

# Raccoon Creek News

Winter 2018

Welcomes, Farewells, and What's to Follow.

## Welcome New Board Members

ATHENS

GALLIA

HOCKING

JACKSON

MEIGS

VINTON



### It's Glenn Stout!

Glenn has been involved in Vinton County since the early 1960s. Graduated from OSU in 1970 with a BS in Forest Industry. Glenn worked in the timber industry, operated the Vinton County Airport, and served as Director of Health at the Vinton County Health Department and the Solid Waste District.

Glenn was chair of the Raccoon Creek Improvement Committee before the formation of RCP, and has volunteered with RCP since its formation in 2007. While attending college, Glenn worked to reclaim and treat the acid mine drainage issues on the 70 acres where he now resides; restoring the stream on the property from lifeless to a lively small stream!



### Welcome Constance White.

White retired from ODNR-Division of Soil and Water, where she served as a Program Specialist and the last 6 years as the Ohio River Watershed Specialist.

She worked with the Watershed Coordinators Grant Program from Dayton to Lisbon. She first became involved with the Raccoon Creek Watershed work when she was District Program Administrator at the Gallia SWCD in 1988.

She has also served as an officer/member for many years with the Ohio Mineland Partnership organization.

### Hi. I am Nora Sullivan.

Growing up in suburban Cleveland, the daughter of an English teacher and a nurse, I loved getting out into nature in our yearly camping trips and holidays spent at my grandparents' rural home in southwestern Ohio. I think that is why it felt like I had come home when I relocated to Appalachian Ohio in 2009.

After two years at Hocking College, two years as an AmeriCorps with Monday Creek Restoration Project, and two and a half years getting my master's degrees, it felt even more like home. I got to know Amy Mackey, the Ohio University researchers, Ohio Department of Natural Resources folks, and an army of people working to restore Raccoon Creek, during my AmeriCorps service. As a grad student I had the pleasure of doing more work in Raccoon Creek, and am thrilled to have been hired as an Environmental Specialist at the Voinovich School, because it means I can still be involved in AMD restoration work.

As a board member with Raccoon Creek, I hope to work with the team to assure that the amazing improvements in water quality in the creek are maintained. My hope is that the team will continue to look for new and innovative ways to make Raccoon Creek watershed a great place to live and work. One focus I feel is important for the future is to find ways to encourage watershed residents feel a sense of pride and ownership of the incredible accomplishments Raccoon Creek Partnership has achieved.

### Hello, I'm Angie Cameron.

I was raised in Jackson County on a dairy farm and graduated from Wellston High School. I attended The Ohio State University in biochemistry/premedicine and graduated with a degree in comprehensive science education.

I taught secondary sciences in Westerville and helped develop the Outdoor Education program there. I wrote a curriculum for and took the first group of Westerville 8<sup>th</sup> grade students on a week-long outdoor education experience in Geneva Hills. I have also been a secondary science text book editor for the Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company and worked for many years as a biomedical technical writer/editor for Abbott Laboratories, Ross Nutrition Division, in Columbus, Ohio. I am also a sewist and have been since I was 6 years of age. Upon retirement, I moved back to the hills I love and am looking forward to becoming active in conservation and restoration of the environment here.

## Thank you Vance and Bob!

### Thank you Vance, for everything.

Vance was always willing to help. He was a hands-on volunteer at every event possible. He and his wife would load up their truck, stand in the cold or rain, cook food for the masses, and lend a hand every chance they could, and always with a smile (and sometimes a bag of jalapeno chips if we were lucky). Vance is passionate about invasive plants and is working to better his portion of Raccoon Creek by addressing this issue. Thank you for your service to our community and the Raccoon Creek Watershed.

By Jessica Makosky- RCP's treasurer

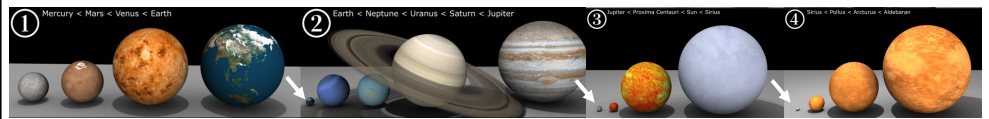


### Bob's Farewell

The first time I met Bob, he was giving a presentation at the RCP Annual Dinner called, "Wonders of the Universe." The slide that stuck with me all of these years revolved around size and perspective among many of the planets and stars we are all familiar with. Much like the one below.

As you follow the entities from left to right, and then on to the next line, you begin to realize how small we are in the whole scheme of things. We are a part of something bigger. Bob understands the beauty of our universe and the importance of preserving what we are given. His dedication and hard work during his tenure on the RCP Board has certainly allowed Bob to shine every bit as bright as Canis Majoris. You could say Bob was our BIGGEST STAR! Thank you Bob, for your service to our community through the Raccoon Creek Partnership Board. We hope to see you again soon!!!

By Jessica Makosky- RCP's treasurer



## Sarah Landers Cornwell says her good byes to RCP.



### I Fell in Love with a Creek (and fell in it a few times too)

By: Sarah Landers Cornwell

I didn't grow up playing in creeks. I had done some camping and hiking growing up, but I would never have considered myself an "outdoors" person. Back in the summer of 2010, the first time I put on chest waders and stepped into Raccoon Creek, I was terrified.

Serving as a Rural Action Stream Restore Corps AmeriCorps member with RCP from 2010-2011 was a life changing decision; that I won't ever regret, nor soon forget. In the four years that followed I had the pleasure and honor of serving as the Raccoon Creek Water Quality Specialist. The job was not an easy one and very often I was pushed out of my comfort zone trudging through the woods in the middle of nowhere, sliding down muddy stream banks, learning how to winch boats, lugging electrofishing equipment in +90 degree heat, presenting & teaching hundreds of people each year, running kids watershed camps, checking & fixing the Carbondale Doser in below zero temperatures, plunging my hands in cold winter waters, wrangling fish, and picking macroinvertebrates out of kick nets until I began to see them wiggling even when I closed my eyes.

Bit by bit I became a scientist, a mentor, a teacher, a community resource, a water protector. Though the opportunities presented to me I became certified at the highest level of OEPA chemical water quality monitoring, became a proficient grant writer, learned to canoe, got over my fear of public speaking, and I can now more than just wrangle those fish. Community outreach and environmental education become my passion and as much as I came to love field work, developing relationships with local landowners, RCP board members, community groups, Soil & Water Conservation District members, and agency folks at all levels of government become the most fulfilling aspect of my work.

The last two years my role changed as I took on an Environmental Specialist position with Ohio University's Voinovich School Energy & Environment Program. I was able to use my creekside lessons to help bring more resources to the region and more attention to water quality issues in Raccoon Creek. Although I am deeply saddened that my time vocationally serving Raccoon Creek has come to an end; I have a new and exciting adventure ahead. I'll be staying in the area and working for another regional non-profit, the Appalachian Center for Economic Networks, ACEnet. I'll be using my skill-set to help ACEnet create a sustainable and healthy local economy by providing opportunities for all residents to start businesses, obtain quality jobs, and connect with other entrepreneurs for mutual benefit. I am specifically focusing on providing assistance to food & agriculture entrepreneurs, ex-offenders reentering the workforce, and women business owners. After working on social and environmental justice issues in a region characterized by boom and bust non-renewable resource extraction, I now get to shift my focus to helping communities invest in their greatest renewable resource: their people.

I am ever grateful to Amy Mackey for continuing to hire me (for some still unknown reason!?) and for being a great mentor and dear friend (I can touch fish and know how to use all the ratchets thanks to you!). During my time serving Raccoon Creek Partnership, I made Appalachian Ohio my home, Raccoon Creek took hold of my heart, and I found dear friends and family in an ever expanding network of watershed folks. I had the opportunity to mentor hundreds of AmeriCorps members and students and I learned just as much from them as they did from me. I am truly blessed to have spent my time working with passionate people to keep a creek alive and teach conservation, restoration, and stewardship.



## RCP says its good byes to Sarah Landers Cornwell

It was early spring 2010 when Sarah Landers submitted her application for one of the Raccoon Creek AmeriCorps positions. We had already hired Kara Walton, who had been volunteering with the Raccoon Creek Partnership, and needed to hire one more person who we thought would work well with her. Typically we like to interview and hire people who we have worked with as volunteers or students, or people who have been highly recommended by someone in the watershed field, or at least someone with previous experience with acid mine drainage, chemical monitoring, and biology. We didn't know Sarah, *no one* that we worked with knew Sarah, and she had *no* experience with acid mine drainage, chemical monitoring, or biology.....

BUT, her application and supporting documents were well written, complete, and above all, she seemed excited! At the time, Sarah had a good job at a consulting company in Columbus but she wanted to *get outside!* She wanted to do something that really made a difference.

So, we decided to interview her and made arrangements for her to come to Athens. A few days before the interview Sarah contacted me asking me what she should wear to the interview. I'd never been asked that question before....and I don't know how I answered it, but I'm sure in my head I was thinking "Well, clothing would probably be good!" So she showed up, wearing clothing, and managed to get there on time despite the horrendous Athens construction (I believe it was the Roundabout construction). She seemed nervous, but confident. Friendly, but not annoyingly so. She was VERY prepared, with a binder filled with her past work to share with us. Impressive!

It didn't take too much discussion to decide that Sarah seemed like a pretty good fit, and we decided to offer her the position. She accepted! August rolls around, and it's time for the new AmeriCorps to start. Sarah and Kara are both excited, and seem to be getting along great! WONDERFUL, we made the right choice!

And then I start learning things about Sarah. I learned that she was afraid to touch fish. WHAT?! And she has an intense irrational fear of all flying insects, EVEN butterflies. Butterflies?! And that she didn't know how to use tools, and didn't know the difference between screws and nails. And that she was TERRIFIED about storms. And totally obsessed with safety... Oh my this could be a long year.....

Then I start learning other things about Sarah. Like how excited she gets when she learns new things. And how quickly she catches on. And how obsessively organized she is about important things. And that she doesn't complain (well, not any more than me at least). And that she knows how to dress for the weather. AND that she was willing to work on the fish fear, but the flying bugs....not gonna happen.

Sarah was an amazing AmeriCorps member, serving her term with excitement and enthusiasm. She worked great in the field, in the office, with kids, with adults. Then when our beloved Water Quality Specialist at the time, Brian Blair, moved to Missouri with his family, Sarah applied for the job. Sarah had proved that she could complete the necessary tasks during her AmeriCorps term, so without reservation, we hired her on. Of course she did an amazing job.

Fast forward to fall 2017. Sarah is hired on at ACEnet in Athens, Ohio. A position that will allow her to use even more of her amazing talents. Of course we were all sad when Sarah left Raccoon Creek, but also so happy for her to find a job that fit her so well.

Sarah, thanks for 7 years of helping me keep the fish in Raccoon Creek alive. Thanks for keeping us all in line and on track with your dynamic tables and incredible attention to detail. Thanks for keeping us all safe out there. And above all, thanks for being an amazing friend!!!

Amy Mackey - Raccoon Creek Watershed Coordinator

Board member Nora Sullivan submitted her favorite picture of water quality sampling with Sarah.

"I miss our walks around the Ridges," she said when reflecting on their time together. It was hard for Nora to put into words how much Sarah is treasured and for her to express all the hopes that she holds for her in Sarah in her future at AceNet.



### Winter Cheer...

Winter Cheer is the name of the homemade marmalade Sarah shared with me last season. She and her family worked to preserve the beauty of summer's bounty to carry everyone they loved through the winter season. My how it worked, and what a perfect symbolic representation of Sarah. Sarah is one of the kindest, most giving, hardest-working, sincerest human beings I have come to call friend. Her work in our watershed will be measured for years to come. She is also a tremendous paddler and purveyor of canoe skills and safety. Watching her work with our community to educate young and old alike about the benefits of a healthy watershed has been an honor. Thank you again for that Winter Cheer!

By Jessica Makosky- RCP's treasurer

On September 11, 2017, Sarah Cornwell organized a day of service for AmeriCorps members in Logan to conduct storm drain stenciling. Sarah's amazing organizational abilities really shone bright on this day. There was 16 people blanketing the city armed with stenciling supplies. It was so well orchestrated the group stenciled 157 drains in one day and delivered over 200 informational door hangers to residents in the area. Without Sarah's calm demeanor and well organized skills this wouldn't have been possible.

Thanks Sarah!

Jen Bowman-Director of Environmental Programs at Ohio University.



## Annual Dinner Success!

Our Annual Dinner was a great success. We gained many new members, discussed RCP's great success and many projects, and raised over \$1,300.

We would like to thank the businesses below for showing their support of Raccoon Creek Partnership, the local community, improvement of water quality, and environmental education. Their donations to our silent auction contributed to about half of the funds raised at the dinner.

### Thank you.

Ahoy	Franco's Pizza	Company
Transport	Fullbrooks Cafe	Raccoon Creek
Athena	Hart's Desire	Outfitters
Athens Bread	Hen House Quilts	Random House
Company	Hyacinth Bean	Real World Home
Blue Eagle Music	Jackios	Organizing
Bluetique	Larry's Doghouse	Rocky Boots
C&E	Mama Renie's	Salaam
Casa Nueva	Mitch's Produce	Sassafras Farms
Cherry Orchard	Nelsonville	Silver Serpent
Cowdery Farms	Emporium	Sticky Pete's
Cycle Path	Nelsonville Quilt	Taco Johns
Do It Best	Shop	UniversiTees
Eclipse Company	NYR	White's Mill
Store	Obetty's	Whit's Frozen
Far Corner Farms	Ohio Valley	Custard
Farmacy	Trading	Wizard's Guild

## Call for photos of Raccoon Creek

It's taken years of hard work to restore Raccoon Creek to the healthy state in which we see it today. We all have watched it shift from a dead orange mess of a creek to a waterway bursting with life. And now...

### We would like to celebrate its glory!

To do this, RCP is asking people to get out there, explore the creek, and photograph the beauty that you see in it. We're looking into either making a calendar or maybe postcards with the images we receive.

We ask that photographs be horizontal and high quality. Please submit them with the location of the photographed site, the approximate date of when it was taken, and the photographers name. Submit your winter season photos by the first day of spring, March 20th, 2018 to:

raccooncreekpartnership@gmail.com



## RCP UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

*Monthly RCP Meetings are held the Last Thursday of every month at 6:30 PM*

*For details about upcoming events and activities, as well as event and meeting locations, visit [www.facebook.com/raccooncreekpartnership](https://www.facebook.com/raccooncreekpartnership). Unless otherwise noted, many of our educational events take place at the Waterloo Aquatic Education Center (WAEC).*

*\*\*Event dates and times subject to change.\*\**

Winter Owl Prowl at Lake Hope	February 1st
Registration for RCP Summer Camp opens	March 18th
RCP Spring Day Camp and Birding Hike	April 14th
RCWTA Spring Float	TBD
Monday Creek- Passport to the Outdoors	May 6th
Sunday Creek- Burr Oak Float	May 20th
RCP Family Outdoor Day	May 26th
Monday Creek- Canoe Float	June 10th
Sunday Creek- Summer Camp	June 11th- 15th
RCP Summer Camp	June 18th-22nd
Sunday Creek- Scientist Camp	June 25th-29th
Monday Creek- Summer Camp	July 9th-13th

**BOLD** are RCP specific meetings. **BLUE** are events in the surrounding watersheds.

*\*\*All events subject to change. \*\**

For info or directions visit our Facebook page:  
<https://www.facebook.com/raccooncreekpartnership/>  
 Or e-mail [raccooncreekpartnership@gmail.com](mailto:raccooncreekpartnership@gmail.com)

