



**Five Rivers MetroParks**  
*Volunteer Services*

# VOLUNTEER IMPACT REPORT



**2022**

[www.metroparks.org/volunteer](http://www.metroparks.org/volunteer)



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# Manager's Statement

In 2022, your Volunteer Services team launched a brand new tool to recruit, train, and engage volunteers. Get Connected, was a bold change in the way we share our volunteer needs with the public, orient and onboard new volunteers, train and check off volunteers, and the way volunteers sign up for volunteer opportunities and track their volunteer service hours. Now, volunteers can view our available volunteer opportunities, onboard, train, and sign up to volunteer online from anywhere at any time that is convenient for them.

Volunteer Services can view volunteer data in real time helping us determine where the agency's needs are being met and where more strategic recruitment and engagement is needed. We can utilize this data to help secure grants and sponsorships for the agency. We can also get information out to volunteers quickly and efficiently, especially in times of emergency. Staff leads too can utilize the site tools to better know and grow their volunteer teams and prepare for service.

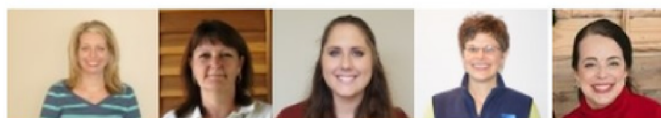
The site certainly has its advantages and is already proving to be an asset. We hope that it is helpful to you, our volunteers, as well, that it is helping you explore the variety of volunteer opportunities that we offer, get involved with those that best meet your interests, skills, and availability, and ultimately, we hope it helps you grow in your volunteer journey with us.

Thank you so much for your support as we continue to learn and grow on this journey with you. You are appreciated more than you know and your service makes all the difference for our parks, programs, and events. We hope you will join us for an exciting and impactful 2023.

Sincerely,



Jenny Hymans  
Human Resources Manager  
Volunteer Services



## **Volunteer Services**

[volunteer.services@metroparks.org](mailto:volunteer.services@metroparks.org); #937-275-7275.

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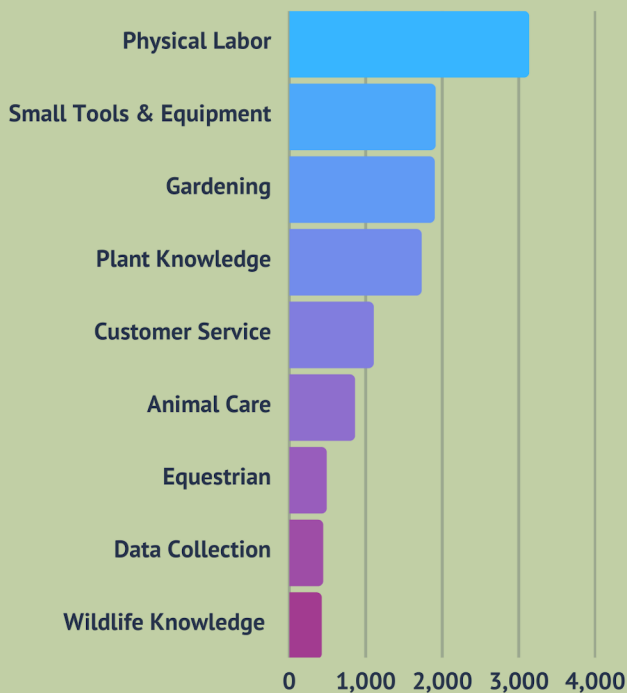
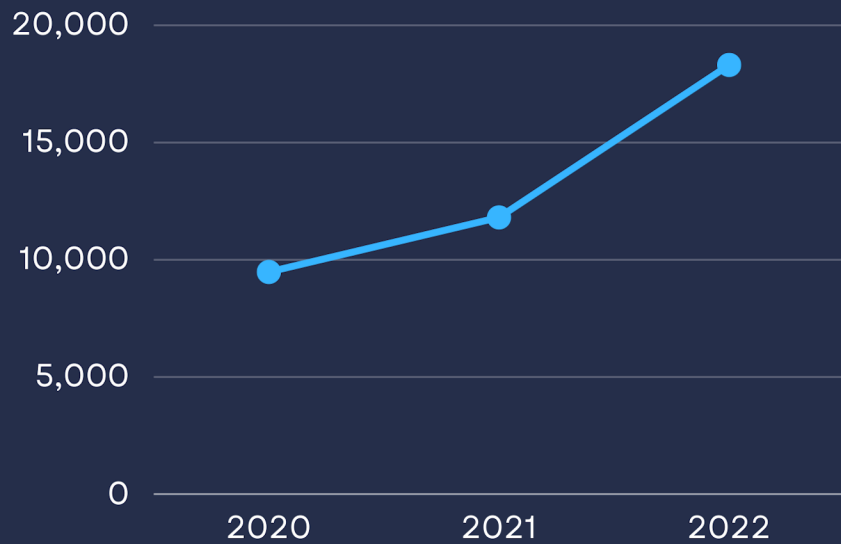
## 18,037.88

In 2022, volunteers served 18,037.88 hours in support of our parks, programs, and events for a dollar value of \$488,285.41 to the agency. This is a significant increase from 2020 and 2021 when volunteerism was significantly reduced due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

## \$488,285.41

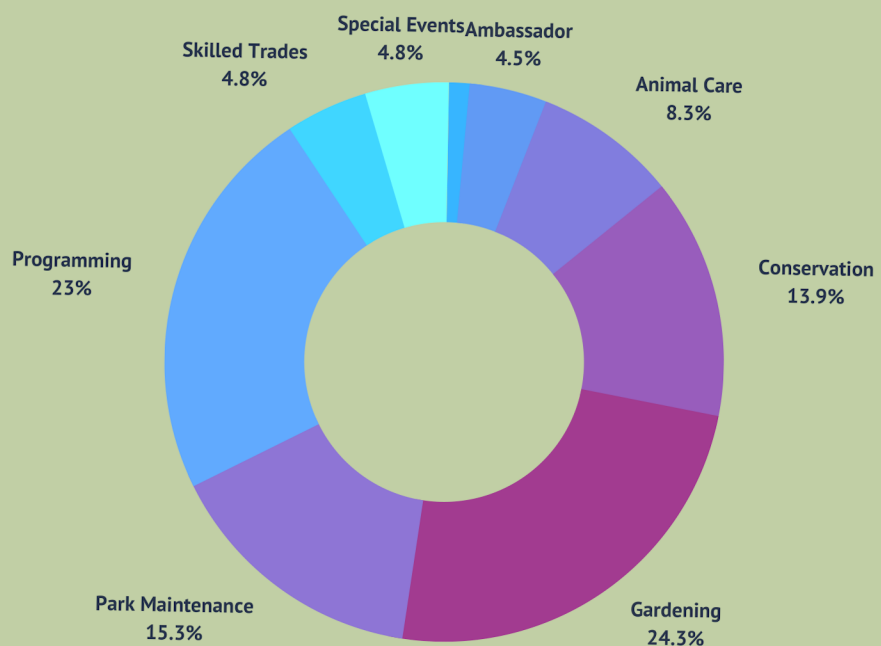


## Year Overview



## Volunteer Hours by Volunteer Position

## Volunteer Hours by Primary Skill





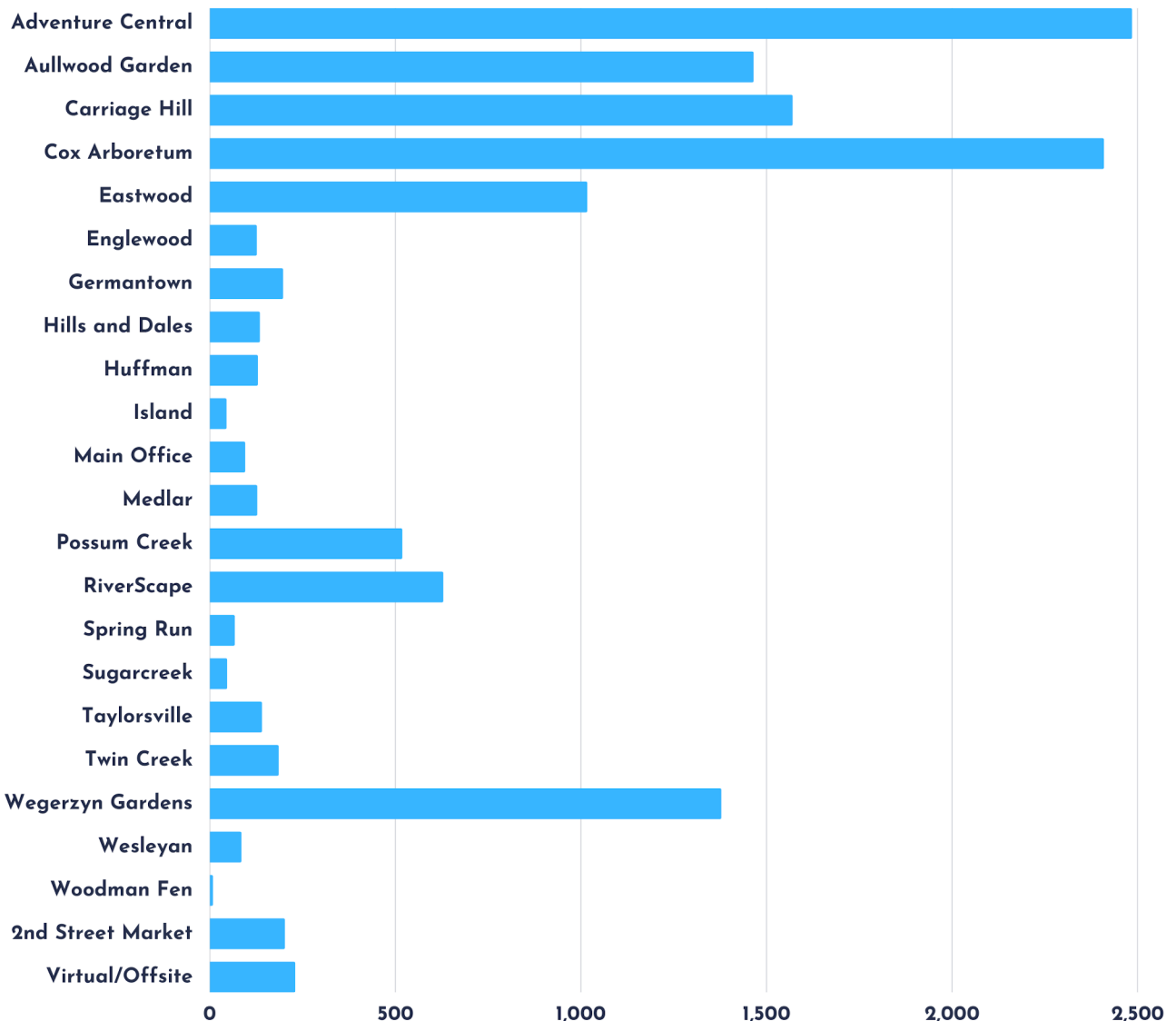
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## Year Overview

### *Volunteer Hours by Location*





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## Growing Volunteer Engagement

### Selecting the Platform

Volunteer Services researched numerous volunteer management platforms before narrowing down to a manageable list of the ten top-rated systems\*. After further research and participating in demos of each of these 10 systems, we were able to identify our top 2 systems that best met the needs we had identified as "Essential Features". These two systems were Galaxy Digital and Better Impact.

Our whole team participated in the final demos of these systems and, based on a close review, selected Galaxy Digital as our volunteer platform.

*\*Note: We had also considered building out a volunteer engagement component to our programming and facility scheduling system, Emerge, however, we soon found that the system would not include many of our "Essential Features" and would be far too expensive to pursue.*

### Building the Site

After selecting Galaxy Digital as our volunteer management platform, we began the process of building our site. We spent 8 months in this process deciding how to organize the site by creating our 9 formal volunteer positions, categorizing all of our existing volunteer opportunities under the appropriate volunteer position, creating opportunities, training pages, the Volunteer Blog, adding photos, and creating virtual training for our volunteers and our staff leads.

We also worked with Galaxy Digital to import the data files of all of our current volunteers, and with Sterling Volunteers, to integrate background checks with the site and rescreen all of our current volunteers.

### Volunteer Management System Evaluation

Essential Features	Meets Expectations	Doesn't Meet Expectations	Comments
Mobile Access	✓		
Group Management			
Onboarding System (work flow)			
Tracking Service Hours			
Online Application System			
Volunteer Photo			
Qualifications			
Expiration Dates for Training/Qualifications			
Alert/Mark Previously Denied Candidates			
Auto Notifications for Milestones			
Customizable Evaluation Process			
Names and Mailing Labels			
Calendar of Volunteer Opportunities			
Sign Up for Opportunities			
Direct communication (email, text, phone call) from system including automatic reminders			
Component for Volunteer Newsletter			
Volunteer Portal with sign in/out			
Customizable reports (Age, interest, facility segmentation)			
Volunteer impact			
Migrate Data			
Administrative Training/Support			
Overall Look and Feel System			
Usability (Administrative Side)			
Usability (Volunteer Side)			

### Testing the Site

Next, we invited 30 staff and 30 volunteers to test out the site during a two-month period from October through November 2021. We asked them to complete their volunteer profile, complete prescribed qualifications, and try out responding to test opportunities we had created on the site for the test period. We collected their feedback during the testing period and made adjustments to the site accordingly during the month of December before launching the site to the public with real volunteer opportunities on January 1st, 2022.





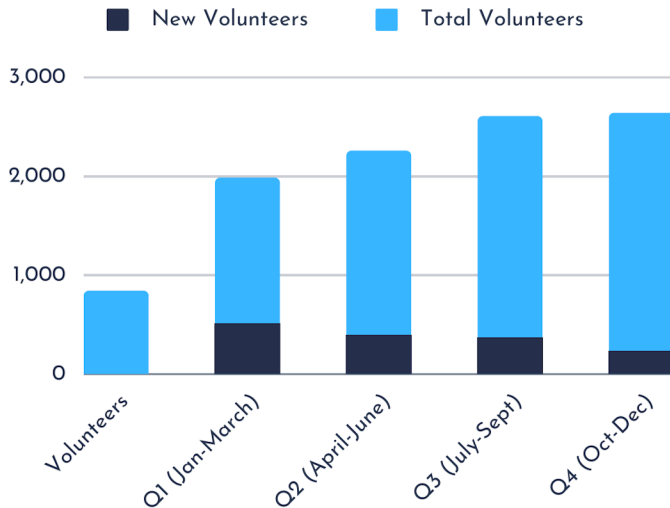


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## Number of Volunteers



## Growing Volunteer Engagement

### New Volunteers

Through Get Connected, individuals interested in volunteering can explore our volunteer opportunities and onboard as a new volunteer anywhere, anytime. Each quarter we onboarded between 200-500 brand-new volunteers through Get Connected.

## Volunteer Opportunities

We had over 530 unique volunteer opportunities in 2022. Many of these opportunities offered shifts. Gardening opportunities received the most volunteer responses with a total of 2,108. Followed by Conservation opportunities with 1,127 volunteer responses.

Followed by:

- Animal Care 775
- Programming 772
- Park Maintenance 402
- Skilled Trades 340
- Special Events 323
- Ambassador 322
- Administration 94

Most volunteers are able to respond to opportunities the same day that they register and onboard as a volunteer (717). Background checks typically take a few hours but can take up to 3 days.

## Volunteer Opportunities



# 2,335

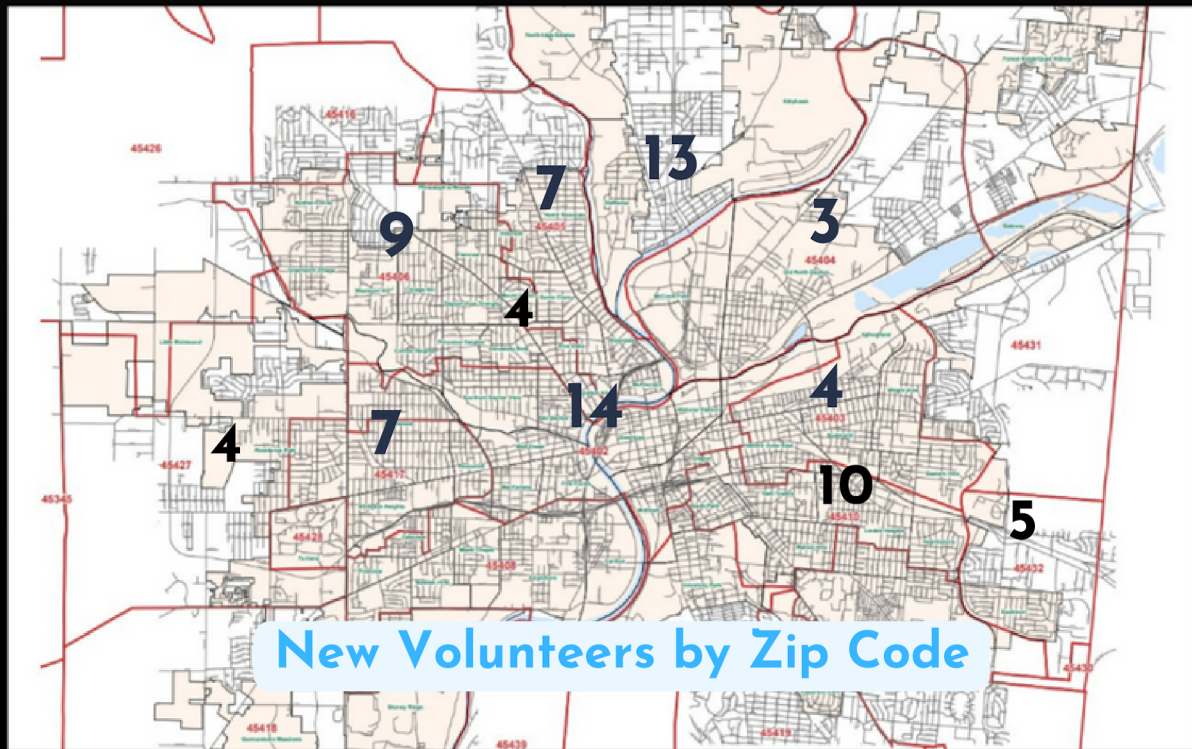
Total Volunteers with 1,410 active in 2022

# 530

Volunteer Opportunities. Many opportunities have shifts. We had over 6,000 volunteer shift slots this year.

# 6,384

Opportunity Responses or sign ups including shifts



## Growing Volunteer Engagement

With this new tool, we are reaching new communities of volunteers including in Trotwood, Shiloh, Northridge, Drexel, Fort McKinley, and Twin Towers neighborhoods. Of the 1,510 new volunteers in 2022, many came from these neighborhoods in North, West, East, and Downtown Dayton. Some began their volunteer journey with us at a service event, Adopt-A-Park, Make A Difference Day, or at a Service Saturday. Others came with a workgroup for a private group engagement or signed on for ongoing long-term volunteer service. Some joined us as short-term youth volunteers completing service hours for school or other educational programs. With Get Connected anyone, anywhere can learn about our volunteer opportunities, onboard as a volunteer, and help out in ways that best fits their needs, schedules, and goals.

Volunteer Services utilizes zip code data to see whom we're reaching and who may be missing out on opportunities to support our agency through high-quality, meaningful volunteer service. This will help inform our strategic recruitment plans for 2023 and beyond.

Additional areas of growth in volunteer engagement included opportunities with youth, community groups, and court-appointed volunteers.

# Growing Volunteer Engagement

## Youth Volunteers

Youth looking to fulfill required volunteer service hours are finding more and more opportunities with Five Rivers MetroParks. This is a growing area of volunteer engagement for us as more and more schools and educational programs are requiring student volunteer service. For Example, in 2022, 25 youth volunteers from Chaminade Julienne High School onboarded to complete their required volunteer hours with us. Youth ages 14-17 can serve individually at qualifying opportunities. Those under age 14 must volunteer at family-friendly volunteer opportunities with a parent or guardian.



*Volunteers Zoe Cormier and Cam Brewer at Adventure Central.*

## Community Groups

We engaged more than twice as many community groups in high-quality, meaningful volunteer service in 2022 than from previous years. This is a growing area of volunteer engagement for Five Rivers MetroParks and one that is highly beneficial to our Parks and Conservation staff, especially our Horticulture teams. For more details on community group engagement in 2022, see page 22 of this report.

## Court-Appointed Volunteers

Another group of volunteers, or service type, finding high-quality, meaningful volunteer service with Five Rivers MetroParks are those approved for court-appointed service. Nine Volunteers were vetted and approved for court-appointed community service with Five Rivers MetroParks in 2022. 6 of the 9 actively served, each completing at least 14 hours, and 3 serving 40 or more hours. A total of 170 volunteer service hours were contributed by this group in 2022, all serving Gardening. 140.5 of these hours were served at Cox Arboretum MetroPark and 29.5 were served at RiverScape MetroPark.

## Repeat Volunteerism

Volunteer Services is also seeing increased in recurring or repeat volunteerism from volunteers as shown in the chart below. More and more volunteers are signing up to support multiple opportunities throughout the year through the Get Connected site.

Volunteers	1242	584	449	376	317	208	135	105
Number of Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20 or more





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## Volunteer Position & Opportunity Highlights

Our 9 Volunteer Positions help us organize and communicate all of the agency's varied volunteer opportunities to volunteers. These volunteer positions are organized based on the function and purpose served by the volunteer.



- *Administrative volunteers* work behind the scenes on a variety of clerical projects to ensure that our frontline staff and volunteers have all they need to provide high-quality parks, programs, and services.
- *Ambassador volunteers* share their enthusiasm for Five Rivers MetroParks with diverse audiences at outreach booths, programs, and events throughout the Miami Valley.
- *Animal Care volunteers* support staff in caring for farm animals and wildlife animal ambassadors at a variety of our parks.
- *Conservation volunteers* are a part of our regional conservation story by assisting in implementing a variety of natural area management plans.
- *Gardening volunteers* support our horticulture and education staff in caring for a variety of gardens throughout our parks.
- *Park Maintenance volunteers* help to manage and sustain 18 beautiful parks, 11 conservation areas, and 160 miles of hike, bike, mountain bike, and horseback-riding trails for park visitors to safely enjoy.
- *Programming volunteers* work alongside staff to provide support at programs year-round that help participants master new skills, learn about the natural world, and appreciate the value of open spaces.
- *Skilled Trades volunteers* help drive our mission forward by assisting with maintenance projects in fabrication, repair, and interpretation.
- *Special Event volunteers* serve a critical role in ensuring that each special event or large-scale program runs smoothly from set-up to tear-down.

Volunteers can "Fan" their favorite volunteer positions in Get Connected to receive a weekly digest email with the latest opportunities and training offered under those volunteer positions.



## Volunteer Position Overview

### Administration

In 2022, 9 individual volunteers supported 7 volunteer opportunities for a total of 213.74 volunteer hours. Volunteers supported staff in the departments of Finance, Development, Outdoor Recreation, Research and Analysis, as well several projects at Aullwood Garden MetroPark.



*Volunteer Susan Witherspoon supports payroll at the Main Office.*



## Volunteer Position Overview

### Ambassador

In 2022, 64 individual volunteers supported 287 Ambassador shift slots for a total of 806.93 volunteer hours.

Volunteer Ambassadors are stationed at our Visitor Centers at Carriage Hill and Cox Arboretum, at the 2nd Street Market, at the RiverScape Summer Music Series, as well as play an important guest services role at all our special events.



*Volunteer Maggie Yegerlehner with Staff Lead and Outdoor Recreation Events Specialist Angela Moore at an Outreach Booth.*





# Volunteer Position Overview

## Animal Care

In 2022, 63 individual volunteers supported 5 volunteer opportunities with 1,181 shifts for a total of 1,488.91 volunteer hours.

## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### Barn Aides

The Carriage Hill Riding Center could not exist without the dedicated support of its volunteers. The center's horses need daily care and our volunteer Barn Aides do an incredible job feeding, watering, grooming, and mucking stalls. In 2022, 40 individual volunteers supported 379 Barn Aide shift slots at the Riding Center for a total of 924.41 volunteer hours.

The Carriage Hill Riding Center Staff shared their appreciation for volunteers with their annual volunteer FUN Day on Saturday, November 5th. The day was filled with smiling faces and lots of equine fun with horseback riding games, equestrian-themed jeopardy, and more.



Volunteer Layla  
Garrison, Barn Aide



Carriage Hill Riding Center Staff and  
Volunteers at the 2022 Volunteer Fun Day

### Wildlife Ambassadors

The FRMP Wildlife Ambassador Care Volunteers provide almost daily support (564.5 hours) to our program making it possible to use Eastern Box Turtles, Gray Rat Snakes, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel in our outreach programs as well as supporting programs within the park. Without the volunteers dedication our program would be unsustainable.

Volunteers also share their experiences with these Wildlife Ambassadors helping the general public understand that they can support wildlife by one, supporting our agency taking care of 16000 acres of land, primarily excellent habitat, and two, improving the land they manage for wildlife by planting native plants.



Volunteer Deb Zurawski,  
Wildlife Ambassador

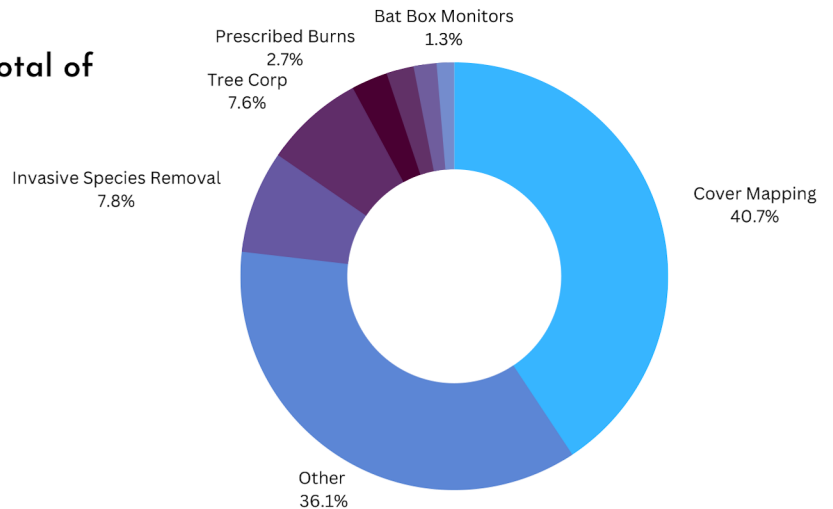


# Volunteer Position Overview

## Conservation

In 2022, 256 individual volunteers supported 111 opportunities for a total of 2,509.06 volunteer hours.

Bat Box Monitors: 30.25  
Bluebird Monitors: 43.50  
Cover Mapping: 1,020.84  
Invasive Species Removal: 194.57  
Native Planting: 51.89  
Prescribed Burns: 68.65  
Tree Corp: 189.48  
Other: 909.88



## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### *Bat Box Monitoring*

Bat populations have been declining in recent years due to threats including habitat loss and disease. To better understand and protect our local bat species, Five Rivers MetroParks initiated a bat box program to provide additional habitat in areas where natural roost sites are lacking. Each box must be monitored at the beginning and end of summer to count the number of bats born that season and track changes in population size over the years. In 2022, 10 volunteers helped conservation staff conduct these emergency surveys at 12 boxes, for a total of 22 surveys and 28 survey hours. We found big brown bats using boxes at Huffman and Taylorsville, and both populations nearly doubled by the end of the summer. This was our first season engaging volunteers for bat box monitoring and because of the tremendous support, we are planning to expand the number of boxes and locations in 2023!

*-Megan Rude, Staff Lead & Conservation Technician*





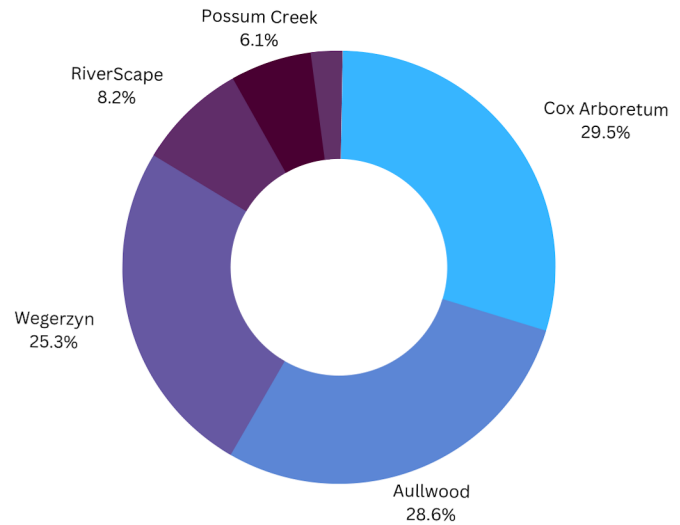


# Volunteer Position Overview

## Gardening

In 2022, 331 individual volunteers supported 46 volunteer opportunities with 1,699 shifts for a total of 4,381.45 volunteer hours.

- Aullwood Garden MetroPark: 1,253.1
- Cox Arboretum MetroPark: 1,290.46
- Possum Creek MetroPark: 265.37
- RiverScape MetroPark: 359.28
- Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark: 1109.35
- Other: 103.89-Additional hours were served in the Heirloom garden at Carriage Hill MetroPark and the Carriage Hill Riding Center.



## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### RiverScape MetroPark

What a successful and productive year we had in 2022. Some of the projects that you amazing volunteers assisted us with include:

- Spring, Summer, and Fall Cleanup - Some would say a lot of FALL Cleanup
- Tree pruning
- Mulching
- Removal of Roses and installation of Pollinator plants at RiverScape MetroPark
- Installation of native plants at RiverScape and Island MetroPark
- Installation of bulbs throughout the Urban Zone MetroParks - make sure to come back in spring to check out your great work and see the beautiful blooms.
- Installation of holiday lights and décor at RiverScape MetroPark and Second Street Market
- Caging and sand-painting trees for Beaver control at Island MetroPark
- Installation of bedding annuals and annual baskets throughout the Urban Zone MetroParks

-Allison Bush, Staff Lead & Horticulturalist



Pictured: Volunteers Martie Szelog and Neil Mackay with Staff Lead and Horticulturalist, Allison Bush at RiverScape MetroPark.



# Volunteer Position Overview

## Gardening

### Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

#### Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark

We had another great year of volunteers here at Wegerzyn. It was so nice to get back to normal after some of the shutdowns/slowdowns in 2020-2021. We had both new and returning volunteers from all walks of life visit and help us out in our park, and we couldn't have gotten as much accomplished without them.

Of course we have our regular Gardening Angel group of David, Jo, Linda, Bill, Connie, Patti, and Mary. This group has come for years and helps out nearly every week of our season, we appreciate their dedication. Another returning Group is Eva from the MVCTC with her students. They helped us with a couple of projects including planting bulbs and transferring plants to Aullwood Gardens. We had some other great student volunteers in 2022, including various dates and volunteers from CJ, the University of Dayton, as well as a group of 25 Valley View Highschoolers in the fall.

Some new groups included Good Will Easter Seals, and our first youth group with children under 10. We also had businesses new and returning who volunteered with us, Heapy Engineering, Kettering College, and Upsourced. We can't forget to mention the families and volunteers from the community for Adopt a Park and MADD this year - both were a great success. Thank to everyone who volunteered at Wegerzyn and any Five Rivers Metropark in 2022, We can't do it without you.

*-Franz Kirchner, Staff Lead & Horticulture Technician*



*Pictured: Staff Leads Franz Kirchner and Elisabeth Bacon with Gardening Angel Volunteers, Connie Sink, and Mary Dye.*



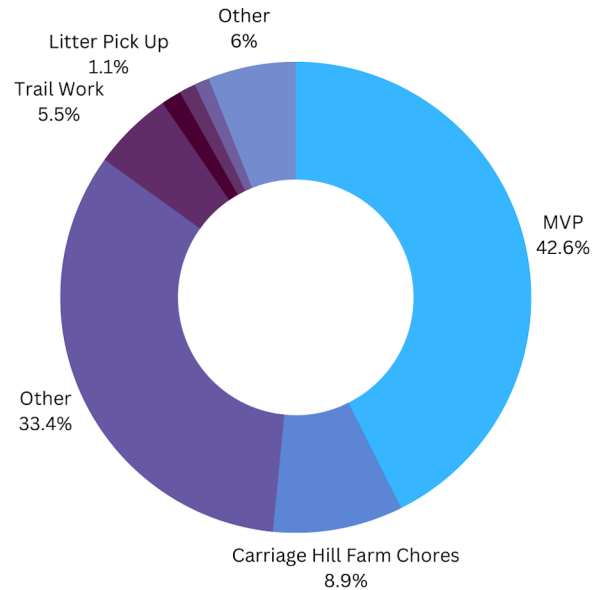


# Volunteer Position Overview

## Park Maintenance

In 2022, 89 individual volunteers supported 15 volunteer opportunities for a total of 2757.41 volunteer hours.

Carriage Hill Farm Chores: 262.3  
Fence Repair: 30  
Litter Pick Up: 33.2  
MVP: 1250.63  
Trail Work: 161.93  
Tree Planting: 39.83  
Other: 979.52



## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### MetroParks Volunteer Patrol

MetroParks Volunteer Patrol group, or MVPs, is a group of autonomous volunteers who support the parks by patrolling our agency's many hike, bike, and equestrian trails, as well as our ponds and conservation areas. These volunteers assist visitors with wayfinding, share valuable information about our parks, and report safety or maintenance issues to staff. Many of these volunteers collect litter, recycle fishing line, and perform light trail maintenance. In 2022, 30 individual MVPs served 1250.63 volunteer hours,



MVP Earl McDaniel



MVPs Kyle Texter and Kellye Moore-Texter



MVP Brad Miller





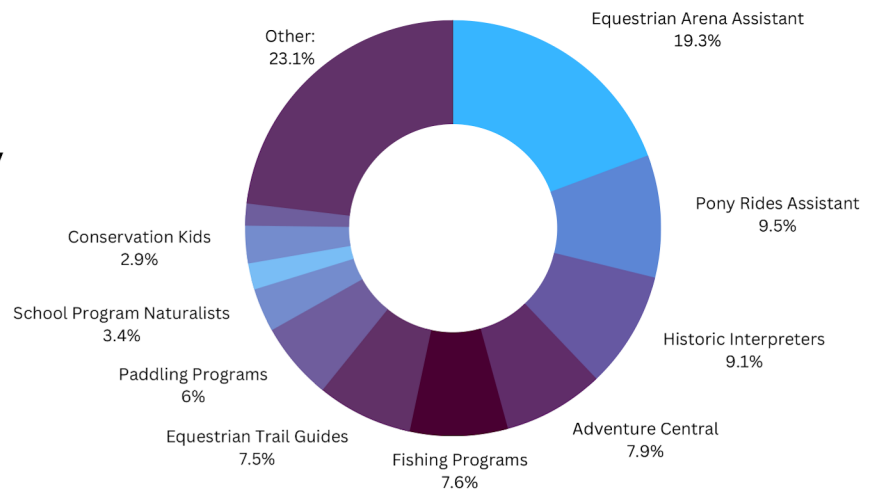
# Volunteer Position Overview

## Programming

In 2022, 845 individual volunteers supported 154 programming opportunities for a total of 4,150.05 volunteer hours.

Adventure Central: 154.55  
Conservation Kids: 57.36  
Equestrian Arena Assistant: 379.77  
Equestrian Trail Guides: 146.5  
Fishing Programs: 149.63  
Historic Interpreters: 178.18  
Paddling Programs: 118.72  
Pony Rides Assistant: 186.9  
Garden Tour Guides: 40.08  
School Program Naturalists: 66.75  
Wildlife Ambassadors: 33.59

Other: 2,638.02 volunteer hours including 2183.81 for the JET, Job Experience and Training Program.



## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### Pony Rides

Thanks to the help our volunteers provided here at the Carriage Hill Riding Center, we were able to dress up many of our horses for Halloween this year. We know how much the children and parents enjoy seeing our horses decked out for the Halloween Holiday and how much the kids enjoy a chance to ride them. Not to mention all the fun pictures! We couldn't do these special Halloween pony rides without volunteer help with the setup, decorating of the horses, the actual Pony rides, and cleaning up after the event!

- 69 Pony Ride tickets were sold on Saturday, October 29
- 7 volunteers supported this event

-Christina Northrup, Staff Lead & Equestrian Technician



Carriage Hill Riding Center Volunteers



# Volunteer Position Overview

## Programming

## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### *Adventure Central*

This year has brought some amazing support people to Adventure Central. Academic assistants alongside student and parent volunteers, have helped an average of 10-15 kids a week stay on track with school homework and project tasks. University of Dayton academic assistants, Ms. Asja and Ms. Brooklyn never fail to put in extra time alongside our talented student participants. Just weeks ago, one AC participant partnered with Ms. Brooklyn and Ms. Asja to create a brilliant history project. The trio took time to collect sticks, pebbles, leaves, grass, and other materials to create a one-of-a-kind model showcase (see attached document)! It is incredible to watch our kids shine alongside our dedicated support people, and to see the culture of the AC community grow through daily adventures!

Additionally, one of our awesome parents and volunteers, Ms. Barb, has been devoting extra time to assist with reading support at AC. She has assisted in homework, provided one-on-one reading time, and has even jumped right in with our youngest group of 2nd and 3rd Graders to implement a new reading-and-phonics-driven game - Site Word BINGO (see attached picture)!

Ms. T, Mr. Cam, and others have also joined us to help support homework time, group activities, and to assist with cleaning and food prep in the kitchen. We would also be remiss in not also mentioning the incredible volunteer turnout we had during our first AC Harvest Fest in over 3 years! Many came early and stayed late to set up activities and lanterns, to conduct activities for families, and to tear down after the event closed. We are so lucky to have had such amazing volunteer support this year. The work of our dedicated volunteers is critical to our mission, and we cannot wait to see what the new year has in store! Thanks to all of our volunteers and student workers for once again embodying true engagement, community, and the spirit of Adventure Central's mission! Here's to an even better 2023!

*-Tyler Kessler, Staff Lead & Educator*

*Volunteer Ms. Barb Jasper working with students at Adventure Central.*





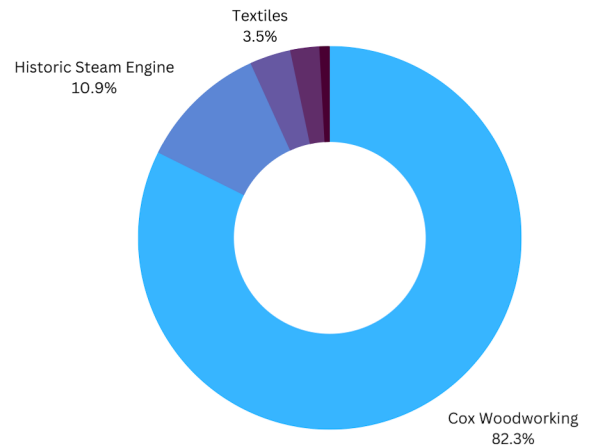


# Volunteer Position Overview

## Skilled Trades

In 2022, 28 individual volunteers supported 13 skilled trades volunteer opportunities for a total of 857.4 volunteer hours. This is a growing area of volunteer engagement for Five Rivers MetroParks.

Cox Woodworking: 705.98  
Historic Blacksmith: 7.5  
Historic Woodworker: 21  
Historic Steam Engine: 93.25  
Textiles: 29.67



## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

### Cox Woodworkers

Thank you to the Cox Arboretum Woodworkers for their service in 2022! Their support is very much appreciated, and they provide amazing support and skills to Cox Arboretum staff. This year they completed the following projects:

- Donor Bench Staining and Refinish- Strip, stain, and refinish benches.
- Trail Kiosks and Shrines for Possum Creek MetroPark- The woodworkers created 12 Trail Shrines for Possum Creek freeing up park staff to complete other tasks.
- Runner Board for the Cox Arboretum Fifth Third room storage-Created a runner board for the closet area. This helped protect the wall from chair carts that are stored in this area.
- Fifth Third Room Cart Dolly Repair- The woodworkers redesigned the chair dolly system that wasn't functional.
- Fifth Third Room Backsplash- Created and designed a backsplash for the Fifth Third room kitchen. This project involved specialized materials and cuts to achieve the appropriate look. Gary oversaw the majority of this project.
- Nature Play - The woodworkers have been involved with conversations on the construction of wooden features and will begin constructing those once Phase One construction is completed at Cox Arboretum MetroPark.
- Construction of the Cox Creatures-Created 12 Woodland Creatures for Holiday Display in Conjunction with Staff Leads Uriah Langmeyer and Avery DeCamp.

-Brandon Thompson, Staff Lead & Site Leader



Pictured: Cox Critters with Staff Leads Uriah Langmeyer and Avery DeCamp

Volunteer Woodworkers at Cox Arboretum MetroPark





# Volunteer Position Overview

## Special Events

In 2022, 138 individual volunteers supported 54 special event volunteer opportunities for a total of 872.93 volunteer hours. Note: This does not include total volunteer hours for each event, but volunteer opportunities designated as direct event support roles.

## Volunteer Opportunity Highlights

This year many of our agency's events returned with high needs for volunteer support. Our dedicated volunteers did not let us down, returning to volunteer at The Adventure Summit, Bike to Work Day, Passport to MetroParks, The TVT Challenge, Mud Day, Small Farm & Food Fest, The Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience, Fall Family Adventure, and more! Learn more about volunteer engagement at these fantastic events in the next pages.





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## Events & Public Volunteer Days

Events & Public Volunteer Days (Initiatives)	Volunteers	Hours	Value of Service
The Adventure Summit	57	200.02	\$5,414.54
Adopt-A-Park Projects	289	860.5	\$23,293.73
Adopt-A-Park Service Kits	105	72.07	\$1,951.00
Service Saturdays	54	114.34	\$3,095.18
Bike To Work Day	33	97.06	\$2,627.41
Passport to MetroParks	19	43.9	\$1,188.37
TVT Trail Challenge	15	38.85	\$1,051.67
Mud Day Celebration	9	28.25	\$764.73
Small Farm & Food Fest	25	117.06	\$3,168.81
The Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience	292	793.48	\$21,479.50
Fall Family Adventure	40	80.09	\$2,168.03
Make A Difference Day	190	555.75	\$15,044.15
Aullwood Winter Luminary Walk	37	107.13	\$2,900.00
A Holiday Evening at Carriage Hill	13	44.92	\$1,216.00
Christmas on the Farm	17	83.86	\$2,279.09
<b>Totals</b>	<b>903</b>	<b>3,237.28</b>	<b>\$87,642.21</b>





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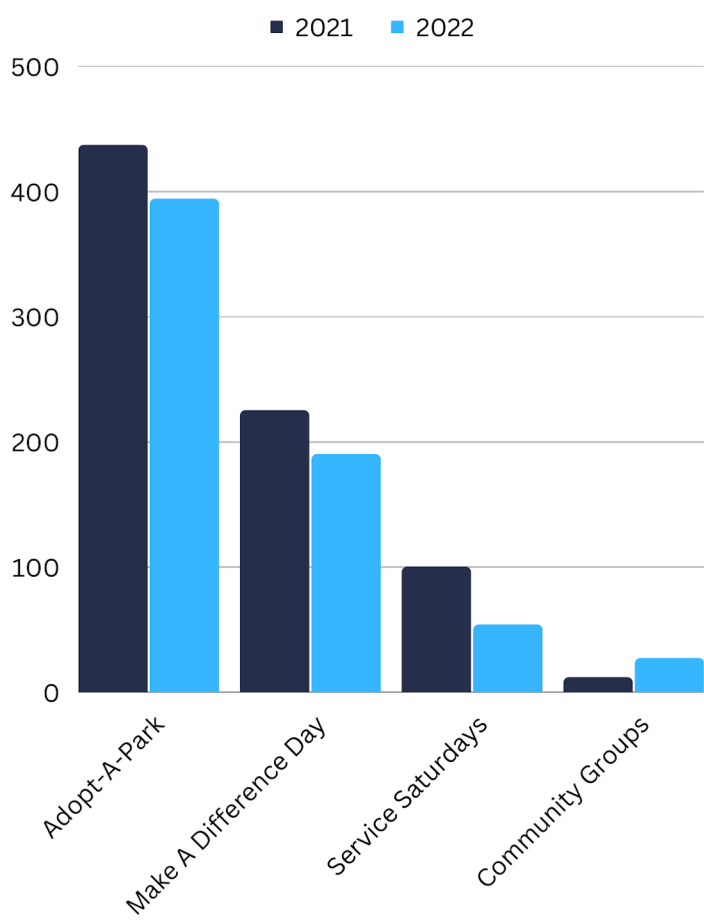
## Public Volunteer Day Opportunities

Staff Leads submit requests for volunteer support for specific projects and tasks for our service events Adopt-A-Park and Make A Difference Day, as well as other Public Volunteer Days including Service Saturdays.

In 2022, staff requested volunteer support for fewer projects for both Adopt-A-Park and Service Saturdays than in 2021.

Community groups can request a private group volunteer opportunity through our Group Volunteer Request Form on Get Connected. Over 70 requests were received for projects in 2022.

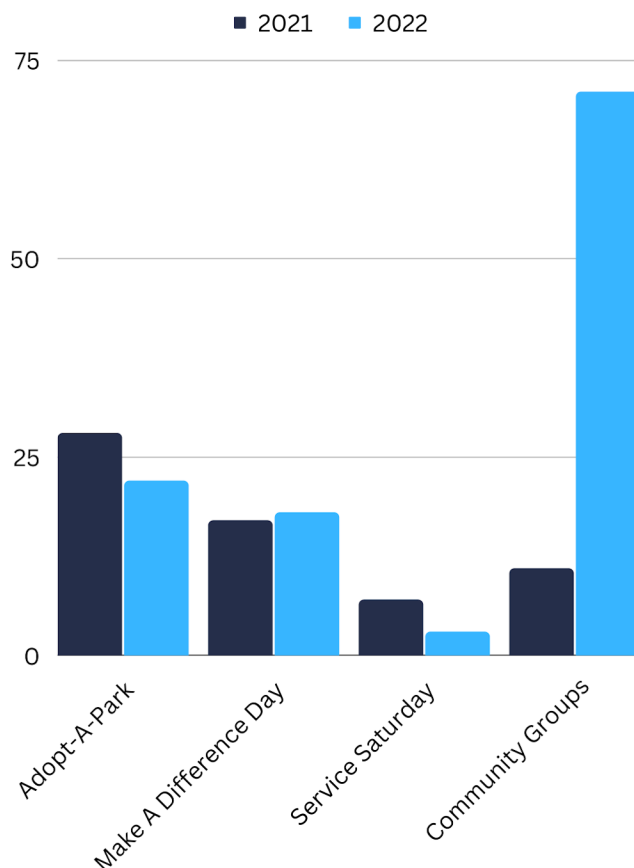
## Public Volunteer Engagement



With fewer projects available, volunteer support for Adopt-A-Park and Service Saturdays decreased in 2022, while engagement from a variety of community groups more than doubled.

30 out of 71 requested group volunteer engagements were scheduled and completed in 2022. Many were not scheduled and completed due to a variety of reasons including ill fit between the group's needs and our mission, lack of available volunteer projects from staff, and lack of follow-through from some groups.

This is clearly a growing area of volunteer support for our agency and one that could make a big impact in 2023.



# Adopt-A-Park Projects

This spring Five Rivers MetroParks invited the community to join us in our parks for our annual Adopt-A-Park service event. Adopt-A-Park participants supported our staff by assisting with a variety of tasks from garden bed maintenance and tree plantings to invasive species removal, litter pick-up, and more.

This year's event offered two safe ways for volunteers to support our parks: in-person projects and a service kit option inviting the public to join the Restore Our Earth Clean Up Challenge. In-person projects were held on Saturday, April 23rd from 9 am-Noon.

Staff hosted 21 Adopt-A-Park in-person projects throughout our park district: Island, Carriage Hill, RiverScape, Medlar Conservation Area, Wesleyan, Sugarcreek, Wegerzyn Gardens, Possum Creek, MoMBA at Huffman, Cox Arboretum, Germantown, Englewood, and Aullwood MetroParks locations. 289 volunteers served in a variety of gardening and park maintenance tasks for a total of 860.5 hours.

## TOTAL VOLUNTEER IMPACT:

- 1845 lbs of landfill litter and debris was collected
- 1820 lbs of recyclable material was collected
- 2.1 miles of rivers and lakes were cleaned
- 3.17 miles of hiking, biking, and equestrian trails cleared
- 7.6 acres of invasive plants were removed
- 8 play/recreational areas were cleaned and maintained
- 165 trees and/or shrubs were planted
- 750 flowers and/or bulbs were planted



**289 volunteers contributed 860.5 volunteer service hours at Adopt-A-Park Projects for a benefit to the agency of \$ 23,293.73\*.**

*\*Benefit calculated based on 2021 Value of Volunteer Time.*

## STAFF QUOTES:

*"All of the volunteers loved the project! It was a great project for all ages and is not super labor intensive but still provides a huge help in the ongoing maintenance of the area. Volunteers loved learning about the black-crowned night herons that utilize the area and loved how we pointed out other indications of wildlife like chewed stumps from beavers, goose and duck tracks, and turtles sunning on logs in the river."*  
**Adam Dietsch, Park Manager**





# Adopt-A-Park Service Kits

The service kit option gave participants the flexibility to pick up litter in our parks, on our trails, and in their favorite local greenspaces throughout April. The public could register for the service kit online and pick it up at scheduled drive-thru distributions on April 7th and 23rd at Cox Arboretum and Wegerzyn Gardens MetroParks. Additional service kits were distributed at outreach opportunities at the Veterans Administration in April and at Passport to MetroParks, a MetroParks event at RiverScape MetroParks in May.

The service kit contained everything needed to safely pick up litter in our parks or out in the community including gloves, trash and recycle bags, 1 litter pick-up tool, a seed tag with sponsor information, and step-by-step instructions including a list of locations in need of litter clean-up. Participants were then sent a survey to report where they picked up litter and how much was collected. New this year, instead of providing informational pamphlets in the service kits, we provided links on our website and in the service kit instructions to educational information in order to reduce waste further.

105 volunteers reported over 72 hours of litter pick up with our Adopt-A-Park Service Kits at Cox Arboretum, Eastwood, Hills and Dales, Huffman, Possum Creek, and Wesleyan MetroParks, as well as Rivers Edge Park, along the Great Miami River Recreational Trail, Iron Horse Recreational Trail and along Shiloh Drive.

Of the 105 reported volunteers:

- 40 under the age of 18
- 11 ages 18-35
- 14 ages 36-45
- 23 ages 46-55
- 17 over age 55



## TOTAL VOLUNTEER IMPACT-SERVICE KITS:

2170 pounds of litter was collected by 105 volunteers contributing 72.07 volunteer service hours with their Adopt-A-Park Service Kits for a benefit to the agency of \$1,951.00.\*

*\*Benefit calculated based on 2021 Value of Volunteer Time.*

## VOLUNTEER COMMENTS:

- *"This was really easy to organize for my group of cub scouts and they enjoyed it. We hope to do this sort of activity again next season."*
- *"It was well-organized, easy to participate, and a great opportunity to get out with the kids and make the world a better place."*

*This year's event was generously supported by the following:*

*Presenting Sponsor: CenterPoint Energy Foundation*

*Additional Support Provided by: CareSource Foundation, Montgomery County Environmental Services, Keep Montgomery County Beautiful, Lexis Nexis, and QEI Engineers Inc.*

# Make a Difference Day

National Make a Difference Day is an annual community service event encouraging community members to get outside and give back in the Fall. On Saturday, Oct. 22 from 9 AM to noon, community members of all ages served at various sites throughout Five Rivers MetroParks to help us clean up our parks, support habitat restoration efforts, and prepare for the winter season. Volunteers supported projects at the following parks: Aullwood Garden, Carriage Hill, Cox Arboretum, Englewood, Germantown, Huffman, Island, Possum Creek, RiverScape, Sugarcreek, Taylorsville, and Wegerzyn MetroParks, along with Medlar Conservation Area.

Through the combined efforts of 190 community volunteers across 17 projects, we were able to remove 1255 pounds of landfill litter and 1.75 acres of invasive plants, clean and maintain 1.65 miles of rivers and lakes, and plant 414 trees and shrubs, and 11,000 flowers and bulbs.

## TOTAL VOLUNTEER IMPACT:

- 190 volunteers
- 555.75 hours served
- 1255 pounds of landfill litter & debris collected
- 325 pounds of recycling litter & debris collected
- 1.65 miles of rivers and lakes cleaned
- 1.75 acres of invasive plants removed
- 414 trees or shrubs planted
- 11,000 flowers & bulbs planted



**190 volunteers contributed 555.75 volunteer service hours at Make a Difference Day for a benefit to the agency of \$ 15,044.15\*.**

*\*Benefit calculated based on 2021 Value of Volunteer Time.*

*This year's event was generously supported by the following:*

*Presenting Sponsor: CenterPoint Energy Foundation*

*Additional Support Provided by: CareSource Foundation, Montgomery County Environmental Services, Keep Montgomery County Beautiful, Lexis Nexis, and QEI Engineers Inc.*



*Pictured: Volunteers from the Chaminade Julianne Boys Basketball team joined long-term volunteers and staff to clear brush at Englewood MetroPark.*





Pictured: Volunteers planting trees in an area that was freshly cleared of invasive species at Cox Arboretum MetroPark.

#### Make A Difference Day Staff Quotes:

"We planted 23 trees, and they are well protected to start their growth. This area was also left in great condition removing all the excess materials. These trees will lead to habitat for many different species along with providing fruits and flowers as food sources. Visitors will also enjoy the colorful leaves and flowers from the Red Bud, Sassafras, Tupelo, and Serviceberry trees." -Joseph Joyce, Trail Specialist

"The project is crucial because it helps eliminate leaves and other debris that can create fungal or disease issues for the tree. By removing the debris, we are removing the possibility of future issues. The new mulch layer around the tree helps prevent weeds, maintains moisture, and provides needed nutrients for the tree." -Allison Bush, Horticulturalist

"This is the first step in creating an entirely new edge thicket habitat of native plants at Wegerzyn. We plan to add perennial wildflowers in the future and enlarge the prairie to meet up with this planting bed. we also designed it to have aesthetic value to provide an example for the public for decades to come on how native plants can be used in their yards for both beauty and wildlife value." -Franz Kirchner, Horticulture Technician

"The most positive outcome of this project is that a very large and unsightly pile of discarded tree tubes was removed from one of our tree planting areas. Six of the volunteers learned how to identify trees such as sassafras, tulip tree, and chinquapin oak. The volunteers learned some new information that excited them and made them want to come back. In addition, more tubes were removed from the trees, freeing them. Now that the piles are gone, we can focus on removing tubes from the trees next year."

-Kevin Reichling, Conservation Technician

Pictured: Volunteers planting native plants at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark.



# Service Saturdays

Service Saturdays are an easy and convenient way to support our mission and make a difference in our parks on the weekends! These public volunteer days do not require volunteer onboarding making it easy for the public to sign up and support our staff out in the parks. These opportunities are offered every third Saturday from May through September and include a variety of projects across our parks open to individual volunteers and teams.

In 2022, we offered 3 unique Service Saturday volunteer opportunities available at MoMBA at Huffman MetroPark, Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark, and Possum Creek MetroPark supporting identified trail maintenance and gardening needs.

## TOTAL VOLUNTEER IMPACT:

54 volunteers contributed 114.34 volunteer service hours at Service Saturdays for a benefit to the agency of \$ 3,095.18\*.

*\*Benefit calculated based on 2021 Value of Volunteer Time.*

Service Saturdays will return May-September 2023, look for them soon on Get Connected!



*Service Saturday volunteers at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark.*



# Teams & Community Groups

Families, service clubs, schools, non-profit or governmental agencies, or corporate or religious organizations are all examples of volunteer groups that help Five Rivers MetroParks achieve its mission. Working side-by-side with staff, these volunteers make Montgomery County a better place to live, work and play.

## TOTAL VOLUNTEER IMPACT:

In 2022, 103 Teams of 412 volunteers contributed 1,828.12 volunteer service hours for benefit to the agency of \$49,487.21\*.

Thank you to the following 30 community groups who scheduled private volunteer opportunities with us in 2022:

AFSAC  
AES Ohio  
Aullwood Friends  
Avery Dennison  
Barrett Paving Materials  
BSA OA Fort Ancient Chapter  
Chaminade Julianne High School  
The Datwyler Group  
Dayton Regional STEM School  
Generation Dayton  
Girl Scout Troop 34236 and Brownie Troop 3110  
GoodWill Easter Seals Job Comm  
Heapy  
Juvenile Court Ten and Under Program  
Kettering College  
Miamisburg High School Vocational Block Program  
MVCTC Retail Ag Services Students  
Pohlman, Talmage, Brown & Campbell CPAs, Inc.  
State Farm  
Synchrony  
Teradata  
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Tipp City Young Men's Group  
The Lutheran Church of Our Savior  
University of Dayton  
University of Dayton Camp Blue  
Upsourced  
Valley View High School  
WDTN/WBDT  
WOW Program at I am Boundless Community Pathways  
YMCA of Greater Dayton Teen Camp



*Pictured above: Volunteers with WDTN/WBDT joined staff to support a variety of gardening tasks at Cox Arboretum MetroPark.*



*Pictured Left: Volunteers with AES Ohio joined staff n planting native seedlings at Wesleyan MetroPark.*



# GET CONNECTED

The place where volunteers make a difference.



## Training

### *Introducing Online Volunteer Training!*

Get Connected has provided us with the opportunity to rethink volunteer training. We now have the capability to build and manage online volunteer training in an online Volunteer Training Library. This library makes volunteer training accessible to volunteers 24 hours a day 7 days a week for easy and convenient knowledge and skill development. All trainings are organized under our 9 current volunteer positions and have been developed with the appropriate staff leads to ensure accuracy of content. Trainings are attached to qualifications in the Get Connected site to ensure the appropriate training needed has been completed successfully before volunteers can sign up for relevant volunteer opportunities.

Available trainings include volunteer orientation and onboarding, Historic Interpreter Training, Garden Guide Training, a variety of Skilled Trades: Woodworking, Blacksmiths, Textiles; Animal Care Training for Barn Aide opportunities at the Carriage Hill Riding Center and Wildlife Ambassador Animal Care at the Twin Valley Welcome Center; CoverMapping, MetroParks Volunteer Patrol, as well as for vehicle and park maintenance equipment.

Volunteer Services developed a complete Get Connected site training for volunteers and one for staff leads, as well as quick video demos for ongoing tips and tricks to help both volunteers and staff grow both their comfort and site skills. Volunteer Services continues to offer in-person Help Sessions to volunteers and staff designed to offer a one-on-one introduction to the site and help staff and volunteers use it successfully to meet their individual needs.

Online training does not replace in-person training and necessary safety check-offs. Many of our available volunteer opportunities require online training before attending an in-person check-off or ongoing shadow experiences with a checkoff that includes a safe demonstration of necessary skills. Get Connected offers a convenient Training and Events feature that allows for easy scheduling of in-person training and events. In 2022, we scheduled 108 separate in-person trainings and events including Help Sessions, Vehicle and Equipment Training, Garden Guide Training, School Tour Guide Training, Equestrian and Barn Aide Trainings, Naturalist Training, Bat Box Monitoring, Covermapping, Prescribed Burn Training and more!







# GET CONNECTED

The place where volunteers make a difference.



## Appreciation *Volunteer Incentive Program*

In 2022, volunteers were offered our brand new volunteer t-shirt as a thank you for 25 hours or more of volunteer service, and a choice of either a warm knit hat or baseball style hat as a thank you for 50 or more hours of volunteer service as part of our VIP, Volunteer Incentive Program, plan. Additionally, volunteers who reached service milestones, received an annual service pin to display on their volunteer shirt, or name badge.



During the month of August, volunteers were treated to an ice cream cone at the Fountain Snack Bar at RiverScape MetroPark. Then, in December volunteers with 25 hours or more were invited to Artisan Night at the 2nd Street Market where they received their VIP items and \$20 in special Market Money to enjoy at the 2nd Street Market.



Volunteers also had the opportunity to participate in a volunteer raffle by providing feedback on our new Get Connected site for a chance to win great MetroParks prizes including RiverScape family ice rink and hot cocoa passes, Market Bucks good at the 2nd Street Market, and Five Rivers MetroParks bandanas.



Volunteers were also publicly recognized for service in our Get Connected Volunteer Blog with special Volunteer Spotlights and on the site's Volunteer Impact Page. Volunteer Spotlights were also shared on Five Rivers MetroParks social media pages. Volunteers were also featured in our agency's quarterly Parkways Magazine.





# Appreciation

## *Top 10 Volunteers by Volunteer Hours*

Isaac Fry  
Earl McDaniel  
Sarah Locker  
Charles Wiltrout  
Jim Lewis  
Ed Gellar  
Ed Stevenson  
Winnie Granson  
Eileen Roberts  
Ellen Evans

## *Top 50 Volunteers by Opportunity Responses*

1. Isaac Fry
2. Stephen McNew
3. Sarah Locker
4. Eileen Roberts
5. Edward Geller
6. Rex Miller
7. Williamj Masterson
8. Susan Witherspoon
9. Neil Mackay
10. Ellenmarie Wahlrab
11. Hannah Gerhart
12. Ellen Evans
13. Carol Williamson
14. Winnie Granson
15. Joe Oswald
16. David A. Saelens
17. Dianne Frimel
18. Michael Shade
19. Joyce M Berchtold
20. William Macek

23. Steve Schwenker
24. Therese Santo
25. Brenden Dines
26. Susan Sandro
27. Don Erwine
28. Dori Dick
29. Elaine Lindstrom
30. Mary Dye
31. Alyssa Watkins
32. Ken Evanchuck
33. Edward Stevenson
34. Gary Drake
35. Patricia Erbaugh
36. Dan Darragh
37. Peter Camm
38. Jan Mazza
39. John Baldwin
40. Donald A Porter

41. Constance Sink
42. Linda Gough
43. Martie Szelog
44. Debby Riley
45. Stephen Freeze
46. KristyZechiel
47. Patrick Kennedy
48. Ginny Wood
49. Carl Henderson
50. Tamilee Holbrook

thank  
you

# Appreciation

## Volunteer Spotlights

### Sarah Locker-Riding Center Staple

In 2014, Sarah started as a Barn Aide volunteer and has completed additional training to serve as a Pony Rides Assistant, an Equestrian Arena Assistant, and an Equestrian Trail Guide. *"I enjoy the physical aspect of volunteering," says Sarah. "You'll definitely get your daily steps in if you help with Pony Rides."*

Sarah's job as a school therapist allows her to have summers off, and most days, she can be found helping as an Arena Assistant volunteer. Arena Assistants support staff during riding lessons and summer camps. *"I love sharing my interest in horses with others, and I learn something new in every class", says Sarah.* Her favorite thing about volunteering is socializing with the staff and other volunteers. *"Everyone is so friendly and welcoming."* While Sarah enjoys working with all the horses, she has a special place in her heart for Duncan and Biscuit.

Sarah Locker has become a staple at the Carriage Hill Riding Center. *"Sarah is an amazing volunteer who always goes above and beyond. She is someone that we know we can rely on, and we are always excited to have her come out and help,"* says Christine Northrup, Equestrian Technician at Carriage Hill.



### Treva Pickenpaugh - Love of History and Community

Nearly 40 years ago, Treva Pickenpaugh first began volunteering at Carriage Hill MetroPark as part of the American Business Women's Association. The group would volunteer one weekend a month at the park assisting as Gate Greeters and at the Visitor Center desk. Over the years, Treva formed a connection to Carriage Hill through her passion for local history, her joy of interacting with community members, and her commitment to serving the public. After retiring from the Dayton Metro Library as Manager of the Huber Heights branch in 2009, Treva expanded her volunteering by serving as a board member for the Friends of Carriage Hill, selling penny candy and farm goods in the Country Store (closed in 2019), and assisting with events such as Christmas on the Farm. Today, Treva serves as a Carriage Hill Visitor Center Ambassador, where you can find her most Saturday afternoons.



Quote by Pearlie Brewer, Visitor Services Representative:

*"Treva has been a faithful volunteer at Carriage Hill for many, many years. I have personally worked with her and observed her faithfulness over the past nine years, and she was here long before then. She assists in whatever capacity that she is needed....when Treva is volunteering, she does more than just greet the visitors. She keeps the children's classroom in good order and watches out for children that may need to be reminded of how to behave in the Visitor Center. She is a class act."*

# Appreciation

## Volunteer Spotlights

### Suchitra Nune-koppula-One of our Newest Volunteers

We'd like to welcome one of our newest Five Rivers MetroParks volunteers, Suchitra Nune-koppula, "Suchi"! We met Suchi when she attended a Get Connected Help session, where she worked one on one with a volunteer coordinator to create an account and complete her qualifications and background check. She was then given an overview of how to navigate the site, find volunteer opportunities that meet her interest and availability and sign up for shifts.

Suchi became interested in becoming a Five Rivers MetroParks volunteer because she has a deep love of nature and enjoys visiting Cox Arboretum. She and her family moved here from India, where she earned a Ph.D. in Environment Science. She researched growing techniques and is looking forward to learning the methods the horticulture staff use at Cox. When asked if there was anything she'd like to share about herself, Suchi said, *"I am so happy and thankful to finally have this opportunity and look forward to future involvement in related horticulture work and tree corps."*



### Ken Evanchuck-Lifelong Outdoorsman and Lover of Nature

A lifelong outdoorsman and lover of nature, Ken Evanchuck first joined the MetroParks volunteer team as part of our controlled bowhunting program. Once he learned that bowhunters who give 25 volunteer hours annually are guaranteed a spot in the program and can then bypass the lottery drawing, Ken began looking for additional volunteer opportunities.

With his friendly demeanor and gift of gab, Ken was a natural fit for an Ambassador role. He accompanied Volunteer Services staff to several volunteer fairs and community events around the Miami Valley, assisting with the MetroParks booth, answering questions and handing out literature. Ken then settled into a weekly Visitor Center Ambassador role at Cox Arboretum, where he is able to point out all his favorite park features to visitors (Don't miss the tulip display in the Edible Landscape Garden! Be sure to check out the tree tower!)

Since starting with the MetroParks in 2019, Ken has expanded his volunteer experiences based on his personal interests. He completed equipment training to operate the zero turn riding lawn mower and learned to drive the 8-passenger tram, which allows us to provide driving tours of the Arboretum to those who have physical challenges. He's assisted at fishing programs helping youth reel in their first catch, as well as participated in controlled prairie burns to rejuvenate our native prairies.

You may run into Ken volunteering as a Visitor Center Ambassador at Cox Arboretum this summer. Our resident "hot n' spicy" expert, be sure to ask him about his hot pepper garden and his special Death Dust seasoning!





# Appreciation

## Volunteer Spotlights

### Phil Bush-Fisherman and Teacher

For nearly 10 years, Phil Bush has been volunteering in a variety of capacities, from conservation projects to outdoor recreation programs. Bush loves fishing and teaching others with help from MetroParks outdoor recreation specialists.

*"Sometimes just touching a warm fish can be really scary," said outdoor recreation specialist Kelly Kingery. "Phil has a very calming effect and usually can get them [program participants] to at least try it and find it's not so bad!"*

Keeping his volunteer work on the water, Bush also volunteers to support MetroParks conservation projects, most recently the tree sinking at Eastwood Lake.

*"Phil is a very dedicated conservation caretaker and participates in many other volunteer events that support the agency's conservation efforts," said regional conservation manager Grace Dietsch. "is a very generous individual and always brightens our day with his big smile and positive attitude."*



### Diane Frimel-Data Collector & Covermapper

For years Dianne Frimel has been assisting MetroParks with land cover mapping, an essential tool that provides information to our parks and conservation and planning staff. Frimel has so much experience with cover mapping, she welcomes new volunteers with an interest in it to learn from her.

*"Dianne freely and enthusiastically shares her knowledge from years of experience with newer volunteers," said MetroParks conservation technician Ben Crusoe. "Her detailed attention to data collection and reporting is very appreciated. She is proficient and assertive while offering directives in keeping the cover mapping team focused on data reporting while in the field."*



### Ed Gellar-MetroParks Helping Hand

Ed Gellar's volunteer journey began in 2017, when he was looking for ways to give back and stay active. Gellar is willing to help out wherever he is needed, from conservation projects to removing litter around lakes and ponds as part of MetroParks Pond Patrol.

*"Ed is a dependable volunteer and a kind soul," said MetroParks education coordinator Kate Lowry. "He cares so much for Five Rivers MetroParks and volunteers his time to help us provide a beautiful space for the public to enjoy. We are so lucky to have him on our volunteer team."*



# Appreciation

## Volunteer Spotlights

### David Saelens-Wegerzyn's Gardening Angel

A little dirt never hurt, especially when it comes to David Saelens. Volunteering since 2016, Saelens is a superlative gardener and regularly helps with a variety of conservation projects at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark. The work he does allows MetroParks staff to accomplish so much more each day.

*"David is our most regular volunteer," said lead horticulture technician Franz Kirchner. "Prior to the pandemic, he rarely missed a Tuesday Gardening Angels spot and came back during a short time in 2020 when things began to reopen. In 2021, David volunteered multiple days during the week all season and has helped nearly every area of the garden. We can count on David to be here - often early - and help us in the gardens while discussing whatever book he is reading at the time."*



### Steve McNew-Love of History, Family and Service

Volunteering since 2019, Steve McNew is a newer volunteer, but brings a wealth of expertise to the historical farm at Carriage Hill MetroPark. McNew works to keep the farm in tip-top shape and does demonstrations for visitors to watch. He volunteers at the historical farm because it reminds him a lot of the farm his grandfather used to own.

*"Steve is as willing to learn as he is to teach, and is always (and in all ways) willing to lend a hand," said education specialist Deb Spencer.*



### Charlie Wilttrout-Keeper of Carriage Hill

Charlie has been volunteering at Carriage Hill MetroPark for 37 years! He supports a variety of long-term volunteer opportunities including Farm Chores, Draft Horses, and the Blacksmith Shop. Charlie also supports many of our programs and special events at Carriage Hill MetroPark throughout the year.

Charlie is known and valued for this dedication to the park, the public, the staff and volunteers he supports, and the many animals he cares for and works with.



### Carol Williamson-MetroParks Ambassador

If you've been to the 2nd Street Market or a special event, such as The Adventure Summit, you may have talked to long-time volunteer Carol Williamson. Carol has been volunteering with MetroParks since 2008 and regularly greets guests at the 2nd Street Market and provides administrative support to our outdoor recreation staff.

*"Carol has always been a great support over the years," said outdoor recreation program manager Brent Anslinger. "Her support has helped our team focus on other tasks and she always shares a smile and a kind word."*





# Appreciation

## Staff Leads

Volunteer engagement would be impossible without the support of our agency's many dedicated Staff Leads. A Staff Lead's role is to support, supervise, and lead volunteers in high-quality, meaningful volunteer engagement that drives our agency mission forward. Staff Leads complete a staff-lead training series, and work closely with a Volunteer Coordinator to plan volunteer opportunities and training. Thank you to all the staff who served as Staff Leads in 2022:

Nate Arnett	Sheila Edwards	Tom Leatherman	Deborah Spencer
Susan Arnold	Nicole Freshour	Lauren Lemons	Matt Stevens
Shelby Ashcraft	David Gibbs	Kaitlyn Lowry	Lynda Suda
Elisabeth Bacon	Jonathan Gray	Joann Lusk	Andrew Tarter
Kimberly Ballweg	Tarronda Harris	Jami McGarry	Brandon Thompson
Shawna Balog	Jordan Hart	Angela Moore	Phil Timko
Rachel Baney	Layla Hatfield	Rick Musselman	Mary Towell
Tyler Beaty	Mary Beth Hobson	Sue Nevins	Houston Ward
Katherine Berg	Betty Hoevel	John Niswonger	Ramon Watson
Freya Berntson	Doug Horvath	Christina Northrup	Hannah Wiest
Alex Boeckman	Alex Huber	Joann Pennington	Taylor Williams
Sarah Browning	Joseph Joyce	Connor Perry	Brandon Wilson
Clark Brunson	Derrick Keating	Michael Pitts	Kelly Wood
Allison Bush	Amy Kennedy	Tim Pritchard	Lois Woods
Meredith Cobb	Tyler Kessler	Chelsea Raterman	Angela York
Angela Collie	Kelly Kingery	Kevin Reichling	Joshua York
Justin Conley	Franz Kirchner	Rick Renner	Lisa Zoromski
Michael Cooper	Jessica Knowles-Thomas	Erin Rowekamp	
Brenda Cox	Taylor Koopman	Megan Rude	
Ben Crusoe	Daniel Kuebler	Randy Ryberg	
Samantha Dalton	Elizabeth Langford	Shane Sheldon	
Avery DeCamp	Austin Lathrop	Crystal Sheppard	
Grace Dietsch	Julia Lawrence	Derik Sloan	
Adam Dietsch	Sally Leatherman	Christopher Snyder	
James Earick		Daniel Spaugy	

***Thank you for supporting volunteers!***







# GET CONNECTED

The place where volunteers make a difference.



## Looking Ahead

*"After getting over the learning curve, Get Connected seems to me to be a comprehensive site. I spent my entire professional career in IT, so I appreciate that the site is well-constructed. By "well-constructed" I mean that I can meander around the site between "volunteer positions", "opportunities", "training and events", and still return to whatever page I wish without the software saying "Oops! We can't find that page" and forcing me to sign in all over again. Kudos to Five Rivers Metroparks for rolling out a quality software package for volunteers!"*

64. Rate your overall experience as a Get Connected user.

[More Details](#)

Very good	58
Good	75
Fair	37
Poor	14
Very poor	1



In December 2022, Volunteer Services asked staff leads and volunteers to share their feedback on the Get Connected site to help us make further improvements for 2023. 186 volunteers responded to an anonymous survey. 91% of those volunteers shared their support of the site and rated their site experience as "Very Good", "Good", or "Fair". Of staff leads, 23 responded to the anonymous survey, and of that number, 65% rated their site experience as "Very Good", "Good", or "Fair". Volunteer Services will be using this feedback to make improvements to the site throughout 2023.

Volunteer Services is also working hard to expand the VIP (Volunteer Incentive Program) benefits for volunteers in 2023 including discounts for volunteers, and adding a brand new long-sleeved volunteer t-shirt to our growing volunteer apparel line. Volunteers who serve 25 hours or more in 2023 can choose to receive our short-sleeved volunteer t-shirt. Volunteers serving 50 hours or more in 2023 can choose to receive a warm knit hat or baseball-style cap, and new for 2023, volunteers serving 75 hours or more can choose to receive our brand new long-sleeved volunteer t-shirt. Volunteer apparel incentives will be distributed on a quarterly basis. Volunteers will be able to request their volunteer apparel incentives on Get Connected.

### Volunteer Apparel

Volunteers can choose from these apparel items for volunteer service in 2023.

#### 25 hours:

Volunteer T-shirt (Short-Sleeved)

#### 50 hours:

Knit Hat or Baseball Style Cap

#### 75 hours:

Volunteer T-shirt (Long-Sleeved)

## Happy New Year!

Thank you for volunteering with us in 2022; you made a difference! We hope you'll join us again in 2023 as we continue to protect the region's natural heritage and provide outdoor experiences that inspire a personal connection with nature.

Sincerely,  
-Your Volunteer Services Team

*Jack E. Leonard*  
*Gyonna Dimphe*  
*Janet Thomas*  
*Candy Holmway*  
*Rebecca Jimenez*



**[www.metroparks.org/volunteer](http://www.metroparks.org/volunteer)**  
**[volunteer.services@metroparks.org](mailto:volunteer.services@metroparks.org)**  
**#937-275-7275**