



# 2012 Annual Report

*"If you want to succeed you should strike out on new paths rather than travel the worn paths of accepted success."*

~ John D. Rockefeller

## FROM THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

When we look back on 2012, many may remember the hot, dry summer, a Presidential election and drastic cuts to local government funding. But we hope your memories also include a fun, family outing at one of the local parks. As we travel through the seasons, we are pleased to see so many people outside enjoying a quiet moment in their neighborhood park, an exciting finish to a youth sports game at a community park or an invigorating hike in their favorite nature park.

Program registration and attendance increased by 88% in 2012 as people embraced the opportunities for recreation close to home. Picnic shelter reservations were up by 12%, too — a sign that people are rediscovering their local parks for gatherings with family, friends and co-workers. Our staff work hard year-round to provide quality facilities and programs for our residents, but we can't do it alone.

As with other local governments, the Park District was faced with reduced revenue from the State of Ohio and property taxes. We adjusted by delaying projects and equipment replacement, tightening our belt on everyday operating costs and asking employees to assume a greater share of insurance costs.

We developed several partnerships throughout the community — like the Mark Andrew Kreusch Memorial Fund, the Washington-Centerville Public Library and the William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation — enabling us to stretch resources. Late in the year, we received a commitment from a local family for a significant contribution for the development of the new Robert F. Mays Park. In addition, the children of Mary Jane and Victor W. Smith provided a memorial garden at the Smith House and the scouts continued to complete projects in the parks. We also partnered with many local businesses for donations to enhance numerous park programs.

We continue to submit grant applications and were successful again in 2012. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources awarded us a Wildlife Restoration Grant to complete the construction of a new archery range at Oak Grove Park. The Montgomery County Solid Waste District provided a Recycling Incentive Grant to add recycling centers at the community park shelters. And in December, we received word that we have been awarded a NatureWorks Grant for a new fitness trail at Oak Grove Park and another Recycling Incentive Grant to help replace the worn safety surface at the Activity Center Park playground.

All of these partnerships are imperative to the success of the Park District. They bring people together to make the parks a special and important part of our community. We hope you continue to enjoy the benefits of your local parks and help us thank these special partners!



**David  
Lee**



**Lucy  
Siefker**



**Bill  
Williams**

49 parks for  
all to enjoy!

*Centerville-  
Washington Park District  
strives to provide quality parks,  
outdoor education, and recreation  
while preserving open space.*





# 2012 NOTEWORTHY NEWS

## COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTY



Saturday, May 20, we held the Community Garden Party at the Smith Entrance of Bill Yeck Park. We dedicated the new Commissioners Grove, a gift to former commissioners, and the Victor and Mary Jane Smith Memorial Garden. Other activities included an art display from the Centerville High School Ceramics class and Cline Elementary art students, a craft area, a garden-themed presentation and refreshments. Members from the Smith Family were on hand to dedicate the garden and answer questions about the historic home.

## MARK KREUSCH NATURE PLAYCE GRAND OPENING

The Mark Kreusch Nature Playce Grand Opening was held Sunday, June 24. Nearly 100 people were in attendance to recognize the generous contribution from the Mark A. Kreusch Memorial Fund of the Dayton Foundation and to officially open the new play area. The Mark Kreusch Nature Playce, the first of its kind in the Centerville and Washington Township community, is an area for children to experience the outdoors in an unstructured manner. Through interaction with the natural environment, children learn how to build forts, skip rocks, climb trees, walk along the trunk of a fallen tree and let their imaginations take over. Play features are all made from items found naturally in the park. The area is open during daylight hours 365 days a year and has become extremely popular with both children and adults.

## NEIGHBORHOOD PARK PARTIES

We hosted our first round of Neighborhood Park Parties during summer and fall 2012. We were fortunate to receive a \$500 Community Giving Grant from Walmart for the program. Nearly 1,000 park neighbors attended the parties at 14 neighborhood and community parks throughout the Park District. Each party included giant games, crafts, inflatables, seasonal treats and fun times with family and neighbors. We will continue to host Neighborhood Park Parties in 2013 and 2014.

Special thanks to Archer's Tavern, LongHorn Steakhouse, Chili's and Fricker's for donating raffle prizes and giveaways, as well as Huffy Corporation for donating two bikes for the grand prize drawing held at the conclusion of the parties. Congratulations to Connor Larimer and Gracie Huff for winning the grand prize bicycles!

*Introducing  
Oakley,  
the Dog Park  
mascot, and his  
new friends!*

## OAK GROVE ARCHERY RANGE GRAND OPENING

The Park District opened the archery range Saturday, September 15 at Oak Grove Park. Basic instruction, crossbow demonstrations and exhibition shoots were part of the festivities, as well as open range times for experienced archers. The archery range was made possible by Ohio Sportsmen and Sportswomen and a cooperative partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wildlife Restoration, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Division of Wildlife. The grand opening attracted more than 150 people.

## PAWS IN THE PARK

This fun fall event, co-sponsored with the Washington-Centerville Public Library, included contests, giveaways, demonstrations, and the unveiling of our Dog Park mascot. A contest was held to choose the mascot's name, and the five winners — who all chose the same name, Oakley — were invited to the event and given a prize. Awards were given for best costume, best trick, best dog/owner look-alike and best Oakley look-alike. Twenty-one vendors were on hand to demonstrate their dog-related products and services. An estimated 250 people attended with their canine pals.

## WETLAND WALK GRAND OPENING

Owlexander's Wetland Walk is our second nature literature trail exploring the wetland habitat, and is located along a half-mile, wheelchair and stroller accessible, paved path. The trail signage was made possible through a partnership with the Washington-Centerville Public Library and is fully funded by the William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation. The trail focuses on blending scientific observations with language arts skills. The grand opening was Saturday, September 29. The event included a short dedication, refreshments and door prizes.





# PROGRAMS

The Park District enrolled 7,520 participants in our 2012 programs – up 88% from 2011! Including special events like Big Rig Gig, Haunted Trail, Luminary Walk and the grand opening events, we reached well over 11,000 total participants.

We were delighted to offer the following new programs in 2012:

## SUMMER TEEN SERIES

The Summer Teen Series was a revamp of our Summer Recreation Program II for 11 – 15-year-olds. We offered this program once a week on Wednesday evenings with themes like capture the flag bonfire, sports smash and dodge ball night. The Summer Teen Series ended with a party that included a bounce house and other exciting activities. The program offered an abundance of physical activity and was a wonderful addition to our summer programs. It will be offered two times a week in summer 2013.

## BARTER BAZAARS

The idea for this program came from Park District Eco-Crew, the green initiatives group made up of Park District staff. Members of the community could trade items in good condition that they no longer wanted or needed, for items that they could use. Barter Bazaars keep things out of landfills and give them a new purpose. We hosted two Barter Bazaars in 2012, both focused on lightly used or an unwanted surplus of crafting supplies. Participants could drop items off in exchange for vouchers and then return the next day with their vouchers to “purchase” items in which they were interested.

## SWEET TREATS

The Sweet Treats Doggie Ice Cream Social was held at the Dog Park at Oak Grove Park on June 21. The event, sponsored by Club K-9 Doggy Day Care, included a make-your-own dog toy station, wading pool for pooches, a presentation on dog park safety and, of course, ice cream! The delicious ice cream was donated and served by MaggieMoo's Ice Cream and Treatery. One hundred people and their dogs attended the event. It was fun to watch dogs and owners lapping up a refreshing ice cream treat!

## ADOPT-A-PARK

Centerville-Washington Park District designed a new Adopt-A-Park program to enhance the parks through community involvement and citizen partnerships. By participating, neighborhood organizations, civic and church groups, scout troops, businesses, schools, families and individuals can take an active role in the beautification, maintenance and improvement of any one of our 49 open spaces. For more information, please contact Chris Fife at (937) 433-5155.



Troop 30651 dressed for story time at Eggstravaganza!

## SCOUTS IN THE PARKS

Girl Scout Troop 30651 has helped us with various projects in an effort to earn their Girl Scout Bronze Award. In 2012, they assisted at Eggstravaganza, the Community Garden Party, the Prairie Seed Nursery and by doing litter sweeps at Willowbrook Park.

Several boy scouts completed projects in the parks to earn their Eagle Scout award:

- Ben Ferdelman
- John Kopicky
- Andy Ford
- Matt Osbourne
- Doug Haney
- Andy Pitrof

Well done, Scouts!

Wow!  
Park District  
Volunteers logged  
over 2,666 hours  
in 2012 — a 45%  
increase over 2011.  
Thank you!



## 2012 PARK IMPROVEMENTS

### Bill Yeck Park

- Native seed nursery planting

### Forest Field Park

- Rain garden planting
- Drinking fountain relocation

### Oak Grove Park

- Social Row Road entrance widening
- Archery range
- Signage at the dog park
- Walking path through the woods

### Oak Creek South Park

- Bridge installation
- Landscape enhancements
- Nature literature trail

### Schoolhouse Park

- West parking lot construction
- Perimeter walking path

### Yankee Park

- Perimeter walking path





# FINANCIAL REPORT

The residents of Centerville and Washington Township fund the Park District with the proceeds from two 10-year levies. Funds from the 0.9 mill levy approved in 2004 are used for improvements in the parks and funds received from the 2.0 mill levy approved in 2007 provide the operating budget for the 49 parks.

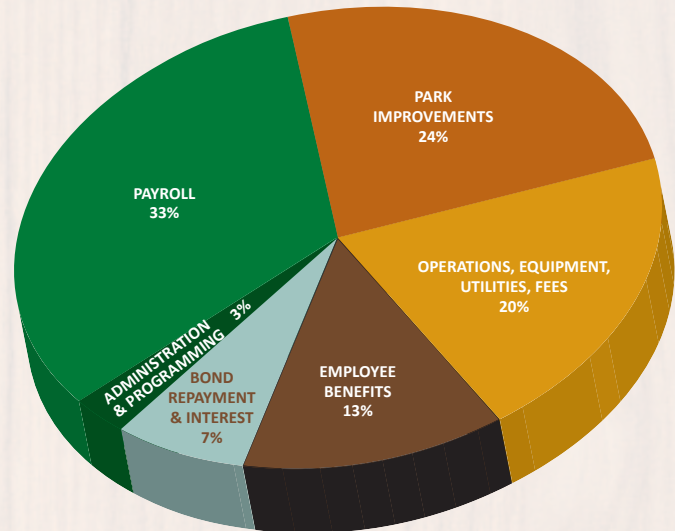
The decline in real estate values, reductions to reimbursements from the State of Ohio and lowered investment income in recent years significantly impacted the annual revenue of the Park District in 2012 and will for the levy years going forward. The Park District has taken action to cut costs and seek additional revenue from donations and local, state and federal grants.

Operational cost-cutting measures include contracting for lower electrical rates; reducing utility usage by implementing recommendations of an energy audit and closing facilities in the winter; and delaying equipment replacement. Administrative belt tightening measures include staff paying a greater share of employee insurance expenditures and eliminating planned staff hiring. Park improvement projects have also been delayed.

Additional funding during 2012 included generous donations from the William & Dorothy Yeck Nature Fund for projects at Bill Yeck Park; grant funding from the Mark Andrew Kreusch Memorial Fund of the Dayton Foundation for the construction of the Mark Kreusch Nature Playce at Grant Park; funds awarded from the Montgomery County Solid Waste District for recycling projects in the parks; and grant funding from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources for the construction of the archery range at Oak Grove Park.

Partnerships with community organizations and other local governments contributed to financial efficiencies. The Park District partnered with the Washington-Centerville Public

## 2012 EXPENDITURES



Library to create Owlexander's Wetland Walk which was fully funded by the William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation. The two organizations also worked together to provide the Paws in the Park event at Oak Grove Park in September. The Centerville Noon Optimist Club again funded the Mini Trail and Haunted Trail in October and volunteers from throughout the community made these programs possible with their performances. At Grant Park, the Centerville Rotary Club maintained the evergreen forest at the McEwen Road entrance and the Centerville Schools and the Park District shared facilities at the Normandy School entrance.

The support of the taxpayers along with contributions from many groups and individuals within our community enable the Park District to stretch your tax dollars for the benefit of the community.

*Every donation makes a difference. Each helps provide park experiences for generations to come. We wish to thank the following donors for their generosity.*

## GENERAL DONATIONS

- Robert Corbin
- George Greenleaf
- Louise Nelson
- George Schenk
- Centerville Noon Optimist Club
- Centerville United Soccer Association
- Centerville Wee Elk Football Association
- Centerville Youth Lacrosse Club
- Kettering-Centerville Kiwanis Club
- Penbrooke Garden Club
- United Way of Greater Dayton
- Walmart Foundation

## MEMORIALS

- Lucas Shear
- Mary Jane and Victor W. Smith Garden

## GRANTS (provided 80–100% of project costs)

- Mark Andrew Kreusch Memorial Fund - The Dayton Foundation
- Montgomery County Solid Waste District
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation

## VENDORS

- Archer's Tavern
- Chick-fil-A
- Chili's
- Club K-9 Doggy Daycare
- Fricker's
- Huffy Corporation
- LongHorn Steakhouse
- MaggieMoo's Ice Cream and Treatery

