



# LAKE BLUFF OPEN LANDS ASSOCIATION

[www.lbola.org](http://www.lbola.org)

Fall / Winter 2005 Newsletter

LBOLA Warmline 847-735-8137

## President's Letter

By Larry McCotter

Does it seem as if the globe warmed this year? As we bid goodbye to this most unusual year, perhaps we could assess the impact of the drought and heat on our natural areas. There were winners and losers in this summer's drought. Big losers included trees, lawns, gardens and your water bill. Winners included the water agency and, not surprisingly, native plants! They're used to drought, having evolved under these conditions over 10,000 years and with root systems in excess of 10' – 15', most were unaffected. If we're headed into continued drought, it might be time to consider planting natives in your garden next spring and to buy and plant trees from LBOLA's native tree sale.

This was a big year for infrastructure in our preserves with the most significant improvement being our collaboration with the Lake Bluff Park  
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## Harrison Development Opinion

By Cathy Spencer

LBOLA supports the decision of the Village Board to accept the current development proposal from developer Stonebridge LLC. We have worked hard over the past year researching and studying the issues, attending and speaking at meetings and providing input to help improve the developer's proposal.

Our primary concern has always been the preservation of the 12 acre oak/hickory woodland to the east of the buildings. The current plan not only accomplishes this but establishes a funding mechanism to provide for future management of the woodland as well.

In response to many objections, the developer reduced the proposed density from 100 backyard units to 71. There are also still 14 condos planned for the historic  
*See Harrison – page 2*



## Mysteries of the Depths Revealed

By Dave Szaflarski

You may recall from our last newsletter that we were excited to find an old farm implement poking above the surface of the Jens Jensen Pond on the west side of the Forest Preserve. So excited that we figured, what the hay, lets plant a contest to figure out what the heck we have in our back forty! Well we were quite chuffed that we received such a great response from our avid newsletter readers. We can now announce that after raking through the great harvest of letters from our farm hand readers that wheat have a winner (Ouch). The first entrant to most accurately describe the farm implement was Margaret Able, who identified the Dump Rake, used between 1880 and 1920 to rake cut hay into rows for later pick up by a hay loader. Margaret will get to choose a native tree from our Spring Tree Sale.

Thanks to all who participated. We hope it was as much fun for you as it was for us to discover a part of history in our midst that reveals a glimpse into a more rural time in Lake Bluff's past. Village Trustee Mike Peters raised the rake and when the pond is frozen, we'll wheel it across the ice to an open area to the west of the pond where it can be properly displayed

*Harrison – continued from page 1*

structures, but possibilities for other uses such as office spaces are being explored.

We requested that there be greater buffer area between perimeter houses and the Forest Preserve border to the south, that there be permanent public access to the Forest Preserve property and restrictions on non-native plant materials in perimeter areas. The current plan includes all these changes.

We are concerned about potential problems posed by existing zoning which could result in 29 gigantic 10,000 square foot, 40' tall structures on 1 ½ acre lots that would loom over and be visible from the Forest Preserve property.

We have concluded that the greater number of modest sized, practical homes and condominiums with deed restrictions limiting residents to 18+ years of age, will have fewer negative impacts on the Village, neighborhood, schools and environment than 29 McMansions.

This issue is complex, with many factors to consider that are not dealt with here. You can obtain more in-depth information on our website [www.lbola.org](http://www.lbola.org) where you can find the development's final concept plan, transcripts of speeches from Village Board hearings by Chris Letchinger, David Barkhausen, Janet Nelson and Larry McCotter as well as Village documentation containing many facts.

While you're there feel free to share your thoughts on our new message board too.



*Will Hart puts finishing touches on new boardwalk system at The Carolyn Goetz Wetlands Preserve. (Eagle Scouts\*\*\* please note the sorry condition of the observation platform to the rear!)*

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## **Drought's Continuing Effects on Trees – By Gloria Dougherty**

Have you noticed a recent loss in our town? Lake Bluff has lost nearly 50 large, stately trees this summer, many of them 12" + in diameter. These trees were lost due to disease, pest infestation and storm damage – and much of their weakness can be attributed to the effects of drought in the summer of 2002. Now, we have a new, more devastating drought on our hands and its effects are likely to be even more widespread. At this point, in mid November, it is still possible to help the trees and limit drought damage.

Watch the weather. Watering can still be beneficial for thirsty trees. Keeping one hose attached and trickling at the base of a tree or large evergreen will help. Mulch with organic materials like wood chips or composted leaves to conserve moisture. Be careful not to 'volcano' the mulch so that you're not providing a home for rodents and other pests at the base of your trees. Be prepared in the ensuing months, and even years, to identify problems quickly and appropriately. Some trees will be able to be saved with careful attention. Check websites such as [lakebluff.org](http://lakebluff.org) and [mortonarb.org](http://mortonarb.org) for more information on how to preserve our wonderful trees.

## Volunteer Opportunities at LBOLA

By Dave Szaflarski

As the end of the year draws to a close, LBOLA volunteers can reflect and share a sense of accomplishment in lending a hand to aid our cherished natural local environs. While our natural areas demand much attention, the job can't be done without the dedicated efforts of many. It is amazing that, from their busy lives, LBOLA volunteers can find time to make LBOLA a successful and respected community organization.

But it is indeed a work in progress. Many volunteer opportunities exist at LBOLA and we faithfully submit, we are always looking for new friends to share our passion. It should also be pointed out that a lot of times someone comes in with an idea and it just seems to take off. Take the example of the prairie alongside the bike path by Rte. 176.

One thoughtful member learned of the contractor's plans ordinary turf grass there. Well, that member worked with LBOLA to see that prairie was planted instead of sod and that really sprouted into something! So you see LBOLA has many volunteer opportunities and your passion or new ideas could really grow in LBOLA! Volunteering has many rewards with perhaps the best part being meeting new people and getting out to the natural areas of Lake Bluff. But whatever your passion or talent, you don't necessarily have to be a nature buff to volunteer. You can see from the list below that there are many opportunities so give us a call at 847-735-8137 and help us out!

Map maker, Skokie Preserve kiosk organizer, Bluebird house monitor, Purple martin birdhouse landlord, Birdwalk organizer, Preserve steward, Burn crew, Fundraising, Political Action, Newsletter contributor

## Restoration Progressing Rapidly at Lake Genevieve

It's been just 18 months since Shields Township acquired most of the Lake Genevieve property and gave LBOLA the green-light to begin restoration of the property.

The collaboration of Lake Forest High School students, LBOLA volunteers Township employees and committed neighbors including Bill Nordeen, Rick Pokorny and George Morton has resulted in an impressive transformation of the property located at the northern edge of the Village at the end of Bayshore Road. October's workday led to the discovery of a rarely found wetland shrub known as buttonbush or *Cephalanthus occidentalis*. We've seeded in many woodland and wetland native plants and expect to see more of them coming into maturity next year. Feel free to visit Lake Genevieve anytime. You can find directions to all 12 LBOLA preserves on the web at [www.lbola.org](http://www.lbola.org).



*Long time LFHS biology teacher George Morton leads a brush-clearing workday at beautiful Lake Genevieve*

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District, which provided funding for the materials while LBOLA provided labor to completely replace the old boardwalk system at the Carolyn Goetz Wetlands Preserve. Will Hart constructed the entire 120' system in his basement and schlepped each section out to the preserve. Will has been invaluable to our land management efforts for over 4 years. Thank him if you get a chance.

Though the Harrison debate has been heated at times, it has also been remarkably civil and I'd like to congratulate everyone who participated in the process and spoke before partisan audiences at various board meetings.

LBOLA itself was divided over the issue but our Board did reach a consensus which is outlined in a separate article on Page 2.

I'd like to thank members of the Association for their steadfast support this year. From our Native Tree Sale to volunteer workdays to Open Lands Day to our 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Outdoor Ed. project at the Beach Prairie to your generous financial contributions, LBOLA is providing a tremendous benefit to the community. The steadily improving state of our 12 managed natural areas, encompassing 200+ acres makes an impressive statement.

Thanks for all you do.

- Larry



Lake Bluff Open Lands Association

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