

January - March 2008

Leading Creek News



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Wetlands of the Watershed Tour

Celebrate American Wetlands Month by exploring the wetlands of the Leading Creek Watershed. On Thursday, May 8th from 5 to 8p.m. the Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District and the Leading Creek Watershed Group will sponsor the Wetlands of the Watershed Tour and Picnic.

This free watershed tour will include three unique wetlands and end with a picnic. Meet us at the first stop on the tour, the Wilson Wetland on State Route 7 near Middleport and Hobson. At 5pm presenters from the Cooper Hollow

Wildlife Area will tell the story of the Wilson Wetland and show off the varied wildlife there. At 6pm we will meet staff from the Ohio Department of Transportation and tour the Fairgrounds Wetland Mitigation Area that also has an acid mine drainage treatment system incorporated into the wetland. At 7pm we will end the tour at the Meigs SWCD

Conservation Area with a tour of the wetland enhanced there in 2007. Participants will then enjoy a cook-out and picnic and have the chance to explore the Conservation Area further, including the hiking trails.

Pre-registration is requested. To register for the Wetlands of the Watershed Tour and Picnic please call the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.



This wetland with a 2.2 acre pool area at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area near Rutland will be the last stop on the tour

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Our Partners

Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District
 Agri-Drain Corporation
 American Electric Power
 Buckeye Hills RC&D
 Boy Scouts of America
 Eastern Local School District
 Girl Scouts of the USA
 Leading Creek Conservancy District
 Leading Creek Improvement Committee
 Meigs County Commissioners
 Meigs County Engineer
 Meigs County Health Department
 Meigs County Recycling & Litter Prevention
 Meigs Local FFA
 Meigs Local School District
 Mid Valley Christian School
 Natural Resources Conservation Services
 Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Divisions of Forestry, Soil & Water Conservation, Mineral Resources Management, and Wildlife
 Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Division of Surface Water
 Ohio State University Extension
 Ohio University, College of Engineering
 Ohio University, ILGARD
 PDK Construction
 Residents of the Leading Creek Watershed
 Rural Action, Inc.
 Rutland Village Council
 Southern Local School District
 Township Trustees of Columbia, Salem, Rutland, and Salisbury Townships in Meigs County
 U.S. Department of Agriculture
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 U.S. Office of Surface Mining
 4-H

2008 Photo Contest Winners Selected

The winners of the 2008 Photo Contest sponsored by the Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District and the Leading Creek Watershed Group were announced at the Annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep on April 19.

The theme this year was “The Streams of Meigs County” and the Meigs SWCD received entries from all over the county. Three winners were chosen to receive cash prizes and two honorable mention places were chosen. A point system based on attributes like focus, lighting, and creativity was used to tally the winners. Thanks go out to the contest judges, the Meigs SWCD Auxiliary Members, who volunteered their time and expertise to score the photo entries.

Local support helped bring this contest into a fourth year. Thanks go out to all the banks that donated and helped make this contest possible: Farmers Bank & Savings Company, Home National Bank, Ohio Valley Bank, and Peoples Bank.

The first place winner was

Continued on Page 3



First place photo: “Streams – A Reflection of What We Do” by Joani Powers of Long Bottom



Second place photo: “Springtime Awakening” by Joani Powers of Long Bottom



Third place photo: “Spring Thaw” by Carol McDonough of Rutland

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Photos Contest Winners continued from page 2

Joani Powers of Long Bottom with her entry entitled "Streams - A Reflection of What We Do."

The second place winner was also Joani Powers of Long Bottom with her entry entitled "Springtime Awakening."

The third place winner was Carol McDonough of Rutland with her entry entitled "Spring Thaw."

The fourth place Honorable Mention winner was Jeff Dawkins of Racine with his entry entitled "DD's Day Out."

The fifth place Honorable Mention winner was Constance Fowler of Racine with her entry entitled "Leaping Streams."

All photo entries can be viewed at the Meigs SWCD office, at the next Leading Creek Watershed Group public meeting, at the SWCD's Annual Banquet, and at the Meigs SWCD booth during the 2008 Meigs County Fair. Keep your eyes open for that perfect photo of Meigs County's waters for next year!



Fourth place Honorable Mention photo: "DD's Day Out" by Jeff Dawkins of Racine



Fifth place Honorable Mention photo: "Leaping Streams" by Constance Fowler of Racine

Watershed Public Meeting

On Wednesday June 24th, from 6:30 to 8:30 pm, the Huntington District of the Army Corps of Engineers will be presenting a study on water resource concerns in Meigs County. The meeting will be held at the Pomeroy Library, and is being hosted by Rural Action.

focusing on Watersheds in five Counties of Southeastern Ohio, including Athens, Gallia, Lawrence, and Scioto, as well as Meigs County.

Members of the general public, as well as community leaders, resource professionals, and other stakeholders are urged to attend. This is part of a larger study

The meeting will be an opportunity for citizens, organizations, and government officials to identify opportunities, and prioritize watershed concerns, related to flood damage reduction, ecosystem and environmental restoration, as well as other issues relating to water management. Contact Rural Action at 740-767-4938 with questions.



Record Stream Sweep Turn Out

The 8th Annual Leading Creek Stream Sweep was held Saturday April 19th at Jim Vennari Park in Rutland, and this year's was arguably the largest ever in the history of the event.

Over 100 volunteers showed up to clean up locations in Rutland and Salisbury townships and in the village of Middleport. Concerned individuals, students and youth groups including 4-H, Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts were among the participants.

We were happily surprised to see the masses of people that cared enough to come out. The 100-plus volunteers that participated this year far outnumbers the 35 who turned out last year. Volunteers filled both of **Rutland Township's** dump trucks and four pickup trucks with trash collected from the stream banks. The refuse weighed approximately three tons.

Volunteers met at 9a.m. and were provided with gloves and trash bags. Locations were assigned and all refuse was to be brought back to the Rutland starting point. For their service, volunteers received a Leading Creek Stream

Sweep T-shirt and pizza for lunch.

Many tons of trash and debris have been removed from Little Leading Creek and Leading Creek over the past eight years through this litter clean up. The Leading Creek Stream Sweep coincides with Earth Day and is sponsored by the Meigs SWCD, Rutland Township Board of Trustees, and the Meigs County Transfer Station. This year sponsors also included the Stewart-Johnson Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9926 of Mason, W.Va.

We would like to thank all the people that helped make this Stream Sweep an amazing success. Plan on joining us again for the Ohio River Sweep on June 21st. See page 5 for details.



Children that attended the Leading Creek Stream Sweep were able to enjoy the playground at Jim Vennari Park after a morning of working to clean up their watershed.



Volunteers came in all ages this year, like these youngsters shown here, many sporting their new Leading Creek shirts.



Determined volunteers did some heavy lifting to dispose of large items like rugs, mattresses, and couches.



Little Leading Creek was truly in need of a litter clean up day. Volunteers found much debris along the stream including metal piping and drums, furniture frames, windows, and, of course, tires.

Time to Register For Watershed Summer Camp

Leading Creek Watershed Camp is back again! The 4th Watershed Day Camp will be held on June 4th and 5th at the Meigs SWCD Conservation Area near Rutland... and it's still free!

Many new activities will be added this year. Staff from partnering agencies will direct children in activities including fun with wetlands, snakes and birds of Ohio, fish and bugs of the creek, and water quality investigations.

The day camp will run from 9a.m. to 5p.m. each day. Lunch and snacks will be provided. Plus, there is no fee for campers!

Camp lessons will be prepared for students entering the 5th through 8th grades. However, if your child would like to attend Leading Creek Watershed Camp and is not in this age group, please contact us.

Any child in the general age range can register for

camp, but only the first 50 kids will be accepted for this year's two day camp. So hurry up and send in your registration form to the SWCD before May 30th.

Volunteers are always welcome to help during the two days of fun and learning outside. To register your child for Leading Creek Watershed Camp or to volunteer please contact the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.



Ohio River Sweep 2008

On Saturday, June 21st the 20th Annual Ohio River Sweep will take place. The Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District will organize three locations in Meigs County this year. Volunteers are needed at Pomeroy, Portland, and Racine.

In Pomeroy volunteers meet at the amphitheater in the riverside parking lot. In Racine volunteers meet at Star Mill Park. In Portland volunteers meet at the school that has become the Portland Community Center. At 9am at each site volunteers will begin

picking up trash to make the community look a little brighter.

All trash will brought back to the meeting locations and disposed in trucks provided by the villages or townships. Volunteers will then be treated to lunch at noon and receive a new River Sweep T-shirt.

River Sweep is a riverbank cleanup that extends the entire length of the Ohio River and beyond. Some tributary streams are also gradually being added to the list of clean up sites. All counties along the Ohio River participate in this extensive day

of cleaning up litter. Leading Creek ends up in the Ohio River, so plan to join us to do your part on June 21st.



A stream falls gently over rocks along Oak Grove Road near Racine.

Photo "Waterfall" by Lynn Mallory of Racine.

Concern Over Local Streams Nothing New

By

Jim Freeman

Wildlife Specialist / Watershed Coordinator
Meigs SWCD



A stream shimmers along Sidehill Road near Rutland.

Photo "Barefoot Memories"
by Kim Eads of Rutland

With all the emphasis being placed on watersheds and watershed groups these days, it may be easy to believe that watersheds and watershed groups are somehow a "new" thing.

"Old school" thinking states that creeks and streams should be straight and clean, but by June, 1963, the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District was already discussing how planting trees could help control flash flooding by slowing down flood velocities and retaining water. The recreational potential of improving watersheds was also considered.

In October, 1963, a letter from the "Citizens Committee for Strip Mining Reclamation in Meigs County" requested assistance from the SWCD in helping solve problems on farms in Scipio Township "which have not been stripped," specifically addressing damage already done to the drainage systems and farm land. The old meeting

minutes do not specify how the problems could be solved, but it seems logical to believe it would involve strip mine reclamation as well as removal of sand from streams.

The board passed a resolution of support requesting assistance from the state, which may have eventually resulted in the reclamation projects of the 1970's and 1980's. Parts of Scipio Township, along with other neighboring townships, were extensively strip mined for coal and much of the sediment from those abandoned mines found its way into streams like Little Leading Creek and Mud Fork, in the Leading Creek watershed, as well as the West Shade River. It is this sand that covers local roads after every flash flood. Some landowners living along those streams are old enough to

remember when the creeks flowed free, and many others can remember the creeks clogged with sand and coal fines so high "you could drive a tractor straight across from bank to bank."

Today, many of those same residents can tell you that things have greatly improved. Reclamation projects have greatly reduced the amount of sediment getting into the creeks, and the sand already in the creeks is slowly working its way down toward the Ohio River.

However, there is still a lot of room for improvement; some creeks still have large amounts of sediment, others are affected by acid-mine drainage from old coal mines, plus there are old, failing septic systems throughout the watershed.

Leading Creek Watershed Group Membership Form

Join us today! Leading Creek wants *you* to become a member!

To become a member of the Leading Creek Watershed Group simply fill in your information below and drop this form off at our office or mail it to us c/o Meigs SWCD
33101 Hiland Road
Pomeroy, OH 45769

Yes, I want to join today!

And I want to donate! (see options below)

Name (Please print) Organization (if applicable)

Mailing Address

City State Zip

Telephone Email

Signature Date

Benefits of Membership

All members receive personal invitations throughout the year to participate in activities such as watershed tours, group contests, litter clean up days, and water sampling demonstrations.

Option to Donate

Here is your chance to help us restore and protect the watershed. All donations are used to directly benefit the efforts of the Leading Creek Watershed Group. Those who donate \$10 or more receive one of our newly designed t-shirts. Also keep in mind that your contributions are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to Leading Creek c/o Meigs SWCD.

- \$10 *Donor* Preferred Shirt Size (If applicable) _____
- \$25 *Supporter*
- \$50 *Patron*
- \$100 *Sponsor*
- \$500 *Benefactor*
- Other \$_____

The Leading Creek Watershed Group is a partnership of residents, officials, and agencies united by common interest in restoring the Leading Creek Watershed to add to the quality of life for the residents of the watershed and surrounding communities.

Thank you for your membership and for your support!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 8th: Wetlands of the Watershed Tour and Picnic from 5pm to 8pm, meet at Wilson Wetland

May 29th: Leading Creek Improvement Committee Meeting at 9:45 a.m. at Meigs SWCD office

June 4th & 5th: Leading Creek Watershed Day Camp at Meigs SWCD Conservation Area

June 19th: Leading Creek Improvement Committee Meeting at 9:45 a.m. at Meigs SWCD office

June 21st: Ohio River Sweep from 9am to noon in Pomeroy, Portland, & Racine

June 24th: Public Meeting for Army Corps of Engineers Study at 6:30p.m. at Pomeroy Library

Office Closed for Holidays:

May 26th

July 4th



www.geocities.com/meigsswcd

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