

# ON THE LAND

CUYAHOGA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

LEADING CONSERVATION IN THE URBAN LANDSCAPE



Summer 2010

## Composting: Urban Soil Stewardship



Soil organic matter is comprised of living biomass (plant, animal and microorganisms) and dead biomass at various stages of decomposition. The dead biomass continuously breaks down in the soil and new substances are synthesized by other organisms.

Over time, soil organic matter is lost to the atmosphere as carbon dioxide produced by microbial respiration. Since carbon loss is a natural soil process, organic matter must be added by new plants, animals and microorganisms to maintain soil organic matter.

Over the years, soils in Cuyahoga County have largely been viewed simply as a construction material. Today, consideration of urban soil functions and uses has expanded to storm water treatment and peak flow attenuation, habitat for soil organisms, recycling system for nutrients and organic wastes, and medium for

urban gardens and landscaping. Given the current trend to rediscover the beneficial functions of urban soils, soil organic matter has increasingly become a topic of conversation. In keeping with this, many landowners throughout Cuyahoga County have taken up the opportunity to improve soil quality and implement practices that promote additions of soil organic matter. Of particular interest is backyard composting of kitchen waste. Urban Soils Stewards are needed. To learn more, join us this Fall for a composting workshop that will explain how rich, crumbly compost can improve urban soil quality and provide nutrients to help plants grow.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- AUGUST 25 - RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP, MAYFIELD VILLAGE
- AUGUST 28 - CONSERVATION DAY/ANNUAL MEETING (P.3)
- SEPTEMBER 9 - RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP, CLEVELAND
- SEPTEMBER 25 - *DIKE 14* CLEVELAND NATURE PRESERVE OPEN HOUSE
- SEPTEMBER 28 - RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP, CLEVELAND
- OCTOBER 4 - RAIN BARREL & RAIN GARDENS WITH CUYAHOGA FARM BUREAU, N. ROYALTON
- OCTOBER 7 - KATIE SPOTZ PRESENTS: *ROW FOR WATER* (P. 4)

### AND COMING THIS FALL...

- COMPOSTING WORKSHOP
- RAIN GARDENS, BIO-RETENTION AND OTHER GREEN PRACTICES WITH THE CLEVELAND BOTANICAL GARDEN

## Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve (Dike 14)

The 88 acres adjacent to Gordon Lakefront State Park, that was a barren mudflat in 2002, has transformed into a lakefront habitat that is home to a variety of birds and butterflies throughout the year.

The Dike 14 Environmental Education Collaborative, a

group of Cleveland's finest environmental agencies, has worked diligently to open this unique area to the public.

Each year hundreds of people visit Dike 14, which will soon be known as the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve. Currently, the site is open is open to the

public twice per year, but the Collaborative is working with its partners to open the dike for the public from dawn to dusk.

Join us on **Saturday, September 25th** from 7:30a.m. - 2:00p.m. for the Fall Open House and a look at a truly special place.



*The western view on the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve*

**IN THE NEWS...**The algae blooms have arrived earlier than usual and are covering more of Lake Erie than in decades. Most blame the algae blooms in the Western Basin on phosphorous used to fertilize crops, but over fertilization of lawns and gardens in our area, which washes into the Lake Erie tributaries and eventually Lake Erie, also promotes excess algae growth. When algae dies, it consumes oxygen from the water as it sinks to the lake bottom.

Help protect Lake Erie by testing your lawn or garden soil to determine if you need to fertilize. Check our website under "soil fertility" or call the office for more information.

## ELECTION 2010

Soil and Water Conservation Districts, located in all 88 counties, are legal subdivisions of Ohio's government providing natural resource management assistance to county landowners and other units of local government. The Cuyahoga SWCD is currently funded through county and municipal appropriations, and state match dollars through the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Any resident 18 years of age or older who resides within the county may vote in the election of SWCD supervisors.

The Nominating Committee presents **Kevin Kubovcik of Cleveland and Thomas Marsalis of Mayfield Village** as candidates for the one open position. Residents of Cuyahoga County may vote for their favorite candidate by absentee ballot or at the **Conservation Day** event on **August 28th** from 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. For an absentee ballot, contact the office at 216-524-6580, ext. 10 or visit the [cuyahogawcd.org](http://cuyahogawcd.org) website for the required ballot request form. Please make an informed decision by reviewing the candidate biographies below.



Cuyahoga  
Soil and Water  
Conservation  
District

### BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Patricia Carey  
Fred Cash, Sr.  
Kevin Kubovcik  
Michael Emancipator  
Ruth Skuly, *Chair*

### DISTRICT STAFF

**Janine Rybka**  
*District Administrator*  
**Jared Bartley**  
*Rocky River Watershed Coordinator*  
**Gloria Kestranek**  
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*Storm Water Program Manager*  
**Patricia Hughes**  
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**Shannon Mullins**  
*Storm Water Specialist*  
**Claire Posius**  
*Euclid Creek Watershed Coordinator*  
**Amy Roskilly**  
*Conservation Education Coordinator*  
**Lisa Vavro**  
*Storm Water Specialist II*

### NRCS STAFF

**Jim Storer**  
*District Conservationist*

## MEET THE CANDIDATES



### Kevin Kubovcik

Kevin Kubovcik has served as the Fiscal Agent for the Cuyahoga SWCD since being elected to this position for the term commencing in January 2008. He received his Bachelor of Science in Business Administration degree, *cum laude* from the University of Phoenix in 2003. His passion for improving his "neck of the woods" is evident in his participation in grassroots efforts. Kevin Kubovcik is a 15-year resident of Cleveland's Old Brooklyn neighborhood and currently serves on the board of Old Brooklyn Community Development Corporation's Greenspace Committee and promotes the need to re-use vacant parcels of land by converting them into urban farms and community gardens. Kevin is also a member of the National Wildlife Federation and his backyard has been certified as a natural wildlife habitat that he enjoys with his 2 dogs. Mr. Kubovcik is an ardent believer that we should all serve as responsible stewards to protect and preserve our natural resources.

### Thomas Marsalis



Tom Marsalis received a Bachelor of Science from Cleveland State University. He retired from the City of Cleveland Division of Water Pollution Control in 2009 where he served as Deputy Commissioner, and supervised all areas of sewer maintenance including personnel, budget, vehicle maintenance, engineering, construction, inspection, customer service, outreach, sewer repair, sewer cleaning, and the Capacity Management Operation and Maintenance program. He served as the City of Cleveland's representative on the Cuyahoga RAP Technical Committee since 1990 and was an active member of the Northeast Ohio Storm Water Task Force that proposed storm water activities in the area to comply with USEPA Storm Water requirements. Tom wrote the City of Cleveland Storm Water compliance permit application and the annual reports and has lectured on storm water controls at conferences locally, nationally, and abroad. He has also been involved in coordinating public events, including the Big Creek clean up and Public Works Day.

Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District  
**61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting & Conservation Day**



**Saturday, August 28, 2010**

**CAMP CORDE**

**2901 W. Ridgewood Drive - Parma**

**9:00am - 12:30pm**

(West Creek Wetland Tour to follow)

Join us for this **free, fun, family-friendly educational event** featuring:

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

- 9:00a.m. - 11:30a.m. Board of Supervisors election
- 9:30a.m. - Noon Exhibits and Activities (go with the stream flow, wildlife, soils, urban gardening)
- 9:30a.m. Rain Barrel Demonstration
- 10:00a.m. Eco Scavenger Hunt
- 10:45a.m. Watershed Nature Walk & Soils Investigation
- 11:00a.m. Stream Monitoring and Water Quality Sampling
- 11:30a.m. - 12:30p.m. Annual Meeting, Conservation Awards, Picnic Lunch
- 12:30p.m. West Creek Wetland hike and tour

**Conservation Day 2010 is possible due to the support of our sponsors and conservation partner agencies:**

**CT Consultants, Inc. Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau**

CT Consultants, Cleveland Metroparks, Friends of Big Creek, Cuyahoga County Farm Bureau, LEAP for Biodiversity, Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District, Ohio Department of Natural Resources-Division of Wildlife, West Creek Preservation Committee, OSU-Extension, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

Watch [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org) for the latest program information  
 For more information, call 216-524-6580, ext. 13

## ON THE LAND

### CUYAHOGA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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*Conserving land and aquatic resources in a developed environment through stewardship, education, and technical assistance.  
An equal opportunity employer and provider*

2nd Annual

# Euclid Creek Stewardship Event

Saturday, September 11  
Wildwood State Park  
Cleveland  
Beginning at 9:00 a.m.

Meet at the Marina Parking lot. Learn about the importance of **bio-swales** and assist with the annual primping of this cool example of "green infrastructure"

10:00 a.m. - Noon

## Euclid Creek Stream Clean Up

Meet at the entrance to Wildwood State Park. Volunteers will assist with the annual stream clean up along the creek from Lakeshore Boulevard to the mouth of the creek at Lake Erie.

Contact Claire Posius for more details  
216-524-6580x16

# ROW FOR WATER

After 70 days alone at sea, 22 year-old Katie Spotz became the youngest person ever to row an ocean solo. No stranger to overcoming challenges, Katie has run across deserts, cycled across America, and she is the first person to swim the 325-mile Allegheny River. As part of the challenge, Katie partnered with the Blue Planet Network to help a billion people gain access to safe drinking water for life. So far, Katie has raised over \$100,000 for clean drinking water.

On October 7th, at the celebration of the completion of the Rain Barrel Art program, the Cuyahoga SWCD will proudly present Ms. Spotz to share her story.

All of the painted rain barrels can be viewed at [www.cuyahogawcd.org](http://www.cuyahogawcd.org). The auction is now taking place and any painted rain barrels that have not been bid on will be available for auction at this event.



## KATIE SPOTZ

*"Row for Water"*

Thursday, October 7, 2010

**Brecksville Community Center  
One Community Center  
Brecksville, OH 44141**

7:00pm - 8:30pm

Registration is required.

Tickets - \$20 per person

*Event proceeds going towards clean water programs*

Call Amy Roskilly at 216/524-6580, ext 22  
[aroskilly@cuyahogawcd.org](mailto:aroskilly@cuyahogawcd.org)  
(Cash or check accepted)