

# Polk County Conservation Winter 2015/Spring 2016 Volunteer Events

## Jester Park Invasive Species Roundup Saturday, December 5 @ 10:00-12:00 p.m. Jester Park

Your help is needed to restore our woodlands by removing honeysuckle and other invasive species. Meet us at 10:00 a.m. by the pond near Shelter #5. Participants are encouraged to dress appropriate for the weather, wear sturdy shoes, and bring gloves and a reusable water bottle.

## Carney Marsh Restoration Project Saturdays: February 6th, March 5th, April 2nd 11:00-2:00 p.m. Carney Marsh, Ankeny

A DMACC crew of Environmental Science students and staff have committed to volunteering on the first Sunday of every month for the rest of the year at Carney Marsh. Be a part of this restoration effort by coming along on any or all of the dates above. No experience is necessary, and equipment is provided. You should, however, dress for the weather, bring appropriate shoes or boots, and bring a refillable water bottle. Please confirm date and time with Pat Spain (515) 323-5280 or pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov

\*We will cancel in the event of heavy rains or snow and/or lightening

## Volunteer Appreciation Banquet Sunday, March 13th @ 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. Jester Park Lodge

Come join us at the Jester Park Lodge to celebrate your contributions to conservation efforts in Polk County. The evening will consist of a special program and guest with dinner and a recognition/awards ceremony as we highlight the projects and events of 2014.

Volunteers who have contributed 10 (or more) hours are invited to attend. Please contact Pat Spain at pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov to confirm your hours and RSVP.

## Trail Ambassador Coordinators

We are now actively seeking to fill positions as Trail Ambassador Coordinators (TACs) throughout our parks. Those placed in this position would fill a leadership role by communicating and coordinating a network of volunteers.

For further information, please contact Pat Spain at (515) 323-5280 or pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov



Four Mile Creek Sweepers clearing this waterway of tires and other debris

## A huge thank you to the following volunteers...

- REI, Cummins Central Power and members of the public who helped remove 10+ tons of trash from Four Mile Creek as well as participated in park beautification in and around Mally's Weh-Weh-Neh-Kee Park.
- Ericka Schoenberg for her time dedicated to Environmental Education and land restoration efforts.
- Moonlight Seed Collection participants who burned the midnight oil harvesting seed for the next growing season.
- Grandview University students who helped with seed sorting at Chichaqua.
- Monarch tagging participants who helped the scientific community in tracking these pollinators on their annual trip to overwintering grounds in Mexico.
- Wells Fargo employees who cleaned up the lake shore and cleared the area of invasive plant species.
- New Park Stewards Alec Schaufenbuel (throughout our parks), Ashley Seidel (Brown's Woods), and Jon Shelness (Brown's Woods).
- New Adopt a Park sponsors at Mally's Park in Berwick Cummins Central Power.
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation volunteers who have sought out opportunities to extend their reach into our Family of Parks.
- Those with DMACC and the public who continue to dedicate one Sunday per month on restoration efforts at Carney Marsh.

# Polk County Conservation Spring 2016 Volunteer Events

## City of Des Moines Trash Bash

Saturday, April 22nd

Various Locations - PCC at Easter Lake

Earth Day kicks off with a Bash at noon downtown including sponsor and volunteer recognition, team introductions and educational booths. The rally builds a sense of community and cohesiveness to the day's activities and is an opportunity to recognize the thousands of hours these volunteers will put in this year. After the kick-off bash and lunch, team captains will lead the volunteers out to their project locations for an afternoon giving back to the community. More information to come.

## Arbor Day Century Tree Project

Saturday, April 30th @ 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Easter Lake Park

Celebrate Arbor Day this year with Polk County Conservation. In addition to ongoing woodland restoration efforts within the greater enhancement projects of Easter Lake, PCC volunteers will be planting trees in areas where intensive work has been done to clear invasive species. These trees will be cared for throughout the years and their growth documented for future generations to enjoy.



*Polk County oak grove*

### Pat Spain

Planning & Outreach Coordinator

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## Volunteer Spotlight



PCC welcomes our newest PCC Trail Ambassador Tom O'Donnell. Tom is an avid cyclist who feels at home on his recumbent tricycle, riding and making use of many of the area paved trails in the Des Moines Metro, and onto those that stretch beyond!

Giving back to his community is Tom's forte; which is evident through his many years as a soccer referee, volunteering for various non-profits and now including our TA program. Not long after officially signing up; Tom and members of his family assisted a badly injured bicyclist, getting the person and their bike off the trail to where paramedics could tend to injuries.

Tom is very friendly, willing to offer advice to beginners, way finding directions to any in need and offer any assistance that he is able. If you happen to see him on the trails--give him a wave and tell him thanks for all he does!

