

# 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 # 5

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*Bridging the Watershed*

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### *Think Field Studies!*

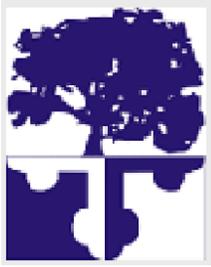
#### **Elizabeth Seton High School Ladies 'Talk Trash' at Kenilworth!**

This October a small army of excited and highly motivated Elizabeth Seton High School students hauled a MASSIVE amount of trash from Kenilworth Aquatic Gardens including a whopping 80 lbs. of recyclable containers! Despite the high tide preventing access to the heavily trashed Anacostia shoreline, the ladies managed to scale the boardwalks and step into the mud to remove items varying from a squirt gun to a shoe. Acclaim must be given to these young women, who managed to remove more trash during their field study than other volunteers at the same site on National Public Lands Day!

The downside to this story is that we all know more trash was brought in with the next tide. Don't forget, more work needs to be done to achieve the Alice Ferguson Foundation's goal of "Trash-Free by 2013." Interested in having your students participate in a "Talkin' Trash" field study? SO ARE WE! Visit our website [www.bridgingthewatershed.org](http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org) to schedule your field study today!



## Teacher Training



### Meet Us In The Mountains

For over 22 years, MAEOE has hosted a statewide environmental education conference. Originally aimed at outdoor schools, the conference has grown to include classroom teachers, museum educators, government agencies, and many other organizations that provide environmental education throughout the state of Maryland. Now the largest state environmental education conference, MAEOE has expanded to offer the following features: full and half-day workshops; make n' take sessions; 1-2 hour sessions; evening socials; local tours and field trips.

Alice Ferguson Foundation staff members are regular attendees and occasional presenters, and this year is no exception! You will find all the BTW staffers at the Rocky Gap Lodge in Flintstone, MD, from February 1-3, ready to share experiences and learn from other seasoned environmental educators from our region. This year's conference, themed "Convenient Actions for an Inconvenient Truth," will also feature a Saturday morning session led by none others than Anna Wadhams and Rebecca Scott! The ladies will be sharing a few of their favorite watershed-focused lessons in a session titled "Wild About Watersheds!" If you attend the conference this winter, be sure to pop by and say hello!

Register by December 16, 2007 for a reduced rate! A conference brochure and online registration forms can be found at [www.maeoe.org/conference](http://www.maeoe.org/conference).

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## Ferguson Foundation Feature

### National "Centennial Challenge" May Fund The Expansion of Bridging the Watershed!

National Park Director Mary Bomar and Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne announced that the Alice Ferguson Foundation's Bridging the Watershed (BTW) outreach program may be expanded throughout the Potomac Watershed as part of the National Park Service "Centennial Challenge," where selected National Park Service programs have been nominated for special funds.

"The Centennial Challenge is a critical element in the National Park Centennial Initiative put forward by President Bush and unveiled by Secretary Kempthorne one year ago," Bomar said about the Centennial Challenge – a funding mechanism to match up to \$100 million a year over 10 years of public money with \$100 million a year for 10 years in private donations. Financial commitments to the first round of proposals exceeded President Bush's challenge. "We have about \$370 million in proposals with not \$100 million in private commitments but \$216 million committed from park visitors, friends groups and other partners," Bomar said.

"The Alice Ferguson Foundation has been a dedicated partner in coordinating conservation efforts in the National Capital Region and teaching citizens how to be good stewards of the environment," Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-MD) said today. "It is a great testament to the value of the Bridging the Watershed program that it was selected as a candidate to receive

federal funding as part of the National Park Centennial Initiative.

If Congress approves this funding request, the "Centennial Challenge" will expand the reach of Bridging the Watershed to more students and educators, ranging from rural areas in Maryland and Virginia, Pennsylvania and West Virginia to inner-city schools in the District of Columbia. The program represents a dynamic private/public partnership of diverse populations of high school students and teachers in the Potomac Watershed with the rich resources of their national parks.

For more information on the Centennial Challenge and other programs selected for recognition please visit the link: <http://www.nps.gov/2016/>

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## *Classrooms to Parklands*

### **For Your Eyes Only!**

Teachers and Rangers, we're talking to you! Don't forget – whenever you are looking for extra resources to prepare for your Bridging the Watershed program, look no further than your own special pages on our website. Teachers, you can find classroom presentations galore! Rangers, you'll find everything from Ranger Liaison meeting minutes and field study data sheets to guides for managing field equipment. AND, we are happy to add any materials that you have created that might be helpful for other BTW teachers and rangers. Just remember, these sites are for your eyes only, so they are not linked to our homepage. You need to type in the direct address:

Teachers - [www.bridgingthewatershed.org/teacherresources.html](http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org/teacherresources.html)

Rangers – [www.bridgingthewatershed.org/rangerliaison.html](http://www.bridgingthewatershed.org/rangerliaison.html)

### **Need Funds for a Special Project?**



We often hear from teachers and parks that they want to create special projects to help make their space "greener" – whether it's initiating a recycling program on campus or cleaning up historic illegal dump sites on park grounds. The trick is, though the big ideas and enthusiastic volunteers can be easy to come by, that it is sometimes tough to fund these projects. Here's a fairly new program that might help you turn your big ideas into great improvements in our own local environment!

The General Mills brand "Hamburger Helper" has announced its 2007 "My Hometown Helper" grant program, a nationwide initiative that helps local groups make a difference in their own community. Applicants are invited to submit an essay of 250 words or less describing how the grant would help with their community project. Award amounts will range from \$500 to \$15,000 each and all requests for funding must be sponsored by a municipal or civic organization or a public school. Funds will be awarded based on the merit of the project, including its impact on and support within the community.

Grants are available several times a year and the next application session opens February 1, 2008, so start thinking big! For more information on the "My Hometown Helper" grant program and a complete set of rules, visit the program's website: [www.myHometownHelper.com](http://www.myHometownHelper.com)

## *Service Projects*

### **You Don't Have to Bring Your Whole Class to Us to Make a Difference!**

2007's Potomac River Watershed Cleanup was the most successful on record, with an astonishing 300 tons of trash collected! Have your kids be part of the momentous volunteer effort! Find out more about the 2008 PRWC by visiting [www.potomaccleanup.org](http://www.potomaccleanup.org)

### **Potomac Conservancy Needs Your Help to Get Nuts for Clean Water**

Since 2001, Potomac Conservancy has been "growing native" to improve the health of the watershed! They send out a call for volunteers each fall to help collect native tree seeds. It's all part of Growing Native, an annual program to help restore the Potomac River and its tributary streams. This year, the Alice Ferguson Foundation joined in, gathering more than 120 pounds of seeds from black walnut and paw paw trees at Hard Bargain Farm. Next year, HBF will participate as a drop-off site, so you can bring your native seeds to us and we'll send them along!

Over the years, volunteers have made great strides collecting over 94,000 pounds of seeds. These seeds are delivered to state-run nurseries where they are grown into tree seedlings and eventually planted along streamside land. These seedlings will grow into trees, which will help restore forests that filter pollution and run-off before it enters our streams, and act as carbon sinks that help to reduce levels of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. The demand for native trees is growing all the time. If you have native trees on your school campus or park grounds, think about organizing a collection next fall! It's a great way to combine an object lesson about native vs. alien ecologies while engaging students in community service.

For more information on Growing Native seed collection events, or how to become involved in your community, visit our website: <http://www.growingnative.org>.

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## *What's New at AFF?*

### **"Yes Sir, That's My Baby!"**

The Bridging the Watershed Family is proud to announce a new addition! Monday October 1st BTW Program Manager Jeanne and her husband Seth welcomed the arrival of their first child, Daniel Harry Troy. Both mother and child are doing well, and little Daniel has already enjoyed walks in the woods and a trip to the Alice Ferguson Foundation's Hard Bargain Farm Environmental Education Center. It looks like we have another naturalist in the making! Personally, we BTW-ers can't wait to see Daniel interact with the baby goats and piglets next spring.



This newsletter was produced by the Bridging the Watershed staff at the Alice Ferguson Foundation. Submissions are welcomed from all readers. Please send content to Jeanne Troy ([jtroy@fergusonfoundation.org](mailto:jtroy@fergusonfoundation.org)).