



48 Parks for all to enjoy!

2010 - 2011 Biennial Report

FROM THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

The past two years have been busy with new facilities, additional technology for communicating with the public, and increased park attendance, all while dealing with funding reductions.

We held a grand opening of the community's first skatepark at Oak Creek South Park, providing a new type of recreation facility that became an instant success. A community celebration at the Smith entrance of Bill Yeck Park gave residents a first look at the historic home and grounds, while providing an opportunity for community input to the master plan for development of this new park area. A new nature literature trail at Grant Park, developed in cooperation with the Washington-Centerville Public Library with support from the Yeck Family Foundation, offered children a fun activity along the nature trail. The development at Oak Grove Park continued with more walking trails, expansion of the dog park, and completion of the baseball complex.

In an effort to provide more timely information, a Facebook page, Twitter site, and YouTube channel containing a series of videos were created. The website continues to provide updated information and serves as a valuable resource for recording our history along with current programs and park plans.

The District continues to look for new program ideas and has reaffirmed our focus on providing healthy lifestyle opportunities close to home. We partnered with the GetUp Montgomery County program and increased our opportunities for fitness and exercise in the outdoors by offering programs for all ages. All of our nature education, recreation, and fitness programs continue to grow in popularity.

While park visitation increased, we experienced funding challenges and acted quickly to reduce spending throughout the Park District while still providing the services residents have come to expect.

Some projects have been delayed while we evaluate other sources of funding or apply for grants. The development of Holes Creek and Silvercreek Parks along with the multi-use trail connecting the two and the construction of lighted tennis courts at Oak Creek South Park, the picnic shelter at Iron Horse Park, the large picnic shelter and basketball courts at Oak Grove Park, and some perimeter walking paths at community parks have been postponed.

We appreciate the support of Washington Township and Centerville residents. Watch for a community survey later this year where you can give feedback as well as share your thoughts and ideas on how we can better serve your park needs. Until then, we hope you take advantage of some of the 48 parks and the multitude of opportunities to improve your quality of life!



**David
Lee**



**Maggie
Weisman**



**Bill
Williams**

*The
Mission of the
Centerville-Washington Park
District is to provide quality parks,
outdoor education, and recreation
while preserving open space.*



NOTEWORTHY NEWS

BILL YECK PARK SMITH ENTRANCE MASTER PLAN

After 17 years of negotiations and planning, the Park District purchased the 37-acre Smith farm located at 2230 E. Centerville-Station Road to make Bill Yeck Park the District's largest nature park at 194 acres. A master concept plan was created to preserve the unique natural area, keep alive the history of early industry and of a major pioneer farm, and to encourage and support historical, ecological and land-oriented citizen organizations while interpreting nature in creative and experimental ways not offered elsewhere.

Identified as the central core in the master plan, the Smith entrance will be the keystone of the Bill Yeck Park complex. It is almost completely surrounded by parkland and lies in the center of the "big loop" formed by the Sugar Creek valley.

The Park District is working closely with the Yeck and Smith families to implement the vision of their parents. Once funding is secured, the park development will include:

- Education center
- Activity plaza
- Butterfly garden
- Picnic shelter
- Rain garden
- Natural amphitheater
- Community gardens
- Paved and natural trails
- Historic 1800's home
- Pine/evergreen grove
- Apple orchard
- Seed nursery
- Prairie & meadow habitats
- Small pond with waterfall

OWLEXANDER'S HOOT ROUTE

Thanks to the generosity of the William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation, the Park District along with the Washington-Centerville Public Library, created Owlexander's Hoot Route in Grant Park. This permanent adventure trail promotes nature exploration and education, early literacy skills, family bonding, and fun. The trail, geared toward ages 3 to 8, has signs along the route that represent storybook pages. The story combines nature, counting, alliteration, and rhyming with each having a riddle, activity, or fact about an animal. Owlexander, the Park District's mascot, uses his wing to point kids in the right direction to meet several animal friends who inhabit Grant Park.

STAFFING CHANGES

Staffing changes at the Park District do not happen often. But in 2010 and 2011, changes due to retirement or advancement opportunities resulted in a shift of several positions. Ken Carter was promoted to Park Operations Manager and Kristen Marks was promoted to Program Manager. New program staff include Recreation Coordinator Erin Morley and Outdoor Education Coordinator Chris Fife, and the administration department welcomed Dawn Osif as Full-Charge Bookkeeper and Catherine Ball as Communications Coordinator. The new personnel bring great ideas and enthusiasm and have jumped right in to learn about the community's park needs.

OAK CREEK SOUTH PARK OPENS SKATEPARK

If you build it, they will come...this certainly held true for the skate park which opened at Oak Creek South Park on Friday, May 7, 2010. Wally Hollyday of California whose company has built over 100 skate parks over the past 30 years, designed the park. The 9,000 square foot park consists of four concrete bowls ranging in depth from a few feet to nine feet.

The addition was part of a list of projects promised to voters in the 2004 Park Improvement Levy which passed by an overwhelming percentage of voters in Centerville and Washington Township. A donation by the Kettering/Centerville Kiwanis Club helped fund the project.

In 2010 the Park District received a third place award from the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association for the skatepark. This Award of Excellence was in the Park Area Development under \$1,000,000 category.



The skatepark was requested by residents.



PROGRAMS

Twenty new programs were created in 2010 and 2011 including Adult Archery, Crafting Club, Fall Into Fitness, Homeschool Nature Academy, and Playdate Café to name a few. In addition, the Intergenerational Series was expanded to offer additional opportunities for grandparents and their little ones to spend time together.

Nearly 2,000 attended the following educational programs:

- Around the World in 9 days
- Eco-Explorers
- Homeschool Nature Academy
- Junior Nature Club
- Monthly Preschool Series
- Playdate Café *(New)*
- Junior & Senior Adventure Camps
- Volunteer Naturalist Guided Hikes
- Crafting Club *(New)*

Two nature camps were offered each year - Winter Woods Day Camp and Hidden Meadows Day Camp. More than 1,100 children discovered the wonders of nature at Grant Park thanks to these two programs.

The FREE Summer Recreation Program attracted record numbers in 2011 due to changes enabling preschool-age children to attend. This program and its associated special events attracted 5,357 attendees in 2010 and 2011.

Hike For Your Health walked a combined 300 miles in 2010 & 2011!

By encouraging families to get outdoors, 1,300 attended the following:

- Campfire Sing-along
- Passport to Nature Programs
- Family Camping
- Get Out and Play
- Adult Archery *(New)*
- Tree Climbing *(New)*
- Family Nature Night *(New)*
- Pioneer Woman
- Fairy & Gnome Home Festival *(New)*

Numerous FREE special events were offered including the Haunted Trail and the Halloween Mini Trail. Both attracted an average of 2,300 visitors. Other events included Big Rig Gig, Adventures in Camping, Day at the Beach, Earthy Evening, Capture the Flag Bonfire, and intergenerational programs which provided fun for over 1,000 children ages pre-K through teen.

Athletic programs attracted 550 participants for offerings including youth and adult tennis instruction, adult tennis leagues, and adult softball leagues.

Further enhancing our focus on wellness programming, we launched Spring and Fall Into Fitness, Mini Movers, Wellness Walk, Hike For Your Health, and Homeschool Fitness Academy. A total of 1,400 participated in these fitness programs close to home.



PARK IMPROVEMENTS

2010

Activity Center Park

- Park headquarters expanded

Bill Yeck Park

- Smith entrance master plan completed

Oak Creek South Park

- Skatepark completed

Oak Grove Park: Baseball Complex

- Hardscape & paths added
- Concrete seating added
- Parking lot completed

Weatherstone Park

- Playground equipment added

2011

Bill Yeck Park

- Trees planted at Smith House
- Commissioners' Grove established
- Bluebird Meadow observation deck completed
- Time trail year markers added along the trail

Divided Ridge Park

- Playground equipment added

Forest Field Park

- Parking lot & drive expanded
- West side of park graded & seeded
- Playground relocated

Oak Creek South Park

- Landscape enhancement plan & phase I planting completed
- Perimeter walking path added

Oak Grove Park

- Baseball field lighting added
- Multi-use trail added
- Dog park expanded & turf renovated

Stansel Park

- Interpretive sign installed



The Fairy & Gnome Home Festival won an award from the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association

FINANCIAL REPORT

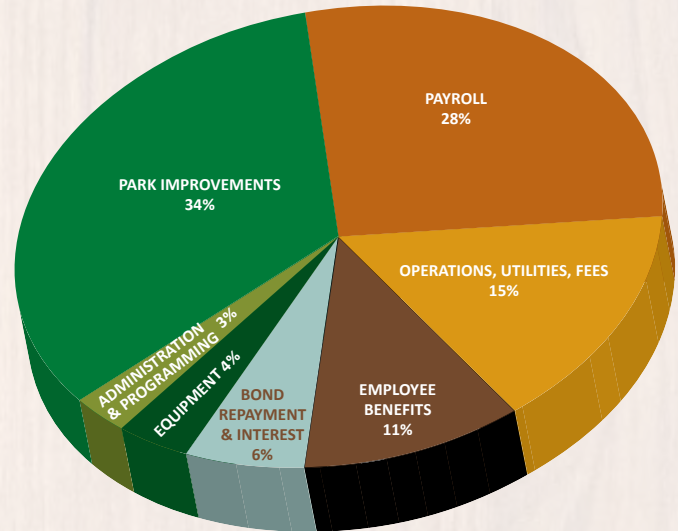
The residents of Centerville and Washington Township fund the Park District through the proceeds from two 10-year levies. Funds from the 0.9 mill levy approved in 2004 are used for park improvements and funds received from the 2.0 mill levy approved in 2007 provide the operating budget.

The recent decline in real estate values, reduced reimbursements from the State of Ohio, and lowered investment income have significantly impacted the annual revenue during the two-year reporting period and the levy years going forward. Because of this, measures have been taken to cut costs and to seek new revenue from donations as well as local, state, and federal grants.

Additional funding in 2010 and 2011 included a generous donation from the William & Dorothy Yeck Nature Fund for projects at Bill Yeck, Grant, and Stansel Parks; a grant from the William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation for Owlexander's Hoot Route (see page 6); a grant from the Montgomery County Solid Waste District for recycling projects; and grants from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to partially pay for improvements at Oak Creek South Park and to purchase archery equipment for park programming.

In addition to funding donations, 2010 and 2011 saw two generous land donations as well. John & Ting Carlson and James & Deborah Heintz purchased and then donated the lot adjacent to Watkins Glen Park enlarging the park and creating additional access from the Hidden Creek neighborhood. Washington Township donated open space along Spring Valley Pike for the creation of Trailways Park, now a stop along the community's multi-use trail system.

2010 - 2011 EXPENDITURES



Park District financial records are subject to a biennial audit conducted by the Auditor of the State of Ohio. The audit report for 2009 and 2010 was again unqualified and revealed no findings for recovery and no citations. The clean audit report reflects the Park District staff's commitment to public stewardship and legal compliance.

“ **Every donation makes a difference. Whether land or money, each helps provide valuable park experiences for generations to come. We want to thank those below for their generosity.** ”

BOY SCOUTS

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

2010: Murry Chelette, Kyle Comer, Luke Conover, Paul Conover, Corwin Dickey, Kevin Farley, Robert Henderson, Brian Mann, Stephen Miller, Stewart Moss, Max Stout

2011: Nathan Braun, Mitch Cahill, Peter Gordnier, Jason Treadway

GIRL SCOUTS

Troop #30561 donated their time for the below projects during 2010-2011:

- Quarterly cleaning of Willowbrook Park
- Created decorations for and volunteered at the Luminary Hike
- Made birdseed pinecones for various parks

Great Job, Scouts!

DONATIONS

General Donations

- John Balazs
- Michelle Bruno
- Centerville Baseball League
- Centerville Garden Club
- Centerville Noon Optimist Club
- Centerville Rotary Club
- Centerville United Soccer Association
- Centerville Wee Elk Football Association
- Gerard Hall Memorial Fund
- Kettering Tennis Club/Quail Run Racquet Club
- Landmarks Foundation of Centerville Washington Township
- Modern Woodmen of America
- Penbrooke Garden Club
- Victor Smith Family
- Bob Streifhau
- United Way of Greater Dayton
- William & Dorothy Yeck Family Foundation

Land Donations

- John & Ting Carlson
- James & Deborah Heintz
- Washington Township

Memorials

- Tom Brandt
- Allyson Catanese
- David Cunningham
- Fred Kistner
- Cynthia Laipple
- Melissa Mikesell
- Marlene Orendorf
- Kathy Rosenbaum
- Kenneth Shawler
- Sharon Silverberg
- Sherry Silverberg
- Sharon Wright

Grants

- Montgomery County Solid Waste District
- Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- William & Dorothy Yeck Nature Fund