

VOLUNTEER



Spring 2013

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SAFETY

CORNER...

1. Remember to call in to Kelly (618-559-8648) when beginning 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 and a basic first aid kit.
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

Alternative Spring Break—Truman State University

By Andrea Watkins Davis

This year for the annual Truman State, Alpha Phi Omega spring break service trip, sixteen of us traveled to the Shawnee National Forest with the general plan of hanging out and clearing trails. We definitely did those things, but during our week volunteering, we ended up having more fun and learning a ton more than we had expected.

For a bunch of nerdy college kids like us, a week in nature was fairly out-of-the-norm. We certainly didn't know anything about chopping wood or discovering house sites in the forest. By the end of the week, though, we had mastered the names and uses for all the forest tools, learned to use a compass and a map (and even create our own maps), and also discovered a bit of history from the area. It took us some time to get everything right (one broken axe-head was proof of that), but our guides Pat and Kelly were *extremely* patient with us and made sure that whatever we were doing, we were having fun!

After the event, all sixteen of us walked away from this trip with a new appreciation for nature, and for all the hard work that goes into preserving it for everyone to enjoy. Thanks for everything, Shawnee National Forest!



Sierra Club Outings with Uncle Bob RSVP required for all outings to Bob Tyson (618) 684-5643

Spring is in full swing with the Sierra Club, and there are a bunch of exciting outings you can attend,! Below is a sampling of events too, so for a full list visit, please visit the following link:

<http://www.illinois.sierraclub.org/Outings/MobileView/>

Sun, 4/7	Thacker Hollow
Sat, 4/13	Starved Rock State Park
Sun, 5/5	Trail of Tears State Park



Visit the Sierra club website for specific information on where to meet, what to bring and what to expect on the hike and/or for more info on the Sierra club.

The SVC would like to recognize...

The Pope County Saddle Club for their **543** hours of volunteer work and their adoption of trails around Lusk Creek and the surrounding areas. Managing for equestrian use on trails is difficult, and the Pope County Saddle Club have been doing a great job! Additionally, they have earned the Presidential Service Award for contributing over 500 hours of volunteer service, Congratulations and thank you!

Cub Scout Troop 7128, Du Quoin, IL for their help at Johnson Creek Campground in removing down tree limbs off the roads. Through their efforts, they helped mitigate 8 hours of work for our recreation staff while also learning the importance of community service. Its especially important in scouting. Great job guys!

And all the GREAT Volunteer help we have gotten over the course of 2012! We had a total of 250 volunteer hours built 1 mile of sustainable hiking and equestrian trails. This includes 4 trail structures made entirely from locally found boulders. Quite the accomplishment!



The First Red-Bird

by Evaleen Stein

I heard a song at daybreak,
So honey-sweet and clear,
The essence of all joyous things
Seemed mingling in its cheer.

The frosty world about me
I searched with eager gaze,
But all was slumber-bound and wrapped
In violet-tinted haze.

Then suddenly a sunbeam
Shot slanting o'er the hill,
And once again from out the sky
I heard that honied trill.

And there upon a poplar,
Poised at its topmost height,
I saw a little singer clad
In scarlet plumage bright.

The poplar branches quivered,
By dawn winds lightly blown,
And like a breeze-swept poppy-flower
The red-bird rocked and shone.

The blue sky, and his feathers
Flashed o'er by golden light,
Oh, all my heart with rapture thrilled,
It was so sweet a sight!

Things to look for in Southern Illinois

March 21st - Vernal Equinox

March 25th - Look for Black Morel
Mushrooms



April 4th - Dogwood Trees Blooming



April 22nd - Snake Migration
At Snake Road

May 8th - Fireflies Flashing

May 15th - Bobcats begin
having
their litters



LNT Highlight— Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Spring rain, along with freezing and thawing can make trails and campsites vulnerable to foot traffic, remember...

- *Good campsites are found, not made. Site alterations are not necessary.*
- *Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites when trails are already established.*
- *Disperse use to prevent the creation of new campsites or trails.*

Shawnee Family Fun Day By Pat MacMeekin

The name is not that good, but the event will be awesome!

A group of volunteers from the Shawnee National Forest attended the Outdoor Nation Student Symposium last November.. We went with the intention of networking and learning about working in the outdoor field. During the trip, though, we were also awarded funding to put on an awesome event.

The Shawnee Family Fun Day is an event aimed at promoting basic outdoor living skills. Topics include how to pack a day pack, water conservation, navigating using a map and compass, outdoor cooking, rock art, and outdoor safety and myths.

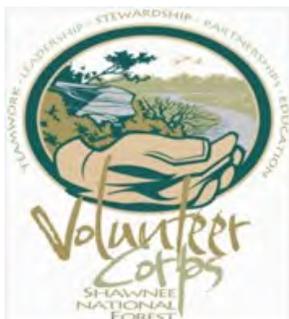
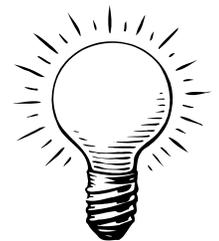
The event will start with instruction on canoeing techniques followed by a short canoe trip to the event site. There we will beach the canoes and begin the seminars. At noon, the group will come together and cook lunch using some of the techniques we learned earlier in the day. After lunch, we will resume the seminars. We'll finish the day by getting back into the canoes and return to the main beach.

But here's the best part of the whole thing: **ITS FREE!!!** This includes free transportation from the Arena Parking Lot at SIU to the event site, a free lunch, and other cool stuff we are going to learn.

Unfortunately, because it is entirely free, we have a limit of **40 available spots**. So, if you are interested in participating, please email: FriendsOfTheShawnee@gmail.com. You will be talking to Chris (he will get you all signed up and confirm your registration), **so hurry while there are still open spots!!!!!!**

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.



CONTACT US

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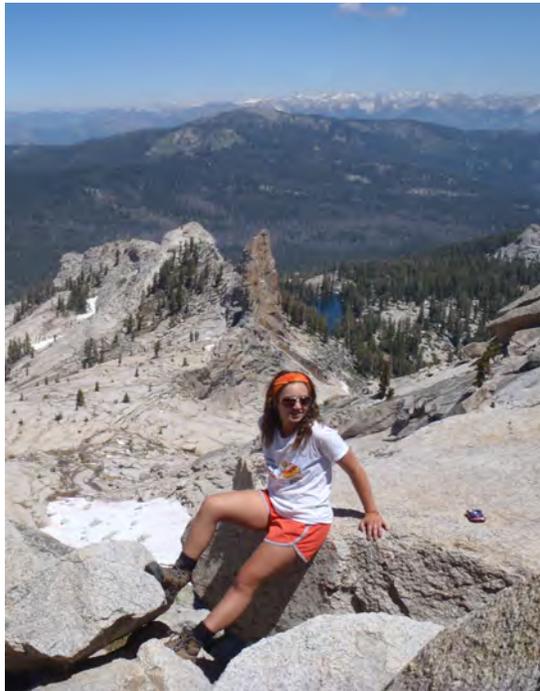
New Fieldwork Volunteer

By Bethany Becker

Hello there! I am Bethany Becker, but you can call me Beth, the new Fieldwork Volunteer this semester working with the Shawnee National Forest and Shawnee Volunteer Corps. My fieldwork consists of a 100 hour onsite hands on work with a choice of agency. I work with the lovely good-natured Kelly Pearson, District Volunteer and Wilderness Coordinator, and with his nose to the grindstone, Pat MacMeekin, the AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteer in Service to America). Working with them, I am gaining understanding of trail construction and maintenance associated with volunteer management as well as gaining more experience in program delivery with a focus in conservation education.

Getting to know me more, I am a sophomore majoring in Outdoor Recreation at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale. I love everything about the wilderness, especially hiking and backpacking to explore new surroundings.

My future goal is to teach kids and/or young adults about wilderness education and reconnect them with nature through hands on experiences. It is a wonderful feeling teaching someone who is uncomfortable with the environment and then watching how they progress and develop connections with the environment to enjoy a new nature of their own. I hope to continue to learn more and help others by teaching them outdoors skills and leading them in the wilderness.



Working with Kelly and Pat is an amazing experience that has increased my knowledge and experience in my volunteer management and program delivery in conservation education of the wilderness to help me with my future career goals. I love working with them and hope you can experience as well at our next Panther Den or Garden of the Gods service day with the Shawnee Volunteer Corps.

Hope to see you then, Beth

The American Felling Axe

The American Felling Axe is one of the oldest and most versatile traditional hand tools still used today.



17th century blacksmiths

brought the felling axe to the east coast of America from England, France, and Spain.

With the abundance of virgin timber in the eastern United States, the axes quickly began unique evolutions depending on the craftsman's location, and the axes intended purpose.

For example, the single bit, Kentucky Pattern Axe has one cutting edge and a flat back. Also referred to as an American Axe, it is the classic "axe" as we think of it today.

It became the international standard of quality by the late 1700s, when American craftsmen perfected the forging process out of necessity to tame the American wilderness, or at least try...

Conversely, the double bit axes came as the successor to the single bit. They were most likely invented by The Mann Edge Tool Company in Pennsylvania; born out of progression in technology and the need for more specialized tools as we worked westward across the continent.

The Double bit axe has two cutting edges. Typically one side of the axe was honed to a fine "felling" edge, while the other side is left slightly more blunt for chopping knots or working close to the ground.

Today, the American felling axe is still a favorite tool among natural resource professionals, especially in wilderness areas where the use of traditional hand tools are embraced and are used to maintain the pioneer spirit.

Searching for the Cherokee Trail of Tears in Southern Illinois: Service Learning on the Shawnee National Forest!

By Mary McCorvie

With the arrival of spring, March was a wonderful time to host a volunteer service learning project searching for Trail of Tears campsites on the Shawnee National Forest (NF), and volunteers took advantage of the service learning opportunity, traveling to southern Illinois from all over, including Texas, New York, Maryland, Wisconsin, Michigan, Missouri, and northern Illinois, to participate in the event. While the weather was pleasant, conditions changed overnight as it turned cold, rainy and blustery, giving the volunteers a taste of the hardships the Cherokee endured while in Illinois.

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail, which commemorates the 1838 removal and forced march of the Cherokee Indians from their eastern homeland in the Smoky Mountains to Oklahoma, extends across southern Illinois, from the Ohio River at Golconda to the Mississippi River. The Cherokee crossed southern Illinois during an unusually cold and harsh winter, and the great majority made the long and arduous journey on foot making their trek even more heart-rending. At one time during that harsh winter, there were at least five detachments of Cherokee, each containing about 1,000 Cherokee, camped in southern Illinois because the Mississippi River was frozen and dangerous to cross. The river was also too thick for the ferries to operate but too thin for a wagon to cross on.

Southern Illinois University's (SIU) Center for Archaeological Investigations is currently researching possible Trail of Tears camp locations for the National Park Service and is a partner in researching the history of Hamburg Hill during the Trail of Tears. The stretch of road on Hamburg Hill is one of the best preserved, most rustic and scenic original trail segments used during the forced removal and almost certainly contains campsites used by the Cherokee as they waited to cross the Mississippi River. The base of Hamburg Hill is a relatively wide hollow that could have accommodated a large number of Cherokees along with their tents, wagons and livestock as they waited to cross. The focus of this volunteer Passport in Time project was to search the hollow for artifacts that might have been related to the Trail of Tears.

Each morning for nearly a week, 18 volunteers, six SIU faculty and students, and two U.S. Forest Service archaeologists scrambled down the steep Hamburg Hill Road, 175 years after the Cherokee traveled down the same road on their way westward toward their new home. Days were spent excavating archaeological units in the valley, searching for items that might have been lost by the Cherokee as they camped near Clear Creek. A few early nineteenth century artifacts were recovered, including a small fragment of a green shell-edged plate. Although no items recovered during the volunteer project were conclusively proven to be Cherokee, the Passport in Time volunteers and students enjoyed their time in their out-of-doors classroom and took home many lessons on Cherokee history and culture as part of this Service Learning project. Volunteers also started to fill a gap in knowledge about that terrible yet significant episode in the nation's history called the "trail where they cried," which has now come to be known as the Trail of Tears.



1972 - 2012



Volunteers in the National Forests Act

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