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[AmeriCorps/USDA - Third Quarter Report - April 1, 1995 - June 30, 1995] [Folder 2]

2013-0661-F

rc3073

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UNITED
STATES
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

AMERICORPS/USDA

Third Quarter Report
(April 1, 1995 - June 30, 1995)



Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman meeting with one of the many USDA AmeriCorps Members who have performed flood relief service recently in Missouri. (Photo by Ken Hammond).

"The USDA AmeriCorps program is obtaining concrete, measurable results that are making a significant difference in communities across the nation."

- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman



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SUMMARY

AmeriCorps/USDA Third Quarter Summary

At the end of the third quarter, 980 AmeriCorps Members sponsored by USDA served in 38 states in urban and rural projects fighting hunger, protecting the environment, and re-building rural America. During the third quarter --- from April 1, 1995 to June, 30 1995 --- the Members provided 486,679 hours of service to their communities, bringing the total number of hours of service performed since the launch in September to 1,392,060. AmeriCorps Members also recruited at least 8,811 unpaid volunteers who served at least 106,139 hours, bring the total number of volunteers to 10,669 and the total number of volunteer hours performed to 134,196.

Members of the Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team cooked and prepared meals at soup kitchens, created community gardens, conducted nutrition and food safety workshops for the elderly, sorted goods at food banks, developed nutrition education programs for schools, provided outreach for the Women's, Infants, and Children (WIC) nutrition program, began efforts to improve participation in the summer feeding program, assisted earthquake victims with emergency food information, and informed pantries about how their clients who are working but are still poor can boost their incomes by utilizing the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Members of the Public Lands and Environment Team working on Forest Service lands performed rehabilitation and watershed protection work, reforested fire-damaged lands, constructed and maintained trails for hiking and horseback riding, planted cuttings for riparian and wildlife restorations, maintained and rehabilitated campgrounds and made campgrounds accessible for the disabled, completed timber stand improvements, restored historic sites, conducted threatened and endangered species habitat surveys, removed and installed fences, improved wildlife habitats, and hung erosion control netting on roads.

Members of the Public Lands and Environment Team working on private and local municipal lands repaired and restored flood-damaged areas, re-created fish habitats, conducted water quality monitoring, built community greenhouses, constructed urban, suburban, and rural nature trails, built playgrounds, restored windbreaks originally created by the Civilian Conservation Corps, revegetated coastal marshes, restored collections at the National Arboretum, created a safe-haven lot at a public housing development, cleaned up an urban wetland, revitalized historical sites, improved camping sites, and protected stream banks.

Members of the Rural Development Team provided service on projects related to running water and indoor plumbing, sustainable agriculture, emergency response and prevention, fisheries restoration, new uses of natural resources, environmental education centers, community improvement and personal responsibility, recycling promotion, American Indian empowerment, water quality protection, rural housing improvement, and cultural resource preservation.

The Cost-Effectiveness of AmeriCorps/USDA Projects

The limited cost/benefit analyses prepared by or for AmeriCorps/USDA provide that the Department's program is extremely cost-effective.

The USDA Forest Service has calculated that --- as of the end of the second quarter of AmeriCorps service ---- its 236 AmeriCorps Members serving on Public Lands Teams perform at least \$1.51 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spends to support such service. Although it is difficult to blend cost benefits from different Forest Service regions around the country, the cost-benefit figures are based on an average of the combined cost savings of all recreation projects completed. These costs included all Federal spending, including the Member stipends and educational awards.

The Forest Service AmeriCorps Public Lands crews completed recreation projects for 51% less than similar projects completed by force account (if completed by Federal employees), and 68% less than similar services completed by contracted services. For example, in one area it cost AmeriCorps \$64,185 to complete 53 miles of heavy trail maintenance. The same projects would have cost \$126,000 by force account, and \$212,000 if the services were contracted.

The Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation & Development Council in Tennessee calculated that, in the first four months of the program, the four USDA AmeriCorps Rural Development Team Members, who are managed by the Council, performed approximately \$2.73 worth of service for each \$1.00 that the American taxpayer spent to support such service.

As evidenced by the chart on the next page, the Council calculated that, if purchased on the "open market," one service project performed by one Member would have cost an estimated \$23,975 while another service project performed by three Members would have cost an estimated, \$50,400, bringing the total value of the service performed to \$74,375. The cost of the AmeriCorps Members, pro-rated to the four months period in which they performed the projects, was \$27,272.

AMERICORPS SOLID WASTE SPECIALIST (One member sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service)

Accomplishments (4 months)	Cost to Community if Service Purchased on Open Market*	Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps	Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps
Assist Hancock County with Convenience Center Design, Permitting and Funding Grant	\$3,400		
Assist Hancock County with completion of 10 year Solid Waste Management Plan as required by state law.	\$8,500		
Preparation of Bid Specs and package for Recycling Equipment for the City of Harrogate.	\$1,700		
Preparation of Bid Specs and Package for Transfer Station for Claiborne County.	\$2,550		
Preparation of Bid Specs and Package for Grainger County Recycling Center	\$2,125		
Design and Layout of Solid Waste Education Brochure	\$1,400		
Preparation, development and writing of four grant proposals for outside funding of important solid waste projects.	\$4,000		
TOTAL	\$23,975 (estimate)	approx. \$7,272	\$16,703

* Estimated costs based on the known 'going price' in the RC&D region.

SPECIALTY RECREATION AND TOURISM INITIATIVE (three members sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service)

Accomplishments (4 months)	Cost to Community if Service Purchased on Open Market*	Cost as Provided Through AmeriCorps	Savings to Community Through AmeriCorps
Inventory, Development of Regional Committee, Setup of Tourism Network, Preliminary Funding Search, Eco-Tourism Feasibility Study, Wilderness Road Draft and Design of Regional Tourism Database	\$50,400 (estimate)	approx. \$20,000	\$30,400

* Estimated costs based on the known 'going price' in the RC&D region.

AmeriCorps/USDA is "Getting Things Done" on Forest Service Lands

The following is a brief summary of the third quarter and cumulative accomplishments from the eight Public Lands and Environment Teams operated directly by the USDA Forest Service:

- * Maintained 127 miles of trail in the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 355.2 miles.
- * Reforested 386 acres of land in the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 638 acres.
- * Completely rehabilitated or built 220 campground sites in the 3rd quarter, bringing this cumulative total this program year to 254.
- * Prepared 16 campsites for accessibility to people with disabilities, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 42 camp sites.
- * Improved 52 acres of timber stand, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 254 acres.
- * Constructed 58 miles of new fence in the 3rd quarter, bring the cumulative total for the program year to 79 miles.
- * Achieved 912 acres of Wildlife Habitat Improvement in the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total this program year to 2,019 acres. One-hundred structures to shelter or protect wildlife were built and 58 nesting boxes ---- critical to the survival of the species were built, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 133 structures and 296 nesting boxes.
- * Improved 577 acres of fisheries habitat in the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 760 acres.
- * Work was done this quarter on 15 miles of vehicle trails to keep them passable and free of obstructive growth and slides, bringing the cumulative total for the year to 18 miles.
- * Established and built four new picnic areas in the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total to 10 new areas.
- * Improved watersheds damaged by wildfire by cutting and planting 29,500 willows in riparian areas to prevent further erosion during the 3rd quarter, bringing the cumulative total this program year to 92,500.

- * Built 11 flood fences during the 3rd quarter to prevent future flooding.
- * Members built 1.5 miles of a special Historic Site Trail during the 3rd quarter.
- * AmeriCorps Members worked with the city of Eureka, California in the 3rd quarter to build obstructions to stop erosion of six different areas in and around the city. The work was critical to saving slopes from sliding and diverting unwanted runoff and flooding from eroded areas
- * Maintained 1.23 miles of streambank this quarter.
- * Improved Forest Service road conditions --- and thus the safety factor ---- by "daylighting" 50 curves this quarter on winding roads with "blind" curves by cutting and clearing brush.
- * Released 775,000 salmon fry in a fish stocking operation this quarter.

AmeriCorps/USDA is "Getting Things Done" Fighting Against Hunger

The following is a summary of the third quarter accomplishments of the five USDA Anti-Hunger, Nutrition, and Empowerment Team projects managed by the USDA Food and Consumer Services through local partnerships with anti-hunger groups and youth service corps. USDA/AmeriCorps Members:

- * Cooked and served 17,386 meals this quarter, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 34,586 meals.
- * Created and helped manage 17 new sites for the Summer Feeding Program, bringing the cumulative total for the year to 22 new sites created.
- * Repaired and/or expanded 10 emergency food pantries this quarter, bringing the cumulative total for this program year to 14 pantries.
- * Made nutrition education and food safety presentations to 3,000 students this quarter, bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 8,000 students.
- * Conducted nutrition education and food safety education workshops for 8,000 low income or senior citizens, bringing the cumulative total for this program year to 12,592 citizens who benefited from workshops.
- * Distributed 38,400 poster and brochures, directly reached 38,400 people, and referred 5,998 eligible persons for assistance --- bringing the cumulative total for the program year to 41,490 posters and brochures distributed, 35,347 people reached, and 5,998 eligible persons referred for assistance.
- * Collected, sorted, and delivered 503,752 pounds (over 250 tons) of food this quarter.
- * Started, planted, and/or maintained 26 community and school gardens this quarter.
- * Promoted 16 Farmer's Markets and community gardens, totaling 206,214 square feet this quarter.
- * Provided information about the Summer Feeding Program to 143,000 citizens this quarter.

AmeriCorps/USDA is "Getting Things Done" Helping the Environment

The following are highlights from the third quarter accomplishments of the 14 Environmental Team projects sponsored by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on private lands in urban and rural areas and the one project sponsored by the USDA Agricultural Research Service at the National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. USDA AmeriCorps Members:

* In the Atlanta, Georgia area, Members have installed an irrigation center at a community greenhouse; potted 25,000 plants for use in schools, parks, and beautification projects for the Olympics; improved outdoor education centers for six public schools through a wide variety of projects, including construction of 375 feet of wheelchair-access trails, planting 190 plants and 30 trees, clearing one mile of trail, and mulching and planting over 600 square feet; provided conservation education to 8,929 students in 34 schools on litter control, recycling, and beautification.

* In Baytown, Texas, the Members provided coastal and shoreline protection in the Galveston Bay area, creating an island that serves as a habitat for an endangered species and a demonstration of productive uses of dredge material; grew thousands of plant materials for stabilizing the land; planted 100 acres of the island, bringing the cumulative total for the year to 220 acres.

In Boston, Massachusetts, Members constructed a three-story greenhouse at a home for teen mothers; completed landscaping and maintenance work at the National Center for African-American artists museum; set up a farmer's market at Franklin Park; began landscaping work, rebuilding fences and walls, and painting walls at the Franklin Hill Housing Development; removed a large tire dump from the Lena Park Community Development; prepared a design for site renovation and playground construction at the Perkins Community Development Center; and tutored students at the Jeremiah Burke High School to help them compete in the envirothon --- the first time an inner-city school from Boston has entered the annual competition.

* In Chicago, Illinois, the Members provided environmental education to over 1,100 students on gardening and fishing; recruited 500 volunteers to help improve the environment and increase public safety near public housing and in Little Villages; performed landscaping and/or apartment improvement work at a variety of Chicago Public Housing Developments, including: Lathrop Homes, Robert Taylor Homes, Henry Horner Housing, Wentworth Gardens, Madden Park, and Ida B. Wells; took 40 children and eight adults from public housing on canoe trips to increase their appreciation for water quality and the environment; and improved 30 apartments for homeless and battered women at Lathrop Homes.

* In the District of Columbia, at the National Arboretum, Members planted more than 750 plants of various sizes in various collections and areas, have killed thousands of weeds, by spraying them with a herbicide. Weekly, they cut grass in high visibility areas equaling approximately seven acres in size, performed the delicate task of moving a Japanese koi (an expensive fish in the carp family) from a very murky pond to a cleaner pool, and helped with construction of Japanese beetle traps and the removal of beetles.

* In the District of Columbia and nearby Maryland, the NRCS AmeriCorps Members constructed five raised beds for an Earth Week exhibit on the mall; worked with over 450 students on various environmental education activities; improved seven different public parks, including constructing and installing blue bird boxes in Kenilworth Park, planting 250 trees and 350 seedlings in Anacostia Park, constructing 16 feet of boardwalk in Greenbelt Park, installing 280 trees and 900 plants in Little Bennett Regional Park, and improving 200 linear feet of stream bank at Sligo Creek Park; cleaned-up 20 acres in Fort Lincoln that resulted in 15 bags of trash and a truckload of branches and weeds; and cleaned-up seven public swimming pools to help prepare for summer youth activities.

* In East. St. Louis area, Members stabilized over 4,000 feet of stream and road in Belleville that suffered from massive flooding in 1993, including surveying the area, drawing a survey chart, removing trees that would interfere with the stabilization work, cutting out ditches and removing silt, and placing "filter fabric" and rip rocks in the stream to prevent future flooding and erosion; created or improved maintenance of 22 community gardens; renovated a greenhouse at Kenneth Hall Park; worked in Kenneth Hall Park (formerly Jones Park) cutting down dead and dangerous trees and saving the city \$700 per tree; worked with mental health patients to teach them how to plant gardens; and worked with a church group from Belleville to create a park in Centreville on land that had been donated by a mother in memory of her son that had been recently shot.

* In Goldendale, Washington, Members worked to improve salmon habitat by building 6.5 miles of fence to improve riparian areas, planting 600 trees, and installing four structures to retain sediment; treated 300 acres of land damaged from forest fires; cleaned-up parks in preparation for Memorial Day and summer activity; and assisted local conservation districts in the setup of 50 stream monitoring sites.

* In Nebraska, removed an old wheelchair-access boardwalk and constructed a new one; provided environmental education activities to 1,700 youth; protected cultural resources at four locations including one that was over 800 years old occupied by the Plains Indians; planted 14,000 trees; and stabilized 70 feet of streambank using bioengineering techniques.

* In Indianapolis, Indiana, Members planted 675 trees in a public park and helped implement the State of Indiana Envirothon Program.

* In New Jersey, completed stream walks on 10 streams, totalling about 80 miles, to identify potential sources of non-point pollution; planted trees utilizing bioengineering techniques to stabilize 2,000 feet of streambank to enhance wildlife habitat and improve water quality; organized stream cleanups in five counties; organized a cleanup with 12 area high schools at Carnegie Lake; engaged in Beachgrass plantings on dunes in four counties; Cleaned, marked, trimmed 30 sq. ft. of board walk was installed on 12 miles of neglected trail; constructed a 15 foot bridge in a park; and made 128 environmental education presentations to 2,325 students.

* In Oklahoma, Members worked in 10 counties to restore 44 windbreaks that totaled 19.5 miles; planted over 64,500, including 7,500 trees in windbreaks and 57,000 on eroded and gullied areas and in outdoor classrooms and community projects.

* In the Pittsfield, Illinois area, Members improved three miles of trails in Brown County; enlarged treehouses for camping; constructed a storage shed and completed a bunkhouse; cleared brush and debris from two miles of drainage ditches that serve as main channels to New Canton, Nebo and Pearl; and stabilized two miles of streambank in Calhoun County.

* In Portland, Oregon, Members completed a plan to restore a five-acre site from a junkyard to a recreation area --- more than two acres has been cleared of trash and debris, and the adjacent property has been weeded and maintained; trained and worked with over 1,000 homeowners to survey downspouts and get their participation in an effort to reduce the amount of stormwater from roof tops that flows into the Columbian Slough --- this effort will reduce the overflow from the combined sewer and improve water quality by reducing the amount of untreated sewage that enters the Columbia and Willamette rivers; Members renovated the trail system in an 185-acre park by establishing five main trails and closing a network of unauthorized trails.

* In South Dakota, Members assisted educational outreach on environmental issues to over 2,100 elementary school children; completed a 23-county land-use survey to identify areas that may negatively impact the Big Sioux, Vermillion and James rivers; completed ten streambank stabilization projects resulting in 9,500 feet of streambank and 4,500 willows planted; worked with landowners to encourage practices that would improve the Lake Campbell watershed, fish habitat and recreation --- 43 producers were contacted resulting in the use of eight different types of management practices, and treatment of over 2,300 acres.

AmeriCorps/USDA is "Getting Things Done" Rebuilding Rural America

USDA has fully embraced the vision --- held by both the President and the Corporation for National and Community Service --- that AmeriCorps be community-based, community-designed, and community-run. The USDA Rural Development Team has different community service objectives for each and every individual site, based on the needs of each local community. Consequently, the Rural Development Team Members are providing such a wide variety of services that they are nearly impossible to aggregate.

The best illustration of how the Rural Development Team is "getting things done," is a list of success stories in each of the following areas: running water and indoor plumbing, rural economic development, emergency response and prevention, fisheries restoration, alternative uses of natural resources, environmental education facilities, community facilities improvement, personal responsibility development, tree planting, windbreak restoration, and riparian improvement, land use planning, recycling promotion, American Indian tribal empowerment, woodland management, water quality protection, rural housing improvement, and cultural resource preservation. Many of the Rural Development Team Members are working in rural Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, and Champion Communities.

Running Water and Indoor Plumbing

* In New Mexico, a Member assisted the Vallecitos Fresh Water Delivery System in its efforts to locate and deliver fresh water to the community and assisted with the development of the El Rito Waste Water Treatment Plant. A Member serving in Las Cruces helped water associations in 5 colonias in the area to successfully apply for almost \$30 million in RECD Water and Waste Disposal Grants, helped a colonias set up a water association,

* In Jonesville, Virginia, a Member succeeded in getting the Virginia Water Project to pay for installing plumbing for an elderly man who had lived his entire life without it.

* In Texas, a Member serving in San Benito assisted local families by facilitating repairs, additions, and water and sewer line connections to 172 bathrooms. A Member serving in El Paso assisted 5 applicants for RECD Water and Waste Disposal Loans, 3 applicants for Section 504 Rural Housing Repair Loans, and 2 Section 502 Single-Family Housing Loans, and with other USDA Members organized a one-day clean up of a colonia.

Rural Economic Development

* In Southeastern Utah, a Member compiled a comprehensive set of demographic economic and social data for the four counties in southeastern Utah. The data will be used for such purposes as projecting future planning needs, provides vital information for grant applications for economic development and for businesses considering locating in southeastern Utah.

* In Oregon, a Member serving in Baker City assisted a local historic preservation group in a project to convert downtown upper story space to commercial use, assisted the mayor of a small town to receive RECD assistance for sewer system hookups. A Member serving in Oakridge helped develop that city's Strategic Economic Development Plan, served as a planning assistant to the City Council, conducted regular work sessions with the Planning Commission, authored a zoning ordinance, and facilitated the annexation of land for a city park.

* In Arizona, Member serving in Nogales compiled an industrial building and lot inventory which has helped a local development foundation attract 3 new businesses to the area, resulting in the creation of 46-52 new jobs, has helped a local company create 3 additional jobs, and has compiled a guide of local suppliers to be distributed in the area and northern Mexico. A Member serving in Douglas surveyed job loss in the area, did research and other preparations, then authored an application for a Main St. revitalization grant, and served on the local Border Patrol/Port of Entry Citizen Advisory Committee.

* In Tennessee, a Member serving in Jacksboro worked to implement a "Total Quality Partnership" between citizens, and State and Federal agencies by organizing meetings, setting up a county-wide planning committee, producing a promotional video, etc., has written grant proposals and received a total of \$403,915 for Campbell County to-date, and served as a liaison between the County Executive's office and various agencies/groups/persons in the County.

* In West Virginia, a Member serving in Fairmont worked as the liaison between a local EZ/EC community and the City of Fairmont, helped the EZ/EC revise its Strategic Plan, surveyed leadership needs to help it qualify for a \$2,000 community support grant, assisted in organizing technical assistance information into a reference guide for use by local rural communities, and worked with a local university on a \$30,000 grant to create an electronic information network for the EZ/EC. This Member was recognized by the Governor of West Virginia for her contributions to rural development in the State. A Member serving at the Lincoln [County] Economic Development Authority worked with a \$4,500 grant from the Appalachian Community Fund to set up a local bartering program, and worked under another \$67,408 grant to help local counties continue with their economic development plans.

* In Washington, one Member assisted 7 local community non-profit organizations to tie into a Statewide telecommunications project, and organized annual workshops and a conference to assist rural community leaders to meet public agency representatives to access needed resources, and was noted in a national publication. A Member serving in Grant County organized and coordinated a grant-writing workshop for the county's non-profit organizations, and gave a number of presentations to a variety of community-based organizations and networks on strategies for accomplishing goals, trends in private and corporate funding and contacts of sources of possible funding. Another Member organized monthly meetings of the Washington Community Economic Revitalization Team to assess its impact in assisting rural, timber-impacted communities and more effectively target the funding of economic diversification projects, and completed a report on the efficacy of Federal/State coordination and collaboration in large-scale diversification projects in timber-distressed communities.

* In Mississippi, a Member serving in Cleveland organized 15 community meetings to discuss collaboration between local leaders and the EZ/EC community, which resulted in the development of a 5-year program of leadership, economic, and community development for the region, and to help a community revise its strategic plan. A Member serving in Yazoo City helped the Yazoo Microenterprise Program to write its business plan, keep records, and develop marketing strategies; represented RECD AmeriCorps at the National Rural Development Conference, assisted in the development of an Even Start education program proposal and a Teen-Age Pregnancy Prevention Program proposal, coordinated transportation for Yazoo Community Action Inc., and helped write a proposal for a family-based center for public-housing residents.

* In Texas, a Member serving in Alice collaborated with the Small Business Development Center to provide training, enabling 2 individuals to establish their own small businesses. A Member serving in Weslaco helped 30 businesses prepare proposals for expansion and marketing, facilitated the submission of 4 loan applications to create more than 48 jobs, contacted 25 Social Service agencies to commit appropriate resources, helped 10 applicants for RECD Water and Waste Disposal loans, and assisted the Empowerment Zone sub-zone team in prioritizing needs and developing programs to address concerns relative to rural healthcare, and as a result, 2 rural health clinics and a private medical clinic associated with a major hospital are under construction in the area.

Sustainable Agriculture

* In Maine, an AmeriCorps Member coordinated workshops on best management practices for blueberry growers. 124 growers participated and received credit towards receiving their pesticide applicators license.

* In Arizona, in an effort to support sustainable agriculture for native Americans and other local farmers, Members built a greenhouse to demonstrate technology and growing high value crops. They built 20,000 feet of drip irrigation to conserve water. Ten producers have requested the greenhouse plans and five are interested in the irrigation system. Members organized a farmers produce cooperative and built a trailer for the market. Six-hundred flowers were grown for beautification projects. Food is also being grown for community food banks and soup kitchens.

* In Tennessee, Members drilled a water well for one family, helped to build 3 barns, two fences and pheasant cages; worked with landowners to install animal waste systems on dairy, beef and poultry operations --- once construction is completed, these systems will handle 40-50 tons of waste per year.

* In Iowa, AmeriCorps Members have assisted with animal waste management. On ten farms lagoons have been pumped to recycle the effluent onto grassland or cropland. Plans have been prepared for six other farms.

* A Member serving in London, Kentucky helped the local Kentucky Highlands Investment Corporation, part of the local Empowerment Zone, create an agricultural diversification committee as called for in the EZ's strategic plan, which will identify new ideas, experimental crops and production methods, approve and recommend which projects will be accepted, and review reported data to determine the degree of success.

* In Minnesota, Members provided assistance to landowners in informing livestock producers in waste facilities and utilization. Members worked with 40 producers to collect soil and manure samples to determine application rates, developed a list of manure spreading equipment and worked with the farmer to produce waste utilization plans, 17 are complete and 20 more are in progress.

* In Kentucky, a Member helped the Eastern Kentucky Vegetable Producers Association become a viable and successful cooperative of farmers from a seven county area.

Emergency Response and Prevention

* In California, AmeriCorps Members conducted a survey of citizen awareness on emergency preparedness and assisted in damage reports, conservation plans and field surveys of flooded farm land. They are completing information to the public on fire-retardant plant projects. Three demonstration sites have been set up to evaluate the plants and to show residents landscaping techniques for integrating them into the home environment to reduce fire hazard.

- * In Missouri, Members surveyed and mapped 2300 acres of flood plain to assist 16 landowners in sand removal. Completed maintenance of 27 floodwater retarding dams, assisted 95 landowners in assessing herbicide runoff into water supply, and worked with 11 farmers to develop water management plans.
- * In Tennessee, a Member serving in Johnson County assisted the local Enterprise Community in obtaining fire-fighting equipment in conjunction with a State of Tennessee and a business development grant, and worked with the local organizing board to institute a county-wide 911 emergency system.
- * In McCreary County, Kentucky, Members started a road inventory and management system for 965 roads in the county in order to establish a 911 system.
- * In Las Cruces, New Mexico, two Members worked with a local planning department to help institute a 911 emergency system.
- * In Arkansas, Members worked with the Ozark-St. Francis National Forest facilitated the installation and dry fire hydrants. The State of Arkansas has appropriated 2.2 million dollars for the Dry Hydrant project. In Holly Grove, Members worked to help residents move from a 100-year flood plain. The City of Holly Grove saved \$50,000 due to the appraisal efforts of one Member.
- * In South Carolina, Members completed pond assessments for potential Dry Fire Hydrant sites in an effort to reduce fire insurance rates in Williamsburg County.
- * In New Mexico, a Member aided in locating a building and funding for the Coyote Volunteer Fire Department.
- * In Vermont, Members have worked with 77 rural fire departments in considering the use of dry fire hydrants. Fire departments in eleven communities now have plans for accessing water supplies for fire protection, and four more communities are in the planning process.
- * In Iowa, Members have worked with local conservation districts to assist two dozen counties collect information and make GIS maps for used by agencies and landowners for land use and resource management practices on erodible land and in flood plains. The Members assisted the City of Oakland to design a community tree planting project to replace large number of trees lost to construction and weather damage.
- * A Member serving in Helena, Arkansas worked to set up a local 911 emergency communication service, helped reorganize and helped secure over \$13,000 in State funding for 2 local fire departments serving over 3,000 residents.

* In North Dakota, AmeriCorps Members have helped seal abandoned wells; cleaned-up flood damage at Aneta City Park and Harwood Trailer Court; helped with the flood relief planning being done in anticipation of the dangerously high water levels at Devils Lake. Members conducted a flood hazard survey and watershed inventory mapping; performed bank stabilization at McVille Dam and a watershed inventory at Silver Lake.

* In Mississippi, twenty-one dry hydrants were installed for fire suppression in the Mt. Olivet community. Efforts are being made to establish dry hydrants in four other counties. AmeriCorps Members are working in 10 counties to identify alternative water sources for rural fire protection.

Fisheries and Aquatic Wildlife Restoration

* In Maine, Members worked with the Beals Island Shellfish Hatchery to help raise 15-20 million juvenile clams. With the help of AmeriCorps, the number of clams raised is 5-10 million more than normal. This effort will provide over \$1.8 million benefit to the coastal community.

Community Facilities Improvement

* In South Carolina, Members constructed ten buildings that will be used to house youth at-risk in an outward bound program.

* In New Mexico, a Member helped obtain equipment and supplies and provided program guidance for the Coyote Senior Citizens Center and worked with secular, religious, and government groups to develop the Coyote Community Center.

* In Texas, a Member serving in Uvalde, organized 20 community volunteers to enhance and expand a local recreational area by facilitating the installation of a swimming pool. A Member serving in San Diego partnered with the Freer Improvement Committee to organize and help 20 volunteers clean up their community. A Member serving in Hebbronville organized community volunteers and businesses to increase access to a local park by widening the sidewalk. Concrete and lumber were donated by local businesses enabling the volunteer labor to complete the Kohler Park Project in 6 weeks.

* A Member serving in Marshall, North Carolina who previously established a Family Resource Center, saw the caseload triple from 4 to 12, and obtained the services of a mental health professional who works in family preservation to work at the Center.

* In North Carolina, Members organized, coordinated, implemented, and supervised the Mingo Falls restoration trail project with local businesses and the Oconaluftee Job Corps, coordinated the ground-work for Phase I of the Oconaluftee Greenway Project, worked toward the development of Walking Trail brochures for downtown Cherokee and adjacent hiking trails, organized a work group that constructed playground equipment and painted the facilities at the Ceremonial Grounds on the Qualla boundary, organized and implemented an Arbor Day event at the Qualla Civic Center, worked to develop a Mountain Bike Trail, prepared an Urban Forestry Grant for beautification of neighborhood parks, and worked with communities to provide access to parks and recreational facilities for the disabled.

* In New Mexico, a Member serving in Las Cruces organized 20 National Honor students to spend a day cleaning a community building in San Elizario and helped clean a newly constructed homeless shelter. A Member in Aztec helped a local Boys and Girls Club apply for over \$90,000 for operational funds and purchasing a building and completed a community service project with other AmeriCorps Members to clean up and repair a local adult day-care center.

* In Marion, Virginia, Members printed, presented, and installed 40 tree identification plaques, 265 Riverwalk Tree Identification Guide Books, and 1,200 Riverwalk brochures, held a Riverwalk Tree Identification Laboratory Field Day, held two teacher trainings, provided the school system and community and educational outdoor laboratory and exercise trail.

* In Mississippi, Members worked with the City of Indianola to develop a community recreation and education program, and worked with the City of Belzoni to develop a Centennial Park Plaza and Green.

Alternative Uses of Natural Resources

* In Arkansas, Members worked to develop a market for wood pellets thus creating local jobs and save small sawmills in the local community.

* In New Mexico, Members worked with the Sangre De Cristo Wood Workers to build an incubator facility.

* In Minnesota, Members conducted a survey to determine the activity and level of interest in short rotation woody crops for alternative fuel use.

* In Louisiana, Members worked to provide timber bridge technology and materials for recreation project in Lake Providence.

Conservation Education Facilities

- * In Mancos, Colorado, Members developed and helped construct a nature walk in the town of Mancos, wrote grant applications and recruited local partners and volunteers to build and publicize the trail.
- * In Tennessee, Members established outdoor environmental learning centers have been established at 14 schools.
- * In South Carolina, AmeriCorps Members constructed, two outdoor classrooms; six miles of nature trails and prepared two teachers guides.
- * In New Mexico, Members assisted in the cleaning, painting and laying an irrigation system at a ranch for disadvantaged youth.
- * In Mississippi, Members worked with the O'Bannon Elementary School to construct an Education and Conservation Outdoor Classroom.
- * In South Carolina, members completed the restoration of a nature trail at Greeleyville Elementary School.

Community Improvement and Personal Responsibility Development

- * A Member serving at the P.R.I.D.E. in Logan County, West Virginia, EZ/EC community organized the donation and distribution of 12 tons of seed potatoes to needy families, assisted the Director of the local Head Start program, drafted plans for a local senior center, and worked with other AmeriCorps Members and volunteers from local organizations to repair homes. Two Members serving at the Council of the Southern Mountains worked with a Summer Food Service Program running 55 sites in McDowell County feeding approximately 1,000 children.
- * In Utah, Members renovated a building and established a food bank in San Juan County that serves 6,000 residents including 2,000 Navajo residents. A cleanup was organized for a two mile section of highway.
- * A Member serving in Macon Ridge, Louisiana, established a tutorial program for high school seniors, assisted the local Drug Awareness Resistance Education program, and helped victims of the New Orleans flood as a member of the State flood relief team.
- * In Oregon, a Member helped other AmeriCorps Members organize a community paint project that enlisted an estimated 200 volunteers.

* In Virginia, a Member serving in Jonesville organized 10 volunteers to clean up a portion of a local river and worked with other Members to organize a clothing donation and perform home repairs for low-income families; also worked with the Appalachia Service Project to provide volunteer labor and donate materials.

* In Mississippi, a Member serving in Natchez helped organize a "Teen Rally" to discuss unwanted pregnancy prevention, preparing for college, and the AmeriCorps program, for which she generated a great deal of community interest, as well as donations of time and materials from a variety of benefactors, and also worked with a local university to determine local recreation needs. A Member serving in Lorman tutored grammar school students in reading, math and science, conducting a series of HIV/AIDS awareness workshops, sponsored a college ACT workshop to improve standardized college entrance exam scores, organized a college recruitment night, and ran a blood drive.

* In Tennessee, a Member in Johnson County works with families of patients in the intensive care unit the local Veterans Administration hospital. A Member serving in Greeneville set up a data base of local social services that will be provided to citizens and agencies to improve the provision of these social services where needed.

* In New Mexico, Members organized a job fair targeting youth to try preventing gang membership. Members also assisted in developing a work ethics, school to work project at San Juan College.

* A Member serving in Prestonburg, Kentucky assisted the Service Connection Inc. in performing necessary social services for local residents and helped with referrals to local contractors from local citizens who needed home repairs done.

* In Kentucky, a Member helped develop the Owsley County Fund for Excellence - --- a foundation dedicated to helping the youth of Owsley County stay in school. A Member serving in Hazard wrote the district plan for the local Family Preservation and Family Support Services Program, helped a local county start an education foundation designed to help the children of the county, worked with 15-20 volunteers of the Eastern Kentucky Vegetable Producers Association to purchase a building, and was instrumental in setting up a Local Economic and Community Development Center to bring in and retain business and economic opportunities. A Member serving in Barbourville designed and taught a series of lifeskills classes for low-income individuals that have been given to 63 families to date; information on home ownership and renovations that was requested by many attendees was supplied by RECD offices in the area. A Member serving in London developed a life skills curriculum for a local Job Training Program for young people, developed a transportation system for JOBS/Welfare clients to travel to/from training and educational facilities, and helped out at a local Senior Citizen Center.

* In South Carolina, Members sponsored three Scout Troops for the Adopt-A-Highway program managed by the South Carolina Department of Transportation

* A Member serving in El Centro, California planned and worked at a drug usage identification conference attended by 79 people, and organized volunteers to assist in a city beautification project where the community restored a public park, renovated buildings, and painted over graffiti.

Tree Planting, Windbreak Restoration, and Riparian Improvement

* In North Dakota, Members have canvassed Grand Forks county to identify healthy Elm trees and to assess the loss of trees due to Dutch Elm Disease.

* In Missouri, assisted one landowner to implement a wetland wildlife area on 40 acres that included planting 400 trees.

* In Iowa, AmeriCorps Members have been credited with the success of over 3,000 acres of wetlands being reserved. They have contacted landowners, shared the program with them, and assisted them in developing easements and restoration plans. One member assisted in work that resulted in the local conservation district board purchasing a 512 acre tract of diverse landscape. Members provided assistance in harvesting and replanting 2,000 willow trees to stabilize a streambank.

* In Minnesota, AmeriCorps Members have been working in the Nemadji River Basin, in which they organized a project that recruited 100 volunteers to plant 5,000 trees. Members worked with over 580 students in various environmental education activities including river monitoring, tree planting, and the envirothon. They also worked with over 160 adults in various environmental management presentations.

* In California, Members are also helping residents with erosion problems due to high coastal winds. They have prepared information and tours on windbreaks. Members assisted in collecting seeds from three conservation plants and have worked in the nursery to produce young trees for windbreak plantings.

Tourism Development to Boost Local Economies

* In Colorado, Members developed a management plan for the San Juan Skyway which increased local involvement in tourism development and preservation of cultural, physical, and historical resources, and inventoried scenic, recreational, and cultural resources for the Skyway.

* In West Virginia, Members worked to develop the 600 mile Hatfield-McCoy Trail System across seven counties, assisted in planning and implementation of the Phillipe Convention and Business Bureau's Spring Craft Festival which was attended by 2500 people, worked with McDowell County to develop a publicly held recreation area to develop a tourism base in the county.

* In Utah, Members worked with San Juan County and the Navajo Nation-- The Rural Development Team Members inventoried sites for inclusion in the Trail of the Ancients. The sites were inventoried for geologic, historic, scenic, recreational, aesthetic, and cultural qualities and potential. The Members worked with the Navajo Nation to develop a strong tourism industry and to determine the impact of tourism on the Nation.

Environmental Education

* In Oregon, Members were trained in leadership and mentoring to work with 16 youth who have dropped out of school. AmeriCorps Members developed a plan for training those they were mentoring in environmental education. In one-to-one mentoring relationships, they are working in teams of eight for a six week summer program.

* In Missouri, Members provided conservation education to 850 students.

* In Tennessee, Members made 2,250 environmental education presentations; assisted in an envirothon participated in by 100 students -- team trained by AmeriCorps Members won the state competition. Members also coordinated and promoted regional Envirothon for high school students from 10 high schools in five counties and coordinated a Conservation Camp for over 900 4th grade students, teachers, and parents.

Land Use Planning

* In Western New York, AmeriCorps Members are helping to demonstrate applications of GIS computer mapping in managing natural resources. Approximately 280 miles were mapped by the third quarter. Members worked with the American Chestnut Foundation to map 150 surviving mature chestnut trees in Western New York. Forest inventory data has been digitized for the Seneca Nation of Indians, to support improved management of the over-harvested forest resources. Members are also working to identify bald eagle nesting sites on the reservations. One hundred, fifty natural gas wells are being mapped and evaluated by AmeriCorps Members to help with managing the closing the wells.

* A Member serving in Cave Junction held meetings, and met with appropriate officials to update the Strategic Plan of the local Enterprise Community, assisted in the planning for expanding a local state park, worked with the Oregon Economic Development Department to design a tourism plan that was eventually full-funded with a \$12,000 grant.

Recycling Promotion

* In South Carolina, Members posted Two-thousand signs at businesses to support recycling of oil, batteries and hazardous materials.

* In Tennessee, Members gave five demonstrations and 12 presentations on recycling and helping the county meet the compliance requirements of the Tennessee Solid Waste Management Act of 1991. They also organized four Regional Household Hazardous Waste Collections during which 7500 pounds of hazardous materials from 120 households and worked with 140 school children on art projects made from recycled materials.

* In South Carolina, AmeriCorps Members helped to upgrade a recycling curriculum for statewide use in schools. This curriculum has been used to train nearly 3,000 teachers. The upgrade was done to include materials used by other programs and the cost estimates for presenting 160 of the lessons.

American Indian Tribal Empowerment

* In Arizona, one Member helped establish a community wool cooperative on the Navajo Nation. Another Member also worked with the Cameron Chapter House of the Navajo Reservation to identify natural and cultural resource based tourism programs including developing bed and breakfast Hogans. A Member serving in St. Michaels, Arizona travelled to very remote parts of the Navajo Nation to make presentations at various tribal functions, and in so doing has increased the number of applications for RECD Housing Preservation loans from 7 in the 3rd quarter of FY94 to 33 in the 3rd quarter of 1995, an increase of more than 400 percent.

* In Colorado, a Member inventoried 33 sites on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation supervised the work of the South Ute Conservation Corps to prevent erosion.

* A Member serving in Sylvia, North Carolina worked on a Cherokee reservation to increase the knowledge and receptiveness of RECD housing assistance in the tribe, worked to get an RECD inventory property house for a family, helped organize youth volunteers to build homes on the reservation during the summer, and helped a very poor family to without electricity, running water, or adequate sanitation to obtain same.

* In New Mexico, in San Juan County, a Member generated 42 applications for RECD Section 504 Housing Preservation Grants/Loans from residents of Indian pueblos who had not filed a single application in FY94, represented the RECD and AmeriCorps by giving a lengthy presentation on RECD assistance to a meeting of every housing improvement coordinator at every pueblo in New Mexico, an organized a basketball camp for at-risk drug-endangered youth. A Member serving in Gallup generated 17 applications for RECD Section 504 Housing Preservation grants from the Pueblo of the Zuni Native American tribe where no applications had been filed the same quarter in FY94, organized families to form "sweat equity" teams to apply for RECD Self-Help and Single-Family housing assistance, and helped locate funding for a local bike path project.

* In Oregon, a Member serving in Pendleton assisted 3 very low-income applicants of the Umatilla tribe for RECD single-family housing loans, assisted the tribe in successfully applying for a \$2.6 RECD Community Facility loan and grant for a Tribal Interpretive Center, assisted in the design of a water and waste system under this grant, including designing specifications, setting up and configuring hardware and software for the Tribal Water Department, training employees in using the systems, and used the Internet to access information on grants for housing, water systems, education scholarships, etc. for the Tribe.

Woodland Management

* In West Virginia, Members assisted the West Virginia Division of Forestry to develop a field survey to determine the amount of logging residues.

* In Minnesota, Members developed and conducted a Best Management Practices education workshop for loggers.

Water Quality Protection

* In South Carolina, Members completed grassland surveys covering 50,000 acres in two counties. This work is to support the improvement of water quality through better management of hayland and pasture land.

* In Maine, an AmeriCorps member assisted the Dept. of Marine Resources with a sanitary survey of to pinpoint failing septic tanks within 500 feet of the shore. This source of pollution is having a detrimental effect on the shellfish habitat. Many people in this low-income community are without indoor plumbing. This motivated the AmeriCorps members to take action. They helped the community seek resources for septic repair and water quality monitoring. Today a total of \$40,000 has been allocated for repairs and 11 new monitoring sites are targeted.

* In West Virginia, over 90 limited resource farmers were by water quality projects in six communities. Three members evaluated over 4400 acres of cropland that lead to the reduction of an estimated 88,000 pounds of nitrogen. Over 200 students were given presentations on things you can do on the farm to improve water quality. Members assisted Save Our Streams volunteers to survey the health of aquatic life on several streams.

* In Ohio, Members inventoried over 35 miles of Big Darby Creek corridor, designed 20 Best Management Practices, and designed a two acre wildlife wetland. Members also assisted the Nature Conservancy in addressing severe gully erosion with native prairie grasses.

* In Mississippi, two AmeriCorps Members and five volunteers have been trained and certified in the Adopt-a-Stream program. Five streams have been adopted and being tested monthly.

* In Michigan, 750 farm families completed the risks assessments for farm a Farm*A*Syst. As a result, nearly 200 people have made changes in their practices to reduce the risk of contamination.

* In Louisiana, AmeriCorps Members conducted the Farm*A'Syst program which is designed to help landowners assess and reduce the level of risk to ground water pollution on a farm. Members conducted a public information campaign to raise the level of knowledge of groundwater pollution risks. Five-hundred students completed pre and post-assessment; 685 landowners received information packages; and members completed 90 one-on-one farm assessments.

Rural Housing Improvement

* A Member serving in Blytheville Arkansas assisted in the development in the application for an RECD Housing Preservation Grant for 20 houses, and conducted a series of Low-Income First-Time Home Buyers workshops and worked with those who applied and qualified for Arkansas Development Finance Authority HOME funds.

* A Member serving in El Centro, California caused the following increases in RECD Section 504 Rural Housing Repair Program loans and grants activity: from 0 inquiries in the same Quarter in FY94 to 250 inquiries; from 0 applications to 37; from 0 recipients at the end of the Quarter in FY94 to 19 recipients at the end of this Quarter at a total of \$94,840, with an additional 4 applications pending for an additional \$40,000. This Member also collaborated with the City of Brawley Housing Rehabilitation Program to assist elderly homeowners with low-interest construction loans to replace or convert substandard hazardous dwellings into safe, adequate, and affordable homes, and as a result was able to obtain a \$4,900 grant for an elderly lady to pay for the dismantling of her existing home and permits for a new home, which will include a new air-conditioning and heating system.

* In Louisiana, a Member serving in Bastrop assisted over 70 applicants for RECD Single-Family and Home Repair loans and made 10 presentations on Farm/Home Safety to over 200 students, and worked with an elderly feeding project. A Member serving in Ferriday increased applications for RECD assistance by approximately 10 percent. A Member serving in Winnsboro had 10 RECD Home Repair loans funded and an additional 10 approved, worked with the Rural Housing Assessment Program, and made 6 presentations on Farm/Home Safety to over 200 students. A Member serving in Tallulah and Lake Providence provided training via the local Community Action Agency to over 30 low-income home buyers, through the Rural Housing Assessment Program conducted 55 surveys that will hopefully lead to either new construction or repairs of existing dwellings, assisted 8 applicants for RECD Home Repair assistance, and made 6 presentations on Farm/ Home Safety to over 200 students. A Member serving in Jonesville assisted in the filing of over a dozen applications for RECD Single-Family and Home Repair loans, educated 40 children about Farm/Home Safety. A Member serving in Rayville represented the RECD to 30,000 Louisiana residents at a Parish festival, personally generated more than 100 applications for RECD assistance and promoted Farm Safety videos to over 1,500 students. A Member serving in Lake Providence has had 7 applicants for RECD housing assistance approved, worked with over 60 families in a rural assessment project to obtain safe, decent and sanitary housing, and made 8 presentations on Farm/Home Safety to over 400 students. A Member serving in Alexandria and Boyce has generated 25 applications for RECD housing assistance.

* In New Mexico, two Members serving in Las Cruces generated 1 REC Section 502 Single-Family Housing Loan application, 4 RECD Water and Waste Disposal Grant, 1 Section 504 Housing Preservation Grant, 1 Section 504 Housing Preservation Grant by meeting with approximately 200 people during the quarter. A Member worked with the Mesilla Valley Habitat For Humanity to build 6 homes. A Member serving in Aztec helped Habitat For Humanity build a home and worked with other Members to survey over 500 single-family houses for possible State of New Mexico housing assistance.

* In Mississippi, a Member serving in Jackson worked to get low-income potential home buyers to participate in a series of Home Buyer Education classes by preparing and distributing flyers, pamphlets, and public service announcements. A Member serving in Natchez went door-to-door, posted notices, and organized meetings to inform people about the various types of RECD housing assistance that is available to them; over 60 applications in the last 10 months for single-family housing loans were generated, as well as 20 housing preservation loans, of which 7 have already been funded. A Member serving in Jackson conducted seminars to inform local residents about the types of RECD housing; subsequently approximately 15 percent more applications for aid were received and 10 percent more loans were actually approved. A Member serving in Greenville performed outreach for RECD housing assistance programs which increased the number of actual recipients of RECD Very Low- and Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants by approximately 25 percent over the previous year. A Member serving in Canton worked with delinquent RECD borrowers to make their accounts current, assisted applicants for RECD aid, organized a new home buyer education program for a local community resource center, and distributed information on energy conservation and good property maintenance. A Member serving in Webb assisted applicants for 13 RECD Self-Help Housing loans, as well as applicants for RECD Very Low- and Low-Income Housing Repair Loans and Grants, and worked on the sale of tax credits to support the construction of low-income apartments.

* In Texas, a Member serving in Laredo organized several volunteers, local donors, and businesses to rebuild an elderly man's home that had been destroyed by fire. Expenses were covered by a benefit plate sale, and as a result of the cooperation between the citizens and the businesses engendered by the Member, the project was completed within 3 months. A Member serving in Raymondville assisted 25 residents in obtaining funds to build safe and adequate housing, install water systems, and do home repairs. A Member serving in Edinburg teamed up with the Child Protective Service to provide needed home repairs for a local family, and got contractors to donate materials and manpower to this 1-day project. The repairs included sheetrocking 2 bedrooms, a kitchen and a living room, and painting the inside of the house. A Member serving in Edinburg helped a family of 5 relocate from living in an old school bus to a home. The husband was disabled and unable to work, but took care of the children while his 8-months pregnant wife worked in the fields. The Member also helped them obtain funds and donated materials to build a bathroom to their new home.

* In Oregon, A Member serving in Ontario assisted 5 applicants who had been refused State weatherization aid, to successfully apply for RECD home weatherization aid, helped a local county senior center to apply for a \$134,000 Housing Preservation Grant, and arranged for a local donation of a truckload of dirt and volunteers at the home of a low-income senior citizen.

* In Jonesville, Virginia, a Member arranged for an RECD loan to allow a homeless family with a baby acquire an RECD home from inventory.

Cultural and Historic Resource Preservation

* In West Virginia, a Member performed archeological site investigations on over 100 acres in seven rural communities; artifacts that were recovered were documented for exhibit; mapped and planned for the use of a civil war site; monitored the removal and re-burial of four historic graves. This Member will increase the future use of archaeologists as volunteers to bring expertise to local cultural resource preservation.

* In Tennessee, Members completed oral histories for the Hidden Heroines Oral History Project.

* A Member serving in Morgantown, West Virginia has been working to renovate a historic theater in the heart of the downtown business district which is a source of local pride and interest by organizing a visit for the consulting firm overseeing the restoration, organized a cleanup of the building, compiled a report on needed repairs and facilities, and authored a guide for fundraising for the repair committee.

AmeriCorps/USDA Members Are Learning Personal Responsibility While Expanding Their Own Educational Opportunity

Because USDA has spent so much time and energy to date documenting the accomplishments towards meeting community service objectives, we only do not have a tremendous amount of hard, empirical, aggregated evidence to date on our success in meeting Member development objectives. Our best empirical evidence of success in meeting Member development needs is our excellent retention rate, which has been at least 80% since the start of the program.

In addition, our quarterly site reports, as well as site visits in every region of the country, indicate the following:

- * All USDA Members have received extensive training --- in the vision of AmeriCorps, team-building and citizenship development, and the specific technical skills they need to perform their service.
- * By performing hard work together under the philosophy of "sweat equity," Members have learned to bridge their diverse racial, gender, religious, generational, and geographical backgrounds in order to work together as cohesive teams.
- * Many USDA Members have significantly increased their leadership, public speaking, and project planning skills in just the few months since the launch of the program.
- * Of the USDA Members who joined the program after dropping out of high school, many have either earned their GEDs or made significant progress towards obtaining their GEDs. Of the Members who joined the program with either some college education, college degrees, or some graduate education, many have expressed the belief that AmeriCorps has increased both their ability and their desire to continue their educations.

One USDA AmeriCorps member was picked to speak at a forum sponsored by Secretary Glickman, and another was picked to participate in a forum sponsored by the First Lady.

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Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
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b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



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NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

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 Andreassen 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, Andreassen 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," Andreassen 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."

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

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.

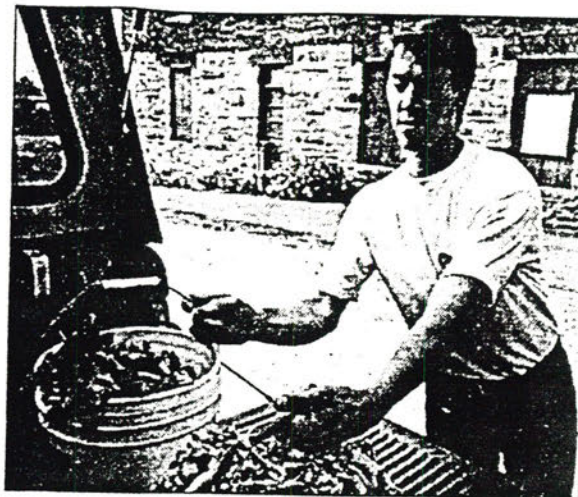
Gonzalez and Luevanos plan to pursue their teaching credentials at SDSU's Imperial Valley Campus. Alvarez will pursue master's degrees in psychology and public administration, also at SDSU's Imperial Valley Campus.

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."



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.

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

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

QUINCY HERALD WHIG
QUINCY, ILLINOIS
APRIL 28, 1995

Team maps rural part of county

Starr McDaniles and Darlene Ivarson attract some attention as they drive slowly through rural Adams County townships and study each building.

People ask if they're out looking for mushrooms or if they're lost and need help.

Sometimes the situation is reversed. "We get flagged down and asked for directions," Ivarson said.

Whether they can answer the question or not, they're working to make sure people get to the right place in emergency situations.

McDaniles and Ivarson are part of a five-member AmeriCorps team "mapping" each building and its address throughout Adams County. They're taking the first steps toward an enhanced 911 system that automatically supplies an address for the emergency site.

The crews first mapped existing addresses for homes and buildings in the county's 13 incorporated villages and some townships.

"It lays the groundwork to assign addresses to everybody in the county," said Mark Warren with Klingner & Associates. "All addresses will be street-style addresses like in Quincy."

"It's tedious and time-consuming. It requires a great deal of concentration," said crew member Bob Gillespy. "After a while my vision blurred from marking little houses on the map and looking ahead, then going back to check stuff."



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/Kevin Cooper

THE NACHEZ DEMOCRAT
NACHEZ, 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 criminals 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.

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

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.

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.

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.

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 Logan, 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.

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.

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 mie Does, 26, and Emily Jones, 21, both of Burlington.

See HUNGER, 1A

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.

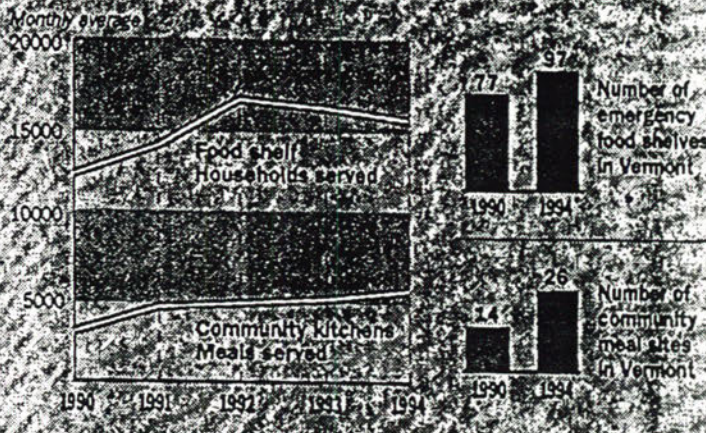
Does has spent much of his time working on the prison garden, which includes picking up donated plants from local greenhouses and farms.

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 1992, 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 P.

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 workers prepare the soil for a garden in Rush City.

Renyold Ferguson

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 a neighborhood near heavy industry, an area of the city 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



A Sullivan Central team tests soil at the Envirothon at Sycamore Shoals State Park. Times-News photo — Ned Jilton II

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.

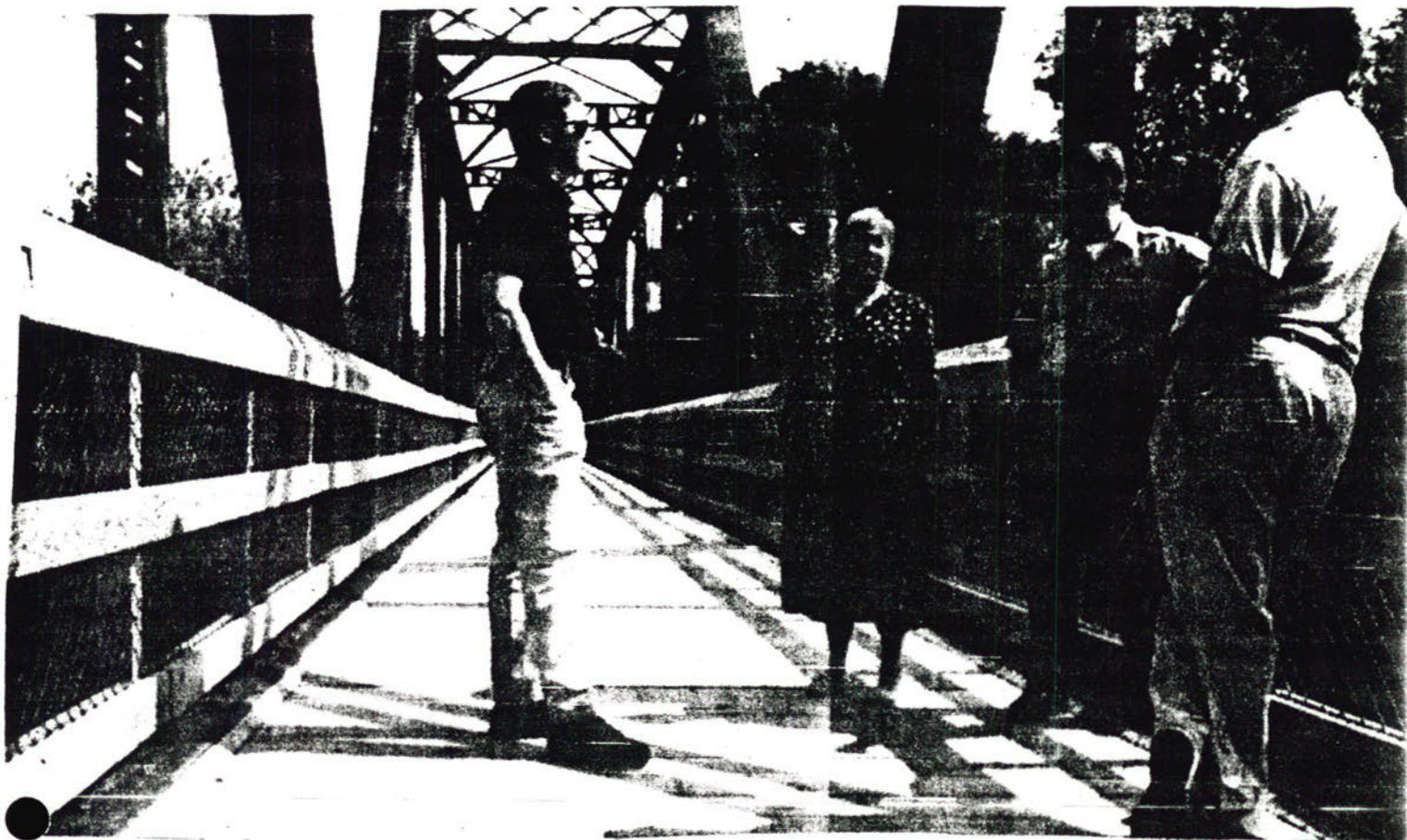
Billie Barlow, Americorps National Service member, helped recruit Envirothon teams. Barlow works with the Appalachian-Northeast Tennessee Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, which has coordinated the local Envirothon for the past two years.

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.



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 on the bridge was built by park service personnel. (David Conner II photos)



Post 798

VFW takes over Newport Community Meal Site

by Ralph Heymsfeld

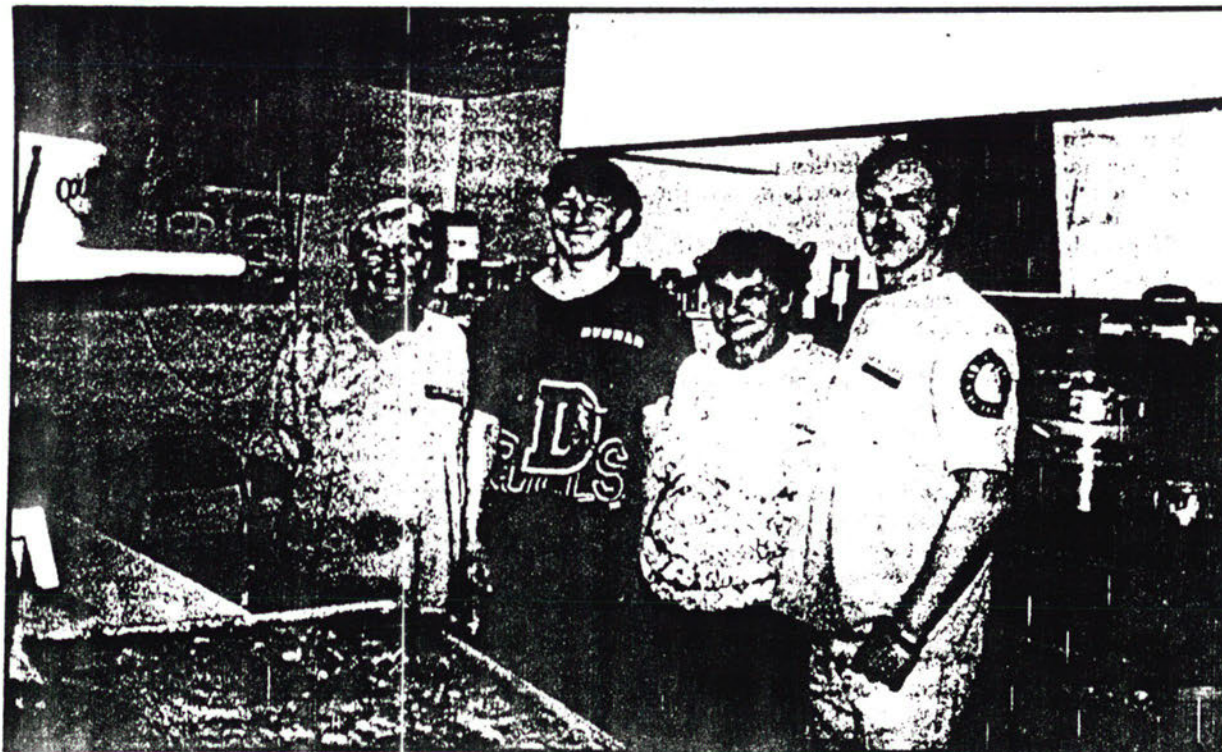
NEWPORT — The Newport Community Meal Site has found a new sponsor in the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 798 in Newport. Founded eight years ago at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, the meal site has operated from the VFW Hall under the supervision of North East Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) since 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 Chalfoux 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 Chalfoux, 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

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.

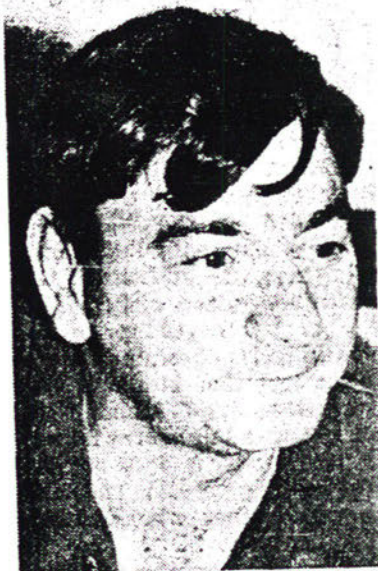
The national service initiative is intended to develop communities and protect the environment at a local level. AmeriCorps workers are provided a stipend, basic health insurance, a child care allowance and a \$4,725 education award for college or vocational training.

"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**

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

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 amount of time taken to supply water to rural fire fighting efforts can reduce insurance rates in these areas.

Water is also a key ingredient in 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 mile vehicles using the road can achieve.

Having water available for extraction on-site resulted in a 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.

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.

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.

September, 1995

Volume 14, Number 9

AmeriCorps update

>>>>>>>

Good programs don't just fade away!

By Amy Wilson (Niger, Mali)



Surviving an unprecedented political fray, AmeriCorps has been given a second year to prove its worth. If one had the opportunity to review them all, nationwide projects

would demonstrate some success in providing community service, building communities and fostering participant development. As with Peace Corps, some of the most stunning accomplishments are not easily quantified or measured.

The Camp Out . . . A Review

By Hud Minshew (Zaire)

All I can say was the contra dancing was good and dusty, the food was excellent, and the RPCV Africa contingent was loud and boisterous well into the wee hours. Please forgive us!!

Getting the truck out of the ditch the next morning brought us all back to our days on the continent. Word has it that Mr. Hobgood is The Waltzer of the 90's. Heart of the Valley RPCVs would like to thank the

Our five rural development members in southern Oregon assisted with the development of over 19 community projects characterized by a high level of local involvement and interagency cooperation. Our second generation volunteer (the son of RPCVs who met in Thailand) was a critical contributor to stream restoration projects throughout Curry County whose funding totaled over \$433,000!!

Currently AmeriCorps programs are recruiting people interested in community service. The Southwest Oregon Resource Conservation & Development Council is looking to fill five full-time positions related to community organizing and stream restoration. Please phone 476-5906 for details on this specific program; or phone the Oregon Community Service Commission for information on AmeriCorps programs in Oregon 800-826-4865.

Merrills for the use of their farm and for tolerating RPCVs without a cause.

The camp out was a good opportunity to travel around the world through conversation with other RPCVs. The arid climate and bright stars brought out some interesting theories on development and bringing the Peace Corps Experience home.

We also had the fortune of having three Americorps volunteers in our presence. They provided interesting insight into working in community development in the U.S. There is plenty of work to get done here, folks.

CALHOUN NEWS
BRUSSELS, ILLINOIS
JULY 12, 1995

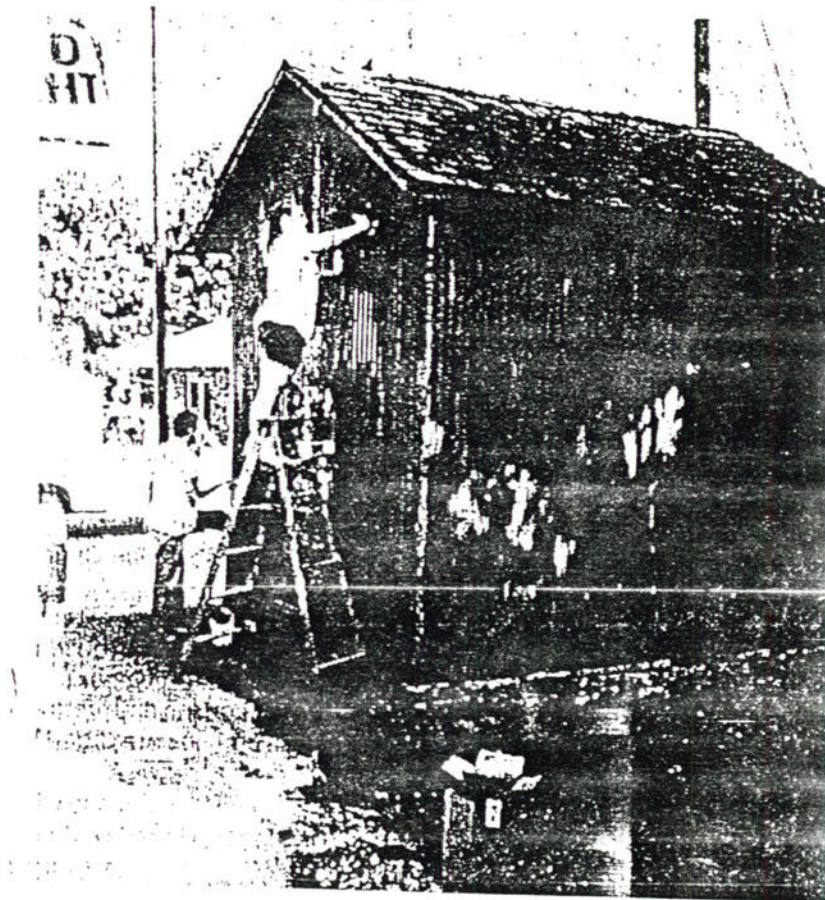
Brussels Historic Jail Renovated

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.



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 37, 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."

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.