



For Immediate Release

November 6, 2014

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First Lady Designates Three New Preserve America Stewards

Washington, D.C.—First Lady of the United States Michelle Obama has signed designation letters for three new Preserve America Stewards, bringing the total nationwide to 43.

The newest to join the honor roll include HistoriCorps, a nationwide program that helps agencies preserve historic properties on public lands; Diving With a Purpose in Florida, which provides volunteers working with underwater preservation efforts; and, the Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association that helped save a county courthouse and repurpose it as a museum.

“Preserve America Stewards are volunteer programs that have demonstrated success in saving historic places in the best tradition of the national historic preservation movement,” said Milford Wayne Donaldson, FAIA, chairman of the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP). “Preservation has always relied upon motivated, active volunteers who band together to make certain that significant historic places remain to enrich and enlighten present and future generations.”

Florida: Diving with a Purpose (DWP) is a volunteer underwater archaeology program that partners with Biscayne National Park and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. DWP trains experienced divers to assist in the documentation and preservation of shipwrecks and other underwater archaeological sites. Last year, DWP also launched Youth Diving With a Purpose (YDWP) geared to youth ages 15-23. For more information: <http://www.divingwithapurpose.org/>

Illinois: The Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association was formed to save the Effingham County Courthouse from potential demolition. After the county government moved out of the Second Empire-style historic building, which dates to 1871, some citizens called for its demolition. Now, thanks in large part to volunteer efforts, the building has reopened as the Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum. For more information: <http://www.effinghamcountymuseum.org/>

Nationwide: HistoriCorps partners with land management agencies to organize volunteer preservation projects on public lands throughout the United States. Since 2009, HistoriCorps has preserved 144 historic structures in 16 states, engaging 650 participants in more than 50,000 hours of service and training. Volunteers have worked on structures ranging from Forest Service lookout towers to historic mining complexes to rural cabins, and much more. For more information: <http://historiccorps.org/>

For more information on the Preserve America Stewards program, see www.preserveamerica.gov/stewards.html.

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ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION

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