



# JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

## *THE GRAND OPENING OF THE WATERSHED CENTER*

Thanks to all of you who were able to join us at the dedication of the Watershed Center on Sunday, August 22nd, 2004. I think you will agree it was a special afternoon; the weather was almost perfect, meaning it neither rained nor snowed; the music on our own front porch, supplied gratis to us by Dr. Goodheart's Home Remedy Band, kept us smiling, moving, and certainly cured whatever ailed us. At the front of the building, beneath a white canopy tent placed on the driveway-lawn area, we were treated to a feast of homemade food (thanks to Allison's Bakery) as attractive to look at as it was delicious to eat.

Outdoor tours were conducted along pathways that feature plantings of indigenous flowers, shrubs and trees in areas similar to their native habitat, attracting insects and wildlife to enhance the natural setting. An area has been set apart as a future platform viewing station where one can observe the nesting habits of our resident eagle family,

(provided they do a repeat of their fascinating routine that gave us so much excitement and pleasure the past four months). The trails are an on-going project demanding long term attention. The intent is to provide a classroom sampler of conditions that can easily be found in the vast watershed area. Friends of the Jordan have been working with the East Jordan Garden Club and Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council to accomplish this mission.

The gleaming interior of the building was proof of the long days and nights of hard work by our team of skilled carpenters and craftsmen. The old oak flooring from the former Dahlquist building in town was sanded, sealed and buffed to a shine that said, "Old wood never dies, it just needs a little faith and a lot of attention to start life anew!" The whole interior respects the age and history of the one hundred plus year old building but at the same time has been restored using state of the art environmentally safe materials and methods. The Watershed Center is finally ready and so are we. Look for the programs we are offering to the public in another part of the newsletter.

Walls in the main room were temporarily covered with panels of collaged photos and memorabilia assembled by Jinny Heick, daughter of the late Dr. David Pray, showing his life-long love and commitment to the preservation of the Jordan River. Jinny spoke during the program of her father's role in bringing about the designation of the Jordan River as the State's first Wild and Scenic River under the Natural Rivers Act of 1970. She then went on to surprise us all with a gift from her family to the Center of a replica of the riverboats made famous by Teddy Kotowich during his long years as fishing guide and owner of Ted's Boats and Guiding Service in East Jordan. The boat and all it represents will be a prominent part in our effort to keep the past history of the Jordan River alive for the generations to come.

Thora Kotowich also spoke during the program of her role as secretary and documentarian of the group that formed under Dr. Pray's leadership. She listed the many federal, state, municipal, and local representatives it took to work together and hammer out this new category for protecting state rivers from unregulated encroachment and degradation.

A wonderful collaged panel of photos and articles about her late husband, Teddy, was shown. (The response was so favorable that we wonder if you might be interested in a panel discussion in the future with Thora, Jinny, and a few other guides and fishermen from the same time period. Let us know.) Interspersed among the panels was a display of beautiful nature photographs by photographer Kris Busk.

The highlight of the afternoon began when Dr. John Richter, President of Friends of the Jordan, reminded us of the important contributions made by old Friends no longer with us, except in spirit. He went on to speak of the present and future plans for the membership's commitment to further the educational aspects of our mission statement. The formal part of the ceremony ended with John pouring water from the Jordan River over the steps leading up to the entrance of the building as a poignant and proper way of declaring the serious purpose of the Watershed Center. A full text of the talk can be found on the following pages.



# JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

## JORDAN RIVER WATERSHED CENTER DEDICATION

August 22nd, 2004

### -REMEMBER THE PAST, CELEBRATE THE PRESENT, PROVIDE FOR THE FUTURE

I want to thank everyone here for coming today. By your presence you've recognized the value of the Friends of the Jordan. Whether it's through your financial contributions, material support or by volunteering your time you've made a personal investment in our mission, "To Conserve The Natural Resources And Protect The Environmental Quality Of The Jordan River Watershed." Thank-you.

I hope you can appreciate the symbolism between this Center and our mission. We've rescued a relic of the past from demolition and restored it to shepherd a new path to the future. It's been a long time coming but an interesting journey, full of discovery and the making of many new acquaintances along the way. This project has required and will continue to require a lot of faith, perseverance and commitment to our mission.

This has been a community project. I've often compared it to Johnny Cash's "Cadillac" song, "One Piece at a Time." It's been pay as you go, relying on the generous contributions of all of you and a whole lot of sweat equity by our board, members and volunteers. The result, I think you all would agree, is nothing short of amazing!

It's not like we had a huge war chest of money going in and nothing like taking out a mortgage to build a house. This whole project virtually landed in our lap and we had to act and mobilize quickly. This was a huge leap of faith by us in you and I thank all of you for helping make it a reality. We have no debts except that of gratitude.

But, the question must be asked, why? Why build this Watershed Center? Back in 1992, the Board of Directors began to consider the concept of an "Interpretive Center." Early in our existence we read and studied everything we could find on the Jordan River and the Jordan Valley. We consulted with experts, reviewed management plans and assessments, analyzed environmental laws, ordinances and surveys. We conducted numerous informational seminars on a host of subjects. Through this learning process we became a "Watershed" group.

We learned and assimilated many marvelous things and met some truly outstanding people in the process. We also found a lack of integration and coordination between land use policies, water management plans, environmental protection statutes and recreation uses among the various state, local and federal agencies. We discovered numerous studies and initiatives stuck on the shelf and forgotten. No real continuity existed. Leaders and ideas came and went, lived and died and, too often, their contributions lost within a generation. Political leadership and ideologies shifted back and forth. The MDNR was split, downsized and reorganized forcing many experienced people into early retirement. No one person or



organization was committed to advocate comprehensively for this resource. Yet the threats posed to this pristine watershed ecosystem had not been seen since the logging era. This natural treasure deserved renewed and concerted efforts to understand it, protect and preserve it.

This was and remains one of the pillars upon which the Friends of the Jordan was founded. We also want to insure that the responsibility of stewardship will endure from generation to generation and not be reliant on individual champions, the whims of politics or chance. To meet these challenges in this new era we built this Watershed Center and designed plans for these grounds to accomplish the following goals.

1. Expound the principles of Watershed Based Ecosystem Management, promoting land protection and water conservation.
2. Advocate for the resource and be a sounding board for the environment.
3. Provide a natural resource library, reference center and archives for and about the Jordan River Watershed.
4. Conduct environmental education programs, classes, seminars and forums to foster the understanding, appreciation and preservation of the Jordan River Watershed.
5. Sponsor and promote research, studies and surveys to monitor, assess and improve the environmental quality of the Jordan River Watershed.
6. Demonstrate sound environmental stewardship based on science with a commitment to ecological principles.
7. Protect our natural heritage and portray our natural history.
8. Construct trails, gardens and displays as an outdoor classroom and a place for contemplation utilizing native plants and trees that benefit wildlife.
9. House the offices of Friends of the Jordan and provide a meeting place for other groups.

This is and will continue to be a work in progress. We need and welcome your continued physical and financial support. There are many opportunities for you to get involved as we enter into a new and uncharted era. This represents a new beginning and our success will be measured by how well we pass the torch to the next generation.

John Richter, President

## UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE WATERSHED CENTER

September 22, Wednesday	10:00 am	Local Eagle Information photo exhibit	Joel Evans
September 25, Saturday	7:30 pm	Birds of Prey – Night and Day Predators lecture and film	Shirley Vollbach
October 16, Saturday	8:00 am	Fall Bird Migration field trip	Jerry Aydlott
October 21, Thursday	7:00 pm	<b>Friends of the Jordan Annual Meeting Wellhead Protection Program Presentation in cooperation with the City of East Jordan Identification of critical infiltration zones</b>	

### Winter Film Series on Nature, Science and the Environment

2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday November through March at 3:30 pm

Discussion to follow each film - Joe Nerone

Light refreshments will be served

November 13

December 11

January 8

February 12

March 12

### Dr. David C. Pray, 86

Dr. David C. Pray was born in a small town on a river that he would love his entire life, where people worked with their hands to forge metal, to make a living for their families. The town was East Jordan, the river was the Jordan, and on April 11, 1918, the second of three sons, David Carroll Pray, was born to Charles H. and Eva B. (Boulard) Pray.

He played and swam and camped along that river with his brothers and friends and learned to fish trout and guide flatboats down the winding curves and currents. He knew the river like the back of his hand and earned money for college as a river guide working for Teddy Kotowich. He would guide people down the river, help them catch trout, clean them, cook them and eat them on the riverbank – a real-life Huckleberry Finn.

He developed the principles that would guide how he lived his life: responsibility, integrity, honesty, dedication, hard work, compassion for others, respect for nature, and a belief in God, and he followed these principals throughout his life.

David lived in East Jordan his whole life. He graduated from East Jordan High School, Michigan State and the University of Michigan, where he learned to forge metal with his hands. And like his father before him, became a dentist and served the East Jordan community by caring for their teeth. He practiced dentistry for 40 years.

He served in the United States Navy during World War II and retired after 20 years as a United States Naval Reserve Commander. He was a civic leader, mayor, accurate historian, proud Rotarian, Shriner and member of the First Presbyterian Church. He was also a founder of the Jordan River Watershed Commission.

In 1972, the Jordan River was the first of Michigan's rivers to be designated Wild and Scenic under Michigan's Natural Rivers Act of 1970. Today, The Friends of the Jordan River continue the critical work of protecting the Jordan River Watershed that was begun by the visionaries of the Jordan River Watershed Commission.

On June 5, 1948, in East Jordan, he married Rennie Sue Savage and together they had three daughters, Ellen, Anne and Jinny. He had twin grandsons whom he dearly loved and who were the joy of his life. He shared his wonderful stories, sense of humor, and instilled his love of nature and birds and the river and the Earth with his family, and he will be deeply missed.

David died at his home on July 12, 2004, after a long struggle with Alzheimer's. David Pray was a wonderful son, brother, friend, husband, father and grandfather. His legacy will live on as long as the Jordan River flows wild and clean and free.

*Memorials may be given to the Friends of the Jordan River at:  
P.O. Box 412  
East Jordan, MI 49727*

## FAREWELL TO BUD

(An address by John Richter at the Bud Jones Memorial,  
August 14, 2004 at Pinney Bridge on the Jordan River)

Dear Vivian and all of you that loved and admired Bud,

It is totally fitting that we gather here at this place to remember Bud. Bud's spirit lives here and is all around us. For me, his memories and influences are everywhere. This Valley was his cathedral, his comfort zone, his home. This is the place where Bud's magnificent spirit could soar and his phenomenal thoughts and imaginations flowed uncluttered. Nature was his truth and he devoted his formidable energies and incredible intellect to preserve it.

I first met Bud not far from here about 15 years ago. I had read something in the newspaper about sand traps and various projects intended to reduce sediment deposition into the Jordan River. Intrigued, I ventured down here to see for myself.

From a distance I watched and listened to this quiet man who spoke volumes. We struck up a conversation and, probably like most of you, I was immediately taken by his easy style and keen mind. Before that day I didn't know that people like Bud existed. This guy was for real, or maybe unreal. He was a walking encyclopedia of all the things I wanted to know.

I was honored to be included with Bud in a select group of people to found the Friends of the Jordan. Bud was not only unanimously elected to be our first president for the next seven years but truthfully, he was the only choice. He was THE man.

Over the years Bud set the tone, set the agenda and guided this fledging organization into what it is today. He was committed to openness and fairness. He graciously gave to all of us the treasure trove of his vast knowledge. His incredible depth, his life long affection for nature and his genuine love of learning permeated our organization. He has been and always will be the "soul" of Friends of the Jordan.

I've been a student of Bud's since the day we met. As an understudy I relished his knowledge and absorbed as much as I could. I watched and observed how he ran board meetings and how he could keep the focus while letting everyone speak. In the end he had the uncanny ability to cut through a complex issue to delineate the essential points. I especially appreciated how well Bud treated people and how he could warm a room with his boyish grin.

Bud was a genuine American Hero. He was a scientist, an environmentalist, a pilot, and a life-long student of life, a humble servant, a teacher, a principled clear thinker and a man of uncompromising integrity. He was my friend, my mentor, my teacher and my captain. He treated me like a son.

I am humbled and oppressed to think I am his heir apparent and committed to carrying the torch he lit and used so effectively to enlighten the rest of us. I will forever be proud to have stood shoulder to shoulder with Bud Jones to defend the Jordan Valley.

I am forever grateful to have known you; Love John.

(Footnote; During Bud's Memorial a Bald Eagle graced the sky in a final tribute)



## WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

### “TRUTH”

I have the high honor and distinct privilege to formally dedicate the Watershed Center and the grounds. I dedicate them to NATURES TRUTHS and to all those who have worked through the years to preserve them.

Over 200 years ago, in the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson spoke of truths that were self evident. These truths were endowed by the Creator, based on the laws of nature and were a reflection of nature's God. Our founding fathers, leery of state sponsored religion, cited the virtues of the laws of nature to instill spirituality and morality into a new nation's conscience.

Throughout history our Native American's cultures and beliefs have been intimately bonded to the sanctity of the natural world and the wisdom of nature.

A few years ago, when being inducted into MUCC's Hall of Fame, former Governor Milliken said, "The truth is that the quality of life in Michigan depends on nature. The natural beauty of our State is much more than a source of pleasure and recreation. It shapes our values, molds our attitudes and feeds our spirit." "Michigan's soul is in the land."

The Jordan River Watershed embodies the finest range of biological and ecological values that nature can bestow. These are the values that sustain us. They are the essence of our existence. In them we find balance, harmony and purity of spirit. The power and forces of nature are real, they are honest. They can destroy but in so doing, heal, renew and sustain. They are our gold standard of what is true, our DNA Test.

Nature does not lie or deceive. It is incorruptible. It does not respect or obey emperors or empires nor is it swayed by political persuasion. Neither does it play favorites. It is unassuming. It simply is. It freely gives us the water we drink, the air we breathe and the food we eat. Instead of conquering nature, it is we who must yield to learn and respect her truths.

As I look out on this wonderful celebration here today I see a diverse group of people from all walks of life. What bonds us together as "Friends" is not just a building, but a shared belief in these intrinsic truths and the conviction to preserve them.

In today's fast paced world we are constantly bombarded by a sophisticated array of competing interests. Commercials, spam and telemarketers try to sway our behavior and influence what we should value. Half-truths, doublespeak and political spin have come to be expected. Synthetic food, artificial intelligence and terminator seeds are no longer oxymorons. Our natural resources equally face unprecedented pressures. What if we so altered our natural world, fragmented and exploited our ecosystems to where that delicate balance of life and biodiversity were lost? Where will we turn to find that which is real, unbiased and true? How will we know? According to whom? We will be like a ship adrift in the fog, lost without a compass or a destination.

If you've read our book you know that we've identified the watershed, and the Jordan River Watershed in particular, as that fundamental entity that drives and sustains our natural world. Within the fabric of a watershed are woven the interdependent fibers of the webs of life that turn the ecological hands of time. If we protect the integrity of our watersheds we retain an endless fountain of truth and sustenance.

The Jordan River Watershed is unquestionably one of Michigan's finest, unfragmented, free flowing, premier, watershed ecosystems. It is a natural treasure of global importance. In this context it represents a precious vestige of our natural heritage. It possesses the priceless intrinsic qualities where we can find the true essence of life, real values worth preserving and truths worthy of protecting. It represents a standard we cannot afford to compromise or lose.

And so it is in this spirit that I dedicate this Center. It is not just a building but a belief. It represents the convictions of many and a renewed, deep and abiding purpose to perpetuate this gift to future generations. May our children's heirs say about us, "Thank you for taking care of this natural heritage and we vow to pass on these truths, self evident yet timeless to the next generations."

I hereby dedicate this Center in the spirit of NATURES TRUTHS and christen its threshold with the healing waters of the Jordan River.

John Richter



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## WISH LIST FOR THE WATERSHED CENTER

Although most of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Watershed Center may be finished, we still have some needs to make better use of the meeting room and for the building itself:

Coffee Maker	Small Refrigerator	Telescope
Spotting Scope	Binoculars	Storage Shed
Large Screen TV	VCR	Computer
Printer	Television Cart	Podium

We are also accepting donations for the purchase of the following items:

- \*Chairs, Desk, Bookshelves, Window Blinds
- \*Wood Identification Signs for the driveway entrance and the Sportsman's Park Walkway
- \*Landscaping materials and plants

Please call us at (231) 536-9947 if you can help us with the wish list.



## JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

FRIENDS OF THE JORDAN RIVER WATERSHED, INC.

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