

Metroparks of the Toledo Area **2012 Annual Report**



Your Clean, Safe, Natural Metroparks

Each of the Metroparks offers picnic areas, play fields and playgrounds. They have trails for hiking, bicycling and cross-country skiing. And they preserve important natural areas. Each Metropark also offers its own unique characteristics and experiences.



Parks

Wildwood Preserve, Sylvania Township
Oak Openings Preserve, Swanton
Secor, Berkey
Side Cut, Maumee
Farnsworth, Waterville
Bend View, Waterville
Providence, Providence Township
Swan Creek Preserve, Toledo
Pearson, Oregon
Blue Creek Conservation Area,
Whitehouse (portions open)
Fallen Timbers Battlefield and Ft. Miamis
National Historic Site, Maumee
Toledo Botanical Garden, Toledo (affiliated organization)

Future Parks

Middlegrounds, downtown Toledo
Howard Farms, Jerusalem Township
Keil Farm, Toledo

Greenway Trails

In partnership with local communities and institutions.
University/Parks Trail
Wabash Cannonball Trail
Towpath Trail
Oregon Parks Trail
Chessie Circle Trail (in development)

Attractions

The Canal Experience, Providence
The Manor House, Wildwood
National Center for Nature Photography,
Secor
Maumee River



To Preserve and Protect the Natural Heritage of Northwest Ohio



The Board of Park Commissioners
Governing Body of Metroparks of the
Toledo Area

Scott J. Savage, *President*
Fritz Byers, *Vice President*
Lera L. Doneghy, *Vice President*

Board members appointed by Judge
Jack R. Puffenberger, *Lucas County*
Probate Court

Mission

To enhance quality of life
and inspire preservation
efforts in this and future
generations by providing a
regional system of premier
natural, historical and cultural
parklands maintained and
operated to the highest
professional standards.

FROM THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

For This And Future Generations

2012 was a pivotal year for your Metroparks, with two significant decisions by the Board affecting the future of the park district.

In late winter, the Board of Park Commissioners appointed Steve Madewell as the Executive Director of the park system. Steve brought a tremendous wealth of experience and expertise in park planning, development and resource management, as well as environmental and outdoor education programming.

The second significant decision dealt with future funding.

In 2002, the people of Lucas County passed a 0.3-mill levy specifically for the purpose of acquiring additional parkland. Utilizing funds from the levy, along with state and federal grants, the park system added more than 3,000 acres to its landholdings.

In 2012, the Board made a decision to allow the land acquisition levy to expire and proposed a new levy that could be used not only to acquire land, but also for park development and operational purposes. Funding from the new levy would enable Metroparks to address essential major maintenance and capital repair and replacement needs, in addition to making improvements on newly acquired parklands and several major projects that had been planned many years ago.

In November, the citizens of Lucas County passed the levy. In doing so, they ensured the park system's ability to continue to provide clean, safe, natural areas in all existing parks, preserves and greenways. The levy also empowers the park district to open at least five new Metroparks: the Middlegrounds in downtown Toledo, Howard Farms in Jerusalem Township, the Oak Openings Corridor in western Lucas County, Keil Farm in south Toledo and the Fallen Timbers Battlefield in Maumee.

With Steve Madewell's leadership, funding from the levy and the continued support of the community, Metroparks is well positioned to continue its mission of preserving northwest Ohio's natural treasures for this and future generations.

Scott J. Savage, President
Board of Park Commissioners

Connecting With The Community: 72,000 People Attended Programs

Programming

The Programs Department partnered with the Women's Initiative of United Way of Greater Toledo and Rosary Cathedral School in a pilot creative writing program to bring children in urban Toledo communities to Metroparks. For some, it would be their first nature experience. The pilot was a success and the program officially kicked off in 2013.

Educational partnerships with area school districts continued in 2012, including outreach to every 6th grader at Springfield Middle School during a two-day park experience. The park district's Naturally Diverse program brings nature education to 2nd graders.

The Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program was filled to capacity in 2012. The comprehensive, multi-week environmental education program offers adults training and outlets to share their knowledge as volunteers, helping others enjoy nature.

The National Center for Nature Photography held its annual photo contest, with 585 photos entered by 115 participants. The center will close for an extended period in 2014 for a major renovation that will include several new features to enhance the educational experience for visitors.

Holidays in the Manor House, December 2-9, brought 19,600 visitors to the house, where they were welcomed by more



than 100 volunteers. New in 2012 was a series of holiday-related activities in the Farmhouse at Wildwood during the same period. Hundreds of people participated in a variety of holiday-themed arts and crafts activities.

The majority of the program staff were recertified under the National Association for Interpretation in 2012. Metroparks also hosted the NAI Train the Trainer program.

Customer Service

Revenue from rental facilities totaled \$290,558, exceeding the projected goal for the year. The recently renovated Buehner Center at Oak Openings became the newest rental facility in June and has become a popular rental site. The recently renovated Farmhouse at Wildwood continues to grow in popularity as well.

Metroparks Customer Service Department launched a new customer service training program, which was rolled out to all staff in 2012. The updated training featured videos of employees in a variety of customer service scenarios.

Communications And Marketing

A partnership with Mercy Health Partners initiated in late summer to promote physical and emotional well-being for women was very successful, resulting in on-site, drop in workouts at Wildwood Preserve that were well attended.

Staff and volunteers participated in 74 community events during the year, including the Crosby Festival of the Arts, the Toledo Farmers Market, Party for the Planet and more.

The Great Park Search summer promotion had 350 participants and brought together sponsors for a fun and engaging campaign to encourage people to visit each of the parks.

Beautiful Images

Secor Metropark is home to the National Center for Nature Photography. In 2012, the center hosted several exhibits, including "Curious Critters," by Dave FitzSimmons; "A Photographer's Guide to Ohio," by Ian Adams; and "The Ancient Ohio Landscape," by Art Weber. The center also hosted the 9th Annual Celebrating Nature through Photography Contest and a traveling exhibit at the Main Branch Library Gallery.

Development

More than a dozen donor connections in 2012 included member receptions in the Manor House, special member programs such as Canoes and Campfires, a MetroBarks Chili Walk and other fun and enlightening events.

Donations

A generous contribution from the Stranahan Foundation at the end of the year will offset the cost of a new roof on the Manor House at Wildwood.



The Dorothy M. Price Fallen Timbers Education Fund awarded \$27,000 for interpretive improvements at Fort Miamis.

The BP Husky Refinery awarded an initial gift of \$25,000 for the Pearson playground then challenged Metroparks to raise an additional \$25,000, which the company matched. Thus resulting in \$75,000 toward the cost of the new "signature" playground. The France Stone Foundation contributed \$24,000, with additional funding from Friends of Pearson and the Eastern Maumee Bay Chamber of Commerce.

The 2012 Wagener Memorial Golf Classic raised \$6,000 to benefit Side Cut Metropark initiatives.

Metroparks hosted the Rotary Club of Toledo at the Middlegrounds in May to formalize the Rotary's gift of \$300,000 for the construction of a pavilion at the future Metropark on the downtown Toledo riverfront. The Rotary Club of Toledo continues to be committed to the project.

Membership

The Members Grant Program funded 14 projects or programs, from an electric cart used at Wildwood to tree plantings at various parks. Member dollars were also used to enhance Windows on Wildlife, signage, lighting needs and more.

Member campaigns were successful in retaining 78 percent of the membership – an exceptional rate for membership programs.

The Members Grant Program was recognized by the Ohio Parks and Recreation Association with a Management Innovation Award in 2012.

Metroparks At A Glance



2,837,532 Visitors

Visitation is calculated using a combination of vehicle counts and estimates based on public surveys.

Wildwood Preserve	1,111,566	Oak Openings Preserve	227,347
Swan Creek Preserve	432,766	Secor	120,005
Pearson	485,646	Farnsworth	66,295
Side Cut	376,253	Providence	17,654

2012 All Revenue \$16.5 million

Local property taxes	\$ 15.3 million
Donations, federal/state grants	\$ 0.2 million
Income from fees	\$ 1 million

2012 Expenses \$14 million

Salaries/personnel	\$ 7.4 million
Land acquisition	\$ 1 million
Park development/major maintenance	\$ 1.4 million
Park operations, utilities, materials, etc.	\$ 4.6 million

Employees

At the end of 2012, Metroparks had 75 full-time 26 part-time and 62 seasonal employees.



Volunteer Services

Volunteerism at Metroparks increased by more than 10 percent in 2012, with 3,391 individuals and 91 groups contributing 46,256 hours of service. The value of that donated time was \$991,706, according to the Independent Sector, a national leadership network for nonprofit organizations.

The Volunteer Trail Patrol grew to more than 200 members who gave 13,061 hours of their time helping to ensure that others had a great experience in the Metroparks. Volunteer hours have also increased at The Canal Experience, Manor House teas and other programs.

Metroparks received a 1st place Ohio Parks and Recreation Association award for the Week of Caring volunteer program, which is coordinated in partnership with United Way. During Week of Caring, 120 corporate volunteers donated more than 475 hours at Metroparks.

Volunteer plant monitor Ruta Klavins discovered a plant at Oak Openings Preserve – *Aristida basiramea* – a mostly northern grass species that has never before been documented in Ohio. Other volunteers monitored vernal pools, bluebirds, raptors, bats and frogs, collecting numbers for databases used to monitor the success of these species and, ultimately, the environment.



10 Years of Land Acquisition

With funding from a 0.3 mill levy, Metroparks embarked on a 10-year strategy to acquire additional lands to preserve the region's natural integrity, enhance parks and create new corridors.

By the time the levy had expired at the end of 2012, Metroparks had acquired 3,454 acres of land. The levy generated approximately \$23 million in revenue, which it used as leverage to secure another \$23 million in grant monies – doubling the impact of the local taxpayers' investment.

Land Acquisitions by Category (in acres)	2012	10-Year Total
Oak Openings Corridor	30	1,897
Lake Erie Coastal Zone		987
Maumee River Corridor	2	103
Swan Creek Corridor & Westside Corridor		117
Other: Blue Creek Conservation Area, Keil Farm		350
Total	32	3,454

At the end of 2012, when the levy expired, \$3.6 million remained in the land acquisition fund to make additional purchases in 2013. The park system anticipates that it will be able to acquire an additional 400 to 500 acres of land with these funds.



Connect With Your Metroparks



**METROPARKS
TOLEDO AREA**
Your Clean, Safe, Natural Places To Be

MetroparksToledo.com

Enjoy them. Protect them.

Let them live forever through your designated or planned gift.

Please contact us at 419-407-9716.

Stewardship: Land Management highlights from 2012

In 2011, Metroparks received a \$413,000 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Wet Prairie Restoration Grant through The Nature Conservancy. Using those funds in 2012, the park system restored 200 acres of globally-rare wet prairie communities. By the end of the year, the Land Management Department was well on the way to successfully completing the three-year project to restore 300 total acres of wet prairies in the Oak Openings Corridor.

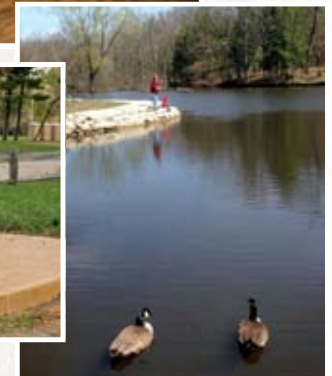
Metroparks received a \$503,000 GLRI grant award through Partners for Clean Streams in a project known as the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, Maumee Corps Grant. The funds were used to hire 18 workers to remove invasive plant species and improve habitat in a 900-acre area of high quality habitat at Oak Openings Preserve, Secor, Wildwood Preserve and Swan Creek Preserve. Work was initiated in 2013.

Cleanup was completed in 2012 after a 2010 tornado that caused extensive damage to 150 acres of Oak Openings Preserve. Following cleanup of the massive storm damage, many of the impacted areas were enhanced by planting native prairie and savanna species started at the Metroparks Blue Creek Seed Nursery in Whitehouse.

Research conducted within the storm cleanup area found that biodiversity had increased significantly in many areas compared to what it was prior to the tornado.

2012 Planning & Construction Projects

- Oak Openings Silver Trail bridge replacement
- Sheet piling removal and bank stabilization at the Providence canal
- Wildwood Manor House masonry maintenance, tuck pointing and chimney work in preparation for a roof replacement in 2013
- Moss garden fence reconstruction at Wildwood Manor House
- Side Cut tennis court resurfacing
- Wildwood Visitors Center basement moisture protection
- Completion of the Packer-Hammersmith Center renovation at Pearson
- Completion of Macomber Lodge renovation at Pearson
- Completion of Pearson lake shoreline renovation and stabilization
- Phase 1 of Mallard Lake shoreline renovation and stabilization at Oak Openings
- Wildwood Visitors Center restroom renovation
- Paving at Farnsworth
- District-wide park bench replacement program





StayConnected!

All parks, administrative offices: 419-407-9700
Program and facility reservations: 419-407-9710
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METROPARKS
TOLEDO AREA

Your Clean, Safe, Natural Places To Be