

Local activists plan rally at marina this weekend

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In response to the cutting down of another tree in the Beardstown Marina on Thursday March 12 and the ongoing struggle to clean the silt from Muscooten Bay, two local activists launched two websites to document the process, gather feedback, and serve as an information source for the public concerning the marina issues.

An 'Open Our Marina' Rally will start the evening of Good Friday, April 6, 2012. Christy Bley will host an information booth with a hot dog roast. On Saturday April 7 there will be a sunrise breakfast and informational rally under a bridal-style tent. She plans to "read the Corps' own words" from the recently recovered Beardstown Community Boat Harbor project to share solutions that can open the marina for public use.

The local Facebook group named "The Beardstown Marina Project (our War against the Corps)" founded by Dave Utter had over 100 members over the weekend the last tree fell. In one week the group has exploded to 331 and counting. The group has been posting information about the

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long struggle that Beardstown residents have been facing the in regards to the Army Corps of Engineers role with the demise of Muscooten Bay. To further expand the message to internet users outside of Facebook and collaborate with their views, Utter has developed a website just before the tree fell called: <http://beardstownharbor.org/> reach more people in his electronic protest. The website is under construction as he and his supporters are adding to the pictures, history and goals of the page. At this time there is a 63 page Army Corps of Engineers study in a searchable PDF document that shows a good history of why the mouth of the Sangamon was created.

Another website that went up last weekend is to shed light on the Beardstown Marina issues, and is also under construction (<http://beardstownmarina.com/>) It is hosted by Bley. The site is in its infancy, but one of its goals is to promote the Beardstown Marina. Bley has been trying to spread awareness of the environmental impact around the marina and levee area affected by recent events. She also plans to have a comment board so people can tell their own story or opinion. This site is an extension of her documentation of the wildlife, river workers and watershed changes.