



*Volunteers pose next to some of the litter and debris that was gathered up and hauled away during a recent MECCA Work Day at Deep Cut Park.*

## Work Days a Success

Volunteer labor made a difference at two recent MECCA Work Days (see additional photos on page 4).

The first work day was held at Deep Cut park where about 20 volunteers, including personnel from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Water removed over five tons of debris.

Volunteers fanned out picking up litter for about a one mile stretch on

east side of the park. Using ODNR's skid loader and dump truck, many large appliances, tires and other items were removed from the canal bank.

The second project consisted of repainting the foot bridge over the Feeder canal from Lake St. Marys. Again, ODNR personnel supplied the paint, brushes and technical expertise. More Work Days are being planned for the future.

## MECCA Yard Sale/Membership Drive Continues

The Initial MECCA membership Yard Sale continues as nearly \$3,000 has been raised from membership dues.

Annual Memberships are being offered in increments of square yards of canal land. Stewardship of one square yard of canal land is \$10, providing for various levels of membership. An individual membership is

\$10, or one square yard, a family membership is \$20, a Sponsor Membership is \$50, a Partner Membership is \$100 and a Corridor Partner Membership is \$250 or more.

Any donation is accepted and all are tax deductible as MECCA is registered with the IRS as a 501 (c) 3 not-for-profit organization.

## Progress for MECCA

It's been a busy summer so far for the MECCA Board of Trustees. In addition to the Work Days, meetings, and organizational plans, the board continues to focus on its goal of hiring an executive director.

Since the board organized about 16 months ago much has been accomplished, but we realize the tremendous potential of this organization will go untapped until we accumulate the resources to invest in full-time organizational leadership.

In the past few months members of the MECCA Board have met with various legislators and their representatives. A meeting was held in July with Stephen George, Executive Director of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission; Beth Hanson, the Northwest Ohio Regional Representative of the Ohio Bicentennial Commission; Brian Schwartz, assistant to U.S. Senator Mike DeWine; and Craig Buford, assistant to Ohio Senator Bob Cupp. The board has also communicated with Ohio Representatives James Jordan and John Willamowski.

The response from these meetings has been tremendous as support continues to grow for MECCA's initiatives and objectives.

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The current membership list is printed in this newsletter. New members will be included in future newsletters. If you are not a member, please consider joining the organization. If you are already a member please recruit a friend. A membership form is included in this newsletter, or send your name, address and a check to: P.O. Box 722; St. Marys, Ohio; 45885.

# Progress

*Continued from Page 1*

With the help of Sen. DeWine's office we have begun exploring the path toward having parts of the Miami Erie Canal recognized as a "National Heritage Corridor." This recognition will open the way for federal grants and funding to preserve the history of the corridor and promote the recreational and educational resources.

Heritage Corridor status must be obtained through legislation passed by the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. To achieve this we need to rally grass roots support through letter-writing campaigns, etc. This is the type of activity that requires the time commitment of an executive director.

The MECCA Board has begun working on a two-year budget for an office and executive director, and continue exploring avenues to raise the necessary funds. To date we have raised over \$5,000 in donations and memberships. The board believes once the start-up funds have been raised, the executive director can help make the organization self-sustaining through continued donations and memberships and by applying to grants and foundations.

If you have any ideas, suggestions or comments, please contact a board member or put it in writing to P.O. Box 722, St. Marys, Ohio, 45885. In the meantime we thank all those who have become members and/or donated funds to MECCA.



*MECCA President Dave Stilwell (left) and Vice President Monika Wanamaker (right) accept a check from St. Marys Kmart Manager Ralph Peyton during a recent ribbon-cutting ceremony.*

## ***Kmart Recognizes MECCA With 'Grand Opening' Donation***

At a recent Grand Opening to the newly remodeled Kmart store in St. Marys, store manager Ralph Peyton presented the Miami Erie Canal Corridor Authority with a check for \$500.

Peyton said Kmart likes to help organizations working to make a difference in the local communities. When the store in the St. Marys Shopping Center on Indiana Ave. originally opened, a similar contribution was made toward the Belle of St. Marys Canal Boat Fund.

Now a "Big" Kmart, the store includes a large selection of food items in its pantry.

## **MECCA Receives Large Donation From Lima Ford Plant**

At a recent ceremony, the Ford Motor Company of Lima presented a check for \$2,000 to the Miami Erie Canal Corridor Authority.

Ford Motor Company's Corporate Citizen Initiative Program donates to communities for educational, cultural and economic development needs. Committees in local plants review requests for support, and make recommendations to headquarters. The Ford Engine Plant on Bible Road in Lima, Ohio recently received checks from corporate headquarters to present to area organizations from this special funding.

At a luncheon on Wednesday, July 15 in Lima, Kevin Haver, MECCA acting secretary/treasurer and Monika Wanamaker, MECCA vice-president, accepted a check from Mr. Tim Hornsey, Ford Plant Manager for \$2,000. He also presented checks to Lima's Pre-Dare Program, Habitat for Humanity, Art Space Lima, Ohio State University-Lima Branch, and Lima's Rotary Riverwalk.

Beverly A. Miller, Community Relations Coordinator of Ford's Lima Plant said they "were happy to be able to help in some small way."

Rich Yanock, Lima Plant controller,

learned about MECCA while he was attending a function at the Delphos Canal Commission Museum in April. He had no idea so much of the Miami-Erie Canal still existed. When Yanock learned about MECCA's goals to encourage local, regional, and nationwide recognition of the Miami-Erie Canal Corridor, while working with business and industry to incorporate their needs, he thought those efforts deserving of Ford's support.

MECCA will add this money to funds currently being raised to hire an executive director who will coordinate these goals, activities and plans.

# Construction on Canal Walk Path Set to Begin

August 19, 1998 is the bid date for construction of a walk path between Minster and New Bremen. The path will run along the Miami-Erie Canal towpath, linking the villages on Minster and New Bremen. Craig Hirschfeld, a member of the steering committee which has been coordinating these efforts said, "this is particularly exciting because there could be activity along this path by late September, early October."

Phase 1 of the project, actual construction of the walk path, which will begin near Minster Park and end at Lock 1 Park in New Bremen, is scheduled for late September or Early October.

The path will be made of crushed limestone and be almost three miles long.

Phase 2 includes construction of one bridge at Minster Park and another bridge at Spring Creek, as well as an underpass at St. Rt. 66 to the Auglaize-Mercer Family YMCA. This phase is scheduled for 1999.

Funding for the walk path is provided by a federal government ISTEA grant,



***Construction is expected to begin on a walk path this fall on the Miami-Erie Canal Towpath between Minster and New Bremen.***

covering 80 percent of costs associated with developing the project. The remaining 20 percent, or approximately \$60,000, comes from local industries, businesses and individuals. Hirschfeld said that goal has been met.

A 15-year "management lease agreement" between the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Auglaize County Commissioners, holds the county responsible for taking care of

not only the walk path, but the surrounding canal area. MECCA will help coordinate efforts of local organizations, groups and individuals to keep the area clean and free of debris. Hopefully the excitement of this walk path along the Miami-Erie Canal towpath, the ability to walk between Minster and New Bremen, and pride in our historical significance along the way will deter misuse and littering.

## \$1.7 Million Canal Improvement Program Begins

Phase 1 of what will be over \$1.7 million in canal improvements is expected to begin in Spencerville later this year.

With the consulting work complete, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is beginning to bid out several repair and improvement projects on the Miami and Erie Canal.

ODNR Division of Water representative Hung Thai said Phase 1 program will include several projects in the village of Spencerville. The work will include dredging 2,000 feet of canal in Spencerville, which will basically include all of the canal between Locks 15 and 16. There will be concrete repair work on Lock 16 and the total replacement of the side spillway at the north end of town.

The bid date was set for Aug. 11, and Thai said he hopes construction would begin in Spencerville in October. The engineer's estimates for Phase 1 is \$620,000.

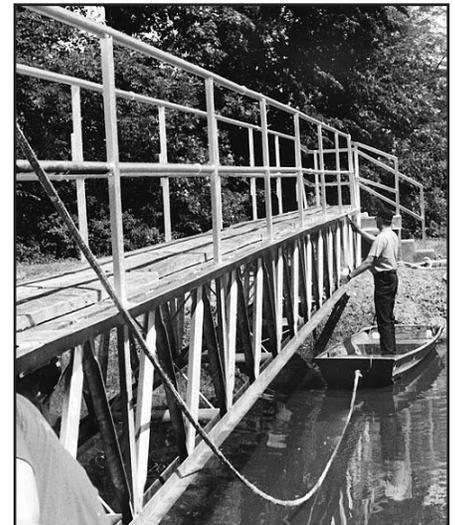
Thai said Phase 2 will consist of the repair and beautification of several structures crucial to the hydraulic operation of the canal. These projects include repairing the Tumbles at St. Marys, which is where the water flows from the Municipal Power Plant; replacement of the culverts under the canal at Barrington Creek; repairing the Six-Mile Creek Aqueduct; repairing the concrete at Lock 14 and possibly the dredging of the feeder canal at Lake St. Marys.

The extent of the work on some of the Phase 2 projects will depend on available funding after Phase 1 has been bid out.

The majority of the funding for the canal improvements has come from Nature Works funds which Ohio voters approved in 1992. The goal of MECCA is to continue to lobby state legislators for additional capital improvement money for the Miami-Erie Canal in the future.



# WORK DAYS



**Thank You,  
ODNR  
Division of Water**  
*The MECCA Board of Trustees would like to thank Division of Water Employees Leroy Goodwin and Steve Dorsten for their invaluable help and support during our recent Work Days.*



**WORK DAYS --** (top) The foot bridge used along the Buckeye Trail and the towpath gets a new coat of paint from land and sea. (Bottom) a skid loader proved to be very useful in pulling up some of the heavier debris from the canal bank and out of the canal itself during a MECCA Work Day near Deep Cut.

# Planning Under Way for M-E Canal Book

The MECCA Board of Trustees has begun planning to produce a book on the Miami-Erie Canal in Western Ohio.

With the help of the Delphos Canal Commission, rights have been obtained to a unique book of memoirs called "Playmates of the Towpath."

We hope to publish many of the photos and personal recollections printed in that book, and add many more.

MECCA will host an organizational meeting this fall of any historical associations and individuals who want to help with the writing, editing and research for this project.

MECCA hopes to use donations to cover the printing of the book, and use the proceeds from its sales.

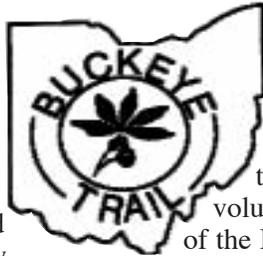
We are looking for personal recollections or canal stories passed down through families. Photos and any canal-related artifacts would also be very useful (All photos and artifacts will be returned).

MECCA is currently recruiting volunteers to help make this project a reality. If you are interested, or have material to contribute, please call Dave Stilwell at (419) 394-8874.

## Buckeye Trail Blazes Get New Coat

Each year the American Hiking Society helps organize a National Trail Days. Hiking groups across the country plan special events on this day, which was celebrated June 6 this year. In Ohio, The Buckeye Trail Association organized a "Go To Blazes" Day. The 1,200-mile Buckeye Trail is marked by blue blazes and on

National Trail Days volunteers set out to repaint the blazes on as much of the trail as possible.



Thanks to the help of Boy Scout Leaders Todd Dwenger in Minster; Doug Stewart in Delphos; their troops and other volunteers, over 40 miles of the Buckeye Trail got new blazes in Shelby, Auglaize and Allen counties.

## MECCA BOARD MEMBERS

If you are interested in volunteering time, becoming a Board Member or if you have questions about MECCA, please feel free to contact any board member listed below:

John Andreoni  
Robert Antibus  
James Bernhold  
Richard Bryan  
Bob Ebbeskotte  
Kevin Haver  
John Hawley  
Dave Huber

Tim Metzner  
Nick Van Schoyck  
John Siegel  
Dave Stilwell  
Rev. Chris Vasko  
Monika Wanamaker  
Don Wiechart  
ODNR Liaison -- Steve Dorsten

**MECCA; P.O. Box 722; St. Marys, Ohio; 45885**

## MECCA Members

As of Aug. 1, 1998

### Individual Members

Gary S. Barker  
Ralph F. Bornhorst  
Ralph Bornhorst  
Frank J. Bricker  
Doris Chivington  
Rob Ebbeskotte  
Barb Grimm  
Nancy S. Gulick  
Don W. Hager  
Louis Hohman  
Karl R. Mesloh  
Don Nagel, Jr.  
Alice Noble  
Cathy J. Schreima

### Family Members

James A and Catherine Bernhold Family  
Classic Delight  
Paul R. Kogge  
Dennis Gebele  
Catherine Grundish  
Joyce and John Gilberg  
Paul & Judith Lawrence  
Jack Watkins  
Mr. and Mrs. Stan Kuenning  
Dave and Mary Jo Stilwell  
Hung Thai  
The Mackenbach Family  
David and Ginny Moorman  
Charlie and Joan Hutchinson  
Tom and Janie Southard  
David and Monika Wanamaker

### Sponsor Members

Bank One of Delphos  
Eldon Montague (Attorney at Law)  
Delphos Herald, Inc.  
James Heinrich  
Spencerville Chamber of Commerce  
Photographer Framemaker and More  
Warren Brim  
Warren J. Gardner  
Stephen Worl  
New Bremen Historic Assoc.

### Partner Members

Herb and Paula Schumm  
Spencerville Area Canal Committee  
Park District Foundation of Allen County  
Canal Cities Insurance and Investment  
St. Marys Foundry, Inc.  
Joint Township District Memorial Hospital

### Corridor Partner Members

St. Marys Area Chamber of Commerce  
Commercial Bank of Delphos  
Minster State Bank  
First National Bank of New Bremen  
St. Marys Kmart  
Ford Motor Company

*Please excuse any inadvertent omissions*

# Support the Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Authority Become a Member Today

**E**stablished in 1996, The Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Authority (MECCA) is a non profit corporation working toward the creation of a heritage corridor and recreational greenway along the Miami & Erie Canal. The Authority is working toward the creation of educational programs and developing strong working relationship among corridor stakeholders to preserve and interpret the natural, historical and recreational resources throughout the corridor.



## Membership Benefits

- Quarterly Issues of a Newsletter
- Invitations to public meetings
- Invitations to programs and events
- Support the goals of MECCA

## **MECCA Miami-Erie Canal Yard Sale -- \$10 a Square Yard**

**Mail to: MECCA; P.O. Box 722; St. Marys, Ohio; 45885**

I Would Like to Buy \_\_\_\_\_ Square Yards for a Total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Minimum Membership \$10 for individuals; \$20 for families

I Would Like a Corporate/Business/Organizational Membership at:

- Sponsor \$50       Partner \$100       Corridor Partner \$250

I would like to make a one-time tax-deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Miami Erie Canal Corridor Authority  
P.O. Box 722  
St. Marys, Ohio 45885**