

AmeriCorps! The Waypoint

ISSUE 2: MLK DAY OF SERVICE

APRIL 1, 2005

MLK DAY REBORN



Notes from the Editors:

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Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 2005
went off without a hitch.

Yeah, 'bout that.

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Depending on your source, anywhere from a foot to possibly a ton of snow fell on Cape on MLK Jr. Day. And depending on your source, those at the Wellfleet House shoveled 20 or 21 tons of snow out of their driveway in order to even get to the service sites. For those unaware souls, the Wellfleet driveway is in fact 38,826 miles long, making getting out of the house, we're not sure, mildly challenging. And yes, it's the last 26 miles that are the killer.

Those at the Bourne House also have their own driveway, but as it is located in actual "civilization" complete with "real, living people as neighbors with Bobcat tractors to plow snow out of the way," it was "easier" to get to the service projects.

->The following portrays the Day of Service, with 100 percent accuracy.<-

UPPER CAPE SUMMARY

*Brought to the Cape in part by:
Wednesday COD Day*

The Upper



Cape service group, those Wacky Wednesdayians, served organizations in Mashpee, Falmouth, Hyannis, and West Barnstable.

The weather had a harsh effect for Wednesdayians, as it helped turn away nearly all community vol-

unteers.

However, all four projects went well and were done.

Corps members served with the Cape Wildlife Center, where they painted operating rooms; with Salvation Army, where they cooked and served lunch for the clients, and ate it with the clients as well; with the Boys & Girls Club, where they helped paint a mural in the teen center (see next page); and with the Carriage House, a women's shelter, where they



Painted the children's play room, as noted in these photos. Due to weather, the Boys & Girls Club and Carriage House required multiple visits by corps members.

Refreshments were provided by donations from Dunkin' Donuts, Cape Cod Bagel

Please read a first-hand account by Wellfleetian Chris Sethness on pages 8 and 9 for a more detailed, personal account of the service day.



Boys & girls of the Boys & Girls Club in Mashpee designed and helped create the mural for the teen center, with a little help from certain gray-clothed birdies with paint brushes and floor cloths. The messages, scratched graffiti-style, include

‘Believe in Yourself’
‘Respect’
‘Live Strong’
and, appropriately,
‘I Have A Dream’





The Champ House crew included Lorraine and Bob Gardiner, front and center in this photo, who have volunteered with AmeriCorps in the past. The force (e.g. spirit of service) is strong with them, as the two have also previously applied for Senior Environment Corps of Cape Cod & Islands. They shoveled out their driveway in order to volunteer, and they were even on time to the opening ceremony. Honorary corps members? You betcha.



Other pieces of the Champ House crew puzzle included Boy Scouts, lead by Scout Master Bill Monroe, the nice guy kneeling above. They all are returning volunteers as well, and though they be young in age, they are wise beyond their years, and the force is strong with them as well. At least one has the rather unique ability to paint himself into a corner and escape without stepping on the still-wet floor. They served with the corps until the very end of the service day, and are honorary corps members for the Mid-Cape crew.

MID CAPE SUMMARY

*Brought to the Cape in part by:
Tuesday COD Day*

The Mid Cape wunder-group, after shoveling themselves out of their driveways and parking lots, began the day at the opening ceremony at the Cape Cod Community College cafeteria, where a dozen volunteers ate Dunkin' Donuts donations and met the members whom they'd be serving with. From there, volunteers went to one of three service sites.

At the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, volunteers and corps members served the animal shelter, including cleaning the cages and organizing the MSPCA offices.

At the Angel House, a home for families suffering from substance abuse and its effects, volunteers joined with corps members to paint and renovate two rooms, including a 'chill-out' room. Volunteers included Barnstable High School students and young professionals.

Volunteers dominated the service at the Champ House, a series of houses that provide a haven for people who are physically disabled, in recovery from drug or alcohol abuse, mentally ill, and all those in need in some way or the other. The volunteers, which in-

cluded Boy Scouts and other community members, painted and organized one house's basement and bathrooms, and after lunch the same volunteer group painted the basement floor of the third house. Other volunteers and corps members painted three bathrooms in the second house.

A massive lunch was provided by donations from Mike's Pizza, Pinoccio's and Scottie's Pizza, Stop 'N' Shop, and Shaw's.



Alumni represented well, and traveled from Boston, Falmouth, Bourne, and elsewhere to serve. Can't they get enough? Time will tell; Blitz Week, Canal Cleanup and other large service projects are just around the corner.

LOWER CAPE SUMMARY

*Brought to the Cape by:
Thursday COD Day*

The service group on the Lower Cape began the day with a celebratory kick off event at Nauset High School. While munching on breakfast donations, care of Dunkin' Donuts of Eastham and Stop 'N' Shop of Orleans, volunteers listened to AmeriCorps member Shane Jordan give a short speech on Martin Luther King Jr. and the importance of service. Tom Quinn of Nauset Inc., an organization providing a home for people with physical or mental disabilities living in the Lower Cape area, next stepped up to the podium to describe his organization. Then, with a final encouraging word from Corps members, volunteers jumped into their cars and drove to one of two service sites.

The first service project was the removal of wallpaper in the dining/kitchen area of a Nauset Inc. group home in Orleans. In addition to stripping the old wallpaper using a steamer and their tenacity, volunteers patched the ceiling, created a professional-looking snow-person for the yard, and made friends with the residents of the home. Volunteers included Girl Scout Cadette Troop 679 of Dennis and students from Eastham and Orleans.



Meanwhile, the rest of the group gave their time to the Lower Cape Outreach Council, which is an organization that provides emergency financial assistance to residents on the Cape. AmeriCorps Cape Cod members and volunteers, students from Harwich and a couple of special friends from Boston, joined forces to paint several rooms of the Outreach Council's building in Orleans.

Both groups refueled for the afternoon with lunch provided by Upper Crust Pizza, Red Barn Pizza, and Shaws of Harwich.



Volunteers in action



Nauset Inc., pictured on this page, received much love from the Lower Cape community, thanks to the combined strength and organizational skills of Thursday COD day. High school students combined with Girl

Scouts to strip wallpaper and repaint ceilings of the organization that offers a place to live for people with physical or mental disabilities.

Members also served with the Lower Cape Outreach Council, where they helped paint several rooms.



Honorary corps members include Girl Scouts

and lots of high school students, and Tom Quinn for having faith to attend and speak at the opening festival.

MLK JR. DAY ACCORDING TO A CORPS MEMBER

*By Christopher Sethness
Wellfleetian*

After months of planning, phone calls, site visits, coordinating donations and organizing volunteers, the day had finally come—MLK Jr. day! This was the granddaddy of all projects, our struggling achievement since first entering the basement of our COD day. Wednesday COD Day was going to prosper. It was morning, time to get moving. What's this? Cars buried, howling winds, frozen faces!?! The extreme weather conditions had moved in; we were forced to postpone two of our four projects. The Carriage House painting and the Boys & Girls Club mural were both going to have to wait for another day, but no time to sulk, The Salvation Army and Cape Wildlife Center were waiting. We had a stop to make. In the hopes that the few volunteers we had not told to stay home would still make it out, I led a small reconnaissance team out to the Sandwich library. We arrived and waited in an empty, half-plowed parking lot. As the minutes floated by, we began to lose hope. Mike Davis gave one of his many confused but entertaining faces from the passenger seat. He showed how I felt—broken and struggling to make the best of it. That's when



Sherri erupted from the back seat, "It's Mark Adams!" He pulled alongside and we all chatted about the weather, trying not to smile too much (might scare him off). It was like having a lemonade stand up all day and finally seeing that one person come jogging down the street with a crisp, new dollar in hand. Sherri happily

directed Mark to the Salvation Army, giving him directions and thanking him for his support. It was then that I realized that even just one person was worth the trip. Differences were made individually, in the mind of a single person. But no time for that sentimental stuff, onward, Cape Wildlife was waiting.

Chlln4 (my temperamental ocean-blue Pontiac GrandAm) rumbled through the streets, dodging potholes and black ice, somehow making it to the Cape Wildlife Center. Sherri, Mike and I unloaded our gear and began to plan out the course of attack. Two top-priority rooms were the entranceway and the operating room. The previous afternoon, Mike and I had prepared and first-coated the entranceway. Rubbing my hand over the wall, I knew we needed three times the amount done today. What if there wasn't enough time? Doubt started to return as I watched Mike lay out the roller trays. But before I could get myself down, I remembered something important. In

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

my dozing state at the library I had partially missed Sherri's phone conversation in the back seat. We had reinforcements en route! This was going to be a good day. The paint was mixed and ready to rock minutes later: five gallons of Soar Blue, one of the many things generously donated by Sherwin-Williams. Just then Erin, Christine, Serendipity (Sarah) and Nigel (Sarah's visitor) arrived. It was a breath of fresh air. Seven people could get this done. We sanded. We taped. We dropped cloth. We rolled. We brushed. All of it, together we did this. We were the volunteers here, and we worked hard. Clothes were covered in paint, sandpaper dust filled our noses and covered our hair, the crazy swan shrieked at us...but we didn't falter. Never had I seen such willingness to help. These fellow AmeriCorps members (Nigel definitely an honorary member) came to Cape Wildlife that day to serve on a project that they knew nothing about. And I saw nothing but determination and smiles from them. Mike and I didn't expect this when we were first planning the project, but it couldn't have gone smoother. The Center's staff smiled, pleased with our work and it filled me up to know that we had served a much needed NEED that day. A part of me knew that Martin Luther King Jr. would have been happy for us that day, for working on a day most people take off. There are other Mark Adams' out there, people that do things out of the goodness of their hearts. And I am happy to be surrounded by them every day, on every project. We're in this together. Checkmate.

HE'S REALLY TALL, HE RUNS REALLY FAR AND HE REALLY NEEDS MONEY!

Bourne House supervisor Nathaniel Marcum is planning to run the mother of all marathons in Boston to raise money for liver research.



When thousands of runners from all over the world toe the Boston Marathon line this April 18, Nathaniel will be right there, ready to run the 26.2 mile test of mental and physical endurance. In place of his usual AmeriCorps 'A', Nathaniel will sport the American Liver Foundation purple and orange in honor of his Uncle Jim, who suffered from liver problems.

In preparation for the big race, not only must he log 18-mile and 21-mile training runs, Nathaniel must also raise **\$2,500**. He has been diligently entreating his friends and family for donations to his worthy cause and needs all the support he can get.

If you would like to support Nathaniel or to learn more about the American Liver Foundation running team, please visit their Web site at www.liverteam.org.

Best of luck to Nathaniel this Marathon Monday as he races toward the finish line and contributes to finding a cure for liver diseases!

A Week In The Life Of

MEGHAN HARTMANN
Bourne-Again

NFTE: This is quite a dated week, but hey, this issue is nearly two months late

Saturday: Today is a quiet day at the house. A lot of people are out and about which gives me the opportunity to do laundry and try to organize the stuff piling up in my room. In the evening, most of Bourne and a few members of the Wellfleet House go out to Liam Maguire's in Falmouth and we listen to a group playing folk music. Erin L.'s sister (Nikki) is visiting and we chat and find that we have a mutual friend in Denver. (Small world!)

Sunday: My plan was originally to go ice skating today, but I realize that I copied down the wrong hours for public skating. So instead I stay home, read and listen to the rain outside. The coming week will be a full one, so I'm saving up my energy.

Monday: My house has a group project at Children's Cove in Barnstable where we help them prepare for the annual Christmas party they put on for abused children and their families. There are lots of decorations to put up and activity kits to organize. After service today I go home for a relaxing evening at home with a book.

Tuesday: Today is my COD day. It's been raining steadily since yesterday, and it's a slower commute than usual. Our main focus this month is making preparations for our Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of service. At the office, I start off by having a meeting with the rest of my COD group concerning our progress regarding donations and volunteer recruitment. After the meeting, I drive

down to Center-ville to do a site visit at an animal shelter where we will be sending volunteers on MLK Day. When I return, I work some on my COLT role as Bourne House historian and also call several local community groups to recruit volunteers. At the end of the service day, I drive home and then go grocery shopping with Sherri for the house dinner on Wednesday. When I get home again it's time to cook dinner for myself and join Jenna and Erin L. to watch 'Law and Order.' (NFTE: *It's the original, and it's on TNT. The Bourne House allegedly knows drama.*)

Wednesday: I go to my IP at the Mashpee Shellfish Department on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Today I work on trying to finish sorting and weighing seaweed samples collected last month in Waquoit Bay. The goal of the project is to use the seaweed data to determine the abundance and diversity of plant species and then correlate that data with aerial photos and video of the entire bay. It should be really neat when it's done, but the sorting is getting to be really tedious and I'll be glad when my part is done. When I get home, I take a short break before delving into cooking the house dinner with Sherri. We're making pasta, meat-sauce, veggie meatballs and salad. The dinner turns out well, to my relief, and we are joined by Heidi, one of our service partners, and Gretchen, the head of the program. After dinner, we have our house meeting at which we discuss past and upcoming group projects, go over any COD issues, re-assign house chores

from the 'chore wheel,' talk about maintenance concerns, and other little things that come up each week. Every once in a while, some of the house members will go out and do something after the meeting, but usually it's hard to find the energy after such a long day and we collapse instead.

Thursday: Today at my IP I finish the very last of the seaweed samples and go out in the afternoon with my supervisor (NFTE: *Rick York, Meghan's supervisor, is a great human being to serve with*) to Poppanessett Bay to seed a portion of it with scallops. The scallops we release today were raised as part of a shellfish-culture program run by the shellfish department. The small seed were bought by Barnstable County several months ago, raised in upweller tanks, shifted to plastic mesh nets in a river off Waquoit Bay, and finally spread in Waquoit and Poppanessett Bays to grow to maturity. Tonight, I work on my program evaluations and go to bed early because Friday will be a long day of service.

Friday: The house woke up early today to go to a group project where we help improve a trail at the Mary Barton Land Trust. We put down layer of rocks and a layer of mulch to cover over the roots sticking up and make it safer for visitors of all ages. The work is all by hand, or by wheelbarrow, and very tiring, but it was ultimately satisfying because we finish the section of trail we a set out to do. Then we return to Children's Cove to help with the Christmas party until 11 pm. We were joined there with the Cove staff, their volunteers, and Mass Maritime Academy cadets. I had a great time helping the kids make packets of 'Friendship Tea' while other members help with additional activities, man the popcorn machine, run the karaoke booth, and act as Santa's helper elves. It was a jolly occasion, and it gives us joy to help make the holidays of the children





Wellfleet are now authors of the new children's book, *Brewster Burning and Orleans Highway Pruning*, as seen to the left and right.



All-Corps and House Service Project Highlights

Though there has been record amounts of snowfall on Cape this year, AmeriCorps must go on, and group and all-corps projects must go on, if just for the mental health of the corps members and house supervisors. Cabin fever has been rearing its ugly head at the houses, not completely rearing, it hasn't consumed Tokyo, but it has stuck its head out of the water and blown steam out of its nose.

Wellfleet highlights include:

- trail maintenance at a Mass Audubon property
- grassland habitat restoration in Brewster through the wonderful tool known as fire

Bourne highlights include:

- orchard pruning at another Mass Audubon property in Barnstable Village
- floating upweller maintenance for the Bourne Department of Natural Resources

All-corps trainings include:

- Cape Cod Stranding Network, where the corps was trained on mammal identification and rehabilitation. See the big plastic porpoise picture to the bottom left? It's a common dol-



Corps members have 'handled' plastic and flesh porpoises in and out of trainings, and Bourne Agains dominated Mass. Audubon apples trees.



For more information about AmeriCorps Cape Cod, contact the Resource Development Office at (508) 375-6869, e-mail us at info@rdoac.org or visit our website, www.rdoac.org

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AmeriCorps Cape Cod



Barnstable County

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