

Newspaper Article #2

(This is an excerpt, a smaller section, from the full article.)

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Earnest Volunteers Agree Job Was Long Overdue 1st Step

By JOEL H. SEKERES

Perspiration dripped from Norman Beauvais' face like rain as he guided his small rowboat against the bank of the Blackstone River behind the Old Slater Mill in Pawtucket yesterday.

He jumped ashore, his blue jeans and T-shirt splattered black with river muck, and, with weary grunts, began unloading his boat's slimy cargo of small tree limbs, a discarded auto tire, a large piece of plywood and a car's axle assembly with a tire and wheel attached.

"People are fed up with pollution," he muttered. "Government hasn't been tough enough and the people just had to take things into their own hands to help make the river clean. It's everybody's job."

And it seemed yesterday

that everybody took the job seriously. Mr. Beauvais, a 34-year-old self-employed contractor of 72 New York Ave., Cumberland, was one of thousands of volunteers who toiled beneath leaden skies and intermittent rain for Project ZAP.

He was part of an unlikely mixture of construction workers, students, housewives, music teachers, secretaries, engineers, Boy Scouts, factory workers, truck drivers and a multitude of others who labored and sweated together, united in a common fight against pollution.

Riverbanks Lined

From Woonsocket to Providence, knots of humanity lined the riverbanks, using hoes, rakes, shovels and gloved hands to remove tons of paper, dead tree limbs, cans, boxes, worn tires and

other junk that had been so casually discarded there.

Men and women in rowboats, canoes and rubber rafts hauled up any debris they could get a grip on.

And a team of volunteer scuba divers, often unable to see more than six inches in front of their faces, went beneath the surface of the murky waters to pry engine blocks, refrigerators, bed springs, pipes and auto doors from the mud below.

If there was a consensus among the volunteers, it was that Project ZAP was an overdue first step in what should become a continuing statewide effort to clean up all of Rhode Island's polluted rivers. Every one of nearly two dozen volunteers interviewed yesterday emphasized that one day of involvement is not enough, that sanitizing riv-

erbanks is helpful but still not enough and that industries and institutions must be stopped from dumping waste into the rivers if marine life is to be saved.