

## AVA LYNN HOTTMAN

### July 30, 1950 – February 25, 2006

Each of us who knew her has a different vision and version of who Ava Lynn Hottman was, and each of us is correct. Ava was the quintessential “Renaissance Woman.” She was an accomplished woman of her age and time, she was very well educated and knowledgeable about the world around her. Ava also could cook, do needlework, read good books, write in her journal, and care for those around her. In retrospect, however, she was so very much more than just these images of her. As we have gathered this last week to remember her and pay tribute to her, I think we have each begun to find out more about the whole of who Ava really was, and to understand the huge contribution that she made, and continues to make, for the protection of Ohio’s environment, especially her precious Ohio waters.

Ava was an avid reader of history and a great believer in the Roman concept of the republic. She often likened Ohio citizens, who came forward to preserve or clean up Ohio’s waters, to the image of the great Roman General Cincinnatus and his troops. When called to defend Rome, they put down their farming implements, unharnessed their horses, stepped out of their fields, picked up their swords and fought to protect their mother country. When the battle was over, they laid down their power and their swords, went back to their farms, picking back up their tools and the lives they had set aside for awhile. Ohio has long recognized the citizen soldier, and named Cincinnati in honor of the Roman general. Ava saw all Ohio citizens as the true protectors of Ohio’s natural resources and environment, putting their own lives on hold, for a season, or for years, as the need arose.

My image of Ava is more along the lines of General George Marshall. President Harry Truman credited Marshall with winning World War I because he was able to supply the troops along an incredibly long front, making it possible for the troops to carry on the fight to victory. After the end of World War II, Truman sent Marshall, now a private citizen, back to Europe to rebuild the continent, which Marshall succeeded in doing, against all odds. In tribute, the restoration program was named for his efforts. Ava was the supplier for the troops and she was the rebuilder of Ohio’s environment. At conferences, sitting at a table with an urn of coffee, fresh cups, an ashtray, and empty chairs, she would meet with everyone and anyone who could offer assistance in building her vision of a cleaner, better Ohio.

She knew every word, of every section, of every environmental law there was, and more importantly, she knew what words were not there. While the Clean Water Act is traditionally considered a surface water protection tool, Section 319, which provides pass-through funding to the state levels, only says “water,” and so Ava determined that Section 319 money could be used for ground-water protection as well. Using federal dollars, she funded numerous local initiatives from Soil & Water Conservation Districts and Ohio State University Cooperative Extension county offices, to regional planning commissions; initiating surface and ground water protection and clean-up efforts at the local level all over the state. Those first funding dollars have turned into the great watershed protection efforts we have in Ohio today. When the Federal government determined that they were not bound

by Ohio and United States Environmental Protection Agency clean-up rules and regulations at the Mound and Fernald clean-up sites, she used the new Sole Source Aquifer designation in the 1986 Amendments to the Safe Drinking Water Act to force them to begin a clean-up effort. The concept of Sole Source Aquifer designation has spread across Ohio. We have more areas in Ohio with Sole Source Aquifer designations than any other state in U.S. EPA Region V and possibly in the whole United States. Two more efforts are currently under way. These also grow out of Ava’s legacy.

As this issue was coming to print, Ava was in the midst of her last struggle with illness. We are so pleased that she got to see the paper that she and Earl Finbar Murphy wrote, finally come to print. This paper, begun in 1998, was more of a dialogue between old acquaintances with overlapping backgrounds as they discussed environmental and planning law and public policy from academic and applied positions. This paper, Ava’s final, is only a small snapshot of their musings. It was her dream that a larger version could someday be published in a law review or as the chapter of a planning book. Until such time, this shorter version will have to suffice.

In all respects, she fully expects all of you to carry out her work and she charges you each with the responsibility of citizenship and the defense of Ohio’s natural resources and environment any way you can.



Ava Lynn Hottman along the banks of the Scioto River in Columbus, Ohio. Photo taken by Tina Baker, dear friend and colleague, circa 1976. Photo courtesy of Tina Baker’s private collection.

Lovingly submitted,  
Julie Weatherington-Rice  
March 3, 2006