

A Time To Replenish



ILLINOIS SOUTH CONFERENCE PROPERTY COMMITTEE

2021 ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The Property Committee oversees the maintenance of the Highland office and DuBois Center properties. It works closely with the Outdoor Ministry Team to assess and maintain the DuBois Center property. Currently, the committee is prioritizing maintenance needs and a schedule of completion. Members of this committee are Mark Beckmeyer, Dennis Hesker, Roger Harris, Dave Hoffmann, Rev. Gary Kniepkamp, Priscilla Self, Conference Staff Rev. Shana Johnson and Hayley Elliott. Dave Hoffmann and Priscilla are the Co-Chairpersons.

The closure of DuBois Center due to the Covid-19 pandemic brought more problems and issues than usual to the Center's infrastructure. I often wondered how vacant buildings deteriorated in seemingly short time spans. Now I know. Non-use of toilets brought rust and cracks to the inner works - resulting in cracked seals and water leakage, non-use of underground sewer pipes caused root clogs and collapsed pipes, water lines that usually did not freeze in the winter – did and caused damages at the cottages and the barn, and on and on. It seems that we and the staff played catch-up so far in 2021. A huge extra thank you goes to the part-time maintenance staff – Tom Karhrhoff and Josh Meredith who have worked “above and beyond”. And then, the sudden and consistent use of the facilities during the summer resulted in broken kitchen drains causing water to leak through small cracks in the basement wall. There is good news though, all of these necessary repairs are finished, and it has brought some of the old installations up to current codes. And most of these repairs were much less intense and costly as initially feared.

These DuBois Center projects (in addition to regular maintenance items) were completed since the 2020 Illinois South Conference Annual Meeting:

Rustic Septic System was rebuilt with a modern and up-to-date underground sand filter.

Fencing along the dam road was rebuilt, straightened, and painted. Many thanks to members and friends of Grantfork UCC.

The Director's Residence was readied for the new Acting Director, Hayley Elliott, with painting, new exterior doors, new window blinds, new garage steps at the back door, back yard grading and gutter underground drains installed to stop basement ground water leakage. The Program Director's residence updates were determined but not yet finished.

The Office Renovation of painting all the walls, all new flooring, all new overhead lighting, basement ground water leak correction, new sump pump, dehumidifier and basement mold remediation were finished. Appreciation goes to committee members, volunteers from St. Paul UCC, Belleville and these financial donors - Rev. Jean Carmean, Rev. Bill and Patti Causer, Eunice Hediger, Rev. Ivan and Viv Horn, Virginia Ilch, Cara Johnson & family, Mary Lou Lurtz, Ida Nuenberger, Revs. Linda and Lev Reynolds, Rev. Carol and Mr. David Shanks, members of St. Paul UCC in Lebanon and St Paul UCC in Waterloo. All new replacement windows are ordered and will be installed by volunteers from St. Paul UCC, Columbia. These are the first major updates done to this building since it was built in 1965.

Extensive Tree Storm Damages occurred last fall and this spring. Some had to be cleaned up by a local tree service. A lot was cleaned up by staff and in exchange for the firewood by neighbor Dave Lamczyk and St. Paul UCC member Gene Paszkiewicz. It is so good to have a community of folks to call on in extraordinary times.

At Hickory Lodge, a local plumber installed all new fixtures in the downstairs restroom showers. Tom and Josh re-caulked and painted this area too. This might not sound like much, but this is a big improvement.

The Stage floor was completely rebuilt by volunteer, Dave Hoffmann, Property Committee Co-chair and member of St. Paul UCC, Belleville.

At the Barn, a new boot storage system was built by Dave Hoffmann and a major sewage issue was repaired.

A new compressor was installed in the Oak Lodge walk-in freezer. Thanks to members of St. Paul UCC in Columbia for their financial donation for this fix.

A new lawn mower was purchased, which will “pay for itself” in two years by deleting the need for a hired grass cutting service.

The Deer Run Cabins were renovated by the DuBois Green Team and Mission Team from St. Paul UCC, Freeburg. Tom Krueger, Eagle Scout from St. Paul UCC, Columbia, and several volunteers built accessible ramps to each of these three cabins. Thanks to all these persons for their efforts and donations of time, talent, and treasure. Renovations of the Deer Run Lodge and Shower House are next on their list.

The Highland Office did not need assistance from the Property Committee during this time.

PROJECTS ON-HOLD:

Oak Lodge HVAC – Due to the pandemic, this project was held up until now. The contractor is now waiting for materials to be manufactured and delivered. Thanks to all the individuals and churches that made financial donations for this project.

The New Rustic Fish-Ridge Cabin was also held up by the pandemic with the cancellation of the 2020 work week of the Mission Team from St. Paul UCC, Belleville. This project is still on their list for 2022.

The Property Committee members facilitated most of the aforementioned projects by securing bids, scheduling and supervising contractors and volunteers and doing some of the work themselves. A lot of this was necessitated by the retirement of the Director in October 2020 and the hiring of a new Acting Director in April 2021. Appreciation for their guidance and collaboration goes to Rev. Shana Johnson, Conference Minister, Jill Baker, Conference Moderator and Nancy Wagner, OMT Chairperson.

You can read about more future projects in the Annual Reports of the Conference Minister, Conference Moderator and DuBois Center Acting Director. Also, stay tuned for the DuBois 6.0 Campaign to be presented at the ISC Annual Meeting. There are many UCC churches, members and friends invested in the future of the Illinois South Conference and DuBois Center. We are grateful to every one of you.

Blessings,

Priscilla Self, ISC Property Committee Secretary and Co-Chairperson

Dave Hoffmann, ISC Property Committee Co-Chairperson