

### **Environmental Education**

- Trail Tales<sup>R</sup> is being expanded to include Nippersink Forest Preserve. Partnering with Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods and both the Waukegan and Vernon Area Public Libraries, the next books have been selected. Once permissions are obtained, panel creation will begin. Brushwood Center has worked hard to obtain additional funding for this project. Current funds will allow for development of three additional story panels.
- The dates of Science First in Lake County have been adjusted to allow Waukegan students to fully participate. The end date of the school year in Waukegan was revised because of the teacher's strike.
- The Hike Lake County program has concluded for the year. Participants can collect this year's shield until the end of January. We received many of positive comments both through notes and as people come for their shields.
- The 2015 environmental education theme is, "Soils Sustain Life". There will be educational programs that focus on this theme. This theme coincides with the United Nations General Assembly recognizes 2015 as the International Year of Soils.
- Summer camp registration is currently open. Early Bird registration is available through February 15.
- Twenty-three people have requested to be on the Snowy Day email contact list since it was announced in the Winter Horizons. This is a contact list to promote impromptu snow-related activities led by Education staff. Traditionally scheduled snow-related programs were often canceled due to lack of snow so this list was created to have a greater success rate of these snow-related programs running.
- Educators are working with the natural resource staff to create an Arbor Day event at Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve; part of the US Forest Service grant requirement.
- Plans are underway for the District-wide volunteer recognition event being held at the Greenbelt Cultural Center on February 28. An invitations will be sent to commissioners soon.

### **Public Affairs**

- The new website was launched in November. Staff has received many compliments on the look and ease of use of the site. Staff continues to work on post-launch refinements and improvements.

- Staff has started to work on the materials for the Profiles in Excellence event, being held on Sunday, February 1. The 2015 theme will celebrate African-American "Youth: Strength, Courage, Our Hope for the Future".
- The District's Nature Blog had a stellar year. The posts had over 8000 views, originating from 91 countries. Visitors came from all continents, except for Antarctica.

The chart below reflects the news stories, program notices, blogs and other announcements concerning the District from January – October 2014. This reflects more than 120 sources that posted information about the LCFPD. These sources have a combined total subscription of more than 240 million people. The items were posted on the television, radio, newspaper, organization website and blogs. District biologist, Gary Glowacki was quoted in an article about Vernon Hills installing a turtle crossing sign. This article received the most attention. The District receiving the Sustain our Great Lakes Grant was also posted on many sources.

