

# Happenings in your 'shed

## Saturday, June 7 - River Day

Black River Canoe & Kayak Race, 11am start time  
Riverside Boat Launch, Riverside Drive, Port Huron

Vantage Point Fishing Seminar, 9am - 5pm  
Vantage Point Maritime Center, Port Huron

Water Reclamation Facility Tours, 10am & noon  
100 Merchant Street, Port Huron

21<sup>st</sup> Annual Liteline Classic Kids Free Fishing Clinic, 10am - 3pm  
W.P. Thompson Pond on 40th Street, Port Huron Twp

Kids All-American Fishing Day, 7:30am - 11:30am  
Pine Shores Golf Course, 515 Fred Moore Hwy, St. Clair

Canoe the Pine River, 9am - 5pm  
St. Clair Boat Harbor, 902 S. Second St, St. Clair

Guided Tour of Columbus County Park, 10am & 11am  
Bauman Road, 100 feet north of Columbus Twp Hall

Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off, 8am - noon  
Clay Township Fire Dept, 9620 Ainsworth Road at M-29, Clay Twp

Algonac Fishing Derby, 9am - noon  
Algonac-Clay Library, 2011 River Drive, Algonac

Algonac Water Fest, 12pm - 4pm  
Jiggers Bar and Grill, 8367 M-29 on Anchor Bay, Ira Twp

Reminder!

If you no longer wish to receive *The Blue Watershed News* by mail, or you are not yet on our mailing list and would like to receive the newsletter electronically or by mail, please call (810) 987 - 5306 and leave your name, address, phone number, email, and whether you wish to be added or removed from the mailing list.

This newsletter is distributed by the St. Clair County Storm Water Program for the Northeastern and Anchor Bay Watershed Groups.

## St. Clair County Health Department

Storm Water Program  
3415 28<sup>th</sup> Street  
Port Huron, MI 48060  
(810) 987 - 5306

*We want to hear from you!*

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# The Blue Watershed News

A publication of the St. Clair County Storm Water Program

Issue 8 ♦ Spring 2008

What is a watershed?

A watershed is another word for a river basin. It's an area of land shaped like a bowl that drains streams and runoff to a larger body of water. We all live in a watershed! Find yours at [www.stclaircountystormwater.org](http://www.stclaircountystormwater.org).

### About us

The St. Clair County Storm Water Program began in 2003 because of federal requirements to improve water quality. We are currently taking action to make our water cleaner.

### Mark Your Calendar...

- River Day, June 7
- Native Plant Sale, June 18

### Visit us online

Visit our watershed website at [www.stclaircountystormwater.org](http://www.stclaircountystormwater.org) for information about:

- Watershed maps
- Septic system maintenance
- Hazardous waste disposal
- Beach closures

### Help save trees

In an effort to reduce paper waste and mailing costs, please send us your e-mail address so we can send you a copy of the *Blue Watershed News* electronically. E-mail your request to [stormwater@stclaircounty.org](mailto:stormwater@stclaircounty.org).

## An X-Stream River Cleanup

### Volunteers clean up six St. Clair County rivers

Piles of garbage, paper, plastic, scrap metal, wood, furniture, appliances, and tires was all that was left after volunteers came through and cleaned up six area waterways during Stream Clean on Saturday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

Armed with buckets, gloves, waders and trash bags, 180 volunteers did a great job of getting our rivers ready for the variety of ways we will soon be enjoying them all summer long.

On Mill Creek, six canoes floated down a 3-mile stretch of river and pulled out a dumpster-worth full of trash. In Port Huron Township, students from Central, Chippewa and Memphis middle schools helped remove litter from Stocks Creek. Volunteers with Algonac State Park used heavy equipment to pull out all the debris they found in the Marine City Drain. On the Pine River volunteers worked long and hard to clear the river of log jams and other debris to make it navigable for canoeing. The scenic Belle River in Columbus Township had volunteers pulling out furniture of all shapes and sizes.



At the end of the Mill Creek cleanup in Yale City Park, volunteers roll tires out of their canoes and into a tractor waiting to dispose of them.



Volunteers congregate with their canoes on the banks of Mill Creek ready to embark on the river cleanup.

And the 19<sup>th</sup> annual St. John's Marsh cleanup in Clay Township removed three compacted cubic yards of trash.

The Stream Clean final result? These six stretches of rivers are now free of over 100 tires, countless trash bags of litter, and too many other items to list here.

Stream Clean doesn't start and stop with just one day; it takes all of us to help keep them clean! A big "Thank you" goes out to all our volunteers who participated in our cleanup. You can help make a difference by getting on our Stream Clean mailing list at [riverday@stclaircounty.org](mailto:riverday@stclaircounty.org) or (810) 987-5306.

### Help keep 'em clean!

Drop off chemicals, batteries and oil-based paint for free disposal. Car tires without rims, \$2.75/ea. Computers, \$5/each. St. Clair County Landfill 6779 Smiths Creek Rd, Smiths Creek, (810) 985-2443 Appointment required.

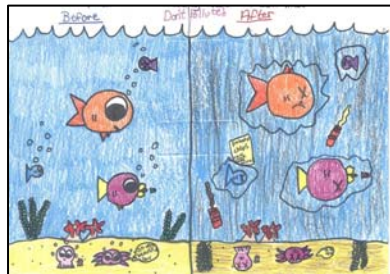
View a map of your watershed at [www.stclaircountystormwater.org](http://www.stclaircountystormwater.org)

**Students with a Message**

"Stop! Pollution is not healthy", "Don't pollute our water" and "Clean water is important" are the messages the winning students from our water quality poster contest want you to know.

Jake Mercier, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade Algonac student and Max Rossi, a 4<sup>th</sup> grade East China student placed first in our Water Quality Hotline poster contest. Honorable Mentions were also given to deserving students. A team of judges selected the winning artwork out of 390 entries based on creativity, quality, and effectiveness of message.

We want to thank these students for presenting the simple things we can do to keep our water clean.



Hanna Wilhelm's poster depicts the before and after effects of pollution.

**Algonac Poster Winners**  
(All students are from Millside Elem)

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Jake Mercier
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Julia Heim
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Garth Emch
- Honorable Mentions -  
Matthew Witherspoon  
Nicholas Todino  
Miranda Saldana

**East China Poster Winners**

- 1<sup>st</sup> - Max Rossi, Pine River
- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Hanna Wilhelm, Eddy
- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Sydnee Frank, Belle River
- Honorable Mentions -  
Amber Clees, Eddy  
Christina Hoggard, Belle River  
Alexandra Card, Pine River

**Watershed News**

**A monitoring update**

Spring time means monitoring time! As the warm weather settles in, we are busy preparing for another season of monitoring our rivers and beaches. This monitoring data is important for the watershed groups because they use it to focus their efforts on protecting and restoring the areas that need it most.



Kristen O. Jurs, Storm Water Coordinator, searches for benthic organisms in Stocks Creek.

In the Anchor Bay Watershed, monitoring results from last summer indicate there is a great amount of fish spawning activity in Swan Creek; sign of a healthy waterway! Monitoring results also showed safe levels of E. coli bacteria, but extremely high levels of phosphorous. Phosphorus is a nutrient that binds easily to soil particles and is believed to enter our water primarily through soil erosion. Excessive amounts of phosphorus leads to low amounts of

**Friends Update**

Great news! The Friends of the St. Clair River Watershed received a \$13,297 grant from MI Corp to begin a volunteer stream monitoring program. They will be monitoring tributaries in the St. Clair River Watershed.

The first official stream monitoring will be held September 2008. Volunteers

oxygen in the water which is detrimental for fish and other aquatic organisms.

This summer we will go back to Swan Creek and search for potential sources of phosphorous and soil erosion. We will partner with Friends of the St. Clair River Watershed to collect aquatic benthic macroinvertebrates and assess streamside habitat.

In the Northeastern Watershed, monitoring results from the last five years have shown dramatic improvements in E. coli bacteria levels at our seventeen beaches. This summer, we will continue the bacteria testing at our beaches and find and correct failing septic systems.

We will also add new monitoring sites at Stocks Creek, the Howe-Brandymore Drain, Mill Creek, Bunce Creek, Cuttle Creek and several locations in the Black River. This data will let us know where we need to focus our resources to keep improving water quality.

**Benthic Macroinvertebrates**  
Tiny bugs that live on a stream bottom whose presence indicates of the health of a waterway.



will receive training at sessions held in August and September.

Live close to a stream you'd like to see monitored? To become a bug or water volunteer, please call or email Janice Littlefield at (810) 989-9533 or [bythequay@comcast.net](mailto:bythequay@comcast.net). Hope to see you on the water!



**Earth Fair Photo Album**

Earth-friendly family fun ~ April 18-19

**Important DATE!**

Don't miss the Native Plant Sale!

Thursday, June 18  
4:30 - 7:00 p.m.  
Pine River Nature Center

Here's your chance to purchase native plants assembled into easy-to-plant kits. Choose either 32 plugs or 8 quart-size perennials for each of the following kits:

**Woodland Wildflower Kit**  
Shade loving plants

**Rain Garden Kit**  
Plants tolerate seasonal wet and dry soils, full to partial sun

**Bird & Butterfly Kit**  
Sun loving plants

Each garden kit contains a mix of 10-12 different native grasses and wildflowers and comes with a sample garden design. All plants, grown by the Native Plant Nursery in Ann Arbor, are native species propagated from Michigan sources.

Kits are available by pre-order for \$45.00. Plant pick-up will be at the Pine River Nature Center, 2585 Castor Rd in Goodells.

Native plants provide a beautiful, hardy, drought resistant, low maintenance landscape. They save time and money by eliminating or significantly reducing the need for fertilizers, pesticides, and watering.

Order deadline is June 11<sup>th</sup>. Request an order form at (810) 987-5306 or [riverday@stclaircounty.org](mailto:riverday@stclaircounty.org).



The Lexington Garden Club's rain garden absorbs runoff from the road, filters pollutants, and improves water quality.



Our friends, the sturgeon and the eagle, paid us a friendly visit.



Students show off their artistic side by creating painted prints of Michigan fish.



A boy takes his turn at riding a bike which generates electricity to the light bulb.



Gearing Elementary students take turns placing a pin on the map to identify their watershed.



Kids had fun interacting with the rabbits, llamas, alpacas, goats, turtles, birds and snakes.



Students crowd around a boat filled with aquatic organisms and a chance to view them up close under a microscope.

Join us in April for Earth Fair 2009 at Goodells County Park, the only place to celebrate Earth Day in St. Clair County.