



To our members and friends:

March 2022 Newsletter

### **AT LONG LAST—GENERAL MEETING AND FREE MUSIC CONCERT APRIL 28**

The last meeting and event in our cabin was before the pandemic on February 20, 2020 and featured the local band *Work In Progress*. The enthusiastic crowd enjoyed an excellent concert that evening which included pizza and bottled water for sale before the show. Little did anyone know how the pandemic would change our lives just 20 days later. So, now that Covid 19 has gone from pandemic to endemic, we can comfortably resume indoor programs. We begin where we left off featuring a concert by the same local band *Work In Progress* on Thursday evening April 28<sup>th</sup>. Doors will open at 6:30p with two 45 minute sets of music beginning at 7:15p with a 15 minute intermission. Pizza and bottled water will be available for sale before the concert and during intermission. Free snacks, cider and coffee will also be provided. You're welcome to BYOB. Contributions to the Preserve will be accepted but are not expected. There could be a big turnout so get there early to assure a seat.

*Work In Progress* has become well known locally having performed at numerous events including Homewood's Art and Garden Fair, Trail Mix at the Preserve, Homewood's Fall Festival, Grape & Grain, and One Trick Pony. Their music is best characterized as "Americana" which includes elements of bluegrass, newgrass, blues and rock plus some original music. Instrumentation includes guitars, bass, banjo, mandolin, and the Cajon (a Peruvian percussion instrument). Musicians include Dirk French, Jeff Mahary, Steve and Steve Klein (father and son), and Tim Majkowski. Music will be performed without amplification due to the wonderful acoustics in the cabin. So, come on out to the cabin to enjoy wonderful music in a unique venue - --- and BYOB !

### **BATHROOMS REMODELED**

We last reported on the bathroom remodeling project a year ago in our March '21 newsletter. Eagle Scout candidate Adam Kramer (who has subsequently become an Eagle Scout) led the demolition part of the project with a crew of boy scout volunteers with significant concrete demolition work done by adult helpers Mike McDonnell and Greg Busler. The Board then contracted with Larson Contracting to proceed with the remodel work; this was a complex job due to the unusual configuration of multiple roofs, built over the years, with one on top of the other. Our goal was to build two unisex, private, ADA-compliant bathrooms in the same space as the previous bathrooms, while preserving the original contours and roof of the building.

Although the project took about 8 months due to various delays including supply chain delivery issues, we're very pleased by the finished product. Plumbing work was done by Aleck Plumbing as a subcontractor to Larson. Under separate contracts, HVAC work was done by Van Drunen Heating and Air Conditioning and electrical work was done by John Sailor of Sailor Electric. Over the winter our volunteers led by John Sandala painted the inside walls of the bathrooms and vestibule. Remaining work to be done is to have Larson Contracting put an epoxy finish on the bare concrete floors which can only be done in warmer weather. Once that is



complete, we'll start opening the bathrooms from roughly dawn to dusk until mid-November. The bathrooms should be available before our planned April concert event. We thank all who have contributed to this major project. Funding of the new bathrooms came from a transaction we reported on in our February 2019 newsletter. Back in January 2019, the Preserve cooperated with the Village of Homewood in the sale of 2.5 acres to Canadian National for their future campus expansion. The sale price was \$150,000 as reported in local media and in our newsletter. The Village held back \$50,000 for infrastructure needs related to the CN project and the Village donated \$100,000 to the Preserve for future capital improvements. We can now report that these funds have been spent on the following: (a) a water quality appraisal of the Sand Pit Lakes, (b) installation of a furnace in Black Bear Lodge, (c) roof replacement roof over Senior Hall and (d) remodeled bathrooms. All of these were significant upgrades to the Preserve.

### **LANDSCAPING IMPROVEMENTS**

Back in August of last year, Jerry Vankus, a long-time supporter of the Preserve urged us to “spruce up” the entrance to the cabin and make it more accessible for visitors who use walkers or wheelchairs. Jerry backed up his suggestion with a contribution to help pay for it. We sometimes react to these sorts of ideas with skepticism because we humans are commonly resistant to change. But we gradually warmed to the idea and in the Fall we began the project to spruce up our cabin entrance. First, we needed a porch to replace the old, decrepit ramp that was installed decades ago. Member Mak Beattie had earlier volunteered to do carpentry work and so, we recruited Mak to build a new porch that would sit on top of the existing concrete apron and be level with the doorway entrance. Next Greg Busler removed the near-by, non-native honeysuckle bushes that had been there for as long as anyone can remember. Next we worked on the brick path connecting the office to bathrooms and the front garden. We removed the wonderful paving bricks that were scavenged from Washington Park Racetrack over 40 years ago. With the bricks set aside, we hired Jesse Plascencia from Express Green. Jesse and his crew laid down a new foundation of gravel-fines, which was elevated up to 20”, contoured, and topped off with the paving bricks. (By the way, Jesse does most of our tree removal work. You can contact Express Green at 708/473-8005; we’re very satisfied with their work). Volunteers Greg Busler, Dan Galen, John Sailor, Jay & Amy Eagle, John Sandala, and John Brinkman worked right alongside Jesse and his crew to get the work done. The work was completed between October & November. If you haven’t been over to the cabin since then, stop by and take a look. We’ve received numerous complements and are very, very pleased with the final product. Coming next: new trees and a small native garden will be planted in front of our cabin entrance in late May.

### **UPDATE: WAR ON TEASEL**

Following up on articles going back to 2018, we’re now in our 5<sup>th</sup> year battling this pesky invasive species. We knew from the start a multiyear campaign would be required to control and eventually eradicate common teasel (*dipsacus fullonum*); it’s clearly the most threatening invasive plant in the Preserve. We apply herbicide in the spring to kill the plants before they can form seed pods. We do this again in the fall to prevent their return the following year. Last year, at the urging of Jim Helke, we made a more concerted effort to remove all seed pods from

the plants throughout the growing season. Remember that these plants have a two year life cycle, growing a close-to-the-ground rosette the first year and growing a stalk for seeding before dying after the second year. The seeds can survive for 3-5 years before sprouting so we will be at war with this plant for many more years. We're very pleased to report a 99% + rate of success last year. This is much improved from previous years and we have our *teasel warriors* to thank for this. They are: Greg Busler, Todd Wittenberg, Jeff Maharry, Dirk French, Dan Galen, Jim Helke, John Sandala, Casey Kueltzo, and John Brinkman. We thank our volunteers for their consistent efforts to ultimately prevail in this multi-year effort.

### **TINKERGARTEN**

As a reminder, we had been partnering with Tinkergarten in 2018 & 2019. But like so many other activities, the pandemic resulted in a 2-year shut down of their outdoor classes in the Preserve. However, we're pleased to announce the return this year of their one-hour classes beginning Monday April 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:30a. These classes are led by member Beth Kosiba to promote its mission of age-based learning in small groups available in outdoor, natural settings; the age group they serve is between 18 months and 8 years. To sign up and learn more, check out their website: [www.tinkergarten.com/camp](http://www.tinkergarten.com/camp). Please direct questions to Beth Kosiba via email: [bethann.kosiba@tinkergarten.com](mailto:bethann.kosiba@tinkergarten.com)

### **EXPANDED OFFICE HOURS**

The office will now be open on Saturday mornings from 9-noon. Stop by to renew your membership, buy honey or IW merchandise, or pick up free milkweed seed packets.

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

A reminder that it's time to renew your membership in The Preserve for 2022. We very much appreciate your support for our all-volunteer organization. The cost is still \$25 for adults and \$5 for active military and youth (under 18). Also, you can now join with your spouse or significant other for \$40; that's a savings of \$10 and you'll both receive membership cards. You might find it convenient to buy your membership on-line. Here's how it's done: Ø Go to: [www.homewoodizaakwalton.com](http://www.homewoodizaakwalton.com) Ø Click Membership, then Join Online, then fill in contact information and credit card details. Ø Please consider an optional contribution. We are a 501(c)3 organization and contributions are tax deductible. We'll then mail your membership card(s) to you.

### **A MUSEUM AT IZAAK WALTON?**

YES! And we need the services of **an architect** to help design it. Is there an architect out there who could work on this? If yes, please send us an email. (address on bottom of page 1) In Senior Hall, behind the fireplace there's a room formerly used as a residence by our caretaker. We'd like to gut this room and rebuild it as a small museum where artifacts and photos of our history can be displayed.

Your President, *John Brinkman*

