

10/13/87 *The forest preserve*

KANKAKEE — In the November 1986 general election, a referendum placed on the ballot called for the creation of a forest preserve district in Aroma, Bourbonnais, Kankakee and Limestone townships in Kankakee County. The proposition was voted favorably by a comfortable 3 to 1 margin.

In February 1987, Marwood Hendrix, county board chairman, nominated Patricia Gould, Stephen Licks, Don Palzer, John A. Smith and Richard Witt as commissioners and these people were formally appointed by the County Board by a healthy margin.

This board then set in motion the mechanics to create the Kankakee Valley Forest Preserve District, adopting the necessary resolutions and ordinances to become a vital and viable unit of government — a unit of government dedicated to preservation of land, river banks, flora and fauna, trees and other natural resources in the district.

Part of our mission is to acquire the Perry Farm from the State of Illinois either in its entirety or in collaboration with other units of government to preserve and improve the natural beauty of the farm and environs including the portion of Indian Caves lying within its boundaries. The board has developed a comprehensive plan for both passive recreation such as nature trails, walking trails, bicycle paths, wild flower area, arboretum, prairie grass area, natural habitats, an old fashioned working farm, plus active recreation which will encompass ball fields, soccer fields, childrens toys and the like.

The other part of our mission is to locate suitable areas in the other townships that need to be preserved and improved for the benefit of the present generation and generations to come.

We are trying to do what our forefathers did for our generation. Envision if you will, what our community would be without Governor Small Memorial Park with its historical buildings and Civic Auditorium, beautiful Bird Park, Riverview Park, Beckman Park, River Road Park, Aroma area parks with their river banks and scenic beauty.

Our forefathers dedicated their resources, time and energies to enable us to have a quality of life better than they had — can we do less? This, then, is the mission of your Forest Preserve District — to enhance the quality of life for ourselves, our children and grandchildren for generations to come.

Don Palzer