



Homewood Izaak Walton Preserve, Inc.

Dedicated to Service in Conservation

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To our members and friends:

October 2020

ANNUAL TURKEY RAFFLE FUNDRAISER

By now you've all received your ticket booklets in the mail for our Annual Turkey Raffle Fundraiser. As announced in our last newsletter, our usual Turkey Raffle, Bake Sale and Auction Party normally held on the 2nd Saturday of November will not take place this year due to the pandemic. But we're still conducting a raffle fundraiser. We'll draw the winning tickets on Sunday November 8th. We're pleased so far with your strong response as every day we receive many new envelopes with your contributions and turkey tickets. For those of you who have not yet had time to send in your raffle tickets, you still have plenty of time to get them in. Deadline to get your raffle tickets in for the drawing is 5pm on Saturday November 7th. We will offer 5 Grand prizes 1) \$500 cash, 2) \$400 cash, 3) \$300 cash, 4) \$200 cash, and 5) \$100 cash as well as 30 turkey coupons from Walt's foods (value \$25.00). Individual raffle tickets cost \$5 and a booklet of 6 tickets cost \$25. This is our primary annual fund-raising event and it accounts for a substantial amount of annual Preserve revenue. Please consider purchasing or selling these tickets and return the ticket stubs and payment via mail or in person at Senior Hall (1100 Ridge Road). Tickets may be donated to the needy if you wish; simply note that when returning ticket stubs and payment. Any ticket drawn with this designation will result in the coupon being donated to organizations that serve those in need.

Additional ticket booklets are available at Senior Hall. Stop by or call to request additional booklets. (708/798-1850). To encourage ticket sales, members who sell 6 booklets (\$150) will receive a complimentary Walt's \$25 gift card for each block of 6 booklets sold.

For many, many years the enthusiasm of our membership for this fundraiser has been gratifying and wonderful. In these unusual times, we are especially thankful to our members and all of our friends for your continuing support for this key fundraising effort.

WATER MAIN CONSTRUCTION PROJECT-II

The Village of Homewood, after considerable planning and deliberation, decided earlier this year to change the sourcing of the Lake Michigan water that we enjoy; this process has been widely reported in local media. Plans now call for water to be supplied by Chicago Heights (which is sourced from Indiana) instead of Harvey (which is sourced from Chicago). The new water main will be located underground and come into Homewood via our eastern trail, which you may

know as the old railroad right-of-way going to the Thornton Quarry. We first reported on this project last year when soil borings were performed along the proposed route. Preliminary construction work will begin in mid-November with intensive construction beginning in early spring and lasting throughout 2021. The pipeline will follow the old railroad right-of-way to a point directly east of the Village Water tank next to the Public Works Garage on Ashland Avenue. Over the railroad right-of-way, the construction method will be open trench digging. However, the final 300 yards of pipeline leading to the water tank, must traverse our prairie. The construction method through the prairie will be underground directional drilling; this will be less disruptive than the open trench method. We're working with Village officials to prepare for the project and minimize disruption to the Preserve. Detailed plans are not quite final and unanswered questions remain. However, we need to realize there will be disruption next year. Trails will be closed from time to time, trucks will be accessing the pipeline route, and considerable vegetation will need to be removed to allow clearance and access of construction equipment. Restoration activity will follow promptly and we will surely look for opportunities to actually improve both the prairie and forested sections along the railroad right of way by eliminating invasive species and replacing them with native flora. As we learn more we'll keep you informed of the project's status and expected disruptions in future newsletters

2021 PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST

Back by popular demand is our Photo Calendar for 2021, this year expanded to 14 months including November and December of 2020. The idea originated last year with Francis Fullam, who suggested to Howard Wolinsky (an avid photographer of the Preserve) that he organize a photo contest to select best photos from the Preserve for the calendar. Once again, an ad hoc committee organized the contest, coordinated by Board member Todd Wittenberg, which included Howard Wolinsky, Kathie Hazlett, Heather Marcum, James Shover, and Penny Shnay. Participation was quick and unexpectedly strong: nearly 50 photographers submitted over 160 photos for the contest. Three independent professional and freelance photographers were asked to judge the entries based on seasonal appropriateness and artistic merit. The judges were impressed with the quality and diversity of the photos submitted.

Calendars can now be ordered on line at our website (homewoodzaakwalton.com). Cost is \$15 which includes mailing. Calendars can also be purchased for \$12 at the cabin during regular office hours (Saturday: 9-noon) or you can mail us a note requesting a calendar(s) and a check for \$15 (for each calendar) to the Preserve and we will mail the calendar to the address requested. We applaud and thank all of those who have worked together to make this beautiful calendar available to our members and friends.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT FOR 2020

The Covid 19 pandemic has changed our lives this year in many, mostly negative ways. Consequences on health, socializing, education, and income have been obvious. Many businesses were forced to shut their doors (at least temporarily) and yet some businesses flourished on account of the virus: for example Amazon, Netflix and companies that sell soap & cleaning items. Well we are pleased to report that The Preserve is included among these rare success stories because our membership count in 2020 is 25% *higher* than ever before. Our

previous best was in 2018 when we topped out at 1,439 members. Now in 2020 we currently have 1,800 members or 361 over the prior record.

The Governor's orders relative to *stay-at-home & essential businesses* were issued in mid-March, just as winter weather was yielding to spring. At The Preserve, we noticed the parking lots were abnormally full and soon came to realize people were looking for places to go where family members could get exercise and fresh air. Our veteran members knew all about us and increased their visits. Then, word spread to others about the natural wonders to be seen by hiking in our 190 acres. In March and April visitors were surely greeted by ducks, geese and amazing migrating birds stopping by on their annual trek north. Upon speaking with visitors, we learned that many had never before hiked our 5 miles of trails; most of these guests liked what they saw and many bought memberships. Also, people were impressed by the fact that volunteer work is the great engine that powers what gets built and maintained in The Preserve.

Many thanks to our great members of many year's standing and also to our many new members. Your membership dues account for over half of our annual operating income and we very much appreciate your support.

.....Membership Chair, Shawn Straney

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT COMPLETED by Andrew Gaughan

Andrew Gaughan is a member of The Preserve, a senior at Homewood Flossmoor High School, and an Eagle Candidate from Scout Troop 364 in Homewood. In order to advance from the rank of Life to the rank of Eagle, a scout must perform a substantial service project. Andrew's project was done for the benefit of The Preserve and was divided into two parts. The first part involved the refortification of 20 feet of shoreline at Lake Akela, about 1,000 yards north of the picnic area. The path next to the lake is elevated 4 feet above the lake from construction of a retaining wall made of horizontally laid telephone poles dating back to the 1950's. Over the years, erosion ate away a 20-foot section and so Andrew managed a crew that removed old poles and replaced them with new ones. The poles were anchored into the ground with giant nails (½" rebars), which were nailed through the poles and deep into the ground. To finish the project, small diameter limestone was placed behind the wall; the limestone was secured from a nearby, abandoned railroad bed. The second part of his project involved the construction and installation of two benches with backs. Benches of this design were first installed in 2017 and there are now 9 scattered throughout The Preserve. All of these were installed as part of Eagle Projects. Andrew's benches are located on the east end of Lake Walton (affording a wonderful view of the sunset) and across from the Beaver Lodge at the northwest corner of the Prairie Lakes (often affording a view of busy beavers at dusk). Andrew's crew included the following volunteers: Donovan Brennan, Max Cichon, Michael Gaughan, Mick Gaughan, Adam Kramer, Lucas Kramer, Chris Kush, Mike McDonnell, David Schlismann, Shawn Straney, Jim Winicky, and Jimmy Yast

Thanks Andrew for a job well done and good luck as you finish up your final requirements for Eagle Rank.

Your President, John Brinkman

TURKEY RAFFLE FUNDRAISER

Please support our only annual fundraiser by sending in your raffle tickets ! See article included in this newsletter for details. Drawing of winning tickets for the Grand Prizes and Turkey gift coupons from Walt's will take place on Sunday November 8th. Winners will be contacted immediately thereafter. Many thanks for your continuing support of the Preserve !