



the GreenWay

SCA's Conservation Quarterly

Summer 2012



SCA's Carlos De La Torre, an NPS Academy intern, "wanted to help make a change, and conservation was my answer."

A Legacy of Conservation and Innovation

Their battleground, weapons, and uniforms have changed, but not their commitment to country.

SCA was founded 55 years ago this summer to address an urgent need: our national parks required more help than government resources would permit. Today, as SCA continues to serve America's public lands, we are taking on challenges that reflect more modern times to affect a better future.

The SCA Veterans Green Corps engages former servicemen and women who have recently returned from overseas in forestry, including habitat restoration and wildfire mitigation. The training, credentials, and experience prepares them for careers in conservation, and the Corps also eases their transition into civilian life by following a structured regimen familiar to recent-era veterans.

Before he earned a Bronze Star in Afghanistan, Brian Dwyer was a farmhand in Florida. Enlisting in the Army National Guard, he says, "only strengthened my work ethic and sense of duty and loyalty to something greater than myself." Today he is serving with SCA in Black Hills National Forest in South Dakota, "with like-minded people who enjoy helping others and working in the environment."

"All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance," says Davon Goodwin, quoting Dr. Martin Luther King. The 23-year-old Purple Heart recipient from Pittsburgh hopes his work at Kaibab National Forest will give him "research experience in different fields that will make me a stronger candidate for employment in the future."

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**CONSERVATION
BEGINS HERE**
Student Conservation Association
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

55 Years at Work for the Planet, Our Nation, and Our Youth

As SCA observes its 55th season of service, the power of young people is on full display. As you'll see in these pages and, quite likely, in your own summer travels, SCA field members are impacting parks and communities across our nation, just as they have from the very beginning:

- SCA Founder Liz Putnam envisioned the power of young people to protect parks, thereby planting a seed for the national service movement
- Liz and SCA co-founder Martha Talbot were models of young women in leadership years before the women's rights era
- And as the earliest SCA members worked to address important conservation issues, they advanced environmental action more than a decade before the first Earth Day

In the years that followed, SCA became a national leader in youth service and stewardship. In the midst of the Civil Rights Era, SCA was among the first to engage young people of color in conservation. When Yellowstone caught fire and hurricanes devastated the Atlantic coast, SCA volunteers stepped in to aid the recovery. And when oil spilled in the Gulf of Mexico, our members were again among the first to respond.

Today, as our nation writes a new chapter with young military personnel returning from overseas, sky-high youth unemployment, land management agencies in rebuilding mode, and climate change and other issues straining our environment, I am proud that SCA remains a central figure in America's story.

With your support, SCA will continue to provide innovative solutions for our nation and transformative opportunities for our young people.

This is our legacy. This is their future. Thank you.

A Legacy of Conservation and Innovation *continued from page 1*

As unemployment continues to run high and youth joblessness nears record levels, SCA has developed intentional professional pathways to effectively usher young conservationists into careers. The NPS Academy, conducted in partnership with the National Park Service, and the Career Development Intern Program, in collaboration with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provides young people of color with a wide range of career opportunities while also building a more diverse agency workforce.

Carlos De La Torre is a 21-year-old majoring in wildlife management at Texas A&M. This summer, he's coordinating other volunteers, leading visitor tours, and intervening in buffalo and bear jams at Grand Teton National Park. In his off-time, he helps out at the Visitor Center. "I've always volunteered," Carlos notes. "With glaciers and coral reefs deteriorating, dolphins and whales being slaughtered, poverty around the world, etc., I wanted to help make a change, and conservation was my answer."

As SCA grows its traditional partnerships with government resource managers, we are also working with more and more private corporations to put young people to work. Our community conservation programs, which annually employ nearly 1,500 urban teens in 20 leading cities, have been cited by the U.S. Conference of Mayors as among the country's best green jobs programs for youth. And following a successful launch last year, SCA and ARAMARK are expanding our Environmental Sustainability Internship Program, which provides participants with hands-on environmental job experience as they implement solutions for businesses, universities, sports venues and other locations across the country.



SCA intern Ila Galanti is now a registered dietician with ARAMARK at the University of Chicago.

"This program addresses a prominent challenge that exists in the private sector today—how we effectively engage young professionals with an interest in entering the workforce and impacting social or environmental issues," said Rick Martella, ARAMARK Vice President of Corporate Affairs. Nearly half the 2011 Sustainable Interns have already been hired by ARAMARK and other corporations, a testament to their skills and dedication.

SCA is still fueled by the same spirit of ingenuity that sparked our creation five and a half decades ago, even as we evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of our nation.

Blogs, videos, photos and more! Follow Carlos and other SCA members in the field all summer long at followme.thesca.org.

Liz Putnam Earns Legacy Award

SCA Founding President Liz Putnam, who launched the youth conservation service movement 55 years ago this summer, recently was presented with The Corps Network's Legacy Achievement Award in Washington, D.C.



"Corps impart the value of leadership and stewardship in young people all across our country, while preparing participants for conservation careers," Ms. Putnam stated. "Our collective legacy will be a better planet for all."

Youth corps members and alumni from around the country surrounded Liz following her remarks, offering a combination of congratulations and appreciation for helping to create the field opportunities they've enjoyed across America.



SCA hosted more than 100 young people in a June 26th service project at Kenilworth Park and Aquatic Gardens in Washington, D.C. to commemorate its 55th anniversary. Volunteers from SCA, the Department of the Interior, and Outdoor Nation removed invasive plants and restored hiking trails. The event was held in cooperation with First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move Outside! healthy kids initiative. "Young people, conservation, and parks just go together," said National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis. "That's what Liz Putnam knew 55 years ago when she started SCA, and we are delighted to help celebrate this great organization's anniversary in one of America's 397 national parks."

Two Awesome Ways to PROTECT THE PLANET AT YOUR WORK

WORKPLACE GIVING: DONATE TO SCA THROUGH PAYROLL DEDUCTION.

This is an easy way to support SCA throughout the year in increments that won't stress your wallet! You'll still enjoy all the benefits associated with being an SCA supporter. If your employer would like to include SCA in their current workplace giving campaign or to discuss some easy ways to set up a workplace campaign at your work, please contact SCA's partner, EarthShare at <http://earthshare.org/contact-us> or call (800) 875-3863.

EMPLOYER MATCHING GIFT PROGRAM: AN EASY WAY TO DOUBLE (OR TRIPLE!) YOUR IMPACT!

Many companies will match your own personal gifts to SCA, doubling your impact for our land, our youth, and our future. Contact your HR department to see if your employer offers this amazing benefit and then let us know: donorcare@theSCA.org or call Vicki at (603) 543-1700.



#11343

Alumna Author Honors SCA



The book's dedication is just as lovely as the flowers featured on its pages: "My heartfelt admiration and appreciation to the SCA for fostering my love for the outdoors at an early age."

Sara Barnard was just 15 when she first joined SCA as a trail volunteer in the Santa Fe National Forest. "I was in a wonderful environment with wonderful people," Sara recalls. "It was the most influential summer of my life."

Much of what she learned that year and through two subsequent SCA internships are evident in *The ABCs of Oklahoma Plants: Edible, Medicinal and Just Plain Fun Plants Right*

Outside Your Door, a children's book filled with fascinating flora from A: the (Stinking) ash to Z: *Zanthoxylum clava-herculis*, better known as Hercules' club.

"SCA enabled me to develop a great appreciation and respect for Mother Nature," says Sara, now 29. "I credit it with shaping who I am today."

Sara, who has also written a series of historical novels as well as some non-fiction pieces on military life, lives on a ranch in Geronimo, OK with her family and several rescue animals. Her husband, Jerry, is an Army paratrooper stationed at nearby Fort Sill when he's not deployed to Afghanistan. The couple has three young children.

"They are the inspiration for almost everything I do," Sara says. "I just can't wait for them to be old enough to join SCA!"

Corporate Partnerships Support Youth Conservationists

SCA and the Dr Pepper Snapple Group have renewed a partnership which has already enabled SCA members in all 50 states to conduct projects in water conservation, native planting, waste reduction and recycling, and engage and educate more than 1.5 million Americans in sustainable behaviors. Dr Pepper Snapple also was a Presenting Sponsor of SCA Earth Day projects across the country.

Nestlé Waters North America has agreed to extend its support of SCA community conservation programs which annually provide green job opportunities to more than 1,5000 diverse teens in 20 U.S. cities. To further demonstrate Nestlé Waters' commitment to sustainability, Nestlé employees will join SCA members in making improvements to Coyote Point Recreation Area in San Mateo, CA on July 21st.

A new partnership with Union Bank, N.A. will allow SCA members to provide California state parks with some crucial extra hands this summer. "Union Bank is proud to partner with SCA," states Union Bank Foundation President & COO Carl A. Ballton, "as we seek to strengthen our communities by fostering economic, social, and environmental sustainability." Bank staff recently worked with field members to restore parts of Chino Hills State Park in Brea, CA.



It's a Park Finder and a Fund Raiser!

Download the free **Oh, Ranger! ParkFinder app** to locate local parks and support SCA. SCA earns a dollar-a-download, up to \$150,000! For Apple or Android devices, from American Park Network and Ford Explorer.

See more at thesca.org/ohranger





"Nature is one of our best classrooms," says SCA intern Theresa Conn, at Cape Cod National Seashore.

The Plight of the Piping Plover

by Theresa L. Conn, SCA Conservation Intern

It was early morning at Cape Cod National Seashore. I was walking cautiously along the beach with three shorebird biologists trained in avian behaviors. We were looking for signs of Piping Plovers, which are federally threatened shorebirds that nest all over Cape Cod. It was my ninth day at work as a Shorebird Conservation Intern, and already I felt like I knew what I was doing. However, it was early, and I felt my mind drifting.

"Theresa, freeze!" yelled Dennis, my supervisor.

Like a child playing a game, I stiffened immediately without even a thought. My right foot was raised in the air, only inches above the ground.

"You're pretty close to a scrape," Dennis said, both chastising and understanding. I looked around but saw nothing. Finally, I spied the small, sand-colored Piping Plover egg lying in a hidden nest in the ground, about five feet away.

My first month on the Cape was essentially Piping Plover Boot Camp. I shadowed shorebird techs as they traveled the beach looking for birds, nests, and eggs. I found scrapes (nests) on my own, watched adorable chicks stumble around the beach, and sledge-hammered six-foot fencing posts into the sand.



Piping Plovers face many natural and human-caused challenges, but one of their biggest problems has been public outrage about conservation practices. From early March to mid-August, areas of the beach are closed off for recreation to accommodate shorebird nesting. This can be very frustrating for some beachgoers. Kids are fun and receptive, but adults are not always as understanding. Some will disregard the fencing and continue walking, which puts eggs and Plover chicks in danger. In extreme circumstances, we get help from the park rangers. Fortunately, it rarely gets to that point.

My time with SCA on Cape Cod has redirected and shaped my future career goals. I grew up with a desire to be a teacher, but I didn't want to live my entire life in a classroom. I've now learned that teachers come in all different forms, and that nature is one of our best classrooms.



Although retired from the National Park Service, Deanne Adams and Tony Sisto are ensuring their support for SCA will last long into the future.

Retired Rangers: “Couldn’t Have Done Without SCA”

There was a lot they didn’t have in common. He was raised on the plains of Texas, she in a remote Alaska village. But Tony Sisto and Deanne Adams did share a love of the outdoors and by the time they met, in 1977, they were both rangers at what is now Denali National Park. They soon married and spent their entire careers—nearly 70 years between them—with the National Park Service before retiring a few years ago.

Looking back over his tenure at Isle Royale, the Great Smoky Mountains, Yellowstone and more, Tony says “we probably had SCA volunteers in every park. To me, SCA is the way to get young people to care about the environment and involved protecting public lands.” Deanne agrees. “After a 32-year career working in education and interpretation, the value of interpreting our national park sites to the public—especially to young

people—is very important to me,” she says. “We relied on SCA to help us bring kids way outside their background and provide them with a great conservation experience.”

When they began to think about their estates, the former rangers also concurred that including SCA in their plan was one of the best ways to ensure that new generations of conservation leaders would protect our treasured lands for years to come.

“Having had a great career working in some spectacular national parks,” Tony says, “I want to see that they are open in perpetuity. SCA isn’t just icing on the cake. They were an integral part of what we did. There was so much we couldn’t have done without them. And they could use SCA more and more everyday.”



Please join Tony and Deanne in providing for SCA in your estate plans.

To learn more, ask Hugh Montgomery to send you SCA’s new comprehensive guide—*Do Something Grand for Our Youth and Our Land*. You can contact Hugh at hmontgomery@theSCA.org or (603) 504-3241. And please let him know if you have included SCA in your plans so that he can welcome you into SCA’s Liz Putnam Legacy Society.

More information about Tony and Deanne’s inspirational commitment to each other, to our national parks and to SCA can be found at thesca.org/TonyandDeanne.

Somali Refugee Finds Way to SCA

Hard work, long hours, extreme weather—SCA can be the toughest test some teens ever face. But not always.

In May, 16-year-old Siraji Hassan completed SCA's Leadership in the Environment Advancement Program (LEAP), a Pittsburgh-based experiential education initiative for youth in poverty. At the program's closing ceremony, Siraji told a hushed audience how years earlier he fled with his family from their native Somalia.

"A man appeared in our village and told us that there was going to be a big war, and that we had to leave as soon as possible," Siraji stated. "He said there were going to be bombs and shooting."

The fighting began almost immediately. Siraji's home was destroyed. His mother gathered her children and they fled with other villagers. "Many people died walking. People starved, died of thirst," he said. Others fell to preying animals.

After three days, they reached Kenya and "my mother started crying." They received medical treatment and moved into a shelter, where they lived for several years before emigrating to America.

"I once lived in a refugee camp and now I live in Pittsburgh," Siraji reflected. "I didn't go to school in Kakuma, now I attend Allderdice High School. I didn't have a job, now I work at the Student Conservation Association."

The crowd erupted into applause and Siraji was presented an award for his achievements.



SCA's Siraji Hassan.

Fern Nelson, 1911-2012



Fern Knutsen Nelson, who supported and nurtured dozens of early SCA volunteers at Grand Teton National Park, passed away recently in Jackson Hole, WY at the age of 101. Ms. Nelson and her husband Albert boarded SCA members at their ranch, and supervised, transported, and by all accounts thoroughly enjoyed the company of the student volunteers.

"Fern was a wonderful friend to SCA," states SCA Founder Liz Putnam, "and her care and generosity in the late 50s and early 60s was crucial to the success of the program. She loved those kids and they loved her, as did I. She will be greatly missed."

As a newspaper columnist, Ms. Nelson received an award from the Wyoming State Historical Society for her series of old-timers' stories, "This Was Jackson's Hole."



Million Dollar Challenge

We Did It!

SCA beat its Million Dollar Challenge goal by more than \$60,000! On behalf of all the young men and women who will serve with SCA this summer through your generosity: thank you!



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Helping you give wisely. In charity.

The American Institute of Philanthropy and Charity Navigator rank SCA among America's top conservation charities for fund-raising efficiency.

SCA is a nationwide conservation force of college and high school volunteers who protect and restore America's parks, forests, and other public lands. SCA's active, hands-on approach to conservation has helped to develop a new generation of conservation leaders, inspire lifelong stewardship, and save our planet.

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Printed on 100% post-consumer paper, processed chlorine-free, soy ink



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SCA's Conservation Quarterly Summer 2012



SCA's Emma Strong opens new Welcome Center. Photo: Daily Courier

SCA Gets Old Caboose Back on Track

There was nothing welcoming about a crumbling caboose in the middle of Connellsville, PA until SCA's Emma Strong suggested they turn it into an official Welcome Center. Everyone in town thought Emma, the project leader for Trail Town Outreach Corps, was on to something.

"I couldn't help but look past the poor aesthetics of this piece of rusting metal and imagine what a benefit it could be to the Great Allegheny Passage and Connellsville." Emma spent weeks amassing volunteers—"the right people with the right information and the right skills," she says—to handle the restoration. And last month, the Yough River Trail Council cut the ribbon to the new visitor center.

The spruced caboose is now stocked with maps, brochures, even local restaurant menus, and local officials give Emma all the credit. "This was an important amenity that Connellsville was missing," she states. Emma notes she started riding the Passage as a child and now, thanks to her, many others are likely to follow.