

## Successful Indian Creek Watershed Summit Encourages Plan Adoption

The Indian Creek Watershed Summit, held on November 6th, 2008 at Royal Melbourne Country Club, was attended by over 70 government and regional representatives, including board members and staff of municipalities,



townships, park districts, watershed area non-profits, private businesses and concerned Indian Creek stakeholders. Also participating were regional stakeholders from the neighboring Upper Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership, Bull Creek/Bull's Brook and Flint Creek watersheds. The event was sponsored by the Indian Creek Watershed Project with funding

support from the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's Watershed Management Assistance Grant fund.

The keynote speaker was Mayor **Al Larson** of the City of Schaumburg. Mayor Larson spoke to the group about Schaumburg's adoption of the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan and other ways they are improving their watershed and natural areas. Staff members **Rob Covey**, Community Development Engineer and **Martha Dooley**, Senior Landscape Planner for Schaumburg also attended having worked with the mayor to implement these innovative management approaches.



Al Larson at the podium

The meeting also featured, **Mike Warner**, Executive Director of the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) who reviewed the Indian Creek Watershed Plan priorities and its adoption as one of the

*Continued on page 2...*

## ICW Plan Complete After 10 Years of Watershed Planning

On November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the final Indian Creek Watershed plan was approved for adoption by the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission. The plan was updated in response to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) criteria for developing "watershed-based plans" as well as suggested updates from watershed partners. SMC secured grant funding and has worked with Indian Creek stakeholders since 2004 to upgrade the Indian Creek plan to meet these requirements. **The updated plan will allow SMC and Indian Creek watershed partners to continue to access grant funding for environmental restoration projects recommended in the watershed plan.**

Indian Creek is a tributary to the Des Plaines River watershed in south central Lake County. The 38 square

mile watershed includes portions of 10 municipalities and parts of Ela, Fremont, Libertyville and Vernon townships. There are 650 acres of lakes in the watershed. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of the watershed is developed. The Plan is intended to provide a "blueprint" for reducing flood damages, improving water quality, and protecting and restoring natural resources in the watershed. **The Plan also includes information for citizens and local, state, and federal government agencies to use when making decisions related to green infrastructure, open space preservation, acquisition, grants and restoration.**

The final plan will be adopted by the Lake County Board this winter and posted on the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's website in the near future. For copies of the updated plan contact SMC at 847-918-5260.

## Indian Creek Watershed Summit...continued from page 1

first EPA recognized watershed plans in the State of Illinois. SMC staff **Patty Werner, Mike Prusila** and **Chris Gaynes** also assisted during the event. Applied Ecological Services staff (creators of the Indian Creek Watershed Plan), **Steve Zimmerman, Todd Polacek, Marcus Chang** and **Matthew Kocourek** presented some innovative grant projects that have been funded to help improve water quality, lessen flooding and improve watershed conditions. They also reviewed future priorities for the watershed.

The Indian Creek Watershed Project, Ltd. (ICWP) board hosted the event and provided a visual presentation of some of the best management projects that have been



*Heron Creek, Our First Forest Preserve in Indian Creek Watershed*

completed in the watershed. Valuable handouts about grant award details, ways to plan for the long term benefit of our area resources, and action priorities identified in the Indian Creek watershed plan were reviewed.

**This event provided an opportunity for ICWP to network with area decision makers while encouraging partners to adopt the Indian Creek Watershed Plan as a**

**guide for future planning in the watershed. Since the year 2000, over \$3.5 million in projects have been awarded to entities in the Indian Creek watershed. This is a true testament to the power of coordinated watershed planning.**

## 11 Summit Awardees Recognized for Leadership and Dedication

- **Mayor Al Larson and the Village Of Schaumburg** for Innovative Regional Planning
- **Lake County Stormwater Management Commission** for Superior Watershed Planning
- **Village of Vernon Hills and VH Engineering Department** for Exemplary Watershed Improvements
- **Upper Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership** for Excellent Watershed Leadership
- **Fremont Township Highway Department** for Dedicated Planning
- **Lake County Forest Preserve District** for Extraordinary Land Preservation
- **Long Grove Park District** for Dedicated Restoration of their Natural Lands
- **Sylvan Lake Homeowners** for Lake and Watershed Dedication
- **Countryside Lake Association** for Monitoring and Protecting Their Lake and Shorelines
- **Flint Creek Watershed Partnership** for Dedicated Watershed Planning
- **Sean Wiedel** for Being Our Indian Creek Watershed Hero



*Barbara Turner and Lee Bassett receive award for Long Grove Park District*



*Bonnie Thompson Carter receives award for Lake County Forest Preserve District*





## Top 11 Priorities for the Indian Creek Watershed in the Future

- Encourage government entities to adopt the Indian Creek watershed plan as a guide for the future.
- Government entities and stakeholders become familiar with Indian Creek watershed plan, its watershed issues and recommendations.
- Encourage expanded use of best management practices, such as stormwater treatment train, infiltration techniques, and conservation development practices.
- Minimize the use of road salt and phosphorus loading fertilizer.
- Implement more restoration and retrofit projects that improve water quality.
- Work with communities to develop a collaborative green infrastructure preservation strategy.
- Educate residents and other key stakeholders about protecting and improving their local waterbodies.



Sunset over Indian Creek

- Promote the installation of more rain gardens for infiltration, improved water quality, and reduced flooding.
- Save the rich natural resources of the watershed, restore high quality areas, and preserve buffers around them while managing invasive species.
- Protect Diamond Lake, our rare natural glacial lake - but protect all lakes and wetlands in our watershed from pollution, destruction and sediment loading.
- Finally - Work with government decision makers and our watershed partnership neighbors, Bull Creek/ Bull's Brook, Flint Creek, the Upper Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership, and others to promote more regionally coordinated watershed improvement efforts and build success!



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The Indian Creek Watershed Project, Ltd. is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization formed in the summer of 2000 to promote water quality education and improve conditions in the Indian Creek watershed of northeastern Illinois.

Newsletter content produced by Tori Trauscht. Photos taken by Tori Trauscht, Greg Denny, Countryside Lake and Vernon Hills representatives. Layout by Genevieve Connor/Prairiebug.com.

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## Countryside Lake Residents Actively Protect Their Most Valuable Resource

Countryside Lake residents have been monitoring their water quality and water levels for years. This naturally shallow lake was built within the flow way of Indian Creek by Samuel Insull, the Commonwealth Edison magnate, in the early part of the 1900's. Over the years, with development and increased sediment loading, the lake has been getting shallower to what is now 8-9 feet deep. Countryside Lake residents cherish their most valuable resource—the lake—so they have become vigilant about monitoring water quality and watching for incoming sediment and better shoreline stabilization.



CLA monitoring

Water quality testing for Countryside Lake Association (CLA) has been ongoing since 2002 especially along the Indian Creek main inflow tributary. In 2003, because of a large new development upstream, large amounts of sediment passed downstream during rain events, and were monitored and recorded by CLA and the Lake County Health Department Lakes Management Unit. The developer was required to make corrections and the

situation improved. The CLA lake team members have been monitoring for sediment-ation during rain events ever since.

In 2006 CLA received an IEPA 319 grant to better monitor water quality. A few dedicated engineers and other resident professionals devised an innovative tracking system to analyze sediment levels. They continue to track and share that data with Lake County and

IEPA, and remain diligent at systematically protecting their lake. CLA is now one of the first communities to encourage shoreline best management practices with the development of a comprehensive lake homeowner's manual. They have banned the use of phosphorus in fertilizer around the lake and across the Association. Having completed four grants since 2003 they are getting better educated all the time about what can be done to improve their valuable resource.

**We commend CLA for getting their feet wet and becoming serious that their lake stays protected.**



## We're Listening.

Talk to us. About your personal aspirations... your needs... your concerns for your family's financial future. We'll help you design a strategy that's right for you. Our representatives do it by offering a variety of products and services to help you meet your goal of financial security. And by listening.

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## Seavey Ditch Dam Removal Project in Vernon Hills

The Village of Vernon Hills was the recipient of a grant awarded to the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) in 2006 under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) program. The grant package submitted by SMC was part of an on-going county effort to preserve and protect the County's natural drainage system.

The Vernon Hills effort was included under a project appropriation targeted within the Des Plaines River Watershed. Approved project applicants received up to 55% federal cost share, and contributed a minimum of 45% of their total project cost.

The Vernon Hills Municipal Golf Course dam removal and channel stabilization project was a \$475,500 effort to restore the natural flow to the Seavey. The USEPA provided \$255,000 in funding for the effort and the Village supplied the remaining match. The project was completed this summer (2008) by the designer, Living Waters Consultants and the general contractor, the BSL Group.

The project removed a three-foot high metal and concrete



*Seavey Ditch dam removal and stream enhancement adds beauty, functionality and improved habitat to the Vernon Hills Village Golf Course stream corridor.*

dam that impounded 1,150 linear feet of stream channel, and added a riffle and pool system for grade control and channel stability, streambank stabilization, and riparian buffer restoration. Vernon Hills had the vision to take on such a creative project. Dam removals are occurring all over to provide better fish habitat, help water quality and aid aquatic systems.

“The genesis of the project was to address upstream sedimentation of our major waterway and to increase the storage capacity of the site. Soil sediments moving downstream were trapped by the dam impoundments and continually deposited within the off-site upstream corridor.

The grant funding allowed increased focus on stabilization of the streambanks, slowing sediment loading, water quality and habitat improvement, and aesthetic enhancements,” advised David Brown, Village Engineer. “Because the project was within our Municipal Golf Course, we have received a lot of questions about the project and the ‘new’ native plantings. It is an ideal location to assist in educating the general public about watershed improvements.”

### ***Illinois RiverWatch Network:***

## **Citizen Scientists Are Needed to Determine the Health of Our Streams**

Fresh water is a scarce resource and it is our responsibility to protect it for ourselves and future generations. The Illinois RiverWatch program offers Illinois citizens the opportunity to become involved in the stewardship of the state's rivers and streams. RiverWatch certified volunteers, or Citizen Scientists, play an important role in helping identify potentially degraded waters and areas that may need better protection. Citizen scientists examine indicators of water quality like stream habitat and the diversity of species such as dragonfly nymphs, beetle larva, midges and snails.

The Indian Creek Watershed Project can help schedule an interactive workshop for our stakeholders if we get enough interested individuals. These workshops give citizens the tools to test water quality like a professional, you examine

macroinvertebrates in the stream. The workshops have two parts: lab sessions that help review monitoring procedures and detailed identification of stream critters, then stream sampling to practice proper monitoring techniques. Equipment is provided except knee-high boots or waders, sun block, insect repellent, a water bottle, and lunch, which participants must supply. After completing the workshop, you may adopt a local stream site and monitor once annually, usually in May or June. There are orphan sites in Indian Creek that could be adopted. Let us know if you are interested in getting YOUR feet wet by attending a training session in the Indian Creek Watershed.

For more information about RiverWatch visit:

[www.ngrrec.org/river\\_watchcitizen.htm](http://www.ngrrec.org/river_watchcitizen.htm) or contact Vera Bojic at 618-468-4870 or [vbojic@lc.edu](mailto:vbojic@lc.edu)



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 Village of Vernon Hills  
 Woodland Grove Gallery, Long Grove



Longview Meadow Wetland

A watershed planning effort initiated under the Upper Des Plaines Ecosystem Partnership

**We need your support!** We are an all volunteer organization working in the central Lake County region of Illinois to promote protection of the Indian Creek Watershed.

**Your support will help us** to educate more stakeholders about ways to improve water quality in our lakes, streams, and other water bodies and it will help us support on-the-ground projects in the Indian Creek Watershed. We are dedicated to taking action and promoting projects which will directly help the water quality and natural resources in the Indian Creek sub-basin of the Des Plaines River. As a supporter you will receive our newsletters and watershed planning updates as they occur, but most of the money will be spent on public education and projects.

**Please consider donating at one of the following levels to help our worthy watershed effort.**

Checks should be made payable to: **Indian Creek Watershed Project, Ltd**

....and mailed to: **19561 University Drive, Mundelein IL 60060**

Stakeholder \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Streamleader \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ Riverkeeper \$100 \_\_\_\_\_

Watershed \$250+ \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ *Any donation will help!*

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ *(Helps us keep mailing costs low and saves resources!)*

This gift is in honor/memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Occasion: \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to volunteer for the Indian Creek Watershed Project (circle area of interest) :**

1. Workday planting or clearing support
2. Group help with Adopt-A-Highway clean up
3. Help on an educational project
4. Fundraising support
5. Newsletter outreach
6. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

*The Indian Creek Watershed Project, Ltd. has been determined by the Internal Revenue Service to be a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Your donation is tax-deductible. Your support will be used for improvements in the watershed! Financial reports for the Indian Creek Watershed Project Ltd. are available for inspection at the Lake County Clerk's Office at 18 N. County Street, Waukegan, IL*

### Our Mission Statement

The Indian Creek Watershed Project is comprised of watershed stakeholders dedicated to the preservation, protection, and improvement of the Indian Creek sub-watershed of the Des Plaines River.

Our mission is to realize a long-term vision for a healthy watershed and an educated citizenry.

Our goal is to educate while building partnerships to improve water quality, reduce flooding, and preserve and restore wetlands, woodlands, and other natural resources for future generations.

**The average person in the US uses anywhere from 80 - 100 gallons of water a day, that is 5 times more water than Europeans use.**

**Only 18% of the world's population has access to safe drinking water. Every day, more children die from dirty water than HIV/AIDS, war, malaria and accidents all put together.**