

Loveland Herald

Greenacres river lab benefits Little Miami research

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By Lindsay Braud Staff Reporter

LOVELAND - The Little Miami River is being monitored more closely thanks to the opening of Greenacres River Lab.

Greenacres Foundation Water Quality project director Anne Lyon is in charge of the new Greenacres River Lab at 211 Railroad Ave. across from Nisbet Park. The lab is in the old Bronner House, built in 1860.

Lyon said they opened the lab to monitor the Little Miami. The state used to evaluate the waterways in Ohio every other year, but has reduced that to every 10 years.

"We wanted to develop a high end citizen program so we could do it ourselves," Lyon said. If the river becomes too polluted it could lose its scenic status, she said.

According to Lyon, the lab contains the same equipment high end labs use. It has a spectrophotometer, turbidity meter, conductivity meter, pH testing, fecal station, incubator and autoclave.

All these items are used to measure the amount of nutrients, mud, conductivity, pH level, and fecal matter in the river. They also properly clean tools.

Greenacres Foundation is a non-profit organization. All the money needed to create and fund the lab comes from grants and donations, Lyon said.

Volunteers are an important part of Greenacres. Lyon said, 30 to 35 volunteers work as runners, water collectors, in the lab, and enter data each month.

Lyon said, the idea for the river lab started three years ago. Eric B. Partee, executive director of Little Miami Inc. (LMI), wanted to open a trail information center. Lyon and Partee combined their efforts to open the facility together.

"It is a great compliment to the river conservation efforts," Partee said. The information center will open in October with a 265-gallon aquarium, education about river cleanup, tree planting and land preservation.

City Manager Fred Enderle said the Bronner house was owned by the city of Loveland, but was in need of repair. The city was going to demolish the house and expand Nisbet Park until LMI came to them with the information center idea.

Enderle said the city asked for development proposals. DeVol Construction Services LLC bought the building from the city and is making improvements at DeVol's

expense. DeVol also made an agreement with Greenacres and LMI to let them use the facility for 10 years, rent free.

"The reason it all came together is because we were looking for a property to put our business in. It just so happened LMI and Greenacres were also looking for a building," owner Jeff DeVol said.

DeVol Construction will move in the building later this summer.

"It has always been my dream to have a community lab. It is very empowering to allow people to protect the water in their own backyard," Lyon said.

Andy Dickerson from LMI will be manager of the information center. They are looking for volunteers to staff the center.

Call 936-9344 or visit www.littlemiami.org for more information. Call Greenacres Foundation at 891-4227 or visit www.green-acres.org for more information about the river lab.

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