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## Environment

# Little Scioto cleanup meanders

By **Laura Arenschiold**  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

**GREEN CAMP, Ohio** — The Little Scioto River flows through Marion County here, past cornfields, factories and

a park. The creek, surrounded by tall grass, crooked trees and a chorus of croaking frogs, is peaceful compared with the noise of Columbus nearly 60 miles away. The river daw-

dles here. That quiet scene, though, belies the murky truth: The Little Scioto River is among the nation's most polluted. The waterway is laden with toxic chemicals.

The Baker Wood Preserving Co., a business that treated railroad ties with coal-tar creosote from 1890 until it closed in the 1960s, is the  
See **Cleanup** Page **A6**

## Ballot issue

# Would legal pot create more jobs or trouble?

By **Alan Johnson**  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

A tsunami of green is going to hit Ohio — big green waves of cash — if marijuana is legalized, advocates say. "There's enough money in this for everybody," ResponsibleOhio investor Alan Mooney says in a YouTube video promoting his Ohio Cannabis Institute. Mooney, an entrepreneur and licensed minister who uses "Sir" with his name because of an honorary designation by Pope Benedict XVI, calls marijuana a "miracle plant" and "a gift from God." But opponents say the effect would be devastation, not salvation.

See **Pot** Page **A7**



COURTNEY HERGESHEIMER | DISPATCH

A cardboard cutout of Pope Francis greets people as they enter the offices at St. John Neumann Catholic Church in Sunbury. A group from the church, including the Rev. David Sizemore, will attend the papal Mass in Philadelphia next Sunday.

# 'A people's pope'

Francis' upcoming U.S. visit generating lots of excitement in central Ohio, across the country

By **JoAnne Viviano** • THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

**T**hirty seconds. • That's how long it took fans of Pope Francis to snatch up 10,000 tickets released last week for his Mass in Philadelphia. Rock-star status? Absolutely. • As the leader of the Roman Catholic Church prepares to make his first U.S. visit this week, organizers are preparing for the unprecedented crush of people expected to visit Washington, New York or Philly in the hope of getting a glimpse of the man known as "the people's pope." | See **Pope** Page **A10**

## Medicine

# 2 cholesterol drugs pricey, promising

By **Misti Crane**  
THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

This summer was revolutionary for cardiologists and some of their toughest-to-treat patients. Almost three decades after the advent of statins, two new, powerful cholesterol drugs gained approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Doctors say the injected

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## Cleanup

FROM PAGE A1

cause of the pollution.

Stacked and left outside to dry, the creosote-drenched ties dripped the oily tar onto the ground, where it oozed into a ditch that runs to the Little Scioto. A known cancer risk to people, the creosote killed all aquatic life in a 5-mile stretch of the stream.

For years, federal, state and local officials have talked about restoring that section of the Little Scioto. Cleanup efforts actually started once, but the money to pay for them dried up.

"It's disappointing," said Lynn Clabaugh, a Marion Township trustee and farmer who owns land along the Little Scioto. "They have the federal and the state money to do everything else except to do what is basic for people, like take care of the water quality."

The Little Scioto is a Superfund site, one of 50 in Ohio and among more than 1,000 nationwide. The Superfund was created 35 years ago to deal with severe pollution caused by industrial chemical contamination.

For 20 years, cleanup efforts were regularly funded, and projects were completed. But over the past 15 years, the fund has dwindled. This year, the total is about \$1.1 billion, about one-third of what it was at its peak.

Environmental cleanups are expensive and



ADAM CAIRNS | DISPATCH

**Because previous cleanup efforts stalled, part of the Little Scioto River remains fouled with toxic creosote.**

can take years, if not decades, to complete. Whatever money is available these days is used on the worst cases, experts say.

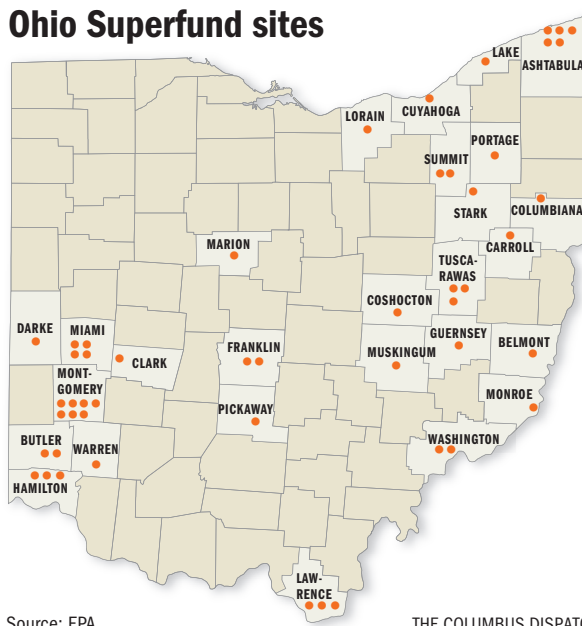
"Every year, it's a fight to see how much Congress is going to give us (for Superfund cleanups)," said Lois Gibbs, often called the "mother of Superfund." She founded the Center for Health, Environment and Justice, a national organization that lobbies for stronger environmental

health regulations.

The Superfund began in 1980 after Gibbs, a then-housewife in Niagara Falls, N.Y., learned that her son's neighborhood elementary school had been built next to a toxic-waste dump. That neighborhood was Love Canal, a name now synonymous with the fight to clean up industrial waste.

For a while, the Superfund was financed in part by a tax paid by manufacturing and chemical companies. The money

## Ohio Superfund sites



Source: EPA

THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

allowed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and its state partner agencies to clean up toxic messes and, in many cases, force companies to cover the costs.

At its peak, the fund had about \$3.8 billion at its disposal. But in 1995, Congress allowed the tax requirement to expire. Since then, the fund has struggled to stay viable. The U.S. EPA has lobbied for a return of the tax, but manufacturers have argued against it.

The Superfund got a one-time cash infusion of \$600 million from the

2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, but the money has declined steadily since then.

That leaves sites such as the Little Scioto in the lurch. The toxins are so bad there that the Ohio EPA is advising people not to touch the water in the river between Holland Road, just west of Marion, and Rt. 739 near Green Camp.

In 2002 and 2006, river sediment was dug up and sent to a hazardous-waste facility at a cost of about \$8 million. However, the work stopped before half the job was completed.

The overall price tag was set at \$17 million.

The U.S. EPA named the Little Scioto a Superfund site in 2009 and hoped the cleanup effort would resume again in 2012. But nothing has happened.

Steve Snyder, who works in the Ohio EPA's Bowling Green office on environmental cleanup, said there has been some behind-the-scenes work. The U.S. EPA has completed a draft proposal for how to clean that section of the river, and other documents that have to be completed before the work can be considered for funding are tentatively scheduled to be done by 2016, he said.

Even then, the Little Scioto will compete with the 1,300-plus Superfund sites nationwide.

Andy Appelfeller, a Marion County farmer and longtime Marion County commissioner, said he has been involved in conversations about the Little Scioto for more than a decade.

"You can't fish, you can't swim, no anything in the river," he said. "I think it will eventually get done. I hope in my lifetime. I'd like to see it."

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## Derailment

### Ethanol tanker burns in South Dakota

SCOTLAND, S.D. (AP) — Seven ethanol tank cars derailed and at least one caught fire Saturday morning in southeastern South Dakota, the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad said.

No one was hurt, the railroad said.

The 98-car train derailed about 6:15 a.m. in a rural part of Bon Homme County, a region awash in cornfields between the towns of Scotland and

Lesterville, railroad spokesman Andy Williams.

Williams said three tankers lost their contents. Officials aren't yet sure what caused the derailment over a small bridge that spans a dry creek.

"It's too early to tell," Williams said. "It will be under investigation."

The derailed tanker cars were near the front of the train, said Lee Rettig of the Bon Homme County

Emergency Management Department.

Rettig said one rural road was shut down as firefighters who responded from Scotland, Lesterville, Menno, Tyndall and Tabor worked to extinguish the blaze.

It was put out about 2:30 p.m., he said.

Burlington hazardous materials teams responded to help with the cleanup. There are no waterways near the crash scene.

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