2013 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Blanchard River Watershed Partnership will be held on Wednesday, November 20, 2013, from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. at the Brugeman Lodge located in Riverbend Park east of Findlay. Breakfast will be provided starting at 7:00 a.m. Please RSVP for breakfast by calling Phil Martin at 419.422.6487 by October 31, 2013.

If you can’t make breakfast, still plan to come and learn more about the Blanchard River watershed and what the Partnership is doing to improve Water Quality. The program will start at 7:45 a.m.

Board of Directors Elections

Voting for three Board of Directors position will occur. The following positions are open for elections: At-large #1, Riley Creek Representative, and Eagle Creek Representative. To be eligible for the At-large position, you must live or work in the watershed. To be eligible for one of the Representative positions, you must live or work in that subwatershed. If you are interested in running for one of the positions, please call Phil Martin at 419.422.6487.

Who will be the speakers?

Tim Brugeman, president of the BRWP, will talk about the BRWP and its role in the watershed. Phil Martin, watershed coordinator, will discuss the activities of the BRWP in 2013 and give a look forward to what may happen in 2014.
**Grants…** The Blanchard River Watershed Partnership has been directly or indirectly involved in bringing in over $3,000,000 in 2013 into the Blanchard River Watershed. Endorsement of The Outlet/Lye Creek Watershed Action Plan and the Riley Creek Watershed Action Plan directly led to the Blanchard River watershed being the focus for many grants and other money. The money has presented a tremendous opportunity for the stakeholders in the Blanchard River Watershed to help the BRWP improve water quality in the watershed.

**Active Grants:**

- **$284,750** for Sediment and Phosphorus Reduction in the Upper Riley Creek watershed (Hancock County) and the Putnam County portion of the Lower Riley Creek watershed. This three year grant was from the Great Lakes Commission for installing Agricultural BMPs. 1,465 acres of cover crops and 1590 acres of Conservation Tillage have been enrolled. Also, a 0.5 grass buffer was completed.

- **$15,000** Healing Our Waters (HOW) grant from Freshwater Futures for a Feasibility Study on the Village of Houcktown on how to address the failing Home Septic Treatment Systems. Blanchard Design has completed the study. It will be posted on the web site by November 1, 2013.

- **$30,000** Findlay-Hancock Community Foundation grant for increasing the Sustainability of the Blanchard River Watershed Partnership.

- **$160,000** Water Pollution Control Loan Fund from the Ohio EPA to help repair/replace low income family Home Septic Treatment Systems in Hancock County. The BRWP wrote the grant with help from the Hancock County Board of Health. The grant was submitted through the Hancock County Commissioners. The BRWP and the Hancock County Board of Health are administering the grant. As of October 26, 2012, nine systems have been contracted totally nearly $90,000 with two more systems in the bid stage. **Six more projects have been done this year. There is no money left in this grant.**

- **$56,000** Water Pollution Control Loan Fund from the Ohio EPA was received in 2013 to help repair/replace low income family Home Septic Treatment System in Hancock County. The BRWP wrote the grant with help from the Hancock County Board of Health. The grant was submitted through the Hancock County Commissioners. The BRWP and the Hancock County Board of Health are administering the grant. This grant is good through December 31, 2014.

- **$397,574** Hancock Soil & Water Conservation District - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) - This grant is for Sediment & Phosphorus Reduction in the Lye Creek watershed using various agricultural BMPs.

- **$53,493.80** GLRI Hancock Health Department to replace failing Home Septic Treatment Systems in the Lye Creek watershed. Grant provides $5000 each for 10 systems.

- **$414,765** to the Nature Conservancy for Nutrient Reduction in the South Findlay Area of the Upper Blanchard Watershed: The project will reduce nutrient loading to the Upper Blanchard River Watershed, south of Findlay, Ohio, through the use of two-stage ditches, buffer strips and cropping systems which will filter nutrients and trap sediment. **There is a landowner in Hardin County committed to the project. A site in Hancock County is still being pursued.**

**Potential Grants:**

- **$92,000** GLRI grant for restoring the Riparian Buffer along Lye Creek in Findlay - The grant will be used to restore about three acres of riparian corridor along Lye Creek in Findlay near the mouth.

- **$93,344** GLRI grant to replaced Ash trees destroyed by the Emerald Ash Borer - The grant will be used to replaced lost trees in the Village of Ottawa, the City of Findlay, and the Hancock Park District.

- **$29,899** Great Lakes Basin grant - The grant will be used to use cost-share for farmers to plant cover crops and use conservation tillage in the Lower Riley Creek watershed in Allen County.
As the BRWP continues to grow in an effort to become more sustainable, you will find the BRWP using more advertising and outreach to businesses, corporations, and other stakeholders in the watershed. If you are driving into Findlay on Lima Ave, before the airport, you will see this billboard on the left side of the road. Another billboard, like this one, can been seen on Main St. east of Bluffton at County line road. These billboard will rotate to other locations each month. A mailing of a brochure is planned to the major businesses and corporations in the watershed.

The BRWP’s website has been updated to reflect our new logo, motto, and appearance. Check out the changes at www.blanchardriver.org. The BRWP has also added a facebook page. You can view the page at https://www.facebook.com/BlanchardRiver. This facebook page will show up in google searches. The BRWP is going to maintain its facebook group page. This page is viewing only to people who have asked to become a friend. If you want to follow the daily activities of the BRWP, use one of our facebook sites.

Other Summer - Fall BRWP Activities...

The BRWP was very active during the summer months with water quality monitoring, river clean-up, county fairs, and implementation of our grants.

- **Water Quality Monitoring** - 22 sites were monitored on Lye Creek (4), Riley Creek (6), Little Riley Creek (3) and the Blanchard River (9). Results can be seen on the web site by mid December.

- **River Clean-up** - On October 12, 2013, the BRWP partnered with volunteers from the Marathon Petroleum Company on a river clean-up in Findlay on the Blanchard River and Howard Run.

- **County Fairs** - The BRWP had a display at the Allen, Hancock, and Putnam County fairs. Picture to the right is our county fair display. Congratulations to our three winners of a Rain Barrel given away at each fair. The winners were Ann Meyer - Putnam County Fair, Logan Stechulte - Allen County Fair, and Laura Dagani - Hancock County Fair.

- **2014 Rain Barrel Decorating Contest** - The BRWP is again sponsoring a Rain Barrel Decorating Contest in the area high schools in 2013-14. The final decorated barrels will be on display at the Findlay Village Mall in late February. The awards will be presented on March 2, 2013 during the Greater Findlay Home Show. Below are pictures of last year’s winners

- **First Place** - Riverdale H. S.
- **Second Place** - Columbus Grove H. S.
- **Third Place** - Van Buren H. S.
Sustainability??????

The BRWP received word that the State of Ohio will not be offering funding of any watershed coordinator funding when the current funding ends. The funding for the BRWP coordinator from the state will end on June 30, 2015. In order to maintain the position at the present level will require the BRWP to become more sustainable. The BRWP also is in need of more operating money. Our goal is to raise a minimum of $50,000 to meet these needs. The sources for the money will include more membership, fundraisers, corporate / business sponsors, and grants.

2013 Sponsors….

The BRWP would like to thank the following sponsors for helping make 2013 such a successful year.

### BRWP Activities…

**November**
- November 20th - Annual Meeting at Brugeman Lodge located at Riverbend Park east of Findlay. RSVP for breakfast by October 31, 2012 to Phil Martin, 419-422-6487.
- November 28th - Happy Thanksgiving from the BRWP.

**December**
- December - Social get-together. Call Phil Martin at 419-422-6487, if interested.
- December 25th - Merry Christmas from the BRWP

**January**
- January - Planning meeting 9-12 noon. Check Facebook, website, or Call Phil Martin at 419-422-6487, if interested.

### Membership - New and Renewals…

The BRWP will be starting our Annual Membership Drive. The BRWP hopes that all present members and many new members will join the BRWP in 2014. The money from membership is used and needed to help cover the daily operations of the BRWP. Membership rates are:

- $15 - INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP
- $25 - FAMILY MEMBERSHIP
- $50-$249 -MEMBERSHIP PLUS!!!
- $250 and up - CORPORATE/BUSINESS

Check our web site for more details and options: **Please consider renewing or joining the BRWP!!!**