



Athens District continues as an anchor at the Nelsonville Timber and Outdoor Show

The Athens District of the Wayne National Forest continued its long tradition of participating in the Nelsonville Timber and Outdoor Show.



Bill Scripp and Chad Wilberger talk to visitors at the Timber and Outdoor Show.

Though the show changed its name this year from the "Paul Bunyan Show" after the show's coordinators split paths, the location and the emphasis of the Nelsonville Timber and Outdoor Show remained the same as the ever-popular former event. "Several of the participants said they liked it better than ever," noted Robin Riggs who helped in the Forest Service tent each of the three days of the event.

The Show is held on the grounds of Hocking College whose students major in several natural resource careers. The show features activities such as tree felling contests, lumberjack water show, ATV enduro races, and all the traditional logging events you would expect to find at a show named after Paul Bunyan. An adjacent historic village came to life with reenactors

providing a "walk through time." The Wayne National Forest was one of main sponsors of this year's event.

"The show traditionally draws about 75,000 people," said Phil Sammon. "Many of them come all three days, and its something people look forward to all year. For a small town- this is a very big deal and we've always done our part to support it." Sammon said this year the Forest's tents and displays were right inside the entrance gate which put them in a prime location.

The Athens District takes the lead in organizing the event and this year had two large tents with displays as well as an outdoor display for the fire engines, equipment and Smokey Bear. "This is the first year we've had two tents," said Riggs, "which really expanded what we could include and which projects we could showcase for the public."

Riggs was responsible for running the "Nature Store" and selling items from the Eastern National Forest Interpretive Association (ENFIA). "We loaded up several boxes of items from our ENFIA outlet at the office and took them down there. Each of the three days I was going back to the office to get more things to sell," said Riggs. "We sold over \$1,300 worth of merchandise related to natural resources or the Wayne National Forest!" Riggs was delighted with her success and said much of the money raised will later be available for interpretive programs on the Forest.

Smokey Bear and the fire team had their trucks and equipment there along with a specially outfitted cabin trailer to provide information. An ATV ridden by a manikin wearing all the latest in

safety gear promoted the ATV trails on the district as well as recruited volunteers for the new trail patrol program. Other projects showcased were non-native invasive species, wetlands, the US 33 bypass construction, and the vegetation management program.

Childrens games were a new addition to the event. Teena Ligman provided a rotating roster of games and activities for children and willing adults. Several of the visitors became familiar as they returned every 2 hours with their children to participate in the next game on the board. Each game had an educational element.

District Ranger DeVela Clark was pleased with the event. "This was my first opportunity to be involved in this event but I was very impressed with the organization and how well we were received by the public," he noted. "It was a great opportunity to interact with people and answer questions."

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