



# The Boone Watershed News

A Publication of the Boone Watershed Partnership, Inc.

Volume 4, Issue 1  
Winter 2012

## The Boone Watershed Partnership Works for Clean Streams

### Message from the President

2011 was a very exciting and productive year for the Boone Watershed Partnership! We believe that everyone deserves that fundamental necessity for life: clean, safe water in their communities. BWP is working hard in the region to ensure future generations will have that

unpolluted water. While we are finding more and more ways to accomplish our mission, funding is becoming more of an issue. During the year we lost a major funding source and this will put a strain on our budget for this year. The BWP needs your help in ensuring we can continue to work for clean water. Please make your tax-deductible contribution today to help us carry out our mis-

sion! Send your check made payable to Boone Watershed Partnership to: Matt Dake, Treasurer, 578 Beaver Creek Road, Bluff City, TN 37618

Gary Barrigar  
President, BWP

**We are now looking for different fund raising activities. If you have a special talent or skill that could help us please contact Joy Stewart by email at [joylarry@btes.tv](mailto:joylarry@btes.tv).**

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### From the Editor

Dear Readers, it is with great enthusiasm that I relieve Gary Barrigar as editor of the Boone Watershed Newsletter. He has faithfully produced this newsletter for a number of years and I thank him.

The purpose of the newsletter is to keep you up to date on all of the activities of the organization, bring you relevant environmental news and educate readers on topics of interest.

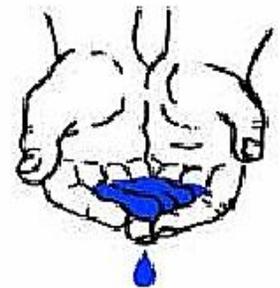
As you read this newsletter, you will see that 2011 was a very busy year. The majority of the projects, activities and events the members, volunteers and partners of our organization have supported throughout the year are found on pages 4 and 5. It is particularly amazing given the size of the organization, 33 members and 3 sponsors. We have provided public education and outreach along with substantial improvements to the water quality and quality of life for our community.

As we begin a new year, it is time to reflect on the past and look forward to the future challenges of 2012 and to reaffirm our commitment to our Vision:

**To partner with local users, regional, state and federal entities, educators and others to identify and address water resource issues in the Boone Watershed.**

Going forward, please let me know if there are other articles or information that you would like to see included in future issues.

Happy New Year  
Deborah Wilkinson



**Clean Water:  
We All Need It!**

**Do your part  
to conserve  
and protect  
our  
water!**

### Quote of the day:

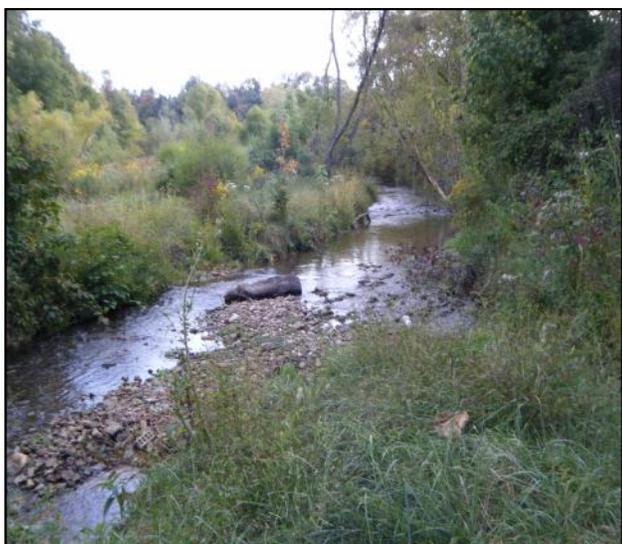
**When the well's dry,  
we know the worth of  
water.**

**Benjamin Franklin**

## Sinking Creek Restoration Project Update - January 3, 2012

In October 2008, the Boone Watershed Partnership (BWP) received a grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to address high levels of *Escherichia coli* in Sinking Creek. Sinking Creek is on Tennessee's 2006 303(d) list of impaired waters and its lower section has been posted to warn against contamination for decades. Sinking Creek originates on Buffalo Mountain and flows through Johnson City and Carter County before sinking underground and emerging in the Watauga River. The Sinking Creek sub-watershed also includes Catbird Creek, which also runs off Buffalo Mountain. Potential sources of the *E. coli* could include leaking septic tanks, storm water discharges (from streets and yards) and runoff from pastures.

With the goal of eliminating leaking septic tanks along the creeks in the watershed wherever possible, the old septic tanks are filled in and the drain lines from the residences are connect to Johnson City sewer lines. If no sewer line is available, septic tank pump-outs and repairs are done. To date, 14 sewer connections and 4 septic tank pump outs and/or repairs have been completed in the watershed.



At the one agricultural project, 11 volunteers from the BWP and the Tipton Haynes Historic Site braved the cold on Saturday, December 10 to plant 700 trees along Catbird Creek at the Tipton Haynes Historic Park site. This supported the project of fencing cattle out of the

creek previously completed by BWP thus eliminating a source of both sediment and *E. coli*.



In addition to the Sinking Creek Restoration Project, the BWP is working to develop an environmental education park on 28 acres of property owned by the City of Johnson City that include about five acres of wetlands from Sinking Creek. BWP member Bill Francisco is taking the lead in this effort which will include a boardwalk and outdoor classroom at the wetlands. For more information on the wetland park, contact Bill at 423 926-6813 or [wlcisco@aol.com](mailto:wlcisco@aol.com).

A steering committee meets regularly to assess progress and plan future projects. The City of Johnson City is preparing to run a new lateral line to provide sewer access to 4 houses along Sinking Creek Road in Carter County and preparations are underway to connect a church septic to the sewer line. Several agricultural projects are also under consideration.

If you are interested in learning more or assisting with the project, contact:

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Elizabethton, TN 37643  
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(423) 543-7576

## Ring in the new—BWP Board Members Profile:

### Deborah Wilkinson and Bill Sorah newly elected board members for 2012

**Deborah Wilkinson**, a native of Kansas, received her B.S. in Chemistry from the University of Kansas. She made her way to Tennessee as a result of employment by Eastman Chemical Company where she worked as an Analytical Chemist for 19 years. She has long been interested in the health and well being of the environment and while she has



Deborah discussing water quality issues with 4th graders

a great fondness for the flat lands and prairie grasses, her 22 years here in the Northeast Tennessee mountains has given her a special appreciation for the natural abundance of water resources in the area. As a member of the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance for many years prior to its consolidation into the BWP and a member of Boone Watershed Part-

nership for several years, she sees first hand the need for protecting the water quality and how important it is for each of us do our part to conserve and preserve it.

In retirement, Deborah volunteers with several organizations to promote her passions for educating the public about water issues. In addition to her work with BWP, she supports education and outreach of water related topics with the Girl Scouts and American Chemical Society. She is also a volunteer with the American Cancer Society Washington County Relay for Life where she serves as a team captain and also the On-line Committee Chair. She and her husband Rick are actively involved in making Relay a “waste free” event.



Recycle Bins at Relay

In her spare time Deborah is a member of the Board of Examiners for the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence where she helps drive Tennessee organizations to achievement of world class performance. She serves as team leader of examining teams and feedback report editor.

Deborah hopes that the combination of passions and skills will help BWP achieve its mission. ■

**Bill Sorah** has served as the Deputy City Manager-Public Works for the City of Bristol, Tennessee since July of 1991. He is responsible for oversight of the divisions of engineering services, utility services, and public services. Major work elements of this department include water and sanitary sewer service, solid waste management, street maintenance, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program, fleet services, public transportation, site plan review, and the geographic information system. Previously, he was employed by the City of Bristol, Virginia as Assistant Director for the Parks and Recreation Department from 1977 until 1989. In 1989, he became the Purchasing Agent for the City of Bristol, Virginia and served in that role until July of 1991.

Bill has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi and a Master of City Management from East Tennessee State University and is a native of Bristol. His wife, Karen, also a native of Bristol, is employed as a pharmacist at Wilson's Pharmacy. They have three adult children, Brett, a fourth year medical student at ETSU's Quillen College of Medicine; Emily, a second year pharmacy student at ETSU's Gatton School of Pharmacy and Jennifer, a fourth year pharmacy student at Samford University's - McWhorter School of Pharmacy.

Bill's hobbies include officiating college football and he has officiated at the NCAA Bowl Championship Series level with the Sun Belt Conference for the past decade including the 2004 Chick-Fil-A Peach Bowl in Atlanta, Georgia; 2005 MasterCard Alamo Bowl in San Antonio, Texas; 2007 AutoZone Liberty Bowl in Memphis, Tennessee; and the 2011 Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl in San Francisco, California.

Bill's interests in BWP stem from the city's presence in the watershed. The city maintains a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for the operation of the Bristol Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant and a NPDES permit for the operation of a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System. The city desires to have a positive impact and protect the environment within the Boone watershed. He believes it is important to work closely with all stake-holders in the watershed to achieve this goal and BWP offers the opportunity to partner with other local and state government entities, corporate entities, members of the education community, and private citizens toward this common effort. ■

## 2011—The Year in Review

### ACTIVE PROJECTS:

Sinking Creek Restoration Project



Gap Creek Restoration project

Water-wise Landscaping Project

Beaver Creek Watershed Action Plan and proposal submitted for EPA funding of Beaver Creek Restoration Project

Sinking Creek Wetlands Park Development

Boone Lake Association Island Shoreline Restoration—Herron Island-400 linear feet

Cash Hollow Creek Restoration Project- BWP to provide 100 hours of volunteer work

Johnson City Morning Rotary Water Resource Education Project

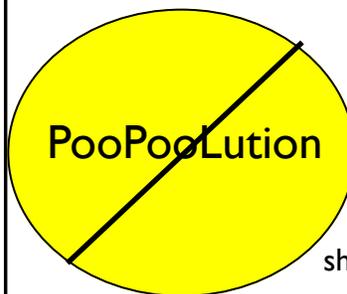
Exit 7 Litter Project new litter fence near Tinseltown Theaters to trap litter before it is washed into Beaver Creek

### ACTIVITIES/EVENTS SUPPORTED:



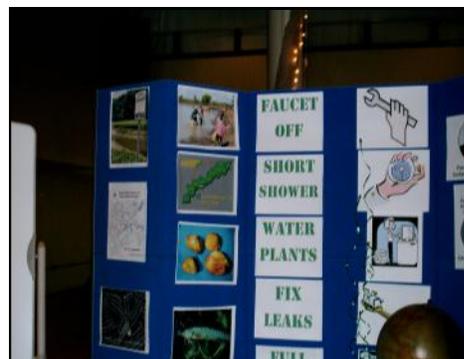
Rain Barrel Workshop  
(10 barrels sold) March 9

East TN Environmental Conference, manned a booth March 15-16



Jacob Francisco Memorial Century –62 mile (100KM) bike ride and multi KM walk-manned a booth and provided tee shirts - April 16

Earth Day celebration with the Girl Scouts-outreach to 60 Cadettes (ages 10-12) April 16 — at Hands on Museum





Stream workshop at Warrior's Path State Park - April 16

Earth Day Event - manned a booth at ETSU library- April 20

Carter County Stream Clean-up - April 30

Boone Lake Clean-up – April 30

Stream workshop – May 7 at Spring Roan Mountain Naturalists' Rally



Waste Free Relay, Washington County American Cancer Society Relay for Life - June 10



BWP annual awards picnic –July 30 in Elizabethton



Wal-Mart Doe River Clean Up- May 24, June 21, August 16

Buffalo Mountain Park Day – May 28

Carter County Conservation Camp – Aug.30-31

Roan Mountain Naturalists' Rally - Sept. 9-11

Beaver Creek Clean-up – Bristol VA/TN-September 24

Todd Burleson Memorial (Roan Mountain) Clean-up – September 24

Public Lands Day event –TVA Access, South Holston River - September 24



American Chemical Society Celebration of National Chemistry Week, 4th Grader Day– Outreach to over 1200 4<sup>th</sup> graders October 25-26



Tree Planting (700) along Catbird Creek on Tip-ton Haynes Historic park site - Dec 10

## Water-wise Landscaping Project Update by: Joy Stewart, Master Gardener

In Fall of 2009, the Northeast Master Gardener Program and the Washington County Virginia Master Gardener Program joined forces to begin planning the Water-Wise Landscaping Demonstration Project. Boone Watershed Partnership has been an active supporter and financial sponsor of the project.

The objective of the Water-Wise project is to show homeowners in the Tri-Cities area how to have a beautiful yard while conserving and protecting our water supply. Studies show that proper landscaping in a residential development can reduce annual storm water runoff volume by as much as 65%. In addition, homeowners will have the benefit of more attractive, colorful gardens and landscaping that will enhance the beauty and value of their homes.

Project goals are to raise awareness of water quality problems created by storm water runoff,



Photo by Joy Stewart

to educate the public on the need for and value of sustainable landscaping for storm water runoff and to showcase a variety of sustainable landscap-

ing techniques that people can use in their yards.

After assessing a variety of potential locations in the Tri-cities area, project staff selected a site at the Appalachian Fairgrounds in Gray. Project components at the site include : (1) two rain gardens; (2) two rain barrels, 55-gallon and 275-gallon; (3) permeable pavement, and (4) an educational kiosk with signs, brochures and other informational materials. As of October 2010, two rain gardens and two rain barrel were installed.

Additional installations have been delayed by funding problems and difficulty in finding additional financial sponsors. However, in Fall 2011, **Limestone Masonry in Limestone, Tennessee**, volunteered to build the educational kiosk and install both the permeable pavers and the stone step entryway to the display. It appears the project is on its way again and will hopefully be completed before Summer 2012. ▣

## Upcoming Meetings

BWP General Meeting	4-6 pm, January 12	Winged Deer Park, Johnson City
Overmountain Chapter, Trout Unlimited Meeting	6 pm, January 19	Firehouse Restaurant, 627 West Walnut Street, Johnson City
BWP Board Meeting	2 pm, February 7	Johnson City TDEC Office
TN Environmental Conference	March 13-14	Meadowview Conference Center, Kingsport, TN
Vista Volunteer Team	April 18-24	Buffalo Mountain Camp Johnson City, TN

**Learn how you can become involved in helping keep our streams clean.**

<http://boonewatershed.com/>

**Join us on Facebook**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Boone-Watershed-Partnership-Inc/133272473350069?ref=ts>