



11.22.10

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Winter Welcome Center Hours 8 am-4:30 pm (Mon-Fri)

30239 South State Route 53

Wilmington, IL 60481

Phone: 815-423-6370

<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp>

Midewin Meadowlark Messenger Dec 2010

Here's what the bird is bringin'

Click title or scroll through

- ☆ [Calendar of Volunteer Workdays and Events for Dec-Jan](#)
- ☆ [Winter Training: Seed Cleaning Equipment](#)
- ☆ [Reminiscing the Last Couple Months with the Volunteer Staff](#)
- ☆ [Benefits of Trick or Treating: Bunker Style](#)
- ☆ [2010 Midewin Volunteer Awardees](#)
- ☆ [Some Year End Highlights](#)
- ☆ [Unsubscribe](#)



Deer Hunting Season October-January

Midewin remains open to all public land users during hunting seasons. During firearm seasons, all non-hunting visitors are required to remain on designated trails and are recommended to wear blaze orange as an extra precaution.

Public Access during Hunting Season

All hunting areas are open to the general public. The following guidelines must be observed and will be enforced to ensure a safe and enjoyable recreational experience for all visitors. Access to public lands at Midewin is by non-motorized means only –hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, snow shoeing, or cross country skiing. Trails are not snow plowed in the winter. There are nearly 33 miles of trails available for recreational access, including 22 miles for shared use by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians and 11 miles for hikers only. Equestrians and bicyclists are required to stay on these designated interim trails at all times of the year. Hikers are restricted to trails only during firearm hunting seasons. Hunters should be aware that visitors will be using the trails during their hunt and locate accordingly. All visitors during hunting season are advised to wear blaze orange for safety.

The Forest Service prohibits shooting in or within 150 yards of any building, developed recreation site, or occupied area. At Midewin, this particularly means no shooting when hikers, bicyclists, or equestrians are within 150 yards. Shooting across roads, bodies of water, and cemeteries is also prohibited. Hunters using bicycles or horses to get part way to their hunting sites must obey state laws regarding transportation of firearms. Firearms must be unloaded and completely cased while riding horses or bicycles at Midewin.

See the Midewin website for more information

<http://www.fs.fed.us/mntp/recreation/hunting.htm>

Archery

October 1st – November 18th

November 22nd – December 1st

December 6th – January 16th

Firearm

November 19th – 21st

December 2nd - 5th

Muzzleloader-Only

December 10th – 12th

[Back to Top](#)

☆ Calendar of Volunteer Workdays/ Events for Dec-Jan

DATE	TIME	MEETING LOCATION	ACTIVITY
29 November 2010 Monday	9:00 am- Noon	Midewin SO Welcome Center	Mighty Acorns Training <i>New volunteer instructors needed</i>
4 December 2010 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	Seed cleaning or planting.
* 9 December 2010 Thursday	10:00 am – 3:00pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	*Brush control, And/Or cleaning seed and planting seed in flats.
* 8 January 2011 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	*Brush control, And/Or cleaning seed and planting seed in flats.
* 13 January 2011 Thursday	TBD	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	*Brush control, And/Or cleaning seed and planting seed in flats.
* 22 January 2011 Saturday	9:00 am – 2:30pm	Midewin SO (Horticulture Bldg)	*Brush control, And/Or cleaning seed and planting seed in flats.

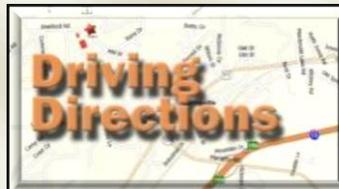
*Since brush clearing is weather dependant, these workdays may vary. Please call ahead. Sometimes we do half outdoor + half indoor.

For more information about the workshops or events listed or to RSVP contact Allison Hedden, Volunteer Coordinator at 815-423-2149 or ahedden@fs.fed.us.

Knowing how many volunteers will attend a workday allows Midewin staff to better organize the workday, and we can inform you of any changes. Workdays may be cancelled if extreme weather occurs (again, please call ahead). If you plan on staying for the entire workday, please bring your lunch. As always, Midewin will provide tools, safety gear, and water for volunteers. Children are welcome, but must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperones (for educational groups). Volunteer groups are welcome to join our workdays; many hands make for light work. Please do not bring dogs or other pets to workdays.



Click



☆ Winter Training: Seed Cleaning Equipment

people often ask me what the heck we do at Midewin in the winter season. So, I sometimes respond with 'Well, why don't you come and find out?'

There is well over 500 lbs of seed harvested each year that needs to be cleaned by hand or with our very efficient seed separating equipment. Staff and volunteers, such as Jack McNamara and Gail Pyndus (Left), are prepared to train anyone interested on these machines. There is a learning curve to understanding the delicate balance of air flow, screen sizes,

bouncing balls and brushes, but with a couple days practice, you're on your way to adding a new skill to your volunteer resume. please join us for a winter workday in December or January. Refer to calendar above.

☆ Reminiscing the Last Couple Months with the Volunteer Staff

More than 75 volunteers helped with one of four projects at Midwin on National Public Lands Day, September 25.



Midwin's trail bridge crew completed the first of two bridges that extend the west side trail through South Patrol Road restoration area.



With persistent brush cutting and herbiciding, volunteers have made a difference at the Moses Morgan historic farmstead located near the Iron Bridge Trailhead.



[Back to Top](#)



Volunteers built this sandbag wall as a temporary remedy to keep water in areas of the Middle Grant Creek wetland restoration.



On National Public Lands Day, Chief of the Forest Service, Tom Tidwell (middle) and Regional Forester, Kent Connaughton (left of Tom) met with several very special Midewin partners, such as Michael Howard and wife Amelia of Eden Place Nature Center in Chicago. Just before lunch, the Chief joined Midewin volunteers to harvest some pasture rose hips.

[Back to Top](#)



It was quite an honor to the full-time and volunteer staff to hear very meaningful speeches from (L to R) Prairie Supervisor Wade Spang; Midewin Alliance President, Jerry Heinrich; Chief Tom Tidwell; The Nature Conservancy State Director, Leslee Spraggins; and Regional Forester, Kent Connaughton. Our work here is very much respected!



[Click here for full story](#)

Wade Spang graciously shakes the hand of Jim Otis, TNC Board of Trustee Chair. The Nature Conservancy accepted this generous donation from CenterPoint Properties that will be managed in an endowment fund for the Volunteer Program at Midewin. Eric Gilbert (far left), Senior Vice President of CenterPoint presented the check signed by cofounder and CEO of CenterPoint, Mike Mullen.

[Back to Top](#)

☆ Benefits of Trick or Treating: Bunker Style

In the words of Raquel Garcia-Alvarez, Recreation Technician, Midewin

Wendy Tresouthick, Environmental Education Specialist coordinated a very well attended event called Trick or Treat Bunker Style. This event not only featured trick or treating, but also living history presentations with costumed impressionists portraying figures from the local area (past, present and future). Over 125 visitors were greeted by the spirit of a civil war soldier who was wounded in battle and buried in a local cemetery, portrayed by Walt Homan. Visitors heard stories of the Underground Railroad when they met the spirit of Caroline (interpreted by Shawnee National Forest employee Marlene Rivero) a runaway slave from the plantations of St Louis, MO. They also met a displaced farmer, based on the Hayden family (interpreted by Lorin Schab) from the 1940s, whose land was purchased by the US Army to create the Joliet Arsenal. Visitors found themselves in front of Jim Tresouthick a wildland firefighter who reassures them that fire is essential for prairie regeneration. On the last stop visitors find Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl relaxing on their day off. Thank you to the volunteers who contributed over 100 hours to make this event a huge success.



☆ 2010 Midewin Volunteer Awardees

The Volunteer Recognition Banquet is a way to reminisce and celebrate year end accomplishments, specifically on account of Midewin's terrific volunteer staff. The night consisted of a silent auction, dinner, drinks, and presentations for over 130 guests. We are grateful to ExxonMobil for sponsoring this dinner each year. Thank you also to the Midewin Alliance for much of the coordination.

The US Forest Service staff makes challenging decisions each year to narrow down volunteer awardees in each department. On November 3, we confidently presented 11 beautiful photo tiles (examples below) to volunteers for their exceptional efforts at Midewin during 2010.



[Back to Top](#)

Wall of 2010 Awardees



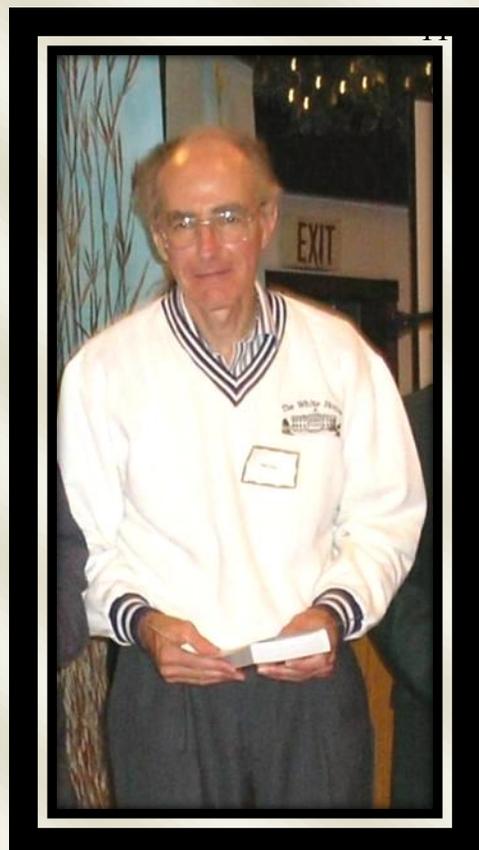
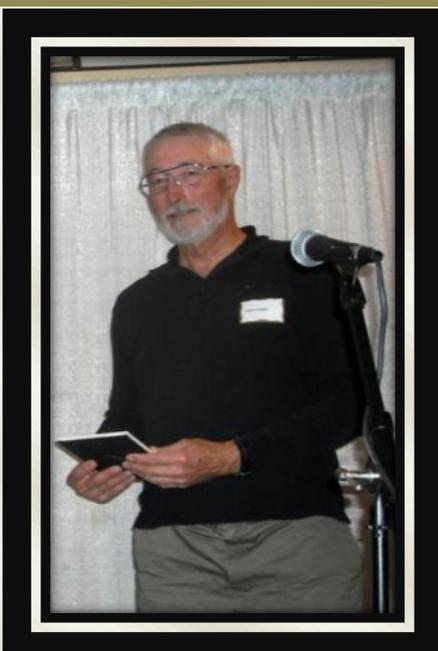
Top Left: *Trinity Services in Wilmington* has been contributing to the native landscaping around the headquarters since 2007. They also planted porcupine grass and made some native seed bombs out of mud to launch near a trail

Top Right: A heritage award went to long time volunteer, John Reddy from Joliet. Because of his experience as an employee at the Joliet Arsenal, he contributes greatly to the Heritage tour program. You may also know him as a Mighty Acorns youth program educator.

Bottom Left: A heritage award went to Emily Durkin from Manhattan who has contributed 25 hours to curating artifacts collected at Midewin.

Bottom Middle: The Public Services award went to Carol Ference of Homewood. She has contributed 250 hours this year. Carol is here to greet you on Mondays at the Welcome Center. She is a bird monitor, oral history transcriber and is also an important Alliance Board Member.

Bottom Right: A restoration award went to Kim Bumpus of Braidwood. She is here reliably on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for a diversity of seed processing tasks. She has contributed over 55 hours in just 3 months



Top Left: A restoration award went to Larry Costain of Naperville. He is known for participating in many restoration tasks such as seed harvest and processing and planting. He acquired his herbicide license for important invasive management which comes in handy as a Trail Steward on the Westside trail.

Top Middle: A restoration award went to Kirk Frazier of Frankfort. He contributes to a diversity of tasks in restoration including seed harvest and processing, planting, invasive removal and wetland management. You will see him monthly at Saturday workdays.

Top Right: After formally retiring from the Midewin volunteer staff, Bob Jones of Orland Park well deserves his Lifetime Achievement Award 2010. He has contributed his time and ideas to the restoration and education program since 1997.

Middle Group: Plainfield Central High School BioExplorations Club also received a restoration award for visiting every fall since 2008 to help with seed harvest. Cold and rainy weather does not intimidate this group.

Bottom Left: Margaret Kelly of Joliet was an obvious choice for the Ecological Monitoring award this year. She is a butterfly monitor, bird monitor, vegetation monitor, rare plants monitor with Plants of Concern, and a trail steward. Did I miss anything Margaret?

Bottom Right: Kim Meyer-Ramirez of Frankfort earned a Midewin Alliance award for her design and implementation of the Bobolinking program, getting youth involved with scientific research. They studied nest predation using motion sensing cameras and clay eggs.



☆ Some Year End Highlights

The following accomplishments have been made this year with the help of volunteers, staff, and contractors.

- Planted approximately 40,000 plugs of 100+ species at 10 Midewin locations.
- Planted seeds of 112 species in 1183 trays and pots for the shadehouse stock
- Harvested 500+ pounds of seeds from 200+ species from wild and propagated species.
- Staff began first year greenhouse crop of 1000+ plants of 20 species.
- As of 2010 there are 2450 acres from 8 sites that have been seeded, planted and reseeded with native prairie species.
- Midewin completed drain tile inventories for 457 acres (5.5 miles of drain tiles were found).
- Wetland delineation surveys were completed for 464 acres.
- Turning lanes into Midewin's Supervisor's Office have been completed.
- With the help of Recovery Act stimulus money, 7300 acres have been contracted to be treated for invasive brush and phragmites. 5000 acres of this will be treated for resprouts. Refer to Before/After photos below.
- Volunteers contributed over 8200 hours of service this year!



Well Done Everyone!

[Back to Top](#)

Midewin has a variety of volunteer opportunities year round, come and find one that fits your style or feel free to offer your own hobby:

Youth Program Instructor
Welcome Center Host
Interpreter/Ambassador
Trail maintenance
Construction
Prairie planting
Seed cleaning

Seed harvest
Ecological Monitoring
Invasive control
Landscaping
Office Assistant
Oral History Transcriber
And more...



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<mailto:ahedden@fs.fed.us?subject=unsubscribe me please>

[Back to Top](#)