

Mill Creek MetroParks

2011 ANNUAL REPORT



Board of Park Commissioners

Mill Creek MetroParks is governed by a board of park commissioners consisting of five residents of Mahoning County appointed by the Probate Court of Mahoning County and serving without remuneration or benefits.



APPOINTING AUTHORITY
The Honorable Judge Mark Belinky
Mahoning County Probate Judge

MILL CREEK METROPARKS 2012 BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

<i>President</i>	Robert J. Durick
<i>1st Vice-President</i>	John Ragan
<i>2nd Vice-President</i>	Louis Schiavoni
	Jay Macejko
	Valencia Marrow
<i>Executive Director</i>	Clarke Johnson



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<i>Marketing Director</i>	Linda Kostka
<i>Editor</i>	Linda Kostka
<i>Graphic Designer</i>	Julie Peterson
<i>Photographer</i>	Lily Martuccio

About the Cover

Sunset at the Farm is a special event held at the MetroParks Farm each September. On this beautiful evening, a record 2500 adults and children attended.

On the Back

The Children's Vegetable Garden program is a hands-on gardening program for children ages 8 - 12. The Veggie Garden is located at the MetroParks Farm.

Mission Statement

The mission of Mill Creek MetroParks is to provide park, recreational, and open space facilities of regional significance. In fulfilling this mission our objectives are:

- To be responsive to community needs
- To be environmentally sound
- To be adaptable
- To be economically responsible



2011 BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

From left to right: John Ragan, Louis Schiavoni, Valencia Marrow, Robert J. Durick, Jay Macejko, Clarke Johnson (Executive Director)



A Separate Political Subdivision of the State of Ohio

Mill Creek MetroParks is a separate political subdivision of the state of Ohio and is not a part of any local or other political subdivision. It was established on January 1, 1989, under Chapter 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code, as the successor to the Youngstown Township Park District subsequent to the voters' approval of the conversion. Mill Creek MetroParks serves all of Mahoning County.

The MetroParks currently operates Mill Creek Park, located in Boardman Township and the City of Youngstown, Yellow Creek Park in Struthers, the MetroParks Farm in Canfield Township, Vickers Nature Preserve in Ellsworth Township, McGuffey Wildlife Preserve in Coitsville Township, MetroParks Bikeway, which traverses Austintown Township, Canfield Township and the City of Canfield, Sebring Woods in the Village of Sebring, Cranberry Run Headwaters in Boardman Township, Mill Creek Preserve in Boardman Township, Sawmill Creek Preserve in Canfield Township and Mill Creek Wildlife Sanctuary in Beaver Township.

MetroParks revenue is derived from three main sources: receipts of a tax levy upon all real estate within the District, receipts from the Local Government Fund and income from MetroParks facilities such as greens fees, rentals of cabins, pavilions, and boats, lesson programs, and other activities.

Thank you for supporting me in my first year as Executive Director of Mill Creek MetroParks. I've met so many wonderful people in the Mahoning Valley, and learned a lot about the proud history of this area I now call home. Most important though, I'm honored to be a part of the jewel called Mill Creek MetroParks.

Clarke W. Johnson

From the Director's Chair



Dear MetroParks Friends & Supporters:

It's been 120 years since Volney Rogers first discovered the beautiful, green oasis that he named Mill Creek Park. Over the course of those years, a few fortunate people were able to lay claim to the title Executive Director. After completing my first year here in the Mahoning Valley, I am awed by those who have gone before me, and proud to be a part of this grand legacy.

This past year was one of great progress, and great challenges. Several key, long term staff members retired, and I wondered how we would fare without the collective body of knowledge they had amassed over all of those years. Tom Bresko, Recreation Director, was the first to head out, after a tenure of 34 years. His successor, Carolyn Pofok, came to us after working 8 years at Cleveland MetroParks and has made the position of Recreation Director her own in a very short time. Then, Dave Christy, Treasurer and Administrative Services Director, announced he would retire on December 31. We were fortunate to be able to hire Kevin Smith, former Treasurer for the City of Columbiana, to fill Dave's shoes.

Other staff retirements included Dee Bowersock, MetroParks Bookkeeper, with 22 years of service and Don Carney, long-time MetroParks police officer with over 30 years on the job. Both positions were filled internally. I, and the entire staff, wish Dee and Don well as they embark on this new chapter in their lives. Of course, we do expect them to visit from time to time!

Several major projects undertaken this year have the potential to change the face of the MetroParks and enhance our visitors' experiences for years to come.

The historic Fieldhouse at Mill Creek Golf Course was given a total face lift, and construction began on the new Learning Center and Practice Range. In addition, we are now able to offer beer and wine at Hole 37 Restaurant, the renovated grille room.

The James L. Wick Recreation Area will be the site of a state-of-the-art, regionally significant children's play area, thanks to a bequest that was made through the estate of a generous supporter. The design for the area was created late in the year, and construction will begin in 2012. A fundraising campaign to raise the rest of the money needed for completion of the project will get underway early next year.

As 2011 came to a close, our board and staff embarked on a strategic planning process that will take the MetroParks through the next 10 years. A series of focus groups were held in December, and the turnout was beyond our expectations. We truly saw the dedication and support of community leaders and volunteers who took time out of their busy schedules to be a part of this exciting process. Once the plan is complete—the target date is October 2012—we will share the results and strategies with the public.



Things to Do in the MetroParks

Spring, summer, winter or fall, there is no place like Mill Creek MetroParks to experience the drama and beauty of the seasons. As each one unfolded, visitors were touched by nature, learned something new, or created a memory.

Staff and volunteers at Fellows Riverside Gardens spent three days in October carving 15,000 pounds of pumpkins in anticipation of the annual Pumpkin Walk at Twilight. The glowing pumpkins were placed throughout the gardens for the enjoyment of the 4,200 visitors who braved a light drizzle to take in the display. A highlight of the exhibits at Fellows Riverside Gardens was the traveling show *The Bison: American Icon*. This exhibit, funded through the National Endowment for the Humanities, focused on the human interaction that affected the American bison and the important environmental lessons learned.

The first annual The Farmer & The Chef fundraiser was a great success, generating a net profit of \$7,524 for agricultural programs at the MetroParks Farm. The event paired local farmers with local chefs to create appetizers, entrees, side dishes and desserts made from locally grown products.

Sarah Turner kicked off the 7UP Summerfest Spectacular concert series, and several celebrity guests who were featured in her video appeared onstage to support her. Ray Mancini, Mel Pachuta (Human Beingz), John Sferra (Glass

Harp), Mayor Jay Williams, and boxer Harry Arroyo were interviewed by emcee Dan Rivers. National recording artists Atlanta Rhythm Section drew several thousand fans and helped increase concert attendance 5% over 2010.

In spring, thousands of family members made their way to Canfield to greet some of the MetroParks Farm's newest arrivals as the annual Farm Animal Baby Shower marked its 20th year. Throughout the season, the farm was a much anticipated destination for some of our youngest MetroParks visitors, along with a first time stop for many families. Visitors to the farm not only enjoyed a trip to the barns to see the animals, but also took guided tractor-wagon rides to experience other sights, sounds, and smells of the farm. During the summer, the AgVenture Barn became a back drop for an outdoor Movie Under the Stars, which marked the opening of a new concept for the Farm, a gift shop.

Ford Nature Center continued its long-standing tradition of walks, hikes, kayaking, school field trips, children's programs and special events. Some crowd pleasers included a look back in time at Pioneer Pavilion in February, an owl walk in March, two frog walks in April and May, monarch observation in September, and locating Nature Center turkeys in November. Guest presenters Bob Glotzhofer (Mysterious Monsters of the Ice Age) and Joe Hannibal (Investigating Historic Millstones) offered expert looks at new subjects.



The MetroParks went to the dogs with the addition of MetroMutts, a new membership program for dogs and their human companions. A series of hikes, dog-related programs and "Yappy Hour" events gave people and canines plenty to take advantage of.

The annual photo exhibit filled up the Weller Gallery with the fine work of local entrants. The Reptile & Raptor Exhibit attracted close to 2,000 visitors.

Despite the record rainfall in 2011, Mill Creek Golf Course had an exciting year. A major upgrade to the Hole 37 Restaurant was made with the acquisition of a license to sell beer and wine. Other improvements included new carpeting, paint and furniture, making Hole 37 casual, attractive and welcoming. Innovative programs provided fun and enjoyable experiences for golfers while delivering a healthy environment for our customers, connecting them to nature. Other small changes that made a difference included adjusting tee time intervals to keep the starting times on schedule and improve the pace of play, and the creation of a Player Services Attendant, who assisted in directing the daily activities of the golf operation.

Health and wellness classes continue to be popular with yoga and Tai Chi students who come to relax and get fit amidst the beauty of Fellows Riverside Gardens. Several bus tours coordinated by the Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens were immensely popular and quickly

sold out. Tours to Washington DC included the US Botanic Garden, National Arboretum, Dumbarton Oaks and Hillwood Estate Museum and Garden. In November, travelers enjoyed Phipps Conservatory in Pittsburgh, aglow with holiday lights and a behind the scenes tour of the facility.

Indoor and outdoor facilities accommodated many groups and families for their graduations, parties and events. Recreation field staff worked with a number of baseball leagues to have the diamonds ready to accommodate their games at Scholl, Volney Rogers, and Wick Recreation Areas. We welcomed the return of the Ohio High School Athletic Association with the Spring and Fall Tennis Sectionals at the Volney Rogers Courts. Children and adults learned about the historic Lanterman's Mill and its surrounding areas. MetroParks guests enjoyed the view as they paddled around Lake Glacier and Newport on the pedal boats and kayaks. We ended the year with football leagues playing at Volney Rogers Field, as well as some high school soccer at the Wick Recreation Area.



Fellows Riverside Gardens is a premier venue for wedding ceremonies and receptions. To showcase this facility, Bridal Fair—"A Garden Wedding", was held in July, just as the Gardens were at the peak of color.



Celebration, a month-long special event at Fellows Side Gardens, attracted nearly 20,000 visitors. Over 40 were decorated by local non-profit organizations.



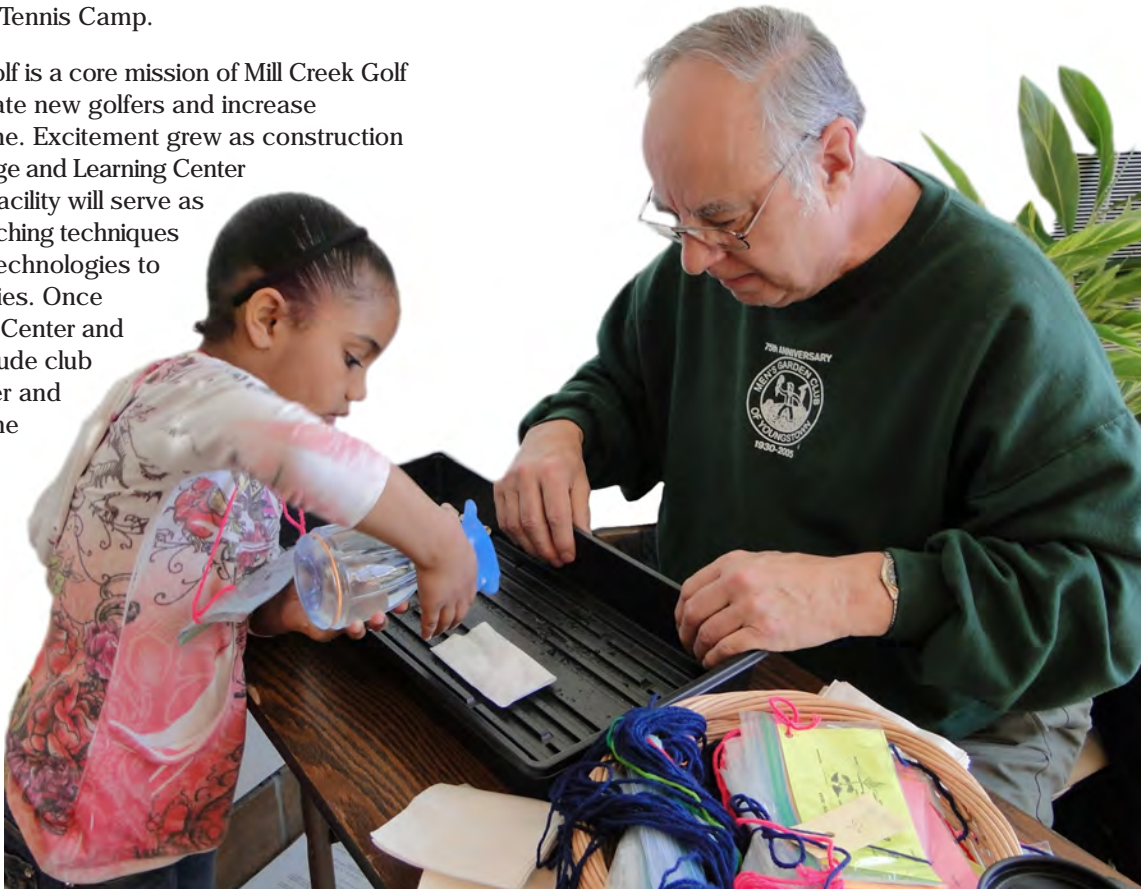
Education Made Fun

The Family Garden in Fellows Riverside Gardens was a beehive of motion from May until September. A variety of educational drop-in activities let children dig, plant and explore. The butterfly garden was enlarged, two new theme gardens were added, and an enabling garden and a straw-bale garden made the Family Garden accessible to all.

At the MetroParks Farm, over 100 children from grades K-6 attended Ag Camp in August. This year's theme at Ag Camp was New York, New York, and campers learned how food goes from farm to table in the big city. Ag Camp is a partnership with Agland Co-op, Witmer's and the Junior Fair Advisory Board. Other fun camps included Junior Golf Camp, Junior Naturalists, and Tennis Camp.

Growing the game of golf is a core mission of Mill Creek Golf Course, in order to create new golfers and increase participation in the game. Excitement grew as construction of the new Practice Range and Learning Center began in late fall. This facility will serve as an activity center for teaching techniques using state-of-the-art technologies to help players of all abilities. Once complete, the Learning Center and Practice Range will include club fitting, a teaching center and a free-to-use short game area with green side bunkers.

Golfers attending camps and clinics spanned all ages. A ladies two-day clinic, Adult Link Up to Golf and Get Golf Ready workshops, and junior introductory and graduate camps got novice as well as seasoned golfers right in the swing of things. Several special events and tournaments were held at Mill Creek Golf Course during the spring and summer months. The YMCA Community Cup, Mill Creek 7UP Junior Golf Championship, Kenny Novak Junior Tour, Mill Creek Pro-Am and numerous charitable golf outings rounded out a successful season.



What We Learned

MetroParks staff not only educate, but seek out opportunities for themselves to enhance their profession. Workshops and trainings were diverse, covering areas such as safety, management training, invasive species management, pond and lake management, creating play environments, and fundraising. Conferences attended were Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference, Ohio Parks and Recreation Association Conference, National Parks and Recreation Conference, Ohio Woodland, Water and Wildlife Conference, FBI Great Lakes Leadership Seminar, the Association of Fundraising Professionals International Conference and American Public Gardens Association Conference.

Some of the more interesting and unusual workshops attended by staff were:

- Qualitative Habitat Evaluation Index (QHEI) training
- Categorical Exclusion Environmental Documentation training
- Winter Road Maintenance: Smart Salt and Road Deicer Strategy
- Ohio EPA's Inland Lakes Sampling Program and Harmful Algal Blooms Initiative
- Solar Panels, Hydroelectric Power and Marcellus Shale Waste Water presentation

Other Staff News

Assistant Police Chief Bruce Emery was able to successfully recover the Kneeling Girl Fountain, within a week of its theft from Fellows Riverside Gardens.

Golf Director Dennis Miller, PGA, was awarded Public Golf Course Merchandiser of the Year by the Northern Ohio PGA.

Andy Santor, Golf Pro, received TPI Titlelist Performance Institute fitness certification Level 1.

Educational Group Program Attendance*

<i>Mahoning County Residents</i>	MetroParks Farm	Ford Nature Center	Fellows Riverside Gardens	Subdivision Totals
Austintown Township	723	335	297	1355
Beaver Township	44	104	0	148
Beloit Village	49	10	0	59
Berlin Township	0	0	0	0
Boardman Township	1,003	350	289	1,642
City of Campbell	82	127	40	249
Canfield City & Township	486	122	302	910
Coitsville Township	0	0	0	0
Craig Beach Village	0	0	0	0
Ellsworth Township	61	0	0	61
Goshen Township	0	10	0	10
Green Township	98	14	87	199
Jackson Township	93	0	0	93
Lowellville Village	49	0	63	112
Milton Township	16	0	13	29
New Middletown Village	14	10	10	34
Poland Village & Township	479	174	266	919
City of Sebring	45	20	0	65
Smith Township	50	12	0	62
Springfield Township	195	3	27	225
City of Struthers	366	258	41	665
Village of Washingtonville	0	0	11	11
City of Youngstown	1,860	1,085	824	3,769
Total Mahoning County	5,713	2,634	2,270	10,617

Program attendance – Nonresidents

Trumbull County	902	136	247	1285
Columbiana County	334	74	176	584
Other Ohio	113	247	322	682
Pennsylvania	0	0	237	237
Other State/Country	2	0	143	145
Total Nonresident	1,351	457	1,125	2,933
GRAND TOTALS	7,064	3,091	3,395	13,550

* Educational Group Programs are special programs requested by schools, groups, and organizations.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Mill Creek MetroParks and Polish Youngstown worked together to present *Kulig: A Polish Winter Celebration* in January at Fellows Riverside Gardens. Kulig, an organized sleigh riding party, is an old Polish winter tradition that dates back to the days of nobility. Over 600 people attended this first-time event.

A Shakespeare festival was held at the Judge Morley Pavilion in cooperation with the Mahoning Valley Players. Nearly 500 people attended the two performances.



Local schoolchildren took part in the ceremony to install a peace pole in the Family Garden by Seniors for Peace.

A “friend raising” event at the Mill Creek Preserve was hosted in collaboration with the Western Reserve Land Conservancy in June. Guided hikes through the wetland restoration area highlighted the importance of these habitats and helped educate visitors on the benefits of land conservation.

The Mill Creek MetroParks Police Department hosted a regional training with the Mahoning Valley Chiefs of Police Association in June at McMahan Hall in Canfield. Over 80 local police officers attended. A golf outing, also held in conjunction with Mahoning Valley Chiefs of Police Association, attracted over 100 golfers in August.

Friends of Fellows Riverside Gardens (FFRG) sponsored several major events that drew thousands of visitors to the MetroParks. An orchid exhibit, Garden Author Lectures, Pumpkin Walk at Twilight, and Winter Celebration attracted a diverse audience and many new visitors. Capital improvement projects at Fellows Riverside Gardens that received support from FFRG included the completion of the Seasonal Celebration Plaza project, construction of a high tunnel greenhouse and funding for design work of future garden projects.

Twelve hundred children attended Children’s Book Festival: Plant the Seed to Read at Fellows Riverside Gardens. The MetroParks partners with The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County, Altrusa International of Youngstown and Western Reserve PBS to promote literacy.



Nearly 1300 Boy Scouts & Cub Scouts helped clean up the MetroParks on Earth Day.

In October the MetroParks co-sponsored a seminar with the Men’s Garden Club of Youngstown (MGCY) titled *Trees, Trees, Trees: A Seminar All About...Trees*. The MGCY donated three American elm trees to add to the American Elm Demonstration Project, which was established in 2010 at the Mill Creek Preserve.

The Alliance for Watershed Action and Resource Education (AWARE) sponsored a Watershed Festival at the MetroParks Farm in October. This “Green” themed event featured displays and demonstrations from various environmental groups and government agencies, live birds of prey, and plenty of games, arts, and crafts.

A trail bridge on the West Newport hiking trail in Mill Creek Park was reconstructed with the help of local Boy Scout of America Troop #109.

Planning and Operations staff assisted the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) with various planning efforts in the Idora Neighborhood, including preparation of a proposed site plan for YNDC’s Iron Roots Urban Farm.

Commitment to the communities we serve is paramount to MetroParks staff. Just some of the organizations, committees, boards and initiatives staff members are involved in are: AFSCME Union, AWARE (Alliance for Watershed Action and Resource Education), Mahoning County Storm Water Management, OPRA (Ohio Parks & Recreation Association), City of Youngstown Design Review Committee, Rotary Club of Youngstown, Hands On Volunteer Network, Association of Fundraising Professionals, American Public Garden Association, Youngstown CityScape, Mahoning Soil & Water Conservation District, Great Ohio Lake to River Greenway, Mahoning River Consortium, Mahoning Valley Chiefs of Police Association and the Vindicator's Greatest Golfer in the Valley.

Recreation staff is dedicated to working with local non profits to ensure their races, walks and bike-a-thons are successful. The Distance Classic Race, Weight Watchers Run, Memorial Run, Amyloidosis Run, Kidney Foundation Walk, Cardinal Classic, YMCA Triathlon, Community Cup, YUTC Race, Suicide Prevention Walk, Hearts for a Safe Harbor Run, Peace Race, Covelli Panerathon, and Multiple Sclerosis Walk brought a combined total of 5540 visitors into the MetroParks.



Into the Community

Participation in fairs and festivals is an important component of community outreach. The public was able to meet and talk to MetroParks staff at many venues throughout the year:

- Boardman St. Patrick's Day Parade
- Greater Youngstown Home & Garden Show
- Antlers & Anglers Sportsman's Showcase
- Canfield Fair
- Grey To Green Festival
- OH WOW Children's Museum Silly Science Sunday
- Watershed Festival
- Downtown Youngstown Holiday Parade



Partners in the Park



The MetroParks experienced great community support in 2011. Individuals, organizations, foundations, and businesses contributed \$290,870. The Board of Park Commissioners and staff of Mill Creek MetroParks thank everyone who supported us as Partners in the Park. Their gifts of time, talent and financial resources are greatly appreciated. The legacy of Volney Rogers lives on through the inspired support of our community.



7UP Summerfest Spectacular attracted nearly 14,000 people in 2011.

Organizations, Foundations, Corporations

A P O'Horo Company
Agland Co-op / 1st Choice Energy Solutions
Akron Children's Hospital of Mahoning Valley
Alpha Omega Document Management
Altieri's Home & Garden
Altronic, Inc.
Aqua Ohio
Arcadia Publishing Inc.
Asphalt Solutions Inc.
Asthma and Allergy Center LTD
Austintown Garden Club
Becker Funeral Homes
Belleria Express
Blackridge Garden Club
Buckeye Beverage LLC
Burgan Real Estate, Ltd.
CBS Topsoil
CCA Northeast Ohio Correctional Center
C L Firestone Inc
Cal Ohio Lube Products Inc.
Celtic Healthcare
Chris Graff Agency LLC
City of Youngstown
Crago Veterinary Centre
Constantine Economus MD, LLC
Covelli Enterprises
Davis Foundation
The DeBartolo Corp.
DLO & Associates

Do-Cut True Value
Drake's Landing
Ebert Animal Hospital, Inc.
Eye Care Associates
Farmers National Bank
First National Bank
First Place Bank Community Foundation
Florence Simon Beecher Foundation
Fox Funeral Home
Fred Martin Ford & Mercedes-Benz
Friends of Poland Library
Garden Club of Forest Hills
Garden Club of Ohio
Garden Club of Youngstown
Garden Forum of Greater Youngstown
Garden Gate Garden Club of Poland
Girard Herb Society
Glen Gardeners Garden Club
Handel's Ice Cream, Creekside
Hill Barth & King, Inc.
Hole 37/Barry Dyngles
Humility of Mary Health Partners
Immaculate Heart Garden Club
Independence Garden Club
John Perdue Inc-McDonald's
J C Enterprise Center Inc
J M Verostko Inc
Jane F Lamb Charitable Foundation
Johnny Appleseed Garden Club

KeyBank Liberty Office
MAC Trailer
Mahoning Garden Club
Mahoning / Shenango Kennel Club
Mahoning Valley Dahlia Society
Mahoning Valley Distributing Agency
Mahoning Valley Rose Society
Manchester, Bennett, Powers & Ullman
mc consultants, inc
Men's Garden Club of Youngstown
Mignonette Garden Club
Mill Creek Park Foundation
Mill Creek Ladies Golf Association
Moccasin Flower Garden Club
Murphy Contracting Co.
National Healthcare Access Inc.
Ohio Humanities Council
Olsavsky Jaminet Architects Inc.
Pasadena Community Foundation
Pet Lodge USA of Boardman LLC
Pets Are People Too
Poland Women's Club
Polish Youngstown
PNC Foundation
Prime Thyme Herb Guild
R T Vernal Paving
Rhiel Supply Co
Ron Kreps Drywall & Plastering Co.
Rossi & Rossi

Rudzik Excavating
Rulli Brothers
St. Christine's Golf League
St. Michael Garden Guild of Canfield
Schwebel Family Foundation
Sensit Technologies
Southern Park Golf, Inc
Spring Maids Garden Club
Stifel Nicolaus
Stonebridge Grille & Tavern, LLC
Strollo Architects
Superior Beverage Group
Tabernacle Evangelical Presbyterian
The Taylor-Winfield Foundation
V & M Star
The Vintage Club
Wags & Wiggles Resort
Warren P Williamson, Jr Fund
The Raymond John Wean Foundation
Witmer's Inc.
Youngstown Foundation
Youngstown Orthopaedic Associates
Youngstown Propane, Inc
Youngstown State University
Yurchyk & Davis CPA

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Jodi Zimmerman

Volunteers

We are fortunate to have the gift of people's time and talents to support the activities that occur at the MetroParks year-round. We celebrated our volunteers' commitment last year at the annual Volunteer Recognition Picnic. For the first time, it was held at the Judge Leo P. Morley Performing Arts Pavilion, where our guests took in the big band sounds of the Don Burns Orchestra.

Time recorded for volunteers throughout the MetroParks was 10,445 hours. Based on minimum wage (\$7.40), this would have an approximate value of \$77,293.

Volunteer Hours Recorded:

7359	Horticulture Department
1290	Boy Scouts Earth Day Cleanup
900	Mill Creek Preserve/Wildlife Sanctuary
686	Ford Nature Center/Special Events
200	MetroParks Farm

The Rain Garden at the MetroParks Farm captures rain from the roof of the Education Building and filters it before it runs off into the storm water system.



Grants and Awards

Many major improvements and projects were completed because MetroParks staff diligently looked for alternative sources of funding. These types of endeavors cannot be funded through the MetroParks budget.

\$300,000

FHWA TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM GRANT to improve .79 miles of East Cohasset Drive in Mill Creek Park.

\$301,050

CLEAN OHIO FUND GRANT to purchase 73 acres of property adjacent to existing Mill Creek Park property.

\$200,000

FLORENCE & WARD BEECHER FOUNDATIONS awarded a grant, payable over 4 years, for the continuing upkeep of Lanterman's Mill.

\$37,796

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION GRANT to determine preferred alignment options for Phase III of the MetroParks Bikeway.

\$10,850

OHIO EPA SURFACE WATER IMPROVEMENT FUND GRANT (SWIF) to construct a rain garden at the MetroParks Farm.





Natural Areas and Conservation

This marked the first year for active Canada goose management in Mill Creek Park. The large population of Canada geese not only affects water quality but their aggressive behavior can be dangerous for MetroParks visitors. Staff worked closely with the Ohio Division of Natural Resources to help reduce the number of goose nests within Mill Creek Park.

The Northeast Ohio Naturalists (NEON)/Cleveland Museum of Natural History visited the Hitchcock Woods area of Mill Creek Park in April, performing field surveys and noting a number of rare plant and animal species.

In October, staff and volunteers flocked to the Mill Creek Wildlife Sanctuary to participate in the “Big Sit”, an annual international bird observation and recording event. A total of 64 bird species were observed from sun-up to sun-down, beating the previous year’s results and coming in second place for sites competing within Ohio.

Several Youngstown State University graduate students partnered with the MetroParks on research projects throughout our natural areas studying songbirds, invasive plant species, and other topics. Their studies benefit the MetroParks by providing data that can be used in making important land management decisions.

YSU students study plant identification during a site visit to Mill Creek Preserve.

A local Eagle Scout built and installed a number of nest boxes throughout natural areas in the MetroParks. These nest boxes not only provide places for songbirds and waterfowl to raise their young, but also provide needed shelter to other wildlife as well.



Maintaining the MetroParks

Keeping our nearly 5,000 acres of park lands updated and maintained requires year-round diligence and planning. Not only are there routine tasks that must be accomplished on a regular schedule, there are many seasonal tasks too. Each area of the MetroParks has its own unique set of duties.

Over 100 new trees and shrubs and 300 flowering perennials were planted in the MetroParks. New plantings include the Rain Garden at McMahon Hall in Canfield, the entrance planting to the Golf Course at SR 224, planting around the Sebring Woods sign and beautification at the Wick Recreation Area entrance. Daffodil Meadow saw the addition of 800 new daffodil bulbs.

Unfortunately, the Emerald Ash Borer made its way to Ohio, and ash trees infested by the pest were found throughout the MetroParks. Live as well as dead ash trees were removed for public safety.

Trees, shrubs and other vegetation were trimmed from the scenic vistas throughout the MetroParks to maintain

and improve picturesque views. Vegetation was also trimmed or removed along roadsides and intersections to improve sightlines and increase vehicular and pedestrian safety.

Ongoing tasks in the MetroParks never seem to end. Crews cleaned and maintained rental facilities and comfort stations, collected and processed trash, litter and recycling, maintained and repaired MetroParks vehicles, repaired and patched potholes on MetroParks drives, cleaned and repaired storm drains, erected and took down special event banners at various locations and repaired and replaced picnic tables and grilles in public areas.

Each season brings its own specific tasks for our hardy maintenance department. In the winter, snow and ice are removed from drives, parking areas, walkways and facilities. Snow making machines are set up and torn down, drives are closed for the season, and water is turned off to non-heated facilities. In spring, drives are reopened, pavement markings are reapplied to park drives, grass mowing and trimming are done, and



pavilions are readied for summer. Before summer is in full swing, the golf course is readied, ball fields are groomed, row boats and pedal boats are delivered to the boat houses, and debris is removed from road berms, lawns and meadows.



In Fellows Riverside Gardens, the Sommer Fountain was rebuilt as part of the new Seasonal Celebration Plaza. New walkways were installed through the Perennial and Shade Gardens, the planting areas in the Long Mall were enlarged, the turf area regraded, and new grass was planted.

Nearly 1,500 new flowering perennials, shrubs and trees were installed in the Gardens in 2011. Much of this planting occurred in the Perennial and Shade Gardens, Miniature Rose raised beds and Seasonal Celebration Plaza. In addition, over 4,000 new permanent bulbs were planted in the Perennial and Shade Gardens.

Keeping the MetroParks safe and secure is the priority of the MetroParks Police Department. The department implemented the Taser and all full-time staff were certified in its use after experiencing the effects of the device. Five part-time officers were hired to fill the void left by officers who have moved on in the last few years. The Lexipol Knowledge Management System for Policy Manual and Daily Training Bulletins was implemented, along with wireless broadband and an update of the department's computer system. A new radar unit was received from the Canfield Police Department.

Both Mill Creek Golf Course and the Par 3 saw many needed improvements. A new roof and increased pumping capacity enhanced the operation of the irrigation pump house, while irrigation and drainage improvements and replacement of sprinkler heads were made. New teeing areas on the front nine at the Par 3 kept the golf course open for play during concerts at the Morley Pavilion.

Dog lovers helped keep the MetroParks trails clean by sponsoring a "mutt station" in one of 10 locations. These waste stations make it convenient for all pet owners to pick up after their dogs. The program was so popular, it sold out in 4 months.



MetroParks police officer Dania Gillam lends a hand to a visitor.



Mechanic Jim Hunt repairs the brakes on a MetroParks Police Cruiser.



One of many trees planted at Mill Creek Golf Course as part of the improvements to West Golf Drive.

Capital Improvement Projects

FELLOWS RIVERSIDE GARDENS	
Renovation of plant collections	\$5,418
LANTERMAN'S MILL	
Waterwheel repair & seal siding	26,677
LILY POND	
Treatment & improvements	9,858
METROPARKS FARM	
Upgrade sanitary sewer	10,000
MILL CREEK GOLF COURSE	
Sanitary sewer, Fieldhouse	41,568
Fieldhouse improvements	70,250
Bunkers & drainage repair	21,666
Driving Range & Learning Center (from Replacement Reserve)	103,592
ORCHARD MEADOW	
Comfort station renovations	12,549
PROPERTY ACQUISITION	24,092
ROADS	
Paving & pavement marking at 12 locations	28,634
West Golf Drive resurfacing (ODOT)	71,898
STREAMS	
Healthy Stream Initiative	4,950
TRAILS	
Restoration & improvement	3,111
WICK RECREATION AREA	
Entrance drive improvements	56,241
Design work, children's play area	52,681
YELLOW CREEK PARK	
Water line replacement	7,461
TOTAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	\$550,646



Lanterman's Mill gets a new coat of stain.

Capital Equipment

Terex Hi-Ranger bucket truck	\$72,000
Golf Course, misc equipment	63,812
Tractor, MetroParks Farm	24,882
Police cruiser	24,601
Police, misc equipment	14,143
Furnishings & equipment, Birch Hill Cabin	12,188
Beverage carts, golf course	10,000
Tire breakdown / changer	6,565
Kayaks, Lake Glacier	3,000
TOTAL CAPITAL EQUIPMENT	\$231,191

Wick Recreation Area is the place for a sand volleyball competition.

2011 Statistics

Facility Attendance

FELLOWS RIVERSIDE GARDENS	
Visitors	382,953
METROPARKS FARM	
Visitors	17,369
School Program Attendance	8,636
Farm Tours	8,733
FORD NATURE EDUCATION CENTER	
Visitors	14,636
Program Attendance	3,977
LANTERMAN'S MILL	
Visitors	9,850

Other Rentals

BOAT RENTALS	
Lake Glacier	3,015
Lake Newport	851
BATTING CAGES PLAYS	16,508

Golf Statistics

MILL CREEK GOLF COURSE ROUNDS	
Adult	51,496
Junior	2,863
Senior	16,221
TOTAL ROUNDS	70,580
9-Hole Rounds	33,572
18-Hole Rounds	18,504
PAR 3 GOLF COURSE ROUNDS	
Adult	10,635
Student	7,399
Senior	1,624
Evening	1,324
TOTAL ROUNDS	20,982

Special Events Attendance

Winter Celebration	19,845
7UP Summerfest Concert Series	13,395
Olde Fashioned Christmas at the Mill	5,500
Animal Baby Shower	4,500
Pumpkin Walk at Twilight	4,165
Merry and Bright Nights	3,054
Sunset at the Farm	2,500
Book Festival	2,100
Reptile and Raptor Exhibit	1,830
Santa and His Reindeer	550
Sunfest	500
Shakespeare in the Park Play	500
Halloween at the Morley	450
Easter Eggstravaganza	250
Family Garden Day	190
Movie Under the Stars	100
TOTAL	59,429



Rental Facility Useage

CABINS	
Bears Den	70
Birch Hill	240
Log Cabin	60
Pioneer	161

PICNIC PAVILIONS	
Slippery Rock	45
Chestnut Hill	55
Stitt	46
Scholl	95
Wick	68

YELLOW CREEK PARK	
Yellow Creek Lodge	120
Capt. John Struthers Pavilion	25

FELLOWS RIVERSIDE GARDENS	
Rossi Auditorium	159
Garden Cafe	41
Radius Room	79
Classrooms	234
Wedding Ceremonies	147

METROPARKS FARM	
Classroom A	163
McMahon Hall	272
TOTALS	2,080

Police Statistics

Accidents	
Traffic	19
Non-Traffic	69
Arrests/Misdemeanor Citations	
Adults	41
Juveniles	17
Citations-Traffic	
Adults	66
Juveniles	4
Crimes Against Persons	6
Crimes Against Property	48
Fires	3
Thefts	23
Towed Vehicles	25
Recovered Vehicles	3
Stolen Vehicles	2
Parking Tickets	36
Police Hours	37,310
Police Cruiser Mileage	176,979

Summary of Receipts, Expenses and Balances

MILL CREEK METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT

Income Statement

For the Year Ending December 31, 2011

ENCUMBERED FUNDS 01/01/2011	\$282,012.94
*AVAILABLE CASH BALANCE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR	\$4,771,145.64
REVENUE	
General Property Tax	\$6,759,907.06
Local Govt. Funding	573,233.08
MetroParks Activities	2,192,596.73
Fellows Trust Fund	18,284.63
Grants	31,819.59
Golf Course Donations	10,860.22
Transfers/Advances	403,314.52
TOTAL REVENUES	\$9,990,015.83
TOTAL REVENUES AND BALANCES	\$15,043,174.41
EXPENSES	
Operating-Materials & Supplies	\$1,918,686.36
Operating-Salaries & Wages	4,736,326.44
Capital Equipment	229,968.30
Capital Improvements	686,317.01
General Expense	2,202,815.60
Transfers/Advances	403,314.52
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$10,177,428.23
CASH BALANCE AS OF 12/31/2011	\$4,865,746.18
2011 YEAR END ENCUMBRANCES	\$893,391.84
*AVAILABLE 2011 YEAR END BALANCE	\$3,972,354.34

*The available cash balance is used to sustain MetroParks operations during the first quarter of the following year until tax collection commences.

This was a financially challenging year for the MetroParks. Revenues were down significantly due to a decline in property taxes and gas royalties, and a decrease in golf course revenues due to the wet and rainy playing season. Expense reductions were valiantly implemented to lessen this financial impact. Reductions in capital improvements and healthcare costs were able to create a net reduction in expenses totaling \$346,479.81. The MetroParks worked hard in 2011 to achieve a balanced budget, and will continue to monitor expenses in the coming year. Once again, local government revenues will be reduced, and interest revenue and gas royalties are expected to remain low. We will continue to see significant savings on healthcare expenses that have been received since becoming fully insured.

Merry & Bright was the theme for Winter Celebration at Fellows Riverside Gardens



The MetroParks Farm is a 400-acre working farm that promotes agriculture through education and programs. In addition to wagon tours, display barns, an exhibit area and a playroom, the Farm offers a wonderful setting for many MetroParks special events.

