

FLOW



Photo by Ellie Nowels

FLOW Wins National Grant Competition

Thanks to all who voted during the recent grant competition, FLOW has received a \$10,000 grant from MillerCoors. FLOW was one of eight finalists in the competition, and the winners were selected by on-line voting. The top four vote-getters each received \$10,000.

FLOW will use the grant funds to partner with the First Unitarian Universalist Church in Clintonville to create a stormwater management demonstration project that will include water collection and rain gardens to decrease polluted run-off. The demonstration will kick off an outreach campaign to churches, schools, small businesses, and public officials, with the goal of creating ten similar projects in our watershed by 2012.

This grant program was made possible by MillerCoors, which is partnering with River Network to support water sustainability initiatives in states where the company has breweries. MillerCoors shares FLOW's commitment to help communities understand, protect and restore rivers and watersheds. As one of the nation's top brewers, MillerCoors supports the United Nations CEO Water Mandate, and has designated water conservation as one of its key sustainable development priorities. MillerCoors is committed to improving its own water use by constantly striving to reduce the amount of water used to brew its beer.



Healthy Streams, Healthy Yards

Join FLOW for a six week course to learn how to protect our streams by making your own yard healthier, more beautiful, and safer for your family. Topics will include rain barrels, rain gardens, composting, low-impact lawn care, and backyard habitat. This program is made possible by a grant from the Columbus Foundation.

Course dates:

- Section A: Thursday evenings, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, May 28 to July 2
- Section B: Monday evenings, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM, July 20 to August 24

Registration for section A will begin on April 30 and for section B on June 30. No registrations will be accepted prior to those dates. Based on previous years' experience, we expect that the demand for this course will be high, and registrations

will be processed in the order in which they are received. To be placed on a registration reminder list, please contact us at hdean@olentangywatershed.org or 614-267-3386.

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Healthy Streams, Healthy Yards

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A \$15 course fee will cover six demonstration workshops and all written materials. The fee will be due within two weeks of registration. Participants who complete all six workshops will receive discount and cost share coupons with a value that exceeds the course fee. The cost share coupons may be applied to implementing any of the practices covered in the course (including rain barrels, rain gardens, composters, and native plantings).

Note: In previous years, our \$30 rain barrel cost share program has been very popular, and we are working hard to secure funding for a similar program in 2009. Please check our website regularly for more information as it becomes available.

Reminders

MONITOR Project and Watershed 101 Course:

There is still time for you to register for FLOW's Watershed 101 volunteer training program. The

six-week intensive course will take place on Saturdays from April 25 to June 6 (excluding Memorial Day weekend). The hands-on training will include watershed history, geology, native plants and wildlife, habitat assessment, wetlands, stormwater, wastewater and drinking water treatment. The course is free and open to the public. In exchange for the training, volunteers are requested to donate an equivalent number of hours to FLOW's stream monitoring or stream naming programs. This program is made possible by a grant from the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF). For more details, check www.olentangywatershed.org or call 614-267-3386.

Adopt-An-Area of the Olentangy: Would your family, neighborhood group, school or business like to adopt an area of the Olentangy for regular clean-up? FLOW can help you get started. Please call 614-267-3386 or e-mail hdean@olentangywatershed.org for more details. The first workday in 2009 will be April 18, part of the larger city-wide Earth Day celebration.

Watershed Feature: Whetstone Prairie

By Davin Lloyd, FLOW Volunteer

The next time you are on the Olentangy Greenways Trail, stop and check out the Whetstone Prairie. The prairie covers over 5 acres and features 42 native plant species including cone flower, sunflower, blazing star, obedience plants, bee balm, and black-eyed Susan. Goldfinches, cardinals, indigo bunting and other songbirds call the prairie home, while frogs, toads and dragonflies breed in the vernal pools.

The Whetstone Prairie was created to educate the public about prairies and the benefits of landscaping with native plants; provide native food and a habitat for songbirds, butterflies and small mammals; minimize the need for park maintenance; highlight local natural heritage; and create an aesthetically pleasing natural landscape.



If you are biking or walking, the prairie is located in Whetstone Park off the Olentangy Greenways Trail to the south of Adena Brook. If you plan on driving, the entrance to Whetstone Park entrance is at 3901 N. High Street. From the entrance, follow the entry road and park near the small bridge that crosses Adena Brook. Walk back across the bridge to the prairie. All visitors are welcome to enjoy the prairie during regular hours for Whetstone Park. For information

on visiting and/or volunteering, please contact whetstoneprairie@gmail.com.

If you know of other sites of educational or historical importance within our watershed that you'd like to see featured in upcoming issues of Information FLOW, please contact us!

FLOW Calendar of Events, Meetings, and Volunteer Opportunities: Spring 2009

All times and dates are subject to change. Please confirm time, date, and location by calling our office at 614-267-3386 or on our website at www.olentangywatershed.org

Adopt-An-Area of the Olentangy: Clean-up for Earth Day

What: Clean-up 7 key areas along the Olentangy.

When: April 18, 9 AM to 12 PM.

Where: Various locations. Call or write for details.

New volunteers are welcome!

Earth Day 2009: Picture This

What: Have fun at this Earth Day celebration with booths, live music, local foods, and kids' activities.

When: April 19, 12-7 PM.

Where: Goodale Park in Columbus.

For more details: <http://www.picturethis09.org/>

FLOW Annual Member Meeting

What: Join other FLOW members for a short hike followed by program updates, business meeting, and election of officers.

When: April 22, 5 PM (picnic and hike), 6:30-7:30 PM (meeting).

Where: Highbanks Metropark, Mansion Shelterhouse.

RSVP requested. The meeting will take place in an open shelterhouse, so be sure to bring a sweater!

Watershed 101/MONITOR Volunteer Training

What: Train to become a watershed monitor in this six-week course for volunteers who plan to participate in our new MONITOR program in Delaware County.

When: April 25, 9 AM - 4 PM (continuing on May 2, May 9, May 16, May 30 & June 6).

Where: Various locations in Delaware County. Call or e-mail for details.

Registration required.

Healthy Streams, Healthy Yards

What: Participate in this six week course to learn how to help the Olentangy while caring for your own yard.

When: May 28, 6:30 to 8:30 PM (continuing on June 4, June 11, June 18, June 25 & July 2)

Where: Various locations. Call or e-mail for details.

See accompanying article for more details. Registration required.

Riverfest

What: Join us for the Riverfest kickoff, featuring a COSI family fun night and a Waterfire performance on the Scioto.

When: May 29, starting at 5 PM

Where: COSI

For more details: <http://www.riverfestcolumbus.org/>

Adopt-An-Area of the Olentangy: Riverfest Work Day

What: Clean-ups and invasive plant removal at 7 key areas along the Olentangy.

When: June 20, 9 AM to 12 PM.

Where: Various locations. Call or write for details.

New volunteers are welcome!

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