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UNITED
STATES
DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

PRINT MEDIA COVERAGE

1/28/95 THE SUN (SAN BERNARDINO)

Agriculture chief praises AmeriCorps in area visit

By DAVID WAHLBERG
Sun Staff Writer

LYTLE CREEK — Dion Trujillo led acting U.S. Agriculture Secretary Richard Rominger along a nature trail that Trujillo and other AmeriCorps members had built.

"We're learning about a lot of new things, like forestry and biology," said Trujillo, 28, of Rialto.

"That's what (AmeriCorps) is all about," Rominger said. "Learning while you're working."

Rominger visited the Lytle Creek Ranger Station on Friday to tout AmeriCorps, the federal service program created by President Clinton that has come under Republican criticism in recent weeks.

AmeriCorps members build

hiking trails, design nature centers, repair fire-ravaged areas and plant vegetation for a year. In return, they get \$4,725 education grants. About 20,000 people are participating around the country.

Rominger, who tentatively replaced former Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy this month after Espy resigned, addressed about 80 AmeriCorps members gathered in a circle outside the ranger station.

"I feel like I left Washington, but I came home to the best of government," he said.

More than 400 people applied for the 80 AmeriCorps jobs in the San Bernardino National Forest, he said.

"I don't think anyone can call

See AMERICORPS/A2

Americorps: Trujillo offers praise

Continued from A1

that coercive volunteerism," he said.

Newt Gingrich and other Republican Congress leaders have criticized the program on those grounds.

"All of you have taken government and made it your own," Rominger said. "You've turned a concept into some solid, practical action."

The trail that Trujillo's crew

built outside the ranger station will display various plants of the national forest, from desert brush to mountain wildflowers.

"It's going to be a nice little place to visit and learn from," said Scott Gorman, 22, a crew member from Pomona. "We're going to be able to take our kids back here someday and say, 'We did this.'"

Lauren Whitechurch, 24, an AmeriCorps member from San Bernardino, said he joined the program to learn more about for-

estry.

"It's a chance to learn about the environment and what we can do to help."

Beth Anglin, who belongs to an AmeriCorps crew in Palm Springs, said she signed up because she was tired of babysitting and telemarketing.

"This gives me a chance to work outside," said Anglin, 19. "I love the outdoors."

Rominger said he hopes AmeriCorps gains enough bipartisan support to continue.

"It's people pulling together to tackle community problems," he said. "This is what government should really be about."

Saluda Standard-Sentinel

VOL. 95 NO. 3

JANUARY 19, 1995

AmeriCorps Assists Saluda County With 911 Conversion

By John E. Morgan III

Have you seen white government vehicles traveling all over your county?

Don't be alarmed at their sight. They are filled with USDA volunteers from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's, AmeriCorps. The AmeriCorps volunteers, working with the Saluda County Chamber of Commerce, are a part of the South Carolina Rural Development Team.

The group of individuals on the AmeriCorps team is in Saluda County to start-up the Emergency 911 conversion.

These rural community service volunteers will be in Saluda County until January 19 trying to reduce the Emergency Medical Service response time throughout the county by updating and compiling all road locations, names, and numbers, to a single reference package, including new and nameless avenues.

This Emergency 911 initiative entails going down every roadway, paved or dirt, in the entire county to inventory the number of houses. This is a very necessary project for the effort of saving lives in Saluda. Sometimes this includes personal



911 TEAM - USDA volunteers from the Natural Resources Conservation Service's AmeriCorps are in Saluda County assisting with an emergency 911 conversion for the county. Members of the team are, L to R, front row - Karen Kinard, Abby Gage, Diggs Hill; back row - John Morgan III and Madeline Cislo.

driveways. Please bear with us as we are volunteers working for you and your safety in the event of an emergency.

AmeriCorps will meet at the

Chamber of Commerce with the Saluda Road Planning Commission on Wednesday, January 25, at 7 p.m., about the 911 Project. Public invited.

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.

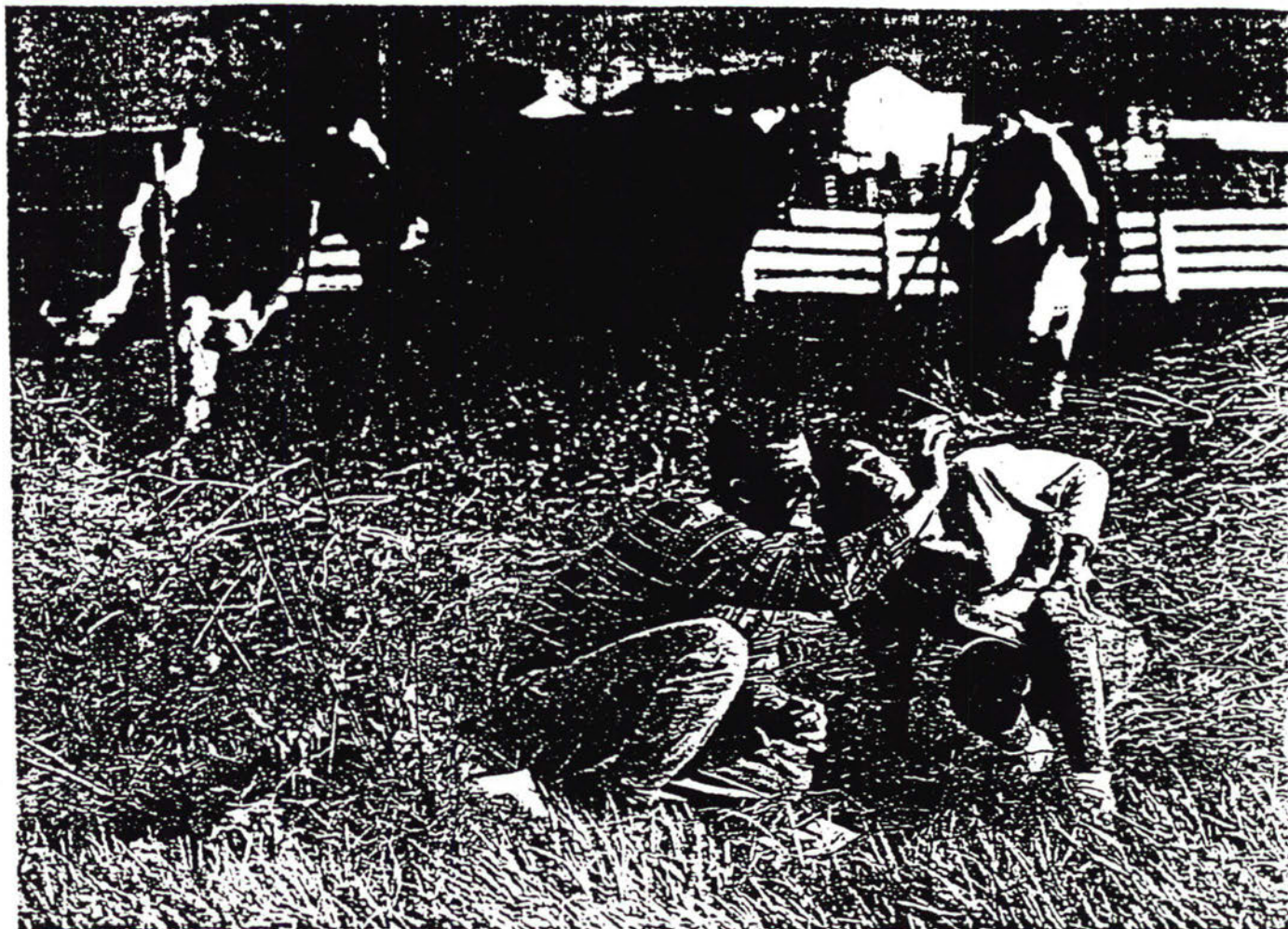
Several AmeriCorps members working with the local branch of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) met with Woolsey earlier in the month and toured a work site at the Atwood Ranch in Glen Ellen. The members will be working on a variety of water quality improvement projects throughout Sonoma County. Members

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.



JOHN BURGESS PRESS SERVICE

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 to 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 on

See Helping, Pa

The Press Democrat
Santa Rosa, Calif., Wed., Oct. 19

Helping

Continued from Page P1
and fish die.

For more than five years, local farmers have been asking the Soil Conservation Service for help dealing with animal waste, said Charlette Epifanio, a soil conservationist who is supervising Jensen. In Jensen and his AmeriCorps co-worker, Nancy Scolari, the farmers have found the help.

Although some farmers might eye the AmeriCorps workers with suspicion because they are government employees, Jensen said the agricultural community has welcomed his expertise.

He sees his role as a buffer between polluting landowners and regulatory agencies. He hopes to stop the pollution before regulators fine the polluters.

AmeriCorps stresses work ethic

Also provides college money

by PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

APPLEGATE — Eagle Point resident Melissa Powers, 20, gave up her job at a local pizza restaurant to join AmeriCorps.

"I want to earn some money to help me with college," she explained. "I want to get a degree in forestry and work outside."

Seattle resident Lynne Petersen, 21, who had been working as a nanny while going to college, was also looking to earn money to further her education.

"I wanted the discipline and the college education," she said. "Also, I wanted to learn a lot about the environment."

There was another reason Petersen, who sports a thin silver nose ring, had for joining.

"I think it will be fun," she said with a grin.

The two were among the 38 young adults standing in the rain near the Star Gulch barracks in the Applegate Ranger District that will serve as their home base for the next 11 months.

The camp, which began Tuesday, will be administered by the Northwest Youth Corps in a partnership with the Rogue River National Forest. It is one of eight AmeriCorps camps that have been established in the nation.

Under the national service program created by President Clinton, participants receive up to \$7,500 per year in pay plus an educational award of \$4,725 at the end of the year to go toward college or trade school expenses.

During their tour, the coed group, ages 17 to 24, will learn career skills while doing tasks ranging from trail maintenance to construction projects.

Participants come from 15 states, mostly from North Carolina and Florida, but most — nearly 30 — are from Oregon. They were among thousands of applicants who applied for AmeriCorps jobs across the country, and were selected based on their ex-



Mail Tribune / Jim Crave

KNOTTY — Members of Americorps practice a team-building technique, untying a human knot without letting go of each other's hands.

perience, enthusiasm and career goals.

"A youth program such as this is exactly what the forest is looking for," Rogue River Forest Supervisor Jim Gladen told the group. "This is just the thing we need to help our spirit."

Carl Lierman, 76, of Tigard, who worked for two years in the Civilian Conservation Corps that ran from 1933 to 1942, told the young crew that it is also what the nation needs.

In addition to teaching young people a good work ethic and providing training, it would also provide community service, he said.

"This is what our group (CCC

alumni) was hoping that Bill Clinton would do, something for you kids," he said.

In addition to working on Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management projects, the AmeriCorps crew will assist communities such as Butte Falls and Prospect in a variety of civic chores. The communities have each received \$100,000 federal grants awarded through the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative aimed at providing economic stability to Northwest timber-based communities.

"Our age group kind of gets a bad rap for being apathetic and lazy," said Dan Miller, 23, a crew leader who has bachelor's de-

grees in resource management and public policy. "This program gives us an opportunity to demonstrate that is not true."

The Star Gulch facility, which is still being spruced up for the crew, includes separate bunkhouses for men and women, a dining hall, a recreation meeting hall and a staff trailer. No drug or alcohol will be allowed.

A husband and wife will cook dinner for the crew and help them prepare breakfast and lunch.

"We're stressing real health-oriented food," Miller said. "They are going to need healthy meals because we're going to be working them hard."

Soil Conservation Service joins in salmon recovery

The first wave of AmeriCorps programs, announced by the White House this month, includes more than \$200,000 allocated to the Mid-Columbia Salmon Restoration Project located in Klickitat County.

AmeriCorps, the new national service initiative signed into law by President Clinton last September, establishes a "domestic Peace Corps," involving thousands of young Americans who will work through AmeriCorps programs to perform critical service in urban and rural communities nationwide.

In Klickitat County, AmeriCorps participants will work under the leadership of the Soil Conservation Service (SCS). The project involves planning, designing and installing conservation practices on private land to improve water quality on a sub-watershed basis. The goal is to provide suitable habitat and water quality for salmon spawning in streams and rivers capable of doing so. The SCS, and the Central and Eastern Klickitat County Conservation Districts, work with landowners on a voluntary basis.

Local SCS District Conserva-

tionist Dave Kreft put together the proposal based on the emerging Columbia River salmon issue and the need for local employment opportunities.

"Another important factor was the recent ground work laid by the Central and Eastern Klickitat Conservation Districts," Kreft said. "The districts recently completed a 2-year grant to create a demonstration site along the Little Klickitat River west of Goldendale. The AmeriCorps program will basically continue that work, but on a broader scale."

"This is absolutely a brand new program. We will be getting the details over the coming weeks on when we can start recruiting people for the local team," he said.

AmeriCorps will be launched in September and will eventually engage up to 20,000 AmeriCorps members. In exchange for one or two years of service, AmeriCorps members will receive a living expense of about \$7,500 per year and an educational voucher worth \$4,725. These educational awards can be used to finance higher education or pay back college loans.

AmeriCorps no boondoggle in Butte Falls

By PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

BUTTE FALLS — Risa Huetter has a challenge for those in Congress contemplating cutting the budget for AmeriCorps.

"They should come out and work with us and see how hard we work," said the AmeriCorps member. "If they think what we're doing is stupid, then they don't know what's going on."

Congressional leaders, vowing to reduce federal spending, have questioned the merits of the \$580 million in funding for the 20,000-member national service corps. President Clinton, who touted the program in his state-of-the-union address last month, wants to expand the program.

Under the program, participants receive \$7,660 in living allowance during their 10-month tour, and a \$4,725 educational voucher to be used for college or trade-school tuition.

Since joining AmeriCorps last fall, Huetter, 19, of Ashland, and the other members based at the Rogue River National Forest have been cutting trails, planting trees, building erosion control projects, cleaning up after forest fires and working on various construction projects.

In the local community hall, built 40 years ago, AmeriCorps members are restoring the interior and adding a long awning over the entrance.

Over at the county branch library building, they have started building a storage shed. Plans also call for building an extension on the local fire hall. And they are rehabilitating restrooms in the nearby park.

Those projects are being financed by a \$100,000 grant received by Butte Falls through the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative for timber-dependent communities. Prospect has received a similar grant.

Huetter, who was working on a ranch in Colorado before joining AmeriCorps, says the program allows young people to learn work skills and earn money for education.

"I've learned a lot of patience," she said, noting she intends to go to college upon completing the program. "I plan to go into architecture. I like doing construction. It's great to learn how things are put together."

Inter supervisor Bill Tucker, 65, town marshal of Butte Falls, likes



Mail Tribune / Steve Johnson

Cisco Villastrivo, 19, works on the Butte Falls community center in an AmeriCorps project.

the way the program has come together.

"We're getting repairs that have been badly needed for years," Tucker said. "I honestly believe it's as good a program as you're going to get to help a community like this. There is no other way I can think of that this kind of work would get done."

"And they are great workers," he added. "As soon as they know what you want, they get right to it."

Tim Dodge, 21, of Cottage Grove, spent three years studying environmental science at Oregon State University before joining AmeriCorps.

"Probably one of the toughest things to do nowadays is to get a job straight out of

college," he said. "I wanted to get some work experience before completing my degree."

Dodge also wants employers to visit an AmeriCorps work site.

"The best way to know what's going on is to get out here," he said. "It's hard to put down on paper what we're getting from this program. We're earning what we're getting."

Cisco Villastrivo, 19, of Woodburn, agreed.

"It keeps me out of trouble," he said of the program. "And I'm learning new stuff all the time."

Before joining AmeriCorps, he worked

in a glass factory.

"I want to go back to school," he said. "The only reason I'm not going to school now was that I didn't have the money. This program is really helping me out."

Laurel Alexanian, 20, of Spokane, who was painting a room inside the hall, was working in fast-food restaurants six months ago.

"I wanted to do something that had more of a purpose," she said, adding that she is interested in pursuing a career in wildlife biology or conservation.

"I like learning the different types of work," she said, adding, "It'll look good on my resume, too."

AmeriCorps volunteer program draws a 'mature' group of Jerseyans

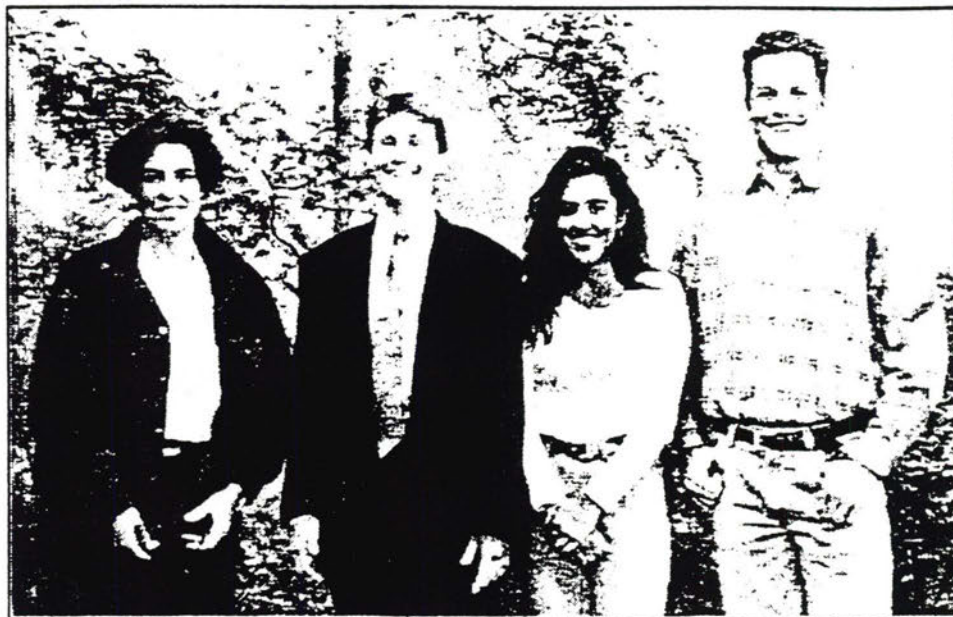


(PHOTO BY JOE EPSTEIN)

Volunteers with AmeriCorps place stones in Peter's Brook in Somerville to help improve fish habitat

Sonoma Marin Farm News

October 1994



Local AmeriCorps members from L-R: Julie Maggi, Colin Close, Nancy Scolari and Mike Jensen.

Four Local AmeriCorps Members

What does Bill Clinton's community service program look like on a local level? Four AmeriCorps members with the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) will work on a variety of pollution reduction projects in Marin and Sonoma counties.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service initiative composed of diverse groups of Americans who will begin performing critical service to meet human, environmental, public safety, and educational needs in return for a \$12,000 stipend and a \$4,725 educational voucher.

In the Petaluma SCS field office, Nancy Scolari and Mike Jensen will work with landowners in Marin and southern Sonoma counties. Their goal is to improve water quality and riparian habitat through management measures on dairies, livestock operations, and vineyards.

Nancy Scolari - a native of the Salinas Valley, Nancy was raised in a predominantly agricultural area in which her family previously owned a dairy. Nancy is concurrently attending Sonoma State University studying Environmental Technology with a concentration in water quality. She hopes to continue her education in the area of soil science once the AmeriCorps program is completed.

Mike Jensen - of Penngrove, a Sonoma County native for 25 years, will be working for the Soil Conservation Service field office in

Petaluma. Mike is a recent graduate from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Landscape Architecture. He is excited to be working in the agricultural community where he was involved in a local 4-H program.

In the Santa Rosa Field Office, Julie Maggi and Colin Close will be assisting individual landowners with reducing stream pollution from animal waste and erosion problems.

They will also help landowners who want to form small watershed enhancement groups to restore and improve salmon and steelhead habitat.

Colin Close - is a long-time Sonoma County resident. She received her bachelor's degree from Sonoma State University where she studied the environmental issues facing landowners. She realizes the tremendous contribution the agricultural industry makes to Sonoma County's economic and cultural well-being.

Julie Maggi - a Sonoma County resident, recently graduated from SSU with a bachelor's degree in geology. She was raised in the Santa Rosa area on the small farm her family owns. "Though I've lived in New York, I frequently visited my family in Sonoma County and was saddened by the continued loss of our agricultural land and open space. It's the primary reason I left New York to pursue a natural science degree." ▲

Tina Wright-Swinton committed to serve Marion County community through AmeriCorps pilot program

By TODD SHIFFLET
Star & Enterprise

Tina Wright-Swinton is young, energetic and she wants to help. Even more, she has promised to get things done.

AmeriCorps, a pilot program initiated by the Clinton Administration, is allowing Mrs. Wright-Swinton the opportunity to serve her community. She can serve a one-year term of community service and for her commitment, receive money to pay off a college loan or tuition.

She is the AmeriCorps representative for Marion County and will be assisting low-to-moderate income individuals in the county to upgrade their housing. She will also be assisting school-age children in after-school programs.

"I'll be going door-to-door finding out exactly what's happening in Marion County. It's an outreach program to target low and moderate income housing residents. And I will be working at the Marion Student Enrichment Center with students in grades one to eight - to do well in school - as mentor and tutor," said Mrs. Wright-Swinton, 26.

A conservative estimate identifies over three percent of the households in Marion County with no plumbing. This is three times the national average. Marion County has one of the highest levels of sub-standard housing in South Carolina, according to her project and mission statement for Marion County.

Mrs. Wright-Swinton said she will be working with the Farmers' Home Administration as an outreach person. She will be identifying those residential homes which are in financial need and connecting them with programs which can help. She also plans to initiate an educational service for the program so that housing improvements will be long-term.

"A lot of people in rural Marion County are not apt for change."

she said. "The challenge is going to be finding and connecting with the people out there who need resources... helping people find out what programs are out there."

She said she will primarily be working with identifying residents and connecting them with loans and other assistance programs provided by FmHA, but will also be working with the United States Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Administration, Marion County government, Marion County community service and the Pee Dee Regional Council of Governments. Agencies which will be helping with assistance include the FmHA, Habitat for Humanity and various other housing and urban development programs. Some of her resources include the Clemson Extension Service, the Marion County Planning Department and Marion School District 1, she said.

"I have a lot of ideas, but it's going to be difficult for one person to take on the whole community. Once I find out what specific problems there are and identify the people, I know I'm going to need the support of others. It's going to be a lot of work and a lot of challenges," Mrs. Wright-Swinton said.

She is excited and determined by the challenge. She has gone through a number of training courses with the FmHA and AmeriCorps and plans to be effective in her service.

"I think it's an excellent program - community service to pay for an education. I know I am a people-person, and having an opportunity to interact and help somebody makes me feel really blessed," she said.

Mrs. Wright-Swinton said her AmeriCorps colleagues in different counties in the country are concentrating on different projects. Each county has its own specific priority. Counties in South Carolina which have the advantage of an AmeriCorps representative include Allendale, Denmark, Orangeburg, Santee/Lynchburg

and the Williamsburg/Lake City area, she said.

Mrs. Wright-Swinton is also excited about working with students out of the Marion Student Enrichment Center. The center is a local non-profit agency made up of retired educators and high school volunteers. She will be working

AMERICORPS PLEDGE

I will get things done for my community. I will help people who are in need. I will be a good role model. I will be a good citizen. I will be a good neighbor. I will be a good friend. I will be a good student. I will be a good worker. I will be a good leader. I will be a good follower. I will be a good team player. I will be a good listener. I will be a good communicator. I will be a good problem solver. I will be a good decision maker. I will be a good planner. I will be a good organizer. I will be a good manager. I will be a good supervisor. I will be a good mentor. I will be a good coach. I will be a good teacher. I will be a good parent. I will be a good grandparent. I will be a good sibling. I will be a good friend. I will be a good neighbor. I will be a good citizen. I will be a good role model. I will be a good person.

to stem the tide of high school drop-outs in Marion County, and nurturing their desire for an education.

A Marion native, Mrs. Wright-Swinton will receive a living allowance for her one year of service, plus an educational award. She is a graduate of Coastal Carolina University with a degree in Business Administration. She has worked with the Department of Social Services, the South Carolina Employment Commission and Fleet Funding, all of which relate to her Americorps service position.

Marion County Administrator Pete Rogers will act as her supervisor.

Anyone seeking more information about AmeriCorps can call 1-800-880-4183

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Local news

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ANTI-HUNGER PROGRAM

United Way given \$25,000

United Way of Greater Milwaukee has received a \$25,000 grant from the General Electric Fund to support a local initiative to hire and train 38 young people to work with an anti-hunger program.

The grant will be used to support the Department of Agriculture's AmeriCorps Anti-Hunger, Nutrition and Empowerment Project coordinated by the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee and the Milwaukee Community Service Corps.



The two coordinating organizations will recruit, hire, train and educate 38 people between the ages of 18 and 23 for the program.

AmeriCorps teams then will implement activities in four focus areas: community outreach; constructing and renovating buildings for food sites and or meal programs; helping local farmers with neighborhood farmers markets; and working with food pantries, meal programs and food drives to collect, sort and assist at the Hunger Task Force warehouse.

AmeriCorps Program Will Benefit Western Oklahoma

1/18/94-Kiowa County Democrat

Leaders of natural resource agencies signed an agreement Monday to cooperate on AmeriCorps, a national service program that will employ youth and help conserve natural resources in Oklahoma.

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's national service initiative that allows diverse groups of young people to earn college or vocational school scholarships while performing service to meet human, environmental, public safety and educational needs. The U. S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service; the Oklahoma Conservation Commission; the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts; the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture; and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation will implement the AmeriCorps program in Oklahoma.

"Through this program, we can offer our young people an opportunity to earn an education, and we can provide protection for our soil, water, air, animal and plant resources," said Bobbye Jack Jones, SCS State Conservationist for Oklahoma.

The primary objectives of the program include providing participants with opportunities for

self-improvement, increasing the public's awareness of ecosystems, and providing protection for Oklahoma's natural resources by creating and restoring windbreaks.

Jones said, "Following the 'Dust Bowl' of the 1930's, conservationists planted the bare land with trees, forming miles of living windbreaks. These windbreaks have protected the soil from wind, acted as snow fences along highways, provided habitat for wildlife, protected crops, and added beauty to the landscape.

Unfortunately, many of the windbreaks are deteriorating and in need of restoration. Through the AmeriCorps program, the windbreaks will be restored, and the land will remain protected from wind erosion."

The participants will work in western Oklahoma for approximately one year, beginning in September. The program is offered on a nondiscriminatory basis. Acceptance of applications has been extended until August 19. Twenty participants will be chosen to renovate the windbreaks.

Participants in the program will work for approximately one year, earning a stipend of at least \$7,500 and an educational award worth \$4,725. Any citizens age 17 or

older are eligible to apply. There is no maximum or minimum family income required to apply. For more information, contact LeRoy Tull at (405) 742-1207, Amy Sanders at (405) 742-1246 or (405) 742-1007 (TDD), or the toll-free national USDA AmeriCorps hot line at (800) 880-4183.

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DEC 27 1994

BURRELLE'S

RN

Clean and sober, woman looks to help others

by Jeff Hanson
Journal News

TRIM PAGE

HAMILTON

Today, Vicky Adams watches young people doing to themselves what she did to herself only four years ago. "It hurts to the bone," she said. "It hurts to the bone to see young men and women throwing their lives away." Four years ago, the 32-year-old Hamilton woman wasn't going anywhere: after more than a decade of drug and alcohol abuse, she wound up in a hospital bed with a failing liver. "You've heard about being scared right?" she asked. "It scared the hell out of me." She's been clean and sober ever since. As a result, victories keep on coming.

Next month, Adams is going to work for the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps as part of AmeriCorps, President Clinton's national service program. For 10 months, Adams will work in soup kitchens, educate people about the importance of nutrition, and make breakfasts for senior citizens.

"It's been a long four years," she said. "Emotionally it's been rough. But God has seen fit to put the right people in my life. Nothing has been as bad as my days of drinking and drugs. I know I have a future without drinking and drugs. And I know I don't have a future with them."

She dropped out of high school in 1979. Last month, she took her graduate equivalency exam. She feels pretty good about her chances of passing. But what's most important to her is the lasting

effect she can have on people by sharing her trials, as well as her triumphs.

"If I can help someone not go through the pain and suffering and turmoil that I've gone through, I've accomplished my goal," she said. "No diploma could take the place of that."

One of the benefits of AmeriCorps is an education award for college or vocational training totaling \$4,725. Adams doesn't know what she wants to do following her 10-month commitment to the program, whether she might sign up for another stint.

College is a goal. One day she'd like to work as a drug and alcohol prevention specialist and expand on the work she has done as a volunteer to substance abuse prevention agencies in Butler and Hamilton counties.

"I think it's important that teen-

agers know there are adults that have been there, that we know what kind of harm (drug and alcohol abuse) could do," she said. "It's so important that we catch them before they get there."

Hamilton will have a lasting effect on her. She's enjoyed a lot of success. She's also enjoyed the support of people who cared for her as she discovered a different way of living.

"I'm feeling all kinds of things," she said about leaving Hamilton. "I came here without no family. But people have taken me in, tough-loved me, and loved me until I could love myself."

"I've had a lot of natural highs," she said. "Sometimes people will ask me if I'm on (drugs or alcohol) and I say, 'No, I don't go that way anymore.'"



WILDLIFE NEWS SERVICE

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

1801 N. Lincoln • Oklahoma City, Okla. 73105

AmeriCorps program helps farmers, wildlife

A national youth service program is underway in western Oklahoma that will benefit not only wildlife, but also many state farmers.

AmeriCorps is a national service initiative created by President Clinton that allows young people to earn money for college or vocational school by working to meet environmental, human, public safety and educational needs. In Oklahoma, 20 AmeriCorps participants will be restoring windbreaks at 30 to 40 sites - windbreaks that provide wildlife habitat, protect crops and reduce soil erosion.

Following the 'Dust Bowl' of the 1930s, these living fence lines were planted mostly to protect farm land from Oklahoma's gusty winds. It was these same windbreaks, though, that helped bolster deer, quail and turkey populations. Through the AmeriCorps program, deteriorating windbreaks will be restored and wildlife habitat improved.

Initiated in September, the program is scheduled to last one year. However, officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the agency administering the project, hope to renew the project for up to four additional years.

Nationally, an estimated 20,000 participants are working to improve the environment and complete many other projects in the areas of public safety, education and community service. For comparison, the AmeriCorps program is over three times bigger than the Peace Corps, which has averaged about 6,000 participants annually in recent years.

-30-



FEDERAL DOLLARS AT WORK — An AmeriCorps group was busy last week clearing down and drying timber on Observatory Hill. The logs were cut into firewood for distribution in the Goldendale area. People in need of firewood must be referred through Klickitat County Senior Services, the Interfaith Fellowship or the Klickitat/Skamania Development Project.

Thursday, June 23, 1994 — 6A

Klickitat project funded

A Klickitat County salmon habitat restoration project has been named one of 57 recipients nationwide for federal funds through President Clinton's Americorps program.

Known as the "domestic Peace Corps," Clinton signed the Americorps national service program into law last September. The program will employ about 20,000 people nationwide by the end of this year.

Dave Kreft, a Klickitat County district conservationist with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, said the Mid-Columbia Salmon Restoration Project will receive about \$225,000 through Americorps. The money will be used to hire 10 people and a supervisor whose main goal will be to work with private landowners to restore and maintain streams for spawning salmon.

Kreft said the project will last one year. People hired for the project will be paid \$7,500 for the year. They also will receive a \$4,725 education voucher that can be used to pay off college loans or future tuition expenses.

The salmon habitat project also is supported by the Yakama Indian Nation, the Klickitat County Board of Commissioners, the state Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Central and Eastern Klickitat Conservation Districts.



FEATURES

Friday
January 27
1995
White Mtn. Jrd.
(Nancy's Corby)

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.

Director lauds AmeriCorps program



Mail Tribune / Bob Pearson

HELPING HAND — Joel Berg, national director of the AmeriCorps program, helps Rogue Valley AmeriCorps members create fish habitat at Applegate Lake Thursday. Berg visited southern Oregon as part of a tour of Northwest programs.

By PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

APPLEGATE — The mud-spattered young man wearing the yellow hard hat grinned into the cold wind blowing across Applegate Lake.

"It's really exciting to move from the theory phase to making this a reality," Joel Berg said. "To work alongside these people is really something."

Berg was among a dozen AmeriCorps members Thursday who dragged manzanita brush down into the muddy basin of the lake's Squaw arm, where the brush was attached to a cable. Come spring when the lake is full, the brush will serve as fish habitat.

But Berg, 30, wasn't a member of the young national service crew based at the old Star Gulch facility of the Applegate Ranger District. Rather, he is national director of the program, appointed by President Clinton in early 1993.

He stopped by the Rogue River National Forest program, one of nearly 40 nationwide, as part of a tour of Northwest projects. In the program that began this fall, people in their late teens and early 20s earn at least \$7,500 and an educational voucher of \$4,725 for 10 months of work.

In addition to a variety of environmental tasks, they are also doing rural development work, including projects expected to start soon in Prospect and Butte Falls.

A longtime supporter of the program, Berg noted that it has components similar to that of the Civilian Conservation Corps of the Great Depression.

"But there is the educational benefit that didn't exist before," Berg said. "Not only is the government asking something of young people, but we're giving something back."

"The reason Clinton believes in it so

strongly is that it's kind of a GI bill without the GI," he added. "This is an alternative way for young Americans to do service for their country without joining the military."

Nationwide, there are about 20,000 members, but he expects the ranks to grow.

"I think it's working even better than expected," he said. "This is work that either wouldn't get done or work that the taxpayers would have to pay about five times as much if private contractors were to do it."

In addition to learning good work ethics and gaining experience, many

participants will go to college and continue to add to the economy, he said.

Many young people would have a bleak future without the program, he said.

"They are doing things government

couldn't do, or doing it better for a lot cheaper," he said. "The president hopes this goes beyond party politics. A lot of Republicans supported this."

Because of that bipartisan support, Berg expects AmeriCorps to survive future political battles.

"We need members of Congress to come up and see what these people are doing," he said. "If they think they are young, lazy people being overpaid, then they can kill the program."

But he figures that most observers will come to the conclusion the work is important, along with the training.

"These people are working damn hard, and the money they are getting is actually pretty measly," he said.

The program offers a future for many young people, he said.

"They are doing things that need to be done," he said. "This is not make-work. The president's goal is to get up to 100,000 members by the end of four years."

"It's really exciting to move from the theory phase to making this a reality. To work alongside these people is really something."

— Joel Berg,
AmeriCorps director

AmeriCorps workers lend a hand to flood recovery

BY LARRY PERCE
Lincoln Journal

BROWNVILLE — Anyone joining AmeriCorps, President Clinton's "domestic Peace Corps," must have community spirit and be willing to forgo higher wages they might earn at another job.

In return for their sacrifices, workers can wipe out college debt or gain money to return to college by helping out nonprofit agencies and local governments.

Workers must look beyond the limited financial benefits of AmeriCorps, said Chuck Yearly of Lincoln, supervisor of a crew working out of Tecumseh.

"We're here for the community, to get involved," Yearly said.

Workers wear black baseball caps and gray T-shirts with a white A on a black circle. The AmeriCorps motto is "Getting things done."

The Tecumseh crew will spend most of its 1,800 working hours clear-

ing 1993 flood debris from flood control dams in Johnson, Otoe, Nemaha, Richardson and Pawnee counties.

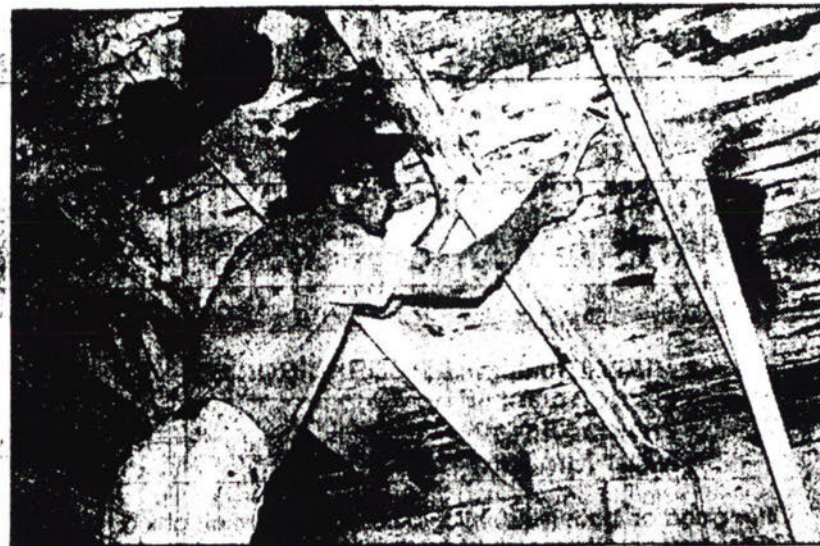
Work is directed out of the Soil Conservation Service office in Tecumseh and is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's rural development program.

AmeriCorps also has crews working in an anti-hunger, nutrition and empowerment program.

Clinton announced AmeriCorps on Sept. 12, and crews went to work a week later. Yearly is accepting project proposals for nonprofit and public projects in villages, cities and counties.

"A lot of these places don't have much money (for public work projects)," he said.

Last week, the Tecumseh crew began scraping damaged paint from the interior of the floating Meriwether Lewis Museum. Last year's floods nearly swept the old river



LARRY PERCE/LINCOLN JOURNAL

Eric Bartels of Tecumseh scrapes paint from the ceiling of the Meriwether Lewis Museum in Brownville. Bartels and three other AmeriCorps workers are repairing damage done to the old dredging boat by a leaky roof and flooding in 1993.

Please see AMERICORPS on page 5

AmeriCorps/Workers help communities and themselves

Continued from page 1

dredge away. The interior paint was damaged when the roof leaked. Heat and humidity caused more damage.

The crew will scrape and then repaint the ceiling and walls for the nonprofit Meriwether Lewis Foundation. A private contractor installed a new roof this summer.

Yearly, who has a master's degree in rural and community planning, was a community planner in Carroll, Iowa, before his job was phased out. He had been out of work for months. AmeriCorps will help him pay off his graduate school debt and gain experience as a supervisor.

Eric Bartels of Tecumseh, a construction worker and the father of two children, said he wants to go to a two-year college without borrowing money.

Theresa and Emily Sherman, two sisters from Tecumseh, said they will pay off student loans they incurred while attending Platte Community

College in Columbus and Peru State College.

"It takes care of all of mine, thank God," Emily Sherman said, scraping paint from the ceiling of the old river dredge.

The sisters, 20-year-old identical twins, plan to go back to school after a year.

AmeriCorps, a \$360 million program, pays 20,000 Americans to work in four areas: education, health and human needs, the environment and public safety. If extended by Congress, the program could spend \$1.5 billion over three years to pay for 100,000 workers.

Anyone older than 17, including high school dropouts and people with graduate degrees, can apply for the program.

AmeriCorps supervisors make \$6.35 an hour plus tit toward money for education. Workers earn \$4.35 an hour plus schooling money.

added in, workers earn about \$12,000 a year plus paid medical benefits. AmeriCorps workers are not considered federal workers and are not eligible for unemployment. They must work the entire year to receive educational benefits, and are limited to two years in the program.

Yearly said the Tecumseh crew and crews in Lincoln, Omaha and Norfolk soon will each add another worker.

In Lincoln, recruiting is under way for 23 volunteers to work with nine community action agencies in Nebraska, said Lorrie Benson, director of Community Action of Nebraska Inc.

Benson will oversee a program aimed at reducing violence among youths 10 to 15 years old. For information, call Benson at (402) 471-3714.

For information about other AmeriCorps opportunities, call 1-800-

First AmeriCorps worker to focus on water, sewage plans

By Barbara Hahn
of the Daily Courier

CAVE JUNCTION -- Rural development in a small town in the Dominican Republic has a lot in common with rural development in a small town in southwestern Oregon.

Marcus Kauffman, the new community development coordinator for the Illinois Valley, knows the similarities well. As a Peace Corps volunteer, he helped set up water collection and storage systems, as well as construct a latrine in a Dominican Republic community with few such facilities.

In his new post in the Illinois Valley -- the first AmeriCorps position in the valley -- he'll help the Community Response Team meet goals outlined in the region's strategic plan. And one of the big goals outlined in the plan is to improve and expand water and sewage systems.

Same thing, bigger scale.

But for Kauffman, 26, the experience of helping a community solve its problems and accomplish goals has a personal twist. This is his home town.

Kauffman grew up in the Illinois Valley and recently returned after leaving to earn a bachelor's degree in international studies, with an emphasis on Third World

economic development, from the University of Oregon. Then, he joined the Peace Corps, helping rural Dominican Republic communities improve infrastructure.

Trained as a rural youth volunteer, due to his experience with Future Farmers of America and 4-H as a youngster, he was sent to the northwest corner of the small Caribbean island nation.

"I started off in rural youth projects," he says. That is, he managed a baseball team composed of Dominican Republic children.

"There are hundreds of kids there and everyone wants to play baseball," he explains.

With sports a mainstay of community participation, Kauffman organized a program that brought needed sports equipment to rural communities. Through contacts at Illinois Valley High School and other schools, unused athletic equipment was shipped to the small country. The sporting goods were then distributed to those community groups willing to put their labor toward a community project, he says.

One success story was a community latrine.

"Most of the people in the com-



MARCUS KAUFFMAN
Drawn to rural communities

munity didn't have latrines," he says. So, Kauffman organized a project that built a simple latrine near a community building that served as a center for social functions.

Then there was a project to provide drinking water.

"About two-thirds of the villagers didn't have access to potable water," he says. Instead, there was a large, concrete cistern within the community that was periodically filled by the government to provide for basic needs.

The idea was simple enough: Capture rain water that falls from November through March via gutters attached to roofs, then store the water in cisterns for use later in the season.

Using system designs, Kauffman wrote grant requests that garnered funds from public and private agencies. The money came through, but within days of the project's implementation, Kauffman severely injured his leg, sending him back to the U.S. for reconstructive surgery. Another volunteer saw the project through.

Though now out of the Peace Corps, Kauffman saw a need to continue helping rural communities. This time, President Clinton's AmeriCorps program provided a way to employ him at a local level.

"This is an opportunity to do great things," Kauffman says of the program. Not only with the community benefit from the help, but he'll also have \$4,700 a year in student loans paid off for his effort.

The experience also is giving him an opportunity to return to his roots.

"I spent my formative years in college," he says. "I'm having to

relearn the community."

And, the community has changed in recent years. More people have moved in, and those involved in promoting projects have changed faces.

"I'm working on outreach now trying to get more people involved," he says. Most important is to get those willing to commit for at least a year of service involved in working toward meeting the community's goals.

The Community Response Team will meet at 7 p.m. Thursday at Illinois Valley High School.

Chicago Sun-Times



BRIAN JACKSON/CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

Some of the 50 Chicago area members of AmeriCorps, the new domestic service organization, work Tuesday at the Edna White Century Garden at 111th and Homewood.

Diverse AmeriCorps Youth at Work

By Rob Otmstead

Staff Writer

Chris Travis was not amused when a little British history was slipped in on him on his first day of gardening as a member of AmeriCorps.

A community volunteer told Travis about the legend of Queen Anne's Lace, a flower said to have sprung from the blood of Anne Boleyn, wife of Henry VIII, after she was beheaded.

But mini-history lesson aside, Travis, 18, a resident of the Ida B. Wells housing development, said, "It's the best job out here—in the world."

AmeriCorps is President Clinton's effort to bring people to public service while helping them earn money for education. In Chicago, the program is at the Chicago High School for Agricultural Science. Fifty young people will be employed for 10 weeks, each earning a tax-free \$147 stipend per week.

Yearlong programs start in August, but the summer run is being called "Summer of Safety" because part of its focus is to curb violence and crime.

"The carrot at the end of the stick is ... a \$1,000 scholarship," said crew leader Paul O'Grady, an office manager with the U.S. Department of Agriculture taking a break from his normal duties to supervise 10 participants.

The young workers are recent or soon-to-be high school graduates

from "all different educational backgrounds, economic background—some of them went to Ag school, some are from Ida B. Wells," said Elizabeth Tyler of the Botanic Garden in Glencoe. Tyler has been helping community volunteers establish the garden, called the Edna White Century Garden, at 111th and Homewood, for more than a year.

The diversity, the scholarship and the chance to be a part of a

program aimed at curbing violence, drew Brigid McDonald, 17.

"I'm working with completely different people all the time, that I don't live around," said McDonald, a graduate of Mother McAuley High School.

O'Grady said workers start at 7:30 a.m. and loafing isn't allowed.

"That's part of the project also: teaching a work ethic," he said. "[This is] a job and it's not a 'do-what-you-want' type of thing."

6-99/94

AmeriCorps Assists School District

Have you ever wondered how much work goes into producing the food we eat everyday?

Most of us know where these products come from but have no idea how the process works. Have you ever seen how a gallon of milk or a dozen eggs get from the animals to the store and to your table?

The local AmeriCorps volunteers are working with the Newberry School District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service on an agricultural curriculum for teachers.

This project is centered around the agricultural activities of Newberry County. The AmeriCorps volunteers are taking inventory at participating farms in the county to identify aspects that could be used as educational teaching materials in environmental and agricultural education.

The USDA volunteers are laying the foundation for teachers to learn about the workings of an agricultural setting. The purpose of this project is to find what activities and practices found on a farm are worth the leaders of tomorrow learning and understanding.

The volunteers are headed by Karen Kinard, the AmeriCorps leader for the farm teacher curriculum. The idea is to set up a program for select teachers to go through an agricultural training period to better understand the farming process and establish a working curriculum for other teachers to utilize.

The AmeriCorps team is taking inventory at participating farms in the county to identify aspects that could be used as teaching materials in agricultural and environmental education. The volunteers are also setting up a working agricultural resource library of available materials from numerous sources for future utilization by teachers.

The field data compiled by the volunteers from Newberry County farms will be used by the school district to create the new curriculum. A handful of teachers will take the raw data and organize an agricultural program for other teachers to go through to adequately teach the farm curriculum.

After enough teachers have completed the program and begin to incorporate some of the material into their classes, field trips to the area farms will give the students a chance to see first-hand how the food, we so often take for granted, gets to our table.

The teaching curriculum will include many aspects of environmental education and conservation techniques used to protect the quality of our existing environment for future generations. The importance of environmental education is being realized throughout the world and can be seen in everyday life. That's why we all, especially our children, need to learn and understand how processes that affect our environment work and what can be done to protect and hopefully, rebuild what we still have.

AmeriCorps Continues Work With Watershed

BY KIMBERLY M. JOHNSON

YOUR COMMUNITY AT WORK
AmeriCorps continues its commitment to rural South Carolina.

The Newberry Team II members (Amy Overstreet, James Holland, Jay Henderson, Mary Roe and Angela Brinkley) use a computer program to identify non-point source pollution in the Bush River Camping Creek watershed.

To identify potential solutions for the problem areas, team members place data such as soil type, land slope and land use into the AGNPS (Agricultural Non-point Source) computer model.

The model simulates conditions at all points within the watershed.

The AGNPS program actually runs a watershed model and spatially interprets the results.

The Natural Resources Conservation Service will use the model of the two subwatersheds to pinpoint problems within the overall Bush River Camping Creek watershed.

The team has created a Lotus spreadsheet for inputting data from SC Dept. of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) water monitoring station. The information has been accumulating over the years and has not been analyzed.

As a result of the spreadsheet,



Newberry Team II, AmeriCorps, members receive technical training from supervisor Jim Wilson, center. Pictured, from left, are: Jay Henderson, James Holland, Jim Wilson and Mary Roe.

the data can be graphed and comparison studies can be made in order to illustrate trends and patterns over the years.

Aerial photos, topography maps, as well as a clinometer which measures the land slope percentage are some of the instruments and equipment used by the team.

As Holland and Roe use the equipment in the field, they have placed a premium on their outdoor experiences.

Holland enjoys the physical landscape such as the hillsides, the change of seasons and the well-managed farms. "For farmers, the work is right there...they live within the workplace," he said.

Roe feels a greater appreciation for the environment.

She recalls watching a PBS program about mammoths. Roe marveled how she could relate to various subjects in the program to her AmeriCorps work.

Devising a plan to cross a creek and trying to pry a canoe out of mud are some memorable tales for Amy Overstreet. Overstreet works primarily with computer data entry. She looks forward to increasing her field time.

Call 321-6222, to learn more about the team's current project.

Americorps: Many want to help out

Continued from 1A

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

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.

Medford Mail Tribune

2/15/95

Medford, OR

AmeriCorps update

The last time we wrote defending President Clinton's national service program, AmeriCorps volunteers were up in Butte Falls, hammering away on improvements to the Butte Falls community hall.

They're still in Butte Falls, working at the county library branch building, the fire hall and restrooms at the park. Earlier, they maintained national forest trails, planted trees, and worked on erosion-control projects.

THE NATIONAL SERVICE program provides young workers with a living stipend and money for college. But the GOP Congress is still eager to make AmeriCorps an example of its willingness to spare no "liberal" program (although it wants to spend more money for young soldiers to do make-work on obsolete military bases) — especially a program that President Clinton can properly be proud of.

Anyway, since that last editorial AmeriCorps crews are now helping improve the popular but heavily worn trail on Upper Table Rock. Literally, your tax dollars at work.

Their job is in gutter

By MIKE HALL
The Capital-Journal

Those people painting words on curbs and in gutters in Topeka aren't graffiti vandals.

They are painting an important anti-pollution reminder, "No Dumping — Drains to River."

Norman L. Sawyer, non-point source coordinator for the Shawnee County Conservation District, said the message was being painted adjacent to storm sewer inlets in the Shunganunga Drainage area.

The painting is being done by four Americorps/USDA members.

Sawyer estimates 8,000 storm drains need to be stenciled. He said many members of the public don't realize the storm drains empty directly into Shunganunga Creek or the Kansas River without going through any kind of treatment process.

Examples of the kinds of things people shouldn't put into storm drains are: used motor oil, antifreeze, fertilizer, pesticides, paint residues, leaves, Styrofoam and cans.

The Americorps members began stenciling this week, but Sawyer said the majority of the work will be done next March through June. The program also is looking for more volunteers to help with the work.

As the stencilers move through an area painting the message on the curbs, they also distribute an informational brochure. Potential volunteers may contact the Shawnee County Conservation District Office at 3231 S.W. Van Buren. The district also will have a booth at the Topeka Lawn, Flower and Garden Show, Feb. 17-19, 1995, where volunteers may sign up.

Clinton project benefits college

■ The AmeriCorps project leaves its mark in The Dalles

By TOM STEVENSON
Managing Editor

There is much work to be done on the grounds of the new Columbia Gorge Community College campus.

Projects are backed up, waiting for the time, money and manpower to become available to get them done.

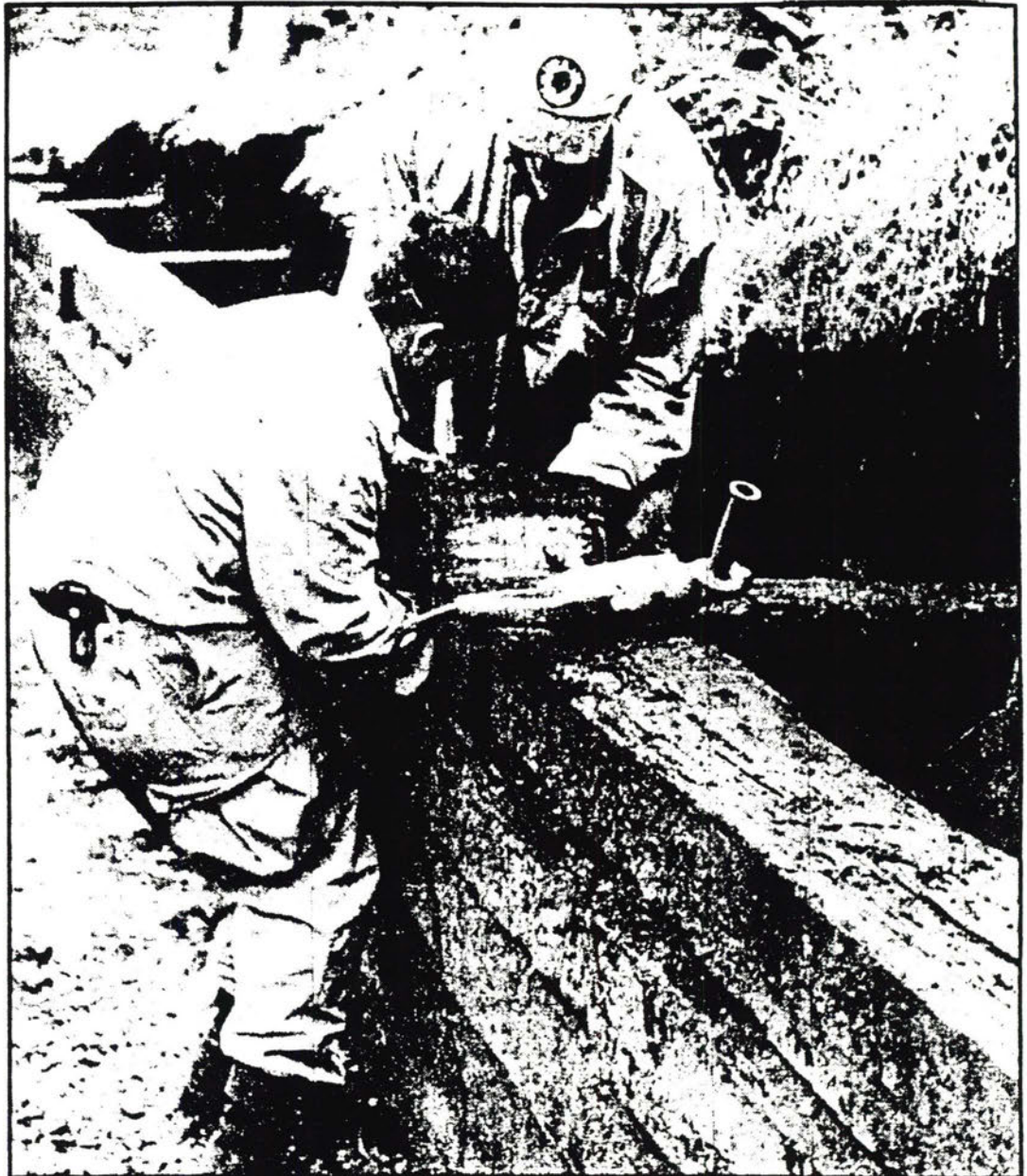
One of those projects — a new retaining wall that holds back a bank along the main driveway — has been done thanks to a cooperative agreement between the college and the new AmeriCorps Program.

The AmeriCorps Program was designed and implemented by President Clinton as an opportunity for those who want to go to college — but for financial reasons cannot afford to. Under the program's rules, participants sign up for a year, work on a number of different projects for a minimal weekly salary, and at the end of the year get a \$5,000 education voucher.

For many the commitment is one year, for others it can be two.

It takes quite a commitment for someone to step outside each day to work in all kinds of conditions, doing work to benefit the environment, all for only \$156 a week. There is a carrot dangling at the end, however, and it is that, along with an opportunity to learn many skills, that has attracted a wide assortment of people to the program, according to Jerry Gabay.

Gabay is the director of the Mt. Adams Center of the Northwest Service Academy, which is a part of the AmeriCorps program. He was on hand last week to watch six members of one of his three nine-person crews work on the



AMERICORPS IN ACTION — Brent Force (left) and Carl Lampman were two team members from the AmeriCorps Program who were working recently on a new retaining wall at Columbia Gorge Community College. Both work through the Northwest Service Academy's Mt. Adams Center. (Staff photo by Tom Stevenson)

new retaining wall at Columbia Gorge Community College.

"It is a diverse group," said Gabay. "We have three grandmothers in the program, and we have people right out of high school."

Under the guidelines of the AmeriCorps program, all of the projects the teams work on have to be environmentally related. The team that was working at CGCC had earlier been building a fence around a water project in

Washington before being snowed out. Near Estacada, they built about five miles of trail in the Mt. Hood National Forest. At the same time the crew was working in The Dalles, another group was

See AmeriCorps, page 7



THE WHOLE CREW — Crew members from the AmeriCorps Program who took part in building a new retaining wall at Columbia Gorge Community College include (from left) Christina Wellman, Jennifer Glowacki, Brent Force, Kim Pope, Carl Lampman, and John Duff, the Team Steward. (Staff photo by Tom Stevenson)

AmeriCorps

Continued from page 1

enhancing habitat for waterfowl on Wells Island at Hood River.

Yet another team recently finished working three weeks dismantling Hope's Place, a women's shelter in White Salmon that burned. The environmental connection there, Gabay noted, is that the new Hope's Place will be a solar building and will have a state-of-the-art recycling program.

The work is not easy, as Jennifer Glowacki, a recent high graduate from Timber noted.

"The work is hard," said Glowacki. "The first project we did was trail building and it took a lot out of you. But we got used to it, and we have a good time working together, so that helps."

Glowacki joked that the team had recently took a week off for training, and then moved to Columbia Gorge Community College to begin the latest project and the sore muscles quickly returned. But to her, it is certainly worth it.

"The scholarship at the end makes it all worth while," she said. "But I just graduated and this is giving me a chance to figure out what I want to do."

Carl Lampman, a 23-year-old from White Salmon, had worked construction since he graduated from high school, but has wanted to go to college to study engineering. It was his mother who handed him the application for the AmeriCorps program.

"If you're looking to further your education and looking for a challenge in your life, then I would say 'yes, do this,'" Lampman said. "It's also nice to know that what we're doing is

going to affect future generations."

John Duff, a 26-year-old former resident of the east coast who came to the program via Seattle, was the "team steward" on duty at the college. He was quick to note that the program was off to a good start.

"Things are going well," he said. "There have been a lot of things we had not anticipated, but that is part of it being the first year. What I'm enjoying seeing is the success people are having. They are sticking with the program, setting goals and reaching them."

Because he is a member of the actual "management staff," Duff will not get the \$5,000 education voucher at the end of the year. He said he chose to become a part of the AmeriCorps team because he "wanted to do something for the environment, something outdoors and to work with people."

"It's been a great experience so far," said Duff, who has his Bachelor's Degree in English and plans on furthering his education. "The dynamics of working in a group like this are really interesting."

Since the program began late last summer, only four people have dropped out, Gabay said. One was asked to leave, while the other three chose to depart for personal reasons.

The Northwest Service Academy is one of similar programs created as part of AmeriCorps. Some of those involved live on site at Trout Lake, and their room and board is deducted from their \$156 per week. Others live at home or in other private residences.

Those from the ML Adams

Center work throughout the Mid-Columbia region, and Gabay said he is hearing from a number of groups and agencies who are interested in having groups do work.

"We met (last week) with some people who want us to do some riparian work on Fifteen Mile Creek," Gabay said. "The BPA also wants us to do riparian work on other creeks. The Dufur Historical Society has talked to us. All of those are in the conceptual stage. We would also really like to do some work on the Riverfront Trail in The Dalles."

The projects being accomplished by those in AmeriCorps are quite likely projects that would not get done otherwise — at least not as quickly, Gabay noted.

"We are going out and working in the communities," said Gabay. "We hope people will see what can get done."

Those who have work done by AmeriCorps workers pay for it in various ways. In the case of the college, CGCC officials agreed to give tuition grants for participants of \$200 per day that the crew is working on the campus.

Gabay said that he is uncertain how the grants will be used, but different options are being explored, ranging from a class being taught to all in the ML Adams Center, to individuals getting further training.

"It is a cooperative effort that works," Gabay said.

The Northwest Service Academy is currently recruiting for new crew members to begin working in January. For additional information about the program contact Leigh Hancock at (509) 395-3467.

Americorps offering openings in the Four Corners area

The U. S. Department of Agriculture is launching the Americorps program in Utah this month by offering opportunities to about 40 college graduates to gain work experience and tuition reimbursement while helping develop rural areas of the Four Corners region. Americorps is President Bill Clinton's new national service initiative that establishes a "domestic Peace Corps."

Job opportunities are available in Utah, New Mexico, Colorado and Arizona in the disciplines of education, information, small-scale agriculture development, natural resources inventory and determining industry potential.

Americorps is seeking college graduates with an interest in rural development. To request an application and learn about Americorps in the Four Corners region, call 1-800-784-1445. Applications will be accepted through Sept. 30.

Participants will earn a stipend of \$12,000 for working 1,800 hours during a 10- to 12-month period. They will also receive health insurance and reimbursement for child care, if necessary. Upon completion of the 1,800 hours, an education voucher of \$4,725 will be awarded. The voucher may be used to repay

student loans and/or be applied toward tuition for an advanced degree.

The Four Corners initiative will focus on economic development and environmental conservation. Specifically, Americorps members will be conducting an analysis of the potential for natural resource based, value-added industries in the region; conducting research into the role of natural resource based industries in local economies; and assisting limited resource farmers in developing a database of regional demographics and assisting with tourism industry management.

Creek project introduces AmeriCorps

By DAN SWANSON

News-Press managing editor

National officers greeted an AmeriCorps National Service crew working Monday to clear South Table Creek.

Paul Johnson, chief of the Soil Conservation Service, and Joel Berger of the U.S. Department of Agriculture visited the crew to help launch the program in Nebraska and nationwide. AmeriCorps, which got off the ground on Sept. 12, is considered to be the domestic version of the Peace Corps.

Berger joined the four AmeriCorps workers removing log jams and debris from the creek bed on National Arbor Day. Foundation property near Steinhart Park Road. "There's no better way to learn than to work alongside your members. You don't really learn by sitting in your office in Washington," he said.

The Nebraska City project is one of the first in the Midwest and is part of the Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy's focus on helping to repair damage from the 1993 floods. "When we visited the flood damaged sites, we promised not to go until the job was done. We're here because the job isn't done," Berger said.

AmeriCorps has four branches in Nebraska -- Tecumseh, Omaha, Lincoln and Norfolk. The Omaha and Tecumseh branches are already in operation and the Norfolk branch is recruiting for workers. Workers are paid a minimum of \$7,600 and receive health benefits. They are also eligible for an educational voucher worth \$4,725 to pay for tuition or school debts.

Working in Nebraska City Monday were Crew Leader Chuck Yearsley of Lincoln, Eric Bartels of Tecumseh and Theresa and Emily Sherman of Tecumseh. Bartels said he joined AmeriCorps because of the education benefit and the chance to help the community. Bartels, who is married with two children, hopes to go back to college. Yearsley said the program is a way to serve the country and gives citizens an example of national service.



Theresa and Emily Sherman, left, USDA director Joel Berger, Eric Bartels and Chuck Yearsley take a break from work Monday. Berger and the AmeriCorps crew worked one day clearing debris in South Table Creek that had been left behind by the 1993 floods.

Photo by Dan Swanson

Johnson told the workers that the Soil Conservation Service intends to build on what they do. "You're the first generation of this program," he said. "This is a program that will only strengthen in future years." He said up to 20,000 people will be working in AmeriCorps by the end of the first

year.

Bill Caldwell, a University of Nebraska Extension specialist, was also on hand Monday to inspect the program. He said he is studying the program to use it with other service projects. "The service component is the lasting benefit," he said. "The spirit of volunteerism

and national service are the things I will look for in building components. We are looking for something that adds meaning to the lives of the young people involved."

Johnson said AmeriCorps gives people the opportunity to work on the land and be of service. "Young

people a great deal to contribute and they want to contribute," he said.

NADF employees are expected to work throughout the winter cleaning the creek bed. AmeriCorps crews moved on today to other areas of the district affected by the 1993 floods.

One of first states to benefit from national service initiative

Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps to be located in Bellows Falls

BELLOWS FALLS

by Robert F. Smith

BELLOWS FALLS — President Clinton signed into law a bill creating AmeriCorps on September 21, 1993, a domestic version of the Peace Corps. This program will provide a broad spectrum of citizen volunteers to work in the areas of education, public safety, environmental programs and meeting human needs. Vermont, through the efforts of Senator Patrick Leahy, will be one of the first states to benefit from this national service initiative in a program titled the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, funded by a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture. Bellows Falls has been chosen as the center from which the local members of the program will work in Windham and Windsor counties. Holly Hammond, the Team Leader of the Anti-Hunger Corps in southeastern Vermont, held a meeting on November 16 at the Windham Memorial Library to explain the local program to any interested parties.

In five geographic regions of the state, groups of eight individuals



Robert F. Smith

Holly Hammond, Team Leader of the Anti-Hunger Corps in southeastern Vermont, the domestic version of Peace Corps

will live and work together in a variety of programs to help reduce

the problem of hunger in Vermont. Volunteers must be age 18 or older,

and make a commitment to work for one year full-time in the pro-

gram. In return they will be provided with a \$7,660 annual living allowance, health insurance, work related transportation and a child care allowance, if needed. At the end of the year of service they will receive a \$4,725 education or training voucher that can be used for vocational, college and university courses, or towards paying off student loans.

Hammond said that the program, which began this month, is in its recruiting and training stage. Suitable housing for the eight local team members is being sought in Bellows Falls, which is centrally located for their assigned area.

"During this first year we want to work out programs that will not be just Band-Aids to the problem of hunger in this part of Vermont, but some real solutions," said Hammond. "We'd like to work with advisory groups from the local communities made up of parents, educators, clergy, the homeless and others. We need their help in deciding what the priority areas are that we should concentrate on."

Part of the purpose of the Anti-Hunger Corps is to collaborate with already existing groups and programs, providing extra hands and technical assistance as needed, with the long-term purpose of making

those groups and programs more effective on their own. For instance, Hammond explained that they would be working with Southeastern Vermont Community Action in its food distribution program, helping SEVCA create a better program with more community distribution centers and more regular volunteers. Other areas that the local group may become involved with are nutritional education programs in the schools and elderly housing projects, school lunch programs, community meals projects, summer feeding programs, food shelves and food banks.

"There are a lot of possibilities," explained Hammond. "Because we're in the start-up phase right now, it's impossible to say exactly what we'll be doing and what programs we'll become involved in. But this is a tremendous asset for the communities in this area to take advantage of."

Those interested in working in this program can write to the Vermont Anti-Hunger Corps, c/o Office of Economic Opportunity, 103 South Main Street, Waterbury, VT 05671-1801, or call 1-800-360-2577. While applications are being received to fill the 40 positions open throughout the state, more volunteers are needed.

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 Colorado Corps — 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 has 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 it's an authentic attempt to provide a truly beneficial service to communities."

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 banks of waterways.

The volunteers, recent college



RINEI KNOLBER/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, who 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 this helped you get there."



STARR MCDANILES AND CHAD DENISON are working with Pittsfield Economic Developer Robin Hendley to gather information on Pittsfield's downtown area. McDaniles is from Pearl and Denison from Pittsfield.

They're parts of Americorps team

By DAN LONG

"Hopefully some of the things I'll be learning I can take back to Pearl and use it to stop the decline there," Starr McDaniles said about her working as an Americorps volunteer.

McDaniles and Chad Denison are two members of Americorps, a group of volunteers employed

by the US Department of Agriculture.

Denison, from Pittsfield, and McDaniles are working through the Pittsfield economic development office to collect data on Pittsfield's downtown area.

They'll collect information on businesses, buildings, residences, parking and other factors, according to Robin Hendley, Pittsfield

economic developer.

The information will be used to meet ADA requirements, fulfill Main Street designations for application and other possible projects.

"We need to know what the data says and see what direction it's pointing," Hendley said.

It could point to a certain market area not being met by current businesses or a need for more parking, or it might not, Hendley said.

Denison and McDaniles will work for 9-10 months on the data collection project. They've already undergone some training including CPR and first aid from the Red Cross and team building at WIU, according to Denison.

At the end of the project, both volunteers will receive scholarships toward additional education as well as experience.

"It's a volunteer position with a living expense," McDaniles said.

"You earn money and there's a \$4,725 scholarship toward (education)," Denison said. "It's a chance to make contacts and gain experience."

Both volunteers applied for the program through Two Rivers RC&D, the local sponsor of the program.

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 toward 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.

Service with a smile

AmeriCorps does survey in county

By Henry E. Green

(The following article is the first in a series.)

It's been called the domestic Peace Corps.

It's a national service program fostered by President Bill Clinton, and it's called AmeriCorps.

And AmeriCorps has come to Abbeville County.

A Newberry-based team of this new service organization has been doing a grassland survey of Abbeville County.

Around the nation, AmeriCorps has about 20,000 volunteers, according to team member Amy Overstreet.

Members receive a living stipend of \$12,000, and they get an educational stipend of \$4,500 after completing 1700 hours.

This South Carolina rural development team has a target area of nine counties--Aiken, Edgefield, Abbeville, McCormick, Saluda, Newberry, Greenwood, Lexington and Laurens.

The rural development team includes 10 members in Greenwood

and 10 in Newberry.

The Newberry squad has received some training from Mike Hall of the Soil Conservation Service in to help the members with the grassland survey.

James Holland, the team leader, notes that although the main focus of the survey is on grassland, it looks at other things, too.

Another team member, Amy Overstreet of Columbia, studied art history and English at Wofford, where she graduated with a bachelor of arts.

"I have a strong belief in the value of community service," she said. "I hope this will prepare me for two years of service in the Peace Corps in Africa, where she plans to help out in health and nutrition in the Ivory Coast.

She's planning to leave for Africa in the late summer of 1995.

James Holland, from Aiken, is retired from the military and is the team leader.

He likes the outdoors, and he thought it was a good opportunity for community service.

"I've seen what the Peace Corps

has done," he said.

And to Holland, AmeriCorps is something of a domestic Peace Corps.

Other members of the team include Mary Roc, who is from Powdersville in Anderson County.

Roc lauds AmeriCorps as a good exercise in leadership training.

Angela Brinkley, meanwhile, lives in Columbia, and has a degree in computer science from Shaw University, and is working now on a degree in aerospace engineering from the University of South Carolina.

She enjoys being outdoors, as does Jay Henderson, who lives in Columbia and worked with the Soil Conservation Service in Richland County before joining the AmeriCorps team.

The reaction from Abbeville County residents, Overstreet said, has been mixed.

"Generally people welcomed us here," she said. "Mostly it's just curiosity. Overall it's been a positive experience."

A city girl, she has learned much about life on the farm, and she has been particularly impressed by the self-sufficiency of farmers, and by how hard they work.

Program Employs Youths To Clean Up Windbreaks

Western Oklahoma will be the focus of a program to preserve and renovate existing windbreaks in a program through AmeriCorps, a national service program employing youth and helping conserve national resources across the country.

An agreement has been signed with the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, the State Soil Conservation Service, the State Conservation Commission and the Association for Conservation districts to employ 20 youth, 17 years of age and older, to work on preserving the windbreaks most of which were planted during the Dustbowl era of the 1930s.

Area coordinator of this program will be Mark Rose, with Great Plains Resource Conservation and Development Association (405) 562-4882.

His office currently is located at Burns Flat but will be moved to Sentinel by Oct. 1.

Young men and women desiring to apply should contact him in the near future. Forms are available.

One of the focuses of the program will be the first such windbreak in the county which was located in Greer County.

A special ceremony involving this site is scheduled for Friday, Oct. 21. Congressman Frank Lucas has been invited to participate in the program.

The program is funded with both public and private support.

Rose notes that not all wind-



PRESERVING WINDBREAKS — Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Sherrer, SCS State Conservationist Jack Jones, Oklahoma Conservation Commission Director Mason Mungle, and Vice President of Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts A.E. Cranford of Sentinel sign an agreement to cooperate on AmeriCorps. AmeriCorps is an environmental program that will provide jobs and help conserve natural resources in western Oklahoma.

breaks will be able to have work done on them in the one-year life of this specific program.

Any landowner who desires work on a windbreak on his or her property is urged to contact Rose in the near future.

Rose notes that the interest evidenced in this program will determine whether this kind of effort will continue in the future.

The agreement was signed in Oklahoma City on August 3 by Commissioner of Agriculture Gary Sherrer; SCS State Conservationist Jack Jones; Oklahoma Conservation Commission Director Mason Mungle; and Vice President of Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts A.E. Cranford of Sentinel. Cranford is also district director of the Northfork Conservation District, headquartered in both Sayre and Sentinel.

AmeriCorps workers lend a hand to flood recovery

BY LARRY PEIRCE
Lincoln Journal

BROWNVILLE — Anyone joining AmeriCorps, President Clinton's "domestic Peace Corps," must have community spirit and be willing to forgo higher wages they might earn at another job.

In return for their sacrifices, workers can wipe out college debt or gain money to return to college by helping out nonprofit agencies and local governments.

Workers must look beyond the limited financial benefits of AmeriCorps, said Chuck Yearly of Lincoln, supervisor of a crew working out of Tecumseh.

"We're here for the community, to get involved," Yearly said.

Workers wear black baseball caps and gray T-shirts with a white A on a black circle. The AmeriCorps motto is "Getting things done."

The Tecumseh crew will spend most of its 1,800 working hours clear-

ing 1993 flood debris from flood control dams in Johnson, Otoe, Nemaha, Richardson and Pawnee counties.

Work is directed out of the Soil Conservation Service office in Tecumseh and is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's rural development program.

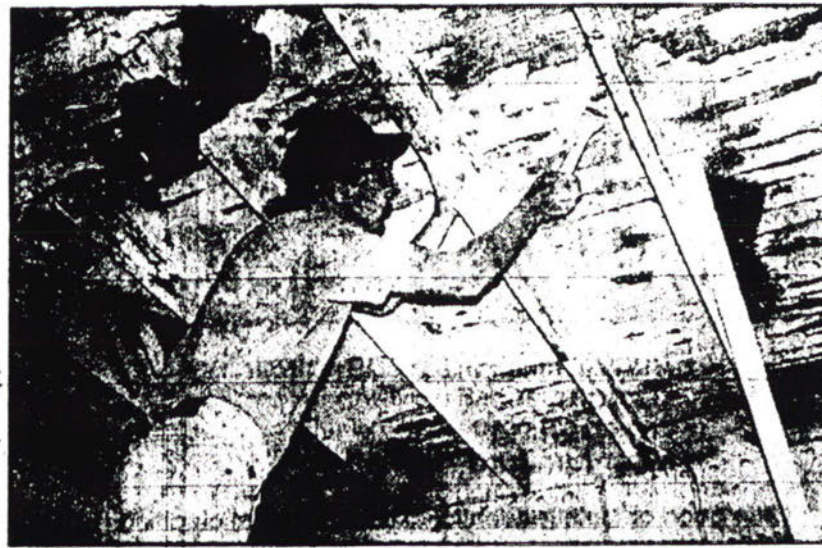
AmeriCorps also has crews working in an anti-hunger, nutrition and empowerment program.

Clinton announced AmeriCorps on Sept. 12, and crews went to work a week later. Yearly is accepting project proposals for nonprofit and public projects in villages, cities and counties.

"A lot of these places don't have much money (for public work projects)," he said.

Last week, the Tecumseh crew began scraping damaged paint from the interior of the floating Meriwether Lewis Museum. Last year's floods nearly swept the old river

Please see AMERICORPS on page 5



LARRY PEIRCE/LINCOLN JOURNAL

Eric Bartels of Tecumseh scrapes paint from the ceiling of the Meriwether Lewis Museum in Brownville. Bartels and three other AmeriCorps workers are repairing damage done to the old dredging boat by a leaky roof and flooding in 1993.

AmeriCorps/Workers help communities and themselves

Continued from page 1

dredge away. The interior paint was damaged when the roof leaked. Heat and humidity caused more damage.

The crew will scrape and then repaint the ceiling and walls for the nonprofit Meriwether Lewis Foundation. A private contractor installed a new roof this summer.

Yearly, who has a master's degree in rural and community planning, was a community planner in Carroll, Iowa, before his job was phased out. He had been out of work for months. AmeriCorps will help him pay off his graduate school debt and gain experience as a supervisor.

Eric Bartels of Tecumseh, a construction worker and the father of two children, said he wants to go to a two-year college without borrowing money.

Theresa and Emily Sherman, two sisters from Tecumseh, said they will pay off student loans they incurred while attending Platte Community

College in Columbus and Peru State College.

"It takes care of all of mine, thank God," Emily Sherman said, scraping paint from the ceiling of the old river dredge.

The sisters, 20-year-old identical twins, plan to go back to school after a year.

AmeriCorps, a \$360 million program, pays 20,000 Americans to work in four areas: education, health and human needs, the environment and public safety. If extended by Congress, the program could spend \$1.5 billion over three years to pay for 100,000 workers.

Anyone older than 17, including high school dropouts and people with graduate degrees, can apply for the program.

AmeriCorps supervisors make \$6.35 an hour plus a stipend toward money for education. Workers earn \$4.35 an hour plus a stipend.

When the educational stipend is

added in, workers earn about \$12,000 a year plus paid medical benefits. AmeriCorps workers are not considered federal workers and are not eligible for unemployment. They must work the entire year to receive educational benefits, and are limited to two years in the program.

Yearly said the Tecumseh crew and crews in Lincoln, Omaha and Norfolk soon will each add another worker.

In Lincoln, recruiting is under way for 23 volunteers to work with nine community action agencies in Nebraska, said Lorrie Benson, director of Community Action of Nebraska Inc.

Benson will oversee a program aimed at reducing violence among youths 10 to 15 years old. For information, call Benson at (402) 471-3714.

For information about other AmeriCorps opportunities, call 1-800-

W E D N E S D A Y

METRO/REGION

THE  STATE

FEBRUARY 15, 1991

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AmeriCorps volunteers lend a hand in Midlands

By MICHELLE R. DAVIS
and KAY GORDON
Staff Writers

Amy Overstreet, 22, graduated from college and had no idea what to do with her life. James Holland, 54, a retired U.S. Army major, was teaching life science at an alternative school until it closed.

Both opted to join the ranks of AmeriCorps — President Clinton's pet project that he has dubbed the domestic Peace Corps.

IS PROGRAM WORTH PRICE? B6

Overstreet and Holland are part of a five-member team working in South Carolina on rural development projects under

AmeriCorps. This week, two teams spent time in Richland and Lexington counties improving dry fire hydrants and inspecting dams.

Several South Carolina groups fall under the AmeriCorps umbrella, including City Year and the National Civilian Conservation Corps. In return for a living stipend and an educational grant, AmeriCorps members work on community projects. The 11-month program began in September.

"Our effort is to reach out to rural communities where county governments do not have staff for some projects," said Jim Wilson, AmeriCorps coordinator and district conservationist in Columbia. Among other tasks, groups have analyzed water samples, done grassland surveys



TIM DOWNING/STAFF
AmeriCorps volunteers James Holland and Amy Overstreet complete work on a dry fire hydrant in rural Richland County.

and mapped roads for 911 systems.

The rural-development AmeriCorps project is sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service under the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Statewide, four five-member teams are based

PLEASE SEE **AMERICORPS** PAGE B6

Americorp volunteer comes to Bell County

Nine Americorp members recently began their service in Kentucky's Appalachian Region after being sworn in at the Farmer's Home Administration (FmHA) state office in Lexington.

Thomas G. Fern, state FmHA director, conducted the ceremony and challenged the members to "become leaders in the community which they will be working."

The nine members attended a two day orientation/training session in London, and have now reported to their respective communities to begin work.

The participants in the Kentucky Appalachian Region will facilitate community strategic planning and assist in implementing programs to improve or develop needed community facilities. Team



Americorp volunteer Laura Duncan will be working in Middlesboro. Pictured are FmHa State Director Thomas G. Fern, Duncan, Bell County Chamber of Commerce Director Gale Edwards, and Americorp Coordinator Louis Elliott.

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 include Middlesboro, Barbourville (2), Hazard, Prestonsburg (2), London (2), and Somerset. The Americorp

team member working in Middlesboro will be Laura Duncan, who will be working out of the Bell County Chamber of Commerce.

Daily Nebraskan, Sept. 12, 1994

University of Nebraska
newspaper

AmeriCorps is launched nationwide

Nebraska students will participate in service program

By Angle Goettsch
Staff Reporter

President Clinton's service corps of college students soon will be marching into Nebraska.

In Nebraska, 20 college students will serve in AmeriCorps, said Craig Derickson, Nebraska's director of AmeriCorps.

AmeriCorps, which kicks off today nationwide, is President Clinton's national service program that will offer students academic scholarships in ex-

change for community service. Through the program, students can help solve local problems while getting leadership and service opportunities.

Nebraska's Soil Conservation Service will work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to fill the Nebraska positions. Five people will be working at offices in Norfolk, Lincoln, Omaha and Tecumseh.

Derickson said participants would earn a living stipend of \$7,660, and supervisors would receive \$12,000. They also would receive an educational voucher of \$4,725 when they completed 1,812 hours of service. The educational voucher may be used to pay for college loans or tuition.

This summer, organizers have been gearing up for the project around the

country. Students had to apply to participate in the AmeriCorps program by Sept. 2.

Derickson said many University of Nebraska-Lincoln students had sent him applications.

No specific qualifications were required to apply for AmeriCorps, he said, other than a strong interest to work in a community service program and on environmental projects. Site supervisors are required to be college graduates. Other service participants must be college bound.

John Beacon, UNL director of scholarships and financial aid, said the program would give people who normally couldn't afford it the chance to go to college.

But, he said, "it will be at least one

year before anyone will be able to get a voucher."

Beacon said: "Under this scenario, you are a servant for some years before you can use that money toward college, but students will not have loan dependencies."

Derickson said the Corporation for National Service administered the national program. State commissions sponsor 300 programs across the country, and federal agencies also sponsor some projects.

Derickson said AmeriCorps programs that were linked with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, like Nebraska's program, would help solve environmental problems.

See AMERICORPS on 6

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AmeriCorps

Continued from Page 1

"They will be working as a team to provide local communities support for flood relief, water quality protection, natural resource protection, complete rehabilitation and maintenance on recreation areas, and environmental and ecosystem management education," Derickson said.

"We want to work with the community and provide information on how to protect the environment," Derickson said.

Derickson said he expected 20,000 students to participate in AmeriCorps nationwide by the year's end.

He also expected the program to be a lasting one.

"Because this national service program gives students opportunities to help meet educational needs, I have speculation that this program will continue," Derickson said.

Beacon said AmeriCorps was a good opportunity for college students, but it would be better if more students could get involved.

AmeriCorps no boondoggie in Butte Falls

By PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

BUTTE FALLS — Risa Huetter has a challenge for those in Congress contemplating cutting the budget for AmeriCorps.

"They should come out and work with us and see how hard we work," said the AmeriCorps member. "If they think what we're doing is stupid, then they don't know what's going on."

Congressional leaders, vowing to reduce federal spending, have questioned the merits of the \$580 million in funding for the 20,000-member national service corps. President Clinton, who touted the program in his state-of-the-union address last month, wants to expand the program.

Under the program, participants receive \$7,600 in living allowance during their 10-month tour, and a \$4,725 educational voucher to be used for college or trade-school tuition.

Since joining AmeriCorps last fall, Huetter, 19, of Ashland, and the other members based at the Rogue River National Forest have been cutting trails, planting trees, building erosion control projects, cleaning up after forest fires and working on various construction projects.

In the local community hall, built 40 years ago, AmeriCorps members are restoring the interior and adding a long awning over the entrance.

Over at the county branch library building, they have started building a storage shed. Plans also call for building an extension on the local fire hall. And they are rehabilitating restrooms in the nearby park.

Those projects are being financed by a \$100,000 grant received by Butte Falls through the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative for timber-dependent communities. Prospect has received a similar grant.

Huetter, who was working on a ranch in Colorado before joining AmeriCorps, says the program allows young people to learn work skills and earn money for education.

"I've learned a lot of patience," she said, noting she intends to go to college upon completing the program. "I plan to go into architecture. I like doing construction. It's great to learn how things are put together."

Volunteer supervisor Bill Tucker, 65, former town marshal of Butte Falls, likes



Mail Tribune / Steve Jor

Cisco Villastrivo, 19, works on the Butte Falls community center in an AmeriCorps project.

the way the program has come together.

"We're getting repairs that have been badly needed for years," Tucker said. "I honestly believe it's as good a program as you're going to get to help a community like this. There is no other way I can think of that this kind of work would get done."

"And they are great workers," he added. "As soon as they know what you want, they get right to it."

Tim Dodge, 21, of Cottage Grove, spent three years studying environmental science at Oregon State University before joining AmeriCorps.

"Probably one of the best things to do nowadays is to get a light out of

college," he said. "I wanted to get some work experience before completing my degree."

Dodge also wants doubters to visit an AmeriCorps work site.

"The best way to know what's going on is to get out here," he said. "It's hard to put down on paper what we're getting from this program. We're earning what we're getting."

Cisco Villastrivo, 19, of Woodburn, agreed.

"It keeps me out of trouble," he said of the program. "And I'm learning new stuff all the time."

Before joining AmeriCorps, he worked

in a glass factory.

"I want to go back to school," he said. "The only reason I'm not going to school now was that I didn't have the money. This program is really helping me."

Laurel Alexanian, 20, of Spokane, was painting a room inside the hall working in fast-food restaurants months ago.

"I wanted to do something that had more of a purpose," she said, adding she is interested in pursuing a career in wildlife biology or conservation.

"I like learning the different types of work," she said, adding, "It'll look good on my resume."



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

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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.

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.

I Couldn't Ask for More Than This

by Nancy Scolari, Americorp Member, Petaluma FO

WHAT'S AMERICORPS?-

September 6, 1994—I found out about the AmeriCorps position over the answering machine. A dear professor of mine at my university took the time to call me over the summer and inform me of positions with the Natural Resources Conservation Service. I decided to look into the position because I had just recently finished a class in soil science which I enjoyed thoroughly. This seemed like the perfect opportunity to explore my interest in soil science.

I first talked to Richard King in Santa Rosa, who explained that the positions were available as a part of a nationwide program entitled AmeriCorps. Mr. King also explained the various positions and their objectives. The opportunity seemed like a perfect step in the right direction. I was searching for a program within the United States that was aimed at community service through environmental action. This job was ideal.

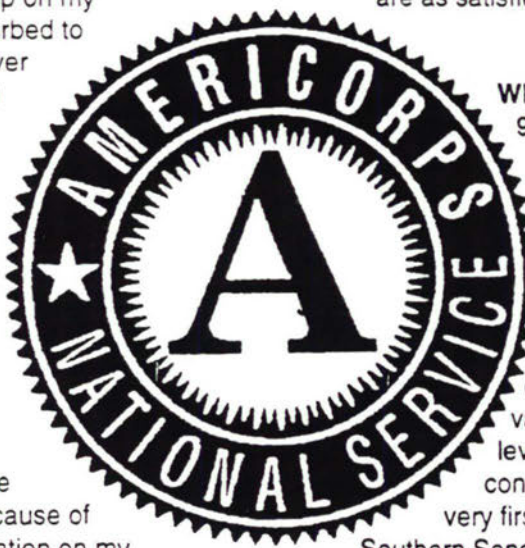
At this time I left on my vacation in Mexico for two weeks. Anxious about my application, I called my mother to check up on my status. I was disturbed to find that I was never called back for an interview. When I returned to the United States, I decided to call and ask about any weaknesses that I may have had on my application. It was explained that NRCS was unable to contact me because of conflicting information on my date of arrival. I was ecstatic to find out that they were willing to take the time to interview me the very next day.

I walked into the interview a bit nervous as expected and hoped for

the best. I came out of the interview feeling I had just accomplished a great task. Now I just had to wait one more time.

I received a call the very next day! The Petaluma Field Office wanted an interview with me once again. I went into their office that very day and met Lisa Shanks, the District Conservationist. After meeting with the Petaluma office I decided that this was definitely where I wanted to work. I was very pleased with the work atmosphere of the whole office and the employees were very personable.

A few days later I was informed that I was selected as an AmeriCorps member. I was overwhelmed with excitement at the chance of finally starting my career and at the same time functioning as a vital part of my community. I couldn't ask for more than this. So far the experience has been wonderful. The people of the community have been very kind. I have spent all day meeting with people of different agencies and the experience is overwhelming. I certainly hope that other AmeriCorps members are as satisfied as I am.



THE FIRST WEEK—September 9, 1994—This week was certainly overwhelming! So far I have attended two RCD meetings. Both of them were of various confusion levels. The most confusing was on the very first day. The

Southern Sonoma County Resource Conservation District held a meeting in which a variety of acronyms were present—RCD, SCS, EPA, BCDC, etc. It was very difficult to get the gist of the meeting unless you were familiar with the different agen-

cies. The next meeting I attended was for the Marin RCD. This meeting made a lot more sense. I think it was because I finally started catching on to the terms.

The most heated topic of interest seems to be affiliated with levee permits. There are a number of permit fees that landowners are required to pay to a number of agencies. The cost all adds up quickly and landowners are quite peeved. It didn't go over too well when BCDC proclaimed that there was an outstanding fee of \$.10 per cubic yard (totaling \$5200) that was to be required. Things heated up fast.

GRAND TOUR—September 23, 1994—I accompanied Charlette Epifanio when we went to check out an As-Built at "T's" dairy. The whole process was pretty fascinating. It's amazing how much more one can see once you've been enlightened. Charlette pointed out many things that I would have completely passed up and would have never seen in my life. On the job it seems like one really needs to train the eye to find what you're looking for. After we went through the As-Built, I was able to see the dairy in a whole different light. I began to see the drainage problems associated with the dairy. It was amazing that Mr. "T" went through all the trouble of putting in the drainage system and didn't really complete it. He guttered all of his structures just so that ultimately the water would run right over manure.

The next day I went out with Paul Sheffer on his grand tour of Petaluma and Sonoma Valley. This was a great learning experience. He is a very knowledgeable person. One day I would love to spit out information like he does. We were able to see a couple of vineyards and levees. On this day I decided that my job wasn't really a job. It seems like I'm on an extended vacation touring Sonoma and Marin counties. ♦

A New Phase in My Life

by Mike Jensen, AmeriCorp Member,
Petaluma FO

THE APPLICATION—August 1, 1994—I'm down in San Luis Obispo, celebrating my 25th birthday with friends from Cal Poly. I called home to talk to my family and my father tells me about a couple of jobs that have just been advertised. I had been scoping the newspaper looking for a job related to my degree in landscape architecture while working as a carpenter for a couple of contractors in Sonoma County. My father informs me of the AmeriCorps position looking for college graduates with environmental degrees. The deadline for applications for the AmeriCorps job was August 3rd. So I cut my vacation short and drove back up to Petaluma in the morning.

THE INTERVIEW—August 22, 1994—Dressed in a tie, sports coat and slacks, I arrived to the interview 10 minutes early at 8:35 a.m. I wasn't all that nervous...but I was curious about how technical their interview questions would be. "So, Mike? What time did you think the interview was scheduled?" Lisa Shanks asked. "I'm ten minutes early, right?" I reply. "WRONG!!!!" (The interview was scheduled for 8:15 a.m.)

Well, I guess I'm not getting this job, I thought. My dad must have taken the wrong time down or something. It kind of relaxed me for the interview knowing that I wouldn't have a chance anymore. The questions started out about personal history and did not seem that bad. The questions got harder as the interview went on because they would shift gears on you so fast. Next, the questions got really hard and were asked by some kind of doctor or shrink named **Charlotte Epifanio**. I figured she must have been CIA or something. Well not quite that extreme. "How would you talk to an irate farmer?" she asked. Now these questions were getting very hypothetical and I figured there must have been some kind of grading key. I survived. No worries anyway. They hate me, I'm late. By far not a good interview by my standards.

A FINALIST—September 26,

1994—To my surprise found out I was

See page 13 Phase

Phase

one of the finalists. I was very happy, but started to worry as soon as I hung up the phone. What does finalist mean? Another interview? God, I hope not. At this time I wanted to find out more of what the job entails. What will I be enlisted for the next year of my life? Will I personally get enough out of it, to take a pay cut by more than half?

AMERICORPS MEMBERSHIP-

—September 29, 1994—**Lisa Shanks** called to let me know I had been officially accepted. She also wanted to know if I could start on the 6th if she got approval. I said, "sure." Now I was excited for the job, and began looking forward to a new phase in my life. New phases are always exciting and they don't come all that often. Today, I'm fully STOKED!!!!

THE FIRST DAY—September 6, 1994—**THE FIRST DAY, YEAH!!!!**
SSCRCD, MCRCD, SCS, BCDC,

EPA, ASCS, USDA, AO, MALT, CARCD, SFEP, NOAA, LAFCO, SFRWQCB, HELPME, ETC... Let us just say it was a crazy first day for memorizing names, agencies, and jurisdictions. Though it was a little confusing, it was very interesting to sit in on the Southern Sonoma Resource Conservation District meeting. For the first time I was exposed to all the issues and key players in the North Bay. I met a lot of people, and did my best to record as many names as possible. I survived **THE FIRST DAY, YEAH!!!!** And I even had fun.

PIECES MAKING SENSE—

September 8, 1994—Today we drove out to Point Reyes Station to attend the Marin RCD meeting. The pieces really started to fall together today. For the first time I really started to understand how the NRCS works with the RCD's and the landowners in the region. The North Bay Initiative started

to make sense and I could see how all the jurisdiction were trying to open up communication with one another. There is a great importance for the agencies to know what the others are up to, if anything good for the region is going to happen.

KICK OFF!!!—September 12, 1994—Today we went down to San Francisco with the other four AmeriCorps members from Santa Rosa and Ukiah. The AmeriCorps program was referred to as the Peace Corps for the United States. The Mayor of San Francisco, Frank Jordan, spoke along with Dusty Baker, Manager of the S.F. Giants and many others. I really did not understand the full scope of the AmeriCorps program before. Today over 20,000 AmeriCorps volunteers were sworn in by President Clinton and in three years time there will be over 100,000 in the U.S. ♦

Mail Tribune

Serving Southern Oregon & Northern California

Clinton's Forest Plan aids local timber towns

Prospect, Butte Falls will get money for civic projects

By PAUL FATTIG
of the Mail Tribune

Butte Falls and Prospect are about to get major facelifts, thanks to two \$100,000 grants awarded through the Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative.

The money, part of President Clinton's Forest Plan to help provide economic stability to northwest timber-based communities, will enable the communities to launch projects identified by community-originated strategic plans.

"We will be able to upgrade the existing facilities that are badly in need of repair, and to build a much needed addition to our fire hall," explained Tacey Hoban, a member of the Butte Falls town council and the Butte Falls Economic Development Commission.

Other projects include community hall renovation, restoration of park rest rooms, reroofing the library and making it handicapped accessible, building a library/museum storage room, sidewalks and repairing fences around the town perimeter.

"The townspeople are very enthusiastic about the projects planned," Hoban said, adding, "and

(they) intend to contribute their time, labor, effort and materials to bring this about."

In Prospect, the money will be used to install lighting and covered bleachers at the high school and community field, renovate Lions Park, complete the arboretum and construct and install visitor services signs along Highway 62.

Most of the labor for the projects will be supplied by the Rogue River National Forest's AmeriCorps workers, who begin training Tuesday, according to forest spokesman Tom Dew.

Most of the 40 participants in the 10-month local national service program hail from southern Oregon. Participants receive up to \$7,500 per year in pay plus an educational award of \$4,725 at the end of the year to go toward college expenses or to pay off school loans.

During their tour, the coed group, ages 17 to 24, will be housed in separate barracks in the old Star Gulch facility in the Applegate Ranger District. In past years, Jackson County had leased the site to use as a juvenile offender facility.

"Most of these projects are labor intensive,"

see GRANTS, Page 3A

Grants

from Page 1A

Dew said of the Butte Falls and Prospect projects. "They'll start doing those this winter."

This marks the first time the Forest Service has melded the new AmeriCorps program with its rural community assistance program, Dew observed.

"We're real excited about it," he said. "We're getting a real wide range of kids in the program. Some have had some college or are college graduates. But we also

have those who haven't completed high school. It's a neat idea to mix those groups."

The young people will learn career skills while doing tasks ranging from trail maintenance to construction projects.

Besides the Forest Service, entities helping in Butte Falls and Prospect include Pacific Power, Burrill Lumber Co., Prospect schools, Lions and Lioness Clubs, Prospect Community Improvement Association, Boise Cascade Corp. and Jackson County.

ESTABLISHING TREE WINDBREAKS FOR YOUR PROPERTY



USDA



Natural Resources Conservation Service

AmeriCorps

In cooperation with the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District

January 1995

AmeriCorps In Antelope Acres



We would like to introduce ourselves as AmeriCorps members, Phillip Sam, Sandy Haynes, and April Jurgen, working with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly the Soil Conservation Service) and the Antelope Valley Resource Conservation District. The AmeriCorps program is President Clinton's program to lift up America through national service. This program is similar to a domestic Peace Corp in which AmeriCorps members work closely with the neighborhood and community.

One of our projects, as AmeriCorps members, is to promote the planting of tree windbreaks for Antelope Acres residents. As you are probably aware, in 1992, the Soil Conservation Service, with the help of many local agencies, worked together to revegetate about 2,500 acres of windblown lands in and around the Antelope Acres. We feel that for us to stop at this point would mean that the residents and their properties are still at "high risk". There are still many acres of unvegetated barren lands and the potential for future droughts exists, which may create additional dust sources.

Currently we are putting together a brochure on tree windbreaks to inform residents on the benefits of having a windbreak. The AmeriCorps staff can provide assistance with site preparation, tree selection and irrigation design. We can also provide hands on assistance with planting trees and setting up the irrigation. One way to reach out to local residents is through the Antelope Acres community Center and the Town Council.

For more information, please contact Sandy Haynes or Phillip Sam at the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Lancaster Field Office. (805) 945-2604.

Benefits Of Having A Windbreak



- ☐ Prevent soil erosion
- ☐ Reduce noise and dust
- ☐ Lowers cost of home heating and cooling
- ☐ Moderate summer heat and wind
- ☐ Provide shade
- ☐ Attract birds and wildlife
- ☐ Protection of homes, crops, and animals
- ☐ Increases property value





EATON CANYON RECOVERY ALLIANCE

Affiliated with COMMUNITY PARTNERS

OES Community Liaison Office
3746 Foothill Boulevard
Pasadena, California 91107

ECRA UPDATE

PAGE 8

PLAN A "SAFETY WALK" IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

On December 3, 1994, AmeriCorps members, Phillip Sam and Sandy Haynes, participated in a neighborhood "sandbag walk" along with Virginia Kimball from the OES Community Liaison Office, Mike Bohlander from L.A. County Public Works, Stephenie Frederick from Mount Wilson Toll Road Homeowners' Association, and local residents, Sandy Rice and Shirley White from the Woodglen area.

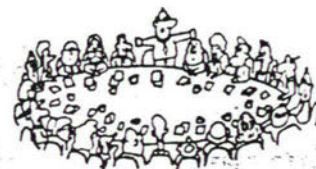
The areas covered were along Pinecrest, Crescent, Bowring, Skyview, Woodglen, and Winterhaven. We visited residents who gave sandbag mitigation measures last year after the Altadena/Inglewood Fire. We informed residents about the potential danger of debris and mud flows from the hillsides. We also provided information about sandbag distribution locations, pipe and timber deflector wall cost estimates, a new county policy to waive building permit fees on retaining walls, and a standard design specification sheet on retaining walls.

The response from most residents was very favorable; people seemed to appreciate our visit and the information we made available. Many residents have taken measures and installed new sandbags, pipe and timber deflectors, or retaining walls. On the other hand, some residents did not feel there was much risk since the area avoided major problems last year. There was misinformation about who is responsible for the sandbags, about storm drains being able to handle whatever comes down, and about K-rails being able to hold everything behind them. Stephenie made note of these issues and will bring them up at the next Mt. Wilson Toll Road Association meeting Thursday, Jan. 12, 7:00 p.m. at the OES Community Liaison Office, to better inform and educate the local residents.

Overall, the neighborhood sandbag walk was quite successful in informing local residents about the need to take safety precautions. As AmeriCorps members, we would like to contribute our time to work closely with the neighborhood and the community. We would like to offer our services to other homeowner associations or individual residents who would like to arrange similar neighborhood sandbag walks for their area.

To arrange a date, please contact Phillip Sam or Sandy Haynes at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (formerly Soil Conservation Service), Lancaster Field Office, (805) 945-2604; or fax (805) 942-5503. To obtain a copy of the information given to residents, please call the OES Community Liaison Office, (818) 304-7890.

ECRA COMMITTEES



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COMMUNICATIONS	Frank Griffith	818/798-2281
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SECRETARY	Ken Givretz	818/794-4822
OES RECOVERY CENTER	Virginia Kimball	818/304-7890
	Fred Messick	818/304-7890

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

You are cordially invited to help with the upcoming newsletter mailing!

WHAT: Folding, stapling and stamping the ECRA Update Newsletter.

WHEN: Two dates are open: Monday, Jan. 30, 2-5:00 p.m.
or Tuesday, Jan. 31, 9 a.m. - 12 noon

WHERE: OES Community Liaison Office, 3746 Foothill Blvd., Pasadena

REFRESHMENTS: Provided!

Please call the OES office at (818) 304-7890 to arrange a time to volunteer. Thank you!

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

The Eaton Canyon Recovery Alliance wishes to express its gratitude to:

- **Foothill Family Service** -- for providing a delightful dinner and evening of fellowship, December 3, for fire veterans and volunteers who helped the community in the past year;
- **Allen Corbett and Daira Grencions** -- for organizing and hosting a holiday party at the OES Community Liaison Office, December 16, for persons who lost their homes in the firestorm; and
- **Ken Anderson of C.G. Anderson and Associates, Inc.** -- for providing space adjacent to the OES offices for the well-attended party.

Post-Bulletin
Rochester, Minnesota
Oct. 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 Guthmiller 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.

OKLAHOMA.

FARMER-STOCKMAN

November 1994



Inside this issue:

A facelift for windbreaks

the night to a \$4,725 educational voucher at the end of 10 months, said Tom Wilson, Sentinel, district conservationist of the North Fork of the Red River Conservation District. They have to work the entire 10 months, but the voucher they receive is good for books and tuition at any college or technical school, or it can be used to pay existing higher education loans.

Other benefits of the program include a new public awareness of windbreaks and their need for maintenance, Wilson explained.

"In many cases, people around here have taken windbreaks for granted...they've always been there. Now, with the teams working updating the older windbreaks, we have producers realizing the need to protect them from cattle and keep them vigorous."

"We've gotten a good benefit from

this awareness already, and we haven't planted a tree yet," he explained, noting planting will be done during the dormant season of winter.

The renewed awareness of the need to protect windbreaks is even more critical now, Wilson says, because many of the older windbreaks were made of eight to 10 rows of trees. Newer plantings are usually designed with only three rows.

"So, we have to be very careful about protecting them from grazing cattle, or we'll lose them early on."

After watching the team in action on his place in late September, Vaughn, a conservation district board member, is convinced.

"They're workin' little dudes," he smiled. "We interviewed these people before they came to work. They are all trying to get an education. And, I believe most will make it!"

If you're interested, call...

■ Western Oklahoma landowners interested in having new windbreaks built or existing windbreaks renovated, may apply for the program by contacting the district conservationists at the nearest SCS field office. Participating landowners will be part of the Oklahoma Forest Stewardship Program which makes cost-share opportunities available.

Why AmeriCorps?

■ During a break from cutting, stacking and raking, the Sentinel AmeriCorps crew took time to discuss their motives and feelings with the *Farmer-Stockman*.

The educational voucher was the primary goal, of course, with five members of the team planning to use it to go to school for the first time. The rest planned to pay off existing college loans once they complete their ten-month stint with "the corps."

But there was more. There was a link to the past and a desire to build links to 1994 for the future.

"It would be nice in 50 years to see this, and say 'I did that!'" explained one member. Another chimed in "It's good to do something for the environment and our communities...to put something back." Also, the team was quite interested in meeting members of the original CCC crews who planted the windbreaks they are now renovating.

Dill City's Cindy Marquez was quite vocal about wanting to make the team successful.

"We want to do a good job, since this (the team work project) is a first," she explained. "It's up to us

to work together as a team. We have to make it work or they'll (the government) drop it."

Landowner Milton Vaughn seemed to think the team would have no prob-

lem "making it work."

"They've worked together quite well for just getting to know one another. I've been amazed at how they've pitched in."



One of several groups of Oklahoma young people hired in USDA's AmeriCorps program to work on conservation related projects, these workers are based in Sentinel and cover part of a 23-county area. Those pictured include, from left, backrow: Lynden Haygood, District Conservationist, Greer County Conservation District; landowner Milton Vaughn; Christopher James, Mangum; Cindy Marquez, Dill City; Dustin Carip, Hobart; Grant Griffith, Sentinel; James Buchner, Lawton, and Tom Wilson, District Conservationist, Sentinel, North Fork of the Red River Conservation District. Front row, from left: Jesse Carter, Sentinel; Sam Rice, Warren; Chns Shield, Sentinel; Tommy Koons, Colony, and Brent Smith, Sentinel.

VALLEY EDITION

Los Angeles Times

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1994

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Local Service Corps Takes Pledge of Action, Altruism

By JOCELYN Y. STEWART
TIMES STAFF WRITER

UNIVERSAL CITY—With an economics degree from UCLA, and a resume laced with honors and awards, 22-year-old Anna Ouroumian figures she could easily command a higher salary, complete with impressive business cards and a lofty title—but Our-

NATIONAL SWEARING-IN: A23

oumian has her sights on a different goal.

The recent UCLA graduate from Glendale is content to spend this year working with a local anti-hunger project, earning a modest income.

Her co-workers will be people like Garland Robinson of South Los Angeles, who temporarily put off

Please see CORPS, A3



JILL CONNELLY / For The Times

An AmeriCorps representative holds torch during swearing-in.



JILL CONNELLY / For The Times

AmeriCorps members at the Universal Amphitheatre listen to President Clinton speak about the goals of the national service program via satellite.

CORPS: Group Sworn In With Pledge of Action

Continued from A1

obtaining a master's degree to fulfill a lifelong dream of "working with the people."

Like thousands of Americans across the country, Ouroumian and Robinson have signed up for a "season of service" in AmeriCorps, the President's national service program. Monday, the two gathered at the Universal Amphitheatre with nearly 1,000 other participants for the mass swearing-in of the nation's first class of AmeriCorps workers.

In Los Angeles, the thread uniting an otherwise disparate group of AmeriCorps members—young and old, middle class and poor—is an idealism reminiscent of a bygone era in American history: the belief that they can be the agents of change. Like a domestic Peace Corps, the AmeriCorps members will combat problems ranging from hunger and crime to illiteracy and pollution.

"I'm interested in community empowerment and . . . showing people that things can be done," said Ouroumian, who grew up in Glendale. "I know it sounds cliché-ish, but I believe anything is possible."

At the ceremony, AmeriCorps members listened to a string of speeches laced with words of encouragement and praise by Mayor Richard Riordan, Police Chief Willie L. Williams and U.S.

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Henry Cisneros, as well as past and present members of other service organizations.

"AmeriCorps will rise or fall with your success this year," Cisneros said. "You're on the ground floor of something really big. Today is an historic event."

Speaking via satellite to AmeriCorps members nationwide, President Clinton applauded members for their commitment to changing America and "getting things done."

"Every generation in our history has learned to take responsibility for our future, and your generation is no exception," Clinton said. "We look at you now, and we know you are no generation of slackers. Instead, you're a generation of doers."

For all its seriousness, the event, hosted by actor Andrew Shue of the television show "Melrose Place," seemed like a pep rally at times, with members breaking out in impromptu chants—"We want Bill!"—and songs—"Lean On Me"—while waiting for the satellite hookup.

Singer Patti LaBelle, who donned a black AmeriCorps cap, and the R & B group Immature brought the crowd to its feet.

"I like what you're doing," LaBelle said as the crowd cheered wildly. "Keep on striving for the

positive things in life."

The centerpiece of the event was the pledge, taken by all new AmeriCorps members.

Standing before a screen, their right hands held high, the group at the amphitheater listened to Clinton's words and repeated them:

"I will get things done for America to make our people safer, smarter and healthier. I will bring Americans together, to strengthen our communities. Faced with apathy, I will take action. Faced with conflict, I will seek common ground. Faced with adversity, I will persevere. . . ."

In return for their pledge, they, like members nationwide, will receive a living stipend, basic health insurance, a child-care allowance and a monetary award for college, vocational training or to be applied toward a previous educational loan.

Trial runs of the program this summer across the nation have received mixed reviews. Many know that the work is difficult, especially for the pay they will receive. But for some, at least, the compensation is secondary to the life-changing experiences they expect to have during their year of service.

Garland Robinson sees his year as a way to help and to lay the foundation for a lifelong career in social work.

Please see CORPS, A25

CORPS: Activists Have Wide Interests

Continued from A3

While working on a political science degree at USC, Robinson became convinced that his calling is social work. But with a degree in political science and no experience, he could not find anyone to hire him.

"I asked, 'How can I get the training if I'm not given a chance?'" he said. "I just wanted the chance to prove myself."

AmeriCorps, he said, will give him that chance and an opportunity to put to use the experiences that have shaped his life.

A self-proclaimed "product of the '60s," Robinson, 44, grew up on 27th Street between Central Avenue and Naomi Street. He remembers a different Los Angeles, one filled with communities where people knew and cared for each other.

"There was a brighter time in Los Angeles, and I was part of that time," he said.

And Robinson has reason to believe in the possibility of change. In May he became the only one of his parents' seven children to graduate from college, realizing a decades-old dream.

"I have a story to tell because I've been there," he said.

Like Robinson, who was active in student government and other organizations, many AmeriCorps members are no strangers to community work.

Ouroumian, who graduated magna cum laude in June, spent her extra time outside the classroom planting trees at Nickerson Garden housing projects, promoting environmental awareness, helping with earthquake relief and working with a number of service organizations at UCLA.

And last year, she spent her summer break working with residents of the Pico-Union area near downtown Los Angeles, organizing community members in Summer of Service, the pilot program for



JILL CONNELLY / For The Times

Anna Ouroumian and Garland Robinson are sworn in as AmeriCorps workers Monday during ceremony at the Universal Amphitheatre.

AmeriCorps.

"We reached so many people that I was really inspired, and that reinforced my belief in community service," Ouroumian said.

AmeriCorps is open to anyone over the age of 17, including high school dropouts, college graduates, students and professional school graduates. With these requirements, the program attracts individuals from varying backgrounds—some of whom might have been overlooked by other employers.

Before coming to this country four years ago, Mayra Perez volunteered with the American Red Cross, assisting the victims of war in her native El Salvador.

A clerk at a shoe store, she is studying for her high school equivalency degree and will spend her AmeriCorps year working with an anti-hunger project.

David Guizar, 21, was once in a gang and his brother was killed by gang members. He will spend a year working in his neighborhood in South Los Angeles, trying to help the same kinds of young people he once fought with and against.

"I finally got my chance," Guizar said as he waited for the ceremony to begin. "This is my first job. I'm part of staff. It feels pretty good, you know?"

Guizar will be working in the same program with Aqeela Sherrills, 25. When a fire at Jordan

Downs housing project sparked racial tension three years ago, Sherrills, a resident of Watts, stepped in and served as a mediator.

Sherrills will spend a year with Building Up Los Angeles, where he will work on establishing tutoring programs, a public safety project, gang prevention and conflict mediation in the schools.

Beginning next week, 40 AmeriCorps workers, including Ouroumian, Robinson and Perez, will be added to the Interfaith Hunger Coalition's permanent staff of four full-time and four part-time workers, who administer anti-hunger programs in the region. Its annual budget of \$320,000 will increase to more than \$1 million.

"This is going to enhance what we've been able to do, yet it's part of something that's brand new for us," said Carolyn Olney of the Southern California Interfaith Hunger Coalition.

Perhaps one of the biggest contributions AmeriCorps members will bring to community service is their familiarity with their community and its problems, organizers say.

Along with his life experiences, Robinson will bring a very basic message to the people he works with:

"I understand, and I am one of you," he said. "I'm just a regular person who cares and wants to help."

Job program investing in conservation

Patterned after the CCC of the 1930s, AmeriCorps workers take their turn on the windbreaks of western Oklahoma

BY DAN CRUMMETT

Milton Vaughn, 77, has farmed the light soils of Greer County since 1942 when he returned from the Seabees to farm with his father. The windbreak that extends westward from his current home was already there, beginning to control what had been a farmer's nightmare only several years before.

"We bought our first tractor in 1936 or '37, and you could hardly drive it over the dunes in this field," Vaughn pointed, noting today's field as it gently rolls, neatly surrounded by windbreaks on three sides.

The windbreaks planted by members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the federally-sponsored work program born of the drought and depression of the 1930s, have served well. Vaughn will tell you they've stopped a lot of sand and have allowed him to farm wheat, cotton and alfalfa since he came home to help his dad, whose failing eyesight was ending his career.

But, windbreaks are living creatures, and like all other creatures they age. More than a half-century of standing up to the hot summer winds of southwest Oklahoma has killed some of the trees in the 1940 vintage planting. On two occasions Vaughn "posted" the planting, selectively cutting some trees for fence



Removal of dead underbrush is one of the first steps in renovation of windbreaks that date back to the 1930s and '40s.

posts to make room for new growth. Still, without additional periodic maintenance the windbreak's Siberian elms, desert willow and mulberries ultimately will give up.

That's where the modern-day counterpart of the CCC entered the picture this fall. A team of 11 young people employed under the USDA's new Soil Conservation Service AmeriCorps program provided the labor to upgrade Vaughn's windbreak, and many others in a 23-

county area of western Oklahoma. Overall, 20 members of the Oklahoma Public Lands and Environment Team currently are employed in western counties to renovate windbreaks. They are organized into three teams based at Sentinel, Mangum and Woodward.

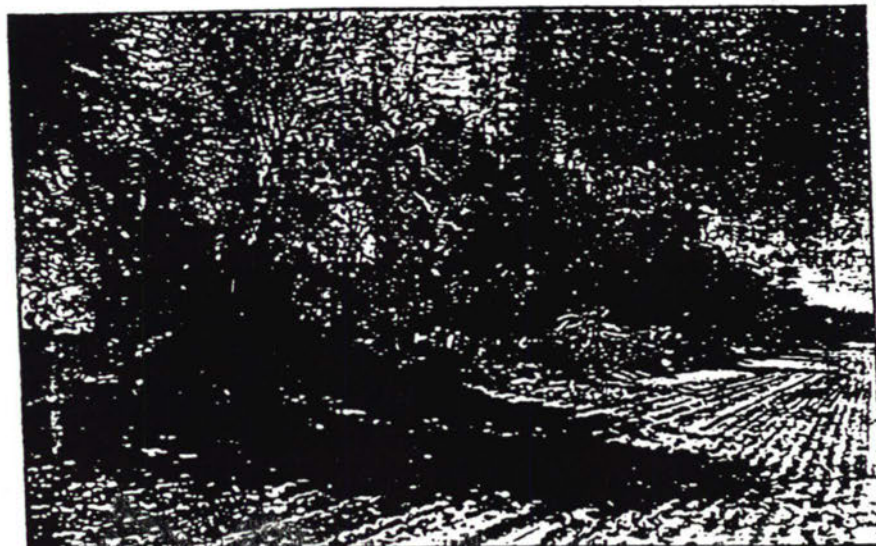
Using chainsaws, axes and gloved hands, the teams follow directions provided by state foresters and SCS personnel to scour out the undergrowth of old windbreaks, remove dead and fallen limbs and, in general, prepare the old plantings for planting season.

During cold weather, team members will be back planting modern windbreak varieties, such as pecan, to fill some of the holes age and decay left in the windbreaks over the years. In addition, the clearing of undergrowth and brush will allow existing trees to be invigorated and will provide for natural regeneration.

Team members also will be involved in constructing fences on windbreaks exposed to cattle, to prevent trampling of young trees before they can become established.

In all cases, the AmeriCorps team works hand-in-hand with the landowner, SCS and state natural resources personnel.

For their efforts the workers receive roughly a minimum wage paycheck, health insurance coverage and



Providing a half-century of protection to the fragile soils of Greer County, this aging windbreak receives a face lift from young people employed in the USDA AmeriCorps program.

LANSING STATE JOURNAL

LANSING, MI
DAILY 70,000

THURSDAY

JAN 26 1995

BURRELLE'S

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.

BUFFALO NEWS

BUFFALO, NY
DAILY 305,482

MONDAY
JAN 23 1995
BURRELLE'S

Give AmeriCorps a chance

Clinton should fight for national service idea

EVEN before it has a chance to succeed or fail, the youth corps program proudly promoted by President Clinton is being measured for the ax by House Speaker Newt Gingrich of Georgia.

AmeriCorps, as it is called, is "gimmickry" in Gingrich's view. He has pronounced himself "totally, unequivocally opposed" to it. Given Gingrich's power and prominence since the 1994 general elections, those comments wrongly put AmeriCorps in jeopardy just as it leaves the starting blocks.

It was only last September — the day the airplane crashed on the White House grounds — that Clinton held the ceremonies that started AmeriCorps. The program puts young people into one- or two-year public service jobs carrying the minimum wage, health insurance and a \$4,725 educational voucher for each year in the program. The voucher can go for college tuition, vocational training or the payment of student loans.

Surely the program deserves more than four months' trial. It has the promise of providing direction and structure to young people. It's not a handout. Clinton's attraction to the program was fortified in the 1992 campaign when his proposal repeatedly drew strong applause from audiences.

The president has seemed ready to compromise in the face of the Gingrich whirlwind, but on this issue he has apparently drawn the line. That's as it should be. He should fight for the program because it is

based on a hopeful concept of creating stronger, more focused citizens and because it hasn't had a chance yet.

In this area, the West Seneca Youth Bureau operates an AmeriCorps group of 16 young people engaged in a wide range of community service tasks, some of them in Buffalo. The group spends two days a week at the Food Bank of Western New York in the city, for instance, and has ties with the organization restoring St. Mary of Sorrows Church in Genesee Street. One day a week is spent in educational activities, including efforts of the group's high school dropouts to attain equivalency diplomas.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a smaller band doing mapping of Erie County in conjunction with the county's Department of Environment and Planning.

It might have been more to the point if the first group in this area had been based in Buffalo, but apparently suburban West Seneca won out because of prior experience with youth service projects. City Hall is still in contention for grants later this year.

Nationwide, AmeriCorps includes 20,000 young people in 300 different programs. The Republican Congress should let it live for a decent time and judge it on its results in a fair way, not through the filter of partisan politics.

America's young people should be able to expect at least that much.

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