

Harpeth River Watershed Association  
 PO Box 1127  
 Franklin, TN 37065



HARPETH RIVER  
 WATERSHED  
 ASSOCIATION

*"Working together to protect and restore the Harpeth River Watershed and provide expertise in statewide conservation policy"*

**WHAT'S INSIDE?**

4TH ANNUAL  
 HOOTENANNY



FRANKLIN DRINKING  
 WATER WOES



LATEST ON THE  
 CHEMICAL SPILLS  
 INTO THE HARPETH



RESTORATION  
 PROJECTS



VOLUNTEER  
 OPPORTUNITIES



GRANT AWARDS

PO Box 1127  
 Franklin, TN 37065  
 615-790-9767  
 www.harpethriver.org

# VOICES for the HARPETH

Issue No. 8, Fall 2007

## 4<sup>TH</sup> YOU ARE INVITED TO THE ANNUAL HARPETH RIVER HOOTENANNY

*In The Round with J. Fred Knobloch, Don Schlitz,  
 Jellyroll Johnson and Thom Schuyler*

*Saturday, November 3, 2007 6:00 - 10:00 PM*

The 4th annual Harpeth River Hootenanny promises to continue the tradition of great entertainment, a lively silent auction and delicious food in the beautiful setting of Orrin and Lee Ann Ingram's Riverview Farm. We are proud to welcome award winning J. Fred Knobloch, Don Schlitz, Jellyroll Johnson and Thom Schuyler to the Hootenanny stage this year. These talented songwriters each possess an enviable list of credits, including hits for Ray Charles, Kenny Rogers, Faith Hill and Delbert McClinton.

Each are strong as individual performers, but teamed up "In The Round," the possibilities are endless. Fred and Thom are the founders of this format which originated 20 years ago at the Bluebird Café and are the club's most popular show. Together, these four stellar artists promise an evening you won't want to miss.

HRWA is grateful to our sponsors for their support. River Champion, Darrell Waltrip Honda-Volvo, is joined by First Tennessee and Trillium Ventures to help make this event possible.



All proceeds from the Hootenanny and silent auction go to support work to protect and restore the diverse Harpeth River Watershed.

Tickets are on sale now. Seats are limited, so contact us today to purchase your ticket.

Tickets	\$125 each
Table Sponsor	\$2500
<i>(includes company recognition at event)</i>	

**Call 615-790-9767 to purchase tickets and/or make a donation for the silent auction! Tickets can also be purchased on the website, [www.harpethriver.org](http://www.harpethriver.org).**

**HRWA STAFF**

Dorene Bolze, *Executive Director*  
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 Lindsay Gardner, *Director of Science and Restoration*  
 Roger Smitchens, *Director of Finance and Administration*  
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RIVER RESTORATION



WILDLIFE PROTECTION



POLICY AND PLANNING



EDUCATION AND OUTREACH



# THE CUMBERLAND RIVER IS FRANKLIN'S DRINKING WATER SOLUTION.

*Franklin Has Outgrown the Harpeth*



Take a canoe trip down the Harpeth River in Franklin and you can view first-hand how the city's old drinking water plant and water withdrawal activity coupled with the drought is causing physical change to the river and limiting the use of a resource we all enjoy. Reduced water flow affects the river's recreational quality. Canoeists upstream of the withdrawal have no easy way to take out to avoid the safety hazard of the lowhead dam. It is time to investigate the options of removing the lowhead dam. As long as the lowhead dam exists, hazard signs needs to be posted on the river and a canoe take-out constructed. Fish migration is also blocked along this stretch of the river.

Water pools behind the dam and becomes stagnate below the dam which causes algal blooms. That is bad news to anglers who come to middle TN and the Harpeth for the smallmouth bass. Improving the river, along with the native bass population, will bring more anglers and more tourism dollars to Franklin to add to the major increase tied to the city's new battlefield park.



City of Franklin lowhead dam July 2007 - No water flow

HRWA has contended that the city's existing water withdrawal without a permit does not comply with the TN Water Quality Control Act. The Act states that it is unlawful to carry out an activity, including water withdrawals, that results in the "alteration of the physical, chemical, biological and other properties of

waters of the state except within conditions of a permit." The current withdrawal is not permitted under the "grandfather clause" that only applies if the withdrawals were in existence prior to July 2000 AND do not cause adverse conditions affecting the river's uses. Though the city has an permit application before TDEC to increase the withdrawals from the Harpeth and expand the plant, the current operations need to be addressed and adjusted so that the state law is followed.

Franklin residents have suffered mandatory water restrictions again this summer. These restrictions could continue next summer if measures are not taken to shift the city's use of the Harpeth for a portion of its drinking water entirely to the Cumberland River. Franklin already receives the majority of its water from this river via Harpeth Valley Utility District (HVUD). While city officials have known for several years that water delivery upgrades are needed, solving the water supply issues does not mean building

a new drinking water plant on the Harpeth, a naturally low-flow river in the summer months. The issue can be solved by utilizing the Cumberland River for Franklin's water needs. The drought was a reminder of what longtime residents know, that producing water from the Harpeth is unreliable in the summer. Although the city is getting ALL of its drinking water from HVUD due to

the drought, senior city officials do not ask for enough water from HVUD each year. The city has to impose water restrictions to stay within the HVUD agreement. Meanwhile, other utility companies that get all of their water from HVUD have all the water they need. Rather than spending tax dollars on a new plant that would not be capable of operating during the summer months, funds should be spent now on improving the infrastructure needed for the water distribution system (pipes, pumps, redundancy, etc.).

Not only will utilizing the Cumberland via HVUD avoid degrading the Harpeth in the summer, it's also a much more economic choice for the citizens of Franklin. HRWA funded water economics expert, Bill Wade, to perform an analysis of city consultants and HVUD data. Significant errors and omissions were found such as the city's contract commitment with HVUD for a base amount of water purchases. Once adjustments were made using appropriate financial and resource economic analyses, the figures show that expanding the city's drinking water plant will lose money immediately compared to shutting the plant down and buying all the remaining water from HVUD. Consultant's studies completed last summer outlined \$1.2 - \$5 million upgrades needed without any water coming from the Harpeth. But, city senior staff have been proposing for over 4 years to also build a new drinking water plant. This additional \$7.5 million expenditure is NOT needed and could be better spent on other important capital needs for Franklin. Contact your aldermen today to voice your support to protect the Harpeth and shift Franklin's water source completely to the larger and more reliable Cumberland River. ♦

For complete details and scientific studies on this issue and to learn what you can do, please visit [www.harpethriver.org](http://www.harpethriver.org). Click on Action Alert and Policy sections.



# HRWA ANNOUNCES NEW SPEAKER'S SERIES: RIVER RUMORS AND REALITIES

HRWA is pleased to announce the beginning of a new speaker's series this fall. The series will offer the public an opportunity to learn about the river from the experts. Due to the upcoming elections, the first series of programs will be held at locations in Franklin from 6:30 - 7:30 PM. Please contact us at 615-790-9767 to reserve your spot to attend. Series topics and locations will expand to more locations around the watershed in 2008!

## 2007 Dates and Topics:

### **Drinking Water Supplies and Tax Payer Dollars**

Speaker: Dr. William Wade, Energy and Water Economics Expert  
First United Methodist Church : Tuesday, September 25, 2007 6:30 PM

### **How Does Your River Handle Pollution and Wastewater?**

Speaker: Mike Corn, CEO, AquAeTer Environmental Consulting  
Franklin Library: Monday, October 15, 2007 6:30 PM

### **Landscaping with Native Plants to Reduce Water Use**

Speaker: Andy Sudbrock, Nashville Natives Restoration Ecologist  
Franklin Library: Thursday, November 8, 2007 6:30 PM

## UPCOMING EVENTS



September 25th, Speaker's Series: Drinking Water and Tax Payer \$\$\$

October 3-18 Early Voting for Franklin - Get Out and Vote for the Harpeth!  
Visit the website for the Action Alert!

October 7th, Member's Adventure on Blue Heron Cruises

October 15th, Speaker's Series: How Does Your River Handle Pollution?

October 23rd, Election Day for Franklin - Get Out and Vote for the Harpeth!

November 3rd, 4th Annual Harpeth River HOOTENANNY!

Volunteers are needed to help with the event. Please contact us to sign up.

November 8th, Speaker's Series: Native Landscaping to Reduce Water Use

HRWA is looking for Volunteers interested in giving presentations or classroom programs. Call for details.

# THE HARPETH RIVER IS YOUR RIVER!

The Harpeth River Watershed Association needs your help to continue to protect and restore the ecological health of the watershed. Your donations support our programs in restoration, education, wildlife protection and statewide conservation policy.

Members enjoy benefits such as free or discounted family fun events to explore the watershed, newsletters and E-news bulletins and opportunities to make a difference in the health of your river.

*Please consider a gift today. Visit our website at [www.harpethriver.org](http://www.harpethriver.org) to join today!*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ ST: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\*HRWA sends updates and organizes volunteers via email.

**NEW Option: Please make my payment monthly via my credit card.**

\$5    \$10    \$15    \$\_\_\_\_\_

I would like to pay by  Check    Visa    MasterCard

Account Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about us? \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to the Harpeth River Watershed Association.  
The HRWA is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax deductible.

## Annual Giving Levels:

- \$40 Individual Membership
- \$60 Family Membership
- \$100-249 Dragonfly
- \$250-499 Bullfrog
- \$500-999 Tippecanoe Darter
- \$1000-2,499 Box Turtle
- \$2,500 and above River Otter
- I am interested in becoming a volunteer.
- I am interested in Planned Giving or Endowment Gifts.

## Member Benefits Include:

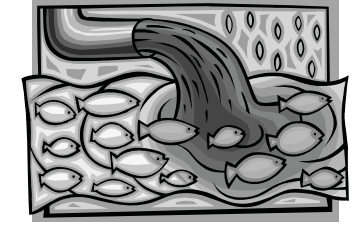
- ◆ Free T-shirt (two with Family)
- ◆ Membership and Pollution Hotline Card
- ◆ Newsletters, E-news bulletins and one free education program for your group
- ◆ Free or discounted family-fun events to explore the watershed

## LIBERTY CREEK CLEAN UP CONTINUES

Beginning in the fall of 2006, residents in the area of Daniels Drive, near Battle Ground Academy's lower school in downtown Franklin, started noticing a peculiar odor emanating from the Harpeth and a small tributary named Liberty Creek. After several reports from the Tennessean, the City of Franklin began taking water samples and sent them to the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). In January of 2007, results came back showing very high levels of compounds used in manufacturing solvents—acetone and toluene along with lower levels of several other chemicals. Upon investigation, Egyptian Lacquer Manufacturing Company

was determined to be the likely source of the release. They were the only facility in the entire 37064 zip code area listed on the EPA Toxics Release Inventory that utilized those chemicals. TDEC officially named them as the responsible party a few months later and ordered them to determine the extent of the contamination and develop clean up plans by specified dates.

ELMCO's consulting firm, TriAD, submitted a proposed Corrective Action Plan (CAP) for the groundwater cleanup to address the ongoing pollution. The recommendation is to allow "natural attenuation" of the hazardous chemicals which means the chemicals will *continue*



*leaking into the Harpeth indefinitely until it all washes into the river.* This could mean years of adverse effects on the river including low oxygen levels that violate state standards, extending the duration of the "dead zone" conditions in Liberty Creek and continued aggravation to nearby residents. ◆

**Attend the public hearing on October 10th at 6:00 PM at Franklin City Hall and call for an appropriate clean up plan that protects public health and the river.**

*For complete details please visit [www.harpethriver.org/policy\\_libertycreek.html](http://www.harpethriver.org/policy_libertycreek.html).*

## HRWA WORKING TO RESTORE YOUR RIVER



The River Restoration team has been hard at work this season on several stream restoration projects to improve conditions throughout the watershed. We have worked with a JROTC group in the Eagleville area and scout groups along the Little Harpeth in Brentwood's River Park. Other projects include:

- ◆ Completion of a Benthic Macroinvertebrate Inventory of Fivemile Creek in Franklin with trained volunteers. Data is currently being analyzed. This study will provide much needed baseline data as we move forward with the Fivemile Creek (I-65 growth area near the Agricultural Center) Subwatershed Planning Committee to plan the next steps for restoration as part of our EPA grant.
- ◆ Conducted a Dissolved Oxygen study on the Harpeth River around downtown Franklin in July 2007. Results indicated that Egyptian Lacquer chemical seeps into the area around Liberty Creek are contributing to the very low dissolved oxygen levels in the river.
- ◆ Hosted a community wide meeting and formed a Wastewater Advisory Group in the Eagleville community. Studies earlier this year indicated the presence of *E.coli* and *Shigella* bacteria in the water. Received new funding from the state to continue efforts to improve the conditions of the Harpeth River headwaters to benefit both the local community and everyone who lives downstream.
- ◆ As part of our EPA grant, HRWA presented how to use the Center for Watershed Protection's Watershed Treatment Model by communities to develop land use plans and stormwater regulations that help meet mandated pollution reduction goals at the EPA Stormwater Management Conference.

HRWA is in need of a small jon boat without a motor to use as a floating lab for scientific studies, if you have one you wish to donate, please contact Mike Cain at 615-790-9767.

## MEMBER EVENTS TO EXPLORE THE WATERSHED

Join us on October 7th from 4:00-7:00 PM as we explore the Harpeth and Cumberland Rivers. We'll take a ride with Blue Heron Cruises to view the Harpeth River at its mouth where it meets the Cumberland. Cruise is limited to 22 participants. Meeting location details will be provided with confirmation. Please call 615-790-9767 to register. Wine, soft drinks, snacks and cheese will be served.



Member Tickets: \$10  
Nonmember Tickets: \$12

## VOICES FOR THE HARPETH

**Newsletter Team: Dorie Bolze, Sarah Gann, Pam Davee, Lindsay Gardner, Cam West**  
**Newsletter Layout: Sarah Gann**  
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## HRWA RECEIVES GRANTS FOR RESTORATION EFFORTS

We are pleased to announce that HRWA has received several grant awards recently to help fund on-the-ground restoration and scientific studies. These grants provide restricted funds for use in specific areas of the watershed. Although they provide much of the funds for equipment and materials for restoration, we continue to need the support of members, donors and corporate sponsors for our staff resources for restoration, education, outreach and policy related efforts. The grant awards to date are as follows:

- ◆ Tennessee Department of Agriculture's (TDA) Nonpoint Source Program awarded funds for the development of a restoration plan for the West Harpeth- \$20,000 and a protection plan for the South Harpeth -\$20,000. The South Harpeth is considered the most pristine river in middle TN by TDEC.
- ◆ Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) Instream Flow Program awarded \$10,000 to support data collection on instream flow and dissolved oxygen around the Franklin water withdrawal, as well as studies to characterize sediment behind the lowhead dam as a first step toward removal of the dam.
- ◆ Two additional TDA Nonpoint Source Program grants were awarded to implement the first two years of restoration plans in the headwaters near Eagleville and in the Jones Creek area of Dickson County.
- ◆ TWRA Wallop Breaux Sport Fish Restoration Fund awarded \$20,000 over a two year period to support stream restoration efforts throughout the watershed.

## HRWA CELEBRATES NEW OFFICE

A ribbon cutting event, hosted by the Williamson County Chamber of Commerce, was held on Wednesday, August 15, 2007 to celebrate the new offices of the Harpeth River Watershed Association. The new office is located at 1164 Columbia Avenue, Franklin. Attendees of the event included Chamber members Cheryl Wilson and Betsy Hester, state Senators Henry and Johnson, Williamson County Mayor Anderson along with the Harpeth River Watershed Association staff and several representatives from the Board of Directors. Senator Johnson generously donated the American and Tennessee State flag that were flown over the capital in honor of HRWA.



## SCIENTIFIC STUDIES

The staff, expert advisors and trained volunteers at HRWA have been hard at work this summer studying the effects of the river's low-flow conditions that have been exacerbated by the drought, water withdrawals by the city drinking water plant, sewer plant discharges and chemical seeps from Egyptian Lacquer on the overall health of the Harpeth River. The study entailed collecting water samples every six hours and measuring the level of dissolved oxygen in the river. The results indicate that the levels are below state water quality standards. HRWA is currently coordinating the annual study of the entire river's length with TDEC and volunteers to continue monitoring the health of the river. Low dissolved oxygen levels are caused by reduced flow, increased temperature, overgrowth of algae, as well as the introduction of some pollutants. Fish and other aquatic life rely on high levels of oxygen in the water to survive. You can learn more about this and other HRWA studies on our website at [www.harpethriver.org](http://www.harpethriver.org). Please contact us today to learn how you can get involved or to lend your support to our efforts to protect the Harpeth for everyone.

## VICTORY FOR THE HARPETH RIVER

*Former Bellevue Quarry Will Be Protected from Off-Site Dumping*

On June 19, the Metro Council approved a bill allowing a 30-acre piece of property next to the former 70-acre quarry on McCrory Lane in Bellevue to be rezoned for townhome construction. Public concern over the use of the quarry as a landfill or for fill from off-site locations has been an issue since late 2005. Property developers originally proposed an exemption to the State Scenic Rivers Act to allow the property to be permitted as a construction and demolition landfill. This activity is prohibited within two miles of scenic rivers, such as the Harpeth, to prevent water pollution. In 2006, the amendment to change the law was successfully defeated thanks to the efforts of concerned citizens, Representative Moore and Senator Henry.



HRWA's Pam Davee overlooks Bellevue quarry next to the Harpeth River.

In September 2006, the 70-acre quarry property was subdivided. The Metropolitan Planning Staff and Commission indicated that the public's concerns had to be addressed regardless of whether the site was one or two pieces of property. As the rezoning bill moved through the Commission approval process, the Metro staff recommended that no fill be allowed in the quarry to prevent pollution and a fence be constructed around the quarry to protect the public. The

rezoning bill was approved by the Commission with the conditions for no dumping and a fence around the quarry.

As the rezoning bill moved through the Metro Council process, two simultaneous activities shaped the outcome. First, Councilmen Cole and Briley introduced a bill (2007-1384) which would more closely align state laws designed to protect water quality in the Scenic Harpeth River to local metro ordinances. Second, the bill for the re-zoning, introduced by Councilman Tygard (BL2006-1297) received much scrutiny from the public, the press and other council members due to the threat to water quality and public safety if the issues were not addressed. Although the bill was approved with conditions by the Planning Commission, the Council did not consider the conditions valid. During the Council approval process, an amendment was attached to the bill to apply the Planning Commission conditions.

Thanks to the work of many dedicated citizens, the quarry property WILL NOT be used as a receptacle for off-site materials. This was a big threat to water quality in the Harpeth because the property is located atop very porous limestone (karst) rock and water in the quarry can connect with the river. Keeping pollution out of the quarry is critical to protecting the river. The quarry has at least 50 feet of water in it, so the potential for contamination is very high if it receives off-site material. The developers can obtain

a grading permit after they receive the proper authorization from the state to move dirt around on the 30-acre site, but because the quarry and the townhome site are two separate pieces of property they cannot put fill from the townhome site into the quarry.

**“Keeping pollution out of the quarry is critical to protecting the Harpeth River.”**

However, they can move rock and dirt from the quarry site into the hole if they obtain appropriate permits. The State of Tennessee and Metro have agreed to work together to make certain that the conditions of the permit are very stringent. It will meet all of the requirements of the grading permit for fill, which limits fill to only inert materials originating from the site, such as limestone and dirt. Therefore, the potential for any pollutants such as oil or asphalt that could contaminate the Harpeth River via the quarry has been dramatically minimized, especially under the close scrutiny of Metro Water Services. The developers agreed to put a fence between the two sites and to prevent unauthorized access to the quarry. This should reduce the possibility of unauthorized dumping because the permit will be revoked if anything enters the quarry that does not originate on site. The fence also limits access to the quarry, serving to keep the public safe.

Our sincere thanks to everyone who participated in this process to protect the Harpeth River. ◆

