

Village of Bull Valley: Year 2021 in Review



Dear Residents,

Below you will find an update and summary of events that occurred in the year 2021. It was a busy year, in spite of it being another year of Covid and its restrictions. This report is a little long, but there is a lot of information in it. I appreciate your patience. As always, please feel free to email or call with any questions or concerns.

Emily Berendt, Village President

bvillageinfo@gmail.com

815-459-4833 Office

815-337-3101 Direct

April 1, 2022

The Monarch Mayors Pledge

The monarch butterfly, is an iconic species whose eastern populations have declined by 90% and western populations by 99% in recent years. Through the National Wildlife Federation's Mayor's Monarch Pledge, U.S. cities, municipalities and other communities are committing to create habitat for the monarch butterfly and other pollinators. The Village is participating in this program.

The Mayor's pledge document asks us to commit to undertaking three projects in furtherance of the pledge annually and identifies several ways to accomplish this. One way is to recruit, inform and assist residents about the opportunity to develop a monarch waystation on their property. Two locations have been identified so far.

The first location is at the eastern gateway to the Village along Bull Valley Road, just west of the McAndrews Glen subdivision, which itself created 25 acres of monarch and pollinator habitat over 15 years ago. It's a private residential property with approximately 150 feet of road frontage, adjacent to the 45-acre Boloria Meadows Nature Preserve. The owner will remove invasive trees and brush up to road edge, including some large non-native trees. The cleared area, approximately one-quarter to one-half acre, will then be planted with a monarch-friendly native prairie seed mix donated by a local restoration contractor.

Within two to three years this restored area will be awash with monarch host and nectar plants such as milkweed, coneflowers, blazing stars, asters, and goldenrods. The owner also has committed to continued control of invasive plant species and regular controlled burns once the prairie planting is established. They have also agreed to put up signage identifying the stretch of roadside as monarch habitat, with signs provided by the Village.

This first project is viewed as a demonstration that will be highly visible. Over time we hope that many of you will be inspired to undertake similar habitat restoration projects, creating a network of interconnected habitats that monarchs and other pollinators can travel between.

The second location for a monarch habitat is the area north of the dog park at the Still Farm, where the previous prairie restoration has been sadly neglected and overtaken by invasive species. Two enthusiastic residents have volunteered to work to revitalize the prairie in that area, and incorporate monarch habitat into the plan. The first step there, as on Bull Valley Road, will be to clear the roadside tree line for safety and visibility.

You should see activity at both sites as the weather begins to improve. Once the tree line on Queen Anne Road is cleared, you will be able to see into the restored area. Volunteers are welcome to help with the burn and seeding activities. We will send an email with dates and times of workdays when scheduled.

The third pledge we are making is to pass a Dark-Sky ordinance to reduce light pollution using guidelines of the International Dark Sky Association, Inc. The mission of the IDA is "to preserve and protect the night time environment and our heritage of dark skies through quality outdoor lighting."

If you are interested in creating a monarch habitat on your property and want more information or if you are willing to volunteer to help with the current projects, please call the Village and leave your name and number. We will put you in touch with the team leader for the project.