



# Volunteer News & Views

THOUSANDS OF ACRES AND MILES OF TRAILS. **IT ALL BELONGS TO YOU!** – JANUARY 2024

## Welcome to the new year – 2024!

As we begin the new year, the Greene County Parks & Trails Team wishes you a Happy New Year. We look forward to another successful year of interesting and fun programs and events that our community will enjoy and participate in throughout 2024! GCP&T encourages and invites our Volunteers to sign up to assist with the programming events so that we may maintain our successful delivery of the programs and events offered in our Greene County Parks. Thank you to our Volunteers who continue to provide many dedicated hours to the GCP&T mission!

## FIRST PLACE FOR GCP&T!

**We are proud to announce that our agency has been awarded a first place, state-wide award from Ohio Parks and Recreation Association!**

Through a partnership with Greene County Veteran Services, we developed a series of programs that are veteran focused and are part of GCVS's Warrior Resiliency Team!

Starting with family picnic this summer and ending with an archery program, the Warrior Resiliency Team aims to provide a peer-based group that welcomes interactions between people who share similar experiences of being diagnosed with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, or both while also providing services to help them thrive.

Our Ranger Division will accept this award at the annual OPRA Conference in early 2024!

In addition, we are proud to continue our partnership with the Greene County Veteran Services on programming to support our Veterans as part of their Warrior Resiliency Team!



Greene County Parks & Trails Officers Barker and Trout, of our Ranger Division and who are certified archery instructors, taught the group the ins and outs of archery, ending with a target contest.

This program will definitely be back in 2024 as part of this amazing WRT mission supporting our Veterans.



## IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN – RENT-A-BUCKET TIME!

Maple Sugaring is one of the sweetest times of year and Greene County Parks & Trails is preparing for the Rent-A-Bucket and Maple Sugaring Tours at the Sperling Lane location in Beavercreek, Ohio.

Local residents were invited and encouraged to rent their very own sugar bucket and learn how maple syrup is made at our Greene County Parks & Trails' Sugar Bush. The maple sugar bucket will be labeled with the family's name and families will learn how to tap a maple tree to collect sap into the sugar bucket.

Our GCP&T volunteers are an integral part of this program and we could not do this without you! We are currently recruiting our volunteers to sign up to lead tours and to

cook. We will keep you informed of the volunteer needs as we proceed through the process.

### Thank you to our volunteers for

your many hours of volunteer service that you donate to Greene

County Parks & Trails. We would like to invite our volunteers who have not volunteered any hours during the recent past, to please contact our office to volunteer for this as well as other GCP&T programs. Thank you!

SOLD OUT



## THREE WAYS GETTING OUTSIDE INTO NATURE HELPS IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

According to an article on [ucdavis.edu](http://ucdavis.edu), there are at least three ways that getting outside into nature helps improve your health.

1. **"Nature can help us improve our thinking, reasoning, and other mental abilities.** Studies have shown that our minds and bodies relax in a natural setting. This increases feelings of pleasure and can help us concentrate and focus more effectively, according to studies in the National Library of Medicine.
2. **"Nature can improve physical wellness.** Getting out into nature can lead us to want to walk, bike, hike, or kayak more often. People typically engage in regular physical activity when they're in nature. So, stepping

outside can help you keep a healthy weight or even lose weight by increasing activity levels.

3. **"Being outside can improve your mental health.** Nature can help decrease your anxiety levels and can help lessen stress and feelings of anger. Exercise can also help this, but it's even better when you're outside. Regular access to green spaces has been linked to lower risks of depression and improved concentration and attention. Being outside allows us to be social and come together with family, friends, or even people you don't know who are also looking for a great hiking trail, for example."

Take a walk or a hike, ride a bike, or simply sit and take in the nature around you. Just three more reasons to get outside and visit our Greene County Parks – and/or your own backyard!

## GCP&T ACCOMPLISHMENTS – FOURTH QUARTER 2023

Greene County Parks & Trails has been busy this past quarter! We are proud to share the following accomplishments:

- **Caesar Ford Park** New CAMPGROUND is all complete except for the water meter and two final inspections. All will be done early 2024 with an opening planned in the Spring of 2024. Also, GCP&T Team members set up the Christmas Light displays for the 2023 ParkLights.
- **Koogler Wetland Prairie Reserve** An Eagle Scout completed a project during which 85 feet of new boardwalk was installed for the Park.
- **New Entrance Signs** Installed new signs at the Narrows Reserve, James Ranch Park, Karohl Park, and Caesar Ford Park.
- **Paving** LMST – Jackson Road to one mile south toward Yellow Springs was resurfaced; Old Town Reserve parking lot was resurfaced; Sara Lee Arnovitz – a path was paved from the parking lot to the front bridge and boardwalk; Fairgrounds Rec. Center Park – the driveways and shelter parking lot were resurfaced.







Greene Grasshoppers Trunk or Treat



The Great Pumpkin Patch



Rangers Giving out Candy in Xenia



Hudson the Rescue Pup at Trunk or Treat



Halloween Bash



Wiggle Worms



Pumpkin Glow



Night of Romance



Park Lights



DIY Project



Seniors Bingo



Santa Visits James Ranch



Santa Paws



Santa's Workshop



## WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE GCP&T ADMINISTRATION / NATURALIST TEAM



**Savannah Sheets** is the new Administrative Support Associate at GCP&T! Savannah previously worked for ten years in her father's office where she gained much knowledge and experience to bring to her new role at GCP&T. Savannah hails from

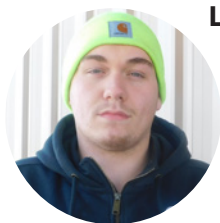
Greene County and says that she is an outdoorsy soul who likes to spend time in nature and enjoys yoga and music of all kinds. Savannah states that she is thrilled to welcome you to your own backyard and help you get out here and explore what Greene County has to offer! Welcome, Savannah!



**Courtney Carmack** is the new GCP&T Naturalist who recently joined our Team! Courtney is from Troy, Ohio, and says that she became fascinated with wildlife and the natural world at a young age. Her passion led her to pursue a B. S. in Biology with Ecology from

Loyola University Chicago. While in school, she traveled and visited amazing places such as Alaska, Peru, and South Korea. Courtney loves hiking and capturing photos of the great outdoors with her camera! Courtney has previously worked for the Great Parks of Hamilton County as a naturalist and for the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery as an educator. Courtney has now made GCP&T her home base! Welcome, Courtney!

## WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMBERS OF THE GCP&T MAINTENANCE TEAM



**Landon Butler** is a graduate of Xenia High School and was a member of the winning 2022 Football Team that accomplished an undefeated 10-0 record winning season! Landon enjoys watching football, especially the Bengals play, and spending time with his friends.

In addition, Landon previously worked at RiversEdge Canoe & Kayak Outfitters, in Waynesville, Ohio. Landon chose Greene County as his workplace because it's close to home for him and his grandfather worked for Greene County. Landon says that he enjoys working at GCP&T because he likes the guys he works with and he enjoys the work! Welcome, Landon!



**Paul Hackney** is a graduate of Greeneview High School, Jamestown, Ohio. Paul enjoys fishing and coaching Little League Football. Paul's previous work experience includes working at the historical Clifton Mill in Cedarville, Ohio. Paul chose to work at GCP&T

because his brother and father work for Greene County. Paul says that he enjoys the work here, including the flexible hours! Welcome, Paul!



**Josh Howard** joined our GCP&T Team during the fourth quarter of 2023.

Josh has previous experience working as a seasonal employee in Fairborn, Ohio, in the Parks & Recreation Department there. Josh enjoys race car

racing, fishing, hunting, and spending time

with his family. Josh says that he chose Greene County as his workplace because he wanted to be someplace where he enjoys the work that he does, as well as meeting new friends! Welcome, Josh!



**Carson Lewis** is a new member of our GCP&T Maintenance Team! Carson has previous experience working at his father-in-law's landscape company. Carson enjoys playing drums for his church and spending time with his wife and their dog at home.

Carson says that he chose Greene County Parks & Trails as his workplace because he loves being outside and helping his County. He also stated that what he likes best about working at GCP&T are the people and the work! Welcome, Carson!