

# Newsletter

*"Look deep into nature, and then you will understand everything better."*  
- Albert Einstein

Spring 2014

## Big News!

Our new Executive Director, Moira O'Keefe, would like to send greetings, and introduce herself!

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## Birds & Flowers

A little bit of nature to stimulate your senses after a long winter. With fresh air and buzzing beauty, we encourage you to come out and visit!

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## Board Elections

A new year, means a fresh start. Our newly elected Board members are excited for all the projects to come, and to get more involved with the community. We are also developing a Junior Board!

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## Suggestions?

Your input is valuable to us, and we hope to hear from all of you. Please contact us with any ideas you would like to read about in our newsletters.

## GRIST MILL HOURS:

*April through October: Saturdays and Sundays from noon until 4pm. Stop in for a tour, or just to take a look around.*

*Grinding demonstrations are on the last Saturday of each month, and stone ground corn is always for sale! See page 3 for our featured recipe.*

## Springtime

*The Franklin Creek Preservation Area Committee strives to preserve and protect high quality natural areas in the Franklin Creek watershed, while providing educational, cultural and recreational opportunities for the public to discover, explore and experience the area.*

## Cabin Fever?

I think everybody is about ready for spring! It has indeed been a long winter. Many of us have enjoyed the simple beauty of the snow falling and gracing the dormant leaves of our trees. As the snow reveals various animal tracks we know that mother nature is still very alive... Soon enough the snow will be melting and the skunk cabbage flowers will be blooming in the Old Mill Raceway. Franklin Creek State Natural Area offers beautiful views of numerous native woodland flowers.



*Feast your eyes this spring! Here is a Red Bellied Woodpecker busy searching for his next snack.*

Join Ellen Baker for a spring woodland flower walk on May 3rd at 10:00am. This event is free, but we always appreciate donations. People who wish to attend should meet at Sunday's shelter. You can call Ellen at (815)456-2283 if you have any questions.

There are many exciting things happening here, so share with your friends and family! Enjoy the news!

## Upcoming Events

### Evening at the Mill: Black Jack Logan

~Presented by Brian "Fox" Ellis  
~An American soldier and political leader, He served in the Mexican-American War and was a general in the Union Army in the American Civil War.

~April 26th dinner at 6pm for \$25

~ Please contact Julie Hage at: (815)288-5445 or Ellen Baker if you have questions, or would like to purchase tickets

Interested in becoming a volunteer!

### Heritage Volunteer Meet & Greet

~Learn how to lead a tour at the Grist Mill and what other roles a Heritage Volunteer might play.

~April 5th at 11:30am

~Questions: Contact Phyllis Dupre at (815)284-4167 or phyllbdupre@gmail.com

## Ongoing Events

### Yoga

~ Restorative Yoga: Tuesdays at 5:30pm  
~ Yoga for all levels: Sundays at 4pm and Thursdays at 5:30pm

~ If you have any questions, please call: Moira O'Keefe at (847)975-9642

## Welcome Aboard!

*A letter from our new Executive Director  
Moirra OKeefe...*

Dear Friends and Supporter of Franklin Creek and its Grist Mill,

I wish to begin by saying how privileged I feel to have been chosen by the Committee to be the Executive Director of the FCPAC! For many years Franklin Creek State Natural area has served as a retreat and an oasis for me where I found peace hiking the lengths of its trails, adventure traversing its stream crossings, enjoyment fishing the depths of its many pools and inspiration from its dramatic rock outcroppings and picturesque landscapes. After so many years of taking in all that Franklin Creek has to offer I am thrilled to give back and be a part of the organization responsible for protecting and preserving some of the most pristine and ecologically diverse public lands in the region.

In addition to the land so dear to my heart, Franklin Creek State Natural Area has the unique honor of being the site of the Grist Mill. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the dedication of this reconstructed timber frame, volunteer built, operational mill. In these fifteen years through the hard work of the all volunteer committee, a foundation has been laid highlighting the Heritage and Natural features of the nature preserve and the water powered Grist Mill. From April through October the mill has been open from 12:00-4:00 PM for tours on

and Sundays and on the last Saturday of the month for grinding demonstrations. It is my hope to build upon this



foundation. Fifteen Years may seem like a long time to you, but we think it is just the beginning. The opportunities are great but we need help from you to realize them. Whether it's by attending one of our events, volunteering your time, becoming a member, or making a donation we cannot do it without you!

Help us:

Create and maintain public enjoyment of the Franklin Creek watershed while protecting its high quality eco-system through stewardship, restoration and educational activities.

Utilize the Grist Mill as the primary vehicle to engage and educate the public about the ecological importance and the heritage of the area.

Develop the organizational capacity, partnerships and resources to accomplish our mission.

Currently we are looking for volunteers to give tours of the Grist Mill, to lead walks, talks and hikes, to build history and ecology displays, run educational and recreational programs such as fishing clinics as well as volunteers who can lead or help with controlled burns, removal of invasive species, seed collecting, carpentry, construction, etc.. We are always in need of volunteers willing to assist with events, help in the gift shop, participate in restoration workdays and help with cleaning and maintenance of the mill. Finally volunteers with specific expertise such as fundraising, communications, marketing and design and business planning are also needed to help build FCPAC's capacity to reach more people and offer them new and better experiences.

We recently were bequeathed in the will and testament of a long time supporter a large donation that will help to pay back the loan needed to purchase the newly acquired headwaters property. We are extremely grateful for this gift and ask that you might also think of the organization and its needs as you prepare and or review your will and testament.

I look forward to meeting you and serving as Executive Director. Please do not hesitate to call me on my cell 847-975-9642 or at the mill 815-456-2718 to schedule a tour or learn more about volunteer opportunities and/ or what sponsorship can offer you!

Happy Spring and Thanks for all your continued support,

Sincerely,  
Moirra OKeefe

## Stimulate your Senses

*Springtime flourishes*

Listen to the bubbling water at Mill Spring while 350 gallons per minute refresh the Franklin Creek. Nestled in the old Red Oak roots, a few hepatica appear through last year's liver shaped leaves. The Hickory tree's velvety leaves that are opening resemble spring woodland flowers. Look for the tiny Spring Beauties blooming along the sidewalk on the Mobility Enhancement Trail to Mill Spring. The sea of bluebells around Mother's Day is quite a sight. Every spring day in the woods has something new to brighten your day.

As migrating Warblers find their level in the trees, they sing their music at heights. Red bellied woodpeckers may still find a kernel of corn tucked in the bark, which provides a good source of protein for their coming eggs to be laid. The Kingfisher swoops over the pond or creek for a fish, while making its nest in the surrounding bluffs. A treat for your ears, the Nuthatches, Brown Creepers, and Woodpeckers tap out their tunes. Also, numerous species of waterfowl stop by for a snack, while taking a dip in the Mill Pond.

Ten's of thousands people visited the natural area last year! Look, listen, and learn while you're out enjoying yourself. Be sure not to disturb the environment, so that future visitors can have new experiences, and create new memories!

~ Ellen Baker & Kristina Hallam

# You're Invited!

*Progress stems from community involvement just as a flower blooms from a seed.*

## BALLOTS ARE IN

**Chair** - Donna Ducharme

**Vice Chair** - John Nicholson

**Treasurer** - Ellen Baker

**Secretary** - Jim Lillyman

**Directors** - Donna Ducharme, John Nicholson, Ellen Baker, Jim Lillyman, Julie Hage, Ivan Hullah, Jimmy Jackson, John Keller, Henry Nichols, Time O'Neil, Mike Duerst, Phyllis DuPre

## YOUTH BOARD

The Committee is looking forward to the development of a youth board! With the expansion of our

organization, we need fresh faces to help us grow as part of the community. As an opportunity to be part of something bigger than ourselves, we have the chance to learn and become better citizens. There will be a workshop for the proposed youth board very soon, and we will keep you posted!

Our readers are encouraged to share with their families and friends about this project. We need your help!



## Interesting Facts...

*~Plants on the surface of Earth have existed for about 400 million years. \**

*~The bark of the willow tree was the original source for making aspirin. \**

*~Eighty five percent of plant life is found in the ocean. \**

As always, we are deeply grateful for your donations.

Franklin Grove Creek and Preservation Corporation is a 501 c3 non-profit organization.

Please send any contributions to 1893 Twist Rd. Franklin Grove, IL 61031-9315

Thank you!

## FEATURED RECIPE

### Italian Polenta

1 1/2 c stone ground corn	1 c grated cheese
6 c water	1 1/2 tsp salt
3/4 tsp paprika	

*Stir the stone-ground corn into boiling salted water. Boil 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Cover and cook slowly 1 hour. Add the cheese and paprika. Place in a baking dish, sprinkle with more grated cheese, and bake in moderate oven 40 minutes.*

*~Grandma*

**Purchase your Stone Ground Corn here at the Grist Mill for all of your cooking needs!**

## \*Resources & Acknowledgements

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

[www.did-you-know.com](http://www.did-you-know.com)

[www.sciencekids.co.nz](http://www.sciencekids.co.nz)

[www.fullpunch.com](http://www.fullpunch.com)

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

## Public Relations

### Contact us at:

Franklin Creek Grist Mill

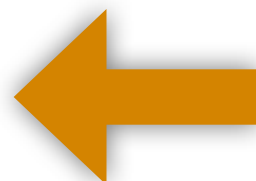
1893 Twist Road

Franklin Grove, IL 61031

phone: (815)456-2718

### or visit our website at:

[www.FranklinCreekGristMill.com](http://www.FranklinCreekGristMill.com)





# What's New At Franklin Creek?

*This winter may have been long, but we've been productive as a Committee. There are many opportunities to get involved this season, and we hope to see all of you! With our new and enhanced volunteer program on the rise, as well as the development of a Junior Board, we are seeking new talent to join our team. Enjoy the spring weather and come on out to Franklin Creek State Natural Area and Grist Mill!*



Hurd Barn due for restoration!



Progress then & progress now!



The simple beauty of Earth's hydrosphere