

Parks

Franklin Township Park

Located one block south of Route 72, on Third Street in Kirkland.

Focal point of the park is the Northern Illinois Veterans Memorial. The effort to bring the memorial about began in 1989 and cost \$300,000 to complete. Dedicated on Memorial Day in 1992, it was said to be “the biggest memorial of its kind in the state of Illinois.” From 3,500-4,500 persons attended the ceremony.

At the time of construction it included the names of 5,000 Illinoisans killed in various military conflicts the United States had been involved in during the 20th century. Expanded in 1996, the wall now contains 10,000 names, from as far back as the Civil War.

Chamberlain Park

Located in Genoa.

The origins date from the death in 1940 of Miss Lila Chamberlain of rural Genoa Township. She left her family home at Derby Line Road and Route 23, with its 4.6 acres of land and a small endowment, to Genoa Township for use as a park. The township teamed up with the town of Genoa however to sell the Chamberlain property and to establish a better location for a park. The small Eureka Park on Genoa’s north side was now expanded in size and renamed Chamberlain Park, in honor of Lila Chamberlain. Thus was born the Genoa Park District in 1944.

Hopkins Park DeKalb

Located at 1403 Sycamore Road.

Long been considered the crown jewel of the City of DeKalb’s park system. It was originally farmland outside the city limits. Members of the Hopkins Family first settled in rural Sycamore Township in the late 1930s, with Dr. Rufus Hopkins building the two-store red brick house now with the address 860 North Seventh Street in 1854.



He sold the land for Oakwood Cemetery (north of Ellwood House) and for St. Mary’s Cemetery (North Fourth Street and Sycamore Road). His brother Thomas Hopkins, a DeKalb attorney, had a son Jacob Hopkins, who became a judge in Chicago and in 1930 donated the land for the park in memory of his parents and sister.



Forest Preserves

Sycamore Forest Preserve

Located at 955 East State Street, along the Kishwaukee River.



The 60 acre site had been the location of the flood-prone Evergreen Village Mobile Home Park. DeKalb County acquired the property using \$7.3 million in Federal and State grants. In 2014, demolition began of the 123 mobile homes, for redevelopment of the site as open green space. To look at the land today, it is hard to visualize that anything else was ever there. Its proximity to Sycamore Park across the road helps enhance that property.

An article in the Daily Chronical from late September of 2016 referred to the new Forest Preserve as being an “Arboreal Retreat.” It’s worth driving or walking through to see how beautiful the site has become.



Afton Forest Preserve

Six miles south of DeKalb at McGirr and Crego Roads, in Afton Township.

It is DeKalb County’s largest “Forest Preserve,” but really is not. In actuality it is a nature preserve. A 240 acre farm was purchased for \$216,000 for its creation, later expanded to 316 acres.

This was a project originally of the DeKalb County United States Bicentennial Commission and is now part of the DeKalb County Forest Preserve District. The DeKalb County Board and the DeKalb County Historical Society also supported the project. A historical marker was dedicated at the Forest Preserve on April 16, 1977. Afton Forest Preserve is sometimes referred to as one of DeKalb County’s best kept secrets.

P.A. Nehring Forest Preserve

Located on Bethany Road, immediately east of the Kishwaukee River, in what is now DeKalb.

Long out in the country and private property, the 28 acre parcel had been owned by DeKalb industrialist, banker and philanthropist Paul A. Nehring (1882-1974). Acquired by the DeKalb County Forest Preserve District, the land consists of a wooded area along the east bank of the river, and a large open meadow extending south. Prior to establishment of this forest preserve, Bethany Road on extended from Route 23 to the Y.M.C.A. With designation of the forest preserve, the road was put through to connect with North First Street.

DeKalb Public Library Hours

Monday - Thursday
9:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Friday
9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Sunday
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.



Haish Memorial Library Building

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DeKalb County Tours



Parks and Forest Preserves

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