

The Volunteer

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's Volunteer in Parks Newsletter

December 2014



25 Years of Jul and Counting

By JP Anderson

Volunteer Marilyn Arvidson, has not missed a single Swedish Christmas program at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's Chellberg Farm for 25 years. She is assisted by park staff but her dedicated service has led to her role as the co-coordinator of this yuletide event.

Marilyn's ability to recruit and help train over a dozen other volunteers each year is a vital part of creating this delightful and historically accurate program. The Friends of Indiana Dunes play Santa by providing financial support to fund the shuttle bus, historic food displays, entertainment, decorations including a Christmas tree and refreshments for the visitors.

The Chellbergs (Kjellbergs) were part of the local Swedish community from 1869 – 1972 and their holiday traditions are carried on in the old farmhouse. Marilyn and about a dozen volunteers come together to share the celebration of the holiday season with Swedish decorations, foods, songs, and the "Santa Lucia" procession.

All of the volunteers' support, commitment, and enthusiasm for our park is remarkable. We would like to thank everyone for serving our visitors and helping to preserve the national lakeshore and its history. It is the support of dedicated volunteers like you that helps to make the protection and preservation of this national park possible. The Swedish Christmas portion of the Holiday Traditions in the Dunes program at the Chellberg farm has resulted in a very successful interpretive program which has been enjoyed by thousands of visitors over the past 25 years

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This year's Chellberg farm volunteers included: Bob Ahrendt - Jul Tomte (Santa Claus), Marilyn Arvidson - Assistant Coordinator, Lucia Customs & Lucia Buns, Margaret Cornett - Santa Lucia, Eva Hopkins - Hardanger (stitchery), Lydia Hutchins - House Greeter, Andy Johnsen - Musician, Dorothy Meyer - Swedish Cooking, Smorgåsbord, Judy Misiuk - Main House Greeter, Rita Newman - House Greeter, Zella Olson - Swedish Cooking, Smorgåsbord, Claudine Pearson - Handwork, Advent Wreath, Corrine Peterson - House Greeter, Marti Pizzini - Musician, Lucia Song, Arthur Studebaker - Papa in bed, Kathleen Wilder - Swedish Cooking, Smorgåsbord.



Have you found us on Facebook? <https://www.facebook.com/#!/IndianaDunesNL>



Volunteering and the IRS



All the time and effort a volunteer gives is appreciated, but is it tax deductible? The IRS determined that volunteer reimbursements could be taxable income and must be reported in order to be in compliance with IRS policy. Some long standing VIP reimbursements are considered taxable and it is now clear that some reimbursements must be reported on your W2 or IRS Form 1099-MISC. There is some difference for volunteers who are traveling as part of their volunteer duties, and if you are asked to be in travel status to volunteer for Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore we will provide that information to you. For the majority of our volunteers the following are taxable:

- Mileage reimbursements at a rate above \$.14 per mile. If you receive more than 14 cents a mile as reimbursement for travel, the park will generate a 1099-MISC and you must report the reimbursement above the \$.14/mile as income on your annual tax return.
- Reimbursement for a pre-determined flat rate. In the past, volunteers would receive a flat per day reimbursement. Again, you would need to fill out a W2 and the park will have to generate a 1099-MISC so that this can be reported as income.
- Reimbursement without receipts. Any reimbursement you receive for items without a receipt must be reported on your W-2 or 1099-MISC as income on your annual tax return. For example, if you requested to be reimbursed for a tool used in a program and you do not have a receipt for that tool, the reimbursement would be considered income and would have to be reported to the IRS.
- Reimbursements for meals when food is readily available. It has been determined that if you start off at your house before you come to do your volunteer duties, then food is considered readily available. You can bring food from home.
- Non-monetary awards or gifts of value above acceptable amounts. It has been determined that a non-monetary award valued at no more than \$50 is an acceptable amount. For example, a \$25 book given to a volunteer as an award for outstanding service would not have to be reported as income on your taxes.





Looking for a chance to volunteer? Here are a few ways we could use your help. For more, go to www.volunteer.gov and click on the state of Indiana. Thanks!

Birding Calls for the 115th Christmas Bird Count Thursday December 30th ALL DAY!



The 115th Christmas Bird Count will take place from December 14, 2014 through January 5, 2015. Become a citizen scientist! Brave the snow, wind, or rain, and lead novice birders or follow along with an experienced birder and take part in the Christmas Bird Count. Help make an enormous contribution to conservation. Audubon and other organizations use data collected in this longest-running wildlife census to assess the health of bird populations - and to help guide conservation action.

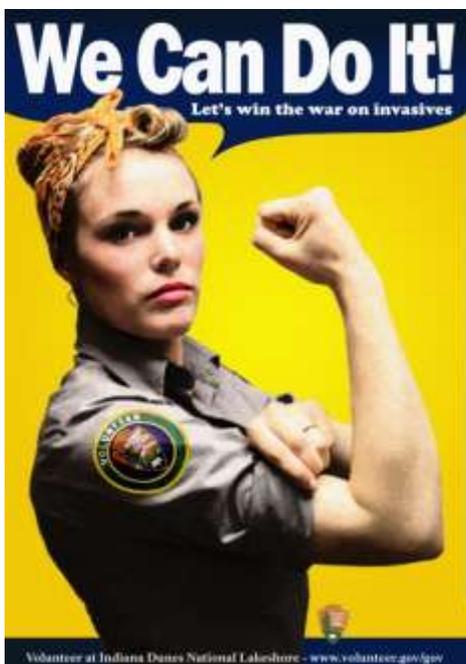
You can come out to the park, OR if you have a bird feeder inside this red circle, you can count the birds that come to your feeder!

Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore West birding circle count day is **Thursday, December 30th**.

You must be registered for your count to count.

To register, contact Ranger Christine Gerlach by email at christine_gerlach@nps.gov or phone (219) 395-1885.

All counters must be registered with Christy by Friday, December 26th.



Announcing a new addition to the STEWARDSHIP DAYS collection: MILLER WOODS

Thanks to the success of Ranger Ted's Stewardship Days the third Saturday of the month around the park, we will be adding Miller Woods Stewardship Days on the 4th Saturday of each month starting January 2015, 9am – Noon. If you want to join, meet at 9:00am at the Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education at 100 N. Lake Street in Gary, Indiana.

Have you ever seen the amazing wildflowers in Miller Woods? This unit of the park has a rare habitat called black oak savannah, which is home to some really cool summer wildflowers. Unfortunately, like other areas of the park, not all the plants in the woods are supposed to be there and they are starting to crowd out the native plants. So we need some help to keep Miller Woods awesome!



Stewardship days in Miller Woods on the 4th Saturday of January, April, July, and October will include a hike to the site that is currently being restored, an informal presentation about the

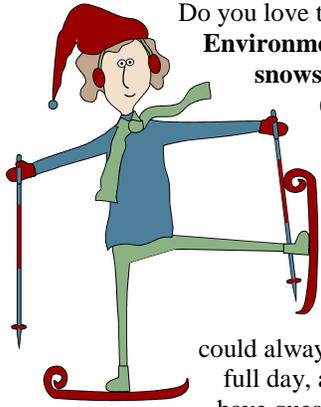
restoration project given by Cathy Martin from Save the Dunes, Q&A, followed by a short stewardship component. All other Miller Woods stewardship days in the remaining months of 2015 will focus mainly on volunteer restoration efforts.

All restoration tools and safety gear will be provided. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

For more information and to RSVP please contact Ted Winterfeld at (219) 395-1661, ted_winterfeld@nps.gov or Rachel Veronesi at (219) 395-1844, rachel_veronesi@partner.nps.gov.



Calling Winter Enthusiasts:



Do you love to ski and snowshoe? Have always wanted to learn? **The Douglas Center for Environmental Education needs volunteers to assist with our informal skiing and snowshoeing program on Saturdays throughout the winter.** Throughout the day, (9 a.m.-4 p.m.) the park checks out skis and snowshoes free of charge to visitors to use on the Miller Woods trail. We need volunteers to assist with the check-in and check-out process. If your skill level allows, volunteers are needed to hike or ski the trails to assist folks who might need help.

If you prefer indoor activities, we could use help Saturdays with craft activities for younger visitors and even staffing the front desk to greet visitors. The Douglas Center is really hopping on Saturdays now, so we could always use a helping hand. Volunteers need not commit to every Saturday or even a full day, and we can work with you to set up a regular schedule. If interested or if you have questions, please contact Julie Larsen at 219-395-1821 or by e-mail at

julianne_larsen@nps.gov.



Volunteer Sweeties Needed for 2015 Maple Sugar Time



Break out the spiles! Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's 37th annual Maple Sugar Time public program is set for weekends, (March 7, 8, 14 and 15) and school programs during the week (March 5, 6, and 9 – 13). The deep snows and crummy post-Christmas storms will have passed and the freeze-thaw-sap cycle will be here before you know it. We could sure use the help of our fabulous volunteers for this year's program.

Maple Sugar Time is a celebration of the evolution of maple sugaring in Northwest Indiana and its sweet effects on the land and people's lives. We love this opportunity for the public to come explore the site, smell the smoke, and learn about the history of our sugar bush. We would like to share the excitement with you as a volunteer for this annual seasonal event.

Don't know how you can help? Below are the various tasks for volunteers. Not sure how to do these amazing tasks? No problem!!! We require all volunteers, new and returning to attend a workshop before the event (whether this would be your first volunteer effort or you are one of our golden volunteers coming back AGAIN!) We would love to get your application by February 6. (If you are a high school student who needs to get community service hours, this is one way to do it!)

Volunteers guide visitor along 5 stops on the Maple Sugar Trail demonstrating the importance of maple trees and the evolution of sugaring techniques. The stops include:

 Pre-contact American Indian Site – How can you get the water out of maple sap without a metal pot to put over the fire? This stop shows the ingenuity of the local tribes and how they might have made maple sugar.

 Metal Kettle Site – The pioneers had technology that as not available to the earlier settlers. This stop shares the process and importance of sugaring to pioneers.

 Drilling Posts Site – Hands-on activity to give an idea of the work involved in tapping trees. We encourage visitors to drill and attach spiles and buckets.

 Sugar Shack 1900–1930s Site - How and why the Chellbergs made syrup.

 Chellberg Farmhouse Site - It gives visitors a chance to warm up, to taste pure maple syrup (and compare it to imitation maple syrup), and to learn how to use maple sugar products in cooking. In addition, it provides a brief look into rural life around 1900.



Your time spent volunteering is deeply appreciated by both the national lakeshore staff and park visitors.. Please use the MST volunteer sign-up sheet on the next page and follow the instructions to join in on the fun. Thank you for sharing your time and talents!

If you have questions please contact JP Anderson at [Jean-Pierre Anderson@nps.gov](mailto:Jean-Pierre_Anderson@nps.gov) or give him a call at (219)395-1848.



2015 Maple Sugar Time - Volunteer Sign-up Sheet

PLEASE RESPOND BY FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6th

SPECIAL NOTE: Everyone needs to attend one of the following, please select one.

_____ **Saturday, February 21 at 9:00 – noon - MST workday,**

Set-up the sugar bush and shack. Please meet at Bailly/Chellberg Parking lot

_____ **Wednesday, February 18 at 1:00 p.m. –Training/Review - Meet at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center**

_____ **Wednesday, February 18 at 6:00 p.m. –Training/Review - Meet at the Indiana Dunes Visitor Center**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Please send my schedule via (Circle one) E-mail Paper Mail Phone

Best time(s) I can be reached if we have questions _____

I have volunteered for Maple Sugar Time _____ (years).

Note: It is often wet/muddy/slushy and on uneven surfaces, please wear appropriate footwear.

Volunteering for Maple Sugar Time Public Weekends

I can work: March 7th _____ March 8th _____ March 14th _____ March 15th _____

You can select more than one activity, if you do, put them in priority with 1 being first choice.

___ **Greeting the Public** - greeting arriving visitors; give information, information booth (9:30am – 4:00pm)

___ **Tour Greeter/Organizer** - greeting a.m. tour visitors and organizing tour times (9:30am – noon)

___ **Visitor Center** - assist with Bailly/Chellberg visitor center operations (10:00am – 4:30pm)

___ **Pre-metal/Native American site** - maintain fire & boil sap using log & rocks method (9:30am – 4:30pm)

___ **Pioneer (kettle) site** - maintain fire & boil sap using kettle method (9:30am – 4:30pm)

___ **Drilling Posts Site** - demonstrate tapping process: brace, bit, spiles, and buckets. Assist visitors.

___ ***Sugar Shack-Evaporator Operator** - maintain fire & boil sap in sugar shack; *special training required

___ **Tour/Trail Conclusion** - syrup tasting-fill cups and distribute to visitors in Chellberg House

___ **Interpret House** - importance of the different rooms and uses during late winter

___ **Interpret Kitchen Life** – wood stove, water, uses of maple syrup & sugar

___ **Logistics** – gather sap, move wood, etc (Public Weekends) 10:00am – 4:00

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___ **Distribute flyers** - pick-up MST flyers at VC and distribute to area businesses

___ **Collecting sap** - February 21 through March 16 (circle) Su. M. Tu. W. Th. F. Sa. I will call the MST Volunteer Hotline (219-395-1848) or Please call me ___ hours/days before I am needed.

___ **Tear-down/Clean-up** - I can help wash buckets and tubs after MST.

VOLUNTEERING AT MST IS FUN AND LOTS OF HELP IS NEEDED!

Note: It is often wet/muddy/slushy and on uneven surfaces, please wear appropriate footwear.

**Volunteering For Maple Sugar Time School Programs
Thursday, March 5 – Friday, March 13, 2015**

I am able to work (circle dates):

	MARCH				
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
School programs run from 9:00 a.m. - 2:45 p.m.				5	6
The time you are needed depends on activities assigned.	09	10	11	12	13
We will try to schedule your preferred activities.					

Select as many as you would like to do, but put them in order of preference, with 1 being first choice

- ___ Native American site (Tending the fire)
 - ___ Pioneer site (kettles, tending the fires)
 - ___ working at the sugar shack
 - ___ greeting children/providing house tour/filling maple syrup cups
 - ___ cooking on wood burning stove inside house
 - ___ assistant cook (great learning experience)
 - ___ Logistics (moving firewood, etc.)
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Please sign-up by February 6, 2015

You Can Sign Up by Email, Paper Mail, or Phone

Email (jean-pierre_anderson@nps.gov) - Phone Your Response to Voice Mail (219-395-1848) or Paper mail to:

J.P. Anderson
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
1100 North Mineral Springs Road
Porter, IN 46304-1299



Have questions???, please call J.P Anderson at 219-395-1848.





INDU Volunteer Training

Frog Monitoring Training



Soon the sun will come back and all those amorous amphibians will be looking for a date. With a little practice you too can tell the difference between a Chorus Frog and Spring Peeper, just by their love song! In partnership with the Field Museum and Shirley Heinze Land Trust, we could use your help to monitor the earliest signs of spring throughout Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Start by attending a Frog Monitor Training workshop, one of several in the Calumet Region. For dates and more information, drop a note to Jim Erdelac at volunteer@heinztrust.org.

Smart phone users unite!



Great Lakes Early Detection How To: Feb 28 Douglas Center 1:00a.m.-2:00a.m.

The National Park Service has leveraged Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding to create the Great Lakes Early Detection Network (GLEDN). The GLEDN is a mapping tool designed to allow users to monitor the presence and spread of invasive plants and animals and alert others to their detection from an online account or from a smart phone application. With the GLEDN, managers and citizen scientists can easily plot the area, density, and variety of invasive species they encounter in the field, and update this data in real time.

Check out the site below to find out the most egregious invasive species in the Great Lakes National Parks.

[http://nature.nps.gov/biology/invasivespecies/Documents/GL_EPMT\[1\].pdf](http://nature.nps.gov/biology/invasivespecies/Documents/GL_EPMT[1].pdf)

Come to this workshop and find out how you can help, just by hiking the INDU trails. If you are interested, please drop [Lynda Lancaster@nps.gov](mailto:Lynda_Lancaster@nps.gov) a note!

Community Stewardship Leaders-

We are developing a program to work with the communities around the park on mutually beneficial stewardship topics. We will develop training and work schedule as part of the program. If you and your community are interested, please drop me a note [Lynda Lancaster@nps.gov](mailto:Lynda_Lancaster@nps.gov). or chat with [Ted Winterfeld@nps.gov](mailto:Ted_Winterfeld@nps.gov).



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