

Camp Dubois Rendezvous brings replica Lewis and Clark encampment back to life

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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WOOD RIVER - Visitors and history lovers alike are welcomed to this autumn's **Camp Dubois Rendezvous**.

This weekend's free event, which celebrates the pre-1840s fur trade era, is taking place on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and is located on routes 143 and 3 in Wood River,

Historical reenactors set up camp in the area around and inside the replica of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's encampment. The original Camp Dubois, located toward Hartford, was where their expedition to the newly purchased American west began.

Campers and traders slept in teepees and period-specific tents, setting their modern amenities to experience life how it would have been when Lewis and Clark began their training heading into their famous expedition.

Tomahawk and knife throwing competitions are available for all ages to participate. Black powder shoots, an archery contest, as well as an auction will all take place over the weekend.



Luke Reinhold has been running and maintaining Camp Dubois over the past seven years. Through his work with a group of historical reenactment venturing crew out of Collinsville, he was approached by the site's caretaker to take over operations.

"My favorite part of running the camp is teaching the school kids," Reinhold said. "We have so many volunteers that have a chunk of knowledge from each time period. Walking around and watching the kids learn is great."

The Roxana School District brings young students to the camp to learn about the history that exists in their own back yard.

The non-for-profit organization is run on donations from members of the surrounding communities who enjoy the work that Reinhold and his groups do each year.

"The community helps us out so much," he said, citing help the organization has received from Phillips 66, Airline Pawn and Jewelry, the Piassa Armory and much more.

The encampment's creator, Carroll John "C.J." Lanahan, died on Sept. 25 and the site and its demonstrators plan to hold a dedication ceremony during the rendezvous that occurs on the first full weekend of May.

All of the hard work that the demonstrators and volunteers put into the encampment are to restore it to the former glory that Lanahan intended.

“It took him three years to build it from the ground up,” Reinhold said. “We’re trying to put it back to how C.J. had it.”



