



The

# Volunteer View

A quarterly newsletter to keep the Forest Preserve District of Kane County volunteers informed.

WINTER 2011 EDITION

Robb Cleave, *Editor*

Tracey Smith, *Copy Editor*

## Upcoming Volunteer Events

### Annual Stewards Meeting

**Date:** February 16  
**Time:** 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.  
**Place:** Brewster Creek Lodge, St. Charles.

### Co-Op Workday

**Date:** February 25th  
**Time:** 9 a.m. to Noon  
**Place:** Schweitzer Woods F.P.

### Volunteer Orientation

**Date:** March 5th  
**Time:** 7pm — 8pm  
**Place:** Fox Valley Ice Arena, Geneva

### Herbicide Training

**Date:** March 7th  
**Time:** 6 pm — 8pm  
**Place:** Brewster Creek Lodge, St. Charles

### Maple Sugaring

**Date:** March 10th & 11th  
**Time:** 1 pm — 4 pm  
**Place:** Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve, Elburn

## Big Events and Beautiful Weather Highlight a Great Fall for the District Volunteers

The fall season is always an exciting one for volunteers at the District. Whether talking about the Windmill Docents and Millers wrapping up another successful visitor season or our education volunteers hosting huge events one after another, everyone really stepped up. The Mounted Rangers elected new leadership and our Natural Areas Management volunteers stayed busy with an impressive array of projects and workdays. Read on to find out what else is new with some of your favorite volunteer groups.

### Natural Areas Management

From Seed Teams to school groups, the Naturals Areas Management volunteers really went the extra mile this fall. We had an amazing turn out all season at Seed Team with a great Seed Mixing Festival, which took place on November 18th at the Aurora West F.P. shop. With an energetic group all season, we collected native prairie and woodland seeds from all corners of Kane County. Natural Areas volunteers also had the distinct pleasure of working alongside about 35 football players from St. Charles East High School doing restoration and mulching work at LeRoy Oakes. Keeping with the scholastic theme, Geneva Middle School South also assisted in collecting native seed from Dick Young F.P. along with volunteers. Just because the warm weather has finally slipped away does not mean that you can not still join a steward at one of our many winter workdays that can be found on the next page. Hope to see you all in the preserves!

### Education



Photo by Robb Cleave

Volunteer Mounted Ranger Lori Johnson and her horse Puff entertain the public and assist with parking at the annual Harvest of the Acorn Moon event at Oakhurst F.P. in Aurora.

Our education volunteers did not miss a beat helping out our naturalists putting on some of the District's biggest events this fall. Volunteers made their presence felt at the Harvest of the Acorn Moon, Friday Night Frights and Dick Young F.P. where 250 8th grade students from Geneva Middle School—South participated in a service/education project! All of these hugely successful events went above and beyond what our volunteers do on a regular basis helping lead programs with the Naturalists and acting as hosts to our Nature Center at Tekakwitha Woods F.P. We are always looking to add to the ranks of these wonderful volunteers, so contact the Volunteer Coordinator if you would like more information.

### Mounted Rangers

The Mounted Rangers wrapped up another successful fall season of (continued on pg 3)

# Restoration Workdays

To be added to the workday email list or for questions, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at (630) 762-2741 or [Volunteer@Kaneforest.com](mailto:Volunteer@Kaneforest.com)

## **Aurora West Forest Preserve, Aurora**

*Steward: Michael Adamski*

January 19 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 16 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 15 from 9 a.m. to noon

## **Big Rock Forest Preserve, Big Rock**

*Steward: Brian Griffin*

January 7 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 4 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 3 from 9 a.m. to noon

## **Bliss Woods Forest Preserve, Sugar Grove**

*Steward: Mary Ochenschlager*

January 28 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 25 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 24 from 9 a.m. to noon

## **Burnidge Forest Preserve, Elgin**

*Steward: Gary Swick, Chris Townsend*

January 21 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
February 18 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
March 17 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

## **Campton Forest Preserve, St. Charles**

*Steward: Brad Jones*

Call the District for Dates & Times

## **Dick Young Forest Preserve, Batavia**

*Steward: Jacques Hooymans*

January 3 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
February 7 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
March 6 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

## **Fabyan Forest Preserve, Geneva**

*Steward: Bob Lootens, Jon Cooper*

January 14 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 11 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 10 from 9 a.m. to noon

## **Freeman Kame Forest Preserve, Rutland Township**

*Steward: Mike Ander*

Call District for Dates and Times

## **Glenwood Park Forest Preserve, Aurora**

*Steward: Kathy Vranek*

January 7 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 4 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 3 from 9 a.m. to noon

## **Johnson's Mound Forest Preserve, Elburn**

*Steward: Kim Haag, Jim Judd*

January 19 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.  
February 16 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.  
March 15 from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

## **Leroy Oakes Forest Preserve, St. Charles**

*Steward: Tim Balassie*

January 17 from 9:30 a.m. to noon  
February 21 from 9:30 a.m. to noon  
March 20 from 9:30 a.m. to noon

## **Les Arends Forest Preserve, Batavia**

*Steward: Martin Valenzuela, Therese Michels*

January 14 from 9 a.m. to noon  
February 11 from 9 a.m. to noon  
March 10 from 9 a.m. to noon



Photo by Robb Cleave

From left to right: Staff members Andy Olnas and Bill Graser with volunteer Robert Liva (in training) preparing for a prescribed burn at Muirhead Springs F.P.



Photo by Robb Cleave

Restoration Technician Amy Halsall speaks with Jacques Hooymans during a seed harvest at LeRoy Oakes F.P.

# Welcome New Volunteers!

## Natural Areas Management

- Quinn Ryan
- Linsey Crowninshield
- Ali Milani
- Trevor McCarren
- Douglas Kullen
- Maria Byer
- Matt Kispert
- Courtney Cameron
- Jason Hargrove
- Ryan Heldt

## Mounted Rangers

- Linda Shuster
- Anita Kaenel
- Diane Cunningham

## Education

- Marissa Happ
- Barb Mckittrick

**Congratulations** on joining the District's volunteer corp. We look forward to working with you!



## Volunteer Wrap-Up

(Continued from page 1) cross country races with the annual Chief's cook-out at Creek Bend F.P. in St. Charles on October 29th. In addition to all their amazing work on parking duty during cross country meets, the rangers also partook in several parades, including the St. Charles Christmas parade. At the November meeting the Rangers elected new leadership. The new officers are as follows: Warren Rylko—President, Colleen Levy—Vice President, Linda Fidler—Secretary, Janet Parker—Treasurer. Please join us in welcoming all the new officers!

### Windmill Millers and Docents

Our Millers and Docents at the Fabyan Windmill wrapped up the regular tour season in October but have been celebrating their accomplishments ever since! On the Miller side of things, the volunteers racked up the most hours since 2006, with over 800. June 2011 was also the third most Miller hours in a month (194) in the history of the Fabyan Miller volunteers. In addition to all the groups success, individual Millers Roger Henry and Head Miller, Mark Rivecco hit lifetime marks of 900 hours 2000 hours lifetime, respectively.

The Docents also did more than their fair share in showing around 5213 visitors to the windmill. With all the record-breaking goings on, Docents Shawn and Pam VanKampen were gracious enough to throw a holiday party at their home for all the windmill volunteers on January 7th. Now that the official tour season is over, the winter is a time for volunteers to keep the windmill up to par with regular repairs and maintenance. The regular weekend tour schedule begins mid-April until mid-October, hope you can stop by and see a Kane County treasure.

### Snowmobile Safety Patrol

One word can describe the Snowmobile Safety Patrol (SSP) this fall antsy. With the trail signs up in November and everyone rearing to go, someone forgot to tell Mother Nature to do her part. Finally, our pseudo winter dropped enough snow for sledding just weeks ago and the group is off and patrolling. There might not be another blizzard like last year but if there is you can take solace in the fact the SSP will be looking out for the public's safety. The SSP is also going to be working with our Mounted Rangers to complete a search and rescue course in case of just such an event.



Photo by Robb Cleave

Volunteers from Geneva Middle School South collect seed during an event at Dick Young.

# Volunteer You Should Know:

## Brett Larson, Fabyan Miller / Natural Areas Restoration

**You volunteer as a Miller at the Fabyan Windmill and a natural areas volunteer.? Do you have a favorite volunteer position? If so, why?**

Between being a Miller at the Fabyan Windmill and a natural areas (brush cutter) worker, it's close, but I'd have to say the natural areas restoration. I get a greater sense of accomplishment when you see the results. It's something to do in the winter and it's fun to burn the cuttings to stay warm. But then again, at the windmill, seeing the look of fascination on the visitors faces as the windmill turns is also priceless. Maintaining such a unique treasure is also motivating...

**Why did you decide to become a volunteer with the Forest Preserve District?**

Well, it started when I saw the restored windmill turning. I had grown up not far from it and it had never moved. Watching it, I realized how much it is the same as a sailboat, which I race on Lake Michigan. The windmill is like a ship that a crew needs to maintain and set up for optimal aerodynamics and safe performance.

**Do you have any funny or unique stories from your volunteer experiences?**

I can't think of anything funny - other than anything fellow miller Roger Henry does. Unique would be my volunteerism born from witnessing my parents involvement in various community projects, particularly my mother Darlene Larson and her beginning the process of restoring the Fabyan Japanese Gardens, through the Geneva Garden Club, back in the early 1970's.

**Do you volunteer with agencies outside of the Forest Preserve District?**

Just a few years ago (2007-2008) I was on the Fermi Citizens Task Force reviewing the possibility of a next generation particle collider called the ILC and it's possible effects on the area community. It was very rewarding to meet various people of all aspects and come to a greater understanding of how Fermi benefits the area and society as a whole.

**What is your professional/educational background?**

I am a graduate of Geneva High School and Augustana College in Rock Island, IL. BA in Business and Accounting. Currently President of Larson-Becker Co. which is a supplier to the li-



*Photo by Kathy Vranek*

Brett Larson seen here doing some restoration to Bob Lootens leg at a Glenwood Park F.P. workday.

censed water well contractor of pumps, tanks and misc. items for private water wells.

**What are your hobbies/interests outside of volunteering with the District?**

Spending time with my lovely wife, along with racing sailboats and iceboats, canoeing, fishing, hiking, reading. I used to do more bowling, skeet shooting, running and biking.

**MANY THANKS TO YOU BRETT!**

# Volunteer You Should Know:

Colleen Levy, Vice President of the Kane County Mounted Rangers

**You volunteer as a Kane County Mounted Ranger. Do you have a favorite volunteer position? If so, why?**

Kane County Mounted Ranger. To be able to volunteer while doing something I love, horseback riding, is very fulfilling

**Why did you decide to become a volunteer with the Forest Preserve District?**

I love meeting people and being able to talk with them while representing the Forest Preserve District as a mounted Ranger sounded very rewarding and I have found that to be so true.

**Do you have any funny or unique stories from your volunteer experiences?**

Everyone loves the horses and wants to pet them. The conversation always includes answering questions about the Rangers and the Forest Preserve in general. Many people will come and tell you how they see the Rangers in parades or at community events and they always thank us for our service.

**Do you volunteer with agencies outside of the Forest Preserve District?**

Not at this time

**What is your professional/educational background?**

Accounting and customer service

**What are your hobbies/interests outside of volunteering with the District?**

Horses, reading, country dancing



Colleen Levy is a volunteer Mounted Ranger who has recently been elected as the groups Vice President.

## VYSK Nominations

If you know of a volunteer going above and beyond contact the Volunteer Coordinator to nominate them as the Volunteer You Should Know!

MANY THANKS TO YOU  
COLLEEN!

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