

Hello Friend!

Thanks so much for signing up to volunteer at Charlotte's Quest Nature Center in Pine Valley Park, Manchester, MD, we are thrilled to have you!

Before you join us to volunteer please fill out the volunteer application form here:

<https://forms.gle/GC8kLkRnf3yWuAgF9>

We want your experience volunteering your time at CQ to be meaningful and beneficial to you. If you have any questions or concerns at all, you can reach out directly to me, Vicky, the Volunteer Coordinator on my cell at 410-259-1151, text or email at [vicky@charlottesquest.org](mailto:vicky@charlottesquest.org)

Before you arrive for your volunteer activity please:

- Wear protective clothing such as long sleeves, pants, sturdy shoes and head covering, like a brimmed hat to protect from the sun. Gardening gloves too.
- Wear bug repellent and sunscreen. It is the time of year for insects including stinging and biting ones. Best practices are to leave the insects alone and they will usually leave you alone. Keep an eye out for insects that may have small holes in the ground where you are working. Be aware of larger holes that may be from a larger animal near the gardens as well.
- Bring your own first aid kit for scrapes and insect stings. In the event of an emergency call 911.
- The clothing helps protect your body from ticks or other wildlife you may encounter, it is a natural park and preserving wildlife is part of our mission. It will also help protect your skin from encountering poison ivy or other plants that may cause blistering skin rashes.
- It is a good practice to immediately remove and wash clothing and shower when returning home from working outdoors.
- Please check yourself for ticks, tucking your pants into your socks is a regular practice as well.

Possible tools to think of bringing with you if you wish: hand trowels, hand cultivators, hand pruners, loppers, weeding tools, a bag or bucket to carry weeds. If mulching the finished gardens as well, you will want to bring a pitch fork, shovel, flat rake and wheelbarrow to get mulch from our pile (in the parking lot). We do have some of these tools available at the center to borrow as well.

When hand pulling weeds use protective gloves, and do not overly exert yourself. A small hand tool (ex. cultivator) may help to loosen the earth around the weed. Weeding is easiest when soil is wet after a rain. Weeds (except garlic mustard) can be put in the compost bin located to the right of the 2 sheds.

Poison ivy, should you encounter it, and wish to remove it we urge you to wear gloves and long sleeves. A safe practice to avoid getting the oils on you or your clothing: Using a plastic bag, place your gloved hand inside the bag, pull the plant up by its root, then flip the bag inside out getting the whole plant into the bag. Tie it up and dispose of it in the trash. You may use our large trash cans on site for this. There is a handwashing station, wash up arms using thick lather of soap to "cut" through the oils. If it is not something you feel comfortable doing, you can leave it, and then please let us know where you spotted it. We have identifying pictures to help here:



"A weed is in the eye of the beholder" we will do our best to explain in writing and with pictures which plants should be removed. Any plants growing up in the walkways should be removed. Plants, such as vines that are growing inside or on top of other plants should be removed. Most of our gardens have perennial plants at this time, therefore they may or may not show flowers depending on the time of year.

Here at Charlotte's Quest almost 100% of the tasks are completed by volunteers like you! This task is so very important to our center and park, and you and your time are very valuable! Without wonderful volunteers like you, we could not get it done. Thank you.

Happy Volunteering!  
-Vicky Crouthamel