



Confluence Chapter  
St. Charles County, MO

*Our mission is to engage Missourians in the the stewardship of our state's natural resources through science-based education and volunteer community service.*

### **Eagle Days at Squaw Creek National Refuge**



#### **Article and photo by Scott Barnes**

I was invited to volunteer for Eagle Days with the Osage Trails Chapter on 12/2 thru 12/4, 2011. I had no idea what to expect but will tell you it was an experience I will always remember. There are not words to describe the sound of 200,000 snow geese calling to each other just before sunrise (left).

The first day is strictly for school children who come from all over the area, some as far away as three hours. My group first stopped at the shelter built high enough to view the entire refuge. This was followed by the eagle show which featured a 23-yr old bald eagle once featured on the cover of the National Geographic, and a male golden eagle. For the remaining tour, we visited stations set up by MDC and the Refuge which further explained eagles, and their nesting.

The second and third days was for the public and the volunteers manned the stations around the refuge where the bus tours and private cars were able to stop to view eagles and ask questions about the geese, swans, hawks and many kinds of ducks at the refuge. My day ended watching geese and eagles soaring over the refuge getting some last minute flight time before sunset. Before I knew it Eagle Days was over and it was time to go home. I am thankful to have worked with the Osage Trails and Loess chapters. I would recommend trying to get up to Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge and try to time it during bird migration if possible. Thank you, Kenyon Greene, for the invitation to work with your chapter on Eagle Days.

Squaw Creek NWR was established in 1935 as a feeding/breeding ground for migratory birds. The refuge is made up of 7,350 acres along the Missouri Flood plain, 30 miles north of St. Joseph, MO.

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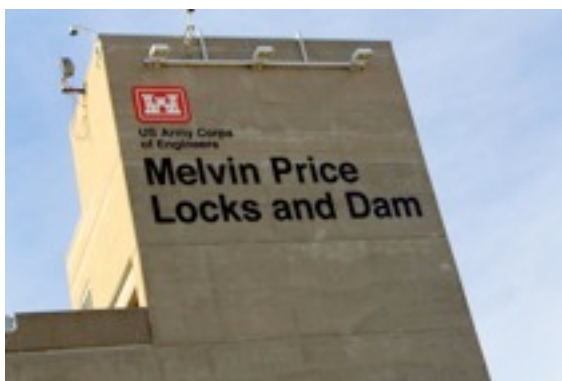


## Another Fun Holiday Party



Thanks to the efforts of the fun committee, **Kay LaBanca, Cathy DeDecker, Deb Geno, Jayme Hanna, Claudia Kasten and Barbara Lomker, and many others**, Confluence had another great holiday party attended by 48 members. The silent auction brought in over \$600 for our projects. *Karnack, the Magnificent* (left), aka **Bob Lee**, envision's even more fun in 2012..... so stay tuned

### Great Rivers Museum and the Melvin Price Dam by Steve Thomas



On November 16, 2011 twelve Confluence members enjoyed a field trip to the National Great Rivers Museum and the Melvin Price Locks and Dam near Alton. We first browsed the museum, learning about the river and the operation of the various locks and dams. Next we viewed an excellent 25-minute movie on the Power of the Mississippi River. The highlight of the trip was a 45-minute private tour of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam.

During the tour a large north-bound barge entered the lock. We were able to observe the whole process as the barge was secured, the water level raised in the lock, then the gates opened as the barge continued its journey up the river. The field trip was capped off with an enjoyable lunch at State Street Market in Alton.

"WE DON'T INHERIT THE EARTH FROM OUR ANCESTORS,  
WE BORROW IT FROM OUR CHILDREN"  
CHIEF SEATTLE

**Did you know?**  
**Free Subscriptions to Missouri citizens**  
by Deb Geno

I imagine most of you know about the free Missouri Conservationist magazine, free to all Missouri residents. But here's the link just in case you haven't subscribed: <http://mdc.mo.gov/node/9087>

Another one is *Xplor*, also published by MDC. This is a cool magazine targeted at children ages 7-12. Great for teachers, parents and children. <http://xplormo.org>

Another one, this one published by MO DNR. Missouri Resources. Link: <http://www.dnr.mo.gov/magazine/subscription.htm> to subscribe.

**The impact MMN's have on  
Missouri and it's economy**

If you ever wonder "What good are we doing for Missouri's environment?", please take time to read the following from the recent state report and be *amazed*:

Through December 2011, with combined efforts of 12 recognized Chapters, **1210 volunteers** have been trained as Missouri Master Naturalists;

Over **10,000 hours** of advanced training were obtained by Master Naturalist volunteers;

A total of **394** volunteers have become Certified Missouri Master Naturalists or have maintained certification during 2011;

During 2011, volunteers provided **44,768 hours of community service**; Over 155,000 hours of volunteer service has been provided to local communities since 2004

Approximately **125 organizations** have partnered with Master Naturalist chapters at the local level to accomplish natural resource education efforts and service projects within the community;

The **economic impact** of Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer service during 2011 is valued at **\$967,720**

The **cumulative economic impact** of Missouri Master Naturalist volunteer service is valued at **\$2,648,602**

for more details: <http://extension.missouri.edu/masternaturalist/>

***Where does Confluence fit in? Our volunteer hours for 2011 were 6,675 (17,149 since the fall, 2005), and 1,214 hours of advanced training (5,252 total since fall, 2005)***



**Babler State Park  
Gets Ready  
to Celebrate  
75 years**

by Alberta McGilligan



The Confluence Chapter has been asked to assist with a facelift of the area around the Babler Visitor Center in preparation for the park's 75 anniversary celebration. Alberta McGilligan has volunteered to chair the project but would be happy to have assistance in the planning stages and of course in the preparation and planting of the flower beds. If you have an interest in designing native gardens this would be a great opportunity to experience all the considerations that are involved in designing for a public space such as Babler.

The areas to be considered are an area around the current identification sign and a fairly large flower bed directly in front of the Visitor Center. Currently there are mature asters around the identification sign and these will be moved into the area immediately around the large Babler statue. The flower bed close to the Visitor Center is planted with Missouri native plants but has become overgrown and untidy looking. Some plants may be salvageable but many will have to be removed. There are 2 trees that will have to be removed also.

Please notify Alberta McGilligan 636-399-6567 or [albertamcgilligan@yahoo.com](mailto:albertamcgilligan@yahoo.com) to volunteer for the design part. She will be doing a call in the spring for removing, preparing and planting.

Confluence has been asked to help with a few other tasks for the park and Bob Lee can give details on those requests.

***Time to mark our calendars!***

**MMN Annual Fall Conference in Lake of the Ozarks**  
Friday, Sept. 21 - Sunday, Sept. 23  
at **Windermere Baptist Conference Center** in the Lake of the Ozarks, <http://www.windermereusa.org/>

***And...***

**Tri-Chapter Potluck**  
Tuesday, August 28 from 5-8 pm  
with Advanced Training of Archery and Shotgun



**All details for the above will be coming later, but mark your 2012 calendars today!**

**Forest ReLeaf Gets Help from MMN's for  
Two Projects  
by Mike Walsh**

On November 30th, with the help of about 10 MMN's we planted 267 native trees in Creve Coeur Park to create a windscreen for the nursery. The trees will also benefit wildlife, reforest and old fescue field, and increase the number of trees in the park. Species included chinkapin oak, river birch, tuliptree, northern red oak, Kentucky coffeetree, American sycamore, chokecherry, swamp white oak, overcup oak, roughleaf dogwood, and hackberry. We augured the holes using an augur on loan from the City of Richmond Heights and with the help of Forest ReLeaf volunteers and **Master Naturalists** planted and protected all of the trees with vinyl tree guards.



On December 7th, with the help of about 15 MMN's we winterized over 4,000 of Forest ReLeaf's 3-gallon trees and shrubs comprised of more than 40 native species. Work involved constructing a large straw "tree fort" and placing all the trees and shrubs inside of it, then coving it with a 100'x25' polysheet and sealing the edges with gravel. Of the 4,000 inside, approximately 1,200 will be given away this spring while the remaining 2,800 will be re-grown and given away in the fall.



Please accept my sincere thanks for all the efforts of the MMN's this year and every year (and next year!!!). **Mike**

**Nature Explore Classroom  
is on tv!**



In case you missed Joe Walker's announcement, the Confluence Nature Explore Classroom in St. Charles recently was on Fox News. To view the interview, go to:

<http://stcharles.fox2now.com/news/environment/79951-its-your-neighborhood-spotlight-st-charles-county-parks-department>

to see the progress and some of your fellow members

SOME PEOPLE SEE A ROSE BUSH AND LAMENT THAT THEY  
HAVE THORNS. OTHERS SEE A THORN BUSH AND REJOICE  
THAT THEY HAVE ROSES.

-ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## Progress at Boone-Hays Homestead

Photos and article by Sam Hodge



Tremendous progress has been made to improving the woodlands habitat....

Much of the old field has been cleared of a choking layer of dead wood, exotic weeds, grasses, and cedar. Much of the debris has been burned or is ready to be burned. (These three pictures are of the same vista, just a little different aspect. The little oak in the picture is the same.)

A million dollar view can now be seen overlooking the valley and Boone-Hays homestead.



The chinquapin oaks are now singing their song: "I'm free! I'm free at last to drink in the sun, water, and the air!" The maples had been crowding out this native tree. Now, the sweet acorns will attract more wildlife into the area, such as mice, squirrels, deer, turkey, and other birds. The acorns are even good enough to eat by us two-legged mammals!

It is exciting to think of the new growth that will come with the spring, now that the sun can reach the woodlands floor and germinate the existing seed bank.

MDR is providing a specialist to train a group of us to map the Terrestrial Communities, for managing the woodlands and its ecology.

More scheduled work days have been opened to provide an opportunity for more of our members to appreciate the natural wonders of this area, and

we need volunteers for plant and bird surveys. Contact Bob Lee at [lee010@earthlink.net](mailto:lee010@earthlink.net) if you're interested in these vital positions.

