

# METRO

THE PLAIN DEALER



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Brecksville-Broadview Heights High School seniors Katie Bartholomew, left, and Tricia Scanlon formed a human chain with other high school students to remove about 1,000 tires from under the Clark Avenue Bridge in Cleveland during Saturday's 17th annual Cuyahoga RiverSweep.

## Volunteers team up to clean up banks of Cuyahoga

### Future trail sites get special attention

CARL MATZELLE  
Plain Dealer Reporter

People were talkin' trash around the city Saturday — not about sports or politics, but real trash.

More than 700 volunteers — including teachers, students, office workers and executives — hauled tires, discarded furniture and other debris from the banks of the Cuyahoga River and its tributaries in the 17th annual Cuyahoga RiverSweep.

Each year, volunteers have

collected more than 10 tons of litter during the half-day blitz and this year was no exception, events coordinator Tanya Stella of the Ohio Canal Corridor said. More than 21,000 tires have been collected since the clean-ups began, she said.

"Unfortunately, none of the trash is recyclable because it's so filthy," Stella said. "But it gets people involved in their communities, makes them aware of the blight that exists." The cleanup targeted several areas this year, including the Flats, Slavic Village, Tremont and Old Brooklyn areas of Cleveland.

Last year, workers focused on areas like West Creek Reserva-

tion in Parma for the expanding Towpath Trail. This year, they focused on Morgana Run in Slavic Village, the Treadway Ravine in Old Brooklyn and Bacci Park near the Ohio Canal in Cuyahoga Heights — all future sites of hiking and biking trails.

At Hart Crane Park in the Flats, Bob Sevel, 44, and about a dozen other Ohio State University graduates collected litter, picked weeds, mowed grass and planted flowers.

Sevel, an 11-year-veteran of the event, lives in Old Brooklyn. He said volunteering gives him a better appreciation of the inner workings of the city. And by sprucing up public areas, Sevel

hopes to leave a legacy.

"It makes me think about those who have traveled these paths in the past and those who will traverse them in the future," he said. "I'm paying it forward."

Volunteers, including Dennis Turski of Tremont, wore T-shirts depicting Edward Munch's painting "The Scream," to proclaim RiverSweep's theme, "Don't Just SCREAM ... DO something about it."

Turski, 54, a six-year RiverSweep veteran, said the program has had a positive effect on his neighborhood because volunteers are collecting less debris from the same areas each year.

"But we still have a ways to

go," said Turski, a manager at Ford's Brook Park No. 1 and No. 2 Engine Plants.

Students from Cuyahoga Heights, Hathaway Brown and Brecksville-Broadview Heights high schools also pitched in.

Emily Drumm, 16, was one of about 170 Brecksville students who participated. Emily and other students formed a human chain and helped haul about 1,000 tires from underneath the Clark Avenue Bridge.

"It was fun. It felt good to contribute," Emily said. "But I know my arms will be sore tomorrow."

To reach this Plain Dealer reporter: cmatzelle@pland.com, 440-934-0522