



Community Engagement Department Memorandum

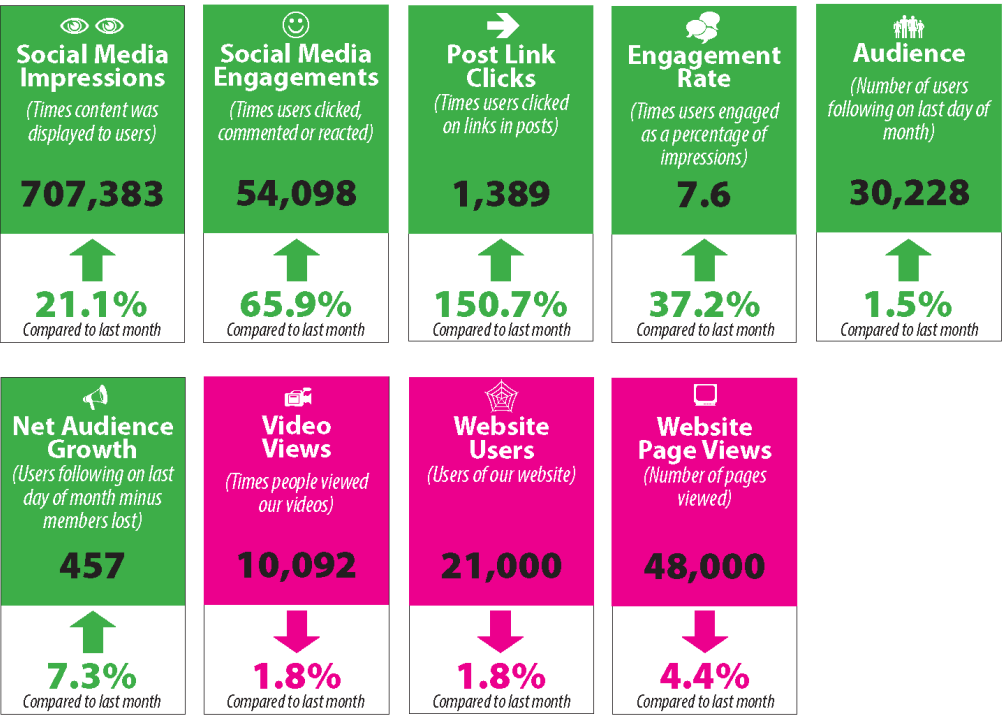
To: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
From: Laurie Metanchuk, Community Engagement Director
Date: 7/14/2026
Re: May 2026 Report

Executive Summary

Community Engagement delivered another strong month, expanding public awareness and support for the District's mission through strategic communications, environmental education, and community outreach. Digital performance tallied excellent numbers for the month, with social media impressions exceeding 707,000, engagement increasing nearly 66%, and link clicks more than doubling, demonstrating growing public interest and meaningful engagement. Conservation successes — including the threatened Least Bittern discovery — and the opening of the Arrowwood Point Archery Complex generated significant public attention and positive media coverage.

Environmental Education continued to strengthen community connections to nature through camps, public programs, and outreach, serving more than 26,700 participants year-to-date while generating program revenue. Together, these efforts continue to build public trust, increase awareness of the District's conservation mission, and reinforce the value of preserving Kane County's natural resources for future generations.

Communications & Marketing



June 2026 Report

Top Posts on Facebook, last month:

By Reach (Unique Users Shown Post)

1. Least Bittern Nest: 142,758 reached
2. Least Bittern Chicks: 47,913 reached
3. Archery First Look: 47,616 reached
4. Nathan Patched Up: 13,711 reached
5. We're hiring: 13,089 reached

By Engagement (Clicks, Reactions, Shares)

1. Least Bittern Nest: 31,345 engagements
2. Least Bittern Chicks: 5,868 engagements
3. Archery First Look: 3,506 engagements
4. We're hiring: 1,674 engagements
5. Archery Opening: 1,263 engagements

Top Pages on the Website, last month:

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| 1. Home page – 6,396 views | 7. Arrowwood Point Archery Complex – 1,278 views |
| 2. Paul Wolff Campground – 4,550 views | 8. Fabyan Windmill – 1,262 views |
| 3. Locations – 4,174 views | 9. Big Rock FP – 843 views |
| 4. Big Rock Campground – 3,163 views | 10. Public Nature Programs – 837 views |
| 5. Burlington Prairie FP – 2,496 views | |
| 6. Careers – 2,344 views | |

TreeLine Newsletter

Our current print subscribers total 5,451 (no change). Current email subscribers total 16,042 (+6), for a combined total of 21,499 subscribers (+6). As always, free subscriptions to *The TreeLine* newsletter are available at: http://bit.ly/ForestPreserve_Email.

Press Coverage

The Forest Preserve District published the following press release in June:

- Register by June 30 for Early-Bird Rate at Kane Forest Preserve Foundation Golf Outing, June 29

The District received the following coverage:

Bison

- Wild Bison Return to Illinois: How to Visit Burlington Prairie, Outside Online, June 6

Arrowwood Point Archery Complex

- Kane County opens new Arrowwood Point Archery Complex with free public event June 6, Daily Herald, June 1

June 2026 Report

Environmental Education

- Paddle and explore on the river this summer, Shaw Local, June 16

Gunnar Anderson Forest Preserve

- Geneva mom's project to honor late son leads to wind phone in Kane, Shaw Local, June 28

AKane Forest Preserve Foundation

- Register by June 30 for early-bird rate at Kane Forest Preserve Foundation golf outing, Daily Herald, June 30

Natural Resource Management

- A day in the life of a pollinator, Shaw Local, June 2
- Threatened 'Least Bittern' Nest Confirmed in Kane County Forest Preserve, Kane County Connects, June 22

Environmental Education

June Spotlight



Week in the Woods summer camps have kicked off! In June, we had Summer Unplugged, Animal Adventures, and Tracking and Survival camps. These camps have taken place at the Camp Tomo Chi-Chi Knolls in Gilberts, LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve in St. Charles, and Jon J. Duerr Forest Preserve in South Elgin. Campers in elementary and middle schools enjoyed games, crafts, lessons, and other activities while exploring nature.



Animal Adventures camp: Bird watching

Community Engagement Department Memorandum

June 2026 Report

Program Reach & Revenue Generation

In-Person Programs	Programs Planned (Monthly)	Programs Completed (Monthly)	Attendance (Monthly)	Average Attendance Per Program (Monthly)	Programs Planned (Total FY)	Programs Completed (Total FY)	Attendance (Total FY)	Average Attendance Per Program (Total FY)
Public	13	13	290	22	164	156	6,178	40
School	5	5	74	15	97	86	2,840	33
Scout	0	0	0	0	2	2	35	18
Community	8	7	247	35	62	58	1,817	31
Outreach	5	5	77	15	44	44	3,667	83
Learn from the Experts	2	2	36	18	23	22	622	28
Virtual Public*	1	1	n/a	n/a	11	11	n/a	n/a
Virtual School	n/a	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0
Program Totals	34	33	724	23	403	379	15,159	41
Nature Center Attendance			872				11,603	
Total Attendance			1,596				26,762	
Revenue	\$9,494							

*Note: Only webinars have live attendees.

^Excludes LFE/KCCN partnership revenues.

In-Person Programs

- Public Programs** – In addition to Week in the Woods, we held many other public programs. Naturalists Libman and O'Brien held a couple bison program at the Burlington Forest Preserve, *Birds & Bison* and *Red Dog Days*. They explored the prairie around the bison enclosure while discussing bison ecology.

Naturalist O'Brien explored the pond at LeRoy Oakes with the *Little Saplings* and *Twigs to Trees* programs.



Little Saplings: Pond Exploration

June 2026 Report

Naturalist Ross met a group at Voyageur Landing Forest Preserve for the monthly kayak trip. They paddled up river then floated back to the Forest Preserve.

- **School Programs** –Naturalists Libman and Lemon welcomed four homeschool networks to naturalist-guided hikes at the Hoscheit, Elburn, Dick Young and LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserves. Topics seasonal discovery hikes, insects, and prairie ecology. Naturalist O'Brien met Sunny Hill Elementary for an exploration of the woods at Helm Woods for the *Mighty Acorns* program.
- **Community & Outreach Programs** – We had many programs with daycare facilities and other organizations' summer camps. Lighthouse Academy visited with kindergartners through 5th graders for *Rivers and Streams* hikes led by naturalists Lemon and O'Brien. Naturalist Libman visited The Pearl of St. Charles to give a presentation on bats in Illinois. There was one woodland birthday party that Naturalist Ross took to explore the creek where they searched for crayfish. Naturalist interns Harriet and Faye

Nature, Virtually Everywhere! Online Programs

For patrons that can't come to the forest preserves, or choose not to gather in groups, the Environmental Education team continues its innovative work to bring high-quality nature programs to folks via podcasts, live virtual hikes, videos, and webinars. In June, we released: ***Birds in Your Yard*** – Learn some tips and tricks on how to attract birds to your backyard. With the right mindset, and a few good feeders, you can see an awesome diversity of species from your own kitchen table!

<https://youtu.be/dfiGV1b54Qc?si=bxMO4yxXflKtrSQE>

Rental Facilities

Barbara Belding Lodge at Brewster Creek Forest Preserve

In June, the lodge hosted four meetings, a fundraising event, and a baby shower, totaling \$1,100.

Creek Bend Nature Center at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve

In June, Creek Bend hosted a rehearsal dinner, two wedding ceremonies and receptions, and a Celebration of Life, totaling \$7,200.

June 2026 Report

Kane Forest Preserve Foundation

Kane Forest Golf Outing

Get ready for 18 holes of fun for a great cause during the Kane Forest Preserve Foundation's annual Golf Outing, Thursday, Sept. 10. Proceeds go to support the second phase of a Nature Play Space Project at LeRoy Oakes for young children. **Thank you to the Commissioners who have already sponsored or registered for this event. To add your name to the list and register to golf, or sponsor, visit www.kaneforestpreservefoundation.org**



18 HOLES OF GOLF - CONTESTS - FOOD & FUN!

THURSDAY, SEPT. 10
HUGHES CREEK GOLF COURSE
1749 SPRING VALLEY DR., ELBURN

- Check-In at 9 a.m. - Breakfast sponsored by Chick-Fil-A Elgin
- Tee-Off at 10 a.m.
- Lunch & Drink Tickets
- Golf concludes around 3 p.m.
- Dinner, Raffles & Auction
- Chance to win a car! Hole-in-One sponsored by Bob Jass Chevrolet of Elburn

REGISTRATION

\$450 PER FOURSOME (EARLY-BIRD SPECIAL)
\$500 AFTER JULY 1ST

SCAN TO REGISTER!



SCAN ME

GOLF FOR A GREAT CAUSE
Supporting Phase II of the Nature Play Space
at LeRoy Oakes Forest Preserve



www.kaneforestpreservefoundation.org

Sponsorships Available: KovachBrittany@kaneforest.com