

ARBORETUM UPDATE!

Summer 2014



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

Letter from the Manager



Children are out of school and the daffodil beds at Cox Arboretum MetroPark are being reclaimed as lawn. Both are sure signs that summer is arriving at the Arboretum. Before we know it, Butterfly Season will be upon us.

Staff and volunteers have been busy all spring grooming the grounds following what has proved to be one of the harshest winters in recent memory. As we begin to shift our thoughts to summer projects, all eyes are now focused on the Barbara Cox Center for Sustainable Horticulture. Members of the Human Nature design team, Five Rivers MetroPark Staff and representatives from the James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation board participated in a

day long kickoff charrette to facilitate discussion on the schematic design for the Center. The team reviewed the Center's key objectives and completed an onsite inventory of existing amenities. The session yielded three potential sites for the Center. The team's findings and final recommendations are eagerly awaited.

As quoted by Abraham Lincoln, "The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time." The Barbara Cox Center for Sustainable Horticulture is helping to define the future of Cox Arboretum MetroPark. In keeping with the spirit of the Center for Sustainable Horticulture, our goal is to become the region's leader in sustainable horticulture. To meet this end, we are reviewing our "best practices" to assure that we are achieving sustainability standards. The newly renovated Allée will include low flow irrigation for water conservation as well as landscape fabric and mulch which will inhibit perennial and annual weed growth, reducing the need for spring trimming and chemical herbicides. Sustainability at the Arboretum will be reflected in the plants we select and the construction materials we choose for projects from roof replacements to walkways.

New educational initiatives will encourage Cox Arboretum MetroPark visitors to practice sustainable horticulture at home, helping to insure that we become the region's conservation and sustainable horticulture leader.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Russell B. Edgington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Russell Edgington
Manager of Cox Arboretum MetroPark

ARBORETUM UPDATE!
is published for the members
of The James M. Cox, Jr.
Arboretum Foundation.

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Arbor Day Celebration



Thank you to all who joined us to celebrate Arbor Day.

The National holiday is celebrated on the last Friday of April and was established to increase awareness, and encourage people to plant and care for trees. This year we brought the true purpose of Arbor Day back into the spotlight by inviting Betty Hoevel, Education Supervisor, to present the benefits of trees. Betty's passion encouraged everyone to gain a deeper knowledge and appreciation for trees, the backdrop of our landscape.



Rich Pearson, Horticulturist, shared information about this year's Arbor Day tree—the Rainbow Pillar Serviceberry. Rich concluded the program by planting the tree and shared his tips on how to plant in the local clay-like soil prominent in the area.



Wildflower and Native Plant Sale



The annual Wildflower Sale was held April 26th in the Zorniger Education Center. Plants lined the Gallery on both sides and knowledgeable volunteers and staff were available to answer questions. The Fifth Third Conference Room displayed helpful information and ideas to make your own wildflower gardens at home. A big thanks to all the volunteers who worked hard on the propagation of the plants and helped put together the event!

Growing Collections!

An Update on the Niehaus Magnolia and Lilac Collections



Cox Arboretum is one of many parks at Five Rivers MetroParks, which is committed to being the leader in protecting and promoting the conservation of natural areas. Our current Master Plan suggests planting the Shrub Garden with an array of flowering shrubs and trees.

Using the Master Plan and the commitment to sustainability, the rejuvenation of the Magnolia Collection began with planting seven species native to forests in North America.

Planted in the fall of 2013, the initial 98 plants received an unexpected hardiness test from a long, hard winter. Surprisingly, most survived including plants from each species. Future additions will include suitably hardy plants from the family Magnoliaceae: Species uncommon in the nursery trade, choice new cultivars and longtime favorites.

The original lilac planting near the pond in the Shrub Garden is now more than 30 years old and in decline. While there are no known lilacs native to this region, the rebuilding of this collection began this spring with plantings along both sides of the path to the Bell Boxwood Children's Maze with ten *Syringa pekinensis* Pekin Lilac and 34 *Syringa X 'Penda'* Bloomerang Purple Lilac.

Future selections will involve visits to local sites and nurseries to discover what is new and promising, rare and unusual and able to withstand the vagaries of our climate.

Look for both the Magnolias and the Lilacs to appear beyond the confines of the Shrub Garden to delight visitors and enhance the spring experience at Cox Arboretum MetroPark.

The magnolia and lilac collections are funded by a generous gift from the Charles Niehaus estate.



The Bloomerang Lilacs will mature at 3-4 feet high and wide, growing together to form an informal hedge. These recent introductions have the unusual trait of periodically re-blooming throughout the season when temperatures cool.



The Pekin Lilacs grow as a single tree trunk up to 15-20 feet high and spreading 10 feet wide. The flowers bloom in early June and develop an interesting curled peeling bark as they mature.

THE ALLEE



No one can say for sure how long it took Claude Monet to Paint “Allée Des Rosiers,” but one thing is certain- a true work of art takes time. The Arboretum’s artwork began last fall with the removal of the remaining Sugar Tyme Crabapple trees of the famed Cox Arboretum MetroPark Crabapple Allée. Next, close to 100 loads of Arboretum-produced compost was tilled into to the soil just before winter settled over the Miami Valley. When old man winter finally loosened his chokehold, our canvas was ready for medium.

To date, the site has been carefully sculpted into a promenade reminiscent of the famed Allée of France. One hundred Kousa Dogwood trees have been planted in double rows forming the new Allée. Staff and volunteers worked hard at laying sod, which was generously donated by Green Velvet Sod Farms of Dayton.

The Clematis Arbor has been retired and a new arbor, designed by Earl Reeder Associates, is emerging from the earth-like layers of oil on canvas. Stop by the Arboretum and witness for yourself what is destined to be a work of art!





Butterfly House - "Save the Monarch"

Summer time: hamburgers on the grill, kids out of school, a trip to the beach, and a visit to the Butterfly House sponsored by the Dayton Power and Light Foundation. The 16th season of the Butterfly House will begin July 7th and extend through August 29. On display is the complete life-cycle of native moths and butterflies. Visitors discover eggs, caterpillars, chrysalis or cocoons along with adult moths and butterflies. Each additional visit to the Butterfly House will offer something new. Enjoy the Pollinator Garden outside the Butterfly House and pick up a copy of the Dayton Power and Light Foundation sponsored Butterfly Trail Map and extend your visit to the Conservation Corner.



While each moth or butterfly has a unique story to tell, the monarch butterfly seems to stand out from the others. The monarch migration is one of the most miraculous migrations to take place. Very little is known about how the butterflies are signaled to migrate or how they stay on course. Scientists from the U.S. and Canada have only known the location of the overwintering sites since the 1970's. There is still much to be discovered about this migration and overwintering biology.

However, monarchs are in trouble. Their habitat in the U.S. is shrinking and their population is in steep decline. In the past monarchs faced declines due to weather conditions such as drought, winter storms, or wet springs but the loss of a food source is a much greater concern. The monarch is dependent on milkweed as food for caterpillars. Without milkweed there is nothing for the females to lay eggs on or the young caterpillars to eat. Due to an increase in corn production, pesticide use, and development less milkweed is allowed to grow. Droughts over the past years in parts of the U.S. mean nectar is not available. During their time in Mexico the adults must rely on stored fat, as they do not feed during the winter. Since many of the nectar stops do not have the resources these insects need they arrive in Mexico undernourished, causing the overwintering monarchs to die during the winter months. This reduces the population even more.

Scientists who study monarchs believe the next few summers are critical to help reverse this decline. Although the population numbers are the lowest on record, the monarch is not in danger of extinction at this time. What is in danger of disappearing is the migration of the monarch butterfly. This means the monarch butterfly would stay in southern places like Florida and Texas and not migrate to the Midwest, East Coast or Canada in the summer. Thankfully, there are ways to help save the monarch migration. Planting milkweed, summer and fall blooming flowers help the monarchs in two ways. Milkweed provides food for the larvae and blooming flowers provide nectar for adult monarchs as they travel over wintering grounds.



Stop by the Butterfly House and talk with a volunteer guide to find out more about the monarch and other butterflies and what makes a great butterfly habitat. You can be a part of Saving the Monarch Migration!

Butterfly House Hours

July 7th – August 29th

Monday– Sunday 8am—8pm

Volunteer guides available

Monday– Saturday 10am—2pm

Sunday 12pm—2pm.

If interested in volunteering at the Butterfly House please contact Janet Metter, Volunteer Coordinator, at 937-277-4133

Lauren Asquith Receives Highest Honors



In April of 2014 Lauren Asquith was awarded the Outstanding Environmental Educator Award in the field of Informal Education by the Environmental Education Council of Ohio (EECO).

The statewide contest received a high amount of nominations, but Lauren's passion and accomplishments impressed the judges and made her an exemplary nominee.

Attend one of Lauren's programs at Cox Arboretum and you will become engaged with her warm, passionate personality that inspires a Culture of Conservation. She has uncanny people skills: the ability to use her enthusiasm, voice, and body language to take her audience on an adventure they never forget. Lauren has an extreme sense of responsibility to her audience; from making sure everyone sees a bird on a warbler trip at Magee March, to helping a child find a crawdad in a creek.

Through presenting, publishing, answering questions and providing feedback, Lauren has impacted programs across the nation. She has presented at conferences throughout Ohio and recently presented at the North American Association for Environment Education (NAAEE) conference in Baltimore, Maryland. Within the past year, she has also co-authored three publications within the National Association for Interpretation's Legacy.



Lauren's passion for educating the community on conservation has no limits, whether it's engaging preschoolers through the new Tikes Taking Action program or bringing nature into the classroom through workshops for teachers. She is a true leader and advocate not just for MetroParks, but for the entire community.

If you participate in one of Lauren's programs or see her around the Arboretum, help us in congratulating her for her hard work and dedication to conservation and sharing that knowledge with others.

Adopt-A-Park



Adopt-A-Park is a regional clean-up effort that brings together volunteers of all ages and backgrounds to make our parks and river corridors healthier and friendlier places to visit. The dedicated volunteers who participate each year in Adopt-A-Park provide vital help to make our parks a happier and healthier place to visit. "Volunteerism is key to sustaining our local natural amenities and green space," says Kevin Kepler, Volunteer Services Manager for Five Rivers MetroParks. "In turn, those natural amenities sustain our quality of life in the area."

ADOPT-A-PARK BY THE PROJECT AT COX ARBORETUM METROPARK

This year the projects at Cox Arboretum MetroPark were all about trees: **renovation, replacement and restoration**. The 60+ volunteers at Cox were split into three teams to work on projects lead by Five River MetroParks staff.

One team headed for the Allée and planted the first six of 100 caliper balled and burlapped **Cornus kousa**, Kousa Dogwood trees in the **renovation** project that replaced the Crabapple trees that were removed due to decline. Attention to detail was taken to ensure all of the trunks were vertically straight as well as aligned in a straight row. A great success to begin a great project!

Another team headed to the Wildflower Area and planted 100 Robinia pseudoacacia, Black Locust saplings. These 3– 4 feet saplings were randomized through the area where dozens of Ash trees infested with the Emerald Ash Borer were removed earlier in the spring. The Black Locust was selected as a native species known to grow fast once established, to **rapidly** replace the lost shade canopy of the Ash. Many hands made quick work planting and removing some invasive Honeysuckle and Buckthorn!



The third team, small in numbers but mighty in productivity, headed for the greenhouse to transplant forest hardwood tree seedlings into larger pots. These trees will be grown in pots for another year to produce a bigger sapling, giving a better chance for survival once they are planted in the parks. As the trees grow, the Five Rivers MetroParks Conservation Department will work on **restoration** of wooded areas decimated by the Emerald Ash Borer. Like a human potting machine, this team potted over 400 seedlings!



Five Rivers MetroParks ADOPT-A-PARK BY the Numbers

- DP&L sponsored our t-shirts and the complimentary lunch.
- South West airlines and Solid Waste Montgomery County again provided tools, trash bags and gloves
- 44 work sites throughout Montgomery County
- 2,365 volunteers registered this year
- 5,912 hours of volunteer service
- More than 18 miles of trails cleaned
- More than 30,000 pounds of trash removed
- 3 illegal dump sites cleaned
- 23 miles of shore line cleaned
- 2 playgrounds spruced up with new plants and mulch
- More than 500 tires picked up
- 4 acres of wetland planted / restored/ improved

Cox Arboretum MetroParks by the numbers:

- 6 Kousa Dogwoods planted
 - 100 Black Locusts planted
 - 400 seedling tree transplants
- Total: 506 trees added to the FRMP tree family!



Garden Store News

The Garden Store is changing its purpose and focus so that visitors can “Take Home a Bit of The Arb.” Recently, the Cox Arboretum Foundation board and MetroParks staff conducted an evaluation of the Garden Store and discovered that the most popular items sold in the store were the items hand-crafted by the Arboretum volunteers. Also noted was that visitors to the Zorniger Education Center were looking for educational displays for their families to enjoy.

As a result of the findings, the foundation board unanimously voted to make significant changes to the Garden Store format to better meet the needs of arboretum visitors and to better align with their mission to provide nature-based educational opportunities.

Beginning in mid-June, handmade items and plants such as terrariums, hypertufas, leaf castings, African Violets and bat houses will be featured throughout the Huffman Gallery and available to purchase seven days a week during Zorniger Education Center hours.

The items will be displayed in the Gallery and the current store space transitioned into a visitor hospitality center. The center will feature comfortable seating and vending machine refreshments and will eventually serve as an interactive educational hub for visitors to learn more about the Arboretum and MetroParks.

Zorniger Education Center Hours

Monday-Friday 8am – 5pm

Saturday – Sunday 11am – 4pm

Closed Major Holidays

*“If nothing ever changed,
there’d be no butterflies”
(author unknown).*



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

Tributes

In memory of Martha Arnott

Ms. Ethel M. Burns

Ms. Verna Dewald

Mr. Nate Grant

Mr. Alvin T. Kissinger

USPS Employees

In honor of Rich Pearson and Ron Smith

Mrs. Jean V. Woodhull

Tribute gifts given through March 2014 - May 2014



New Members

New Members as of March 2014 - May 2014

Gary and Cathy Adler, Jill Chabut, Jim Crotty, Elise Hafenbrack, Joan Lumpkin,
Barbara Meyer, Adam Williams



Member Gifts

Membership gifts are now available at the Visitors Service desk, during the Zorniger Education Hours, for new members and renewed members. You must have your member gift coupon with you in order to receive the gift.



James M. Cox, Jr. Arboretum Foundation
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Park Hours

APRIL 1 - OCTOBER 31

8am - 10pm

NOVEMBER 1 - MARCH 31

8am - 8pm

Zorniger Education Center Hours

Monday - Friday 8am - 5pm

Saturday - Sunday 11am - 4pm



**Cox Arboretum
Foundation Members
are invited to the
2014 Pollinator Party**

Zorniger Education Center
Monday, June 30, 2014
5:30 pm - 7:00 pm

Please RSVP to
brenda.cox@metroparks.org
937.277.4839