

RAVINA

An Advocate for Community Resources

Published by Friends of the Ravines (FOR)
Spring/Summer 2013

Beechwold the Beautiful

by Gregg Peace

he historic Old Beechwold neighborhood is known for its superb trees. "Beechwold the Beautiful" was originally the title of a brochure published by the Beechwold Realty Company as streets were being paved and

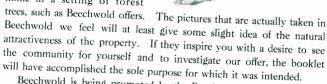
land developed by Charles H. Johnson, who was ready to sell lots in what was formerly "The Zoo" and later the summer home of the owner of Jeffrey Manufacturing Company. The marketing brochure described the area in this way:

"They include nearly every imaginable species, so being of a giant stature. Here the sturdy oak, the symmetrical beech, the walnut, the maple, the hickory, etc., all add their mead of beauty to the landscape. These trees are being reverently preserved, the plat of the district having been so skillfully planned that scarcely any of them need be removed in putting in the improvements. Each home location will have plenty of open space for a good house, without removing the trees. It is the desire of Beechwold's promoters to preserve the natural phases of its beauties so far as is practicable, and the trees will therefore look down upon the residents of Beechwold just as they looked down upon the Indians ten decades ago."

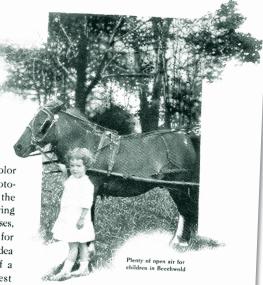
In the early 1920s, homes were being built and the modern history of Old Beechwold began. Many homes were built on a ravine that was once lush with wildflowers and old growth trees, but by 2008 the ravine had become overrun with invasive plants, notably wild honeysuckle, winged euonymus, English ivy, and wild grapevine. The Old Beechwold Association established the Arbor Committee, which focused on removing the invasive plants and planting new trees to replace many older ones that had been ravaged by recent storms.

Initially, progress was slow. Neighbors were not certain they wanted to remove the invasive plants. They reasoned that the plants were green and therefore were native to the area and should be left alone. In time, the Arbor Committee recruited

The pictures we are reproducing in this booklet are actual photographs taken in Beechwold, with the exception of the frontispiece and the center page picture, which are water color paintings drawn from photographs. In the last pages of the booklet we are also showing some photographs of houses, which are reproduced here for the purpose of giving an idea of the beauty and charm of a home in a setting of forest



Beechwold is being promoted by the Beechwold Realty Company, Incorporated, of Columbus. While the corporation has been very recently formed, and for the chief purpose of improving and promoting Beechwold, the company's principals are by no means new in the real estate field in Columbus. In fact, the individuals of the company have probably developed and successfully marketed more suburban real estate, especially in recent years, than any other individual or company in the city.



Page 9 from the 1927 brochure "Beechwold the Beautiful"

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

ello! I'm excited to introduce myself to you as the current Chair of the Board. Thanks to Brian Gara, past Chair, for recruiting me to this fantastic group of conservationists and concerned citizens for Central Ohio ravine conservation. I joined the Board of Trustees in 2010 and enjoy sharing my love of the outdoors and Ohio's natural history with the people of central Ohio. I have worked at the Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks since 1997, and am currently the Assistant Resource Manager for the park district. At Metro Parks, I work with a talented group of land managers, ecologists, and park planners to help make Metro Parks a place people can enjoy and can interact with nature.

Friends of the Ravines has the challenge to promote and educate Central Ohioans on the importance of the smaller significant ravines that have survived many years of development and human habitation. Together, YOU and I can work together and continue to promote and conserve these special habitats. See you in the ravines!!

Carrie R. Morrow, Chair, Board of Trustees

NEWS FROM THE RAVINES

ADENA BROOK COMMUNITY begins its 2nd Saturday cleanups in May. Volunteers will gather at the Rain Garden at Overbrook Drive and High Street (across from Overbrook Presbyterian Church) and will work from 9 until 11 a.m.

COLUMBUS AND FRANKLIN COUNTY METRO PARKS will be restoring and creating a new park along the Scioto River in Grove City. The park features three ravines, floodplain, forests, and upland fields that will be a great new green space along the west banks of the Scioto River. Public access to the parks is part of Metro Park's promise to Franklin County voters as part of the levy passed in 2009.

WALHALLA RAVINE residents report sightings of a resident mama deer, her now-grown children, a big fluffy red fox, barred owls, Cooper's and red shouldered hawks, and a small flock of crossbills. What an oasis for Columbus's urban fauna! And, at last, justice for the ravine: in October of 2012, two men were convicted of dumping paint in Walhalla Creek in 2008.

A TRIBUTE

News of the accidental death of John F. Husted at age 55 is shocking to all who had the good fortune to work with him

in any capacity. When Friends of the Ravines was in its infancy and began the Glen Echo Ravine northern slope restoration,
John was the maestro. He conceived the Glen Echo slope restoration plan, and he worked on site, first with volunteers and later as advisor to the Civilian Conservation Corps.

He became the official spokesperson for the Glen Echo restoration and led the Steering Committee of Franklin County Greenways on a tour of Glen

Echo on July 12, 2002. He organized several educational outreach visits to Glen Echo for area high school students to explain the anatomy of the restoration and to teach proper ravine stewardship. Twice in the fall of 2003, John oversaw removal of invasives in Glen Echo, and on Make a Difference Day he brought teenagers from North Broadway United Methodist Church. And he instructed students from the Graham School at Friends of the Ravines' first "Out with Invasives—In with Natives" activity.

John was an important and vital force in planning, carrying out, and promoting the Glen Echo slope restoration project which was Friends of the Ravines' first attempt to fulfill our mission to protect and restore ravine areas and educate the public about ravine stewardship in Franklin County. We are deeply saddened to report this news to *Ravinia* readers.

John and his son Forrest planting on Glen Echo's north slope

John and Graham School students

Beechwold the Beautiful continued from page 1

several neighborhood volunteers and began removing invasive plants on the south side of the ravine near the Rustic Bridge. Half a dozen volunteers cleared a small area, which enabled neighbors to see a view across the ravine that had not been visible for decades. A neighbor used the ravine for his Eagle Scout project and enlisted the help of his troop to further clear the area of invasives. Neighbors responded enthusiastically, and soon the south side of the ravine had been cleared of much of the honeysuckle, euonymus, and grapevine.

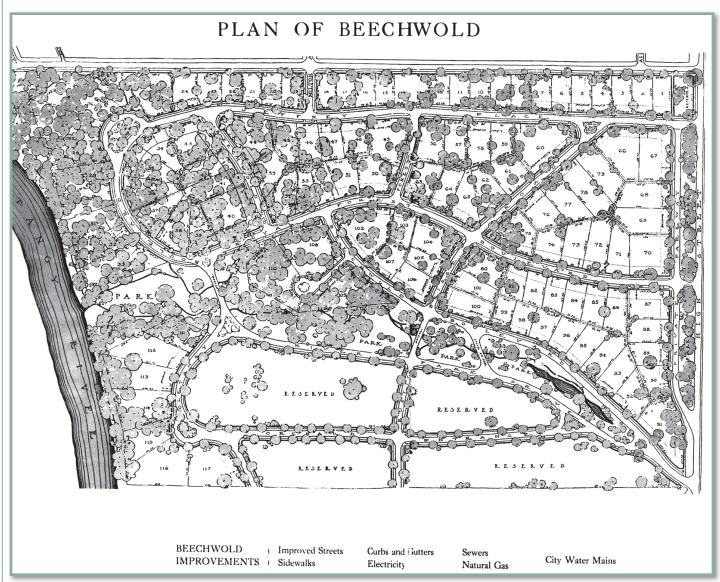
The Arbor Committee established quarterly dates for invasive plant removal and cleanup. As ravine restorers know, removing invasive plants takes time. This past summer, with support from the City of Columbus and their hardworking volunteers and equipment, we were able to remove invasives from a large area of the northern ravine going down to the river. We discovered many native plants already growing

that now have the space and light to thrive. A dramatic difference—the view is spectacular!

We strongly believe our efforts will restore our beloved Old Beechwold to its original glory. To this end, we have launched a re-planting initiative and have focused on planting the American beech tree that has been in decline, along with a mix of other native trees, including redbud, red oak, white oak, hickory, sassafras, and chokeberry.

With the help, support, and shared knowledge of those who have been involved in similar efforts, the Old Beechwold neighborhood is working to restore our ravine to the grandeur that inspired its designation as "Beechwold the Beautiful!"





Map of Old Beechwold from the 1927 brochure titled "Beechwold the Beautiful"

Courtesy of Gregg Peace

Spring/Summer 2013

When Trees Die, People Die

This article first appeared in The Atlantic (9/26/12) and is reprinted with permission.

The curious connection between an invasive beetle that has destroyed over 100 million trees, and subsequent heart disease and pneumonia in the human populations nearby

he blight was first detected in June 2002, when the trees in Canton, Michigan, got sick. The culprit, the emerald ash borer, had arrived from overseas, and it rapidly spread—a literal bug—across state and national lines to Ohio, Minnesota, Ontario. It popped up in more distant, seemingly random locations as infested trees were unwittingly shipped beyond the Midwest.

Within four years of first becoming infested, the ash trees die—over 100 million since the plague began. In some cases, their death has an immediate impact, as they fall on cars, houses, and people. In the long term, their disappearance means parks and neighborhoods, once tree-lined, are now bare.

Something else, less readily apparent, may have happened as well. When the U.S. Forest

Service looked at mortality rates in counties affected by the emerald ash borer, they found increased mortality rates. Specifically, more people were dying of cardiovascular and lower respiratory tract illness—the first and third most common causes of death in the U.S. As the infestation took over in each of these places, the connection to poor health strengthened.

The "relationship between trees and human health," as they put it, is convincingly strong. They controlled for as many other demographic factors as possible. And yet, they are unable to satisfactorily explain why this might be so.

In a literal sense, of course, the absence of trees would mean the near absence of oxygen—on the most basic level, we cannot survive without them. We know, too, that trees act as a natural filter, cleaning the air from pollutants, with measurable effects in urban areas. The Forest Service put a 3.8 billion dollar value on the air pollution annually removed by urban trees. In Washington D.C., trees remove nitrogen



An ash tree on the Ohio State University Oval

Courtesy of Sherrill Massey

dioxide to an extent equivalent to taking 274,000 cars off the traffic-packed beltway, saving an estimated \$51 million in annual pollution-related health care costs.

But a line of modern thought suggests that trees and other elements of natural environments might affect our health in more nuanced ways as well. Roger Ulrich demonstrated the power of having a connection with nature, however tenous, in his classic 1984 study with patients recovering from gall bladder removal surgery in a suburban Pennsylvania hospital. He manipulated the view from the convalescents' windows so that half were able to gaze at nature while the others saw only a brick wall. Those with trees outside their window recovered faster, and requested fewer pain medications, than those with a "built" view. They even had slightly fewer surgical complications.

Environmental psychologists Rachel and Stephen Kaplan attributed nature's apparent restorative ability to something they termed "soft fascination": Natural scenes, they theorized,



Dying ashes on Kenny Road

Courtesy of Sherrill Massey

are almost effortlessly able to capture people's attention and lull them into a sort of hypnotic state where negative thoughts and emotions are overtaken by a positive sense of well-being. Indeed, an analysis of numerous studies in BMC

Public Health found evidence for natural environments having "direct and positive impacts on well-being," in the form of reduced anger and sadness.

The effect, it has been suggested, can have subtler effects than a mere elevation of mood. A 2010 study looked at the presence of parks and forests in the vicinity of people's homes and their ability to act as a "buffer" against stress. They ending up finding that the presence of "green space" was more closely related to physical—in terms of minor complaints and perceived general healththan mental well-being. While nature wasn't enough to make the participants forget about stressful life events, it appeared to quell their psychosomatic complaints.

The increases in mortality identified by the Forest Service study, meanwhile, were more pronounced in counties where the median household income was above average. The disparity highlights what we intuitively know about the presence of trees: In wealthier communities, they increase the market value of homes, while parks in poor neighborhoods attract crime and are thus undesirable. The researchers hypothesize that the rich communities that thrived before the blight arrived thus experienced its destructive effects more potently.

Which is all to say that there is something fascinatingly mysterious about the entanglement of our health with that of nature. The suspicion that this may be so, of course, is seen well outside of the scientific literature on the topic. Maurice Sendak knew it, as he spoke of his appreciation for the trees seen from his window in the final months of his life. And Henry David Thoreau, writing in *The Atlantic* in June 1862, said, "I think that

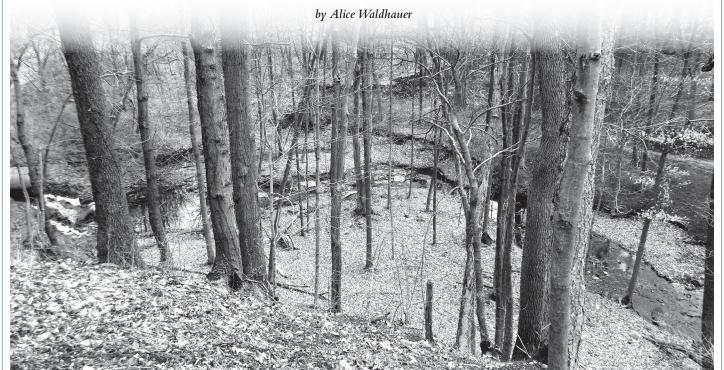
I cannot preserve my health and spirits, unless I spend four hours a day at least—and it is commonly more than that—sauntering through the woods and over the hills and fields, absolutely free from all worldly engagements."



Dying ash on campus

Courtesy of Sherrill Massey

BEHIND THE SCENE AT FLINT RAVINE



Flint Ravine between a manmade lake and Rt. 23

Courtesy of Alice Waldhauer

Flint Run is a tributary to the Olentangy River in southern Delaware County that features three stretches of ravine as the stream flows behind residential developments and under shopping centers. Although the drainage area of this tributary is about two square miles, it flows virtually unnoticed from its origin in Orange Township to its confluence with the Olentangy River. The exponential growth in Delaware County presents challenges for the remaining undeveloped streams and ravines, and Flint Ravine is no exception.

The headwaters of Flint Run are near the Olentangy Meadows Elementary School in newly developed neighborhoods north of Lazelle Road on the east side of Route 23. These housing developments contain hundreds of new homes, with stubs for more streets predicting additional construction. Brilliant green stormwater ponds dot the neighborhoods. These ponds fulfill a requirement for treating additional stormwater running off from new roofs and roads, but the green color suggests that the burden of fertilizer and nutrients may be too great for treatment in a retention pond. As Flint Run flows southward it meanders behind construction sites in the new neighborhoods to a patch of undeveloped woods where steep ravine walls are hidden by the dense vegetation surrounding a mature forest. The stream is joined by several smaller ravine tributaries that stretch northward like fingers. Hawks and herons still find forage and refuge in this remnant of forest—for now.

After flowing through this forest, the stream banks flatten out and Flint Run flows through a culvert under Lazelle

Road. In recent months, Flint Run overflows during heavy rain and submerges the roadway. The stream continues along the edge of the parking lot of an assisted-living facility and into a drainage pipe, where it passes beneath the Park Place Center shopping plaza. For several hundred feet, the stream follows the low topography of the service road between frontage businesses along Route 23 and the parking lot of a closed grocery. On the south side of Dillmont Drive, Flint Run re-emerges as a surface stream behind the dumpster along the perimeter fence of a child-care center, where fast-food wrappers and litter are strewn across the ravine. It winds southward beneath Windsong Way, where the ravine walls become steeper and more deeply incised behind the businesses that line the east side of Route 23. Here the steep walls of the ravine have made a convenient spot for construction spoils to be bulldozed over the edge to make way for parking on the rim. Still, the edges of these lots appear fragile, with plastic drainage pipes gushing stormwater that erodes deep gullies in steep slopes. Telltale cracks in the asphalt reveal a story of gravity. Just before Flint Run passes beneath the highway, the ravine is 50 feet deep and a small manmade lake was formed when the stream was dammed with concrete.

On Route 23 north of the intersection with Flint Road, the highway dips to cross Flint Run in a wide valley. The stream runs through a culvert beneath Route 23 and flows along the property boundary between Camp Mary Orton and the Pontifical College Josephinum where natural ravine

features are protected by the mission of the Godman Guild. The Godman Guild has managed Camp Mary Orton for over a century—protecting nature from urbanization. The Godman Guild shepherds Flint Run to its confluence with the Olentangy River. (Friends of the Ravines held its spring plant walk at Camp Mary Orton in April 2010, allowing the public to enjoy the natural beauty of the ravine's mineralized rock concretions and abundance of spring ephemerals.)

In 2012, the City of Columbus annexed a land parcel that included the mature forest of Flint Ravine on the north side of Lazelle Road. Developers submitted plans for apartment buildings that required a change from the rural residential zoning. And they requested a variance to the standard 25 foot setback at the edges of the property, with a proposal to

build two- and threestory apartment buildings along with an extendedstay hotel, within five feet of the property line. Developers plan to build garages on the rim of the ravines, which would block the view and deny access to the natural beauty below.

After learning of the proposed development, environmentalists and local community leaders voiced concerns about the minuscule setbacks. the increase in traffic, and the impact of increased stormwater runoff to Flint Run. Neighbors expressed their dismay about the impending change of the area's character from rural and forest to apartment buildings and a hotel. When a neighbor who spoke at the Development

Commission hearing called the apartments an unsightly monstrosity, the Development Commission responded by requiring the developer to install plants to screen the imposing view from the towering complex to his farmhouse patio below. Ultimately, the Columbus Development Commission gave the project the green light, and neighborhood groups met with a Columbus councilman in a last-ditch voicing of their concerns. Citing the need for jobs, the councilman sided with the developers. Columbus City Council concurred, and the annexation and development proposal was approved in December 2012.

Now that the apartment and parking lot proposal has been approved, the development is moving forward, but the public-comment process is complete. The developer is exercising the option to purchase the property and finalize

engineering plans for the buildings and parking lots that will be built on the rim the ravine. Several City of Columbus departments and the Ohio EPA will review the plans to ensure that the development complies with city and state rules. Tree preservation goals, prohibitions against building on steep slopes, and stream setbacks are typically outlined in planning documents, but it seems that building code compliance reviews focus so intently on the details of a project that the strategic goals of natural resource preservation can get lost along the way. In this case, the plan places the stream behind buildings and screens it from view, which ensures that the ravine will be neglected.

Each development along the 2.5-mile-long stretch of Flint Run faces away from the stream, as if to hide its very

existence. At the shopping center, only a trace of low topography along the service road betrays the location of the stream valley. At road crossings, waterborne trash accumulates at culverts, where it pauses on its journey to the Gulf of Mexico. Plastic bags cling to tree branches at the high water mark. Nearby birds' nests are built from twigs mingled with litter.

In the recent decades of explosive growth in central Ohio, developers bought flat rectangular plots of cornfield on which to build homes for the burgeoning population. Most of these sites have been developed, so now builders are developing odd-shaped parcels with streams and/or wetlands.

Some stream sites have been developed to the advantage of the natural beauty of ravine landscapes, but that is the exception rather than the

rule. In their eagerness to meet the demands of the market, developers focus on their products and forget that ravines with their wooded slopes and streams perform important ecological functions.

The ravines of central Ohio were created by the meltwaters of glaciation that carved deep stream channels into the topography that had been scraped flat during the ice age. They are urban oases and they improve air and water quality. Their topography is a respite from Ohio's flat glacial plain, and they offer refuge for urban wildlife. Impervious surfaces that surround urban development overwhelm the natural function of ravines. When development threatens the health of Franklin County's ravines, it threatens the health of Central Ohio.



Gloria Humes from the Far North Columbus Community Coalition in the woods to be developed.

Courtesy of Alice Waldhauer



Thank You for Supporting

The 2013 Ravine Art Contest

by Martha Harter Buckalew

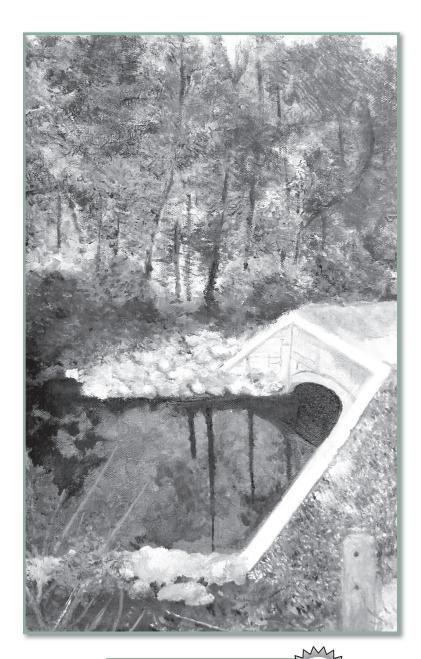
This year, Friends of the Ravines' third annual Ravines Art Contest featured poetry and visual arts from 48 students who represented 13 schools in Franklin County. An awards ceremony was held on February 15, 2013, where the show was on public display for a month in Room 100 of the Northwood High Building (located at 2231 North High Street). Since 2011, 241 students from 22 different schools have submitted 2-D visual art, poetry, decorated rain barrels, and/or photographs to the annual contest.

In 2011 and 2012, the event was funded by small grants from the Greater Columbus Arts Council. This year's art contest was funded by individual supporters who donated a total of \$740. In addition, Friends of the Ravines received a \$500 sponsorship from the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission and Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The school of each winning entrant receives \$100 for its visual arts or language arts program, and winning students receive gift cards or art-related prizes. Each year the Ravines Art Contest is judged by Columbus-area arts professionals.

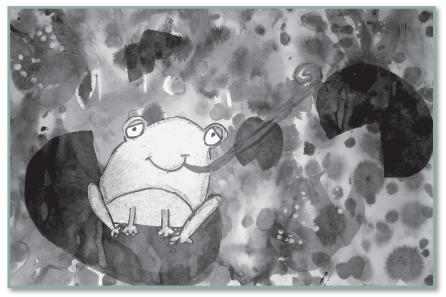
The annual event is open to any K-12 school student in Franklin County. Rules, regulations, and entry forms for the 2014 contest will be posted in the fall of 2013 on Friends of the Ravines' website: friendsoftheravines.org

You can view the winners' art works in color on Friends of the Ravines' website. Donations for the 2014 Ravine Art Contest can be sent to P.O. Box 82021, Columbus, OH 43202.



Stone Bridge
Forest Nobleton
Grade 10
Marion Franklin High School

Spring/Summer 2013



Zakira Anne CouchGrade 2 Westgate Elementary School





Saipriya Rajagopal

Grade 4

Winterset Elementary School







Untitled

Tiaundae Price

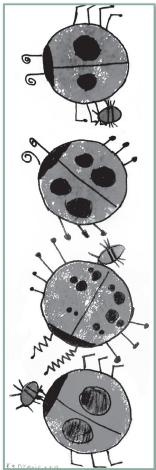
Grade 8

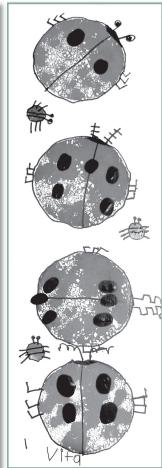
Medina Middle School





Leland's Ravine Leland ScottGrade 7
Champion Middle School





Bird
Theresa Cobb
Grade 4
Avondale Elementary School



Kenyetietta Quinn & Vita Long Grade 1

Como Elementary School

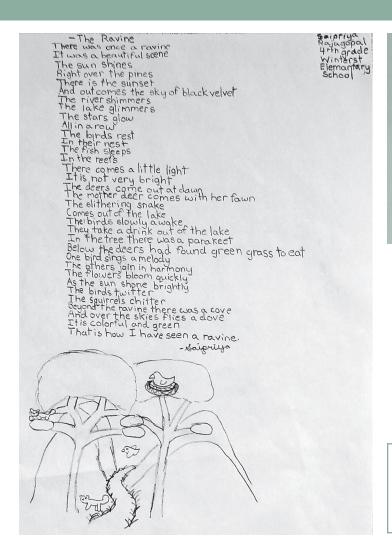


Untitled
Charles Sullivan
Grade 12
Marian Franklin III

Marion Franklin High School



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The Ravine
The Trees Are as greens as Peas

The creek is as silent as a butterfly
I Hear the buzzing of the bees
But maybe,
It's just the Rattling of the trees
The spiders are jumping on the water like flees
Birds fly high in the sky
Then At Night They Say
Goodnight

The Ravine

Brittany Payne Grade 8 Buckeye Middle School



The Ravine

Saipriya Rajagopal

Grade 4

Winterset Elementary School



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Spring/Summer 2013

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Submissions and suggestions are welcome.

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