

AmeriCorps' The Waypoint

ISSUE 3: The 55-hour workweek

June 21, 2005

Why are our weekends, really? (Vol. I)



Notes from the Editors:

A curious thing happened when 'spring' arrived for that one week on Cape this year: As temperatures increase, corps members' weekends decrease.

Who knew.

Not that we're complaining; house supervisors did warn that 'spring' brings many Saturdays and Sundays of service, particularly in the months of May and June. And it is the first day of summer, and the weather has not disappointed.

It is all we editors can do to play catch-up with the amounts of goings on over the past three months.

This issue (Vol. I in a two-part saga) are summaries of group and all-corps service projects. The following issue (Vol. II, the finale in which all questions will be answered, or will answers be questioned?) contains individual placement and other more-personal accounts of AmeriLife.

Where to begin, besides the beginning? Alright, start with Wet Fests. As mentioned in previous issues, Year 6 has really taken these traveling water education festivities to previously unknown heights; thanks to planning by AmeriCorps member Jesse Bermel and the Cape Cod Groundwater Guardian Team, there have been nearly a dozen Wet Fests at schools and community gatherings across Cape. Since January alone, Bourne Agains have educated in Forestdale and Oak Ridge Schools (twice) in Sandwich, the Marstons Mills River Day in Barnstable, the Laurel School in Brewster, and West Hyannis Elementary. Those Wacky Wellfleetians have been busy as

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Approximate number of Wet Fests facilitated this year by both houses:
657
 Actual number of Wet Fests facilitated this year:
657-647=10

well, visiting Wellfleet Elementary, the Orleans Water Fest, Eastham Elementary, and Eddy Elementary in Brewster. Year 6 corps members, in particular Wellfleetian Lona Smith at one of her individual placements, have taken environmental education to dozens more schools and community groups, with worm farm presentations, disaster preparedness forums and of course the classic 'Trouble in Away' recycling puppet shows started by Year 1, to senior citizens, church groups and elementary schools.

Wellfleetian Group Projects Summaries

You may be wondering, what have the Wellfleetians been doing for the past three-ish months? Supervisor Ashley Look has had her house serving up and down the Lower Cape, from Mashpee to Provincetown.

A highlight of the past few months was assisting the Cape Cod Stranding Network in responding to a mass cetacean stranding of no less than six dolphins, all of which the 50 community members (dozen or so AmeriCorps members, mostly representing Wellfleet) were able to return to the water, including a couple mom/offspring pairs. And yes, the members were the ones doing most of the lifting.



- Bird house installation on Monomoy Island in Chatham (props to Wellfleetian Allison Murphy on her new fancy IP at Monomoy)

Too many to list (seriously, too many to list), on this page are a handful of Wellfleetian Group Service Projects:

- Dennis:
 - *Herring run cleaning, Shellfish propagation, Conservation land surveys*
- Eastham:
 - *Grassland restoration at Fort Hill, Bleacher demolition at the Field of Dreams*
- Harwich:
 - *Installed signage at Harwich Conservation Trust properties*
- Chatham:
 - *Planting beach grass with the Green Grant Youth Council*
- Truro:
 - *Cleaning the grounds of the Highlands Center at the National Seashore*
- Mashpee:
 - *Trustees of Reservations land maintenance*



- Herring run clearing in Harwich and elsewhere



- Osprey pole resurrection in Dennis



- Repairing fencing around beaches in Eastham

Bourne Agains Group Projects Summaries

House supervisor Nathaniel Marcum has done quite a remarkable job at organizing many, many, MANY (and many types) of service projects for Bourne Agains. So many in fact that the house has only worked together as a team on one project only a handful of times in the past months.



• Christmas tree chipping in Marstons Mills



• Quashnett River restoration in Mashpee/Falmouth



• Bourne DNR spat net installation



• Herring run clearing in Yarmouth

Sandwich:

- *Cooke's Farm trail repair*
- *Catch basin mapping (several times)*

Bourne:

- *Vista clearing*
- *Conservation Pond invasive removal and vista clearing*
- *Bench installation at Bourne conservation areas*

Mashpee:

- *Herring run clearing (several times)*
- *Oyster propagation*

Falmouth:

- *Peterson's Farm trail blazing*

Barnstable:

- *Kalmus Beach symbolic fence installation*
- *Symbolic fencing on Sampson's/Dead Neck Island*
- *River Day in Marstons Mills*
- *Fire mitigation through wood chipping in West Barnstable (the King of the Pile contest went well).*



• Oak Crest Cove land clearing in Sandwich

Members made several visits to Sandy Neck Beach in Barnstable to do much habitat protection, including installing symbolic



fencing to protect piping plover habitat (special marks for return visits to reinstall more than half of them after one of several Nor'Easters removed or buried the fencing), as well as erosion control fencing.



Blitz Week '05

Thompson's Field in Harwich

Ah, Blitz Week. AmeriCorps' annual assembly of volunteers was once again held at Thompson's Field, about 57 acres of invasive species-covered Harwich Conservation Trust land. Traditionally the planning falls to the member who is placed with the Harwich Conservation Trust; this year the responsibility fell to Wellfleetian Jamie Martin and, speaking without any bias whatsoever, she did a remarkably fabulous job. She organized the whole thing; she got the tools, the food donations, the volunteer groups, the invasives for the volunteers to remove, drag and burn; she even ordered the weeklong warm weather (a high commodity on Cape, ask the Canal Clean-Up and Earth Celebration organizers about weather, go on, we double dare you). Volunteers included elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, Girl Scouts, and random people off of the street.



The land management goals of Thompson's Field include:

- Habitat restoration and preservation (open fields/meadows, sandplain grasslands and coastal heathlands)*
- Groundwater preservation (several active wells in surrounding properties, particularly a public wellfield)*
- Community education (about habitat restoration and land management policies)*

Each COD day went and assisted volunteers to make the field free (well, free-er) from invasives such as bittersweet, Japanese honeysuckle and Autumn Olive; members thinned pitch pine trees and erected bird houses. And, arguably the best part, all invasives were burned with assistance from the Harwich Fire Department. Bananas, boats and s'mores were roasted and eaten.

Overall, we give the project two very much used lopper handles up.



Canal Clean-Up: A day of trash and thai

Canal Cleanup, version 6.0:
brought to the Canal community by Erin Linsky, Christine Bevacqua and Michele 'L' Palmer, and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

For six years AmeriCorps Cape Cod members, chiefly Bourne Agains, have organized and run this rain-or-shine Saturday community event, and this year's version did not disappoint as more than 100 volunteers braved the misty rain and donned gloves and trash bags and hunted for interesting, odd, colorful and heavy pieces of trash along the north side (i.e. the non-Cape, rest-of-the-world side) of the Canal.



Erin, Christine and 'L' and the Army Corps of Engineers all brought Canal Clean-Up together, despite the dreary, uncooperative nature of nature.



Raffle prizes, donated from HyLine Cruises, Ryan Family Amusements and Lindsey's Restaurant, went to the most unusual, biggest and most colorful trash pieces (who knew that unidentifiable underwear or the rusty, broken, grime-reaper, I-Know-What-You-Did-Last-Summer pointy end of a scythe wouldn't win).

Breakfast as well as coffee (the impetus of all existence) were provided by Starbucks, Star Market and Grand Union. Lunch consisted of sandwiches and pizza, and thai food courtesy of Thai Cape and Krua Thai (*NFTE: Krua is arguably the most favorite place for Bourne Agains*).



During lunch the volunteers could peruse informational booths from the Cape Cod Stranding Network, the Bourne Conservation Commission, and Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.



Volunteers were varied in ages and backgrounds; some were Girl Scouts, middle school and high school students, others were from Cape Cod Community College as well as residents from around the Canal. Not to mention alumni and other Ameri-related people (service partners, Senior Environmental Corps, special friends from Boston).

Wednesday COD Day, especially Bourne Agains Sherri Heft, Erica Perez and Nathaniel Marcum and Wellfleetians Ryan Grady and Michael Davis, took the Earth Celebration 2005 and Wellfleetians Ryan Grady and Mi-
bration ball and ran with it and organized a very successful event. EC is a festival for environmental organizations to offer the public information and education about Cape Cod's environmental issues. Media on EC ran in the Times, on the radio and elsewhere. Donations came from Ben & Jerry's, Trader Joe's, Shaw's, Stop 'N Shop, Dunkin' Donuts, Starbucks, and Adventure Island in Bourne, among others. About 200 people came to the County Fairgrounds on a rainy Saturday, remarkable considering the organizers expected about that many if the weather was nicer. Organizations involved included Sierra Club, Mass. Audubon and Cape & Islands Self Reliance.



Once again the Falmouth Fiddlers graciously gave their time and talents to perform at Earth Celebration, free of charge, much to the delight of both corps and staff members, as much jiggging was occurring.



Wellfleetian Devon Winkler ran a recycled art booth where community members could create art pieces out of would-be trash. Devon helped with the Wellfleet Recycled Art Show as a COD project.



Members from both houses performed the ever-popular puppet shows every half hour, including a formembers-only version featuring Bono.



Another 'booth' was the solar panel and wind turbine renewable energy trailer. This trailer is often brought to community gatherings and provides portable, free, renewable



Bourne Again Erin Wnorowski came with her service partner, Bourne Conservation Agent Heidi Marsella, and offered the public the opportunity to paint potted planters.



Members ran booths from their placements, such as Bourne Again Shane Jordan's model passive solar house from Self Reliance.