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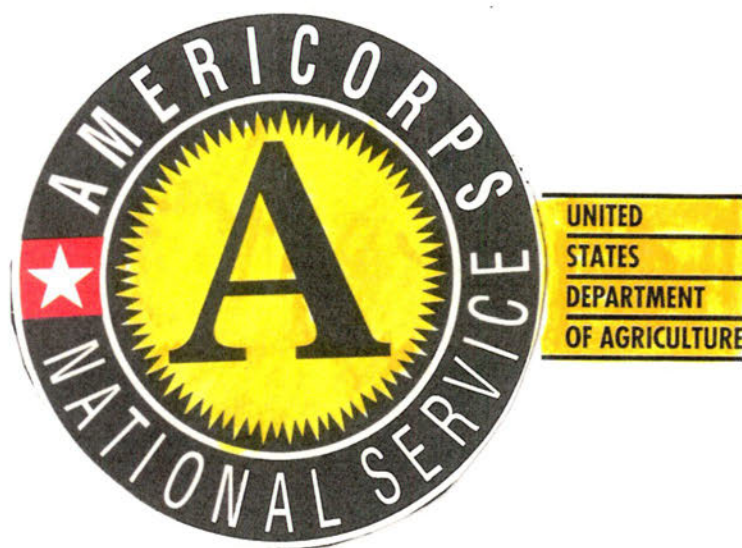
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AmeriCorps/USDA . . . in the news

Print Media Coverage

1994-1995



Clippings from our inaugural year

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

Lujan Preparing Area Calendar

Leticia Lujan is the America Corp volunteer working at the Eloy Chamber of Commerce. Lujan's job is to promote economic development.

Lujan's job is similar to that of a VISTA volunteer. Her job will end Sept. 30. She saw a flier about the America Corp program and that a meeting was scheduled at city hall.

After that she applied for the position. At the end of her term she will get a \$4,700 education grant and this is the reason she is working hard.

She is an Eloy native. Lujan graduated from the Santa Cruz Valley Union High School in 1987.

Lujan already has an associate degree from Central Arizona College. She wants to go to the University of Arizona in Tucson to complete her education. Although she has not decided, business administration is a possibility for her major.

At Santa Cruz she played softball and was in the Spanish Club.

She is married to Marcelo, and they have four young children.

Her main project is coordinating a community calendar. On the south side of the Eloy Chamber of Commerce office is a window that displays her initial efforts.

Lujan is also working on a labor survey in Eloy for the Greater Casa Grande Economic Development Foundation. This is scheduled to begin in the next few weeks.

She is also preparing a business proprietor survey for the chamber. This is to gain information about local business and who they do business with. "We want to see if we can attract businesses that they might need nearby."

This survey is scheduled to go out at the end of the month, Lujan said.

Another project is about illegal dumping. "I'll be researching ways on how to develop projects to stop illegal dumping," Lujan said.

Water conservation is another project she is working on in cooperation with the city.

"The community calendar is not as good as Eleanor's Brown-

yet," Lujan said, referring to it's A Date column in *The Eloy Enterprise* sponsored by Hodges Rexall Mart. Both Lujan and Brown will be working cooperatively.

"Eleanor gave me a lot of information and people to contact," Lujan said.

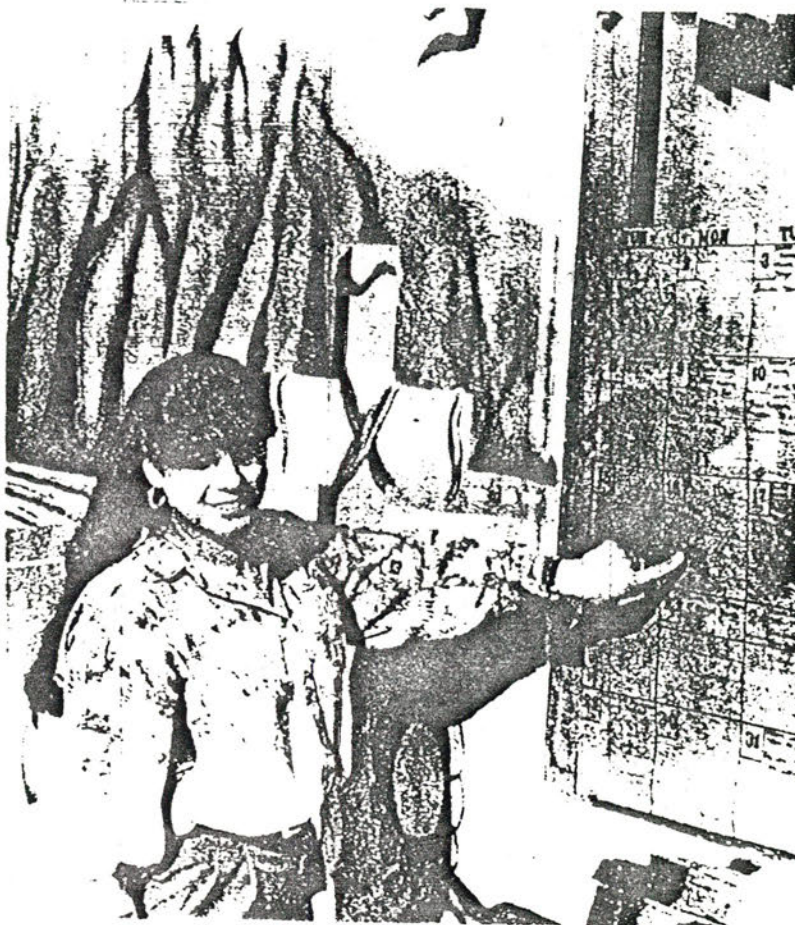
Groups are encouraged to contact her if they want to be in the calendar at 466-3411 at the chamber office.

"This is something that came out of the Focus Future effort. What they want is an actual calendar to put up," Lujan said. The calendar is designed and after it is erected at the chamber office they may add lights to it.

January is the first month. "They gave me this window to work with (temporarily)," Lujan said.

"I want it to look like an actual calendar. It's going to have to be big to put everything for a while month," she said.

"If anyone has ideas they want to share with me how to get the calendar put up, please contact me," Lujan said.



**ELOY ENTERPRISE
ELOY, ARIZONA
JANUARY 19, 1995**

AmeriCorps national service organization alive, well and serving others in the White Mountains

Carolyn Dryer
The Independent

SHOW LOW — Members of AmeriCorps, a national service organization working in communities throughout the Four Corners area, is on the move in the White Mountains. Some of the AmeriCorps members have already knocked on some White Mountain doors. They've handed out forms they'd like residents and business owners to look over and fill out, then mail in.

Created by federal legislation Sept. 21, 1993, USDA/AmeriCorps is the domestic equivalent of the Peace Corps. Twenty thousand strong, the purpose of the program is, as every volunteer will tell you, "to get things done." Local AmeriCorps volunteer Tom Sepulveda said the program is involved in rural community development, "helping people pull themselves together by the bootstraps."

"It has to be people empowering themselves. Otherwise, you get that same old dependence on government which doesn't help anybody."

"It's the essence of the new covenant and we shouldn't stop it."

President Bill Clinton, in his State of the Union address Jan. 24, said of the AmeriCorps: "It's the essence of the new covenant and we shouldn't stop it." Describing the volunteers who serve in AmeriCorps, President Clinton said they are "solving problems and earning money for college."

That serves as an accurate description of Sepulveda who is a college graduate, married, hoping to earn enough money this year to get a good start on paying for his master's degree. Sepulveda and the 47 other AmeriCorps volunteers working on the Four Corners Regional Rural Development Project are focusing on two main projects for this region.

One is the Crofford Demonstration Farm in Woodruff, 15 - 20 miles southeast of Holbrook. Through the construction of a 17' X 24' greenhouse built from easily obtained materials at minimal expense, volunteers hope to "show the advantages and profitability of such greenhouses." The farm is also aiming to demonstrate alternative high return crops, including herbs.

The other project is creating an economic data base. Called Econ dB, the volunteer community action team is working on collecting information from local communities. The team will not be telling the communities

what they need to do to develop projects. Sepulveda said nobody from AmeriCorps will be analyzing the data, but it will be available to community planners.

Some community action teams do more than collect data. They build trails, such as the Heritage Trail from St. Johns to Lyman Lake, pointing out historical sites along the trail. "A big history trail," said Sepulveda, "that shows all aspects of a given area's historical heritage."

"It is a grassroots effort to solve the problems facing communities across the Nation."

The AmeriCorps Ethic includes the goal of "getting things done," "strengthening communities," encouraging responsibility, and "expanding opportunity." As its mission statement says, "It is a grassroots effort to solve the problems facing communities across the Nation."

Sepulveda believes in it and hopes the information gathering process will bear fruit and the White Mountain communities will be able to determine their own destiny. He'll be knocking on your door.

President Clinton, a Democrat, and Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona, a Republican, do share the same sentiment about AmeriCorps. Kyl, in a speech on the floor of the senate Jan. 20, said, "... it provides meaningful work for young people addressing real problems without federal micromanagement ... In the process, national service instills in young people the strong traditional values of hard work and responsibility. They learn those values because they are serving. It is not a program to teach those values. It is a program where the values are learned because of service rendered."

In the process, national service instills in young people the strong traditional values of hard work and responsibility. It is not a program to teach those values. It is a program where the values are learned because of service rendered."

For more information about AmeriCorps, call Sepulveda in Holbrook at 524-1305, or the Holbrook headquarters at 524-1442.

Marvell receives Americorps Grant

Marvell, in partnership with the East Arkansas Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Council, has received funding through the Rural Forestry Assistance (Rural Development) AmeriCorps Program.

The mission of the AmeriCorps Program is to engage a diverse group of Americans in working partnerships with communities to provide real and measurable services to meet environmental and human needs while building an ethic of service, responsibility, and citizenship.

The City of Marvell Enhancement Project is designed to improve the social, economic, and natural environment of the town.

"As part of the project, trash bins and planters will be installed as permanent fixtures in the downtown area. Accessible ramps will be built and the existing sidewalks will be made accessible. New culverts will be installed in residential areas where they are virtually nonexistent or non-serviceable," stated Bart Washburn, Assistant to the Mayor Clark Hall.

As part of the project, the East

Arkansas RC&D Council will begin revisions on an Area Plan. In the plan revisions, committees will be selected and public meeting held for each county in the district. The following concerns have been identified in Phillips County: soil conservation and land treatment; infrastructure; use, quality, and quantity in irrigation water; flood protection and drainage of agricultural and urban land; recreation and tourism; rural fire protection; and recycling and waste management.

The City of Marvell Enhancement Project will address waste management, infrastructure, flood protection and drainage concerns.

Besides the City of Marvell and the East Arkansas RC&D Council, additional partners include the USDA Forest Service, Phillips County Conservation District, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

"Getting Things Done" is the motto of the AmeriCorps Program. With assistance from this grant and the partners involved, Marvell is doing just that.

Holly Grove Council looks to city's future

The Holly Grove City Council continues to make strides for the progress of the city. During last Thursday's meeting, the council discussed two issues of valued importance to the future of the city. One concerned the FEMA buy out program and the other a senior citizens center project.

Mayor Lula Tyler reported that 13 property owners have agreed so far to participate in the FEMA buy out program of housing and land in the floodplain area. To date, FEMA has committed \$159,250 towards the project. The land which is purchased will belong to the city. Tyler stated that she has been working with the Forestry Service in Russellville for plans of development in the bought out area. Tentative plans include walking trails, nature trails, and a lake with fishing piers.

The council also agreed to give Tyler the authorization to enter into an administrative services contract and an architect services contract if the senior citizens' application proposal is funded. The city is seeking funding for a senior citizens center project from the Arkansas Community and

Economic Development Grant program. A city selection committee with the approval of the council has selected Wingfield Associates Consulting Services of Conway as administrator/preparer and Twin Rivers Architects of Arkadelphia as architects if the project is funded.

The council discussed the need for street paving. Portions of Second Street, Atlanta Street, East Street, and Spruce/Tyler Streets were named as priority needs. The city has a restricted one cent sales and use tax which has collected over \$25,000 and can be used for street paving. Bids for paving will be solicited.

Tyler reported that although the city has been approved for the COPS Fast program the funds have not been received. The council discussed advertising the position, but decided to table the matter until funds were available.

Renee Spurlock reported that her 1700 hours with the Americorps program will be completed this month. She will continue to work in a slot provided by the Forestry Service. This will enable her to continue with the Holly Grove projects.

Americorps member Jana Coleman gave a report from the Crime and Drug Committee concerning city street lights. The committee recommended upgrading 9 lights to sodium lights and installing 8 new sodium lights in needed areas. Each sodium light would increase the electric bill

approximately \$7.00 per month. The council discussed the need for prioritizing the list and then phasing in lights as funding is available. Mayor Tyler suggested that the council include some of the cost in the 1996 budget. No immediate action was taken.

The council reviewed ordinances #148 and #150 which call for the cleanliness of property and the condemnation of properties that constitute a public nuisance. Mayor Tyler distributed pictures taken by members of the city beautification committee. The pictures showed some of the properties in town that needed particular attention. She related that letters had been sent to out-of-town property owners requesting that they take care of their property. The city is mowing some of these properties and billing the owners for services rendered. A motion was passed for the city beautification committee to help determine properties which are not meeting standards and to make recommendations to the council.

Street maintenance employee Floyd Christian was reported as having resigned. The position will be advertised. A temporary employee has been hired to mow city property. The council discussed the need for additional help for clean up during the annual homecoming weekend.

All council members were present for the meeting. The council will meet again August 17.

**THE MONROE COUNTY SUN
CLARENDON, ARKANSAS
APRIL 13, 1995**

**City Wide Clean-Up
In Holly Grove**

The Holly Grove Beautification Committee will sponsor a City Wide Clean-Up. The committee is urging the community to get involved in making the city one of the most beautiful cities in Monroe County. There will be a special residential pickup on Saturday, April 29. This will give everyone the opportunity to get rid of anything from bathtubs to screwdrivers. Be sure to place these items in front of your residents on Friday afternoon, April 28, so you will be ready for the Clean Sweep on Saturday, April 29.

If anyone needs assistance in moving heavy objects or cleaning-up their property please contact AmeriCorps-USDA Member Renee Spurlock at 462-8300, Chairman Brenda Coleman at 462-8350, Mary Frances Spurlock at 462-3402, or Grace Brown at 462-8574 so we can make arrangements to help you as soon as possible.

**MONROE COUNTY SUN
CLARENDON, ARKANSAS
MAY 5, 1995**

**Second Clean-Up
Day in H.-Grove**

A second clean-up day has been scheduled for Holly Grove by BFI for Saturday, May 6, starting at 8:00 a.m. All items, large or small, will be hauled away if placed at curbside.

The first clean-up day was scheduled for Saturday, April 29. BFI was not prepared for the large quantity of items needing hauling away. Therefore, they have agreed to return for a second Saturday and have promised to complete the task this time.

Americorps Member Renee Spurlock will be assisting the company in locating homes with items needing to be picked up. For more information about the clean-up day contact Renee Spurlock or Mayor Lula Tyler.



AMERICORPS MEETING IN HOLLY GROVE: Eight AmeriCorps participants and other officials met in Holly Grove last Wednesday with U. S. Department of Agriculture AmeriCorps Director Joel Berg. Each of the participants told of specific areas of work in which they were involved. In some way, they have all been involved in the work at Holly Grove. AmeriCorps participants include from left: Vivian Jones of North Little Rock; Loyda Stith of Batesville; Audria Coleman of Holly Grove; Debra Carmen of Little Rock; Joel Berg, AmeriCorps director of Washington, D.C.; Renee Spurlock of Holly Grove; Jana Coleman of Holly Grove; Lisa Cobb of Jonesboro; and Harrison Locke of Farao.

In Arkansas, AmeriCorps fits Clinton's vision

BY GRANT TENHILLE

Democrat-Gazette Staff Writer

AmeriCorps member Renee Spurlock is moving Holly Grove residents out of danger.

Approximately 60 homes in the east Arkansas town of 700 are inside the flood plain of the White River. During periods of heavy rain, water seeps into the ground floor of some homes. If a 100-year flood were to sweep down the White River, it would take most of those homes with it to the Mississippi.

So Spurlock, 35, a Holly Grove resident, is coordinating a program under the Federal Emergency Management Authority to buy the flood-threatened property and find the 135 residents of the area new lots on which to build.

She has spent the past 10 months educating landowners about the buyout program, surveying the area, researching ownership of every piece of property and finally going door-to-door answering questions, providing en-

couragement and soothing fears.

"AmeriCorps has really helped this town," Spurlock said.

Spurlock is one of approximately 250 AmeriCorps volunteers in Arkansas working for dozens of private, nonprofit and government agencies across the state. Their accomplishments may be the best defense of President Clinton's modern-day Peace Corps.

Their jobs include feeding the hungry, teaching Little Rock Hispanics job skills, educating mi-

grant farm workers on the dangers of pesticides and helping rural fire departments find money for training.

On Sept. 21, 1993, Clinton signed the National and Community Service Trust Act creating AmeriCorps. The creation of a national service corps had been a high priority for Clinton during the 1992 campaign.

Clinton envisioned a domestic version of the Peace Corps, created by President John F. Kennedy in the early '60s, a group that

would perform volunteer work in communities across the United States in exchange for government grants to pay for college education.

On Sept. 12, 1994, Clinton administered the oath, via satellite, to 20,000 AmeriCorps volunteers across the country.

Republicans in Congress, led by Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., attempted to kill the program earlier this month by slashing the 1996 budget for

See AMERICORPS, Page 11A

AmeriCorps

• Continued from Page 1A

AmeriCorps from the proposed \$575 million to \$159 million. They say the Corps is nothing more than another federal jobs program that costs a lot but accomplishes little.

AmeriCorps volunteer Jennifer Alexander said Gingrich is wrong.

In Little Rock, King is helping feed hungry families.

Through her work with the Rice Depot and Potluck, two Pulaski County relief organizations, King, 23, developed the Red Barrel program. Red barrels have been placed in grocery stores across Pulaski County with signs that encourage people to donate food. Since November, more than 15,000 pounds of food has been collected and distributed to 17 agencies across the state.

"Because of Jennifer it was a success," said coordinator Laura Rhea. "Because it was a success it is going statewide."

King wants the House Speaker and his fellow congressional Republicans who say AmeriCorps is just another wasteful bureaucracy to know that her work has fed thousands of hungry people.

"We are getting things done," King said.

AmeriCorps supporters said the program has become a political target of the Republican Congress, eager to attack one of President Clinton's pet projects. Republicans are unapologetic.

"I think that this is something that the president wanted his name on as an achievement of his administration, but I think the people really have turned their thumbs down on these '60s-style programs," said Rep. Tim

Clinton has saved AmeriCorps, at least for now, by vetoing the congressional rescissions package June 7. He instructed Congress to find other spending cuts. King, and her fellow 20,000 AmeriCorps volunteers across the country, are relieved.

Gingrich says AmeriCorps is getting in the way of a balanced budget.

"If you are going to get to a balanced budget and your choice is having a nice little government bureaucracy that runs people around the country doing nice things or taking care of people with severe disabilities, where is each one on the priority list?" Gingrich said in an interview earlier this year.

One of the central tenets of AmeriCorps is that the volunteers will be placed within existing agencies so that no extra bureaucracy will be needed to create and supervise projects.

Diversity reigns

The AmeriCorps projects are diverse, and so are the volunteers. Most are college-age, but some are in their 60s. All are working on projects that fall within four "national priorities" outlined by the Corporation for National Service, the 200-employee Washington agency that oversees AmeriCorps. Those priorities are education, public safety, human needs and the environment.

A short list of the agencies where Arkansas' AmeriCorps volunteers are working includes:

• The state's Spinal Cord Commission, where AmeriCorps volunteer John Gould of Little Rock, who is paralyzed from the chest down, counsels recently paralyzed people learning to cope with a disability.

• Central Hispano, a private, nonprofit Little Rock organization where AmeriCorps volunteer Patrick Presley helps members of Little Rock's Hispanic community learn the skills they need to get off welfare and hold jobs. He and his fellow AmeriCorps workers often serve as translators for local hospitals and police during emergency situations.

• The Resource Conservation and Development Office of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where Deborah Carman of Little Rock helps rural fire departments across Arkansas find the money for training and new equipment.

In Holly Grove, Spurlock also has formed citizen committees who are fighting neighborhood crime and picking up litter.

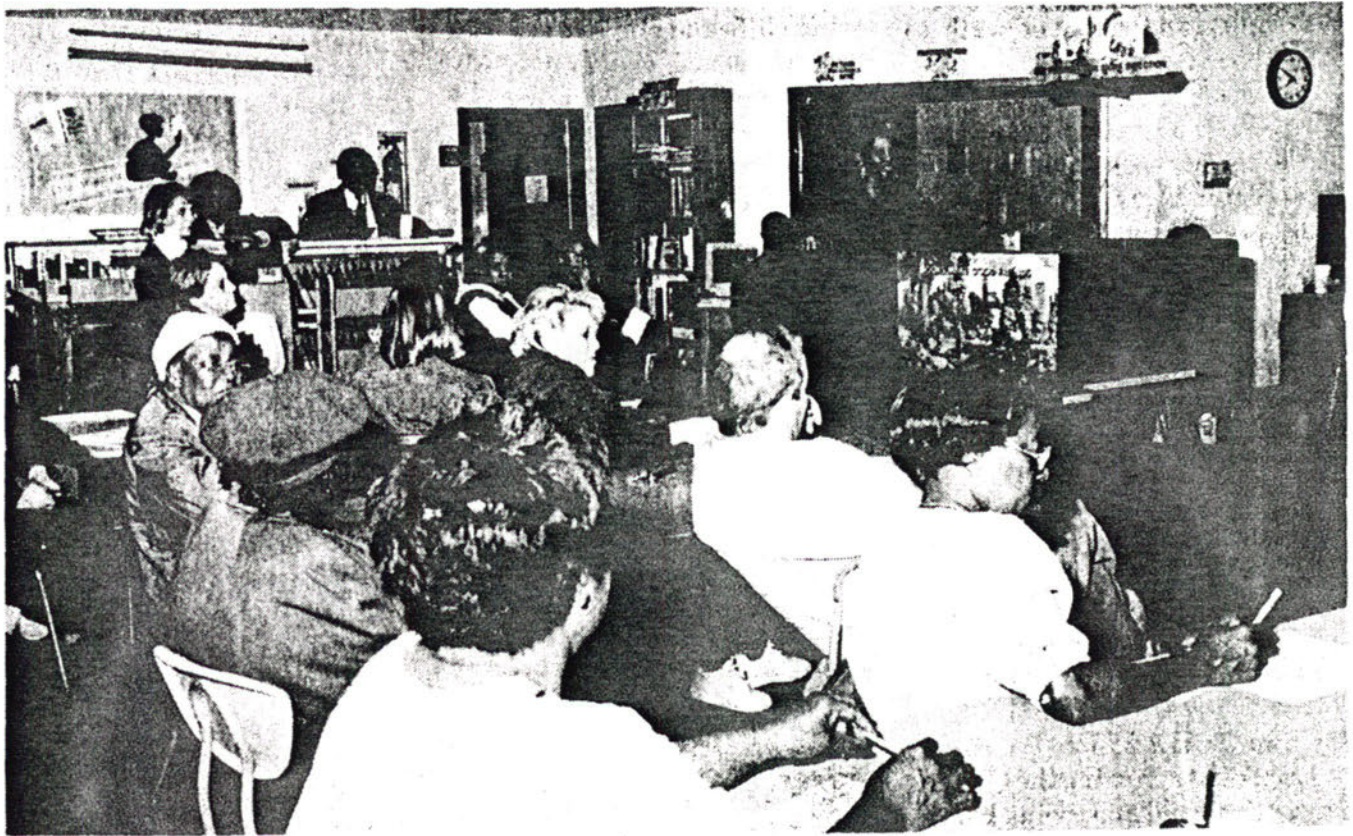
Holly Grove Mayor Lula Tyler said AmeriCorps is making her town better.

"It's miraculous for a small town," Tyler said. "We cannot afford to go out and hire a person to do what they are doing. We would have been a little dump if it hadn't been for them."

Project Coordinator Gail Wainwright of the U.S. Department of Agriculture said the Holly Grove flood plain project is one that has needed to be done for years, but manpower had never been available. The Agriculture Department is overseeing the project.

"These projects might have happened 10 or 15 years from now, but they wouldn't happen as quickly as they have without these people," Wainwright said. "They give more of their free time than they ever get compensated for."

THE BRINKLEY ARGUS, BRINKLEY, ARKANSAS, JANUARY 15, 1995



PARTICIPATE IN COMMUNITY MEETING: Residents concerned about the future of Holly Grove attended a Monday night meeting to discuss community issues. Mayor Lula Tyler and Americorps Coordinator Renee Spurlock spearheaded the program. Participants listened to the concerns of the new mayor and then signed up to work on committees in various areas. Committees will be focusing on the issues of health care, crime and drugs, city beautification, education development, economic development, and recreation and tourism. The individual committees will meet on February 13 starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Holly Grove City Hall. For more information about serving on a committee contact Lula Tyler or Renee Spurlock.

THE BRINKLEY ARGUS
BRINKLEY, ARKANSAS
OCTOBER 30, 1994

Two Special Guests at Holly Grove City Council Meeting

The Holly Grove City Council welcomed several visitors to its monthly meeting held October 20. Special visitors included Deborah Mitchell and Dr. Lon Cordell.

Deborah Mitchell with the office of Rural Advocacy in Little Rock was introduced to the council by Mayor Donna Hill. Ms. Mitchell discussed the Arkansas

Rural Advocacy Grant Program. She stated that 82 grants were given last year for a total of \$286,175.00 and that other projects are possible. Mitchell discussed ways that Holly Grove might want to become involved with the grant program.

Mayor Hill also introduced Dr. Lon Cordell with the Americorps project. Cordell is a retired psychologist who has had experience working with HUD and other government agencies. With the Americorps program in Holly Grove, Dr. Cordell will be working during the next year helping relocate people that are living in the flood plain area.

The Americorps program has placed 22,000 people across the nation to help rural areas with conservation planning. Dr.

Cordell along with Rene Spurlock, a second Holly Grove Americorps employee, will help the city in identifying sources of financing for various services and will focus on the provision of additional multi-unit housing available in Holly Grove.

The council passed a motion to levy real estate millage. The following millage was adopted: .0018 General Fund; .004 Policeman's Pension Fund; and .0004 Fireman's Pension Fund.

The council took two stands on upcoming issues in the November 8 election. The council passed a motion to encourage defeat of Proposed Amendment 2. The council unanimously passed a motion to support Referred Act 1, commonly known as the soft drink tax.

Starting in November the meeting time of monthly council meetings will change. The council voted to meet at 7:00 p.m. until the next time change.

Absent from the meeting was Alderman Lula Tyler.



ATTEND TRAINING SESSION: Americorps members from three states attended the Delta Service Corps Super Training June 26-29 at the National Guard Center Camp Robinson, North Little Rock. Americorps members assisting the City of Holly Grove include from left: Jana Coleman, Lisa Cobb, and Renee Spurlock.

AmeriCorps members attend training session

An Americorps training session was held June 26-29 at the National Guard Center at Camp Robinson, North Little Rock. Over 200 people from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi were in attendance. Workshops during the session included conducting meetings, working with diverse cultures, promoting volunteerism within communities, adult literacy, and various other subjects related to community life.

Jana Coleman, Lisa Cobb, and Renee Spurlock, Americorps volunteers assisting the City of Holly Grove attended the meeting. The three have worked closely with Holly Grove and surrounding areas in Monroe County.

Coleman has assisted Fargo with getting garbage pick-up service and is in the process of obtaining city street lights. She has worked with Holly Grove in securing sodium lights in the poorly lighted areas of town in an effort

to reduce crime. She is available to help other communities in Monroe County as well.

Cobb is a licensed real estate appraiser. She has been writing appraisals for the homes in the 100 year flood plain in Holly Grove for the FEMA buy-out project. Although she has spent a great amount of time in Holly Grove, she is officially stationed at Jonesboro.

Spurlock has been working with committees in Holly Grove to improve the community in various areas. Target areas have been beautification, economic development, education, and housing. She has assisted Mayor Lula Tyler with the FEMA buy-out project.

Other Americorps participants working in Monroe County that attended the workshop are James Thompson, Eugene McKinney and Harrison Locke. Locke and Harrison are specifically assigned to work with Arkansas Farm and Land Development Corporation.

MONROE COUNTY SUN
CLARENDON, ARKANSAS
JULY 6, 1995

Committees To Meet Monday in H.-Grove

The community committees for Holly Grove will meet on Monday, February 18. The committees have been divided into two groups with the first meeting at 6:00 p.m. and the second at 7:00 p.m.

Committee meeting at 6:00 p.m. include Crime and Drug Committee, Education and Development Committee, Recreation and Tourism Committee, and Drainage and Flood Committee.

Committee meeting at 7:00 p.m. include Health Care Committee, Economic Development Committee, and City Beautification Committee. The overall Planning Committee will also meet at 7:00 p.m.

The committee will meet the second Monday of each month at the Holly Grove City Hall. All persons interested in serving on one or more of these committees should attend.

FEBRUARY 23, 1995

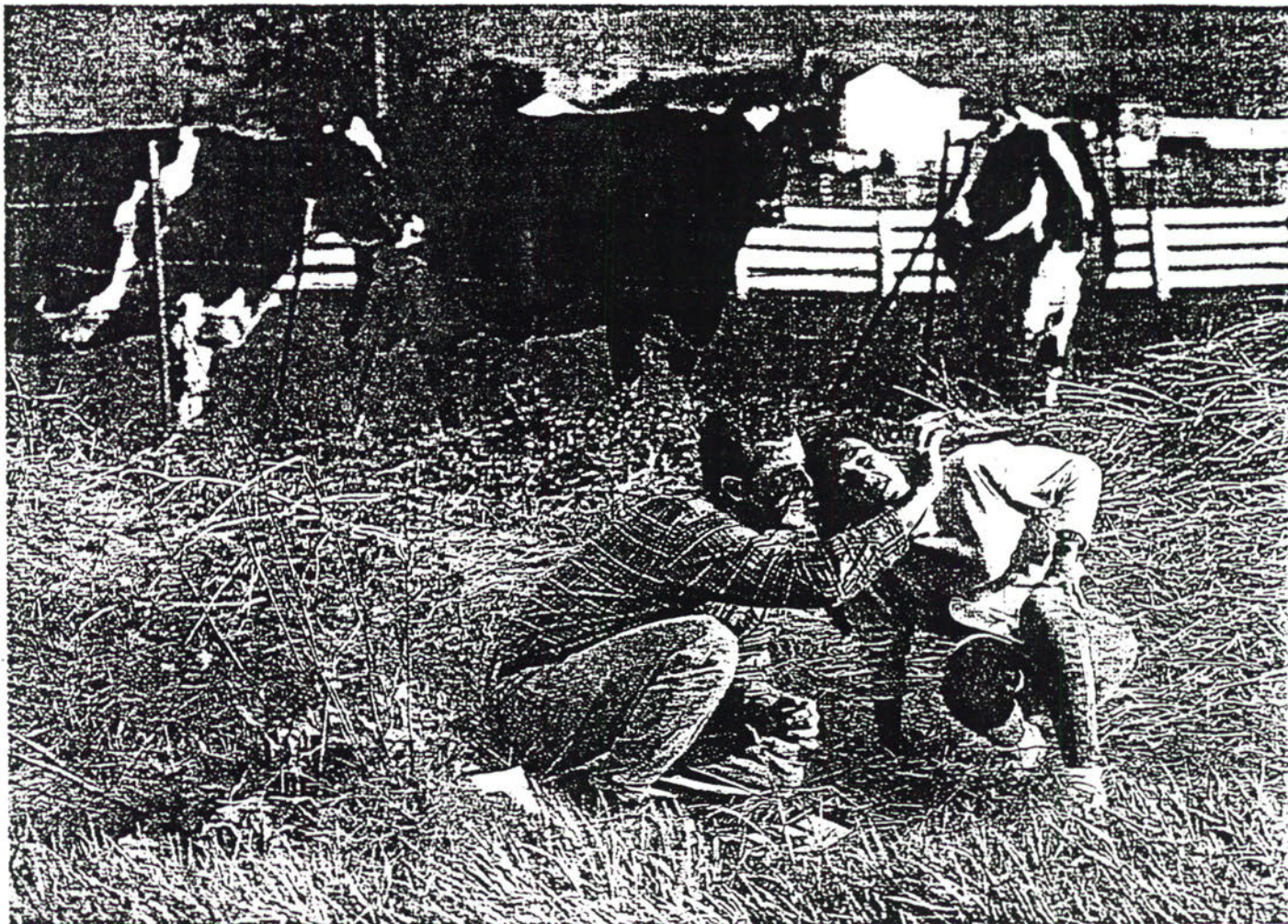
Americorps Workers Guests at Holly Grove Woman's Club

Three members of the Americorps program were guests at Tuesday's meeting of the Holly Grove Woman's Club. Renee Spurlock, Jana Coleman, and Audria Coleman discussed their various responsibilities with the Americorps program. They stated they work in helping communities find funding for needed projects. In Holly Grove, Americorps has been instrumental in securing funding for a flood plain buyout and are working for improved housing in the area. Under the direction of Americorps, the community interest committees have been reestablished and are making plans for improvements in many areas for the City of Holly Grove.

In other business during the meeting, the club voted to sponsor an art contest at Marvell Academy. The contest will be divided in two parts, one division for grades nine and ten, and another division for grades eleven and twelve. Entries may be either in photography or painting. The winners will be submitted to district competition.

The meeting was held in the home of Mary Ann Reynolds who served as hostess. Serving as co-hostess was Willa Lambert. Mickey Calloway was in charge of the program. Introducing the Americorps coordinators was former Mayor Donna Hill. Following the meeting and program, the ladies were served refreshments.

The club will meet again on Tuesday, March 21.



JOHN BURGESS PRESS DEMOCRAT

AmeriCorps workers Mike Jensen and Nancy Scolari check ammonia levels in a water sample taken next to a large dairy at the headwaters of Stemple Creek. The pair, who found good readings, will monitor the stream for a year.

Helping out his hometown

Corps worker aids farmers

By RONNIE COHEN
Press Democrat Bureau

Mike Jensen earned twice as much money before he left his Penngrove home for college as he does now that he's graduated.

But the 25-year-old Jensen is thrilled to be helping Petaluma area farmers as a member of AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps that was a centerpiece of Bill Clinton's presidential campaign.

"It's not the best-paying job," Jensen said. "But I'm learning just an immense amount. And the reason we're in the AmeriCorps is to serve the community."

The Petaluma fields in which Jensen played as a boy now are home to office buildings. The changes sadden Jensen. Because he loves the outdoors and wants to preserve open space, he studied landscape architecture and land-use

When he graduated in June, the job market looked bleak. Then Jensen's father, a Penngrove contractor, spotted an ad for an AmeriCorps job with the Soil Conservation Service in Petaluma.

Jensen was visiting friends in San Luis Obispo when his father called and told him about the \$12,000-a-year job. Although he could earn twice as much working as a carpenter, Jensen rushed home to be one of 50 job candidates.

Since last month, as part of the first group of AmeriCorps workers to work for the Soil Conservation Service, Jensen has been advising area dairy operators and other agricultural landowners on ways to keep manure out of waterways.

Jensen sees the farmers as heroes.

"I don't want to see Petaluma get engulfed in this urban sprawl," he said. "All the open space you see is farmland. It's the agricultural people and the farming community who have left it open."

So Jensen feels great about helping dairy operators manage their land in ways that don't pollute. And, Jensen said,

It's not the best-paying job, but I'm learning an immense amount. The reason we're in AmeriCorps is to serve the community.

MIKE JENSEN

there are ways.

Farmers can, for example, continue spread cow manure on hay fields, Jensen said. They just need to compute how much manure they can put down before bacteria gets into waterways, eats oxy-

See Helping, Page 2

AmeriCorps crews help forest, people

If some of your priorities are improving quality of life, taking care of national forests and other public lands, education and motivation, AmeriCorps has some answers.

This is what the so-called "Domestic Peace Corps" is up to so far:

- 20,000 AmeriCorps members are fighting hunger, helping with rural development, working with educators and helping preserve or restore fragile natural habitats

- They are getting on-the-job training in a myriad of skills designed to improve both the human and environmental condition

- Many, if not most, are gaining new insights into their own career choices, even as they earn the \$4,725 education award for their 1800-plus hours of work. Some say their educational opportunities would be crippled without the stipend and training.

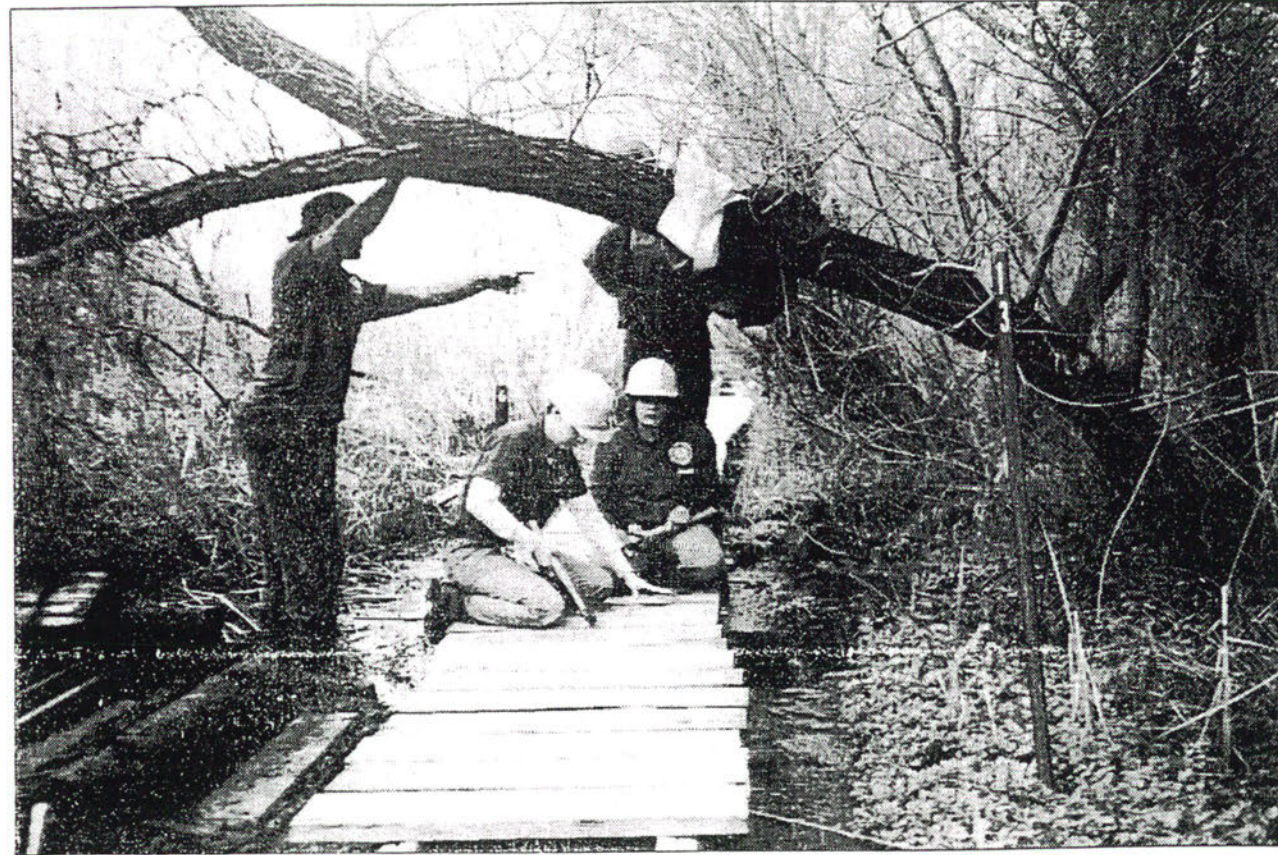
Calimesan Ken Amundsen, 21, joined the program to earn the stipend and discover his own future.

"I was working at Burger King before this," he said. "AmeriCorps has really opened a few doors for me."

Amundsen said he's gained new experience and is looking closer at potential careers with the U.S. Fish and Game Dept. As such, he said, he would work to protect natural resources and wildlife from poachers or those cutting down trees illegally.

He and fellow crew members are getting five day's training in the handling of chain saws, including four in the field at Idyllwild. They'll use that training to cut fire fuel breaks, which help check wildland fires.

Locals' work:
Public lands, environment
Members from Yucaipa, Ca-



Bridge over troubled waters

AmeriCorps workers raise wooden walkways above the water in the riparian areas of Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.

limesa, Beaumont, Cherry Valley, and other area communities make up the San Bernardino National Forest crew, working on public lands and the environment.

The organization is broken into several components:

- The **Education Team** is comprised of nine members and two supervisors who make environmental-education presentations at

elementary schools.

Geared to kindergarten-grade 6 students, the programs teach children wilderness survival skills, such as what to do if they become lost in the wilderness ("Hug a Tree"). They also learn about the essential components of habitats in a program known as *Habitat Means Home*, and get to meet and learn about Smokey Bear and his message.

The site, recovering from a devastating fire in 1992, is a favorite spot for viewing many wild species in natural settings.

Guest speakers include United States Forest Service officers and fire-prevention technicians.

The team also gets hands-on experience in researching and designing new programs, according to Anne Hotchkiss, AmeriCorps spokesman out of the Mill Creek Ranger Station.

- Five members belong to the **Construction Team**, which handles such diverse

tasks as post-fire rehabilitation, plugging gaps in forest buildings to keep out swarms of killer bees, trail maintenance and graffiti removal.

"All of these enhance the National Forest experience" for both visitors and the natural environment, said Hotchkiss.

- More experienced crew members do specialized repairs and rehabilitation within public lands, including

the Chapparral Neighborhood in Lytle Creek.

- Two crew members, looking to enhance their training in the field are working on bald eagle surveys with wildlife biologists. Others are enhancing their education by serving as interpreters in the SBNF Children's Forest.

"It's a forest within a forest for kids and parents, where they can learn the forest ecology," said Hotchkiss.

'Heading in the right direction'

"A lot of kids these days have no guidance," said AmeriCorps crew supervisor Jesse McIntire of the USFS. "I have kids who have nothing, who can't even afford a jacket or to wear decent clothes. They're just off the streets and don't know what to do with themselves. At least we'll get some kids off the streets and headed in the right direction."

McIntire said about half of his crew will be trained in firefighting through US Forest Service classes.

The most dangerous of all

The training will qualify them for some of the most dangerous and difficult firefighting assignments of all: working on fire hand crews, cutting lines and doing wildland fire mop-up.

"That's where you get the most injuries," he said, "due to tree hazards and rolling rocks. People can fall through stump holes and get their legs burned."

The experience can guide them toward careers in Forest Service firefighting, including the so-called hot shots. McIntire said these are the most highly-skilled professional firefighting hand crews of all.



YEAR 115, No 49 MARCH 14, 1995

GAZETTE 50¢

of the Gold Country

Adjudicated as a Legal Newspaper • Court Decree No. 18589

School program features fuel reduction

As part of the community Communication Program for Fuel Reduction, the Education Coordinator for Americorps, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Aleta Apgar, has presented a series of ecosystem-themed workshops to explain to students grades 5-12 in El Dorado County the basics of fire safety in our wild land-urban interface.

The presentations are aimed at helping to reduce catastrophic wildfires in our county through community education. The public school system currently endorses both cross-curriculum learning and community awareness. The education program emphasizes things each student can do now to be aware and help address this critical issue in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Sharing with peers, adults, and teachers the components of fire safety at home and in our forests an important facet of the series of presentations.

Reducing catastrophic fire is a goal with which all of us can agree. The problem is being addressed by agencies on the federal, state, and local level, one of the issues where we are seeing cooperation between private landowners and government agencies.

El Dorado Unified High School was the first school to be involved in this program. Camino Opportunity School, Ponderado, is lining up a schedule for March. Sierra Ridge has expressed an interest in scheduling presentations. The Pollock Pines area was targeted first to coincide with a community

action project co-sponsored by the KCD's Mark Hicks, U.C. Cooperative Extension's Bill Frost, and the District 2 Supervisor, Ray Nutting.

On Saturday, Feb. 11 there was a cooperative effort to make two lots in Sly Park Hills a fire safe demonstration model.

Later in the Spring, Forest Service Representatives are willing to do a school presentation to coincide with the Mormon Emigrant Trail Fuel Break Burn as part of the series' thrust to expose students to the high risks and prevention measures in our region.

An outdoor environmental education component, a casual vegetation survey of the sites is also offered as part of the program. By law, schools have fire defensible space, but students do not necessarily understand what this entails. Their own schools are a good starting place.

In conjunction with the goal of making the Traverse Creek Watershed fire safe it is hoped the program will expand to the Black Oak Mine Unified School District Schools.

Any interested teachers in El Dorado County wanting to schedule presentations or desiring more information should contact Aleta Apgar, Americorps, NRCS, 415 Placerville Dr., Suite M, Placerville, CA 95667, phone 622-1410.

...

It is better to have
old, secondhand diamonds
than none at all.

—Mark Twain

Program

(Continued from Page 1)

Americorps at the end of September.

"There used to be one way to serve your country — through military service," said Joel Berg, 29, director of the USDA Americorps team, while visiting the Imperial Valley Friday. "Now we have another way for them to serve: community service."

Berg said some of the needs identified in the colonias include housing, water and jobs. The FmHA can help with at least two of those needs by offering 1-percent loans up to \$15,000 for housing repairs for people age 62 and under and grants up to \$5,000 for people 62 and older.

The Imperial Valley office currently has more than 1,000 home loans and 65 farm loans with residents in both Imperial and San Diego counties.

Yet, many others who need the services don't know about them.

"Nationally, we've done a lousy job at this kind of outreach," said Berg.

Because the government is downsizing the Imperial Valley FmHA office by two employees, the two Americorps volunteers

will be a great help in doing the outreach the office staff cannot handle.

"We want to let people know we are here. Outreach such as this can do that," said Rafael Lopez-Barragan, county supervisor for the FmHA in Imperial and San Diego counties.

"I want to change the perception of our office. I want people to see us not as a bank of last resort, but an organization of first opportunity," he said.

Alvarez, 22, said the program provides a great opportunity for both the people who may be helped and the participants of Americorps.

"It will be a great learning experience," she said.

Leuванos, 35, said the outreach he will do in helping people get grants and loans will be beneficial.

"A lot of people here, they don't get information. A lot of these people are very poor and don't speak English. They wouldn't be able to find out from the newspaper this kind of information," he said.

While such philanthropy is nice to hear in the 1990s, Leuванos conceded he will also get a personal benefit.

"I will learn a lot ... and I owe a lot in school loans," he said.

THE PRESS DEMOCRAT, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 1995

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA

AmeriCorps jobs

Editor: As an AmeriCorps member, I would like to express my appreciation to The Press Democrat and to writer Susan Swartz for the Feb. 5 article about the AmeriCorps program. I do believe, however, that the article was limited in its representation of the scope of President Clinton's nation service program.

The article highlighted only two of the four types of service available to members to choose from. Along with human services and education projects, AmeriCorps members are also serving in public safety and environmental projects.

From southern Sonoma County to Ukiah, the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service has six AmeriCorps members on board, all of whom are college graduates with a desire to serve their country through community work.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service, formerly the Soil

Conservation Service, is a federal agency that provides free technical conservation assistance to landowners. In northern Sonoma County, five AmeriCorps members are assisting the California Department of Fish and Game. AmeriCorps members enable these state and federal agencies to assist the public with projects that the budget-cut staffs could not otherwise handle.

Our assistance to the public is provided as a response to requests made by the community we live in and have chosen to serve.

When I introduce myself and describe the AmeriCorps program as a domestic Peace Corps, the handshake gets a little firmer, the smile a little broader, and the comment is always the same: "It's about time."

JULIE MAGGI
Fulton

OVER STORY

POLY POST, CAL POLY POMONA, POMONA, CALIFORNIA

AmeriCorps: Volunteers for America

By Mara Caitlin Roche
Poly Post Reporter

AmeriCorps, the "brain child" of President Clinton, has been in the news lately. Republican members in Congress, notably Newt Gingrich, have recently mentioned it as a possible target for funding cuts. But, what you might not know is that there are four full-time AmeriCorps members here at Cal Poly.

In the AmeriCorps application, Clinton states, "Through national service, you can help lift up America. There is so much to be done today, including teaching children to read, caring for the sick, and keeping our streets safe and our parks clean. Through AmeriCorps, you can help make America everything it ought to be—a nation where all our citizens, whatever their backgrounds, can live up to the fullest of their potential."

The four students interviewed have had positive experiences with working for AmeriCorps, though they are concerned about possible cutbacks to the organization, due to the congressional opposition.

"There is funding for the first two years [for AmeriCorps]. We are trying to establish a tradition of excellence so AmeriCorps can continue," said Jami Fisher, a senior in Landscape Irrigation Science. "Because this is the first year—we need publicity. We're a lot like the Peace Corps—but we do more with the community."

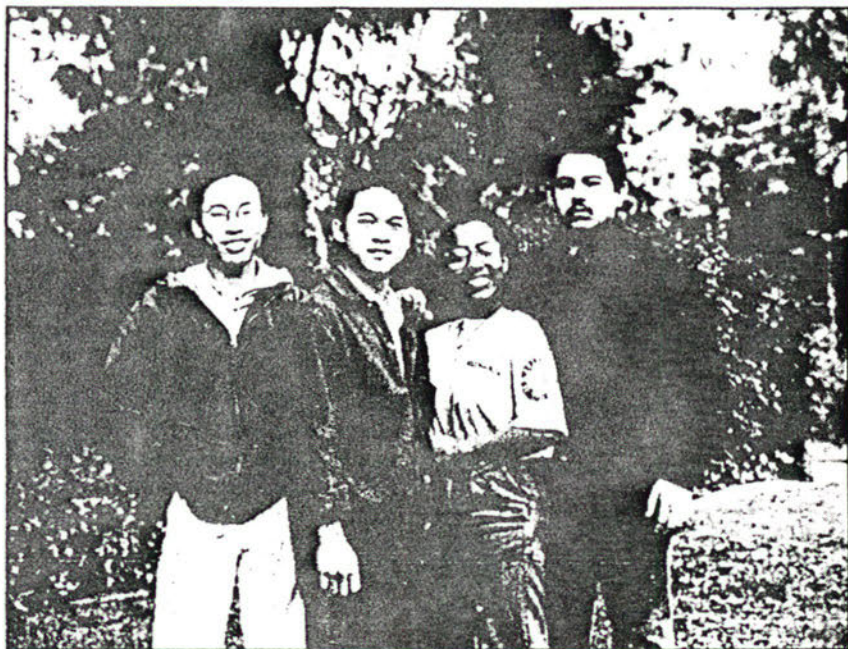
The group is currently working on a project for the Morongo Indian Reservation, helping that community with a flood-water control project. "We are able to provide the additional labor and technical assistance needed on projects like this," said Fisher. Fisher said that projects such as this would normally have to wait months to get off the ground if the extra assistance was not available through AmeriCorps.

Additional projects this past year have included developing waste-management plans for dairies and environmental improvements for area high schools.

"We are working with one high school, developing a 'demonstration garden' of native plants on steep, rocky soil," said Fisher.

"The program is good for community service," said Tai Diep, a junior in Civil Engineer major. When asked to explain the difference between Poly Corps and AmeriCorps Diep said, "They are both developed to help the community. But the focus is different for AmeriCorps groups; Poly Corps deals mainly with community service."

In the application, Clinton continues, "... through national service you will learn things that money can never buy. You'll join America's



AmeriCorp's volunteers Tai Diep, Kevin Nguyen, Jami Fisher and Adrian Gonzalez

long tradition of great citizens—men and women of every race and religion who come together to build up our communities and our country."

When asked how he felt about the diversity of AmeriCorps, Kevin Nguyen, a junior in civil engineering, said that he thinks it is important because, "It's not only friendship that we exchange, but we exchange our cultural backgrounds as well."

"Communication is a key to everything. Well, we've managed to work in groups, and handle problems—we manage to achieve power in a group," said Adrian Gonzalez, a senior in Agricultural engineering.

Last week, the group had a surprise visit by Richard Rominger, acting secretary of Agriculture. He fielded questions from the students, including some about the questionable support in Congress for the 20,000 member workforce.

"There are people who think it costs too much money, but it has bipartisan support in Congress and it's a high priority for the president," Rominger said.

Hopefully, students such as Fisher, Diep, Nguyen and Gonzalez can show those in Congress that the work they do does make a difference.

YEAR 116, No 11 JUNE 20, 1995



GEORGETOWN GAZETTE

50¢
of the Gold Country
Historical Voice

Adjudicated as a Legal Newspaper • Court Decree No. 1858

El Dorado Gazette, Georgetown Gazette & Town Crier

National Americorps director visits Divide projects

by Rebecca Murphy

Following the first year of President Clinton's AmeriCorps program, the Divide was visited last week by Joel Berg, Director of the Department of Agriculture's component of the program.

"I'm systematically visiting all our sites throughout the country," he said. "The USDA

received the largest grant for its AmeriCorps projects with 1,200 members in 38 states."

The program provides jobs and a \$12,000 to \$20,000 stipend to volunteers performing community service-type work. The process to acquire funds through the Corporation for National Service is a competitive one for different federal agencies and resulted in the USDA's award of \$2.5 million. The \$20,000 maximum payment made to volunteers designing and working on projects that are helpful to their particular area includes catastrophic health benefits and an education award of \$4,725. Volunteers are p

GEORGETOWN GAZETTE
GEORGETOWN, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 20, 1995

Americorps director . . . continued from page 1

lowed a maximum of two years service. They must be at least 17 years old with no maximum age limit for participation.

The USDA operates three types of AmeriCorps teams throughout 38 states: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team, being used on the Georgetown Divide. The Rural Development Team members in Placer and El Dorado counties are working on Fuel Reduction Projects on U.S. Forest Service and private lands, educating people on preventing brush from igniting and creating massive fires.

The criteria for a project has several components, Berg said. "We must be able to see measurable concrete results that are meeting the community's needs. Fuel reduction really matters to this community. We make sure members will get something out of it. And we must balance different parts of the states and counties which get projects."

Appropriately, Berg's first stop following lunch at Parra's Mexican Restaurant was the Kelsey Fire burn area which exemplified the need for fuel reduction in the area. Other stops included the Darling Ridge Fuel Reduction Project and Hansen Hollow Defensible Space Project all of which are being aided by AmeriCorps volunteers.

"We're not the federal government coming in," said Berg. "We're empowering communities to get done what they need. We believe that states and local communities should have control. The majority of

the members work for private companies."

Working in conjunction with agencies like the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the USDA Soil Conservation Service, and the Consolidated Farm Service Agency to name just a few, AmeriCorps volunteers provide labor and skills necessary for whatever their local communities need similar to the work force provided by the California Conservation Corps.

"We stress four points," said Berg. "Getting the job done, building strong communities, expanding educational opportunities, and promoting personal responsibility."

Although the program has been criticized by some Americans, it has received high bipartisan support in Congress. Most of the criticisms, Berg said, come from people who know nothing about the program.

"They say volunteers should not be paid because then others will not volunteer for nothing," he said. "Our members have inspired and energized others, not discouraged them from providing their own public service. We believe in order to transform civic ethics, people should do more to improve communities."

To become a paid volunteer in the AmeriCorps program, you can call (800)94-ACORP to receive an application. A catalog listing individual projects will be mailed from which you may choose to participate.

Local volunteers meeting with Berg poses were James Newman, Jesse Haramati, Athea Brusin, Carol Rutenbergs, and Aleta Apgar

September 27, 1994

The Sonoma Index-Tribune

Woolsey praises local work site

Congressional representative Lynn Woolsey, who played an instrumental role in shaping AmeriCorps as a member of the House Education and Labor Committee, praised local AmeriCorps members who began performing community service this week in exchange for educational grants.

"Not only has AmeriCorps opened the door to higher education for Sonoma County residents, it has given new life to meaningful new programs in our communities that have been neglected for too long," said Woolsey.

Several AmeriCorps members working with the local branch of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) met with Woolsey earlier in the month and toured a work site at the Atwood Ranch in Glen Ellen. The members will be working on a variety of water quality improvement projects throughout Sonoma County. Members

meeting with Woolsey included Nancy Scolari, Mike Jensen, Julie Maggi and Colin Close.

"We'll get a lot of conservation work done in Sonoma County thanks to the AmeriCorps members who will be working with us," said Lisa Woo Shanks of the Soil Conservation Service in Petaluma.

Fifteen thousand Americans were sworn into the AmeriCorps recently in ceremonies across the nation. The year-long, full-time program will provide the local participants with a stipend of \$12,000 and an educational award of \$4,725.

Woolsey also noted that a coalition of 18 nonprofit agencies in Sonoma County, known as the Sonoma Project, will be bringing on 27 AmeriCorps members who will work in a variety of fields such as education, public safety, the environment, and health and human services.

JUNE 20, 1995

El Dorado Gazette, Georgetown



Joel Berg (second from right), Director of the Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps Program, visited the devastation of last year's Kelsey Fire.

**GEORGETOWN GAZETTE
GEORGETOWN, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 20, 1995**

AUBURN JOURNAL
AUBURN, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 15, 1995



Page A8

Auburn Journal
Thursday, June 15, 1995

■ **On Americorps.** As an AmeriCorps member in Auburn, thank you for the article in the Auburn Journal.

I would like the public to know that implementation of the wildfire prevention demonstration project at the Live Oak Waldorf School could not have been completed without the cooperation of the California Conservation Corp, County of Placer, Placer Hills Fire Protection District, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Placer County Resource Conservation District, and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

I know your main emphasis was AmeriCorps, but I want to say that this was a multi-agency cooperation to educate the public about fire hazard and prevention.

James Newman
AmeriCorps
Auburn

Fuel load project to begin in Traverse Creek Watershed

A team of Americorp members have been assigned to the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, formerly the Soil Conservation Service. Their mission: to reduce fuel loads in potentially critical forest lands.

The local team covers the area encompassing El Dorado, Nevada, Placer, and Amador counties. The program is part of President Clinton's pilot Americorp legislation, with projects of community service and a motto of "getting things done." The program has been called the Domestic Peace Corps.

The team members, headquartered in Placerville, are working on the Traverse Creek Watershed located in the Georgetown area. The participants will identify landowners and then set-up community meetings and workshops. They will assist in formulating individual plans according to the various desires and needs of land use from limited timber harvest to wildlife habitat. They will also help develop incentive programs and assistance funding.

District Conservationist Jim Kimmel has two Americorp members to assist work through his office: Aleta Apgar, a conservation educator, certified teacher and former viticulturist, and Jesse Haramati, a civil engineering candidate in a joint University of California Santa Cruz-Berkeley Program. They work cooperatively with El Dorado County's Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation District and Soil Conserva-

tion Service.

As a team they unite their efforts with Cliff Heitz, Auburn's District Conservationist, and his representatives: Geologist Carol Rutenberg and James Newman, a wildlife management Humboldt State University graduate. Two other team members, Christi Lyn-Maison, an agronomist, and Althea Brusin, an agriculture science graduate from Cal Poly, work under the tutelage of Grass Valley's District Conservationist, Ron Zinke. The project coordinator is Bob Roan of High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area.

The anticipated success of this project will minimize the impact of inevitable wildfires. Successful implementation of this program will generate more Americorp volunteers and inclusion of more watersheds in the fuel load reduction program.

The aim of this rural land development project is to demonstrate a model of community interaction, cooperation between federal and state and local agencies and private landowners. The reduction of fuel loads and fuel ladders to reduce possibility of catastrophic wildfires is one of the most critical environmental issues currently being addressed in the foothills.

EL DORADO GAZETTE
GEORGETOWN, CALIF
DECEMBER 6, 1994

EL DORADO NEIGHBOR
EL DORADO, CALIFORNIA
JANUARY 29, 1995

Volunteers help snuff the fuel for killer fires

BY CATHERINE BRIDGE
Neighbors staff writer

Off Shoo Fly Road near Kelsey recently, two vanloads of Natural Resources Conservation Service officials and the AmeriCorps volunteers working with them on a four-county fuel reduction pilot program surveyed the lingering devastation from August's arson-set fire.

Despite recent salvage logging, crowded stands of thin blackened poles, looking like a toothpick forest, still mark the site where fire roared over 860 acres.

"Burns in the foothills easily get to 20,000 to 30,000 acres," Cliff Heitz, the conservation service district's conservationist in Auburn told the group, which included Joel Berg, head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's contingent of AmeriCorps volunteers. "It was just luck or a fluke that the fire didn't sweep on to Georgetown."

Bob Roan, head of the High Sierra Resource Conservation and Development Area, said, "Because the fuel load is so heavy, these become killer fires, not just 'cleanup' fires, but the kind that fry every-



LEZLIE STORLING / NEIGHBORS

Jesse Haramali and Alea Apgar are AmeriCorps volunteers who educate people on how to clear a firebreak to keep their homes safe. They leave islands of manzanita

behind as habitat for birds and other animals. The volunteers demonstrated the technique in El Dorado County and several other foothills counties.

everything. These trees won't come back for 10 to 15 years, and when they do, they'll look like hairs on a dog's back — and burn up again within 10 years."

That's why the USDA-funded conservation service has recruited six AmeriCorps volunteers with science backgrounds to

help set up model fuel reduction programs on private land in Amador, Nevada, Placer and El Dorado counties. The conservation service, together with officials of area fire districts, the California Department of Forestry and the U.S. Forest Service, envisions a public-private partnership in which

landowners receive public agency help developing fuel reduction and defensible space plans for fires and up to \$200 per acre or 75 percent of the costs to clear the land.

ANTELOPE VALLEY

ANTELOPE VALLEY CALIFORNIA

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 1995

Americorps takes root in A.V.

*Tree-planting
helps residents
weather storms*

By Karen Maeshiro
Daily News Staff Writer

ANTELOPE ACRES — April Jurgen was a student at Antelope Valley College, Sandy Haynes was working in real estate and Phillip Sam was fresh out of college with a degree in agricultural biology.

The three took up the call to join President Clinton's Americorps community service program last fall and have come together in the Antelope Valley, where they will help residents plant trees as windbreaks against dust storms.

"I've always been interested in volunteering and helping people, and I'm a real outdoors person," said Haynes, a 57-year-old resident of Lancaster. "It's the joy of helping people and being outdoors. We've learned a lot about windbreaks, and we're disseminating the information to the people."

On Saturday, Haynes, Jurgen and Sam attended a tree-planting demonstration at the Antelope Acres Community Center to launch the program by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, where the three have been assigned.

About 20 people were on hand to watch as 54 Arizona cypress seedlings were placed into the ground. In the center, Natural Resources Conservation Service staff discussed the program with residents and answered their questions.

The three Americorps members will be working with residents in Antelope Acres to help plan the windbreak, determine the number and type of trees needed, and provide the labor to plant the seedlings.

Jurgen, who is hearing-impaired, provides staff support by writing up reports. Haynes and Sam get to do the outdoor work.



AmeriCorps making mark

By DAVE MILLER

Hi-Desert Star Staff Writer

MORONGO VALLEY— It's new and already making its mark on the local community.

AmeriCorps, the new domestic peace corps created by President Clinton, has desert residents and others with the lofty goals of young Americans filling its ranks and working on projects in the Morongo Basin.

AmeriCorps Crew 13 has been working on environmental projects within the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve and Joshua Tree National Park.

The Preserve was formally private ranching land until The Nature Conservancy started purchasing land in the canyon in 1968. The Nature Conservancy has since relinquished its holdings in Morongo Valley and the Preserve is presently under Bureau of Land Management (BLM) management.

Joshua Tree became a national park this year after years as a national monument.

Although AmeriCorps is headquartered on the San Bernardino National Forest and administered by the U.S. Forest Service, members of Crew 13 meet at the BLM's North Palm Springs office.

The 14-person crew has been working on the Big Morongo Canyon Preserve for the past three weeks, building new trails and maintaining and restoring existing trails that were damaged by a 50-acre brush fire two years ago, and the floods which followed.

They are also rebuilding bridges and boardwalks within the Preserve.

In Joshua Tree National Park, Crew 13 did projects like cleaning up an old mining area, maintaining trails and removing old scaffolding from the Key's Ranch Dam.

Taking a few minutes from her task of painting Preserve signs Thursday afternoon, crew member Angie Savio, 19, of Palm Springs, said, "This is our third week here; that leaves another week for us. It has been a lot of fun."

"Four days before the crew started working here, my boyfriend and I came up and hiked down Big Morongo Canyon. At that time, we didn't know we'd be working here."



Angie Savio of Palm Springs was one of several Morongo Canyon Preserve in Morongo Valley. AmeriCorps Crew 13 members working at the Big (Star photo by Tim Bulone)

Savio's boyfriend is another member of the crew, Duke Janus, 26, of Palm Springs.

Crew members get a living allowance which adds up to \$4.23 an hour, basic health care coverage, and child care, but the big chunk is an educational grant totaling \$4,725 at the end of an 1,800-hour stint in AmeriCorps.

"I plan to go to college in Colorado and pursue something to do with botany or soil science," Savio said. "My goal is to open a nursery or be a farmer one day."

"We have seven years to use the money for college. If we don't use it, the grant money goes back into the pot for others."

According to the Forest Service, the educational grant can be used for college, vocational schooling, or paying off existing student loans.

Four other members of the crew were busy Thursday building an enclosure around a well and tank

which supplies the Preserve and neighboring Covington Park with water.

All four have collegiate goals:

- James Gannon, 26, of Cherry Valley, plans to attend college and major in wildlife management;

- Jason Valdez, 18, of Beaumont, plans to attend a junior college and gain a basic Associate in Arts degree;

- Beth Anglin, 19, of Yucaipa, has a goal of community college and being a fish and game warden, and

- Ruben Contreras, 19, of Yucaipa, will use the educational grant funds to go to a community college — possibly Crafton Hills — where he will study fire science and take emergency medical technician (EMT) courses.

Crew member Patrina Olvera says she likes the project because, "We're making it better to use and lots of people have noticed the work we've done."

Of the Preserve job site, Olvera

adds, "It's really pretty and in the spring I bet it will look beautiful."

Another member of the crew, John Soto, has a deeper interest in the Preserve because he thinks his father might have grown up there.

"He told me he grew up in Morongo Valley and started to describe where he lived. It sounds the same as the Preserve," Soto said.

Soto and his father are planning a trip to the Preserve to confirm these suspicions.

"My crew is very enthusiastic about the work we're doing here," said Oscar Montijo, crew supervisor. "They feel we're making a big difference as far as giving people better access to the Preserve."

"Everything they're touched, they've left better than they found it," said Robin Kobaly, a BLM botanist and Preserve manager. "This (the crew's work) is on the order of dreams where money falls out of the sky; impressed is an understatement."

LOS ANGELES TIMES
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
APRIL 7, 1995

Metropolitan Digest

LOS ANGELES COUNTY NEWS IN BRIEF

Talking About Hunger



IRIS SCHNEIDER / For The Times

Kelvin Drayton with the Los Angeles Poverty Department tries to use humor to get at young people's feelings about panhandling in a dramatization at the Youth Anti-Hunger Conference held Thursday. The conference was attended by 1,000 Los Angeles high school students and was designed to offer high schoolers the tools with which to fight hunger and homelessness in their communities. A series of workshops, seminars and panels were presented.

EAST VALLEY FOCUS

WITH HOLLYWOOD

Program Brings Lessons on Diet to Classroom

After meeting anti-hunger workers in the Mississippi Delta, seeing neighborhood vegetable gardens in Pico Union and listening to community members across the country, federal agriculture official Joel Berg offered his assessment of AmeriCorps, the President's national service program.

"It's here, it's real and it's working," Berg said, standing in a classroom at Arminta Street School. "A lot of people thought it was just another promise, that it wasn't going to happen."

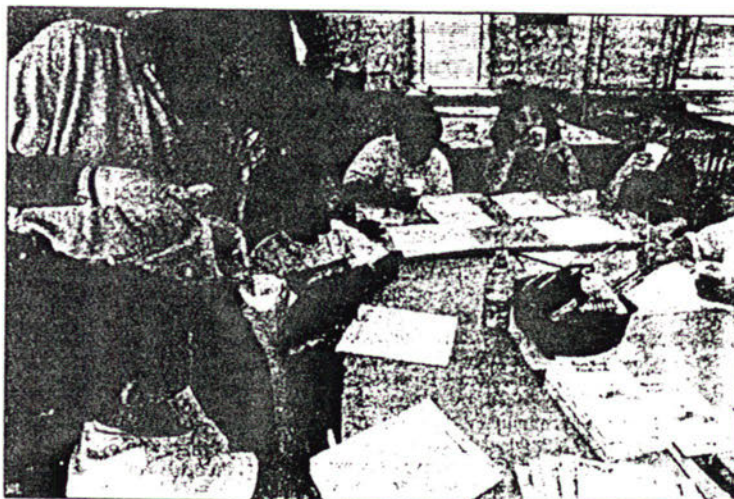
Berg, director of the U.S. Department of Agriculture National Service Program, visited the school as part of a national tour of AmeriCorps projects. Since the program was launched in September, AmeriCorps workers have been placed at community-based projects throughout the country, wrestling with a range of problems, from drug abuse to illiteracy and hunger.

Although organizations are required to submit quarterly reports detailing progress, officials should observe projects for themselves, Berg said. "Don't believe you can learn how things are going by sitting at your desk in Washington," Berg said. "You have to be out here, talking to the people."

At Arminta Street School, the last stop on his two-week tour, Berg watched as the third- and fourth-graders in Jan Shaffer's class participated in a presentation on nutrition and the importance of eating breakfast.

On one side of the room, students gathered around a TV watching several "Start Your Head" commercials promoting breakfast.

"What happens when you don't eat breakfast?" asked Peter Val Verde, an AmeriCorps worker assigned to the Southern California Anti-Hunger Coalition.



Photos by RICARDO de ALATANIA / Los Angeles Times

AmeriCorps co-team leader Terri Piggee pours a yogurt shake to fourth-grader Julian Arellano, prepared by children during a nutrition program at Arminta Street School. Right, fourth-grader Salatiel Gray samples yogurt shake in the program offered by AmeriCorps.



Hands—and bodies—shot up jostling for a chance to answer.

"You don't have enough energy to play," said Alfonso Garcia, 10.

"You get grouchy," another student answered.

Students laughed and howled at the short, comical commercials.

Across the room, AmeriCorps workers Terri Piggee and Lee Henderson taught students the five groups and demonstrated how fruit smoothies are made—part of an attempt to show that food that is healthy can also taste good.

"It tastes like candy," said 9-year-old

Elizabeth Meza, after taking a sip.

For the students at Arminta, which has a high number of homeless and low-income students, the nutrition message is an important one.

"It's really needed—especially in areas like this," said Principal Marcia Cholodenko.

Elizabeth Riley, executive director of the Southern California Interfaith Hunger Coalition, said the presentation was one of many anti-hunger projects conducted by AmeriCorps workers assigned to the organization.

"AmeriCorps really has enabled us to

impact various communities in a very short time," she said.

For Berg, scenes like those at Arminta are evidence that the program works.

"They say a picture is worth a thousand words," he said.

—JOCELYN STEWART

VAN NUYS

Masters Greeted by Noisy Protesters

A Sun Valley man who shot and killed a tagger and wounded another was greeted Tuesday morning by a small but loud group of protesters as he entered Van Nuys Municipal Court.

But after his hearing on gun possession charges was continued to next month, William Andrew Masters II was whisked through a courthouse back door to avoid the protesters and reporters.

Masters is charged with misdemeanor counts of carrying a concealed weapon and carrying a loaded weapon. He faces a maximum sentence of 18 months in jail if convicted.

The charges stem from a Jan. 31 incident in which Masters, while taking his usual late night walk, confronted two men scrawling graffiti beneath a freeway overpass in Sun Valley. Masters told police that he pulled out a gun he was carrying in a fanny pack and shot the two men when one of them tried to rob him with a screwdriver.

Cesar Rene Arce, 18, was killed and David Hillo, 20, was shot in the buttocks. Hillo recovered from his wound and was charged with vandalism.

The protesters, a group calling itself Four Winds Student Student Movement, staged a mock funeral and candlelight vigil Monday night. Tuesday morning, the protesters exchanged words with people entering the court on other business.

The protesters said Masters should be tried for murder for killing Arce. The district attorney's office declined to file felony charges against Masters, calling the shooting self-defense.

—JULIO MORAN

LOS ANGELES TIMES
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA
JUNE 21, 1995

► COMMUNITY SERVICE

High desert residents moving forward, thanks to AmeriCorps

By Julie Johnson
Daily Press

Valli Andreasen knew she needed a change.

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

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

An advertisement for AmeriCorps changed that.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Please see AMERICORPS, B4►

► AMERICORPS / From B1

vation.

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

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

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

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

Hill getting benefits from AmeriCorps program

By Philip Michaels
Staff Reporter

It was another 10-hour workday for crews along Double View Drive in Idyllwild last week. Crews cut down trees and cleared away brush to build a fuel break protecting nearby houses from any fire hazard. And though the work was tiring, none of the young people volunteering their time were complaining.

"A lot of them have mentioned what a great feeling it is looking at a completed project and saying 'Hey, I did this,'" said Anne Hotchkiss, a public affairs specialist with the San Bernardino National Forest. "It's really a source of pride for them."

The dozen or so young people working on the fuel break were part of the AmeriCorps program, a national service group geared toward meeting unfulfilled needs in communities across the country.

THE NATIONAL AMERICORPS program was created by the National and Community Service Trust Act signed into law by President Bill Clinton in September 1993.

According to Ms. Hotchkiss, the local AmeriCorps program, which works with the U.S. Forest Service on the San Bernardino National Forest, has 87 members.

While different AmeriCorps programs across the country serve different needs, the local group is dedicated toward performing environmental projects on public lands, Ms. Hotchkiss said.

For their year of service, AmeriCorps volunteers receive a \$4,725 educational award to further their education. And for those looking to pursue a career in forestry, Ms. Hotchkiss said, the program provides them with job-related training and experience.

"**IT'S NEAT TO** see people out here doing stuff for the environment," said Jackie O'Brien, a supervisor for AmeriCorps' Yucaipa crew.

Tim Paye, an AmeriCorps volunteer from Beaumont,



Tim Paye, a volunteer with the AmeriCorps program, thins some trees near Double View Drive to build a fuel break. The national service program will be performing environmental and rehabilitation projects on public lands in the San Bernardino National Forest.

(Photo by Philip Michaels)

said he was drawn to the program because of the educational award and the chance to work outdoors.

"It's good exposure to forestry," he said. "It's a good job opportunity."

Ms. O'Brien said she found the AmeriCorps volunteers to be extremely enthusiastic about their work.

"**THEY'RE JUST ALL** willing to learn," she added. "They're excited about being outside and working to ward their education."

Last week's work on the fuel break was one of the first projects performed locally by AmeriCorps crews. However, Ms. Hotchkiss said, crews have been busy working on public lands throughout Southern California, completing post-fire rehabilitation of the 12,000-acre Devil Fire, renovating trails in the San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forests and rehabilitating overused recreation areas in the Joshua Tree National Park.

The work done by Double View Drive last week served a dual purpose for the AmeriCorps volunteers, Ms. Hotchkiss said. In addition to getting work done on the fuel break, the project also gave the volunteers an opportunity to receive training on how to operate saws.

"We've been really kind of hampered on projects so far without any saw training. This will really open it up for us," Ms. Hotchkiss said.

LOCAL FOREST SERVICE officials are enthusiastic about the potential of the AmeriCorps program. Kathy Valenzuela, district resource officer for the forest service's San Jacinto Ranger District, said she has already placed a number of requests for AmeriCorps crews to work on local projects throughout the coming year.

"My hope is they'll be doing lots of work for us," Mrs. Valenzuela said.

For AmeriCorps volunteers to work on a project, it must meet certain criteria, according to Ms. Hotchkiss. The project should have long-term benefits, demonstrate clear results and strengthen the surrounding community.

Mrs. Valenzuela said projects she would like to see AmeriCorps volunteers work on locally include tree thinning, some tree planting, clearing vegetation from around trees, trail rehabilitation and restoring nearby picnic areas.

Crews working it out

AmeriCorps gives job experience

By Lee Peterson
Daily Bulletin

LYTLE CREEK — They wanted to work, and they got what they asked for.

After a few months of chopping, clearing, shoveling and sculpting, the parcel behind the Lytle Creek Ranger Station is more than halfway toward becoming a multihabitat nature trail, thanks to a team of AmeriCorps workers.

The trail is just one of several projects assigned to the AmeriCorps workers hired by the San Bernardino National Forest last October. In addition to the trail, tasks performed by the

various crews have included restoration of fire-scarred wild lands, hiking trail maintenance and graffiti removal from picnic tables.

"It's hard work and it's something I enjoy," said Barbara Hicks, a 26-year-old Bloomington resident, who is part of the nature trail crew.

Hicks, like many AmeriCorps workers, joined the federally funded "domestic Peace Corps" in its inaugural year in order to gain work experience and earn money toward education. The minimum age for AmeriCorps members is 18, and there is no maximum. The enlistees serve for one year, with an option of joining for one more year. The National Forest's crews average age is 26.

In return for a \$4,725 educational grant and \$4.23 per hour, the workers are required to put in 40 hours per week, show up on time and put in a full day's labor, said Jessie McIntire, a Forest Service AmeriCorps team supervisor.

Lazar Jackson of Rialto said he joined the National Forest's AmeriCorps because he wanted to get more experience in forestry, as a possible career. After almost three months in the corps, the 22-year-old said he's getting the variety of experience that will help him decide exactly what career to pursue.

Shannon McCallum of San Bernardino is also part of the nature trail

See AMERICORPS/B2

AmeriCorps/from B1

crew. "I'm looking forward to seeing it in five to six years down the road when everything grows in."

McCallum is also thinking about "re-enlisting" in AmeriCorps next year, after this program is completed in September.

But members of the Republican majority in Congress have mentioned AmeriCorps as a possible target of funding cuts.

On a visit to Lytle Creek Friday, Richard Rominger, the acting secretary of Agriculture, was optimistic about the continuing federal support for AmeriCorps, which employs about 20,000 people nationwide.

"There are people who think it costs too much money, but it has bipartisan support in

Congress and it's a high priority for the president," Rominger said.

While there's plenty of sweaty heavy labor to do in the National Forest, AmeriCorps workers have been assigned to a variety of federal agencies and do a wide variety of work.

The Inland Empire West Resource Conservation District has four AmeriCorps workers, who are serving in a variety of consulting, surveying and educational roles.

Administered through the U.S. Natural Resource Conservation Service, the workers are helping dairies create manure management plans, educating the public on resource conservation and consulting on various environmental projects.

Jami Fisher, a Cal Poly Pomona landscape irrigation science major, is going to school on a limited basis this academic year in order to make time for AmeriCorps.

By working for the Resource Conservation District, she said she's getting real-world experience in designing irrigation and consulting on other projects. That experience will help when she starts looking for a job upon graduation in 1996.

"It's not just going out carrying tools and doing the hard grunt work," Fisher said.

The district's other AmeriCorps members include two Cal Poly civil engineering students and a Cal State San Bernardino environmental studies and geography major.

Community service is their mission

By Stephanie Spear
Special to the Herald

President Clinton's AmeriCorps national service program is alive and well in the Southwest — for now.

Forty AmeriCorps members in the Four Corners region — 11 headquartered locally — are settling into their positions of service to communities, though the new program is threatened by the current budget-cutting Republican congress.

The president's prized national service initiative was signed into law with the National and Community Service Trust Act in September 1993, creating 20,000 national AmeriCorps positions and consolidating a number of other national service programs. AmeriCorps, the centerpiece program under the act, gives Americans 17 and older living stipends, educational money, health insurance and child care allowances in exchange for one to three years of work in non-profit segments of communities.

AmeriCorps seeks to teach an ethic of civic responsibility and community-building while providing job experience in education, public safety, environment and human services.

"It's service work, basically, to help communities revitalize. AmeriCorps is not out to bring the federal government's guidelines and rulings down upon the people — rather, that communities have something to say and programs are developed through the wishes of the people," said Lloyd Wilhelm, facilitator for the Four Corners AmeriCorps members.

Nine men and women with the AmeriCorps rural development program and three with ColoradoCorps — a state-designed, AmeriCorps-funded service learning program for students on college campuses — started work this fall and winter. Three federal agencies and Fort Lewis College are sponsors for the project in the Durango area.

San Juan Resource Conservation and Development, which provides natural resource development assistance in rural areas, made one-year grant applications which created six AmeriCorps positions.

One was filled by environmental biologist Agnes Suazo who provides expertise to the Southern Ute Indian Tribe. Her task — AmeriCorps language doesn't include the word job since members don't receive pay from the community — is to inventory stock ranges on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation and recommend repair and improvement of fences, stock ponds, dams and roads. Suazo, 38, represents AmeriCorps' ideal of recruiting qualified people who want to return to areas like those they grew up in in an attempt to reverse what the government calls "brain drain" or exodus of creative minds from rural areas. Suazo graduated from Fort Lewis College in 1990 and performed seasonal and other work for a national forest in Idaho before taking the AmeriCorps position.

Going from the classroom to the town

By Stephanie Spear
Special to the Herald

ColoradoCorps tries to keep higher education from getting its head too far in the clouds.

The program on Colorado's college campuses which is a part of President Clinton's AmeriCorps national service program seeks to move students from the heights of academia and ground them in the very real work of community service.

Fort Lewis College is one of 16 Colorado colleges or universities with ColoradoCorps members who started work this fall. Jennifer Grau and Nicole Anderson will continue their part-time positions in FLC's service learning program through next year. Beyond that, however, ColoradoCorps' future is uncertain. House speaker Newt Gingrich as been quoted as saying the AmeriCorps program is "coerced voluntarism" and "gimmickry."

Anderson, a 28-year-old graduate of FLC said one of ColoradoCorps' and service learning's goals is to "create a kind of experience that is real to our daily lives. The idea is to start teaching through the experience of learning hands-on. Suddenly you have a relationship with the world."

Anderson and Grau fill half-

time positions with FLC's Center for Service Learning helping director Kalin Grigg oversee about 80 "mentors" — FLC students who volunteer in area schools — and students involved in internships and other projects that attempt to integrate public service with students' educations.

Grau, a 21 year-old senior, is also working on a project to involve more students in service learning. Anderson is helping organize a conference to bring together FLC sociology graduates to assess their education's relevance to their experience following graduation.

"It's a fascinating piece of legislation," said Grigg of the 1993 National and Community Service Trust Act which created 20,000 AmeriCorps positions nationwide, where members work with community non-profit entities in exchange for a living stipend, educational award money and other benefits. Anderson and Grau will receive a \$4,050 stipend for 900 hours over a two-year period and \$2,375 to apply toward education.

"What Clinton was trying to do was inspire an ethic of service and get people involved in serving communities," Grigg said.

Some AmeriCorps projects receive direct federal funding, as do nine other positions in the San Juan Basin. ColoradoCorps

receives its funding through the Colorado Governor's Commission on National and Community Service, an entity created by AmeriCorps legislation to generate state service programs. Grigg is a member of that commission which awarded the ColoradoCorps program to Colorado Campus Compact, a coalition of Colorado colleges and universities who sponsor community service learning programs.

"AmeriCorps is a way to take your frustrations (with the educational system) and act," said Jennifer Grau, 21, who will graduate from FLC this spring. She recently helped match college students with kids in the LULAC — Durango League of United Latin American Citizens — tutoring program and she is gratified by the mutual reaction of college students and kids.

"There is excitement on both sides," she said.

AmeriCorps and therefore ColoradoCorps faces challenges. Grigg said federal guidelines tend to favor projects that tackle urgent urban problems that have a direct physical impact, and human service results are often hard to quantify.

"My guess is that (the program is) going to be neutered," Grigg lamented, though Clinton has vowed to fight for his program.

"You know what? It feels like home," said Durango-raised Suazo of working on the reservation where her mother and other relatives are buried.

According to Ollie Powers, AmeriCorps information and education specialist at San Juan RC&D, Suazo's work will help bring the tribe closer to self-management of their own land. Their new conservation corps will implement the upgrades this summer.

Powers is another AmeriCorps member, preparing media releases about the program and San Juan RC&D projects. Powers has a communications degree but did not work in her field for 10 years while raising her children.

"This just has been really fun. I'm doing San Juan RC&D a service and they're doing me an even bigger one," said Powers, 40. She and the other AmeriCorps members get \$6.65 an hour for working 1,700 hours during one year and \$4,725 to apply toward their education.

Like Powers, Mark Applequist is an AmeriCorps member in a time of transition. Applequist, 46, a longtime construction worker with a degree in forestry was looking for a change of career when his last child went to college. He is surveying 200,000 acres of private woodlands in the San Juan Basin to determine timber quantity for pos-

sible future logging.

AmeriCorps member Dale White walks the nearly 300 square miles of Ute Mountain Ute Indian Reservation doing a natural resource inventory so the tribe can develop a grazing management plan. His educational award money is earmarked to repay his student loan from a recent masters program where he earned a degree in natural resources management.

Shannon Manfredi and Amy Callard were placed in the Region

Nine Economic Development office and are dealing with regional transportation and growth

Tim Richard, Manfredi, 21, volunteer grew up in Ignacio and graduated from FLC in

1990 with a humanities degree. She is helping organize a spring area growth conference and recently wrote a grant for a Four Corners sustainable forestry conference.

Her AmeriCorps position has been an eye-opener, showing her that "region nine has its hand in everything" and that she wants to be in a community service-oriented job. "I think it fits," she said.

Callard moved back to Durango after finishing her MBA degree in May. One of her projects is to help update the Overall Economic Development Plan, an exhaustive compilation of data on the immediate five-county region. Recently she accompanied another Forest

Service-sponsored AmeriCorps member to that agency's regional meeting, an event she and Manfredi describe as breaking down walls between agencies.

"I'm not sure the Forest Service would have done that before," said Callard.

Todd Tucker, along with Carla Garrison and Tim Richard are Forest Service-sponsored AmeriCorps members. Tucker is trying to help communities along the San Juan Skyway develop a land management plan along the 236-mile scenic loop. Tucker, 28, returned to his home town of Durango in December after receiving a landscape architecture degree outside the area.

Garrison and Richard are working with Forest Service officials and other groups on the revised San Juan National Forest Plan Revision targeted for completion in 1999.

Garrison is gathering economic data that will impact decisions on forest use, and Richard a sociological profile of communities and their values.

"We act as a liaison between communities and agencies," said Garrison, who is working on a masters degree in natural resource management.

Enthusiasm is a common theme among the AmeriCorps members.

"AmeriCorps has given to me what Durango has not," said Richard, who has struggled to live in Durango for 15 years. "I truly believe its an authentic attempt to provide a truly beneficial service to communities."

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.

U.S.D.A. AmeriCorps Director Visits Mancos Riverwalk Project

Joel Berg, Director of the National Service for U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A.) was in the Mancos area this past week to check out the Riverwalk project.

AmeriCorps, an extension of the U.S.D.A., is the President's national service initiative to obtain results in addressing the nation's critical education, human service, public safety and environmental needs at the community level.

Berg, who runs the AmeriCorp program was out from Washington D.C. to take a look at the Riverwalk Project and many of the other projects in the area.

Ray Carey, Mac Neely, Berg and other AmeriCorp members walked along the Riverwalk with a group of junior high students. Berg believed the Riverwalk was an excellent project. He said he was able to grasp a small sense of the overall work put into the project.

Berg said he was impressed with the project even more so when the principal and the Mayor were on hand to meet him and discuss the project. He appreciated the fact that

AmeriCorp was getting things done and promoting things in the town at the same time. Berg said the AmeriCorp members and students were learning and teaching each other through all of the projects.

The Riverwalk, worked on by AmeriCorp members, has given not only Mancos a chance to have a place to sit, relax and enjoy the river; but, the students can take advantage of the learning possibilities involved. Some of the students suggested building a bridge to fish on, looking for microorganisms, testing the water for drinking, erecting a trash can to recycle and many other ideas.

Berg said, "AmeriCorp members are bridging the gap between government and the people." He said AmeriCorp was about rebuilding trust, solving problems, and sharing the load with the community. He said AmeriCorp helps people realize the community nor the government cannot do it alone, they need each other.

After walking around Mancos, Berg said the quarterly reports, which ran across his

desk, did not show what was really going on. Exploring the fields gave him an idea of what AmeriCorps was accomplishing.

While out in the field, Berg traveled to El Paso, Tx., Tucson, Az., Bernalillo, NM., Mesa Verde, Mancos and many other stops along the way.

Americorps helps Ute Mountain Utes

SPECIAL TO THE DAILY TIMES

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

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

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

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

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

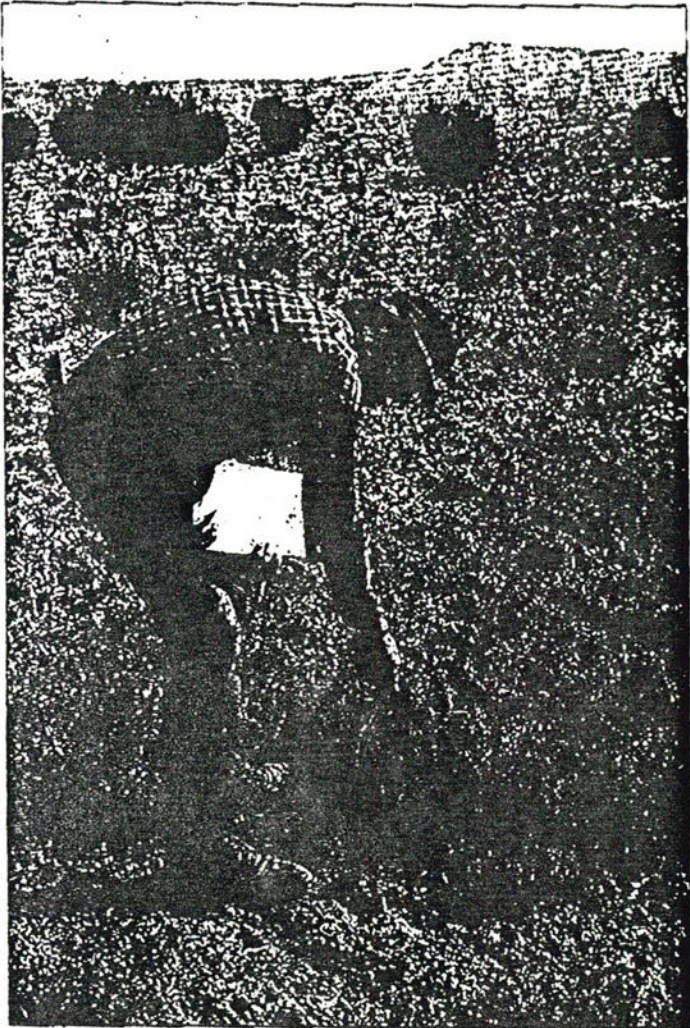
He drives about 80 miles to the survey location from his Cortez office. Most days start with a stop at tribal headquarters in Towaoc to pick up any information and tools needed for the day.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Americorps: Many want to help out

Continued from 1A

AUGUSTA CHRONICLE
AUGUSTA, GEORGIA
JANUARY 3, 1995

Americorps visits camp, planting the seeds of hope

By Stephen Delaney Hale
South Carolina Bureau

AIKEN — Aiken resident James Holland has long been a believer in national service.

He is now putting his beliefs into action as a member of AmeriCorps.

Often dubbed the domestic Peace Corps, AmeriCorps was created last year by President Clinton as the answer to his promise for a national service organization.

Wednesday, the retired veteran and former school teacher joined a team of volunteers who planted pine seedlings at Camp Long in eastern Aiken County. The half-dozen AmeriCorps members were creating an outdoor environmental education plot at the popular summer camp.

When the kids return in the summer of 1995, they will study the effects of man on the environment through the plots being prepared by the team.

"I felt I could make a contribution here and at the same time enjoy it," said Mr. Holland, 54. "I am retired and not ready to sit on the porch yet."

Thousands have already volunteered for service na-

Please see **AMERICORPS** on 13A



RON COCKERILLE/STAFF

Americorps members Angela Brinkley (left) and Amy Overstreet plant long leaf pines at Camp Long Wednesday.

tionwide. The reason why, according to other members of the team at Camp Long, is they feel the need.

"I've always had a strong belief in community service," said Amy Overstreet, a 22-year-old Wofford College graduate.

In August, Ms. Overstreet, a Columbia resident, is leaving for two years in the Peace Corps in the Ivory Coast. She thinks this experience may be good preparation.

A compatriot, Angela Brinkley, said watching her many nieces and nephews grow up in the inner city inspired her to work with rural children. Ms. Brinkley, also 22, has an associate's degree and is studying engineering at the University of South Carolina.

Both women plan to take advantage of education credits they are earning for their volunteer work. Volunteers get a nominal living stipend, credit toward college tuition loans, work experience and training and, in some cases, lodging.

All of that is important, but most say they get much more.

Jay Henderson, 24, of Columbia, said he joined because he likes working outdoors and wanted "to do my part and help the environment any way I can."

All of them professed a deep love and concern for the environment and a compulsion to do something to benefit it.

Team leader Mary Roe of Powdersville, S.C., near Greenville, described herself as the "mid-life, career change, go-back-to-get-your-masters-degree type."

She said the common denominator for the group is the desire for community service.

"A need to help people," Ms. Roe said.

Other AmeriCorps volunteers have completed a six-week mapping of Edgefield County to help set up a 911 survey. They have also done a farm survey in Abbeville and a water quality survey in Saluda County.

Ms. Brinkley's summed up their purpose, saying simply she

WATERLOO/CEDAR FALLS COURIER
CEDAR FALLS, IOWA
NOVEMBER 13, 1994



LAST BUT NOT LEAST

Silos & Smokestacks has introduced all but one AmeriCorps member assigned to its staff. Candy Welch Streed is the AmeriCorps Public Market and Agri-Tourism Organizer for Silos & Smokestacks. She is a graduate of UNI, having attained a Bachelors of Arts degree with an emphasis in business, social, and behavioral sciences.

At UNI she served as co-founder, president, and fundraiser for the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC). Her term in these roles was not uncommon. She served both as vice-president of the UNI Conservation Club and as an International Student Counselor for the Bartlett Hall Bridges Program.

Candy has acted as a resource for numerous organizations, bringing recognition to each one. Her skills as a speaker, administrator, and fundraiser for SEAC were recognized with the presentation of the Achieved Outstanding Organization Award for 1992-1993. While working for Silos & Smokestacks, her talents will be devoted to the establishment of a public market site in Waterloo which will feature the sale of native Iowa crafts and products year round.

Candy is among the five national AmeriCorps members welcomed to the Silos & Smokestacks team. Their positions represent the value of Silos & Smokestacks, as a program worthy of national interest and support. To find out how you, too can become involved in Silos & Smokestacks, call Lori at (319) 234-4567.

IOWA FARM BUREAU SPOKESMAN
IOWA COUNTY, IOWA
DECEMBER 10, 1994



Welcome to USDA/AmeriCorps

When President Lincoln signed into law the act of Congress establishing the United States Department of Agriculture on May 15, 1862, he did so with a vision of USDA as the people's department.

It is most fitting then, that the people's department is leading the effort to bring the president's national service program to fruition. USDA/AmeriCorps members will be planting the seeds in America for a future built on volunteerism and community.

The purpose of the AmeriCorps program is to get things done using the concept of national service as a vehicle. It offers opportunities to Americans to serve their country and

earn education awards in return. It is a grass roots effort to solve the problems facing communities across the nation.

Iowa County has five AmeriCorps members who are working out of the National Resources Conservation Service (formally SCS) office on the square in Williamsburg. In the next couple of weeks we will be giving you some information on these volunteers starting with Patrick Lake this week.

Patrick (Pat) Lake, age 23, from Fort Madison, is majoring in geography with emphasis on environmental studies. He spent two years at Western Illinois State. On AmeriCorps wetlands. "It's right up my alley. It's exactly what I wanted to get into, especially right after school," stated Pat.

He anticipates being able to apply classroom principles of geography to practical experience in the field.

Seeing how the land responds to the efforts of the wetlands restoration project will interest Pat as he is able to see tangible results in the restoration of bottomlands into wetlands.

Pat became interested in geography and subsequently wetlands after a class at Western Illinois under the noted expert, Dr. Viner.

Pat sees a need for effective wetlands management in the future and plans to continue his work in wetlands restoration.

AmeriCorps workers based in Williamsburg

Team helping farmers enroll in watershed program

By KEN SWEBNEY

A new volunteer organization initiated by President Clinton is making its presence felt in Iowa County.

Five young adults, all AmeriCorps volunteers from throughout the Midwest, set up shop in early October in the former Soil Conservation Service office on the west side of the square in downtown Williamsburg.

The main purpose of this group, according to Paul Heffron, public information officer, is to help get landowners along the Iowa River basin apply for and get enrolled in the Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program (EWRP).

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATION

Heffron explained that AmeriCorps is an umbrella organization that puts a number of domestic volunteer service organizations under one agency. Although AmeriCorps volunteers are not federal employees, the program is administered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

According to a USDA/AmeriCorps publication, the purpose of the AmeriCorps program "is to 'get things done,' using the concept of national service as a vehicle. It offers opportunities to Americans to serve their

country and earn education awards in return. It is a grassroots effort to solve the problems facing communities across the nation.

More simply, Heffron said, it can best be described as a "domestic Peace Corps."

AmeriCorps volunteers must be high school graduates. According to Heffron, college graduates are preferred. During their terms of service, members are paid a living allowance which amounts to about \$6.60 an hour. Members must perform 1,812 hours of service in no less than nine months and no more than 12 months.

At the end of their terms, members are given an educational award worth \$4,725 which can be used for college, job training or repayment of student loans.

Both public agencies and private, non-profit organizations can apply for AmeriCorps projects. The projects vary widely from conservation to domestic violence to historic preservation.

VARIETY OF EXPERIENCE

Members of the Williamsburg-based group have a wide variety of experience and education.

Heffron, 22, the public information officer for the group, is from Centerville and is a graduate of Creighton University, Omaha, with a degree in history. He said last summer he did some work in the Dominican Republic for the Institute for Latin American Concern and this service made him decide to volunteer for AmeriCorps duty.

Jeff Chase, 25, of Cedar Rapids, is a graduate of Upper Iowa University, Fayette, with a degree in conservation management. While at Upper



AmeriCorps volunteers working in Iowa County are, from left, front: Jeff Chase; back: Terri Abbett, Ezana Habte-Fabr, Patrick Lake and Paul Heffron.

Iowa, he volunteered for the Committee for the National Wild Turkey Federation and was a leader with Wetlands for Iowa. He also was

heavily involved in outdoor pursuits, espe-

See AMERICORPS, page 12

AMERICORPS: Goal is flood control on bottom land

(Continued from page 1)
cially archery.

Terri Abbett, 31, is from Kansas and holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Missouri State University, Warrensburg, and a master's degree in environmental biology from Emporia State University, Emporia, Kan.

She spent this summer working with the University of Missouri, researching the Indiana bat in northern Missouri. Her specialty, however, is songbirds, having studied songbird diversity at Emporia. While at Warrensburg, she studied songbirds and mammals of Nevada and was attacked while attempting to count eggs in an owl's nest.

Patrick Lake, 23, is from Fort Madison and will graduate from the University of Iowa in December with a major in geography with emphasis on environmental studies. He also spent two years at Western Illinois University, Macomb, where he studied geography and wetlands.

Ezana Habte-Gabr, 27, is from Eritrea, a country which gained its independence from Ethiopia in 1991, but has spent most of his life in Iowa. He has a degree in geography from the University of Iowa and is currently working toward a master's degree in geography from the University of Northern Iowa. He is engaged to be married to a Colombian citizen from Bogata.

Habte-Gabr said giving service to AmeriCorps while acquiring experience on GIS (Geographic Information System) is a great way to learn about GIS as well as giving something back to the State of Iowa.

Heffron said the project which the five will be working on was proposed by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). It involves nearly 50,000 acres of the Iowa River floodplain, spanning nearly 45 river miles from the Meskwakie Indian Reservation near Tama to the Mississippi River. Their

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

For their project, the AmeriCorps members will be:

- Restoring wetlands by helping landowners in the basin enroll in the Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program;
- Developing and implementing an inventory of existing wetland easements and other potential sites using a GIS layer;
- Assisting the Iowa River Corridor coordinator in implementing the objectives of the IRC vision statement;
- Developing and implementing an inventory of special water quality/wetland restoration projects; and
- Developing and implementing a public information program on wetlands, alternative floodplain management and water quality.

The project proposal indicates there are approximately 400 landowners in the nine counties of the Iowa River basin. The AmeriCorps members will be helping with applications and helping landowners do the plans and convert the lands back to wetlands.

FLOOD CONTROL

Heffron and Chase explained that the primary goal of the project is flood control on bottom land that has been cropped periodically, interspersed by years when the land is under water.

Landowners enrolled in EWRP do not contribute any of their own funds to restoration. In exchange for a perpetual wetlands easement, landowners receive \$837 an acre, with 75 percent payable at the start of the project and the remainder when restoration is completed.

Heffron said landowners have until Dec. 31 to sign up for the

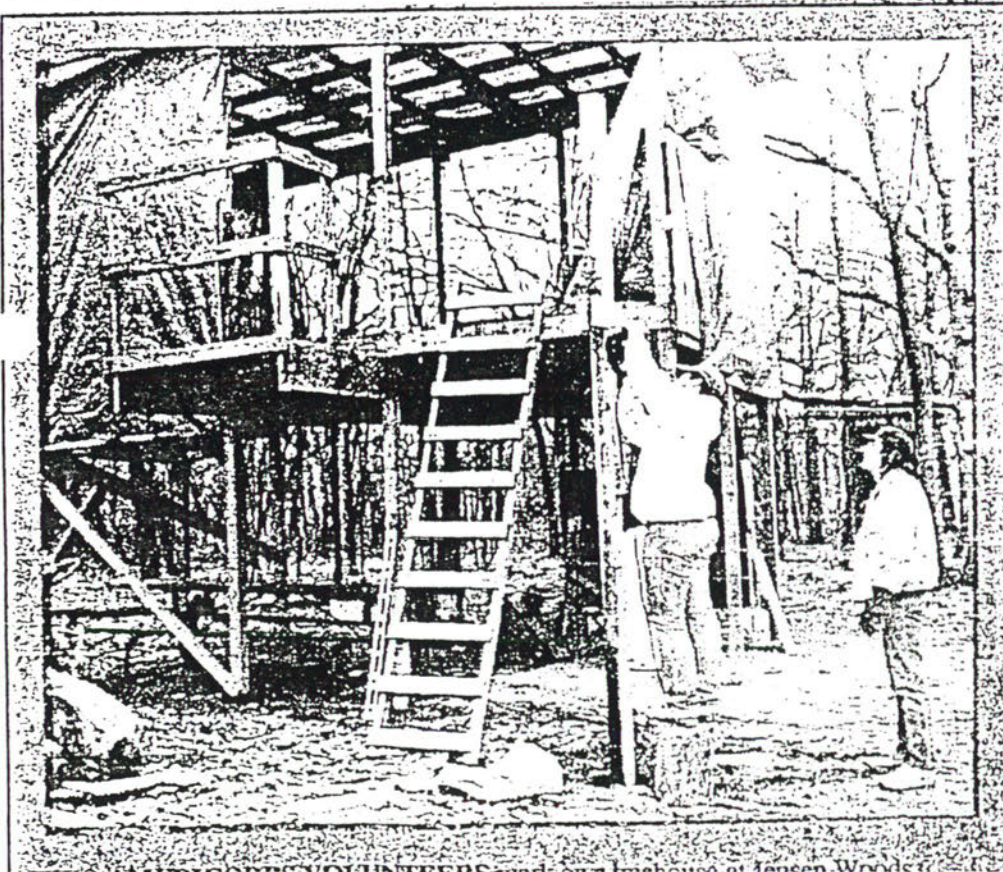
The Democrat- Brown County MESSAGE

April 18, 1995, Volume 126, Number 16

Mt. Sterling, Illinois 62353

Jensen Woods

(from page 1)



and they have provided a boost to the camp by putting it ahead of schedule on several improvements.

"I was looking at doing all this myself," Blythe said. "It's a good deal for them too, because they learn a lot of skills here," Blythe said.

So far, the workers have added on to treehouses, hung doors, painted, drywalled, and installed a furnace. They will also build a pole barn.

"We did duct work, and I don't think any of them had even seen duct work before," said Blythe, who worked in the heating and cooling business for 20 years.

Jensen Woods is a 550 acre camp affiliated with the Central Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church. It averages around 550 kids a year. Blythe works in the office at Bloomington in the winter, and the camp during the summer.

The workers started the first of April. The

camp will open June 7, and close Aug. 12. The Americorps program also ends in August, and McCartney said the volunteers are booked solid at other places until then.

"We wouldn't be able to (make these improvements) without them," Blythe said.

The camp also has 18 horses and mountain bikes for children to ride. It was started in 1964, but "took off" in 1988, according to Blythe.

"You never grow old out here – the kids won't let you," he said.

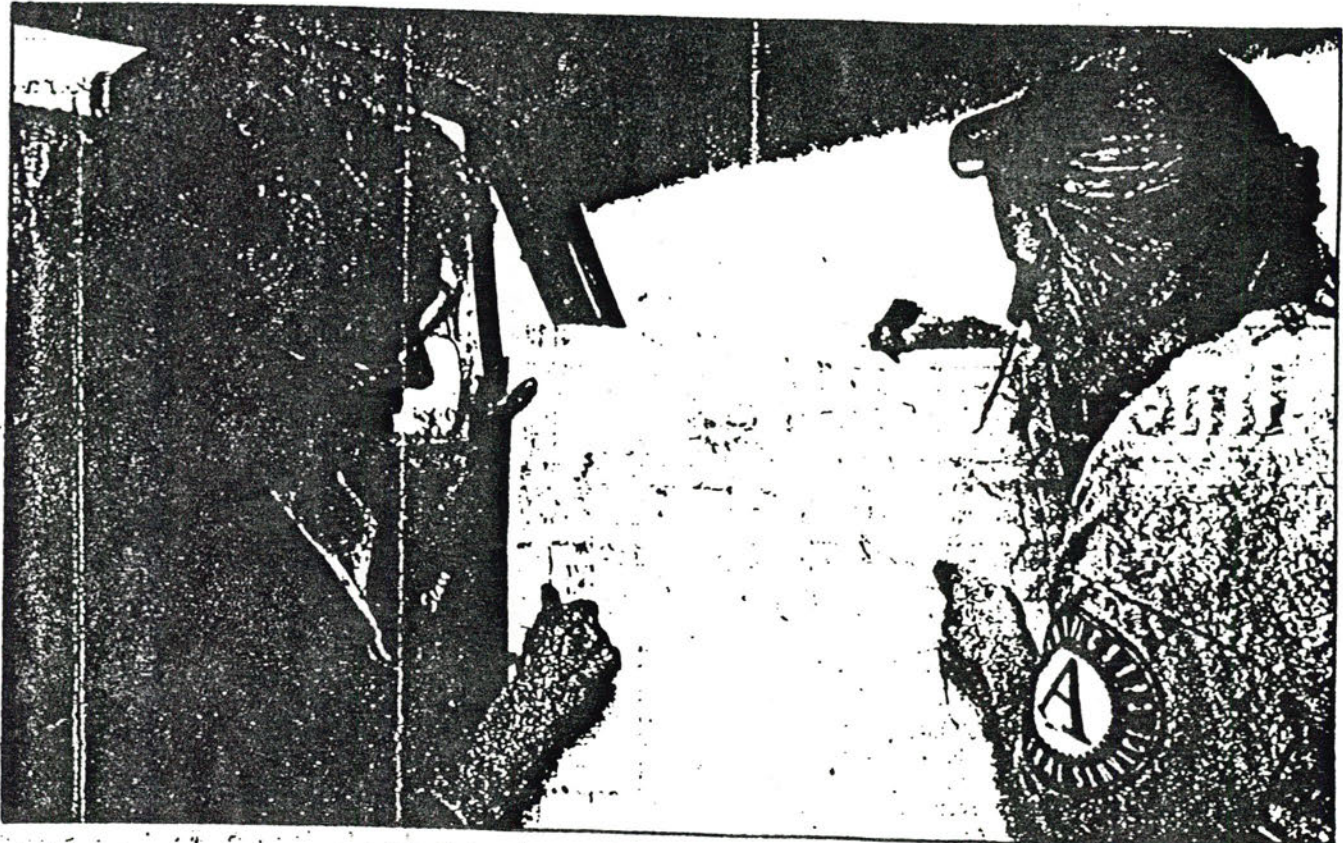
"This has been the best place I've worked so far – it's fun," said an Americorps volunteer, Larry Warcup, of Jacksonville.

His co-worker, Joe Daniels of Pleasant Hill, agreed – at least in one regard.

"It's fun," he said. "But it doesn't pay very good."

It's paying pretty well for Jensen Woods

Mapping the County



H-W Photo/Michael Kipley

AmeriCorps crew members Starr McDaniles, left, and Darlene Ivarson check their progress in "mapping" building addresses in Adams County townships. The work is a step toward an enhanced 911

system that would supply the addresses of emergency sites.

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."

The work is 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."

JULY 7, 1995
BAYLIS, ILLINOIS

The Pike Press

more news of Pike County than any other source.

BAYLIS

By MANDY LEWIS, 336-2671

Americorps sprucing up Baylis

Members of Americorps were in Baylis last week. They helped move the Honor Roll sign up by the town hall, painted a couple of rooms in the town hall and did filing. They plan to do many other tasks for the village. This is free labor to the village while the individuals are acquiring useful and knowledgeable skills.

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 McDaniels.

Ivarson and McDaniels, 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 McDaniels 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."

Pittsfield survey findings 'significant'

By Deborah Gertz

Herald-Whig Staff Writer

PITTSFIELD, Ill. — Look at downtown Pittsfield as an employer, and it's the largest one in Pike County.

The downtown area has 122 businesses, churches and fraternal organizations and 674 employees, based on findings from a recent central business district survey.

"That's significant," said Robin Hendley, the city's economic development director.

"I had no idea there were that many businesses in that small of an area and that many employees."

The survey, done by Hendley's office and two rural development team members from the AmeriCorps program through Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development, looked at a nine-block area bordered by Memorial, Jackson, Jefferson and Fayette streets. Interviews were done with 111 — 90.9 percent — of the establishments.

"I don't see how you can develop any kind of strategy without data and information to base it on," Hendley said. "It's a good

AT A GLANCE

The findings of a recent Pittsfield central business district survey include:

- The district had 674 employees — 482 full-time and 192 part-time.

- Employers classified the workforce as 54.9 percent white collar and 45.1 percent blue collar.

- Seventy-one of the 111 establishments surveyed are owner-occupied. Forty rent or lease the property.

- Retailers represented the largest group of employers with 26 — or 23.4 percent of the total.

- Five commercial establishments — Kientzle Shoe Store, the Pike Press, First Bank, Farmers State Bank and Alexander Lumber — were established prior to 1900.

- Forty-nine of the businesses surveyed were established since 1981, with 26 coming after 1990.

- Fifty-nine percent of the non-residential structures were rated in good to very good condition. Forty-nine of the buildings had the original facade.

- The district has 602 on-street parking spaces and 629 spaces in parking lots.

baseline, something good to start with."

Business owners/managers were asked about the product or service offered, the year established, employment levels, classification of employees and

use of upper floors. The survey also looked at structural roof and facade condition and use of basements.

"It gives you a lot of information," said Mayor Rick Conner. "Who knows what some of this

data will be useful for at a later date?"

The survey, for example, could help the city look at parking needs, Conner said. "If the traffic patterns continue, the city could look at public/private partnerships ... leasing parking for certain hours."

Conner also pointed to the number of businesses established since 1990.

"Eight or 10 years ago there was a downswing in the core area of the community and the council became aggressive in promoting the downtown area. Now it's showing its full effects," he said. "I think we have an extremely solid downtown area compared to most communities our size."

Business owners and managers also take pride in their buildings. "Over 50 percent of the buildings are in good to very good (condition)," Hendley said. "They do take care of them."

Many business owners and managers offered comments and suggestions about the downtown. "Thirty people were very happy" with the area, Hendley said. "That's a real good sign."

EAST ST. LOUIS JOURNAL
EAST ST. LOUIS, ILLINOIS
OCTOBER 12, 1994

Americorp seeking sites for spruce-up

By Mike Viola
Staff writer

Weed-infested lots throughout East St. Louis and neighboring communities will be receiving a facelift from participants in a new work program.

Organizers of the AmeriCorps Project are asking members of the community to let them know of lots that can be transformed from eyesores to bright spots in the community.

"We are looking to create urban gardens, clean up playgrounds and add mini-parks in the community," said Arthur Johnson, speaking for the local AmeriCorps Project.

The garden park project is a joint effort between AmeriCorps and Make East St. Louis Beautiful. While the project concentrates in East St. Louis, vacant lots can also be transformed in neighboring communities through AmeriCorps.

Anyone with suggestions on a site that could be turned into a community garden or mini-park should call Rufus Williams or Don Wallace at 583-2519.

AmeriCorps was formed in East St. Louis this summer as a domestic form of the Peace Corps. It is being administered (See GARDEN, Page 4A)

Garden

(Continued from Page 1A)
through State Community College.

Participants in the year-long program are paid \$147 per week and receive up to \$4,275 at the end of the year to advance their education.

Over the next year, AmeriCorps participants are expected to accomplish the following goals:

To restore 20 neglected or abandoned lots in residential settings to state and federal standards.

✓ To clean up and beautify vacant acreage at State Community College and to renovate the greenhouse at East St. Louis Senior High School.

✓ To restore athletic fields, several floral gardens, a lagoon, a stream channel and renovate a greenhouse in the East St. Louis Park District.

AmeriCorps workers also will be involved in clean-up work from last year's flood along the Mississippi River throughout the Metro East.

CALHOUN NEWS
BRUSSELS, ILLINOIS
JULY 12, 1995

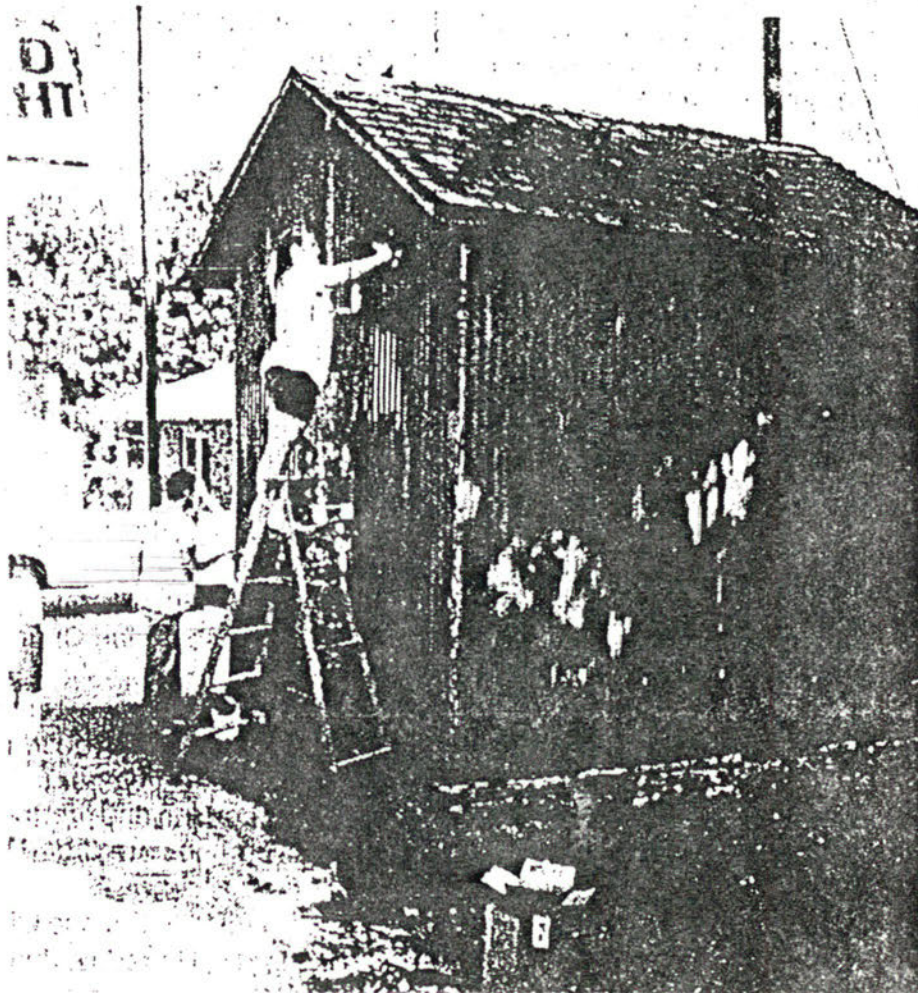
Brussels Historic Jail Renovated

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.



ILLINOIS

Area AmeriCorps participants begin jobs Monday

By Deborah Gertz
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

PITTSFIELD, Ill. — Two years ago, Chad Denison started school at Western Illinois University in Macomb.

Then he ran out of money, forcing him to enter the job market and put his education on hold.

A new federal program now will give Denison the chance to earn more job skills — and money for college.

Denison is one of 15 people hired for the national AmeriCorps program, sponsored locally by the Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Corp. in Pittsfield.

"I tell people it's President Clinton's national community service initiative, his answer to the Peace Corps," said Bill McCartney, Two Rivers executive director and AmeriCorps coordinator.

"These people will be working here within the confines of the United States to help communities improve environmental, public safety, health and human needs."

Nine people will work with the rural economic development program, while six others will focus on public lands and environment in the area served by Two Rivers. That includes Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Pike and Schuyler counties.

Each will earn a salary and a \$4,725 scholarship after 1,700 hours of service. The workers start Monday and will finish in August 1995.

Denison, 22, will work with the rural economic development team — and he'll be meeting people that could help him in the future.

"It's a good program to push me ahead to where I need to be," said Denison, who lives in Pittsfield.

"The end result hopefully, will be stuff the community can use to work with business and target other businesses to move in," McCartney said.

The team also will interview all Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) contract holders about future plans for the land. "There will be a series of questions the team puts together with the end result being some alternatives people can go into rather than corn and soybeans," McCartney said.

If time permits, team members will work to create interest in using local resources to build timber bridges.

"It hasn't been any problem at all finding work for these folks," McCartney said. "We want to get something at least in every county."

Jamie Totsch, who lives in Clayton, will work with the public land and environment team. That team will work with streambank stabilization, some flood cleanup work, build a wetland in Calhoun County and work with tree and shrub planting across the region.

"I know pretty much how to do the things we want to do, but the college after will help me out," he said. "I want to go to college for forestry or landscaping ... I love working outside."

Totsch, 18, was working on a temporary basis at Siloam Springs State Park when he heard about the AmeriCorps program. "I hope it will be a good step for the future," he said.

"This will make them aware of careers and opportunities they maybe never saw before," McCartney said.

The workers will spend their first week in orientation and initial training. Sessions on first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and teambuilding are planned along with visits to the work sites.

Communities, workers benefit from program's projects

PITTSFIELD, Ill. — Bill McCartney wants to get the AmeriCorps program up and running after investing weeks in preparations.

The workers — 15 serving Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Pike and Schuyler counties — begin their jobs Monday. A formal kickoff for the U.S. Department of Agriculture program will take place Friday morning in Quincy's Moorman Park.

Field projects will range from economic development to flood cleanup. The program

promises to benefit communities across the region — and the workers who earn job skills and a scholarship.

McCartney screened 41 applicants. Many came from the five-county area, but some from as far away as Springfield and Edwardsville.

"What we looked at was what they wanted to do with their lives," McCartney said. He is the AmeriCorps coordinator and executive director of Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development in Pittsfield.

"This is more than a job. We want to provide a living allowance and an opportunity to get on to school."

Anyone over 17 years of age including high school dropouts, high school graduates, college students, college graduates and professional school graduates is eligible for the nationwide program.

More information about AmeriCorps is available by calling McCartney at 285-4114 or the national AmeriCorps hotline at 1-800-880-4183.

Local applicants sought for AmeriCorps

By ROSALYNNE HARTY

REGIONAL EDITOR

PITTSFIELD — Bill McCartney is looking for some trailblazers to join the new federal AmeriCorps.

McCartney, a Soil Conservation Service employee working with Two Rivers Resource Economic Development Corp., is trying to recruit service-minded workers to build hiking and bike trails as well as be pioneers in the new Clinton service corps.

"We're trying to accomplish things within the communities that they probably wouldn't be able to accomplish without their help," McCartney said.

The tasks, which range from taking surveys to planting trees, also will provide exposure to careers in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and rural development.

"Here is a chance to get a little scholarship to go to school, and maybe expose people to some careers — find out what they want to do the rest of their life," McCartney said.

"Here is a chance to get a little scholarship to go to school, and maybe expose people to some careers — find out what they want to do the rest of their life."

Bill McCartney

Soil Conservation Service employee

AmeriCorps applicants must be 17 "up to whatever," McCartney said. Workers will be paid a modest salary, plus health benefits, while earning stipends for higher education or to repay college loans. The program is

loosely modeled on the GI Bill and offers educational benefits in return for service.

The 15 workers in the Two Rivers area will be among 400 AmeriCorps members in Illinois this year. Other groups will work with river-quality monitoring, day-care and other community service projects.

The Two Rivers teams will be assigned to work in Adams, Brown, Calhoun, Pike and Schuyler counties.

Nine AmeriCorps members are being recruited for the Public Lands and Environment team. Those workers, who will earn \$7,600 for 1,700 hours work, will build hike and bike trails, a 50-acre wetland, an environmental education center that will serve six counties, and help stabilize streambanks that were damaged in the Flood of '93.

Some of the workers will work with park districts and not-for-profit groups that deal with environmental issues.

Six AmeriCorps members are

needed for the rural development team, which will be working on three main projects: a small-town business research and retention project, requiring surveys and information-gathering; research into possible alternative uses for farmland that will soon be coming out of the Conservation Reserve Program; and surveying local township and county officials about pending bridge replacements to see if a market can be created for local wood for timber bridges.

These workers will be paid \$12,000 for 1,700 hours.

The application period has been extended to Sept. 23. For more information or to apply, contact McCartney at 285-4114 or by writing: Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Corp., 110 Fayette, Pittsfield, Ill. 62363.

For information on other Illinois AmeriCorps programs call the lieutenant governor's office at 1-800-843-5848. The national information number is 1-800-942-6777.

Appearance biggest complaint

New Canton survey parallels village board issues

By DAN LONG

A recent survey of New Canton appeared to reflect issues the board has been dealing with over the past few months.

The survey, conducted by AmeriCorps volunteers Starr McDaniles and Darlene Iverson, asked residents several questions about what they saw as good and bad about New Canton.

They presented the results to the board Tuesday night.

When asked what three things were liked least about the community, 24 mentioned appearance of town, 19 mentioned lack of activities for young people, 17 mentioned problems with children, and 17 mentioned losing and lack of businesses.

When asked the biggest problem in town, 19 said kids in crime and mischief, 14 said no activities for young people, 14 said appearance of town and 10 said lack of community spirit.

The town board recently sponsored a clean-up day and is working on removal of inoperable and unsightly vehicles.

Activities and problems with youth may be addressed soon by a business proposal involving the school building.

When asked if the school should become a community center, 79% said yes, 16% no and 5% didn't know. Two people said it would be too costly, two thought it was condemned, one said it should be torn down, and one said it was in bad shape.

Preserving it as a historical site was suggested by 18 people.

One person suggested the ball diamond should be cleaned up, a plan the board set in motion a few

Where New Canton buys what

Where do you shop for the following?

	Groceries	Clothing	Gasoline
New Canton	55	0	39
Barry	29	2	6
Pittsfield	7	23	2
Quincy	47	65	14
Missouri	16	32	56
elsewhere	4	11	5

Information from AmeriCorps survey of New Canton in spring of 1995. Many people answered more than one place.

months ago.

Mentioned specifically as lost or lacking businesses were hardware store, carwash and medical care. Not mentioned were the departure of Kiser Creek and soon departure of Gates Repair to Barry.

Other least liked things were gossip, loose dogs and cats, ignoring stop signs, no jobs and no local police protection.

One person wrote down that there weren't any house numbers, but house numbers are a project that is in motion.

When asked what New Canton needed most, 16 responses said more businesses, 13 said "things to do," 13 said local police officer and 11 said a community center.

Housing and cleaning up the town also made the list.

Support of outside assistance received approval of 64% of residents, 6% said no, 29% didn't know and 1% said it depended on amount of government involvement.

That approval appears to parallel interest in grants, housing grants for rehabilitating the ball diamond.

MOST LIKED

When asked what was most liked about New Canton, 39 said small community, 38 said good

neighbors, 38 said friendly people, 20 said quiet community, 13 said low crime rate and 11 said everyone knows everyone.

LARGE RESPONSE

Of the 162 surveys distributed, 109 were returned, a return of 67.3%.

"That's better than average," Iverson said.

Of those returning the survey, 49% lived in New Canton all of their lives and 87% expected to be living there five years from now. "No" was the response of 8% whose destinations upon moving included Barry, Hull and Pike County.

When asked if New Canton had a high crime rate, 74% said no and suggestions for reducing crime were a full- or part-time deputy, recreation for kids and enforcement of curfew.

A large majority of residents, 79%, would like to see more police protection, but of that 79%, 51% didn't feel the town should pay for it.

Tourism garnered a 55% approval.

When asked if they were satisfied with education, 70% said yes and with housing, 51% yes.

The board plans to distribute the results to residents.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS
JUNE 22, 1994

Service corps recruits dig in to help neighborhoods, themselves

By Ray Quintanilla
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

Holding a shovelful of dirt, with manicured designer fingernails studded with rhinestones, Carrie Potts on Tuesday began working toward her goal of becoming an accountant.

"It starts right here, like this, digging and shoveling. But you know, when I'm into my career, I'll be making the money for me and my son," said Potts, 20, a single parent with a 7-month-old baby.

For the summer, Potts will be earning \$147 a week with the promise of an additional \$1,000 for college under a 10-week model of President Clinton's AmeriCorps, a national service program billed as a domestic Peace Corps. AmeriCorps won't officially start and accept its one-year recruits until fall.

Potts was among 50 summer recruits, whose ages range from 16 to 22, who cleaned up a South Side neighborhood flower garden Tuesday at Homewood and Monterey Avenues. Nearly half of the Summer of Safety participants come from poor backgrounds.

"It's not exactly the kind of work I would want to do all the time, but it's better than hanging out," said Potts, who plans to attend Northeastern Illinois University in the fall.

The Chicago High School for Agricultural Science, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Chicago Housing Authority shaped



Tribune photo by John Dzekan

Some of the 50 summer recruits working for an urban service corps clean up a South Side neighborhood flower garden Tuesday.

the local plan and devised duties for the recruits.

It started with some weed pulling, but before it's over, the recruits will fight illegal activity in one of Chicago's neighborhoods.

"These kids are very eager to help people, and I know they will

get a lot out of it," said Karen Cole, 35, an Agriculture Department employee who supervises the workers.

Gardening is light work compared to the task the recruits will face in two weeks: cleaning up the Ida B. Wells housing development

and helping the South Side area's residents form a neighborhood watch program.

"I'm not afraid. I've heard all the horror stories, and no matter how you see it, these are people who need help," said Quinn Leonard,

17, a Beverly resident and a graduate of St. Ignatius College Preparatory School. "I'm here to try and help them out."

Joel Berg, national service director for the Agriculture Department, said Chicago and CHA po-

lice will increase their presence to ensure the recruits are safe between the work hours of 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"If you want to make a difference, you've got to go into areas of high crime," Berg said. "We've taken precautions, but no one can guarantee 100 percent safety for them."

But the combination of improving neighborhoods, steady summer employment, and the bonus for college or vocational school training was enough to keep the recruits from entertaining thoughts of leaving the program.

Some recruits said they'll spend time trying to get Wells residents involved with improving their area.

"It's their neighborhood. The big part will fall on the residents, and I'll help out," said Barbara Wilson, 18, who was raised at the Cabrini Green development and now lives a few blocks away with her mother.

"Maybe some day the place can be a wonderful place to live," Wilson, a premed student at Western Illinois University, said of Wells. "We'll work together."

Potts, who was raised at Wells and still lives there, said she'll introduce her work friends to some neighborhood friends. "Everything's going to be fine. I'll talk to some friends of mine and get them to help us, so everyone works together," she said. "We'll have fun."

Americorps' recruits sweep into the city

By Ray Quintanilla
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy swept up piles of broken glass at the Madden Park housing development Tuesday to underscore the Clinton administration's resolve to improve conditions for America's poor.

"The administration is going to clean up America," Espy said, pushing a broom over an asphalt basketball court in the South Side development at Ellis Avenue and Pershing Road.

The agriculture secretary arrived to give a pep talk and promote Clinton's Americorps, a domestic national service program.

Some 50 program participants will clean up and plant upwards of 80,000 in donated flowers, trees and vegetables at Madden Park. In a few weeks, the group will begin the same work at the Ida B. Wells development.

The recruits, as part of the agriculture department's "Summer of Safety" program, also will help residents of both developments form neighborhood watch groups.

"This is a program where students can give something back to the communities. We cannot do anything without the participation and goodwill of the people we are trying to help," Espy added.

His remarks mark the third time, since that top administra-

tion officials, including the president and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, have made Chicago Housing Authority developments the backdrop for social ills they want to address.

The president pushed for passage of his crime bill and an assault weapons ban while touring the Robert Taylor Homes earlier this month. Department of Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros even spent a few nights at the Taylor project to see what was needed to improve life in public housing.

Since then, Cisneros has embraced CHA Chairman Vincent Lane's plan to demolish many of the high-rise buildings in favor of scattered-site and smaller developments.

Now the agriculture department is getting into the action by putting youth, who will earn \$147 a week and a \$1,000 educational bonus upon completion of the program, into some of the toughest public housing developments to get residents to spruce up.

Some residents said they're skeptical of politicians who promote efforts designed to help them. "There's been of lot of talk ... and very little done," said David Smith, 47, a Madden Park resident.

Smith said once the students disperse in August, much of the garbage, broken glass and other



Tribune photo by Eduardo

Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy (left) helps Terrell Davis, 18, of the Chicago High School of Agricultural Sciences during Americorps' cleanup Tuesday at the Ida B. Wells development on South Ellis Avenue.

refuse, will slowly return.

About half of the recruits come from the Wells development. The rest come from across the city.

"I don't see how they expect people to volunteer to do anything. I clean up in front of my house, that's it," said Glenda Watkins, who lives in Madden Park with her husband and five children. "I think the work they'll do is good," she added.

For workers themselves,

even small tasks such as sweeping can improve residents' lives, they said.

"I've never seen so much glass in my life. It's terrible, and to think kids were playing around all this stuff isn't very good," said Sheena Hodges, 16, who lives in the 9800 block of South Union Avenue.

Madden Park has 487 dwelling units and is one of the CHA's smallest developments. It also has

one of the housing agency's vacancy rates at 3.1 percent.

Nearly one in four of the units at the Wells development is vacant. That doesn't worry program's organizers. "One person has quit because of questions about safety," said Barbara Valerious, principal of Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, who is overseeing the cleanup efforts.

"That's not bad," she added.

Quincy, Illinois □

AmeriCorps team tackles Quincy work

■ The service corps volunteers will clear right-of-way areas and do other work that is labor intensive, but low priority on the regular city work list.

By John Webber
Herald-Whig Staff Writer

President Clinton's AmeriCorps service program debuts in Quincy Monday.

Volunteers will tackle projects to clear trees and brush from more than a dozen city right-of-way areas, mainly in neighborhoods near the riverfront. The crews also will tackle other labor-intensive tasks, such as re-laying bricks in two historically significant alleys in the East End Historic District.

AmeriCorps coordinators will send a team of four workers to Quincy Monday to start whittling away at the city's low-priority job list.

"We want to emphasize that these are not projects that would take away jobs from city crews or union members or anyone else," said Gary Sparks, the city's director of administrative services. "We have discussed the situation with the union (Machinists Lodge 822), and they have been fully supportive of this program."

Inside

■ Map showing AmeriCorps projects in Quincy.

— Page 7A

AmeriCorps was envisioned by Clinton as a kind of "domestic Peace Corps," allowing people to do public-works labor in return for minimal pay and vouchers that can be used to pay college tuition or pay back student loans.

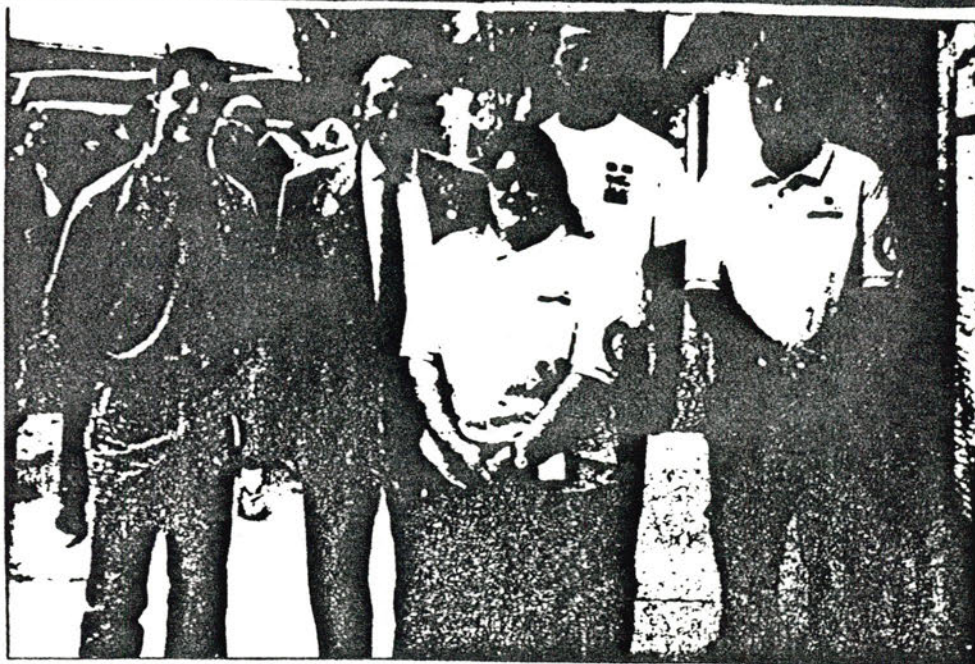
"Workers receive a stipend that amounts to about minimum wage, but after 1,700 hours of service, they also receive educational credits worth \$4,725 to be paid directly to the school or lender," said Bill McCartney of the Natural Resource Conservation Service, a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in Pittsfield.

McCartney coordinates the regional AmeriCorps program, through the USDA and Two Rivers Resource Conservation and Development Inc., which spawned the Two Rivers Regional Council a decade ago.

(See AMERICORPS, Page 7A)

THE McPHERSON SENTINEL

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1995



AmeriCorps member Ryan Webster, left, was recently honored for his part in saving the life of a Louisville man. With him are Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman, Melinda Owens, Rick Martin and Scott Koling (McPherson and Marquette EMS member who trained Webster in life-saving techniques).

AmeriCorps member helps save man's life

Kansas USDA/AmeriCorps Member Ryan Webster, while providing extra hours of service on July 23, helped save the life of Clyde Wheeler, 44, Louisville, at Tuttle Creek Reservoir.

Webster received his CPR/first aid training from AmeriCorps member Scott Koling, EMT-I/C who is with the McPherson EMS and director of the Marquette EMS.

Both Webster and Koling were honored by Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman during the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson.

At about 4 p.m. on the day of the accident, Webster and Tuttle Creek State Park Conservation Officer Randy Conrad were near the Big Dog Marina when they heard screaming. When they investigated, they found Wheeler, who had been in an inner tube being pulled by a Ranger bass boat.

The boat slowed to an idle to turn around to pick up Wheeler. When the driver was unable to steer away, the rear propeller of the boat caught Wheeler's feet, inflicting severe injuries. Two park employees in a boat nearby were able to get Wheeler into the boat and get him to shore.

"I was thankful that I was there. But I wished that I hadn't been ... anybody in my position would have done the same thing ..."

Ryan Webster

With Wheeler on shore, Webster, along with Conrad began giving first aid. Webster said that he was able to use the first aid training given to him and the other USDA/AmeriCorps members by Kansas Health and Safety Extension Council (KHASEC) AmeriCorps.

Webster said they worked with the victim for about 25 minutes even though it "seemed like an eternity." After pulling on latex gloves, the first thing they did when in the boat was to elevate the victim's legs and stop the bleeding. The injury extended from the waist to the knee with a

See MEMBER, Page 3

Member

From MEMBER, Page 1

three to four inch wide wound exposing the leg bone, muscle and tendons. The bones in the ankle of the other leg were also exposed. Webster said he kept talking to the victim to keep him from going into shock.

The first Responder and EMT to arrive at the scene was Joe Clark. When he arrived, he discovered that Wheeler had lost half a foot, had severed an artery, along with other injuries. Clark said the "kid" (Webster) had a towel over the wound and was applying pressure. "He was doing a fine job...I was glad they were there."

Clark said the victim had lost 85 to 90 percent of his body fluids and they were having trouble getting a blood pressure reading. Clark said the action of Webster and Conrad "saved the victim's life."

Webster said he had learned the man's injuries were too severe for the Manhattan hospital to handle, and the man was flown to the University of Kansas Medical Center.

When Webster was praised for his actions he said, "I was thankful that I was there. But I wished that I hadn't been ... anybody in my position would have done the same thing ... the incident has crossed my mind every night before I go to sleep."

Outdoors

Americorps workers graduate

*Workers donate
1,800 hours
at Kanopolis*

By CHARLA GATZ
Outdoors Editor

KANOPOLIS LAKE — A graduation ceremony and buffalo burger feed was held Friday at the Corral Shelter for Americorps workers who labored in the state parks during the past year.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)/Americorps Kansas project was operated in conjunction with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks.

The four Americorps workers who worked at Kanopolis State Park have recorded 1,800 hours since October when the project commenced.

"That's something that would be hard for us, with our budgets, to du-

"Given the time of flood cleanup and the other activities going on, like keeping the trails open, it was very crucial timing to be able to have that kind of manpower."

Rick Martin
Kanopolis State Park manager

plicate," said Kanopolis State Park Manager Rick Martin. "Given the time of flood cleanup and the other activities going on, like keeping the trails open, it was very crucial timing to be able to have that kind of manpower."

The workers completed or assisted with nearly 50 projects in the park. They spent a large portion of their time on the trail system in Horseshief Canyon cleaning up flood debris, re-opening and remarking trails, repairing erosion, clearing brush, installing

gates and fences, repairing low water crossings and basically trying to keep the trails in usable condition.

In addition, they installed international signage, planted trees, repaired and installed courtesy fishing docks and repaired swimming beach rope.

They also cleaned up flood debris in the wildlife refuge and built, repaired and installed duck boxes and goose nesting structures.

Martin was impressed by the caliber of people who volunteered for

the Americorps program. They were very interested in the work they did at the lake, he said, and held degrees in related fields such as biology and natural resources.

The Americorps workers received a stipend for living expenses while they were performing the community service projects.

After nine months of service they became eligible for a monetary educational award that can be applied any time within the next seven years toward tuition at a college or university or to any past or future educational loans.

Martin was further impressed by the number of projects the workers completed and the number of hours they put in.

"We wouldn't have the money or the budget to get it done as quickly as we got it done with these guys," Martin said. "We're in hopes that the program continues next year."

the Salina Journal

Serving Kansas since 1871

AmeriCorps leaves its mark

My daughter told me how proud she was of the work I've done, after I took them fishing this spring," said Cindy Ochs. She is referring to her service in AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps is the president's national service initiative to achieve direct results in addressing the nation's critical education, human service, public safety and environmental needs at the community level.

AmeriCorps provides opportunities for Americans of all ages to serve their country in an organized effort fostering citizen responsibility and building their communities. Americans age 17 or older can make a substantial commitment to their country and earn education awards for college or vocational training in return.

Ochs is an AmeriCorps member stationed with a Kansas environmental team at Webster Reservoir. Webster is in a remote area in north-central Kansas. Cindy is a 32-year-old single parent, mother of a 2-year-old son and a 13-year-old daughter.

On Memorial Day weekend, a heavy rainstorm struck the Webster Reservoir area causing flooding to the park, closing roads and camp grounds and isolating rest rooms and shower facilities.

During a recent visit with Cindy, she took me around the reservoir to show me the damage. She showed me the handicapped-accessible dock that cost taxpayers \$20,000 to build. Even though she suffered an allergic reaction while sand-bagging the dock, to prevent high water from destroying it, she was proud of their effort. When we stopped to pick up trash left by park visitors, she lamented that she could not understand why visitors could not police their own camp sites.

As we drove across the dam she spotted a large object floating in the reservoir and was afraid that it was part of a dock. It was obvious that Webster State Park had become "her" state park. She mentioned that the AmeriCorps members had worked hard to help clean up the damage from the previous flood and now much of that work may have to be redone.

Cindy's service with AmeriCorps has been an adventure. Looking younger than her age, she has spent her service in cleaning up flood damage to the Webster State Park caused by the 1993 flood.

The skills learned by Cindy while in

POINT OF VIEW



Jim Meisenheimer

FOR THE SALINA JOURNAL

Cindy could be on public assistance, instead she is serving her community, becoming self-sufficient

saw and how to build and repair Wacondas. Wacondas are a pivoting sheltered picnic table that can be turned, allowing for constant shade. Hundreds of Wacondas located in Kansas state parks were damaged by the 1993 flood.

Before we went back to the park office she stopped and showed me a Waconda. She mentioned that when the weather was too bad to work outside, the AmeriCorps members spent hundreds of hours fixing and repairing them.

While showing me how they worked she said, "I have never done anything that I could look back at with pride and say I did that. I have never been able to leave my mark on anything; I now have something to show."

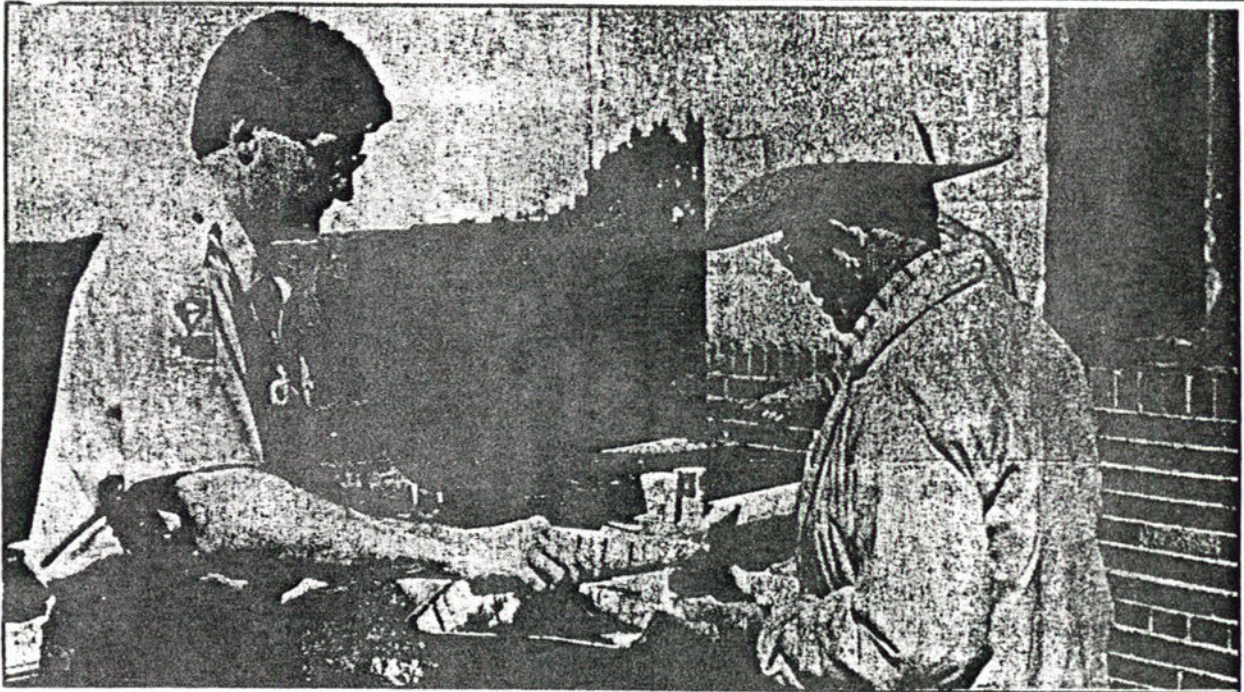
Cindy's stint with AmeriCorps has been an exciting one, including a lot of hard work and different challenges associated with outdoor activities. In spite of those challenges, Cindy wants to sign up for another tour with AmeriCorps. She said that it, "gives her flexibility." She wants to use her education award to learn to prepare income tax returns.

As I was leaving the park, she was reaching for a broom to start cleaning the park office, looking for something to do until flood water started receding.

Cindy could be on public assistance, instead she is providing service to her community, developing self-esteem, while earning a way to become self-sufficient. Cindy is an exemplification of the AmeriCorps motto — "Getting Things Done."

■ Jim Meisenheimer is regional facilitator for AmeriCorps/USDA.

Outdoors



Rick Martin of Lindsborg, left, Kanopolis State Park manager, serves a buffalo burger to Civilian Conservation Corps alumnus Herb Queen of Grainfield following the kickoff of the Americorps program Wednesday at the Corral Shelter at Kanopolis Lake.

Americorps program kicked off Wednesday at Kanopolis

By CHARLA GATZ
Outdoors Editor

KANOPOLIS LAKE — The Civilian Conservation Corps program of more than 50 years ago has been dusted off and renamed Americorps but conceptually it is based on essentially the same premise — sweat equity.

The Americorps program, a modern day version of the CCC, was officially kicked off Wednesday at the

not available in cash form but may be used to pay tuition at an institution of higher education or to pay off student loans.

Eight more workers are being sought to become involved in the program. Four groups of five workers each will work in wildlife areas at Wildlife and Parks state lakes at Kanopolis, Glen Elder, Milford and Webster.

Each worker will receive a basic

reap the benefits of an additional \$7,660 toward school expenses.

Herb Queen of Grainfield, a CCC alumnus, also addressed those gathered. CCC was a federal program implemented from 1933-42 for unemployed 18- to 25-year-old boys.

"Anybody who hasn't lived in the '30s can't understand how it was," Queen said. "There was a lot of work to be done and no money to do it."

The boys labored on various pro-

JOURNAL-WORLD
LAWRENCE, KANSAS
NOVEMBER 20, 1995

Program gives graduates experience

● **AmeriCorps**, a national service project launched by President Clinton in September, has splashed down in Douglas County's wetlands.

BY RIC ANDERSON
JOURNAL-WORLD WRITER

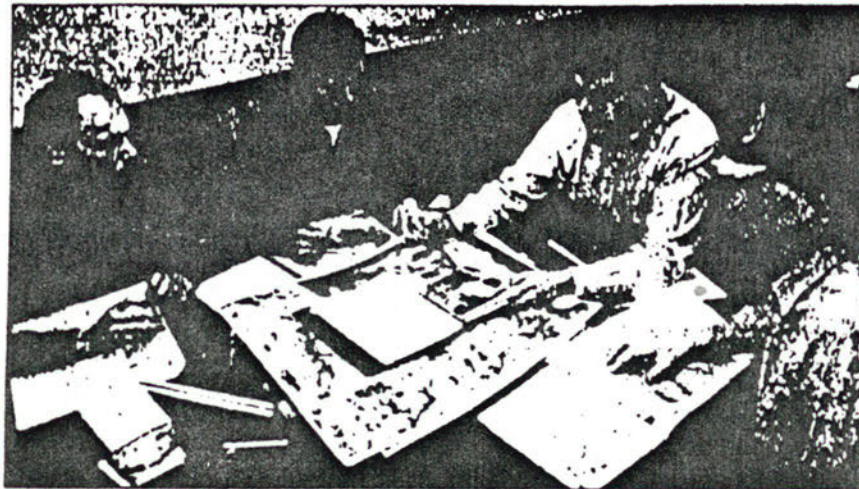
As time was running out on his seasonal job last summer, Craig Johnson's next career move was a frustrating uncertainty.

"In our field, you've got to have a job to get experience and experience to get a job," said Johnson, a 24-year-old biologist who graduated from Emporia State University in 1993.

And although he was working in his field at the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks' Melvern Wildlife Area, he said, "What I was hearing was that summer work didn't really count as experience."

Today, he's getting that experience in AmeriCorps, the \$360 million national service program launched by President Clinton in September. Johnson is one of four volunteers working in Douglas County on a five-year project to inventory the state's wetlands and riparian areas, or links of waterways.

The volunteers, recent college



RENÉ KNORREN/JOURNAL-WORLD PHOTO

Discussing aerial photos of the Douglas County terrain are, from left, Cody Lind, Arlen Flax, Kevin Feleay and Craig Johnson. The four, who work out of the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Lawrence, are members of AmeriCorps, a federal program that allows students to work in community service to repay college loans.

graduates with degrees in biology and park resource management, are charting county wetlands by studying aerial photographs and maps, plus making on-site visits.

Kevin Feleay, a 25-year-old Kansas State University graduate in biology, was the first AmeriCorps volunteer to arrive in Douglas County. Feleay started working on the project in

October, has been joined by Johnson, Arlen Flax, 24, and Cody Lind, 30.

Each volunteer made a one-year commitment to AmeriCorps and has the option of serving a second term. In return, each receives a \$12,000 stipend for living expenses and a \$4,275 educational award that can be used for college, job training or repayment of student loans.

The four, who are among 20,000 participants in AmeriCorps, are working in the federal agriculture department's Natural Resources Conservation Service office, 3010 Four Wheel Drive.

Douglas Gahn, NRCS district conservationist, and project members said the goal was not to snatch productive land away from farmers.

"The rule of thumb is that if you can drive a tractor through it, you can farm it," Johnson said. "You just can't drain it."

The riparian study, Gahn said, will help local conservationists protect and enhance banks of waterways.

Feleay said that in addition to working on the inventory, volunteers were involved in training and community service work like environmental education programs for youths.

All the while, volunteers will be gaining career footholds and the opportunity to work on a meaningful project.

"Most of Kansas' wetlands have been drained," Johnson said. "It'd be nice to look back and say you helped protect what's left. It'd also be nice to be sitting in a big, cushy job and look back and say you helped you get there."

the Salina Journal

Serving Kansas since 1871

MARCH 18, 1995

Working for an education

AmeriCorps offers chance to learn

By DAVID CLOUSTON

The Salina Journal

Sweating over a brush fire or building nesting boxes for birds aren't typical jobs thought of as a way to pay for college.

Kurt Grimm and Troy Hurlburt are hoping their work leads to more than just a paycheck.

"I've been working for them for two years. I'd like to get on full time," said Hurlburt, speaking of Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, with whom he, Grimm and other participants in the AmeriCorps Program are working.

AmeriCorps is a federal program designed to help students pay for college by completing a set number of hours of public service work. For 1,700 hours of service — about nine months — workers receive a \$7,660 stipend for living expenses and \$4,725 for college.

Both undergraduate and graduate students are eligible. Money can pay for accumulated college debts for those already graduated, or help pay tuition for those just entering college or going on to pursue a master's or doctoral degree.

AmeriCorps workers are assigned to different federal agencies. Hurlburt and his co-workers are assigned to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but being directly supervised by Wildlife and Parks officials, with whom they're working at state parks.

During February, the four members of the AmeriCorps/US-IP team at Kanopolis Reservoir, Hurlburt, Grimm, Chris Newton and Scott Morris, developed fish



Todd Lovin, Lindsborg, a participant in AmeriCorps, starts a head fire for a controlled burn in the Langley Point area of Kanopolis Reservoir.

Tom Dorsey/Salina Journal

► See AMERICORPS, Page 9

SALINA JOURNAL
SALINA, KANSAS
SEPTEMBER 12, 1994

**Kansas to receive 48
AmeriCorps volunteers**

TOPEKA — Officials announced Friday that 48 AmeriCorps volunteers will work in flood-damaged areas and for agricultural projects.

Joel Berg, director of national service at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, said the volunteers will work in rural areas to renovate windbreaks and clean federal parks in Kansas.

Two teams of five volunteers, based in Oakley and Scott City, will do windbreak renovation.

Another five teams, each with three members, will work on wetlands projects. They will be based in Topeka, Emporia, Manhattan, Hays and Hutchinson.

Another 20 people will work to restore federal and state parks damaged by the 1993 flood.

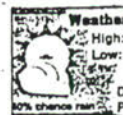
Among other things, they will pick up debris, paint signs and picnic tables, remove dead trees.

Three other volunteers will work in watershed and agricultural projects.



Dodge
City

Daily Globe



24 pages (two sections) 50 cents

Dodge City, Kansas 67801

Friday, May 5, 1995

Volunteers invest time serving the community

By Tom Lister
Globe Reporter

A facet of President Clinton's community-service program is here in Dodge City.

Two workers for AmeriCorps — a program similar to a domestic Peace Corps — are working with the National Resources Conservation Service. Mike Howck and Kyle Hedges have been doing background work for wetland evaluations.

They've also been planting trees at area lakes, teaching hunter-safety courses and performing other types of community service to the area.

Other volunteers in the program are restoring state parks that suffered flood damage in the summer of 1993.

The experience here benefits Howck and Hedges as well as the public.

Jim Meisenheimer, with the National Resources Conservation Service in Salina, said volunteers like Howck and Hedges are required to work a minimum of 1,700 hours during nine-month period. From that, they get a \$12,000 stipend, plus about \$4,000 to be used toward education.

"It's a combination Peace Corps, VISTA and the GI Bill."

See Volunteers Page 16.

—★ Volunteers —

Meisenheimer said.

The experience in the program also gives volunteers a needed edge in the job market.

"It's hard to get jobs that are related to our fields," said Hedges, who has degree in fisheries biology from Kansas State University. Howck graduated from Emporia State University in environmental biology.

Meisenheimer said volunteers also get education on AIDS and training for CPR and resolving conflicts.

The Dodge City branch of AmeriCorps requires participants to have a college degree. In other

cases, the program's age limit is 17.

For more information on AmeriCorps, people can call 1-(800)-880-4183.

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.

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

Local Americorp workers enjoy program

Their work began last October. Four months later, Laurel County's three AmeriCorps workers not only are happy to be participating in President Clinton's effort to involve young people in community service, but are confident that they're making significant contributions in their communities.

Michelle Humfleet has been working with the Cumberland Valley Community Development District since October in various capacities.

She said her experience thus far in the program has been very educational. "I've met so many people. It's wonderful...I've learned so much in just a few months that I didn't learn in a whole year in college." And what she learned was not from a book, said Humfleet, but "hands on."

One of the projects Humfleet has been working on is the completion of a proposal which if successful, would provide money for construction of a woodcrafts showroom to be located in London off of I-75.

She has contacted over 20 small, wood-related businesses in the eight county area of the CVADD, gauging their support. The showroom, which would serve as sort of an outlet mall for local woodcrafts businesses to rent space to display and sell their goods, would allow these businesses to take advantage of the heavy traffic flow from I-75 without requiring motorists to drive several miles out of their way.

Humfleet has also worked in address verification for local 911 services and has helped the Department of Social Services in

Family Preservation research.

Tina King, of East Bernstadt, says her participation in AmeriCorps has not only been an educational experience, but also a motivational one as well.

King is working with the Rural Economic Community Development (formerly FmHA), assisting low income and elderly residents with home repairs.

In her four months, King said she has gained a new understanding of poverty in Laurel and surrounding counties. She said she was never aware that there were so many homes in the area without proper heating, plumbing or that were suffering from other problems.

Her efforts include trying to get funding and organizing different agencies to see that people living in subpar conditions get the help they need.

"I love what I'm doing," said King, who is also a student at Eastern Kentucky University where she is pursuing a degree in education. In fact, King is currently trying to organize local contractors and church organizations in an effort to help even more families in need of home repair.

John Mills, a graduate of UK, is working with Kentucky Highlands Corporation in conjunction with research into alternative crops. Mills has talked to area county agriculture extension agents and faculty at the UK College of Agriculture about such crops.

He said the program has given him "invaluable experience with economic and community development."

Humfleet, King and Mills all

have high praise for the program, but such praise is not so unanimous in Washington D.C. where the program has come under some fire recently.

Some members of Congress have criticized the program for being too costly and claim that some services are being duplicated.

David Gibson, the AmeriCorps Program Director for Rural Economic Community Development

defends the program, insisting that government agencies are getting good, quality labor for relatively cheap wages.

Under the AmeriCorps program, young adults are paid a stipend of \$12,000 for working 1800 hours in a twelve month period. They can also take advantage of education tuition assistance of up to \$4,725 per year and interest on existing student



PROJECT REVIEW — Kenneth Arterburn, Dis. Director of RECD, left, Tina King, Americorp worker, and David Gibson, Americorps project director for RECD, looks over a project King is involved in.



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

THE SENTINEL ECHO
LONDON, KENTUCKY
MARCH 22, 1995

Local young woman working in Americorps program

BY DAVID COLE

Barbourville's Becky Davidson is one of nine new Americorps participants working through the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) in Kentucky's Appalachian region.

This is the first year of the new Americorps program which is similar to the Peace Corps, but instead of sending members overseas, the federal government keeps them in the states to help out. Participants not only are paid for a year's work but also will receive a \$4,725 voucher to apply toward schooling.

After being sworn in at FmHA's state office in Lexington in September, Davidson began work on Oct. 6 at the Barbourville office, which serves the four counties of Knox, Bell, Whitley and Harlan.

Davidson, who's the daughter of Leamon and Linda Davidson of Sharp's Gap and a 1994 Union College graduate, will be a key worker in FmHA's 504 repair loan program.

This program provides assistance, including one-percent interest loans generally \$7,500 or less, to remove health or safety hazards from homes owned by low income and elderly families. Last year 32 families in the four-county area were helped through the 504 program.

ABOUT DAVIDSON'S efforts so far, Robert Dunn, supervisor at the Barbourville FmHA office, said, "She's jumping right in there. When talking about repair loans you're calling on people at their homes, getting on tops of roofs to find out what repairs need to be done. . . ."

Davidson said she recently visited an elderly woman whose foot was injured and who is hav-



New Americorps participant Becky Davidson, second from right, was sworn in at FmHA's state office in Lexington recently. She'll be working at the Barbourville FmHA county office. Others in photo are, from left, FmHA State Director Thomas G. Fern, Barbourville FmHA County Supervisor Robert Dunn; and, far right, Americorps coordinator Louis Elliott.

ing to haul coal into her house.

"She's applied for a heating system," Davidson said. "We visited a guy in Harlan Wednesday. He doesn't have heat and his bathroom floor fell through, and he's applying to repair his house."

Asked what she hopes to accomplish, Davidson said, "I just hope I can find people that really need these loans and help them follow through with assistance."

EXAMPLES OF HOW participants can be helped through the program, Davidson said, include providing an adequate water supply and sewage disposal system; insulation, storm windows, doors and screens; repair or replacement of electrical wiring, roof, heating system, deteriorated siding or structural supports; and

repair or improvements to make a dwelling accessible to a disabled or elderly person.

To qualify for the program, Davidson said, participants must own their homes, need repairs to the property, lack the resources from which to make the repairs and meet FmHA low income guidelines.

The maximum allowable adjusted yearly income for a household in Knox County under the program is as follows: one person, \$8,200; two persons, \$10,100; three persons, \$11,350; four persons, \$12,600; and five persons, \$13,600.

Interested applicants should contact the Barbourville office at 54-3185 or call 546-3186 for more information.

The Daily News

NO-24

MIDDLESBORO, KENTUCKY WEDNESDAY, APRIL 26, 1995

14 Pages

Group tracing pioneer paths

By William Saunders
Staff Writer

Several groups are working to make U.S. 25E and U.S. 11W into a tourist attraction for Tennessee.

The Tennessee Wilderness Road will trace historic pioneer paths that follow the current routes, as well as highlighting area food, lodging and entertainment sites.

"We have a lot of families that came through here years ago when the area was being founded, and now people come through here looking to trace their roots," said Mary Russell, Clinch-Powell Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) - Americorps.

The road begins at Elizabethtown, runs through Rogersville and ends at Cumberland Gap. "We're planning a map of the Wilderness Road with historical sites on it, as well as food, lodging and a range of other items," she added. The map is scheduled to go to print June 1.

The goal of the road, she said, is to highlight the historical significance of the area, as well as to bring in tourism.

"Our main goal is historical preservation," she said. "We've been writing grants to preserve different sites along the road. Also, the road will bring visitors to the area with appreciation of the historical areas of Tennessee, including but not limited to Daniel Boone."

"The main trail will attract visitors here initially, and offshoots from the trail will get them into surrounding counties," said Lindy Turner, Clinch-Powell RC&D.

"Our main goal is historical preservation. We've been writing grants to preserve different sites along the road. Also, the road will bring visitors to the area with appreciation of the historical areas of Tennessee, including but not limited to Daniel Boone."

—Mary Russell

Area counties that would be directly affected by the Tennessee Wilderness Road will be Claiborne, Hawkins and Grainger.

The road program came about through the combined efforts of Clinch-Powell RC&D, Northeast Tennessee Tourism Council, First Tennessee Development District and Middle East Tennessee Tourism Council.

Russell said the program was based on similar roads in Virginia and Kentucky, such as the Daniel Boone Heritage Trail in Kentucky. Such roads have been proven to help boost economies in the communities through which they pass.

Road signs marking the trail are not in place, but Russell said they will be posted at a later date.

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 AmeriCorps workers and other local community service agencies.

Local AmeriCorps 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

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

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.

COMMONWEALTH JOURNAL
SOMERSET, KENTUCKY
DECEMBER 5, 1995

FmHA 504 funds upgrading local homes

By BRIAN WILKERSON
CJ Staff Writer

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

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

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

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

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

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



CJ Staff Photo by Brian Wilkerson

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

used for less-pressing purchases, such as siding.

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

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

She and other FmHA officials

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

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

FmHA

Continued from Page 1

ration's federal HOME program.

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

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

See FmHA, Page 2



Americorp

Pictured from left are FmHA State Director, Thomas G. Fern; Lara May, Americorp participant; Rebecca Estep, Americorp participant; Kevin Antle, FmHA County Supervisor; and Louis Elliott, Americorp coordinator. May and Estep will be working out of the Prestonsburg FmHA county office.

FMHA/RDA Americorp members start service in Appalachian Kentucky

Nine Americorp members recently began their service in Kentucky's Appalachian Region after being sworn in at the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) State Office in Lexington.

Thomas G. Fern, state director, Farmers Home Administration, conducted the ceremony and challenged the members to "become leaders in the community in which they would be working."

The members attended a two-day orientation training meeting in London, and now have reported to their respective communities to begin their service.

The nine participants in the Kentucky Appalachian Region will facilitate community strategic planning and assist in implementing programs to improve or develop needed community facilities. Team members will also engage in outreach activities to assist economically and socially disadvantaged citizens in rural areas in accessing FmHA grant and loan programs.

Site locations for the Kentucky Appalachian Region will be as follows: Barbourville, Hazard, Prestonsburg, Middlesboro, London and Somerset.

TIMES-TRIBUNE
BARBOURVILLE, KENTUCKY
MAY 5, 1995

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.

MINDEN PRESS HERALD
MINDEN, LOUISIANA
APRIL 25, 1995

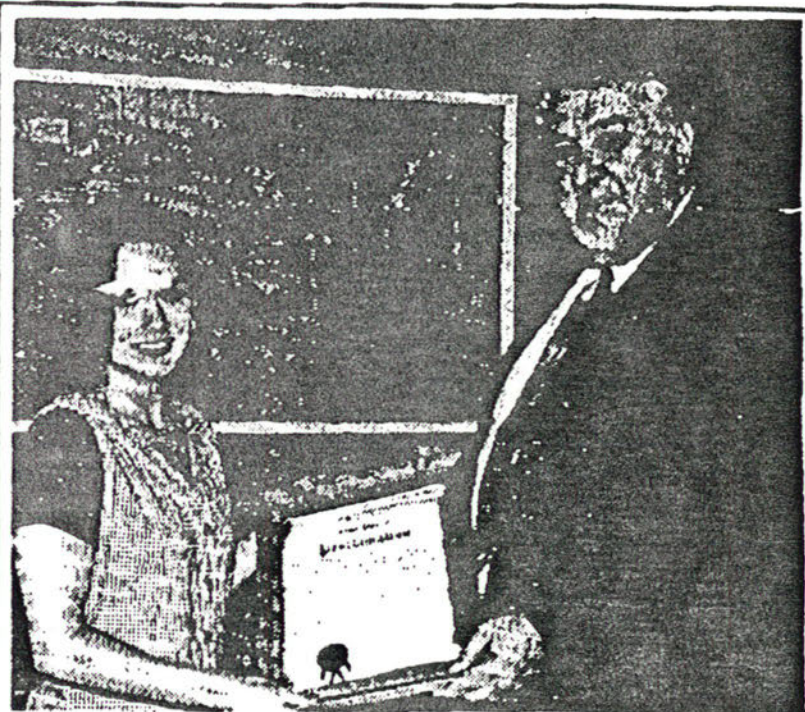


Photo by Sandra Brown

Angela Norsworthy (left) and Amerl/Corps/USDA member serving Webster and seven other parishes, has asked Minden Mayor Bill Robertson (right) to proclaim today as National Day of Service for Minden. Norsworthy, a graduate of Louisiana Tech University, was assigned to Trailblazer RC&D in Ruston to assist with the Statewide Dry Hydrant Program which will install more than 2,000 dry hydrants across the state. According to R. O. Machen Jr., Webster Parish Dry Hydrant chairman, Norsworthy is a real asset to Trailblazer in her help with the statewide Dry Hydrant Project in Webster Parish.



Leader photo by CARLA PAMPE

Day of Service

Across the nation, AmeriCorps members joined with other organizations and communities to perform joint community service projects on the Day on National Service, April 25. sixteen USDA AmeriCorps members in north Louisiana visited schools to provide a day of service by helping in the classroom.

AmeriCorps members Angela Norsworthy, a graduate of Louisiana Tech University, and Alicia Trissler, a graduate of Northwestern State University spent the day at Choudrant Elementary School helping out in whatever areas they were needed. They alphabetized card catalog material, ran errands and listened to children read their favorite stories in the library.

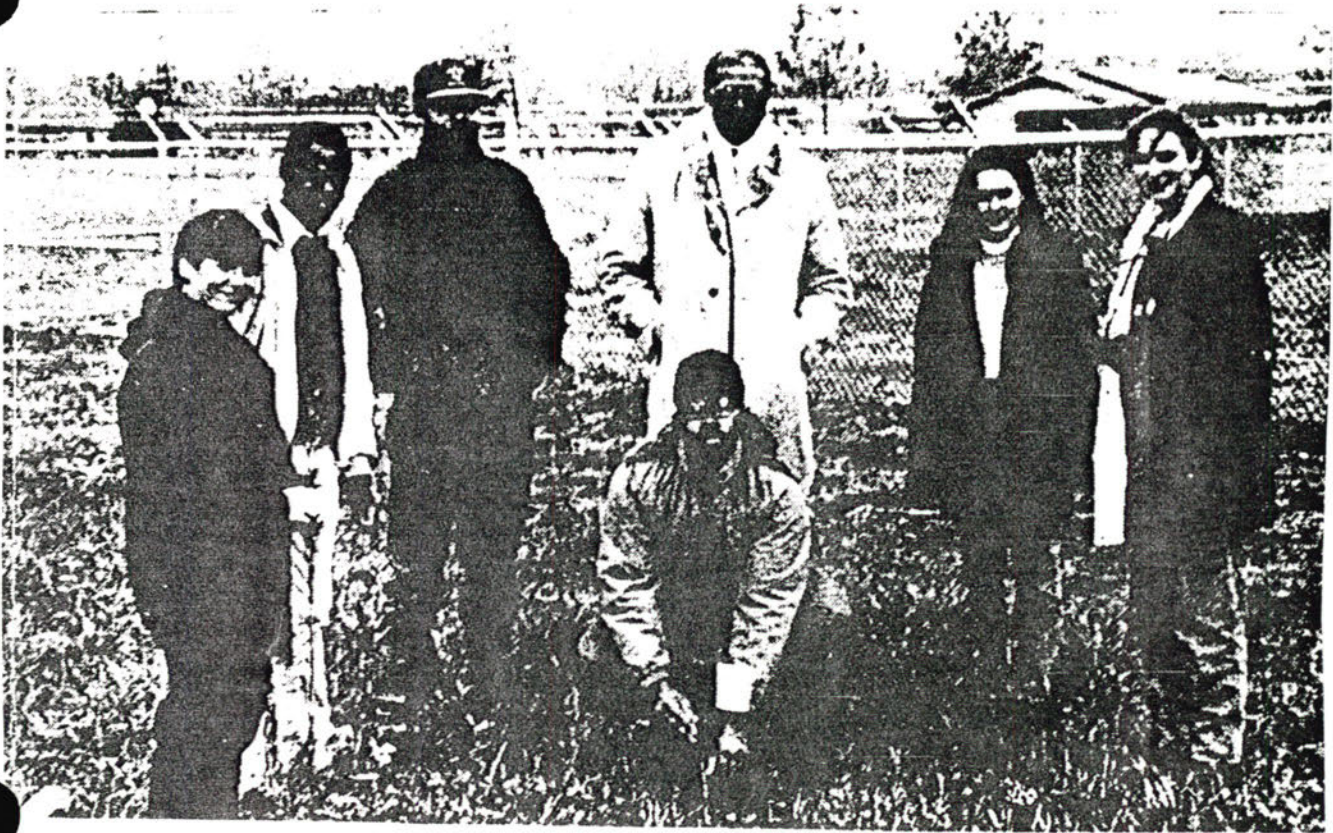
Here, Trissler (second from left) reads a book to 6th grade student Jennifer Hogan, 11, while Norsworthy (second from right) calls out vocabulary words to 6th grade student Chris Rozelle, 12.

Ruston Mayor Hilda Taylor Perritt proclaimed April 25 at the Day for National Service in Ruston to recognize the efforts of volunteers. (Ruston Daily Leader, April 30, 1995)

**RUSTON DAILY LEADER
RUSTON, LOUISIANA
APRIL 30, 1995**



PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION



Planting trees

AmeriCorps is having its Area One Cluster meeting in Madison Parish this month. On Friday, March 3, the AmeriCorps members planted River Birches at the city park. Pictured from left to right are Alicia Trissler, AmeriCorps; Anthony Bridgewater, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Stan Livingston, director of Tallulah Housing Authority; Tallulah Mayor Theodore Lindsey; Carl Collins, AmeriCorps; Angela Norsworthy, AmeriCorps; and Susan Mullins, AmeriCorps. (Madison Journal, March 8, 1995)

AmeriCorp planting in city park

By Scott Cummins
Staff writer

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development program of AmeriCorp has a concern for Madison Parish and it plans to help the community as best it can, officials said.

AmeriCorp members are in Tallulah for their Area One Cluster meeting and were at the city park Friday to plant some trees to help improve the park.

"We are planting River Birches around the park. They are in a dormant state right now," said Anthony Bridgewater of USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service. Bridgewater said now is the best time to plant trees.

The trees planted were donated by the Madison Soil and

Water Conservation District.

Alycia Trissler, an AmeriCorp member from Winnfield, said AmeriCorp was started by President Clinton on Sept. 12, 1994, as an alternative to the Peace Corp.

"The main difference between the Peace Corp and AmeriCorp is AmeriCorp was developed to help communities in the United States, while the Peace Corp was developed to help communities in the Third World countries," she said.

Trissler said the program allows students and graduates to help communities grow and to put the community spirit back into the community.

Anyone 17 or older can participate in the AmeriCorp program. The program offers up to \$4,725 for tuition or loan forgiveness, a living stipend during service, basic health insurance and a child care allowance. People who join AmeriCorp can work with a variety of services including education, public safety, human services and the environment.

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.

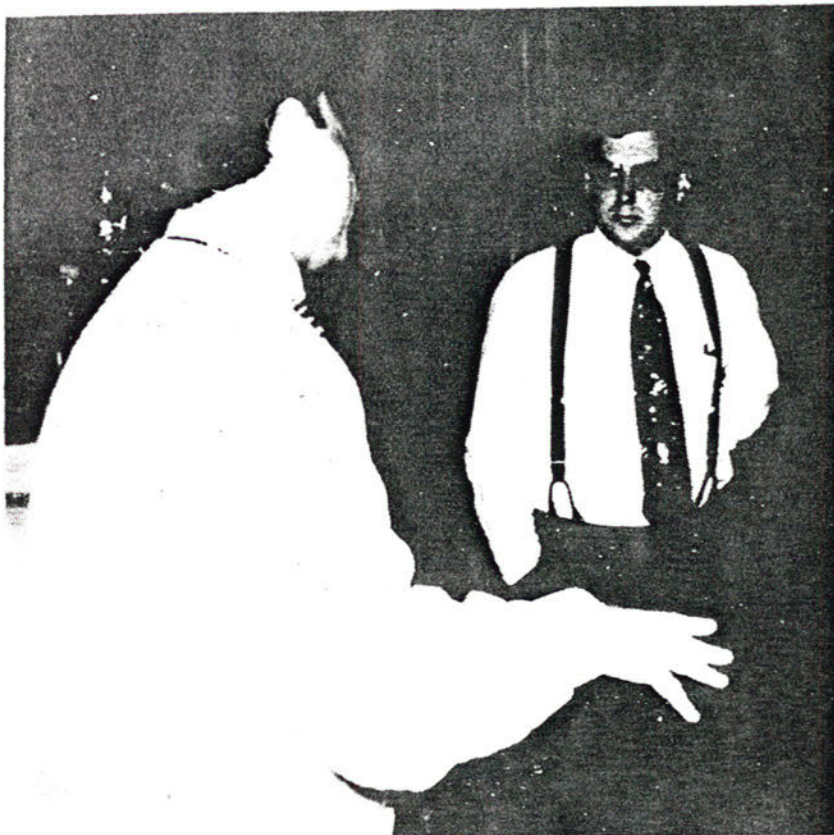
Trissler's job in Winnfield is as a tourism specialist. She has worked with local organizers to prepare brochures and with the museum to train volunteers.

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.

Jury to seek hydrant grant

By JOHN ST. ORES
Daily News Staff Writer

The Jeff Davis Parish Police Jury is expected to take action next Wednesday to participate in a federal grant program that will supply each parish in Louisiana with 35 dry fire hydrants.

Dry hydrants are nonpressurized pipe systems permanently installed in existing lakes, ponds and streams that provide a ready means of water supply to a tank truck.

During the jury's agenda meeting Thursday, Jim Neveu of the Imperial Calcasieu Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. and Dominic Beggan, of Americorp, coordinator of the dry hydrant program, explained the project.

Trailblazer Resource

See JURY on Page 10A

Jury

Continued from Page 1A

Conservation and Development Office in Ruston is in the final stages of obtaining the federal funds to install the hydrants across the state. The contracts should be signed by the end of this month and the materials should be delivered during the summer.

Imperial Calcasieu RC&D Office will oversee the distribution of the dry hydrant materials," said Beggan. "Technical assistance during dry hydrant site location will be provided by the local Natural Resources Conservation Service office, based in Jennings."

Imperial Calcasieu RC&D will provide the following materials for 35 dry hydrants:

- 1 dry hydrant head assembly
- 1 ell
- 2 supports
- 1 blue reflector
- 1 strainer
- 60-foot 6-inches of Schedule 40 PVC
- 1 quart of paint per parish
- 2 gallons of epoxy per

parish

The jury is being asked to:

— Adopt a resolution stating they would like to participate in the statewide dry hydrant project;

— Provide a parish-appointed coordinator;

— Provide the labor and machinery necessary to install the dry hydrants;

— Provide a sign, e.g. "Fire Department Fire Hydrant Number;"

— Maintain the hydrant, i.e. have the local fire department backflush the hydrant at least once a year.

"This project would probably provide a drastic cost savings in terms of insurance premiums, because it counts toward ratings," said Lake Arthur juror Austin "Sonny" Abshire.

Sponsors for the project are the Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron and Jeff Davis Parish police juries and the Allen, Calcasieu and Gulf Coast Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

AmeriCorps program making a difference

By **Mark Watson**
Staff Writer

AmeriCorps — a voluntary service organization that has been called the domestic version of the Peace Corps — should not be a liberal or a conservative issue, Joel Berg said Friday.

"Is it liberal or conservative to improve rural fire protection?" asked Berg, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Service director. "Is it left wing or right wing to improve the water supply for farmers?"

One USDA AmeriCorps program is designed to build 35 dry fire hydrants in each parish of Louisiana. A dry fire hydrant makes it easier for fire engines to pump water out of surface ponds.

Another program actively pursued in central Louisiana is Farm-A-Syst, in which farmers learn how to avoid risks to well water caused by various agricultural practices.

In exchange for providing this service, each AmeriCorps volunteer receives about \$12,000 a year, plus about \$4,700 toward college tuition — or has that money topped off his student loan.

Berg delivered a pep talk to Louisiana AmeriCorps members Friday at the federal department's state headquarters in Alexandria.

"This is not just another big government giveaway," he said. "This is part of a big movement. You are proving the doubters wrong."

"The Washington press corps is used to the old ways of pork, large government programs, and not expecting much from citizens, and this is a program that only works with citizen involvement."

"People don't trust government, and because people are so cynical, that is precisely why you are so important. You are the link to bring government back to the people."

The program is fighting for its fiscal life, as Republican congressmen call for cuts in various domestic programs.

"AmeriCorps is going to live or die not based on lofty speeches from people like me from Washington, or really because of anything we really do in



Joel Berg: AmeriCorps is not "another big government giveaway. This is part of a big movement."

Washington," Berg told the AmeriCorps members. "It's going to live or die based on what you do."

AmeriCorps has made a difference in Louisiana and the South, said Don Gohmert, the USDA's state conservationist for Louisiana.

"They've brought a different dimension than we were able to provide through our ongoing programs," Gohmert said.

"For instance, we are assisting with the statewide dry hydrant project. We can provide the technical engineering support, but we don't have the resources to work directly with all the police juries, volunteer fire departments and local people to tell them about what they need to do to bring dry hydrants to their communities."

"It's a real assistance to a state like Louisiana, where we have high fire insurance costs, because we don't have fire hydrants."

Reducing the spread of fire furthers Gohmert's mission to conserve soil. Burned forests result in more soil erosion.

In another program, AmeriCorps member Aminul Mahfuz, based in Pineville, helps communities build timber

■ Please see PROGRAM, D-2

Metro

Alexandria Daily Town Talk

Saturday
April 1, 1995



AREA AMERICORPS workers met recently with Joel Berg, center, director of National Services for the Department of Agriculture. AmeriCorps workers assist with a variety of community needs.

The program has been active in Winnsboro since September. (photo by Monica Huff)

AmeriCorps... *Domestic 'Peace Corps' active in area*

By Vicki Adams
Contributing Writer

AmeriCorps, the national service organization signed into law by President Bill Clinton, has been termed a success since Winnsboro adopted it in the fall.

AmeriCorps has been called the president's domestic version of the Peace Corps. Sponsored by government agencies, it allows groups of people to perform critical services to meet environmental, human, public safety and educational needs.

The members of AmeriCorps assist with tourism development, community planning, rural fire protection, timber bridge replacement and farm safety.

Lee Wooldridge, a local member of AmeriCorps, says he enjoys helping people in the community.

"I don't mind helping people and I do it everyday," Wooldridge said.

"A program I'm working on now is tutoring students in grades K-7. I'm also giving farm safety classes at local elementary schools."

Wooldridge is sponsored by Rural Economic and Community Development (RECD), which is a subset of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The USDA is a large supporter of the AmeriCorps program. Other agencies under USDA are Forest Service (FS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Judith Ned of Baton Rouge now lives in Winnsboro as a community planner for 12 surrounding parishes.

Susan Mullins of Mangham helps Ned with the 12 parishes



Joel Berg

as tourism specialist.

"I like the benefits of AmeriCorps," Mullins said. "It pays child care while I'm working and I know the education and money are there if I ever decide to go back to school."

Donna Remedies, the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) coordinator, is the AmeriCorps supervisor over Ned and Mullins.

"I don't feel I could have accomplished as much in the community since I've been here without the girls' help," Remedies said. "All the members under FS are college graduates. They could be making a lot more money but they chose to help here. We get a lot done."

Joel Berg, the director of National Services for the Department of Agriculture, visited Winnsboro on March 30 to speak to AmeriCorps members in the area. He oversees 1,200 AmeriCorps members serving in USDA anti-hunger, environmental and rural development projects in 33 states.

"AmeriCorps is about four

things: getting things done, community, opportunity and responsibility," Berg said.

"It creates more jobs, a cleaner environment and safer community. You'll soon see how critical it is to your community."

The AmeriCorps also participated in Saturday's Catfish Festival, where they manned a children's booth.

Sandy Eley, a local AmeriCorps member who's also with the Macon Ridge Economic Development Foundation, coordinated the booth, which included face painting, cartoon characters and information about farm safety, mental health, conservation awareness and fire safety.

The booth also featured identification cards for the children, which will be registered with the police station.

Rural areas may get fire hydrants

By Karl Belvin
Staff reporter

A Rapides Parish Police Jury committee took preliminary steps Tuesday to join a program designed to bring fire hydrants to rural areas.

Through the program, materials for 35 dry hydrants would be provided at no cost to the parish by Twin Valley Resource Conservation and Development District in Natchitoches.

The Police Jury would be responsible for providing equipment and labor for installing the hydrants.

Tressa K. Lantz, an AmeriCorps participant repre-

senting the district, told jurors that a dry hydrant is a non-pressurized pipe system which is permanently installed in a lake, pond or stream in areas not serviced by other hydrants.

These hydrants can be used as alternate water sources for volunteer fire departments in rural areas and also for road maintenance work, she said.

If the jury agrees to take part in the program, Twin Valley would provide pipes, hydrant heads and strainers for 35 sites around the parish, Ms. Lantz said.

Money for the materials is to be provided by a grant from the

state Department of Natural Resources, she said, although the contract for this funding is still being finalized. Because the contract has yet to be completed, Ms. Lantz could not comment on the amount of funding the state will provide.

Once finalized, however, the money would be allocated to Trailblazer Conservation and Development District in Ruston, which is coordinating the project statewide.

Twin Valley is handling the program in 26 parishes, including Rapides, Ms. Lantz said.

The jury's Fire, Rural Development and Agricultural Affairs Committee passed a resolution in support of the project and named Juror Richard Billings, committee chairman, as coordinator of the project for the parish.

Billings said he would be putting together a committee of rural and VPD fire chiefs in the parish to come up with plans for the program.

He also said that the parish has been pursuing a system of dry hydrants for rural areas since

1992 when a map of potential locations was put together.

Ms. Lantz explained that the 1992 program was contracted with a different coordinator and that the program has now been changed to Trailblazer.

In other matters, the Federal Programs Committee heard a proposal from jury President Myron Lawson for a grass-roots, letter-writing campaign in opposition to proposed cuts in federal funding to Job Training Partnership Act programs and food and nutrition programs.

Lawson said these proposed cuts in social programs would most hurt "the young, the poor and the needy."

Terry Bounds, parish director of JTPA programs, said the newly elected Congress has launched a "feeding frenzy" on social programs.

With the cuts, the JTPA's summer program could lose 500 to 600 jobs for young people, Bounds told jurors.

He also pointed out that federal funding for JTPA programs 15 years ago was \$6 million. That sum is now down to \$2 million, and with the proposed cuts, could fall to just over \$1 million.

In light of the detrimental impact the cuts could have to the parish, Lawson urged other jurors and the public to take part

in the letter-writing campaign.

In environmental matters, the Grant Coordinating, Personnel and Civil Service Committee heard a report on parish recycling from coordinator Randal Moore.

Mrs. Moore said the city of Pineville is in its fourth week of a new curbside recycling program and is averaging 11 tons per week. This amount could double once commercial businesses begin adding their recyclable materials to the program, she said.

In another environmental concern, Albertia Roshto of the Tioga Environmental Action Committee read a proclamation from her organization before the Public Health and Liaison Committee.

The proclamation stated that the organization is not anti-business or anti-industry, but that is against any commercial enterprise that seeks to treat, store or dispose of hazardous materials or that has to be permitted by the state Department of Environmental Quality for locating in Tioga.

In other matters, the committees discussed creating a new Police Jury logo, giving the president authority to issue proclamations for historical events and recognize outstanding citizens.

THE NATCHITOCHES TIMES
NATCHITOCHES, LOUISIANA
APRIL 20, 1995

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 field experience to the project and their successful pilot program

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

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

A dry hydrant is a non-pressurized pipe system permanently

installed in existing lakes, ponds and streams.

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

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

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

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

Water is also a key ingredient to maintaining gravel roads.

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

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

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



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

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.

Acadia School fourth graders babysitting 400 fry

by Angela K. Lagasse
MADAWASKA - Gina Jandreau of Madawaska is the mother of a 1-year old son, Alex, is expecting her second child soon and has just become the proud mother of another 400 babies.

Jandreau is a fourth grade science teacher at Acadia School in Madawaska where 400 Atlantic landlock salmon eggs have recently been delivered. The eggs are in an incubation tank which was donated by Fraser Paper Ltd. in Madawaska.

Salmonid Coordinator Amanda Smith of Presque Isle delivered the eggs to

Jandreau's classroom last week. Smith is employed by Ameri-Corps. The sponsors of this project are the Atlantic Salmon Association, SALEN and the St. John Aroostook R. C and D.

A number of tanks are currently up and running in New Brunswick, said Smith. This is the first one to be placed this far north on the American side of the border.

According to Smith projects of this type are ongoing in southern Maine, however, Acadia School is the first school north of Woodland to agree to participate in the project. She added, "We hope to have a

tank in each school along the river in the near future."

The incubation tank is a large aquarium with circulating water and insulation surrounding the tank. The eggs are sensitive to light, so in order for the students to watch the development of the eggs, a small hinged window was placed in the front of the tank for the students to take a quick peek.

Jandreau said she got involved in this project when Smith asked her about it. Jandreau said she was glad to take part. The project is being taken care of by two science classes at Acadia School.

Jandreau received much

direction on the care of the eggs and sac fry. She also had to prepare in advance by finding pebbles and boiling them to prepare the tank. She added, "The night before the tank was delivered to us, I sent my husband outside to try and dig through the snow for a few more pebbles to be sure I had enough."

The eggs should become sac fry in the next three weeks. When they become "pinkie length" they will be released into local brooks, said Smith. This should take place in early June.

President of SALEN Philip Soucy said Friday, "We are delighted to bring the project of introducing salmon in the Upper St. John, to school children." Soucy said that Fraser made the project possible for Madawaska and he hopes to

be able to get a local sponsor in the Fort Kent area soon. "We would like to see a tank at the Fort Kent Elementary School but we do need a sponsor first," he added.

Smith said it is definitely a community project and a community effort. She added, "We hope to have an increase in the nearby communities by next year."

The students are excited about the project. They are able to witness the project of releasing Atlantic landlock salmon into the brooks where the salmon can be enjoyed by families and tourists in the area.

Danielle Ouellette, a fourth grade student, announced while stepping up to the tank for a quick look, "Coming soon to a brook near you."

Pascagoula native serves in AmeriCorps

By DEBBIE WOOD
Mississippi Press Staff

Shelly Foutz-Lowe of Pascagoula is making a positive difference in the lives of Natchez citizens through the AmeriCorps program.

Implemented by President Bill Clinton, AmeriCorps is a national service initiative to achieve results in addressing the nation's critical education, human service, public safety and environmental needs of the community.

Shelly is a member of the inaugural group of AmeriCorps participants in Mississippi. She is working with the City of Natchez planning department.

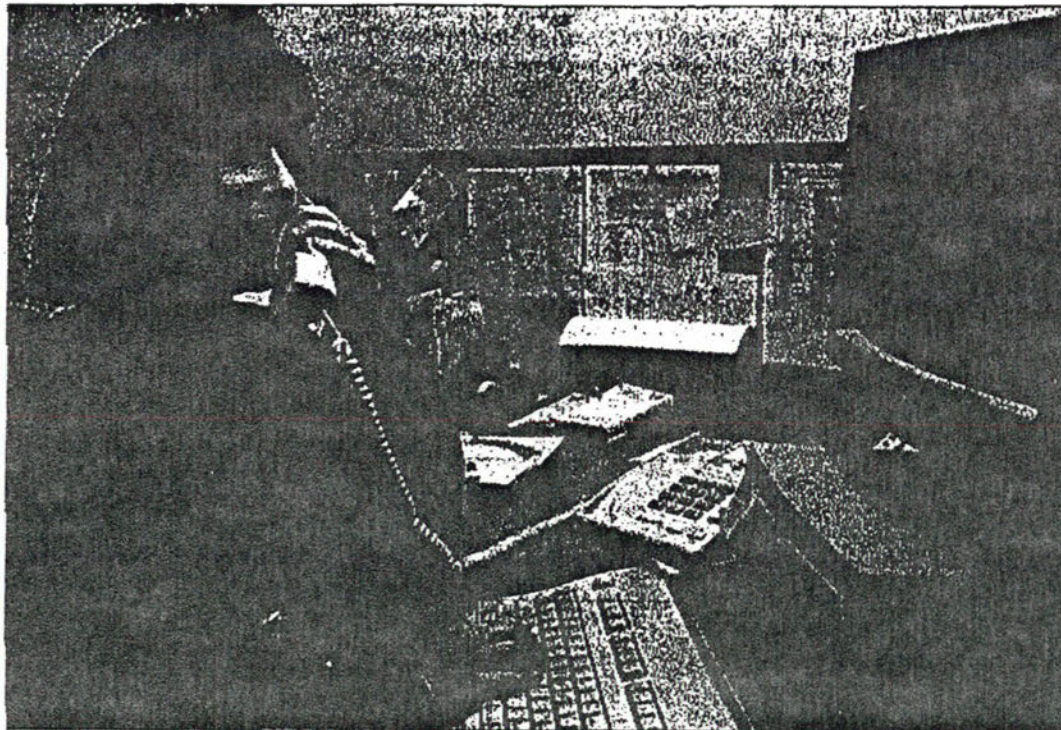
"We sat down and discussed what programs we thought would be best for Natchez," Shelly said. "I knew I wanted to work with young people and since Mississippi has the number one teenage pregnancy rate in the nation, we decided to work on this issue."

Not only is Shelly dealing with teen pregnancy prevention, she is also working with girls who are already pregnant.

"I try to encourage them to stay in school, get their education and get the proper prenatal and postnatal care," she said.

Another objective is the reestablishment of the YMCA in Natchez. In 1968, the YMCA pulled out because of racial relations. Shelly said she hopes to bring the YMCA back into the community and support for these plans has been positive. She also wants to help community organizations pursue grants.

A 1989 graduate of Pascagoula High School, Shelly received a bachelor of science degree in psychology from the University of Southern Missis-



Staff Photo/Anna Ralola

MAKING A DIFFERENCE — Shelly Foutz-Lowe of Pascagoula is making a positive difference in Natchez with the AmeriCorps program initiated by President Bill Clinton. Shelly is working with teen

missippi in 1993.

A professor at USM, Richard Larkin, knew of Shelly's deep involvement in community activities and recommended the program to her. Shelly is one of 67 volunteers in this state working to make rural communities better places to live.

Although Shelly said she was shy in high school, she became involved in community activities in college. She volunteers at a sexual assault crisis center and the Christian soup services in Hattiesburg where her husband, Michael, is working on his doc-

torate degree in psychology at USM.

"My passion is for people less fortunate. I don't like to see anyone mistreated," Shelly said. "I like people and want to help them. I have a keen interest in young people and I'm a champion for these causes."

Shelly will volunteer in Natchez for about nine months, performing 1,700 hours of community service work. For her participation in AmeriCorps, she is receiving a stipend of \$8,000 and scholarship money worth more than \$4,700. She will go

pregnancy, teen pregnancy prevention, the reestablishment of a YMCA and assisting organizations in obtaining grants. Shelly is one of 67 AmeriCorps volunteers addressing different needs in Mississippi.

toward paying off student loans. She also receives travel expenses of \$1,600 as she goes throughout the state talking to community leaders.

"This work does not pay an enormous salary, but the rewards are astounding," Shelly said. "I get so much satisfaction out of helping people, helping them see their own self-worth. I want to let young people know that we haven't forgotten about them. I want them to know that without them, we have no future."

Shelly encourages others to

get involved in the AmeriCorps program which has received little media attention despite the great strides being performed in communities across the country.

"My main objective is to let people know this program is available, especially the middle class," she said. "We are the guinea pigs for this program. I'm breaking my neck to let people know because if the politicians in Washington cut this program out, then I hope everyone in this state gets a clear message, that these politicians don't care anything about the middle class."

"This program is for all classes of people, but mainly for the middle class. Without it, I would still be paying off my student loans. Everyone always has something to say about the President, but at least, he cares enough to try to help our education," Shelly said.

The program is designed for high school graduates who want to take a break before starting college, undergraduates who might want to take a year off between years of college to find out what direction they want to pursue and for college graduates who can use the scholarship money to pay off student loans or to use for graduate school.

Shelly said she is even encouraging her two younger brothers to become involved in the program, sponsored through the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The more people we get involved in the program, the more money we will get from the government," Shelly said. "There's a lot of potential in this state and I get sick and tired of reading and watching television about how bad it is here, when I

See AMERICORPS, P

Local news

Fire program seeks Amite help

By Sandra Nettles
Staff Writer

Reducing fire losses and insurance rates in rural areas is the goal, and identifying water sources throughout the county is the first step.

Canetti O'Brien, coordinator for the AmeriCorps Rural Fire Protection program, asked the Amite County Board of Supervisors on Monday for help in iden-

tifying ponds, streams and other water sources throughout the county that can be used by rural fire departments to fill tanker trucks. O'Brien, who works with Southwest Mississippi Resource Conservation and Development in Brookhaven, said the AmeriCorps program's goal is to improve rural fire protection and reduce fire insurance rates for rural residents.

"It's really a grass roots effort to get local firefighters to go in their districts and find water to use. Then we can coordinate with the county," she said. She explained that once water sources are found the supervisors will be asked to provide hard surface access roads to the bodies of water.

O'Brien invited the board to attend a meeting on the matter scheduled for Monday evening.

THE BOLIVAR COMMERCIAL
BOLIVAR COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
OCTOBER 10, 1994

AmeriCorps program may bring sewer improvements to Bolivar

By Margery Smith
BC Staff Writer

Bolivar County may soon be seeing needed developments and improvements in rural sewer systems, thanks to the efforts of those behind the new federal AmeriCorps program.

Lebrunski Richard, Bolivar County area member of the AmeriCorps program, explained that the program will be used to help pinpoint funds for and assist in the development of a rural sewer system in the county.

The program, which is President Clinton's national service initiative intended to address the nation's education, human service, public safety and environmental needs at the local level, also calls for the improvement of living conditions through urban forestry, according to information given by Richard.

However, Richard noted, the program will initially focus only on obtaining technical assistance with rural sewage systems in the county.

"Right now, we'll just be working on the sewer systems," Richard said. "We're looking at

Stanton subdivision (northwest of Cleveland), Hills and East Boyle subdivisions in Boyle, Shelby Farms, Isaac Daniels subdivision of Mound Bayou and Hogan subdivision of Mound Bayou."

Richard explained that he and Andrea Clark of Cleveland, the other team member of the county AmeriCorps program, will be working with the Bolivar County Board of Supervisors to ascertain money for a rural sewer system,

but the job of determining which area will be designated to receive the system will be left up to supervisors.

Area evaluation surveys have already been conducted in the aforementioned areas, said Richard, adding that he expects to meet with supervisors "in the next couple of weeks" to see if they have settled on a target area in the county for the sewer system.

Clarence Finley of Greenville, coordinator with the Northwest Mississippi Resource Conservation and Development Area (RCD) in Stoneville, confirmed that the AmeriCorps program will focus on rural sewer systems.

"We are a nonprofit organization based in the Mississippi Delta," explained Finley, who supervises Richard and Clark. "We are participating in the AmeriCorps program with the U.S. Forest Service, which is funding the program through RCD."

THE BELZONI BANNER
BELZONI, MISSISSIPPI
FEBRUARY 1, 1995

AMERICORPS TAKES
DRAMA AND

STORYTELLING TO CLASS

The local Americorps program, USDA Anti-Hunger Corps, sponsored a nutrition session on Wednesday, January 25, 1995 at the Ida Green Lower Elementary School in Belzoni. A captive audience of 37 students in Miss Rosie Smith's third grade class watched six corps members present "The Lonely Peanut Butter Sandwich" skit. In the skit, a small boy learns to add variety and more nutrition to his regular lunch, a peanut butter sandwich and milk.

Licensed dietitian Stephanie Gilmore, from Mid-Delta Home Health, talked to the class about good eating habits and the food pyramid. Gilmore also told a delightful and informative story of the "Nutra Bird". A hero, the Nutra Bird eats healthy foods and encourages others to be like him in order to live better and longer in his kingdom.

This session was the second of the Anti-Hunger nutrition workshops being held in Humphreys and Sunflower counties to promote good nutrition and health.

For more information about Americorps and the Anti-Hunger team, come to 202 N. Hayden St., Belzoni, MS or call (601) 247-1305.

Special Week Honors Earth

County Executive Jaycee Rawlings recently signed a proclamation declaring the week of April 15-22 "Celebrate the Earth" week in Humphreys County.

Rawlings said, "The observance of this week not only marks the 60th anniversary of the Soil Conservation Service and the 25th anniversary of Earth Day, but recalls to us as Humphreys Countians the mission we have to conserve our natural resources."

The AmeriCorps members and staff of Humphreys Soil Conservation District, in cooperation with the Natural Resources Conservation Service are continuing the theme Rawlings set for the week by hosting "Celebrate the Earth," an environmental field day at Blue Creek Nature Center in Waverly.

Celebrate the Earth is being held in conjunction with "A Celebration of the Land," a month-long observance by the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The event will take place April 20-21. Approximately 1,000 third through sixth graders from local schools will be treated to a day at the event. However, the public is invited to attend from 2:30-5 p.m. on April 20.

A variety of local industries, and state and federal agencies that deal with the conservation of natural resources will be present with hands-on displays and activities.

Likewise, the hiking trails and nature exhibit room of the Blue Creek Nature Center will be open to visitors. Special guests Ruby Raindrop and Sammy Soil will be on hand to greet visitors at the center.

Come out to Blue Creek Nature Center, located at the Humphreys Agriculture Center, to begin your celebration

**THE NEWS DEMOCRAT
HUMPHREYS COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI
APRIL 14, 1995**

PAGE 8-THE NEWS DEMOCRAT, FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1995

BLYTHEVILLE, MISSISSIPPI

Sunday, March 5, 1995

BLYTHEVILLE COURIER NEWS



Homebuyers workshop set

Mississippi County EOC will conduct a low-income, first-time homebuyers workshop from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday and each successive Monday through March 27.

The workshops will be at the Blytheville Neighborhood Center, 202 W. Main St.

Facilitators for the program are Sandra Smith, MCAEOC housing counselor, and Johnnie Campbell, AmeriCorps/RECDS member.

LEWISTON JOURNAL
LEWISTON, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 6, 1994

AmeriCorps members begin working for USDA Soil Conservation Service

Three AmeriCorps members have begun service with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Lewiston.

Mark Kunz, District Conservationist, Lewiston SCS, announced that Michael Aho of Moorhead, Linda Dahl of Lewiston, and Shelly Eckblad of Red Wing began their service on Oct. 3.

They are among 20 AmeriCorps members selected to work with the USDA SCS in Minnesota for one year.

Aho and Dahl will be located in Lewiston, and Eckblad will be in Rochester. Kunz said the members will be working on a project designed to improve the water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed through public participation to include improved nutrient and pesticide management within the watershed boundaries.

Gary Nordstrom, State Conservationist, SCS in St. Paul, said AmeriCorps is an exciting opportunity to help us get things done with people in the community. "A lot of people competed for our 20 AmeriCorps positions. We will demand quality work from them, just as if they were SCS federal employees, and I do expect them to be visible to the people in the community." SCS AmeriCorps members will wear either a cap, t-shirt, sweatshirt or pin with the AmeriCorps logo on it for

identification.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service program, a domestic Peace Corps of 20,000 members.

SCS AmeriCorps members will work 1,700 hours and receive a living allowance and an educational grant.

The 20 USDA SCS AmeriCorps members in Minnesota are headquartered out of five project sites and will be working on six different natural resource projects.

The projects focus on watershed public participation in Lewiston and Cloquet; conservation outreach and trails promotion in Twin Valley; grassland and pasture management in Rochester; and animal waste management in Thief River Falls.

For more information about AmeriCorps, contact any local office of the USDA SCS. Their offices are located in county seat towns throughout Minnesota.

RED WING REPUBLICAN EAGLE
LEWISTON, MINNESOTA
NOVEMBER 5, 1994

Agriculture

BRIEFS

AmeriCorps members begin work with Soil Conservation Service

LEWISTON, Minn. — Four AmeriCorps members including Shelly Eckblad of Red Wing have started work with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. They are among 20 AmeriCorps members selected to work in Minnesota for one year. They will be working on a project designed to improve water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed including improved nutrient and pesticide management.

200 farmers eligible for WQIP payments

By Jason Abraham
Winona Daily News

About 200 farmers in the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River watershed are eligible for incentive payments through a new Water Quality Incentive Program (WQIP) set to begin this winter.

Farmers in Winona, Wabasha and Olmsted counties are included in the program, which was approved by the USDA-Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS), recently renamed the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

According to a press release, the goal of the program is to reduce the amount of pollution entering the river from agricultural pollutants. Incentive payments are reimbursement for time and equipment that might be necessary to implement the new techniques.

Under the program, farmers will develop three-year management plans for practices that include pesticide, fertilizer and agricultural waste management. Members of AmeriCorps, the public service group formed by the Clinton administration, will assist farmers with the technical aspects of their management plans.

Linda Dahl, an AmeriCorps member, said they will help farmers come up with their own management plans, which will include projects like specialized crop rotation, contour farming methods and tillage methods. No structural projects — like dams — will be funded through WQIP.

Payments will be made to farmers based on what management practices need to be imple-

Participation

To participate in Water Quality Incentive Projects: Applications are being accepted through Dec. 9 at 4:30 p.m. at the ASCS offices in Winona or Olmsted counties. Any farmer or land user in the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River watershed is encouraged to apply.

Further information: Contact Linda Dahl or Mike Aho, 523-2171.

mented and the extent to which they are applied. WQIP payments will be limited to \$3,500 per year for a maximum of three years.

Dahl said a 1989 survey of residents in the Whitewater River watershed asked participants if they felt there was a water quality problem and if they would participate in programs that would address these problems. Fifty percent responded to the survey and 80 percent of the responses were positive.

A somewhat similar program in Rochester that involved residents in the Zumbro River watershed had good results for the past several years, Dahl said.

"We're hoping for a similarly good response with the Middle Branch project and from the survey, it looks like we'll get it," Dahl said.

Any farmers interested in participating in the program can submit an application during a sign-up period, which ends at 4:30 p.m. Dec. 9 at the ASCS office in Lewiston.

THE WINONA POST
WINONA, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 23, 1994

AmeriCorps members begin service with USDA soil conservation

Three AmeriCorps members have begun service with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Lewiston. Mark Kunz, District Conservationist, Lewiston SCS, announced that Michael Aho of Moorhead, Linda Dahl of Lewiston, and Shelly Eckblad of Red Wing began their service on October 3. They are among 20 AmeriCorps members selected to work with the USDA SCS in Minnesota for one year.

Aho and Dahl will be located in Lewiston, and Eckblad will be in Rochester. Kunz said the members will be working on a project designed to improve the water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed through public participation to include improved nutrient and pesticide management within the watershed boundaries.

Gary Nordstrom, State Conservationist, SCS in St. Paul, said "AmeriCorps is an exciting opportunity to help us get things done with people in the community. A lot of people competed for our 20 AmeriCorps positions. We will demand quality work from them, just as if they were SCS federal employees, and I

do expect them to be visible to the people in the community." SCS AmeriCorps members will wear either a cap, tee-shirt, sweatshirt or pin with the AmeriCorps logo on it for identification.

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For more information about AmeriCorps, contact any local office of the USDA SCS. Their offices are located in county seat towns throughout Minnesota.



Crookston DAILY TIMES

Published In Crookston For 110 Years

Price 50 Cents

What do you do with a soil survey?

This is the first in a series of stories on the Polk County Soil Survey.

By Brian Krzmarzick
AmeriCrops member

The Polk County Soil Survey was completed last fall. With spring here, this is a good time to think about why the soil survey was taken and how it can be used.

Many people have only a vague idea of what soils information can be used for; others frequently use the survey information. Patty Wright-Koll, soil scientist for Polk County, says that "appraisers

top the list in the number of requests, but inquiries have come in from environmental consulting groups, engineering firms and the Department of Energy."

According to Wright-Koll, some private citizens and farmers who are interested in finding out more about the land they own or are thinking of purchasing have requested soil maps. These examples, of course, do not include the daily use of soils maps by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) or the

Soil and Water Conservation District.

A published Soil Survey usually contains about 200 pages of maps, aerial photographs, tables and soil descriptions. This may seem a bit overwhelming to the average citizen but ease in using the survey is readily realized. The information that the Soil Survey encompasses ranges from soil textures to available water capacity.

Some of the data that is available from the survey includes

crop information, such as expected fertility levels, yields and ratings for suitability for farming. There are also charts within the survey that rate the different soil types for the suitability for land development and structures, such as buildings, ponds, septic systems or landfills.

History

Soil surveys were first published in the United States during the late 1800's. A renewed interest in the importance of soils began during the dust bowl era of

See SURVEY, page 5.

SURVEY

Continued from page 1

the 1930s. It was discovered that certain soil types blow or wash away more easily than others. During this period of discovery the Soil Conservation Service was established and the mapping of different soils types was increased.

The first mapping of Polk County began in the early 1930s by a Russian-born soil scientist, C.C. Nikiforoff, working for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in cooperation with the University of Minnesota. Agricultural Experiment Station, published the Red River Valley Reconnaissance Survey in 1939. The book contains generalized soil maps of seven Minnesota counties (Kittson to Traverse counties) adjacent to the Red River.

In the 1950s to the 1970s, more mapping was completed in scattered areas of Polk County on an as-needed basis for conservation planning. Over the years the concepts of mapping have changed. The classification systems have evolved with new methods and discoveries. The soils do not change (unless eroded) but our way of looking at them does.

In April of 1983, an agreement was signed to map all of Polk County. In August of '83, Project Leader Al Giencke and a limited crew began mapping. Over the years there was a large turnover of crew and Giencke turned over the project to Charles Saari in 1985. With the help of more than 20 people over 10 years, the project was completed in early fall of 1994.

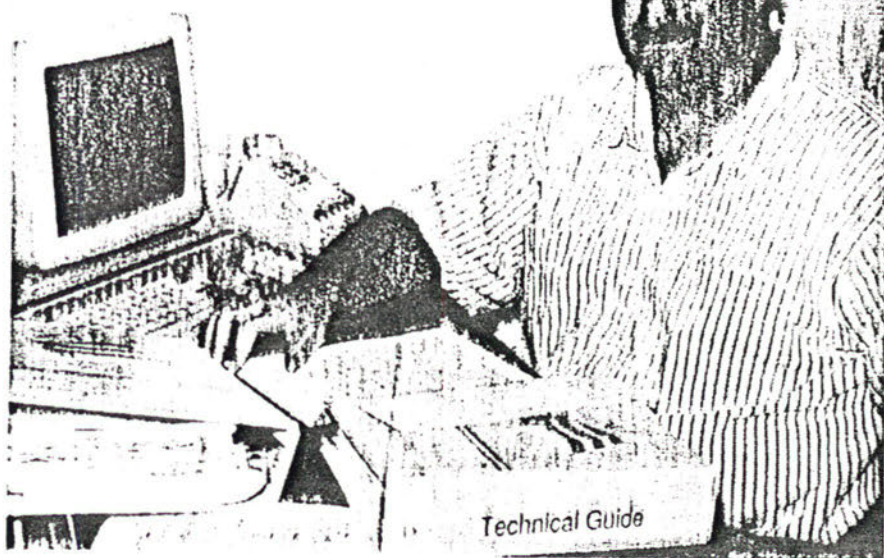
Of the extensive crew that worked to complete the project, two remain for the finishing details. Barry Hunyadi, who joined the group in 1988, and Patty Wright-Koll, who came in 1992, still work in the soil survey office in Crookston. Both of them are working to make sure the survey information is correct before its

printing.

As is true for most of the country, almost all counties in Minnesota have either been mapped or are in the process of being mapped. Over the years, Minnesota has developed a unified soils mapping system so that all soil surveys within the state use the same legend and soil descriptions.

Soil survey books, when published, will be available free of charge at the NRCS office. The Polk County survey is expected to be published within the next several years. An interim report should be available sooner.

In the region, soil survey books have already been published for Pennington, Kittson and Norman counties.



JACOBSMA IS AMERICORPS VOLUNTEER AT SCS—David Jacobsma of Luverne will be working at the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Warren as a volunteer with the AmeriCorps project. He will be helping inform the public about the SCS. — Sheaf Photo

**WARREN SHEAF
WARREN, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 19, 1994**

David Jacobsma Begins His AmeriCorps Service With SCS

David Rose, district conservationist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Warren, announces David Jacobsma of Luverne began his AmeriCorps service October 3 and is located in the Warren office. He is among 20 AmeriCorps members selected to work with the USDA SCS in Minnesota now through August 1995.

Rose said Jacobsma will be working on a project designed to provide community service by helping inform people about the SCS. He began his service with a USDA SCS AmeriCorps orientation program October 3-7 in St. Paul.

SCS AmeriCorps members will be highly visible. They will wear either a cap, T-shirt, sweatshirt or pin that shows the AmeriCorps logo, "We get things done."

Gary Nordstrom, state conservationist in St. Paul, said, "AmeriCorps is an exciting opportunity to help us get things done with people in the community. A lot of people competed for our 20 AmeriCorps positions. We will demand quality work from them, just as if they were federal SCS employ-

ees and I do expect them to be visible to the people in the community."

AmeriCorps represents President Clinton's fulfillment of a campaign pledge to create a national service program, a domestic Peace Corps of 20,000 AmeriCorps members.

The SCS AmeriCorps members will work 1,700 hours during their service time, will receive a living allowance between \$7,660 and \$12,000 and each member successfully completing his service requirements will be awarded a \$4,725 educational grant.

Minnesota's USDA SCS 10 AmeriCorps members are headquartered out of five projects sites and will be working on six different natural resource projects. The projects focus on watershed public participation in Cloquet and Lewiston, conservation outreach and trails promotion in Twin Valley, grassland and pasture management in Rochester and animal waste management in Thief River Falls.

For more information about AmeriCorps, contact any local office of the USDA SCS. Their offices are located in county seat cities throughout Minnesota.

Students part of Clinton's pilot program

AmeriCorps lends funds for services

By Craig McEwen
The Forum

TWIN VALLEY, Minn. — Fargoan Jeff York was preparing to enroll for classes at Moorhead State University when a brochure caught his eye.



Clinton

It was seeking applicants for AmeriCorps, the national community service program that President Clinton calls the most prized achievement of his administration.

A key incentive is the \$4,725 in college tuition that the six-month-old program offers its workers.

Participants, 17 years and older, commit to 11 months of community service — 40 hours per week — for which they earn near minimum wage salaries in addition to the tuition allowance.

Already, the U.S. House of Representatives wants to cut the \$500 million AmeriCorps budget by two-thirds. Five workers stationed at Twin Valley have mixed feelings about that.

They are among 20,000 nationwide and 20 in Minnesota who joined AmeriCorps when it began last September.

York, a 26-year-old MSU junior majoring in political science, admits that the tuition prodded him.

But he also wanted the job experience that the program would provide. "I thought it would be really beneficial to do something like this," York says, "as far as other opportunities that would be created."

It's the college stipend that Kathy Musch, a North Dakota State University zoology graduate, also found attractive.

But Musch, 22, also wanted to do conservation outreach work since her college emphasis was in wildlife and fisheries biology.

"I've gained a lot of experience



CRAIG MCEWEN/The Forum

AmeriCorps workers (from left) Jeff York, Holly Sirjord, Kelly Engen, Aaron Neubert and Kathy Musch stand along the Agassiz Recreational Trail near Twin Valley, Minn.

through it," she says.

Much of the Twin Valley group's effort involves promoting the 32-mile, Agassiz Recreational Trail that is being built on an abandoned railroad bed between Ulen and Fertile, Minn.

The multi-use trail will have two levels: the upper tier for snowmobiling, hiking, biking and bird watching and the lower for snowshoeing, skiing, dog sledding and horseback riding.

Other projects include promoting area tourism, seeking grants for a city park and planning a walking trail in Ada, Minn., helping with a water screening project in Halstad, Minn., promoting the planting of trees along state highways to eliminate snow drifts and soil erosion.

Holly Sirjord, 20, Gary, Minn., attended North Dakota State University for one year and hopes to go back after a stint with AmeriCorps.

"I just hope that this experience will help me with other jobs in the future," she says.

Sirjord is working with the Mahanomen, Minn., Chamber of Commerce and Mahanomen County to promote tourism.

Among her projects is the development of a map that will highlight the Agassiz Trail as well as area resorts, the Shooting Star Casino in Mahanomen and other tourist spots. The map, she says, will be distributed by area businesses.

Aaron Neubert, a 22-year-old Bemidji State University graduate from Mahanomen, is using his mass communications skills to promote the trail.

Neubert, whose college concentration was in broadcasting, is helping produce a promotional video for the Agassiz Trail. "That will be a pretty big project. We want it to be pretty professional," he says.

He is also helping Ada community leaders update a city development video.

AmeriCorps is a good program for more than one reason, he says.

"We're trying to bring economic development to small communities around here," Neubert says. "If we weren't here, nobody would be doing it."

Gary native Kelly Engen, 23, was previously in charge of the Norman County Soil and Water Conservation District's tree program.

Now an AmeriCorps worker, Engen is asking local landowners to set aside land for planting trees — or what he calls a "living snow fence" — along Highway 200, west of Ada.

The Norman County Soil and Water Conservation District, he says, will begin planting about 1,500 trees in May along the first three-mile stretch of the project.

Engen, who had completed 1½ years at Northland Community

College in Thief River Falls, Minn., majoring in conservation law, says the grant will help pay the remainder of his education costs when he returns to school.

Musch says she thinks the AmeriCorps program should be continued a second year because it provides a benefit to small communities.

"I think it's a good program especially for people who have to take out loans for college," says Sirjord.

York, from a political science standpoint, agrees that federal budget cuts should be considered.

"I can see the concern in budget increases because this could potentially be another billion dollar program," he says.

But those who want to cut AmeriCorps funding, he says, shouldn't go in there "hacking away" without taking a close look at what the program has accomplished.

POST BULLETIN
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 26, 1994

City/Region

Jay Furst,
city editor, 285-7742

Americorps members help soil conservation efforts

Americorps, a national service program started by President Clinton, is up and running with four members working in the Soil Conservation Service in southeastern Minnesota.

The four members are working in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service offices in Lewiston and Rochester.

Michael Aho of Moorhead, Linda Dahl of Lewiston and Shelly Eckblad of Red Wing are working in the Lewiston office on a project designed to improve the water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed through public participation in the effort.

Tracy Gudmiller of Fairmont is working in Rochester to help improve the forage and grassland base, improve water quality and increase profitability of agriculture while enhancing the environment.

The Soil Conservation Service in Minnesota has 20 students involved with it through Americorps, which has been called a domestic Peace Corps.

The Southeastern Minnesota Initiative Fund, Mankato State University and Winona State University are administering the program, and held a ceremony today announcing its start.

TWIN VALLEY
TWIN VALLEY, MINNESOTA
DECEMBER 6, 1994

Buildings at county fairgrounds to be painted

The AmeriCorps Rural Development Team last week announced one of its community service projects for the month of May will be to paint buildings at the Norman County Fairgrounds at Ada.

Ten Northwest Minnesota AmeriCorps members, along with three North Dakota AmeriCorps members, will be painting the buildings from 9 to 4 o'clock on Thursday, May 11th. The Norman County Fair Board will furnish the supplies for the services and a few volunteers for the day.

Volunteers are welcome to help. Any interested organizations or individuals should contact the Twin Valley AmeriCorps members at

(218) 584-8205.

AmeriCorps is the new domestic Peace Corps created by President Clinton and Congress to engage Americans of all backgrounds in direct service to their communities in exchange for an educational benefit that can be used to pay for college, job training, or to repay student loans.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is operating three types of AmeriCorps teams composed of approximately 1,200 members serving 38 states nationwide: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team.

AmeriCorps applies for heritage center grant

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), formerly Soil Conservation Service (SCS), AmeriCorps members announced today information about their recent progress.

The Twin Valley AmeriCorps members assigned to help coordinate the Agassiz Recreational Trail (A.R.T.) have submitted a grant for an Information Heritage Center in Twin Valley. This would be a replica of the old Twin Valley depot and would be built along the A.R.T. The Information Heritage Center would house 24-hour restrooms for trail users.

For community service projects, all 12 AmeriCorps members in NW Minnesota, participated in the Crookston Clean-Up on November 9th. Along with area volunteers, the AmeriCorps members picked up litter on the two main one-way streets.

On November 15th the AmeriCorps members received wind and water erosion training in Red Lake Falls, from area District Conservationists Dave Dornbusch and Randy Huelskamp. This training also touched on some of the formulas used to measure crop residue loss.

Of the funds appropriated from the Minnesota State Lottery by the LCMR (Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources) for the Agassiz Recreational Trail, there

was an allocation for the establishment of a walking trail in the city of Ada. AmeriCorps A.R.T. coordinators are helping the City of Ada develop a plan of work, so construction on the Ada Trail can begin this spring.

The A.R.T. Citizens Advisory Board chose Shelley Johnson of Twin Valley as the winner of the A.R.T. Logo contest. She will receive a \$50 savings bond.

On November 23 the AmeriCorps members went through a team building rope course at the MSU Regional Science Center. Each member went through a series of low rope courses and one high rope course. The emphasis of the day was setting individual goals and accomplishing those goals through teamwork.

The Conservation Outreach members have been working on organizing a Crop Residue Alliance for their respective counties. An initial letter of contact has been put together along with a list of area agri-businesses. In the coming months, the AmeriCorps members working on this project will be going to these businesses to discuss the potential contributions they can make. Also, they will be traveling to the landowners of priority living snowfence land and discussing the potential of their land for the planting of trees for the living snowfence project.

THE WINONA POST
WINONA, MINNESOTA
OCTOBER 23, 1994

AmeriCorps members begin service with USDA soil conservation

Three AmeriCorps members have begun service with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in Lewiston. Mark Kunz, District Conservationist, Lewiston SCS, announced that Michael Aho of Moorhead, Linda Dahl of Lewiston, and Shelly Eckblad of Red Wing began their service on October 3. They are among 20 AmeriCorps members selected to work with the USDA SCS in Minnesota for one year.

Aho and Dahl will be located in Lewiston, and Eckblad will be in Rochester. Kunz said the members will be working on a project designed to improve the water quality of the Whitewater River Watershed through public participation to include improved nutrient and pesticide management within the watershed boundaries.

Gary Nordstrom, State Conservationist, SCS in St. Paul, said "AmeriCorps is an exciting opportunity to help us get things done with people in the community. A lot of people competed for our 20 AmeriCorps positions. We will demand quality work from them, just as if they were SCS federal employees, and I

do expect them to be visible to the people in the community." SCS AmeriCorps members will wear either a cap, tee-shirt, sweatshirt or pin with the AmeriCorps logo on it for identification.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service program, a domestic Peace Corps of 20,000 members.

SCS AmeriCorps members will work 1,700 hours and receive a living allowance and an educational grant.

The 20 USDA SCS AmeriCorps members in Minnesota are headquartered out of five project sites and will be working on six different natural resource projects. The projects focus on watershed public participation in Lewiston and Cloquet; conservation outreach and trails promotion in Twin Valley; grassland and pasture management in Rochester; and animal waste management in Thief River Falls.

For more information about AmeriCorps, contact any local office of the USDA SCS. Their offices are located in county seat towns throughout Minnesota.

TWIN VALLEY TIMES
THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA
MARCH 5, 1995

AmeriCorps members here improve environment and promote tourism

Five members of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) AmeriCorps Rural Development Team in Twin Valley announced that in their last few months of service they have made significant progress improving wildlife habitats, promoting local tourism and providing conservation outreach by designing living snow fences.

AmeriCorps works with the Agassiz Wildlife Refuge in order to provide Habitats for Animals, constructing brush lodgings for various wildlife. The AmeriCorps members also worked with the Snowdrifters Snowmobile Club in Thief River Falls to help prepare for the Iron Man 250 snowmobile race. Other community service projects include Give Water A Hand water screen-

ing project in Halstad, and helping set up and staffing an AmeriCorps booth at the Red River Valley Winter Shows in Crookston.

AmeriCorps members working on the Agassiz Recreational Trail (A.R.T.) project have completed an A.R.T. pre-brochure and are developing a Mahanomen County tourism brochure. They are also preparing a grant for a city park in Ada, and working on the plans for the Ada walking trail. The AmeriCorps members have received a grant for \$200 from Polaris to help with the promotion of A.R.T.

AmeriCorps members working on the Conservation Outreach project have constructed a working Living Snow Fence Model to better demonstrate a need for such a program. A living snow fence is one or many rows of trees planted along a roadway to stop snow from drifting across. Members also organized a tillage demonstration to be held in late August of this year. AmeriCorps has received \$3,000 from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) and \$1,500 from the Watershed Advisory Group to help with both of these projects.

AmeriCorps is the new domestic Peace Corps created by President Clinton and Congress to engage Americans of all backgrounds in direct service to their communities in exchange for an educational benefit that can be used to pay for college, job training, or to repay back student loans.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is sponsoring three types of AmeriCorps teams composed of approximately 1,200 members serving 38 states nationwide: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team.

Down East

AmeriCorps grant to fund 8 jobs in Washington County

By Clayton Beal
Of the NEWS Staff

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has awarded the state a grant to fund 20 positions in the AmeriCorps National Service project, including eight jobs in Washington County to benefit cranberry growers, staff a clam hatchery and conduct water quality studies.

The total cost of the ACNS project beginning in September is expected to be about \$500,000. In addition to a federal grant of more than \$300,000, several participating government agencies will provide matching funds for the overall project. Each agency will be expected to contribute about \$1,800 toward each position funded with a stipend of \$12,000.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service initiative that allows people to earn college or vocational school scholarships or credit to pay off existing educational loans while performing critical service to meet human, environmental, public safety and educational needs.

Any Maine citizen, age 17 or older, is eligible to apply for one of the

positions. The program will require applicants to have at least two years of college course work. There is no maximum or minimum family income requirement. Applications will be accepted until Aug. 5.

Those hired under the service program will work one year, earning \$12,000. Those with a minimum of 1,700 hours of service, also will receive an educational award worth \$4,725.

Dana Nelson, coordinator for the bi-county Down East Resource and Development agency at Cherryfield, prepared the grant application on behalf of several participating organizations. He said Friday that the grant was approved by the AmeriCorp Foundation.

"Twenty positions will be funded statewide, eight in the Down East RC&D area. The Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District will have two water quality coordinators; The University of Maine at Machias and the Beals Island Regional shellfish Hatchery at Beals will have five positions; and there will be one cranberry coordinator position working out of

the Down East RC&D office in Cherryfield," he explained. "We were very fortunate to receive eight positions in Washington County."

The cranberry industry in Washington and Hancock counties will benefit from the enhancement of an Integrated Crop Management Program for growers. Nelson said the cranberry coordinator would work out of Cherryfield.

Nathan Pennell, office manager for the Washington County S&WCD office at Machias, said one of the two water quality coordinators would perform water quality studies on the St. Croix River watershed at Calais. The other coordinator would study the Chandler River watershed in the Jonesboro region, and would implement a coastal water quality monitoring program from Roque Bluffs to Addison. The studies will include recommendations favoring water protection and pollution cleanup.

Five ACNS positions will be utilized by the shellfish hatchery at Beals. They will be involved in a variety of hatchery operations, including experimental research on clam beds.

Volunteers in AmeriCorps Help Cultivate, ● Preserve Natural Resources in Downeast Area

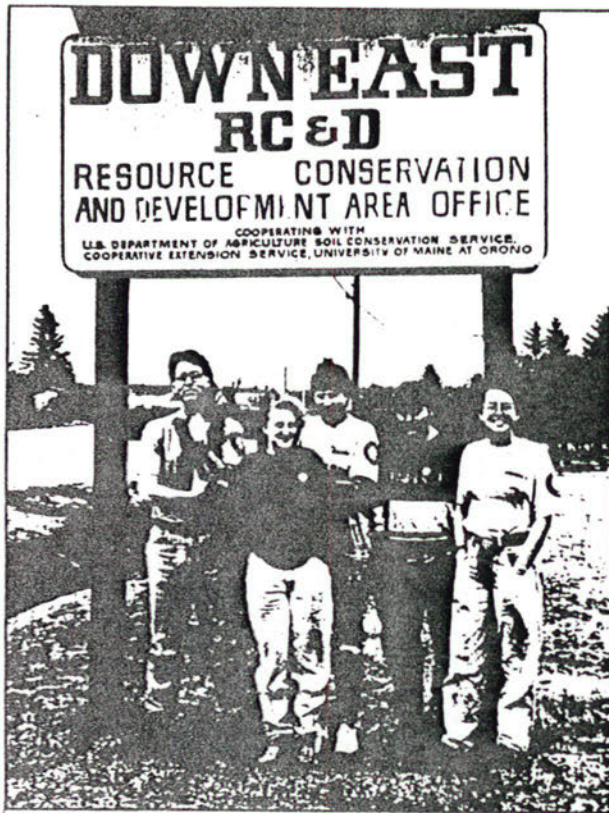
BY MARY ANNE CLANCY
CHERRYFIELD—Washington County's eight AmeriCorps volunteers are leaving their mark on everything from cranberries to logging practices to seed clams.

Most of them like their positions so much that they are thinking of signing up for another year if Congress funds President Bill Clinton's national service initiative.

A repeat performance would be just fine with the staff of the three Washington County programs to which they are assigned. The AmeriCorps volunteers have helped those programs extend their services in times of reduced funding and overextended staff.

In Washington County, the AmeriCorps positions are geared to water quality and community outreach. As part of 20 AmeriCorps positions under USDA's Soil Conservation Service, the eight workers are assigned to the Washington County Soil & Water Conservation District, the Down East Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D), and the Beals Island Regional Shellfish Hatchery.

The volunteers have also made the difference known in high schools across the county. Stu-



STAFF PHOTO BY MARY ANNE CLANCY

Five of Washington County's AmeriCorps volunteers gathered to discuss their water quality projects at the Down East RC&D in Cherryfield recently. From left to right are Mark Chellis, Teresa Simeone, Jane Lamson, Robert Klimas, and Barbara Coffey.

dents from Lubec, Eastport, Calais, Washington Academy, Narraguagus, and Jonesport-Beals contribute to an environmental newsletter. The students at Jonesport-Beals and at Machias Memorial High School are producing a video on water quality. Jonesport-Beals students

are helping state agencies and town selectmen conduct a shore survey that could result in the opening of closed clam flats in their communities.

The AmeriCorps volunteers also go into the classroom, talking to students about water quality. This summer, they'll offer a

teacher training program on water quality issues.

The volunteers say their experiences have been positive. In addition to earning money to pay for their college educations or pay back student loans, the on-the-job training is helping with career decisions.

Karen Mushrall of Bucksport is the cranberry water quality coordinator working with the RC&D cranberry committee. RC&D coordinator Dana Nelson said Mushrall has enrolled in a graduate program at University of Maine at Orono and will work on an upland cranberry research project with Dr. David Yarborough.

Mushrall developed the interest in upland cranberries over the last six months working with Washington and Hancock County cranberry growers. Her concentration has been on Integrated Crop Management (ICM). ICM reduces use of pesticides and fertilizers and a grower's cost by emphasizing sampling for insect, diseases, and nutrients, rather than automatically applying chemicals.

ICM is also a focus of Karen Bert's work. Bert, who has a degree in environmental studies and journalism from Evergreen University in Georgia, is the water quality coordinator for the Chandler-Indian River watershed in western Washington County.

Working under direction of district conservationist Dave Garcelon, Bert has been concentrating on blueberry ICM and best management practices for blueberry growers.

Garcelon said Bert just completed the last of four best management practice workshops for blueberry growers in Machias, Ellsworth, South Paris, and Union. Those workshops focused on the best ways to apply herbicides so that they don't leach into groundwater, and were attended by 130 people, Garcelon said.

Bert also assisted in organizing an April 15 workshop on growing native highland cranberries—a product that may create a niche market, he said.

Barbara Coffey of Bowdoin also works under Garcelon's supervision as the water quality coordinator for the St. Croix River. She has completed her course work in environmental studies at University of Maine in Machias (UMM). Her AmeriCorps focus is logging practices, which have one of the largest impacts on water quality in the St. Croix.

Coffey speaks with enthusiasm about the three logging and landowner workshops she assisted with in cooperation with district forester Geneva Duncan. The sessions in Calais, Machias, and Ellsworth attracted 150 people. The Maine Forest Service has adopted the program and plan to offer them statewide, she said.

"The workshops went really well, and I followed up with a letter to people who attended," she said. "Champion responded by

asking for a workshop on road-building techniques."

Coffey said she hopes to continue in the AmeriCorps program for another year before returning to UMM to complete her degree by student teaching.

The five AmeriCorps workers at the Beals Island Regional Shellfish Hatchery are just as enthusiastic. They have been working on clam spawning experiments, trying to determine the best water temperatures in order to increase the numbers of clams spawned.

"We got clams to spawn the earliest ever," said Rob Klimas, a native of Millinocket who is working toward a degree in marine biology at UMM. "I've been a clam digger for 12 years, and this whole thing is really thrilling."

Karen Malley of Minnesota graduated from UMM with a degree in environmental sciences last year. In addition to working on the high school environmental newsletter, she is giving a lecture series on aquaculture at UMM. Hatchery manager Dwayne Shaw said the hatchery will offer a retraining program this summer for fishermen who are interested in moving into shellfish aquaculture.

Teresa Simeone of Rhode Island has one more class to go before receiving her degree in biology from UMM and said she'd like to do another year of AmeriCorps.

Simeone is helping biologists from the Department of Marine Resources to prepare for the shoreland surveys of Jonesport and Beals. DMR, the Maine Department of Environmental Protection, town selectmen and Jonesport-Beals students, are working together on the project, she said.

Jane Lamson is originally from Portland and graduated from UMM last year with a degree in education. Her teaching focus is science, and she's been working on the newsletters and has taken the lead on environmental education in the schools.

Lamson said she's applying for science teaching positions throughout coastal Maine.

Mark Chellis's interest is in marine ecosystems. The Gorham native graduated from UMM with a degree in environmental sciences and is working on production of the water quality video. The AmeriCorps volunteers wrote a successful \$1,000 grant application to fund the project. Chellis said the Jonesport-Beals students wrote the script and students from Machias Memorial High School are editing the program and putting it together.

The program will be aired on the public access station in Machias.

The present positions are funded through September. Nelson said the RC&D is already working on applications for next year's positions.

Young AmeriCorps volunteers are tackling WMNF projects

32-member
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working on
conservation
tasks -- unless
their new
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By WENDY HANSCOM

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

DAN MARTEL
AmeriCorps member

they have completed 1,700 hours of service.

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

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

"I'm here because I want to ex-

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

See AMERICORPS, page 3

Ashland High students adopt Aroostook River

by Jenny Steffens

Ashland high school students are skipping class to go fishing.

But they're not getting many bites or getting in trouble with the principal.

Rather, the 12 students, ranging from freshman to seniors, are involved in an "Adopt a Stream Program" which has taken them from classroom lectures to field trips at fish hatcheries.

The program, which began in April 15 and finishes at the end of the school year, ranges from river cleanup days to water quality testing.

"I thought it would be fun," said 17-year-old Teresa Godsoe about joining the program. "And it has," she added.

Senior Annie Coursey said she joined out of interest.

"I'm in environmental science," Coursey said. "And it was suggested by one of my teachers."

The Adopt a Stream Program was initiated and implemented by Nicky Violette, an Americorps volunteer based in Presque Isle. Americorps, similar in nature to the Peace Corps, is an initiative for community work signed by President Bill Clinton in September 1994.

Under the direction of Violette, and with the cooperative effort of Ashland teachers, the students are studying watershed, water pollution, building a model of the Aroostook River and visiting sites

crucial to the restoration of rivers.

One such trip took the students off campus to a salmon hatchery on the Sheridan Road in Ashland. The hatchery, recently built by Atlantic Salmon for Northern Maine, plans to raise more than three million fish.

There, students saw the beginning stages of raising salmon and learned about the history of salmon on the Aroostook River.

"The whole movement of salmon restoration is very much in the grass roots stage," said Mike Hill, regional coordinator of the Atlantic Salmon Federation based in Brunswick. "And it's a vital link to the survival of the Atlantic salmon."

Hill added that Atlantic salmon are a good indicator species, meaning that if the salmon are coming back there is good water quality.

"That's the thrust of this project," Hill said. "To get things started and have the salmon come back."

The hatchery will distribute the salmon from Millinocket to Fort Fairfield, said Jim Barresi, a member of the board of directors of Atlantic Salmon for Northern Maine.

"This is going to be quite some salmon river," said Amanda Smith, also an Americorps volunteer.

"This river had great salmon runs," Barresi responded, recalling earlier years. Then smiling, he added, "This is our hospital for fish."



RIVER PROJECT - Ashland high school students, Shannon Currier, left, and Rachel Chapman, work on building a model of the Aroostook River as part of an "Adopt a Stream Program." (Steffens photo)

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See AMERICORPS, page 2

AmeriCorps

Continued from page 1



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

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

AmeriCorps arrived at Bog Brook on Jan. 14. The crew spent the first few days learning about each other and the program. Last Wednesday was their first full-day working in the national forest.

Their work in the forest will be demanding and labor-intensive, according to Rebecca Oreskes of the U.S. Forest Service.

Corps members will create wildlife habitat, clear for scenic vistas, paint and do maintenance work at forest recreation sites, and build and maintain trails.

"It lets us get a whole lot of projects up off the ground that we otherwise wouldn't be able to do," Oreskes said. "We're really impressed with the quality of people who've come. They're not getting lots of money and we're really pleased with their skills, dedication and determination. They really want to work and do a service."

The Forest Service manpower has been hurt by federal cutbacks the past few years.

At times during the year, corps members will share Bog Brook facilities with the National Guard. For most of the summer, the entire AmeriCorps crew will be camped

"In the summer, we'll focus primarily on trail work and environmental education," said project director Bryan Yeaton. "We'll learn more about the Forest Service and what they do. We'll be teaching people to leave the forest as good as, or better than, they found it."

Searching for more projects

During their year with AmeriCorps, crew members are also encouraged to take up a personal volunteer project in the surrounding community.

Those projects can be anything from volunteering at the local library or school to helping environmental groups with concerns like water quality, erosion control or community education.

They're willing to listen to about any pitch, Yeaton said, and he'd welcome project ideas from local non-profit civic, educational and governmental groups.

"We want to get into the schools," said corps-member Dan Martel, an electrical engineering graduate. "We're anxious to tell people about what we're doing."

AmeriCorps members are also looking for recreational ideas. Some crew members have cars and travel home for the weekend, but others do not and won't get home too often.

Cathy Newell, SAD44 Adult Ed director, is trying to help organize some activities, she said, and would

LANSING STATE JOURNAL
LANSING, MICHIGAN
JANUARY 26, 1995

AmeriCorps

Keep Clinton crew active

EDITORIAL

The hands-on spirit of President Bill Clinton's AmeriCorps enhances the State of the Union as well as mid-Michigan.

National service corps workers took their rightful place in the audience for Clinton's State of the Union address Tuesday night.

Their work clearly demonstrates how state-federal partnerships help revitalize communities. Their labor helps pay off college loans.

Last fall, Michigan's first U.S. Department of Agriculture AmeriCorps crew began helping farmers control runoff to the Grand River. They identify potential sources of groundwater pollution — a first step toward prevention.

In all, AmeriCorps assigned 15 workers to assist farmers in six watersheds protect their groundwater. Each put in 1,700 hours for a \$12,000 living stipend, education awards for college or vocational training, health insurance and a child-care allowance.

Watershed areas include the upper and lower Grand, Kalamazoo River, River Raisin, Black River, Pine River and an area in Leelanau and Benzie counties that drains into Lake Michigan.

AmeriCorps should be protected and preserved regardless of changes in the Washington power structure. A national service program connected to college loans remains a non-partisan priority.

AmeriCorps Worker Fighting Water Pollution

Doug Fedewa, one of Michigan's fifteen USDA AmeriCorps members, will be working with landowners, primarily farmers, to evaluate their structures and management practices for potential sources of groundwater pollution.

Fedewa will work from the Hillsdale Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office and will use the "Farm*A*Syst" program adapted to Michigan by MSU Extension. "Farm*A*Syst" is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for pollution.

"Identifying potential sources of ground and surface water pollution is an essential first step in efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution," said Dennis Haskins, district conservationist for the NRCS.

AmeriCorps is a domestic Peace Corps program to engage Americans, especially young people, in community service work across the nation. It was patterned after the Civilian Conservation Corps, which, after the Great Depression, helped restore our nation's economic health and civic spirit while rebuilding roads and addressing severe erosion problems. AmeriCorps offers opportunities for Americans age 17 and older to serve their country and earn educational credit toward college or vocational training.

"I'm really excited about helping people prevent water pollution, and the AmeriCorps voucher I'll earn after a year means I can continue my college education," said Fedewa, who wants to become a Natural Resource Specialist.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Working with local conservation districts, it is responsible for helping farmers and others to protect our nation's water and food-producing resources.

AmeriCorps is President Bill Clinton's national service program, passed with bipartisan support from Congress. It engages 20,000 Americans in performing service that meets community needs in return for an educational award, which may be used to pay for college, job training or graduate school or to pay back student loans. The majority of AmeriCorps members are working in partnership with states, local governments and non-profit organizations.

The USDA is running three types of AmeriCorps teams in 38 states, composed of approximately 1,200 members: an anti-hunger team, a public lands and environment team and a rural development team. Many of the AmeriCorps projects are spon-



Doug Fedewa

sored by community-based organizations and all projects are designed to get things done while boosting community, opportunity and responsibility.

Further information may be obtained by contacting Doug Fedewa, USDA/AmeriCorps, 3251 Beck Rd., Hillsdale, MI 49252. (517) 439-1497.

**Jonesville News
Hillsdale, Michigan
November 10, 1995**

Hudson Post-Gazette
Hillsdale, Michigan
November 30, 1995

AmeriCorps worker monitors pollution for USDA in Hillsdale

Doug Fedewa, one of Michigan's fifteen USDA AmeriCorps members, will be working with landowners, primarily farmers, to evaluate their structures and management practices for potential sources of groundwater pollution.

Doug will work from the Hillsdale Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office and will use the Farm*A*Syst program adapted to Michigan by MSU Extension. Farm*A*Syst is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for pollution.

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture is running three types of AmeriCorps teams in 38 states,

composed of approximately 1200 members: an Anti-Hunger Team, A Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team. Many of the AmeriCorps projects are sponsored by community-based organizations and all projects designed to get things done, while boosting community, opportunity, and responsibility.

For further information, please contact Doug Fedewa - USDA/AmeriCorps, 3251 Beck Road, Hillsdale, Michigan 49242, (517) 439-1497.

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To file a complaint, write Secretary of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250, or call (202) 720-7327 (voice) or (202) 720-1127 (TDD), USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.

AmeriCorps worker here to give farmers hand with wells

By JIM PRUTTY
Tribune Editor

Farmers who suspect their groundwater may be contaminated now have a service they can use to help identify problem areas on their property.

The new Farm*A*Syst program from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is designed to help farmers determine if their groundwater has been contaminated from chemicals or if their current chemical handling procedures are contributing to the problem.

While the program is primarily focused on farmers, any landowner can call for a test. The administrator of the program for Van Buren and



Lisa Crozier

Allegan Counties is Lisa Crozier.

Crozier, a biology graduate from Western Michigan University, is a member of the AmeriCorps, a domestic Peace Corps program to engage young people in community service work.

"I just moved here from Malawi," said Crozier. "I've been with AmeriCorps for about a month-and-a-half."

Crozier said she will be on duty for about nine months to a year, depending on how well she does in getting the word out about her job and the program. She said she has been given a goal of 100 farmers to get involved in the program, but she said she wants to go beyond that mark.

To do that Crozier said she will have to help farmers close wells that are contaminated after they have filled out a Farm*A*Syst survey.

Please see WATER, page 8

Water

Continued from page 1

"I want to close as many wells as I can to lessen the chances for contamination of the area groundwater."

She said the government has set aside \$16,000 for Allegan County and \$9,700 for Van Buren County to share the cost of closing wells with landowners.

"I want to provide education on the risks of chemical (spills)," said Crozier. "I will promote (proper) chemical storage and handling or ways to prevent contamination from chemicals."

She said ways farmers or landowners can reduce their risk to is to move sheds downhill or install cement pads where chemicals are mixed. She said she is willing to help farmers complete the survey, a process she said that takes two-to-three hours. Farmers, she said, should not be concerned about seeing her as a government employee coming on their land.

"I do not work for the government," said Crozier. "The survey is confidential and free. The program is strictly voluntary. Any information about the farm stays here. I just help the farmer complete the forms correctly."

For more information on Farm*A*Syst, call Crozier at (616)637-2439 or contact her at her office at 225 Broadway in South Haven.

Van Buren Tribune
Van Buren County, Michigan
November 21, 1995

AREA

AmeriCorps assessing water

Two of Michigan's 15 AmeriCorps program members are working for the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Hillsdale and Lenawee counties to help farmers identify ground-water pollution.

Dana Gron, a 1989 graduate of Concord High School and a 1993 graduate of Central Michigan University, is working in Lenawee County. Doug Fedewa works in Hillsdale County.

They are using the Farm*A*Syst program adapted to Michigan by the Michigan State University Extension. The program is a voluntary and confidential risk-assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for ground-water pollution.

The assessment is free. Gron and Fedewa will evaluate farm structures and management practices. The results are given to the land owners for their use.

Jackson Citizen Patriot
Hillsdale County, Michigan
November 24, 1995

Eaton County News
Eaton County, Michigan
November 18, 1995

18 - November 18, 1995

County

Eaton farmers offered assessments

Matt Schnepf, one of Michigan's 15 USDA AmeriCorps members, will be working with landowners, primarily farmers, to evaluate their structures and management practices for potential sources of groundwater pollution.

Schnepf will work from the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Charlotte and will use the Farm*A*Syst program adapted to Michigan by Michigan State University Extension. The service is a voluntary, educational opportunity offered to farmers. Farm*A*Syst is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for groundwater pollution.

"Identifying potential sources of ground and surface water pollution is an essential first step in efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution" says Robert Baetsen, District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Patterned after the Civilian conservation Corps which, after the great depression, helped restore our nation's economic health and civic spirit while rebuilding roads and addressing severe erosion problems, AmeriCorps offers opportunities for Americans age

17 and older to serve their country and earn educational credit toward college or vocational training.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the USDA agency that, working with local conservation districts, is responsible for helping farmers and others to protect our nation's food-producing and water resources.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service program that passed with bipartisan support

from Congress. The program engages and meets critical community needs in return for an educational award which may be used to pay for college, job training, graduate school, or to pay back student loans. The majority of AmeriCorps members are working in partnerships with states, local governments, and non-profit organizations.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is running three types of AmeriCorps

teams in 38 states, composed of approximately 1200 members: an Anti-Hunger Team, a Public Lands and Environment Team, and a Rural Development Team. AmeriCorps projects are sponsored by community-based organizations and all projects are designed to get things done, while boosting community, opportunity, and responsibility.

Farm families in Eaton County interested in Farm*A*Syst can contact Schnepf at (517) 543-1539.

WMU Grad Studying Area's Potential for Pollution

By Paul Garrod

SOUTH HAVEN—Lisa Crozier, a graduate of Western Michigan University, has been selected as one of Michigan's 15 United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) AmeriCorps members who will be working with landowners, primarily farm owners, to determine the potential sources of groundwater pollution.

Crozier, who will work from the South Haven Sank Trails RC & D Office, will use a year-old program Farm*A*Syst, adapted for the state by the Michigan State University Extension.

The program is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine through structure evaluations and management practices the potential for pollution.

Crozier said the federal program is free to farmers in Van Buren and Allegan counties, where she will concentrate her work. "Landowners can keep the results on hand for their own records. Good results could see an increase in property values," said Crozier. All information from the worksheets is confidential and will stay on the farm, said Crozier.

"Identifying potential sources of ground and surface water pollution is an essential first step in efforts to reduce non-point source pollution," said Randy Seelbrede, a District Conservationist for the Natural

Resources Conservation Service.

"People have the idea that it's not hurting them now, but it could hurt their children or grandchildren," said Crozier about groundwater pollution.

AmeriCorps is a domestic Peace Corps program to engage young Americans in community service across the nation. Similar to the Civilian Conservation Corps which, after the Great Depression, helped restore the nation's economic health and civic spirit, while rebuilding roads and addressing severe erosion problems, AmeriCorps offers opportunities for young Americans, age 17 and older, to serve their country and earn educational credit toward college or vocational training.

"I'm really excited about helping people prevent water pollution and the AmeriCorps voucher I'll earn after a year means I can continue my college education," said Crozier, who seeks a career as a wetlands conservationist.

Approximately 20,000 Americans are involved in this national service program developed by President Clinton. In return for working, individuals may pay college expenses, student loans, or use it toward graduate school or job training. Many of the workers are involved in a partnership with states, local governments, and non-profit organizations.

For more information on the program, contact Crozier at (616) 637-2439.



LISA CROZIER

Hillsdale Daily News
Hillsdale, Michigan
November 7, 1995

AmeriCorps comes to Hillsdale County

One of Michigan's 15 United States Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps members will work with Hillsdale County landowners to help evaluate their land.

Doug Fedewa is available to help primarily farmers to evaluate their structures and management practices for potential sources of ground water pollution.

Fedewa will work from the Hillsdale Natural Resources Conservation Service office and will use the FarmASyst program adopted for Michigan by Michigan State University Extension.

FarmASyst is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for pollution.

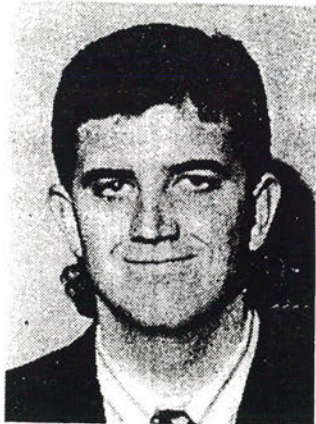
"Identifying potential sources of ground and surface water pollution is an essential first step in efforts to reduce non-point source pollution," DNCRS District Conservationist Dennis Haskins said.

AmeriCorps is a domestic Peace Corps program to engage Americans, especially young people, in community service work across the nation.

"I'm really excited about helping people prevent water pollution and the AmeriCorps voucher I'll learn after a year means I can continue my college education," Fedewa said.

For further information contact Fedewa at 439-1497.

Local AmeriCorps, and Farm*A*Syst



Charlotte Shopping Guide
Charlotte, Michigan
November 23, 1995

Matt Schnepf, one of Michigan's 15 USDA AmeriCorps members, will be working with landowners, primarily farmers, to evaluate their structures and management practices for potential sources of groundwater pollution.

Schnepf will work from the Natural Resources Conservation Service office in Charlotte and will use the Farm*A*Syst program adapted to Michigan

by Michigan State University Extension. The service is a voluntary, educational opportunity offered to farmers. Farm*A*Syst is a risk assessment checklist that helps determine the potential for groundwater pollution.

"Identifying potential sources of ground and surface water pollution is an essential first step in efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution" says Robert Baetsen, District Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Patterned after the Civilian Conservation Corps which, after the great depression, helped restore our nation's economic health and civic spirit while rebuilding roads and addressing severe erosion problems, AmeriCorps offers opportunities for Americans age 17 and older to serve their country and earn educational credit toward college or vocational training.

"I'm really excited about helping people prevent water pollution, and I know that I am going to learn a lot from the farmers that I work with so this

should be a great experience for me," says Schnepf.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the USDA agency that, working with local conservation districts, is responsible for helping farmers and others to protect our nation's food-producing and water resources.

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sponsored by community-based organizations and all projects are designed to get things done, while boosting community, opportunity, and responsibility.

Farm families in Eaton County interested in Farm*A*Syst can contact Schnepf at (517) 543-1539.

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AmeriCorps succeeds in S.D.

BY ROBERT PORE
OF THE PLAINSMAN

Despite attacks by House Speaker Newt Gingrich as "coerced volunteerism," President Clinton's AmeriCorps program has been a success in South Dakota, said an official of the Natural Resources and Conservation Service.

"It has made a difference with the communities that have been working with the environment here in South Dakota," said Joyce Watkins of Huron, who is the director for the Natural Resources Conservation Service AmeriCorps team.

Last September, nine Huron residents were sworn in as members of AmeriCorps, a national service organization.

Among the members of the Huron team are: Brad Bader,

Jeffrey Dronen, Jim Hansen, Neal Hegg, Jason Kleinsasser, Michael Knigge, Shelli Meehan, Kendra Sargent and Kerry Zihlman.

Twenty AmeriCorps slots were allocated for NRCS in South Dakota, Watkins said. Currently there are 18 AmeriCorps members, nine in Huron, four in Brookings and five in Mitchell.

In Clinton's budget, he's proposing to increase funding to the AmeriCorps program. He would boost the number of participants from 20,000 currently to 47,000 by the end of the 1996 budget year, boosting the funding for the program's parent agency by \$290 million.

Sixteen of the 18 AmeriCorps workers receive \$7,760 for 1,700 hours of community service, Watkins said. The other two

members will receive \$12,000 for their supervisory responsibility.

The workers also receive free health care and a \$4,725 educational voucher for one year of work. The \$4,725 can be used for college, vocational education or to pay off college loans.

Also in South Dakota, there are AmeriCorps members working on the Rosebud Reservation and on a YMCA program in the Timber Lake area, Watkins said.

"The AmeriCorps members working outside of Huron have been involved in conservation work designing and building riparian areas by planting trees and helping in stream bank stabilization," Watkins said.

She said AmeriCorps members have also been collecting information for the USDA's Natural

AMERICORPS / page 3

AMERICORPS/ from page 1

Resources Inventory and doing conservation programs, such as on windbreaks and wetlands, for South Dakota youth.

"AmeriCorps members will be working with the Beadle Conservation District on the Ravine Lake project this spring," Watkins said. "They have helped to bring a lot of community awareness when it comes to conservation programs."

While Watkins said their wages amount to "just enough to buy groceries and keep a roof over their heads," AmeriCorps members are keeping busy.

She said the AmeriCorps program is a "valuable aid" to conservation work in South Dakota.

"It gives the Natural Resources and Conservation Service another tool to help promote environmental awareness and what it means to South Dakota," she said.

Along with AmeriCorps help-

ers, NRCS also has an Earth Team Program, with members providing more than 10,000 hours of volunteer service to the field of conservation work.

Watkins said the NRCS will be seeking to renew its grant with the organization that administers the AmeriCorps program.

AmeriCorps teams across the country work in a variety of programs including anti-hunger, public lands and environment and rural development.

Watkins said her agency will be working with the Consolidated Farm Service agency and the Rural Economic and Community Development agency on future AmeriCorps projects.

"What's important is that the program is giving the AmeriCorps members a sense of personal satisfaction in the work they are doing," she said. "They also learn the value of community service."



Young willow trees in hand, Shelli Meehan leads Kerry Zihlman up Lake Byron's eastern shore. They and fellow AmeriCorps mem-

bers recently planted 500 willows to help stabilize the shoreline of the Hogsback state game production area.

YO JOHNSON/PLAINSMAN

Restoring Lake Byron

State grants to help sediment management

BY ROBERT PORE
OF THE PLAINSMAN

Two state grants totaling \$165,000 have been awarded to the Beadle Conservation District, the bulk of which is for Lake Byron restoration.

The grant money is from the state's Coordinated Soil and Water Conservation Grant Fund. The awards were announced Friday by Gov. Bill Janklow.

"Most of the conservation districts start with some local funds for a project," said Clark Johnson of the South Dakota Department of Agriculture, who administers the grant money. "Then they receive these state grants. The district combines the two and makes application for federal matching funds."

Johnson said Beadle Conservation District started with \$181,920 of local funding, which helped it qualify for the state grants. That money will be used to qualify for and attract another \$546,480, including some federal dollars.

"All together, the Beadle Conservation District will have \$911,405 to work with," he said. "As you can see, there can be a real multiplier effect. The districts that

work at it can come up with funds necessary to carry out very nice projects."

The first grant awarded to the Beadle Conservation District was the largest application approved, \$155,000. The money will be used to help develop better management practices to reduce sediment and nutrients entering Lake Byron.

The second district project, which was awarded a \$10,000 grant, will involve erosion control, forage production, water improvement and wildlife habitat improvement on rangeland.

A total of \$460,225 was awarded to 15 projects in 13 South Dakota conservation districts.

Hand Conservation District was the only other Heartland district to receive grant funding. Its grant of \$3,442 will be used for demonstration projects in the Lake Louise watershed on the economic impact and environmental gain of implementing conservation practices on grazing lands.

■ ■ ■

THE LAKE Byron Watershed Project dates back to 1993, when a \$245,000 Environmental Protection Agency grant was awarded to the Beadle Conservation District to begin restoration on 2,500 acres of shoreline.

But high water levels and other weather-related problems delayed restoration

until last November, when work began to stabilize 2,000 feet of shoreline along the north shore of the 1,800-acre lake 15 miles northeast of Huron.

The stabilization project cost around \$95,000. Along with funds from the EPA grant, the state Game, Fish and Parks Department provided a 45 percent matching grant. The remainder of the project's cost was met locally.

The work was done by Weatherston Contractors of Beresford. Dean Fox of Wolsey, who has been hired by the Beadle Conservation District to oversee the project, said the remaining 500 acres of shoreline work will begin this spring.

About 10,000 feet of shoreline has been identified as critical. Winds and high water have eroded much of the shoreline, causing tons of sediment to fill the lake.

In an effort to stabilize the shoreline, crews are creating steeper banks that are reinforced by plastic mesh and tons of boulders to slow down erosion.

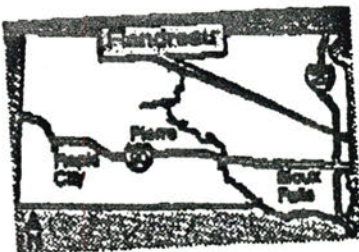
Fox said cabin owners along the lake are also doing a number of private shoreline stabilization projects on their property.

The U.S. Geological Survey last year estimated about 34 million cubic yards of sediment have been washed into Lake Byron from the surrounding watershed.

LAKE BYRON / page 3

THE ARGUS LEADER, SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA, MARCH 15, 1995

■ FLANDREAU



**AmeriCorps members
promote conservation**

AmeriCorps members, costumed as Sammy Soil Saver and Wendy Water, will visit Spafford Elementary in Flandreau from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. today.

THE ARGUS LEADER, SIOUX FALLS, SOUTH DAKOTA, OCTOBER 25, 1995

■ ROSEBUD

**AmeriCorps members
take oath of service**

Fifteen AmeriCorps/Team USDA members took their oath of service Tuesday at Rosebud.

They are making a 10- to 12-month commitment to their communities and will be headquartered at Fort Pierre and Rosebud.

AmeriCorps is the president's national service initiative establishing a 'domestic Peace Corps' and the AmeriCorps/Team USDA was designed to rebuild rural America, protect the environment and fight hunger, said Joyce Watkins, project director for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Huron.

In exchange for 1,700 hours of community service, members can earn a living stipend of \$7,945 or \$12,000, depending on qualifications and experience, and an educational award of

Students part of Clinton's pilot program

AmeriCorps lends funds for services

By Craig McEwen
The Forum

TWIN VALLEY, Minn. — Fargoan Jeff York was preparing to enroll for classes at Moorhead State University when a brochure caught his eye.



Clinton

It was seeking applicants for AmeriCorps, the national community service program that President Clinton calls the most prized achievement of his administration.

A key incentive is the \$4,725 in college tuition that the six-month program offers its workers.

Participants, 17 years and older, commit to 11 months of community service — 40 hours per week — for which they earn near-minimum wage salaries in addition to the tuition allowance.

Already, the U.S. House of Representatives wants to cut the \$500 million AmeriCorps budget by two-thirds. Five workers stationed at Twin Valley have mixed feelings about that.

They are among 20,000 nationwide and 20 in Minnesota who joined AmeriCorps when it began last September.

York, a 26-year-old MSU junior majoring in political science, admits that the tuition prodded hooked him.

But he also wanted the job experience that the program would provide. "I thought it would be really beneficial to do something like this," York says, "as far as other opportunities that would be created."

It's the college stipend that Kathy Musch, a North Dakota State University zoology graduate, also found attractive.

But Musch, 22, also wanted to do conservation outreach work. "College emphasis was in wildlife and fisheries biology," she says. "I gained a lot of experience



CRAIG McEWEN/The Forum

AmeriCorps workers (from left) Jeff York, Holly Sirjord, Kelly Engen, Aaron Neubert and Kathy Musch stand along the Agassiz Recreational Trail near Twin Valley, Minn.

through it," she says.

Much of the Twin Valley group's effort involves promoting the 32-mile, Agassiz Recreational Trail that is being built on an abandoned railroad bed between Ulen and Fertile, Minn.

The multi-use trail will have two levels: the upper tier for snowmobiling, hiking, biking and bird-watching and the lower for snowshoeing, skiing, dog sledding and horseback riding.

Other projects include promoting area tourism, seeking grants for a city park and planning a walking trail in Ada, Minn., helping with a water screening project in Halstad, Minn., promoting the planting of trees along state highways to eliminate snow drifts and soil erosion.

Holly Sirjord, 20, Gary, Minn., attended North Dakota State University for one year and hopes to go back after a stint with AmeriCorps.

"I just hope that this experience will help me with other jobs in the future," she says.

Sirjord is working with the Mahanomen, Minn., Chamber of Commerce and Mahanomen County to promote tourism.

Among her projects is the development of a map that will highlight the Agassiz Trail as well as area resorts, the Shooting Star Casino in Mahanomen and other tourist spots. The map, she says, will be distributed by area businesses.

Aaron Neubert, a 22-year-old Bemidji State University graduate from Mahanomen, is using his mass communications skills to promote the trail.

Neubert, whose college concentration was in broadcasting, is helping produce a promotional video for the Agassiz Trail. "It will be a pretty big project," he says. "I want it to be pretty professional."

He is also helping Ada community leaders update a city development video.

"AmeriCorps is a good program for more than one reason," he says.

"We're trying to bring economic development to small communities around here," Neubert says. "If we weren't here, nobody would be doing it."

Gary native Kelly Engen, 23, was previously in charge of the Norman County Soil and Water Conservation District's tree program.

Now an AmeriCorps worker, Engen is asking local landowners to set aside land for planting trees — or what he calls a "living snow fence" — along Highway 200, west of Ada.

The Norman County Soil and Water Conservation District, he says, will begin planting about 1,500 trees in May along the first three-mile stretch of the project.

Engen, who had completed 1½ years at Northland Community

College in Thief River Falls, Minn., majoring in conservation law, says the grant will help pay the remainder of his education costs when he returns to school.

Musch says she thinks the AmeriCorps program should be continued a second year because it provides a benefit to small communities.

"I think it's a good program especially for people who have to take out loans for college," says Sirjord.

York, from a political science standpoint, agrees that federal budget cuts should be considered.

"I can see the concern in budget increases because this could potentially be another billion-dollar program," he says.

But those who want to cut AmeriCorps funding, he says, shouldn't go in there "hacking away" without taking a close look at what the program has accomplished.

NORTHERN WATCH, THIEF RIVER FALLS, MINNESOTA, FEBRUARY 11, 1995

AmeriCorps will help at Winter Shows

AmeriCorps National Services Organization enrollees will work with the Red River Valley Winter Shows at Crookston during the Winter Shows February 17 - 20. AmeriCorps members, wearing various symbols of their national service program, hope to provide needed help to ensure that events run smoothly.

In addition to helping out the Red River Valley Shows organization, AmeriCorps will have booth space exhibiting AmeriCorps information and descriptions of the projects currently in progress in northwest Minnesota. These include the Conservation Outreach project stationed out of Warren, Crookston, Red Lake Falls, McIntosh and Twin Valley; the Agassiz Recreation Trail project out of Thief River Falls and Twin Valley; and the Ag-Waste project out of Thief River Falls.

AmeriCorps will give a short presentation at the Education (Emu) Seminar located in the educational Area on Sunday, February 19 at 11:30 a.m. during the Winter Shows.

If interested in learning more about AmeriCorps and what members are doing in this area or find out how to help out with one of the projects, stop by the AmeriCorps booth at the Winter Shows, contact the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service) office to get further information.

THE PINE KNOT
CLOQUET, MINNESOTA
MARCH 4, 1995

Cromwell land is 'educational'

By JACKIE HEBERT
Pine Knot Managing Editor

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

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

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

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

The group used snowshoes

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

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

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

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

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

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

"One of our missions is to be

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

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

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

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

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

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Editorial

Americorps may offer many benefits

Natchez has the honor of hosting Shelly Foutz-Lowe, a Pascagoula native, who is among the first wave of volunteers with Americorps, President Clinton's program to encourage young men and women to serve their country.

In exchange for a stipend and money to fund education, young people spend their time trying to make life better for those around them.

Foutz-Lowe, a graduate of the University of Southern Mississippi, is among 67 Americorps volunteers in Mississippi. The president created Americorps to address needs in education, human services, public safety and the environment on the community level. Any community can benefit from that type of assistance.

We applaud the spirit behind the Americorps program. If administered correctly, it has the potential to serve the people of this country in countless ways through the coming years.

If the program survives budget cuts and presidential election years, its benefits will be many fold.

Individuals will benefit directly from the assistance provided by volunteers.

The volunteers will benefit not only from the stipend and college money, but by coming to know the joy of helping others. We don't expect many volunteers to complete their terms without having their personal horizons expanded at least a little bit.

And whenever there is an honest effort to improve the quality of life of needy people, everyone benefits. Good deeds create goodwill, which anyone may enjoy.

President Clinton spoke about this program often during his campaign for election. Since his inauguration, it has received little press.

Perhaps that is best. The program will succeed or fail on its own merits, which means it will succeed or fail on the merits of people like Foutz-Lowe.

We wish Foutz-Lowe good luck in her work here, and we encourage her to remember she is in on the ground level of what may someday, years from now, be considered a grand tradition.

Yazoo misses bid for share of \$40 million

Although Yazoo County will not share in the \$4 billion set aside for the nation's nine empowerment zones and 65 enterprise communities, Arthur James, who coordinated the preparation of Yazoo County's application, said the county benefited anyway.

One of the benefits was the addition of an AmeriCorps volunteer, LaDonna Gulley, who was sent to Yazoo City by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a result of Yazoo County's empowerment zone application.

Gulley is now working on a project that will "target low-income individuals who would like to go into business."

"The Department of Agriculture called and asked us if we would like to have an AmeriCorps volunteer," James said. "She will be assisting with the efforts of the strategic plan we developed and will be here for a year."

After receiving a grant from the Office of Community Services, Gulley is currently concentrating her efforts on the micro business effort.

Classes for people who want to go into business may be available by March, James said. The financing for those businesses could feasibly come from the Micro Loan Foundation, a part of the Delta Foundation.

Additionally, James said Yazoo City's three banks have offered technical and financing assistance.

"Right now, we're identifying the potential clients," he said. "Also, people who are already operating a small business and who are having problems are able to attend the classes. It must be a small business with only one or two persons working for it."

Although Yazoo County is not included in the empowerment zone, James said the county should benefit from the economic spinoff effects due to Yazoo County's close proximity to those counties that did receive empowerment zone status.

Prior to submitting the empowerment zone application, several public meetings were held to get input from anyone who was interested. James said that the input he got, in itself, is worth a great deal.

"Like any other major program, if it ends with a good plan, I can turn around and use it to make grant applications we need," James said. "And we can use it to attract industry, which will, of course, improve our tax base."

Had Yazoo been so designated, \$40 million in Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community -- Social Service Block Grant funds -- would have become available.

Additionally, employer wage credits would have been offered to residents and qualified employers and businesses would have been allowed increased tax deductions for qualified properties.

In an appearance in Greenwood last Thursday, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy officially announced the selection of portions of Bolivar, Holmes, Humphreys, Sunflower, Washington and Leflore counties as the rural empowerment zone.

The north Delta region, which includes portions of Panola, Quitman and Tallahatchie counties, and an area in west Jackson near Jackson State University, were pegged

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as enterprise communities. They will receive \$6 million in federal aid.

In the preparation of Yazoo County's application, James termed Yazoo County's chance of being selected as "a slim chance," but said the product that comes from meeting together and establishing common goals for the county is worth the effort.

The Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community is a concept that is a part of the Clinton administration's com-

munity revitalization strategy.

The 30 rural enterprise communities from across the nation were picked by Espy while U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development's Henry Cisneros selected 65 urban enterprise communities.

Espy, in consultation with the President's Community Enterprise Board, designated the three rural empowerment zones. Cisneros, also in consultation, picked six urban areas, for a total of nine empowerment zones nationwide.