

## **2008 Conservation Mini Fair at Ridgway Park**

Ridgway Park was full of life on Thursday May 22<sup>nd</sup> as presenters from various agencies were on hand to educate grade school students on the importance of conservation issues. 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders from Gallatin County School and 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Norris City learned about water quality, recycling, soil erosion, electrical safety, and an assortment of other topics. This field trip was hosted by the Gallatin County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), and was made available with a grant from Shawnee Resource Conservation and Development Area.

Twelve stations were set up through out the park where trained professionals discussed their areas of expertise. On hand were Dan January of The Egyptian Health Department, Chris Mitchell of Hamilton County SWCD, Mike Gwaltney of Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Karen Cathy, Sharon Buchanan, and Nancy Lambert of the University of Illinois Extension, Carla Barnes of Franklin County SWCD, Rick Walter of Williamson County SWCD, Maridy Tso from Farm Bureau, Robin Mizell of Massac County SWCD, Robin Holloway & staff of Southeastern Illinois Electric Co-Op, Thomas Harris of Johnson County SWCD, Bob & Joy Fox of Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, and Janice Page of Franklin County SWCD.

There were many other volunteers who helped make the day a success. Setting up benches and preparing the noon time meal were: Rick Street of NRCS; David Schou, of Farm Service Agency (FSA); Phyllis Mace & Kristi Abell of Gallatin County SWCD; Norbert Rider, Gallatin Co. SWCD Director; Bud Kimbro, Gallatin County SWCD Associate Director; Kelly Barnes and Helen Baker of Pope/Hardin SWCD; Jewel Brooks of White Co. SWCD; Kristi Abell of Gallatin Co SWCD; Steven (Hot Rod) McDermott, Blake Patton, Cole Baker, Justin (Juice) Lindsay, and Josh Farler of the Gallatin County FFA; Sue Kimbro and Judy Koerner of Ridgway.

The Gallatin County SWCD would like to thank all of the wonderful volunteers and presenters for their time and hard work. Special thanks go to Mayor Becky Mitchell and the Village of Ridgway for help in preparing the park, Scates Valley for providing the cooker and the Ridgway Knights of Columbus for the ice donation.

Picture #101\_0691:

Thomas Harris, Johnson Co. SWCD is demonstrating the effects of soil erosion.

Picture #101\_0710:

Chris Mitchell, Hamilton Co. SWCD and Mike Gwaltney, NRCS, provided soil samples for grade school students to compare with one another.



