

# JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE JORDAN RIVER WATERSHED • SPRING/SUMMER 2018

## Health of the Jordan Still Looking Good

**T**he Jordan River continues to score generally excellent grades on the quality of its waters, according to results released this spring by the Great Lakes Environmental Center [GLEC].

The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed retained GLEC in 2017 to test five study sites along the Jordan, which include Deer Creek, Bennett Creek, Green River, and downstream and upstream of the federal Jordan River Fish Hatchery. GLEC staff conducted macroinvertebrate, habitat and algal assessments at each of the sites following Michigan Department of Environmental Quality's [MDEQ] Procedure 51, which describes qualitative biological and habitat survey protocols for wadeable streams.

"All five study sites rated as Acceptable when assessing the macroinvertebrate community and Excellent when assessing the habitat," the GLEC report concluded. "Deer Creek scored slightly lower during the macroinvertebrate assessment than the other four sites most likely due to the absence of stoneflies at this location and the dominance of one taxa (the mayfly



ELIZABETH DEKORNE

Baetidae). The high percentage of sandy substrate and low percentage of coarser substrates such as gravel and cobble would inhibit the colonization of stoneflies. Bennett Creek, the Green River and the Jordan River consisted of a mix of sand, gravel, and cobble, and as a result supported multiple families of mayflies, stoneflies, and caddisflies at each site. The algal community assessment

identified two species present in high proportions at all sites as well as multiple other species contributing to the unique community composition at each site."

The study was designed to establish baseline data and trend analysis at the five sites in order to observe and document any significant changes in the water quality of the Jordan River, according to FOJ President Dave Peterson, who thanks all who have donated to the FOJ to make the assessment possible.

*Look for the report online at: [friendsofthejordan.org](http://friendsofthejordan.org)*

## Rebecca Drenth Named 2018 Recipient of Dr. John Richter Memorial Scholarship

**R**ebecca Drenth, a 2018 graduate from East Jordan High School, has been named the 2018 recipient of the Dr. John Richter Memorial Scholarship, given each spring by the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed in honor of the late founding member and president of the FOJ for many years.

The \$1000 scholarship is awarded annually to a graduating senior from a school in the Lake Charlevoix watershed, who will be pursuing college study of environmental issues.

Rebecca will be attending Michigan State University in the fall, where she will study fisheries and wildlife and water sciences. She is the daughter of Tim and Kathy Drenth.

Her passion for the environment was fueled when she volunteered to help in Appalachia.

"It was in Clay County, Kentucky, the poorest county in the United States, working with other volunteers to restore and remodel unsafe and unhealthy homes, that I witnessed first hand how the health of an environment is intricately connected to the health of its people," Rebecca wrote in her application. "The noticeable lack of public sanitation (garbage disposal, sewer systems, access to fresh water in homes) left the environment littered with trash, the rivers filled with raw sewage

*See Scholarship — page 5*





## Adopt-A-Highway

Snow hadn't been gone long when FOJ members took to M66 in early May for the first of three highway cleanups along its two-mile stretch of the road as part of the Michigan Department of Transportation's Adopt-A-Highway program. Hitting the road were [l to r] Bert Webb, Tim Goodwin, Bill Webb, Lynne Goodwin and Jinny Heick. See calendar at right for remaining dates this season.

## UP AND COMING

**Sunday, July 15, 10 a.m.** — Adopt-A-Highway pickup. Meet at Pinney Bridge Rd. and M66.

**Friday, August 3** — Deadline for photo submissions in the annual "Visions of the Valley" Photography Contest.

**Saturday, September 22, 1-3 p.m.** — Annual Photography Contest, Exhibit, and release of the 2019 "Visions of the Valley" calendar.

**Sunday, September 23, 11 a.m.** — Adopt-A-Highway pickup. Meet at Pinney Bridge Rd. and M66.

**Thursday, October 18, 7 p.m.** — Annual meeting of the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed.

2018 Board Meetings — **3rd Thursday of every month** [except December], 6:30-8:00 p.m., Jordan River Watershed Center. Public welcome.

**Check the FOJ website** for additions, details and/or changes to events at [www.friendsofthejordan.org](http://www.friendsofthejordan.org). Also find the FOJ on Facebook.

## Nature Lover's Camp 2018 will Explore 'The Wonders of Water'

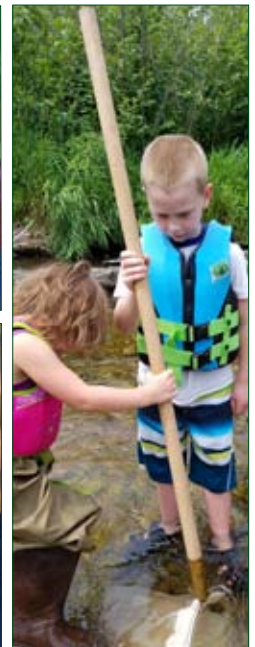
The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed is partnering once again this summer with Raven Hill Discovery Center for "Nature Lover's Camp 2018 — The Wonders of Water."

Created for kids age 4-14, Nature Lovers Camp will run daily July 23-27 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on the Raven Hill campus. Campers will learn about the watershed's natural areas, from creeks to ponds to woods. They will create art with elements from nature, practice survival skills and more as they learn about our local natural environment.

Lunch is included, and campers

also will receive a reusable water bottle, backpack and be entered to win a river raft trip down the Jordan, courtesy of the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed. Campers should bring sunscreen, bug spray, closed-toed shoes for hikes, and a change of clothes for when they get wet.

Special rates for the Nature Lovers Camp are \$90 for the week, or \$20 a day, and includes admission to the museum. For more information or to register, contact Raven Hill at 231.536.3369 or [info@miravenhill.org](mailto:info@miravenhill.org). Some scholarships are available, as well as options for child care before and/or after camp and half-day attendance.



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[www.friendsofthejordan.org](http://www.friendsofthejordan.org)

EMAIL: [foj@friendsofthejordan.org](mailto:foj@friendsofthejordan.org)

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The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed, Inc. is a grassroots, nonprofit 501 (c) (3) non-governmental organization with the mission to "conserve the natural resources and protect the environmental quality of the Jordan River and its watershed."



## AmeriCorps, Community Make a Big Difference in Enhance East Jordan Effort

**M**ore than 100 community volunteers and area AmeriCorps workers joined together Saturday, May 19 in East Jordan as part of Northern Michigan's Russ Mawby Signature Service Project, "Enhance East Jordan."

The community-minded group took on a number of beautification efforts throughout the East Jordan area, among them the nature walk behind the Friends of the Jordan River's Watershed Center. Other sites included Sportsman's Park, Raven Hill Discovery Center, East Jordan Public Schools/Community Trail, Jordan River Fish Hatchery, and Grandvue Medical Care Facility.

"This was a very special opportunity to dig into one of Northern Michigan's most picturesque communities, and see some of its most beautiful and important assets up close," said Alison Mellon, director of Char-Em ISD's AmeriCorps program. "It is a point of pride for AmeriCorps to partner in our communities, through efforts like the regional service project and in our schools."

This marked the final year for Char-Em ISD's AmeriCorp Literacy Coaching Corps. AmeriCorps has in previous years conducted similar projects in Gaylord, Grayling and the Pigeon River State Forest.

The FOJ has been working on restoring the nature walk behind the Watershed Center for several years, following an initial removal of invasive buckthorn. While some buckthorn remains to be tackled, much was accomplished in the natural area, including reestablishing some of the trails. Thanks to all who participated.

The Russ Mawby Signature Service Project was a collaboration between AmeriCorps, Char-Em ISD, East Jordan Public Schools, East Jordan Chamber of Commerce, and the City of East Jordan.

Special thanks to Lowe's of Gaylord and Petoskey, Home Depot in Gaylord, and Walmart in Gaylord and Petoskey, which donated garden tools for the effort.

Thanks also to the City of East Jordan for removing the brush and wood gathered by the volunteers at the Watershed Center.



A little rain couldn't dampen the spirits of the 19 volunteers who descended on the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed Center May 19 as part of Northern Michigan's Russ Mawby Signature Service Project. Volunteers included community volunteers and AmeriCorps workers. Among them in the photo above, in no particular order, were Zack Pitman, Kamryn Webb, Kyleigh McDuffie, Mailey Hamilton, Sami Burks, Destiny Smith, Theresa Ingalls, Cody Ingalls, Emma Ingalls, Alex Rodgers, Josilyn Gabriel, Maggie Warren, Matt Hamilton, Michael Signorello, Gary Mellon, Bill Webb, Lynne Goodwin and Tim Goodwin.



# State of the Jordan River Fishery

By ETHAN WINCHESTER

The Jordan River is in fine shape, but in regards to conservation and fisheries, the work is never done. The river seems to be in good shape as the 2018 season starts out. The river does seem to show an increase in small to mid-size fish, most likely due to the increase in baseline flows over the last few years increasing access to important nursery habitat near the shoreline.

However, personal observation has continued to show brook trout populations being pushed further and further into the upper reaches and tributaries, and an increased abundance of young-of-year coho salmon throughout the system — a correlation that should not be overlooked due to the known detriment coho salmon smolts cause to brook trout populations.

Recent work completed by the Great Lakes Environmental Center focusing on water quality continues to prove the Jordan River is the epitome of a northern Michigan coldwater stream. Water quality remains in good to excellent categories, and macroinvertebrate counts continue to exceed Michigan standards. Friends of the Jordan plans to continue this important work in the future to continue to build baseline data in the event of any problems down the road.

This spring, the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed added a committee/segment to our board meetings — “fisheries” — in which I report any updates in regards to fisheries, and advise the board on anything relating to such. I’ve continued to work with our local biologist on behalf of Friends of the Jordan to continue to see what changes and improvements may be made to the Jordan River. Our primary focus is habitat improvements where needed, working with Conservation Resource Alliance on identifying these



PHOTOS: ETHAN WINCHESTER



needs and how to complete them.

The Jordan River has long been known for its brook trout population, being known as one of the only lower peninsula systems to have wild and native brook trout populations prior to the stocking era of the late 1800s.

Therefore, Friends of the Jordan recently passed a resolution placing an emphasis on protecting and rehabilitating the brook trout populations throughout the Jordan River watershed. The focus of the resolution is stressing the importance of brook

***If you are interested in helping out with fisheries improvements, projects, and funding within the Jordan River watershed, please contact me at [ewinchester@boyneoutfitters.com](mailto:ewinchester@boyneoutfitters.com)***

trout over non-native fish, in particular adfluvial pacific salmonids, by way of mechanical means and fishing regulation changes.

The resolution is a statement showing that Friends of the Jordan continues to be at the forefront of conservation efforts in Michigan, especially as it relates to native fisheries and our coldwater resources.

I am proud to say I am a board member of Friends of the Jordan, and I look forward to continued improvement of the fisheries within the Jordan River watershed. A conservationist's job is never done, and I for one, still have a lot left to give.

*Ethan Winchester is Director of Operations at Boyne Outfitters*

# NOTABLE

Interested in going beyond a financial commitment to the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed? The FOJ board is looking for those who are ready to take that next step and get involved on a board level. If you've ever thought about that next step, attend a meeting or drop us a line at: [foj@friendsofthejordan.org](mailto:foj@friendsofthejordan.org). The FOJ board meets monthly the third Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the Jordan River Watershed Center, 101 Union St., East Jordan.

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FOJ members can save 25% off any weekday rental between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. kayaks, canoes, or rafts through Jordan Valley Outfitters in East Jordan. To reserve your trip and rental craft, visit **Jordan Valley Outfitters'** website at [www.jvoutfitters.com](http://www.jvoutfitters.com), or call their office at 231.536.0006. Be sure to reference coupon code FOJJVO8 to receive the discount. JVO staff are often tending trips with other clients, so don't hesitate to leave a message.

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The continuing battle against sea lampreys will move to the Jordan River in June. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service assessment crew will conduct work in the Jordan River (Charlevoix County) on or about June 12 - 21 to estimate the abundance of sea lampreys. The information gathered will be used to determine the need for sea lamprey control.

# JRAG, Lions Ready for the Season

Collection totes for returnable cans and bottles and trash are now out for the season at the Jordan River access sites, which include Rogers, Webster, Old State and Graves Crossing roads, according to Tom Breakey, president of the Jordan River Action Group. Look for their familiar red, river collection bags at the landings along the river.

Breakey said once again the East Jordan Lions/Lioness Club will serve as caretakers of the sites. More than 8,000 returnables and more than 100 bags of trash were recovered by the group last year. "Our efforts have cut down on the amount of trash in the river," Breakey

added, "There are a couple of other groups who are planning a Jordan River cleanup this summer too. Hats off to them."

The group now has an "I SUPPORT JRAG" sticker for a \$20 donation, available by mail through Jordan River Action Group, PO Box 215, East Jordan, MI 49727. They also hope to have booths at this year's Freedom Festival Block Party on Main Street in East Jordan and at Paddle Antrim in Ellsworth.

Breakey extended a "Big Thank You to the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed for sharing a space for JRAG to share our information."

# Scholarship...

*Continued from page one*

after the rains, and wells for drinking water polluted with the runoff from abandoned mines. I was shocked that this was *my* America."

Returning home to East Jordan, she immersed herself in learning about fresh water and environmental sustainability through opportunities offered by Tip of Mitt Watershed, Inland Seas Waterways Association, and Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality.

"I realize I have taken much for granted living in a state that values programs that keep our land, waterways, and wildlife healthy," Rebecca added. "I am passionate to learn as much as I can, especially about water quality

and its impact on our environment, so I can help people, like the ones in Clay County, live healthier lives and have hope for a better future."

Before starting college this fall, Rebecca will work this summer, as she did last, as Beach Water Testing Coordinator for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, where she has learned the importance of keeping our water clean.

"The FOJ scholarship provides me with the support necessary to further my education in environmental science," Rebecca added. "I'm excited to partner with the Friends of the Jordan to learn and apply all I can to help our community protect the quality of our water. Thank you for believing and investing in my education!"

## STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR RIVER. SUPPORT THE FOJ.

Your membership and tax-deductible financial support helps the FOJ to continue its work of "protecting and conserving" the Jordan River Watershed. Your River is depending on you.

▲ NAME

▲ ADDRESS

▲ CITY

▲ STATE

▲ ZIP

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The Friends of the Jordan River Watershed is a charitable 501 (c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax-deductible under federal law.

- \$15 Individual
- \$25 Family
- \$25 Business/Organization
- \$50 Hawk
- \$100 Owl
- \$250 Osprey
- \$500 Eagle
- Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Friends of the Jordan River Watershed, PO Box 412, East Jordan, MI 49727



PO Box 412  
East Jordan, MI 49727



*'I choose to listen  
to the river for a  
while, thinking river  
thoughts, before  
joining the night  
and the stars.'*

— EDWARD ABBEY

## Announcing the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Jordan River Photography Contest and Watershed Calendar

**D**o you marvel at the wonders of the Jordan River Watershed? Show us in a photograph what's wonderful to you and it could appear as a month in the Friends of the Jordan River Watershed's annual 'Visions of the Valley Calendar.' This year the FOJ invites photographers of all ages and skills to look for the "Wonders of the Watershed".

More than \$1200 and 14 awards will be presented, including Grand Prize, Youth, President's Choice and Viewers' Choice.

The rules are simple. All photographs must be taken in the Jordan River Watershed. Open to all. Simply enter an unmatted 8" x 10" horizontal print, a \$5 per photo entry fee and entry form, available online at [friendsofthejordan.org](http://friendsofthejordan.org), where you'll also find complete contest details. Photographers may enter as many times as they want. Youth 18 and under may enter two photos for free. **Submission deadline is Friday, August 3.**

Awards will be presented at the FOJ's annual Photography Contest Celebration and Exhibit, with the release of the 2019 "Visions of the Valley" calendar, on Saturday, September 22, 1-4 p.m. at the Jordan River Watershed Center in East Jordan. Proceeds from calendar sales support FOJ activities.

