



# Lake Bluff Open Lands Association

PRESERVATION, RESTORATION, AND EDUCATION SINCE 1981

www.lbola.org

Spring 2012

LBOLA Warmline 847-234-2860

## President's Letter – *Larry McCotter*

***It wasn't supposed to happen this way.*** Last month, when people should have been shoveling snow off the sidewalks - they were frying eggs on them instead. And with precipitation lagging by 30% for the year and recent temperatures 30 degrees above normal - This is not the way climate change was supposed to happen!

The vernal heat wave did more than break records and give us an early start on tanning season. It kick-started natural processes that may have unknown long-term consequences. Will flowers and trees be nipped in the bud by a *perfectly-normal* cold snap? Will migrating birds arrive only to find that the bugs that provide their food haven't gotten the message yet? Will trees bloom earlier than bees are able to pollinate them? Imagine all the weird things that could happen as a result of summer arriving in advance of spring. Guess we'll have to wait and see.

One known consequence is that we've cancelled this year's Tree Sale. Given the timing of our newsletter, there was just no way for us to provide you with an order form and get trees in the ground in advance of an early leaf-out. So let's shoot for next year for trees & shrubs, OK? Sorry.

We've got a lot of fun activities planned for April and May, so please check out the dates for our birdwalks & plantings and plan to join us! It'll be fun!



Photo by Elaine Slayton

*Red Hat volunteers Dan Carlson, Bill Nordeen and Hal Jones prepare an ancient stump to survive prescribed burn at the Prairie Preserve on Belle Foret Dr.*

## A Few Calendar Items

*We have quite a few springtime activities coming up. Please make a note of them now.*

### **Woodcock Walk at the Skokie River Prairie Reserve**

Saturday, April 14<sup>th</sup>, 7:15 – 8:30 PM

Each spring we enjoy some good-natured voyeurism as scrutinize the weirdly primal mating ritual of the male woodcock and enjoy a springtime evening in the beautiful Skokie River Prairie, just east of Mariani. The 90 minute event is both educational and fun and despite the subject matter, is quite kid friendly. But it can be a bit chilly, so please dress appropriately including boots!

### **Annual Spring Bird Walk at Crab Tree Farm**

Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 AM

Our bird walk leader will be the ever-popular Cliff Miller so plan on an early morning to enjoy the spring migration, plus the beauty and history of Crab Tree Farm.

### **LFHS / LBMS Earth Day Celebration and Planting at the Bikepath - Sunday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9:00 till noon!**

You've seen our efforts to clear a bit west of Rockland Wetlands at Hwy. 176 and Green Bay. You've heard the results with all the frogs screaming and turkeys roosting. Now it's time for the other side of the road to get some attention! It's been years since we planted the Bike Path Prairie, but on Earth Day, we'll install nearly 1,000 native plugs to brighten the entrance to the Village. Join us for some messy, dirty fun!

### **Summer Solstice at the Lake Shore to Benefit LBOLA – Friday, June 22<sup>th</sup>!**

Our fifth annual Summer Solstice Celebration will soon be upon us. Join us for a celebration of the longest day of the year and the beginning of summer. Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> with beverages at 6:30 PM and pot luck dinner beginning at 7:00, we'll convene at the Lake Bluff Beach SOUTH shelter for an evening of great food and a celebration of the arrival of summer. A beach road jitney will be available.

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](mailto:info@lbola.org) or the LBOLA warm line (847) 234-2860.

## Take Care. It's Tick Season

The good news is that most of the ticks we collect in the prairie are harmless, though admittedly yucky, *dog ticks*. They're about 1/4" long & you can't miss them.

The bad news is the increase in the local *deer tick* population and that a good percentage of them carry Lyme Disease. Deer ticks are less than 1/8" long, are pretty hard to detect, but if you see a reddened "target" patterned rash that is the telltale sign – please take action and see a doctor. Treatment is easy and effective and it is important not to let Lyme disease go untreated. Prevention is good too! Use DEET on your clothing. Especially legs, and keep cuffs tucked into boots or socks. For more information visit: [http://lakecountyiil.gov/Health/resources/Documents/ticks\[1\].pdf](http://lakecountyiil.gov/Health/resources/Documents/ticks[1].pdf) or call: (847) 377-8002.



Photo by Lisa Culp

### Prairie Plant Profile - Rattlesnake Master

More than any other plant, Rattlesnake Master, *Eryngium yuccifolium* plays a significant role in LBOLA history.

As the Belle Foret subdivision was being platted, LBOLA's crack team of plant rescuers discovered Rattlesnake master on a portion of the property to be developed.

Rattlesnake master is quite rare and an indicator of a high-quality prairie remnant. LBOLA teamed with the Lake Bluff Park District to make a land-swap with the developer in order to save "the best of the best", now known as LBOLA's Prairie Preserve on Belle Foret Drive.

Quite a number of other wonderful and rare prairie species call that preserve home, including prairie dropseed grass, nodding ladies tresses and shrubby St. John's wort.

The Latin species name, *yuccifolium*, "stems" from the plant's parallel veins and roughly serrated leaves, closely resembling the yucca plant. Native Americans were reported to have used this plant as an antidote to rattlesnake venom!

## LBOLA Treasurer's Report

### March 2012

By Al Trefts

LBOLA ended 2011 in a slightly stronger financial position than a year ago, thanks to a combination of generous donations and stringent cost awareness throughout the year. While donations were down from 2011, as they must have been at most not-for-profit organizations, we reduced expenditures and activities including our summer intern program, resulting in a small positive cash flow for the year. Through the early months of this year, expenses have remained lower than last year so we continue to be in a better position as we look forward to the summer and hope to increase our summer intern efforts and perhaps purchase some new equipment.

The students we hire in the summer to assist our volunteers' efforts continue to be our single largest expense and we have more than enough work to do in our preserves to keep our summer intern workforce for the entire summer so fundraising remains a high priority. If you have any ideas or suggestions for fundraising efforts or communications activities or if you would like to assist in these activities, please do not hesitate to contact me at [treasurer@lbola.org](mailto:treasurer@lbola.org).

#### Wish List:

Looking to de-clutter your house, garage or barn? Perhaps LBOLA workday volunteers could benefit from having tools of equipment you might no longer need or use.

For example:

- A small agricultural or large garden tractor for mowing the preserves;
- Chain saws, brush cutters, weed wackers, loppers, rakes or pitchforks for clearing buckthorn;
- Shovels, spades, nursery trowels or blub planters for Earth Day;
- Rubber boots or Wellies for working in wetland areas.

So, before you throw it out, leave us a message at (847) 234-2860 or shoot an email to [info@lbola.org](mailto:info@lbola.org) describing what you have and we'll let you know if we can use it. And remember, any such donations to LBOLA are tax deductible.

#### Let your shopping benefit LBOLA!

Shopping for sporting goods or bicycles for spring? You'll do LBOLA a big favor if you begin your search at [LBOLA.org](http://LBOLA.org), then go to "Donate" and scroll down to check out our shopping affiliates. Shop at Bass Pro, Performance Bicycles, West Marine, Life is Good, Golfsmith, Pacsun & lots more! Your purchase will painlessly and effortlessly benefit LBOLA. And Thanks!

## Thanks to our recent contributors!

Over 90% of donated funds go directly to our mission of restoring Lake Bluff's Natural areas!

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## ***“But Be Back By Dinner Time.....”***

LBOLA, in conjunction with Alliance for Excellence and the LBES Eco-Club recently hosted a free screening of the movie, *Mother Nature's Child: Growing Outdoors in the Media Age*. Prompted by the growing disconnection between children and the natural world, *Mother Nature's Child* explores nature's significant role in child health and development.

Director Camilla Rockwell, first decided to produce *Mother Nature's Child* when she became a grandmother and realized that her grandson would grow up without the connection to the natural world that has been the norm for every previous generation.

“The tide has moved quickly to keep children indoors for a number of reasons that didn't exist when I was growing up,” says Rockwell. “*Mother Nature's Child* highlights a moment in time when one generation can still recall what it was like to roam the neighborhood in free outdoor play. This has changed so rapidly that we are just beginning to discover the symptoms of ‘*nature deficit*’: obesity, depression, and a range of attention and learning disorders. I hope the film will encourage parents and teachers to examine lifestyle choices for their children.”

The film features unique scenarios with children of all ages, and insights from experts, parents and teachers about the ways that free time in nature supports cognitive and physical development, creativity, emotional balance and spiritual awareness. Footage includes a variety of rural and urban settings. Although the main voices in the film belong to children, the film features interviews with a range of experts including Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*.

“We also look at the obstacles for inner city populations, the parental fears that keep children indoors, the place of risk-taking in healthy adolescent development, the importance of nature mentoring, and the influence of technology.

The showing of the film was followed by a short Q and A session revealing the level of concern throughout the community with the emotional well being of our children. LBOLA has purchased the DVD of the film and will make it available to parents who request it.

To learn more about the film and see a trailer, visit <http://www.mothernaturesmovie.com/>. To borrow the DVD, contact LBOLA at: [info@lbola.org](mailto:info@lbola.org).

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Awareness Month!

