

# Bridging the Watershed

An Outreach Program of the Alice Ferguson Foundation in Partnership with the National Park Service and Area Schools



## By The Way...



Issue # 3

May 2007

### *In This Issue:*

- Teacher Training
- Think Field Studies!
- Ferguson Foundation Features
- Fun For Students
- Classroom Extras
- Service Projects
- We Love Our Work!

*Bridging the Watershed*

Alice Ferguson Foundation  
2001 Bryan Point Road  
Accokeek, MD 20607  
[www.bridgingthewatershed.org](http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org)

Phone: 301-292-8757  
Fax: 301-292-8201

## *Teacher Training*

### **Institutes Are Fast Approaching**

Do you know of a teacher, National Park Ranger, or NPS volunteer who might be interested in joining in the fun of BTW field studies?! The deadline for all institute applications has been extended to May 31st. Summer is the perfect time for classroom teachers to venture outdoors and discover programs available to enrich their students' learning experiences. Of course, we are always looking for more rangers to help lead programs, whether it's in their own park or another in the region. Here's your reminder that we will be busy teaching teachers and rangers all summer – JOIN US!

July 9 – July 20:

Teachers and National Park Rangers will work together for two weeks in classroom and park settings, learning the BTW curricula and how to implement our hands-on lessons with students. This includes an overnight stay at Hard Bargain Farm!

July 23 – July 27:

Partners who work in Frederick and Washington counties in Maryland, and in Jefferson or Berkeley counties in West Virginia are best suited to visit Harpers Ferry National Historical Park or Monocacy National Battlefield. Both will play host to this week-long institute.



Teachers take a Habitat Hike along the Potomac River at Hard Bargain Farm during last summer's institute.

Classroom teachers are eligible to receive stipends for attending any institute, and all participants are eligible to work toward graduate credits in both the 10th Annual and Harpers Ferry Institutes. Please share these wonderful opportunities with your colleagues! More details and applications can be found at [http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org/ec\\_summer\\_inst.html](http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org/ec_summer_inst.html).

## Think Field Studies!

### Talkin' Trash with Juliet Thompson

On a chilly day late in March, BTW educators Becca and Matt met with Ranger John Kirkpatrick to encourage Juliet Thompson's Environmental Science students to talk trash – literally. Thirty-two enthusiastic students from Northwestern High School visited the FDR Memorial site on the National Mall to study litter in a Talkin' Trash field study. Talkin' Trash is a module inspired by the Potomac River Watershed Cleanup, where students collect trash, separate it by materials, weigh it, and analyze its potential origins and where it should have gone. Most students get a funny look when an educator tells them, in excited tones, that they will be picking up trash as the main event of their field study. But, as is usually the case, they had a great time. The reaction from one student: "Picking up trash was actually quite fun (something I wasn't expecting). I was really excited because my group picked up the most trash - YEAH!"

In just 45 minutes the students collected 117 pounds of trash, a staggering 64% of which could have been recycled rather than littered. The students were clearly surprised, one noting that "today was a very life-changing experience for me. I finally realized just how much people can waste, and where it all goes." Another commented that "this trip was very eye-opening because I couldn't believe that so many people littered. . ."



Students clean the shoreline of the Potomac River near the FDR Memorial on the National Mall.



A proud group of Northwestern High School students smile for the camera, showing off their work.



Bonding with the resource - these students pose with Franklin Delano Roosevelt at his memorial.

Here at BTW, we always hope to leave a lasting impression with our students. Part of our mission is to foster environmental stewardship, and Talkin' Trash is a field study that truly embraces such a goal. Reflections such as this one let us know we are on the right path:

***"What I did today made me feel very proud and helpful. This is because I was able to make a difference in the environment by cleaning the Potomac River."***

# Ferguson Foundation Features



On Friday, as the staff of AFF prepared for a busy cleanup day, Becca strolled to the River to assess the challenge - a pile of bottles and tires are the "norm."

## Cleanup Wrap-Up

The Alice Ferguson Foundation is winding down from another fantastic Potomac River Watershed Cleanup! Our 19th annual event took place primarily on the weekend of March 31 and April 1, with a total of 8,177 volunteers in Maryland, the District, Virginia, Pennsylvania and West Virginia. These tireless members of our watershed community worked at 402 sites to remove 209 tons of trash from the environment – and that's no joke! Even more exciting, three BTW classes participated through Talkin' Trash field studies!

Each year, the statistics grow; and here at the Alice Ferguson Foundation, the tides of effort are shifting from trash cleanup to trash prevention. In 2004, the Trash-Free Potomac River Watershed Initiative was launched, reaching toward accomplishing the goal by the year 2013. A Trash Treaty was signed by regional officials representing 22 districts, asserting that trash is a problem in our region, and both financial and human resources would be dedicated to achieve the goal.

## A Whole Lot of Trash Talkin' in DC

Next month, the 2nd Annual Potomac Watershed Trash Summit will convene at the World Bank in Washington, DC. On June 14th, students and teachers are encouraged to attend and take part in discussions about a regional anti-litter campaign, trash-innovative businesses, legislating solutions, regulating allowable amounts of trash in the environment, learning from plastic bag bans and bottle bills, trash monitoring and more. Registration is **FREE** for students and teachers - those interested should email Becca at [rscott@fergusonfoundation.org](mailto:rscott@fergusonfoundation.org) for more information! Becca will send you a special registration form which is due to AFF no later than **June 12th!**

## A New Face In The Field!

BTW is delighted to welcome the newest member of the education team, Maureen Fine! Maureen is a part-time educator with the program, helping out at a number of field studies this spring. While her career to date has been primarily in physical therapy, Maureen has a wealth of volunteer experience, as well as a Master's degree in environmental studies! We are particularly excited to have her native/invasive plant expertise on hand for *Alien Invaders* modules. We're hoping to see a lot more of Maureen in seasons to come!



## *Fun For Students*

### **Literary Competition**

Deadline: June 15, 2007

Entries for this photo, essay, and poetry contest in honor of Rachel Carson must be a joint project involving a person under age 18 and a person age 50 or older. Sponsored by the EPA Aging Initiative, Generations United, and the Rachel Carson Council, Inc. Winners will have their work published online. This is a fantastic opportunity to create a mentor-youth relationship!  
<http://www.epa.gov/aging/resources/thesenseofwonder/index.htm>

### **The Adventure Continues**

Deadline: January 31, 2008

In collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Volvo Adventure Award rewards young people creating their own environmental projects. The Adventure Award is for youth, ages 13-16, working in groups of two to five. Winners are invited to the final competition in Göteborg, Sweden, where the best will be awarded cash prizes to support their projects. The winning team will also receive an invitation to participate in the annual UNEP conference for children and youths. Check out more details at [www.volvoadventure.org](http://www.volvoadventure.org).

### **See How DC Stacks Up!**

The Earth Day Network ranked a few cities in the U.S. on how well each addresses environmental issues, and how environmentally impaired they are. Find D.C.'s Urban Environment Report here: [http://www.earthday.net/UER/report/dc\\_washington.html](http://www.earthday.net/UER/report/dc_washington.html). This could prove a really interesting resource for you or your students! DC ranked an impressive 2nd in Toxics & Waste, but an ominous 66th in Air Quality. Overall, D.C. falls in the middle of the pack – 45th out of 72 cities.

---

## *Classroom Extras*

### **FREE DVD Copies of "After the Storm"**

The Weather Channel (TWC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) co-produced a half-hour television special about watersheds, *After the Storm*. This program premiered on TWC in 2004 and focused on storm-water management. The program highlights three case studies - Santa Monica Bay, the Mississippi River Basin/Gulf of Mexico, and New York City, where polluted runoff threatens watersheds highly valued for recreation, commercial fisheries and navigation, and drinking water – all similar problems that we face here in the Potomac Watershed.



For more info on how to use this in your classroom, visit EPA's Web site at: [www.epa.gov/weatherchannel](http://www.epa.gov/weatherchannel). To order a free copy of *After the Storm*, please contact NSCEP at 800-490-9198 or send an email to [nscep@bps-lmit.com](mailto:nscep@bps-lmit.com) and please refer to *After the Storm* (DVD), EPA 841-C-06-001 OR *After the Storm* (VHS), EPA 840-V-04-001.

## **Savings On 15 Watershed Conservation Publications**

Looking to stock up on reference books for your home or classroom? We caught wind of this special sale through the NPS Info email list, and we thought we should share! McDonald and Woodward Publishing has posted a special offer on its web site regarding all water-related titles, to celebrate the anniversary of the publication of their first water-related book, *A Guide to Common Freshwater Invertebrates of North America*.

Other water-related titles included in this special offer are the following Izaak Walton League publications: *A Handbook for Stream Enhancement and Stewardship*, *A Handbook for Wetlands Conservation and Stewardship*, *A Field Guide to Aquatic Macroinvertebrates*, and the *Watershed Stewardship Action Kit*. See [www.mwpubco.com/fifth\\_anniversary\\_special\\_offer.htm](http://www.mwpubco.com/fifth_anniversary_special_offer.htm) for details.

---

## *Service Projects*

### **Calling All Apprentice Ecologists**

The goal of the Apprentice Ecologist Initiative is to elevate young people into leadership roles by engaging them in environmental stewardship projects. A \$500 scholarship will be awarded annually to the author of the top Apprentice Ecologist essay. The idea of picking up trash in a natural area is specifically noted on the website as an option on the website. Many of your students already do this and are able of leading an activity!

Visit [http://www.wildernessproject.org/volunteer\\_apprentice\\_ecologist](http://www.wildernessproject.org/volunteer_apprentice_ecologist) for more information.



### **Save the Earth and Raise Some Funds**

Recycle ink cartridges and cell phones to benefit the environment and help pediatric cancer research. This could be an excellent fundraiser for your school, or a fantastic way for your park to participate in an earth-friendly activity. Free recycling materials and shipping are provided. Details are at <http://www.earthtonesolutions.com>.

---

## *We Love Our Work!*

### **...And So Do You!**

Nomination Deadline: June 30, 2007

Have you or your colleagues done something outstanding this year to integrate environmental education into your programs? The National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) announces the creation of the Richard C. Bartlett Environmental Education Award to honor an outstanding educator who has successfully integrated environmental education into his or her daily education programs. Teachers in 5th to 12th grades are eligible to be nominated. The winner will be awarded \$5,000 for his or her continued work in environmental education. Details can be found at <http://www.neefusa.org/bartlett/index.htm>.