

A quarterly newsletter linking donors to causes in our community

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Rowers enjoy striking views of the downtown skyline from Rivergate Park in the Flats.

Giving residents more access to the lake, river, and valley

From Lake Erie to the Cuyahoga River to the Cuyahoga Valley, Greater Cleveland boasts vast and beautiful natural resources. However, these treasures are sometimes off-limits or hard to access by the public.

Fortunately, local nonprofit organizations are providing new opportunities for people to use and enjoy these geographic features, and in doing so, are making our region a more desirable place to live and visit. In this Donor Connections, we are delighted to profile the works of five groups that are opening these gifts of nature for the public to enjoy: **Cleveland Rowing Foundation, Geauga Park District, Lake Metroparks, ParkWorks, and the Trust for Public Land.**

Cleveland Rowing Foundation gets *youth* rowing and college-ready

Cleveland youth will have new opportunities for recreation on the Cuyahoga River – and a launch on their way to college – thanks to the Cleveland Rowing Foundation and its new Rivergate Park complex in the Flats.

Through its CMSD Rows program, CRF will offer students in the Cleveland Metropolitan

School District swimming certification/ lessons, learn-to-row instruction, competitive rowing, tutoring and homework help, and college and scholarship counseling.

The program will be based at Rivergate Park, a formerly vacant, concrete-covered site being transformed into green space

Trust for Public Land *conserves* land for people

At the Trust for Public Land, the focus is on conserving land that people can enjoy – as parks, gardens, trails, and other natural places.

“People are the key component of all we do,” says William Carroll, director of the Ohio office of TPL, a leader and innovator in land conservation nationwide. “We only help acquire property if the public can use it. And we pay special attention to the ‘power’ of a place, land that people are emotionally attached to.”

The organization’s work in Ohio since 1974 bears that out. It bought the land for Euclid Beach State Park, including the beloved Euclid Beach carousel. It has completed 25 land acquisitions for the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, adding thousands of acres along the Towpath Trail, around Blossom Music Center, and where the Richfield Coliseum once stood.

Its current focus is on connecting Cleveland residents to the Lake Erie shoreline and to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park. For example, it acquired the land for Rivergate Park, the corridor for the Lake Link Trail connecting the valley to the Near West Side and to the lakefront, and property to extend the Towpath Trail through the Flats. TPL works with



Capping the Towpath Trail in the Flats, Canal Basin Park will feature trails, a park, and a performance venue.

many partners in its efforts to acquire property and ensure it gets into the public domain.

To learn how your grant for TPL conserves land for Greater Clevelanders, please call 216-928-7518 or visit www.tpl.org/ohio.

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and a center for rowing, kayaking, and dragon boating. The 6.5-acre site, with 1,100 feet of riverfront and two buildings, was purchased by CRF with the Trust for Public Land and other partners.

“Rivergate helps improve public access to one of our great natural assets,” says Sarah Ott-Hansen, CRF



Rivergate enables Cleveland Rowing Foundation to expand its rowing programs for youth.

director of development. “It also gives us a creative means to help youth in our underserved communities.”

Learn-to-row classes and competitive rowing are available for adults and children 14 years and up. Kayaking is also offered through the Cleveland Metroparks Institute of the Great Outdoors.

Created in 1989, CRF includes more than 800 college, high school, and adult rowers, and dragon boat enthusiasts.

A \$1,000 gift helps sponsor a student in CMSD Rows. Gifts also can help with the creation of a green park, building renovations, and site improvements at Rivergate.

For more information, visit www.clevelandrows.org, e-mail sarahotthansen@wowway.com, or call 216-337-0220.

ParkWorks promotes *revitalization* through creative public spaces

Whether downtown, in the Flats, or in urban neighborhoods, ParkWorks is creating the green-space amenities and connections that make Cleveland a more vibrant, welcoming place to live and visit.



This rendering depicts a bright and busy Lake Link Trail.

“Raw natural resources, like our river and lakefront, set Cleveland apart,” says Ann Zoller, ParkWorks executive director. “We have a huge opportunity to leverage those assets in a way that revitalizes and ties in our neighborhoods

and enhances the viability of downtown, through a system of parks, trails, streetscapes, and more.”

ParkWorks acts as a kind of project manager, identifying and leading collaborative projects that use public spaces to spur revitalization and complement other development efforts. It has also elevated urban design by bringing in nationally renowned designers.

On the west bank of the Flats, ParkWorks is developing a former railway bed into the 1.5-mile Lake Link Trail, which will connect the Flats and downtown to Wendy Park on Lake Erie. Downtown, it is focusing on pedestrian-friendly, quality-of-life amenities that will enhance the \$1.5 billion under way in new development. In city neighborhoods, it specializes in turning excess vacant land into parks and green spaces.

To see how your support can help revitalize downtown and neighborhoods, visit www.parkworks.org or call 216-696-2122, ext. 111.

Lake Metroparks *invites* public to Erie's shores

For more than five decades, Lake Metroparks has conserved and protected the unique natural resources of Lake County, from scenic waterways to open spaces. But the county's greatest natural resource – Lake Erie – has remained mostly out of reach for the general public, lost to industrial and residential development. In fact, only 20 percent of the 31-mile Lake County coastline is accessible to the public.

That situation is about to change with Lake Metroparks' development of Lake Erie Bluffs – a 140-acre park located on Lake Erie in Perry Township.

Amazingly, the property remains largely unspoiled by previous development. The coastline is a wild sand beach home to a number of rare plants. The upland is a mosaic of woodland, wetland scrub/shrub, and meadow habitat that provides shelter and food for a host of species.

The first phase of development will begin late this year or in early 2012 and will involve a loop trail, beach access, and an observation tower that will provide visitors a 360-degree



Lake Metroparks acquired the land for Lake Erie Bluffs in July 2010.

birds-eye view of Lake Erie, the coastline, and the preserved inland area. Subsequent phases will expand the trail network to highlight meadow, wetland, and streamside habitats.

For more information, call 440-639-7275 or check out www.lakemetroparks.com.

Geauga Park District opens eyes, minds to the night

sky

"No sight that the human eyes can look upon is more provocative of awe than is the night sky scattered thick with stars."

– writer Llewelyn Powys

The Geauga Park District does not limit itself to earthly endeavors when it comes to preserving, conserving, and protecting the natural features of Geauga County.

That's why it's devoting a rare area in Northeast Ohio untarnished by light pollution to create an astronomy-focused public park.

Observatory Park will be one of only five Dark-Sky Parks in the United States when it opens to the public in the spring of 2012. Located in Montville Township on 1,100 acres that protect the headwaters of the Cuyahoga River, the park will join 17 other open spaces managed by the park district.

Observatory Park will allow the district to take its mission to educate from the ground to the galaxies.

"We saw this as an opportunity to create an educational experience for school kids and the general public by tying that into the nature experience," says Thomas G. Curtin, executive director of the Geauga Park District.

With the help of partners such as Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Museum of Natural History, Great Lakes Science Center, Kent State University, and the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society, the district has developed

an interactive curriculum focused on the environment and earth sciences. Plans for Observatory Park include a public viewing building with a seismograph and weather station, an observatory, a sloped amphitheater, constellation viewing sites, walking trails, and a planetary path.



Members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society help to install the Oberle telescope in the observatory.

To learn more, call 440-286-9516 or log on to www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/observatorypark.shtml.

How to recommend a grant to these and other organizations

Complete the grant recommendation form enclosed, or access your Advisor Xpress account through the Donor section of the foundation's website. For more information, please call or e-mail the Gift Planning and Donor Relations team.



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