

www.nwilaudubon.org

NIAS MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Join us the first Tuesday of every month, September through May. All of our programs are open to the public.

Please note: schedule and location of programs are subject to change due to COVID-19 restrictions; please see newsletter and website for up-to-date information.

Most programs are held at the St John United Church of Christ, 1010 Park Blvd., in Freeport.

Most programs begin at 7 PM with announcements, followed by the program at 7:30 and then refreshments.

Check the current newsletter or our website nwilaudubon.org for specific monthly details, special events or any changes to the usual time and place.

Please join us!

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER:

- 2. Calendar Considerations, Preserves Oversowing, 2022 Birdathon Update
- 3. Programs, Events, Field Trips 2022 Birdseed Sale Update
- 4. The Black Birders Retreat
- 5. Conservation Committee
- 6. 2022 Christmas Bird Count

7. Thank You!

About Bird Information: birds.cornell.edu Bird Photo: Becky Matsubara Program photos provided by the presenters.

DECEMBER 2022 – JANUARY 2023

NORTHWEST ILLINOIS AUDUBON SOCIETY

A chapter of the National Audubon Society

Lapland Longspur (nonbreeding plumage) Calcarius lapponicus

Despite being one of the most abundant breeding songbirds in North America, the Lapland Longspur is remarkably easy to overlook. It breeds in the remote High Arctic and winters in vast agricultural fields that are often devoid of other birdlife in that season. The Lapland Longspur with which most birders in North America are familiar is a small, streaky thing, but during the breeding season they are spectacular. The deep black masks and chestnut napes of the males, only slightly more subdued in females, make the Lapland Longspur difficult to mistake for any other species—a far cry from their nondescript winter garb.

DR. DAN WILLIAMS SURVIVE OUTDOORS

Tuesday, December 6th Program 7:00pm

St John's Church, Freeport, IL

Dr. Dan Williams is the founder of Survive Outdoors, website and YouTube channel. He has a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology and is a Physician Assistant working at Physicians Immediate Care in Freeport, Illinois. He focuses on what to do if you get lost in the outdoors as well as how to prepare for short and long excursions in the wilderness. He is an expert in zoonotic illnesses from ticks to mosquitos and often discusses management of outdoor injuries. He has consulted for National News Outlets and contributed to the rescue attempt on the Mt Hood Avalanche.



HYBRID PROGRAM: All members of Northwest Illinois Audubon Society (that we have emails for), will receive the zoom link the week before the program. If you are not a member, we want you to join us for this great program, but you need to email, nwilaudubon@gmail.com to receive your zoom link.

BICYCLING WITH BUTTERFLIES

Presented by Sara Dykman

Zoom (from home) or in-person at St John United Church of Christ (Sara will be zooming from Mexico).

Tuesday, January 3rd Program 7:00pm

St John's Church, Freeport, IL and Zoom (remote)

In 2017, Sara Dykman became the first person to followby bicycle-the eastern population of monarch butterflies on their roundtrip, multinational, multigenerational migration. From Mexico to Canada and back, her 10,201mile adventure on a beat-up bicycle, was a call to action. "The monarchs need us," Dykman explained, "They can't call politicians to demand healthy prairie or rally for native gardens. But we can! We might not be able to fly like butterflies, but we can bike alongside them and be their voice."

Sara then wrote a book," Bicycling with Butterflies" (Timber Press, April 2021) that deftly combines a travel memoir and popular science and recounts Dykman's inspirational ride alongside the monarchs. The cast of characters is numerous, from eager schoolchildren to skeptical bar patrons, from climate deniers unimpressed to border officials and course-millions -of monarchs. Her of presentation as well as the book will be



filled with optimism, energy, and hope, "Bicycling for Butterflies" is a compelling story, confirming the urgency of saving the threatened monarch migration-and other threatened systems of nature that affect the survival of us all.

You will not want to miss this presentation!!

Sara Dykman is the founder of beyondabook.org which fosters lifelong learners, boundary pushers, exploders, and stewards. She works in amphibian research and as an outdoor educator, guiding young people into nature so they can delight in its complicated brilliance. She hopes her own adventures-walking from Mexico to Canada, canoeing the Missouri River from source to sea, and cycling over 80,000 miles across North and South America (including the monarch trip) – will empower young and old to dream big.

CALENDAR CONSIDERATIONS

W December 6 – Conservation Committee Meeting at 6:00 pm. Contact Teresa at 815-238-3963 if you would like to participate

P December 6 – Monthly Program, 7:00 pm (see page 1 for details)

B December 17 – 47th Annual Christmas Bird Count (see page 5 for details)

P January 3 – Monthly Program, 7:00 pm (see page 1 for details)

M January 4 – Conservation Committee Meeting at 6:00 pm. Contact Teresa at 815-238-3963 if you would like to participate.

I January 21 – To Build A Fire, 10:00 – 11:00 am, Oakdale Nature Preserve (*see page 3 for more details*)

E January 21 – Open Land Birding Field Trip, 9:00 am – noon (see page 3 for more details)

January 30 – Open Land Birding Field Trip, 9:00 am – noon (see page 3 for more details)





PRESERVES OVERSEEDING

Seeds of selected prairie species will be overseeded at both our Elkhorn and Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserves in December. While much of our annual seed collection is spread in areas after our early spring burn, certain species require longer periods of cold wet conditions and/or their habitat is not on this spring's burn schedule.

Since this activity is weather dependent, we'll use our contact list to notify interested volunteers. To get on the list call Mary Blackmore at 815-938-3204 or e-mail Nancy Ocken at rnocken@ gmail.com. We will try to provide as much notice as possible.

2022 BIRDATHON FUNDS DISTRIBUTED

Birdathon *Your money goes where the birds go*



This year's May Birdathon raised over \$2700. Those funds were distributed to organizations that work to protect birds and the habitats they rely on. Our chapter retained 30% of the funds raised to assist with our many programs and activities.

Many thanks go to both the Birdathon birders and individuals who sponsored one or more birders. Their generosity provided much needed funds for bird protection projects in both wintering and nesting areas, as well as migration routes.

We all look forward to the 2023 Birdathon on May 7!

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTED INCLUDE:

- Northwest Illinois Audubon Society
- National Audubon's Mississippi River Initiative
- Natural Resources Foundation of Wisconsin
- Belize Audubon Society
- Stewards of the Upper Mississippi
- Sand Bluff Bird Observatory

PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FIELD TRIPS

OPEN LAND BIRDING FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, January 2 • 9:00 am – noon Monday, January 30 • 9:00 am – noon

Coordinator: Mary Blackmore 815-938-3204 <u>Note: Registration Required</u> | Carpool from the Harbor-Freight lot (east side) in Freeport at 9:00 a.m.

This year we plan to resume our group open land birding outings, with a few changes. Masks will be required for car-poolers. If pandemic or flu conditions worsen we will cancel, so registration is required (see above). We will carpool and cruise country roads in local areas that were historically prairie. Viewing will be done predominantly from vehicles, using the cars as blinds. You may drive separately in your own vehicle, but be aware that we have a limited number of radios for communicating sightings. We will do our best to accommodate everyone's travel preferences.

Typically we'll see several species – notably Snow Bunting, Lapland Longspur and Horned Lark – on roadsides or in fields, often in abundance if there is adequate snow cover. Snowy Owls have been spotted in past years. Other species we'll search for include Rough-Legged Hawk, Northern Shrike and Merlin. Of course we'll enjoy any bird we see, including our many yearround residents.

> Ken Beach, NIFA President, leads a group on a beginning tree identification outing using the 1/3-mile hard-packed accessible trail at Oakdale Nature Preserve, August 27, 2022. | Photo by Juliet Moderow

TO BUILD A FIRE

Saturday, January 21, 2023 • 10:00 - 11:00 am

Oakdale Nature Preserve 4433 S. Cranes Grove Rd., Freeport, IL Coordinator: Adam Moderow, 815-541-5842

A campfire is an integral part of enjoying the outdoors for many people. It can also be a necessary one. When it's cold and you're in the wild, the knowledge of how to build a fire can be a vital difference in how the day turns out. During this demonstration, we will talk about building a fire in the winter, and how to manage it properly to keep you and the nature around you safe. Dress warmly. Meet by the Mogle building, just off of the parking lot.

Contact Adam Moderow at adamoderow@gmail.com or at 815-541-5842 to register in case it becomes necessary to limit the number of participants.



SUCCESSFUL BIRDSEED SALE

Good weather, great volunteers and supporters, and loyal customers came together resulting in another successful birdseed sale fundraiser. We distributed over 12 tons of product. Our profit of over \$4700 will be used to fund our many programs, activities and publications.

The sale would not have been possible without our team of dedicated volunteers who participated in seed distribution and delivery, ear corn picking, husking and bagging, flier creation and mailing, order processing and much more. Many thanks go to Lynn Feaver, Chris Kruger, Tim and Teresa Smith, Mary Blackmore, Jeff Shriver, Richard Benning, Merry Blake, Don Miller, John Jankowski, Paul Brown, Kara and Bob Gallup, Bob Wittenbeck, Laura and Doug Dufford, Nancy and Randy Ocken, Juliet and Adam Moderow and Dan Barron. Special thanks go to the members of the Birdseed Sale Committee – Tim Smith, Chris Kruger and Mary Blackmore – for their many hours of planning, coordinating and follow-up.

Many thanks go to the folks at O'Mara Transport Company for not only providing our main pickup site, but also using their forklift to assist us in staging the many pallets of seed. Thanks also go to Audubon members who hosted our regional pickup sites: John and Kay Day, Anne and Chris Straight, Chris Kruger and Jeremy Dixon. Additional thanks go to Joe and Brenda Akins for allowing us to pick ear corn in one of their fields, and to Cub Foods of Freeport for donating bags for the corn.

Be sure to remember the money-back guarantee stated in the sale flier. If you discover any seed spoilage in your bags, call Mary at 815-938-3204 and we will provide you with a refund.

With concerns about supply chain issues, truck driver shortages and inflation, we were indeed fortunate to have had a successful sale. Thank you!

MY INVITATION TO THE BLACK BIRDERS RETREAT IN GEORGIA IN OCTOBER

Juliet Moderow

On October 14-16, I was invited to attend a Black Birders Retreat in Little Saint Simons Island in Georgia. This invitation was connected to our chapter's work with the Freeport Art Museum as part of their Birds in Art exhibition in 2021 because of our shared



Juliet Moderow and Christian Cooper

for everyone. He also spoke to a larger audience and shared how his racist confrontation in Central Park propelled him to become an activist for inclusive birding in a program we called Celebrating the Diversity of Birds and People (you can still find the recording of the program on YouTube).

and inclusion in birding and art. Our community celebrated birds for months and during June of that year, we worked to bring Christian Cooper to Freeport. Christian met the children and teens at the Boys and Girls Club of Stephenson County and talked about how birding is Since then, I have kept in touch with Christian and received this invitation back in January alongside 30 other individuals across the country. I was the only one from Illinois invited to take part of this first of its kind retreat and it was a tremendous honor for me to be a part of it.

Little St. Simons Island is owned by Hank and Wendy Paulson

who then donated the island as part of a conservation easement to the Nature Conservancy to ensure that it is preserved for years to come. It is an 11.000-acre Island that is full of diverse wildlife. The birds I observed included the fall warblers and waterfowl that have recently left the Midwest, Roseate Spoonbills, Little



Roseate Spoonbill | by Juliet Moderow

Blue Herons, Tricolored Herons, Wood Storks, Black Vultures, Anhingas, so many Northern Harriers, and many species of shorebirds that live along the coastal habitat. I was also close to many alligators and an Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake that had a recent meal. There are full-time naturalists that live on the island who lead tours and provide educational opportunities to the visitors to learn about the amazing birds and other wildlife. The Paulson's provided their island with no cost to the attendees,



Front row, left to right: Sheridan Alford, Alex Troutman, Sam DeJarnett, Nicole Jackson, Isaiah Scott, Jason Hall

which was such a generous offering. The attendance was limited to 32 people due to the lodging constraints of the island, which therefore limited others to joining this opportunity. However, the hope is that this retreat is the first of many to come to include more and more people to expand our efforts of creating an inclusive birding community. Christian stated "Black birding is having its moment; we're going to make it a movement."

The weekend was short, but impactful. Aside from the birding experiences, the most rewarding part was meeting exceptional people who are making a difference in the birding community. I have already built new relationships and gained inspiration from each of them to assist our chapter as we continue to do our good work.

I hope you can learn about these wonderful people as well. Their names are listed in the photo and I also wanted to highlight a few individuals (below). I encourage you to look them up, read their books, visit their websites, listen to their podcasts, share their work, and be inspired!

To learn more about Little Saint Simons Island, visit: littlestsimonsisland.com

ADDITIONAL LINKS:

Nikola Alexandre – California; Co-founder of Shelterwood Center for Resilient Futures: Black, Indigenous, and LGBTQ-led community forest and retreat center (www.shelterwoodcollective.org)

Sheridan Alford – Lawrenceville, GA; Environmental Educator; Co-founder of Black Birders Week (www.beaniejean.com)

Danielle Belleny – San Antonio, Texas; Wildlife Biologist and Author of This is a Book for People Who Love Birds; Co-founder of Black Birders Week

Dudley Edmondson – Duluth, MN; Author of Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places (dudleyedmondson.com)

Jason Hall – Philadelphia, PA; Founder of In Color Birding Club (www.incolorbirding.org)

Tenijah Hamilton – Atlanta, GA; Program Manager at NOVA and Host/Producer of "Bring Birds Back" at Birdnote podcast (www.birdnote.org/podcasts/bringbirds-back)

Tykee James – Philadelphia, PA; Co-Founder of Amplify the Future (amplifythefuture.org); Co-founder of Black Birders Week

Corina Newsome – Atlanta, Georgia; Conservation Scientist with National Wildlife Federation; Co-founder of Black Birders Week

Dexter Patterson – Madison, WI; Founder of BIPOC Birding Club (www.bipocbirdingclub.org)

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE NEWS

REDUCE AND REUSE

Teresa Smith

I want to say one word to you. Just one word: Plastics! You might recall this line from the 1967 classic movie, The Graduate. Dustin Hoffman received this word of advice in 1967 but if a graduate of 2023 received this word of advice it would take on a different meaning. Plastics, like most things in life, have advantages and disadvantages. We see plastics in every directions that we turn today because plastic is relatively inexpensive to make and can be very durable. We are also seeing more in the news about plastics including plastic pollution. Most of the plastics from the past century are still with us today and the amount of new plastics manufactured continues to increase. According to the International Energy Agency, demand for plastics has outpaced all other bulk material such as steel, aluminum or cement nearly doubling since 2000. Plastic production is a key driver for the use of petrochemicals and a major contributor to global warming gases.

Single use packaging plastics make up nearly half of all the plastic that is manufactured. We know that less than 10% of plastics are recycled. Yes, it makes us feel good when we put plastic bottles in the recycling bin but if you follow that recycling truck to its final destination you would likely find the items being dumped into the landfill, incinerated or being chemically recycled into fuel. It is also important to note that a plastic water bottle does not get recycled into a new water bottle. The #1 and #2 plastics that are used for bottles are recycled into clothing or used to make plastic decking material.

So what is chemical recycling? Chemical recycling involves the use of very high heat (which takes high level of energy) and the output from the intense heat is a pyrolysis oil that is used as fuel. The process to make the pyrolysis oil releases large amounts of carbon dioxide into the environment and contribute to global warming gases. Environmentally not a sound practice.

So what can you do to decrease plastic pollution? Pick one plastic item that you use only once and replace it with something you can use multiple times. That one item might be converting from single- use plastic grocery bags to washable cloth grocery bags or purchasing a stainless water bottle that can be refilled millions of times. Changing our habits takes a bit of effort so make sure to share your efforts with friends around you and remember progress not perfection. Reduce and reuse before you recycle to be a part of the plastic pollution solution.

QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

Contact Teresa Smith at 815-238-3963 or timtreetsmith@gmail.com



CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

It's time once again for the Northwest Illinois Audubon Society to participate in the annual Christmas Bird Count. This will be the 47th time that our chapter has taken part in this endeavor to take one-day snapshots of types of bird species and numbers of each in approximately 2500 count circles throughout the Western Hemisphere. Our local count day is planned for December 17, 2022.

The last two years have seen changes in the way CBC field counting is organized. Because of the uncertain nature of the COVID-19 situation this year's field counting will be conducted similar to last year. The local compiler will assign territories to field count participants. Flexibility may be in order on count day if conditions allow for it. Observations at bird feeders are an important part of Christmas Bird Count data. To be a feeder counter you must be within our official count circle which extends seven and one-half miles out from its center in Read Park in Freeport. The information below tells about being a feeder counter and includes a form to fill in with your observations.

Anyone who wishes to be a feeder counter, or has questions about this year's Christmas Bird Count, should call the local compiler, Richard Benning at 815-865-5279.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT FEEDER COUNT PARTICIPATION

Participating in the CBC as a feeder counter can be a rewarding way to be a citizen scientist. Your observations will be included with our local data. You must be sure that your feeders are in our official count circle which is described above. If you are not sure that you meet this requirement call Richard Benning at the number listed above. You must do your counting on the day of our local count, December 17th.

It is asked that you spend at least a cumulative (not necessarily all at once) two hours doing your feeder observations on the day of the count. You don't have to be glued to the window watching every bird for every minute. Just check your feeder often during the hours you are counting. Then complete the form included here and mail it as indicated. Each species that you observe should include the largest number of that species seen at any one time. For example, if you see eight juncos at 8:30 a.m. and eleven juncos at 9:45 a.m. the number you should record is eleven because that is the largest number of juncos seen at any one time.

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| Phone: | |
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| Address: | |
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| Email: | |
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| Start Time: | End Time: |

| Mourning doveAmerican Tree SparrowRed-headed WoodpeckerSong SparrowRed-bellied WoodpeckerWhite-throated SparrowDowny WoodpeckerWhite-crowned SparrowHairy WoodpeckerDark-eyed JuncoNorthern FlickerNorthern CardinalBlue JayPurple FinchBlack-capped ChickadeePine SiskinTufted TitmouseAmerican GoldfinchRed-breasted NuthatchHouse SparrowBrown Creeper(other) | | _ |
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| Red-bellied WoodpeckerWhite-throated SparrowDowny WoodpeckerWhite-crowned SparrowHairy WoodpeckerDark-eyed JuncoNorthern FlickerNorthern CardinalBlue JayPurple FinchAmerican CrowHouse FinchBlack-capped ChickadeePine SiskinTufted TitmouseAmerican GoldfinchRed-breasted NuthatchHouse SparrowWhite-breasted Nuthatch(other)European Starling(other)(other)(other)(other)(other) | Mourning dove | American Tree Sparrow |
| Downy WoodpeckerWhite-crowned SparrowHairy WoodpeckerDark-eyed JuncoNorthern FlickerNorthern CardinalBlue JayPurple FinchAmerican CrowHouse FinchBlack-capped ChickadeePine SiskinTufted TitmouseAmerican GoldfinchRed-breasted Nuthatch(other)Brown Creeper(other)(other)(other)(other)(other) | Red-headed Woodpecker | Song Sparrow |
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| Northern FlickerNorthern CardinalBlue JayPurple FinchAmerican CrowHouse FinchBlack-capped ChickadeePine SiskinTufted TitmouseAmerican GoldfinchRed-breasted NuthatchHouse SparrowWhite-breasted Nuthatch(other)Brown Creeper(other)European Starling(other)(other)(other) | Downy Woodpecker | White-crowned Sparrow |
| Instrument of the function of | Hairy Woodpecker | Dark-eyed Junco |
| American CrowHouse FinchBlack-capped ChickadeePine SiskinTufted TitmouseAmerican GoldfinchRed-breasted NuthatchHouse SparrowWhite-breasted Nuthatch(other)Brown Creeper(other)European Starling(other)(other)(other)(other)(other) | Northern Flicker | Northern Cardinal |
| Black-capped Chickadee Pine Siskin Tufted Titmouse American Goldfinch Red-breasted Nuthatch House Sparrow White-breasted Nuthatch (other) Brown Creeper (other) European Starling (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) | Blue Jay | Purple Finch |
| Image: Charles | American Crow | House Finch |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch House Sparrow White-breasted Nuthatch (other) Brown Creeper (other) European Starling (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) (other) | Black-capped Chickadee | Pine Siskin |
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| | (other) | (other) |

MUST BE COMPLETED ON DECEMBER 17TH

Please mail form to: Richard Benning, P.O. Box 11, Davis, IL 61019 <u>NO LATER</u> THAN December 21st THANKS!

| Would you like to jo or give a GIFT mem | BOARD MEMBERS President Richard Benning | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| | on Society and National Membership local mailings and the national "Audubon" magazine. | Vice-President Laura Dufford Secretary Mary Blackmore Treasurer Tim Smith | |
| | National Membership \$20 | Board members At-Large: | |
| All renewals for national | memberships need to use the national membership form. | Elizabeth Boettner, Jeremy Dixon, Carol Redmore, Fred Redmore, | |
| 2. Northwest Illinois Audub | on Society Local only Membership | Fran Shriver, Steve Simpson | |
| includes this newsletter and or | ther mailings from our local chapter. | COMMITTEE CHAIRS | |
| | Local Only \$15 | Membership Jeff Shriver Conservation Teresa Smith | |
| Name of new member or gift i | recipient | Programs Don Miller Education Adam Moderow | |
| Phone | Email | Publicity Leah Dixon Field Trips Chris Kruger | |
| Address | | Equity Diversity Inclusion | |
| City | State Zip Code | Gary Gordon and Juliet Moderow | |
| City | | President Emeritus Gary Gordon | |
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| Treasurer, Northwest Illino | is Audubon Society, P.O. Box 771, Freeport, IL 61032 | rev 5/22 | |

THANK YOU!

For recent financial donations: Darrell Windell, Chuck and Patty Wenstrom, Richard Montgomery.

Lynn Feaver for mowing firebreaks at our Elkhorn Creek preserve.

Jeremy Dixon for relocating one of the Elkhorn Creek bluebird boxes to more favorable habitat at the preserve.

Recent field trip and event leaders: Adam Moderow, Mary Blackmore.

Volunteers and supporters of our annual Birdseed Sale Fundraiser (see page 2).

Tim Smith for winterizing our mower, and for removing downed trees from the trails at our Silver Creek Biodiversity Preserve.

Judy Corrie and Mary Blackmore for providing supplies for our campfire s'mores.

Mary Blackmore for organizing the campfires at our preserves.

Shey Lowman for creating the activity calendar every two months for our website.

Fall seed collecting volunteers at both preserves: Mary Blackmore, Kara Galllup, Bernard Lischwe, Pam Richards, Paul Brown, Judy and Harlan Corrie, Merry Blake, Nancy Ocken, Tim and Teresa Smith and Don Miller.

Northwest Illinois Audubon Society

P.O. Box 771 Freeport, IL 61032-0771

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When using the state switchboard simply ask to be connected to the legislators office. When using the capitol switchboard follow the series of prompts.

FEDERAL

Senator Richard Durbin

230 S. Dearborn, Suite 3892 Chicago, IL 60604 www.durbin.senate.gov/contact/

Senator Tammy Duckworth

230 S Dearborn Suite 3900, Chicago, IL 60604 312-886-3506 | www.duckworth.senate.gov/connect/

16th District Rep. Adam Kinzinger

628 Columbus Street, Suite 507, Ottawa, IL 61350 www.kinzinger.house.gov/contact/

17th District Rep. Cheri Bustos

2401 4th Ave., Rock Island IL 61201 http://bustos.house.gov/contact

STATE

45th District Sen. Brian Stewart

50 W. Douglas Street, Suite 1001, Freeport, IL 61032 stewart@ilhousegop.org

36th District Sen. Neil Anderson

1523 47th Ave, Suite 3, Moline, IL 61265 senatorneilanderson@gmail.com

89th District Rep. Andrew Chesney

50 W. Douglas Street, Suite 1001, Freeport, IL 61032 Chesney@ilhousegop.org

90th District Rep. Tom Demmer

105 E First Street, Suite 110, Dixon IL 61021 demmer@ilhousegop.org

71st District Rep. Tony McCombie

301 First Ave., Rock Falls, IL 61071 (815) 632-7384 | *McCombie@ilhousegop.org*