



# Brook Notes

Doan Brook Watershed Partnership News

Fall/Winter, 2012



*Plymouth Church volunteers at stream clean-up*

***The Fall issue of Brook Notes is devoted to one of the most vital components of our organization: volunteers. We are grateful that the work of the Doan Brook Watershed Partnership's staff and Board is well received by our watershed community. Yet, so much progress is made quietly, and very formidably, by volunteers who are devoted to the Doan Brook and its watershed. These volunteers create a fabric, comprised of diverse individuals, each representing a thread of attention and effort, that, when woven together, improve the place we call home.***

***Not every cause has the power to compel people of such varied backgrounds, ages and talents to take action. The gift of our region's abundant rain and snowfall--and ensuing streams, rivers and lakes--is such a cause. Enjoy learning how a few volunteers make the Doan Brook their cause. Needless to say, four short pages are woefully inadequate to feature our entire volunteer corps, let alone those Robin Hoods working in anonymity.***

***The Partnership will be adding volunteer positions in the coming months. We invite you to join your watershed neighbors in the fun and the meaning of Doan Brook stewardship.***

*Tori Mills, Executive Director, DBWP*

## **2012's Watershed Heroes are volunteers....**

The 2012 Watershed Heroes are a unique, Cleveland-style brand of the wonder twins who serve different, yet complimentary, roles in an effort to create positive change in the Glenville neighborhood of Cleveland. Julie Patton and Arcey Harton are leaders of a neighborhood group, the Green Scouts, that restores vacant land, educates students of all ages and adds a twist of art and nature to all their endeavors.

In 2008, Julie and Arcey became the Partnership's local partners in an effort to protect and revitalize two vacant land bank parcels at the juncture of Ashbury Avenue and East Boulevard. Through this project, the Partnership installed a new rain garden, a green-street and placed an urban conservation easement on the site. Julie and Arcey were the Partnership's on-the-ground activists for these recent successes. In fact, they were planting seeds of revitalization at this site long before we found them.



*Jim McKnight meets with Glenville neighborhood youth for input on Greenway design*

In 2004 the idea of working with neighborhood children on a "Greenway Project," to connect Rockefeller Park with neighborhoods that flank the Park's eastern border, began to take shape for Julie and Arcey. Their vision was rooted in memories of growing up in a patchwork of the Park's wild spaces, the Cleveland Cultural Gardens and the vibrant Glenville neighborhood of artists, athletes and professionals.



*Draft vision for Ashbury Greenway, leading to Rockefeller Park & Doan Brook by Jim McKnight*

Arcey and Julie proceeded to create a small kingdom of artists, students, and ecologists who leveraged resources in a most unconventional and reciprocal manner to construct an herb garden, a pollinator garden, a market garden, a City Fresh produce stand, an art gallery, a street bioswale, a raingarden, a cistern and art installations of every stripe.

*Continued on page 4*

### Hawken School and Doan Brook: a natural partnership

Most of us remember taking a class field trip down to the Doan Brook at some point in grade school, perhaps spending time picking up trash, wading through a marsh, or sitting in a classroom inspecting owl droppings. But what really is Doan Brook all about? And why should we care?

Doan Brook is a watershed that covers about twelve square miles of the Cleveland area. In particular, the Doan Brook watershed drains parts of Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, and sections of Shaker Square, University Circle, Fairfax, Glenville, Buckeye, Hough, and St. Clair-Superior. So, for a lot of us, the Doan Brook watershed is home.

It is critical that young people understand that virtually all aspects of our lives, including economic prosperity, physical well-being, psychological health, food, water, and air, all stem from the natural ecosystems in which we live.

The Hawken Upper School community has been working with Doan Brook since the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year. According to Victoria Mills, Doan Brook Watershed Partnership Executive Director, "Not only are Hawken's grants and generous donations crucial to the watershed's well-being, but Hawken students provide the manpower that is required for maintenance projects." Currently, Hawken is contributing to Doan Brook's rain gardens and bioswales, which are landscape elements that control the runoff of urban water. A bioswale drains urban runoff through soil that filters the water before it enters the stream.



*Weeding the Lower Lake bioswale with Hawken volunteers - photo by Tatiana Yudovina*

Specific vegetation is planted in this soil that is conducive to filtration.

When it comes to volunteering, there seems to be a collection of stereotypes that surround Doan Brook. If you are not the outdoorsy type, you may conjure up unpleasant ideas of deep, dank mud, litter, and the smell of wet woods. However, Ms. Yudovina, the faculty member in charge of Hawken's Mather house community service, wants students to know that working at Doan Brook "isn't just picking up trash;" in fact, Mather house is working on some exciting projects which would allow students to design landscapes. In the near future, Ms. Yudovina even hopes to incorporate Doan Brook projects directly into the classroom. For instance, this semester she is involving her statistics classes in a Doan Brook project that will "train students to test the effectiveness of the bioswale."

Ms. Yudovina is not the only person excited about Doan Brook; Seniors

Sarah Jammal and Kate Anagnostos are also dedicated Doan Brook volunteers. Sarah is a Mather house leader who found her calling at Doan Brook through the House partnership her sophomore year. Aside from performing maintenance duties at the watershed, last winter, she worked on writing a proposal and contract for the official Hawken-Doan Brook partnership. In the future, she hopes to "run informational campaigns and do fundraising" and even train students as tour guides and interns. Similarly, Kate has been volunteering at Doan Brook since the beginning of her junior year and has worked with the bioswale, the downtown rain garden, planting, and maintenance. Both Kate and Sarah want to see more students become more active at the watershed. The Doan Brook watershed depends on volunteers to contribute to its success.

*Lauren Lumpkin, Hawken School Class of 2014*



## Moving from Inspiration to Initiative

*"Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working."* Pablo Picasso

Many people can envision how to improve the world around them, but few convert their thoughts to action. Because the DBWP serves as a clearing house for watershed information, we are fortunate to learn about many citizens who propel change throughout the watershed.

Virginia Haven, an octogenarian, doesn't let a day pass without walking along the Doan Brook to clear trash as she goes. She notices details like the lack of trash cans or broken park benches and beats the bushes until these small, but important, fixes are made.

Kathy Smachlo, a busy physician, has an equally powerful commitment to environmental health. She has transformed her yard to provide food for wildlife, create diversity and improve water quality. The roles she's played for the Partnership are manifold, never missing an opportunity to help in even the most modest of ways.

Hawken senior Arthur Erlendsson is a five-time recipient of a Cleveland Institute of Music scholarship and contributes to an award winning debate team. But in the midst of college resume building, Arthur expanded his perspective to community building. He interned last summer with the Partnership, taking on a stew of projects with so much initiative that it was hard to keep with him.

For the past three years, Cleveland Heights native David Perelman-Hall has led our Fall photography

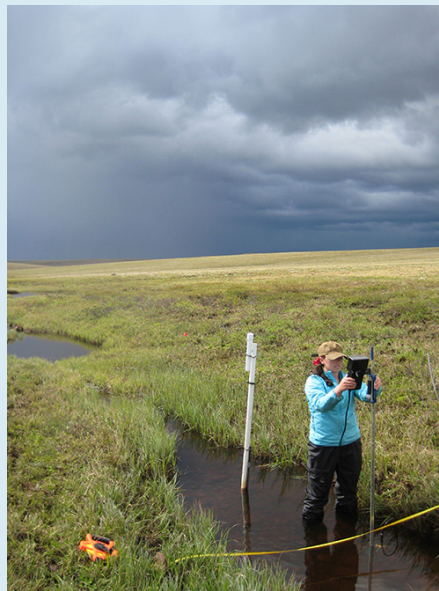
hike & workshop through the Doan Brook Gorge. David approached the Partnership expressly to collaborate on a very important aspect of our work—the goal to ignite and strengthen connections between people and our watershed landscape. See photography from workshop participants on our Facebook page.

Some volunteers move from the independent to the certifiably elusive category. Over the past five years, a stealth brigade of volunteers has been steadily improving and building

trails through the Doan Brook Parklands. One friend estimates that new and improved trails through the Gorge, the Doan's most pristine section, are the result of thousands and thousands of—not dollars—but hours from anonymous donors.

This quick sketch of volunteers only scratches the surface of activism that benefits the Brook. So *thank you* citizens of all ages, those known and unknown, for stepping up! As the Brook's importance becomes better understood, many new stewards will follow your lead.

### New watershed resident volunteers to connect with her new home



*Julia Larouche studying in the Arctic*

Julia Larouche, a recent transplant from New England, has just started volunteering with the Partnership on a weekly basis. We like to think of her as our new "Volunteer in Residence", because she's the kind of talent that is normally recruited from afar. Julia is finishing her Ph.D. in Natural Resources at the University of Vermont. Her dissertation explores the sensitivity of pristine arctic streams to climate change.

The arctic climate is warming faster than the rest of the globe, causing the tundra to burn and the permafrost to thaw. Increasing rates of thaw is concerning because

permafrost soils contain nearly twice as much carbon as the CO<sub>2</sub> found in the atmosphere. This slowly decomposing carbon, along with dissolved forms of nitrogen and phosphorus, flow to arctic streams, rivers and lakes, which in turn cause eutrophication. As a reminder, the Shaker Lakes are subject to eutrophication (*i.e.*, excessive algal bloom) in the heat of the summer. Thus, many of the field and analytical methods Julia has used to study arctic systems can be applied in northeast Ohio.

When she's not working hard to finish her Ph.D., you can find Julia studying and teaching yoga, spending time with her husband, and exploring all the simple joys and hidden treasures of Cleveland. Welcome to the watershed, Julia!



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### 2012's Watershed Heroes

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As can be expected with informal community building, the gardens change hands and students come and go. Julie and Arcey, however, are the fixtures that guide all that evolves and blossoms at the Greenway. Julie bathes all visitors to the Greenway with fresh ideas, poetry and a deep appreciation for the natural world. And Arcey is quiet, thoughtful and devoted to the day-to-day upkeep. Together they are our 2012 (wonder-twin) Watershed Heroes; and we honor them.

*"Beautiful camaraderie among the Hawken and Cleveland School the Arts youth today. Unexpected alliances, unveiling hidden corners of the city, enriching common ground and expanding consciousness of a more complex (less b & w, either/or, rich or poor, ugly or beautiful, native or...) existence. In a world of perceived have & have nots it's easy to forget we need each other. I think our downstream efforts have far reaching implications that may not be realized until years from now. The rain-garden is a beauty. We will make sure she is watered until the plants know they are home free. Thanks for all that we've done, together." --Julie Patton*



Julie Patton, Arcey Harton and Hawken volunteers

### 12<sup>th</sup> annual fishing day lures enthusiastic crowd

Thanks to the support of many contributing organizations and volunteers, the Partnership's annual Family Fishing Day on Saturday, August 25 drew over 600 participants from all over Northeast Ohio to enjoy the pleasures of fishing and spending time outdoors at Rockefeller Park, in the Doan Brook's lower watershed.

Both young and old alike took advantage of free bait, loaner rods and fishing tackle, thanks to a grant written by volunteer Bob Davis of the North Coast Black Bass Anglers Association and support from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. Holden Parks Trust funded healthy, farm-raised catfish, bluegill and largemouth bass throughout the summer. And we thank Councilman Jeff Johnson, the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District and University Circle Inc. for many free give-aways: children's t-shirts, rain barrels, and a picnic lunch.

A variety of educational activities were also donated. The Cleveland Treatment Centers took children on a "Casting Challenge," while Youth Outdoors/Cleveland Metroparks presented KNOW YOUR BAIT, with an opportunity to learn about the different fish in our local waterways, their habits and habitats. The Nature Center at Shaker Lakes encouraged kids to get "Manic over Macroinvertebrates," and Cleveland Museum of Art educators introduced all ages to the traditional Japanese art of fish printing.

Additional sponsors included TLC Springwater, who generously



Family Fishing Day photo by Brian Fyfe

donated over 700 bottles of water for the day, Constantino's Market, who provided a fish preparation demo and lunch support, Passion4Fishing, who assisted with angling education throughout the day, plus Cleveland Water Pollution Control, the Cuyahoga County Department of Health and PluggOne Outdoors.

Due to much needed restoration of the Doan Brook corridor by Rockefeller Lagoon, as well as repairs to the historic lagoon itself, next year's family fishing day may have a different look. We'll keep you posted!



2600 South Park Boulevard, Cleveland, OH 44120

[www.doanbrookpartnership.org](http://www.doanbrookpartnership.org)

ph: 216.321.5935 ext. 234

Victoria Mills, Executive Director  
[mills@shakerlakes.org](mailto:mills@shakerlakes.org)

Mary Ryan, Program Assistant  
[ryan@shakerlakes.org](mailto:ryan@shakerlakes.org)

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