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Richfield HERITAGE PRESERVE

MARCH/APRIL eNEWSLETTER

Photograph taken by
Judy Soroczak

A Message from Your Park Director David Green

Every aspect of society relies on volunteerism to some degree to survive. Parks and Recreation is no exception. We need volunteers in order to succeed in programming, operations, safety, marketing and promotion. Therefore, it is fitting that time is set aside every year to honor and acknowledge the everyday people, who make a personal and voluntary commitment, without pay or financial gain, that do something for the benefit of others and society as a whole.

A study conducted by John Hopkins University, estimated that approximately 140 million people from 37 countries engage in volunteer work in a typical year. Put another way, these volunteers represent the equivalent of 20.8 million full-time equivalent jobs (including 44 percent of the nonprofit workforce), and contribute US \$400 million to the global economy which is incredible! 2014. Since that time, the park was led by the Richfield Joint Recreation District which served as both a working and governing board.

One of my many roles as the park's first director was to learn about and get up to speed with all that took place in the six years prior to my arrival while paving a path for the park to move forward.

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BUILD IT & THEY WILL COME

By Susan Czaplicki

For the past seven years, volunteers have played a vital role at Richfield Heritage Preserve by undertaking projects, and planning programs and events to help fulfill the RJD mission statement.



Most Saturday mornings, Richfield Heritage Preserve volunteers can be found maintaining, preserving, and improving the park for everyone to enjoy. Richfield residents, RHP volunteers, Richfield Safety Forces, local schools and universities, corporate groups, partner groups, Richfield Library, and scouts have all made a substantial difference at the park.

RHP Volunteer Coordinator Susan Czaplicki manages volunteers and collaborates with the RHP Park Director David Green and RJD Parks Operations Chair, Jeff

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FRIENDS OF CROWELL HILAKA BECOME Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve

By Lynn Scholle Richardson

It's not surprising that a name change evokes strong reactions. Names have meaning, history, and influence. When Friends of Crowell Hilaka changed their name to "Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve", supporters asked, "What made you do it?" Others asked, "What took you so long?" This article addresses both questions.

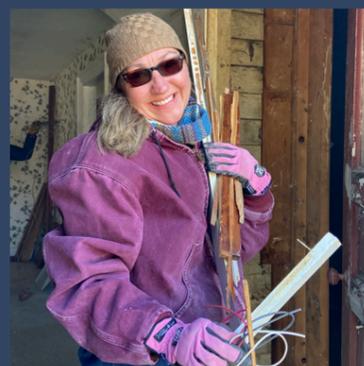
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THE BUCKEYE TRAIL
ASSOCIATION



SUMMIT COUNTY
CHAPTER of OHIO
HORSEMAN'S COUNCIL



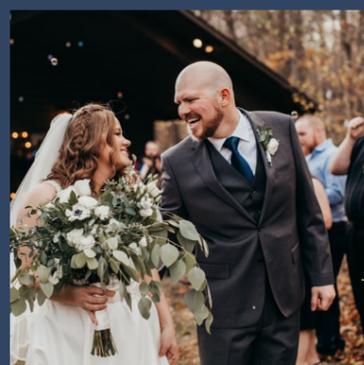
OVIATT HOUSE
PROVIDES
Unique Opportunity



EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES
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SPRING WILDFLOWER
HIKES



THE LODGE

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RICHFIELD
Joint Recreation District

A Message from Your Park Director

David Green

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A study conducted by John Hopkins University, estimated that approximately 140 million people from 37 countries engage in volunteer work in a typical year. Put another way, these volunteers represent the equivalent of 20.8 million full-time equivalent jobs (including 44 percent of the nonprofit workforce), and contribute US \$400 million to the global economy which is incredible!

In an attempt to acknowledge the charitable good work being done by volunteers everywhere, National Volunteer Week was created. This year we observe National Volunteer Week April 17th to 23rd and recognize how important volunteerism is worldwide, especially here at Richfield Heritage Preserve.

They say that you are only as good as your team. I am successful because of the hundreds of volunteers that I have had the privilege of working with over the past year. There are several volunteers who have taken on larger tasks and responsibilities that would typically be handled by full or part-time employees which we do not yet have. I have worked with these individuals directly on a weekly basis that I would like to acknowledge here. They are:

Susan Czaplicki

RHP Volunteer Coordinator
2015 to present

Commitment! If you visited the preserve on any Saturday morning as well as other days of the week, you would have seen Susan engaging with individuals and groups of volunteers. From program set-up and coordination, to Eagle Scout projects, and working with corporate groups, she has done it all!

Jeff Deluca

RJRD Board Member & Operations
2014 to present

Driven! Having a 30-year background in parks, Jeff has the expertise and drive in getting things done. He has offered his hands-on services on most Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays, throughout the year conducting and leading many of the day to day needs.

Kathy Donchess

Social Media Manager & Editor of the RHP eNews
2017 to present

Creativity! Kathy has worked behind the scenes utilizing her skills and expertise in marketing to build upon our brand while greatly broadening our reach. She has been the one informing our patrons of the happenings at the park through social media, and has created this informative eNewsletter to keep you up to date with our progress, successes and plans.

Dave Kalal

Skilled Technician
2019 to present

Trades Extraordinaire! Dave has been the one to call on when it has come to plumbing, electrical, equipment repairs and construction projects. Instead of having to contract out repairs or projects, he has offered his time and expertise, saving the preserve thousands of dollars.

Amy Huey

RJRD & RHP Website Coordinator

Generous! Amy has been the one keeping us in compliance with meeting postings on our websites. She has also shown off her skills in enhancing our websites which is quite often the first contact many of our patrons have with the preserve.

TLC Crew

Dedication! On any given Wednesday you will find Sandy Norris, Nancy Kanik, Clive Fetzer and Betty Vandermeer, showing up to keep our park clean and presentable through trash clean-up, cleaning restroom facilities, and general park maintenance and care.

Friends and Partner Groups

Passionate! Many of our trails, wildlife surveys, park clean-ups, habitat improvements and programming have only happened due to many who have shown up when a need was presented.

The work conducted by so many selfless volunteers has been vital in keeping the preserve moving forward and the impact they have made and are making will be enjoyed by so many for years to come. I sincerely thank you! As national volunteer week approaches, please join me in thanking the hundreds of volunteers who have contributed to the betterment of RHP.

BUILD IT & THEY WILL COME

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Most Saturday mornings, Richfield Heritage Preserve volunteers can be found maintaining, preserving, and improving the park for everyone to enjoy. Richfield residents, RHP volunteers, Richfield Safety Forces, local schools and universities, corporate groups, partner groups, Richfield Library, and scouts have all made a substantial difference at the park.

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firewood, assisted with Lodge renovations, removed invasive species, managed the park's websites, managed social media and marketing, assisted with grant writing, installed culverts, monitored bluebird boxes, built bridges, boardwalks, and benches, improved parking lots, and led hikes and programs, to name a few. In a typical week you can see our volunteers shoveling snow, building kiosks, installing light fixtures, clearing drainage ditches, maintaining trails, and tending gardens.

"Volunteers are integral to the park's success. I'm very grateful for everything volunteers are willing to do, and continually amazed by their hard work and dedication," states Czaplicki.

Since 2017, the number of volunteers engaged at the park has increased by over 273%. During that time, volunteers have shared their time, talents, skills, and energy to the equivalent of close to \$900,000.



Numerous volunteers have shared that they enjoy volunteering at the park and giving back to the community. Residents and park guests have expressed their appreciation for the volunteer's hard work.

As we celebrate Volunteer Appreciation Week in April, we sincerely thank volunteers for their hard work and dedication. You truly have made a difference! We would also like to add a heartfelt thank you to Ohio Operating Engineers and the Richfield community for your continued support.

If you are interested in learning more about how you can get involved, or about upcoming RHP volunteer opportunities, park events, and programs, please contact the RHP Volunteer Coordinator, Susan Czaplicki, at volunteer-info@rjrd.org

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By Lynn Scholle Richardson



It's not surprising that a name change evokes strong reactions. Names have meaning, history, and influence. When Friends of Crowell Hilaka changed their name to "Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve", supporters asked, "What made you do it?" Others asked, "What took you so long?" This article addresses both questions.

The Friends began in 2009 when the property was still a Girl Scout camp. Although the camp's name had a checkered legacy, [https://www.friendsofcrowellhilaka.org/whats-in-a-name.html#/,](https://www.friendsofcrowellhilaka.org/whats-in-a-name.html#/) the Friends' name was a no-brainer. "Friends of Crowell Hilaka" was abbreviated as "FoCH", pronounced "folk", which nicely suited their identity as a grassroots group.

When the property transferred to Richfield, FoCH recognized that the name of the place might change and decided they would align their name with whatever name the park eventually took on. Meanwhile, the name "Crowell Hilaka" had significant recognition value. The most dramatic example was when two FoCH members attended the grand opening of an L.L. Bean store in Lyndhurst. When a floor manager overheard them talking about Crowell Hilaka, he joined the conversation and soon introduced them to L.L. Bean's outdoor programs director. FoCH then introduced L.L. Bean representatives to RJRD's Special Revenue Committee---and a partnership developed.

FoCH registered as "Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve" when the park name changed in 2016. FoCH had already been tasked with restoring Kirby's

Mill and needed support from camp alumni — who would not easily recognize the name "Richfield Heritage Preserve". While using the new park name in their literature, FoCH decided to keep its own name until after the mill restoration was completed. This strategy worked for reaching camp alumni and Richfield residents who knew FoCH from the 2014 levy campaign.

However, new visitors discovering the park were confused by the Friends' name discrepancy. So, the Friends compromised with "Friends of Crowell Hilaka for Richfield Heritage Preserve". This label was accurate, but awkward. The name change timeline was moved up.

The old name will endure in two ways. Even though they will be doing business with their new name, Friends maintain ownership of their original name for IRS purposes. Secondly, "Crowell Hilaka" is unalterably one of the many layers of identity in Richfield Heritage Preserve.

Additionally, soon after the new park opened its gates to the public, the RJRD applied to have it recognized as a historic district. The State Historic Preservation Office determined that the Girl Scout era was the unifying element and the "period of historical significance" so the park is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the "The Camp Crowell Hilaka Historic District". RJRD's creation of the historic district gave Friends the freedom to take on their new name without fear of losing an important legacy.

Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve ("Friends" for short, not "FoRHP") continues as a 501c3 nonprofit corporation partnering with the RJRD to protect, preserve, enhance, and promote the park ---moving into the future with a growing list of members, contributions, and accomplishments to serve Richfield Heritage Preserve.

THE BUCKEYE TRAIL ASSOCIATION

Pledge & Support Helped Save RHP

More than a decade ago, a delegation from the Buckeye Trail Association toured Camp Crowell Hilaka. They were invited by the Friends of Crowell Hilaka who were conducting tours of the Girl Scout property in hopes of attracting supporters, donors and potential buyers for the property. Buckeye Trail's Cecilia Hartman, Pat Hayes, Jim Sprague, and Melissa Reed went on an extensive tour of the property and were impressed by the interesting and varied terrain the property offered local hikers.

At the time, the Buckeye Trail skirted the camp on three sides which increased hikers' time on busy roads. The Buckeye Trail Association showed their support and belief in saving the property by pledging \$100 per acre – or \$23,000 to the campaign with the hopes that the trail could one day be rerouted through the property rather than around it, making for a safer and more appealing trail.

By lending their name and showing their support the BTA's involvement bolstered the attention of local residents who eventually voted to save the property. A Win-Win for Buckeye Trail hikers, and Richfield taxpayers and outdoor enthusiasts across Northeast Ohio.

In 2015, a year after the Richfield voters approved the purchase of the property, plans were made to take the Buckeye Trail through the former camp. The route incorporated two of the old Girl Scout paths:

Pine Lake trail along the west shore of Lake Linnea (Upper Lake) and Deer Leap Trail along the creek. The trail also took a brand new route over the hillside beyond the former dance hall and along the ridge top overlooking the Wild Ravine.* Camping options for through-hikers was also approved by The Clean Ohio Trails Fund which works to improve outdoor recreational opportunities for Ohioans by funding trails for outdoor pursuits of all kinds.

In 2016, teams led by Pat Hayes, built the new trail that had been laid out by Pat and Buckeye Trail GIS Coordinator Richard Lutz. It is arguably the most popular path in the park today.

BTA didn't just build a new trail. They helped preserve a unique, historically significant property. Their presence continues to be constant by organizing trail work days, and lending their experience and expertise in trail management as well as hard work.

For more information about The Buckeye Trail Association or how to get involved go to <https://buckeyetrail.org/>

** camping is pending until RHP becomes a licensed campground*

SUMMIT COUNTY CHAPTER of OHIO HORSEMAN'S COUNCIL at Richfield Heritage Preserve

By Molly Eastwood

My fellow equestrian, Cynthia McWilliams, and I first visited the park in 2014 during a community wide open house and instantly fell in love with the property! We knew it was a wonderful place for horse activities. That's when we got involved, promoting interest in bridle trails by several OHC members riding in the 2015 Community Parade. That fall we hosted a hay wagon ride/hot dog roast so equestrians could see the wonderful possibilities that could be available for horse events and trails.

In May of 2016, over 700 people attended our Derby Day event, which featured horse rides, crafts, games and food. All donations received went toward plans for designing and building future horse trails in the park.

The following fall in 2017, members of the community and OHC built 5 miles of trails on a weekend in September.** The Ohio Operating Engineers built the summer barn parking lot in March 2019 with funds from our Derby Day event.

Horse clinics were held in 2018 & 2019 and over the past several years OHC has participated in friend's group's Winter Wonders and the park's Trick-or-Treat on the Trail events.

Since 2015, OHC members have fixed the summer barn gutters and maintained the bridle trails including signage, adding trail mix for firmness, digging culverts and ditches where needed and leaf blowing every fall. All future donations to OHC will be earmarked for a new roof on the summer barn where our meetings are held June through October.

One of our most popular annual events is a Prayer Ride which takes place in the fall. Richfield Heritage Preserve is a beautiful and the perfect location for personal reflection and prayer.

***Greg Monsanty designed & helped build trails*

So many people have expressed their joy at once again being able to travel the trails through the property, including friends volunteer Sandy Norris. "It makes me very happy that "WE" - ALL of the community now can once again travel the trails, and welcome more people to enjoy this terrific resource."

To learn how you can be involved go to <https://ohconline.com/>

For equestrian rules & regulations, please go to: <https://ohconline.com/trail/richfield-heritage-preserve/>



OVIATT HOUSE PROVIDES Unique Opportunity for Volunteers

By Judy Bowman



Oviatt House Incorporated (OHI) is committed to restoring and preserving the historic Oviatt House located in Richfield Heritage Preserve to honor its significant ties to the Underground Railroad, preserve the pioneer spirit of the Western Reserve, and inspire the community and future generations to celebrate the freedom it represents. Like any non-profit, OHI relies on volunteers to accomplish much of our work.

VOLUNTEERS HAVING FUN!

In October, work on the house began in earnest. Despite no heat or power, volunteers worked some 180 hours removing non-original carpet, drywall, plumbing, ductwork, wood paneling and interior doors under the direction of Project Manager Ken Bowman. Some were RHP veterans; however, most volunteers were new to RHP. Once the winter storms are over, we will schedule additional volunteer work days.

FUNDRAISING

To date, OHI has raised more than \$65,000 of our \$200,000 goal. Former OHI board member Judy Makowski contributed hundreds of hours to our successful fall/winter fundraisers. Future activities will include fundraising events and online campaigns to raise the money necessary to restore and renovate the interior and exterior of the house.

GET INVOLVED

In addition to hands-on work restoring the house, OHI is seeking volunteer board members and help with fundraising and visitor center/museum development. To get involved in this exciting and important project please email us at: oviatthouse1836@gmail.com.

Oviatt House was added to the National Park Service's National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom program in March 2021. Listings included in this program "honor, preserve, and promote the history of resistance to enslavement through escape and flight."

For additional information, including more pictures of our smiling volunteers, or to donate to the cause, please visit our website at <https://www.oviatthouse1836.com>.





Photograph taken by
Judy Soroczak

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES @ RHP

https://www.rjrd.org/uploads/3/8/7/1/38712131/social_media_manager_.pdf

https://www.rjrd.org/uploads/3/8/7/1/38712131/social_media__internships.pdf

SPRING WILDFLOWER HIKES at Richfield Heritage Preserve

April 22 through May 14th



Spring wildflowers will be in bloom throughout the Preserve in April and May. To help you enjoy these woodland beauties, the Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve are again offering a self-led hike, beginning April 22, to follow at your convenience on your smart-phone---and a more comprehensive in-person hike on Saturday, May 14, from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m. Both will be guided by ecologist Jennifer Windus, retired from the Ohio Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. The two-mile loop trail starts near The Lodge and follows the Buckeye Trail through one of the most scenic sections of the park.

The May 14 guided walk will feature insights on protecting our park's native species and about their role in the life of RHP. Participants are asked to meet before 1:00 p.m. at Waterfront---which is just south of The Lodge---dress for the weather, and wear sturdy shoes. While the hike is free, attendees are asked to RSVP. Be looking for our event listing through EventBrite soon!

Alternatively, if you would prefer to enjoy the self-led hike to get the best view of the Preserve's spring ephemerals, visit <http://www.friendsofrichfieldheritagepreserve.org/> to download a map. Since our woodland beauties appear at different times as the weather warms, plan on returning to catch successive displays. The trail also features informative signs provided by the Friends group.

For additional spring wildflower walks go to RHP's calendar of events found at www.richfieldheritagepreserve.com



THE LODGE

Richfield
HERITAGE
PRESERVE

Capacity: Up to 225 guests

**Perfect venue for weddings,
corporate parties and family reunions.**

FEATURES:

- ◆ Two-story vaulted ceiling
- ◆ Curved trusses
- ◆ Beautiful knotty pine is featured throughout
- ◆ Handsome stone fireplace



Now booking for 2022 and 2023

**For more information, contact The Lodge
at thelodge@rjrd.org**

Pictures courtesy of Courtney Lee Photography