



THE SPIRIT

Preserving the life of America's unique community

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Society

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Hall of Fame Inducts Eight

Saving Your Family Photos Topic of June Program

"Preserving Family Photographs" presented by Judi Weber, owner of Quality Plus Photo Design Center, will be our program June 28, 2015, 2:30 p.m. at Park Forest Village Hall.

Sharing family photographs helps keep the story of your ancestry alive. Our family photos are in danger! Most families have hundreds of disorganized photos deteriorating in their homes. Judi will share secrets to help you get your valuable memories back into your life.

Judi Weber is a mother, grandmother and photo lover. Certified as a Personal Photo Organizer, she has owned Quality Plus Photo Design Center in Worth for 33 years. Her passion is saving photo memories and memorabilia. She will share that with us on June 28.

This program is free and open to the general public.

Seven people who have made consistent, substantial and beneficial contributions to the life and citizens of Park Forest, along with the not-for-profit Friends of the Thorn Creek Woods, were added to the Park Forest Hall of Fame at its annual induction ceremony.

The annual event is sponsored by the Park Forest Historical Society.

The class of 2015 includes Joan Bogar Crabb, Maureen Cribbs, Judy Dolan Mendelson and her late husband Jon, Bruce Neel, former Society President Dr. Magne Olson, and former Village Manager John Perry..

Their contributions to the life of Park Forest follow.

JOAN BOGAR CRABB

Her cat may get nine lives, but Joan Bogar Crabb has lived two of her own in Park Forest. From the late 1950s to the early 1980s Joan was a homemaker and mother of four. After leaving to new jobs and to care for aging parents, she moved back to Park Forest in 2006, and to community involvement. living in one of the Village's original townhomes.

Joan was instrumental in the formation of the Park Forest Art Center, which continues today as the Tall Grass Art Center offering an art gallery, instruction, and an annual art fair. She served as a writer for the Park Forest Reporter and Star Publications, and later for Copley News Service.

Joan serves as newsletter editor for the Thorn Creek Audubon Society, which provides a yearly series on birds and environmental issues, environmental education for school children, a Hummingbird Festival and Wetlands bluebird houses.

Joan resides proudly in Park Forest Cooperatives. These uniquely historical residences offer green space, access to public transportation, and a sense of community in which one can think globally and act locally. Joan embodies the tradition of Park Foresters working to make the world a better place.



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New Members of the Park Forest Hall of Fame

MAUREEN CRIBBS

Two words closely associated with Maureen Cribbs and her contributions to Park Forest are “artist” and “teacher.” Having arrived in Park Forest in 1956 with husband Jim and daughters, Cindy and Valerie, Maureen taught for a year at Raygor Day School and one year as a Kindergarten teacher at Talala School. From 1963 to 1978 she taught at Blackhawk Junior High, then a year in the ALPS program at Rich East. She has taught at Chicago and Governors State Universities, and at Robert Morris College.



Maureen has a continuing connection with Tall Grass Arts Association almost since its inception. She served two years as volunteer director of the art school, has had two single-person gallery exhibits, has done demonstrations in art making, and is presently a board member, serving on Art Fair committees. She is a Presenter for the Art Insights program of the Art Institute, and a docent for Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park. Early on she served on Park Forest Orchestra's board and painted sets for Children's Community Theater.

She is an active members of Grace United Protestant Church, having served as Chair of the Administrative Board for 10 years. For more than 20 years she has served as a SPRED mentor.

JON MENDELSON

The late Jon Mendelson was a local teacher, field ecologist, land preservationist and writer. Though a scholarly and somewhat private person, Jon touched the lives of many people through his classes, nature center programs, writings, scientific papers, and presentations at the Open Space Congress, Thorn Creek Ecosystem Partnership, and community meetings. Jon's ecology courses at GSU inspired generations of students. His nature essays graced the pages of Thorn Creek News. Jon's words were lyrical, often provocative, sometimes whimsical, but always made one want to know more about nature.

A dedicated champion of open space, and a force of nature in his own right, he worked tirelessly to acquire land for Thorn Creek Woods and to study and protect local watersheds. He provided leadership and vision as chair of the Management Commission, president of Friends of Thorn Creek Woods, and board member for the Land Conservancy of Will County.

He was himself part of the flora and fauna of Thorn Creek. For thirty years he was caretaker for the historic farm nestled in the woods. At October's Garlic Fest, Jon showed visitors the finer points of growing organic garlic, teaching, guiding, and inspiring through words and example.

JUDY DOLAN MENDELSON

For many years, Judy Dolan Mendelson has performed the Herculean task of overseeing the day-to-day operations of the Thorn Creek Nature Center. She serves as liaison between Thorn Creek Management Commission and nature center staff, training naturalists, coordinating volunteers, developing programs, designing displays, pamphlets and more. After years with the Forest Preserve of Will County, she is secretary of Friends of Thorn Creek Woods and edits the quarterly newsletter.



Judy was an early strong voice in the local organic movement. She introduced organic produce at Park Forest Farmers Market and worked with the South Suburban Food Coop to make such items more readily available.

With her husband Jon, she has been caretaker of the 1900's Hornicek farm within Thorn Creek Woods, Illinois' second certified organic farm. Every year, the 1200 garlic bulbs grown on the farm are the centerpiece of the popular Garlic Fest, drawing hundreds of visitors and bringing much-needed funds to the center's operations budget.

What Judy does every year on the farm she also does on a larger scale for her community, for Thorn Creek, and for the Nature Center. She takes limited resources, nurtures them, brings them to fruition, and shares them with the world.

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BBRUCE L. NEEL

In more than three decades in Park Forest, Bruce Neel was always able to take time away from his job as an accountant for Swift & Co. and later for a Chicago accounting firm, to serve the people of Park Forest. As a young father, he coached, managed and sometimes umpired Boys' Baseball for seven years. More recently he organized a group of Park Foresters for the sad task of sewing shrouds for children in earthquake ravaged Haiti.



Bruce volunteers at Respond Now, working on behalf of impoverished and homeless people, as a finance officer and by soliciting food, clothing and money.

Bruce is dedicated in his work with Grace United Protestant Church, where he has served on the Finance Committee for several years, has taught Sunday School, and has served as treasurer for fourteen years. There, inspired by his wife's work with this program at St. Lawrence O'Toole Church, he started the SPRED program, which provides a worship service, and gives spiritual and social nurture to special-needs residents of the Ludeman Developmental Center. Over more than 20 years he has befriended and mentored a series of Ludeman residents including his current friend whom he brings weekly to church.

MAGNE OLSON

Dr. Magne B. Olson, Professor of History at Chicago State University, moved to Park Forest with wife Judy in 1968. He became a member and committee chairman of the Area A Coop Board, and as father to Kristofer and Rachel, coached Girls Softball, and volunteered in Indian Princesses and Indian Guides.

Magne was a member of the Bicentennial Commission from 1974-77, working on Freedom Hall and Bicentennial events, helping to bring William Whyte back for a "20 Years After" speech. He served as an advisor to the "OH! Park Forest" oral history project. He joined the Park Forest Historical Society in 1985. As the Society's president from 1987 to 2001, memberships and programming grew; the Hall of Fame began annual inductions; the "Prologue" newsletter started, and Cable TV programs and interviews were produced. In 1998, his weekly column, "Forty Years Ago," appeared in the *Park Forest Star*.



He served as advisor to the South Suburban Heritage Association from 1989-94, was a member of the Park Forest Public Library Board for eight years and was on the Board of the Suburban Library System for five years. After moving out of the area, Magne returned for a number of years to serve as a weekly volunteer with the Archival Collection.

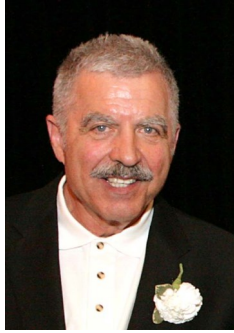


Members of the Park Forest Hall of Fame gather for a group photograph after the 2015 induction ceremony.

New Members of the Park Forest Hall of Fame

JOHN PERRY

From 1972 to 1989 John Perry, author of Blueprint for Building Community, served the Village of Park Forest as Assistant and then Village Manager. During his tenure he saved the Aqua Center and Racquet Club from closing, kept Marshall Fields in town an additional decade, and led formation of IRMA, the first municipal self-insurance pool in Illinois.



John helped shape an affirmative action strategy for fair housing in the South Suburbs, including targeted marketing and community legal action. His team defeated a lawsuit by the National Association of Realtors, setting a nationwide standard for affirmative fair housing.

In 1987, Marshall Fields announced it would leave the new development of the shopping center before the end of its lease. A Village-led, month-long initiative of petitions, publicity and demonstrations at the State Street store resulted in Fields agreeing to remain under a revised lease as anchor of the redevelopment in Park Forest for another decade.

When the Chicago YMCA announced plans in 1983 to close the Aqua Center, John convinced Village Trustees to purchase the facility, then led a volunteer cleanup crew to prepare it for opening day. Less than a year later, when financing for the Racquet Club was withdrawn, John again negotiated a Village purchase. Both of these facilities continue in operation today.

FRIENDS of THORN CREEK WOODS

Formed in 1969 as Thorn Creek Preservation Association, Friends of Thorn Creek Woods is a citizens' activist group responsible for preserving the 985 acres of pre-settlement woodland landscape. They helped secure its dedication as an Illinois Nature Preserve on June 4, 1978, and worked to form the unique inter-governmental Management Commission to oversee the preserve as one, single preserve, owned by several entities.

Against all obstacles, and there were many, Friends efforts ensured permanent protection for this land--a unique open space that enhances Park Forest and the entire region.

The preservation of Thorn Creek Woods is a history of people. Through the years, more than 1500 people organized and fought to preserve the woods. They staff the nature center, develop exhibits, lead programs, build trails, monitor species and raise funds for programs and improvements.

Thousands of visitors experience wildness in this woods--the centerpiece of an expanding network of open space in the south suburbs. Young and old, groups and individuals, schools and families, walk the trails, enjoy nature programs and explore the Nature Center. The Preserve profoundly influences the way volunteers, children and adults think about nature. Friends of Thorn Creek Woods make all this possible.



Vice-President Sue Zelek accepts for Friends

**Like us on Facebook at "Park Forest Historical Society" and "1950s Park Forest House Museum." Like both, please.
Follow us on Twitter at, "ParkForestHistory@PF60466."**

We made a Twitter account for 1950smuseum. We hope to swap it to 1950smuseum@1950smuseum. Please bear with us as we get established on some new Social Media, and learn the ropes.

Can you help? Call Jane Nicoll, at 708-481-4252 or email via www.parkforesthistory.com

In My Own Little Corner

By Jane Nicoll

May 19, 2015 the 1950s Park Forest House Museum was successfully moved to two adjoining classrooms in St. Mary Catholic Church, 227 Monee Road in Park Forest.

Thank you to the volunteers who helped pack the collection under my direction: Jane Addison, Vivian Purnell, Gretchen Falk, Anne Marie Leofanti, David Golland, Mike Gans, Carl Stover, Judith McGee, Matt Wenzel, Rose Thomas, Suzie Brown, Elisabeth Johnson, Dora Ivory, Michael Johnson and Rick Brant. Rick was a tremendous help to Jane and Carl, by helping load and unload 5 of 6 loads of things they moved by van prior to and just after the move. Mike Gans moved bricks out of the basement and into his car, and helped move in the 6th van load.



Al Jones of Superior Cabinet and Window and platform he created for the kitchen

The rooms are laid out in a reasonable facsimile of a house, after painstaking planning of the space. Big thanks to Al Jones of Superior Cabinet and Window for building a rolling platform, with "kitchen" walls to hold the original kitchen cabinets from 141 Forest Boulevard. Also, a big thanks to the maintenance staff of Central Park Apartments who



Two views of the House Museum as laid out in the St. Mary Church.



rallied to take the cabinets, bathroom sink and medicine cabinet off the walls intact. The kitchen area looks great, even with the cabinets just resting on the platform for now.

Barb Szymanski of St. Mary worked very hard over several months to clear these two rooms of furniture. We thank all of the staff of St. Mary and Father Dennis Spies for their willingness to have us there, and for the generosity and cooperation they have extended to us. Carl Stover is building a free-standing closet for the bedroom. We need a smaller hall closet built as well.

Unpacking has just begun, and will take some time — and some volunteers. We also need some volunteers to help clean up the kitchen cabinets before they can be mounted. This involves some rust abatement on the backs of the cupboards and trimming off excess latex paint attached to the cupboard edges.

Open days and hours have not been decided on, but we do know we will need more active volunteers to be able to show the museum, and we must show it to cover rent.

Consider being trained to show the museum in our new location. Contact Jane Nicoll, 708-481-4252, if you are interested. This museum simply will NOT succeed if people do not step forward to volunteer.

Society is seeking Board Members.

We are looking for more people to be considered for our Board of Directors.

Call Mike Gans, President for information on what is involved.



**PARK FOREST
HALL OF FAME
INDUCTION
HIGHLIGHTS
APRIL 12, 2015**

