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Shawnee Outdoor Learning Center

Kentucky General Assembly granted \$7M for construction of the Shawnee Outdoor Learning Center



Wilderness Louisville is thrilled to announce the financial support of the Kentucky General Assembly, who awarded \$7M to Metro Parks over 2 years to be used for construction of the Shawnee Outdoor Learning (SOL) Center. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who met with and supported us along the way, including Senator Gerald Neal, Speaker David Osborne, Senator David Givens, Senator Damon Thayer, Senator Mike Nemes, Rep. Jason Nemes, Rep. Pamela Stevenson, Senator David Yates, Senator Cassie Chambers Armstrong, Senator Julie Raque Adams, Council Member Donna Purvis, Deputy Mayor Nicole George and Mayor Craig Greenberg.



NEW DEVELOPMENTS



This Spring, the Kentucky General Assembly also awarded \$2.5 M to support improvements in Jefferson Memorial Forest (JMF). Thank you to Council Member Dan Seum for his tireless advocacy and support of JMF

New Hires!

Programs Team Welcomes New(ish) Recreation Supervisor, Matt Douthitt!

Matt Douthitt has rejoined the program team as the Recreation Supervisor! He is a lifelong Louisville native that was previously a seasonal and a full time Naturalist at JMF. Matt is an expert paddler and team’s course facilitator and has several other outdoor skills. We are excited to welcome Matt back to the JMF team!



Welcome Center Welcomes New Staff Assistant, Cricket Diggs!

At the end of May, the Welcome Center brought aboard a new fulltime staff member, Cricket Diggs! Cricket is extremely passionate about the healing powers of nature and is a frequent visitor of Jefferson Memorial Forest. Be sure to stop in and introduce yourself!



NEW DEVELOPMENTS



Tom Wallace Improvement Project continues. Boardwalk, bridge work and remaining stone construction are underway. Paving of path and parking will happen toward the end. Expecting a summer completion

Chickasaw Forest Play Area is complete and the installation of play elements will begin in the fall with local programming partners, PlayCousins Collective and Metro United Way.



Horine Conference Center renovation complete, open house coming in the fall!



Land Management Perspectives

The Natural Areas Land Management team has had a busy spring! With the help of volunteers, the crew began construction of a new 2 mile loop trail in Horine, off the Red Trail. The plan is to open the as yet unnamed trail this summer. Additionally, the team finished removal of invasive brush at the Sand Pit property (12.5 acres) with the help of both Mercy Academy and regular volunteers. Land Management also completed invasive removal at Shawnee, Chickasaw and Carson (together, a total acreage of 112.82). Mercy Academy also helped the team mulch trees and garden areas at the Horine Conference Center. They weeded and mulched the Welcome Center garden beds. During Tree fest at Petersburg Park, they mulched trees along with 30 volunteers. The team

also spent their time removing fallen trees from trails and continued correcting major erosion issues on the Coral Ridge Loop and Scott's Gap trails. In late April, Land Management conducted their annual Kentucky glade cress survey at McNeely Park, where they harvested seed from surrounding areas to supplement the glade cress population. In recent years, there has been an increase in glade cress and the population is expected to grow subsequent to the addition of harvested seed. Please note that in spring, when the Kentucky Glade Cress flowers and during the fall, when the seed is germinating, the glade cress areas can be sensitive. Please tread lightly and stay on the designated trails! The team attended a Prescribed Fire training course administered by the KY Prescribed Fire Council, in preparation for

controlled burns planned at McNeely this fall. They also began scheduled maintenance and mowing rounds on the Louisville Loop for this summer, and have been clearing vegetation and debris along the trail to make it more welcoming and enjoyable for trail visitors. John Studer, Manager of the Land Management team, has been working with Natural Areas colleagues to design new trail markers that they hope will be ready for installation this summer.



Staff Blog Spotlight

A Profile of Andrea Madden

This quarter we are highlighting one of the members of our JMF Welcome Center team!



1. Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Eastview, Kentucky. It's a small town about 20 minutes outside of Elizabethtown. My grandparents lived in White Mills, and I spent a lot of time there too. We moved to Newnan, Georgia in middle school so I spent most of my high school years about 40 miles outside of Atlanta.

2. What drew you to the outdoors, both as a child and now?

Growing up, our house was on a gravel road with maybe 6 or 7 other houses and forest surrounding it. I spent my childhood exploring the woods and going on adventures. I loved getting to explore and still do. It is so freeing. Being surrounded by trees and nature reminds me to slow down and how we are all connected.

3. What does your day to day work entail?

I get to do lots of different things working in the Welcome Center. I learn something new every day. My favorite thing is helping people explore the forest. I get to help visitors select trails, reserve campsites or shelters, enroll in programs or camps and help with scenic drive maps

4. How did you get interested in your job?

I started hiking at JMF during COVID. I had left my position in banking and was home with my preschooler and a new baby. We needed to find place to get out of the house and this forest became "our" place. When it was time for me to re-enter the workforce, I found the part time position at the Welcome Center and allowed me to share my love of this forest with others.

5. What is your favorite local green space?

This is such a hard question because we have some beautiful green spaces here in Louisville. The first place that comes to mind is group site 1 at the Horine Reservation. I love camping and getting to experience that with my kiddos. We have created some beautiful family memories there.

6. Do you have a favorite plant to find in nature?

I love wildflowers. I enjoy seeing pops of color. I also enjoy seeing the changes season to season.

7. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

I enjoy being a part of the team and enjoy connecting with different visitors! Thank you!



JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Full-Time Positions:

ECHOMobile Programmer- \$37,440 annually
+benefits

Lead outdoor nature-based recreation programming. Plans, develops and conducts mobile nature play programs to diverse audiences. Prepares / maintains recreation materials and supplies. Safely drive box truck / van with trailer. Database organization.

Please send your application and resume to
Jessica.Kane@louisvilleky.gov.



Positions Available

Seasonal Positions:

Environmental Programmer- \$16.25/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.

EEL Corps Member (AmeriCorps Environmental Education Leadership)



For details:



Apply Online



Call the JMF Welcome
Center to register!
502-368-5404

Natural Areas Programming Schedule

Great American Campout

5p June 22 to 10a June 23

Jefferson Memorial Forest will join tens of thousands of people across the nation as they camp for a cause. The annual Great American Campout is a nationwide event that connects people with the great outdoors. This event is an easy way for friends, families, and children to connect with nature, sleep under the stars, and create memories of outdoor experiences. Jefferson Memorial Forest will provide the campfire, s'mores, and evening activities for your family to enjoy. You provide your dinner, breakfast, and tent. In the morning, you will have the day to explore the Forest; spend time hiking any of our 35 miles of trails or fishing at Tom Wallace Lake with free fishing poles provided at the Welcome Center. Program meets at the Program Area in Horine Reservation. Ages: All ages. A parent/legal guardian must accompany anyone under the age of 18.

Fee for camping: \$25.00 per family, \$5.00 for each additional family member

Pre-Registration required.

Tree Trek

July 13 - 9a to 11a

Join us for a hike for young beginners who are curious about trees. A program for explorers who want to see and learn trees. Individuals will have their own tree journal where they can take as many cool notes as they want while on a hike. You will also have the opportunity to do leaf and bark rubbings to really see what a tree looks and feels like. Programs Meets at Environmental Education Center

A parent/legal guardian must accompany anyone under the age of 18.

Pre-Registration required.
Register online or by calling
502-368-5404.
Fee: FREE

Map and Compass

August 12 - 9a to 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

REGISTER ONLINE

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