

Columbus and Franklin County Metropolitan Park District

# METRO PARKS



*photo by Dan Ferrin*

## Annual Report 2012



# Director's Report

In 2012 we accomplished many of our goals in spite of significant decreases in revenue. In addition to a primary goal of maintaining clean, safe parks, we focused on fulfilling the commitments that we made to the voters in 2009.

As anticipated we lost revenue due to the state of Ohio's decisions to reduce Local Government Funds and eliminate tangible personal property tax revenue for local governments. Revenue was reduced by a further 5.5 percent when property values dropped. The budget for 2013 is 62 percent of the budget for 2011 and 76 percent of the budget for 2012. See the enclosed financial review for more details about our financial situation.

Although most financial news was negative, there are a couple of positive signs. The state reauthorized funding for the Clean Ohio program for the first time in several years, and we are in line to receive a \$900,000 grant through this program. Property values appear to have stabilized, so we hope to avoid further reductions from this source.

We implemented many steps to streamline our already efficient operations. However, it will not be possible to absorb any further cuts of this magnitude without impacting the services we provide. Thus far these impacts have primarily affected our planned park improvements. We have maintained our existing parks and facilities and even made some progress on park improvements, most notably with the completion of the Battelle Darby Creek Nature Center. But our other plans for new parks, new trails and enhanced educational offerings have been scaled back.

## The Year in Review — 2012

More than 7,500,000 visitors enjoyed time in the Metro Parks this year as attendance grew by 10 percent. This total does not include the millions of people who utilize the Greenway Trails that we manage. Importantly, the parks, trails and facilities continue to be clean, safe and well maintained.

The opening of the Battelle Darby Creek Nature Center is certainly a highlight for the year. With its living stream, fun exhibits and focus on education, the nature center will be a regional draw for decades to come. Its location overlooking the bison and in close proximity to prairies, wetlands, Darby Creek, and archeological sites enhances the inside features and draws visitors out to explore the park. Educational activities continue to be enhanced in all of the parks, and an increased emphasis on programming for seniors has been implemented.

Our other major construction efforts this year focused on the trail systems. The Ohio to Erie Trail is now complete from Battelle Darby Creek to Cincinnati, and we are currently constructing the next segment, which will bring the trail to Galloway. On the east side, we completed a significant stretch of the Blacklick Creek Greenway Trail between Pickerington Ponds and Blacklick Woods. Improvements were made on other sections of the Greenway trails throughout the county.

The Rock Garden at Inniswood was renovated and significant improvements were completed at Blacklick Woods Golf Course. Initial improvements are being completed at Walnut Woods Metro Park, including the Buckeye Area, which will be fully open in Spring 2013.

At Scioto Audubon Metro Park the rehabilitation of the former impound lot is now complete. We are partnering with the Columbus Rotary Club to install an obstacle course that should add to the park's attractiveness to young professionals.

Metro Parks grew by over 650 acres this year. These additional purchases bring Metro Parks' total conserved land to over 27,000 acres. Grants and contributions from governmental partners were an important component of the funding for most of these acquisitions, and we are very grateful for this support. Acquisition of property for the planned new Metro Park by Grove City was completed. Land was also acquired for the planned Rocky Fork Metro Park in northeast Franklin County.

As an important part of our mission, we strive to protect and improve habitat for wildlife. This also creates new opportunities for people to observe and enjoy wildlife. The re-introduction of bison continues to be a huge hit with the public. The effort to reinforce the populations of the federally endangered riffleshell mussel in Big Darby Creek, in cooperation with several conservation partners, received additional attention. About 300 acres of habitat restoration projects were completed that will enhance our ability to sustain wildlife populations for decades to come. Sandhill cranes expanded their local populations in our restored wetlands.

## The Year Ahead — 2013

Metro Parks will continue to fulfill commitments made during the 2009 park levy campaign. Maintaining the outstanding quality of the existing Metro Parks will remain a top priority.

Notwithstanding the financial challenges caused by the significant reduction in available funding, we are pursuing some projects



that we promised with our levy. Facilities will be completed at Scioto Audubon, including new shelters, a restroom, trails, a sledding hill and an obstacle course.

The Buckeye area at Walnut Woods will be opened with new trails, picnic facilities and our largest dog park. We will construct additional trails through the central area of the park.

In partnership with ODOT, we will be contracting for the bridge over Interstate 270 that will bring the Ohio to Erie Trail into the Hilltop area. We will continue to make other improvements to the Greenway Trails to enhance your fitness, recreation and transportation experiences.

The educational efforts of Metro Parks will continue to be a primary focus. The Students Exploring Ecosystem Dynamics (SEED) program is achieving wonderful success with Columbus and other school districts. Our expanded programming for senior citizens will continue and we will provide a wide range of programs that are of interest to people of all ages.

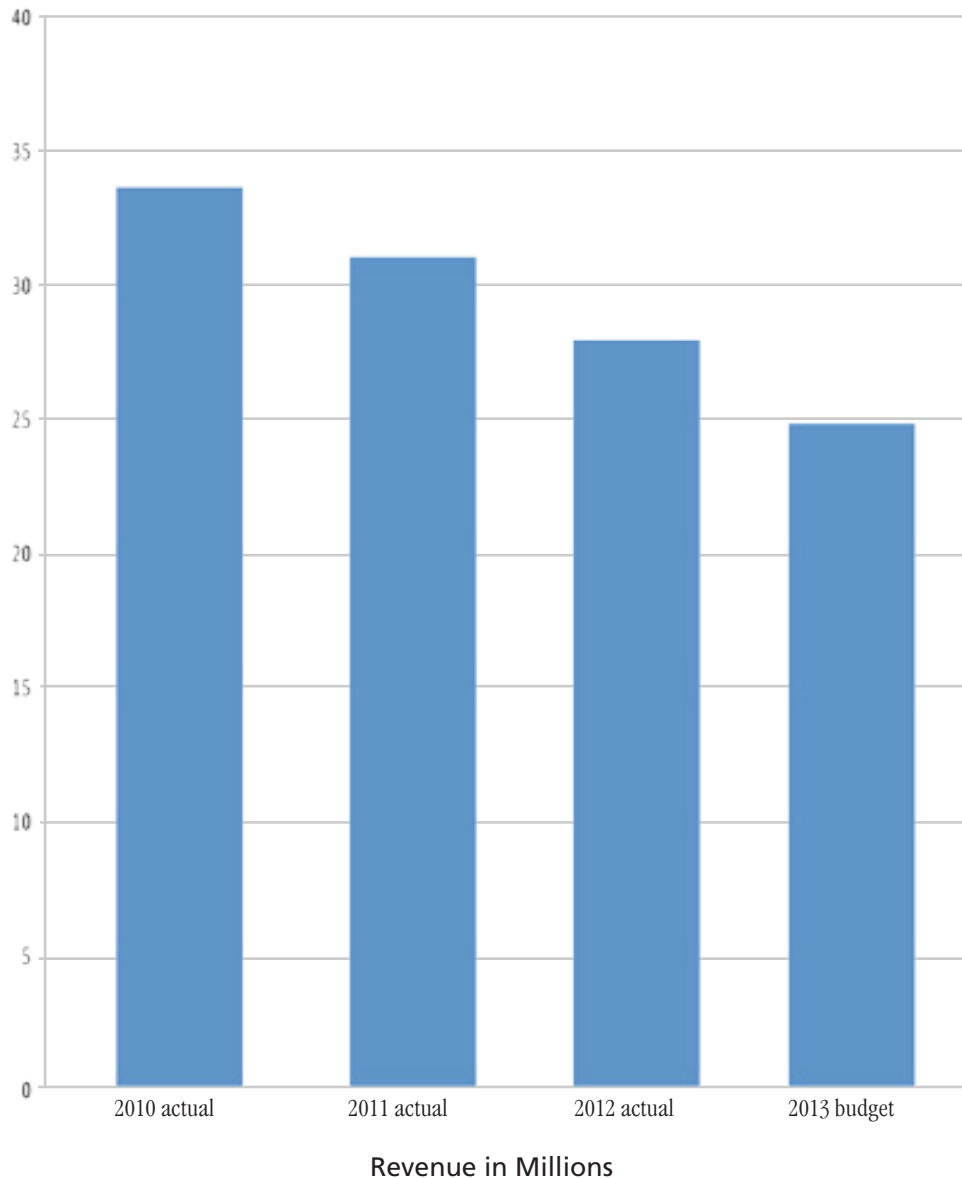
We are working hard to ensure the high quality of the current Metro Parks while making progress in fulfillment of our promises to the community. We look forward to serving you with clean, safe parks that protect habitat for our native wildlife species.

**John O'Meara**

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# Decline in revenues



The chart to the left shows the decline in Metro Parks' revenue streams over the past four years due to the state's decision to cut Local Government Funds and eliminate the tangible personal property reimbursements, coupled with reduced property tax revenue. We anticipate that funding levels will stabilize in the next few years as long as additional funding cuts are not enacted by the state.

We are working to fulfill the promises we made in 2009, when Franklin County voters passed a property tax levy for the Metro Parks. The commitments were based on an assumption that funding from the state and tax revenues would remain stable. Unfortunately, since these are the primary revenue sources for Metro Parks, our ability to complete these promises on the original schedule is not viable. We remain committed to fulfilling our promises, but recognize that many projects need to be delayed due to lack of funding.

Over the past three years we have made considerable progress towards fulfilling our commitments. Metro Parks attendance has increased by 14 percent. We have taken over management of 40 miles of the Greenway Trails system from the City of Columbus and built 25 miles of new park trails, developed facilities at Walnut Woods Metro Park (which will have its grand opening in the spring), expanded our school and senior citizen initiatives, and added 2,180 acres of land for the enjoyment of all people and to protect wildlife habitat.

However, in response to the challenging budgetary situation and uncertainty of future funding sources, we have taken several steps to balance our budget. We have delayed opening new parks and facilities, reduced staff through attrition, eliminated most of our land acquisition budget (except where supported by grants or funding from partners), and reduced operational expenses.

Metro Parks will continue to provide outstanding service to the public, protect natural and cultural treasures, interpret nature to kids, maintain clean and safe parks while being stewards of one of the finest park systems in the country. We appreciate your continued support in these challenging times.

# Design & Visitor Services

## Battelle Darby Creek

- Opened a 14,000-sq-foot nature center in late October, featuring interactive exhibits and a 50-foot living stream
- Completed a portion of Camp Chase Railroad Trail/ Ohio to Erie Trail, allowing biking from the park west to Dayton and Cincinnati
- Restored more than 155 acres of prairies and wetland, and constructed an additional three miles of trails, a parking lot and birding observation areas

## Blacklick Woods and Golf Courses

- Completed another phase of the Blacklick Creek Greenway Trail, extending the trail from Blacklick Woods to Pickerington Ponds
- Completed re-surfacing work on the Multi-use Trail
- Blacklick Woods Golf Courses partnered with First Tee and Morty's Kids to focus on youth golf opportunities
- All concessions at the golf course became self-operated

## Blendon Woods

- The annual Monarch Day event attracted 450 visitors
- Removed 500 ash trees killed by emerald ash borer infestation and marked a further 1,000 ash trees that need to be removed in the future
- Assumed responsibility for the operation of the disc golf course from previous vendor

## Chestnut Ridge

- Re-stocked the fishing pond with bass and bluegill



The living stream at the new Battelle Darby Creek nature center

## Clear Creek

- The Division of Wildlife released 3,500 brown trout in Clear Creek
- Made repairs to Clear Creek Road to enhance visitor experience and comfort

## Glacier Ridge

- Over 350 horses and riders used the bridle trail and more than 3,100 disc golfers played the course
- Re-painted the main park restroom and shelter
- Staff recycled ash tree debris to make a boardwalk, allowing program access to vernal pools

## Heritage Park and Trail

- Construction began on a dog park, in partnership with the City of Hilliard

## Highbanks

- The 154,008 visitors in August was the highest recorded monthly attendance since the park opened in 1973
- Renovated the nature center viewing pond
- Continued treatment of ash trees in an attempt to reduce the effects of the emerald ash borer infestation
- Installed an Eagle Cam and linked to it from our website, allowing people to view the nesting pair of eagles

## Inniswood

- Renovated the Rock Garden with financial assistance from the Inniswood Garden Society
- Installed over 4,000 annual plantings for summer displays, 950 mums for fall display and 8,150 spring bulbs

## Pickerington Ponds

- Completed a stream bank restoration project to return Blacklick Creek to a more natural condition, with financial assistance from the Ohio EPA
- A pair of sandhill cranes nested in the park and raised a colt
- An Eagle Scout installed a War Veteran's Memorial in the Glacier Knoll picnic area

## Prairie Oaks

- Stocked Darby Bend and Beaver lakes with 1,100 bluegill, 50 catfish, 1,400 crappie and 90 pounds of minnows



## Scioto Audubon

- Completed environmental remediation at old City of Columbus impound lot and converted it to green space
- Established late-night opening sessions on the second Friday of each month from March to October, with the climbing wall and fishing available till midnight

## Sharon Woods

- Installed “you are here” signs
- Replaced three major waterlines
- Repaired the Multi-use Trail and removed 100 dead or dying ash trees
- Provided centralized dispatch service for ranger operations

## Slate Run

- Reintroduced more than 300 bobwhite quail
- Renovated restrooms at the Farm and Shady Grove area, complete with new siding and roofs
- Organized a two-day invitational deer hunt to help manage deer overabundance

## Three Creeks

- Nesting eagles spotted
- Removed invasive plant species, including callery pear, garlic mustard and honeysuckle

## Walnut Woods

- Organized a Walnut Creek Tire Drive and removed 90 tires that had been cluttering the creek
- Constructed a timber shelter, main roadway, playground, restroom and dog park in the Buckeye Area, slated to open in 2013
- Renovated the park office and maintenance facility

## Greenways

- Conducted a survey of trail etiquette by trail users
- Continued maintenance and clearing of Alum, Olen-tangy and Blacklick trails
- Opened two additional miles of the Alum Creek Trail

## Park Operations

- Park staff district wide dedicated hundreds of hours to clean up after the summer storm
- Hosted several field trips for the EcoSummit
- Issued 63 special event permits
- Approved the purchase of the first natural gas vehicle for ranger patrol

## Design

- Continued construction on Ohio to Erie Camp Chase Trail
- Widened the Alkire Road bridge over Big Darby Creek in conjunction with Franklin County Engineer, providing a critical link for the Camp Chase Trail west of the creek
- Replaced numerous shelter posts at Prairie Oaks

## Ranger Program

- Four rangers graduated from the Ohio Basic Police Academy
- Ranger staffs of Sharon Woods and Inniswood were combined
- Rangers wrote 402 incident reports, issued 90 court citations and 147 written warnings

## Resource Management

- Restored 140 acres of native Darby Plains wet prairie-savanna at Battelle Darby Creek, to complete a 670-acre Darby Plains prairie restoration area



Glacier Ridge staff created a boardwalk from dead ash trees

- Completed the Blacklick Creek stream restoration project with support of a water quality grant from Ohio EPA
- Completed a 130-acre wetland restoration at Prairie Oaks, including reforestation and headwater stream restoration, with support from an Ohio EPA WRRSP Grant.
- Managed invasive plant species throughout the parks, including the removal of more than 20 acres of bush-honeysuckle and the establishment of native shrubs at Battelle Darby Creek

## Columbus City Schools Intern Initiative

- Offered places to 25 high school students to provide them with experience in the natural resources profession and life skills in the workplace
- During the eight weeks of training, interns worked in the fields of maintenance, day camp and administration

# Education & Outreach

## Mission Statement

To provide Central Ohio students with a positive, memorable environmental experience that supports the academic goals of school districts and provides teachers with resources to expand awareness of Metro Parks' natural and cultural resources.

## Students Exploring Ecosystems Dynamics (SEED)

More than 6,750 fifth graders from two South-Western City Schools, 11 Westerville City Schools and all of Columbus City and Groveport Madison schools participated in SEED. The SEED curriculum was re-written to align with Ohio's new Content Standards for Science.

## Metro Five-0

A total of 106 public programs were held in the second year of the Metro Five-0 initiative, offered for people age 50 and older. The programs attracted 1,250 participants.

## Community Outreach

- Presented 3,413 programs to groups of all ages, with 180,769 participants
- More than 80,000 school age students came out to Metro Parks for 1,375 school programs
- A total of 16,554 preschoolers attended 384 public programs, with another 20,352 preschoolers attending 312 requested programs
- Awarded around 300 pileated woodpecker patches to participants in the Metro Parks Explorer program
- Seven parks offered a total of 200 tram programs attended by 7,959 people



Metro Five-0 participants take a nature hike at Blendon Woods.

- Naturalists held 21 public programs at the Heritage Nature Center in Groveport, attracting 387 participants
- Naturalists and volunteers interacted with 12,619 people in picnic areas or on trails as part of the roving interpretation initiative

## Of special note

- Twelve bison programs were held at Battelle Darby Creek, attended by 489 people. At Blendon Woods, 1,583 people participated in 42 monarch programs

## Special Events

- **Winter Hike Series:** The 13 hikes in the series were attended by 11,682 participants.
- **Commit To Be Fit Hikes:** Ten autumn hikes were attended by more than 1,700 hikers
- **Central Ohio Folk Festival** - Battelle Darby Creek (3,628 visitors)

- **Blacklick Creek Celebration** - Blacklick Woods (175 visitors)
- **WAG Fest** - Prairie Oaks (10,929 people & 4,000 dogs)
- **Spooky Stories** - Blendon Woods (48 visitors)
- **Children's Garden Day** - Inniswood (121 visitors)
- **The Halloween Party** - Inniswood (132 visitors)
- **Music in the Garden Series** - Inniswood (931 visitors)
- **Wellness in the Garden Series** - Inniswood (725 visitors)
- **Fall Fest** - Slate Run (2,705 visitors)
- **Three Creeks Fest** - (298 visitors)

## Summer Nature Adventure Camps

Six Metro Parks hosted 31 week-long camps, with 648 campers ranging in age from preschool through 9th grade.

## Senior Outreach Programs

Understanding that not all seniors can travel to our parks, we bring the parks to them. Outreach naturalists provided programs for 198 groups, attended by 3,720 seniors, including seniors in long-term care facilities, assisted living facilities, senior centers and other locations.

## Senior Camp

The 13 days of Senior Camp, held at Blacklick Woods in the fall, attracted 685 participants. Seniors came from many of the LifeCare Alliance dining centers, Columbus Recreation and Parks senior centers, church groups and adult day care facilities. The campers enjoyed live animal programs, walks, fishing, crafts, nature bingo with prizes, tram rides around the park, lunch and meeting new friends.

## Nature Centers

Blacklick Woods nature center received 46,211 visitors, with 27,455 visitors at Blendon Woods nature center and 53,975 visitors at Highbanks nature center. A new nature center opened at Battelle Darby Creek on October 25 and received 14,538 visitors by year end.

## Volunteers

### NATURALIST VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

More than 11,400 hours of time were worked by 386 naturalist volunteers throughout the park system. Of these, 22 volunteers worked more than 100 hours

### INNISWOOD

Inniswood's 244 volunteers worked 11,130 hours. In addition, 22 junior volunteers (age 11–17) worked 153 hours.

### SLATE RUN FARM

The Farm's 40 dedicated volunteers, often with their families helping, logged 2,408 hours. One volunteer worked 583 hours.



A farm volunteer sharpens a chisel on a foot-powered grindstone.

# Park Attendance

Park	2012	2011	+/-	%
Battelle Darby Creek	733,700	723,800	9,900	1%
Blacklick Woods	872,800	818,700	54,100	7%
Blacklick Woods Golf Courses	51,300	37,700	13,600	36%
Blendon Woods	495,600	437,800	57,800	13%
Blendon Woods Camp	8,900	8,000	900	11%
Chestnut Ridge	175,200	162,600	12,600	8%
Clear Creek	30,100	*12,600	17,500	*139%
Glacier Ridge	293,100	239,700	53,400	22%
Heritage Park & Trail	38,100	39,100	-1,000	-3%
Highbanks	1,165,800	954,600	211,200	22%
Highbanks Camp	12,100	13,900	-1,800	-13%
Inniswood	366,600	504,200	-137,600	-27%
Pickerington Ponds	267,400	264,200	3,200	1%
Prairie Oaks	447,700	406,100	41,600	10%
Scioto Audubon	764,100	531,800	232,300	44%
Sharon Woods	778,700	711,200	67,500	9%
Slate Run	240,900	217,300	23,600	11%
Slate Run Camp	6,500	3,200	3,300	103%
Slate Run Farm	56,900	53,000	3,900	7%
Three Creeks	719,200	699,400	19,800	3%
Walnut Woods	23,900	#4,900	24,400	#498%
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7,554,000</b>	<b>6,843,800</b>	<b>710,200</b>	<b>10%</b>

\* Attendance figures became recordable at Clear Creek in August 2011

# Attendance figures became recordable at Walnut Woods from October 2011

# Finance

## Funding

The majority of the money used to operate Metro Parks comes from property tax levied on Franklin County residents. The 10-year, 0.75-mill levy, passed by voters in Franklin County in 2009, provides income for capital and operating expenses as well as land acquisition.

Additional funding is derived from grants, donations, investments, state and local government funds, and from receipts of park operations.

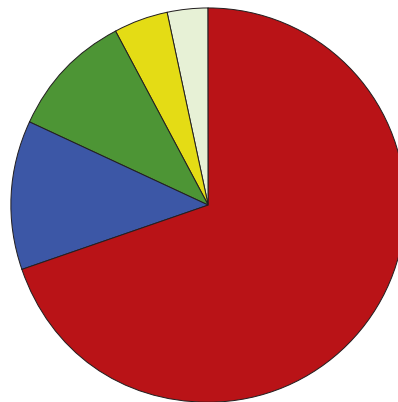
## 2012 Reserved Facility Use

	# of Reservations	# of people
Shelters	2,152	86,055
Lodges	1,356	32,169
Camps	323	14,788
Banquet*	233	9,407
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4,064</b>	<b>142,419</b>
Receipts		\$223,258

\* Golf Course Banquetting

## Revenues — 2012

Property Tax Levy	\$19,531,338
Government Grants	\$3,333,860
Local Government Funds	\$2,900,822
Government Partnerships	\$1,253,058
Income from Operations	\$513,018
Donations, Sponsors, Bequests	\$176,522
Miscellaneous	\$132,218
Investment Income	\$64,919
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$27,905,755</b>

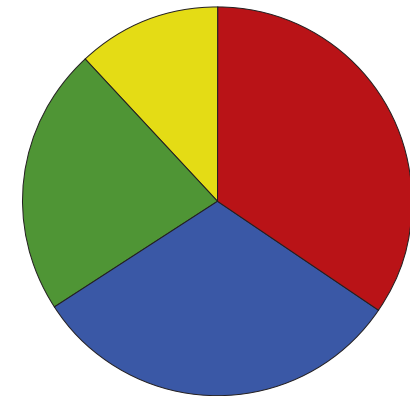


## 2012 Revenues

Property Tax Levy	(70%)
Government Grants	(11.95%)
Local Government Funds	(10.4%)
Government Partnerships	(4.5%)
Other	(3.15%)

## Expenditures — 2012

Personnel	\$11,738,647
Capital Improvements	\$10,633,009
Land Acquisition	\$7,558,177
Operating Expenditures	\$4,016,561
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$33,946,394</b>



## 2012 Expenses

Personnel	(34.6%)
Capital Improvements	(31.3%)
Land Acquisition	(22.3%)
Operating Expenses	(11.8%)

## Blacklick Woods Golf Courses

Revenues	1,074,748
Personnel	872,844
Operating Expenditures	436,711
<b>Net Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>(234,807)</b>



## Human Resources

Human Resources has primary responsibility for managing, assisting and dealing with all employee-related matters including such functions as policy administration, recruitment process, benefits administration, new employee orientation, training, labor relations, wage and salary administration, performance management, and unemployment and workers' compensation. Human Resources staff work closely with all parks and departments to support and respond to their needs.

In addition to the 249 full-time and part-time staff, Metro Parks utilized a variety of seasonal and intern workers in 2012 to assist in achieving goals while reducing costs. Of the year-round staff, 39.75 percent have over 10 years experience with Metro Parks, resulting in a staff with a high level of expertise in maintaining clean, safe parks, educating the public, and providing the best customer service to visitors.

Over the next year, Human Resources will continue to assess and improve our internal systems and processes to meet our ongoing objectives of attracting, retaining and motivating talented staff, developing and enhancing employees' skill sets, recognizing outstanding performance, and monitoring costs associated with running programs that contribute to these successes. In addition, Human Resources will continue to pay close attention to operational needs and analyze staffing to achieve the goals of the overall personnel strategy.

## Public Information

Social media continued to play a significant role in the way we communicate. The various social media platforms, particularly Facebook, allowed Metro Parks to interact with a wider community, listen more carefully to our visitors, and have a more instantaneous communication that could not be conveyed with traditional print publications that have tight deadlines.

 10,148 Fans  2,339 Followers  6,167 Video Views

- Produced 780,000 copies of Parkscape in four issues, distributed in parks, in a Wednesday edition of The Columbus Dispatch and through a Metro Parks mailing list.
- Coordinated a Metro Parks presence on WBNS-10TV, including a half-hour Metro Parks program broadcast in prime time.
- Updated park brochures for 11 of the parks (405,000 copies), plus 50,000 All Parks Guides, 10,000 Natural Resources brochures, 3,500 Adventure Camp brochures and 1,500 Senior Group Programs brochures.

## Land Acquisition

Metro Parks grew by 656 acres in 2012. As the largest park district in Ohio, we now conserve over 27,000 acres in Central Ohio. The majority of land acquired was located in two new park areas: 260 acres at Rocky Fork Metro Park (currently 909 acres) and 189 acres at the park near Grove City (currently 620 acres). These two areas are part of Metro Parks' 2010 levy commitments of opening three new parks during the next 10 years.

Additional land was acquired along major streams, 45 acres along Big Darby Creek in Battelle Darby Creek and 33 acres along Big Walnut Creek in Three Creeks Park. We also acquired 129 acres at Clear Creek Metro Park.

Metro Parks received over \$1,000,000 dollars through the Clean Ohio Conservation Fund Grant program to assist with 75 percent of the purchase price of two acquisitions. These funds are vital to the success of Metro Parks' land acquisition program in conserving open space in Central Ohio.

## Information Technology

The park district's e-mail and other web services were moved to Google. This freed IT technicians from the maintenance of an e-mail server, allowing them to devote more time to preventive maintenance of equipment, which has grown to 110 workstations, plus 10 servers supporting administrative and other systems. The move to Google provided other useful applications. For example, during the planning of exhibits for the Battelle Darby Creek nature center, naturalist staff used Google's services to build a web site for sharing and critiquing information needed for the center display panels. This reduced travel and the number of face-to-face meetings and speeded display development, while including more staff in the process.

## Geographic Information System (GIS)

Metro Parks completed development of park data, including trail, facility, roadway and other points of interest through GPS collection and post-processing in GIS. The data will be used in the development of web map services for staff use. The data was also submitted to the National Parks and Recreation PRORAGIS program to inventory and compare park district information on a national level.

GIS was used to assist in the site analysis, planning and development of capital improvement projects including the Heritage Park dog park and Walnut Woods' Buckeye Area. For Resource Management, GIS applications included transect data collection for biological surveys.

# Donors

Ms. Debbie Adelman, JCC Preschool  
Ms. Teri Allison  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Anson  
Ms. Judy Arnett  
Ms. Sandra Bates  
Ms. Christina Beargie  
Ms. Vickie Bender  
Mrs. Marcia Beilfuss  
Ms. Susan Blees  
BMS Class of 2010, c/o Ms. Reeve  
Mr. Daniel Brook & the Biomedical Science Class  
Mr. Jack Buchan  
Ms. Barbara Butler  
Central Ohio Water Garden Society  
Ms. Thelma Collins  
Ms. Deborah Cooper  
Ms. Roseann Costello  
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Colleagues of Tom Householder  
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Mr. Eben Kent  
Ms. Jerri Kitchen/Ms. Kelcey Bartoe  
Ms. Jeri Klopfenstein  
Mr. Paul Knoop  
Ms. Catherine Kress, Living Hope Free Meth.  
Mr. Calvin Lam & Biomedical Science Major Class  
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Ohio Cheviot Breeder's Association  
c/o Sharon Converse  
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Mr. & Mrs. Brian Parks  
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Mr. Brett Stewart  
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Toledo Area Metroparks  
Triangle Eastern Star c/o Shirley Hall  
John Vingle/Livingston House Society  
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David B. Owens - Metropolitan Park Fund  
Marian K. and Albert H. Thomas Fund

# About Metro Parks

Attracting more than 7.5-million visitors in 2012, your Metro Parks are a vital asset to the social, cultural, environmental and economic health of Central Ohio. Metro Parks offer exceptional settings for renewal of the human spirit. Visitors can enjoy healthy, fun-filled interaction with the natural world at no cost every day of the year. Each year Metro Parks' naturalists offer over 4,000 free programs for individuals of all ages and abilities.

Established in 1945, under authority of Chapter 1545 of the Ohio Revised Code, Metro Parks has grown steadily. From woodlands to wetlands, prairies and streams, the park system has increased its holdings to more than 27,000 acres—operating 17 natural area parks.

In accordance with its mission, Metro Parks works to conserve and enhance habitat for the more than 2,400 species of animals and plants that thrive within the parks.

Funding for Metro Parks comes from a combination of real estate tax, local government funds, earned income, grants and partnerships.

## Metro Parks Headquarters

1069 West Main Street  
Westerville, OH 43081

E-mail: [info@metroparks.net](mailto:info@metroparks.net)

Information: 614.891.0700

Reservations: 614.508.8111

InfoLine: 614.508.8000

TTY: 614.895.6240

**WEB:** [www.metroparks.net](http://www.metroparks.net)



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[www.youtube.com/  
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## Friends of Metro Parks



The Friends of Metro Parks is an all-volunteer membership organization working to enhance the programs and facilities of Columbus and Franklin County Metro Parks.

For more information about the Friends visit [metroparksfriends.org](http://metroparksfriends.org)

## Metro Parks Mission Statement

The Mission of Metro Parks is to conserve open spaces while providing places and opportunities that encourage people to discover and experience nature.