



RAVINIA

An Advocate for Community Resources

Published by Friends of the Ravines (FOR)

Fall 2008/Winter 2009

Clintonville Art Gallery Features Local Ravines

Clintonville resident Bridgette Turner has been painting the ravines in Clintonville for several years. When she opened the Turner Studio & Gallery in May 2007, she set about recruiting painters for a year-long painting project. "I have an intense love of nature for its beauty, its form, and its serenity," says Bridgette, whose deep passion and respect for the land comes to a personal resolution in her landscapes. She even loves to paint weeds.



Photo shows Elaine Freeman painting on the south rim of Glen Echo Ravine.

Artists were invited to capture the various seasons in Glen Echo Ravine, Overbrook Ravine, and Walhalla Ravine. Several of the artists participating in the event are members of the Ohio Plein Air Society. (En plein air is a French expression applied to painting in the open air.) The show is not limited to plein air work, but includes studio work done from the artists' own photographs. Accepted media are oil, acrylic, watercolor, pastel, and pencil.



Area residents have no doubt seen several of the painters on site. Bridgette tells us that the community is enthusiastically welcoming the project. Based on the selection of artists, this curated show will offer a wide range of styles and media. Participating artists are Virginia Buehler, Gary Chacongas, Carol Cosgrove, Edie Dean, Elaine Freeman, Larry Golba, Tom Harbrecht, Chuck Harris, Mary Holobaugh, Brian Johnston, Karen LaValley, Charles Marshall, Doreen St. John, and Bridgette Turner.

The finished paintings will go on display at the gallery on October 18, 2008, and continue through December 20. Gallery hours are from 12 to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, and by appointment. Hours will be extended the weekend of the show's opening on Sunday, October 19, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Turner Studio & Gallery is located at 3017 Indianola Avenue, south of Studio 35 Cinema. For more information, call 614-563-1834 or go to www.BridgetteTurnerFineArt.com.



FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

When we begin preparing the Fall/Winter issue of *Ravinia*, we are saying goodbye to the lazy, hazy, uncomplicated weeks of summer. As we move into autumn, with hopes for an Indian summer, our pulses quicken for that bittersweet season of renewed dedication and effort that precedes the winter.

Ravinia, as always, captures that sense of activity and commitment. Our residents are dedicated to the Sisyphean task of removing invasive plants, supporting the renewal of the Clean Ohio Fund, presenting landscape paintings of our ravines at the Turner Gallery in Clintonville, reflecting on our summer travails with fogging, and calling for more dedication to the use of native plants in our gardens.

Ravinia reminds us of the work we've done, of why we do our work, and of all that remains yet to be done. It chronicles our engagement with the environment, and it captures the sense of both reflection and urgency that characterizes our engagement. With many thanks to Martha Buckalew and the many people who have written for *Ravinia*, we hope it makes your winter a better prelude to spring.

Jack Cooley, Chair, Board of Trustees

Elementary Botany at OWU in 1899 Revisited

By Martha Harter Buckalew

The article "Elementary Botany at OWU in 1899" contained a caption that misled one reader, who kindly brought the omission to our attention. The text under a 1892 visual read: "Monnett Hall was razed in 1978 and replaced by Smith Hall, a coed dorm." Two additional dates will clarify. Monnett Hall was vacated in 1968, the year that a new dorm, Smith Hall, opened.

The need to clarify the caption provides an opportunity to elaborate on Monnett Hall's unique history. In 1857, a Mary Monnett, a sophomore at the Ohio Wesleyan Female College, donated \$10,000 for the construction of a new women's facility. The Second-Empire-styled Victorian building served as classroom and dormitory for female students. Over the years it would merge with Ohio Wesleyan University, and, to accommodate the growing student population, the hall was enlarged.



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NEWS FROM THE RAVINE

ADENA BROOK neighbors continue to learn about ways to lessen the impact of stormwater runoff by installing rain gardens. Did you know that water running off of residential roofs, roads, and driveways can increase water in Adena Brook by 500%, leading to increased flooding and erosion? A 300-square-foot residential rain garden like the one installed in the front yard of Greg Cunningham (who lives at 670 Glenmont Avenue) naturally captures and cleans 12,000 gallons of water every year, or enough to fill two and a half tanker trucks. The Adena Brook rain garden, located at High and Overbrook is about 1,000 square feet; it captures and cleans 40,000 gallons of water every year, enough to fill over eight tanker trucks.

For more information about Adena Brook Community's conservation work, visit www.adenabrook.org. Send an e-mail to susanbarrett@columbus.rr.com to be included in current information exchanges about biodiversity, clean water, safety, and litter cleanups.

Rush Creek, where the so-called Schoolhouse Run is located, sits south of South Street and north of Colonial Hills School, hence the name. Its headwaters are located on the Harding Hospital property, and it joins Rush Run on Brookside Oval just north of the Park Boulevard Park in Worthington. The intermittent stream is not a named tributary according to the gazetteer of Ohio streams or other published records, but "Schoolhouse Run" is a familiar moniker to area residents.

Glen Echo Park's east entrance has been adopted by a native plant aficionado who has planted echinacea and ruellia in the sunny area east of the stone stanchion. The flowers promise to provide a colorful welcome to park goers next year.

Ravine Residents! The City of Columbus has launched GreenSpot, a new program to inspire, educate, and recognize individuals who make their homes greener. Look for information at www.ColumbusGreenSpot.org or call 645-3111.

Attention!

Friends of the Ravines' 2009 Community Forum will continue the discussion on fogging for mosquito control.

Visit our website:
www.friendsoftheravines.org
in Spring of 2009 to learn details.

Vote Yes to Renew the Clean Ohio Fund

On November 4, Ohio voters will have the opportunity to vote to protect and preserve Ohio's quality of life through the renewal of the existing Clean Ohio Fund. Clean Ohio is a renewal of a \$400 million bond program designed to improve the quality of life for all Ohioans by preserving natural areas and farmland, protecting waterways, and redeveloping urban areas to foster economic growth. It also will help clean up polluted industrial sites, helping to stimulate economic development in urban areas by creating high-quality jobs and economic investment.

There is strong bipartisan support from Ohio's top political leaders, business groups, farmland preservation organizations, and conservationists to renew the Clean Ohio Fund. U.S. Senators Brown and Voinovich are the campaign's Honorary Co-Chairmen, and Governor Strickland, Senate President Harris and House Speaker Husted have all endorsed the renewal of Clean Ohio. The campaign committee is a bipartisan coalition of farmers, scientists, sportsmen, conservationists, and business, labor and community leaders.

In 2000, an overwhelming 57 percent of voters supported the Clean Ohio program. Since then, the Clean Ohio Fund has enabled the assessment, clean-up, and revitalization of 173 abandoned and polluted industrial sites, leveraging private investment to re-develop sites. This has resulted in over 14,750 new jobs and nearly \$2.6 billion in private investment. Also, the initiative has resulted in the protection of 26,000 acres of natural areas, 20,000 acres of prime farmland, and 216 miles of recreational trails.

Renewal of the Clean Ohio Fund will not raise taxes. This program will be financed by revenue generated from the sale of state bonds, which will be sold to investors and repaid from existing state revenues and will be allocated for revitalization and conservation initiatives.

Local governments, public agencies, and non-profit organizations will be eligible to apply for program dollars. (Polluters will not be eligible for Clean Ohio funds and will still be held liable for damage they create. The state EPA will be able to hold polluters accountable.) The Clean Ohio Fund is broken into four programs administered by different departments of the state, each with a citizens' advisory council.

The programs are:

- Brownfield assessment, clean-up, and redevelopment: Ohio Department of Development in coordination with the Ohio EPA and the Clean Ohio Council
- Conservation of open space and natural areas: Coordinated through the Ohio Public Works Commission's 11-member, locally appointed Natural Resources Assistance Councils (NRAC)
- Farmland preservation: Ohio Department of Agriculture, with the advice of a Farmland Preservation Advisory Board
- Recreational trails: Ohio Department of Natural Resources, with the advice of a Clean Ohio Trail Advisory Board

The renewal of Clean Ohio will continue efforts to protect Ohio's quality of life for future generations, ensuring that our children and grandchildren can enjoy Ohio's land, water, and natural beauty. Every citizen in Ohio will benefit from the Clean Ohio Fund. By continuing to rid our state of polluted industrial sites, we can stimulate economic development in urban areas, create jobs, and encourage investment.

Help us keep our drinking water safe. Help us protect our lakes, rivers and streams. Help us revitalize our downtown areas. Help us strengthen our economy with thousands of new jobs. Help us spread the word about Clean Ohio. On Tuesday, November 4, VOTE for a Clean Ohio!

For more information on how you can get involved, please visit www.cleanohio.org.



Thoughts About Fogging for Mosquito Control

By Jeff Frontz

Every summer since 1980, Columbus has sprayed insecticides to kill mosquitoes. I never thought about it until a few years ago when I learned that property owners could ask that their houses not be sprayed.

My wife and I immediately opted out of having our Walhalla Ravine home sprayed and have every year since. This year, I heard about confusing information coming out of the Columbus Public Health, the agency that does the city's mosquito control. I heard from another neighbor on Walhalla that she'd been sprayed while riding her bike to work. After more investigation, I became concerned about how mosquito control is performed in Columbus.

First, some background: Mosquitoes are a part of the ecosystem. They're an annoyance that I've tolerated with the aid of repellent and citronella candles. And I figured that the dragonflies, bats, and birds would keep them in check, just as they've done for thousands of years. With the arrival of the West Nile virus in central Ohio, however, the specter of mosquitoes as a source of disease was resurrected. When I first heard about the disease, it sounded a little scary; it was hard to tell what was hype and what was fact. It was especially hard to figure out what the risks were so that I could put the risk of West Nile virus into perspective with, say, the proverbial risk of getting hit by lightning.

Thinking about risks is something I do a lot professionally. I'm a software engineer, so I spend a lot of time thinking about cost/benefit or risk/reward trade-offs. Thus, when the city said in a recent meeting that the reason for mosquito control is to prevent mosquito-borne disease, most notably West Nile virus, I wanted to understand the risks of disease as well as the risks from mosquito control. On the one side, you can control mosquitoes and reduce the risks of West Nile virus. On the other side are the effects of the controls, such as risking pesticide poisoning or developing cancer.

These risks need to be understood and compared when determining whether or when to apply a particular mosquito control. It's what drives agencies to develop plans, often called integrated pest management plans, that determine thresholds for applying particular controls when attempting to reduce the effects of a particular pest.

In the case of mosquitoes (and West Nile virus-carrying mosquitoes in particular), a variety of controlling mechanisms are available. The mechanisms typically cited are eliminating mosquito breeding sites, education (about how to avoid mosquito bites), assisting groups that are at higher risk for West Nile virus (e.g., the elderly), controlling mosquitoes before they change into flying insects, and using pesticides.

Each of these controls has its own costs and benefits (as well as its own risks). An integrated pest management plan would attempt to quantify the costs, benefits, and risks to minimize costs and risks while maximizing benefits. The plan would define increasing thresholds of infestation or other observations to trigger an appropriate response. Typically the plan would quantify the expected results of each particular control.

Unfortunately, Columbus doesn't seem to have such a plan. When I asked the city's mosquito control administrator about having such defined thresholds for escalating efforts (as well as well-defined goals for each effort), he dismissed the concept; his belief was that such policies were unfounded and ill-conceived.

Integrated pest management plans are also updated to reflect new information—be it information about the targeted pest, about effectiveness, or about new controls. However, according to the mosquito control administrator, Columbus's plan hasn't been updated since before 1999. This is despite the continuous publishing of new studies on West Nile virus (how it is spread, how dangerous it might be, etc.), on the effectiveness of controls, and on the risks of controls.

Besides having an effective integrated pest management plan, the city must act according to the agreed procedure. In the case of Columbus, the administrator said that, despite their having told folks that the city would be using the insecticide malathion for mosquito control, a permethrin-based insecticide was used. This is especially distressing since permethrins are deadly to cats. Cat caretakers should have been provided this information so that they could take precautions to minimize the risk to their companion animals. Permethrins are also extremely toxic to aquatic wildlife. Ravine dwellers and fish pond owners should have been given this information so that they could have taken precautions to opt out of spraying or to cover their ponds.

Based on what I've found, I'm very concerned. I'm concerned that we're not adequately understanding the risks of West Nile virus. I'm concerned that we're not adequately understanding the risks of the controls the city has decided to use. I'm concerned that the city is not embracing the best current practices for pest management. I'm concerned that we're not making wise use of city funds. I'm concerned that the city isn't doing a better job of keeping us apprised of what it is doing at our behest for the purpose of mosquito control.

As a result of my concern, I've created a website to document what I've found: "No-Spray Columbus" (<http://nospraycolumbus.org>). Its name exposes my current thinking about mosquito control.

Jeff Frontz is a software engineer for a biotech startup; he spends his free time using the Internet to support environmental issues.

GARLIC MUSTARD REMOVAL: Keys to Success

By Beth Brown

When we moved to Rush Creek Village, we were thrilled with our modernist “cabin in the woods.” The thrill faded a little the following spring, when I realized that our woodland and hillsides were clogged with various honeysuckles and garlic mustard. I could only find ONE trillium on the whole property, in what should have been prime habitat for native ephemerals. My crusade against the garlic mustard began.

That first year, I yanked plants that were flowering. Of course, with their deep tap roots, most of them simply grew back. By planning my garlic mustard pulls around the weather, I was at least able to choose optimally soft and somewhat moist soil conditions, so that my success at pulling the entire root increased. Still, the next spring, there they were, back again. And they had babies!

In the meantime, I had read an article by a botanist at OSU, who had tested various composting methods to determine which methods had the greatest reliability in rendering the thousands of seed unviable. It turned out that the best method is to yank the plants, double bag them in black plastic, and let them “cook” inside the bags for 2 months. For someone with as many plants as I had, this meant I was going to have many, many plastic bags lying around for the whole summer—not an appealing prospect. I realized that I was going to have to re-focus my efforts.

So in the third year of my crusade, I started pulling the tiny dicotyledons along with the flowering two-year-old plants. Pulling the first-year infants of these biennials proved to have many advantages. First, because these small plants will not set seed, they can be simply discarded in place on the ground.

Second, because they are so small, the total bulk is small, if one prefers to compost them. Third, they are tender and may be eaten. But fourth, and best of all, every single dicotyledon that is pulled will never become a two-year-old!

In the spring of Year 4, I started seeing the positive results of my infanticide. The numbers of adult plants were smaller. I had far fewer of the big bulky plants to contend with. The “nursery patches” of the babies were shrinking. In Year 5, my hillsides were looking so good that I started working my way further down the hills, attacking the infants on my neighbors’ properties (with their permission, of course).

By Year 6, I had cleared garlic mustard from about ¾ of an acre. This past spring, Year 7, garlic mustard plants are gone from about one full acre. Here and there, some plants will pop up, as their seeds do remain viable for quite a few years, but, overall, I consider my efforts to be a big success.

Like anything that we dream up, there are always pros and cons. For the pros, see above. There is a con, and that is that this is very fussy work. When you get down on your hands and knees and see the vast nursery beds of the first-year babies, it is overwhelming and depressing. They number in the hundreds. That said, because they grow in dense clusters or mats, a single grab can pull lots of them at once. Because they are tiny, the whole root comes out. With persistence and a sense that one CAN win the war of attrition, the human can triumph over the dastardly invaders.

*From the north bank of Schoolhouse Run,
Beth Brown*



Elementary Botany at OWU, *continued from page 2*

By the time it was demolished – (amid bitter controversy) – it was large enough to accommodate more than 250 residents. In 1992, a garden planted with flowers, herbs, and shrubs, was dedicated at the original site. The Monnett Hall nameplate salvaged from the structure is mounted in a brick monument near the center of the garden to honor the memory of the young heiress.



For more information see Money, Methodism, and madness: The Story of Mary Monnett by Cynthia J. Rush. Columbus, Ohio: Innovations Resources, c2002.



Old Beechwold Residents Battle Bush Honeysuckle

By Todd Lusch

It has been a busy summer for volunteers of Friends of Old Beechwold Ravines. Following in the paths of many of the ravine groups who are working in the area to preserve the natural setting of the ravines, volunteers agreed in October 2007 to undertake the challenge of preservation.

Two clean-up days were held in October and November 2007, and the results were a major improvement to the community. In April 2008, volunteers continued with the plan to remove bush honeysuckle and garlic mustard in the ravine areas of Old Beechwold. To date, the group has removed large amounts honeysuckle along Riverview Park Drive, W. Beechwold Blvd., and W. Royal Forest Blvd. With the help of a Boy Scout troop and efforts by Tyler Gabalski, an area named Jastram Grove was completely cleared of honeysuckle. Before-and-after pictures show a tremendous change, and as the summer months have passed, the area is beginning to look like a natural forest setting.

The support of community residents and Elayna Grody, Columbus Recreation and Parks' Natural Resource Manager, has been overwhelming. All of the work has been done with the assistance of private donations from households in Old Beechwold, along with support from the Clintonville Community Fund. Of course, donations are always welcome and can be made to: Friends of Old Beechwold Ravines, 68 W. Royal Forest Blvd., Columbus 43214.

Removal of invasive plants in the Old Beechwold ravines will continue through the month of November, weather permitting. The group of volunteers works every third Saturday of the month from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00. For more information about volunteering, please contact Todd Lusch at 614-261-0046.



Go Really Green!

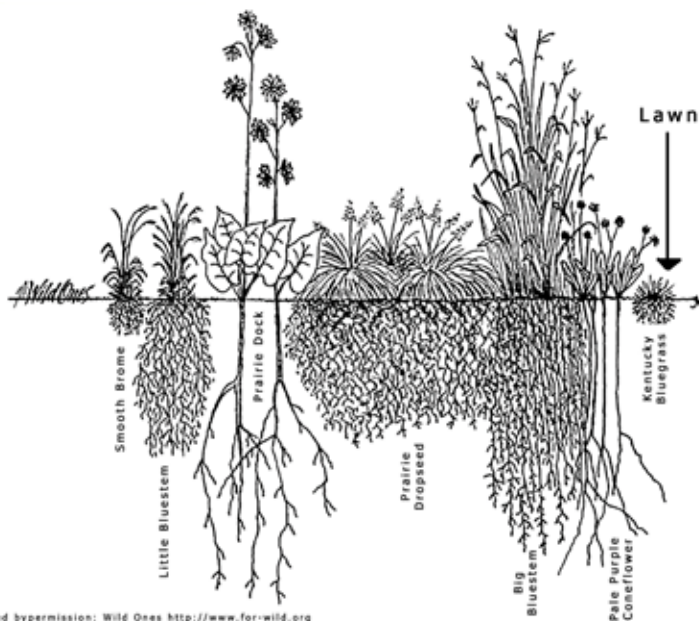
By Toni Stahl

A garden that absorbs and stores carbon dioxide is a critical, hidden key to sustainability for Ohio's future. Carbon dioxide is one of our planet's major greenhouse gases, and planting native plants in your yard minimizes its negative effects. Native plants absorb carbon dioxide from the air and use it to form plant cells, releasing oxygen as a byproduct. They capture and store more carbon dioxide than lawns because of their deeper taproots (see scale diagram). The root system of an average lawn grows downward a few inches at most. A scientific study shows shallow lawn roots cause the soil temperature to rise faster, and soil with warmer temperatures stores less carbon dioxide. (For more information please visit <http://ecnr.berkeley.edu/facPage/dispFP.php?I=605>.)

Two-thirds of most native plant mass is below ground; some mature native prairie grass roots can extend downwards 10-15 feet or more. Native plants aerate our soil naturally because roughly one-third of native plant root structure dies off every year. This results in capturing underground a large proportion of carbon the dioxide absorbed during the plant's growing season. In addition, their deep taproots filter nitrates and other pollutants out of rainwater, break up clay naturally, and stabilize soil erosion.

Native plants are drought tolerant, conserving water, and are less expensive and less hazardous to maintain than lawns because they do not require the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizer. Because native plants create their own ecosystems to care for themselves, they reduce the need for mowers, weed eaters, and other gasoline-powered yard-care devices that

pollute the atmosphere. Native plants are also essential for native predators. Insects are at the core of a healthy garden, and most are vegetarians. (See *Bringing Nature Home* by Douglas Tallamy (Timber Press, 2007) for additional information.) Pesticide-free native plants provide essential food for beneficial predators and promote a healthy environment, with an additional benefit: they serve as flyways for migrating species.



Used by permission: Wild Ones <http://www.for-wild.org>

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Available Shirt sizes: M XL *Anyone contributing \$100 or more will receive TWO T-Shirts!!*

I want to volunteer to help Friends of the Ravines carry out its mission to protect ravine areas and educate the public. I can help by:

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My special area of expertise is _____.

My favorite ravine is _____.

Friends of the Ravines, PO Box 82021, Columbus, Ohio 43202

Like native perennials, grasses, and shrubs, native trees are more beneficial to the environment because, having adapted to Ohio's changing weather and soil over hundreds of years, they can reduce energy consumption. Properly placed, evergreen trees can protect your home from north and west winter winds. Deciduous trees can provide shade in the summer, and when they lose their leaves in the winter, they can help warm your home. Another benefit of native trees is that they are fire retardant; they burn more slowly than non-native plants, providing additional protection for your home.

In summary, native plants promote clean air and water, reduce energy consumption, and conserve the earth's natural resources. When you plant regionally native plants in your yard, you help create healthy greenways that will ensure the future of Ohio's environmental health. For more information see: <http://home.columbus.rr.com/nwfbbackyardohio/>

Toni Stahl is a National Wildlife Federation Habitat Ambassador who maintains a nationally certified urban wildlife habitat and frequently contributes articles to Columbus Audubon.



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Submissions and suggestions are welcome.

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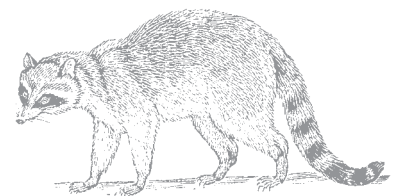
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