

Sylvan Lake Shoreline

Wait On Your Spring Cleanup!



With a very warm February wrapped up, it's hard to not feel like spring is already here. While the warmer temperatures are a great motivator to get outside and start working, we should remember some yard chores should wait till it's warmer. Bees, caterpillars, larvae and eggs all overwinter on plants and in our yard debris for protection. So it's best to wait until nighttime temperatures have reached 50 degrees to start clearing that debris and applying fresh mulch. This is usually close to Mother's day in our area. Watch the apple and pear trees. If they have finished blooming, it's ok to clear yard debris.

If you want to start your chores early, cut back bushes that bud on new growth or trim dead branches off trees. Cut back ornamental grasses and perennial flowers, but leave around 8-24" inches of stem for cavity nesting bees. Leave all your debris in another area of your yard and compost or put it out with yard waste pickup when it has warmed up.

If you still want more early work to do, consider volunteering at the forest preserve or here in our own neighborhood to work on removing invasive species. While many can still be easily identified in the winter, soon they will be the first bushes and trees to leaf out.

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Sylvan Lake Website

www.slia.net

The Sylvan Lake website provides up-to-date information on events and activity around the lake. You can also download the latest Shoreline, participate on a message board, and learn about the history of Sylvan Lake.

The updated website is ready for your use. The only place that requires a password is the Sylvan Lake Phone Directory under the **Association, Contacts** tab.

If you don't have the password, send an email message to Sylvanlakers@gmail.com and request it.

Garden Club

The Garden Club had a great fall season with fun events for all! In November, neighbors came out on Thanksgiving morning for a 5K to kick off the day.



We kicked off December and the holiday season with Santa's Visit and the Luminary Walk.



The ladies of Sylvan Lake were welcomed out for the Garden Club Holiday Party, graciously hosted by Irene Flora.

What to look forward to in early 2024:

- Egg Hunt & Bake Sale: Saturday March 30th. The Egg Hunt kicks off at 9am sharp
- Spring Party & Meeting: Friday May 3rd, hosted by Dawn Owen



Garden Club Board

Officers

President - Jennifer Scharff
Vice President - Nancy Hanson
Treasurer - Irene Flora
Secretary - Dawn Owen

Board Members

Jen Crow
Kelly Dickinson
Bridget Duerr
Lizzy Erickson
Karen Finerty
Kathy Ford
Wendy Kjeldbjerg
Lauren Rollinger
Lisa Washburn

Sylvan Lake Dam Update

The SLIA Board will have members from Fremont Township and Lake County Stormwater Management available at our March board meeting to answer questions about the dam project, costs, and funding. We encourage everyone to attend this meeting on March 20th at 7:30pm at Countryside Fire Station (801 S. Midlothian).

Fall Cleanup Day

I know it feels a little late to thank everyone for their help on clean-up day, but better late than never. We had such a great turnout and completed so much work. Thank you to everyone that helped!



At the beach, we trimmed dead and low hanging branches, weeded and turned the mulch around the trees. We also pulled in the piers and cleaned the garbage around the shed and did our yearly shed cleaning. Thank you to Dave Benedeck and Pete Lind for leading those groups.

At Schwerman Park, Kimberly Del Bene and Scott Hansen led a small group in completing some much needed park repairs along with weeding in the pea gravel. Once again, they were the last ones working for the day, then continued the next day and several more days after that!

In Juneau Terrace, a group led by Melissa Mendiola and Alyssa Casey cut back the large honeysuckle bushes at the entrance, trimmed low hanging trees, weeded the path and the dry creek bed, planted bushes, seeded and removed the very heavy broken bench by the lake.

Led by Sandy Washburn, a large group of neighbors came together at birdhouse square to start the bird sanctuary in memory of Kathy Trahan. They cleared the area where needed and planted several bird friendly bushes and trees that were purchased through neighbor donations. Thank you Alex Grandt for picking up those donated bushes that morning.

And a huge thank you to the group led by Ryan Haukendahl who gathered the wood for our Oktoberfest fire. They hauled old wood from all over the neighborhood including from the farthest end of Ravinia across tiny bridges and up very steep hills. It was not an easy job.

Last, but not least, thank you to Tammie Trahan and Genevieve Connor for entertaining the children by making scarecrows. The kids had a blast while their parents worked hard elsewhere.



Thank you again to everyone that came out and helped. And thank you to those who help at other times of the year, but could not make it on clean-up day.

Sarah Owen

Eco-Lakers Easement Updates

There are so many updates and so much work that we did last fall that I can't even remember everything we did! After the leaves have dropped from our native trees and our native bushes, identifying the invasives becomes easy. Because of this, we saw so many new faces that were able to help out.



We started and finished Blue Heron Point in just two days, so we were able to dedicate weeks to working in Ravinia, Hiawatha Terrace, and along the W Sylvan fenceline. That doesn't even include the work we did on our neighborhood fall clean-up day. We are almost finished in Ravinia, Hiawatha and along W Sylvan and will start in Maple Park



this spring or fall. Unfortunately, invasive removal is not a once and done project. The invasive species are notoriously hard to control, so even though we cut and herbicide the stumps, some will resprout. This is where our neighborhood stewards with Tall Grass Restorations come in. They will come in and herbicide the resprouts when controlling other non-woody invasives.



It doesn't end once the invasives are removed. We can't just remove them and leave the soil bare. Invasive species are considered invasive, and not just non-native or exotic, because they outcompete our native plants and can stop anything else from growing in that area. So once they are removed, we need to replace them. We plant bushes, flowers, grasses, sedges and put down native seed and then wait. We will continually monitor these areas along with our stewards to watch for invasive regrowth, but also to make sure everything we plant survives. And if it doesn't, replace it again. We will continue this work along with new projects, such as stabilizing our streams and shorelines with native plants.

If you are interested in helping please contact Sarah Owen at Sarahstoeckel@gmail.com

ECO-CORNER #29

by Jenn Cameron

To-Do List

Hello, and Happy 2024! You probably don't need to add another thing to your list of things to do or to someone else's "Honey Do List," but we can take advantage of the milder March temperatures to prepare ourselves and our stuff for the upcoming growing and gardening season. Here are a few suggestions to start off on a green(er) foot in your yard this year:

1. Take inventory of your gardening tools. How many extra rakes, shovels, and other yard tools do you really need? I had several different rakes and shovels in my garage just hangin' around doin' nuthin'. I kept half, and the rest? Buh-bye, donated, along with a duplicate dandelion digger (remember those?!), an old bulb planter (nope), and also two broken sprinklers that were recycled.



2. Edit and safely (i.e. legally) dispose of any old bags or containers of chemical products. Read the labels carefully. Old bags may hold product that has absorbed moisture and is now unusable, any products ending in -cide (insecticide, pesticide, herbicide, etc.) are marketed to be fatal to some living thing but also are likely to cause ecological harm if inadvertently washed or blown to another area or exposed to or ingested by other insects or wildlife (both land and aquatic) > not to mention pets!



3. Inspect your hard landscaping and garden beds for necessary repairs. Wood posts and timbers rot, retaining walls sometimes fall down (ask Humpty Dumpty haha), and erosion sometimes shlumps your yard into where it doesn't belong. Plan for any repair and realignment projects before the start of the growing season. It's better to fix those things during the cooler months instead of in the middle of a hot and buggy summer.
4. Plan for your native seed and plant ordering. Online sources for native trees, plants, and seeds are beginning to ramp up, believe it or not! Browsing online can be informative and helpful to better understand what plants go where, what natural ecological benefits they will provide, and what aesthetic appeal they could add to your yard. Also be on the lookout for in-person native plant sales usually scheduled for May.



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Fremont township is always looking for volunteers for their food pantry garden and check out the eco-corner section in the newsletter for other early spring ideas to prepare for the gardening season.

The following are good resources for more information

<https://extension.illinois.edu/blogs/garden-scoop/2021-02-26-spring-garden-cleanup#:~:text=The%20best%20plan%20for%20spring,overwintered%20in%20standing%20dead%20stems.>

<https://xerces.org/blog/dont-spring-into-garden-cleanup-too-soon>

Fall Tree Plantings In Our Parks For Beautiful Blooms This Spring

Last fall we had several trees planted in our parks and several bushes at the beach, in our easements and along the W Sylvan fenceline. Many of these new trees and bushes will be covered in beautiful blooms this spring.



Look for the new Redbud in Point Comfort Park and Serviceberries in Schwerman Park. Other trees and bushes planted include Chinquapin Oak, Blue Beech, Kentucky Coffee Tree, Tulip Tree, American Plum, Pagoda Dogwood, American Hazelnut, Red

Osier Dogwood, Silky Dogwood, Grey Dogwood, our native Bush Honesuckle, Common Wiitchhazel, Ninebark and so many more that I can't remember them all! Also, new plantings at the beach included switchgrass along the beach deck, new dogwoods to replace the buckthorn removed behind the beach shed and native flower seeding and dogwoods near the cattails. More plantings will come this spring in Schwerman Park and the beach!

Sarah Owen

Sylvan Lake Board Meetings

Our volunteer SLIA board has their monthly board meetings every third Wednesday, 7:30pm at the Countryside Fire Department. Please join us to hear what's happening and being planned in our community.

SLIA Board

President	Dan Trahan
Vice President	Cliff Gartner
Treasurer	Ed Meltzer
Secretary	Jeremy Vale
Parks & Easements ...	Sarah Owen, Kimberly Del Bene
Lake	Alyssa Casey
Beach	Peter Lind
Recreation	Laurie MacKay

Garden Club

President	Jennifer Scharff
Vice President	Nancy Hanson
Treasurer	Irene Flora
Secretary	Dawn Owen

Board Members

Jen Crow	Nancy Hanson
Lauren Rollinger	Jen Scharff
Olga Zavialov	Karen Finerty
Debbie Pomazal	Nancy Brashear
Mariann Mortensen	Wendy Kjeldbjerg

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