



VOLUNTEER MEETING

Volunteer meetings are a great way to meet new people, hear about upcoming volunteer opportunities and learn something interesting from an exciting lineup of guest speakers. Meetings take place at 7 p.m. in the Winton Centre Auditorium, unless otherwise noted. Coffee and tea are provided. Bring in your favorite baked goods to share. No need to RSVP, just come and enjoy!

May 21 – Melinda Hartong from Hartong Digital Media will be on hand to show us how to compose photos and get the perfect shot using our cell phone cameras. She'll be sharing some quick and easy tips and if the weather cooperates, we may head outside for some hands on learning.

Jul 16 – Stay tuned!

Sept 16 – Stay tuned!

When recording your hours in VIC for volunteer meetings, log them under [Volunteer Meeting \[Training\]](#) [Volunteer Services](#). Training hours may be doubled. Drive time to and from the training may be included but not doubled.

April 7–14

National Volunteer Week



5-MINUTE SURVEY: WHO ARE YOU?

Liz Rosevear, Volunteer

Nature adds a little something special to each of our lives, which is why we volunteer with Great Parks. We all feel the benefit of giving back some part of ourselves to an organization that provides life-changing experiences every day to people in our area. Volunteer Services is working to open up this opportunity to more people. This includes actively recruiting community members from varying socioeconomic levels, race and ethnicities, ages, and educational backgrounds.



For my Xavier University graduate program thesis, I will be focusing on recruiting more teenage and young adult volunteers who live in City of Cincinnati neighborhoods. By getting them involved with Great Parks, we're hoping to show them the benefits of volunteering that we already know – plus opportunities for green job training, mentorship and improved mental and physical health.

In order to set a recruitment goal, I need to know a little more about the composition of our current volunteer group, which is why Kris, Niki and I are asking you to **fill out a quick, 5-minute survey**. While some of the questions may seem a bit personal, we promise that your responses will be collected anonymously.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VolunteerDemographicsSurvey>

Please complete the survey by **Friday, April 5**.

Thank you in advance for your help! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at lizzierosevear@gmail.com or Volunteer Services at volunteer@greatparks.org.

Free Entry Days 2019

Bill Mowery, Chief of Guest Experiences

Free entry days for 2019 (and early 2020) have been approved. On these days, the motor vehicle permit requirement is waived for both resident and non-residents. Our goals are to encourage new users to visit and provide access to those who may see cost as a barrier. By combining free entry with established national and local initiatives like Earth Day, we demonstrate our support and leverage the attention they generate. Help spread the word! Thanks.

THIS MONTH'S BLOG

What's a Reservoir?

<http://blog.greatparks.org/2019/02/whats-a-reservoir/>

CONNECT WITH GREAT PARKS

 facebook.com/GreatParksHC

 twitter.com/greatparks

 instagram.com/great_parks

Volunteer Spotlight



Steve Whayne

How long have you volunteered for Great Parks? Two years.

What is your favorite volunteer activity? Hiking!

What is something we might be surprised to learn about you?

I have run 4 Marathons and I have survived 2 bank robberies (I used to work at a bank).

Are you retired? I am recently retired from Procter & Gamble, and now I work for a market research company in Blue Ash.

What did you want to be growing up? A professional baseball player. LOL.

What are three things on your bucket list? Travel to all 50 states (I've been to 48 so far), climb Mt. Kilimanjaro and start a Grateful Dead Networking Group.

Do you have a specialty dish you'd like to share with us? I have three — Cherry Cobbler, Homemade Chili and Corn Chowder.

Try Something New!

Please review the list of programs below. If you are able to assist with the activity, phone or email the event supervisor to volunteer. **Click on any bolded assignment category and you will be hyperlinked to the VIC login portal.**

FRANCIS RECREACRES

Earth Day Protect our Species

Sat 4/20, 9 a.m. – noon

Give endangered species a hand on Earth Day. Volunteers will plant trees, remove invasive plants and pick up litter, turning the park into a cleaner and greener wildlife habitat. Afterward, we'll celebrate with a grilled lunch and nature interpreter program. Meet at the playground. Register online at <https://reservations.greatparks.org/Info.aspx?EventID=1300> or contact Niki Marengo at nmarengo@greatparks.org. All ages welcome. **Stew Crew [Francis RecreAcres\ C&P East]**.

GLENWOOD GARDENS

MYPOP Gardening

Flexible scheduling, call for more information

Confident gardeners can "adopt" an area within the Highfield Discovery Garden. Special one-time group projects occur as well. For less experienced gardeners, we offer three-hour supervised gardening sessions to get you going. To volunteer, contact Kathy Charvat at kcharvat@greatparks.org or phone 513-771-8733. For volunteers ages 18 and up. **MYPOP [Glenwood Gardens\Guest Exp Central]**.

Visitor Center and Gift Shop Help

Tue, Fri, & Sat, call for shift times

Volunteers are needed to provide park guests with truly memorable experiences. If you enjoy making someone's day better, volunteer at Cotswold Visitor Center. Volunteers answer phones, assist guests with purchases, run the cash register, answer questions and do some light housekeeping which will make the facility shine. Training provided. To volunteer, contact Doug Stevenson at [dstevenson@greatparks.org](mailto:d Stevenson@greatparks.org) or phone 513-771-8733, ext. 110. For volunteers ages 18 and up. **Visitor Center/Niche [Glenwood Gardens\Guest Exp Central]**.

MIAMI WHITEWATER FOREST

Program Animal Care

Recurring Mon, Wed or Thu, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to feed, clean and interact with program animals that are used for education programs. Each animal has its own unique feeding and care schedule. Keeping our critters healthy and happy takes some work but providing up close, hands-on animal encounters for our park guests is a great way to foster appreciation for nature and wildlife. Training is provided. To volunteer, contact Will Buelsing at wbuelsing@greatparks.org or phone 513-367-4774. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Animal Care [Miami Whitewater\Education & Events]**.

Dog Park Maintenance

Mon-Fri as needed, anytime between 6:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Volunteers are needed at Simmonds Family Dog Park to string trim around dog park fencing. String trimming will reduce herbicide use around the cute pups that call the dog park their play space! You will not be enforcing dog park rules and the areas you will be working in will be closed to dogs. You most likely will be interacting with some dog parents, so good communication skills are a must! To volunteer, contact Graig Hoffman at grhoffman@greatparks.org or phone 513-367-4626. For volunteers ages 18 and up. **Construction & Maintenance [Miami Whitewater\C&P West]**.

Invasives and Litter, Oh My!

Tue 4/9, 9 a.m.-noon

Join forces to improve native wildlife habitat! We'll be cutting invasive woodies like honeysuckle and autumn olive, and picking up trash from the inner loop hike/bike trail. To volunteer, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or phone

513-367-4626. For volunteers 14 years of age and up. [Stew Crew \[Miami Whitewater\C&P West\]](#).

Tallgrass Garlic Mustard Pull

Thu 4/25, 9 a.m. – noon

Join us on the Tallgrass Prairie Trail to hand pull and remove invasive garlic mustard. Removing invasive plants will help make way for native species, particularly spring wild flowers. To volunteer, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or phone 513-367-4626. For volunteers 14 years of age and up. [Stew Crew \[Miami Whitewater\C&P West\]](#).

MITCHELL MEMORIAL FOREST

Tree Care and Invasive Species Removal

Recurring first Thursday of the month

Over the last few years, Great Parks has planted lots of native trees at Mitchell Memorial Forest. We are looking for help caring for these trees as they grow into forests. Volunteers will work with staff to remove vines, invasive species and straighten tree cages and tubes. Meet at the Tall Pines parking area. To volunteer, contact Zach Marcum at zmarcum@greatparks.org or phone 513-503-1326. For volunteers 18 years of age and up. [Stew Crew \[Mitchell Memorial\C&P West\]](#).

SHARON WOODS

Program Animal Care

Recurring Tue or Sat, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Volunteers are needed to feed, clean and interact with program animals that are used for education programs. Each animal has its own unique feeding and care schedule. Keeping our critters healthy and happy takes some work but providing up close, hands-on animal encounters for our park guests is a great way to foster appreciation for nature and wildlife. Training is provided. To volunteer, contact Angela Marczi at amarczi@greatparks.org or phone 513-563-4513. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Animal Care [\[Sharon Woods\ Education & Events\]](#).

Help Fight Alliaria Petiolata

Wed 4/3, 9-11 a.m.

If not pulled, flowers of the invasive plant garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*) will go to seed and cover a greater area year after year. This will crowd out native plants that are more beneficial to local wildlife. Deer do not eat garlic mustard so it's up to us to curb its growth. Meet at the Gorge Trailhead near the dam. To volunteer, contact Wayne Hawkins at whawkins@greatparks.org. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew \[Sharon Woods\C&P East\]](#).

Out of This World!

Fri 4/5, 7-9 p.m. & Sat 4/6, 7-9 p.m.

Guests will enjoy the park after dark and celebrate all things space! Your help is needed with science-based activities like walking along a scale model of the solar system, launching water-powered rockets, exploring the constellations in a pop-up planetarium and more! Meet inside the Sharon Centre. To volunteer, contact Tom Hughes at thughes@greatparks.org or phone 513-563-4513. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Interpreter Programs \[Sharon Woods\ Education & Events\]](#).

Time to "School" Garlic Mustard!

Wed, 4/17, 9-11 a.m.

Invasive garlic mustard likes to grow in rich, moist, shady areas which are found along the School Trail. If left unchecked, it will cover a greater area year after year. Deer do not eat garlic mustard so it's up to us to "school" it. Meet at the Sharon Centre. Volunteer to pull garlic mustard by contacting Wayne Hawkins at whawkins@greatparks.org. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew \[Sharon Woods\C&P East\]](#).

SHAWNEE LOOKOUT

Garlic Mustard Pull

Sat 4/20, 9-11 a.m.

Celebrate an early Earth Day by helping us weed out one of the most prolific invasive plants we know, garlic mustard. Deer won't eat it so it's up to us! Meet at the Miami Fort Trail Head.

To volunteer, contact Adam McCosham at amccosham@greatparks.org or phone 513-978-7198. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew \[Shawnee Lookout\C&P West\]](#).

WINTON WOODS

Special Riders Program

Mon 3/4-Sat 5/25,

Mon 6:15-7:15 p.m.,

Wed 6:15-7:15 p.m.,

Sat 10:15-11:15 a.m.

Volunteers are needed to lead or walk beside horses ridden by Special Rider students during this therapeutic riding class. Training is provided at the Riding Center. To volunteer, contact Margie Rennie at mrennie1@icloud.com or phone 513-931-3057. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [SRP \[Riding Center\ Guest Exp Central\]](#).

Winton Woods Cleanup

Sat 4/13, 9 a.m.-noon

For more than 30 years, Great Parks, Forest Park Environmental Awareness and hundreds of volunteers have removed tons of litter in and around Winton Lake. Join us for this important cleanup and stay for a grilled lunch and nature program afterwards. Meet at Kestrel Point Picnic Shelter. Register online at <https://reservations.greatparks.org/Info.aspx?EventID=1300> or contact Niki Marengo at nmarengo@greatparks.org. All ages welcome. [Park Cleanup \[Winton Woods\ C&P Central\]](#).

Easter Brunch

Sun 4/21, 10:30 a.m. & 1 p.m.

Hop on over for Easter brunch at the Mill Race Banquet Center! Park guests will celebrate the holiday with the Easter Bunny and enjoy an all-you-can-eat buffet. The Easter Bunny sometimes has difficulty seeing where he is going, so volunteers will help guide him around the room. To volunteer, contact Liz Keer at lkeer@greatparks.org or phone 513-728-3551, ext. 285. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Special Events \[Winton Woods\ Education & Events\]](#).

Little Tykes

Wed 4/3, 11 a.m.

Join us for our annual festive Earth Day Celebration. Help children, ages 3-6, and their parents learn about simple fun ways to give back to nature. Meet in the Winton Centre Auditorium. To volunteer, contact Susan Sumner at ssumner@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-4811. For volunteers ages 18 and up. [Interpreter Programs \[Winton Woods\Education & Events\]](#).

Give Back for Earth Day

Tue 4/16, 10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

What could be better than joining other families for our annual Earth Day Celebration? Help home-schooled students, ages 5-12, and their parents learn about simple fun ways to give back to nature. Meet in the Winton Centre Auditorium. To volunteer, contact Susan Sumner at ssumner@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-4811. For volunteers ages 18 and up. [Interpreter Programs \[Winton Woods\Education & Events\]](#).

WITHROW NATURE PRESERVE

Invasive Plant Removal

Thu 4/11, 9 a.m. – noon

Numerous invasive plants, from vines to bushes and trees, are growing along the entrance road in Withrow Nature Preserve. To enhance our native landscape we need volunteers to help cut and remove these plants. To volunteer, contact Dan Hart at dhart@greatparks.org or phone 513-250-0925. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew \[Withrow C&P East\]](#).



Surveying Help

Recurring, as needed

Do you like hiking off trail? Volunteers are needed to go out on jobs with our park surveyor. You might be carrying equipment, marking boundaries, or helping the surveyor with a variety of other tasks. This is a great way to see parts of the parks that are off the beaten path. You'll need to be able to navigate hilly and uneven terrain and work in all types of weather. Very flexible scheduling. To volunteer, contact Steve Walton at swalton@greatparks.org or phone 614-657-8425. For volunteers ages 18 and up. [Boundaries & Surveying \[Park\Design & Land Aquisition\]](#).

Get Certified in First Aid CPR

Sign up for National Safety Council First Aid CPR classes. First Aid CPR is an optional training, free and open to all Great Parks volunteers and employees. Trainings are held at the Sharon Woods Employee Training Center, adjacent to the Sharon Centre. Certification cards will be mailed to you approximately 6 weeks after completion of training. Upcoming training dates are:

Tue 4/9, 8 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Wed 5/15, 8 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Thu 6/13, 8 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Tue 7/16, 8 a.m.-12:00 p.m.



Registration closes one-week prior to training so don't delay. Sign up on line at: <https://volunteers-greatparks.bridgeapp.com/login> (your user name is your 6 digit volunteer ID number found on your photo ID card. *Example: 000987 or 009876*).

If you register for this training and can no longer attend, please cancel or reschedule by logging into your Bridge account using the link above.

Not able to log into Bridge? Contact the Volunteer Services Department at volunteer@greatparks.org or phone 513-521-7275 and ask for Kris or Niki.

Please record these training hours under [First Aid CPR \[Training\Risk Management\]](#). Training hours may be doubled. Drive time to and from the training may be included but not doubled.

Holiday Lights Recycling Exceeds Expectations

Kimberly Whitton,
Public Engagement
Coordinator

Since 2014, Great Parks has sustained a rewarding partnership with Cohen Recycling to offer a holiday lights recycling program. The effort allows the public to drop off their broken or unwanted lights at six Great Parks locations to be collected, recycled and remanufactured into new products. Response to the program has been well received, collecting just over 1,000 pounds in its second year and more than 1,500 last year. However, this year's response was remarkable, collecting just over 11,000 pounds (a 600% increase over the previous year's collection) in the three-month period. Much of the success can be attributed to collaborative social media posts, reaching over 48,000 people; press releases, resulting in multiple media mentions on WLWT, WVXU and WKRC; mention in our e-newsletter, radio spots run by Cohen Recycling and new park signage placed at collection locations. This was my first year being directly involved with the program and I couldn't have asked for a better one!

