

Stonewall Jackson, Burnsville lakes team up for National Hunting & Fishing Days

By Nicole Dickson

On September 27-28, 2008, approximately 15,000 hunting and fishing enthusiasts covered the grounds of the Stonewall Jackson Resort State Park in W. Va. for the National Hunting and Fishing Days Celebrations. The event is sponsored by the West Virginia Wildlife Federation and the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. The two-day event encourages all ages to learn about the outdoors through responsible hunting and fishing practices and techniques.

This year marked the 11th anniversary of this event at the Resort State Park and historically averages between 10,000 to 18,000 visitors annually. This year West Virginia Division of Natural Resources reported that visitation numbers were about what they expected. This also marks the 10th year that Stonewall Jackson and Burnsville Lake have teamed up to represent the Army Corps of Engineers. Stonewall Jackson Lake Park Ranger Jeff Toler says that “this partnership has and will continue to be a very important part of the Corps success at this event.”

Some of the highlights of the event included many youth activities: 3-D archery; Muzzleloader Association public shooting; .22 caliber rifle shooting and youth shotgun shooting. Trapping demonstrations, mobile fish exhibit, bird dog hunting demonstrations, deer field dressing & skinning demonstrations, turkey and coyote calling and hunting seminars were also featured. West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles also offered ATV training courses.

Stonewall Jackson Lake’s Jeff Toler, Rick Miller, and Nicole Dickson, Burnsville Lake’s Scott Hannah and Mike McCoy, and two very loyal Stonewall volunteers Doug Dinkelo and Dave Fernandez teamed to provide the public with outstanding programming this year. In addition to the standard informational booth, a volunteer display was erected with photographs, apparel, and information displayed to introduce the public to the Corps of Engineers successful Volunteer Program. In addition, Water Safety was again put in the spotlight. Thirty-one Water Safety Programs were conducted with the project’s new patrol boat as a great backdrop, reaching 335 people. The patrol boat proved to be a real winner among the outdoor enthusiasts. “They just don’t come any nicer than that,” said one visitor. And lastly, Bobber the Dog made an appearance that made a number of kids happy.

Photo Caption: Stonewall Jackson’s Jeff Toler (left) and Nicole Dickson (center); volunteers Dave Fernandez (left standing) and Doug Dinkelo (right standing); and Huntington District’s Scott Hannah from Burnsville Lake, pose at the park office.