

## Hijinks in Kentucky

After a buffet breakfast in the atmospheric Rathskeller of the Seelbach Hotel, the IPPS Eastern Region Pre-Tour got off to a lively start last Wednesday with Floyds Fork Park Director Scott Martin. Scott's presentation on this unique and innovative new park was both passionate and entertaining. This

progressive project, part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parks system in Louisville, boasts a 100-year vision for community development and is the largest of its kind in the United States, winning the prestigious 'Place Maker Award' in 2010. This monumental endeavor includes over 3,800 preserved acres, with over 75 land acquisitions and a completely interactive playground designed for kids more used to electronic amusements.



Why all of this should matter to IPPS members is the tremendous need for plant materials required to connect the existing native flora to the new roadways and recreation areas envisioned by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Parklands architects. It is a very impressive and bold endeavor, continuing the Olmsted vision for Louisville area begun at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. [www.theparklands.org](http://www.theparklands.org)



The next stop took us to Frankfort to the historic Buffalo Trace Distillery, full of Kentucky tradition in the art of its unique bourbon production. Buffalo Trace is the oldest distillery still in operation, started in the 1780's. Participants enjoyed a very informative tour of various aspects involved in the distillery process. Lunch was enjoyed in a wonderful log cabin, compliments of the Buffalo Trace company, and tasting of single barrel and cream bourbons were heartily enjoyed. The gift shop provided plenty of souvenirs, mostly in the form of bottles of bourbon! The distillery is beautifully landscaped, and there are plans underway to expand the landscape to include more gardens and a specimen tree arboretum, because Buffalo Trace Distillery believes gardens will help increase visitor traffic. A presentation of these plans was introduced during the lunch by the grounds staff horticulturists.





Next on the tour was Wilson's Nurseries in Frankfort. Recently Wilson's celebrated 30 years in operation, as a retail garden center and production nursery, with 70,000 square feet of greenhouse growing space. They also work a 400 acre field-growing facility in Shelby County, as well as a 9 acre wholesale distribution center in Lexington. Even more, Wilson's has its own landscape design-build and installation division, and a charming café which regularly

attracts about 150-200 customers for weekday lunches.

The last stop of the day's tour was to the produce store of Gallrein Farms in Shelbyville. Historically the 1,000 acre farm was planted out as traditional row vegetable production, but the current generation has diversified to create a family destination. Petting zoo, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, pick-your-own, and more complete the scene to provide customers at Gallrein an experience far above the average farm stand. Among the many folksy entertainments, was this owner-manufactured barrel train.



It was a great kick-off to a great Eastern Region conference! Many thanks to the Local Site Committee, headed by Paul Cappiello.