

Towpath Times



Miami Erie Canal Corridor Association

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Canal Activity -- More Than You Think

By Jim Bernhold
President

MECCA Board of Trustees

Since I have been involved with MECCA as a board member I have paid particular attention to articles about the canal in our local newspapers, including *The Dayton Daily News*.

In the past few years no fewer than 75 articles, by various writers, have touched on some aspect of the canal, its history and current efforts to develop hiking/biking trails, small parks and the restoration of various canal locks and other structures of historical significance

along the canal.

At present the volunteer board members are fairly representative of the various communities along the canal, from Delphos south to Piqua, Ohio. New volunteers are always welcome and it can become a satisfying experience to meet new people outside of your local community who share your interest in the canal, its history and possibilities.

Although the publication of our newsletter has been sporadic in the past the board is committed to publish regular quarterly newsletters beginning with this issue. If you

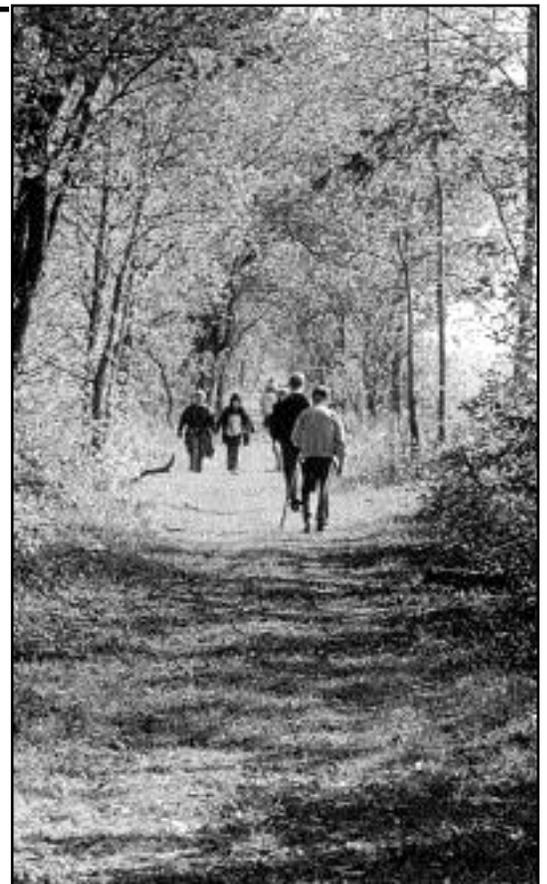
would like to include in future newsletters, or on MECCA's website, www.meccainc.org, publicity on events taking place in communities along the canal, the upcoming issues of *The Towpath Times* will be published in February, May, August and November, 2003.

The deadlines for submitting your event information would be the first day of each of those respective months. This information can be sent to MECCA at P.O. Box 722, St. Marys, Ohio 45885, or if you would like, the event listed on the website. The information can be emailed to webmaster@meccainc.org.

Taking a "Walk With Nature"

An estimated 600 hikers, 12 dogs and a donkey participated in this year's "Walk With Nature," sponsored by MECCA, The St. Marys Kiwanis Club, The New Bremen/New Knoxville Rotary Club, ODNR and the St. Marys Area Chamber of Commerce. Local artist Pat Wietholter donated a print of Lock One in New

Bremen. 427 hikers registered for the print, which was won by Margarita Wilson of St. Marys. Special thanks to the St. Marys City Schools and the Auglaize Council on Aging for providing buses. Also, a special thanks to Bill Slemmons, Marty Goens and Jason Setters who volunteered their afternoons to drive the buses for the walk.



Help Wanted

The Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Board of Trustees has begun the process of establishing a paid staff for the organization.

Effective immediately, the board has initiated a search for a part-time executive director. Part of the job description for the executive director is to evolve the position into a full-time job.

"The position has tremendous potential," said David Stilwell, who is heading up a Search Committee for the board. "This position will grow with the organization, and we're looking for someone who is enthusiastic about the growth possibility, not only for the organization, but for themselves as well."

MECCA's interim part-time executive director, Ben Richard, is funded by a generous grant-in-kind from the Johnny Appleseed Metro Parks. This agreement will be expiring.

The board is currently seeking donations for office space and/or office equipment.

The position will be advertised in the upcoming weeks. (see ad below) Anyone with questions about the position, or would like to donate office equipment or space, can contact Stilwell at 419-394-8874 or email at webmaster@meccainc.org.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR -- Part-time position designed to evolve into a full-time position. The Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association, a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization, is seeking an energetic individual looking to grow with an organization dedicated to enhancing the natural, recreational, historical and economic attributes of a large public greenway in Western Ohio. The successful candidate will possess excellent organizational skills. Experience in fundraising, grant writing and organizing volunteers is a plus. If you are interested in a growing position with a growing organization, please submit your resume and qualifications to: Personnel Committee; MECCA; P.O. Box 722; St. Marys, Ohio 45885.



The "Belle of St. Marys" canal boat was recently renovated and returned to the canal in Memorial Park in St. Marys.



The Allen, Van Wert, and Auglaize counties 4-H horseback ride was held in October with 89 riders and 20 volunteers riding the towpath trail from 40-Acre Pond to Deep Cut Park.



The repair of the "Tumbles" near the St. Marys Municipal Power Plant is part of the Nature Works canal rehab projects, including dredging in Spencerville, along with renovations of Lock 14 and the Six-Mile Spillway.

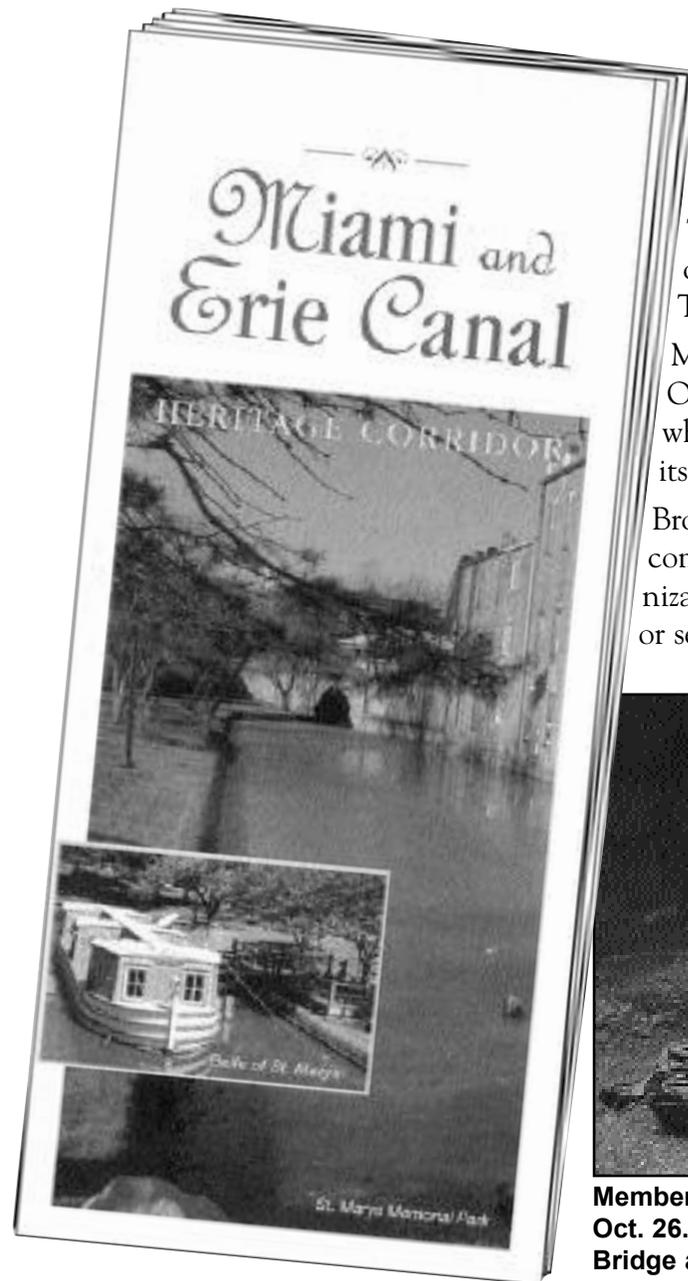
New Canal Brochure Available

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources, with funding help from MECCA has published a beautiful new brochure about the Miami-Erie Canal in Western Ohio.

The brochure includes numerous color photographs, and folds out into an 11" x 17" map of the canal from Delphos to Piqua. The map is highlighted by 40 designated points of interest.

MECCA's Education Committee is currently working with ODNR on the development of an expanded piece of literature, which will include detailed information about the canal corridor, its history and its natural and recreational opportunities.

Brochures are available at area tourism bureaus and chambers of commerce. If you would like a supply for your local library or organization, contact MECCA at P.O. Box 722, St. Marys, Ohio 45885; or send an email to webmaster@meccainc.org.



Members of the St. Marys Kiwanis Club participated in a "Cleanup Day" Oct. 26. Club Members gathered trash and debris under the High Street Bridge and near Lock 13.

Consider MECCA and Year-End Giving

MECCA is a tax-exempt charitable entity under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to MECCA are fully tax deductible and can be made in cash or other property. As you can see from the contents of this newsletter, MECCA has many "irons in the fire" to raise awareness of the historic Miami-Erie Canal between Delphos and Piqua, Ohio and promote its cultural, recreational and economic values. If you wish to donate property please contact Jim Bernhold at 419-628-3232. Donations can be mailed to MECCA at P.O. Box 722, St. Marys, Ohio 45885.



The Classic Showman 4-H club of Allen County recently painted Miami-Erie Canal Trail signs as a community project. The group painted all of the towpath signs from 40-Acre Pond to Kolter Road near Spencerville.

Support the Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Association Become a Member Today

Established in 1996, The Miami-Erie Canal Corridor Association (MECCA) is a non profit corporation working toward the creation of a heritage corridor and recreational greenway along the Miami & Erie Canal. The Association 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

Miami Erie Canal Corridor Association (MECCA) Membership Form



Please check membership level desired

\$10 Individual _____ \$20 Family _____

\$50 Sponsor _____ \$100 Partner _____

\$250 Corridor Partner _____

One-time tax deductible contribution of _____

Total amount enclosed _____

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ email _____

Clip and Mail This Form to: MECCA • P.O. Box 722 • St. Marys, Ohio • 45885

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