



ARBORETUM UPDATE!

A Publication of The James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation

Fall/Winter 2024

May Your Holidays Be
Filled With Love and Cheer



LETTER FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear Members, Supporters, and Volunteers,



One of my favorite and most valuable benefits of membership in the Cox Arboretum Foundation is our participation in the American Horticultural Society's Reciprocal Admissions Program. With your membership, you have access to over 345 botanical gardens, arboreta, and conservatories across North America and the Cayman Islands. This program is an incredible opportunity to explore new

places, gain inspiration, and deepen your appreciation for nature's wonders. During a recent trip to Florida, my family and I took advantage of the program and visited both Harry P. Leu Gardens and Mead Botanical Garden. For more information on this member benefit, visit ahsgardening.org/gardening-programs/rap/.

December 31 will mark the conclusion of my two years of service as Foundation President. As I reflect on the past two years, I am filled with gratitude for our dedicated members and the vibrant community that sustains the Cox Arboretum. It has been an honor to serve as President, and I am so proud of the growth we have achieved together and in partnership with the staff of Five Rivers MetroParks. Your steadfast support has enabled us to expand our educational programs, maintain and enhance our beautiful grounds, and continue our commitment to environmental stewardship.

I am pleased to share that our Vice President, Kathy Sperry from Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, will step into the role of Foundation President on January 1, 2025. Kathy brings a wealth of experience and a shared commitment to the values that define our Foundation. I am confident that under her leadership, the Foundation will continue to flourish.

Thank you once again for your support. It has been a privilege to serve, and I look forward to seeing the many ways our Arboretum and Foundation will thrive in the coming years.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jason C. Eckert".

Jason C. Eckert
Cox Arboretum Foundation, Board President



ARBORETUM UPDATE CONTRIBUTORS

Brenda Cox
Jennifer Davit
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THE JAMES M. COX JR. ARBORETUM FOUNDATION BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jason Eckert
President

Kathy Sperry
Vice President

Valerie White
Secretary

Anthony Pyle
Treasurer

Alan Brown
Immediate Past President

Lisa Japs
Barbara Kedziora
Paul Schlottman
Senay Semere
Kim Spurgeon
Katie Wahl

EX-OFFICIO
Karen Hesser

BOARD LIAISON
Alexis Larsen

NEW BOARD MEMBER



Lisa Japs
Dayton Live, Chief Operating Officer

Lisa Japs is a driven and accomplished woman with a diverse range of experiences. With a career spanning two decades at Dayton Live, Lisa's impact has been profound. Her journey began in the Ticket Office, allowing her to gain deep insights into customer service and theatre operations. Lisa currently serves as Chief Operating Officer, where she is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the organization's operations.

Holding a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Dayton has provided her with a strong foundation in human behavior and has been invaluable in her professional and personal pursuits.

Outside of work, Lisa loves to garden and is an active volunteer with Levitt Pavilion Dayton. She currently serves as the Chair of the Friends of the Library Board. Through her volunteer work, she has been able to give back to her community and make a positive impact in the lives of others. Her favorite weekend activity is going on long, rambling walks in our local parks, and Cox Arboretum is one of her favorites! When the opportunity to join the board of the Foundation arose, she was extremely excited to be part of a group dedicated to being stewards of this amazing park. She wants to help ensure it remains a wonderful natural retreat and learning center in our city for generations to come.



PARK ENHANCEMENTS

(YOUR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK)

Maimon Memorial Garden



Entrance Pavilion: The former pavilion was removed, and a new pavilion was constructed in April 2024. The previous pavilion was natural wood, but the decision was made to stain the new pavilion to match the exterior of the rest of the buildings at Cox, tying it into the entire campus and creating a unified aesthetic. The passion flower vines are being retrained onto the pavilion and growing and blooming beautifully. The pavilion is now an excellent welcome to the Maimon Memorial Garden which lies inside.



Trellis for Berry Beds: Two trellises were constructed and installed in the berry beds in the circle of the Maimon Memorial Garden. These trellises were needed to help train the raspberries and huckleberries that needed a support structure to grow along. The woodworkers built the trellises, and they were installed by Cox Gardening volunteers and staff. The berries are now being trained up there and have performed very well and had improved growth and production in 2024. This trellis was essential to maintaining a neat and tidy look in the garden and improving the health and production of the berry plants.



Shrub Garden



The shrub garden was renovated in 2024 to incorporate new shrub and perennial varieties and designed native landscapes around the ponds, while leaving some selected turf to provide safe access to the pond edge. The gazebo was removed as part of this renovation, as the concrete foundation was failing and not safe for visitors. The existing shrub beds were redesigned to incorporate mixed plantings that showcase the shrub collection, but also create seasonal displays that visitors can draw inspiration from for their own landscapes. These new plantings incorporate many natives, highlighting Five Rivers MetroParks' dedication to sustainability. Irrigation was also installed to ensure ease of care for the new shrubs and perennials. There are still some plantings which will be installed in 2025.



PARK ENHANCEMENTS CONT...

(YOUR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK)

Pollinator Habitat



The pollinator habitat was planted in the fall of 2023 and grew beautifully in 2024, attracting many pollinators and serving as a great destination for everyday visitors and for educational programs. The addition of temporary signage in 2024 improved the opportunity for visitors to learn and be inspired to incorporate native pollinator plants into their own home gardens. Visitors were also able to identify the pollinators in the various stages due to the presence of detailed interpretation. In 2025 visitors will see new permanent interpretive signage.





Tree Tower

The tree tower was cleaned and stained in June of 2024 as part of the three to five year recommended warranty maintenance. This provides an all-weather coat to preserve the structure and bring out the natural look of the wood, while restoring areas that had been damaged due to graffiti. This funding is part of the Foundations sustainability funds for projects made possible through funding from the Foundation.

Bulb Plantings

A beautiful bulb mixture containing six varieties of wild tulips, grape hyacinth, and dwarf daffodils will be planted in the bed space by the new stone wall at the entrance to the park. These perennial bulbs will create a naturalistic display that will come back every year. Forced bulb displays will also fill the gallery with early blooms, some very fragrant, throughout the late winter and early spring. These plantings are made possible through a generous grant from the Zorniger Family Fund of The Dayton Foundation and matching funds from the Foundation.

Thank you to the five 2nd grade classes that came out from Bauer Primary to help plant the 14,000 bulbs.



EDUCATION AT THE ARB

(YOUR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK)

OUTstanding Teacher Award Winners

OUTstanding Teachers are classroom educators who connect students with inspiring outdoor experiences shaping positive attitudes toward nature. These teachers foster a community at their school encouraging kids to get outside and active in natural spaces. With support from The James M. Cox Jr., Arboretum Foundation and The Virginia W. Kettering Foundation, Five Rivers Metroparks holds annual OUTstanding Teacher awards to recognize and promote the work of remarkable nature-based educators who are making a difference for their students and our community. Winning teachers receive an award package that includes funds to enhance their outdoor learning spaces, education materials, memberships to the Environmental Education Council of Ohio and the Cox Arboretum Foundation, and transportation for a field trip to Cox Arboretum MetroPark.

Congratulations to the 2023-2024 OUTstanding Teachers!

Lifetime Achievement (20+ years of classroom experience): Tracy Kuehn, 4th Grade Teacher at Driscoll Elementary School, Centerville City School District



Visit Mrs. Kuehn's classroom and two things immediately become clear:

- 1) her students take extraordinary pride in their prairie garden and outdoor classroom
- 2) stewardship of the prairie is driven by the students.

Student committees make important decisions and fulfill special roles for the prairie's development and maintenance, allowing the next incoming class to carry the conservation torch a little farther. Working collaboratively as committees, students learn skills such as reading, researching, documenting, writing, math, problem-solving, and teamwork. Tracy's career as a K-8 teacher has spanned 30 years, and during that time, she has inspired her students and their families to experience nature hands-on. Living on a farm, Tracy demonstrates the value of a healthy farm-to-table diet and thrills students with stories about her farm animals, especially her beloved horse. Stephanie Johnson, co-president of Driscoll Elementary's PTO and mom of a former and current student in Mrs. Kuehn's class, wrote, "Mrs. Kuehn is known as the jean-wearing, water-drinking, horse-riding, hiking-boot-wearing, outdoor-loving teacher. She is simply a person who loves what she does, how she does it, and does not miss a beat when it comes to teaching her students what it means to be an 'all around' good learner, friend, and problem solver, and always exemplifies the positive impact nature can have as a part of your everyday life."



Leader (10-20 years of experience): Jessie Muhleman, Kindergarten Teacher at Southdale Elementary School, Kettering City School District



If you hear audible whoops of celebration coming from Hills & Dales MetroPark, it is because the park team there is elated that Jessie is being recognized for her work to connect her kindergarteners to nature and to their neighborhood MetroPark. Jesse walks her students and their families to Hills & Dales throughout the school year to investigate seasonal changes and engage in nature play. Families have so much fun they return to enjoy the park

on their own. Jessie is a force for the nature play movement. Her class is outside multiple times a day, enjoying various activities, including practicing math and phonics skills, storytelling, gardening, observing wildlife, recess, and snack time. Southdale Elementary's innovative courtyard classroom features food and butterfly gardens that Jessie and fellow members of the school's gardening committee help maintain, so they can be used by the whole school for learning. Jessie also works closely with the Habitat Environmental Center to expand opportunities for her students to explore natural spaces and learn about nature topics. Serving as a kindergarten teacher since 2007, Jessie has come to strongly believe in the power of nature to heal and uplift people of all ages. She says, *"I feel called to help both teachers and children advocate for their right to connect regularly with the natural world and foster a sincere appreciation for our natural world."*

Rising Star (< 10 years of experience): Molly Horne, Science Teacher at Tippecanoe High School, Tipp City School District



Molly Horne recognized the educational value of the one-acre prairie that sits on Tippecanoe High School's campus. Molly enlisted the help of area botanists and the school's facilities director to restore the prairie after years of neglect. The prairie is now an important part of her science classroom. Molly teaches a College Prep Earth's Environment class where she integrates group projects, multimedia, virtual labs, and hands-on lab activities to create learning opportunities that are not only engaging and interesting, but accessible for students of all ability levels. Molly guides students through investigations of Earth's natural cycles, geographic features, and current environmental issues, incorporating outside learning activities into her lessons. In her after-school hours, Molly serves as an advisor to the STEM Club and the Outdoor Club, facilitating meaningful student involvement in community events such as the

Miami County Science Day and Earth Day celebrations. Tippecanoe High School principal Dan Barnes nominated Molly for the award. After expanding on Molly's impressive accomplishments, he noted, *"All in all, there isn't a better candidate for this award. Mrs. Horne's devotion and passion for all things environmental is commendable. She works tirelessly to make learning fun and accessible."*



Matinee in the Maimon



NEW RENTAL OPPORTUNITY

Have your next garden tea, luncheon, or social event at the pavilion in the Maimon Memorial Garden.



RENTAL OVERVIEW

Monday - Friday 8AM - 5PM (4 HOURS)	Monday - Thursday After 5PM (4 HOURS)
\$300	\$500

Includes tables and chairs for up to 30 people.



OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD

Do you know a teacher who gets students outside, and brings nature into the classroom?



NOMINATE THEM FOR THE OUTSTANDING TEACHER AWARD!

Nominations Due January 31, 2025



METROPARKS.ORG/OUTSTANDING

EDUCATION AT THE ARB 2024 STATS

(YOUR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK)

Putting Learning & Nature Together Stats

Thanks to the generous grant from the Virginia W. Kettering Foundation for the 2023-2024 school year Five Rivers MetroParks is able to host Putting Learning and Nature Together (PLANT) Tours taking place at Cox Arboretum MetroPark. This program supports school field trips, nature based education kits for educators, and workshops teaching educators ways to incorporate nature into their classrooms.

Teacher Field Schools

Builds teachers' confidence in taking their students outside on their own and provides tools for teachers to use during their self-led outdoor adventures.

Results: 15 teachers

Teachers' Night Outs

Themed events for teachers to come to Cox Arboretum to learn from each other and grow stronger nature-based education skills.

Results: 140 teachers

**TOTAL
IMPACT
3,845**

Staff Led Field Trips

Classroom visits to the Arboretum

Results: ~2,500 students

Teacher Led Field Trips

Classroom visits to the Arboretum

Results: 1,300+ students

EDUCATION AT THE ARB 2024 STATS C

(YOUR DONATIONS AND MEMBERSHIP DOLLARS AT WORK)

Conservation Kids

Providing children and families inspiration and knowledge to get outside, play in and explore nature, and ultimately become stewards of the environment and advocates for conservation.



5 Program Graduates

54
Programs

165

Unique Individuals/
Family Participants

85
Hours

957

Total Attendance Youth
and Guardians



Guardian Quotes

Our granddaughter caught a butterfly and was thrilled

It was our kids' first night hike. We questioned whether they would enjoy it, and everything exceeded our expectations and we all had a blast.

My son expressed more interest in insects and nature today than he has in a while. We enjoyed getting to explore as a group and have a naturalist to help!

My kids got to explore the forest at night, which was huge for them. They got to see owls and be a part of a group of kids.

Both kids touching their first frogs! And I'll remember their excitement at what they got to see, touch, and learn. Really amazing stuff.

Good way to have fun while exploring and learning.

We really appreciate the Conversation Kids programs.



Conservation Leaders

An extension of Conservation Kids, for ages 10-17, offering programs as well as opportunities for teens to become official MetroParks' volunteers. As volunteers they can take part in Conservation Action opportunities where they work alongside Five Rivers MetroParks' conservation staff. Additionally, teens can volunteer in Conservation Kids programming, helping kids connect with nature.



19
Programs

25
Unique Individuals/
Family
Participants

644
Volunteer
Hours



Participant Quotes

By the end I was getting so much better at identifying trees, I surprised myself.

My child touching things she never would have before.

My son was overjoyed with this. We'll continue to participate in these programs.

The excitement and teamwork of the kiddos. They took what they learned and replicated teamwork on their own without needing encouragement or dictation. It was so lovely to see them work together.

We had some great conversations.



Cox Arboretum

Wedding & Event Venue

For more information call (937) 278-2657



Celebrations • Graduation Parties • Corporate Gatherings • Holiday Parties • Proms • Recognition Events • Receptions • Rehearsals Retirement Parties • Retreats • Reunions • Showers • Weddings

VOLUNTEER

Make a Difference Day



The horticulture team hosted 20 volunteers from Second Chance Global Ministries and Wright State's Beta Alpha Psi. These groups helped mulch the perimeter of the Shrub Garden and also plant bulbs at the front stone wall.



The park operations team had 15 volunteers help with invasive species removal on the trails.

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who give of their time and talent to make the Arboretum the community gem it is today.

Five Rivers MetroParks Volunteer Stats for Cox Arboretum

The Arboretum hosts many different volunteer opportunities that include woodworking, visitor service ambassador, gardening, invasive species removal, prop ops, program support, garden tours, and tram drivers. If you're interested in getting connected visit www.metro parks.org/volunteer.

120 Ongoing Volunteers



Staff lead Bingo for gardening volunteers



Staff lead Bingo for program volunteers & ice cream party

ongoing volunteer hours

2,738

Total Volunteer Hours

3,613

Episodic Hours

875

443 Episodic Volunteers



USI Insurance



LexisNexis



Lowes

MEMBER EVENT



Hear from Conservation Leaders & what the program means to them



Check out the thank you from our board and MetroParks staff!



Members enjoyed an evening hearing an overview of projects funded in 2024 (noted in this issue) and then a presentation from Conservation Leader participants in what they are learning through their work with the Five Rivers MetroParks education and conservation teams. The evening ended with tram and walking tours of the Arboretum stopping at projects funded on the grounds this year.



NEW MEMBERS

November 2023 - October 2024

Cody Adkins	Douglas Harnish	Norah Peterson
Peter Bertolini	Helena Harper	Casey Potts
Betty A. Beaty	Lauren Haus	Abigail Reed
Joseph Ciriello	Alex Heerdt	Senay Semere
Leslie Collins	Steve Huff	Beverly Shillito
Matthew Dabe	Matthew Hyter	Heather Stacy
Jeff Dalton	Lisa Japs	Lynné Steinhaus
Ann Davis	Christine Kabban	Anna Wagner
Nina Dayo	Alexis Larsen	Katie Wahl
Roy and Nancy Dyer	Craig Machey	Jason Warner
Jill Gordon	Steve and Ann Mays	Christopher Wheeler
Justin Glow and Monica Dempsey	Matthew Mercer	Tom and Carolyn
Kathryn Guirnalda	Camille Morris	Daniel Zelik & Allison Zelik

Perennial Society

*Leave a lasting legacy for generations to come with a planned gift to the
Cox Arboretum Foundation*

MEMBERS

Barbara Cox*	Bruce & Sue Howorth
Margaret Barnhart*	Samuel Maimon*
Martha Boice	Markita Murdock
Jane Compton*	Charles Niehaus*
Lewis & Ruth Cummings*	Cynthia Shook*
Patricia Edmonson	Edda Wagner*
John & Louise Haley	Alma Walther*
Lou & Millie Homan	Joyce Wolfe*

**denotes deceased*

The Perennial Society are members who have named the foundation in their estate plans or will. For more information call (937) 274-4381

MEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

40 Years

Jane A. Dunwoodie
Tom and Ellie Shulman

35 Years

Don and Joyce Porter
Mary Jane Ryan

30 Years

Richard and Marsha Early
David Hammond and Jane Heavin
Bill and Nancy Stahl
Bill and Karen Todd
Betsy B. Whitney
Nancy Zeller

25 Years

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Conrad
Dr. and Mrs. Dehner
Paul Fleitz
Carol Corr Greis
Mr. and Mrs. Louis G. Homan
Marilyn J. Hook
Margaret Klein
Michael and Dianne Kugel
Frances S. Repperger

20 Years

Karl and Sandy Ayers
John Bucklew
Don Erwine
Mary Haffner
Robert and Cathy Kennedy
Joan Pratt
Dave and Beth Striebel
Ron Testa
Anita Wales

15 Years

James Eidemiller
Robert and Lily Ensign
Linda Haley and
John Goode
Mark Stabler
Roger Steinlage and
Juanita Stoyka
Craig F Williams and
Carol G Williams

10 Years

Gary and Cathy Adler
Linda Moore
Elise Hafenbrack

5 Years

Peter Bovenzi
Ken and Darrell May
Valerie White



FOUNDERS SOCIETY

Joe Bockelman and
Barbara Driehaus
Laura Enzbrenner
Stephen and Rose Fryburg
Sonja Gegel
Janet Graul and
Matt Moore
Margaret Klein
Steve and Lou Mason
Ken and Darrell May
Ruth Mead
Barbara Nichols O'Hara
Marvin and
Christine Olinsky
Caryl Philips
Don and Joyce Porter
Carole Remick
Rick and Jane Schwartz
Carole Stephens
Paul and Patti Stoll
Nancy Zeller

The Founders Society are members who are committed to the long-term goals of the Cox Arboretum Foundation, and give an annual gift of \$1,000 or more.

TRIBUTES

November 2023 - October 2024

**Indicates Tribute Tree or Bench*

In memory of John Campbell

Jimmie Nicolazzo

In memory of Susan Toole

Lyric Rillera

In memory of Jean Leiberman

Bob and Nora Newsock

In memory of Norman Lee Spearman*

Elise Hemm

In memory of Peter Neroni

Bob and Nora Newsock

In memory of Lois Vager

Bob and Nora Newsock

In memory of Greg Marr*

Lorraine Marr

In memory of Tom Wheeler*

George and Margaret McLane Foundation

In memory of Lynn Mathes*

Edward Mathes

In memory of Carole Ann Wilde

Susan, Chris, and Greg Wild

Rob Woodward

In memory of Lura Dene Parke*

Joni Dingledine

*Honor someone you love or a special occasion with a tribute at
Cox Arboretum Metro Park*

For information call (937) 277-4839





The James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation
6733 Springboro Pike
Dayton, OH 45449

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Dayton, OH
Permit No. 609

PARK HOURS

APRIL - OCTOBER 31

8am - 10pm

NOVEMBER - MARCH 31

8am - 8pm

ZORNIGER VISITOR CENTER HOURS

MONDAY - FRIDAY 8am-5pm

SATURDAY & SUNDAY 11am - 4pm

MISSION

To support educational, scientific, civic, and cultural programs and activities relating to the advancement of arboriculture, horticulture and related fields by providing support for the Cox Arboretum as a free arboretum/museum for the benefit of the general public.

Five Rivers MetroParks staff and volunteer woodworkers at the Arboretum have been hard at work preparing for the holiday season. They've crafted festive candy canes and whimsical wooden gnomes, which can be spotted throughout the grounds. Additionally, visitors can enjoy a special photo opportunity with a beautifully handcrafted wooden sled, perfect for capturing holiday memories.

