Summer is here!

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.

Welcome to the Franklin Creek State Natural Area and Grist Mill. Many exciting things are happening here and we would like to invite you to join in the fun.

A retreat from your daily life

Now that the weather is warm and the spring rains have rejuvenated the land, life is blossoming all over Franklin Creek. Not only are the wildflowers blooming, but the birds are singing their sweet songs all throughout this natural area. The harmonious environment here is a vacation from the busy lives we lead. Instead of coming home from work to watch the news or clean the house, you can come out and get a breath of fresh air to clear your mind and enjoy yourself.

Along with the surroundings, the Grist Mill is also blossoming. The regular tours and demonstrations are ongoing, but the Preservation Committee also has plans to enhance the Interpretive Center for all who visit. Educational opportunities about the ecological importance and heritage of the area are in store. Additionally, with a variety of events throughout the year, there is something for all of our readers.

Events at the Grist Mill

Yoga
~ from June 6th through October 10th
~ Thursdays from 3:45pm until 5:00pm
~ Learn basic Yoga postures that lead to more natural respiration, increased flexibility and strength, stress reduction and more.
~ Drop in for $12 or pay $10 a class for 6 or more classes.

Through the Eyes of Leonardo DaVinci with Scott Shepherd
~ Sunday, September 29
~ Dinner will be served at 1:00pm
~ Program starts at 2:00pm
~ Dinner tickets $25
Sticks and Stones

Franklin Creek Geology

Can you imagine looking into the past, before the age of computers, televisions, cars, the light bulb, people, and ultimately to a time before dinosaurs? The geology of Franklin Creek is truly unique. The oldest rock formation in the entire state is found here.*

Most people think of Illinois as being flat, so when you visit places such as this, that part of us that seeks adventure and exploration can be ignited. The glacial till that provides such fertile farmland for Illinois residents is just the icing on the cake, so to speak. The pleasant valleys of Franklin Creek contain three layers of exposed bedrock. St. Peter sandstone can be seen at the top of the gorge, and is approximately 460 million years old. The Shakopee formation exists just beneath the St. Peter sandstone. At the bottom, lies New Richmond sandstone which is the oldest, and is dated to be 500 million years old.* The rocky walls adjacent to the Franklin Creek are quite a sight. They are visible along the trails and off of Twist road at Monday’s Bridge.

The recently acquired Hurd property, located near the center of the natural area also holds terrific geological formations, and is a wonderful example of the determination of this Committee. Previously under private ownership, Hurd has been a highly desired property of the Committee for 40 years. This 40 acre acquisition is important, because the area is in pristine condition. Many native flower species occur here, including the Spring Beauty, Toothwort, Common Phlox or “sweet William,” Bluebells, Columbine, and many more. The peaceful hills of Hurd are also home to many birds, whose songs carry from the tall treetops and rocky gorge to our fortunate ears.

Amazing Restoration

Welcome to the Headwaters Property

In June of 2009, the committee purchased the Headwaters property that basically connects Franklin Creek State Natural Area with the town of Franklin Grove. Prior to this acquisition, the property was used primarily for farmland. With your help, we have saved the area from commercial development! Since then, the Committee has done exceptional work here with the involvement of the Future Farmers of America, and other volunteer efforts.

With agriculture being essential to the local economy, we have bettered the farmland of Headwaters. In cooperation with the Natural Resource Conservation Service and Lee County Soil and Water Conservation District, we have taken some areas out of production, and are demonstrating all seven of the “best use” practices on the remaining active farmland. The waterways, filter strips and field borders, are just a few examples of these practices that are vital to the ecosystem here, because they enhance the quality of the water entering Franklin Creek.

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Additional removed from production, is a 4 acre area dedicated for our lovely pollinating friends, the bee. This pollinator field has been planted completely with prairie flowers and will be monitored to deter the overgrowth of grasses. Being in a more remote area, the bees can do their work undisturbed.

Interesting Facts...

~ White-Tailed Deer can run up to 30 miles per hour, leap as far as 30 feet and as high as 10 feet.*

~ The Ruby-Throated Hummingbird can beat its wings up to 53 times in just one second, causing the humming sound we hear from these little birds.*

~ Deer Ticks live approximately 2 years, and feed only 3 times throughout their entire life. These little bugs can be as small as a freckle, so be sure to look yourself over after outdoor activities.
In Appreciation

On behalf of the Franklin Creek Preservation Area Committee...

Thank You
Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
The Nature Conservancy’s Nachusa Grasslands
Future Farmers of America
Lee County Soil and Water Conservation District
Natural Resource Conservation Service
Individual Volunteers
All other contributors

Plans & Goals
Hire an Executive Director to provide staff leadership and implement the strategic plan
Improve the Grist Mill as an educational and interpretive center
Develop organized programs for volunteers
Work on capital improvements at Headwaters to enhance the visitor experience
Improve public relations and utilize more eco-friendly methods of communication

Get Involved
There is always something to do at Franklin Creek. Our volunteers have accomplished so much, and are greatly appreciated for their contributions. We could use more helping hands at the Grist Mill, and with land maintenance as well as restoration activities.
If this sounds like something you would like to do, please contact us for further information. Thank you!

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
Cornbread

1 c stone ground corn  1 tsp salt
1 c flour  1 egg
4 tsp baking powder  1 1/2 c milk
1 T sugar  4 T shortening

Sift together stone ground corn, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Add beaten egg and milk, then the melted shortening and mix well. Bake in moderate oven for 40 minutes. Enjoy!
Adeline Jasper

More delicious recipes can be found in the Recipes & Remembrances book for sale at the Grist Mill.

*Resources & Acknowledgements
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Illinois State Geological Survey
National Geographic Society
National Audubon Society

Public Relations
Contact us at:
Franklin Creek Grist Mill
1893 Twist Road
Franklin Grove, IL 61031
phone: (815)456-2878
email: FCGristMill@gmail.com

or visit our website at:
www.FranklinCreekGristMill.com
Come over & enjoy yourself!

Franklin Creek is buzzing with summer excitement. The Grist Mill is up and running, with grinding demonstrations that will get your gears turning. The nature trails are painted with beautiful foliage, and accompanied by the peaceful music of the Franklin Creek and its springs. So, come out and see what you discover!