



# HOMEWOOD IZAAK WALTON PRESERVE

Dedicated to Service in Conservation

To our members and friends:

May 2021 Newsletter

## WATER MAIN CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

This is the 8th in a series of updates on the Village of Homewood's waterline project, which will bring a continued source of Lake Michigan water to Homewood and neighboring communities. Our April edition might be of particular interest as it summarized the physical work completed year-to-date.

About 90% of the project involves pipe laid underneath the abandoned railroad line. The great majority of this pipe has been laid and this includes the seldom-visited portion of the Preserve on the other side of Ridge Road (on the south /east side). You may not be familiar with this area, which is narrow and runs in the direction of the Thornton Quarry where decades ago, the rail spur traveled to pick up limestone. Prior to the water line project, few members hiked this trail because it was over grown with thorny brush and was commonly flooded or muddy. For those hiking there, long pants, long-sleeves, and boots were recommended. As a consequence of the waterline project, brush has been removed and good drainage restored. Later this year, relaxing hikes in this portion of the Preserve will be possible. Preserve tractors will be able to travel down there and volunteers will be ready to keep the trail in good repair.

There are a few areas where pipe has yet to be laid. The area under Ridge Road is one challenge. This might be called the Ridge Road Underpass as Ridge Road sits on top of a bridge, under which the railroad once ran. So, the plan is to drill horizontally beneath the bottom of the bridge thus connecting key sections of the waterline. It appears there's a significant amount of rock to drill through, but hope runs high for success.

Another portion that is not yet complete is under the prairie just east of the Ashland Avenue entrance. In earlier newsletters we described the installation method known as jack-boring (horizontal drilling); this will cause minimal disruption of our valuable prairie. Work in this area is about 66% done. Here too drilling has been slowed by underground rocks ranging from 5" to 10" in diameter. It's believed these rocks were deposited from the last glacial advance about 10,000 years ago. We'll endeavor to collect some of these rocks and put them on display. The Village of Homewood is hopeful the prairie section will be completed by mid June. Upon completion the boring pit will be filled and then topped off with 12" to 18" of the original soil, which was set aside from the subsoil when the pit was dug. We will coordinate restoration efforts on the prairie with the Village.

Restoration along the railroad line is going to take time. Portions of the railroad line have long been part of our trail system and these portions will be restored as trails. Final smoothing of the trails will have to wait until the ground settles over the pipe, which was laid about 8 feet down. Furthermore, additional surface grading as well as pressure testing and sanitizing of the waterline, will preclude restoration efforts on the railroad right-of-way until the spring of 2022. In the meantime, these trails are not at all smooth and so you should hike at your own risk.

As part of its' earlier effort to secure project permits, the Village of Homewood committed to a 3-year restoration plan. The Preserve's Board of Directors met recently with Homewood Public Works leadership on restoration issues. As a result of this meeting, Homewood Public works agreed to meet regularly with the Preserve's Conservation Committee in order develop plans and coordinate efforts.

We continue to ask for your patience as we tolerate this disruption. Our Conservation Committee includes knowledgeable and devoted volunteers who are committed to full restoration of the prairie plus the planting of native trees, shrubs and grasses along the railroad line. We continue to believe that when all is said and done, we'll have an even better Preserve. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation

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## **BOARD AND OFFICER ELECTIONS**

The Nominating Committee, members of which were named in our April Newsletter, has announced their nominees for all 6 of our officers and for 4 of our general directors; terms for these positions expire at the end of August. Our by-laws call for the annual election, at the May general meeting, of all 6 officers to one-year terms and for the election of 4 general directors to 3-year terms. All nominees are incumbents and we're fortunate to have these dedicated individuals who are willing to continue to serve our membership and promote the success of our Preserve. So, the following candidates are up for election:

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

As for the election, because of the pandemic we're unable to hold a May general meeting. So, the Board will vote on endorsement motions for the nominated candidates at its' June meeting and will announce voting results in the following newsletter. Any member who objects to any of the candidates is invited to record that objection by sending an email to [info@homewoodizaakwalton.com](mailto:info@homewoodizaakwalton.com). This is clearly an unusual method of holding our elections but these are unusual times.

## **TRAIL MIX CONCERT**

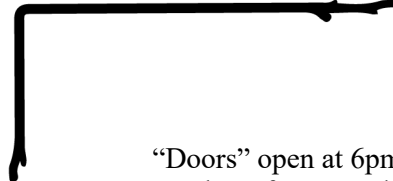
Like the beloved cicada, Trail Mix has re-emerged! Yes, COVID whittled down the Wexler Group's 5th Annual 2020 Trail Mix Acoustic Music Fest to a few virtual events on Facebook, a LP recording created at Izaak Walton called the *2020 Trail Mix Acoustic Music Fest Pandemic Recordings* (available in both digital and vinyl formats) and one live, socially distanced concert at the Preserve in October. However, we find ourselves thrilled to have Trail Mix rise again in 2021, albeit changed just a bit to ensure safety for all. (Masks will be optional but social distancing encouraged)

**What remains the same?** Trail Mix will be a largely acoustic affair designed for people who value actually listening to music in the beautiful Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve, and it will continue to help raise funds for the Preserve. Also, Trail Mix will again be supported in part, by the Village of Homewood, the Heiferman Family, and Melody Mart. The Wexler Group remains the named sponsor for what, in 2021, will be called the Wexler Group 6th Annual Trail Mix Concert Series, which is a bit different from years past.

**What's different?** In short, for 2021, we're excited to bring a nimbler Trail Mix experience that will feature three evenings of acoustic music under the East Pavilion on June 18th, August 13th and October 1st. We are partnering specifically with the Homewood Public Library for our first concert event and they will have a presence throughout the concert series. And for those who wish to get a head start on the music this year, the library will feature most of Trail Mix's artists' as their albums are available for loan, including the aforementioned *Pandemic Recordings*.

Looking ahead, the August 13th and October 1st dates will feature acoustic blues and jazz from nationally and internationally touring artists so be on the lookout for those events. Our first night of music in 2021 is June 18<sup>th</sup>. For this event we're excited to bring the following artists.

**The Teflons    Barry and the Fountains    Andrew Robert Palmer**



“Doors” open at 6pm, music starts around 6:30pm. Red Bird Cafe will provide concessions and a limited number of seats under the eastern pavilion are available for these rain or shine events. Tickets are required to reserve tables (for up to six people), or pairs of chairs. Additional lawn seats will be available as well. Please visit the Trail Mix page on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TrailMixMusicFest> or our events page on Facebook to learn more, <https://www.facebook.com/events/486128139106687?ref=newsfeed> and/or feel free to email [trailmixmusicfest@gmail.com](mailto:trailmixmusicfest@gmail.com) if you have any questions.

### YOGA AT THE PRESERVE

Liz Smith, the owner of *Serendipity Yoga and Wellness*, will return this summer to conduct yoga classes. The Board reapproved a partnership and fee sharing arrangement with her business. The outdoor classes began in May. Students have enjoyed being back in the beautiful and peaceful outdoor space in the east meadow by the cabin. Yoga classes will continue until the weather is no longer suitable later in the Fall. The current class schedule is:

- Hatha Yoga from 8:00-9:00am on Wednesdays
- Hatha Flow Yoga from 6:30-7:30pm on Thursdays
- Flow Yoga from 7:30-8:30am on Saturdays

You can find out more about classes, reservations, and pandemic precautions at Serendipity Yoga’s website [serendipityyogaandwellness.com](http://serendipityyogaandwellness.com).

### CAMPING AT THE PRESERVE

Chicago Outer-belt Alliance is a non-profit organization formed in 2018 for the promotion of hiking and outdoor activities in the Chicagoland area. The group has designed a 210-mile trail that circles Chicago, taking advantage of contiguous corridors of forest preserves and other green spaces. Their route takes them through the Thorn Creek Trail in the forest preserves of Glenwood in early June. Jay Readey, a resident of Flossmoor and a co-founder of the group requested that he and his fellow hiker, Will Miller, camp at Izaak Walton on June 3 and 4 and we readily agreed. They will be joined by an author and celebrity hiker Sydney Williams (and her husband Barry) who wrote a book about healing through hiking: “Hiking my Feelings” <https://hikingmyfeelings.org>.

So, the Board has decided to **invite Preserve members and their families** to campout with this group on Friday night June 4, 2021. We’ll limit this opportunity to 20 additional tents so you must make a reservation in advance and pay a \$10 fee. Please call or email Shawn Straney at 708/870-4836 or [straney@homewoodizaakwalton.com](mailto:straney@homewoodizaakwalton.com). Also, on Saturday morning between 8-9 AM (6/05/21) everyone is invited to stop by for coffee and donuts to greet the hikers and learn more about the Chicago Outer-belt Alliance. We hope you’ll take advantage of this rare opportunity to camp at the beautiful grounds area, by the cabin.

Your president, *John Brinkman*

