



Del. moves forward on Affordable Care Act

State finalizes plans to set up insurance exchanges despite pending court ruling

By Jessica Eisenbrey
Delaware State News

DOVER — Like many other states, Delaware is hard at work attempting to finalize plans for a health insurance exchange before the Jan. 1, 2014 deadline established by the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The exchange would allow individuals to purchase health insurance eligible for federal subsidies and is the most pressing next step in implementation of the law passed by Congress and signed by President Barack Obama on March 23, 2010.

“We’re viewing that as our current mandate and deciding what we need to do to go live by Jan. 1, 2014,” said Rita Landgraf, secretary of the Delaware Department of Health & Social Services.

If possible, leaders of the state would like to have an exchange set up by Jan. 1, 2013 so that all flaws could be worked out in the following year, said Ms. Landgraf.

Because of Delaware’s small population, the state has faced some obstacles when organizing an insurance exchange.

Alicia Holmes, a consultant with

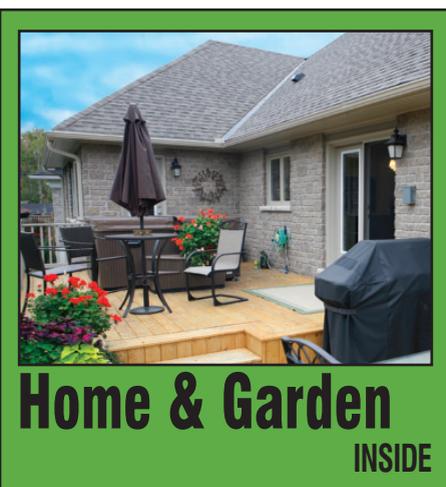
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Weed Warriors

Delaware State News/Jamie-Leigh Bissett

Staff Sgt. Brad Bibbens from the Dover Air Force Base’s Airman Leadership School was one of about 30 soldiers to lend a hand during Saturday’s efforts to clear invasive plant life from the St. Jones River behind Dover Central Middle School. See Page 3 for story and more photos.



Home & Garden

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Volunteers help clean up St. Jones River banks

Effort clears away invasive species as part of pollution control, restoration project

By **Jamie-Leigh Bissett**

Delaware State News

DOVER — Saturday was a great day to be outside, and about 50 volunteers took full advantage of the weather to do some good in their community.

Working alongside staff from Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control Watershed Assessment Section, nearly 30 airmen from the Dover Air Force Base and 20 community volunteers helped clean up brush and debris from the St. Jones River as part of a multi-year pollution control and restoration effort.

“It’s a good thing to do, plus it gets me out of the house,” said Henry Howe, of Ellendale, during Saturday’s cleanup.

“This is fun for me,” said Jahleel Johnson, a third-grader at Academy of Dover.

A two-day effort, the cleanup took part on a 1,200-foot portion of river bank behind Dover Central Middle School. Upon clean-up completion, a stream restoration project will commence which will help reduce erosion and storm water runoff.

“DNREC and the city of Dover have been working for more than five years on revitalization and restoration of the St. Jones River and Silver Lake in Dover,” said Lyle Jones, environmental planner with DNREC’s Watershed Assessment Section, who coordinated Saturday’s cleanup. “This location will ultimately become an outdoor classroom that will enhance student learning and provide hands-on experiences for the students at Dover Central Middle School.”

Friday and Saturday’s cleanup included about a dozen volunteers on Friday and close to 50 on Saturday, with 30 members of the Airmen Leadership School at the Dover Air Force Base showing up unexpectedly.

“I didn’t anticipate the base help,” Mr. Jones said.

Funding for St. Jones River restoration and pollution control projects is made possible by federal grants obtained by DNREC’s Nonpoint Source Pollution program.

The total cost of the project, according to the Community Environmental Project Fund Application, is \$32,900.

Dover’s Silver Lake Revitalization Project, including the St. Jones River, was recommended as part of a pollution control strategy developed by the St. Jones Tributary Action Team, a group of concerned citizens,



Christine Marks, of Dover, used Saturday’s St. Jones cleanup project as an opportunity to fulfill community service hours for

property owners and scientists. The project, initiated in 2007, has included cleanups, stream restorations and planting projects.

Mr. Jones said volunteers are cleaning up invasive plant life such as Japanese honeysuckle, English ivy, porcelain berry, multiflora rose and privet, that typically grow quickly and prevent native plants from flourishing.

After invasive plants are removed, he said, the area will be re-vegetated with native trees that will aid in preventing undesirable species to grow.

Volunteers also helped take down part of the fence that sits along the river bank to allow more access to the shoreline for Central Middle School science students who are studying water quality levels in school.

To address the river bank erosion, Mr. Jones said, Bio-COIR logs made from natural fiber will be installed to provide structural stability by resisting water speed to prevent erosion and trap sediment.

Untreated sediment, Mr. Jones said, accumulates in the river by way of numerous storm water outfalls on both sides of the river.

To help rearrange how storm water reaches the river and therefore decrease the amount of untreated sediment, the project will include the installation of a level spreader. The level spreader, he said, helps decrease the volume of water that enters the St. Jones creating erosion while removing unwanted pollutants by redistributing the storm water into adjacent wetlands, allowing nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus to infiltrate and settle before it reaches the water.

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Delaware State News/Jamie-Leigh Bissett
National Junior Honor Society at Fred Fifer Middle School in Camden. Christine helped remove a fence along the river bank.



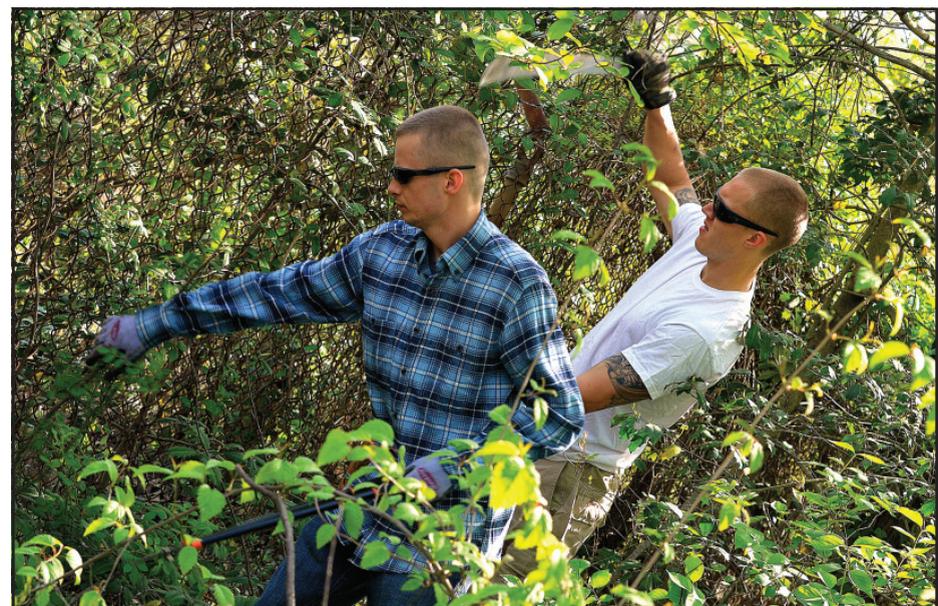
Henry Howe, of Ellendale, was happy to help with the restoration and pollution control project.



Staff Sgt. Robert Kohlenberg and other members of the Dover Air Force Base’s Airmen Leadership School volunteered for the DNREC project on Saturday at Dover Central Middle School.



Peter Schaeffer, a member of the Dover Rotary Club, volunteered his time on Saturday to help with a multi-year restoration project that will revitalize and restore the St. Jones River.



Senior Airman Albert Schneider, left, and Staff Sgt. Zachery Dale from Dover Air

Force Base’s Airmen Leadership School clear out brush along the St. Jones River.