

Northeast Ohio Sierra Club March & April 2014 Newsletter

Bereans Break Ground on Community Learning Farm

By Andi Whitaker, Urban Agriculture Committee

A different type of education will soon take place on the site of the former Riveredge Elementary School at Berea's north end. In collaboration with the Berea City School District and the City of Berea, volunteers are developing a community learning farm to teach residents how to grow their own organic produce.

Not only will the new Berea Community Learning Farm provide recreation, education, and skill development, but it will also supplement Berea's community food pantry with fresh fruits and vegetables. Lori Hanson, one of the founders of the BCLF, said that local organic food will provide produce higher in nutrition than what the food pantry can usually supply. "It's in our back yard... the produce will always be fresher and will last longer."

Hanson is heading this project with Stephanie Rochek and Donna Bunce. All three are volunteers, dedicating considerable time and effort to a project that will better the whole community. The ladies' goals are to "help Berea residents with food security, provide recreational opportunities, and support the educational goals of area schools." CSA shares will be available and plans are in the works for a regular onsite farmer's market.

Bereans have embraced the idea of a community learning farm, with over thirty residents showing up to the first information meeting. A successful fundraiser in February, with donations from many local businesses and citizens, raised enough money for the BCLF to purchase its organic starter seeds and begin construction of a farm shed on the property. Volunteers have already been hard at work building raised beds and a high hoop house has been acquired to extend the growing season.

The Berea Farm offers enrichment opportunities for all. For more information on getting involved with this awesome project, check out the [Berea Community Learning Farm Facebook page](#) or by emailing BereaFarm@gmail.com.

Don't Let All That Is Indian Within You Die!

By [Dennis Michael Plank](#), NEOSC Human Rights Chair

Where did the statement "Let all that is Indian within you die" come from? This used to be a major federal policy of the United States Government. The government used to take Native American children from their families and ship them off to boarding schools to assimilate them to the dominant society. This caused major problems, so it is important that we *don't* let all that is Indian within you die. Why is this

important? It is important because we have already had enough cultural genocide.

The Native American Rights Fund (Summer/Fall 2013) Legal Review Newsletter documents how Native American children were forcibly abducted from their homes and put into boarding schools from about 1800 to 1950. This was done "for their own good." The Indians had to be civilized and the Native American cultures had to be stamped out. There was a policy of ethnocide and cultural genocide. This caused major problems. The children were cut off from their families, cut off from their culture, punished for speaking their Native languages, banned from conducting traditional cultural practices, were cut off from their identity, were taught that their culture was evil, were taught that they should be ashamed of being Native American, etc.

Far from home the children were neglected and abused physically, sexually, and psychologically. They could not take it any more so they started running away. There were about 500 boarding schools in 18 states. At one school in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1842 children ran away. When they were found they had beatings, physical restraints applied to them, and unlighted unventilated jail cells waiting for them. There were about 500 deaths.

According to some Native Americans it is time to start healing. Tribal nations have to heal. The United States community has to heal. The environmental community has to heal. We all have to heal. The psychological, sociological, cultural, and political sciences have shown us that traumas experienced in the past continue to harm the victims and the victimizers. We cannot continue the denial and ignorance of the history of the United States boarding school policy any longer.

We need to stop cultural genocide. We need to stop genocide and ecocide. *Don't let all that is Indian within you die!*

One way to start healing is to attend the **22nd Annual Demonstration and Conference to Protest Racism Against Indigenous Peoples in Sports and the Media, Please Support The Indigenous Peoples**, presented by The Committee of 500 Years of Dignity and Resistance, Friday, April 4, 2014. The demonstration meets at the park at West 25th Street and Detroit Avenue at noon. (If you do not want to do the walk, then meet at Progressive Field at 12:30 PM.) The Conference meets at Denison Avenue United Church of Christ, 9900 Denison Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio, enter at side door, at 4 PM. For more information contact Dennis Michael Plank from the Sierra Club Northeast Ohio Group Conservation Human Rights Sub-Committee at 216-939-8229 or dennislakeerie@aol.com.

Grow a Safe Lawn

By [Laurel Hopwood](#), Chair, Human Health & Environment Committee

It's that time of the year again. You'll be hearing from lawn care companies who want your business.

Did you know ... Lawn care companies who claim their synthetic products are "safe" can be prosecuted for this false and misleading claim?

Did you know ... You are potentially poisoning family and neighbors by allowing pesticides to be used on your property? Pesticides attach to dust particles and enter homes via open windows.

Did you know ... A one time exposure in a child, called the "window of opportunity," can cause irreversible long-term changes?

It doesn't matter if these pesticides (which kill weeds, insects and fungus) are in spray or granular form. It doesn't matter if a company applies or if you apply. What matters is that these artificial chemicals are poisons.

Could pesticides kill you outright? Very improbable. But it's possible that exposure can cause changes at the cellular level within our bodies. Health risks of exposure include cancer, neurological problems, birth defects, immune system suppression, learning disorders and more. Acute responses tend to get passed off as the flu, allergy, or stress. Chronic effects, from cumulative, repeated, low dose exposure, may show up years later, when it is impossible to connect cause and effect.

So what can you do? Nothing, except mow the lawn. Celebrate the biodiversity. Allow bees, which are dying, to proliferate and pollinate. How about growing edibles and/or plants which encourage pollination? Organize a street event where residents share what they've grown. That is community and caring for the Earth.

Events:

► Ohio EPA Public Hearing on Cuyahoga Dredge Disposal Proposal in Lake Erie

Thursday, March 6, 4:30-6 PM

Ohio EPA is hosting a public hearing to discuss the Army Corps' proposal to dispose of 180,000 cubic yards of dredge sediment from the Cuyahoga River navigation channel to a new open lake disposal area. Currently this sediment is being disposed of in Confined Disposal Facilities.

As this meeting date and time coincides with a lobby day on Capitol Hill for Great Lakes activists and stakeholders, we will likely need to enlist some volunteers to step up and deliver comments in their absence! If you can attend, please contact Jessica Ferrato at sierrawater@zoho.com.

Location: Martin Luther King Jr. Branch of the Cleveland Public Library, [1962 Stokes Boulevard, Cleveland, Ohio, 44106](#)

► Rocky River Fish Kill Investigation

Thursday, March 6, 6–7:30pm

Mike Durkalec, Cleveland Metroparks Aquatic Biologist, will unfold the events of the April 2012 fish kill and the legal and biological response to the poisoning of the East Branch of the Rocky River. A true

success story to having eyes on the river!

Location: [Watershed Stewardship Center](#) at West Creek

To register for this free event, [click here](#).

► **22nd Annual Demonstration and Conference to Protest Racism Against Indigenous Peoples in Sports and the Media, Please Support The Indigenous Peoples**

Friday, April 4, Noon

Demonstration and conference presented by The Committee of 500 Years of Dignity and Resistance. The demonstration meets at the park at [West 25th Street and Detroit Avenue](#) at noon. (If you do not want to do the walk, then meet at [Progressive Field](#) at 12:30 PM.) The Conference meets at Denison Avenue United Church of Christ, [9900 Denison Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio](#), enter at side door, at 4 PM. For more information contact Dennis Michael Plank from the Sierra Club Northeast Ohio Group Conservation Human Rights Sub-Committee at 216-939-8229 or dennislakeerie@aol.com.

► **Race, Food, & Justice Conference**

Friday & Saturday, April 4-5

Environmental Health Watch, Rid-All Green Partnership, and Case Western Reserve University Social Justice Institute have come together once again for the [Race, Food & Justice Conference 2014](#) : Analyzing the Urban Food Movement Through a Social Justice Lens! The Race, Food and Justice Conference of 2013 was developed and planned in response to the Place Matters work addressing the social determinants of health. Race and racism is a root cause of health disparities we see manifested within our communities.

The two day conference will be held at two locations in the University Circle Area:

Friday, April 4th, doors open at 5pm, event from 6pm-9pm

CWRU Allen Memorial Library Ford Auditorium, [11000 Euclid Ave, Cleveland, Ohio 44106](#)

Refreshments will be served.

FREE street metered parking after 6. Parking garages are located on Adelbert Rd., Ford Dr. and East Blvd.

Saturday, April 5th, doors open at 9am, event from 10am-2:30pm

University Circle United Methodist Church, [1919 E. 107th, Cleveland, Ohio 44106](#)

Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided.

FREE Street Parking on MLK BLVD and on 107th and Park Lane. FREE Parking at Judson Manor lot on 107th and at the Pentecostal Church of Christ lot on 105th/Chester.

► **EarthFest 2014: Year of Zero Waste**

Sunday, April 13, 10 AM - 5 PM

In partnership with Mayor Frank Jackson's Sustainable Cleveland 2019 initiative, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Cuyahoga Arts & Culture, Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District and ZeroWasteNEO, this year's EarthFest will celebrate the "Year of Zero Waste." There will be over 250 exhibits in Zero Waste, Local and Sustainable Food, Green Home and Garden, Advanced and Renewable Energy, Clean Transportation (with Ride and Drive), Family Fun, Health and Fitness, Community Works and Environmental Science.

Families will enjoy all day entertainment with eco-activities, biodiesel-powered amusement park rides, all day music, urban farm animals, pony rides, petting zoos, healthy food from local food trucks, local microbrews and vintners, and much more...

► **2nd Annual Black River Cleanup**

Saturday, May 3 & Sunday, May 4

[LoCo'Yaks](#), a Lorain County kayaking group which has been doing a wonderful job living the Sierra Club credo of Explore, Enjoy, and Protect, is hosting its second annual Black River Cleanup, and Northeast Ohio Sierra Club invites its members to volunteer! Last year's event was a huge success, with hundreds of participants removing hundreds of pounds of trash both by land and by sea, and enjoying a great dinner afterwards. If anyone is interested in carpooling to this year's cleanup on either day, contact Jessica Ferrato at sierrawater@zoho.com who will collect and coordinate ride share information.

Location: [421 Black River Lane, Lorain, OH](#)

► **Riversweep**

Saturday, May 10, 9 AM- noon

Northeast Ohio Sierra Club will again partner with Ohio & Erie Canal to sponsor and bring volunteers to [Riversweep](#). NEO group volunteers will be directed once again to the cleanup site at Mill Creek, and, depending on the number of volunteers who can commit prior to the cleanup, we may also be able to help manage sites in Tremont and West Creek. It all depends on you!

If interested, please contact Jessica Ferrato at sierrawater@zoho.com. Volunteers will receive Riversweep T-shirts to commemorate this year's cleanup, which will be notable for taking place close to the unveiling of the new Scranton Road section of trail!

► **Explore Maine's Allagash Wilderness Waterway**

September 2 - 6

Join us for a five day trip down the Allagash Wilderness Waterway in Northern Maine. We'll start at Churchill Dam on September 2, paddling down the pristine Allagash River and along a few lakes longer

than wide to the junction with the St. James River.

The early autumn season in the Maine North Woods is typically characterized by mild temperatures, blue skies and few insects. A side trip is possible to Acadia National Park. Previous canoeing or camping experience would be a plus.

For more information call one of the trip co-organizers: Dennis Michael Plank at 216-939-8229 or John Holian at 440-777-7903.

Meetings:

Executive Committee meetings begin immediately after the 7 PM Conservation meeting. Meeting locations will be changing as follows:

March 4 - at Fairview Park Public Library on 21255 Lorain Rd.

April 2 - at Lakewood Library Main Branch on 15425 Detroit Rd.

May 7 - at Lakewood Library Main Branch on 15425 Detroit Rd.

Coal & Energy Committee meets at 4105 Stilmore Rd, South Euclid, Ohio 44121. Please contact Randy Cunningham at (216) 631-3337 for the time and date of the next meeting.

Green Transportation Committee meets on the first Monday of each month at 1 PM in the Linking Employment Abilities and Potential (LEAP) offices at 2545 Lorain Ave. Please contact Akshai Singh for more information: akshai.singh@sierraclub.org. State Transportation calls are on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 PM. Contact Akshai to get on a call, or to connect with any cycling advocacy going on in NEO or statewide.

Rainforest Committee typically meets every month on the third Sunday of the month. Call Michael Melampy at 440-826-2263 for time and place.