



## Fall Newsletter 2014

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City Utilities of Springfield  
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### Director's Update

We got it! On November 12, the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks received the Governor's Award of Excellence for dedication in enhancing Missouri's natural resources. At the award banquet, which was part of the larger natural resources conference, John L. Morris and Governor Jay Nixon spoke passionately about the protection of our natural resources and Gov. Nixon and Sarah Parker Pauley, Director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, made the Award presentation.

As we are concluding our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the recognition was especially welcome because it is shared with so many volunteers, board members, staff members, and recognizes the long-time investment of our sponsors and community. Our collective impact has been positive, noticeable, and truly the result of partnerships and teamwork. It seems like a good bookend to mark our last 30 years, and begin the next.

—Mike Kromrey, Executive Director



From left to right: Governor Nixon, WCO Board Vice-chair Bridget Dierks, WCO Director Mike Kromrey, and Missouri DNR Director Sara Parker Pauley

## Big Urbie Update

### Missouri State University and Watershed Committee of the Ozarks construct 20,000 gallon rainwater collection system in Springfield

Missouri State University and Watershed Committee of the Ozarks have completed the construction of a large rainwater collection system at the MSU William H. Darr Agricultural Center. This innovative project is part of the Big Urbie stormwater grant to improve water quality and reduce stormwater runoff. The rainwater collection system can capture 20,000 gallons of water from the roof of Pinegar Arena to store in underground tanks. The water is used for dust suppression inside the arena. Rainwater harvesting reduces the amount of runoff and conserves drinking water.

The planning, design and construction of this project was a yearlong collaborative effort from many groups. Missouri State Campus Construction served as the general contractor with engineering services provided by Geosyntec Consultants. The 10 polyethylene underground tanks were supplied by Free Water Systems. Matching funds and in-kind assistance was provided by The Sustainability Commission of the Missouri State University Students, MSU Facilities Management and MSU Planning Design and Construction.

This is one of many projects funded by the Springfield-Greene County Urban Watershed Stewardship Project (nicknamed Big Urbie), a \$1.1 million federal grant awarded to Watershed Committee of the Ozarks in 2011 by U.S. EPA Region 7 through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources under section 319 of the Clean Water Act. Learn more about the project at [www.bigurbie.org](http://www.bigurbie.org)

—Stacey Armstrong, Projects Manager



*During Big Urbie Improvements*



*After Big Urbie Improvements*

## Watershed Center Update

### Volunteers

This season has been very busy with volunteers. We have had several new volunteers working with us on field trips, most of them Missouri Master Naturalists. I have also gotten to work with a few new MSU students interested in teaching as they observe field trips. I will be working with Elly, a Greenwood student, this winter to complete a project relating to her interests in the outdoors and green design.

Sandi Shulz started her internship at the end of the summer and has been instrumental on almost every field trip and outreach event this fall. Sandi was a classroom teacher for several years and she is currently studying for her Master's degree through University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and living in Shell Knob, Missouri. She is bringing in great ideas and as we wind down for the season, she will be working with me to improve curriculum design as well as develop pre and post-field trip activities for classrooms and teachers.

## Watershed Center Update Cont.-

In addition a class of Drury students has been coming out to the Watershed Center recording video, taking pictures, creating virtual lessons and more as part of their class project.

We are thankful to our partners in education like Missouri State University and Drury University and Greenwood Lab School and Springfield-Greene County Parks for supplying us with so many competent volunteers.

### Education and Outreach

This fall we reached more students than ever with our field trips and reached new groups and teachers that had not been here before! Along with the school groups that come out, we have had the chance to host several college classes and professional trainings. On top of the visits to the Watershed Center, I have had the chance to go out to schools and other locations to present programming about water quality in our area. Below, I have summarized our educational events.

### Fall Visits to the Watershed Center

| Audience  | Number of Students |
|---|--------------------|
| Field Trip K-12 Students                                | 595                |
| Outreach All Ages                                       | 558                |
| Professional and College groups at the Watershed Center | 305                |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1458</b>        |

### Family Fun Day

On October 4<sup>th</sup>, Watershed Committee of the Ozarks continued our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration with a Watershed Center Family Fun Day. The whole WCO staff was on hand to guide visitors, hand out prizes, and even play a little music! I was able to join Bob Ranney, Ronna Haxby, and Harry Styron and his wife, Jody, in playing and singing some songs inside the education facility. Our director even joined in for a couple of tunes!

Inside, we also had Tana Pulles from the City of Springfield talking about recycling and using worms for composting kitchen waste. Outside, we had our friend Celeste Prussia from MSU cooking some delicious brunch in cast iron Dutch ovens, Darlene Haun and Bob Korpella showing off Macroinvertebrates to curious kids, and Zach Morris with the Department of Conservation teaching kids the basics of fishing through the new Discover Nature Fishing program. Eli Kromrey was even pitching in, scooping popcorn and pouring root beer donated by HomeGrown Foods.

A few of the families participated in the scavenger hunt and took home some cool prizes, and everyone enjoyed the hot and tasty food Celeste had prepared on such a chilly day. We look forward to holding an event like this again in the future, so stay tuned!

—Rob Hunt, Watershed Center Coordinator



*From left to right: Stacey Armstrong, JD slaughter & dog Gus, Intern Sandi Shulz, past intern Clarissa Hatley, Eli and Mike Kromrey*



*From left to right: Jody Styron, Harry Styron, Rob Hunt, Bob Ranney and Ronna Haxby*





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## Source Water Protection Plan

How many times has water been in the headlines of our Nation's media this year? It may be impossible to count, but themes of pollution and scarcity were consistent. Compromised public water supplies in West Virginia and Toledo Ohio, and major water scarcity in California come to mind.

Although our current water quality and supply is fairly good, and in some instances improving, as John F. Kennedy said, "the time to repair the roof is when the sun is shining." We have been working with City Utilities and a steering committee of local experts to develop a comprehensive voluntary Source Water Protection Plan which includes a list of potential contaminant sources. The plan is largely focused on prevention and includes action goals to guide future source water protection actions for our community. This quarter, the team completed the plan and submitted it to MDNR, who subsequently approved the plan for the Public Water Supply/CU.

If you are curious about the content, please feel free to view it on the publications page of our website - [www.watershedcommittee.org](http://www.watershedcommittee.org). A tremendous amount of work went into the document; I want to extend a special thanks to the hard work of Roddy Rogers (CU), Stacey Armstrong (WCO), and Steering Committee Members Cynthia Brookshire, Sean Terry, Vanessa Brandon, Roddy Rogers DeDe Vest, Janet Hicks, Tim Davis, Sarah Davis, and John Waitman.

—Mike Kromrey, Executive Director

