

The Oldham Era

Preserving nature

By Rebecca Yonker

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Era news editor

The sweet scent of pine hung in the damp spring air Sunday afternoon as volunteers trimmed and mulched paths in the Creasey Mahan Nature Preserve in Goshen.

The project, sponsored by Greenways for Oldham County Inc., brought out a few nearby residents, a Girl Scout troop and Judge-Executive John Black.

Around 2 p.m., one group began mulching a 100-foot hill where erosion is especially bad, Greenways President Judy Hall said, as she took a short break from hauling mulch downhill in a wheelbarrow.

At the top of the hill, a group of people would load wheelbarrows with mulch. Then another group would carefully trudge downhill with it where others would spread it even with rakes.

As they spread it, 6-year-old Evan Baker told his brother and sister that the mulch was steaming.

His father, Bob Baker, explained that the mulch is made of wood and sticks that are decomposing, which makes the steam.

They came out to help Sunday afternoon because 11-year-old Lindsay Baker is part of Girl Scout troop 639.

"We're working on a service project," Lindsay said. The cleanup will help her and other troop members get a bronze award.

While they worked on mulching the hill, another group of Girl Scouts helped Greenways Board Member Paul Culbertson trim overgrown branches along a side trail by a creek. Preserve Director Glenn Yost said they were turning a small deer trail into a nice big hiking path.

Small groups of people worked on different areas along the paths for a couple of hours, then came together to put in a 10-inch, 20-foot-long culvert that will divert drainage along an area on the main path through the 166-acre preserve.

It is the first time a culvert has been put in since the area was turned into a preserve, said

Larry Brown, director of grounds and buildings. It is one of the worst areas for drainage, he said, noting that the ground stays moist year-round.

Hall said Greenways sponsored the day as a way to encourage the public to use the preserve more.

"It's just a wonderful recreation area and a place for animal habitat," she said.

The Creasey Mahan Preserve offers more than five miles of hiking paths, a playground, picnic areas, ball fields, tours of the Colonial-style Creasey Mahan home and all sorts of information about nature and all that it offers.