



## FRIENDS OF WARREN COUNTY PARK DISTRICT, 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Friends of the Warren County Park District (FWCPD) was created to support programs and activities associated with the Warren County Park District. The FWCPD encourage volunteerism and raise funds to further the growth of the Park District as well as maintain relationships with other Warren County organizations. These purposes comprise our mission.

2020 has been a challenging year for all of us including the FWCPD. Almost from the start of the year we were faced with the COVID-19 virus impact on our communities as well as the Park District. Most of our meetings during this year have been held as ZOOM meetings. We held one meeting in the early summer outdoors as Ohio was experiencing a drop in the number of COVID-19 cases, but that quickly changed.

David Nuscher continued as the President of the FWCPD with continued support from long-time members including Kathy Schroeder, Judy Bay, and others. Clint Day continued as Treasurer, and Cindy Glorius also continued as Secretary until our new Secretary, Patricia Decker took over in March.



In February, we held the annual “Great Backyard Bird Count” (GBBC) at the Hisey Park Homestead. Bill Lindauer, Dave Woehr, Shannon Pennington, and other “Friends” hosted yet another crowd of “watchers.” Unfortunately, this year we had a lower than expected species count as well as just fewer birds overall. Apparently, this was the news from other organizations participating in the GBBC. Still, the event, including warm beverages and plenty of food, was a total success in terms of fun and camaraderie!

In March, just prior to COVID-19 disturbing the forces of the universe, Bill Schroeder provided programming to over 100 youth and reviewed his book “Smallmouth Sonny” with them. It is great to have famous authors amongst our group!

So how do you make lemonade when the world gives you lemons? By having a great group of Naturalist folks on the team! We quickly learned how to come up with alternative programs that did not require groups to meet together and



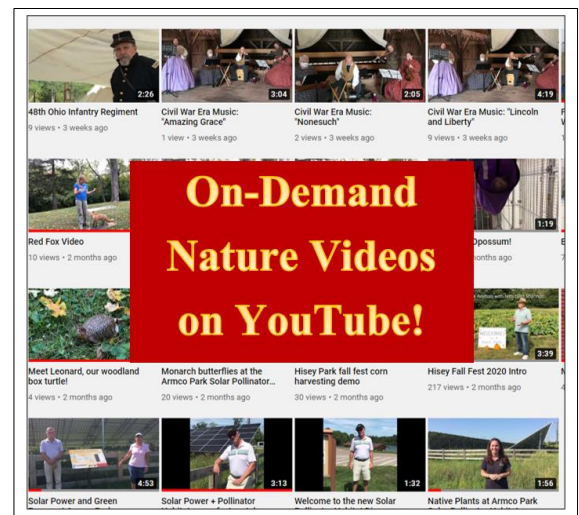
provide possible exposure to COVID-19. The following is a recap of those programs provided by our own Naturalist Shannon Pennington.

## 2020 NATURE PROGRAMS RECAP

What a year it has been! Despite the challenges, we have managed to find several “silver linings” that will continue to add depth and outreach opportunities to our nature programs for many years to come. Our parks are all open with trails for hiking, fishing where permitted, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and traditional, foot-, and disc-golf courses. With wide open spaces and fresh air, the WCPD has provided much needed respite to the community. The Park District staff, Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists, Friends of WCPD, and Cincinnati Off-Road Alliance have continued to help create new opportunities for safe and enriching outdoor experiences.

We have added a Solar Pollinator Habitat Discovery Trail at Warren County Armco Park, Story Walks at Armco and Hisey Parks, as well as enhancements to the multi-use trails and a new splash pad at Landen-Deerfield Park. We launched summer weekly challenges on Facebook ([www.Facebook.com/WarrenCountyNature](http://www.Facebook.com/WarrenCountyNature)), providing a nature topic and suggested activities that people could do from their homes or at one of our parks on their own time. We also initiated a “bioblitz” through iNaturalist, engaging the public in helping us document over 650 species! Virtual presentations have become the norm this year, allowing me to engage with numerous people I had not worked with previously, including Kiwanis Clubs, libraries, scout troops, grade school students, alumni associations, and Miami University’s Institute of Learning in Retirement. If you are interested in a virtual presentation for your own group in Warren County, please reach out!

Finally, we have created a YouTube channel with various nature-related topics including pioneer tool demonstrations, interviews with Civil War reenactors, a virtual visit to the Hisey Observatory, a narrated hay ride through Hisey Park, meet-and-greets with rescued wildlife, a program on monarch butterflies, quick clips about the Park District’s taxidermy animal collection, and a virtual tour of the new Solar Pollinator Habitat Discovery Trail. We will continue adding content, so log in and see what’s new; if you have a topic that you would like to see added, please let me know! <https://tinyurl.com/YouTubeWCPDNature>



Thank you for your continued support of the Friends of Warren County Park District and, by extension, our community nature programs. Best wishes for a happy, healthy 2021!  
~Naturalist Shannon



Other FWCPD OCVN's Dave Woehr and Bill Lindauer kept up much of their normal times outdoors, just without the large crowds of people following them around! As indicated in Shannon's report above, the Solar Pollinator Habitat Discovery Trail at Armco Park has been moving ahead non-stop with several groups and individuals touring the project and lots of media attention. We want to also say a word of extra thanks to Dianna Kenneally for all of her countless hours on project!

This fall was our 15th Annual Hisey Fall Festival. The Festival took on a new look this year as the event was a combination of educational YouTube clips performed with social distancing by Bill Lindauer and Jim Prickett and actual on-site activities that again were outdoors with plenty of social distancing and mask wearing. Pumpkins were grown again this year and visitors/children were able to pick their own pumpkins out of the patch and decorate them in the nearby open shelter. In the early afternoon, the Civil War reenactors shot off cannons and demonstrated what camp life was like for the soldiers of the Civil War. Again, a special thanks to both Bill and Jim for their work on this event that will be available for generations to watch as long as YouTube is around!

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

We hope that COVID-19 will not be a big part of all of 2021. Our anticipation is that with everyone wearing masks, social distancing, and hopeful vaccine solutions, the Friends of the Warren County Park District will be back out during the summer and fall of 2021 for our normal programming and to always encourage volunteerism in our parks.

There are many ways to help including:

- Participation on the Board of FWCPD.
- Assisting with nature programs.
- Gardening, planting, landscaping. (Adopt-A-Park).
- Set up and help hosting the Great Backyard Bird Count.
- Set up and help develop exercise and fitness programs.
- Set up and help with Hisey Fall Festival.
- Set up and help with the Youth Fishing Derby.



Simply include your desire to volunteer with a notation on your membership information!

## BECOME A 2021 MEMBER

Even with the COVID-19 Pandemic, we continue to amaze ourselves in terms of events, education and helping support what we feel is one of the best County Park systems in the State of Ohio! We thank you for the increase in our membership and in the Kroger Rewards program, enabling us to support the park's nature programs and purchase trees to be planted in various parks. We are enclosing our **membership application envelope** with this

letter and hope that you will continue to support the Warren County Park District with your membership and your participation. Alternatively, you can save a stamp and **join online** with options to pay via check, PayPal, or credit card at <http://tinyurl.com/FriendsOfWCPD2021>.



Your \$15 membership fee helps fund:

- Trees and Landscaping
- Hisey Observatory (WC Astronomical Society)
- Nature Education Programs
- Playground Equipment
- And more!

Let us know what you would like to see happen in 2021. We would like to hear from you!

For more information go to:

[www.fwcpdoh.com](http://www.fwcpdoh.com)  
<http://www.co.warren.oh.us/parks>  
[www.facebook.com/FriendsWCPD](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsWCPD)



To sign up for Kroger Rewards, visit  
[www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards](http://www.kroger.com/i/community/community-rewards)  
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Organization Number: UU763