

FALL 2022



We are champions for Louisville's natural areas from Jefferson Memorial Forest, the nation's largest city-owned urban forest, to the ones in your neighborhood.

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Louisville ECHO in Shawnee Park

Louisville ECHO programming continues to grow in west Louisville

Louisville is Engaging Children Outdoor (ECHO) Initiative launched in 2008. Since then, opportunities have been consistently created to afford west Louisville youth and families the chance to explore nature in their neighborhoods. These activities and events supplement those available at Jefferson Memorial Forest.

There has been construction of a bicycle pump track (2018) and a boat/canoe ramp (2020) in Shawnee Park. Construction will soon begin on a Forest play area for children in Chickasaw Park.



NEW DEVELOPMENTS



New Hiking Trail Officially Opened and mural of Bud Dorsey's photographs unveiled in Shawnee Park - August 2022

This August saw the culmination of work done through Wilderness Louisville and the Natural Areas Division of Metro Parks & Rec. It included the opening of a 0.6 mile hiking trail and the unveiling of a mural rendering of some of Bud Dorsey's local photos at Shawnee Park



Wilderness Louisville hires its first full- time Executive Director, Prasanthi Persad



This August also saw the hiring and onboarding of Wilderness Louisville's new Executive Director - Prasanthi Persad. As one who loves nature, Prasanthi is thrilled to join the work of Wilderness Louisville. Her professional background is in public health and health policy, as well as in non-profit development and finance.

Our long-time, but part-time, former Executive Director, Bennett Knox, is now the Parks Director for Whatcom County, Washington.

West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative Wrapping up work for the “Improving Social Determinants of Health: Getting Further Faster” Program



In 2022, Wilderness Louisville continued work on the Getting Further Faster program funded by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and the National Association for County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The “Improving Social Determinants of Health: Getting Further Faster” program, supports community partnerships in evaluating effective strategies for addressing social determinants of health (SDoH).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define SDoH as the “conditions in the places where people live, learn, work, and play that affect a wide range of health and quality-of-life-risks and outcomes.”

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion separates SDoH into the following five domains:



Among our team members collaborating on this work of improving SDoH are:

Dr. Joe Bolinger is a policy analyst with the Center for Health Equity in the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness, where he researches the way government policies contribute to causing or reducing health inequity in Louisville. He holds a Master's in Public Affairs and a Ph.D. in Public Policy from Indiana University-Bloomington. He has particular interests in housing and income support policies. In his spare time, he enjoys playing the 5 string banjo

Dr. Krista Drescher-Burke most recently worked in the Diversity, Equity, and Poverty Programs Division at Jefferson County Public Schools. A Louisville native, she has worked with many nonprofit organizations in the city through board service, evaluation, and grants support. Krista's work has primarily been with social services organizations

Ms. Lacey McNary is the CEO of the McNary group. Ms. McNary has more than twenty years of experience in facilitation, public policy prioritization, and coalition building.

Dr. Victory Osezua is an Assistant Professor for Gwynedd Mercy University's Public Health programs. Dr. Osezua's work explores the social inequities and social structures that affect the wellbeing of underserved communities using community-based participatory research methods. She also works as an independent public health consultant conducting community-based evaluation and research for various non-profit organizations across the country.

Dr. David Roelfs is an Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies for the University of Louisville's Department of Sociology. His research interests include macro-level organizational analysis (the study of changes in industries over time) and meta-analyses of the social determinants of mortality.

Our team has been working with representatives from **Mathematica**, **Health+ Studio** and **NACCHO**, to name a few, through this program. Deliverables that will be produced by the end of 2022 include a Policy plan, a Sustainability Plan, and a communications and marketing video



Land Management Perspectives

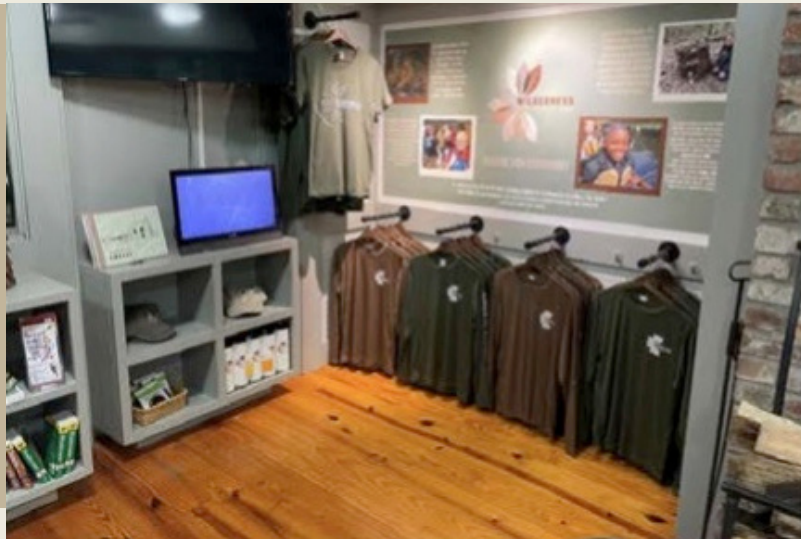
This past summer has been very busy for the Natural Areas Division Land Management staff. Over the last few months we have completed a variety of projects including; invasive species removal on several large tracts, continuing to make improvements to the trails throughout our trail system, watering trees, maintaining natural plantings, mowing the Louisville Loop, and engaging with volunteers and the youth in the communities that use our Forest and Natural Areas parks. In May we began the constructing the new entry to the Scott's Gap trail which will eventually replace the connector trail from the Siltstone to the Scott's Gap trail. Furthering the renovation of Scott's Gap, the Land Management team designed, constructed, and installed four new wooden benches around

the Meadow Meander Trail. Renovations will continue to occur over the next few months while we complete the new entry path to the trail and work on a significant reroute detouring one of the most problematic sections of the Scott's Gap trail.

The largest project of the summer was completing the first nature hiking trail in west Louisville. With the help of the SummerWorks program we were able to successfully finish building the .6 mile loop, install two bridges, and install new interpretive signage along the trail! This new amenity at Shawnee Park will be enjoyed by the community and used for nature programming to engage the community and local youth groups to appreciate and gain knowledge of the natural ecosystem in which they participate. The groundwork for this project was laid out by previous SummerWorks groups and the AmeriCorps NCCC program. Long hours and hard

work spent training and working with the SummerWorks team made it possible to achieve our goal of adding a new and exciting aspect to Shawnee Park for future generations to enjoy.

We have worked with the SummerWorks initiative in west Louisville for five consecutive years. The previous year's projects at Shawnee included the installation of a bicycle pump track, invasive species removal and habitat management, and trail planning and layout. The youths working on the trail project this summer were able to learn more about local flora and fauna and gain experience and knowledge of the trail building process by using new tools and equipment to shape and build the trail surface. The work that this team put in toward furthering our mission of engaging local communities is vital to preserving and enhancing our natural area parks.



'tis the season

TO BE JOLLY

Looking for a great Holiday gift?

*Come check out our Wilderness Louisville Corner in
the JMF Visitor Center & Gift Shop*

All proceeds directly
support Wilderness
Louisville projects that
work to ensure that Nature
is For Everyone!



Volunteer Blog Spotlight

A Profile of Stephen Kendra

This quarter we are highlighting one of our veterans from the JMF Trails Team who helps keep our hiking trails in the Forest in good shape

1. Where are you from?

Originally, I was born near Philadelphia, but was fortunate enough to grow up as the son of a doctor in the U.S. Navy I had the opportunity to live in several places around the globe. After graduating high school in Hawai'i, I spent four years studying up in Northern Indiana at the University of Notre before embarking on a career in high-tech. My family has called Louisville home for some 30 years when UPS moved me here as a senior technology manager.

2. How did you end up working with the staff at JMF? After leaving UPS to pursue a second career in higher education in the College of Business at UofL, I wanted to get more involved with community service. Mixing my passion

for the great outdoors with the opportunity to teach youth about the importance of taking care of Mother Nature, I became a volunteer naturalist and worked with the excellent Programs staff at JMF. In time, I found myself working quite a bit with the Trail Rangers and continue to do trails maintenance outings a couple of times each month.

3. What does that group do?

We perform a wide variety of Lance stewardship activities, including a the ongoing evaluation and repair of the some sixty miles of public access in Jefferson Memorial Forest. Our Team of dedicated volunteers works with John Studer and his crew to keep our trails clear of overhanging branches and

downed limbs. We also address erosion issues and periodically reroute sections of existing trails to make them safer or more interesting to hike. We also work hard to keep invasive plant species from taking over, while planting new trees and bushes to beautify the Forest

4. Sounds

interesting. How can others get involved?

Glad you asked as we definitely want to grow our volunteer staff. For more information, check us out on the Web at <https://www.wildernesslouisville.org/getinvolved/volunteer/>

5. What is your favorite trail? In JMF, it has to be the

be the 3.4-mile Scotts Gap Loop trail in the western portion of the Forest. One of the best overall trails in the U.S. has to be the loop around Cathedral Rock out in Sedona, Arizona. I also really like some of the coastal trails in Maine and Oregon.

6. What do you enjoy most about JMF?

It's the people that I get to work with week in and week out - from the folks who meet and greet people in our Welcome Center to the dedicated folks in our Land Management and Programs staff to the amazing group of volunteers that I'm so blessed to work with!

7. What is your favorite animal?

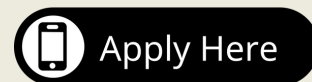
It has to be a sea otter. I love the ocean and I'm quite fond of shellfish. If reincarnation is a thing, you could definitely do a lot worse than returning to planet Earth as a sea otter!



VOLUNTEER

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

**WE'RE
HIRING!**



Digital Communication and Outreach VISTA

Wilderness Louisville (WL) is the nonprofit friends group of Louisville Metro Parks & Recreation's Natural Areas Division based at Jefferson Memorial Forest (JMF). Since its inception in 2013, WL has raised funds and advocated for projects that improve opportunities for Louisville residents to connect with nature, and which have significant implications for helping Louisville become a healthier, more sustainable, and economically vibrant city. WL is currently undergoing a revamp of its membership program and enhancing its digital presence to increase awareness of the organization and build our donor base. As WL enters a phase of rebranding and hones its mission, we seek a VISTA to help clarify the relationship between WL and JMF via social media and other digital platforms. To this end, the VISTA will serve on WL's Marketing and Fundraising Committees and will report to the Development Coordinator of the Natural Areas Division (JMF).



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Seasonal Positions:

Environmental Programmer- \$13-\$15/hour

Join the Natural Areas Crew this coming spring and spend your time outside leading kids on interpretive hikes, habitat studies, outdoor free-play, fishing, archery, and more! Please send your application and resume to David.Grissom@louisvilleky.gov.

ECHO Programmer- \$15-16/hour

The Natural Areas Division at Jefferson Memorial Forest is searching for seasonal employees to provide outdoor education and recreation programming out of Shawnee Park. Please send your application and resume to Jessica.Kane@louisvilleky.gov.



Full Time Positions Available

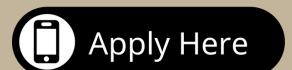
Park Administrator- Administers the natural resources division projects including but not limited to land acquisition, development of parks, trails and protected green space; park improvements, paved metro loop path, landscaping, maintenance and capital projects. Consults with external partners, non-profit sponsors and internal stakeholders to develop and maintain natural resource management plans.

Naturalist (Program Dept)- develops, plans, and executes conservation education curriculum and educational programs which meet national and state standards.

Community Outreach Specialist (Program Dept.)- Participates in and conducts community outreach events and activities. Supervises SummerWorks program.

Parks Supervisor II (Land Management Dept.)- Supervises Land management work crews, volunteers, and trail conditions.

Guest Services Supervisor (Welcome Center)- Supervises employees and seasonal workers who provide customer, hospitality, custodial, safety and security services





Natural Areas Programming Schedule



**Call the JMF Welcome
Center to sign up!
502-368-5404**

Birding in Caperton Swamp

Saturday, Nov. 12, 10am-12 pm

Join us as we explore Caperton Swamp and search for the beautiful birds that take rest here on their journey south. Binoculars and ID guides provided. Bring out the whole family! No birding experience necessary.

Preregistration required.

Fee: \$10/ person

Owl Prowl

Friday, Nov. 18th, 6pm- 8pm

Join Natural Areas staff for an owl prowling that will begin indoors with a presentation about these amazing nocturnal predators, their habitats, behaviors, sizes, shapes, and sounds. The evening continues with a hike along well-traveled paths as we call out for these elusive birds. Test your auditory skills by listening for their responses. Dress for the weather and try to wear clothing that doesn't make noise when you move.

Fee: \$10/person

Waverly Youth Fishing Derby

Saturday, Nov. 19th, 10am-2pm

Join us for an inaugural youth fishing Derby at Waverly Park! Participants must be under 15 years old to participate. Prizes will be drawn throughout the day. Register online or in person the day of the event. Two time slots available, 10:00-12:00 and 12:00-2:00. Equipment and bait will be available or you can bring your own! Burgers and Hot Dogs will be available for purchase from Top Dog Enterprise. Parent or guardian must accompany youth.

Free event



Register Online for
Programming **HERE**

