



Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie

Volunteer Job Description

Title: Oral History Recorder

Purpose: To preserve local culture and history of individuals who lived on local farmsteads, worked at the Joliet Arsenal, or anyone who can contribute to the regional history of Southwest Will County where Midewin is now located. Midewin has a responsibility to fairly and accurately tell the history of this site. Recording oral histories is one form of preserving the historic record of Midewin.

Duties and Responsibilities: To interview, record, and accurately transcribe oral histories of those individuals who have offered to share their story to Midewin's Heritage Program.

Department and Location: Volunteers will be supervised by Midewin's Prairie Archaeologist. Interviews can be conducted at Midewin, local library, informant's home, or anywhere quiet and convenient for both the interviewer and informant. Transcription may take place at the volunteer's home or library.

Qualifications: Individuals must possess excellent conversational and listening skills; have the ability to keep an interview going, draw out information from an interviewee. Volunteers must have an open mind, respect for cultural significance and an interest for learning about Midewin's history.

Time Commitment: Conduct and transcribe at least 2 interviews. Interviews may take up to 2 hours. Transcription may take up to 10 hours.

Training: An oral history seminar and training will be conducted by Midewin's Prairie Archaeologist. Individual training will continue on an ongoing basis as needed by the volunteer. Midewin will provide recorder and supplies.

Benefits: You will learn about the local history of Midewin and will be contributing to Midewin's cultural and historical legacy. You will meet other like-minded individuals who also volunteer with the program. Volunteers receive ongoing recognition from their supervisor and staff, and are invited to an annual volunteer recognition banquet in November.

Contact: Chris Pratt, Volunteer Coordinator, cmpratt@fs.fed.us, (815) 423-6370