



# CONSERVATION CORNER

*A quarterly publication of the Jackson County Conservation District*

## SPRING TREE SALE IS UNDERWAY—PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW!

Perhaps you have already gotten your tree catalog from JCCD in the mail. The release of this catalog marks the start of the busy season for our office—the spring tree sale has arrived and we have more to offer this year than ever before!

This year’s catalog boasts almost 40 species of trees and shrubs (ALL from Michigan nurseries), including nine kinds of fruit trees. Native grasses

and wildflower seed is available, too. We also have many miscellaneous items to assist with your planting this spring, such as tree planting bars, marking flags, tree mats and collars, fertilizer packets and animal repellent. For the large planting projects, you may even wish to rent our tractor-drawn tree planter (using your own tractor). Descriptions and pricing information for all of the

items for sale are posted on the JCCD website ([www.jacksoncd.org](http://www.jacksoncd.org)) or call us to receive a catalog if you are not yet on our mailing list. In the upcoming weeks, you’ll even be able to place your order online using a credit card. Until that function is available, we can take your order over the phone or through the mail. The **deadline for placing your order is March 26<sup>th</sup>**, but order

## Winter 2010

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early because certain products are available on a limited basis and might run out. **See page 3 for our newest products!**

## USDA ANNOUNCES DEADLINE FOR PROGRAM SIGN-UP

At the beginning of January, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service released the sign-up deadlines for two key programs: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP).

These two programs provide opportunities for agricultural and private landowners to receive funding for over 80 different conservation practices, ranging from planting vegetative borders around fields or waterways, to obtaining nutrient management or forest management plans. Both programs can potentially cover 75 percent of the costs of installing these practices.

The **application deadline is February 19<sup>th</sup>**, so interested landowners should



contact District Conservationist Andrew Gust as soon as possible at 517-784-2800 Ext. 3 or [andrew.gust@mi.usda.gov](mailto:andrew.gust@mi.usda.gov).

## LONGTIME DISTRICT CONSERVATIONIST RETIRES

Back in 1971, when he began an internship in Port Huron with the Soil Conservation Service, Julius Pigott probably wasn't thinking too much about retirement. Fast forward 38 years, and Pigott's career with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service consists of almost four decades of commitment to managing and protecting natural resources—all in Michigan!

Julius Pigott grew up on a small farm in Mississippi. He always loved the outdoors as a child and was first introduced to soil conservation in a high school when his agriculture class installed a terrace system on his family's farm. Julius earned a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture Education from Alcorn State University.

Once Pigott became a full-time NRCS employee, he worked in Ann Arbor and Monroe before coming to Jackson in the late 1970s. During his 38-year career with NRCS, 22 of those years were spent in our county!



*Julius Pigott at his retirement party hosted by Ingham County (where he served the last 3 years of his career).*

Pigott enjoyed the diversity of Jackson County's landscape. He will miss the clients and friends he established over the years, but he will NOT miss the tedious computer programs and paperwork that go along with being a District Conservationist!

Pigott still resides in Jackson County. His plans for retirement include doing some traveling—Mardi Gras in New Orleans this year, and perhaps Arizona and Alaska in the near future. He will remain active in his church and is thinking of doing some work with Habitat for Humanity to keep his hands busy.

JCCD would like to send a big "thank you" to Julius Pigott for his commitment to Jackson County's resources—enjoy retirement, JP!

## JACKSON OFFICE RECEIVES STATEWIDE RECOGNITION



At the December convention of the Michigan Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), Jackson CD received a "Conservation District of the Year" award for 2008-2009 in our region. This award was chosen by the MACD Employees' committee and was based upon a series of statistics, such as the number of volunteers utilized in the community, the number of county residents reached through educational events, and the number of trees sold for conservation purposes.

JCCD wishes to thank all of our volunteers and partners for their role in this award! (Photo L to R: Andrew Gust, Cecilia Govrik, Lori Fitzgibbons, Jim Spink, Zac Smith)

## CONSERVATION IN A BARREL—NEW PRODUCTS FOR SALE!

This spring, JCCD will begin selling some new and exciting conservation products—rain barrels and composters. The items are made by UpCycle Products out of re-purposed high-density polyethylene barrels that were previously used to ship pickled food and olives from Europe. The barrels are properly cleaned so that they are pH balanced.

### Rain Barrels

Capture rainwater from your roof for use on your lawn or garden. Holes are drilled in the barrel lid so water will drain into the barrel from your downspout. A screen keeps out debris and mosquitoes. All of the barrels have a garden hose size spigot at the bottom, and plants can be watered by attaching a garden hose, landscape tubing, or drip tubing. A wooden pedestal is recommended to lift the barrel off the ground so that a watering can could be filled, as well. The barrels have an overflow fitting to allow excess water to be diverted away, and you can use a linking hose fitting to connect multiple barrels.

JCCD will offer barrels in the following sizes: 30 gallon (blue) for \$55.00, 50 gallon (terra cotta or brown) for \$65.00, and 60 gallon (black) for \$75.00. A wooden pedestal is also available for \$25.00. Barrels can be ordered using the tree sale order form or by calling or stopping in the office. Pre-order only and deadline is March 26<sup>th</sup>.



### Tumbling Composters

The 55-gallon black composter is an effective and convenient way to turn food scraps and yard waste into useable compost. It stands about 4 feet tall and needs enough space to be able to spin the barrel and aerate the compost. The barrel works best when placed in full sun, and the darkness of the barrel retains heat to allow materials to break down faster—compost can be ready in just 4 weeks. The barrel can hold over 7 cubic feet of material.

For \$120.00, you will get the tumbling composter with all of the interior parts, and instructions for assembly and use.



**Composter details:**  
*36" wide, 36" deep;  
 46" tall, weight of 75  
 lbs.*



## AND THE WINNERS ARE. . .

By Lori Fitzgibbons, *Administrator*

In November, Jackson CD visited Our Lady of Fatima School in Michigan Center to discuss the importance of recycling in our community. The school has now expanded its recycling program—which was only for paper before—to include cardboard, newspaper, aluminum, and plastic. The school has also been holding a cell phone drive, and will earn money for used cell phones that are sent back to a recycling company.

The students illustrated what they had learned about recycling in a poster contest. A winner was selected for each grade, and the posters have been on display at the Jackson CD office.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

<b>Winter Stonefly Hunt</b> <i>Dahlem Center</i>	<b>Sat. 1/30</b> <i>1-3 pm</i>
<b>Ag Programs workshop</b> <i>Liberty Township Hall</i>	<b>Thurs. 3/11</b> <i>1-4:30 pm</i>
<b>Sprayer Clinic</b> <i>Butch Lincoln Farms</i>	<b>Thurs. 3/25</b> <i>TBD</i>
<b>Earth Day Festival</b> <i>Cascades Park</i>	<b>Sun. 4/25</b> <i>1-4 pm</i>

**Austin  
Maynard,  
4th grade**



**Veronica  
Blissick,  
1st grade**



**Allie  
Nelson,  
5th grade**

**Lauryll  
Samon,  
2nd grade**



**\*\*Grand Prize Winner\*\***  
*now on display at the JCCD office*



**Conner  
Hubbell,  
3rd grade**

**Meghan  
Shovels,  
6th grade**



## WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON IN THE WATERSHED?

By Cecilia Govrik, *Watershed Project Manager*

The last few months have been surprisingly busy as fall watershed events have wrapped up and planning has already begun for the spring. The Upper Grand River Implementation Project (UGRIP) is now officially one-third of the way through, but there are many new tasks that will be addressed this year.

Another successful season of river monitoring took place last October, and the results of the volunteers' efforts are available in the latest issue of *The Early Adopter* newsletter. Pick up a copy at the Conservation District office, the Dahlem Center, or view it on the Upper Grand River Watershed Alliance's webpage ([www.uppergrandriver.org](http://www.uppergrandriver.org)). While you are on the site, be sure to check out how you can get involved in shaping the future of the Upper



*Paul Rentschler from the Upper Grand River Watershed Alliance and Cecilia Govrik hold the MiCorps award that was presented to the Adopt-A-Stream program last fall.*

Grand by attending upcoming public meetings on education, outreach, and restoration plans for the watershed.

The Upper Grand River's volunteer monitoring program received a grant from the Michigan Clean Water Corps, or MiCorps, in late 2009. As a result, Jackson CD was able to hire a part-time coordinator for the Adopt-A-Stream program, Alison Rauss. The Adopt-A-Stream staff completed field training and received certification from MiCorps in the fall. In the future months, Alison will be busy entering water monitoring data from our program into the MiCorps online database ([www.micorps.net](http://www.micorps.net)), as well as planning all of the spring monitoring events.

Before all the snow melts, though, we will be adventuring out into the watershed to look for winter stoneflies. Join us on Saturday, January 30th from 1:00 to 3:00 pm for the 2nd annual Winter Stonefly Hunt. We will meet at the Dahlem Center and a brief training will be given before we head outside. RSVP to the CD office by January 27th.



*Alison Rauss is the new coordinator for the Adopt-A-Stream program.*

Keep your eyes open for details on many other watershed educational events and volunteer opportunities in 2010. From landowner workshops, to habitat assessment training, to a tour of wetland restorations in the Upper Grand. . . there are many exciting things around the bend!

To learn more about the Upper Grand River Watershed and upcoming events, visit [www.uppergrandriver.org](http://www.uppergrandriver.org) or join the new Facebook fan page for the Upper Grand River Watershed Alliance.



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***YOUR LAND, YOUR WATER, YOUR MICHIGAN.***



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***Our office is open 8:00am—4:30 pm, Mon. through Fri.***

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The Jackson County Conservation District (JCCD) is a locally elected nonpartisan entity of state government, whose purpose is to promote wise land use decisions, based upon the capability of the natural resources of Jackson County, through technical assistance and education.

**JCCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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Jim Spink, *Vice-Chairman*

Lathe Claflin, *Treasurer*

Dick Ekins, *Secretary*

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Don Foster, *Associate Member*

JCCD Board meetings are held on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am at the JCCD office and are open to the public.

*All Jackson County Conservation District programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.*