

# "i Volunteer" Newsletter

## Illinois Department of Natural Resources Volunteer Network Program

Spring, 2012

Volume 4, Issue 1

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

IDNR Volunteer Opportunities	2
Earth Day in the Parks Locations Available!	5
Order your 2012 Pink Camo Big Buck, Turkey and Morel Pins	5
~Friend to Friend~ Fundraising ideas	6
National Volunteer Week... April 15-21	8

## IT'S A NEW CAMPING SEASON!

### *We Still Need a Few Campground Hosts!*

Do you have an enthusiasm for working with the public and love to camp? If so, the perfect option for some volunteers is to serve as a **Campground Host**. We offer a free campsite in any of approximately 55 state parks in exchange for 35 hours a week. Hosts, in return, are given a designated campsite with water and electrical hookups at no charge for the duration of their stay. We have a few sites in need of campground hosts for this season beginning **April 1**. If you are interested, contact:

**Johnson Sauk State Park**, Kewanee at: [Melinda.Kitchens@illinois.gov](mailto:Melinda.Kitchens@illinois.gov)  
**Kankakee River State Park**, Bourbonnais at: [Kathy.Pangle@illinois.gov](mailto:Kathy.Pangle@illinois.gov)  
**Starved Rock State Park**, Utica at: [Tom.Levy@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Levy@illinois.gov)  
**Mississippi Palasides State Park**, Savanna at: [Loren.Swanson@illinois.gov](mailto:Loren.Swanson@illinois.gov)  
**Apple River Canyon State Park**, Apple River, at: [Jay.Nottrott@illinois.gov](mailto:Jay.Nottrott@illinois.gov)  
**White Pines Forest State Park**, Mt. Morris at: [Elmer.Stauffer@illinois.gov](mailto:Elmer.Stauffer@illinois.gov)  
**Sangchris Lake State Park**, Rochester at: [Steve.Carey@illinois.gov](mailto:Steve.Carey@illinois.gov)  
**Clinton Lake State Recreation Area**, DeWitt: [Tom.Jackson@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Jackson@illinois.gov)

For more information on these sites go to: <http://dnr.state.il.us/lands/landmgt/parks/>

### "i Volunteer" Newsletter

The "i Volunteer" Newsletter is published quarterly by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Division of Special Events, Programs and Promotions, Volunteer Network Program, IDNR Region IV Office, 4521 Alton Commerce Pkwy, Alton, IL 62002

Editor and Program Manager:  
Dianne Blasa  
Email:  
[dianne.blasa@illinois.gov](mailto:dianne.blasa@illinois.gov)



*George & Elaine Dossett preparing for this season as Campground Hosts at Shabbona Lake State Park,  
Photo by Andy Belan, Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

**For more information on Campground Hosts in your area,** contact your local **Park Office**, or the **IDNR Campground Host Coordinator** at 217-785-8129 or email: [Barbara.L.Foster@illinois.gov](mailto:Barbara.L.Foster@illinois.gov)

## IDNR VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### WOLF ROAD PRAIRIE NATURE PRESERVE

*Volunteers Wanted and Appreciated!*

Help **SAVE THE PRAIRIE SOCIETY** maintain and restore **Wolf Road Prairie Nature Preserve** in Westchester and the surrounding area. You can work at the Prairie House and gardens, or lead groups through the prairie as a tour guide. Volunteer opportunities abound for all who are interested. For further updates on upcoming workdays in March and April, visit their website at <http://savetheprairiesociety.org> or you can call **708-562-3280** to get involved!



*Wolf Road Prairie,  
Photo by Dan Kirk,  
Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

#### THANK YOU!

Elm Middle School 's 8th graders (from Elmwood) decided to raise money on behalf of STPS. Under the guidance of science teacher Geri Rode, they successfully raised dozens of house plants that were then sold to help support Prairie maintenance.

### CACHE RIVER STATE NATURAL AREA

*No Experience Necessary!*

**Cache River State Natural Area** is looking for volunteers to assist at the site and at **Barkhausen Cache River Wetlands Center** near Cypress, Illinois.

Depending on the position, volunteers commit up to 8 hours a month. Positions in need of volunteers are Hiking Trail Steward, Blue Bird Trail Steward, Wetlands Center Associate, and Landscape Steward.

This is a great opportunity for individuals who enjoy sharing nature. On-the-job training will provide the information, experience and confidence necessary to enjoy this rewarding opportunity.

Interested adults should send a short email note to Site Interpreter Mollie Oliver, [Mollie.Oliver@illinois.gov](mailto:Mollie.Oliver@illinois.gov), explaining their interest in this opportunity. Please include daytime phone number for contact, as well as a home address to which a volunteer application may be sent. You may also call **618-657-2064**, Wednesday through Sunday.

### HENNEPIN CANAL STATE TRAIL

For **Youth Service Day** and **EARTH DAY** the **Friends of the Hennepin Canal** and the **Rock River Development Authority** are planning a **CLEAN THE CANAL DAY** on **April 22**. Volunteers will be needed from Geneseo to Rock Falls. If you are interested, meet at Lock 22, 23, or 24 to receive your assignment of approximately 2 miles long. If you need further information, you may email **Barbara Mueller** at [snobank2@yahoo.com](mailto:snobank2@yahoo.com).

## MORE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### VISITOR CENTER VOLUNTEERS

Our Site Interpreter, at **Kankakee River State Park** in Bourbonnais, is very busy during the months of **April through June** with programs and school guided hikes. The Visitor Center remains closed when she is away and she would love to have volunteers help her keep the Center open, offer information and/or work with children. Contact: **Stacey Johnson**, Site Interpreter at: [Stacey.Johnson@illinois.gov](mailto:Stacey.Johnson@illinois.gov) or call her at **815-933-1383 ext. 25** if you are interested.

**Beall Woods State Park** in Mt. Carmel has many programs scheduled during **April, May and June**. They would appreciate anyone who would volunteer to help at the Visitor Center anytime during the week or on weekends. Contact Site Interpreter, **Jacque Hallam**, at **618-298-2441** or email [Jacque.Hallam@illinois.gov](mailto:Jacque.Hallam@illinois.gov) if you are interested.

**Bridget Hinchee**, Site Interpreter at **Argyle Lake State Park** in Colchester, needs volunteers to help at the Visitor Center this **Spring and Summer**. For more specific information or to volunteer, please call the park visitor center at **309-776-3422** or email [Bridget.Hinchee@illinois.gov](mailto:Bridget.Hinchee@illinois.gov).

Visitor Center Docents are needed at **Moraine Hills State Park** in McHenry on **Weekdays**. Contact the Natural Resources Coordinator, **Stacy Iwanicki**, at **815-344-1294** or email [Stacy.Iwanicki@illinois.gov](mailto:Stacy.Iwanicki@illinois.gov) if you are interested.

---

### ARGYLE LAKE STATE PARK

#### *Native Wildlife Habitat Improvement Spring Exotic Plant Removal Workday!*

Come and spend a few hours outdoors helping **The Friends of Argyle Lake State Park** on **May 19 at 9:00 a.m. to Noon** to improve native wildlife habitat by removing nonnative plants from the woods. Litter collecting is an option for younger volunteers who may be too little to use tools. Bring a sack lunch and enjoy a picnic after you work! Tools and gloves will be provided or bring your own. Meet at **Argyle Lake State Park Visitor Center** in Colchester. For more program information, please call the park at **(309)776-3422** or email [Bridget.Hinchee@illinois.gov](mailto:Bridget.Hinchee@illinois.gov). **Help Save our Park!**

---

### GOOSE LAKE PRAIRIE STATE NATURAL AREA

Would you like to bring volunteer assistance to **Goose Lake Prairie SNA** in Morris, IL? You may even want to become one of the partners of the Goose Lake Prairie Partners. They are currently working on the upcoming **Earth Day** activities in **April** and the **28th Annual Cabin Festival** which will be held Saturday, **June 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

The Cabin Festival is an annual event to celebrate cabin living and life in the 1830's. The Partners are also constantly looking for period re-enactors to help with the Cabin Festival. Crafts that pioneers would most likely make in the 1800s is their emphasis. To find out how you can help, contact the **Goose Lake Prairie SNA Visitor Center** at **(815) 942-2899** or email **Susie Johnson** at: [cjohnson0969@comcast.net](mailto:cjohnson0969@comcast.net). You could also play a vital part in the preservation of a unique natural area. Visit the **Partners** website at: <http://gooselakeprairie.org>.

---

## MORE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### HELP TEACH A CHILD THE FUN OF FISHING!

A child can become hooked on fishing the first time he experiences that tug of a fish on the end of his line. Here are two ideal events, hosted by the **Better Fishing Association**, that need volunteers to help youth and their family learn how to enjoy the sport of fishing together.

*Annual Kid's Fishing Expo Photo by Barry Welbers,  
President of the Better Fishing Association*



**Volunteers Needed:**

**14th Annual Kid's Fishing Expo**, at Baker Lake in Peru. You can volunteer Friday, **May 18, 9:00 am** for setup and/or at the event Saturday, **May 19, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm** to be a volunteer instructor or assistant at the stations (Fishing Safety, Fishing Equipment, Knot Tying, Casting, etc.)

Note: Instructors are provided with scripts to follow during their demos.

**For More information contact:** Mark Dudek at 815-220-3901, or Tom Wall at 815-223-3671

**27th Annual Lock 14 Kid's Fishing Tournament**, at Canal Lock 14 in LaSalle. You can volunteer Friday, **June 8, 9:00 am** for setup and/or for the event on Saturday, **June 9 7:30 am to 11:00 am** to help with registration and fish measuring stations.

**For More Information Contact:** Ray Sandrolini at 815-223-2382, or Tom Wall at 815-223-3671.

Visit the **Better Fishing Association** website at <http://www.better-fishing-assoc.org/>

---

## HOW YOU CAN HELP TORNADO VICTIMS IN ILLINOIS

Have you been wondering how you can help those in southern illinois to recover from the EF-4 tornado and severe storms that struck the area on February 29<sup>th</sup>? Harrisburg, plus the counties of Gallatin, Randolph, Saline, Union and Williamson counties were affected by the storms in Illinois. A recent assessment found that 104 homes were destroyed, 50 suffered major damage, and 276 others were seriously damaged. Even one of our own parks, Giant City, sustained damage and the headquarters building for the Shawnee National Forest; together with the Hospital in Harrisburg and 33 businesses in Saline County were either damaged or destroyed. If you would like to help:

**Volunteer Information**

Volunteers wanting to help should call **Operation Blessing** at 618-294-9600.

You can find out updated and more information about the disaster relief at <http://www.ready.illinois.gov/>

---



## EARTH DAY IN THE PARKS

### *Locations Still Available!*

*Earth Day in the Parks* is an event to promote stewardship of our natural resources by Illinois school children. During **April and May**, students and their teachers from throughout Illinois will come to participating Illinois state parks to take part in natural resources stewardship activities.

Registration is still open. Participation will be awarded based on a first come, first served basis for these remaining parks:

**Volo Bog State Natural Area**, Ingleside, McHenry County – April 19 – seeking one class from grades 7-10 to plant native woodland wildflowers

**Tunnel Hill State Trail**, Vienna, Johnson County – May 2 – any of grades 7-10 to plant a butterfly garden

**Argyle Lake State Park**, Colchester, McDonough County – May 2 – seeking an additional class from grades 9-12 to build and install fish attractors

**Beall Woods State Park**, Mt. Carmel, Wabash County – May 3 - any of grades 7-10 to plant native aquatic and prairie vegetation

Teachers, if you are interested in having your class participate, complete and submit the application form at <http://dnr.state.il.us/education/CLASSRM/EDITPinstruct.htm> as soon as possible.

This website will also give you information and answer all your questions about **Earth Day in the Parks**.

The Program is sponsored by the IDNR in cooperation with the Illinois Conservation Foundation. Funds have been contributed toward this event from many individuals and organizations and for 2012, grants were received from the Illinois Conservation Foundation and the Illinois Wildlife Preservation Fund.

## Order Your 2012 *Pink Camo Big Buck, Turkey & Morel Pins!*

Big Buck Pins available for only \$5.00 .... You'll want to add one of these pins to your collection; proceeds of big buck and morel pins support [Sportsmen Against Hunger](#), a program that gives hunters the opportunity to donate venison to needy families in Illinois; proceeds from the sale of turkey pins support youth programs.



Click here to order your [Turkey, Morel and Big Buck pins](#) by mailing a check for \$5.00 (each) to: **Illinois Conservation Foundation, Pin Department, 1 Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702.**

For additional information call **Tracy Shafer at 217-785-5091** or email [tracy.shafer@illinois.gov](mailto:tracy.shafer@illinois.gov).

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of these special 2012 pins will benefit breast cancer research and awareness

The following have contributed to this Newsletter: *Serve Illinois Spring 2012 Newsletter; HandsOn Network Website: <http://www.handsonnetwork.org/nationalprograms/signatureevents/nvw>; and The Prairie Volunteer Newsletter, March/April 2012.*

~FRIEND TO FRIEND~

GET A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS!

Friends Groups have great ideas to share! This will be a page dedicated to sharing information, your ideas and expertise with other IDNR Friends and Volunteer Groups. Do you have questions that other Friends Groups could answer for you? We will save this page of the Newsletter to help facilitate greater networking and communications among our Friends. You can get help and advice from others across the state facing similar challenges; discuss issues; and share ideas for strengthening your group so that we can better protect and promote our sites.

QUESTION: "Our Park needs help! Do you have a unique or successful fundraising idea?"

ANSWER FROM Friends of Hennepin Canal: The Friends of the Hennepin, formed in 1998, and Renaissance Hennepin, formed in 2010, will hold a Fundraising Gala, Unlocking the Journey, on March 23 at the Annawan Best Western Hotel & Banquet Center. The Hennepin Canal, opened in 1907, was ruled obsolete and closed to navigation in 1951; became a 104-mile long state park in 1977 and is listed as a National Historic Place. The Renaissance Hennepin goal is to restore three locks east of Geneseo and create a 50-mile long navigable waterway. The proceeds from the Gala will help provide funds to accomplish their goals. It will include a cocktail hour, buffet dinner with music, silent auction, a play ("The Lock Tender" by Richmond Hill Players) and display of canal treasures. For complete information or to order tickets (\$45 per person or \$75 per couple) go to their Website: www.friends-hennepin-canal.org, call (309) 944-2244, or email Catherine Foes at: farmgirl14@gmail.com. You can upload a Poster of the event at: http://www.friends-hennepin-canal.org/wp-content/uploads/poster.pdf

ANSWER FROM Save the Prairie Society: Save the Prairie Society sold Commemorative Bricks for a Commemorative Walkway at the Prairie House Museum/Nature Center.

Sample Brick Order Form:

Friends of the Prairie House Commemorative Bricks

Only \$100 Buys your own brick.... Your brick(s) will be located in the Commemorative Walkway at the Prairie House Museum/Nature Center.

Your etched, personal message of 3 lines of 13 characters each, will become a long lasting tribute. (Fill in lines to the right - please print).

Three horizontal lines for etching a message.

If an 8" X 8" or a double brick is desired, please enclose \$200.00 and we will contact you concerning the design of your inscription. (All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law).

Name
Address City
State Zip Phone
E mail



Dedicated Save the Prairie Volunteer building the walkway with your bricks

For more information, visit Save the Prairie Website at: http://savetheprairiesociety.org.

A complete list of IDNR Friends Groups can be found at: http://www.dnr.state.il.us/volunteer/FriendsGroups.pdf



**ADDITIONAL LINKS**



**You can access any of the websites mentioned in this Newsletter or send emails by Ctrl + left click**

For more information, to change your email address or to subscribe or unsubscribe to the "i Volunteer" Newsletter you may email: **Dianne Blasa**, the Volunteer Network Program Manager at:  
[dnr.volunteers@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.volunteers@illinois.gov)

The IDNR Volunteer Network Program utilizes thousands of volunteers each year. The volunteers who devote their time and efforts are a vital resource in the management and protection of our natural and recreational resources. Our volunteers are individuals, community organizations, youth groups, retired people, families and people of all ages and backgrounds who would like to help us fulfill our mission "to manage, protect and sustain Illinois' natural and cultural resources, provide resource-compatible recreational opportunities and promote natural resource-related public safety, education and science".

Thank you for giving back to your community!

*Dianne Blasa*

Volunteer Network Program Manager

**National Volunteer Week is April 15-21 this year!**



**We want to recognize and celebrate the efforts of our volunteers.** This is "a time to inspire and encourage people to seek out imaginative ways to engage in their communities. It is all about demonstrating that by working together, we have the fortitude to meet our challenges and accomplish our goals". *Points of Light Institute*

**IDNR Volunteers contributed more than a quarter million hours last year and provided immense value to our State Parks and Natural Resources!** Please tell us about the impact volunteers are making in your community or through your organization by emailing [dnr.volunteers@illinois.gov](mailto:dnr.volunteers@illinois.gov).

This is the time of year for **IDNR staff** to be thinking about who they want to nominate for Outstanding Volunteer of the Year, Friends Group of the Year or Volunteer Group of the Year. **IDNR Staff** can email [dianne.blasa@illinois.gov](mailto:dianne.blasa@illinois.gov) for more information or go to *SharePoint* for the **Volunteer of the Year Nomination Form**.

**"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot...things aren't going to get better, they're NOT!"**  
-- Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

**Go Green! Print this only when necessary. Thank you for helping the State of Illinois be environmentally responsible.**