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UNITED
STATES
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

life

EnviroCorps: Volunteers help at-risk youth

■ Continued from Page C1

Lobbying efforts with the senators failed, however, forcing the elimination of a number of operations.

The cutoff will affect about 1,000 AmeriCorps workers and 300 sites nationally. In Oregon, about 65 positions won't be filled.

Program directors called the decision politically motivated.

"It's absurd since Congress had already approved the funding," said Joel Berg, administrator with the Corporation for National and Community Service in Washington, D.C. "It seems clear that to save the entire AmeriCorps programs, it was a compromise the administration made."

Some Republicans have criticized President Clinton's national service program since its inception in 1994.

Last year, opponents jumped on a General Accounting Office study that revealed the average cost of an AmeriCorps worker at \$26,654 a year.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., called the program bloated and wasteful, labeling it "coerced volunteerism."

Supporters countered that as much as \$9,000 of each member's expenses is raised from private, local and state agencies.

To save the program, AmeriCorps Director Harris Wofford told Congress that he would cut expenditures by about 40 percent, to \$15,000 for each worker, by 1999.

In September, Congress approved Clinton's request for \$402.5 million to finance operations through 1998.

For one year of service, each AmeriCorps participant earns a \$7,600 living allowance and an education award of \$4,725. Part-time members earn \$4,023 and an award of \$2,363.

After completing a year of service, members may use the college stipend to continue their schooling or to repay college loans.

About 25,000 AmeriCorps members are working in 438 communities around the nation.

Steve Hoar, a Newberg resident, spent a year helping 3,000 tribal members on the Umatilla reservation upgrade their fresh-water system.

"I wanted to get some experience with city planning and use some of my talents to help others," said Hoar, who has a degree in civil engineering. "I think I touched the lives of hundreds of people because I know they touched mine."

Program organizers said that two to three candidates apply for every available position.

"I've got a woman in North Carolina who wants to join EnviroCorps and others waiting tables or taking temporary jobs waiting to get in," Rains said. "For the little stipend they receive, they're probably the best bargain around."

In fact, she estimated that EnviroCorp workers — doing jobs such as tree planting, downspout disconnection

and habitat restoration — have saved the city about \$500,000.

In the metropolitan area, AmeriCorps volunteers mentor at-risk youth, teach English language classes for nonnative speakers, assist with weatherization projects for low-income residents, monitor drinking water in the Bull Run watershed and assist with dozens of environmental projects.

They have been placed in such varied organizations as Salmon Corps, I Have a Dream Foundation and Partnership to Stop Violence Against Women.

Barry Messer, a Portland State University professor who coordinates AmeriCorps workers with local schools, said the cuts could cost him 20 positions.

He compared volunteers' efforts to those of their Peace Corps counterparts.

"We know that they can make a difference in kids' attitudes about their environment," Messer said. "Here in Portland, we've also seen them doing outreach work with kids who might have an interest in college and helping them get on track."

For her part, Rains is scrambling to plug her candidates into other AmeriCorps programs.

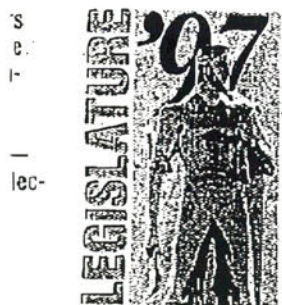
"We're doing our best to match up people we wanted in our program back in September with the Northwest Service Academy," Rains said. "Instead of having two teams of about nine volunteers, the best we can come up with will be one."

Former volunteers call it the best experience of their lives.

"It opened my eyes to a world I would never have imagined," Richard Melo said. The two-year AmeriCorps volunteer battled flood waters, worked with disabled children and educated young people about the environment. "It's heartbreaking to meet people who want to work in this program and cannot."

and this week

This week are expected to be the Legislature. Just stop turning in draft legislation.



new legislation. emerge later. Committees use.

— Steve Suo

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eral bills, including HB2369 (an- 3:30 a.m., Room HA A. Call 986- 140 (contractors), 8:30 a.m.,) and HB2394 (workers' compen-

Van rolls on I-5; father, son die

A 4-year-old boy was ejected and crushed when his family's van rolled over Sunday afternoon on Interstate 5 near Roseburg.

Matthew Wallmann of Redmond, Wash., died at Columbia Douglas Hospital in Roseburg.

His father, Peter Wallmann, was pinned in the front passenger seat. He died at the hospital Sunday night.

Oregon State Police said the boy's mother, Denise Wallmann, 37, was driving south when the van drifted into the center median, possibly

when she fell asleep.

Investigators said the van rolled several times before landing on its wheels in the traffic lanes.

The mother and two other children, Elizabeth, 11, and Andy, 9, were treated for minor injuries.

The accident occurred at 12:30 p.m. four miles north of Roseburg.

Southbound lanes were closed for 1½ hours.

Peter Wallmann was wearing a safety belt, but investigators could not say whether the others in the van were.

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SONOMA-MARIN FARM NEWS

March 1995

Volume 6, Issue 8

The official Farm Bureau newspaper that serves Sonoma and Marin Counties



Colin Close of NRCS, kneeling, shows Doug Buttke and his son Danny how to use the ammonia test kit.

March 30 cut-off date for first-time assistance

Dairy Owners Check Out Ammonia Test Kits

As the water from the relentless January storms drained off the land, AmeriCorps members Colin Close and Julie Maggi donned rubber boots and headed out to visit three of Sonoma County's dairies. Working out of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Santa Rosa, the two AmeriCorps members have made themselves available to train dairy farmers on how to use ammonia test kits.

The CHEMetrics kit, which produces test results on location in just a couple of minutes, is used to analyze the amount of ammonia contained in a water sample. The derived results enable dairy operators to locate any potential problems. As dairymen Doug Buttke, Jim Kehoe and Jack Dei, Jr., were the first to ask for assistance in learning how to use the ammonia test kits, they were among the first to receive one of the ten test kits that were generously donated by the Gold Ridge

So far, all of the dairy farmers that have been introduced to the ammonia test kit were happily surprised to find the kit quick and easy to use. It was also viewed by each dairy operator to be a valuable tool to help better manage their dairy.

The test results may be a rewarding testimony to the time, money and energy invested in improving water quality upon a dairy.

Dairy owner Jack Dei, Jr., has made yearly changes in management practices to better improve his operation. Says Dei, "Using the test kit is very valuable because now when I make changes I can monitor the improvement of the water quality."

Jim Kehoe, the dairy manager of Saint Anthony's Dairy, says of the water quality issue, "It's a tough subject that needs to be addressed, but it all can't be done overnight. We have to work together to solve the prob-

Kits

from page 1

lems and do what we need to do to avoid future problems."

Appointments are still being made for any dairy farmer interested in learning to use the ammonia test kit. Telephone calls to arrange for first time appointments will be taken until March 30, although follow-up appointments will be accepted at any time.

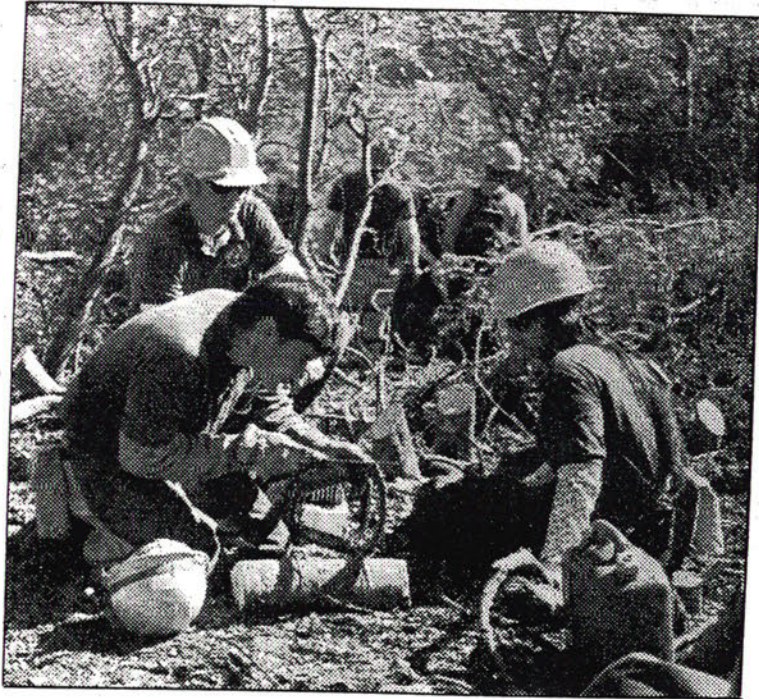
Visits made, come rain or shine, are free and confidential. For more information call Colin Close or Julie Maggi at the Natural Resources Conservation Service's Santa Rosa field office, (707) 575-1409.

The AmeriCorps members wish to express their gratitude to Doug Buttke, Jim Kehoe and Jack Dei, Jr. for their active commitment to the water quality issue and for their consent to use their names for this article.

(ARTICLE & photo
PRODUCED BY
AMERICORPS MEMBERS)

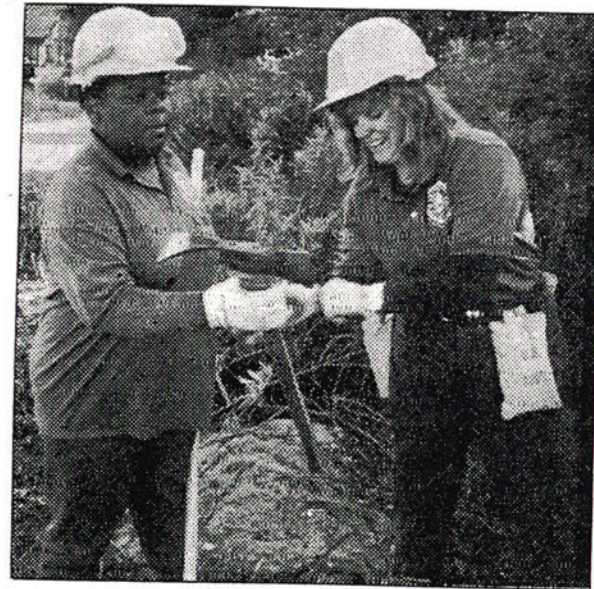
Getting

the job



Putting teeth in it

AmeriCorps crew members Tim Paye, Metin Kanikaynar and Candice Chavez joined in chainsaw training in Idyllwild last week.



Gearing up for work

Crews from AmeriCorps prepare to work on the Chapparal Neighborhood interpretive site at the US Forest Service Lytle Creek Ranger Station.

Done



Conservation

Workshop offers ideas for former CRP land

By Kay Shipman

Farmers wondering how to continue conserving their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres may learn about several alternatives at a July 22 workshop.

A free CRP alternatives workshop will be from 8 a.m. to noon at the Orr Agriculture Center, Perry (Pike County). Participants are asked to pre-register so enough materials can be prepared.

Later this year, the first CRP contracts will expire. Farmers will decide what to do with a considerable number of acres. In a five-county, West-Central area alone, about 75,000 acres were enrolled in CRP.

In the entire state, CRP enrollment was about 794,000 acres.

The workshop topics are those most frequently requested by farmers surveyed in the Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Area, said Mike Roegge of the Quincy Extension Center.

The topics include: traditional and alternative livestock, specialty crops, tree

farming, orchards, production of grass seed and hay, and hunting and recreation operations.

Several workshops have focused on potential problems and practices when former CRP land returns to row-crop farming, but this will provide ideas if farmers are considering something other than row crops, Roegge said.

Workshop participants will get a thumbnail sketch of alternative operations, basic requirements, and market potential, Roegge said.

Farmers may not want to put all their former CRP land in an alternative practice, but might use a portion or some of the rougher ground that way, he added.

The workshop is organized by the Two Rivers Resource, Conservation, and Development Area; the Quincy Extension Center; AmeriCorps; Natural Resources Conservation Service; and the Consolidated Farm Services Agency.

For more information or to register, call the Quincy Extension Center at 217-221-2508.

Oregonian 7/30/96

Low-income families get Food Bank's help

Low-income residents of Multnomah County can join Community Basket, a new membership program run by the Oregon Food Bank.

Located in the Child's Path warehouse at 3808 N. Williams Ave., it offers members a newsletter with information on nutrition, jobs, community projects and social services. In addition, they will get bags of free groceries and nonfood items once a month.

Membership is \$15 for the year or \$5 every four months. Members can volunteer for various duties such as

rebagging food and taking food to the homebound, said Khalil Edwards, an Americorps volunteer at the food bank.

The program begins Aug. 1, from noon to 3 p.m., and will continue the first Thursday of each month. To sign up at the door, individuals and families must meet poverty income guidelines and have proof of address.

Edwards said the food bank will provide surplus items from its warehouse. He added that the surplus food will not be as nutritious as the items in an emergency food box. A member will get several loaves of bread along with snack items, condiments, paper goods, soap and perhaps pet food. By not spending money on these items, he said, members can make their money go further on more healthful food.

The food bank plans to open other sites in Northwest, North and Southeast Portland later this year.

For more information and to volunteer, call Edwards at 282-0555, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

Low-income food program expands territory to North, SE

By MERLE ALEXANDER

of The Oregonian staff

The Oregon Food Bank has extended its new Community Basket program to North and Southeast Portland.

The membership program, which serves low-income residents of Multnomah County, costs \$15 a year or \$5 every four months to join. Members get free food and nonfood items once a month. They also get information about nutrition, jobs, parenting and community services. Home delivery of food is available. Mem-

bers also can volunteer to help run the program.

To qualify, a person must show proof of address and meet poverty-level income guidelines; sign-ups are either at a registration time or during the regular Friday sessions.

These are the times and locations.

Northeast Portland: The first site, which opened Aug. 1 at the agency's Child's Path warehouse, is now located at Bethel A.M.E. Church, 5828 N.E. Eighth Ave. It will be open 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sept. 6. Registration will be the first Friday of each month.

North Portland: Columbia Villa, 9020 N. Dana Ave., noon to 3 p.m., Sept. 20. Preregister Sept. 6, 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Registration open the third Friday of each month.

Southeast Portland: Portland Impact Family and Youth Center, 4707 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd., 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Aug. 23. Registration open every fourth Friday of the month.

For more information about joining or home delivery, call Khalil Edwards or Deb Lippoldt at the food bank, 282-0555.

FOODday

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Low-income families receive surplus food

Community Basket, a new program sponsored by Oregon Food Bank in the N/NE neighborhoods, is a volunteer run membership program.

Community Basket will provide its members with informational services concerning nutrition, job opportunities, community projects, parenting, self-help information and various community programs, on a monthly basis. Members also receive a bonus package of food and non-food items once a month.

By paying a \$15 annual fee or a \$5 quarterly fee (every four months) members will receive a newsletter with

information and community services and a bonus bag(s) of food and non-food items once a month. The first fifteen members to join will get \$5 off the annual membership charge for the first year.

To qualify, household income guidelines must be met (185% of poverty level) and a proof of address showing that you live in Multnomah County is needed. Anyone who qualifies for any other services: W.I.C., food stamps, Head Start, etc., will certainly qualify for Community Basket.

Each site will have a volunteer coor-

dinator responsible for scheduling volunteer shifts, arranging home deliveries, supervising the site, and re-bagging food. Anyone interested in volunteering can call Khalil Edwards at 282-0555 for more information.

Beginning August 1st and the first Thursday of every month following, individuals and families in the N/NE neighborhoods can register at the following time and place and receive their first newsletter and bonus bag(s) of food: August 1, 1996 (1st Thursday of each month) 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm, and will be held at Child's Path, 3808 N. Williams Portland, Ore 97227.

Portland Observer 7/31/96

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HANGING IN THERE WITH AMERICORPS

Eds: Sent Oct. 2 as b0279
By EDDIE PELLIS
Associated Press Writer

FARMINGTON, N.M. (AP) -- With one arm stretched back and another on the horn of the saddle, Joel Berg leans back and gives a celebratory ``yee-haw'' as he steadies himself on a 2,000-pound bull.

The bull lives at the Browning Ranch, one of dozens of projects undertaken nationwide by Americorps, the youth service program.

But this bucking beast is also a metaphor for life-and-death battle for Americorps itself. Congressional Republicans say Americorps is a bloated example of federal bureaucracy, and they want to cut it out of the budget.

Berg is one of the Americorpsmen on that wild ride, head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's branch of Americorps. He does not appear to be a man who is worried about losing his job.

``There's a lot of gamesmanship going on now -- a lot of brinksmanship,'' he says. ``But I welcome people to come in and look at the cost and benefit of what we do. I'm still convinced Congress is going to support this idea.''

At Bob Browning's 45-acre ranch, Americorps members are creating a petting zoo where children will get to know horses, pigs, goats and cattle -- an example of the wide-ranging projects undertaken by the program.

President Clinton likes to call it a ``domestic Peace Corps.'' Federal and state agencies combine with private businesses to develop community projects. For their 1,700 hours of work per year, ``volunteers'' receive minimum wage and vouchers to apply toward their college educations.

The program began last year. In its first year, the USDA sponsored 1,200 of the 20,000 participants, assigning them to work in 38 states on one of three teams -- an anti-hunger team, a public lands and environment team, or a rural development team.

But the future of the program is in doubt; both the Senate and the House have eliminated funding for Americorps for the year beginning October 1996. However, Clinton has vowed to veto any bill that does not keep Americorps alive.

``It seems like just now things are getting put together,'' says Americorps member Todd Tucker, who was on the ranch to meet Berg during his recent visit to northwest New Mexico. ``All the little details are getting ironed out in the program. But when we're told the program may not be around for another year, that's kind of frustrating.''

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Critics say the program is top-heavy with bureaucrats, that it costs too much per person and that it goes against the spirit of volunteerism by paying people to do work for communities.

Although the participants receive about \$12,000 per year for living expenses and a \$4,725 education voucher, a recent study by the General Accounting Office found the average participant in AmeriCorps is supported by more than \$25,000 in federal, state and private dollars. That equals more than \$18 for an hour of direct community work by each person.

Americorps doesn't dispute the GAO totals. But program chief Eli Segal says the price per worker would go down if the GAO considered thousands of hours of work performed by unpaid volunteers recruited by Americorps members.

Berg says some of the extra money goes toward training Americorps members. Members pledge to spend at least 20 percent of their time training to become more knowledgeable in the projects in which they're involved.

He says other expenses include health insurance, transportation, day care for some workers' children and start-up costs for some projects, which are high because Americorps is still suffering growing pains.

"There are some problems with overhead, but I welcome people coming in to look at cost," Berg says. "When the GAO comes, most people in my position would hide under the desk and slowly dribble out pieces of paper. I welcome them in to look at every penny we're spending."

Berg maintains costs will go down and efficiency will improve as projects take hold in communities. He dismisses critics who point out that the program is spread over numerous agencies, all with bureaucrats to handle administrative work.

"I can't imagine any program being scrutinized like this so early in its life," Berg says. "It's hard for me to explain to Americorps members why anyone would want to cut the program before anyone could have any rational way of judging its successes."

In New Mexico, Berg visited the tiny town of Cubero, where Americorps is helping to restore a firehouse, and Jemez Pueblo, where Americorps workers are helping install indoor plumbing to homes that never had it.

Americorps is also helping small communities in southwest Colorado find ways to increase tourism on scenic U.S. Highway 550 while lowering the environmental impact of the traffic.

Americorps members have collected more than \$10,000 in supplies to help transform Browning Ranch. They also sponsored a volunteer day in which 83 people cleaned the grounds, painted buildings and laid irrigation pipe.

"If the people around the country were as resourceful and hard-working as some of the kids I've worked with here, this has potential to be a good program," Browning says.

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AmeriCorps

Continued from page 1

members receive training in conflict resolution, cultural diversity, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, first aid, child development and team building.

AmeriCorps workers in Tulare come from a variety of backgrounds.

Raina Miles, 40, is a Visalia resident who is working on her Masters of Divinity degree at Menonite Biblical Seminary and wants to be a counselor.

Julio Valadez, 21, is a Pixley resident who has worked two years at Teen City, starting when he was with the California Conservation Corp. He is now attending COS.

Rudy Loera, 30, is a Visalia resident who is close to completing an associate of arts degree. He has lived in communities in Asia and the South Pacific as a member of a church mission organization.

AmeriCorps members Oz Gonzales, a Tulare resident, and Johnny Macias, a Visalia resident, also work in Tulare but were not interviewed for this story.

The workers believe their year of service in Tulare is making a difference.

"This has its rewards," Loera said. "We've already seen results. We've seen people [students] move up levels."

In the schools, AmeriCorps members often work with students on a one-on-one basis, helping them with reading and other basic skills.

"It's working really well," Maple School Principal Ruben Canales said.

At his school, the workers are trained to diagnose reading difficulties, and they work with students who are performing in the bottom one-third of their class, Canales said.

At Live Oak School, Miles is assigned to the Discovery Class teacher and her students, who are developing a guide to recreational activities for Tulare youth.

"We're impacting people's lives here."

Rudy Loera

Administrators at Live Oak and at Lincoln School, where she also teaches, have been enthusiastic and very supportive, Miles said. "They wanted these services."

AmeriCorps has provided another way for schools to provide one-on-one contact with students who need it, said Pam Canby, director of curriculum for the Tulare City School District.

Principals on all the campuses she has visited have said they are pleased with the program, Canby said. "They all report positive feelings."

C-SET's AmeriCorps program includes seven other members besides the six working here. They are assigned to schools in Lindsay and Exeter.

Whether the program will be funded in 1997 is not known.

AmeriCorps, which has been called "the Peace Corps of the '90s" has not been without controversy.

Most recently, an internal investigation by the inspector general of the Corporation for National Service, which oversees AmeriCorps, said the financial books for the project are in such disorder they could not be audited.

Last year, a Congressional study found that AmeriCorps' cost per participant was nearly \$27,000 instead of the \$18,000 promised by Clinton.

AmeriCorps has a lot of red tape, but the program is good and Congress shouldn't cut it, Loera said.

"We're impacting people's lives here," he said.

Fjetland-Beshwate said school districts, Teen City and other organizations AmeriCorps members are serving reap many benefits without spending a dime.

STUART NEWS

STUART, FL
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Martin sheriff takes AmeriCorps program

STUART — The Martin County Sheriff's Office took the AmeriCorps community service program under its wing Monday, program officials said Tuesday.

The local AmeriCorps program, part of a national initiative founded by President Clinton in 1993, will be administered by the department's special services division, sheriff's officials said.

"We're just trying to motivate everybody," said sheriff's Maj. Gary Frechette. "Hopefully, they feel like they've found a home."

The Martin County program, which brings education, literacy, health and crime prevention programs to Booker Park, Banner Lake and East Stuart, was under the auspices of the United Way of Martin County and the Martin County Interagency Coalition.

Frechette said he will soon open a community program office in the Martin Square Mall. The office will be shared with the department's crime prevention unit.

APR 7 1996

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Service workers help out homeless

By JODI HECKEL
News-Gazette Staff Writer

CHAMPAIGN — Two years ago, Cecelia Overton spent several months at the Center for Women in Transition, a homeless shelter on Church Street.

Since October, she has worked in the shelter's outreach program.

An Americorps worker, she wants to give hope to homeless women.

Some days Overton feels frustrated and wants to quit. She sometimes asks herself what she could have done differently to help someone change their life.

Sometimes she makes a difference and sometimes it doesn't become apparent until later.

Overton said she recently saw a girl who had stayed at the shelter. When the girl left the shelter, she had no place to go and Overton was afraid she would end up on the streets.

The girl has an apartment and a job now, and is trying to get into school.

"I think that I am making a difference," Overton said. "There have been people I've worked with who have chosen to take a spiritual path and reach out for something different than they had before."

The Americorps/CHART (Comprehensive Homeless Assistance Response Team) program is a national service program that gives participants money for education in return for a year of community service. Local Americorps members work at sites that serve the homeless. Their goal is to coordinate services for the homeless among local agencies.

Of the 12 Americorps members sworn in last October, one has left the program and one has begun a full-time job. Six workers have been added.

Mike Felts, director of the local Americorps program, said all the current sites have been able to provide services they weren't able to before with the help of Americorps workers.

Program director Tami Tunnell of A Woman's Place said the two Americorps workers there have helped more women maintain contact with the program and continue to use its services.

"We're seeing some of those people we probably would have lost if they hadn't had regular contact from Americorps," Tunnell said.

Americorps member Jenna Collins meets with women weekly to help them budget their money, clean up bad credit histories, find jobs, affordable housing and child care. She also takes them shopping for groceries, to open bank accounts and to job interviews.

Tunnell said those things are necessary, but the staff doesn't have time to do them because they concentrate on domestic abuse counseling.

"That extra mile they can go that we can't because of the workload makes all the difference in the world," Tunnell said.

Americorps member Lalita Pourchot works with clients at the Developmental Services Center, negotiating with homeless shelters and landlords and helping clients budget their money and find affordable housing.

Caseworker Lynn Canfield said Pourchot was able to meet every day with a few of her clients that needed more time, which Canfield couldn't provide because of her caseload.

"The value for us of having an Americorps member here is the people with special needs require so much attention from us and we can't give it," Canfield said.

Ron Bribiesco, director of case management, said Pourchot convinced one longtime client to see a doctor, something others had been trying to do for years without any success.

"She has a real feel for building relationships with our clients. They come to trust her really quickly," Bribiesco said.

Pourchot now has a full-time job at the Developmental Services Center.

Felts said he will start recruiting for new Americorps workers this month. He hopes to have 25 to 30 workers next year and five or six additional sites, including the proposed Urbana single-room occupancy apartment building.

The hiring of new workers is contingent on whether federal funding for the Americorps program is included in next year's budget. Overton hopes the program will be continued.

Without it, Overton said, "A lot of people will fall through the cracks."

Youths Earn, Learn in Program

continued from Page 27

way to pay for future schooling."

Helmke's work partner is Dianna Vaters, a 20-year-old Lincoln resident who is considering changing her college focus. She said she had planned to major in English but now "probably will do something with natural resources."

Working with AmeriCorps' public lands and environmental team will "let me get my feet wet and see if there's something else I'm interested in doing," Ms. Waters said.

In their first week on the job, Helmke and Ms. Waters set their agenda, working in Omaha parks sweeping broken glass and gathering litter and answering questions from curious park users.

When they worked at Zorinsky Lake one day, Ms. Waters wore a T-shirt emblazoned with the AmeriCorps' logo — an A on a gold sunburst surrounded by blue lettering spelling out AmeriCorps National Service.

Mrs. Anderson said the AmeriCorps team is "the group we want demonstrating what we'd like to do." Teamed with schoolchildren and organizations, they will be role models for future volunteer efforts, she said.

A list of projects that will take the Omaha team through spring includes everything from cleaning public recreation areas to planting wetlands and building fences.

Helmke said his team will help with a bison project in Thurston County in the coming weeks. The Winnebago tribe is trying to establish a buffalo herd as a food source that is lower in cholesterol than beef, Helmke said. "We'll help them build fences" to contain the herd.

In winter, the AmeriCorps' outdoor work will be replaced by indoor programs that involve schoolchildren in environmental issues, Ms. Waters said.

How to Become Involved In AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps is the Clinton administration's new national service initiative for volunteers who will work in about 400 education, anti-crime, social service and environmental programs nationally.

Who is eligible? Anyone who is 17 years or older, a U.S. citizen or permanent resident and, in most cases, a high school graduate.

How can you join? Call (800) 942-2677 to receive an AmeriCorps National Referral form. Fill it out and mail it.

IN NEBRASKA:

AmeriCorps-USDA — public lands and environmental team, 20 volunteers; Community Action of Nebraska, 23 volunteers; and VISTA, 29 volunteers.

Those interested in working with AmeriCorps projects in Nebraska this year may contact the specific agencies involved:

USDA Team
Marilyn Anderson, 896-0121.

Mediation Centers

Office of Dispute Resolution, Lincoln, Kathleen Severens, (402) 471-3730.

Liza Schug, Central Mediation Center, Kearney, (800) 203-3452 or (308) 237-4692.

Betsy Kosier, Lincoln/Lancaster Mediation Center, Lincoln, (402) 434-9480.

Donna Parnell, Metro Mediation Center, Omaha, (402) 444-1970.

Debora Brownyard, Nebraska Justice Center, Walthill, (800) 774-0348 or (402) 846-6576.

Lori Burkay, Panhandle Mediation Center, Scottsbluff, (800) 967-2115 or (308) 635-2002.

Julie McGreer, Southeast Nebraska Mediation Center, Beatrice (800) 837-

7826 or (402) 223-6061.

Community Action Centers

Association of Community Action Agencies, Lorrie Benson, director, Lincoln, (402) 471-3714.

Blue Valley Community Action, Fairbury, (402) 729-2278.

Goldenrod Hills Community Services, Wisner, (402) 529-3513.

Lincoln Action Program, (402) 471-4515.

Panhandle Community Services, Gering, (308) 635-3089.

Southeast Community Action Council, Humboldt, (402) 862-2411.

Central Community Services, Loup City, (308) 745-0780.

Greater Omaha Community Action, (402) 341-8060.

Mid-Nebraska Community Services, Kearney, (308) 234-2591.

Northwest Community Action, Cha-

dron, (308) 432-3393.

IN IOWA:

Program coordinator is Jody Heuberger in Des Moines, (515) 281-8043.

The specific programs and the number of volunteers being sought are:

■ Association of Farmworker Opportunity program, five.

■ I Have A Dream Foundation, five.

■ Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 20.

■ Iowa College and Community Action Network, 82.

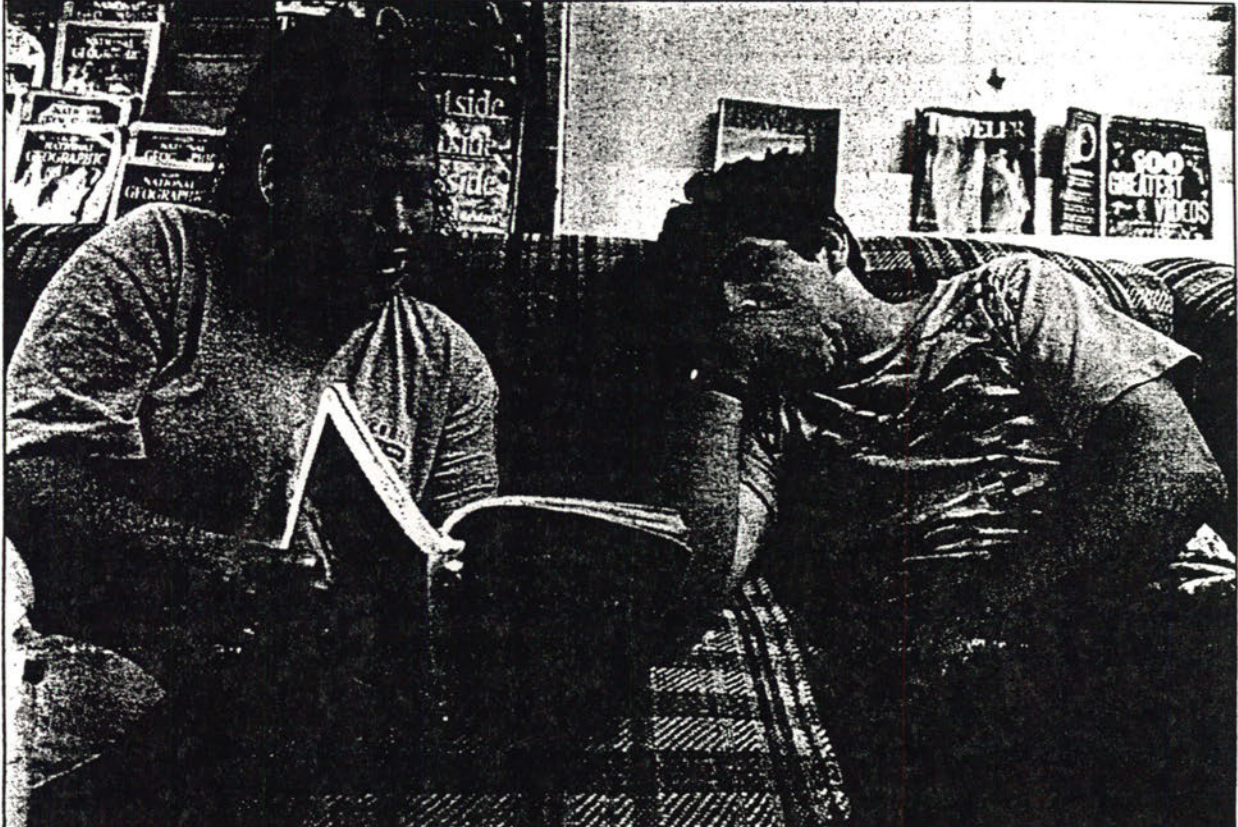
■ Mid-Iowa Community Action, 20 volunteers.

■ AmeriCorps/USDA public lands and environmental team, nine.

■ AmeriCorps/USDA rural development team, 26.

■ VISTA, 60.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS BUSY IN TULARE



Maria Ahumada/Tulare Advance-Register

Angelina Guerrero, left, an AmeriCorps member, reads with Fernando Aguilar at Teen City.

Workers trade service for scholarships

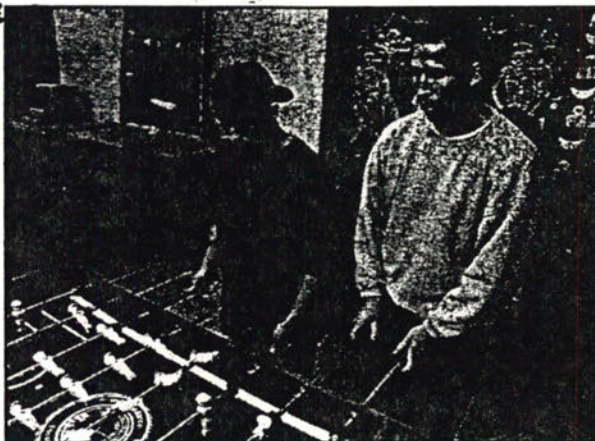
By Julie Fernandez FRONT PAGE
Tulare Advance-Register

Tulare resident Angelina Guerrero was attending College of the Sequoias when her former high school principal told her about a new program that would allow her to serve her community while earning scholarship money.

"She knew I was running out of scholarship money," Guerrero said. "She told me about AmeriCorps. I didn't know what it was really."

Guerrero, 20, is one of five AmeriCorps members working in the Tulare City School District and at Teen City. A sixth is working at Tulare Tech Prep and in Lindsay.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's somewhat controversial program of national service that began last year. Full-time members who commit to 1,700 hours of service are paid a \$7,000 stipend, said Denise Fjetland-



Maria Ahumada/Tulare Advance-Register

AmeriCorps member Julio Valadez, left, and Gustavo Cruz, 17, play a table game at Teen City.

Beshwate, AmeriCorps coordinator for Community Services and Employment Training Inc. in Visalia.

After they complete their year, they become eligible for a \$4,900 educational scholarship, she said. They also can sign up

for a second year and qualify for even more financial aid.

If they already have a government loan, the accumulation of interest stops for the time they are in the program, Fjetland-Beshwate said.

Some AmeriCorps workers continue to attend college while they are in the program, but for the time being Guerrero is not.

"I took this semester off," she said. "I want to go back this summer."

Her career plans are not definite, but her experience working with children at Roosevelt and Maple schools and with teenagers at Teen City, a recreation center, has pointed her in a direction.

"I know I want to work with kids," she said. "I like to see their smiles when they accomplish something."

In addition to her work, Guerrero and other AmeriCorps Please see AMERICORPS, Page 2

HELP FOR POOR FAMILIES

Extra food won't go to waste, thanks to nutrition program

Restaurants can donate their surplus, and farmers can donate produce that would otherwise be tossed.

By MARY HILL

REGISTER STAFF WRITER

Twenty-five inner-city families will get free meals this summer as part of a food-distribution program.

Two agencies are joining forces to gather food from cafeterias, restaurants, hotels and farms to distribute to some of Des Moines' poorest families. The program is being sponsored by the Iowa Farm Service Agency and AmeriCorps, a national service program.

Six AmeriCorps members will receive nutrition training from Iowa State University. They will then teach families how to prepare meals with the food they receive. The program will get under way in June.

Farmers will donate food that they consider unmarketable, such as small or misshapen vegetables.

Though less appealing than produce in grocery stores, the food is still nutritious. Restaurants may donate from the surplus of what they prepare each day.

About \$25,000 will go to pay AmeriCorps members and to transport or package the food.

"The program started with the (U.S.) secretary of agriculture, who decided that we needed to do our part in trying to recover some of the food thrown out every day," said Kevin Fitzpatrick, state project coordinator for the Iowa Farm Service Agency. "Instead of throwing it into the mouths of garbage cans we need to get it into the mouths of the hungry and the needy."

He said the program is similar in philosophy to giveaways of cheese and other commodities sponsored by the federal government.

"It's different than cheese, though, because there will be more

MORE INFORMATION

To volunteer or participate in the program, call the Greene County Farm Service Agency Office in Jefferson at (515) 386-3138.

than one kind of food distributed," Fitzpatrick said. He said the program will help provide "a decent, well-balanced diet."

Participants in the program will receive fresh fruit and vegetables, which Fitzpatrick said may be luxuries for some.

Volunteers are needed to package and transport the food. The distribution will be a 12-week program.

Iowa is one of 17 states where AmeriCorps members will participate in the food-distribution program.

DES MOINES REGISTER

IOWA

5-16-96

SANTEE STRIPER
SANTEE, SOUTH CAROLINA
APRIL 19, 1995

Santee is scene for Americorps

By Barry Wood
Editor

Volunteers from across the state met in Santee yesterday for a two-day conference of Americorps workers and administrators. This was not a sit-down meeting. While service projects went on throughout the little town on Lake Marion, National USDA Americorps Director Joel Berg took a break from cutting the grass around Town Hall to speak to this reporter.

"This program," said Berg of Americorps, "meets the Jesse test. From Helms to Jackson, politicians approve of what's being done.

"These folks are doing great stuff. They help with 911 implementation, housing improvement, enterprise communities and a host of other projects."

Americorps is a federal program begun by President Clinton in which people volunteer their services for up to two years. They work at community projects, and in exchange receive a monthly stipend, as well as up to \$9,400 for college tuition. Locally, Gloria Richardson is working, as an Americorps volunteer, with the Eastern Orangeburg County Enterprise Community (EOCEC).

"This program," said Berg, "is about getting things done. It produces concrete results for the community. It brings together all aspects of the community and bridges divisions. It teaches personal responsibility and provides people with an opportunity. It's a common sense program that works."

Of South Carolina's Americorps program, Berg was enthusiastic.

"Yours is among the best-functioning programs in the country. I urge you to look into it - see for yourself that it works."

Berg added a personal note on the late Josephine High, who was an Americorps worker with the EOCEC.

"I offer my deep regrets," he said, "for the passing of Josephine High. While I didn't know her personally, I understand that her work with Americorps was simply a continuation of her life's work."

Jim Wilson, project coordinator in South Carolina for the Natural Resources Conservation Service, told the *Observer* that Americorps is "a domestic peace corps." In fact, the program's \$500 million budget and 18,000 volunteers make it bigger than the Peace Corps ever was.

"Local counties come up with proposals," said Wilson, "for community improvement. Some 90 percent of it is physical work, and around 80 percent of our volunteers have college educations. They provide hands-on labor, as well as assessments, like grasslands inventories or stream coding. In return, these folks are able to work with professionals, to get exposure in a number of career possibilities. We rotate team leaders so that all are able to plan, organize and delegate.

"Workers learn to complete a project. They plan, and then produce tangible results. But most of all, they have developed a sincere desire for community service. All of them have their hearts in the right place."

The USDA Americorps meeting continues today at Santee State Park.

SANTÉE STRIPER
SANTÉE, SOUTH CAROLINA
AUGUST 23, 1995

EOCEC; Americorps:

Still Hard At Work And Making Progress

By E. Marie Jackson

After more than a year, Eastern Orangeburg County Enterprise Community (EOCEC) and its Americorps representatives are still hard at work and making progress in the eastern part of our county.

Without fanfare or the spotlight, EOCEC still holds their monthly meetings and, along with Gloria Richardson and Vernell Smalls (Americorps representatives), are finding new and innovative ways to help area residents with all kinds of problems.

Some of their accomplishments include assisting the elderly with home improvement grants and low-interest loans, as well as helping other residents with home-ownership loans.

They have also worked closely with small business owners in eastern Orangeburg County, educating them about business loan programs.

EOCEC has joined forces with local police forces, U.S. Marshall's office, Office of Juvenile Justice, and school administrators to bring crime and drug prevention programs to area students.

Educational seminars have been hosted by the group on topics such as Wills and Trusts; Home Weatherization; Business and Industrial Loan Programs; Emergency Services; Drug and Crime Prevention; and Steps To Building Your Credit.

Countless hours of volunteer services have been provided to Vance Senior Citizen Centers, as well as Orangeburg School District Three.

Also to be included in their lists of accomplishments is performance of national service to the community in the town of Santee with such projects as Beautification, Daycare, Landscaping, Santee Town Hall, and Litter Pick Up.

In addition to overseeing the day to day operations of the EOCEC office, Richardson and Smalls host a community awareness radio broadcast weekly to inform the public of issues affecting their everyday lives.

As envisioned by the founders of EOCEC, the group is well on its way to carrying out their mission, which is:

The citizens of the Eastern Orangeburg County Enterprise Community plan to increase job opportunities and quality of life for all eastern Orangeburg County citizens so residents can enjoy a standard of living that is above the poverty line and have the chance to realize their dreams.

"My term as an Americorps member has been fulfilling and rewarding," Richardson said. "I've had the opportunity to work in the different capacities to bring the communities together. It gives me a great sense of fulfillment knowing that I've helped someone who really needed help and would have otherwise been forgotten."

Smalls also expressed her sincere appreciation for being able to be there for so many people in need. "The EOCEC has been a fulfilling experience for me. After coming on board for four months after the death of Josephine High, I have learned a lot. I feel that I have helped or at least tried to help my community."

THE SAN JUAN RECORD
SAN JUAN,
MAY 17, 1995

Food bank in Blanding gets new coat

The Americorps team painted the town of Blanding – at least that is how the team members felt as they painted the inside walls and ceiling of the newly acquired San Juan County Food Bank building.

The new food distribution center will open later this month, primarily through the efforts of Americorps team member Henry Silentman. Silentman wrote the proposal to establish a food bank to serve San Juan County's needy population.

Food will come from donations and purchased from the Utah Food Bank and lo-

cal food stores. Needy families will be given a nutritionally balanced seven-day food supply.

Henry Silentman coordinated the inside paint party. Fellow Americorps team members Andrea Dyar, Sam Sellers, Eldon Miller, Anna Prawl, and Nancy Steele; their Americorps supervisor, Kresha Eastman and her son, Klint; and Allison Williams, a local VISTA volunteer working with students at Albert R. Lyman Middle School, all participated in the project.

Local Boy Scouts may clean the grounds as a possible Eagle Scout project.

TIMES INDEPENDENT
MOAB, COLORADO
MAY 4, 1995

Value-added agriculture products forum set

Alternative farming and marketing methods will be the topic of discussion at a meeting entitled "Gardeners' and Growers' Value-Added Agricultural Products Forum."

The meeting, sponsored by AmeriCorps, will be held on Thursday, May 4, at 4 p.m. in the Moab City Hall Council Chamber located at 115 West 200 South in Moab.

With today's farming practices, much more is harvested from each acre of ground. This is both good and bad.

The good part is that there is a plentiful supply of farm products available for the consumer.

The bad part is prices are so low it takes a larger harvest to meet farm expenses.

This causes the farmer to work harder to produce enough to make a go of it, thereby driving the prices even lower.

Even though more is produced, the overabundance creates a hardship for the farmer.

What are the answers? Two

answers are alternative and value-added agriculture.

Alternative agriculture is the production of non-food, non-feed products from farm and forest materials.

Value-added agriculture is the practice of adding value to a product by marketing it in innovative ways.

A good example of this is Agriboard Industries' manufacturing of panels made from residual wheat straw which is used for building houses.

Their system uses 65%-less dimensional frame lumber than traditional wood construction. This gives not only an environmental advantage, but an economical advantage as well.

With prime farmland being sold to developers, small farms are becoming more commonplace and cost effective.

These topics will be discussed at Thursday's meeting. For more information contact Jackie at 259-4100 or Henry at 801-587-2271.

AmeriCorps forest project shows what can be done

At the top of Morton Street in Ashland is a unique neighborhood of big beautiful homes with grand views, where residents can relax on their decks and watch the shadows play on the eastern hillsides and follow the spring squalls as they sweep through the valley. It's also one of Ashland's neighborhoods in the forest interface - known for both its beauty and potential fire danger. Last week a crew of young people in the AmeriCorps program braved wet, steep slopes and wrestled with downed logs, dying trees and poison oak to help make this area less of a fire danger.

The city of Ashland owns about 1,000 acres of undeveloped land, so the four acres of city land cleaned up by the Forest Service and AmeriCorps crew will not have a major impact on our city's vulnerability to fire. But the clean-up does illustrate the value of this national service program. AmeriCorps/USDA has three broad programs: Empowerment and Anti-Hunger, Rural Development, and Public Land and Environment. The work done in the Ashland watershed was part of the latter program, and the work is dispatched out of the Applegate Ranger District. Members of this hard-working and enthusiastic team live at the Star Gulch facility and are paid the equivalent of about \$1,200 a month for living expenses and tuition credits. In addition to watershed work, the crews protect wetlands, restore recreation areas, increase handicap accessibility, and much more.

The AmeriCorps program has been criticized by Rep. Newt Gingrich and others as being too expensive, but important work is being done and the long-range benefits are great in learned job skills and educational incentives. Investments in education pay big dividends, as we have witnessed with the GI Bill.

The local project also serves as an example of what can be done to reduce fire danger even on steep slopes with decades of accumulation of dead fuel. The slash was piled up and covered with tarps for burning next fall, and enough dead and dying trees were hauled out of the area to generate \$2,000 for the city's forest land clean-up fund.

So private forest land owners take note. Even difficult property can be managed to reduce the danger of forest fires. You won't be able to get an AmeriCorp team for private projects, but a lot of good ideas and direction are available through the Ashland Fire Department and the local Forest Service ranger station.

THE BARBOURVILLE MOUNTAIN ADVOCATE
BARBOURVILLE, KENTUCKY
MAY 11, 1995



Helping out

Rebecca Davidson, center, Barbourville, an Americorps representative, spent a day during the recent National Service Week in Williamsburg, helping Cumberland College's Mountain Outreach Program and Cedar Ridge Ministries. She is shown with Michele Humfleet, London, and Jamie Duncan, Harlan, working with the clothing store on the Cedar Ridge property.

LAS CRUCES SUN
LAS CRUCES, NEW MEXICO
AUGUST 25, 1995

AmeriCorp personnel tour colonias

By Steve Ramirez

Las Cruces Sun-News

The national director for AmeriCorps toured throughout Dona Ana County, including the area's colonias, Thursday.

"Don't judge us by our words, judge us by our deeds," said Joel Berg, AmeriCorps national director of services within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. "This is a program that's become enormously successful throughout the country. Not only do our members want to get involved in the communities they work in, they want to find ways to improve them, too. This program is a good way to bridge the gap between government and its people."

Berg is in the midst of conducting a whirlwind tour

through the Southwest. Wednesday afternoon, he toured the Sparks Colonia east of El Paso. "That was something to see," Berg said. "I got to meet a 95-year-old woman who had just gotten running water in her home for the first time. Getting to see the look on her face and her reactions are some of the rewards of this job."

Thursday, Berg, AmeriCorp volunteers Anna Rodriguez and Lourdes Vigueria, and John Thomas, state rural development director, toured the Gospel Rescue Mission in Las Cruces, a water improvement plant in Mesquite and a wastewater treatment plant in Anthony. Later, Berg traveled to Tucson, Ariz., before ending the day in Flagstaff, Ariz.

"It was partly through the help of AmeriCorps volunteers that the wastewater treatment plant in Anthony was able to get a (\$750,000) grant to improve the treatment plant," said Ernie Watson, spokesman for Rural Economic Community Development, the agency which provided funding. "AmeriCorp volunteers were able to help them fill out the necessary applications to get the funds."

AmeriCorps is a national service program created by President Clinton. About 20,000 citizens, who perform services that meet critical community needs receive money from AmeriCorps that can only be used for college, job training or paying back student loans.

ALDEN ADVERTISER
ALDEN, NEW YORK
MARCH 9, 1995

Alden Resident Participates in AmeriCorps Project

Alden, first to receive Wetland data from study



Lisa Matthies

Lisa Matthies, a 1990 Alden High School graduate and a 1994 graduate of Alfred University, recently helped complete transferring 32 Erie County Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory maps from paper to computer format. Matthies, 23, is part of a five member USDA/AmeriCorps team based in East Aurora.

As an example of how the work AmeriCorps does aids communities, Lisa explains, "By request, we have plotted two maps of the Town of

Alden - one displaying NYS DEC Wetland delineations, and one showing US Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands. These maps will provide an accurate and efficient means of locating wetlands in the Town of Alden. Alden is the first town in Erie County to receive Wetland data from AmeriCorps."

The wetlands data, when overlaid on other computer maps, will provide an efficient and accurate means of identifying wetland locations, boundaries, and classifications to agencies and municipalities with Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities. The AmeriCorps team will make the data available at no cost to local communities in their effort to promote the use of GIS in Western New York.

In addition to the wetland inventory mapping, ongoing USDA/AmeriCorp projects include creating a GIS tax parcel base map for rural areas of Erie County in conjunction with Inteligis Corporation, producing a series of forest management maps with the Seneca Nation of Indians, and generating original maps with the WNY Land Conservancy, American Chestnut Foundation, West Seneca AmeriCorps, Governor's Office of Voluntary Service and a number of other agencies and community organizations.

Of the 42 USDA sponsored AmeriCorps sites nationwide, the East Aurora based program is the only one in New York State.

Volunteers clean up at Meade Lake

By Alan Montgomery
The Hutchinson News

MEADE — AmeriCorps volunteers joined 20 Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks employees Tuesday in the hot, sooty job of cutting down hundreds of fire-blackened trees at Meade State Fishing Lake.

Jim Meisenheimer, an AmeriCorps supervisor based in Salina, brought 11 of his volunteers to the lake to spend a week there helping to clear trees that were killed in a March 22 prairie fire.

The volunteers came from their posts in Salina, Emporia, Dodge City and Hutchinson and from the Kanopolis, Glen Elder and Webster reservoirs, Meisenheimer said.

AmeriCorps, he said, is "President Clinton's national service program" that began in September 1994.

The program is open to young people, age 17 or older, who have completed college, high school or earned a high school equivalency diploma, he said.

"In return for (AmeriCorps) community service, they receive an educational reward, to help pay off their student loans or to further their education," he said.

The volunteers receive modest stipends to pay living costs, plus a \$4,725 education award, for about nine months work, he said.

Fort Scott native Kyle Hedges, 23, was among the AmeriCorps volunteers at the lake Tuesday. With sweat dripping off his nose, and with his T-shirt and blue jeans blackened with soot, Hedges at 2 p.m. was dragging cut limbs to a point where state employees were feeding them into a chipper-shredder. Tractors were used to drag the main trunk sections to burn piles.

Hedges in December 1994 graduated from Kansas State University with a degree in fisheries biology and he hopes soon to land a job with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks; he already has worked several summers for the agency.

He joined AmeriCorps in April, at the advice of his college counselor; AmeriCorps found him a position with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Dodge City, where he is helping with wetlands research.

"This is a good opportunity for me," Hedges said. "It certainly gives me some experience in my field."

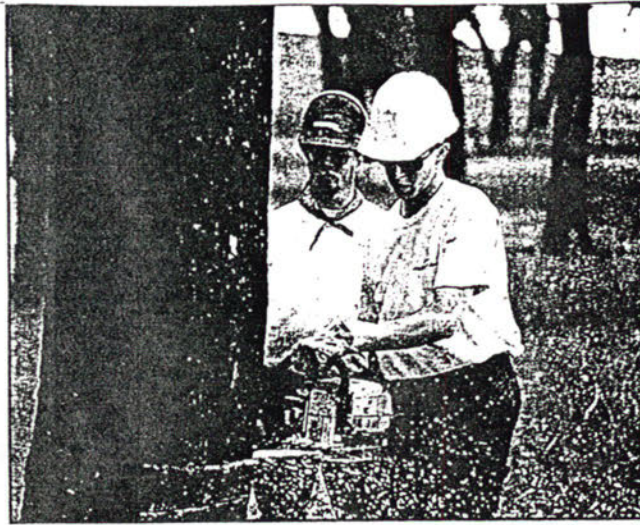


Photo by Scott Ladd

Kansas Wildlife and Parks officer Mike Mitchen, left, oversees John Droste, Dodge City AmeriCorps volunteer, as Droste cuts through a tree at Meade County Lake.

Mark Goldsberry, the Kansas Wildlife and Parks ranger who manages the 55-acre lake, its 30-acre park and 350-acre wildlife refuge, said the fire in March burned more than 360 acres in the park and refuge, located 14 miles southwest of Meade.

A windstorm had broken a tree limb, which downed a power line that started the blaze.

Goldsberry said the pace of the work crews Monday gave him confidence that all the lake's park areas will be open well before the July 4th holiday.

He was grateful for the Wildlife and Parks workers, who came in from as far away as Belleville to help for the week, as well as for the AmeriCorps workers, he said.

"It's great. With the extra bodies, we're going to cover a lot of ground we couldn't have covered otherwise."

**— Mark Goldsberry,
ranger at Meade State Lake**

Fanned by 60-mph northwest winds, the wildfire roared through most of the park before it was brought under control by firefighters from Meade, Fowler, Seward County, Beaver, Okla., and Forgan, Okla.

Goldsberry said at least 500 mature trees, most of them cottonwoods that were 60 or more years old, were killed by the fire and must be removed. In turn, the parks department already has acquired 2,600 seedlings from Kansas State University Forestry Extension to be planted in the park and refuge this fall.

The new trees will include mulberry, ash, bur oak, black walnut, locust and cottonwood trees, he said.

Despite the fire damage, the lake's park and camping areas still have acres of healthy, stately trees for visitors to enjoy, with visitation averaging about 130,000 people per year, the park manager said.

"It's great," he said. "With the extra bodies, we're going to cover a lot of ground we couldn't have covered otherwise."

Volunteerism didn't end with the AmeriCorps. Area businesses, including Pizza Hut and Schmidt Packing, both of Meade, and National Beef Packing, Liberal, donated food for lunches and dinners for the volunteers for the week, said Willie Helms, park office assistant.

Helms doubled as a cook this week, along with Myrna and Jim Perona, Fort Dodge, who camp often at the lake and volunteered to help feed the tree-cutting crews, Helms said.

The AmeriCorps volunteers and Wildlife and Parks workers all are camping in tents at the lake for the week, Goldsberry said.

Meade County Lake was built in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservation Corps, a national work program that is similar to AmeriCorps, he said.

Corps marches against hunger

By Shay Totten
Free Press Staff Writer

Volunteers in a year-old program designed to feed and empower low-income Vermonters are gaining national attention for their work to help the rural poor.

Under the banner of the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, roughly 40 volunteers have fanned out over the state's counties to set up community gardens, nutritional programs for the elderly, and summer hot lunch programs, among other programs.

Their work is being recognized by the U.S. Agriculture Department and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Two Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps members will travel Tuesday to a Washington, D.C., seminar on childhood nutrition hosted by the first lady. The USDA, which funds part of the anti-hunger project, may use Vermont as a model for how to get the rural poor involved in self-sustaining nutritional programs.

The fuel behind the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps is AmeriCorps volunteers, a program started in 1993 by President Clinton. AmeriCorps workers are paid about \$800 a month and after 1,700 hours of service they get \$4,725 for educational use.

"We have to get people into the self-sufficient mode and I think that's crucial among the low-income population," said Laurie Larson, leader of the the corps' Northwest Vermont team, which covers Addison, Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle counties. It's the corps' largest coverage area and has six volunteers.

Two of the volunteers are Jamie Does, 26, and Emily Jones, 21, both of Burlington.

See HUNGER, 5A

HUNGER: Prison garden yields 15 tons of food

Continued from Page 1A

The pair covers Franklin and Grand Isle counties.

The pair's first big project was an eight-week nutritional program they taught to furloughed prison inmates.

The program — which includes classes on nutrition and cooking — might be used statewide.

"That's a part of everything we do: sustainability," Does said. "And that is one of the aspects that drew me into AmeriCorps."

The pair also helped feed new life into a St. Albans community garden and an inmate garden at the Northwest State Correctional Facility, also in St. Albans.

Jones helped launch a St. Albans summer lunch program for several dozen low-income children. The city's recreation department will let kids in the program have free use of the pool and the lunches will be served in a nearby tent. Jones hopes that number will grow.

"This gives the kids an activity to come to other than the lunch. And, it helps take away the stigma for the parents," Jones said.

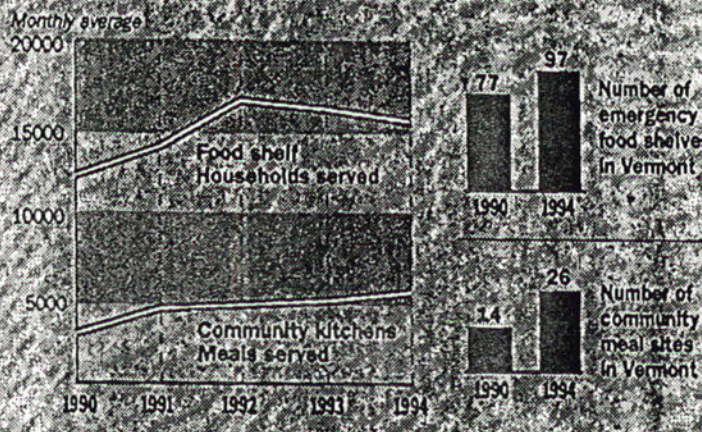
Does has spent much of his time working on the prison garden, which includes picking up donated plants from local greenhouses and farms.

Last year, the garden supplied 30,000 pounds of fresh vegetables to area food shelves and community kitchens and may produce more this year.

But, the sweat and service of volunteers like Does and Jones might not last for long. AmeriCorps funding, about \$850,000 in Vermont, may be wiped out under current proposals in Congress. AmeriCorps volunteers work in a variety of mediums

Feeding the hungry

One out of every seven meals served at community kitchens is going to a child under the age of 18. In 1994, 8,534 children were served a meal. More than 9,000 children rely on private emergency food services. More than half of the two million meals provided annually by food shelves and community kitchens go to children under the age of 18.



Source: Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity

Free Press

ranging from the environment to literacy.

If the budget cuts are approved, the program will end Oct. 1, the start of the federal fiscal year. Volunteers and program leaders are confident that the program's elimination will not end the anti-hunger projects.

"Our focus has been to work with the community so it can continue the project after we're gone," said Bari Gladstone, program director for Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps. "We help them with the agreement that they will take it over after we leave."

Vermont's hard work is paying off and may give federal officials fodder to keep the program, and similar ones, funded.

"The Vermont project is one of the most outstanding projects in the country. It seems to be leading the country in getting things done, not by giving more handouts but by building opportunity and responsibility among the people they are working with," said Joel Berg, USDA's national service director.

Lend a hand

■ The Vermont Anti-Hungers Corps is looking for AmeriCorps volunteers. The deadline is June 30.

AmeriCorps was created by President Clinton in 1993 to act as a domestic Peace Corps in which people receive a bi-weekly stipend and a lump sum after completing 1,700 hours of service. The lump sum can be put toward college tuition or other educational uses.

For information, call the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps office at (800) 360-2577 or 241-2577.

■ More than 100 of Vermont's AmeriCorps members and program staff will come together today and Tuesday at Vermont Technical College in Randolph. The meeting will be the first statewide AmeriCorps conference.

Participants will attend workshops on life after AmeriCorps and look at local AmeriCorps projects, among other things.

The conference runs from 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. today and 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday.



AmeriCorp volunteers were in Hamblen County recently for an anti-erosion project on the Ronald Ray farm in east Hamblen County. Shown here (from left to right in the foreground) are Paul McQuade, Amy Crumley, and Billie Barlow. Also shown are Janet Letterman and Stephen Trent. (CT photo by Greg Kyle)

AmeriCorps Members Visit Hamblen Co. For Streambank Protection

AmeriCorps members of East Tennessee were in Hamblen County recently for a streambank protection project.

AmeriCorps is the national service program helping improve the quality of life for Americans through health education, environment improvement and rural development.

The project was sponsored by the Hamblen County Soil Conservation District, and was held on the Ronald Ray farm on Bent Creek in east Hamblen County.

Streambank sloughing and erosion can be caused by obstructions directing the flow toward a specific point or by cattle breaking off sod as they go to the water.

Not only is the soil lost forever, but the sediment smothers out the

aquatic wildlife living in the stream. To prevent soil erosion of the streambank and improve the water quality, the AmeriCorps members planted four different species of tree seedlings, broadcast seed and mulched the area.

To further protect the area, Ray will fence the streambank to prevent cattle from causing erosion.

For more information on streambank practices or other best management practices, call the Natural Resources Conservation Service at 586-5501.



Renyold Ferguson

AmeriCorp workers prepare the soil for a garden in Rush City.

Gardens A Matter Of Pride

By Margaret Gillerman
Of the Post-Dispatch Staff

It won't be long before the lot next to Jesse and Donna Haire's home in the Rush City neighborhood will be ripe with yellow peppers, plump red tomatoes, tasty green peas and summer squash. Marigolds and zinnias will bloom.

The gardeners who are tilling and planting this week are building a community garden. And backers of the project hope this community garden — and about a dozen like it around East St. Louis — also will grow a bumper crop of neighbor-

Crews Are Preparing Community Project

hood pride.

Crews of workers from AmeriCorp and neighbors are helping prepare the soil, build the wooden sides and walkway, and plant seeds and cuttings at the garden at 910 Sycamore.

Other folks also helped get the community garden project — called Harvesting Good Neighbor Relations — this far. MECCO/Operation New Spirit, a citywide

neighborhood organization, started the garden program about two years ago and has been expanding it since. At least four community gardens are new this spring. AmeriCorp joined as co-sponsor this season.

"Community gardens serve as a way of bringing neighbors and neighborhoods together for a common purpose . . . and of harvesting good neighbor relations," said Venessa Marion, administrator of MECCO/Operation New Spirit.

See GARDENS, Page 4

Gardens

From page one

Florine Johnson, an AmeriCorp worker, coordinates the tilling and planting and was busy on Sycamore this week. Johnson, 46, of Centreville, recently completed a master gardening course offered by the University of Illinois' Extension Service.

She joined AmeriCorp because she wanted "to give a year of community service." In March, she and others started surveying the land and plotting the designs of the gardens. They plan to use only organic fertilizers.

The garden at 910 Sycamore is in neighborhood near heavy industry. Because of the risk of industrial and

experimenting with a raised bed garden, Johnson said.

Sheets of plastic were placed on top of the original neighborhood soil, and then covered with clean soil, so any possible contamination would be eliminated. The original soil has been sent to a lab for tests.

James Pace, 40, an AmeriCorp worker from East St. Louis, helped install wooden planks around the garden and till the soil. He recently completed the master gardening course and joined AmeriCorp "to try to beautify the community" and improve the environment. He said he wanted to get rid of the city's "eyesores" and the dangers they pose, including hiding crime.

"All over, there are lots where the weeds are taking over," he said. Besides, "once you start cleaning up the

for their community."

The garden on Sycamore is just outside the window of the Haire's house in Rush City, on land donated by the Haires. Most years, Donna Haire, has planted a smaller garden on the lot. "I love gardens and I like to see stuff grow," Donna Haire said.

She already has plans to freeze the tomatoes and make stew and chili for her husband and two daughters.

MECCO/New Spirit and AmeriCorp are sponsoring 11 gardens in the Winstanley, Olivette Park, Dayton, Wedgewood, Fairlawn and Lansdowne neighborhoods and the central business district. AmeriCorp also has about a half dozen more community gardens in Lovejoy and Washington Park and at State Community



Times-News photo — Ned Jilton II

A Sullivan Central team tests soil at the Envirothon at Sycamore Shoals State Park.

Envirothon tests nature knowledge

By LISA ELDRETH
Times-News Staff Writer

ELIZABETHTON — Sullivan Central senior Sara Everett examined a handful of soil at Wednesday's Envirothon competition before she helped her team come up with an answer.

The hands-on outdoor competition involved 15 teams from area high schools.

"I've just always liked nature and the environment," said Everett, a member of Central's ESP (Environmental Student Protectors) Club.

Envirothon tests students' knowledge in five areas: forestry, soils, wildlife, aquatics and a current environmental issue. This year's issue was groundwater.

Students spend 25 minutes in each area, answering written multiple choice questions and identifying plants, trees and other objects. Each team fills out one answer sheet.

The team from South Greene High School won first place and will compete in the state contest in May. Second place went to one of the two teams competing from Hampton High School. And the FFA Club team from Cloudland High School took third place.

"It's peaceful to be outside, and I'm concerned about the environment," said Jessica Stowell, a sophomore on Sullivan South's team. The team was made up of members of the school's Environmental Awareness Club.

The aquatics' questions were the toughest, competitors agreed. Sponsored by the Tennessee Valley Authority's Clean Water Initiative, the questions included mapping a watershed.

The Tennessee Division of Forestry sponsored the forestry questions, which included the identification of five different tree varie-

ties.

For the wildlife questions, the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency had various items on display — such as traps, pelts, skulls and feathers — that students had to answer questions about.

"I think there is a problem with the environment, and people don't realize that," said Heather Seay, a junior at South. "I want to try to help rather than sit around and do nothing."

As a project, the club tests the water quality of streams near the school. Also, a recycling day is planned Saturday at South for area residents to bring paper and aluminum to the school between noon and 4 p.m.

"The club's purpose is to make people more aware of environmental issues," said senior Jason Phipps.

South's team also included Spicey Gould, a senior, and Amy Haase, a junior. Club adviser is biology teacher Dee Eiklor.

Recycling has been promoted by the ESP Club at Central for about five years — so much so that even the cafeteria grease is recycled, said English teacher Nancy Shackelford, club adviser.

Team members Tina Kyte, Sara Weaver, Jeffrey Kiser, Gabe Anderson and Everett, all seniors, spent time reviewing sample questions sent to schools about the Envirothon to help prepare them for the contest.

Billie Barlow, Americorps National Service member, helped recruit Envirothon teams. Barlow works with the Appalachian-Northeast Tennessee Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, which has coordinated the local Envirothon for the past two years.

THE NEWS
KINGSTREE, SOUTH CAROLINA
JUNE 14, 1995

Page 18 — Wednesday, June 14, 1995 — THE NEWS



A JOINT EFFORT enabled Williamsburg Academy to receive some new plants for the school campus. Williamsburg First National Bank donated the plants, Williamsburg Soil and Water Conservation District provided technical assistance, and local Americorps members supplied labor. Pictured from left to right are Americorps member Michael Busby, WA Headmaster Larry Berry, Alan Chandler of Williamsburg First National Bank, Americorps member Kendra Williams, June Holliday of Williamsburg First National Bank, and Willie Humphrey of the U.S. Forest Service.

Young AmeriCorps volunteers are tackling WMNF projects

32-member
crew plans
to spend a year
working on
conservation
tasks -- unless
their new
program
is Newtered



IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT—AmeriCorps members Sara Cory (left), Claire Darling and Stina Johnson help clear out a spot along the Kancamagus highway to improve animal and bird habitat. AmeriCorps members will be working in the White Mountain National Forest until December, unless the program is cut. Some House and Senate Republicans have been critical of President Clinton's national service program. (Photo by Bryan Yeaton)

By WENDY HANSCOM

They're young, enthusiastic, visionary and they want to inspire a generation of Americans to take up national community service.

Thirty-two AmeriCorps members are now encamped at the Bog Brook Training facility in Gilead. They range in age from 18 to 26, and have signed up for a year of work in the 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest.

AmeriCorps was a cornerstone of President Clinton's campaign platform. He likened it to a domestic Peace Corps. The six-month-old program currently employs 20,000 young people in 300 programs.

AmeriCorps members have been charged with environmental cleanup, conservation work, combating hunger and poverty, and helping rural communities plan for the future.

Workers in the program receive a weekly living stipend, room and board, limited health and medical care and a \$4,725 tuition grant after

they have completed 1,700 hours of service.

The grant may be used to pay off college loans, or for further schooling. If it's not used for either purpose, it's forfeited.

Crew members at Bog Brook have enlisted for a variety of reasons -- some say it's the money, others were intrigued by the experience.

"I'm here because I want to ex-

**'We're not high-school dropouts
or court-ordered people here**

DAN MARTEL
AmeriCorps member

plore opportunities in environmental studies," said Jessa Eisenwinter-Lake, a biology major who recently graduated from Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass. "It's a good way to look at options in environmental careers, study and pay back those loans."

Jeff Fournier of Penbrooke, N.H. said he needs the money too.

"I came here for the experience of living up here," he said, "and the

big reason is for the money for school. It's not a ton of money, but it's enough to get me going."

Erik Hamilton, a 20-year-old who hasn't been to college yet, said he just wanted to do something "different."

"I wanted to meet new people," Hamilton said. "I also want to further my education in phys. ed. It's nice being around a lot of people and I can use the money for college. I love the outdoors, and I like what we're doing right now. I could do it for the rest of my life."

Susan Chunt of New York City is hoping the program will improve her construction skills.

"I want to learn the construction side because I want to join the

See AMERICORPS, page 3

THE MANCHESTER ENTERPRISE
MANCHESTER, KENTUCKY
APRIL 20, 1995

AmeriCorps to help with home repairs

Dear Editor,

I am an AmeriCorps member working in your county on housing repair.

My job is to locate families in the community who need help affording repair work, and then finding a resource in the community to help them.

If you have needed repairs in your home and cannot afford to make these repairs yourself, write the following information on a blank sheet of paper and send it in

I need to know your name, address, phone number, county, number of people in the household, number of children under 18, number of

elderly or disabled in the household, entire household income, the specific types of repairs needed, and a brief statement giving me permission to discuss your situation with a loan/grant resource.

Send this information to AMERICORPS, 242 Daniel Boone Drive, Barbourville, KY 40906.

Please remember this is no guarantee of help.

All information will be reviewed and put on a list. All information received will be kept confidential.

Rebecca Davidson
AmeriCorps member

AmeriCorps crew helps sort it out

By SABRINA HAYES
Staff Writer

Cleaning out a warehouse and sorting clothes was an all day-job for some area AmeriCorps volunteers.

The members serve through the USDA's Rural Economic and Community Development department, usually helping with rural housing and community development.

But for one day, Rebecca Davidson said they went beyond that.

Davidson, the Barbourville AmeriCorps volunteer, said 10 of her colleagues participated in the Corporation for National Service Day April 25.

Nine of those members were from Somerset, Barbourville, Middlesboro, Hazard and Prestonsburg. The others were from Virginia.

The job of all of the members is to help poor people fix up their homes.

The group was scheduled to help Mountain Outreach repair houses throughout Whitley County, but Michelle Humfleet, the Cumberland Valley Area Development District volunteer in Laurel County, said the cold weather changed the plans.

Mountain Outreach is a student-based organization in Williamsburg that helps repair homes for the indigent in the area.

Instead of helping repair houses, the group helped Cedaridge Ministries clean and sort the clothes in the warehouse in Williamsburg.

The ministry helps people whose homes have been burned or who are in need.

Laura Duncan, who serves in the Bell County area, said the AmeriCorps motto is "getting things done for America."

"We, as AmeriCorps members, have the opportunity to improve ourselves and our communities. By taking the responsibility for one small part of our community, we hope to be an example to the community, to demonstrate just what can be done when we work together," Duncan said.

TIMES-TRIBUNE
BARBOURVILLE, KENTUCKY
MAY 5, 1995

COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL
SOMERSET, KENTUCKY
DECEMBER 5, 1995

FmHA 504 funds upgrading local homes

By BRIAN WILKERSON
CJ Staff Writer

Mildred E. Bell's Antioch Shores home, where she's lived for 44 years, has undergone some major renovations in the past year. There's new vinyl siding on the outside, running water on the inside, a septic tank underground.

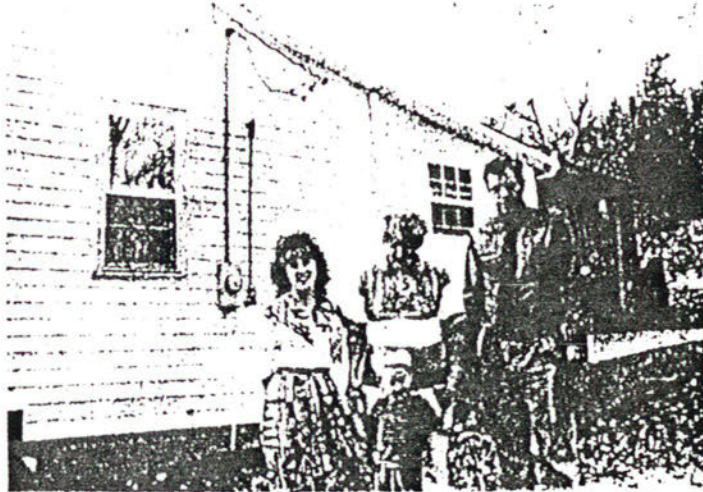
While those and other changes have helped "a whole lot," that's not the only benefit for Bell. Because of state and federal grant and loan programs, the \$10,000-plus she needed was provided at a rate that could fit her budget.

The funding was derived from Farmers Home Administration's 504 Grant and Loan program, which has existed for years, and from the Kentucky Housing Corporation.

Local officials are encouraging homeowners meeting low-income and, for the grants, age guidelines to follow Bell's lead, if repairs are required. Only those having ownership interest in their home can apply.

The homeowner must be at least 62 years old to qualify for any 504 grants, which won't be available again until the next funding cycle. That money can be used for such necessary improvements as adding indoor plumbing or updating the heating system.

The loans can be borrowed by low-income families at a 1 percent interest rate and can be



CJ Staff Photo by Brian Wilkerson

Mildred E. Bell, center, stands in front of her recently renovated home, which included new vinyl siding. With her is her great-grandson, James Christopher White; Tina Elza, an AmeriCorps volunteer; and Gary Crockett, assistant county supervisor with Farmers Home Administration.

used for less-pressing purchases, such as siding.

FmHA is "trying to promote it more," Gary Crockett, the agency's assistant county supervisor, said.

In that vein, Tina Elza, a volunteer with AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service program, has been putting up posters, meeting with various agencies and contacting the media. Her efforts, she said, are starting to pay off.

She and other FmHA officials

can meet with homeowners to help fill out an application or plan a budget for payback of the loan. Those with questions can contact the agency at 679-7493 or stop by the FmHA office on 100 Parkway Drive.

Though the 504 grants/loans are available county-wide, qualified Somerset residents will also be able to apply for a portion of the \$257,250 the city received from Kentucky Housing Corpo-

FmHA

Continued from Page 1

ration's federal HOME program.

Mayor Jim Williams says some homes may receive \$20,000 or more, but most wouldn't need as much. The money may be given in five-year, forgivable deferred loans, depending on the homeowner's income. That means the money wouldn't have to be repaid.

Applications won't be accepted until some more administrative work, such as hiring a firm to administer the project, is completed, Williams said.

See FmHA, Page 2

Pond hydrants contribute to rural protection

Louisiana's rural population and local government agencies have received good news about rural road maintenance and fire protection.

Jack McClanahan, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), has announced the approval of \$998,984 in oil over-charge funds for the implementation of a statewide dry hydrant project to be coordinated by Trailblazer Inc. of Ruston. The project will demonstrate energy savings through improved rural fire protection and road maintenance with the installation of 2,000 dry hydrants throughout the state.

As primary contractor for the statewide dry hydrant project, Trailblazer brings three years of qualified experience to the project for their successful pilot program

completed in 1992. Approval of the current project resulted in the combined efforts of Trailblazer and DNR and in cooperation with the Northeast Delta, Capital, Twin Valley and Imperial Calcasieu RC&D councils and parish police juries.

Twin Valley is a non-profit organization supported by federal, state and foundation grants. The RC&D program is designed to help volunteers at a local level identify and work toward solving the problems unique to their individual communities. Twin Valley RC&D area serves eight parishes area including Caddo, DeSoto, Grant, Natchitoches, Rapides, Red River, Sabine and Vernon.

A dry hydrant is a non-pressurized pipe system permanently

installed in existing lakes, ponds and streams.

Properly installed, dry hydrants can solve the problem of hauling water over long distances by providing natural, unprocessed water for use. The multiple benefits awarded by dry hydrants include energy savings to consumers and road maintenance departments, and improving rural fire protection and lower fire insurance ratings.

Improved rural fire protection is achieved with the use of dry hydrants by providing water from existing sources.

Fire department tanker trucks can tap these water supplies to fight rural fires and reduce the amount of time a water tanker would spend travelling back and forth from the site of the fire to the originating

water source. This reduction in the amount of time taken to supply water to rural fire fighting efforts can reduce insurance rates in those areas.

Water is also a key ingredient to maintaining gravel roads.

Using water to compact new layers of dirt or gravel makes a smoother surface on which vehicles can travel and increases the mileage vehicles using the road can achieve.

Having water available for extraction on-site resulted in a 50 percent reduction of driving time for road maintenance trucks in the pilot project.

With water trucks averaging approximately four miles per gallon in fuel efficiency, the use of dry hydrants reflects substantial savings in fuel costs.



Dominic Beggan and Angela Norsworthy, from left, view a dry fire hydrant in Natchitoches Parish. Every parish in Louisiana will be given the opportunity to install 35 hydrants.

Americorps helps Ute Mountain Utes

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY TIMES

Dale White, a recent AmeriCorps recruit, is doing an inventory of the Ute Mountain Ute Reservation land south of the Colorado state line in New Mexico.

His project to assist the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in gathering information for their land use management plan, a part of Geological Information System.

White has lived and worked construction jobs in Durango for 20 years. After repeated construction-related injuries, he decided to pursue a college education in natural resources.

He identifies plants in the arid zone of northwestern New Mexico while helping the Mountain Ute tribe compile information for a land management plan.

"You have to know what you have before you can plan," White said.

He drives about 80 miles to the survey location from his Cortez office. Most days start with a stop at tribal headquarters in Towaoc to pick up any information and tools needed for the day.

Then he drives to a point east of Waterflow where a dirt road takes him past the power plant to the reservation's New Mexico land.

"I love this transitional zone where the desert changes to mountains," White said.

His job is to walk an area documenting everything he sees. This could be anything from manmade structures like water tanks, roads, and fences to signs of wildlife in the area. The ability to identify animal tracks and scat is helpful.

During the winter when there are no blooms, the identification process include checking the root and/or seed. If that doesn't produce an answer, a change of season will sometimes bring more clues. Mid-summer is ideal for plant identification.

He covers about two square miles a day depending on land formation and the percentage of



Special to the Daily Times
Dale White of Durango inventories Ute Mountain Ute land for land management uses.

plant coverage. He once spent two days in a small canyon because the terrain was very steep.

White stops every four or five feet to examine something at his feet; either a grass clump, bush, animal track, prairie dog hole or soil type.

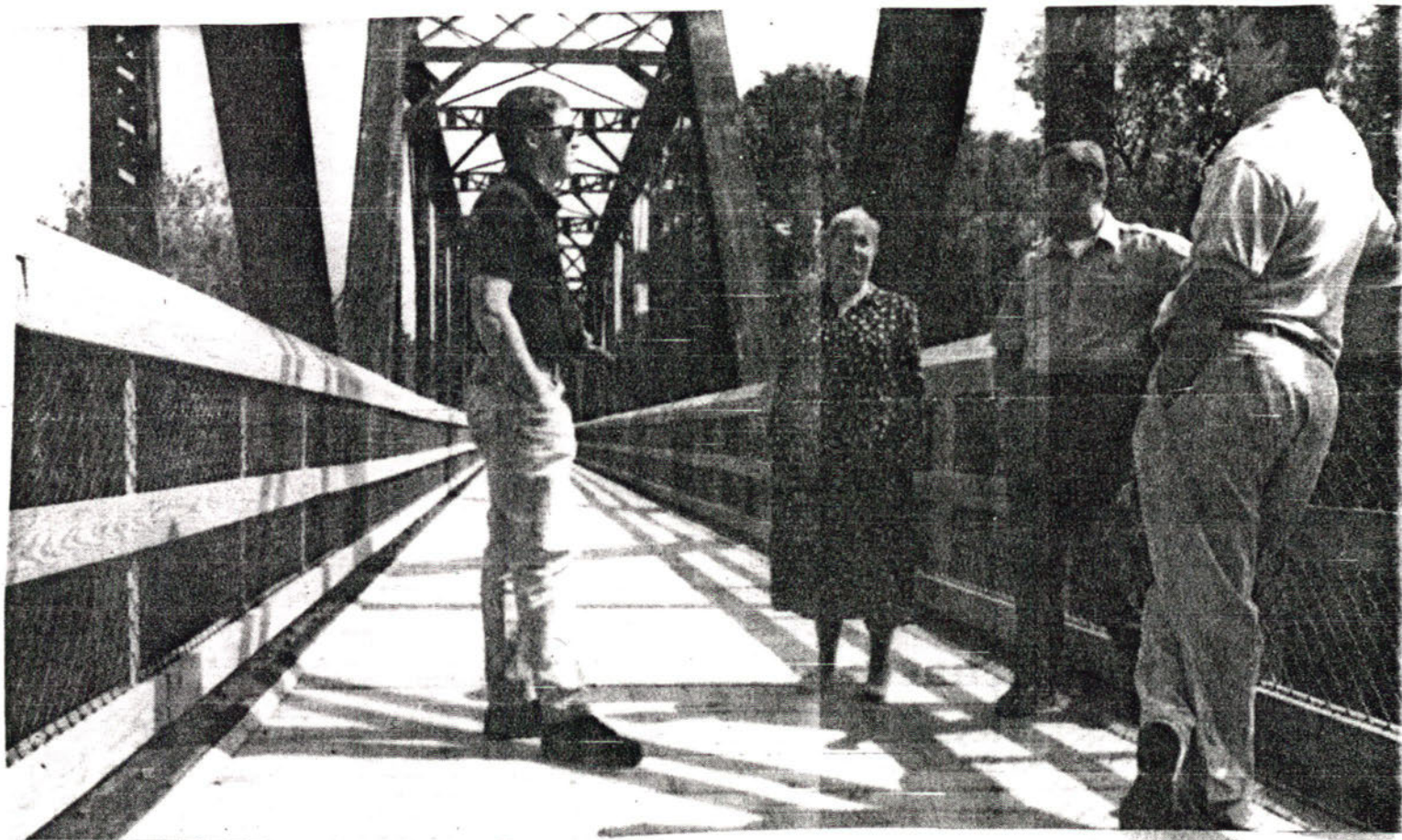
He also makes a visual count on the average percentages of a particular plant at that site. The variables that determine how many plants of a particular species will be found in an area are moisture, slope of the land and aspect of the land to the sun.

He'll return to the area later to check on the percentage of new plant growth, if AmeriCorps project time permits.

At the days end, White transfers his data onto a range site sheet that includes all his findings about the area. This will eventually be mapped into a GIS to aid the Utes in creating a long range land use management strategy.

White graduated from Fort Lewis College in 1990 with a bachelor of science degree in earth system science, a self-directed major. In 1991, he moved his family, wife Angie and three daughters, to Keene, N.H., where he worked towards a master's degree of science in natural resource management and administration which he received last year.

He and his family have since moved back to Durango.



COMPLETE BRIDGE WORK— From left, Brian Bates, Americorp historian, Kathryn St. John, chairman of the Historical Staunton River Foundation, park manager Jim Zanarini and Doug Spencer, Americorp landscape architect, look over the work on the new pedestrian deck at the Staunton River railroad bridge at the Fort Hill Battlefield. The park, a joint private, public venture between Virginia, Virginia Power, ODEC and the Historical Staunton River Foundation. The park will grow by 80 acres when it officially opens June 10 and Virginia Power and ODEC turn over the additional acreage. The park will include an eight tenths of a mile walking trail across the river to Randolph. The new pedestrian platform the bridge was built by park service personnel. (David Conner II photos)



Post 798

VFW takes over Newport Community Meal Site

by Ralph Heymsfeld

NEWPORT — The Newport Community Meal Site has found a new sponsor in the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 798 in Newport. Founded eight years ago at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the meal site has operated from the VFW Hall under the supervision of North East Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) since 1990. Now the post has formally adopted the project, which helps meet the needs of hungry Vermonters in our area.

The meal site, which served 4,442 meals in 1994, is one of several community service projects that NEKCA has either privatized or is in the process of privatizing. Fearful of a substantial loss of federal funds, NEKCA officials say that they would like to see as many programs as possible supported by the communities in which they serve.

The changing of the guard at the meal site coincides with the first annual National Day of Service, April 25, which is the highlight of National Service Week, April 22-29. President Clinton has designated these dates as a time to honor service and citizenship, as well as an opportunity to expand services to the needy. The Northeast Kingdom Initiative Americorps program is celebrating National Service Week by participating in a series of events throughout the week, including the preparation of a special meal which was served at the Newport site on Monday. Some other activities in this area were marigold planting on Monday at Pine Knoll Nursing Home in Lyndonville and a canned food drive this past Friday at Lyndon State College.

Americorps, a newly formed nationwide program, is described by its members as a "stateside Peace Corps," dedicated to public service. The Northeast Kingdom Initiative is one of five Vermont teams. It is made up of 21 members who are focused on improving services in the area of education, human needs, public safety, and the environment.

Americorps has been working with the VFW



At the Newport Community Meal Site on April 24, Betty Chalifoux of Americorps, Steve Austin, one of two NC high school students who work at the site, Theresa Tessler of Vermont Associates, who also works at the site, and Frank Huard of Americorps helped prepare and serve a special meal as part of National Service Week.

Photo by Ralph Heymsfeld

post as "facilitators of the transition," according to Americorps worker Betty Chalifoux, who was on hand Monday. She said that her organization targeted the meal site as one of its major projects after an exhaustive survey of the area revealed the program was in danger of collapse.

"We found out that there wasn't really any group or organization whose mission included maintaining a soup kitchen," added Americorps worker Frank Huard. Americorps arranged for the post to take over the operation of the meal site.

The VFW has also donated \$100 to start a fund which they hope will enable the program to be self-supporting. Several fund-raising efforts are already under way. Raffle tickets costing \$10 apiece are on sale; a \$4,000 vacation will be awarded on August 20 at the Orleans County Fair. In addition, 310 letters requesting support have been mailed to area businesses and other organizations. Those interested in either volunteering or making a donation may call 888-8910 or 888-5702.

NEWPORT, VERMONT
APRIL 26, 1995

AmeriCorps program contributing much to nation's future

If the focus of the current (and untimely) political debate over the 5-month-old AmeriCorps national service program were directed toward the results of full-time service instead of AmeriCorps "volunteer" status, critics threatening to eliminate the program would note:

AmeriCorps programs are devoted to increasing the quality and volume of community service by taking advantage of America's resource of youth. By working directly with the community on a full-time basis, AmeriCorps members enhance their communication and teamwork skills, gain a strong sense of personal achievement and responsibility, and, most importantly, increase their awareness of and commitment to community needs.

Two AmeriCorps programs exist in

Western New York — a NYS Corps Collaboration site in West Seneca and a National Direct program sponsored by the United States Department of Agriculture in East Aurora. As one of the five members of the AmeriCorps/USDA team based at the Natural Resources Conservation Service in East Aurora, I see the benefits of AmeriCorps firsthand.

The goal of our AmeriCorps program is to support resource management and protection in Western New York in part using Geographic Information Systems. Our focus has been on digitizing data (converting maps from paper to computer format) for efficient, accurate analysis and management. In the short time AmeriCorps has been in existence, we have worked on GIS projects in cooperation

with numerous local agencies and municipalities, assisted in soil and water conservation practices, and trained and worked alongside eight Earth Team volunteers.

The need for quality production of digitized data and instruction in GIS will become essential as increased members of organizations store and manage cartographic data by computer. The East Aurora AmeriCorps/USDA team has incredible potential to facilitate GIS data production and education in Western New York — but only if AmeriCorps survives the war of words in Washington.

LISA A. MATTHIES
AmeriCorps/USDA
Alden

BUFFALO NEWS
BUFFALO, NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 25, 1995

Agriculture director praises AmeriCorps during visit to region

By Kristen Hebestreet

Press Staff Writer

People who condemn the AmeriCorps are speaking from ideology instead of reality, the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Service director said Tuesday.

"Challenge anyone with questions to come out and visit a site," said Joel Berg, USDA National Service director, during a discussion with nine AmeriCorps members at the USDA office in Jonesborough.

Berg toured AmeriCorps projects in Upper East Tennessee Wednesday, all projects covering anti-hunger, social services, environmental or rural development projects.

Berg, who developed the basic outline of the AmeriCorps program while working on President Clinton's election campaign, now manages the 1,200 USDA AmeriCorps members working in 33 states.

The national service initiative is intended to develop communities and protect the environment at a local level. AmeriCorps workers are provided a stipend, basic health insurance, a child care allowance and a \$4,725 education award for college or vocational training.

"The vast majority of our projects range from good to excellent," Berg said. "It's our first year, and we're already bigger than the Peace Corps was at its height."

AmeriCorps projects in this region include putting together a map of tourist attractions in Unicoi County, renovating the Sneedville jail, agricultural education work, attracting both industry and tourists to Claiborne County and working with families of critically ill patients at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Mountain Home.

Because many of the AmeriCorps workers are in financially strapped rural communities, most projects require federal grants, loans or some type of funding, Berg said.

"We refer to the AmeriCorps



Joel Berg

workers as a 'funded nonmandate,' " Berg said, in reference to the recent conservative condemnation of unfunded federal mandates.

Berg does not feel Congress will eliminate AmeriCorps as it works to balance the budget because so many things about AmeriCorps pass what he calls the "Jesse Test."

"That means both Jesse Helms and Jesse Jackson support it," Berg said.

Clinton also has said he plans to veto efforts to severely cut funding to AmeriCorps and other job-training programs.

The total budget for AmeriCorps is \$370 million, Berg said, which breaks down to a total cost of \$20,000 per volunteer.

"This is the most cost-effective way for the federal government to serve people at the grass-roots level," Berg said. "For every \$1 of federal money, communities get back at least \$1.50."

Berg drove himself around in his Toyota on the tour of AmeriCorps projects in North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, Virginia and Tennessee.

"This is the best part — East Tennessee," Berg said. "And don't you believe I said the same thing in West Virginia."

JOHNSON CITY PRESS
JOHNSON CITY, TENNESSEE
MAY 24, 1995

MACHIAS VALLEY NEWS
MACHIAS, MAINE
APRIL 18, 1995

Cranberry project begins Down East

MACHIAS — The first year of a new cranberry research project for wild mountain cranberries in Washington County is under way, and will include taste-testing and a recipe and jam contest this fall.

According to Karen Bert of the Washington County Soil and Water Conservation District office, the Cranberry Observation Project, or COP Project, needs information from all cranberry growers who are voluntarily observing patches of the red berries and are willing to do simple data collection.

The project was conceived by Reinald Nielsen of Whiting, who became interested in the hardy native berries after observing them on his property. After doing some private research, Nielsen realized that the berry patches require little of the intensive watering, spraying with pesticides and fertilizing that other berries need.

He recently approached the Conservation District with the idea of holding an informal meeting to test public interest in the potential low-input cash crop. In April, 33 people attended the initial meeting at Machias.

Nielsen has developed a packet

that contains an explanation of the project, data collection sheets, and background information on wild cranberries and lingonberries. The packets are available at the district office in the federal building in Machias.

This year, he will begin evaluating his own test planting of cuttings from six different patches.

Bert, an Americorps volunteer, said there are thousands of native cranberry patches that could be evaluated as Nielsen is doing in search of the ideal strain appropriate for commercial cultivation.

The data sheets will be collected by the district this fall. They will be used to create a baseline of information for the year 1996, when "best" plants may be located and set out for intensive cultivation. The information also will be used to establish guidelines for growing wild mountain cranberries.

This fall, the district will conduct informal taste testings and a recipe and jam contest.

Anyone interested in the COP Project may call Bert or District Manager Nathan Pennell at 255-3995, or write Box 121, Machias 04654.

Schools clamor for environmental teacher

THE TIMES RECORD BRUNSWICK, MAINE FEBRUARY 20, 1995

Americorp worker takes Brunswick students outdoors

BY MICHELLE KEARNS
Times Record Staff

BRUNSWICK — A patch of forest with a swamp and an open hill has been drawing small bands of fourth and fifth graders who trudge merrily through the snow in boots and snowpants for their weekly lesson in the way the outdoors works.

Holly Sheehan, who works for the national service corp started by President Clinton, has been coming to Jordan Acres School on Fridays to take students to this piece of wilderness as part of an hour-and-a-half-long lesson.

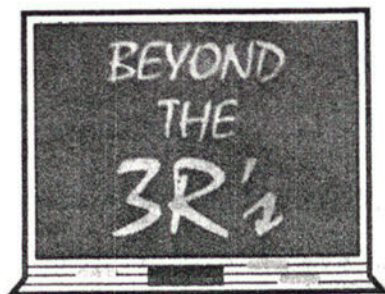
She said she wound up in Brunswick because fifth-grade teacher Rayle Ainsworth had been asking for help designing coursework that would take advantage of what was in the school's back yard.

So Sheehan, who is part of Americorp, the national post-college graduate program, has brought herself and her lesson plans here once a week from her office at the Cumberland Country Soil and Water Conservation District.

On an afternoon a few weeks ago, she went with Ainsworth's class to a clearing beyond the trees for a lesson in the food chain.

As students sat in a circle, she held out a skein of red yarn and asked for a volunteer to be a plant that would "eat the sun — sort of."

The student who volunteered got



a piece of yarn. Then she asked for a plant-eating animal. After a "rabbit" came forward, a "hawk" offered to eat the rabbit for lunch.

As the story continued and volunteers came forward, Sheehan continued asking for volunteers until there was an eagle, a bear, a human, a fern, carbon dioxide. One boy fell back into the snow and said "I am soil."

The story stopped when everyone had volunteered for something and held on to the yarn that had become a web.

It was taut until Sheehan added pollution to the story. What if someone changed his car oil in the back yard and just left it there, she asked. What if more than just one person was careless?

"If it's a big mess of pollution, don't you think it would affect the soil?" said Sheehan.

She told the boy who was soil that because of the spilled oil he would have to let go of his section of yarn.

Gradually, everyone else let go, too, and the web fell slack.

The idea behind the classes is to make students understand how human behavior affects the environment, said Sheehan.



PAUL CUNNINGHAM / THE TIMES RECORD

HOLLY SHEEHAN of the Americorps national service program demonstrates to Jordan Acres fifth graders how pollution can disrupt the food chain. Sheehan conducts the 90-minute classes behind the Brunswick school.

She is also helping teachers with ideas for future lesson plans, so that once she's gone the coursework can continue.

Sheehan has combined short activities like the yarn web with a bigger project that she will see through until warm weather — building a classroom into the forest.

Students have mapped out different land behind their school — on it are oaks, pines, maples, a dead tree, an apple tree, squirrel tracks

and frozen dry scat.

Next students will figure out where to put classroom amenities, such as a wooden walkway over the now-frozen swamp, a trail with signs that explain things to look at, and benches for a small amphitheater.

After that volunteer groups will spend two weeks doing the building.

Sheehan, 25, studied environmental science at Antioch College in Massachusetts, where she graduated

in 1992.

At \$6.50 an hour, she will work for another year for Americorps, a domestic help-the-community Peace-Corps-style program, which may dry up after the political fighting battles play out in Washington. In the meantime, word of Sheehan's work has spread and schools are clamoring for her.

"I'm turning people away because my schedule is full. There's an immediate need for environmental education," she said.

AmeriCorps members plant trees in county

By **DAVID WAHLBERG**
Sun Staff Writer

A leader of President Clinton's AmeriCorps national service program visited the San Bernardino Mountains on Monday to tout the program and try to shield it from the Republican budget ax.

"It's a great investment," Joel Berg, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's portion of AmeriCorps, said after helping about 90 AmeriCorps members plant trees in the Heart Bar area.

"It promotes work instead of welfare. It says you don't get a dime unless you sweat."

AmeriCorps, often called the domestic Peace Corps, provides \$4,725 education grants to about 20,000 members who spend a year on community projects.

Locally, members have built hiking trails, designed nature centers and repaired fire-ravaged areas. Much of the work has been in the San Bernardino National Forest.

The program, which started last year, is facing budget cuts from Republican leaders, including Rep. Jerry Lewis of Redlands,

chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee.

Democrats wanted to boost AmeriCorps' initial \$370 million annual budget to \$570 million next year, increasing membership to 33,000 or more.

Lewis and other Republicans say it should be status quo until the program proves successful.

"It's relatively new," said Dave LaStrange, spokesman for Lewis. "We should see how it's working before it gets a huge infusion of taxpayer dollars."

Berg said AmeriCorps will save money by teaching members to fend for themselves. "It's all about responsibility."

Karen Gilbert, a sixth-grade teacher at Charles Hoffman Elementary School in Running Springs, said AmeriCorps members have worked hard on the nearby Children's Forest.

"They have been fantastic," she said.

AmeriCorps members have taught students to snowshoe and design nature signs, she said. "It would be such a shame to cut back on something like this that is so mutually beneficial."

THE CHEROKEE ONE FEATHER
CHEROKEE, NORTH CAROLINA
APRIL 5, 1995

AmeriCorps' James Bradley To Assist With Home Loans On Reservation

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announces that AmeriCorps member James Bradley will be working in an outreach program on the Cherokee Indian Reservation through the Rural Economic and Community Development Service (RECD). Mr. Bradley is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Red Bradley of the Soco community.

AmeriCorps is a program that engages diverse groups of Americans in performing critical services to meet human, environmental, public safety, and educational needs in return for vouchers for education, vocational training, or loan repayment after 1,700 hours of service.

USDA is running three types of AmeriCorps teams at urban and rural sites nationwide: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team.

Bradley will be working with the RECD Guaranteed Housing Loans Program which assists moderate-income Americans who do not have a down payment when qualifying for a mortgage. The USDA/AmeriCorps member's main goal during this time of service is to build an effective outreach program between RECD and the Eastern Cherokee Tribe. He will

also be working in Jackson, Swain, and Haywood Counties.

Many lending institutions are hesitant to make housing loans to members of the Tribe residing on the Qualla Boundary due to the Possessory Land Holding situation. Bradley will be working through the RECD Guaranteed Loan Program to encourage banks to make housing loans to Tribal members.

The RECD also makes low interest home repair loans and grants, which may only be used for needed structural repair or to remove health or safety hazards. Applicants must be over 62 years of age to qualify for a grant.

Anyone with questions about the RECD Guaranteed Housing Loan Program or home repair loans and grants, call Bradley at (704) 586-5549. You may also call your local lending institution for information on the Guaranteed Housing Loans program.

The AmeriCorps member will also be compiling a directory of available local resources for use on the Reservation. Anyone with information about other sources of funding for housing, about any possible housing grants, or about any Indian-owned businesses such as contractors, surveyors, plumbers, electricians, that could be included in the directory may call Bradley at the same number.

EAST AURORA BEE
EAST AURORA, NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 23, 1995

AmeriCorps team in EA finishes map transfers

The USDA/AmeriCorps team based in East Aurora has completed transferring the 32 Erie County Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory maps from paper to computer format. The data were joined by computer to create a complete Erie County wetlands map. The five-member team began this work when their service term started in September.

The wetlands data, when overlaid on other computer maps, will provide an efficient and accurate means of identifying wetlands locations, boundaries and classifications to agencies and municipalities with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities. The AmeriCorps team will make the data available at no cost to local communities in their effort to promote the use of GIS in Western New York, according to a recent press release.

"Getting things done for America is the AmeriCorps motto," said John Whitney, USDA

NRCS District Conservationist and program director. "The five members of the East Aurora based AmeriCorps team have certainly lived up to that motto. In the last few months, they have developed and assembled many data layers that will help with efforts to implement geographic information systems throughout Erie County. Benefits of the AmeriCorps team's efforts are being realized as communities start using GIS to more effectively and efficiently protect environmental resources and direct future development with greater sensitivity to environmental constraints, economic impacts, community needs and individual land rights."

In addition to the wetlands inventory mapping, ongoing USDA/AmeriCorps projects include creating a GIS tax parcel base map for rural areas of Erie County in conjunction with Inteligis Corporation, producing a series of forest management maps with the Seneca National of Indians, and generating original maps with the WNY Land Conservancy, American Chestnut Foundation, West Seneca AmeriCorps, Governor's Office of Voluntary Service and a number of other agencies and community organizations.

Of the 42 USDA sponsored AmeriCorps sites nationwide, the East Aurora based program is the only one in New York State. Members are Melissa Brice of Clarence, Michael Gangemi of Hamburg, Lisa Matthies of Alden, Jeffrey Rosier of Arcade and Betsy Vazquez of Lancaster.



The Natchez Democrat/Kevin Cooper

AMERICORPS RALLY: Charleston, S.C., Police Chief Reuben Greenberg talks to a group of teens after speaking at the Americorps Rally on Saturday.

THE NATCHEZ DEMOCRAT
NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI
APRIL 10, 1995

Teens hear messages about keeping community values

By **MICHAELA GIBSON**
The Natchez Democrat

A nationally known author and police chief urged people attending a Americorps Teen Rally to no longer accept excuses for crime.

Charleston, S.C., Police Chief Reuben Greenberg stressed the importance of a community-value system and accountability for criminals, instead of blaming society for creating criminals.

"Values are something all of us need to pay a little more attention to," Greenberg said. "We've created a system of no fault crime."

Greenberg, who wrote "Taking Back the Streets," said that communities, told the teens and adults attending the Americorps rally that the community was vital to reestablishing values and taking away excuses such as lack of education from criminals.

"If we exempt (the criminal), we

become a society of endless excuses," Greenberg said.

Greenberg and the other speakers talked to teens about the problems of violence, drug use and teen pregnancy at Saturday Americorps Teen Rally. Americorps volunteer Shelly Foutz-Lowe, the rally organizer, said she was pleased with the audience's response to the rally.

"The people here have been dynamic in their response," Foutz-Lowe said. She estimated about 120 teens and adults were on hand for the rally put together by Americorps volunteers from around Mississippi.

"The crowd may be small, but the results can be big," Mayor Larry L. "Butch" Brown told the audience gathered at the Natchez Convention Center.

"It was worth coming out for," said Katrina Harris, a student at

Natchez Middle School. "More people should have come."

The organizers brought in speakers from different disciplines to give the rally participants their viewpoint on the problems facing teens.

"As long as we've helped one individual, we're pleased," Betty Oliver, state coordinator for U.S. Department of Agriculture Americorps volunteers.

Foutz-Lowe said she hopes the teens who attended the rally will continue the dialogue begun at the rally. "It's important for them to go home and talk to their parents."

In addition to Greenberg, Americorps rally participants heard from WLBT anchor Maggie Wade, who talked about the importance of self-esteem.

Americorps volunteers from Louisiana and Arkansas also helped to put on the rally.



READY WITH INFORMATION — Americorps representatives (from left) Tina King, Michelle Humfleet and Rebecca Davidson manned this booth at Community Expo '95.

THE SENTINEL ECHO
LONDON, KENTUCKY
MARCH 22, 1995

AmeriCorps unit completes mapping chore for county

The five-member AmeriCorps technical unit based in East Aurora has completed its first task, computerizing paper maps of Erie County's wetlands so that as map overlays they are readily available for developers and municipal planners.

The unit, guided by District Conservationist John Whitney of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, began work last September. The computerized data when overlayed on other com-

puterized maps will provide an efficient and accurate means of identifying wetlands for agencies with Geographic Information Systems. The East Aurora AmeriCorps unit is one of 42 tied to a U.S. Department of Agriculture agency and the only one of its kind in New York.

Other tasks awaiting the team during its service period are creating a computerized tax parcel map, forest management map and other maps. The East Aurora AmeriCorps team will be working with the Seneca Indian Nation, Western New York Land Conservancy, American Chestnut Foundation, the Governor's Office of Rural Service and West Seneca AmeriCorps unit and other agencies.

Technical AmeriCorps members who work 1,700 hours are paid \$6.62 per hour up to \$12,000 and are given a \$4,700 tuition voucher.

THE BUFFALO NEWS
BUFFALO, NEW YORK
FEBRUARY 21, 1995

AmeriCorps provides opportunity to help

By Kristen Hebestreet

Press Staff Writer

As the little girl handed Samuel Shore a homemade get well card made from a folded paper plate, she asked, "Could you please give this to my papaw?"

Shore immediately took the card to her grandfather, a patient in the critical care ward at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Mountain Home.

Shore is one of the 300 AmeriCorps volunteers working in Tennessee's urban and rural communities. As a 47-year-old man preparing to study for the ministry, Shore is almost twice as old as the average AmeriCorps participant.

Half of the AmeriCorps workers are 21 to 29 years old, with one quarter 20 years and under and the remainder 30 and over. Most have had some college or a bachelor's degree and more than half — 64 percent — are women.

"The only requirement for AmeriCorps is that they be at least 17 years old and an American citizen," said Carol White, Tennessee Commission on National and Community Service executive director.

What the AmeriCorps workers do depends on what the leadership of the community considers a priority, Ms. White said. This includes promoting tourism, attracting industry, improving housing or working in existing programs.

In Knoxville, AmeriCorps is reducing violence in inner cities by working with Head Start students who display violent tendencies at an early age. AmeriCorps workers in Nashville are developing health care programs for at-risk families and senior citizens.

"And in Memphis, AmeriCorps workers are working to break the cycle of child abuse," Ms. White said. "AmeriCorps workers all across the state are working in environmental education and economic development."

Like AmeriCorps members in other communities, Shore wears more than one hat. In addition to his work with families of critically ill patients at Mountain Home, he is updating the community services directory at the First Tennessee Development District Area Agency on Aging.

Shore is partnered with Robert Hamm, an AmeriCorps volunteer based in Johnson County. Hamm, 53, who also works at the VA intensive care unit waiting room, does some work for Habitat for Humanity and the Haven of Mercy.

Hamm became an AmeriCorps worker after his small business shut down and his 20-year job at Burlington Industries ended. He wanted to graduate from college, but said he also wanted to serve the community.

"I understood I could help others by helping myself," Hamm



Staff Photo by Eddie LeSueur

Samuel Shore, left, helps Mary Miller at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center

said. "This has been the most rewarding and fulfilling thing I've done since I was in the military."

Nationwide, AmeriCorps' 20,000 participants work in communities for \$6,200 in salary and living expenses and, if they complete a nine-month tour, are awarded \$4,725 for college.

The Corporation for National and Community Service, which oversees AmeriCorps, received \$575 million in funding this year. Like many other job training and education programs, AmeriCorps may be eliminated in the efforts to balance the federal budget by the year 2002.

There are seven AmeriCorps workers with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Economic and Community Development Council, all of whom are stationed in Upper East Tennessee, said Jeff Powell, council spokesman.

Powell, who is based in Nashville, said the workers are in this region because so many of the counties here are below the poverty level.

The USDA Rural Development Team is recruited from people who grew up in this area. According to an AmeriCorps brochure, planners hope this will empower communities to develop local leadership and to reverse the "rural brain drain."

Amy Crumley, a 22-year-old Jonesborough resident, says she'd been a 4-H volunteer and Future Farmers of America member since she was in fourth grade. As an AmeriCorps worker, she was a primary organizer of the recent Envirothon for high school students and the Conservation Field Day for elementary school students.

"I really enjoy doing things for other people," she said.

AmeriCorps volunteers like Ms. Crumley are required to work a total of 1,812 hours in order to receive the educational assistantship. This must take at least nine months but no more than one year.

Paperwork within the agency is kept to a minimum. Each AmeriCorps member is required

to submit a quarterly report stating the goals of each project and what is being done to meet those goals.

A service learning grant provided by the National Service Corp. allowed East Tennessee State University, Milligan College and Northeast State Community College to each offer a three-credit class called "Introduction to Community Service."

Billie Barlow, a former journalist from Charlottesville, Va., is working on a "Hidden Heroines" project for the ETSU Center for Appalachian Studies.

The project involves collecting oral histories from Upper East Tennessee women who somehow changed their communities for the better, Ms. Barlow said, and has also written a grant proposal for the cranberry project in Shady Valley.

"I was attracted to the national service movement," Ms. Barlow said. "I felt that a number of people could really make a difference."

Director of National Service for USDA Visits Winnfield on Thursday

Joel Berg, Director of National Service for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) was in Winnfield on Thursday.

In his position as director, Berg is responsible for planning as well as managing the AmeriCorps national service program, overseeing 1,200 AmeriCorps members. Those volunteers are working in fields of environmental endanger-

ment, rural projects in 33 states and toward the prevention of hunger.

Berg made a flying tour through Louisiana, stopping in Winnsboro, going on to Macon Ridge Economic Development Corp., Winnfield, Alexandria, Crowley and Baton Rouge in two days.

"He is visiting all states with AmeriCorps projects," explained Alicia Trissler, AmeriCorps volun-

teer for Winn Parish.

While he was in Winnfield, Berg visited the Winn Parish Museum, with which Trissler is working.

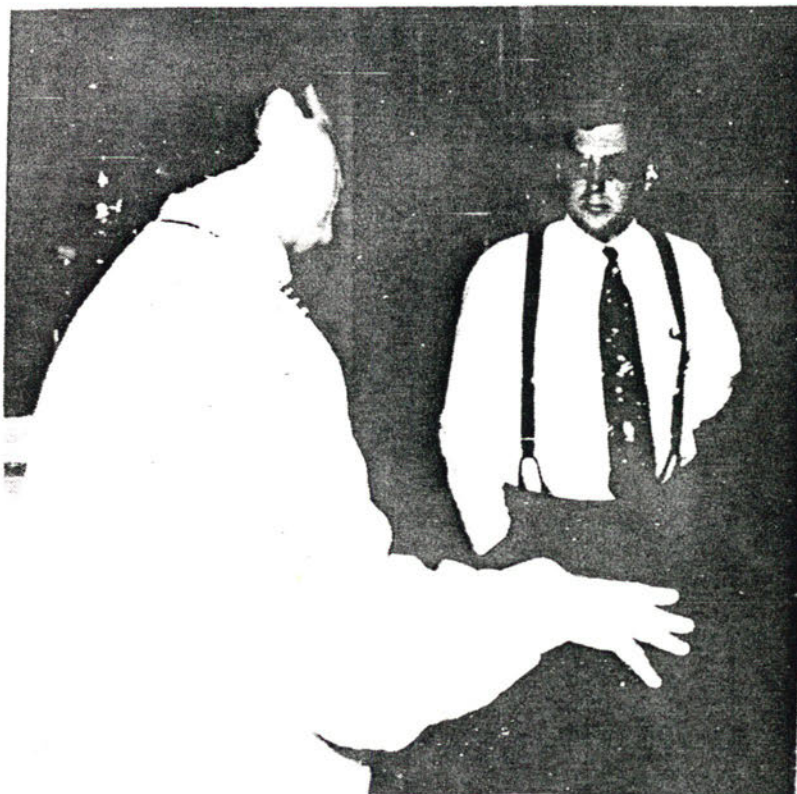
Trissler's job in Winnfield is as a tourism specialist. She has worked with local organizers to prepare brochures and with the museum to train volunteers.

At present, she is working with officials to prepare grant proposals for a HeadStart Program and a program in folk art. At the museum, she also aids in meeting certification guidelines of the American Association of Museums.

"We are planning to make the museum the center of tourism in Winn Parish, a starting point for tourists," Miss Trissler explained to Berg.

AmeriCorps is the brainchild of U.S. President Bill Clinton. It's been called his version of the Peace Corps. In Louisiana, there are 21 USDA AmeriCorps members working with local officials to get jobs done in the areas of tourism, community planning, rural fire protection, ground water protection, timber bridge replacement, farm safety and USDA loan and grant programs.

One program about to begin in Winn Parish is the installation of ten more dry hydrants. Already 25 have been placed around the parish.



USDA Official Comes To Winnfield

Joel Berg, National Services Director for the United States Department of Agriculture was in Winnfield on Thursday during a nationwide tour of AmeriCorps workers. During his visit he toured the Winn Parish Museum with Mayor Deano Thornton and Alicia Trissler, local AmeriCorps volunteer working as tourism specialist for Winn Parish. Here Berg discusses local tourism and the museum with Mayor Deano Thornton. There is a full story of his visit on page one.

THE PINE KNOT
CLOQUET, MINNESOTA
MARCH 4, 1995

Cromwell land is 'educational'

By JACKIE HEBERT
Pine Knot Managing Editor

Thanks to the generosity of foresighted benefactors, the Cromwell School has an 80-acre tract of farm land only a few miles south of the school that is being used for diverse educational purposes.

According to Oscar Eliason, a science instructor at Cromwell High School, the land was willed to the school in 1988, and has been a primary resource and teaching tool since its acquisition.

One of the main instructional purposes of the land is to show students "succession," Eliason said, the succeeding stages a plowed tract of land goes through as it returns to its natural state.

Monday, four Cromwell High School students, along with personnel from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and AmeriCorps, went to the site to brush out new trails so students will have access to a creek and a black spruce swamp on the land.

The group used snowshoes

to walk about three-quarters of a mile into the land, cleared an area for a base camp where they would later eat lunch, and then fanned out into the wooded area to begin brushing.

Eliason said the school has been able to make good use of the land for environmental education purposes, and students from grades K-12 have had numerous opportunities for first-hand experiences because of it.

"A.S.P.E.N. from Potlatch was active on the '80' and in the school, as well as area foresters," Eliason said.

Students have taken part in maple sugar making and have learned about wildlife management as a result of having access to the land.

Eliason also said a number of local citizens have contributed their knowledge and expertise to students in the outdoor classroom afforded by the site.

On-site Monday was a cluster group of AmeriCorps personnel who assisted with the brushing.

"One of our missions is to be

a resource network and do community service projects," said Julie Smith, a graduate of the University of Minnesota, St. Paul, and an AmeriCorps member who has been working in the Willmar and Alexandria areas.

Jen Melby, an AmeriCorps member who has been working with the East-Central Regional Development Commission in Mora, was also present, along with R.C. Boheim and Tim Reese, AmeriCorps members working on the Nemadji River Basin Project in the Carlton County area.

Phillip Klocksien, the State coordinator for AmeriCorps, was also on hand to assist with the rural development crew service project in Cromwell.

Eliason said an all-school Forestry Day is planned on the land for the last Wednesday in April.

With the help of the DNR, AmeriCorps, Eliason, and four of his pupils, the site will be ready for Cromwell students to learn even more about the forest and the environment within the 80-acres of "natural" classroom.

Friendly people and bad roads

Citizens tell what they like and dislike about Barry

By TOM COULSON

According to Americorps, the people of Barry like its friendly helpful people most, and its roads and sidewalks least.

These are two of dozens of findings relayed to council last night by Darlene Ivarson and Starr McDaniles.

Ivarson and McDaniles, during May 11-June 9, delivered 541 questionnaires and had 351 returned - 65%. Of the returns, 310 were filled out.

These are some of the things the survey shows:

★ One-half of respondents have lived in Barry 26 years or longer, and 90% expect to be living there five years from now.

★ Although the largest single group of respondents was older than 70, the response was fairly uniformly distributed across age ranges.

★ Fifty-two percent have high school diplomas, 23% some college, and 8% college degrees.

★ Of 301 who answered a work question, 76 work in Barry, 115 elsewhere, 111 are retired.

★ Of the 115 commuters, five work less than six miles away, 14 work 7-15 miles away, 40 work 16-30 miles away, 15 work 31-40 miles away, and 10 more than 40.

LIKES AND DISLIKES

"What three things do you like most about Barry?"

VFW wants liquor license

Barry VFW Commander Everett Dolbeare asked council last night about the possibility of a liquor license for the club, which has a clubhouse on Decatur 1 1/2 blocks from route 106.

Dolbeare said the club would like to sell only beer and only 3-4 nights a week.

He was told a first step would have to be getting the clubhouse rezoned commercial. It is residential, and the liquor ordinance prohibits licenses in that zone.

Mayor Ed Venicombe did not know whether a license is available, and city attorney Mike Hollahan said he would check.

Public works director Bob Dieker said he would let Dolbeare know when the zoning committee is to meet.

172 responded to this with a total of 519 comments. The top five:

- 206 - Friendly, helpful people.
- 85 - Small rural town setting.
- 39 - Businesses.
- 37 - Quiet, peaceful neighborhood.
- 26 - Library and churches.

Fourteen other factors were listed, including (in descending order) good schools; progressive and improving; low crime rate; police, fire and ambulance departments; security; excellent city services including pool; clean; parks; community spirit including festivals; meets most basic needs; low cost of living; close to major roads; good senior housing; and American Legion.

"What three things do you like least about Barry?"

- 259 responded to this with 322 comments. The top five:
- 58 - Roads and sidewalks.
 - 35 - Some people get treated better than others.
 - 30 - Too many police officers.
 - 27 - Unresponsive government.
 - 22 - Run down houses.

Twelve other factors received votes, including (in descending order) drugs and liquor problem, lack of jobs, dogs and cats roaming, not enough for young people to do, trucks parked around central park and over city, lack of available housing, children running the streets, education system, sewer system, too many city employees not doing their work, no zoning, too much low income housing.

"What do you feel is the biggest problem in Barry?"

363 responded to this, but many answers were similar to what they liked the least. The first two, however, were a little different. The top five:

- 22 - Too few activities for teenagers, young adults and senior citizens.
- 22 - Drugs and alcohol caused by too few activities.
- 22 - Streets and sidewalks need repair.
- 21 - Too many police officers.
- 17 - Lack of jobs.

A question about historic preservation was answered by 98 persons with 108 suggestions. The question:

"Are there any historical or geographical features you would like to see preserved in your area?"

The leading answers:

- 35 - Downtown buildings.
- 17 - Old homes.
- 11 - Cemetery.
- 11 - Park
- 6 - Churches.

Other responses included historical monument, library, stone bridge on Bainbridge, Bennett Springs, bluff area west of Barry, Indian mounds, school, restore top of bank building, forests, Watson property, museum, Bernie Keller farmhouse, bandstand and Mortimer Street House.

"Where do you shop?"

A big majority of respondents shop at home for groceries, gasoline and bank service. Quincy is the favorite source for clothing.

Market comparisons:

- Groceries - Barry 246, Quincy 65, Pittsfield 29, other 28.
- Clothing - Quincy 125, other 109, Pittsfield 87, Barry 38.
- Gasoline - Barry 172, other 96, Quincy 22, Pittsfield 19.
- Banking - Barry 247, other 48, Pittsfield 23, Quincy 11.

One-half of respondents believe Barry's downtown business will increase; 35% believe it will decrease.

Eighty percent want tourism to increase.

This was a "needs assessment survey" conducted by Two Rivers RC&D's Americorps rural development team.

Beginning May 11, Ivarson and McDaniles distributed forms with requests they be returned in three days.

On the third day, the team gathered surveys of persons who were home or had left them in the door to pick up.

If residents were not home, surveyors made one more attempt. After that signs were posted asking citizens to return forms to city hall.

"The 64.9% return was very good," Ivarson said. "Anything over 50% is good."

CALHOUN NEWS
BRUSSELS, ILLINOIS
JULY 12, 1995

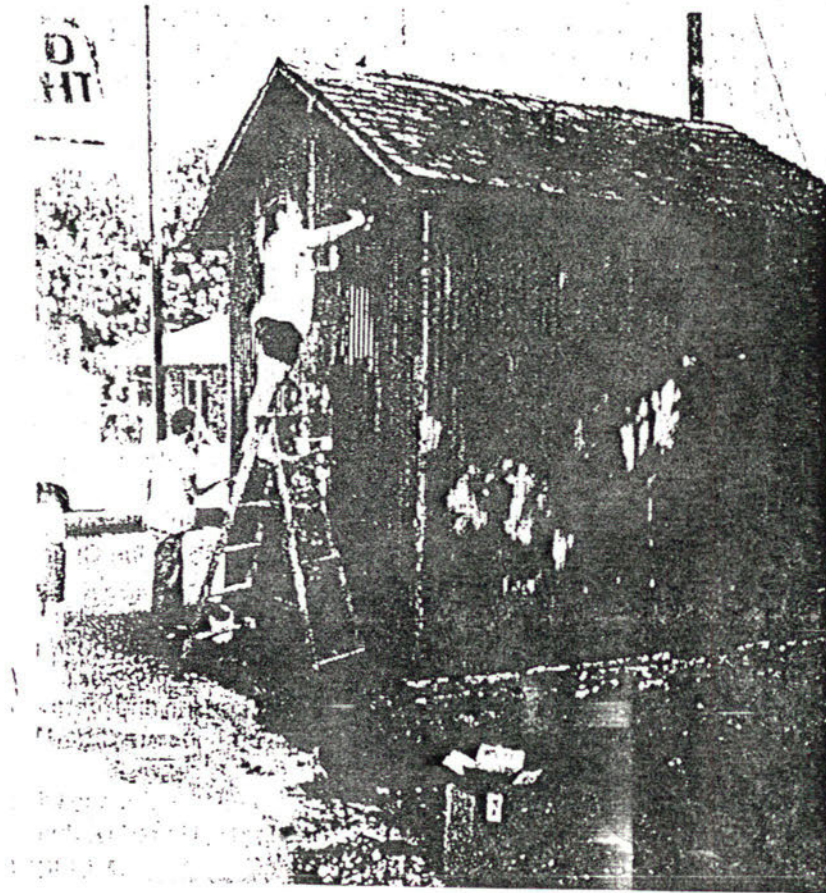
Brussels Historic Jail Renovated

The historic jail building in Brussels recently received a face-lift. Darlene Ivarson and Starr McDaniels, volunteers from the Ameri Corps Rural Development Team, provided the labor to refurbish the old building. A fresh coat of paint was applied to the exterior and the interior has a display of early prison life.

The jail will be open on weekends from noon to 5 p.m. for

visitors to stop by. The jail is located on Main Street by the Brussels Tavern, Wood Duck and Grandma's Attic antique shop.

Mayor Sarah A. Kinder is pleased with the upkeep of all the historic homes and buildings in Brussels. "A drive through quaint Brussels takes one back to the late 1800's and is a pleasant experience," commented Mayor Kinder.



THE SENTINEL ECHO
LONDON, KENTUCKY
MAY 29, 1995

AmeriCorp workers building new home for WWII veteran

By Eddie Arnold

Heavy resident Bertress Feltner served his country during World War II — now, the government is getting a chance to help him.

Feltner will soon have a new home thanks to the efforts of local AmeriCorp workers and other local community service agencies.

Local AmeriCorp worker Tina King, who is assigned to the London Rural Economic Community Development office (formerly the Farmers Home Administration), has been working to make the Feltner project a reality for more than seven months.

When King first visited the

Feltner home to do a health and safety assessment, she found that the elderly man, who has numerous health problems, was living in conditions that were less than adequate.

Walking through Feltner's frame home, King explained that the house was extremely cold in the winter. His only source of heat was a coal-fired stove which left a layer of coal dust throughout the house.

King said that she worked with members of London's Heavenly Helpers to get a cook stove for Feltner to allow him to cook meals at home.

"I bet I've made 50 trips out here," King said, adding that she

► COMMUNITY SERVICE

High desert residents moving forward, thanks to AmeriCorps

By Julie Johnson
Daily Press

Valli Andreasen knew she needed a change.

The oldest of her six sons was entering 10th grade, so she would soon have to get a job to help send the children to college.

But because she had dropped her goal of a degree in zoology to spend 17 years as a homemaker, Andreasen didn't know what she should do.

An advertisement for AmeriCorps changed that.

Now the 37-year-old is three months from completing her one-year portion of a project to survey soil at Fort Irwin. When she finishes she will have \$4,725 in scholarship money waiting for her.

"It's nice to be able to contribute to the community," Andreasen said of the project. "And I earned an education award so I can continue school."

AmeriCorps is a federally funded program that pays for community ser-

vice throughout the nation. This was the first year money went to the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Apple Valley, said district conservationist Rick Aguayo.

The program gave him enough money to start soil surveys at Fort Irwin, Edwards Air Force Base and the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms. Six people of various ages are currently enrolled.

Soil surveys map the different types of soil in a region, said Crisand Giles, a 24-year-old participant from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. If the type of soil is known, scientists can determine, for instance, where desert tortoises might live or how to treat a hazardous spill, she said.

Aguayo's five-year project is unique to AmeriCorps. Most are short-term, such as planting trees or diverting a stream.

Aguayo's six participants have also worked in the community, teaching school children about soil and conser-

Please see AMERICORPS, B4►

► AMERICORPS / From B1

vation.

In addition to a scholarship, AmeriCorps pays workers, who must be at least 17 years old and U.S. citizens, a living stipend of about \$12,000 for the year they spend in the program.

Aguayo said he hopes to get the soil survey funded again next year. He also wants to expand the project to the Chemehuevi Indian Reservation, across the Colorado River from Havasu

City, Nev. Participants would work with the tribe to plant traditional crops and help them apply for grant money.

"I think it's a win-win situation," he said. "These folks are providing community service and will be able to pay for school."

Resident joins national environmental effort

AmeriCorps gaining experience by helping others, themselves

by TARA POTZLER

With the rising costs of college tuition and interest rates on student loans, those interested in higher education are looking for innovative ways to offset the costs, while helping others and gaining experience for themselves.

The AmeriCorps program, a recently created national service organization, has a few local groups who have been lending their expertise and dedication for a variety of regional projects.

John Whitney, a United States Department of Agriculture District Conservationist and program director in East Aurora, has been working with five AmeriCorps members from Erie County for a map transfer project, including use of the GIS, Geographic Information System.

"It's been a very successful effort," Whitney said. "We're pleased and excited with the results so far. The group has worked together really well."

In assembling the group, Whitney said project coordinators were looking for college graduates with backgrounds in environmental studies, a knowledge of computers, and GIS experience.

Betsy Vazquez of Lancaster is one of those involved in the mapping project. An environmental science graduate of Rutgers University, she found out about the project in August.

"It was everything I wanted in

a job," Vazquez said.

In addition to the technical office work, AmeriCorps works with the public on various issues.

"It's a lot of fun and a great opportunity," Vazquez said. "You get experience, and you get a chance to work with and meet people in the community."

Melissa Brice of Clarence another team member involved in the mapping project. The Syracuse University graduate first heard about the AmeriCorps program from a newspaper article.

With her background in environmental studies and GIS, Brice saw the work as an "excellent opportunity. It gives you the experience you need," she said.

Many AmeriCorps members cite the on-the-job experience the projects give participants as a reason to get involved.

Brice said she will put the voucher money into paying off a student loan.

"I've been working with a concentration in GIS, and I've also met many people from the community," Brice said.

The major project involved transferring Erie County Fish and Wildlife Services National Wetlands Inventory maps from paper copies into computer formats.

The maps are complete representations of all wetlands areas in the county, and are provided at no cost to local municipalities.



Lancaster resident Betsy Vazquez (second from right), has worked recently as part of the AmeriCorps program on an Erie County map transfer

project. Vazquez is pictured with Michael Gangemi, Melissa Brice, Lisa Matthies, and Jeff Rosier.

Photo by Rick Kintzel

The services will allow for accurate means of identifying wetlands locations throughout the county.

The new maps, when used in conjunction with other computerized mapping systems and GIS, will provide protection and proper future uses of environmental resources.

The USDA has sponsored 42 AmeriCorps sites throughout the country, but the East Aurora location is the only one in New York State.

Vazquez said the five workers are doing basically the same work, gathering information, digi-

lizing maps and surveys, corresponding with the community, mapping and research, and have been going to conferences and presentations.

Members of the group will also be working with county high schools for the Envirothon in April, a day of competition and presentations dealing with environmental issues.

Like all AmeriCorps groups throughout the United States, the work was begun on projects in this area in September 1994.

The AmeriCorps members are given a stipend to live on, and

upon completion of service are awarded an educational voucher that can be used either to pay off an existing student loan or for future tuition.

If not used immediately, the voucher can be held in trust for up to seven years.

AmeriCorps members serve a length of duty of about 1,812 hours, and this current group will have until December of 1995 to complete their service hours.

Whitney reported good results with the members he has worked with, and will be applying for more AmeriCorps members for the next session.

LANCASTER/DEPEW BEE
LANCASTER, NEW YORK
MARCH 2, 1995

Opinion

Saving funding, food

Respectful, open-minded, community based, worthy. No, this is not the new creed of the Boy Scouts. These are some of the values embodied by the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, a program to feed disadvantaged Vermonters that is worth watching.

The year-old effort is part of President Clinton's AmeriCorps services program, his domestic version of the Peace Corps. In exchange for a small wage and later money for college, volunteers work in community service projects. In this case, the winners are hungry Vermonters.

Though the program is now a target for Washington's budget cutters, including the \$850,000 that goes to Vermont's effort, its attributes are precisely what government should be doing for disadvantaged people.

■ **Respectful.** The corps does not just give food away. Respecting the people it serves, the anti-hunger effort joins with city recreation in St. Albans, for example, and then provides lunch for the kids who come to swim.

■ **Open-minded.** The corps has tapped into whatever resources will feed whoever needs to be fed. The inmates' garden at the Northwest State Correctional Center in St. Albans — already a provider of 30,000 pounds of food to hungry Vermonters each year — has been a focus for one corps volunteer.

■ **Community based.** Far from using a federal know-it-all approach, the corps devises local solutions to local problems. Many of the workers are volunteers, and the food is often grown at community gardens.

The merit of this strategy is that the program's beneficiaries — often the rural poor — learn skills and develop systems that they can sustain themselves, without outside help. It also means the corps' work fits the community's needs.

■ **Worthy.** Some of the program's local ideas may be duplicated statewide, for example teaching proper nutrition to furloughed prison inmates. The anti-hunger effort has also won Vermont recognition and a chance to serve as a national model — "not by giving more handouts but by building opportunity and responsibility among the people they are working with," said Joel Berg, Agriculture Department director of national service.

These goals replicate those of many of Washington's fiscal conservatives, yet they do not place the corps above budget cuts. The federal government's debt is more than \$4.5 trillion, and growing. AmeriCorps' status as a pet Clinton initiative makes it particularly vulnerable.

So are the people it serves. The program's values are so Boy Scout-laudable, it deserves better. Its return on federal investment is high, too, for the hungry and for the participants.

The state's Congressional delegation should help it survive. Meanwhile Vermonters should continue to expand the program's volunteer supporters. Good ideas should survive no matter who is paying for them.

THE BURLINGTON FREE PRESS
BURLINGTON, VERMONT
JUNE 27, 1995

SANTEE STRIPER
SANTEE, SOUTH CAROLINA
MAY 26, 1995



AMERICORPS

GETTING THINGS DONE

In Rural South Carolina



"There is no member of the U.S. Congress more committed to the AmeriCorps program than I am. I feel very strongly about volunteerism," 6th District Congressman James Clyburn on Tuesday tells the 40 South Carolina members of the national service program begun by President Clinton. The AmeriCorps members are in Santee for a two-day training session. (T&D photo by David P. Phillips)

AmeriCorps builds spirit to fight hate of Oklahoma City, Clyburn says

By GENE CRIDER
T&D Staff Writer

SANTEE, S.C. - It was a day when AmeriCorps members showed what they can accomplish by working together.

And they received encouragement from 6th District Congressman James Clyburn, who said experiences such as theirs can prevent occurrences such as the Oklahoma City bombing by teaching people to work together.

The 40 South Carolina members of the national service program started by President Clinton spent much of the morning Tuesday cleaning the town of Santee - painting the town police department, cleaning the roadside along Highway 15 and making repairs to a nearby day care center.

The AmeriCorps members are in Santee for a

two-day training session. Besides attending workshops on everything from using time wisely to serving customers, members also heard Clyburn express his support for the program.

"There is no member of the U.S. Congress more committed to the AmeriCorps program than I am," Clyburn said. "I feel very strongly about volunteerism."

Everyone ought to find something to do with their energy and enthusiasm, for which they are not paid, Clyburn said. Every meaningful job he has had has not paid a salary, he said.

And volunteerism does not go unnoticed, he said, relating the story of how his volunteer efforts while he was a school teacher led to his becoming director of an area Neighborhood Youth Program.

Please see AmeriCorps, 2B

Clyburn: Volunteerism helps

AmeriCorps

Continued from Page 1B

"I didn't stop doing volunteer work," Clyburn said. Eventually, his efforts were noticed again, eventually leading to his position as South Carolina human affairs commissioner, he said.

Nine-to-five jobs can be rewarding, but volunteerism provides rewards for the person served and the server, Clyburn said. And it is recognized, he said.

Clyburn then slipped into a discussion of the Oklahoma City bombing, saying he knows the occurrence caused many in the audience to grieve.

He quoted a letter written by Martin Luther King Jr. to some clergymen he wrote while he was in a Birmingham, Ala., jail in 1963. The clergymen had told the civil rights leader that they believed in his cause, but that they felt his presence was a disruptive one and the timing was wrong.

King wrote that timing is neutral - time does not resolve problems - and that "I'm beginning to believe the people of ill-will in our society make a much better use of their time than people of good will."

The responsibility of bad acts falls not only on bad people, but also "the appalling silence of good people."

Democracy cannot be had in a closed-down society, and people who close society down "can not be called patriotic, because that's not what patriotism means," Clyburn said. The AmeriCorps members' work "is what patriotism is all about."

The members should "build upon experiences you've had with AmeriCorps and the relationships you've had here," to work "on what patriotism is all about," he said.

"We need each other and no one of us is more im-

portant than the other," Clyburn said. It is working together that builds communities, states and nations.

"Once we learn that, we will learn what patriotism really is," he said.

Clyburn wasn't the only official at the program. State and local officials were on hand for a morning press conference and the afternoon session, including AmeriCorps' U.S. Department of Agriculture National Service Director Joel Berg.

Berg, who was mowing grass outside town hall in the morning, said he was on hand to show his support for the program on the day that Clinton recognized national service, with a focus on rural America.

The South Carolina program is "all about" helping rural areas, Berg said. AmeriCorps members in South Carolina are working to organize communities for the common good and helping the elderly, building "dry hydrants" and outdoor education centers, and other work.

He also stressed that most AmeriCorps workers are not directed by the federal government, but by state governments who use the free manpower to serve communities' needs.

AmeriCorps is not about doing make-work, "its about getting things done," for a better South Carolina and nation, he said. Also, it helps middle-class and poor students afford a college education.

Berg also took time out during the press conference to express regrets for the death of Josephine High of Holly Hill, who was a member of the AmeriCorps from the first. High's family was to receive a presidential recognition later Tuesday evening.

The work of the AmeriCorps members impressed others as well.

"I think it's a wonderful thing to see young people take an interest in the environment and the community," Orangeburg County Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator Fred Wehrun said.

"We are proud, very proud, to have this meeting here today," Santee Mayor Franklin B. Goodwin said. "And you know who caused it?" he asked, pointing to AmeriCorps member Gloria Richardson of Bowman, who helped bring the meeting to Santee.

AmeriCorps employees receive a \$12,000 a year living allowance, health and child care benefits and a \$4,725 educational award.

AmeriCorps service honors go to 3 locals

By ALEC ROSENBERG
Staff Writer

It wasn't Memorial Day, Veterans Day or the Fourth of July, but the federal government Monday recognized three locals for their service to the country.

Anabelle Alvarez, 22, of El Centro; Maria Patricia Gonzalez, 39, of El Centro; and Santiago Luevanos, 35, of Oxnard were awarded for participating the past year in AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service initiative. All three have bachelor's degrees from San Diego State University's Imperial Valley Campus.

"What we have here are people who have been to school to come back to the communities to put some of the things they have learned in the classroom into action," said Wilbur Peer, associate administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Business Cooperative Development Service. Peer also presented Imperial County with its \$2.95 million check for being a rural enterprise community.

Alvarez has been working in the county's economic development office headed by Maria Matthews.

Alvarez has helped begin a Healthy Start office in
See AMERICORPS, A6

AmeriCorps

(Continued from A2)

Winterhaven, attended coordinating meetings of the enterprise community committee, talked to homeowners about government programs and promoted economic development for this area.

"I'm sort of like an ambassador from the office," she said.

Gonzalez and Luevanos have done outreach work for the Rural Economic and Community Development Service, previously known as the Farmers Home Administration.

They mostly worked with elderly people, many who only spoke Spanish, and informed them of RECDs programs and helped them complete paperwork.

"I feel great because I've been helping my community," Gonzalez said.

Many Republicans have criticized AmeriCorps, calling it too expensive for these times. The program was allocated \$575 million for

this year, but Congress may cut or kill the program in coming years.

"It is important that the national service and AmeriCorps keep getting funded," Peer said. "It costs about \$15-16,000 a year (per person) for AmeriCorps. It costs \$40,000 a year to lock someone up. This nation was built on community action, and that's what AmeriCorps was built on."

The three Imperial County participants will end their service next month.

Each will receive \$4,725 educational stipends to further their education.

Gonzalez and Luevanos plan to pursue their teaching credentials at SDSU's Imperial Valley Campus. Alvarez will pursue master's degrees in psychology and public administration, also at SDSU's Imperial Valley Campus.

They all are happy they participated in AmeriCorps.

"AmeriCorps mainly is about building trust," Alvarez said. "It benefits both the community and the individuals who participate. I think both sides end up winning."

Young AmeriCorps volunteers are tackling WMNF projects

32-member crew plans to spend a year working on conservation tasks -- unless their new program is Newtered

By WENDY HANSCOM

They're young, enthusiastic, visionary and they want to inspire a generation of Americans to take up national community service.

Thirty-two AmeriCorps members are now encamped at the Bog Brook Training facility in Gilead. They range in age from 18 to 26, and have signed up for a year of work in the 800,000-acre White Mountain National Forest.

AmeriCorps was a cornerstone of President Clinton's campaign platform. He likened it to a domestic Peace Corps. The six-month-old program currently employs 20,000 young people in 300 programs.

AmeriCorps members have been charged with environmental cleanup, conservation work, combating hunger and poverty, and helping rural communities plan for the future.

Workers in the program receive a weekly living stipend, room and board, limited health and medical care and a \$4,725 tuition grant after



IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT—AmeriCorps members Sara Cory (left), Claire Darling and Stina Johnson help clear out a spot along the Kancamagus highway to improve animal and bird habitat. AmeriCorps members will be working in the White Mountain National Forest until December, unless the program is cut. Some House and Senate Republicans have been critical of President Clinton's national service program.
(Photo by Bryan Yeaton)

'We're not high-school dropouts or court-ordered people here

DAN MARTEL
AmeriCorps member

they have completed 1,700 hours of service.

The grant may be used to pay off college loans, or for further schooling if it's not used for either purpose it's forfeited.

Crew members at Bog Brook have enlisted for a variety of reasons -- some say it's the money, others were intrigued by the experience.

"I'm here because I want to ex-

plore opportunities in environmental studies," said Jessa Eisenwinter-Lake, a biology major who recently graduated from Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Mass. "It's a good way to look at options in environmental careers, study and pay back those loans."

Jeff Fournier of Penbrooke, N.H. said he needs the money too.

"I came here for the experience of living up here," he said, "and the

big reason is for the money for school. It's not a ton of money, but it's enough to get me going."

Erik Hamilton, a 20-year-old who hasn't been to college yet, said he just wanted to do something different.

"I wanted to meet new people," Hamilton said, "I also want to further my education in phys. ed. It's nice being around a lot of people and I can use the money for college. I love the outdoors, and I like what we're doing right now. I could do it for the rest of my life."

Susan Chunt of New York City is hoping the program will improve her construction skills.

"I want to learn the construction side because I want to join the

See AMERICORPS, page 3

AmeriCorps

Continued from page 1



JOE KIERNAN of the Bog Brook AmeriCorps encampment uses a bow saw to help clear out a bird habitat area in the White Mountain National Forest.

(Photo by Brian Yeaton)

Peace Corps," said Chunt, who graduated from Wesleyan University in 1993 with a bachelor's degree in economics. "I put the Peace Corps off a year so I could do this."

AmeriCorps arrived at Bog Brook on Jan. 14. The crew spent the first few days learning about each other and the program. Last Wednesday was their first full-day working in the national forest.

Their work in the forest will be demanding and labor-intensive, according to Rebecca Oreskes of the U.S. Forest Service.

Corps members will create wildlife habitat, clear for scenic vistas, paint and do maintenance work at forest recreation sites, and build and maintain trails.

"It lets us get a whole lot of projects up off the ground that we otherwise wouldn't be able to do," Oreskes said. "We're really impressed with the quality of people who've come. They're not getting lots of money and we're really pleased with their skills, dedication and determination. They really want to work and do a service."

The Forest Service manpower has been hurt by federal cutbacks the past few years.

At times during the year, corps members will share Bog Brook facilities with the National Guard. For most of the summer, the entire AmeriCorps crew will be camped out in the national forest, leaving Bog Brook for the Guard.

"In the summer, we'll focus primarily on trail work and environmental education," said project director Bryan Yeaton. "We'll learn more about the Forest Service and what they do. We'll be teaching people to leave the forest as good as, or better than, they found it."

Searching for more projects

During their year with AmeriCorps, crew members are also encouraged to take up a personal volunteer project in the surrounding community.

Those projects can be anything from volunteering at the local library or school to helping environmental groups with concerns like water quality, erosion control or community education.

They're willing to listen to about any pitch, Yeaton said, and he'd welcome project ideas from local non-profit civic, educational and governmental groups.

"We want to get into the schools," said corps-member Dan Martel, an electrical engineering graduate. "We're anxious to tell people about what we're doing."

AmeriCorps members are also looking for recreational ideas. Some crew members have cars and travel home for the weekend, but others do not and won't get home too often.

Cathy Newell, SAD44 Adult Ed director, is trying to help organize some activities, she said, and would welcome any suggestions.



EMILY JONES passes out lunch packages at the St. Albans swimming pool during the first day of the summer lunch program for area children. (Photograph by John Thornton)



JAMIE DOES delivers a load of radishes to the Franklin/Grand Isle Community Action office in St. Albans, Wednesday. (Photograph by John Thornton)

For some, the answer is Americorps

STORIES BY KATHARINE BILODEAU

'My life was feeling meaningless...'

ST. ALBANS — There is a feeling you get when about to embark on some new leg of the life race. It's a sort of an anxiety on confusion sandwich, light on the conviction please.

Probably everyone experiences this feeling at one time or another, the most common being that strange limbo between high school and the "real world."

For some, a year off, thinking and focusing while possibly also doing something productive, might be the best thing in the world.

Emily Jones, an Americorps volunteer working in St. Albans, is one for whom this worked well.

She grew up in what is known as the New North End in Burlington. She went through the Burlington school system and when graduation came around, she wasn't really sure what she wanted.

She ended up at Amherst College, in Amherst Mass, majoring in the infamous

The thread of community

ST. ALBANS — Community. Community action, community involvement, community spirit.

These are themes that have recurred in Jamie Does' life, leading or following him on his far-ranging travels and wide-ranging interests.

Eventually they landed him here in St. Albans, as an Americorps, Anti-Hunger Corps volunteer. But in 26 years, his life has taken considerable twists and turns.

In junior high, his parents took him out of the Burlington School system and entered him into an alternative education experience called the paradise project.

For two years he worked on life skills like public speaking, and empowerment while traveling all over the

country on student-planned trips.

At the top level of the program, he directed and led his own community service project.

Then he went through Burlington High

About Americorps...

Emily Jones and Jamie Does are two volunteers for the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, a division of the Americorps program. The program is in its pilot year in Vermont with five 8-member teams around the state.

The volunteers work for a subsistence stipend which goes toward their room and board. At the end of their one-year commitment, they receive an educational award of \$4,725 to be put toward some form of school.

► See AMERICORPS, p. 8

AmeriCorps gets thumbs up from members

By PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

RED BUTTES WILDERNESS — Eddie Mather has hacked a trail out of the wilderness.

On the physical level, he's done that as a member of AmeriCorps' six-member "back country" team clearing the Butte Fork trail deep in the 20,323-acre Red Buttes Wilderness in the Rogue River National Forest.

But on the spiritual level, Mather, 21, a high school dropout who temporarily lost his way through drug abuse, has blazed a path out of a personal wilderness to enroll in college.

"AmeriCorps has helped me turn my whole life around," said the soft-spoken youth while taking a break clearing brush along the Butte Fork trail.

Having left drugs behind two years ago and now with a fiancée and four children, including two stepchildren, he intends to use his AmeriCorps experience to forge a future.

"This has given me college money," he said, adding that he will begin classes at Southern Oregon State College this fall. "And it has given me a good look at how it would be to work for the Forest Service, something I want to do. I push myself now."

Mather is one of 31 AmeriCorps members based in the Rogue River forest graduating this coming week after a 10-month tour that began Nov. 1, 1994. The local national service crew, one of 40 nationwide, has been deployed out of the old Star Gulch facility of the Applegate Ranger District.

Program participants, all from 17 to 23, earn at least \$7,500 and an educational voucher of \$4,725 for 10 months of work.

There are about 20,000 members nationwide, all pathfinders in the program's first year.

The crew has earned its keep, observed Bill Fleeger, a Rogue River forest employee working with AmeriCorps members.

"They've done a lot of work," he said. "And most of it would not have been accomplished otherwise."

Because of staff and budget shortages, the Forest Service hasn't been able to do a lot of work it had done in the past, he explained.

"But they (AmeriCorps) did more than 280 miles of trail maintenance and more than 2,000 acres of silviculture work," he said. "That's not including the work they've done in the communities."

In Butte Falls, AmeriCorps crews renovated the community hall, reroofed the town library and built sidewalks. Work in

Five spots open in fall

GRANTS PASS — The Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council is recruiting five people for its AmeriCorps program to begin early in October.

The five participants will work in rural areas to help plan and implement natural resource enhancements and community development, explained coordinator Amy Wilson.

In this program, participants will work for a full year, earning a stipend of \$12,000 and an educational voucher of \$4,725, she said. Funding for that program already has been approved by

the Department of Agriculture, she said.

This marks the second year for the program in Grants Pass.

Applicants, who must apply by Sept. 11, should be college graduates, professional school graduates or enrolled in a college or technical college. They also should be community-oriented with demonstrated skills in written or oral communications, she said.

In addition, applicants must have demonstrated an ability to facilitate group discussion as well as mediate differences of opinion, Wilson said.

Prospect included installing lighting and covered bleachers at the high school and community field, and building an arboretum.

"They've helped communities, watersheds and wildlife," Fleeger said, adding, "And I think we've helped the next generation of Americans along the way."

While Congress is still haggling over AmeriCorps funding — a final decision on the portion administered by the Forest Service is expected late next month or early in October — the agency is optimistic that the program will continue next year, said Mindy Martin, AmeriCorps program director for the Rogue River forest.

Another group of 32 participants is expected to begin a 10-month tour on Nov. 1, she said. Those interested should contact Martin at her office at 899-1812.

"We feel confident that it will happen, although the funding hasn't been allocated at this point," she said, noting that other AmeriCorps programs for next fiscal year already have been funded.

Keeping an eye on the program for the past 10 months has been Tom Luthy, 27, a member of the Eugene-based Northwest Youth Corps, which has been providing support for the local AmeriCorps team.

"With this age group you've got a real idealistic group of people," Luthy said. "Sometimes you may do a week of pruning in the rain. It's hard, laborious work. The key word is perseverance."

Working in the cold, drizzling Oregon rain on the side of a mountain isn't a job many would stick to, he said, noting that some weren't able to endure. The local crew began with about 40 members.

"These members who stayed with it have been putting in long, hard days," he said. "Most of them have goals they are

trying to achieve. And they are doing it."

Since joining AmeriCorps, Mather has been certified to fight wildfires, a skill he hopes to use in the summers.

"I got into a situation where I ended up addicted to drugs and dropped out in the 10th grade," he said, noting he had been attending South Medford High School. "I ended up in treatment when I was 19."

He has been clean and sober for nearly two years.

He took two programs offered through SOSOC as an AmeriCorps member, including a geography course. He aced both.

"Getting back into school will be a whole new routine," he said. "I'm looking forward to it."

"The money for college is a big incentive as well as an investment," he added. "I'm confident I will end up paying it back during my career."

Other members of the backcountry trail crew agreed with Mather's assessment.

"It's definitely had its ups and downs, but overall, it's been a good experience," said Tim Dodge, 22, of Cottage Grove.

A natural resources student at Oregon State University for three years before joining AmeriCorps, Dodge plans to return to college.

"I took a year off from my studies to focus," Dodge explained.

Jennifer Tuman, 22, a 1991 graduate of Crater High School, also will return to college, studying marine biology.

For Tuman, who had been working at a pharmacy and had studied at Rogue Community College, the program has given her confidence.

"It's made me a stronger person, physically and mentally," she said. "I wasn't ready for college. Now I am ready to study. Definitely."

TWIN VALLEY TIMES
THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA
MARCH 5, 1995

AmeriCorps members here improve environment and promote tourism

Five members of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) AmeriCorps Rural Development Team in Twin Valley announced that in their last few months of service they have made significant progress improving wildlife habitats, promoting local tourism and providing conservation outreach by designing living snow fences.

AmeriCorps works with the Agassiz Wildlife Refuge in order to provide Habitats for Animals, constructing brush lodgings for various wildlife. The AmeriCorps members also worked with the Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club in Thief River Falls to help prepare for the Iron Man 250 snowmobile race. Other community service projects include Give Water A Hand water screen-

ing project in Halstad, and helping set up and staffing an AmeriCorps booth at the Red River Valley Winter Shows in Crookston.

AmeriCorps members working on the Agassiz Recreational Trail (A.R.T.) project have completed an A.R.T. pre-brochure and are developing a Mahnom County tourism brochure. They are also preparing a grant for a city park in Ada, and working on the plans for the Ada walking trail. The AmeriCorps members have received a grant for \$200 from Polaris to help with the promotion of A.R.T.

AmeriCorps members working on the Conservation Outreach project have constructed a working Living Snow Fence Model to better demonstrate a need for such a program. A living snow fence is one or many rows of trees planted along a roadway to stop snow from drifting across. Members also organized a tillage demonstration to be held in late August of this year. AmeriCorps has received \$3,000 from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) and \$1,500 from the Watershed Advisory Group to help with both of these projects.

AmeriCorps is the new domestic Peace Corps created by President Clinton and Congress to engage Americans of all backgrounds in direct service to their communities in exchange for an educational benefit that can be used to pay for college, job training, or to repay back student loans.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is sponsoring three types of AmeriCorps teams composed of approximately 1,200 members serving 38 states nationwide: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team.

ARIZONA DAILY NEWS
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA
AUGUST 26, 1995

2—ARIZONA DAILY SUN, Flagstaff, Arizona, Saturday, August 26, 1995

AmeriCorps volunteers can only help: official

By BLAKE MORLOCK

Sun Staff Reporter

The director of AmeriCorps' largest component visited Flagstaff Friday, defending the embattled program from criticisms raised by congressional Republicans.

"Some of the complaints are from Pluto," said Joel Berg, who runs the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Service program. He said Republicans are attacking the program because it displaces volunteers from other organizations, it pays them minimum wage and it costs too much to run.

Berg on Friday attacked the complaints during a meeting with community leaders at the Greater Flagstaff Economic Council.

He said unlike Republican claims, he has never heard of an AmeriCorps program taking over the work of other agencies. Republicans say this has prevented concerned citizens from volunteering.

"They act like volunteers are tripping over themselves to help the community and they have all day to work," Berg said.

On the assertion that it pays its members, Berg said, "When congresspeople work for free, then we'll stop paying AmeriCorps members minimum wage."

Berg also said that of his department's \$2.6 million budget. This year, he will spend \$30,000 on administrative costs, including his trip to Flagstaff.

Berg was flanked by two volunteers, Jerry Chavez and Usha Little.

As a member of the rural development wing of AmeriCorps, Chavez put together a deal to guarantee fire and emergency medical service for the Bellemont area. This was instrumental in landing a Wisconsin Tissue plant in the Flagstaff area, expected to bring in 75 to 100 new jobs. He also brought emergency medical services to Parks.

In addition, Chavez put together a cooperative agreement among 19 local, state and government agencies in northern Arizona that will streamline the process of sharing resources in emergencies.

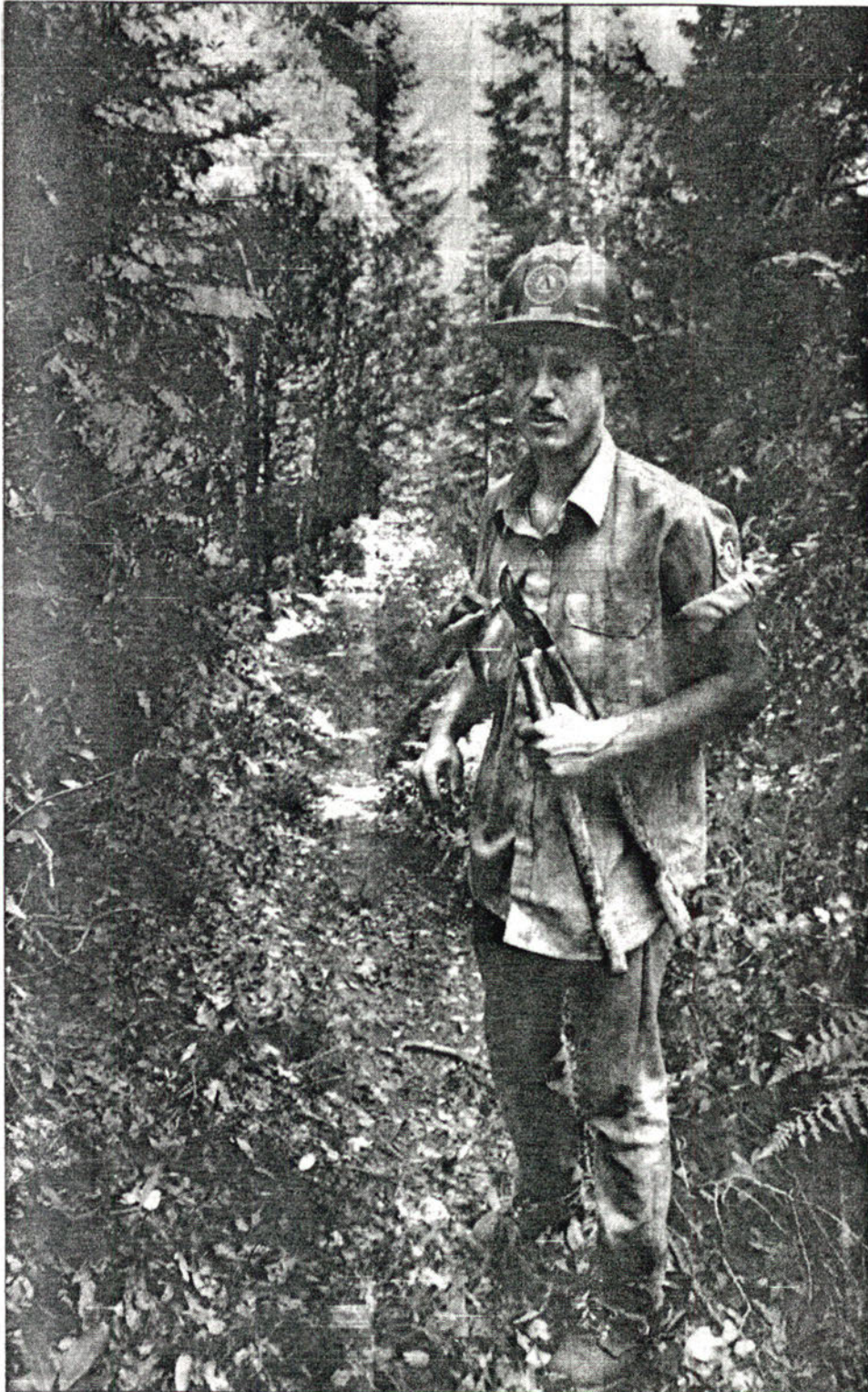
Little said her AmeriCorps efforts in the Navajo Reservation town of Camero have improved the quality of life there. She said she set up a cultural preservation organization and has promoted tourism to improve the economy.

GFEC President Dave Spaur said Chavez helped in attracting Wisconsin Tissue to Flagstaff because Chavez had more staff power and a better budget.

Flagstaff Mayor Chris Bavasi said the city's faith in AmeriCorps is illustrated in the city budget.

"The proof in the city of Flagstaff's interest in this program is that we have invested heavily in this program," Bavasi said. "We think this program is very important."

THE MAIL TRIBUNE
MEDFORD, OREGON
AUGUST 27, 1995



Mail Tribune / Paul Fattig

ABOUT-FACE — AmeriCorps member Eddie Mather, a high-school dropout, says the work has given him a new outlook on life. He plans to use his education voucher to attend Southern Oregon State College this fall.

APRIL 5, 1995

Recovery Roundup

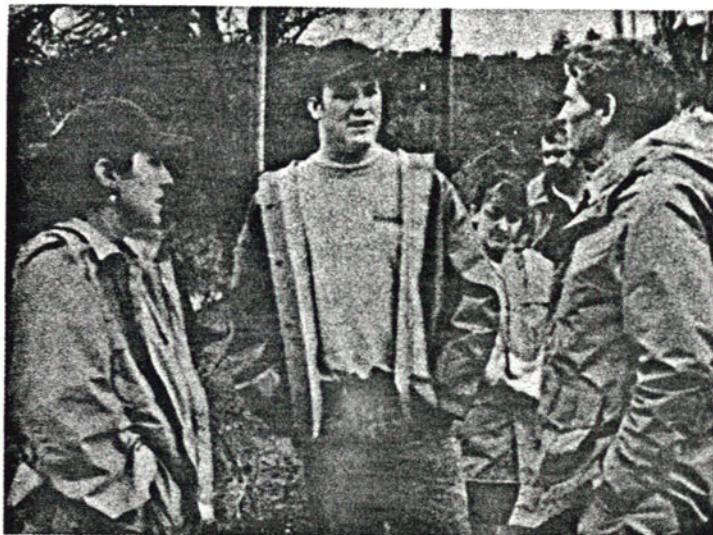
AmeriCorps Contributes Helping Hands

AmeriCorps members have been working during the recent winter storms, aiding thousands of flood victims by filling sandbags, serving meals to families in need, assisting in shelters, and working to strengthen levees and remove debris.

AmeriCorps was started by President Clinton as a national public and community service initiative for young people and senior citizens. AmeriCorps personnel have provided assistance at disasters nationwide.

The National Civilian Community Corps reported 37 members working in Sonoma County, while 12 AmeriCorps members of the Sacramento Local Conservation Corps logged more than 50 hours filling sandbags in Sacramento.

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps had two crews working in the Santa Monica Mountains assisting residents by shoring up their properties with sandbags.



NRCS Photo by Rebecca de la Torre

U.S. Department of Agriculture Interim Secretary Richard Rominger (right) listens to AmeriCorps members Nancy Scolari (left) and Mike Jensen during the flood clean-up.

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PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Black Hills
Daily Pioneer

Americorp project to spruce up canyon garden

By WILLIAM R. CISSELL
Staff Writer

SPEARFISH — A planned five-acre garden filled with many of the native plants of the Black Hills will receive a boost from the National Civilian Community Corp — better known as Americorp, according to Spearfish Canyon Foundation President Jerry Boyer.

Boyer was informed this week that a crew of 10 to 11 young Americorp workers will be in the canyon beginning Sunday, May 11 to begin work on the four-week project.

"They will come in a van with a trailer containing all the necessary equipment to start," Boyer said. "We will be developing the five-acre botanical gardens which will wrap around the Cultural Center.

The involvement of the Americorp is "a very integral part of our plans. Since this is a public garden, it was our goal to involve as many public entities as possible.

"Their participation provides a value of between \$10,000 and \$12,000. It would have been much less of a garden without their help

which represents about 25 percent of the total cost. This will allow us to buy more plants, educational materials and interpretive signage," Boyer explained.

The advisory panel completed their species selection of the native plants about a month ago, Boyer said. "Those chose about 160 different species and we have sent that list to one of the better native plant nurseries in Oregon."

The plants will arrive around mid-May, having been grown to a specific height by the nursery.

"The ones they don't have will be transplanted from the forest floor by a horticulturist," Boyer said.

The garden will have 12 separate themes and the areas between the different species will be natural landscaping.

"The whole idea with the project is to promote water conservation, reduce chemical applications and enhance wildlife habitat. We want to encourage people to use native plants in their domestic and business landscapes," Boyer said. "He said the native vegetation will also bring in more birds, butterflies and so on.

"You can enjoy more of nature at your home," he said.

"What visitors see in the garden will be the same as they see when they are out in the forest but it will be interpreted for them so they will know what they are looking at when they are out in the forest," Boyer said.

Americorp was started by the Clinton Administration and authorized by Congress.

Participants are 18 to 24 years old. They work for 10 months and receive a \$4,725 stipend to be used for higher education. They also receive uniforms, health care, child care and job skill training.

The real compensation, according to an Americorp pamphlet, "comes from having as much responsibility and as many challenges as they can handle. This program helps them become skilled community leaders. It promotes civic pride and responsibility through community service."

The youth are racially, economically and socially diverse.

There are four areas of projects Americorp considers: environmental, public safety, educational and human needs.

"Americorp hasn't done much work in South Dakota and were pleased to find projects here.

"This fits in well with our goal of establishing a native botanical garden to be used for public education," Boyer said.

Boyer said the Forest Service will be providing housing for the youth at Hardy Campus and the Foundation will provide funds for their food.

He said he had first learned of the youth program through a call from someone in Rapid City whose daughter was in Americorp. He had read about the foundation's plans and said he thought it sounded like a good project for the group.

"I called Washington, D.C. and they put me in touch with the Denver office. I filled out the application and it was approved about a year later," Boyer explained.

"I feel very fortunate they found our Spearfish Canyon garden a valuable project," Boyer said.



Staff photo by S. A. Montgomery

DOING THEIR PART: Jonesboro Middle students (L-R) Elizabeth Adams, Michelle Paino and Ben Giles do a little digging in the dirt.

Concerned

Students learn concern for environment

By S. A. Montgomery
Neighbor Staff Writer

Students at Jonesboro Middle School practiced environmental awareness Friday.

As participants in the Gardens Green program, students are learning gardening techniques. Some get passes to go outside and work.

Raking, mulching, planting, fertilizing—the students were doing all of this and more.

"I'm just glad to be getting out of class," grinned seventh grader Ralon Newton as he raked leaves.

Participating students learned to prepare soil for planting in preparation for planting a water oak in memory of Olympic champion Jesse Owens.

Students in Toni Wilkerson's earth science classes did even more, taking part in a new environmental awareness program.

Laurie Ford, a Clayton County Americorps worker, is inaugurating an "Adopt-A-Stream" program in Clayton. Ms. Wilkerson and her class learned more about water conservation in both lectures and hands-on workshops with Ms. Ford.

"We have to be very conscientious about how we use water, this valuable resource," she said to the class. "And we're all guilty of pollution just by our cars, our litter, fertilizing our lawns—even flushing the toilet or building a new home."

Ms. Ford then talked about how

various types of pollution affect water supply sources and the life that lives in them.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture sponsors Americorps workers, who are a "domestic peace corps," according to Ms. Ford, who visits various schools.

The students then went to a small creek actually located on the property of Jonesboro Middle School to "test the waters" for phosphates, nitrates, pH, temperature, and other chemicals.

► Information: (770) 473-5467.



Staff photo by S. A. Montgomery

WATCHING IT GROW: Eighth grader Tiffany Scott takes part in the gardening program.

MOSTLY SUNNY
 Today's high: 60
 Yesterday's high: 53
 Last night's low: 42
 Hour rainfall: None

Carroll quits Morrow for Clayton St.
MORROW — Mark Carroll had a chance to leave the high school sidelines for a college basketball job four years ago and he passed. This time he couldn't say no.
 SPORTS, page 5

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 Atlanta 1996
 til 0

Clayton News/D

VOL. 25, NO. 206 138 CHURCH STREET, JONESBORO, GA 30236 (770) 478-5753 **TUESDAY** APRIL 2, 1996

Natural color



Photo by Larry Rice

AmeriCorps volunteer Laurie Ford plants an azalea Monday alongside the entrance to Clayton County International Park, home of Atlanta Beach. Ford and other volunteers are planting some 2,500 plants as part of the landscaping of the new entrance. The plants, which are being supplied by the Natural Conservation Resource Services, will provide an array of natural color along the roadway to the county park.



IT GOIN... Quentin Holden (L) and Laurie Ford, coordinator, guide the effort.

Building eco-awareness

Clayton County Adopt-A-Stream program is gaining momentum

By S. A. Montgomery
Neighbor Staff Writer

Community leaders met last Wednesday evening for the preliminary organization of Clayton's "Adopt-A-Stream" program.

The program aims to clean and keep as pristine as possible the many creeks and streams in Clayton.

"We've slowly been able to find people who are interested," said USDA Americorps volunteer Laurie Ford. She and Quentin

Holden, another Americorps volunteer, have been the driving force behind the organization.

O.C. Lam, a professor at Clayton State College who plans to retire in six months, has been deeply involved in guiding the still-forming program. Lam has attended workshops and is attempting to secure funding for the

...hard Calhoun, a department manager with the Clayton County Water Authority, affirmed the

water authority has a vested interest in seeing the streams kept clean.

"I'm seeing great enthusiasm and real interest here," said Laurie Hawks, a representative of the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream.

"You have many different partners—schools, businesses, Reynold's Nature Preserve, the water authority, Americorps, Clayton State—and that's a recipe for success."

The group elected Lam to serve as Clayton's Adopt-A-Stream chairman and selected member to serve on the Steering Committee.

According to Lam, sedimentation is a serious problem in the county.

"We need to get the program of the group quickly so that we can take care of it before it gets any worse," Lam said.

Information: (770) 473-5467.

RIVER CHAT

A 20 TON EFFORT TOWARDS A CLEANER RIVER

How do you clean up *twenty tons* of trash from a Chattahoochee riverbank?

Find lots of volunteers and a helpful company with heavy equipment! Thanks to **C.W. Matthews Contracting Co.** for providing a front end loader, 2 flatbed trucks and employees to assist in the trash pick-up. Additional thanks to the 75 people who participated in the hugely successful cleanup on a sunny Saturday in late March.

A diverse range of groups were represented, including the **Georgia Canoeing Association**, **West Fulton Middle School**, **Ameri-Corps volunteers**, **Generation Green**, **Atlanta Center for Excellence (ACE)**, **EPA employees**, **Atlanta Whitewater Club** and **Riverkeeper** members. The **Cobb County D.O.T.** and **Cobb Clean Commission** participated prior to the event by removing hundreds of large tires from the site for recycling.

American Rivers' representative Leigh Askew presented Riverkeeper with a \$1,200 check to help cover the cost of the cleanup. **EPA Administrator Carol Browner** also participated in the cleanup and spoke to the group prior to the event, emphasizing the importance of the Chattahoochee River to the health of the region.

Volunteers were supplied with gloves and bags by **Home Depot** and drinks by **Coca-Cola**. A big thank you to Riverkeeper volunteer **Janelle Poldy** for helping to organize this event.



Standing in front of Matthews' asphalt stockpile, Riverkeeper Sally Bethea addresses volunteers.



EPA Administrator Carol Browner and Ameri-Corps volunteers pause during a hard day's work.

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VALEND A CAMPBELL

Strokes of cleanness

Cora Stering and Heather Liddell, members of AmeriCorps FIRST, apply a fresh coat of paint to the sliding board at Bessie Branham Park last week as part of Earth Week activities throughout the Atlanta area. The event, coordinated by AmeriCorps, attracted more than 70 volunteers to the Kirkwood neighborhood to spruce up the park, which was "reclaimed" from drug dealers and graffiti masters in 1991. Volunteers arrived at 8:30 a.m. to plant a community garden, paint playground equipment, collect litter, plant wildflowers and create a compost bin. — Valenda Campbell

Send I [unclear]

appointed rounds. Neither wind, nor rain,
nor dark of night, etc.

Creative loafing, May 4, 1996