



HOMEWOOD IZAAK WALTON PRESERVE

Dedicated to Service in Conservation

To our members and friends:

June 2021 Newsletter

NO JULY 4 FAMILY PICNIC

The Village of Homewood will not be organizing its traditional 4th of July parade this year due to Covid concerns, as a result we will not be hosting our traditional family picnic at the Preserve this year. Hopefully we will have our Covid experience well behind us by this time next year and when we'll appropriately celebrate these great traditional festivities again !

WATER MAIN CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Progress continues on the Village of Homewood waterline, which will assure a long-term source of Lake Michigan water to Homewood and surrounding communities. With one short exception, an approximate 1-¾ mile waterline has been laid from the far end of our eastern trail near the Thornton Quarry all the way to the village's principal water tank on Ashland Avenue adjacent to the Public Works Building. The exception is 100-feet or so, which has yet to be laid under Ridge Road. The Village and the contractor have been working on a construction plan with IDOT and the plan calls for completion of this final section by early July. After this final section is completed, the pipeline will be connected to a Chicago Heights waterline in Thornton. This line is connected to the Hammond, Indiana water system, which takes water from Lake Michigan. Once connected to the Chicago Heights source, the waterline will be pressure tested and chlorinated before the line is put into service. The Village plans to have the line ready for operation in the spring of 2022.

In our May newsletter we reported on the approximate 800-foot section between the village water tank and the abandoned railroad line. This section is under the prairie and for the most part, pipe was laid under it using a horizontal boring method (jack boring); this was done so that disruption of the prairie would be minimal. As horizontal drilling progressed, a great many small boulders were encountered over a 75-foot section. They couldn't drill through them and so the top-down trenching method was used for this 75-foot section. Care was taken to segregate the top soil from the sub soil so that upon refilling the trench, top soil was placed on top.

As reported earlier, Homewood Public Works secured various permits prior to breaking ground and along with the permits, Public Works established a 3-year restoration plan. The Preserve's Conservation Committee continues to meet with Public Works so that we might better understand the commitments within the restoration plan and then work to find ways for the Village and the Preserve to work together to restore plants, trees, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. We're optimistic that in time, The Preserve will be even better than it was prior to the initial work on the waterline.

.....Shawn Straney



HOMEWOOD SCIENCE CENTER AND IZAAK WALTON PRESERVE ENGAGING STUDENTS IN SCIENCE AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

What do you get when the Homewood Science Center and Izaak Walton Preserve partner to support an educational program for twenty-one middle school students and immerse them in a 6 week exploratory learning experience in the oak woodland at the Preserve? Six completely student-driven and created educational presentations for the Homewood-Flossmoor community at the Homewood Farmer's Market on Saturday, June 5th. The presentations were focused on the importance of the oak tree as a keystone species in woodland ecosystems, but it was up to the students to choose how they would communicate to the public through their own words, visuals, and interactive activities. The students decided to educate the community about biodiversity, restoration, ethnobotany, animal and plant dependence on the oak tree, and the importance of a preserve like Izaak Walton and its volunteers in the role of conservation.

Thanks to volunteer guest scientists and experts, the students participated in restoration work in the oak woodland at Izaak Walton. They discovered the essential role of the oak tree for wildlife while birding with Field Museum and University of Chicago scientists; and explored the oak tree through the stories of a Native American ethnobotanist while tasting acorn pancakes. A guest scientist from Morton Arboretum also visited the students and engaged them in making ink from insect galls. No wonder the students were so enthusiastic about sharing what they learned with the community!

This spring's session of the Conservation Ecology Internship for middle school students was the fifth offering of this free program designed to involve students from surrounding communities in active learning related to the national Next Generation Science Standards for middle school. Students learned science content related to the interdependent relationships in ecosystems and human impacts on Earth systems. Students also engaged in the science and engineering practices of developing models and constructing explanations and the crosscutting concepts of structure and function, cause and effect, and systems and system models. The students' presentations were in support of the Chicago Wilderness 2015 Oak Ecosystem Recovery Plan with a vision to *"Tell the story of the regional oak legacy widely to a variety of audiences in an authentic and engaging way"* and to support the idea that *"the many values and services associated with oaks and oak ecosystems are understood and promoted to a wide variety of audiences."*

The students involved in the spring 2021 session of the Conservation Ecology Program include: Safa Siddiqui, Angelique Smith, Jayvyn Mckee, Kinnedi Williams, Adebago Osunsan, Ahmad Osunsan, Luke DeBruin, Korryn Kidd, Leith Aljibawi, Grant Chatman, Dominick Sanello, Rachel Latman, Charles Sargent, Gabrielle Carillo, Marcus Clinkscules, Kevin Wilson, Terry Barney Jr., Lola Hendrickson, Damien Roonec and Lezley and Denton Higgins.

The next Conservation Ecology Internship is planned for fall of 2021! Keep an eye on the Homewood Science Center website for more details as we get closer to fall programming at homewoodsciencecenter.org.
.....Patricia Messersmith

OFF THE HOOK FISHING CLUB

Off the Hook-South is an official Illinois Bass Nation (IBN) bass fishing club that started in 2020. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of every month at Izaak Walton in Homewood (Zoom for now) at 7pm. We have two club levels; our junior group, ages 11-14, and our High School group, ages 15-18. At our meetings we discuss our tournaments and have a guest speaker (not since COVID). We have tournaments monthly, March – October as long as weather permits. Beginning 2022 season, the club will compete in 4 shore tournaments and 4 boat tournaments in addition to the boat tournaments held by IBN.

We have an open enrollment policy; this means you can join at any point during the season. We have members that attend all of the meetings and tournaments, and we have members that only attend meetings. You can be as involved as you want. We have annual club dues of \$65 (\$60 if you already have an Izaak Walton membership). The best way to get additional information is to reach out for meeting information and join us for a meeting. You can attend a meeting and decide if you want to join, no obligation.

This season, our club has fished the sand pit lakes at Izaak Walton and the Monee Reservoir with a few other waters still on the calendar, including Lake Sara in September!

- ***4/24 club tournament winner- Tyler Moore***
- ***5/8 club tournament winner- Luke Romans***
- ***6/12 club tournament winner- Devin Plankenhorn***

Thanks to an overwhelming response to our plea for boat captains in the Southtown Newspaper, on NBC Channel 5, and on Talk Radio 890- we were able to get boat captains to volunteer for the Cal/Sag IBN State Qualifier! The support shown by the fishing community and their pure kindness and support allowed five of our anglers to qualify and place in top 25 at the Illinois Bass Nation State Championship at the Des Plaines River on June 5 & 6.

Devin Plankenhorn Luke Romans

Josh Moore Tyler Moore Kameron Moore

Any youths interested in joining the club should contact Aja Moore at reelkidzfish@gmail.com. Take this opportunity to fish Bassmaster/ Illinois Bass Nation tournaments or hang out with like-minded people. We'd love to have you. Aja Moore

BOARD AND OFFICER ELECTIONS

At its June 10 meeting, the full Board approved the officers and directors that were nominated by the Nominating Committee. Our May newsletter details the unusual process for this election in lieu of a May general meeting. No objections were received at our email address, so the following candidates were elected:

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| President | John Brinkman |
| Vice President | Gerry Tienstra |
| Treasurer | Dave Smith |
| Secretary | Greg Busler |
| Membership Secretary | Shawn Straney |
| Director Environmental Concerns | Kevin Jennings |

General Directors: Dirk French, John Sandala, Todd Wittenberg, Steve Wlodarski

Your President, John Brinkman

