



Kent Environmental Council

Newsletter

July 2003

Renew Haymaker Project

KEC is looking for gardeners willing to share some of their favorite plants.

This spring the City of Kent began the Renew Haymaker Project by purchasing \$3000 worth of trees and shrubs to replace those lost over the years. On a beautiful April morning city officials and staff, along with KEC volunteers, planted those replacements throughout the west portion of the parkway. This was a great beginning to the project, and KEC wishes to thank City Manager Lew Steinbrecher and other officials and staff.

Now on to the next phase. There is a need to replace perennials along Haymaker's west portion and get pockets of color back too. KEC is asking interested gardeners to inventory their stock and let me know who you are and what you would be willing to part with for a new home on the parkway. You may send the information to KEC, P.O. Box 395, Kent, OH 44240. There will also be a sign-up list at our booth at the Heritage Festival.

Once information is received, a planting plan will be developed. Plants for sun and shade are welcomed. We hope also to begin a hosta bed. Either this

fall or next spring a planting day will be organized, depending on the weather and response. You may assist in the planting or just contribute vegetation and good cheer.

With the assistance of the community, renewing Haymaker will proceed quite rapidly and will positively impact our quality of life with renewed beauty and diversity.

Sherry Gedeon



Helen Gregory, Sherry Gedeon, Elaine Landry

KENT HERITAGE FESTIVAL

Saturday, July 5, 2003

Visit our booth to see our display and get acquainted.



FIFTH ANNUAL PORTAGE COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AWARDS BENEFIT DINNER

It's hard to believe that there have now been five Portage County Environmental Conservation Awards Benefit Dinners. The most recent one on June 7 at the NEOUCOM conference center was likely the most successful yet. More than 200 attended with a good number of public officials including Congressman Ralph Regula who served as honorary chair of the event and received a lifetime achievement award for his work on behalf of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Ohio Erie Heritage Canal project. Our net proceeds exceeded \$11,000, which will be used as seed money for the establishment of an environmental education nature center on Townline Road in Mantua Township.

The award recipients are listed below and included a number of KEC members.

Harriet Begala, Lifetime Achievement

Barbara Andreas, Academic Education for research and university teaching

Dawn Alber, Community Education for environmental education of children with special needs

Jennifer Hillmer and Brad Stemen for Environmental Advocacy and Action

Lynne Erickson, Public Official, Portage County Regional Planning Commission

Bob Brown, Public Official, City of Kent

Sherry Gedeon, Community Enhancement

Robert Heimann, Environmentally Sensitive Building and Development (for his Lakes at Franklin Mills)

Ohio Prairie Nursery in Garrettsville and Thompson, for contributions to Gardening and Horticulture

Sweetbriar Farm in Nelson Township, for Sustainable Agriculture

The Rotary Club of Aurora, Institution Award for support of several environmental projects and coalition building

The Portage County Honor Roll for Land Conservation honored the beginnings of the Breakneck Creek Conservancy

with commendations of the Portage County Soil and Water District, the Portage Park District, the Portage County Commissioners, the City of Kent, Franklin Township and Rootstown Township.

In his brief comments, Congressman Regula praised the gathering and urged continuation of their good work. He mentioned in reference to the developing Portage Hike and Bike Trail that the Canal Towpath Bike and Hike Trail (to which the "Portage" will eventually connect through Summit County) is so heavily used that it sometimes appears to need a "traffic cop." He also recounted the story of the approval of the CVNP back in the 70's when President Ford had been advised to veto the bill to create the park. His interior secretary did not favor "urban" parks! Regula asked Ray Bliss of Akron, then the national Republican Chairperson to intervene and Bliss told President Ford that he could veto the bill and lose Ohio in the next election or sign it and win Ohio. He signed the bill - but lost Ohio anyway! In politics I guess it's the results that count and in this case the results have been superb with the creation of this unique asset to our community.

The 5 dinners have so far raised a total of nearly \$45,000, which have been used for the hike/bike trail, seed money to help with the purchase of a permanent home for the County Clothing Center, the campaign for a county park levy, the construction of a wildlife blind at the Blanche Katherine Novak Sanctuary in Aurora, and the development of nature education materials by the Portage Park District.

Putting on these dinners represents a lot of hard work by many people. As we contemplate next year we would like to encourage the involvement of more people in the planning as well as ideas for beneficiaries.

Walt Adams, President, Portage County Environmental Roundtable



Will the Real Environmentalist Please Stand Up

To Tell the Truth was a TV game show from the fifties. Three challengers are presented to the four panelists for questioning, all claiming to be the person featured. Two of the challengers are imposters, one is the real featured person. At the end of questioning, the host asks, "Will the real (person's name) please stand up?"

And so it is today, as the real environmentalist is asked to stand up. Through complexity, obfuscation, greenwashing, understanding of how the universe works, belief in what is important, and conviction for what is ethical, it seems environmentalism can't reach a critical mass of agreement and common understanding to strongly influence the political process and consumer habit.

In opinion surveys, by far the majority of Americans consider themselves to be environmentalists. At the low end of the environmentalist identity scale must be those who vaguely believe the interaction of human effects and natural effects should somehow be a part of public policy. At the high end could be something of Pagan-like spiritual attachment and identity with the natural world, thus eliminating exploitation.

To keep ant society propagating every individual just knows what to do, and this system has not put the biosphere in peril. But the human specie has recently exploded onto the scene. Most of the individuals, being environmentalists, still seem to be acting by one directive alone—the right to have more stuff.

Rich Patterson



SPLASHING THROUGH HOOPS

The City of Kent is getting all its ducks in order for a cleaner Cuyahoga River. Caroline Arnold even photographed a Great Blue Heron in the river near the Pufferbelly a few weeks ago. (You can see it on our website: www.kentenvironment.org.)

Ohio EPA has just approved a water quality certification for the city of Kent to restore a free-flowing river by removing the gatehouse structure next to the historic Kent dam and bypassing the cut stone portion of the dam. The federal Clean Water Act requires anyone discharging dredged or fill material into water of the state to obtain a Section 401 quality certification from Ohio EPA and a Section 404 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. OhioEPA held a public hearing on April 8, 2003, and considered all the comments received.

With all the rain this spring, the level of the river behind the dam is still high since logs and debris are clogging the gates. When these can be cleaned out and the river flows freely, then construction can begin on removing the concrete gatehouse and reconstructing at least one wall of the historic canal lock, using the original stones still on site.

The Corps of Engineers "404" permit is still needed but Bob Brown, Kent city spokesman, expects it before the end of June. Bob said the city also met the June 1 filing deadline for much of the funding for this project.

When the project is completed there will be a park behind the dam. Water will be pumped up from below into a trough behind the dam so it can flow over the dam.

Plans are also being completed to lower the Munroe Falls Dam from 12 feet to 6 feet, with a fish bypass. This would greatly reduce the size of the Munroe Falls dampool and improve water quality in the river. Construction may begin in Munroe Falls by the end of the summer.

All these steps are important to carry out the Middle Cuyahoga TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) recommendations to clean up the Cuyahoga River in our area. The City of Akron must also release at least 3.5 million gallons of water per day from the Rockwell dam, a big boost to water quality in our river. Stay tuned!

Edith Chase

City of Kent Bicentennial

The third round of meetings for the Bicentennial Plan concluded on June 12, 2003. During these neighborhood meetings the Kent State Urban Design Center presented alternative drawings for the three special planning areas. These draft drawings are available for viewing on the City of Kent's website (www.kentohio.org) for anyone who has not had a chance to see them yet. In addition, the results from the first and second round meetings are also available. Based on the feedback received at the meetings, a preferred alternative will be chosen for each of the special planning areas and will be presented in the

final comprehensive plan.

During the summer months and early fall, the Community Development staff, with the assistance of the design team, will write the final draft of the plan for review. The fourth and final round of the meetings is planned for October and will afford the residents an opportunity to view the draft document and offer feedback before the final plan is presented to Council. If you have any questions about the plan, please contact Mary Gilbert at 330-678-8108 or via e-mail, gilbert@kentohio.org.

Mary Gilbert

KENT: A RIVER CITY

Did you know that the Cuyahoga River was once part of the western boundary of the United States, and that it played a key role in passage of the Clean

Water Act? The role that our river will play in Ohio's future depends entirely on our vision of its value. Help shape that vision!

KEC sponsored a Cuyahoga River Day event on May 31, "The Cuyahoga River: 200

years of History" at Home Savings Plaza. And yes, it did rain. But Bob

Brown, Kent Water Reclamation Facility, brought us up to date on plans for the gates at the Kent dam. The bus tour of historic canal remnants was

changed to the Old Jail, where about 35 participants enjoyed slides of these places presented by Brad Bolton, local historian, and Cathy Ricks, Kent

Parks and Recreation Department. Thanks to PARTA for providing two free buses for KEC. We also thank Guy Perneti, Kent Historical Society, for his excellent display of historic photos at the society's museum, including the 1913 flood..

The cooperation of all our River Day co-sponsors was really appreciated:

Kent Parks and Recreation Department, Kent Historical Society, Sierra Club-Portage Trail, and PARTA. And many thanks to individuals who helped:

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|-----------------|---------------|
| Nancy Adams | Bill Lillich |
| Caroline Arnold | John Mosey |
| Brad Bolton | Dave O'Brien |
| Howard Boyle | Guy Perneti |
| Bob Brown | Denny Reiser |
| Earl Clausson | Cathy Ricks |
| Roger DiPaolo | Diane Smith |
| Frank Hairston | Harold Walker |
| John Idone | |
| Vincent Komenda | |

Edith Chase



PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING US

Dues categories: Sustaining, \$45; Family, \$35; Individual, \$25; Golden Buckeye, \$15; Student, \$10.

To current members: Your newsletter mailing label identifies the status of your dues. "OK" means in good standing and "REN" means it's time to renew (an envelope will be attached for your convenience).

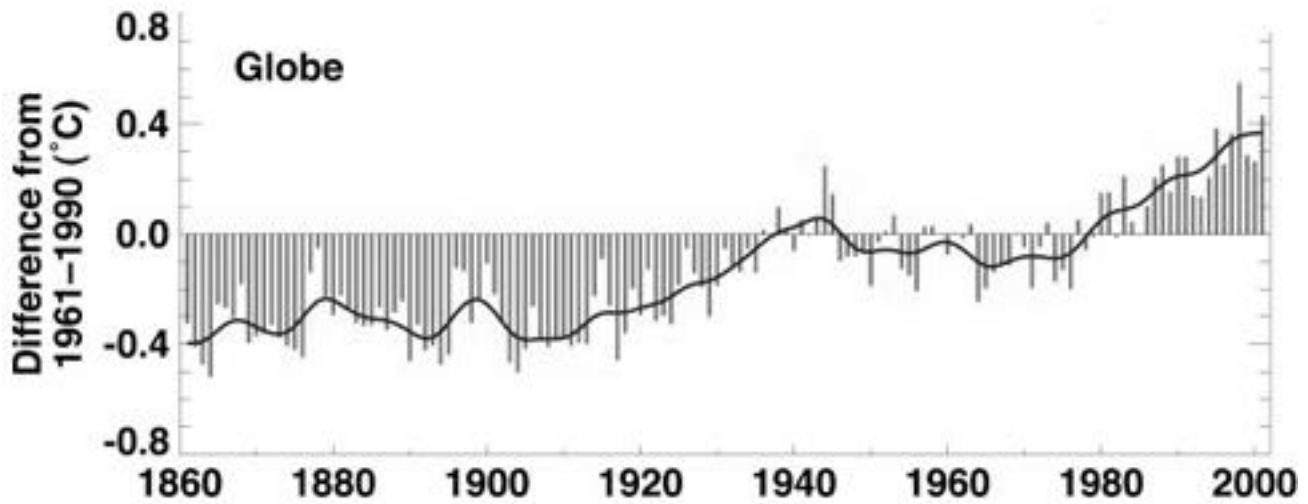
Dues may be mailed to Kent Environmental Council, P. O. Box 395, Kent, OH 44240.

FRIDAY BREAKFAST FORUMS

KEC members, friends, rivals, doubters, believers, petitioners, hangers-on, and indeed, city officials, meet every Friday at 8 AM at the University Inn Coffee Shop. You buy your own breakfast but talk is free, varied, frank, sometimes rowdy, sometimes abstruse, always lively and engaging.

Please note: On Friday, July 4, the forum will meet at 8 AM at the Jail House. Six Russian businessmen will be our guests.

Data from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) shows that 2002 was the second warmest year on record. 1998 is still the warmest year, with the top 10 warmest years all occurring since 1987, nine of them since 1990. The global mean surface temperature for 2002 is expected to be confirmed at approximately 0.5C above the 1961-1990 average.



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