

Discover your Outdoor Experience at

# Richfield HERITAGE PRESERVE

MARCH NEWSLETTER

## A Message from Your Park Director David Green



Every year when March rolls around, we begin to hear people lament over the cold weather, that winter is too long and they can't wait for spring. Winters in

Ohio can be long, but I encourage you to take it all in and truly experience Richfield Heritage Preserve through ALL the seasons. This past month, we have been blanketed with new layers of snow on a regular basis. Snow provided us the opportunity to observe the preserve's hidden stories from the night before. Most of the year wildlife goes undetected but with each new coating of snow we are treated to signs of their presence. Animal tracks can show us what wildlife we share the preserve with, the path each took and the abundance of common and potentially new species. This data can be a tool that can help us manage our property better for all.

As park director, I hope all that visit the Richfield Heritage Preserve, have a great experience. That's why we offered an Interest Survey in...

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## SURVEY SAYS!

Results are IN from our interest survey!

5 questions, 5 minutes... That's all it took for the 100+ people who participated in the first RHP online survey. Click the photo to see what we learned from the survey.



## RHP Along the Buckeye Trail Work day announced!

The Buckeye Trail was envisioned in the late 1950s as a trail from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. Since then, it has evolved into a 1444 mile long loop within the borders of Ohio, with its northernmost point at Headlands Beach Park in Mentor Ohio to its southernmost point at Eden Park in Cincinnati. It is the longest loop trail within a state's borders in the United States. Hikers along the trail pass through beautiful places like the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Hocking Hills, the Erie Canal, and others, including Richfield Heritage Preserve.

It wasn't possible for Buckeye Trail hikers to trek through RHP until 2014 after the Richfield community purchased the property. Hikers weren't permitted inside the fenced property for more than 75 years while it was a Girl Scout Camp and even afterward when the camp was shuttered. However, today, through a partnership with...

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## On YouTube NOW!

CONVERSATIONS at The LODGE  
with David Green

We are excited to bring to you a new video series called "Conversations at The LODGE with David Green". This is a NEW informational video is the first in a series of videos coming out in 2021 that focus on a variety of topics featuring the special assets of RHP, as well as what's happening at the park behind the scenes.

The first of these conversations is with Adam Beichler of The Wilderness Center...

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5 Questions in  
5 Minutes



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## A Message from Your Park Director **David Green**

**JOIN RHP'S EMAIL LIST**

Every year when March rolls around, we begin to hear people lament over the cold weather, that winter is too long and they can't wait for spring. Winters in Ohio can be long, but I encourage you to take it all in and truly experience Richfield Heritage Preserve through ALL the seasons. This past month, we have been blanketed with new layers of snow on a regular basis. Snow provided us the opportunity to observe the preserve's hidden stories from the night before. Most of the year wildlife goes undetected but with each new coating of snow we are treated to signs of their presence. Animal tracks can show us what wildlife we share the preserve with, the path each took and the abundance of common and potentially new species. This data can be a tool that can help us manage our property better for all.

As park director, I hope all that visit the Richfield Heritage Preserve, have a great experience. That's why we offered an Interest Survey in last month's eNewsletter. We wanted to know what brings you to our park and to see how we can improve your experience by asking for your feedback. We then can use that data and learn from it, and see how we can improve engagement and consider providing the opportunities people are requesting. That's not to say we can please everyone, but we will know more about a cross section of our park-goers and can respond to the trends in the data. The FIVE question survey garnered the responses we were looking for! Be sure to read "Survey Says!" in this issue to find out the results.

Also, thanks to the survey, 82% of those responding indicated they enjoy hiking the preserve. So, it seemed timely and appropriate to feature the Buckeye Trail in this issue. We are also planning to offer monthly guided hikes beginning in April. Be looking for details on our Facebook page and in next month's eNewsletter!

In the survey, we heard from many people who would love to purchase a t-shirt, coffee mug, hat or other items. This month our "5 Questions in 5 Minutes" Survey focuses on just that - RHP branded merchandise. From the sale of this merchandise we can create a small revenue stream which will allow us to thank and recognize our amazing RHP Volunteers.

Other exciting things to mention this month include the sharing of our park WISH LIST via Amazon. Many people ask how they can help by donating needed items. Like so many other not for profit entities, we now have a list that will allow people who cannot donate their time to donate a rake, shovel or extension cords. There's no obligation to donate but we are grateful for those who have shown interest.

Also, I am happy to announce the premier of "Conversations at The Lodge" on YouTube! It is my first in a series of videos that will educate and enlighten our park supporters, including me. Be sure to SUBSCRIBE so you can see upcoming releases as well as some old favorites.

Finally, if you're a photographer or know someone who is, please tell them about our 2021 RHP Photo Contest. Check out the link below and be sure to share it! I'm looking forward to seeing the amazing photos of amateur and professional photographers. Winners will be announced in April's issue.

Hope to see you on the trails!

*David Green*



# HERITAGE PRESERVE

## SURVEY SAYS!

### Results from The RHP Internet Survey

Five questions, five minutes . . . That's all it took for the more than 100 people who participated in the first Richfield Heritage Preserve online survey. The questions posed give us some insight into how long people have been coming to the park, what their favorite activities are, what programs they would be interested in participating, whether or not they would be inclined to make an impact by getting involved, and what facets of the park they would like to learn more about. Those responding could also provide their own answer if the choices given in the survey did not apply to them.

Here is how it breaks down:

#### 1) How many years have you been coming to Richfield Heritage Preserve?

Of those who responded, 49% have been coming to the park for 5 years or more. Interestingly, another 35% have recently found our park in the past two years. It is important for us to know that our second largest group of visitors are relatively new to Richfield Heritage Preserve. The remaining 16% between 3 and 4 years.

#### 2) What do you like MOST at RHP? Select ALL that apply

Because more than one answer could be selected, these percentages are based on the total number of responses for each activity mentioned. This didn't surprise us but 82% of respondents enjoy hiking, while 61% liked walking and 38% liked dog walking at Richfield Heritage Preserve. The following interests are listed in order of preference: picnicking, birding, fishing, kayaking, orienteering, canoeing, running and geocaching.

Additional comments included ( listed in order of preference) photography, horseback riding, relaxing and meditating, the historic buildings and history of the property, volunteering, events and gatherings, exploring and camping.

#### 3) In which of these organized activities would you be interested in? Select ALL that apply

The number ONE response was – “A Monthly Guided Hike” with more than 55% responding. Also making the top three “A Day to Canoe with Free Rentals” at 49% and “A Monthly-Themed Walking Tour” with 39%. These were followed by ( listed in order of preference) a Community Building Event, Birding, Fishing Derby, Monthly Dog Play Group, Geocaching 101 event, How To Orienteering Event, and a Seasonal Running Event.

Additional ideas were offered up by the respondents, such ( listed in no particular order) camping, summer programming, lectures, open houses, ranger stations with demonstrations, a treehouse lookout tower, fall clambake, fall festival, an event center and invasive species pulling.

#### 4) Would you be interested in any of the following? Select ALL that apply

A whopping 55% would like to rent “The LODGE” or other shelters throughout the park. This is followed by more than 50% being interested in donating items the park needs on its Wish List. Third is 33% responding they would want to make a Monetary Donation directly to the park followed by 28% responding positively to purchasing a Memory Tree or Bench for a loved one, and 5% interested in becoming a member of the Grant Writing Team. Additional ideas offered up include wanting better trail maps, and more historic information about the buildings on the property.

A lot can be gained by these quick surveys and we hope that as time goes on, we will be able to respond to requests by the majority of our park guests simply by having this touch point with them.

THANK YOU to ALL who participated!



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# HERITAGE PRESERVE

## Richfield Heritage Preserve ALONG THE BUCKEYE TRAIL

The Buckeye Trail was envisioned in the late 1950s as a trail from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. Since then, it has evolved into a 1444 mile long loop within the borders of Ohio, with its northernmost point at Headlands Beach Park in Mentor Ohio to its southernmost point at Eden Park in Cincinnati. It is the longest loop trail within a state's borders in the United States. Hikers along the trail pass through beautiful places like the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Hocking Hills, the Erie Canal, and others, including Richfield Heritage Preserve.

It wasn't possible for Buckeye Trail hikers to trek through RHP until 2014 after the Richfield community purchased the property. Hikers weren't permitted inside the fenced-in property for more than 75 years while it was a Girl Scout Camp and even afterward when the camp was shuttered. However, today, through a partnership with the Richfield Joint Recreation District and the Buckeye Trail, hikers are following the Blue Blazes through the park from the Oviatt Road to the Broadview Road entrances.

Over seven years ago, Buckeye Trail Association pledged a generous donation of \$23,000 to support the RJRD's plans to develop the newly acquired property as a park. Every year, there are one to two work days scheduled to clear debris, widen the trail where it's filled in and eliminate wet spots to improve safety and stave off erosion.



One of the biggest proponents of the RHP portion of the Buckeye Trail is Pat Hayes who not only helped design the trail that crosses through the park, but he has helped maintain with other like-minded volunteers every year since. He is an experienced hiker and a member of the Buckeye Trail Association since 1998, serving on the board for 12 years and as president for three. He enjoys circuit hiking and it took him 4 years to hike the Buckeye Trail in its entirety – that's true dedication and passion for hiking!



Hayes is also dedicated and passionate about coming out every year to work on the Buckeye Trail at RHP, saying it's a worthwhile effort he looks forward to.

"This is a beautiful, magnificent place!" exclaims Hayes. "Richfield has been good to the Buckeye Trail and those who hike it. Trail work is never ending and we always need more helpers, so I'm happy to bring my own tools and do what I can to maintain this portion of the trail."

If you haven't been out to hike recently, we hope you'll look for the Blue Blazes and hike the RHP section of the trail. Work days on the Buckeye Trail are open to all who wish to help!

### BUCKEYE TRAIL WORK DAY

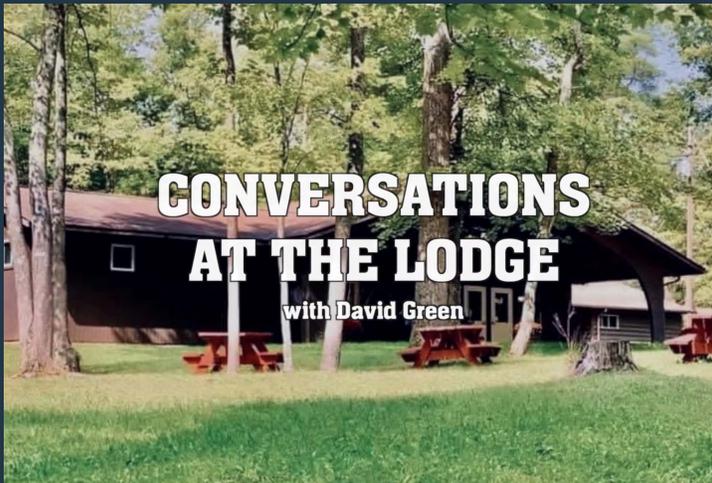
Join us for the Spring Work Day along the Buckeye Trail at Richfield Heritage Preserve on Saturday, April 17, 2021. Mark your calendar and plan on helping! ALL are welcome! The rain date is the following Saturday, April 24, 2021.



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## CONVERSATIONS at The LODGE with David Green On YouTube NOW!



According to Beichler, a forest is much more than the trees growing in it. To maintain healthy trees, multiple factors need to be taken into account. T.W.C. Consulting takes an entire ecosystem approach to management.

We hope you'll tune in!

And remember . . .

SEE

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& SHARE what Richfield Heritage Preserve is all about!

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The first of these conversations is with Adam Beichler of The Wilderness Center. He highlights the health of the various stands of forest throughout the Preserve that were evaluated by him back in 2017 as part of an assessment by T.W.C. Consulting. In their conversation, Green and Beichler revisit the survey which includes elements such as timber, wildlife, water, recreation, and aesthetics.

[SEE THE VIDEO HERE](#)

