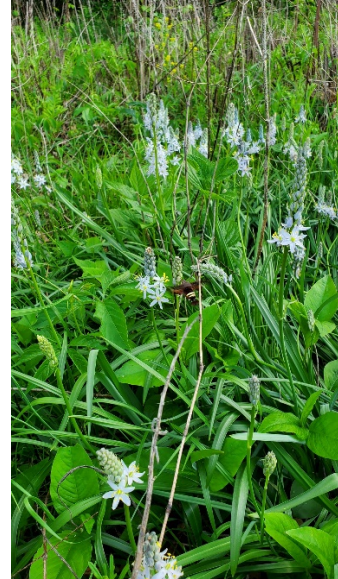
CONTROLLED BURN AREA—THE RESULTS

We frequently report on our efforts at conducting controlled burns in the Preserve. But until now we have not reported on what happens in these areas during the next growing season. Our controlled burn manager, David Zaber, provided the following update with pictures provided:

In the Fall of 2021, volunteers conducted a controlled burn on the south half of Homewood Prairie, Izaak Walton's unique prairie remnant. Fire, when used scientifically, is invaluable for restoring and managing prairies and other ecosystems. Eight months later the burn is covered with a healthier and more diverse mix of plants. In addition to removing nitrogen, restoring soil carbon and controlling invasive species, controlled burning benefits native plants and animals such as Shooting stars (*Dodecatheon meadia*) and Golden Alexander (*Zizia aurea*). Native pollinators such as the Nessus sphinx moth (*Amphion floridensis*) also show up in the prairie like this one feeding on native hyacinth (*Camassia scilloides*). Keep your eyes open for more native species popping up in our Preserve.



Shooting stars



Nessus sphinx moth feeding on native hyacinth

FISHING LINE LITTER

Mother Goose survived an encounter with fishing line litter

Our membership is full of people who love nature and its creatures. One such member recently helped a goose get a fishing line unwrapped from its beak. The outcome was very fortunate for the goose; also, our member suffered no harm. This event raised the question --- are there

members out there who would like to volunteer to gather & dispose of fishing line litter? If you'd like to participate we would work to put you in touch with like-minded volunteers. It's very advisable that work of this nature be done using the buddy system because tugging on fishing line can result in one falling into the lake. And of course, fish hooks might be attached. If you're interested in this specific volunteer effort, please call or email the office at 708-798-1850 or at info@HomewoodIzaakWalton.com.

Also, we appeal to fishermen & fisherwomen to please take care not to leave fishing line behind.

HOMEWOOD SCIENCE CENTER CONSERVATION ECOLOGY INTERNS

Homewood Science Center has offered a Conservation Ecology Internship for middle school students since 2019. The program runs twice a year, with spring and fall sessions. We have welcomed them into our Preserve each session for the hands on learning and conservation experience they receive and the benefit to the Preserve from their field work.

This spring, the students met at the Preserve on Saturday mornings in May to learn about the interrelationships among plant and animal species in the oak woodland and to work to restore this unique natural resource. Under the leadership of Chicago Public School science teacher Nicole Fuller, Homewood Science Center Program Assistant Dominique Barksdale, and scientists from Chicago-area institutions like the Field Museum, the conservation ecology interns cut down invasive species (buckthorn and cherry trees) and sowed the area with native seeds. As a capstone project for the internship, students created poster exhibits and presentations to share what they learned with the community at the Homewood Farmers Market, June 4.

Here are the names of the students in our spring 2022 intern class:

Jonas Townsend Jr.
Anderson Pries
Alice Stone
Joy Benjamin
Carmen Holmes
Kaylen Cagle
Alliyah Mitchell
Oluwadunsin Dada
Solomon Jackson

Ayah McKee
Kawtawn Gray
Lezley Higgins
Denton Higgins Jr
Charles Sergeant
Eleanor Dickover
Benjamin Miller

Your President, John Brinkman



TRADITIONAL JULY 4TH PICNIC

**At the Preserve Grounds immediately following
the Village of Homewood Parade**

GAMES FOR EVERYONE

OLD FASHIONED FUN GAMES FOR EVERYONE
COME ON OUT AND JOIN THE FUN !!!

Please refer to the article in this newsletter for details.

