

# Students fish for knowledge at 16th annual Lewis and Clark Water Festival

October 1 2018 10:50 AM



GODFREY – Approximately 500 fifth grade students from six different schools and 20 classes gathered at Lewis and Clark Community College for the 16th annual Water Festival, Friday, Sept. 28.

“I’m very happy with the attendance at this year’s Water Festival,” said Environmental Educator and Water Festival Coordinator Allison Rhanor. “It is a beautiful day and all the volunteers are helping everything run smoothly. I’m thankful for all the Lewis and Clark students who volunteered their time.”

Nearly 100 L&C student volunteers helped run the event.

Students learned about environmental sciences and participated in outdoor activities during the daylong event, which was organized by the National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (NGRREC?).

Each participating class was asked to collect shoes to donate to the Shoeman Water Project (SWP), which focuses on providing clean water to communities in developing countries. Students collected more than 700 pairs of shoes during the drive.

Mrs. Brokering’s class from C.A. Henning Elementary in Troy won the competition, averaging 11.9 pairs of shoes per student.

Students from across the region got the opportunity to learn about a variety of freshwater topics, including urban fishing, survival in native ecosystems, water treatment, global water needs and the role of prairies in water quality and biodiversity.

“Even though many of these students live near the Mississippi River, for some of them, this is the first time they’ve been exposed to water as a natural resource,” Rhanor said. “It’s amazing to watch them as they learn about the importance of water in every level of the ecosystem.”

The Water Festival program consists of two components. Prior to the festival, a professional development day was held for fifth grade teachers bringing their classes to the event. The teacher workshop provided the teachers with curricular materials, supplies and the teaching methodology to enhance their water education unit in the classroom. The water festival then allows the teachers to bring their students to the L&C campus to cycle through several activity stations. The activity stations are organized and supervised by facilitators from federal, state, county and local agencies, environmental organizations, education institutions and local businesses.

Water Festival sponsors include Pepsi, St. Louis Bread Company, J.L. Nash, Madison County Planning and Development, The Horinko Group Water Division, Southern Regional Groundwater Protection Planning Committee, Wood River Refinery, Veolia and Illinois American Water.

To learn more about Water Festival, visit [www.ngrrec.org/Education/Children/Water-Festival](http://www.ngrrec.org/Education/Children/Water-Festival).