

Contact Information

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Regional Council
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Upcoming Events

[Click event title for more information.](#)

Office Closed

April 3, 2015
Good Friday

2015 Spring Symposium & Annual Meeting

April 24, 2015
9:30 AM
Barnacopia
2570 North Westbranch Road,
Polo, IL 61064

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BLACKHAWK HILLS Regional Council



Jo Daviess • Stephenson • Carroll • Ogle • Whiteside • Lee

Thank you for your interest in Blackhawk Hills Regional Council. You are receiving this newsletter because we would like to keep you up-to-date on projects and initiatives in the six-county region of Blackhawk Hills. We serve Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, and Whiteside Counties in northwestern Illinois.

If you have a project that you would like our assistance with, please contact our office at 815-625-3854 or submit a [Project Proposal Form](#) on our website.

If you have news or upcoming events that you would like us to share in our newsletter, on Facebook, or our website, please contact us at 815-625-3854 or by email at info@blackhawkhills.com.



Blackhawk Hills Regional Council will hold its 2015 Spring Symposium, "What to Expect When You're Expecting Change: Taxes & Transformation in Illinois" along with its Annual Meeting on Friday, April 24, 2015, at 9:30 AM at Barnacopia in Polo, Illinois.

The keynote speaker will be Carol Portman, President of the Taxpayers' Federation of Illinois. Ms. Portman will cover specific tax issues that are percolating in Springfield and how new policy may, in turn, increase or reduce revenues at the local level. Illinois State Representative Tom Demmer will give a state/legislative update. Betty Steinert, Whiteside County Enterprise Zone and Economic Development Administrator, will give an update on the Illinois Enterprise Zone Reapplication Process.

Blackhawk Hills Regional Council will host its Annual Meeting following and in conjunction with a lunch prepared by 3-Headed Monster BBQ and Catering of Shannon, Illinois.

The event is geared towards elected officials and those interested in economic development. However, all are welcome. Registration is \$12/person; please call 815-625-3854 or use blackhawkhills.com/register to RSVP.

Fulton High School Wins Envirothon

The 2015 Land Use Council 1 Envirothon Competition was held on March 10, 2015, at Highland Community College and was hosted by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Carroll, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson and Whiteside Counties. Twenty-two teams participated in the competition with Fulton High School taking 1st place. Members of Fulton's team each receive a \$500 college scholarship and advance to the State Envirothon Competition to be held on April 29 and 30, 2015, at Allerton 4-H Memorial Camp in Monticello, Illinois. The 2nd place team, Pearl City High School, will also advance to State representing Land Use Council 1 as the FFA team. Julie Jacobs, Blackhawk Hills' Office Manager, served as the emcee and a group leader at the competition.

The top three schools were:
1st Place - Fulton High School
2nd Place - Pearl City High School
3rd Place - Orangeville High School



Fulton High School team members Aaron Field, Lyndsey Tegeler, Kaylie Huizenga, Betsy Leanard, and Chistian Hutchison.

Tribute to Della Moen

Blackhawk Hills Regional Councils board members and staff are deeply saddened by the recent loss of Della Moen. Della was the longest serving council member on our board at 25 years. She joined in April of 1989 as the Stephenson County Area Representative and retired in May of 2014. Additionally, she served on the Stephenson County SWCD Board, Yellow Creek Watershed Partnership, and the Conservation Agricultural Partnership. She was also a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Earth Team volunteer, Envirothon Competition volunteer, and recording secretary of the Driftless Area Initiative. For 19 years she wrote a weekly conservation column for the Journal Standard, and these articles were published throughout the State of Illinois. Furthermore, Della was a past recipient of Blackhawk Hills' Volunteer of the Year Award. Della will be missed.



Funding Opportunities

For more information on these and other funding opportunities, please visit www.blackhawkhills.com/grants or contact our office at 815-625-3854.

[Department of Justice](#) - The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program supports projects to plan and implement place-based, community-oriented strategies to address targeted crime issues within a neighborhood. The goal is to reduce crime and improve community safety as part of a comprehensive strategy to advance neighborhood revitalization. Deadline: April 20, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Snapdragon Book Foundation](#) - The Snapdragon Book Foundation seeks to foster children's literacy by providing grants to school libraries serving disadvantaged youth. Grants are awarded to public, private, and experimental schools throughout the United States for the purchase of books. Deadline: April 24, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Voya Unsung Heroes Awards Program](#) - The Voya Unsung Heroes Awards Program provides educators nationwide with awards to help fund their innovative class projects. Full-time educators, teachers, principals, paraprofessionals, or classified staff with effective projects that improve student learning are eligible to apply. Applicants must work at an accredited K-12 public or private school located in the United States. The 100 finalists each receive an award of \$2,000. At least one award will be granted in each of the 50 United States, provided one or more qualified applications are received from each state. Of the 100 finalists, three will be selected for additional financial awards of \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$25,000. All awards must be used to further the projects within the school or school system. Deadline: April 30, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Captain Planet Foundation: EcoTech Grants](#) - The Captain Planet Foundation is dedicated to giving the next generation of environmental stewards an active understanding and love for the natural world in which they live. The Foundation is offering EcoTech Grants to schools and nonprofit organizations for the purpose of engaging children in inquiry-based projects in STEM fields that promote innovation, biomimicry/nature-based design, or new uses for technology to address environmental problems in their communities. Sixteen \$2,500 grants will be awarded. Deadline: April 30, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

[State Farm Youth Advisory Board: Service-Learning Grants Program](#) - The Youth Advisory Board's Service-Learning Grants Program funds student-led service-learning projects throughout the United States. Grant requests must fall under one of the following issue areas: community safety and justice, environmental responsibility, access to higher education/closing the achievement gap, health and wellness, economic empowerment and financial literacy, or arts and culture. Public K-12, charter, and higher education institutions are eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations are also eligible if they are able to demonstrate how they plan to interact with students in public K-12 schools. Grants range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Applications must be submitted online. Deadline: May 1, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Books for Children](#)- The Libri Foundation is a nationwide non-profit organization which donates new, quality, hardcover children's books to small, rural public libraries in the United States through its Books for Children program. Libraries are qualified on an individual basis. Libraries should be in a rural area, have a limited operating budget, and an active children's department. Applications are accepted from school libraries only if they also serve as the public library (i.e. it is open to everyone in the community, has some summer hours, and there is no public library in town). Deadlines for 2015 are: (postmarked by) May 15th, and August 15th. Click [here](#) for more information.

[Youth Literacy Grants](#) - Dollar General's Youth Literacy Grants provide funding to schools, public libraries, and nonprofit organizations to help students who are below grade level or experiencing difficulty reading. Grant funding is provided to assist in the following areas: implementing new or expanding literacy programs, purchasing new technology or equipment to support literacy initiatives, or purchasing books, materials or software for literacy programs. Deadline: May 21, 2015 (11:00 PM CST). Click [here](#) for more information.

[Gladys Brooks Foundation](#)- The Foundation focuses its grantmaking on libraries, educational institutions, and hospitals and clinics in targeted states including Illinois. Grant applications will be considered only for major expenditures, generally between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Funds are intended to be used for capital projects, including equipment and endowments. Deadline: Postmarked by May 29, 2015. Click [here](#) for more information.



Investor Luncheon

The Whiteside Area Career Center (WACC) Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities (CEO) Program will be hosting two identical luncheon sessions for current and future investors. The event will allow interested investors the chance to hear from past and current CEO students and board members, and learn how they can also help transform the economic future of the Sauk Valley Area. The luncheons will be held on April 22 and 23, 2015, each beginning at 12 PM and wrapping up at 1 PM. The event will be held at the WACC in Room 15, and lunch will be provided. Invitations will be sent and participants can choose which day to attend. If you do not receive an invite but are interested in attending, please contact the WACC at 815-626-5810 or the Blackhawk Hills office at 815-625-3854.

The mission of the CEO class is to prepare our youth to be responsible, enterprising individuals who become entrepreneurs or entrepreneurial thinkers and contribute to the economic development and sustainability of our area. It is our hope that these young entrepreneurs will follow in the footsteps of many of the entrepreneurs in our community and will reside in or return here to run their business, raise their families and give back to their community.

Shimer Arboretum Tour

A tour of the Frances Shimer Arboretum in Mount Carroll will be held on Saturday, May 9th, at 1 pm. The 14-acre arboretum has over 200 trees, some more than 100 years old, with 60 species and varieties represented. It is located on the former Shimer College campus, now known as the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation.

A highlight of the arboretum is three surviving old-growth American chestnut trees. One of these trees is listed on the "Illinois Big Tree Register" as the largest recorded in Illinois. It is over 70 feet tall. While American chestnuts were extremely plentiful in the eastern US, an introduced blight has driven the species to near extinction. These survivors are very rare.

The Arboretum Advisory Committee members will be present to lead groups, describe the history of the college and the arboretum, and explain the importance of individual tree species, their identifying characteristics, and their unique traits.

Anyone interested in an informal outdoor course on identification of trees native to Illinois, held on a beautiful historic site should attend. There is no charge for this event; it is open to the public. It is asked that you register so that you may be contact in case weather or other circumstances cause a schedule change. To register, please click [here](#).

The Campbell Center is located at 203 East Seminary, Mount Carroll, north of Route 52/64 off Illinois 78. Participants should gather in the north parking lot accessible from Seminary Street. Click [here](#) to see the location of the Campbell Center and Shimer Arboretum site.

This tour is being organized by the Northwest Illinois Forestry Association and the Shimer Arboretum Advisory Board.
