

SPRING 2023



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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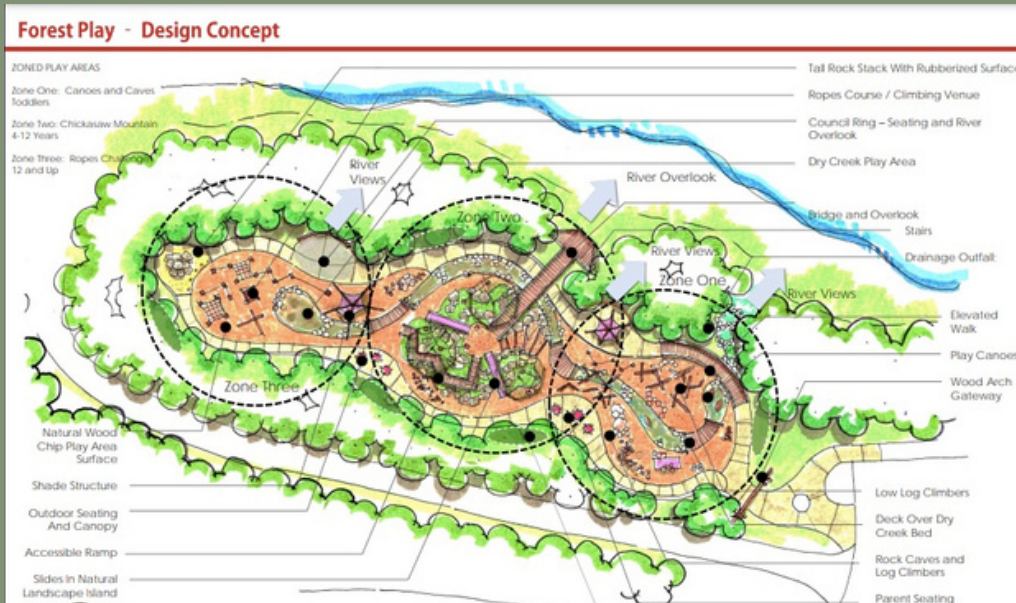
Louisville ECHO Spring programming is underway!

Spring ECHO programming began on March 15th and will continue until May 12th. Youth activities include hiking, gardening, archery, stream exploration, and many more! School programming continues with partner JCPS schools as we finish out the school year with Mammoth Cave trips.

Louisville ECHO is currently hiring for our SummerWorks team that will be providing outdoor programming with partner community centers, as well as participating in some land management activities. If you know a youth 16-21 that is interested in working outdoors this summer, applications are open at www.summerworks.org.



NEW DEVELOPMENTS



This Spring, construction began on the Forest Play Area in Chickasaw Park

Natural Areas welcomes a new Community Outreach Specialist

Community Outreach Specialist Lavel White



Lavel studied Communications and minored in Pan African Studies at the University of Louisville. Lavel is a documentary filmmaker and photographer who has produced documentaries for the Louisville Metro Housing Authority, including *More Than Bricks and Mortar: The Sheppard Square Story* and *More Than Bricks and Mortar: Smoketown A New Beginning*. He has also produced "We All We Got," *Hood 2 Hood* a documentary about violence and incarceration and the effects it has on the inner-city youth and most recently the *Beecher Terrace Story* that is on constant rotation on KET KY. Lavel was selected as a 2019 BMe Genius Fellow and received a generous grant towards community projects that impacted the Louisville community. He is also an Ignite Louisville Fall 2019 Graduate and a member of the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels. Lavel loves nature and taking walks at parks in his local community.

VIEW FROM JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOREST



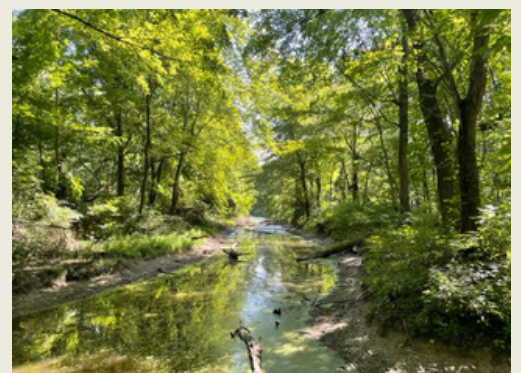
Land Management Perspectives

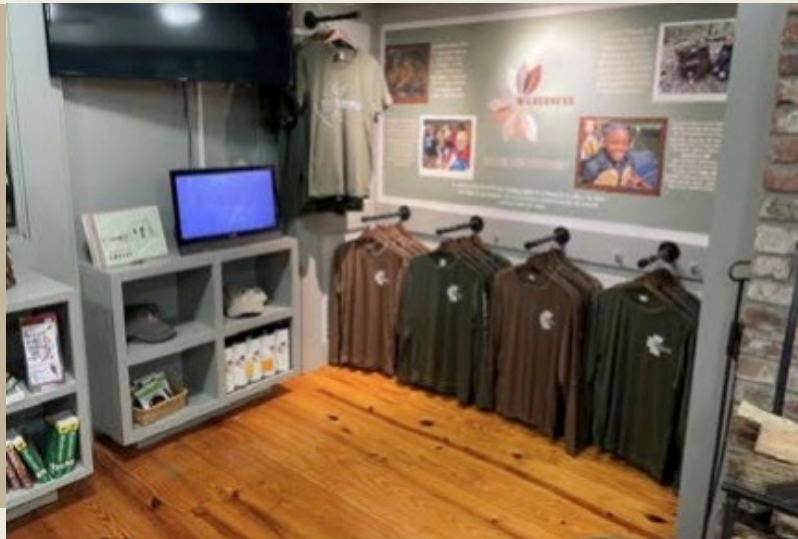
There has been a lot of activity in the Natural Areas Division Land Management. We are now fully staffed with a great crew of responsible and knowledgeable land stewards. Welcome to all the new members of our team! We completed the 2023 Kentucky Glade Cress (KYGC) survey at McNeely (where there is a rare and endemic species of glade cress found only in North Bullet and South Jefferson Counties). We are continuing to clear invasive species at McNeely and are slowly converting the habitat to a barrens / savannah-like habitat that is conducive to Kentucky glade cress. Land Management is also widening and reworking the Environmental Education Stream Trail to prevent erosion issues and to make it

safer for program groups to explore. With volunteers from Mercy Academy school, we are removing invasive species in the Programs area and doing more work on the Environmental Education Stream Trail. With the help of our amazing Natural Areas Volunteers, we are working on rerouting part of the Scott's Gap Trail to a less challenging and more sustainable trail alignment. Also with the aid of our volunteers, we continue the invasive species removal at the Sand Pit. In Scott's Gap, Horine, Forest Green Greenway, Waverly, Tom Wallace and Mitchell Hill Lake, we are managing pollinator meadows by mowing, which promotes regenerative growth in the new season. Over the last few weeks, there has been a lot of tree removal, as we have been clearing away storm debris to keep trails safe for

park visitors.

Among activities coming up for us will be participation in a prescribed burn at Iroquois Park, in collaboration with Olmsted Parks Conservancy. Land Management will also be leading a reforestation tree planting project at Joe Creason Park for Tree Fest on 4/15. We will be planting 80 trees of 10 different native species!





WELCOME
SPRING

Hiking in Jefferson Memorial Forest?
Stop by the 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!



Staff Blog Spotlight

A Profile of Lavel White

This quarter we are highlighting one of the newest members of our JMF and Natural Areas team

1. Where are you from?

I am from the Sheppard Square Housing Projects in the Smoketown community in Louisville, KY. I have lived in several public housing complexes across the City of Louisville. I went away for college at WKU for my Freshman and Sophomore years of college before I transferred to the University of Louisville to major in Communication and Minored in Pan African Studies. When I finished I at the University of Louisville I moved away for a year and a half to Los Angeles, California to pursue my dreams as a filmmaker but I later moved back to Louisville in 2011. I then began working in the Louisville community organizing with Job's with Justice, the Network Center for Community Change and the Presbyterian Community Center. I have

organized around several issues such as Housing, Felony Voting Rights, Violence Prevention and Homelessness issues.

2. How did you end up working with the staff at JMF?

I came to work as a Community Outreach Specialist from Block By Block and the City of Louisville where I worked as a Community Ambassador, Team Lead, and Operations Supervisor (leading a team of Cleaning, Public Safety, Hospitality and Homeless Outreach Community Ambassadors across the City of Louisville).

3. Why did you want to join the JMF team?

I wanted to get back to my passion of working with youth in a more focused way and Jefferson Memorial

Forest has given me the opportunity to work with the Echo Program, Summer Works and to advocate for the Shawnee Outdoor Learning Space in the Shawnee and Chickasaw Park communities.

4. Sounds interesting. How can others get involved?

Folks can become a part of Jefferson Memorial Forest by signing up as a volunteer, joining the Community Council, coming out to Jefferson Memorial Forest and participating in Hiking the beautiful Forest, Archery, Biking, Canoeing, Camping and other community activities that the Natural Areas / JMF has to offer.

5. What is your favorite trail?

I will say being new to the Forest it has to be the Mitchell Hill Lake Trail it is a great 3.2 miles of hiking and beautiful scenery. Any

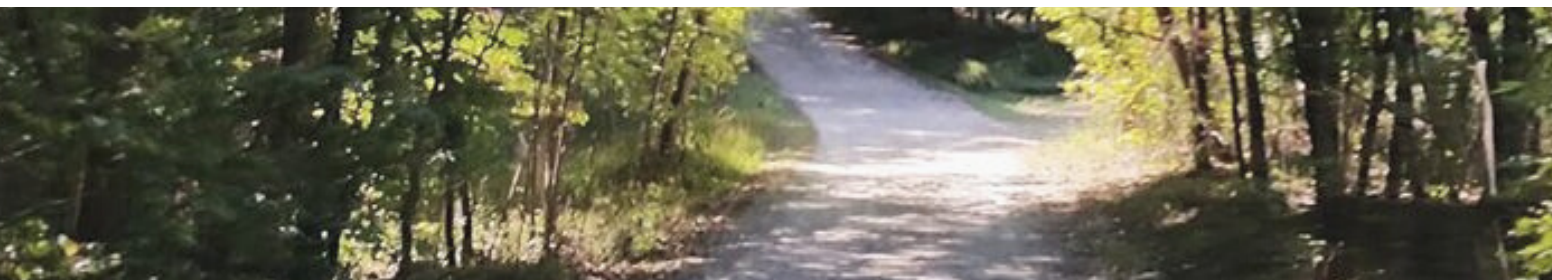
beginner will be able to navigate it and get a great work out in.

6. What do you enjoy most about JMF?

As an inner-city dweller it is great to get away from downtown and the busy streets and buildings to get away and work in a beautiful Forest that is no more than a 30 minute drive from Downtown Louisville. You feel as if you have gone out of town for the weekend but it is actually right in the back yard of where we live.

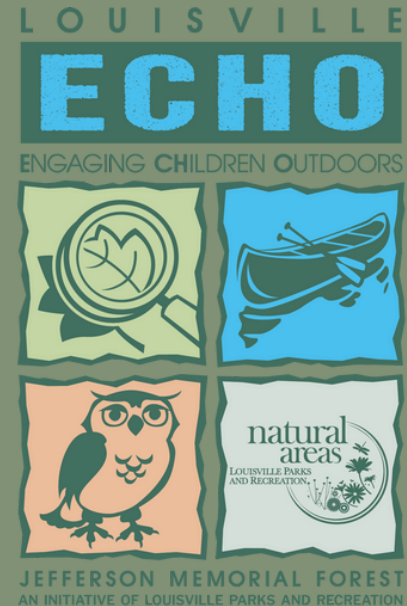
7. What is your favorite animal?

My favorite Animal has to be the Great American Bald Eagle. I am constantly amazed by its beauty and wing span and how it dominates the animal kingdom.



West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative Communications

Deliverable for “Improving Social Determinants of Health: Getting Further Faster”



Through 2022, Wilderness Louisville (WL) 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).

In Spring 2023, WL finalized a communications flier produced by Health+ Studios. Please see its premier below!



West Louisville Outdoor Recreation Initiative's Engaging Children Outdoors (ECHO) Program

ENSURING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE ACCESS TO NATURE AND OUTDOOR SPACES

Spending time in nature is essential for our health and wellbeing. Green outdoor spaces provide options for everyday physical activity, community and social connections, and learning about the natural environment. We need to ensure that all residents of Louisville – no matter where they live, work, or play – have access to safe parks and public outdoor spaces.

WHAT IS THE ENGAGING CHILDREN OUTDOORS WHAT IS THE WEST LOUISVILLE OUTDOOR (ECHO) PROGRAM?RECREATION INITIATIVE (WLORI)?

ECHO offers learning opportunities, activities, and job opportunities to encourage more children, young adults, and families in Louisville to spend time outside and become the next leaders in the outdoor and environmental fields.

For more than a decade, ECHO has provided learning opportunities for children ages 3 to 21, making experiences in nature a fun, interesting, and regular part of the public-school curriculum. ECHO also provides out-of-school opportunities, including summer camps, green career job opportunities for young adults, and community events like Shawnee Outdoor Adventure Day.

WLORI is a community-led planning effort to make outdoor spaces, such as local parks and along the Ohio River, more accessible to everyone. From designing parks and installing nature play spaces to supporting ECHO classes and activities like boating and hiking that get people outside, WLORI connects more Louisville residents to the health benefits of outdoor activity.

WLORI uses a step-by-step process that allows community members, families, and young people to steer park improvements and programs. This community-led process finds new ideas and solutions to longstanding problems that support the community's priorities.



Environmental education



Out-of-school outdoor activities



Nature play



Recreational sports



Youth summer jobs



Family & community events



ECHO promotes fair and inclusive access to green spaces and outdoor activities for children and families. WLORI improves parks and outdoor recreation infrastructure so community members can enjoy nature and be as healthy as possible.

WHY DOES LOUISVILLE NEED ECHO?

Living in a city, we can easily go days and weeks without spending time in nature and experiencing the health benefits of the outdoors. West Louisville, in particular, has historically been excluded from investment in safe outdoor spaces like neighborhood parks and recreational areas, making it even harder for local children and families to spend time learning from, growing, and playing in nature. ECHO provides ongoing outdoor activity opportunities that promote healthy living, social cohesion, self confidence, and career exploration.

The state-of-the-art Shawnee Outdoor Learning (SOL) Center is the final element and most exciting feature of WLORI's Master Plan to improve West Louisville parks infrastructure and access.

HOW WILL THE SOL CENTER HELP ECHO INCREASE ITS IMPACT?

The SOL Center is a yet-to-be-built nature education center that will be located in Shawnee Park in West Louisville. It will provide opportunities for children and families to connect with nature and connect with their community – both of which are essential for good health and wellbeing. The new space also will allow ECHO to expand its programs, including outdoor education, recreational activities, and environmental stewardship activities like tree planting. The SOL Center is part of the WLORI Master Plan that was approved in 2016 after two years of working with the community.

5,000 Children

will have opportunities to experience outdoor activities and nature education with the new SOL Center, doubling the number of children ECHO engages with today.



Inspiring the next generation

Imagine a landscape architect, photographer, mountain climber, environmental engineer, or writer who found their calling through a childhood spent exploring the banks of the Ohio River, rock climbing at the SOL Center, or walking nature paths in Shawnee Park.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

Join other organizations and donors that have signed on to support building the SOL Center. Learn more about how to be a part of the movement. <https://www.wildernesslouisville.org/get-involved/donate/>

We're helping Louisville fulfill its commitment to just and fair access to open outdoor spaces. Join us in our journey to nature justice for all by exploring our ECHO programs! <https://www.wildernesslouisville.org/programs/louisville-echo/>

This publication was made possible by cooperative agreement number OT18-1802 Strengthening Public Health Systems and Services Through National Partnerships to Improve and Protect the Nation's Health from the CDC, which includes the Improving Social Determinants of Health—Getting Further Faster initiative.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Seasonal Positions:

Environmental Programmer- \$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/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.



Positions Available

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

ECHOmobilE Programmer- Provides mobile nature play to pre-schools, daycares, and at community events. Maintains database for ECHO programs and youth.

Permanent Part-time Staff Assistant (Welcome Center)- provides customer service to JMF visitors, answers phones, takes reservations, and maintains the Welcome Center.



Apply Online

SPRING 2023



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

Natural Areas Programming Schedule

Spring Wildflower Hike

Saturday, Apr 15, 9-11:30 am

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

TreeFest

Saturday, Apr 15, 11 am-4 pm

Louisville Parks and Recreation and TreesLouisville are excited to welcome the community to the second annual TreeFest: An Arbor Day Celebration. The family-friendly event will offer a variety of activities for those of all ages.

The day will begin with a volunteer tree planting, where community volunteers will work to plant 200 trees throughout Joe Creason Park (1297 Trevilian Way, 40213). There will be kids activities and the ECHOmobile will be present.

Map & Compass Skills

Saturday Apr 29, 9am - noon

Map and landscape reading are skills every outdoor person should possess. Equip yourself with the knowledge necessary to read and interpret topographic maps and locate destinations while using a compass. These in-field exercises are a hands-on learning experience.

Program meets in the Horine Reservation main parking lot.

Ages: 8 and up. A parent/legal guardian must accompany anyone under the age of 18.

Pre-Registration required.

Register online or by calling 502-368-5404.

Fee: \$5/person

Forest Fest

Saturday, May 20, 11:30am - 7p

Join us for our 15th annual Forest Fest. This will be a fun-filled day of Bluegrass music, arts & crafts, family activities, and food booths. This event is sponsored by Metro Council and free to the public. Follow the @Forestfest Facebook page for the line up and more information. All Ages Welcome. Family Friendly.

FREE admission

**Parking: \$15 / car
CASH ONLY**

REGISTER ONLINE

FOR A LISTING OF ALL EVENTS, CLICK HERE



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.



UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

memorialforest.com/volunteer

Stewardship

4/15 TreeFest Planting Leaders - Joe Creason*

**Sign up through Trees Louisville*

Programs

4/12 ECHO Hike - Shawnee Park

4/13 Bug Hunt - Portland Park

4/26 Spring Plant Exploration - Shawnee Park

Special Events

4/15 TreeFest Kid's Corner Activities - Joe Creason*

5/20 Forest Fest - Horine

ALSO AROUND TOWN...

PRESENTED BY TREESLOUISVILLE, LOUISVILLE PARKS & RECREATION, AND PARTNERS

TREEFEST -LOUISVILLE-



APRIL 15, 2023 - 11AM-4PM

AN ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION - JOE CREASON PARK

TREE PLANTING AND GIVEAWAYS, KIDS CLIMBING ACTIVITIES, VENDORS, LIVE MUSIC, FOOD & DRINK, AND FUN FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!



SPONSORED BY



LOUISVILLE
PUBLIC MEDIA



STRATEGIC
COMMUNICATIONS
IT'S EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

ALSO AROUND TOWN...

LOUISVILLE BALLET'S PRODUCTION OF LA SYLPHIDE EXAMINES THE JUXTAPOSITION BETWEEN NATURE AND MODERN LIFE, AND MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO YOU, ESPECIALLY OUR FAIRIES IN THE FOREST PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS!



LA SYLPHIDE
— WITH BALANCHINE'S SCOTCH SYMPHONY —

APRIL 13-15, 2023 | THE BROWN THEATRE

 louisville ballet

Tickets: LOUISVILLEBALLET.ORG

LA SYLPHIDE

with Balanchine's Scotch Symphony
April 13-15, 2023 | The Brown Theatre

Choreography by August Bournonville and George Balanchine | Music by Hermann Lovenskjold and Felix Mendelssohn | Costumes + Set Designs by Robert Curran

One of the oldest existing classical ballets, set in Scotland and first staged almost 200 years ago, “La Sylphide” explores themes of love, vengeance, and envy while examining the juxtaposition between nature and modern life. With original choreography by August Bournonville and new costumes and sets designed by Artistic Director Robert Curran. This production also includes George Balanchine’s “Scotch Symphony,” the American master’s nod to the Scottish Highlands, filled with intricate footwork, a wistful pas de deux and more, all performed to Mendelssohn’s evocative score.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SUPPORTERS, PARTNERS AND WILDERNESS LOUISVILLE MEMBERS



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THE ZIKE FAMILY & KAREN KRINOCK
MILDRED V. HORN FOUNDATION

