

ILLINI LODGE HISTORY



Councils, Camps, and Lodges

At the time the Champaign-Urbana Council was formed in 1919, the Council used a small facility at Weldon Springs called Camp Hatetokwitit, for a majority of its Scout camping. In 1934 the Council name was changed to Arrowhead and a tract of land outside of Oakwood was acquired for the new council camp. The Camp was named after Robert J. Drake. Drake came to council as a college student, and was a member of Troop 7 in Champaign. Drake was a Scout Executive with the council and while serving in this position was stricken with scarlet fever, and died at the age of thirty. The camp, which had been one of his greatest endeavors, was dedicated to his memory.

The Council initially used the Fire Crafter Organization and program to recognize outstanding campers but in 1936 decided to switch to the Order of the Arrow program because of its year round camping and program emphasis. The Fire Crafters were inducted as charter members of the OA Lodge along with that year's newly elected members. The first official induction of members took place at Camp Robert Drake and was performed by members of the Waukheon Lodge 55 from Danville. The new lodge name became Illini 92. "Illini" meaning brave men in the Algonquin tongue. The totem of the Lodge became moon feathers, a central feather in an Indian headdress.

Waukheon Lodge 55 was chartered with the "Grande Scribe" (now the National Order of the Arrow Director), in early 1933, to the Piankeshaw Council. The original name of the lodge was Swastika Lodge 55. The totem was the Indian swastika, a symbol of peace and good luck. The name was changed to Waukehon around 1937 due to the similarity of the symbol used by the unpopular Nazi Germany. The new name is the English spelling of a Dakota Sioux word WHA-KIN-YAN, which means thunderbird or bird which causes thunder.

The Piankeshaw Council camp was moved from Portland Arch to newly purchased land outside of Georgetown and named Cherokee Hills. Waukheon Lodge helped develop the property including constructing buildings, planting trees, building the campfire ring and carving totem poles. Camp Cherokee Hills was sold by Prairielands Council in 2001.

The New Lodge

Illini Lodge 55 was created through the consolidation of Waukheon Lodge 55 and Illini Lodge 92 in May of 1994. The current Lodge Chiefs of each lodge were co-chiefs for the remainder of the year. Prairielands Council was created in 1991 with the consolidation of Arrowhead Council and Piankeshaw Council. A temporary council name of Illiana was used for the first year.

The totem for Illini Lodge 55 is the White Tailed Deer, represented by a one-inch deer antler piece hung from a leather lace in the fashion of a bolo tie. The honor of Brotherhood in the lodge is represented by tying a figure eight knot on the end of each piece of lace. Vigil members are presented an antler point that is worn below the other antler piece. The antler tip has two holes, one at each end, through which the ends of the laces are passed and knotted to form a triangle.

The Executive Committee of the lodge commemorated the efforts of all the lodge's members, during the consolidation, by issuing a special charter member lodge patch with a gold border. A restriction of five per active member was placed on the gold-bordered patches. These patches were only available during our charter year. A red bordered patch with the same design serves as the trading patch. A white-bordered patch with the same design is used, among other things, to commemorate special events such as National Order of the Arrow Conferences.

Illini Lodge Helps at the Cub Scout Level

Part of the lodge's responsibility is to promote camping at the Cub Scout level. Illini Lodge introduced this by assisting with the Smilin' Pumpkin Shooting Sports Festival in 2004. The inaugural Shooting Sports Festival was a happy success with over 150 Cub Scouts plus family members hiking the paths of Camp Drake. Our goal was to provide a quality outdoor adventure for Cub Scouts early in the pack season. Many good comments were made on the great events in archery and bb guns. The event was conducted again in 2005 with great success. The event has become an annual event that Cub Scouts look forward to every year

Illini Lodge in the Order of the Arrow National Bulletin

Illini Lodge was featured in the June 2000 issue of the Order of the Arrow National Bulletin in recognition of great camp promotions with the release of the CDCD otherwise known as the CD². This was a revolutionary tool of its time as it allowed scoutmasters interested in Camp Drake access to all the forms and guides in an interactive format as well as games, pictures, videos and some history of Camp Drake. The CD² was just part of the camp promotions plans which also included the campdrake.com business card and the Camp Drake Trading Post Credit Card. Those who wish to view this article may do so online at the National Order of the Arrow's website at www.oa-bsa.org and by clicking on "National Bulletins."

Illini Lodge 55's Patch Explained

TOTEM: The totem is the White-Tailed Deer. The deer was chosen for several reasons. It was very important to the Indians native to this area, providing a source of food as well as

hides, antlers, and bones for clothing and tools. The deer is at home in our woodlands, living in harmony with all of nature. The deer is strong, stealthy, and fleet of foot, providing an ideal example of how we should treat our natural areas.

LETTERING AND SASH: The words "Illini Lodge 55" are written in a modern italic style, reflecting the progressive nature of our lodge, always leaning toward the future. The lettering is superimposed on an Ordeal Sash, signifying our common bond with one another and with all members of the Order.

EVERGREEN BRANCH: The evergreen branch at the left signifies our need, as the evergreen is, to always be filled with life, so we may always be ready to provide cheerful service.

RIVER: The rivers of our area have always been essential to life for the local inhabitants. The saltines of the Vermilion also provided salt for the Indians, and later became a valuable source of trade with settlers.

LAND: The land shows the bounties of the prairie, in the form of a field ripe for harvest, and the woodlands and grasslands which we so enjoy at both Camp Drake and Camp Cherokee Hills.

This Lodge Flap originated from the design created by Ed Sudlow in 1994. In 2013, the patch was altered slightly so that the Buck in the image is facing forward bravely into the future. The 2013 alteration was handled by then Treasurer, Kelly Chapman, Jr.

Lodge Member Responsibilities and Achievements at the Sectional, Regional and National Levels

Tom Shrimplin was Section Adviser from 1967-1978. Illini Lodge hosted the National Order of the Arrow Conference in 1963 and again in 1971. In 1963, Marion Sadorus received the Distinguished Service Award. The D.S.A. is given for outstanding service at the national level. In 1983 Ray Lee, Jr. received the Distinguished Service Award. IN 1988 in Fort Collins Colorado Jon Jones was awarded the D.S.A. Ray Lee was OA East Central Region chairman from 1980-85 and was subsequently a member of the OA National Committee. Jon Jones and Alyx Parker were Section Chiefs then OA Central Region Chiefs in the mid 1980's and 1990's respectively. In 1996, at the National Order of the Arrow Conference held at Indiana University, Jack Jones and Alyx Parker received the Distinguished Service Award. In 1998, at the National Order of the Arrow Conference held at Iowa State University, Marty Zvonar received the Distinguished Service Award. At the 2002 National Order of the Arrow Conference at Indiana University, Jeff Jones received the Distinguished Service Award. Marty was the OA Section C-4B Adviser from 1992 to 2002. Doug Dillow was the Section C-4B Staff Adviser followed by Mike Graham who served from 1992 to 2004 when Section C-4B was disbanded. He has continued to serve as the first Section C-3C Staff Adviser from 2005 to 2009. Alec J. Martin served as the Section C-4B Secretary in 2002 and Justin Minick was elected Section C-4B Secretary for 2003 and Kurt Brown finished his term as Justin left to attend the naval academy at Annapolis, Maryland. Illini Lodge continued the tradition of section secretaries as Kevin Douglas was elected the first section secretary for Section C-3C. He served the 2005 term. Cameron Hahne was elected to the position of Section C-3C Vice-Chief in 2005. In 2006 Cameron Hahne was elected Section Chief

and Brandon Price was elected Section secretary. From 2009 to 2012, Alyx Parker served as Assistant Associate Section Adviser for Section C-6A.

Recent Donations From Illini Lodge

Illini Lodge has made several large donations to Prairielands Council over the past years. These donations include 3 new staff cabins at Camp Drake, a bouldering wall at Camp Drake, a new computer at the Raymond Lee Scout Service Center, a new professionally made camp promotions video for 2004 and 2005, a projector, the Plawer Nature Shelter at Camp Drake, camp walkway, a second projector, annual FOS donations and an annual James E. West Fellowship Award. Illini Lodge members serve constantly to help maintain the Camp Robert Drake facility.