

Natural Resources Conservation Service



Earth Team Volunteer Program-ILLINOIS DECEMBER, 2009

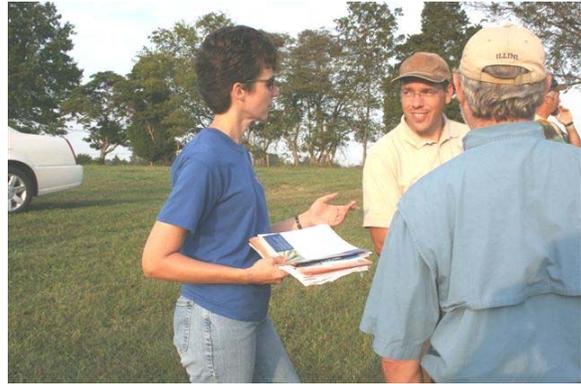
Area1



Presentation at demonstration

The Williamson County SWCD recently assisted with a Pond Management Workshop at the home of Marion Landowner, Randy Jones (5353 Market Road). The workshop was held on September 15th with over 40 people in attendance. Area pond owners were presented with some basic measures required for proper pond maintenance. Speakers from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and University of Illinois Cooperative Extension covered topics including water quality, aquatic plant control, stocking rates, and habitat management. District staff provided additional information on other available resources.

A Complimentary fish dinner was prepared and served afterwards by Fountain Bluff Fish Farm of Gorham, IL. The U of I Extension sponsored this event.



Jodi Hawkins and Rick Walter of the Williamson County SWCD

Morrison Field Office-Area 4



Carolyn Keller, dedicated volunteer for many years assembling the newsletter for the District.



Natural Area Guardians who assisted with bundling the trees for the 09 tree sale.



David Harrison and Doug Vandermyde distributing Pheasants Forever Food Plot seed.



Milford Hahnen-rain barrel sale

Area 2 – Pekin Field Office

Students learn and grow in gardens



By: Josh Bradshaw / Times staff: Beth Wegner, a Master Gardener with the University of Illinois Extension Office in Tazewell County, tends to an educational garden at C.B. Smith Primary School that she and students helped create and maintain.

[Photos](#)



By Sharon Woods Harris
Pekin Daily Times

Wed Sep 23, 2009, 05:00 PM CDT

The children of C.B. Smith Primary School know from experience that seeds are nature's treasure trove — they planted those seeds, tended a garden, brought in the harvest and have eaten the fruits of their labor.

“It's very important to me,” said Dale Tarter, a former C.B. Smith student who came back to visit the garden he helped plant when he was in third grade. “It helped train me to grow plants.

“I helped plant and came out to water the plants. It makes me feel really good to see the plants that were really little and now they're huge with things growing on them. I learned about the balance of nutrition and how important it is to eat good.”

Master Gardener Beth Wegner has been teaching C.B. Smith students about the fruits of the earth for five years now — first with a butterfly garden at the school and then with a food garden a few years later.

A community worker for the Family Nutrition Program at the University of Illinois Extension in Tazewell County, Wegner said she decided that incorporating the garden into that program would help students gain some insights into nutrition and get some hands-on experience in gardening. Her time in the garden is on a volunteer basis.

The program has worked so well that it will grow this year to include students at Edison Junior High School, where a nutrition and gardening program has been added to the school's enrichment program. Eventually the gardens will stretch all the way around

C.B. Smith and Edison, Wegner said. This fall, native prairie grasses will be planted at the east end of the grade school.

Teachers have found the gardens to be an educational horn of plenty, incorporating them into science, math, health and English lessons.

One of Vincent van Gogh's most famous paintings was “Sunflowers,” Moore said, and students learn about him and then paint their own sunflowers. In English lessons, the students write what they think are facts and opinions about the sunflower, she said, and the children also use food from the garden as they learn about the food pyramid.

“I think this is a wonderful way to teach concepts and give the students real life experiences,” she said.

Plants in the garden include the chocolate pepper plant, purple pod pole beans and the Mayflower bean, suspected to be one of the first beans brought over from England on the Mayflower.

The students learn how Native Americans shared their knowledge of the indigenous crops to help the settlers survive the winter.

The butterfly garden enables the children to study the life cycle of butterflies. Monarchs are plentiful there, Wegner said, and as they are now laying their eggs on the milkweed plants before migrating to warmer climates for the winter.

“I think it's good,” Durbin said. “It gets the children outdoors and teaches them how to grow things. They can see what they accomplished as the plants grow.”

article submitted by: Tim Malone, DC, Pekin

**Volunteers Honored at
SHAWNEE RC&D – MARION, IL**



L to R: Jodi Hawkins, AC, Williamson County SWCD, Stephanie Brown, RC&D Coordinator for Shawnee RCD and Phyllis Mace, RC, Gallatin County SWCD.

Stephanie Brown, RC&D Coordinator for the Shawnee RC&D located in Marion Illinois is shown presenting a commemorative print and award to both Jodi and Phyllis for their assistance to her in all phases of the operation while the office doesn't have a grants manager.

AREA 3

On August 20, 2009 Jennifer Wollenweber volunteered as a "Scientist at the Field" at the Underground Adventure exhibit at the Field Museum in Chicago. The Underground Adventure exhibit was developed in 1999 by the Field Museum, the Education Department, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in order to promote soil conservation and awareness.



The main objective as a "Scientist at the Field," is to interact with the Museum guests and help them understand and get excited about soil, life in soils, the need for soils, and the importance of soil management and conservation. Several soil samples were on display for visitors to look at, touch, and discuss. Several guests were amazed that there is more to soil than they ever thought about before. Over 200 guests actively participated in the soil texturing activities and viewed various displays illustrating the different types of animals and insects that live in the soil. The guests were very excited to learn about how different soil textures affect water movement, storage, and runoff. It was also discussed how proper management of the soil impacts storm water runoff and plant growth.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 VOLUNTEERS:

Individuals:

- Ted Gilles, 591 hrs
- Della Moen, 588 hrs
- Glen Schuetz, 409 hrs
- Larry McHenry, 248 hrs
- Ron Gilles, 213 hrs
- Bruce Stickers 168 hrs
- Chris Emken 158 hrs
- Alice Henry 156 hrs

Groups:

- Natural Area Guardians, Rock Island-1481 hrs
- Pontiac Cons. Expo – 1400 hrs
- Bureau Co. SWCD – 696 hrs

McLean Co. 3rd Grade Cons. Day – Normal – 562 hrs
Conservation Day, Warnecke Woods – 527 hrs
Heartland RC&D, Spores & More – 527 hrs
Black College Expo-Mt. Vernon-522 hrs
Kids Day on the Farm – 484 hrs
Peoria Co Tree Group – 427 hrs
Rasmussen Days – Ottawa-417 hrs

Thanks to everyone who participated in or promoted the program this past year. Let's strive to increase participation by 10% this year.

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