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PRESS RELEASE

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and Burpee Museum of Natural History are pleased to announce a new educational partnership that will highlight the natural history of various forest preserves throughout Winnebago County!

“We are excited to see this educational partnership between our organizations flourish by combining Burpee’s knowledge of natural history and the natural resources in our forest preserves to bring new programs and educational opportunities to our community.” **said Forest Preserves of Winnebago County Executive Director Mike Holan.**

The new program, called *Backpacking with Burpee*, will highlight subjects such as native flora and fauna, aquatics, environmental art, fossils, and more. The programs will take place throughout various forest preserves in Winnebago County and will be hosted by educators from Burpee Museum of Natural History.

Program participants will have access to a “Burpee Backpack” that will include supplies such as a portable field microscope, magnifying glass, plaster casting supplies, ID guides, and much more. Every program will be unique and encourage the natural curiosity to identify and learn about all of the different things one can notice out in the wild!

Backpacking with Burpee is open to all ages (participants 15 years and younger must be accompanied by a parent/guardian). The price of admission is \$7 flat per person. Registrations can be made on burpee.org.

“Burpee is so excited for this new partnership! Join us for our Backpacking with Burpee classes and explore the wonders of fossil hunting, bird and plant identification, and even our unique art class that will show you how to see nature from a paleoartist’s perspective. Our new, fully stocked Burpee Backpacks are packed up and ready for an adventure!” **said Burpee Museum of Natural History Director of Education and Growth April Bieschke.**

The community is invited to an Earth Day “Trash Bash” hosted by the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County and Burpee Museum of Natural History. The event will be on **Sunday, April 21, 2024** at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve (5360 Mulford Road, Cherry Valley, IL 61016) from 10 am to 12 pm. Help us kick-off our new partnership, learn about the *Backpacking with Burpee* program, and celebrate Earth Day by helping clean up litter at Blackhawk Springs Forest Preserve!

This is a free, family friendly event. Leashed dogs are welcome. Please wear appropriate attire for litter clean up; long pants, long sleeved shirts, closed toe shoes, hat, and gloves.

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About Forest Preserves of Winnebago County

The Forest Preserves of Winnebago County has been proudly dedicated to conserving, protecting, and enhancing Winnebago County's natural heritage for 100 years.