

# Alum Creek Sheets

## Wrap-up the Summer Benefit Luncheon

*You're invited to FACT's Fundraiser at the Jeffrey Mansion*

*By Joe Bonnell*

Please join FACT for our annual benefit. On Sunday noon, September 21<sup>st</sup>, FACT will host our "Wrap-up the Summer Luncheon" at the historic and scenic Jeffrey Mansion in Bexley with crepes, live music, and special guest speaker Rebecca Rose, Field Conservation Coordinator, The Columbus Zoo and Aquarium.

FACT is inviting all of our members and supporters - this means you - to enjoy a wonderful afternoon celebrating Alum Creek at one of the historic architectural treasures of central Ohio. You'll also have the opportunity to shop for a different kind of treasure at a silent auction.

While there's no admission fee, the purpose of the event is to raise funds so that FACT can continue the environmental protection and restoration projects that you've seen and heard about through the media, our newsletter and website. Our goal is to raise \$7,000 to meet our financial needs for the year and continue our important work in the community. Please consider making a serious commitment to invest in protecting the vital natural resource in your own backyard, Alum Creek. We have only 70 seats available. Look for personal invitations from the FACT Board of Directors. If you're unable to attend, please send FACT a generous donation.

## Lowhead Dam Removal Update

***National Permit Received, FACT Board Approves Consultant's Plan***

*By Kimberly Williams*

According to studies conducted in 2003, the area between Nelson Park and Wolfe Park/Academy Park lowhead dams is not meeting the standards set forth in the Clean Water Act. The removal of the two lowhead dams, which do not provide any flood control, will improve the quality of Alum Creek in this area.

Burgess and Niple (B&N), the environmental engineering design firm contracted to remove the lowhead dams, has completed the survey work upstream from each of the two dams. They examined the creek channel's structure and connection to floodplain, flow patterns, and manmade features in order to identify problem areas.

A proposed plan was presented during a FACT public informational meeting held on August 7 at the Wolfe Park shelterhouse. Representatives addressed issues and answered questions while reviewing the action plans. Subsequently, on August 11, the FACT Board of Directors unanimously approved moving forward with B&N's work plan for removing the two lowhead dams and related stream bank restoration.

We have received the long awaited Nationwide Permit No. 27 from the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) for our planned work in the "navigable water" as required by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. The four month permit process involved the review of historic and cultural resources, impact to Alum Creek (*continued on page 2*)

Friends of Alum  
Creek & Tributaries

Celebrating 10 years  
since 1998

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### FACT Mission Statement

*The mission of Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries (FACT) is to preserve and protect the quality and beauty of Alum Creek watershed and promote environmentally responsible recreation, educational opportunities, and citizen participation at many levels.*



## Lowhead Dam Removal Update *(continued from page 1)*

and threatened and endangered species by the State Historic Preservation Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, OEPA and ACOE. Thanks to B&N and the various agencies for their hard work and cooperative efforts.

FACT has also been working with the owners, Columbus Recreation and Parks and a private property owner, to ensure issues are resolved and we expect to have the necessary agreements signed soon.

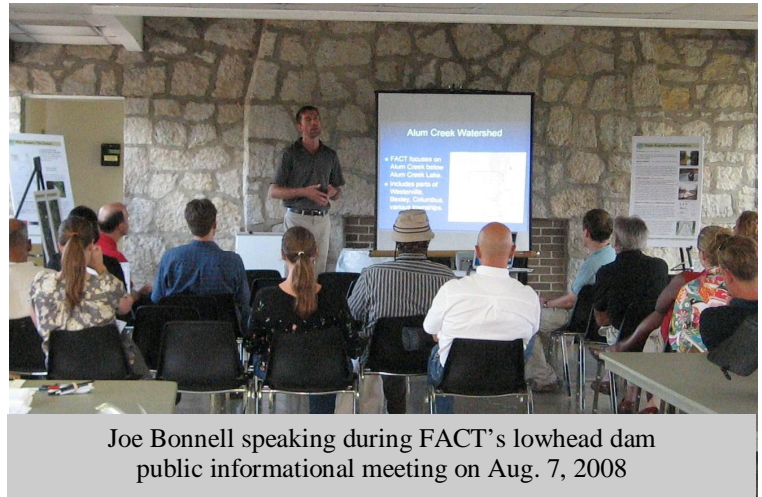
The pace of the project is picking up, and we should finalize details and take the biggest step of all this Fall - the removal of two lowhead dams –starting with Academy Park/Wolfe Park, hopefully in September. The project is entirely funded by an OEPA 319 Implementation Grant which ends this year. For more information about lowhead dam removal please visit our web lowhead dam section [www.friendsofalumcreek.org](http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org).

## Ernst and Young takes a whack at invasive Honeysuckle!

Walk or bicycle along the Greenway Trail (multi-use path) that runs along Alum Creek in Wolfe Park, you may notice more open space between trees. Thanks to fourteen volunteers from Ernst and Young and Columbus Recreation and Parks Natural Resource Manager, Elayna Grody, many invasive Honeysuckle plants were removed on June 23rd. As a result of their actions, native trees, shrubs and wildflowers will have a chance to grow. This effort is part of a larger project in which FACT is collaborating with Columbus Recreation and Parks and Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to remove invasive honeysuckle and other invasive species from the Alum Creek riparian corridor.



(L-R): Front row: Latrenda Thompson, Greg Stewart, Chris McFarland, JJ Vandermark, Lisa Ketner, Tim Delagarza. Back: Fred Rogers, Dustin Pargeon, Matt Kaufman, Greg Szkotnicki, Chris Higbee, Jon Striker



Joe Bonnell speaking during FACT's lowhead dam public informational meeting on Aug. 7, 2008



The Academy Park/Wolfe Park lowhead dam in high water-northbound view from Alum Creek trail suspension bridge. The Nelson Park lowhead dam in low flow water conditions.





## Coca-Cola Syrup Plant Wetland Project

*By Kimberly Williams, FACT Watershed Coordinator*

In January, FACT was contacted by LeRoy Edwards, Safety, Environmental and Security Manager and Octavia Arthur, Safety, Environmental and Security Intern at Coca-Cola Syrup Plant in Columbus, OH regarding a possible Earth Day project. It was proposed that the wetland located on Coca Cola's property could be cleaned of trash and if necessary improve the diversity of plants growing there. Little was known about the wetland, so FACT asked professional wetland scientist, Mark Dilley, founder of MAD Scientist and Associates, LLC, to assess the quality of the wetland.

After exploring the wetland in February, Mark Dilley proposed a conceptual plan including native trees and forbs to plant to increase the variety and number of plants. The wetland is bordered by industry, railroad tracks and a field, and is divided by a utility line corridor. Even so, the wetland is still providing habitat for wildlife and performing important functions such as flood control for the surrounding area by acting as a sponge for excess water.

Due to the time of year and availability of plants it was decided to split the planting in the wetland over two years. This year, Coca-Cola employees, MAD Scientist and Associates, LLC and the FACT Watershed Coordinator, planted trees surrounding the wetland to help provide better habitat for wetland species.

Coca-Cola employees also cleaned the area of trash and removed several large items. Next year, we hope to complete the project and plant wetland flowers and sedges. At the Earth Day planting it was discovered that there was an invasive grass in the interior wetland, and thus invasive species removal should be done to help increase the survival of the native plants that everyone worked so hard to plant.

FACT would like to recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations who helped make this project happen:

- **MAD Scientist and Associates, LLC** for Mark Dilley's expertise and time as well as office space to house the native plants.
- **Coca-Cola employees** for spending their day to improve the habitat and functions of the wetland - an increasingly rare resource in the Alum Creek watershed.
- **Octavia Arthur** who approached the project with enthusiasm & handled the details of ordering plants, supplies and coordinating the event.
- **LeRoy Edwards** who initiated the project and has supported FACT's mission.



Back row: Mark Dilley, Neil Bogan. Middle: Mike Mason, LeRoy Edwards. Butch Lewis, Denver Prime, Shaneka Hughes, Bob Hood, Kashmira Asani. Front: Kim Williams, Christy Robinson, Tom Cross, Octavia Arthur. Not pictured: David Strong



## MORPC's annual Riverfest

FACT had an educational display booth, along with face painting for kids, at MORPC's annual Riverfest in downtown Columbus on May 31. Board Member's Leslie Fowler and Jerry Holloway, pictured, helped meet and greet the many families who strolled through Genoa Park along the Scioto River.





## FACT Service Dividends Increase

*By David Hohmann, FACT Service Chair*

FACT is a highly effective organization when it comes to leveraging investments of volunteer efforts to make big results add up for the good of the Alum Creek watershed. Since 2001 through August 2008, eighty-two FACT service events with 1,460 volunteers working in environmentally sensitive areas near the creek have recovered 1,596 big bags of trash (of which 237 were recycled and diverted from the landfill), plus 1,172 oversize items, over 500 tires and 22 shopping carts. We've planted 1,262 native trees and shrubs, 380 native herbaceous plants, removed 1,660 invasive Honeysuckles and 17 bags of Garlic Mustard, and installed 600 feet of trash exclusion fence by the roadside at the top of the creek bank. These improvements have enhanced the publicly owned areas along Alum Creek and its tributaries (as well as the creek waterway and channel).

FACT's work thus far in 2008 has included eight service events with 140 participants, netting 85 big bags of trash (of which 20 were recycled), plus 62 oversize items, and 54 tires.

Major enhancement efforts by FACT along the Alum Creek Greenway Trail at I-70 and SR 104, Wolfe Park and the bank beside St. Charles planted 513 new tree and shrub—from large size diameter to seedlings, removed hundreds of invasive Honeysuckle bushes and Garlic Mustard.

We also installed another 150 feet of trash exclusion fence. In addition, FACT folks participated in the valued natural enhancements by community volunteers to transform Otterbein Lake beside the Alum Creek and the Boyer Nature Preserve, in Westerville.



A bank of Alum Creek is severely eroding from where homeowners attempt to grow & maintain a full grass turf backyard rather than encourage a natural dense riparian buffer. June 2008.

These amazing continued returns on investments are possible due to the strong commitments by FACT members and community partners who invest in Alum Creek watershed improvements not just with their dollars (which buy the tools and the native plants we are installing) but with their hearts, time and sweat equity. Residents and wildlife will enjoy a natural yield of big dividends for the quality of life in this area for many years to come as the habitat plantings grow and mature. The living green corridor of Alum Creek passing through our city becomes continually more healthy and vibrant thanks to the support of FACT and its members and partners.

Join us to help volunteer your services to make the Alum Creek watershed a better place. See page 8 for our list of planned activities and visit our web calendar often for more details and updates. As always, please dress accordingly. FACT will supply snacks and drinks.



## Save our Endangered Wetlands

A local wetland along Alum Creek on pristine property owned by Macedonia Baptist Church was explored by our wading members, led by Mark Dilley on May 24. This multi-acre gem of a site—adjacent to Three Creeks Park—could be saved, with FACT's support and by the Clean Ohio Fund, from destructive development. Thanks to the church for permitting FACT's tour.



## Riparian Buffers: A Higher Standard with Multiple Benefits

By Kimberly M. Bitters, CFM, Environmental Specialist  
ODNR, Division of Water - Floodplain Management

Excerpt from *The Antediluvian: Ohio's Floodplain Management Newsletter Vol. XIV, Summer 2007, Issue 1*

Lately, there has been a lot of discussion regarding Ohio communities obtaining riparian buffers along their major watercourses. In fact, in my work at the Floodplain Management Program, I've approved several Flood Damage Reduction Regulation updates that included this particular standard including several municipalities and counties. There are a wide variety of riparian buffer options available to Ohio's NFIP communities.

The benefits of creating riparian buffers throughout the major watercourses in your community are numerous. Preserving the natural functions of the watercourse and adjacent land areas, reducing flood damages throughout the watershed, creating green corridors for improved ecological integrity, increasing filtration capabilities to improve water quality, and maintaining aesthetic and recreational values are just a few of the benefits that can be gained.

The Association of State Floodplain Manager's *No Adverse Impact Toolkit* expands on these benefits of maintaining a natural floodplain by including flood water storage, enhanced erosion control, enhanced storm water management, increased property values, and sustained economic prosperity. Of course, simply adopting a riparian buffer ordinance will not immediately correspond to obtaining these benefits. This is tied to the way your

community creates the buffer, allowable uses within the buffer, enforcement of regulations, and/or funding for obtaining and maintaining the buffers.

Indeed, there are numerous options for preserving the natural state of your community's riparian corridors:

-Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) would provide communities the opportunity to allow appropriate open space uses while transferring the development rights to other areas.

-Buffer zones can be adopted by your community through local zoning, subdivision, Flood Damage Reduction Regulations, or stand-alone ordinances specifically designed to implement buffers.

-The easement option can be applied to all new development, including single-lots, *large development*, or plat designs, etc. Easements can also be negotiated as part of land swap opportunities. Maintenance and ownership of the easements are often, but not always, transferred to the local jurisdiction or some other entity.

For the entire newsletter article, please visit:  
[www.dnr.state.oh.us/Water/FloodPlains/antediluvian/  
tabid/3507/Default.aspx](http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/Water/FloodPlains/antediluvian/tabid/3507/Default.aspx)

Look for Vol. XIV,  
Summer 2007, Issue 1.



## Vote 'Yes' on Clean Ohio Fund, Issue #2

In 2000, voters approved the Clean Ohio Fund, which has been used to clean polluted properties, preserve green space and improve outdoor recreation. Since that time, the Clean Ohio Fund has provided for the protection of 26,000 acres of natural areas, 20,000 acres of farmland and 216 miles of recreational trails.

Some of the greenspace and trail projects that have funded in our local area include:

- ✦ Alum Creek Corridor: Mock Park to Innis Park (\$485,835)
- ✦ Alum Creek Trail (\$420,000), (\$150,000), (\$148,000) and (\$400,000)
- ✦ Alum Creek Riparian Protection: Sunbury and Morse Rd (west bank of Alum Creek) (\$216,188)

The Clean Ohio Fund Issue 2 will be on the ballot for the November 4<sup>th</sup> general election. Taxes will not be raised to continue the Clean Ohio Fund. Instead, state bonds will be sold to investors and repaid with existing state revenue. State and local governments, other public agencies and non-profit organizations will be eligible to apply for program dollars. As in the past, funding will be used to revitalize abandoned and polluted industrial sites and to conserve natural areas and farmland. For more Clean Ohio Fund info: [www.clean.ohio.gov](http://www.clean.ohio.gov).





## Watershed Watch Committee

*Chair: Margaret Ann Samuels*

Watershed watch is just what the name implies – members and concerned residents keep an eye on the condition of the watershed, and take action when they see problems. The goal is to keep pollution out of our streams and to preserve the wetlands and stream banks in our Alum Creek watershed.

Several ongoing developments in the Polaris area, mostly on property owned by NP Limited, are pending before the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). FACT, City of Westerville, and others have urged OEPA to consider the proposals together, since they all affect the same tributaries to Alum Creek. In most instances NP Limited proposed designs are for several tributaries to be directed through culverts- covered over with parking areas, and to fill some existing wetlands on the sites, all actions which we strongly oppose.

FACT members spoke at an OEPA hearing July 17 on the most recent permit request, for a 20 acre site at Worthington Road and Polaris Parkway to be developed into offices and a hotel site. We again asked that the OEPA consider the cumulative effects of the changes in the watershed on Alum Creek. A number of area residents are also very

concerned and attended the hearings. We learned that the OEPA is encouraging NP Limited to improve the environmental impact of its pending proposals.

Good watershed stewardship practices to prevent erosion and runoff of pollutants such as soil, trash, chemicals and leaks from vehicles can make a great difference in our water quality. Property owners next to any stream can establish plants that hold the soil and soak up runoff and should create a don't mow corridor. FACT is continuing efforts to help local governments to enact protective measures that help preserve water quality. The Columbus storm water manual is a good example, requiring new construction to be set back from existing streams.

Watershed "watchdogs" who see or suspect unusual incidents such as the chemical spills, destruction of conservation easements or parkland, developers/contractors who have not installed protections to keep construction soil runoff confined to their project and out of waterways, should contact FACT or the appropriate local government agency. Those resources can be found on the FACT's website—  
'government' section, [www.friendsofalumcreek.org](http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org).



Help FACT report these problems

## Fundraising and Membership Committee

*Chair: Joe Bonnell*

Thank you renewing and new members supporting FACT for May, June, July, and August 2008:

**Student, Senior, Individual and Family Members:** William and Mary Price, Peter Wilms, Dan and Katrina Weisenbach, Robert Bostard, Dan and Sarah Binder, Virginia Antle, Melody Gilmore, Dennish Hirsch, Karen Goodheil, Janet Hofman and Jim Sisson.

**Supporting Members:** William Anderson, Joy and Larry Hughes, Lisa Dahill.

**Organization/Business:** Rotary Club of Westerville Sunrise, Columbus Dept. of Public Utilities.

Apologies to the following **Supporting Members** who were accidentally omitted from our last edition: Barbara Bhattacharya, Gloria Higgins, Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur Smith, and Julia Johnson.

## Education Committee

*Chair: Jerry Holloway*

In May, FACT hosted an information table at the Genoa Township Trail Festival and in uptown Westerville at the Fourth Friday event, where the theme was "Back to Nature." An absolutely gorgeous wetland on pristine property owned by Macedonia Baptist Church off Alum Creek Dr was explored by our wading members, led by Mark Dille (see photo on page 4). We displayed our materials and had free face painting for kids at MORPC's annual Riverfest in downtown Columbus (see photo on page 3). June 21 FACT distributed literature from our booth during the annual Wessiefest, with the dedication of restored Otterbein Lake, next to Alum Creek in Westerville. We'll be at Blacklick Metro Park on September 27 during their creek celebration.



## Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries

2820 Watkins Road, Columbus, Ohio 43207 ~ (614) 409-0511

Email: [kwilliams@friendsofalumcreek.org](mailto:kwilliams@friendsofalumcreek.org) Website: [www.friendsofalumcreek.org](http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org)



### Board of Directors:

Joe Bonnell.....Chair; and Fundraising & Membership

Jerry Holloway..... Vice-Chair

Leslie Fowler.....Treasurer

Carol Elder..... Secretary

Margaret Ann Samuels.....Watershed Watch Committee Chair

David Hohmann.....Service Committee Chair

Brian Wilke..... Recreation Committee Chair

David Roseman..... Communications Committee Chair

Jerry Holloway..... Education Events Chair

Barbara Batthacharya.....Past Chair

Dick Lorenz.....At Large Board

Chad King.....At Large Board

Staff: Kimberly Williams....Watershed Coordinator



(L-R) David R, Leslie, Barbara, Joe, Dick, David H, Margaret Ann, Brian, Kim.



## Support the Friends of Alum Creek & Tributaries – Become a Member!

Your contribution is tax deductible and enables FACT to pursue its mission of stewardship and citizen enjoyment of Alum Creek. Please make checks payable to **FACT**, return with this completed form to: FACT, 2820 Watkins Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43207.

### Choose a Membership Category:

( ) Lifetime Personal Member \$500+

( ) Supporting Business \$500+

( ) Supporting Personal \$100-500

( ) Organization/Business \$100-499

( ) Family \$30-99

( ) Individual \$20-99

( ) Student/Senior \$10+

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization/Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email\* \_\_\_\_\_

Amount to Bill Me \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Interests \_\_\_\_\_

*\* Please provide your email address to help FACT expedite news & conserve our resources.*

Save paper! Use PayPal online feature on the FACT website to join & donate with your credit card: [www.friendsofalumcreek.org](http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org) (You do not have to be a member of PayPal to utilize this service).

FACT is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) volunteer community based organization.

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**Cooper Park & Alum Creek Greenway trail - Honeysuckle clean-up Saturday, Sept. 13 9 AM to 1 PM**

Location: 5750 Cooper Rd, just west of SR-3/Westerville Rd. - in the far north side of Columbus. Meet at the park's picnic shelter (by the playground). Help remove invasive Honeysuckle bushes, wild roses, trash from around the park and the Greenway trail which runs along the Alum Creek river.

\*Wear long pants, hats, heavy shoes/work boots (no open toe). Please bring any heavy duty pruners, loppers, bow saws, chain saws, long handled shovels. FACT will provide snacks, beverages, gloves, trash bags for helpers.

**FACT General Membership Meeting Thursday, Sept. 18 6:30 to 8 PM**

Location: Ohio Dominican University, 1216 Sunbury Rd., Columbus, OH Spangler Library room 115.

**"Summer Wrap-Up" FACT Annual Fundraising Benefit luncheon Sunday, September 21 Noon**

Jeffrey Mansion, 165 N. Parkview Avenue, Bexley, OH (See page 1)

Luncheon will feature crepes with a variety of fillings as FACT's gift to our guests.

Contact: Kimberly Williams (614) 409-0511 [kwilliams@friendsofalumcreek.org](mailto:kwilliams@friendsofalumcreek.org) for invitations, & RSVP by Sept. 19.

**Academy Park clean-up "National Public Lands Day" Saturday, September 27 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM**

Location: Academy Park, 250 S. Nelson Rd, south of E. Broad St. \*(Meet at north parking lot, by swinging bridge). Plant restoration, honeysuckle removal, trash clean-up from along the Alum Creek river, trail, & roadways.

**Removal of two low-head dams September date & time TBD. Stay tuned.**

First happening at Academy Park/Wolfe Park dam and then Nelson Park dam. (Dependent upon contractor, etc.)

**Annual Family Recreational Bike Ride and Picnic Saturday, Oct. 18 10:30 AM to 1 PM**

Location: Nelson Park picnic shelter (Clifton Ave. east of Nelson Road, north of E. Broad St.)

Leisurely bike ride along the paved Alum Creek Greenway into Three Creeks Park (by SR-104) and back. Approx. 9 miles RT, or turn around anytime. Upon our return, FACT will serve free picnic lunch! Bring a dish or snack to share, if you'd like. Donations appreciated. Riders should wear bike helmets and please ensure your wheels are in tune, prior.

**Academy Park/Wolfe Park or Nelson Park - River corridor planting & Honeysuckle clean-up**

Oct. 11, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, Nov. 22 9:00 AM to 1 PM \* Stay tuned for email announcements & check FACT's web calendar.

**FACT Annual Meeting Thursday, Nov. 13 6:30 PM**

Location: TBD. Pot luck dinner, awards, recognitions, multi-media presentations. Open to all members and guests.

Web CALENDAR details & updates: <http://www.friendsofalumcreek.org/sitev2/calendar.html>



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