



# The Volunteer Quarterly

April / May / June 2014

Macon County Conservation District  
3939 Nearing Lane  
Decatur, IL 62521  
217-423-7708  
www.maconcountyconservation.org

## Welcome Our New Volunteers!

**Bluebird Monitor** - Norm Jensen

**Natural Restoration** - Mike Hallam,  
Peter Kienzler, and Elizabeth Jeffery

**Special Programming** - Devon Perkins



Thank you for being part of the Macon County Conservation District volunteer family! In 2013 a total of 368 volunteers donated over 11,700 hours of their time. Wow!

The year 2014 opened with a good start. During January and February 101 volunteers turned in over 1,015 hours. THANK YOU!

**“Unless someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
nothing is going to get better,  
it’s not.”**

**-Dr. Seuss**

## Upcoming Events

### Volunteer Recognition Dinner

*Decatur Conference Center & Hotel  
Tuesday, April 8*

Join us for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Volunteer Recognition Dinner. Registration starts at 5:30 pm and a buffet dinner will start at 6:00 pm. Guests (\$18.00) are welcome. Please RSVP to 217-423-7708 by March 25.

### Festival of Spring

*Rock Springs Conservation Area  
Saturday, April 26, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm*



Welcome the new spring with a day outdoors! Experience and enjoy the many activities we offer for the whole family including music, naturalist-led hikes, wagon rides, canoe rodeo, food, face painting, and vintage base ball games! For all ages.

### Independence Day 1860

*Rock Springs Conservation Area  
Homestead Prairie Farm  
Saturday, June 28,  
Noon to 4:30 pm*



Come out to celebrate our nation’s birthday 1860s style. Enjoy a vintage base ball match between the Rock Springs Ground Squirrels and the St. Louis Unions starting at 1:00 pm. Then kick back and relax at 3:00 pm while enjoying a musical concert by Gerald Stanford and Lance Beever with an ice cream social immediately following. Tours of Homestead Prairie Farm and fun family activities will also be available from noon to 4:30 pm.

### Remembering Our Volunteers

Howard Lawrence (September 1928 – March 2014)

## Dates to Remember

### Rock Springs Dulcimer Club

Rock Springs Nature Center

East Conference Room

Saturdays, April 12 & 26, 10:00 am

Saturdays, May 10 & 24, 10:00 am

Saturdays, June 7 & 21, 10:00 am



### Prairie Heritage Volunteer Meeting

Rock Springs Nature Center

Thursday, April 10, 7:00 pm

Thursday, May 8, 7:00 pm

Thursday, June 12, 7:00 pm

### Volunteer Quilt Show

Rock Springs Nature Center

North Exhibit Hall

April, May, and June



Come and see beautiful works of art our very talented volunteer quilters and others have created over the years.

### Vintage Base Ball

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Beautiful Trobaugh Field

Saturday, April 26, 12:00 pm - Rock Springs Ground Squirrels vs. Springfield Long Nines & St. Louis Brown Stockings

Saturday, May 24, 1:00 pm - Rock Springs Ground Squirrels vs. St. Louis Perfectos

Saturday, June 28, 1:00 pm - Rock Springs Ground Squirrels vs. St. Louis Unions



### Bluegrass Music Jam

Rock Springs Nature Center,

Harriet and Norman Greenberg

Auditorium

Sunday, April 13, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Sunday, May 11, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Sunday, June 8, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

## Volunteer Opportunities

There is a busy summer ahead, filled with volunteer opportunities of all shapes and sizes. Wildlife habitats and visitors need your help! Check out these chances to volunteer:

### Garlic Mustard Control

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Meet at Information Shelter near main parking lot

Saturday, April 12, 9:00 am-Noon



Volunteers are needed to help control garlic mustard in the woodlands at Rock Springs. Volunteers will uproot garlic mustard by hand and bag this invasive plant that inhibits native vegetation growth. Work will be moderately strenuous, including stooping and pulling motions and moderate hiking over uneven terrain. No experience is necessary. This stewardship activity is great for families with kids. Dress for the weather, wear clothes for getting dirty and comfortable, sturdy shoes. Lunch will be provided. Limited to 30 people. To register, contact Rich Crowe by April 9 ([rcrowe@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:rcrowe@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-6796).

### Prairie Invasive Species Control Workday

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Meet at Information Shelter near main parking lot

Saturday, June 7, 9:00 am - Noon

We need volunteers to help spray invasive plants in the prairies at Rock Springs. Volunteers must attend the MCCD herbicide training before the day of the event. Volunteers must wear at a minimum long pants, long sleeved shirt, and shoes with socks. Rubber boots are recommended. Lunch will be provided. This event is limited to 10 volunteers and all volunteers must be trained beforehand. Contact Rich Crowe if you wish to be trained. For more information, or to sign up, contact Rich Crowe by June 4 ([rcrowe@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:rcrowe@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-6796). Please include a contact phone number so we can notify you of weather cancellations. If the event is cancelled due to inclement weather, the backup date for this event is June 14.

### Festival of Spring Volunteers

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Saturday, April 26, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm



Volunteers are needed to help in a variety of areas during our annual Festival of Spring. Volunteer stations include: Tickets for Treasures, Information Desk, Wagon Ride Narrator, Canoe Rodeo Assistant, Sticker Stop Attendants, Scout Hike Leaders, Homestead Prairie Farm Tours, and much more! For more information, or to sign up, contact Jenny Garver by April 11 ([jgarver@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:jgarver@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-7708).

## Sangamon River Clean-up Volunteers

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Meet at Information Shelter near  
main parking lot

Saturday, April 26, 9:00 am – noon



Join our team as we clean the banks of the Sangamon River. Wear old clothes, bring a pair of gloves, and dress for the weather, rain or shine. Bags, litter-gitters, and a few pair of gloves will be provided. Participants receive a coupon for a free lunch at the Rock Springs concession stand during the Festival of Spring. For more information, or to sign up, contact Jeff Tish by April 18 ([jtish@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:jtish@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-7708).

## Summer Camp Volunteers

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Monday, June 9 – Friday, August 15



Summer Camps bring hundreds of kids to our sites year after year. We need volunteers to help assist trained camp counselors, lead hikes, help with crafts, and much more! For more information contact Jenny Garver by May 23 ([jgarver@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:jgarver@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-7708).

## Homestead Prairie Farm Open House

June through October

Saturdays and Sundays from 1:00 – 4:00 pm



The Homestead Prairie Farm is an historic treasure that links us to our past. It amazes young and old as they step back in time to discover our local history. On weekends, programs and tours are provided by our Historic Sites Interns and volunteers to enliven this home. If you love history, we would love to have you join us! For more information contact Brent Wielt ([bwielt@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:bwielt@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-7708).

## Independence Day 1860

Rock Springs Conservation Area

Homestead Prairie Farm

Saturday, June 28, noon – 4:30 pm



Volunteers are needed to help celebrate our nation's birthday 1860s style. This annual free event includes ice cream, a music concert, tours of the farm, and other fun family activities. We are looking for volunteers to lead tours, serve refreshments, and help with children's games. For more information contact Brent Wielt by June 20 ([bwielt@maconcountyconservation.org](mailto:bwielt@maconcountyconservation.org) or 217-423-7708).

## Volunteer Trainings

### Volunteer Hike Leader Training

Rock Springs Nature Center

East Conference Room

Monday, April 14, 1:00 – 2:30 pm



Do you enjoy nature and kids? Our volunteer naturalists provide a big help during the school year!

Educational hikes typically last one hour in length with children attending preschool through high school. This training includes a 30 minute indoor informational training before we head outdoors to check out the spring wildflowers on the trails.

### Quilts through the Years: Volunteer Informational Training

Rock Springs Nature Center

Harriet and Norman Greenberg Auditorium

Tuesday, May 13, 1:00 – 2:00 pm

Learn the history of quilts and their importance in daily life through sample quilts and the stories they tell. Volunteer Wanda Stickles will led this fascinating program. Participants will also get a hands-on tour of the quilt exhibit in the exhibit hall.



### Summer Camp Volunteer Training

Rock Springs Nature Center

Harriet and Norman Greenberg

Auditorium

Friday, June 6, 1:00 – 2:30 pm



Assisting our summer camps is a very rewarding experience. We have volunteer opportunities to help assist our trained counselors with children ages 1 through 15. Whether you want to be hands-on and hit the trails with campers or help assist with indoor activities, we can find a job for you. Please RSVP by June 4.

# Program Services Update

*Richie Wolf - Nature Center Manager*

It has been a long, long winter. The beauty and peacefulness of a fresh snowfall has transformed into the hassle and headache of the winter doldrums. Nevertheless, our faithful volunteers never wavered and continued to serve in a variety of ways. Cross country ski helpers, quilters, library workers, front desk personnel, and heritage volunteers delivered valuable hours to MCCD. Spring will arrive, and when it does, the Ground Squirrels base ball team will take to the field for a full schedule. Once again, the crack of the bat will echo through the wetlands and prairies at Rock Springs Conservation Area.

The Festival of Spring is scheduled for April 26. Without all of the volunteer groups and individuals, this event simply wouldn't take place. New this year, will be the Recycling Roundup headed by volunteer Marge Evans, and live chickens and goats will be on hand at the Homestead thanks to our partners at Scovill Zoo.

The quilter group, which meets Wednesdays, is in search of people interested in this historic hobby. Anyone interested in joining this active group should contact Jenny Garver for details. Speaking of the quilters, we are excited to announce that they will be working with our staff to host a quilt show in the exhibit hall at Rock Springs Nature Center from April through June. This show will demonstrate the history and talent it takes to make such fine works of art. We encourage all of you to stop by and take in the incredible sights of these quilts.

Finally, as we enter the warmer months, we plan to expand the hours of operation for Rock Springs Nature Center. Beginning in June, the new hours will be Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday 8am-5pm, Thursday 8am-8pm, Saturday 9am-5pm, and Sunday 1-5pm. With this new change, we will be looking for desk volunteers on Thursdays to work the 4-8pm or 5-8pm shift to assist staff. If you are interested in these hours please contact Jenny to be placed on the list. We feel we can reach more of the public by expanding evening hours so people may visit after school and work. We want you to be part of this exciting opportunity.

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## Volunteer Spotlight

*Katherine Unruh - Marketing Specialist*



A Bluegrass Music Jam meets monthly, all year round, at Rock Springs Nature Center. We interviewed some of the Cactus Ranch players about this unique volunteer experience. Rob Gordon, who plays bass, has been a volunteer for a couple years now, but first started playing about 10 years ago. John Stevens plays guitar, banjo, and mandolin. He has been officially volunteering for 4 years now. However, he has played at Rock Springs for 35 years, ever since he first came out to enjoy bluegrass music in the Rock Springs Conservation Area maintenance shop when he was only 16.

When asked why they enjoy sharing their talents at Rock Springs, John quipped, "Cause I'm a musician." Rob and John come out and play music as a service to the community. "It gives the older generation something to do," said Rob, "I like to see people smile and enjoy the tunes." "Rock Springs is a good spot for our kind of music," replied John, "I like the applause and the chance to give people live music to hear."

"We pack the place," John said. Once each month, musicians play at Rock Springs Nature Center to an average crowd of about 80 people. But regularly their audience spills into the hallway. "I encourage beginners as well as advanced musicians to come out and try playing," said Rob. Although you're sure to hear some bluegrass, the groups that gather regularly dip into older country tunes and other strains of music. "We play because it's fun," emphasizes Rob, and he welcomes people to bring their instruments and give it a try. "There's no pressure," John promises. The group's open microphone and relaxed atmosphere welcome both audience and new players alike.

"It's a good place to make friends," assures Rob. Both volunteers look forward to their time spent performing at Bluegrass Music Jams each month.