



VOLUNTEER VIBE

Shawnee National Forest



Spring 2012

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SAFETY CORNER...

1. Remember to call in to Kelly (618-559-8648) when beginning and ending your volunteer service for the day. Safety is the #1 priority of the volunteer program.
2. Always check weather conditions before the trip. Be prepared and pack a survival kit to be carried by each person. Kits should include but should not be limited to the following: survival blanket, water proof matches, extra water, and food.
3. Watch out for the warning signs of hypothermia. Symptoms begin with feeling cold, experiencing pain in extremities and shivering as the body tries to raise its temperature.
4. Remember when volunteering that it is extremely important to wear proper PPE (personal protective equipment) at all times. Hardhats are a must, and gloves go a long way to protect hands. Sturdy shoes and well-worn jeans are also good as are layers, which can keep you warm and can also be easily removed if necessary.

VOLUNTEERS GET THE JOB DONE

By Chad Deaton. "HU'y kf rlg"dkrqi kuv

The wind storm of May 8th, 2009 is one of the most memorable local events in recent history. This "inland hurricane," packing 100-mph winds, ransacked Southern Illinois, snapping trees, peeling siding off homes and leaving thousands without power. The Shawnee National Forest, especially in Jackson and Union Counties, received substantial damage to the Forest as well as some facilities. One area affected heavily was the Oakwood Bottoms Interpretive Site in Jackson County. This site serves as both a picnic and interpretive area on the Great River Road and highlights this unique bottomland hardwood forest and its associated plant and animal species. The spot includes a 5 acre lake, walking trails, bridges, fishing piers, a pavilion, and a ¼ mile boardwalk through the forest. The May 8th storm left the boardwalk and bridge in shambles. At first glance, it was overwhelming to think of what resources it would take to fix the site, and with a tight budget, it seemed the area would never be rehabilitated.

On October 15th, 2011, repairs and renovations to the site were made possible through the generous efforts of a group of volunteers that were passionate about the area. The group, comprised of individuals from central Illinois, had been coming to the Oakwood Bottoms/Big Muddy area for over 30 years and had taken an interest in keeping it operational. This group of ten volunteers brought their hammers and tools and worked from daylight until dark on this Saturday. All of the rotten or damaged parts of the boardwalk and bridge were removed and replaced with new treated lumber. The bridge was completely re-decked, and the boardwalk was brushed back and leaf blown.

This was an incredible task for one day, no doubt, but because of the amazing efforts of these volunteers, the Oakwood Bottoms Interpretive Site is now completely renovated and made safe for the visiting public to enjoy. This is a great example of how volunteers can make things possible.



SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS WITH UNCLE BOB

RSVP required for all outings to Bob Tyson (618) 684-5643

April 15 (Sunday) Cave Valley Trail, Pomona, IL—Meet at 1 PM at the Shawnee NF Murphysboro Work Center. This outing will also include FS 741 trail to the north. A previous wildflower hike has identified a number of unique species along both trails and marsh land. Help us to identify these flowers.

May 6 (Sunday) Lime Kiln Trail, Ullin, IL—Meet at 11 AM at the Murdale Shopping Center sign, or at 11:30 AM at the former Walmart parking lot in Marion. This three mile trail is located in Cypress Creek National Wildlife Refuge and affords views of swamps, cypress and tupelo trees, and wildlife.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY CELEBRATION

Call Eric Johnson (618) 499-2337 for preregistration and more information

June 2 Saline County Conservation Area (Glenn O Jones Lake)—Join the River to River Trail Society as they celebrate National Trails Day with “Beans and Brats”. This event will take place at the statue of Tecumseh on Eagle Mountain from 10 AM to 3 PM. Beans and Brats will be provided, but side dishes and desserts are encouraged! There will be a special guest from Dixon Springs Ag Center there to discuss invasive plants.

SPRING TRAIL SERVICE DAYS OFF TO A GREAT START

With the help of some great weather and great volunteers, progress is being made in Panther Den Wilderness. Overall, the project has garnered an overwhelming show of support from the Carbondale area, and not just in terms of numbers of volunteers. The enthusiasm and dedication contributed is what makes these Saturdays so special, thus proving that volunteers can produce excellent results while staying safe and having fun! Via the number of return volunteers too, each experience is proving to be rewarding to all involved!



On February 24th, 17 volunteers got up on a cold morning to “break the ice” on our first trail day.

Sincere apologies go to those who were cut out of the picture!

TWO SERVICE DAYS LEFT AT GARDEN OF THE GODS

If you haven't had a chance to get out in the woods with the Shawnee Volunteer Corps this spring, it's not too late. There are still two service days planned for Garden of the Gods. Among the activities planned are a cleanup of old campsites and a revamping of the Indian Point Trail.



Photo courtesy of Michael Jeffords

When: May 13th and 19th

Where: Volunteers can meet us at the Anna Walmart at 7:30 AM or at Garden of the Gods backpacker's parking lot at 9:30

**UNIQUE PROGRAM MADE POSSIBLE BY VOLUNTEERS
CAIRO ELEMENTARY ENJOYS -A STITCH IN TIME**

On February 7th and 9th, Cairo Elementary students were treated to a special program celebrating the history of Cairo and the surrounding area. Thanks to Americorps*VISTAs Beth Dorgay and Eraina Nossa, students enjoyed two assemblies with Civil War re-enactors telling the story of struggling slaves and the war that changed the course of US history forever. The students also participated in classroom lessons about the Mounds City Marine Ways, where some of the first ironclad warships were built. Another lesson covered Cairo's role in the underground railroad. Each lesson included a hands-on activity to reinforce the subject. Every class designed their own quilt block, and with the help of some talented quilters, the blocks were made into a beautiful quilt to be displayed at their school!



Things to look for in Southern Illinois

March

23 White pelicans migrate along the Mississippi River



April

4 Flowering dogwoods bloom



21 Hummingbirds arrive from Mexico and Central America



May

5 Most trees leafing out

24 Fireflies peak this week



June

7 Purple coneflowers blooming



LNT Highlight: Leave what you Find

- Preserve the past: Examine, but do not touch, cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.



Alternative Spring Break Rules!

By: Shannon Wright

Spring breaks are usually filled with wild nights and lazy afternoons with friends and family. When you think of a spring break you don't ever think about and giving to others, unless you're part of the care break program at Slippery Rock University located in Western Pennsylvania. This year our group was fortunate enough to do our service work in the Shawnee National Forest. At the beginning of our trip we didn't realize how much we would gain by the end (and I don't just mean brand new Smokey the Bear hats). We developed critical skills such as patience, problem solving, team building, and gaining other interesting and useful information. Our group performed some tender loving care on the Shawnee National Forest's picnic and camping grounds the first two days of the week. After we were done with the Johnson Creek camping grounds and Lincoln Memorial Park, there wasn't one piece of garbage, dirty fire circle, or stray stick out of place. The next day our group had the opportunity to hike out into the Bald Knob Wilderness Area to aid in clearing downed trees left by the recent tornados. The work was strenuous, and called for a lot of patience and team work, but our group, with the help of the good and great Kelly Pearson, handled those trees like they were twigs. That same day we also hurriedly pulled garlic mustard, an invasive species, before storm clouds rolled in. On the fourth and some would say the most exciting day, our group had the privilege of becoming amateur archeologists. In fact, the Shawnee's resident archeologists showed us how to sift through the cave dirt and look for pieces of pottery and broken tools left by the early Native American tribes. Our trip was not only one of rewarding hard work but of learning as well. We were grateful that we got to learn much of the historic and biological culture of the area. The great snake migration, Lincoln-Douglas debates, and the historic Mississippians were among many topics that we were taught about. The time that this small Slippery Rock group spent in the Shawnee National Forest was definitely one that none of us will ever forget. We came to the forest hoping to make in imprint on it, little did we know that the forest would aid in teaching us so many more things than we could have imagined.



Do YOU have an article so submit to the VIBE?

If so, we would love to see it! Although some articles are written by your humble editor, they have more meaning when they come from volunteers themselves. So, don't be shy, let us know about your experience volunteering in, or just enjoying, your Shawnee National Forest. Even if you just have an idea for an article, send it to shawneevolunteercorps@yahoo.com



CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!

The Shawnee National Forest will be taking part in a variety of environmental education programs this spring and summer and is looking for assistance in a variety of ways – staffing registration tables, helping at a children’s education station, or being Woodsy Owl or Smokey Bear. No experience necessary! Volunteers can commit to a full day or just part of the day.

Event dates	Event	Event times
May 15 th & 16 th	Celebrate Youth! at Shawnee College	900am –200pm
June 9 th	Fishing Derby at Lake Glendale	800pm – 1200pm
June 12 th	<i>ARBORWILD!</i> at Evergreen Park in Carbondale	900am – 100pm
June 13 th	<i>ARBORWILD!</i> at Harrisburg Park District	900am – 100pm



Goodbye, Beth



Americorps*VISTA Beth Dorgay completed her term of service on March 1st. For a number of reasons, we are sad to see her go. During her time spent working out of the Supervisor’s Office in Harrisburg, Beth was friendly, creative and productive. She leaves behind a legacy of programs that will serve the Shawnee well into the future. These programs include the Forest Calendar of Events, Forest Photo Library and new environmental education kits and programs. Beth also played a key role in securing partnerships to bring back Larue Pine Hills Appreciation Day. She was not afraid to get her hands dirty, either. She assisted with relief efforts in Joplin, MO after last year’s deadly tornado. and participated in the Carbondale Cleanup on MLK Jr. Day. Her greatest accomplishment, though, is probably “A Stitch in Time” at Cairo Elementary School. She developed this service-learning project with fellow VISTA Eraina Nossa. Best of all, she was a fun person to be around with a great attitude. Beth is using her newfound free time to do some travelling and catch up with friends and family.



CONTACT US

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**Teamwork, Leadership, Stewardship,
Partnership, Education**

www.fs.fed.us/r9/forest/shawnee

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Volunteers in the National Forests Act

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