

Notes from West Creek Conservancy

West Creek Conservancy
P.O. Box 347113
Cleveland, OH 44134

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A Land Trust Serving Greater Cleveland

February 2015

A Family's Conservation Legacy

Joseph Braun Descendants Carry on West Creek Preservation Efforts

In 1929, Joseph (1883-1962) and Ella (1889-1977) Braun, along with their four surviving children, moved into the home Joseph had built at 607 South Street in Brooklyn Heights. The property overlooked the woods and hills adjacent to West Creek. Nearby, the Brauns built a mobile home park which remained in business until 2011.

The Braun's second youngest child, Eleanor Braun Wagner (1923-2010), and her husband, George Wagner (1920-1990), later moved into the home and managed the mobile home park. The Wagners had two daughters, Cindy (born in 1948) and Debbie (born in 1952).

Before Eleanor Wagner passed away, she let her daughters know that she hoped the natural beauty of the land around her home would be preserved for others to enjoy. After the death of Eleanor in 2010, Cindy and Debbie donated much of their land to West Creek Conservancy. Debbie Wagner Burnham died suddenly in November 2014. Preferred memorials to Debbie went to West Creek Conservancy.

"My mother's family lived there before the area was developed," says Cindy Wagner Gardner, who now lives in Van Wert, Ohio. "She was an avid birder, fostered the wildlife, and knew the names of all the plants and trees in the area. She was enthusiastic about the beauty of nature and passed that enthusiasm on to her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, all of whom spent time hiking the woods, skipping stones, and playing in the creek. Her family wanted to maintain a part of the area she loved in hopes that others could continue to enjoy it. My dad and uncle were amateur paleontologists who enjoyed another aspect of the shale creek. They found lots of fossils in the creek, some of which were donated to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History."



Thanks to Debbie and Cynthia's generous donation and the support of West Creek Conservancy members, Ms. Wagner's property in

Brooklyn Heights is now a natural oasis in an increasingly urban environment. The land she loved will continue to offer a glimpse of green and a healthy home to wildlife in the midst of our busy city. West Creek Conservancy is now working on a management plan for the property to balance urban habitat and recreation.

"This is the right thing to do," says Steve Burnham of Seven Hills, husband of Debbie Wagner Burnham. "We and many of our friends have been using the Metroparks for a long time. West Creek Reservation is right down the road from us, and it's a wonderful getaway from all the noise and confusion of city life. I hike and ski there on a regular basis. I thank everyone involved for all their efforts."

Do you own land that you would like to see remain free from development for your lifetime and for future generations? Consider permanently protecting some or all of your land. Contact West Creek Conservancy today at 216-749-3720 to learn more.

2015 Events!

- * **Blues for Greens:**
February 28 (see inside)
- * **Pre-Spring Hike:**
March 14, 10am, Hemlock Creek Trail
Email: info@westcreek.org to RSVP
- * **World Water Day:**
March 22, more info @ westcreek.org
- * **West Creek Conservancy Annual Meeting:**
April 21, more info @ westcreek.org
- * **Year of Clean Water**

2015 has been designated Year of Clean Water. To see how you can get involved and for a full calendar of events, please visit:

<http://www.sustainablecleveland.org/celebration-topics/2015-clean-water/>

Images of an Urban Watershed

What does an urban watershed look like to you?



We're putting the call out for photos - images of our urban watersheds!

We'll be collecting these images over the next year, compiling as many as are submitted until December 2015; capturing all seasons & CLE weather conditions! Images will then be on display for all to see and will additionally be highlighted at the Watershed Stewardship Center, other local venues, as well as WCC's 2016 Annual Meeting!

Submissions can be sent to info@westcreek.org

Looking forward to seeing what an *urban watershed* looks like to you...

Adopt a Low (Road) Salt Habit!

Salt, as harmless as it sounds, is a chemical that can harm both our personal health and that of our local waterways.

Road salt (sodium chloride) is most commonly used to remove ice from roads, parking lots and sidewalks. As snow and ice melt, road salt is carried into our lakes, streams and wetlands, *where just one teaspoon can permanently pollute five gallons of water.*

Here are other impacts road salts can have on our environment:



Courtesy of www.kdlt.com

- At high concentrations, salt is toxic to fish and insects.
- At lower levels, salt can negatively affect the fish and insect populations by reducing reproduction and survival rates of young.
- Direct road salt splash can kill plants and grass.
- Sodium in road salt can destroy soil stability, decreasing the ability of the soil to filter water, and increasing soil erosion.

Here are some tips for using road salt wisely:




Courtesy of morningmistlandscaping.com

- Shovel (and use the right tool for the job). The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it will be when you do use it.
- 15°F is too cold for salt. Most salts stop working at this temperature. Use sand instead for traction, but remember that sand does not melt ice.
- For best results, apply salt to cleared surfaces. The salt crystals should not overlap but be spread out a few inches apart.
- More salt does not mean more melting. Use less than 4 pounds of salt per 1,000 square feet (average parking spot is about 150 square feet). One pound of salt is approximately a heaping 12-ounce coffee mug.
- Sweep up extra. If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement it is no longer doing any work and will be washed away into your local streams thru a storm drain or ditch system.
- Even if the de-icer says it's safe for pets - look at the ingredients! Calcium and magnesium chloride can burn their paws. Use a product with glycol or just use sand. And when you take your animals on a walk, cover their feet and/or wash them off after a walk.

DRAINS TO LAKE!

For more information, go to www.youtube.com and search for 'Improved Water Maintenance: Good Choices for Clean Water.'

Information is provided by the Mississippi Watershed Management Organization.



BLUES *for* GREENS

WHEN: Saturday, February 28, 2015

WHERE: St. Michael's Woodside
5025 E. Mill Rd.
Broadview Heights, OH 44147

TIME: 6:00 pm - 11:00 pm

TICKETS: \$60 per person or / \$75 per person for premium ticket

Tickets can be purchased at
www.2015bluesforgreens.eventbrite.com

Event features buffet dinner, beer (courtesy of Great Lakes Brewing Co.), wine, live music by Colin Dussault's Blues Project, raffles, auction, and more.

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