

The Resource

Employee Newsletter of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources

December 2002



TIM PETERKOSKI & THE LOWDOWN ON LOWHEAD DAMS



Tim Peterkoski cheerfully admits he's probably the youngest person working for the Scenic Rivers Program. He may look young, but don't be fooled — Tim is getting a good reputation for his work with Ohio's waterways.

As assistant regional manager for Central Ohio Scenic Rivers, he comes

into contact with local governments, zoning boards, schools, landowners, citizen groups, media, and individuals. His mission is education about the benefits of clean, free-flowing streams.

"I explain ways to develop land near our scenic rivers in an environmentally sensitive manner — how to do it right," he said.

Tim has become instrumental in targeting lowhead dams for removal.

For the past few years, the physical dangers and environmental negatives of lowhead dams have been debated. A movement is underway throughout the nation to remove dams that no longer serve a useful function.

Lowhead dams prevent fish from reaching upstream habitat and spawning areas that have been blocked for decades. Dams change the very nature of a stream by pooling water; stagnant water and sediment are impounded behind the dam.

For canoeists, the lowhead dam can be a "drowning machine." Water flowing over a dam forms a backwash, or recirculating current. A victim can become trapped against the dam and drown.

With all this evidence, however, the issue is still often controversial. Part of Tim's job is to call on obsolete-dam owners and educate them on why they should take the dam out. He said, "Sometimes it's difficult because people get attached to them. Municipalities are particularly reluctant to remove them. But I talk to them about the ecological impact of what a dam does to water quality and stream health, how it's better without the dams. Lowhead dam removal is one of the easiest and most cost effective ways to improve stream health."

Tim recently participated in the removal of a lowhead dam on the Olentangy State Scenic River in Delaware County. The old concrete dam was built to generate electricity for a summer cottage 100 years ago; it no longer served any purpose.

"First we get into the water to take a look at what's behind the dam — mud, gravel, old tires or what," Tim explained. Then we break up the dam — which is the fun part! Corpsmembers from the Zanesville CCC camp did the work on the Olentangy River dam, and they were really terrific. It's a slow process. We let the water draw down slowly — to stabilize the stream flow. After that, we remove the rubble."

Sometimes there are unexpected benefits. "After we removed the Delaware dam, at the end of the impoundment, under the pool, was a small waterfall that hadn't been seen in 100 years!"

Capitalizing on this bonanza, Tim is taking potential converts to see the pretty waterfall for themselves. There are five more lowhead dams in Delaware and six in Franklin counties.

Tim has other activities to keep him busy. He reviews publicly funded construction projects within 1,000 feet of the Olentangy River, Kokosing River, Little Darby and Big Darby Creeks in order to minimize impact to the streams. In addition, he is involved in watershed planning for all four waterways. Tim also works with local communities on updating development standards, and helps acquire conservation easements along Central Ohio's scenic rivers.

Tim, a native of Berea, graduated from Baldwin Wallace College with a degree in biology and environmental science. He started with the Division of Natural Areas and Preserves almost four years ago, first as a seasonal worker, then a naturalist at Kelleys Island State Park, and has been with the scenic rivers program for the past 2-1/2 years. Tim and wife, Karla, met while studying in Ecuador; they now live in Columbus' Victorian Village. His hobbies include fishing, hiking, and traveling.



ANNUAL HALL OF FAME & CARDINAL AWARDS

On October 18, the 36th annual Hall of Fame awards were presented. This year, three Ohioans were honored for a lifetime devoted to the preservation, protection, and wise management of Ohio's natural resources.

Also on that day, the department presented the annual Cardinal Awards. Two individuals and an organization were honored for demonstrating awareness and concern for the issues reflected in ODNR's mission statement.



Deborah and Ronald Reed



Jim Fofrich, Jr. for Jim, Sr.

CARDINAL AWARD HONOREES



Mona Rutger



David Hanselmann for Kathryn Loxley



Neil Shaw for Ohio Trails Partnership

HALL OF FAME



Ronald and Deborah Reed are founders of the Mohican Outdoor School (Mansfield-Butler area). The program has provided environmental education to nearly 200,000 elementary school students in more than 85 Ohio school districts. Their environmental education programs allow students to directly interact with nature. In addition, the Reeds have acted to permanently protect Hemlock Falls, one of north-central Ohio's most unique natural features. Ron Reed said, "I'm pleased and honored to accept this award on behalf of all the people who work with us." Deborah Reed said, "We need both leaders and followers in life — leaders to set the direction, and followers to carry out the plan."

Jim Fofrich, Sr., of Toledo, was a charter boat captain who promoted Lake Erie research and conservation efforts. He personally participated in fish tagging research projects to protect Lake Erie's smallmouth bass and walleye populations. His efforts helped demonstrate the importance of Maumee Bay as breeding habitat for Lake Erie fish. In addition, he passionately promoted a catch-and-release ethic among Lake Erie anglers. Jim's leadership in the Lake Erie Charter Boat Association led to the creation of the Take A Kid Fishing Program. He recently passed away from cancer; his son Jim Jr. accepted the award. With tears in his eyes, Jim Jr. said, "Dad always said NO short term visions — only long term visions for Lake Erie."

CARDINAL AWARDS



Mona Rutger, of Erie County, devotes countless hours to the difficult work of rehabilitating sick and injured wildlife. This year, working in cooperation with state wildlife managers, she tended more than 100 ill birds of prey. Each year, school children are provided educational tours at her Back to the Wild Rehabilitation Center. Mona said, "I'm truly honored to be recognized. It's truly a labor of love, and I'm privileged to be entrusted with permits for wildlife rehabilitation."

Kathryn Loxley, a teacher in Jackson County, has promoted conservation through children's programming for more than 35 years. She assisted with the development of Project Learning Tree and has conducted numerous Project Wet and Hooked on Fishing programs. Kathryn's efforts also include serving as a supervisor from 1992 to 1997 for the Jackson SWCD. Kathryn was unable to attend; her award was accepted by David Hanselmann, chief of the Division of Soil & Water Conservation, who called her "an evangelist for nature, an outstanding example of an environmental educator."

Ohio Trails Partnership is a union of the Buckeye Trail, International Mountain Biking Association, and Ohio Horsemen's Council. In the past year, the Partnership has donated more than 21,000 hours and \$215,000 in contributions to improving trails located in state forests and parks. The partnership is dedicated to teaching volunteers proper trail development and maintenance, while fostering good will and communication between users. The award was accepted by Neil Shaw of the Ohio Horsemen's Council, who said, "We all want safer and better trails, and we couldn't have done it without ODNR."



THE PRETTIEST GARDENS



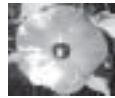
From Laura Roth,
Horticulturist

DECEMBER'S FEATURE

HIBISCUS MOSCHEUTOS

(say *high-BIS-kus moh-SHYOOT-us*);

official name crimson-eyed rose mallow; also called dinner plate hibiscus, swamp rose-mallow



This perennial belongs to the mallow family, related to hollyhock, okra, and cotton. It's indigenous to eastern North America in brackish marshes, and was used by Native Americans for medicinal purposes. Hummingbirds and butterflies love this plant.

So does Laura Roth, who said, "Hibiscus is so stunning. It's a fun plant to grow — the flowers get up to the size of dinner-plates! You can use them in cut arrangements — BIG arrangements!"

The huge-flowered hibiscus is a cold-hardy, tropical-looking perennial

that you can grow right in your own back yard. Robust and vigorous, the multi-stemmed plant grows from three to eight feet high.

Plant hibiscus moscheutos in a border, hedge, or cutting bed; it's also grown in large pots and water gardens.

The foliage is deep green. The flowers are six to ten inches wide, and come in red, pink, white or rose, with a purple eye. They bloom continuously through late summer until first frost. Deadhead old flowers and seedpods to lengthen the blooming period.

They like full sun, but in hot, humid areas will tolerate partial shade. Laura explained, "The plant needs lots of fertilizer and water. It's no good in hot, dry areas. It'll actually grow in standing water — that's why it's called "marsh" mallow."

Plant seeds or seedlings in moist, rich, well-composted soil in the spring. Water regularly and deeply. Move seedlings to their final positions in the fall. Plants can also be grown from cuttings. While roots don't spread underground, this hibiscus can be divided in early spring if plants get crowded.

Laura cautioned, "They start growing late, and unfortunately, some people give up on them. But be patient — it's worth the wait!"



The hibiscus moscheutos varieties grown at the fairgrounds are Disco Belle Mix, Southern Belle, and Turn of the Century. Laura said, "Next to the crepe myrtle, the hibiscus is the most popular plant at the Fair. People come back to Natural Resources Park in October to pick the seed pods!"

SPEAKING OF GARDENS:

The Fountain Square grounds staff works hard to keep the property looking good. Laura Roth is surprised by "the amount of cigarette butts around the complex. It takes the grounds crew 30 to 45 minutes every morning to pick up the butts." PLEASE DISPOSE OF YOUR CIGARETTES PROPERLY!



NEW SCENIC RIVERS LICENSE PLATE ON SALE

The health of a body of water is judged on the diversity and abundance of its wildlife, especially aquatic plants and animals. This theme has become the image on a new scenic rivers license plate, which shows an Ohio stream with an exuberant, healthy, leaping game fish. This splashy new design will be available January 1.

Available through the BMV and local deputy registrars, the plate costs an additional \$25. The scenic rivers program gets \$15 from each purchase or renewal.

The fund helps protect and restore



scenic river forest corridors, improve water quality and river habitat for endangered species, facilitate river clean-ups and the water quality monitoring project, and promote river conservation and education.

The first scenic rivers license plate was introduced in 1995, and featured a heron soaring above a stream.

Give the gift of SAFETY!

- Life is precious: never drink and drive.
- At parties, provide nonalcoholic drinks for designated drivers and others.
- Select child-safe toys: nontoxic, durable, and free of small parts or sharp edges.
- Consider giving gifts of safety, such as a bicycle helmet, smoke detector, or safety whistle.

Brought to you by the ODNR-OCSEA Health & Safety Committee.

MILESTONES

New Hires

Bryan Ford, Intern, Soil & Water

Luther Mountjoy, Intern, Soil & Water

Yousef El-Yousseph, Survey Technician 1, Engineering

Stephon Ash, EEO Regional Program Administrator, Engineering

Nikki Harris-Smith, Executive Secretary, Human Resources

Christine Tibbits, Intern, Human Resources

Brad Armstrong, Administrator, REALM/General Services

Jeremy Byers, NRW, Wildlife #3

Promotions

Lori Benhase-Wolf, from Secretary to Account Clerk 3, Engineering

Tara Kinsey-Lee, from NR Engineer 2 to NR Engineer 3, Engineering

Michael Powers, to Assistant Manager 4, Parks/Lake Hope

Retirements

Mike Schiefer, NR Engineer, Water, 30 years

Jean Eubanks, Fiscal Officer, Water, 31 years

Michael Custer, Officer, Wildlife #5, 30+ years

K. Ed Miller, Environmental Supervisor, Soil & Water, 31+ years

ANNIVERSARIES

5 Years

Mike Bowden, NRA2/Wildfire Training, Forestry

Christine Smith, Executive Secretary, Human Resources

Dan Shroyer, Officer, Wildlife #3

10 Years

John Lewis, Maintenance Supervisor, Parks/Mosquito Lake

Cindy Orth, Naturalist, Parks/Mosquito Lake

Jackie King, Account Clerk, Parks/Mosquito Lake

John Abele, Area Technician, Wildlife #3

Michelle Jones, Account Clerk Supervisor, Wildlife

Verdie Abel, NRA, Wildlife

20 Years

Blythe Lampkins, Inventory Control Specialist, Budget & Finance

Terry Eberling, Area Technician, Wildlife #3

Laura Wilson, Customer Service Assistant, Wildlife

25 Years

Jeff Orth, Assistant Manager, Parks/Mosquito Lake

TIDBITS



PROFESSOR: Ken Temple, law enforcement group manager with the Division of Parks and Recreation, retired after 30 years. He will be an instructor at Hocking College in Nelsonville.

PADDLE POWER: Pam Dillon resigned as deputy chief of the Division of Watercraft to become the executive director of the America Canoe Association in Springfield, VA. A native of Portsmouth, Pam joined ODNR in 1976 as a park naturalist aide.

CAPTAIN KEN: Ken Alvey was appointed the new chief of the Division of Watercraft. He's been with the division for 30 years. He became deputy chief in 2001 and was acting chief since Jeff Hoedt left this past August.

TAKING OFF: Pat Ruble, executive administrator of wildlife management and research since 1981, will retire on December 31. He's been with the Division of Wildlife for 28 years.

TRAIL BLAZER: Joel Reed, who retired from the Division of Engineering last year, has hiked the entire Appalachian Trail. He traveled from Georgia to Maine, a journey of 2,194 miles over seven months — and lost 35 pounds.

HE'S ALL WET: Jim Morris, chief of the Division of Water, received the Wayne S. Nichols Award from the Water Management Association of Ohio. The award is given annually to people who show leadership in water resources.

COMBINED CHARITABLE

CAMPAIGN: Budget chief Peter King reported the final figures for the recent charity drive, "We came up just shy of \$115,000, which is really great given the economy and budget impacts. I want to personally thank our divisional coordinators, Sondra Yates and Kim Dobbins, for their hard work." Actual-dollar donations for this year totaled \$114,397, with 416 donors and an average donation of \$276.29. Peter continued, "A lot of good, more than we will ever know, will come out of this generosity."

TIM RAMBACHER: This past September, Tim Rambacher, a water and sewer operator at Mohican State Park, passed away. He always had a joke and a smile, and will be greatly missed by everyone at the park, state forest, engineering office, and lodge.



GONE FISHING:

Mike Budzik, chief of the Division of Wildlife, will retire January 31, 2003. During his career, he developed important partnerships with Ohio's farm community and expanded ODNR's wildlife areas. A graduate of Hocking College, Mike joined the Division of Wildlife in 1975 as a conservation aide, and rose rapidly through a number of management positions, becoming chief in 1995.



THE RESOURCE

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