



Lake Bluff Open Lands Association

PRESERVATION, RESTORATION, AND EDUCATION SINCE 1981



www.lbola.org

2011 Spring Newsletter

LBOLA Warmline 847-234-2860

President's Letter – It's our 30th Birthday!

In 1981, there was a crisis in Lake Bluff. The Wimbledon Road subdivision was being developed and the plan included the destruction of a beautiful wetland and white pine plantation. A citizens' committee was formed to Save The Wetland. Three decades later, LBOLA is celebrating a big anniversary.

Trees planted years ago are now mature. Land saved has been tirelessly restored over two generations, and thousands of school children have learned about nature – right here in Lake Bluff.

Today we protect 225 acres of public and private natural areas. Over the next 30 years we'll need a new generation of citizens to become involved to protect our remaining open spaces.

Believe it or not (and I can't), you can now follow us on [Facebook.com/LBOLA.org](https://www.facebook.com/LBOLA.org) . Tweet us @LBOLAorg (no dot)  and discover our re-vamped website (thanks to Bo Harper!) LBOLA.org for photos, calendars and events.

And - LBOLA has been chosen the Grand Marshal of this year's 4th of July parade! Quite an honor!

Please come join us...help with the parade, make a donation or just go for a stroll in one of our 13 protected natural areas!

Larry McCotter



Prairie Burn at Crab Tree Farm, 2009

Mark your calendar

We have more than the usual number of springtime activities coming up. Please make a note of them now and plan to support our efforts!

Woodcock Walk at the Skokie River Prairie –
Saturday April 9, 7:15 – 8:30 P.M.

Join us for our annual observation and celebration of the wildly primal spring ritual of the male woodcock and a springtime evening in the beautiful Skokie River Prairie. Plan to dress appropriately for this 90-minute, potentially cold & wet event.

LFHS / LBMS Earth Day Wetland Planting –
Friday April 22, 9:00 A.M. until...

Every spring and early summer, just to the west of the Middle School parking lot, a huge puddle forms and attracts a number of mallard ducks. The thought always occurs, Why not plant wetland plants there to take advantage of that “ephemeral pond”? This project will run in conjunction with the High School's buckthorn-clearing project along the railroad tracks. Join us for some fun in the mud!

Earth Day Event & Woodland Restoration –
Saturday April 23, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 noon.

This year's LBOLA Earth Day celebration and native planting will be at Moffett Woods, located at the intersection of Moffett and Lakeland Roads. Lakeland is the road with the beautiful “alley” of tall hemlock trees heading east. Moffett Woods includes the hemlocks on the north side of the road. Earth Day will involve the planting of several oak trees and hundreds of new woodland and savanna transplants to further beautify and diversify this mature oak woodland. This is a family-friendly event. Bring the kids & let them plant wildflowers!

Annual Spring Bird Walk at Crab Tree Farm –
Saturday, May 14, 7:00 A.M. The ever-popular Cliff Miller will again lead our walk, so plan on an early morning to enjoy the spring migration and the beauty of Crab Tree Farm.

LBOLA's President Receives

I Care Award

By Liz Leutwiler

LBOLA's reluctant "President for Life" and tireless advocate, Larry McCotter, has been chosen by Lake County Cares to be a recipient of this year's *I Care Award*. He is one of nine individuals throughout Lake County to be recognized for their extraordinary commitment to volunteerism.

Lake County Cares (LCC) is the premier volunteer service hub of Lake County. Formerly known as The Volunteer Center of Lake Forest/Lake Bluff, LCC receives nominations for outstanding volunteers from social service agencies, schools, religious organizations, and individuals residing in Lake County. This is the 5th Annual Awards Program for LCC.

Nominations were made by two LBOLA members who know his dedication to our organization well: Bo Harper and Sandy Ragsdale. Both cited his long association with LBOLA, his leadership role for the past 15 years, his time "in the trenches", his work with children/HS students, his understanding of political issues, and his passion for the environment. Sandy summed it up this way:

"Rarely will one find a person so selfless in his sharing of knowledge, his actual physical labor, his political acumen and his vision. Larry is the epitome of a volunteer who really makes a difference in his community and in the lives of those with whom he works."

The *I Care Awards* will be held April 16th at the Deerpath Inn, with Kevin Tibbles, NBC National News Correspondent, and Senator Susan Garrett as Guest Presenters. For more information on Lake County Cares and Larry's *I Care Award*, visit LakeCountyCares.org.

Knowing Larry, he'd say that he is only one of many deserving LBOLA volunteers, and he'd be right. As an "almost all-volunteer" organization, we are so very fortunate to have the wonderful, hard-working, passionate group that we do. It is also an honor for Lake Bluff Open Lands to be recognized by Lake County Cares. But Larry, we are all proud of you and thank you for all you do.

CONGRATULATIONS!



Photo by Kathy Schaffer

Students at Prairie Preserve

Third Graders Fight Nature Deficit Disorder

By Janna Nugent

Each school year, the third graders of Lake Bluff Elementary School learn about prairies as a way to study biology, ecology and history all at the same time. As part of their prairie unit, LBES's third graders take a short walk to see a gem of a prairie in their own back yard: The Prairie Preserve. Located at the west end of Belle Foret Drive, the third graders only have to walk a quarter mile from their school to experience a living example of Illinois' original ecosystem, managed by LBOLA.

Students learn that prairies like the Prairie Preserve once covered more than 60% of Illinois, but now less than one hundredth of one percent of original undisturbed prairie remains in Illinois. As the back yard of a large Green Bay Road estate, the Prairie Preserve escaped being drained and cultivated when this area was originally settled by Europeans, then later LBOLA saved it from becoming part of the Belle Foret subdivision.

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LBES third grade teacher Kathy Scheffer enjoys walking with her students to the Prairie Preserve each year. “I think the whole experience is such a memorable one, from the beautiful walk to all the smells of the prairie -talk about outdoor education!” Ms. Scheffer noted that LBES third graders also visit the prairie at the Botanic Gardens each year, but, “for them to see we have preserved prairie in Lake Bluff helps them all really connect to it and see how it’s right out our back door!”

To help facilitate the third grader’s visits, LBOLA recently cleared a path from the golf course to The Prairie Preserve and installed “stepping stones” though the wetlands to make the walk easier for the kids. LBOLA has also worked with the LBES Eco Club to create paths in Dwyer Woods so that school groups could move through those woods more easily.

One senses how important it is to interest our kids in Lake Bluff’s open lands. Especially since they’ll be the ones responsible for LBOLA’s preserves one day.

LBOLA board meetings are scheduled for May 16, July 18, September 19 and November 21, all Monday evenings at 7:00 PM. For details call the LBOLA Warmline at 847-234-2860

Summer Solstice at the Beach to Benefit LBOLA- Saturday, June 18th!

Our 4th annual *Summer Solstice Celebration* will soon be upon us. Everyone is welcome to join us in celebrating the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer on Saturday, June 18. Cocktails will be at 6:30 P.M. & dinner at 7:00 P.M. at the beach SOUTH shelter for an evening of great food, camaraderie, lively music and an almost-full moon-rise at 10:40 P.M.!

Adults \$25.00. Children under 12 years of age, \$10.00. There will be a cash bar. For additional info, contact us at: info@lbola.org LBOLA.org, or the Warmline (847) 234-2860.



The Case of the Disappearing Trillium

By Larry McCotter

Naturalists have identified an overabundance of white-tailed deer as the culprit in the disappearance of the fabulous display of Trillium and other spring wildflowers on the forest floor in our natural areas.

What’s led to such an imbalance in the deer population? Many factors are involved, but while deer used to have many predators, today, our cars are the number one cause of deer fatalities. While it’s not practical for us to reintroduce wolves (they’re quietly doing that themselves), we do need to accept the important role that coyote play in controlling the deer herd. As a Village, this is also a good time for us to *calmly* discuss culling the deer herd - for their sake as well as the environment’s.

Deer are an important part of the ecosystem as long as their numbers are in balance. Too many deer mean that the woods can be nearly stripped of vegetation, including most of our beautiful and rare wildflowers. When they’re done with that, they move into our gardens. Ultimately they begin to starve as they overwhelm the limited food supply, and a stressed population is more vulnerable to diseases like chronic wasting disease (a relative of mad cow disease). Deer ticks, the tiny ones, are responsible for the spread of Lyme disease among humans, a potentially serious and chronic disease.

Culling the herd... something to think about.

LBOLA’s Annual Spring Tree Sale

Look for the order form for native trees and shrubs at LBOLA.org. Place your order by April 23rd!!!



Photo: Al Trefts

Bill Nordeen and Nan Wick at the Skokie River Prairie.

Red Hot Hat Warrior

Bill Nordeen is a man on a mission. Bill has been a zealot in search of the invasive and destructive buckthorn on which he can practice his deadly art. Bill (and wife Paula) are neighbors of LBOLA's Lake Genevieve preserve where he has spent hundreds of hours working with George Morton on the restoration of that property. Having largely accomplished that goal, Bill has turned his attention, and

his chainsaw, to the Skokie River Prairie, with an unlimited supply of his favorite objet d' art - the Evil Buckthorn.

Bill and Al Trefts have established the Red Hat Warrior work crew and on many Sunday mornings throughout the year (excepting sailing season!), you'll find them working to reveal the Skokie River in, of all places, the Skokie River Reserve.

Red Hat workdays are not to be confused with our traditional workdays that are more family friendly, utilize hand tools and are often attended by Lake Forest High School science students. It was Bill's idea that LBOLA should offer the coveted Red Hat as an incentive for people to come out for 50 hours of meaningful, mechanized, rough & tumble restoration work. That means internal combustion, fire & smoke and sweatin' & cussin' and all that macho stuff.

There is no mystery surrounding the identity of the first to earn his Red Hat. Though he has yet to design and produce the fabled Red Hat, you're sure to see them around town someday soon. If not on Bill's head, then perhaps that of Al Trefts, Dan Carlson, Bo Harper, Carol Gilbert, Larry McCotter, Nan Wick or Liz Leutwiler. Bill – thanks for your dedication to the cause!

**30TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
TREE SALE RETURNS**

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