

THE SUCCESS STORY OF 1991
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

DEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTIES:

Development at the Aroma Forest Preserve was completed. A parking lot was built. A 1.2 mile surfaced hiking trail was established with a 39 station self guided nature trail.

In conjunction with Kankakee Valley Park District, a bicycle path was constructed beginning on the Gar Creek Forest Preserve and continuing for 2.5 miles along the Kankakee River to I-57 and beyond. The project was assisted by a grant from the State of Illinois.

After meeting with residents in the vicinity of Strasma Grove, and a decision to retain the Grove in its natural state, the site was cleaned up, cleared of dead trees and undesirable growth, and new trees planted. A memorial plaque in honor of the Strasma family was installed.

After purchase of the Limestone Forest Preserve for a reforestation site, numerous tree plantings have been held there. Eventually the entire 30 acres will be planted. Reforestation was started with the assistance of Tom Gargrave of the Illinois Forestry Department.

LAND ACQUISITION:

The lease of 61 acres from Shapiro Developmental Center for the Gar Creek Forest Preserve was consummated, with the help of Ira Collins, superintendent of Shapiro and Marge Malone, Assistant superintendent at that time.

The purchase of 30 acres for the Limestone Forest Preserve was accomplished.

A site criteria format has been established for use in consideration of future acquisitions.

Several sites within the District have been or are under consideration for acquisition.

PROGRAMS:

More than a dozen programs for the public have been conducted. They range from topics such as "Educational Resources Beyond the Classroom" to "Fall Colors Nature Walk" and "Sounds and Animals of the Forest".

Most of the nature programs were conducted by Chuck Smead, however, the Audubon Society and Peter Dring, from the Cook County Forest Preserve, also participated in some.

A self guided nature tour of Aroma Forest Preserve was developed, published and made available to the public.

A narrative and slide program relating to the Forest Preserve was compiled for use for public programs.

Tree planting projects were held on several occasions:

- At Limestone by the Limestone Grade School
- At Limestone by the Herscher High School F.F.A. students
- At Aroma Preserve by the Interact Club
- At Strasma Grove by the Cub Scouts
- At Limestone by Nature Conservancy volunteers

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Petitions from Aroma Township and Limestone Township were filed for withdrawal from the Forest Preserve District. Numerous meetings were held with officials from both townships and public town meetings in defense of the Forest Preserve, which resulted in the retention of Aroma Township and the loss of Limestone Township, even though it's residents still attend our programs.

Contracts were made with the County Sheriff and the Kankakee Chief of Police for security patrols of the Forest Preserve sites.

The Richard Witt scholarship was established for a college student pursuing a course related to forestry and/or conservation. The first recipient was Jeff Quigley, who is enrolled in the University of Illinois Forestry Department.

A Kankakee County Recreational Association was formed by Barry Jaffe, President of the District, to coordinate programs and events, and will continue to meet during the Spring and Summer months in 1992.

The Forest Preserve Advisory Committee has been active with suggestions for operation of the District under the direction of Consult and Professor Steve Liehr from K.C.C.

The District was instrumental in getting the veto of Senate bill 1283, which would have required forest preserve districts to get approval from township supervisors prior to purchasing land within the townships.

Joined with other governmental bodies in opposing Riverside Medical Center's application for not-for-profit status for its nursing home and is currently helping to coordinate efforts to make their Westwood Oaks property taxable, which would benefit school districts and municipalities, etc.

The District hired a part time maintenance man and purchased a truck and equipment for ongoing maintenance of the Forest Preserve sites.

The Board passed a General Use Ordinance establishing rules and regulations governing use of the forest preserves and posted signs to that effect.

Numerous talks were given to various service clubs, schools and park districts by President Jaffe and Commissioner Smead about the Forest Preserve District and its activities.

The District established its annual budget of \$354,000, comprised of \$217,000 on hand, anticipated other income of \$28,000 and \$109,000 from general property taxes.

GOALS:

President Jaffe said that certain goals for the future at the top of the list will be land acquisition and continuing the various programs for area residents. Our Board has five active and aggressive commissioners, two very good Consultants, an excellent Administrator, Paul Tolly, who oversees the day to day operations, and our attorney, Jerome Shapiro.

One of our goals will be to add other townships to the District in the future, since everyone seems to enjoy our programs and the protection of forested properties. Hopefully, the District someday will be County wide.

Jaffe wishes to especially thank the City of Kankakee for its help and cooperation and the volunteers who helped our year be the success it has been.

The final goal President Jaffe has, personally, is the formation of an Illinois Forest Preserve Association, which is currently being organized statewide.

The Kankakee River Valley Forest Preserve District is one everyone can be proud of, and we certainly look forward to 1992 with anticipation.



Barry A. Jaffe, President
and the Commissioners, James Fulton, Charles Smead, Kenneth Allers, and Mickey Lile.