

The Kankakee River Valley Forest Preserve District was begun in 1986 by referendum. It was formed as a possible recipient of the Perry Farm from ^Mthe Illinois Department of Conservation. That parcel was instead given to the Bourbonnais Township Park District.

Since that was done the District has received \$1.021 million from taxes, \$78.6 thousand from interest and \$24.6 thousand from the Department of Conservation as a grant re-imbursment for a total of \$1.1million. This is thru May 31, 1995.

Of that total 38.4% was spent on land aquisitions (\$431,275.00) and 17.5% was spent on site development and equipment for that land (\$152,866.00). This includes 5 sites of 202 acres and over 7 miles of walking and biking trails. There is still \$134,390.00 on hand for further land purchases.

The Aroma Preserve is located on Hieland road and consists of 54 acres. It has a 3 mile round trip travel that goes thru many different habitats and natural environments. The trail runs from the parking lot to the Kankakee River and back.

The Gar Creek Trails are located on River Road west of Kankakee Community College and consists of 25 acres owned and 61 acres leased on long term lease from the State of Illinois. Here you will see a 15 acre natural prairie restoration project that shows the type of grass that covered this area when the settlers came to the area.

From the parking lot there you can start on a walking /^{biking} trail that connects with a trail of the Kankakee Valley Park District to give you a pleasant 5 mile round trip. The trail runs along Gar Creek and then follows the scenic Kankakee River to I-57. A quick trip under I-57 and you are back along the Kankakee River and a close up inspection of how Farmer Jones crops are doing this year.

Strasma Grove is a small 2 acre neighborhood preserve located off Duane Boulevard in the south east part of the City of Kankakee. A quiet walk thru here provides a place to relax from the hustle and bustle of the urban world.

Limestone Preserve is located about 3 miles west of Kankakee. Here we have planted over 1000 trees as a re-forestation project. Many students from Limestone Grade School have helped.

Waldron Road site is our newest aquisition. It is located on the east side of Waldron Road halfway between Kankakee and Aroma Park and was the former site of Kankakee Nursery's seedling field. We are in the process of

putting a parking lot in there and mowing down a trail thru this area. The long range plans are to turn this into an arboretum.

Besides acquiring all this property, the Forest Preserve runs educational programs thru out the year. In the past these have included bird watches, indentification of spring and fall flowers of the prairie, how to plant trees and how to prune trees. These programs have been done at various sites of the Forest Preserve and the Kankakee Library. All have been announced thru public service announcements and advertisements in the Daily Journal and the local radio stations.

How has all this been paid for you ask? Yes, by taxes paid by you, but they are not as large as you may think. A taxpayer living in Aroma Twonship that pays about \$3,000.00 in taxes only pays \$20.00 of it to the Forest Preserve district. Its the accumulation of those \$20.00 that has paid for all this.

On the last page of this newsletter is a form that you can fill out with your comments, concerns and ^{needs} edges. Please take a moment to fill it out and return it to us. Also, please mark if you would like to receive additional Newsletters of the Forest Preserve.

Thank You.