

# NewsStreams

A publication of Kentucky Waterways Alliance: Working to protect and restore Kentucky's waterways.



## Clean Water Act turns 40!!!

40 years ago, one of our fundamental laws safeguarding our health and the health of our environment was passed with bipartisan support. The **Clean Water Act revolutionized the way we thought about water pollution** - making discharges into waters illegal unless authorized by a permit to control pollution and establishing water quality standards to protect swimming, drinking and fishing.



In addition to being one of the greatest pieces of environmental legislation ever passed by the United States government, the Clean Water Act is also the reason for our existence here at Kentucky Waterways Alliance. We took this opportunity to celebrate the successes and find avenues to strengthen this legislation that has become our workhorse for ensuring responsible water stewardship.

Our celebration began with 200 friends at the 13th Annual Healthy Foods Local Farms Conference. This year's theme, "No Water, No Food," brought together some of the Commonwealth's greatest environmentalists while sprinkling in some national experts to expand upon the current state of our nation's waterways. The following day, a group of stakeholders from private, public, local and national entities held a candid meeting to discuss the current state of our water issues future water concerns.



In a time when Congress has made repeated attempts to roll back clean water safeguards that could put our health and the health of our rivers at risk, it's more important that ever to stand strong. KWA is your voice for clean water in Kentucky!

In conjunction with the CWA's 40th anniversary, we launched an awareness campaign. The great people at River City Distributing stepped up to help the campaign by pledging to donate \$1 for every new "like" our Facebook page gets, up to \$500! Their generosity quickly helped us get over the 1000 total "likes" mark, but we're still not to the 500 NEW "likes" goal yet. If you haven't done it already, "like" our page today and score one more dollar for clean water!

## Bacon Creek Farm Field Day

Bacon Creek runs through some of the most beautiful and productive farm land in Kentucky. At one such beautiful location this past month, KWA and the Bacon Creek Watershed Council hosted an Agricultural Farm Field Day on the Polley Road farm of Bill Heath. Mr. Heath and his family are participants in the Bacon Creek Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) program. This means that they are making improvements on their farm that will help their operation and improve the water quality of Bacon Creek at the same time.

The Field Day was a chance to show off these newly installed practices, including a cattle water fountain, a heavy use area, and a fence. Together these practices will help Mr. Heath keep cow manure and sediment out of Bacon Creek.

It was also a chance to meet neighbors and catch up with old friends. Lots of people brought snacks to share and had questions and ideas for Mark Howell, Bacon Creek Agricultural Coordinator for KWA.

"All in all, it was a great day," said Howell. "Folks got to see the BMPs first hand and talk to Bill about it all. The Heaths have been really great to work with."

Two more area farmers have already signed up to implement BMPs on their own farms. KWA is delighted to be working with the farming community and hopes to do much more.



## Citizens Want Action; Why the Delay? 40 Years After the Clean Water Act

### Message From the Director

I found this historic photo from a Cleveland State University Department of History web site. The late 60's and early 70's were a time of upheaval, protest and change in the US. I was in high school and remember it well. The messages of rivers on fire and dead lakes mixed with the Vietnam War, the Space Race, civil rights and women's rights have shaped me as an individual and helped to shape my career and life's work.



October 18th marked the 40th anniversary of the Federal Pollution Control Act of 1972, otherwise known as the Clean Water Act. Everyone deserves clean water. We need clean water for our health, our communities, for the environment and yes, for the economy.

Forty years ago, people saw iceberg-sized mounds of floating foam, scum and debris on the Ohio River. Today the river is at the center of major city renewal efforts in northern Kentucky, Louisville, Owensboro and elsewhere. The Ohio River is now widely recognized as a significant bass fishery and supports bass tournaments; there are boating and even swimming events along the river. And let's not forget that 5 million people rely upon the river for drinking water. But the river is still threatened today by a number of pollutants including pathogens, mercury and pharmaceuticals, and it still bears the burden of historic contamination such as PCBs and dioxin.

In forty years, we've solved many of the pollution problems I saw growing up and we've prevented many more. Yes, our rivers, streams and lakes are cleaner now than they were in 1972. We don't have rivers that catch on fire anymore. But now that we've solved or at least controlled the obvious pollution problems we can see that we need to do more to protect this life force – clean water.

The water we drink today was here when dinosaurs roamed the earth and it will be here when we are long gone and our great, great grandchildren's time has come. We don't even have tests to measure for many of the pollutants we discharge into our waters today, let alone know how much is safe for us, our children, and the fish and other animals that rely on the water.

We need to reaffirm our commitment to clean water and demand that Congress and the EPA do more to protect us. We need to update the law and give EPA the authority to truly protect our nation's waters. Every day that we delay, costs rise and the problems are that much harder to solve.

Citizens Want Action; Why the Delay? Tell your friends, your family, your elected leaders you want clean water today!

On behalf of a healthier Kentucky,

*Judy Petersen*



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**Want to be in the know about water-related happenings?**

**Visit our website at**

**[WWW.KWALLIANCE.ORG](http://WWW.KWALLIANCE.ORG)**

**to check out upcoming events in Kentucky!**

KWA is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Articles express the opinions of their authors and not necessarily represent the views of KWA or its officers.



## Swift Camp Creek Walk



The Swift Camp Creek Walk in July of this year was a great chance for members of the Red River Watershed team to get out in the creek. The team is working hard on writing a watershed based plan for Swift Camp Creek and three other tributaries to the Red River as part of the Red River Gorge Restoration and Watershed Plan grant project headed by the Daniel Boone National Forest. The team was able to make observations about the condition of the creek, record plant and animal species, and scout out good spots for a future cleanup.

This project is funded in part by a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under 319(h) of the Clean Water Act through the Kentucky DOW to the Daniel Boone National Forest (Grant # C9994861-10).

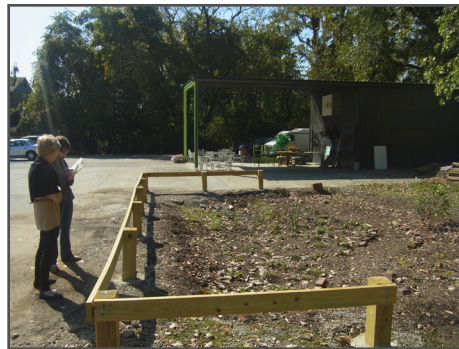


## What an EyeDia !!!

When Diane Stege and Martha Neal Cook moved into the retail space that is now EyeDia on Mellwood Avenue over eight years ago, they understood what a great resource Beargrass Creek could be.

"We thought being this close to the creek was just the coolest thing. It really helped us understand the issues surrounding the creek and our community," said Stege.

EyeDia, the upscale consignment home furnishings store co-owned by Neal and Stege, is now home to a new rain garden and 600 gallon rain barrel. The garden is the result of their desire to be good neighbors, some careful planning, and a little help from some friends. From start to finish, several



*Diane Stege and Tessa Edelen discussing the progress of EyeDia's newly installed rain garden.*

partners played a role in its completion, including KWA, Councilwoman Tina Ward-Pugh, Dropseed Nursery, and MSD.

The garden is catching rain water from the rear building through a gutter downspout, which runs directly into the garden. A spot that was once used for deliveries is now planted with beautiful native plants such as goldenrod and foxglove that will soak up the water. The rain garden and rain barrel will help mitigate stormwater pollution impacts on Beargrass Creek. They will also decrease the amount of water flowing across the parking lot and eroding the hillside next to the creek.

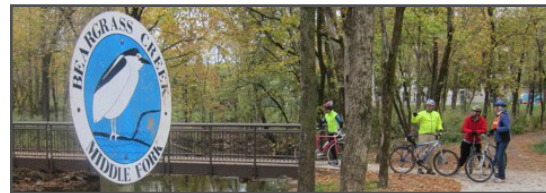
The plants are young and already dying back for the season. Stege, however, knows that good things take time. "Come spring, it'll be a whole different place."

## Biking, Eating and Drinking for Beargrass Creek!

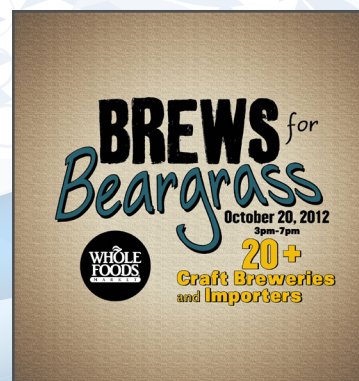
Well, it wasn't all at the same time! Beargrass Creek Alliance was the fortunate recipient of proceeds from the Louisville Whole Foods Market's first ever *Brews for Beargrass* on October 20. The wonderful variety of over 20 craft breweries helped to keep us warm on this blustery autumn day.

The day's festivities were kicked off with a *Tour de Beargrass* sponsored by Beargrass Creek Alliance and led by Ward Wilson, cyclist extraordinaire. Ward led the group on a thoughtful tour of the Middle Fork of Beargrass Creek that highlighted the creek restoration project under construction at Brown Park, stormwater infrastructure like the gutter and stormwater flume behind SteinMart, and even some embedded fossils. The group would like to do more watershed cycling, so stay tuned for more information.

The Beargrass Creek Alliance would like to extend a huge thank you to Whole Foods Market, especially Angela Rees, and Ward Wilson. It was a great day for a great cause!



*Photos courtesy of Mary Beth Brown*





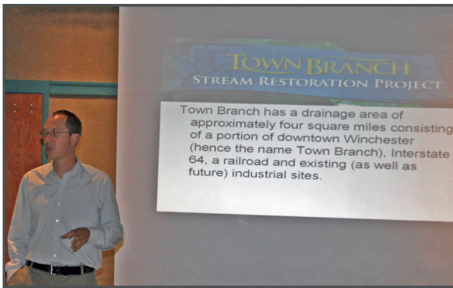
## 2012 Annual Meeting - General Butler State Park



A great time was had by all at this year's Annual Meeting! We kicked the weekend off next to the fire, the lake and the auction table, where we had plenty of great company, food and libations.



A special thank you to all of our auction donors: Forecastle Foundation, Aveda, Four Roses Bourbon, Kentucky Ale, REI, 60 West Bistro & Martini Bar, Louisville Stoneware, Shooting Star Nursery, River City Canoe & Kayak, Big Buffalo Crossing, Canoe Kentucky, Thaxton's Licking River Canoe Rental, and Cave Country Canoe.



We got an early Saturday morning start with our "year in review" presentation. Then, Russ Turpin of EcoGro educated our attendees about *Stream and Wetland Restoration (left)*. Meanwhile, Elizabeth Schmitz of Kentucky Environmental Education Council provided a *Community Mapping Workshop* focused on understanding how we can use the features of our modern environment to become more symbiotic with our surroundings (*right*).



"I cannot thank you enough for allowing me to attend the KWA annual meeting. It is abundantly clear that your board and staff are wholly committed to the statewide mission of KWA. After realizing the reach KWA has with local, state and federal partners and the impacts you are having on the lives of so many in KY, I felt like KWA was a 'best kept secret.'"

- Glenn Dowling, National Wildlife Federation and KWA Annual Meeting attendee



Later D.E. Adams from WaterStep (previously EDGE Outreach) brought a *Global Water Perspective (left)*, while Hank Graddy of Watershed Watch in Kentucky discussed the integration of *Green Infrastructure in Kentucky (right)*.



Following our lunch break, David Wicks and local historian Jim Fotherhill captained a "Voyageur Boat Paddle" from the Ohio River up the Kentucky to the first set of locks (*left*). In the evening we reconvened for a happy hour and dinner. In celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Clean Water Act, our keynote speaker, River Network President Todd Ambts, described the current state of implementation regarding this groundbreaking legislation (*right*).





## KWA Volunteer of the Year Award - Craig Garner



*Craig Garner receiving his Volunteer of the Year award from KWA Executive Director Judy Petersen*

Kentucky Waterways Alliance is what it is today because of our wonderful volunteers! From sitting in the office stuffing envelopes to graphic design, and from stream cleanups to tabling, our many volunteers donated thousands of hours of their time over the last year. However, one volunteer stood out among them this year: Craig Garner. At this year's Annual Meeting, we presented the 3rd Annual Volunteer of the Year award to Craig for his countless hours of IT service at our office.

Thank you for your endless willingness to help Kentucky Waterways Alliance keep our office running in top shape!

## KWA Celebrates our 20<sup>th</sup> year in 2013!

It all began in Georgetown, Kentucky, in April of 1991, when the Kentucky Environmental Quality Commission held a meeting. Over 80 representatives from government, industry, community organizations and individuals from across the state came together to discuss issues facing Kentucky's streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands. Through a number of later meetings, one thing became obvious – Kentucky needed a formal organization to promote networking, communication and mutual support among groups working to protect our water. Kentucky Waterways Alliance was incorporated in April of 1993, and since that time we've become THE voice for Kentucky's most precious natural resource - water.

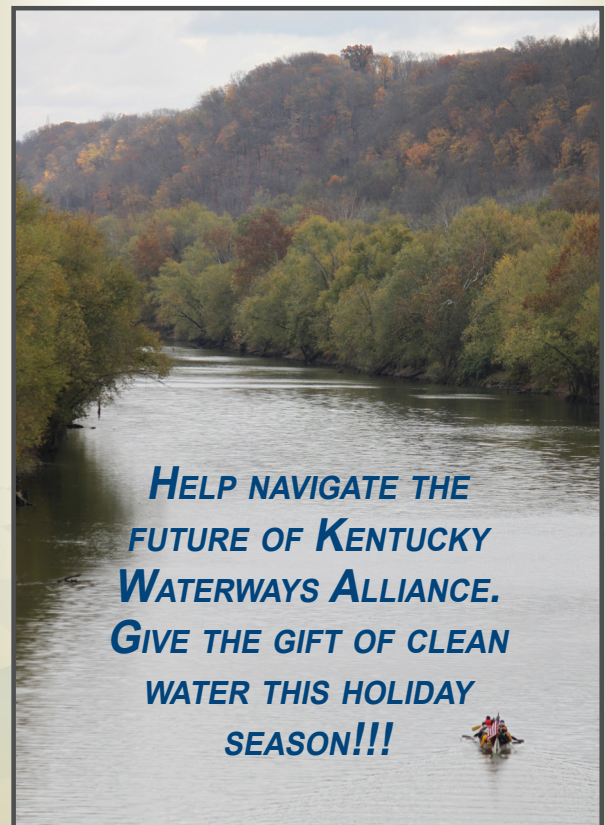
We are very grateful for our members, without whom KWA couldn't function. We hope you'll join us in 2013 to help us celebrate! Be on the lookout for celebrations throughout the state as we reflect on our past and invite you to help us navigate the next 20 years!

## KWA - Ready to launch into 2013!



Want to give an inspirational holiday gift this year? **Now through the end of the year, KWA is offering 2 gift memberships for \$20!** You can fill out the form on the back of this newsletter or you can buy gift memberships online at [www.KWAlliance.org](http://www.KWAlliance.org).

CELEBRATING



**HELP NAVIGATE THE  
FUTURE OF KENTUCKY  
WATERWAYS ALLIANCE.  
GIVE THE GIFT OF CLEAN  
WATER THIS HOLIDAY  
SEASON!!!**



## KWA Works Everyday on Behalf of Our Families for Clean Water

### POLICY... IN BRIEF: what we're doing to protect your water resources

By Tim Joice

KWA is your voice in the fight for clean water in Kentucky! Find out what we've been doing lately on behalf of the health of our waterways and communities.

Recently, Kentucky Division of Water opened a public comment period for proposed changes to state water resource regulations through the "Triennial Review" process. They also opened a comment period for the proposed 2012 Integrated Report to Congress on Water Quality in Kentucky. In addition to submitting comments on both of those issues, we have also been working

on comments for a handful of permit applications, staying active with the Floyds Fork "nutrient diet" development, and will also be commenting on EPA's request for comments on the existing CAFO regulations. Read about KWA's actions on all the recent policy work in the Policy Roundup on our website!

## We love Wetlands! Find out why you should too!

Birds, frogs, fish, beavers, alligators, lizards, crawfish, deer, and more thrive in and around wetlands. But what exactly is a wetland? What does a wetland look like, and where are they found? And why does KWA care so much about protecting wetlands? It's all because they perform critical ecological and hydrological functions in our landscapes.



Swamps, marshes, fens, bogs, prairie potholes, vernal pools, pocosins, fens, wet meadows – each of these terms have one thing in common: they are all wetlands. Although the various wetland types are present in different places in the country and in different locations on the landscape, they all share three conditions to be considered a wetland. First, the area must be covered in water above the soil's surface for a portion of the year. Second, the plants growing in the area must be specific types that can grow in wet and dry conditions. Third, the soil, due to the water covering it, must have certain qualities.

With only those three similarities, wetlands can look quite different around the country. Here in Kentucky, wetlands can be found in several different locations. A majority of Kentucky's wetlands are found next to and surrounding our rivers, lakes, and ponds. These wetlands exist primarily because of the natural variation in rain, and the tendency for water levels to rise for a sustained portion of the year in those low-lying areas. Most of them are referred to as "bottomland hardwood swamps" and "emergent wetlands," with vegetation that varies from cattails, sedges, reeds, blackberries and raspberries, to trees that include willows, sweetgum, pin oak, willow oak, and bald cypress. Other wetlands in the state form on the slopes of the mountains in eastern Kentucky, or as small

depressions in the rolling fields of many parts of the state.

Wetlands perform absolutely essential functions in our landscape. After significant rainfalls, wetlands help soak up and store flood waters like a sponge! Additionally, the natural conditions of wetlands make them very effective at filtering pollutants from waterways, like chemical fertilizers, excess sediment, and animal waste. In fact, they function much like kidneys for humans. Of course, wetlands are also havens of biological diversity because of the wide variation of conditions that exist within them and nearby. Any avid bird watcher, photographer, hiker, hunter, or fisherman can attest to this!

As you can see, wetlands are very important for keeping our waterways in balance, and provide many important benefits for society. Unfortunately, over Kentucky's history the state has lost roughly 80% of its wetlands. It is hard to comprehend losing that amount of wetlands, but it also makes it all the more important to protect the wetlands we still have in the state! We want to make sure the environment's "kidneys" are not only preserved, but enhanced. It is for that reason that KWA focuses a significant portion of our efforts on wetland protection, and making sure that any wetlands that are harmed are accounted for through conservation easements, restoration, and creation of new wetlands.

We can't do it alone though, so when you get a chance, go check out the landscape around you to see if there are wetlands - and if you find one, take some photos and send them our way! But don't stop there - let others know why that wetland is important, and make sure to protect it from harm!



## We'll Miss You, Kelly!

Early this fall, KWA said a fond "Farewell" to Kelly Cook, a long-time member of our staff. Beginning her KWA tenure in our Greensburg office and later transferring to Louisville, Kelly was our Membership Coordinator for more than 6 years. She often went above and beyond her job description to make sure things got done, and her dedication and creative spirit will certainly be missed. It was that creative spirit that prompted Kelly's departure, as she and her husband are moving to California to pursue their musical dreams.

Good luck, Kelly, in all you do! We'll miss you!



## KWA Welcomes our new Office Manager

With the departure of Kelly, our part-time Membership Coordinator, KWA's board and staff revisited the position description and expanded it into a full-time Office Manager. Jessica Kane joined our staff in September and received training from both Kelly and our volunteer bookkeeper, Bob Wilson.

A self-proclaimed "water rat," Jessica has special memories from her childhood vacations to Lake Barkley and spends her summers on Barren River with her husband and three children. Jessica likes red wine and Rocky Road ice cream (hopefully not at the same time!), and says that the best experience of her life was a month she spent living in a tent down inside the Grand Canyon with the Havasupai.



## EPA releases "How's My Waterway?" app

As part of the celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the EPA designed this tool for the public to get simple answers about the health of their waterways. Nancy Stoner, acting Assistant Administrator for EPA's Office of Water, says, "This new app provides easy, user-friendly access to the health of a waterway, whether it is safe for swimming and fishing, and what is being done about any reported problems. People can get this information whether researching at a desktop or standing streamside looking at a smart phone."

The application is surprisingly easy to use and quite informative. Go to <http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway>, enter your location, and instantly receive a list of waterways within five miles of your location. After selecting a specific body of water, the website will give



information on local water pollution incidents, what was found, and what has been done by the EPA and the state to reduce it. There are also simple descriptions of each type of water pollutant, including pollutant type, likely sources and potential health risks. Additional reports and technical information is also available for many of the listed waterways.

"Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air and drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. You are by accident of fate alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet."

- Carl Sagan





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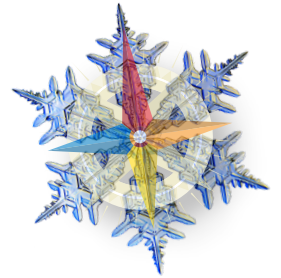
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Kentucky Waterways



## Help Protect Kentucky's Rivers and Streams. Looking for an inspirational holiday gift?

Through the end of the year, KWA is offering a special rate of \$20 for 2 gift memberships!!!



**2 GIFT MEMBERSHIPS FOR \$20 !!!**

My Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Recipient 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Your donations are tax deductible! Mail to KWA, 120 Webster St., Suite 217 Louisville, KY 40206

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