

## Staff Bios



**Stillman President - Susan Allman**

### **Susan Allman**

*Susan Allman* recently retired from Schaumburg School District 54 after teaching second, third, and fourth grade for 33 years. She received her undergraduate teaching degree from the National College of Education and got her Master's of Science in education, with an emphasis in Outdoor Education, from Northern Illinois University. Susan wrote second, third and fourth grade science curriculum used in Dist. 54 and directed the District's award-winning Project CARE, an energy awareness program aimed at 4th - 6th grade students. Ms. Allman has conducted science workshops for various groups including the corporation that sponsored cable TV's Mr. Wizard. She also taught graduate level courses in Seasonal Science for Aurora University. In addition to her educator duties, Susan has been the President of Stillman Nature Center for over twenty years and North Barrington's Village Forester for over ten years.



**Director - Mark Spreyer (at Stillman)**

### **Mark Spreyer**

*Mark Spreyer* did his graduate work in Minnesota on great gray owls and then went on to organize and direct Chicago's peregrine falcon release program. Under his leadership, Chicago hosted the first nest of peregrines in Illinois in 37 years. In 1989, he returned to Minnesota where

he worked with the Minnesota National Wildlife Refuge and other conservation organizations. In 1995, after completing work on a raptor exhibit with the Science Museum of Minnesota, Mark migrated back to Illinois to become Executive Director of the Stillman Nature Center in Barrington. During his career, Mark has also worked with the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, National Audubon Society, and Chicago Academy of Sciences plus he has taught courses for the College of Lake County and Northeastern Illinois University. Recently, Mark came out with a book of nature essays titled *Natural Digressions*. It covers everything from wildflowers to owls, with a heaping dose of Mark's humor!



Associate Naturalist - Lara Sviatke

## **Lara Sviatke**

*Lara Sviatko* is finishing a Master's in biology at Miami University of Ohio. Lara has always been involved with nature though not always as a job. She spent 20 years as a sign language interpreter and educator all the while thinking some day she could teach about nature. Wheaton's Lincoln Marsh provided her with that opportunity. There she wrote, developed and implemented nature programs for preschool through 4th grade. She also expanded a program for toddlers called "nature tots" which became very popular. In addition, Lara put together several programs for adults including a bat night hike and wildflower walks. Lara writes about and gives talks on bats. She is currently working on a project to educate people on the link between bats, agave and tequila. Lara became a volunteer at Stillman Nature Center in 2012. She handles raptors, participates in teaching, and LOVES pond study. She is particularly fond of all the critters she can find there. After being exposed to the prairie at Stillman, Lara is now working to convert her yard to native and prairie plants. When she completes her Master's, Lara hopes to teach Environmental Biology at the College of Lake County where she currently teaches a course on sign language.

