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NEWS RELEASE

Bloomington Police Department

The Bloomington Police Department would like to make area residents aware of an unconfirmed report of a large feline in the Meacham Grove Forest Preserve, just north of US Route 20 on the border of the villages of Bloomington and Roselle. “While investigating a missing person case, officer’s observed what appeared to be a large feline, in a densely foliated area in the forest preserve,” said Bloomington Police Chief Frank Giammarese. “We are working cooperatively with police in Roselle and with the Forest Preserve District to investigate.” The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has also been made aware of this potential sighting.

The forest preserve is a habitat for many wild animals. “As a precautionary measure until the animal can be positively identified, we are asking the public to be aware of their surroundings” said Giammarese. Most wild animals tend to avoid human contact and encounters are rare. Some recommended actions should anyone ever encounter a wild animal, include:

- Avoid walking alone at dawn or dusk.
- Keep a close eye on children and family pets when walking trails in the forest preserve.
- Never approach, if you do encounter an animal, stop don’t run. Do NOT appear timid or play dead.
- Maintain eye contact. Stand tall. Look bigger by opening a coat and/or raising your arms. Slowly wave your arms and speak loudly and firmly. Throw items at the animal if necessary. Give the animal room to escape and time to move away.
- In the very rare event of an attack, fight back. Most people succeed in driving the animal away.

For more information, contact Chief Frank Giammarese or Deputy Chief Bruce Beck at (630) 529-9868.