

### **Environmental Education**

- The Lake County Forest Preserve Volunteer Recognition Brunch is scheduled for Saturday February 28, starting at 10:30 am at Greenbelt Cultural Center. All District volunteers are invited to attend. A short program will highlight the various areas of service where volunteers work.
- Recruitment for the Science First in Lake County program has begun.
- At the January committee meeting, the insurance requirements listed in the Science First in Lake County were questioned. Staff confirmed that the Chicago Botanic Garden is a self-insured entity that can provide non-standard insurance coverage amounts. The required insurance amounts listed in the contract are all possible.

### **Public Affairs**

- The Lake County Nature blog just surpassed 20,000 views with the most recent post highlighting the District's honor of receiving the Excellence in Ecological Restoration accreditation from Chicago Wilderness for the restoration work at Middlefork Savanna. This is the highest award given by the Chicago Wilderness coalition.
- Since the new website launched in mid-November more than \$150,000 in sales have been captured by the ecommerce system. This amount is larger compared to the same period last year.

### **Department Attendance Summary**

- Attendance at EE/PA Department programs and events during the first half of FY15 is up by 25% to more than 25,000. The number of programs increased by 15% during that time. The attendance figure can be attributed to very dedicated staff and volunteers, good weather (especially during the fall school programming season) and accommodation of more programming during the summer months. Summer camps schedules were adjusted to allow for programming with the camp programs of local park districts. In addition, about 700 students attended programming in July through a national program focusing on STEM education.