

WATERSHED STEWARDS

OF CLARK COUNTY

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Frog on Grape Leaf

FROM THE COORDINATOR

From the Coordinator

By Jenifer Naas, Program Coordinator

As a volunteer coordinator, I meet a variety of interesting people who give their time to the Watershed Stewards. Monty Multanen was a fantastic person and a dedicated volunteer, spending his time with several local organizations dedicated to our local environment. He and his wife Sue passed away on May 14th, 2010.

Monty became a Watershed Steward in 2005 and donated more than 500 hours in the past five years. Monty volunteered for the Stewards, but worked for many local organizations: Master Composters, NatureScaping, the Clark County Area Food Bank, and the Clark Conservation District's plant sale. He was also a regular at

Steigerwald National Wildlife Refuge, served on the Rural Lands Taskforce, and monitored water quality for the Columbia River Keepers.

Most weeks, you could find Monty working in the botanical gardens at CASEE, taking care of the garden's compost area. He would stop by to say hello and tip me off to needs of other organizations. He often talked about his former work as an agriculture teacher and how he enjoyed working with the youth at CASEE.

Monty was a thoughtful and generous person, with a wonderful dry sense of humor and kind smile. I know many Watershed Stewards had the pleasure of meeting Monty and agree we lost an amazing community member. We will miss him.

Contact Jen for more information on a memorial for Monty, organized by the various groups with which he volunteered.



Monty (right) with Jeff Duval at Steigerwald NWR Workday in November 2009

Painted Rain Barrels Ready for Fairs

As the school year finishes, classes are putting the finishing touches on their painted rain barrels for the Clark County Clean Water Program's rain barrel contest. The Recycled Arts Festival in Ether Short Park on June 26-27 offers the first chance to see the barrels. Afterwards, the barrels will move to the Water Resources Education Center and then to the Clark County Fair (August 6-16) where the public can vote for their favorite design. Thanks to all the classes who have participated in the contest. Who will "rain" supreme in water collection? Stay tuned.



Painted Rain barrel projects artwork from (left to right)

Mountain View High School, La Center High School, and Washougal High School students

HOME AND GARDEN IDEAS FAIR RECAP

New Ideas for the Home and Garden Ideas Fair

By Amanda Smeller

Fourteen volunteers covered 20 shifts and made 692 contacts for the Watershed Stewards at the 19th annual Home and Garden Idea Fair held at the Clark County Fairgrounds, April 23 to 25.

The Watershed Stewards shared a booth with the Small Acreage program and the Canines for Clean Water program. The Watershed Stewards featured the normal table of handouts and information, a children's activity table, a "stream" fashioned from Watershed Steward Sonya Norton's beautiful blue sari, and a house façade built by Watershed Steward Jeff Duval.

"The best thing was the display that Jeff built," said Jen Naas, Watershed Steward Program Coordinator, adding, "It was challenging to build a display in a long, narrow space." The display included a demonstration of a gutter, downspout, and rain barrel installation.

Steward Mindy Brooks volunteered for two shifts and enjoyed the interaction with the public and other Stewards, as well as exchanging ideas. "People are doing neat things, like building a moveable chicken coop for their small yard in a suburban neighborhood."

As usual, one of the bright, painted rain barrels provided a main attractions to people. People always ask where to buy them, how to use them, and how to make them. In the past three years, the Watershed Steward's rain barrel workshops filled with people wanting to install barrels to catch water from their downspouts. People can learn how to make them by watching a video on constructing and installing rain barrels at the Watershed Steward's website: <http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/ws/workshops.html>.

For Watershed Steward Suzanne Michalik, "it was the children who were the real stars. Hands down, it was the "bag of bugs" prize they responded to." Watershed Steward volunteers made buttons with pictures of macro invertebrates on them. The programs participated in the fair's annual kid's passport program. Kids collected stamps from participating environmental education booths and returned their completed passport for a chance to win the prize donated by the Watershed Stewards. This year, the program donated a prize package including a puzzle, a stuffed animal, and "bag of bugs" to demonstrate the wildlife present in our local watersheds.

While kids liked the prizes, the adults had their own interests. "I came for the plants!" one fair attendee excitedly reported.

For me, I too enjoy the interaction with people and the exchange of ideas, the flow of environmental information, and all the activities. As Mindy stated, "There is a wealth of information out there and these fairs are a great way to consume some of it!"



WATERSHED STEWARDS AT WORK

Ned McConnell, a longtime Steward

Ned McConnell, a Watershed Steward since 2001, demonstrates a passion to educate kids about our environment and regularly volunteers at the Columbia River Watershed Festival and other watershed activities involving youth. Reflecting on his experiences and how they continue to affect his perspective, he says:



Watershed Steward Ned McConnell receives award at the 2008 Volunteer Appreciation Event

“For me, the primary and ongoing value of the Watershed Stewards programs is a heightened awareness and appreciation of the natural world around me.

I’m not too sure that I’ve retained a large amount of the factual data presented in the classes, it’s been a while, but the concepts that were presented continue to reside in my consciousness.

Also, my experiences in the classes and participation in activities (planting, fencing, abatement and educational programs) introduced me to many local “good guys” and provided me with hours of rewarding outdoor experiences.

One example of the “concepts” that hits home, particularly now with me is the pollution of our waters locally as well as nationally.

So much for me to contemplate! But I am reminded of the ongoing ground water pollution in our area each time it rains. After three or more days of non-rain, water rushing down a street ... almost always there is a sheen of oil/gasoline topping the water that rushes to the swales and other “natural” water purifiers.

The storm drain stencils are a step in the right direction, rain gardens another. Making sure I am not adding to the problem.”

Ned has volunteered nearly 700 hours since he became a Watershed Steward, truly an accomplishment!

Randall Pearl, a totally committed Watershed Steward graduate

Taking the Watershed Stewards training and volunteering as a Steward opened quite a few doors, according to Randall. Since becoming a Watershed Steward in 2001, Randal has donated hundreds of hours working to improve Clark County’s watersheds.

Since becoming a Watershed Steward, he has been active in the watershed community as a board member of the Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, a member of the Clark County Habitat Conservation Ordinance stakeholder’s group, and is a charter board member of the Salmon Creek Watershed Council.



Watershed Steward Randall Pearl and MaryKay Moskal talking to WS Susan Tripp and her husband at the 2009 Volunteer Appreciation Event

He volunteers on numerous habitat restoration and enhancement projects with organizations such as Fish First, Friends of the East Fork, and Clark Public Utilities' Stream Team.

Randall's work on a habitat restoration project at Pleasant Valley Park earned him and his wife MaryKay Moskal a 2005 certificate of Merit from the Clark County Commissioners. Randall says, "the park is just a five-minute walk from home, so I've adopted it as my long-term restoration project. Although the park project is a small site, it is representative of the type of habitat improvements required to create conditions favorable to support breeding habitats for salmonids to safely raise their young."

Tammy Mackey, walking the talk

Many Watershed Stewards know Tammy as the US Army Corps of Engineers Biologist who speaks at every Watershed Stewards training about dams and salmon. Although a USACE employee, Tammy is a dedicated advocate for local wild fish. We talked with her about how the Watershed Stewards classes affected her.

"I have used my Watershed Stewards training in many aspects of my life. As a child, recycling and conservation were always important to me, to the point where my father finally bought sorting bins for all of our recyclables because I kept asking for them... non-stop. Aside from being a professional biologist, I have spent many an hour teaching about salmon, volunteering with the Watershed Congress, the Student Watershed Research Project (SWRP), and with Clark Public Utilities StreamTeam.

The information provided in the training led me to pursue more green technologies while remodeling the family home. We have used recycled denim insulation, contracted for a low energy radiant heating system, a solar water heating system, a grey water re-use system, and have installed a composting toilet.

In the yard, I have utilized just about every method of composting, planted native, edible or medicinal plants, and I'm currently preparing to install rain barrels and a rainwater irrigation system (lots of soaker hoses!).

In the coming years, we will replace the driveway with pervious pavers to keep as much rainwater on the property as possible. All of our cleaners have been switched to biodegradable or natural cleaners.

Before the task force was dissolved early this year, I was a member of the Washougal Sustainable City Task Force. My task was to implement composting within the schools. We also talked of the value of a grocery co-op, the farmers market, sustainable development and creating a city which aimed to become as self sufficient and sustainable as possible. I continue to encourage that by walking, biking and reducing my driving as much as possible.

Recently I was asked to speak to a group of professionals, public, and interested stakeholders in Limerick, Ireland about what we are doing to recover our salmon runs. This was a wonderful opportunity to share the values of the Watershed Stewards with an international audience.

The presentation was well received and some Irish biologists will be coming to the Pacific Northwest to look at projects we have underway."



Watershed Stewards Tammy Mackey and Michael Eakin with their daughter in Ireland

WATERSHED STEWARDS AT WORK

Matt swims Vancouver Lake for a cause

by Leslea Steffel-Dennis

Matt Graves became concerned about declining funding for summer swimming program scholarships through Hough Foundation's Pool Pal program. The Pool Pal program instructs swimming for 70 Vancouver area children a week, for 6 weeks as well as swim lesson scholarships for several families.

During his swims at the Hough pool this past winter, he learned the foundation would no longer be able to afford keeping its pool north of downtown Vancouver open to the public. The Marshall Center made its pool available, but funds were needed to keep this successful program alive.



Swimmer Matt Graves

How and why Matt swam

Matt felt that rather than bemoan the loss of Hough and the need for funding for Pool Pal program, he would help by swimming for the cause. Matt decided to gain attention for the program and do fund raising at the same time by performing a shore to shore swim across two miles of Vancouver Lake. He would help raise funds for a great program and bring awareness to Vancouver Lake, a local water body that should be open for swimming but continually has water quality issues that keep it off limits for most human use. Swimming the familiar lake was a different way to become involved and draw attention to water quality in the Lake.

According to Kate Sacamano, Executive Director of the Hough Foundation, Matt's fund raiser "couldn't have happened at a better time. We are grateful for individuals like Matt who use their talents and creativity to make a difference in the community."

Vancouver Lake is part of his "day job" as a licensed Environmental Specialist for the Port of Vancouver. His job includes sampling, permitting, compliance, treatment, and outreach for waters controlled by the Port.

Vancouver Lake testing consistently shows problems with E. coli, blue green algae, and PCBs collected in the silty lake. The lake collects water from small tributaries and larger creeks, such as Salmon Creek. Stormwater runoff from hundreds of storm drains carry various chemicals and silt into Vancouver Lake. Matt hoped this swim will showcase the resource Clark County residents have in Vancouver Lake and help protect the water quality by nudging residents to clean up their own streets and back yards.

Starting with a goal to raise \$1,000, the foundation received more than \$2,400 in donations by the start of his swim, enough to fund the program this summer.

Matt was delighted funds came mostly in small amounts, from 4th and 5th graders, fellow Port employees, and community members who learned of the effort through an article in *the Columbian*.

When Matt stepped into the water on a dreary May morning at the lake's Lower River Road beach, he wore a full wet suit donated by Seven Seas Scuba. He swam the two-mile length with help and encouragement from Port Commissioner Wolfe, members of the Hough Foundation, a guide boat crew, and a spirited group of co-workers. Matt received such positive support that he is considering the idea of expanding the swim.

Matt has had inquiries from other swimmers who want to be a part of future fund raising swims.

What began as a caring citizen determined to keep a valuable program alive, can grow into a win for the entire community. Matt has proved there is more than one way to create awareness and involve our community in the many aspects of our watershed.



A student monitoring at Vancouver Lake

UPCOMING EVENTS

Upcoming Events for the Clark County Watershed Stewards

Clark County Fair - Big Wild Fun!

August 6-16

Join the Watershed Stewards at the annual Clark County Fair. There are a lot of shifts available if you are interested in working the WS fair booth. Contact Jen for more details.

Fall Watershed Stewards Training

September 8- November 10 at CASEE. Evenings 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Register On-line at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/fallWStraining>

Sturgeon Festival

August 18-19

This lively celebration of the sturgeon and its Columbia River ecosystem offers something for everyone.

14th Annual Columbia River Watershed Festival

September 30-October 1 at Kline Pond

The Watershed Stewards will teach local 4th and 5th graders about Clark County Watersheds. Come help other volunteers at this fun two-day event. Contact Jen to sign up.

BACK PAGE

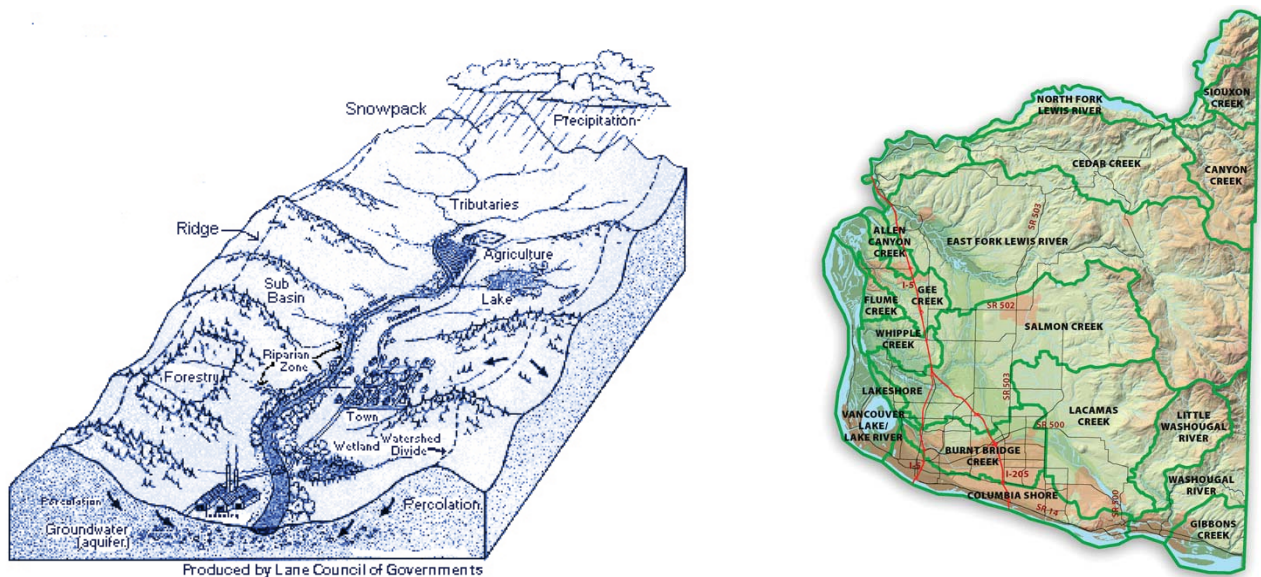
What is a Watershed?

Information from EPA's Watershed Website <http://www.epa.gov/watershed/what.html>

A watershed is the area of land where all of the water underneath the land or running off the land drains into the same place. John Wesley Powell, scientist-geographer, put it best when he said that a watershed is: "that area of land, a bounded hydrologic system, within which all living things are inextricably linked by their common water course and where, as humans settled, simple logic demanded that they become part of a community."

Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. The EPA defines a watershed as a geographic area of 40,000 to 250,000 acres. They cross county, state, and national boundaries. In the continental US, the EPA recognizes 2,110 watersheds; including Hawaii, Alaska and Puerto Rico, there are 2,267 watersheds.

The EPA recognizes four watersheds in Clark County, but the county subdivides this into 18 Watersheds (see picture below) and 78 sub watersheds. For more information on the health of Clark County's Watersheds, go to the Clean Water Program web pages at <http://www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources/>.



The views expressed in this newsletter reflect those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the sponsoring institutions.

WATERSHED STEWARD PROGRAM



WSU Clark County Extension and the Clark County Clean Water Program jointly sponsor the Watershed Stewards Program which is funded through Clark County Clean Water Fees.

Jenifer Naas

Program Coordinator

360-397-6060 x 7703

Jenifer.Naas@Clark.wa.gov

<http://clark.wsu.edu/volunteer/ws/>

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Clean Water Program

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