

## IN THIS NEWSLETTER

It's not too late to get involved in field trip season! Big River Journey and Working River Learning Journeys continue to bring hundreds of students out to the river. Take Me to the River and Journey to the Falls start on October 9<sup>th</sup>. If you missed the training for Take Me to the River, don't worry, just reach out to Allie Dart ([Alexandra\\_Dart@nps.gov](mailto:Alexandra_Dart@nps.gov)) to figure out how you can get up to speed.

Fading daylight has closed down Tuesday night Coldwater Crews for the season, but Thursday morning Coldwater Crew is still a weekly occurrence led by crew leader Jim Stensvold. Fall is a comfortable time to work outside in the fresh, crisp air, so put on your work boots and meet him in the prairie!

And of course, we hope to see you at the Annual Volunteer Recognition Event on October 11<sup>th</sup>!

### ***Mark your calendars for these upcoming opportunities:***

Big River Journey: Big River Journey: 10/2 – 10/5

NatureFest: 10/2, 10/3, 10/4

Big Sit: 10/6

Take Me to the River: 10/9 – 10/25

Journey to the Falls: 10/9, 10/10, 10/11, 10/12

Annual Volunteer Recognition Event: 10/11

Coldwater Crew (Thursday mornings): 10/4, 10/11, 10/18, 10/25

Mill Ruins Crew: 10/6 and 10/20

Bruce Vento EcoStewards: 10/2, 10/13, 10/18



*1Bob Milligan outside of the Mississippi River Visitor Center where he volunteers weekly on Wednesdays.*

This month's volunteer spotlight is on Bob Milligan. Bob grew up in rural eastern Michigan and moved to the Twin Cities fifteen years ago. At that time, "crossing the Mississippi was kind of a big deal." In 2016, Bob started volunteering at the Mississippi River Visitor Center (MRVC) and at Upper Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam. Since then, he's been a regular presence at the MRVC on Wednesdays. Bob volunteers at the park for many reasons: he likes kids, he likes to give back, and he is always learning about the river. He and his wife agree that Bob is not very good at doing nothing (in fact, he is "downright terrible at it!") and his weekly volunteer shift has given him more structure in his semi-retirement. To prospective volunteers, Bob says, "Just try something—you can always change", because there are a wide variety of opportunities that need volunteers.

### **Big River Journey Volunteers (Education)**

October 2, 3, 4, 5

Times vary, but most shifts are 8:30am - 2:00pm

Anson Northrup riverboat, Harriet Island Regional Park

Volunteers are needed to assist staff at small group activities for grades 3-5. Topics include bird watching, invertebrate study, pollution prevention, geology and ecosystems. This is one of the most popular volunteer opportunities at the park and we rely on volunteers to make it happen. So sign up early!

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Brian Goodspeed 651-293-8414 or [brian\\_goodspeed@nps.gov](mailto:brian_goodspeed@nps.gov)

### **NatureFest**

Tuesday, October 2, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Wednesday, October 3, 9:15 am – 2:45 pm

Thursday, October 4, 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Coon Rapids Dam Regional Park (West). 10360 West River Road, Brooklyn Park, MN 55444;

GPS: 45.141005, -93.314207

Volunteers are needed to help staff a fishing station on the fishing platforms at the west end of the dam. The audience is late elementary and middle school students usually with a substantial number of chaperones. Besides fishing, students rotate through a number of other activity stations nearby. This will be a first time fishing experience for many of these students and surveys suggest that this is their favorite station. Volunteers will help with station set up and take down, hand out equipment, bait hooks, take fish off hooks, watch for safety issues, and offer encouragement to participants. Volunteers should be able to lift up to 25 lbs. Volunteers do not need fishing licenses to participate. Please bring a lunch, water, and sun protection.

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Gordon Dietzman, [gordon\\_dietzman@nps.gov](mailto:gordon_dietzman@nps.gov)

### **Big Sit**

Saturday, October 6

7:00am – 11:00am

10:30am – 3:00pm

2:30pm – 6:30pm

Coldwater Spring

It's that special time of year again when Ranger Sharon tallies all the birds seen and heard at Coldwater Spring from sunrise to sundown. You are welcome to participate in any way and in any shift. We need people who can help spot birds, greeter participants, and set up and tear down. If you know your birds well--great. If you want to learn more about identification, especially for sparrows, thrushes and raptors, this is a great way to learn. Ranger Sharon will have some extra binoculars and spotting scopes, but feel free to bring your own if you have them. If you can't make the exact shifts and just want to show up for an hour or two, no need to sign up, we will see you when you show up.

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Sharon Stiteler, [sharon\\_stiteler@nps.gov](mailto:sharon_stiteler@nps.gov)

### **Take Me to the River**

October 9, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 17, 22, 23, 24, 25  
Times vary, but most shifts are 8:30am – 2:00pm  
Hidden Falls Regional Park, St. Paul

Volunteers are needed to help park rangers engage 4th grade students in an orienteering scavenger hunt, fire building activity, and/or shelter building activity and help with set up, take-down, and transitions between stations. This opportunity requires quite a bit of walking and student engagement (park rangers will lead all stations).

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Allie Dart, [alexandra\\_dart@nps.gov](mailto:alexandra_dart@nps.gov)

### **Journey to the Falls (Riverboat)**

October 9, 10, 11, 12  
Times vary, between 8:30am – 2:00pm  
Minneapolis Queen riverboat, Bohemian Flats Park

Assist field trip activity leaders with student engagement and activity set-up for grades 4-6. Volunteers are needed to help set up learning activities and provide additional help while a park ranger leads the educational lesson.

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Brian Goodspeed, 651-293-8414, [brian\\_goodspeed@nps.gov](mailto:brian_goodspeed@nps.gov)

### **Journey to the Falls (Mock Archaeological Dig)**

October 10, 11, and 12  
Times vary, between 8:30am – 2:00pm  
Mill Ruins Park, Minneapolis

Assist with a field trip activity for grades 4-6. We bury artifacts of the milling industry beneath the Stone Arch Bridge and then assist students in excavating the artifacts and interpreting their significance. Volunteers are needed to bury the artifacts in the sand using a shovel and then monitor students as they uncover them. This is very hands-on and great for the volunteer that doesn't mind getting dirty and enjoys working with kids. No experience is necessary; training and background material will be provided.

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Brian Goodspeed, 651-293-8414, [brian\\_goodspeed@nps.gov](mailto:brian_goodspeed@nps.gov)

### **Annual Volunteer Recognition Event**

October 11  
6:00pm – 8:00pm (Boarding at 5:30pm)  
Anson Northrup riverboat, Harriet Island Regional Park

Please join us aboard the Anson Northrup to celebrate all of our accomplishments from the past year! This is an evening of socializing with the park community (volunteers, staff, friends), light refreshments, drinks and, of course, the river. Meet someone new, socialize with the park community, and give yourself a pat on the back for a successful year of engaging the public with the Mississippi River. This event is for volunteers who have completed a minimum of 5 hours of

service between October 1, 2017 and September 30, 2018. Volunteers are invited to bring a guest.

Questions about your service hours? Email us at [miss\\_volunteer@nps.gov](mailto:miss_volunteer@nps.gov).

Please [RSVP](#).

### **Coldwater Crew: Thursday Mornings**

October 4, 11, 18, 25

Drop in; Thursday Mornings, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Coldwater Spring

Ongoing volunteer habitat restoration crews meet every week throughout the growing season and do light habitat restoration. Crews are drop in and there is no minimum or maximum number of times to volunteer. They are run by our super crew leader volunteers. Activities include invasive species removal, site exploration, and other outdoor restoration tasks. If you like to be outdoors and hands on, this opportunity is for you! Volunteers must be comfortable walking on uneven ground, standing, crouching and/or kneeling. Safety equipment (gloves and safety glasses) is provided.

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Mary Hammes, [mhammes@parkconnection.org](mailto:mhammes@parkconnection.org)

### **Mill Ruins Crew**

October 6 and 20

Drop in; Saturday mornings, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Mill Ruins Park, Minneapolis

Looking for a great way to get to know a unique part of your park? Ongoing volunteer habitat restoration crews meet on Saturdays throughout the summer and do light habitat restoration. Crews are drop in and there is no minimum or maximum number of times to volunteer. The crews help with ongoing restoration of Mill Ruins, which is near downtown Minneapolis, along the Mississippi. They are run by our super crew leader volunteers. Activities include invasive species removal, site exploration, and other outdoor restoration tasks. We will also be doing some planting for our opening day! If you like to be outdoors in the heart of the city, this opportunity is for you!

**Sign up on the volunteer [calendar](#).**

**Contact:** Erin Steinhibel, [erin\\_steinhibel@nps.gov](mailto:erin_steinhibel@nps.gov) or 651-293-8474.

### **Bruce Vento EcoStewards**

Tuesday, October 2, 5:30pm - 7:00pm

Saturday, October 13, 9:00am - 11:00am

Thursday, October 18, 5:30pm - 7:00pm

Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, 4th Street E, Saint Paul 55106

Map of the meeting location (<https://goo.gl/GwPaKs>). Parking available along Commercial St.

Help out NPS & MPC park partner Saint Paul Parks and Recreation on habitat restoration events throughout the spring season. Projects will vary by date. No experience is necessary. This is a great activity for anyone who wants to get outside, explore Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary and learn about restoring our natural areas. All tools will be provided. [Volunteers](#)

must wear closed-toed shoes and long pants. You will be working outside so please make sure you dress for the weather. Please also bring a water bottle for drinking.

Register here (<https://goo.gl/TYLgmk>)

Questions? Contact Tricia Wehrle, St. Paul Parks and Recreation,  
[environment@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:environment@ci.stpaul.mn.us) or 651-632-2411

### How Does Volunteering and Outdoor Recreation Affect Health Outcomes?

Mississippi Park Connection is a field experience host for a graduate student, Grace Pankratz, who is pursuing a MPH from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. MPH students are required to complete a field experience to gain new skills for their future job search such as program design, implementation management, and evaluation; data collection analysis and reporting; and policy analysis and advocacy with groups and individuals.

Grace's project with MPC focuses on how volunteering in the outdoors and outdoor recreation affect health outcomes. The questionnaire is less than 5 minutes with 14 multiple choice/checkbox questions. If you are interested in participating in the questionnaire, please contact Grace at [pankr039@umn.edu](mailto:pankr039@umn.edu) who will follow-up with the link to take the questionnaire. The questionnaire closes on Friday, October 19th.

#### **Mississippi Park Connection**

*Mississippi Park Connection is the charitable partner of Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Mississippi Park Connection is committed to preserving, protecting, and enjoying the Mississippi River, the national park that runs through the Twin Cities. Among many things, we work closely together (we even share office space) to operate our joint volunteer program. Learn more at <http://parkconnection.org/>*

*Karen Katz, Park Ranger, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area  
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**This is the volunteer newsletter** for the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, a national park unit located in the Twin Cities. The monthly newsletter details volunteer opportunities for the given month. If you are interested in an opportunity or have questions, contact the person listed. If nothing fits your interest or availability, don't worry, next month brings new opportunities! To volunteer, unsubscribe, or for more information contact [miss\\_volunteer@nps.gov](mailto:miss_volunteer@nps.gov) or (651) 293-8458. Please circulate freely to interested parties.