

Historical Reflections
Boardman Township Park
“*The Growth of the Green Oasis*”
75 Years (1947-2022)

Boardman Park, the “Green Oasis,” is celebrating 75 years of serving the recreational and educational needs of our Community. As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the Park District, the following is the History of the Green Oasis:

The Beginning:

Obviously, the first took place on November 4, 1947, when the seed from which Boardman Park, the “Green Oasis,” would grow was planted after the voters of Boardman overwhelmingly approved establishment of a township park district. The seed may have never been planted if it were not for the generosity of William F. Maag, Jr., who in 1946 donated 72 acres to the Township in order to establish a community park, hence the seed was planted. Mr. Maag purchased a 123-acre parcel of land that would become Boardman Township Park District. The land was mainly farmland and undeveloped woods that the Trustees of Boardman Township had purchased from the Federal Government for \$14,500. Mr. Maag then purchased the Land from the Trustees, paying the full amount. He kept 51 acres in order to build a transmitter for his radio station, WFMJ, and donated the remaining 72 acres to the Township in order to establish a public park.

Secondly, has been the acquisition of property. Over the years, the seed has grown into a community park, rich in natural beauty, comprised of 227 contiguous acres located in the heart of Boardman. Fortunately, the Park has acquired an additional 67 acres of greenspace bringing the total acreage to 294. Therefore, the size of the Park has more than quadrupled since 1947, where today the Park provides 60 acres for active recreational purposes and preserves 234 acres as greenspace and natural habitat. The Park is not only a sanctuary for numerous species of plants and animals, but also is a recreational haven for the Community it serves, a place where families gather to enjoy one of our community’s greatest treasures, its natural resources.

The Plan:

On September 15, 1992, the Park Board adopted the first-ever Master Plan for the Park. The significance of the Plan was two-fold; first it contained the mission statement: *To provide a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences, and to preserve areas of natural habitat*; and, from the Plan evolved a unique and diverse footprint of recreational facilities.

Since 1992 and pursuant to the Master Plan, the Community has benefited from the addition of numerous recreational assets; thereby, creating a unique and diverse footprint of facilities and programs. The primary funding source for each of these accomplishments has been private donations and government grants. The 23 projects below reflect over \$6 million invested in the Park.

- Kids’ Town Creative Playground – First Community-Built playground in the Mahoning Valley
- Tot’s Town Playground – Built in memory of Jonathan and Rebecca Giancola, by the staff & friends of John Burgan & the Giancola Family

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- Maag Outdoor Arts Theatre – Built in Memory of William F. Maag, Jr. implementing the Community-Built concept
- Elton Beard Family Cabin – Built through the generosity of Elton Beard & ODNR NatureWorks Grant–One of the first grant awards in the Valley
- Kenneth Hofmaster Pavilion – Built in memory of Kenneth Hofmaster devoted Boardman Kiwanian
- Hike & Bike Trail
- Main Septic system - elimination of an antiquated on-site Leech Bed system and the connection to a public sanitary system at the Shops at Boardman Park
- West Quadrant Improvements Project - includes the Thomas C. Masters Pavilion w/restrooms, a 300-car lighted parking lot and landscaping,
- 2-Sand Volleyball Courts
- Practice Tennis Wall
- The acquisition of 35 acres of greenspace - increasing the size of the Park to 227 acres, with 40 acres of Open Space property located in several areas of the Township
- The Renovation of Kids’ Town playground with plastic lumber made from recycled materials
- St James Meeting House - Exterior Renovation of Boardman’s most prominent Historical Landmark
- Memorial to the Veterans of Boardman – Partnership with Boardman Township Trustees
- Historical Village Septic System – elimination of the on-site Leech Bed/Holding Tank system and the connection to a public sanitary system at the Shops at Boardman Park
- West Quadrant Phase II - includes the Lariccia Family Bocce Pavilion, ADA Accessible Playground and the asphalt paving of the 300-car parking lot
- The Boardman Park Lariccia Family Community Center Phase I – the renovation & expansion of the 33-year old Community Center
- The Oswald Detchon House – Exterior Renovation of a local historic landmark
- The North Trail project – 8-foot paved ADA accessible walkway that travels parallel to the Main Drive and connects all the Park facilities, as well as connecting to existing nature trail system = 4 miles of trails
- The Georgeanna Parker Activity Center – the renovation & expansion of this 37-year old facility-made building ADA compliant, replaced antiquated/inefficient mechanicals/windows/doors/flooring, technology improvements, provided additional office space for Recreational Director.

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- The Marge Hartman’s Paws Town at Boardman Park – 3.25 acres that is fenced-in and divided into Large Dog and Small Dog play areas, which is for dogs to exercise and play off-leash in a controlled environment under the supervision of their owners
- 18-Hole Disc Golf course
- 2-Pickle Ball courts
- Arnie Nashbar and Family donated 16 acres of greenspace to the Park
- American Food Forest donated 11 acres of greenspace to the Park

By combining individual donations and grant money, the Park has realized all of these additions with only a fraction of the money coming from the Park’s budget. The realization of these assets has been made possible through government grants coupled with the private donations of time, materials, and money. Approximately, 80% of the funding for these improvements has been generated by grant monies and donations, with the balance of the money coming from the Park’s Budget. And because of the generosity of the Community, Boardman Park, the Green Oasis, has evolved into one of the most unique and popular recreational facilities in the Mahoning Valley. Annually, over 500,000 people enjoy the facilities and programs that the Park provides.

Throughout the decades, the Board of Park Commissioners and its staff have worked diligently to meet the recreational needs of the Community, while serving as prudent stewards of the tax dollars entrusted to them. For 74 years, the Park has been operating on the equivalent of a 1-Mill Levy. In 1948 the Park District’s first Real Property Tax Levy was approved, which was a 1-mill levy, and today, 74 years later, the Board continues to operate maintain, preserve, and improve the Park on the equivalent of a 1-mill levy, which consists of two (2) voted levies, 0.3 mill and 0.6 mill, and one (1) non-voted levy of 0.1 mill. Annually, these Levies generate approximately \$871,000.00, which represents 65% of the Park District’s annual income. In order to provide this tax revenue, the owner of a \$100,000 home contributes approximately \$30 per year, or 8 cents per day to support the Mission of the Park.

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Boardman Township Park District

TAX LEVY HISTORY

➤ November 1947	-	Park District established
➤ November 1948	-	1 mill levy for 5 years
➤ November 1953	-	0.5 mills levy for 5 years – Park Board decided to renew the 1 mill levy as a 0.5 mills levy
➤ November 1957	-	0.5 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 1963	-	0.5 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 1967	-	0.4 mills levy – The 0.5 mills levy was reduced to 0.4 mills because of increased property values
➤ November 1972	-	0.4 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 1976	-	0.4 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ June 1980	-	0.6 mills new levy
➤ November 1980	-	0.3 mills levy - The 0.4 mills levy was reduced to 0.3 mills because of the increase in property values
➤ November 1983	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 10 years
➤ November 1983	-	0.6 mills levy renewed for 10 years
➤ May 1994	-	0.3 mills levy replaced for 5 years
➤ November 1995	-	0.6 mills levy renewed for 10 years
➤ November 1998	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2003	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2005	-	0.6 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2008	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2009	-	0.6 mills levy replaced for 5 years
➤ May 2014	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2015	-	0.6 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2019	-	0.3 mills levy renewed for 5 years
➤ November 2020	-	0.6 mills levy renewed for 5 years

The Green Oasis Today:

The Green Oasis is a place where families gather to enjoy a diversity of recreational & educational opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences. It has been the support and generosity of the community that is responsible for making the park the recreational asset that it is today.

Our purpose is to create wholesome opportunities to live and interact with family, friends, neighbors, and communities. The Park offers a variety of recreational facilities and programs year-round that enhance the quality of life for the Community it so proudly serves. The Green Oasis is not only a wildlife sanctuary, but also a place where families enjoy 243 acres of recreational greenspace in the heart of Boardman.

Our mission is to provide a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences. The Park offers unique and diverse opportunities for children and families to connect with nature and recreate outdoors together.

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Visitors can enjoy reservable indoor rooms and outdoor pavilions, tennis, pickleball, and sand volleyball, baseball fields, an 18-hole disc golf course, bocce courts, and four miles of ADA accessible walking trails that transverse the natural areas of the Park.

Over the last several years, the Park has experienced a significant increase in the number of visitors, where today, close to half a million people visit the Park annually. We believe that the continued increase in the number of Park visitors clearly demonstrates that Boardman Park is one of the most popular areas for family recreation in the Mahoning Valley. The popularity of the Park can be attributed to our community’s positive response and enthusiastic participation in the diverse and multigenerational programs we offer year-round, as well as our unique footprint of recreational facilities.

The Green Oasis Preserves What’s Precious...the Environment:

Public parks offer countless benefits to the communities they serve. However, there are times when people tend to take the benefits of public parks for granted, as well as the vital role parks play in the quality of life for the communities they serve. While fun, happiness and play are fundamental to growth and development, the expanded role of public parks is more critical than ever. Programs, services, events and opportunities offered by local, state and national parks and recreation agencies positively impact lives and society as a whole.

It is our mission to provide a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences, and to preserve areas of natural habitat; however, and perhaps most importantly, during these times of climate change, the Green Oasis provides the following environmental benefits to our community:

- The Park preserves 294 Acres of greenspace that provides critical environmental functions that contribute to many of life’s essentials – Mitigating Stormwater Run-Off, cleaning the water & the air and returning oxygen to the atmosphere. There are approximately 38,100 trees within the 294 acres. These trees will intercept 14.5 million gallons of storm water each year; and will remove 6.4 million pounds of atmospheric carbon. The overall environmental benefit to our community is valued at \$1.5 million per year, as well as keeping our living environment healthy.
- The Park preserves 194 Acres of Natural Habitat, which protects many native species of plants and animals and is an excellent representative of Ohio’s glaciated Beech/Maple forests and lowland hardwood forests. The Natural area provides vegetative buffers to development and preserves habitat for wildlife, facilitates a biodiversity and establishes an ecological integrity.
- The Park protects over 18-acres of wetlands and McKay’s Run that is a major tributary of the Yellowcreek Water Shed. Wetland habitats serve essential functions in an ecosystem, including acting as water filters, providing flood and erosion control, and furnishing food and homes for fish and wildlife. Wetlands also absorb excess nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants before they reach rivers, lakes, and other waterbodies.

Although these benefits are not environmental; they do have a positive impact on our community:

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- Enrich the Quality of Life – The Park’s unique and diverse footprint of recreational and educational opportunities; provides a place for children and families to connect with nature and recreate outdoors together.
- The Green Oasis Facilitates Social Interaction and Promotes a Healthy Lifestyle by creating wholesome opportunities to live and interact with family, friends, neighbors, and communities. According to research performed at small local parks, spending time outdoors and connecting with nature improves general mood and attitude, reduces stress, improves mindfulness and creativity, and promotes community connections. Community bonds and connection are what holds a community together.
- Variety of Recreational Facilities - the Park provides sand volleyball, tennis & pickleball courts, practice tennis wall, softball & hardball fields, 4-miles of trails, 3-unique playgrounds, 18-hole Disc Golf course and Paws Town dog park
- 4-Miles of Walking Trails - provides a safe and accessible pathway to walk, jog, or just enjoy the beauty of nature
- Convenient Facilities – facilities are in close proximity, within a short walking distance
- St. James Meeting House – Boardman’s most prominent Historical Landmark, built in 1827 by the family of Elijah Boardman, founder of Boardman Township; the Park also preserves two more historical buildings: the Oswald Detchon House and the Beardsley–Walter–Diehm House
- Reservable facilities are accommodating, with flexible set-ups and seating to accommodate most types of events. All indoor rooms are air-conditioned and have kitchen facilities, which allows our visitors to make their own arrangements for food; Open-Air pavilions have electric, cooking grills and water

Parks have the power to strengthen communities, transform lives, and protect the environment and our future. Parks are the most powerful aspects of every community according to the National Recreation & Park Association.

Historical Highlights:

1812 - The land that is now the Park was once a 160-acre farm. Josiah Beardsley owned the farm from 1812 to 1854. The Josiah’s house, now known as the Beardsley-Walter-Diehm House, which is named for its builder and tenants, was built around 1828. During the 1800’s it was a common practice with farmers in lieu of constructing fences in order to contain livestock would plant Osage Orange trees in fence rows or hedge rows. Once established, the thorny trees (thorns are 1-inch long and very sharp) were pruned to promote thick, bushy growth. The term “horse high, bull strong and hog tight,” used to describe the Osage Orange, simply means that the hedge rows were pruned so that they were tall enough that a horse would not jump it, stout enough that a bull would not push through it and woven so tightly that even a hog could not find its way through.

Today in the Park there is a row of very large and mature Osage Orange trees located along the Service Road that travels from St. James Meeting House south into the Maag Theatre parking lot. Knowing that Josiah Beardsley was a farmer, it can be surmised that the Trees were planted by Beardsley as a Fence Row over 200 years ago.

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September 11, 1947 – First Park Board, the Mahoning County Commons Pleas Court appointed the first Board of Park Commissioners: Lewis W. Bargar (1947 – 1967), Ralph Smith (1947 – 1968) and Atty. Hugh W. Manchester, Sr. (1947 – 1969).

November 4, 1947 – Park Established, General Election, the voters by a 4 to 1 margin approved to establish Boardman Township Park District

November 1948 – The Park’s first tax levy approved a 1-Mill Levy

July 1949 – Homer V. Holl, Sr. – first Superintendent of the Park. Mr. Holl served until 1952.

February 1950 – First Pavilion Edgewood Pavilion – constructed. The Park’s first open-air pavilion, which was designed by Chester V. Long who was the first architect for the Park. Constructed by Felix Pesa & Sons, Inc., contracted for \$4,431.00.

August 1950 – The pylons and stone front constructed by Felix Pesa & Sons at U.S. Route 224 entrance. Cost: \$2,300.

June 29, 1950 – First baseball field built following a suggestion by the Boardman Athletic Association.

July 5, 1951 – First Playground. The Boardman Kiwanis Club furnishes a playground with miscellaneous equipment including a teeter-totter for the Park. About 45 children visit the playground daily. The playground was located adjacent to Edgewood Pavilion.

November 6, 1951 – Bronze Plaque reading “Boardman Township Park –Established 1947” installed at the West Pylon, located at the U.S. Route 224 entrance. Newman Bros. Inc. manufactured the bronze plaque for \$71.00 and the Plaque installed by Felix Pesa & Sons. Co. at a cost of \$16.50.

February 5, 1952 – Charles C. Wedekind hired to replace Mr. Holl as Superintendent of the Park.

May 1952 – Construction of Knollwood Pavilion begins under the guidance of lead architect, Chester V. Long. Vincent DeBucci contracted for \$4,686.00 to construct the Pavilion.

March 16, 1953 – Park purchases Merry-Go-Round from Lifetime Miracle Whirl for \$298.00 for the playground.

May 19, 1953 – Tennis Courts built. Constructed by Erskine Construction and Mining, Inc. for \$2,709.00.

October 7, 1952 – First hiking trails established.

November 1953 – Park Board decides to renew the 1 Mill Levy as a 0.5 Mills Levy.

Spring 1955 – The first Boardman Little League Season played at the Park

November 1955 – Ice skating pond developed which in now the site of Kids’ Town Creative Playground

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January 30, 1956 – Ivor N. Jenkins replaces Mr. Wedekind as Superintendent. Mr. Jenkins serves until 1975.

June 19, 1961 – **Construction of Beechwood Pavilion** begins, which was used as a year-round recreation pavilion located near the ice skating pond. Constructed at a cost of \$8,620.00, by the Ablin E. Erickson Co., Inc. In 1996 the Elton Beard Family Cabin replaced Beechwood Pavilion.

October 14, 1965 – **First telephone answering service** used for reservations.

June 20, 1967 – Philip J. Prosser replaces Lewis W. Barger as a Park Commissioner.

November 1967 – the 0.5 Mills Levy is reduced to 0.4 Mills, because of the increase in property values.

May 14, 1968 – Frank Showalter replaces Ralph P. Smith as a Park Commissioner.

May 12, 1969 – Frank Mastriana replaces Hugh W. Manchester as a Park Commissioner, and as Secretary of the Board of Park Commissioners.

July 7, 1969 – **First Day Camp**. Boardman School Board entered into negotiations with the Park regarding a supervised recreation program held at playgrounds in the Cascade Area. The Park chose two schools due to the availability of restroom facilities: Robinwood and West Blvd. Elementary. Ivor Jenkins met with school Superintendent, Mr. Kibble, to discuss using two schools for a two-month program in the Summer of 1970.

July 15, 1969 – **First concert held in Park** performed by the Youngstown Symphonic Band, under the direction of Paul Rossi

April 1970 – **Comfort station built including two restrooms**, by the Kreidler Construction Company for \$3,500.00. Steel City Electric provided the electricity for the station for a cost of \$1,450.00, and Continental Plumbing installed plumbing for \$4,974.00. Total cost for the project: \$9,924.00.

June 22, 1970 - **First day of Day Camp registration**. 25 signed up at West Blvd. School and 120 signed up at Boardman Park. Thyra Davis, Director of Day Camp at Park, assisted by Cindy Rafferty and Nancy Scott. Virginia D’Amico, director of Day Camp at West Blvd. School is assisted by Marianne Volosin.

August 9, 1971 – **Move St. James to the Park**. Tom Masters and George Marks of the Boardman Historical Society came before the Park Board to report on the progress of their efforts to move St. James Church to the Park, and that they now have sufficient funds to go ahead with the moving of the structure. The Park Board decides to retain Attorney Flynn to thoroughly check into all the legal ramifications regarding the Park Board’s acceptance of St. James Church, and to obtain approval of all the proceedings from the Court of Common Pleas.

October 11, 1971 – The Park Board reviewed an Application and Judgment Entry prepared and approved by Judge Clyde Osborne of the Court of Common Pleas. The Application and Judgment Entry states – *Applicants, members of the Boardman Township Park Commission respectfully request the Court, as required by Ohio Revised Code Section 511.23, for a determination of approval prior to its acceptance of the structure formerly known as St. James Church, and presently classified as a historical structure, by*

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the State of Ohio Historical Society. The Entry also delineates the conditions of the gift of the Church to the Park by the Boardman Historical Society. The Park Board reviewed plans prepared by Architect William L. Cox that reflected the exact relocation site in Boardman Park, which was approved by the Commission.

1971 – 1973 – U.S. Route 224 widened to 5 lanes.

January 11, 1972 – St. James Episcopal Church relocated to Boardman Park. Boardman’s oldest public building and most prominent historical landmark was saved from demolition by a community-wide effort that was spearheaded by Tom and Miriam Masters, and the Boardman Historical Society. On January 11th the church was moved to the Park and renamed St. James Meeting House. Henry Mason Boardman, son of Elijah Boardman, founder of Boardman Township, spearheaded the effort to establish St. James. He donated the land and money for the construction of the Church, which was built between 1827 and 1828. St. James was the first Episcopal church in Ohio, and the first home of the oldest Episcopal parish in the Connecticut Western Reserve.

March 3, 1975 – John E. Holzbach replaces Mr. Jenkins as Superintendent. He serves the Park until his retirement in 1992.

May 1975 – Attorney George C. Economus replaces Attorney Frank Mastriana as a Park Commissioner.

May 30, 1976 – Memorial Day Service in the Park and the celebration of the Bicentennial of the U.S. More than 8,000 people are in attendance.

October 3, 1976 – The Georgeanna Parker Activity Center is dedicated in memory of Miss Georgeanna Parker, a long-time teacher in the Boardman Schools. The facility houses the Offices of the Park District and includes a community activity room. Kreidler Construction Company contracted for \$56,592.00. Total cost including construction, furnishing, landscaping and equipment: \$107,597.07.

October 3, 1976 – St. James Meeting House opens to the public after four years of renovations conducted by volunteers of the Boardman Historical Society.

January 18, 1977 – The Gazebo is dedicated in memory of Rotarian Hugh Manchester. Built by the Boardman Rotary Club under the leadership of Tom Masters and Howard Cailor. Constructed by David and Larry Anderson. The cost of construction was \$16,000.

April 11, 1977 - Day Camp expanded to include Robinwood Lane, along with the Park and West Blvd. Elementary from June 20th-July 29th with a fee set at \$12.00/child. Day Camp Personnel: Director Marilou Bonte at \$120/week, Supervisors at 90.00/week: Barbara Douglass, Gail George, Joyce Mistovich. Counselors at 70.00/week: Georgette Adams, Patricia Ann Baughman, Lynn A. D’Amico, Phyllis J. D’Apolito, Judith Friedman, Nancy Gibson, Beth Greenblatt, Betsy Johnson, Cynthia McNeill, Joanne Sheetz, Barbara Wollitz, Mary Zickar.

April 24, 1977 – First Band Concert performed at the Gazebo. The Concert is also the first in the ongoing and ever popular “Music In The Park” concert series.

May 1977 – Thomas C. Masters replaces Frank Showalter as a Park Commissioner.

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October 1977 – The first Oktoberfest held in Boardman Park sponsored by the Boardman Rotary Club. The Oktoberfest evolved into the largest one-day arts and craft show in the Valley

1977 – The Park Board enters into an agreement with the Boardman Youth Center, Inc., which allows the BYC to construct a Youth Center on Park property. This takes place after the Youngstown Hospital Association, which owned the building that served as the Youth Center at its original location in Beeghly Estates, 6505 Market Street, terminated the lease, so that the Youngstown Hearing and Speech Center could occupy the premises.

1979 - St. James Meeting House was entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the efforts of Genève Novicky, John Darnell and the Boardman Historical Society. St. James is the only public building in Boardman to be so designated.

June 1980 – the electorate approves a new 0.6 Mills levy for the Park.

August 1980 – Southern Blvd. Entrance. Due to the increase in the number of Park Visitors and the traffic congestion on U.S. Route 224, the Park Board decides to construct a second entrance to Park off of Southern Boulevard. The Park Board negotiates with the Ohio Edison Company and the Youngstown and Southern Railway Company in order to allow for the construction of the Southern Blvd. entrance and Drive. United Excavating Co. hired to construct second entrance to Park from Southern Boulevard to the Main Drive of the Park. Total cost: \$9,940.00

November 1980 – the 0.4 Mills Levy is further reduced to 0.3 Mills.

March 1981 – The first Maple Syrup Festival. The Festival consists of the different methods of tapping Maple trees and boiling the sap in an evaporator pan to make syrup. The Festival also features hayrides and other old-fashioned activities.

November 1981 – The Chester V. Long Pavilion is built in honor of the Park’s original architect. Stitle and Barnes, Inc. contracted to construct the pavilion for a cost of \$20,881.00. Mr. Long also designed the Park’s first open-air pavilion – Edgewood, as well as the original site plan/footprint for the Park.

1982 – The Beardsley-Walter-Diehm House – the Park purchased the House and its adjoining five acres for \$176,500.00 from the Diehm family. Edgar Diehm was a minister, schoolteacher and a Mahoning County Judge, who held court on the Front Porch.

April 11, 1983 – Ex-Servicemen’s Pavilion built, following a \$16,000.00 donation by the Ex-Servicemen’s Club of Boardman, with Chester V. Long as architect on the project. M. Cohen Construction Co. low bidder: \$12,239.00.

October 1, 1985 – The Oswald Detchon House, moved to the Park from its location at the intersection of U.S. Route 224 and Southern Blvd. Cost: \$25,325.00, by Andrew Klempay & Sons—includes full basement. Built between 1840 and 1870, the House was occupied by Oswald Detchon, a descendant of one of Boardman’s first settlers. Additionally, the Schiller-Chuey Summer Kitchen is moved from New Springfield, Ohio, and is added to the Historical Village, which includes St. James Meeting House, the Beardsley-Walter-Diehm House, the Oswald Detchon House and the Schiller-Chuey Summer Kitchen.

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1987 – Boardman Youth Center Closes - Due to financial constraints and a decline in attendance, the Boardman Youth Center closes its doors; and the Park takes over operation of Boardman Youth Center and renames the building “Boardman Community Center.”

August 26, 1988 – The Park District enters the computer/digital age. Park Board approves proposal of Sylcom Systems for the purchase of a computer, printer and accompanying software for a reservation/accounting system for \$5,855.00, (includes service). System referred to as R-Base. Hardware: Cordata ATD-Q-20 computer and Toshiba 321SL printer. Boardman Park was one of the first Parks in the State to become computerized

1990 – The Park acquires 78 acres of property along its Southeast boundary, thereby, increasing the size of the Park to 190 acres

May 1991 – Janie S. Jenkins replaces Philip J. Prosser as a Park Commissioner.

June 1992 – Daniel N. Slagle, Jr., replaces Mr. Holzbach as Superintendent.

September 15, 1992 – Mr. Slagle drafts and proposes the Park’s first-ever Master Plan. Board of Park Commissioners adopts the Master Plan for the Park District. The Master Plan reflects the Mission Statement: “*To provide a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences, and to preserve areas of natural habitat.*” Pursuant to that Mission, the Master Plan called for several capital improvements to be made in order to better serve the recreational needs of an ever-growing Community. Through the support and generosity of the Community, the following improvements were realized: Kids’ Town and Tot’s Town Playgrounds, Maag Outdoor Arts Theatre, Elton Beard Family Cabin, Kenneth Hofmaster Pavilion, Hike & Bike Trail, and connection of the Park District’s on-site antiquated sanitary system to a public sanitary system.

June 11, 1993 – Janie S. Jenkins donates her property, the former Southern Park Stable, which is the last remnant of the Southern Park Trotting Track, to the Park District. Established in 1908, the Southern Park Racetrack was a sports landmark in the area. Southern Park consisted of 55 acres with a half-mile racetrack, numerous barns, a grandstand, flower gardens, picnic areas and a baseball field. Located approximately a mile and one-half South of Boardman Center near McClurg Road. It was the enterprise of Senator David Tod, Atty. David Tod Arrel and H.H. Stambaugh. The racetrack was a popular site for high school track meets and thoroughbred horse racing. In 1986 the Southern Stables was placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

October 10, 1993 – Kids’ Town Creative Playground is dedicated. The Playground is 14,400 sq. ft. and is ADA accessible. It is the first Robert Leathers community-built playground in the Mahoning Valley, constructed by a team of over 2,000 volunteers during a five-day period, and was made possible solely through donations of monies and materials.

1994 – 0.8 mile paved **Hike & Bike Trail is opened.** The Trail travels through the natural area of the Park.

June 21, 1994 – The Park Board adopts the first-ever General Rules and Regulations for the Park District.

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1995 – The Park’s Main on-site sanitary sewer system is connected to a public sanitary system at the Shops at Boardman Park; thereby, eliminating an antiquated leech bed system that was originally designed in the early 1950’s for one building. This project was completed through the generosity of David Handel and Charles Bishara.

November 1995 – 0.6 mill renewal levy passed.

May 1996 – Jack R. Russell replaces Attorney George C. Economus as a Park Commissioner.

1996 – The Maag Outdoor Arts Theatre was constructed. Built in memory of William F. Maag, Jr. Similar to the Community-built concept that made possible Kids’ Town Creative Playground, the Theatre is realized primarily through donations of monies, labor and materials. The Theatre was designed by the 4M Company and Joseph Sylvester, Sr., a local builder and developer, who volunteered to oversee the construction of the Theatre.

June 15, 1996 – Boardman Little League relocates to the Fields of Dreams, a 42 acre baseball complex on McClurg Road, which is among the largest youth baseball facilities east of the Mississippi River. It contains 20 baseball fields and was developed as a community effort, funded by private donations, under the leadership of Clarence R. Smith, Jr. and Dr. John York. Chuck Schafer served as architect. John Darnell was featured speaker at the dedication, with Jim Tressel, YSU football coach, throwing out the first pitch.

Summer 1996 - U.S. Army Field Band & Soldiers Chorus performs for the first-time at the Maag Outdoor Arts Theatre, which also includes a Fireworks display by the B.J. Alan Fireworks Company. This concert establishes a long-time tradition of Military Band Concerts and fireworks displays.

1996 – Elton Beard Family Cabin constructed. The realization of the Cabin is made possible through the generosity of Elton and Christina Beard and a NatureWorks grant by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. The Park is one of the first recipients in Mahoning County to receive a NatureWorks grant.

1996 - Hofmaster Pavilion constructed following the donation from the estate of Kenneth Hofmaster for an open-air pavilion, and the Community-Build concept is used to complete the Pavilion, with the students and instructors from the Mahoning County Joint Vocational school volunteering to help build the Pavilion

1996 – The First Community Christmas Celebration – This Community event includes decorating an evergreen tree, with natural decorations, and a visit with Santa and Holiday music. The event was planned and initiated by Elaine Mancini and Barb Barsch. The Holiday festivities continue at St. James Meeting House, Boardman’s most prominent historical landmark, with some cookies and hot chocolate while listening to Christmas music and caroling led by Tom Ruggieri and Linda Smrek and The Boardman High School Band. The lighting of the Community Christmas Tree

November 4, 1997 – 50th Anniversary of the Park. The Park consists of 224 acres of greenspace that provides a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities for the Community it serves.

May 1998 – Dr. Robert C. Johnson replaces Thomas C. Masters as a Park Commissioner.

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July 10-12, 1998 – Tot’s Town playground built in memory of Jonathan & Rebecca Giancola. The Playground is designed for children five years and younger and was spearheaded by John Burgan and his friends and staff, Similar to Kids’ Town Playground, the community-built concept is utilized in the construction.

1999 – After the Boardman Community Baseball organization relocated to “The Field of Dreams,” a 40-acre site on McClurg Road, the Park acquires the former Little League fields (approximately 3.93 acres of property) from the Boardman Supply Company.

1999 – the Park now consists of 227 acres. Of the 227 acres, approximately 60 acres are developed with a diversity of recreational facilities. The balance, 167 acres is preserved Natural Habitat, which supports many native species of plants and animals, and is an excellent representative of an Ohio glaciated Beech/Maple forest. It is these two diverse, yet balanced uses that truly make Boardman Park the “Green Oasis” of the Community.

Fall 1999 – First Haunted Wagon Rides in conjunction with the long standing Pumpkin Carve-Out

1999 – 2001 – The Park District makes diligent effort to convert the former Youngstown & Southern Railroad Line to a recreational trail/greenway. After several years of financial hardships and inactivity, the National Surface Transportation Board (the “NTSB”) on September 3, 1999, granted the abandonment of the Youngstown & Southern Railroad Line (the “Line”). Railroad Ventures, Inc., the owner of the Line, in its petition for Abandonment provided a number of exhibits which demonstrated that this Line required approximately \$4.5 million in rehabilitation work to restore Rail Service to a Class I(10 mph), and that the last two (2) years that the Line operated generated only 319 carloads in 1995 and 120 carloads in 1996. Therefore, the Park District sought to convert the abandoned railroad corridor to recreational trail/greenway and Railroad Ventures, Inc. was willing to sell the Line for such purposes.

The proposed trail/greenway would serve as a connector to schools, sports facilities, churches, retail establishments and numerous other destination spots in the Community. Furthermore, the trail/greenway would have provided transportation benefits and year-round recreational use for the residents of Boardman Township, as well as preserving 22 acres of much needed greenspace in one of Ohio’s most commercialized townships. Additionally, the Park District applied for ODNR Grant for the funds necessary in order to purchase the land and develop the trail/greenway. However, after a year and a half of both political and legal battles being waged over the abandonment of the former Youngstown & Southern Railroad Line, the sale of the property to the Park District was negated by the NTSB. The NTSB reversed its previous decision granting abandonment of the Line; thereby, mandating that Railroad Ventures, Inc. sell the Line to the Columbiana County Port Authority, who sought to reactivate the Line for the primary purpose of hauling Construction and Demolition Debris from states located on the East Coast to a landfill in Negley, Ohio.

May 20, 1999 – The Myron Davis Memorial Gardens (located adjacent to the Gazebo) established through the generosity of Grace Davis and Roberta Ramsey. Grace and her brother Myron were good friends of the Park and members of the Boardman Historical Society.

May 2000 – Gwen Smith-Darnell replaces Janie S. Jenkins as a Park Commissioner.

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Summer 2000 – First Family Night in the Park. Featuring a band concert, family activities, wagon rides and an outdoor movie.

December 2000 - Holiday Light Display – The Display started with 7 displays and over the years has expanded to 27 displays. These displays transforms the Park into a Winter Wonderland for the holidays. Visitors can tune your car radio to 88.9 FM, while driving through the Park enjoying several light displays that are synchronized to a variety of your favorite traditional Christmas songs, The synchronized display consists of a huge 25-foot lighted tree, four singing Christmas trees and many more, is located on and around the Maag Outdoor Theatre. The entire Holiday light display, which features over 27 displays, is free and open to the public.

Spring 2001 – Kids’ Town Playground – Renovation Phase I – The Playground is renovated with plastic lumber, which is made from recycled materials. The renovation is partly funded by a grant from the Recycling Division of Mahoning County. Renovation of Kids’ Town includes removal and replacement of 2,000 SF treated wood deck material and 1,220 LF of hand railing with recycled material, and the sanding and repairing of the remaining treated lumber.

February 2002 – Denise L. Gorski replaces Gwen Smith-Duffy as a Park Commissioner.

Spring 2002 - Kids’ Town Playground – Renovation Phase II – The Renovation is completed. Again, the renovation is partly funded by a grant from the Recycling Division of Mahoning County.

2000 – Plans for the West Quadrant Improvement project are developed. Due to the ever-increasing popularity of the Park, the concept is premised on a severe shortage of recreational facilities. The plans call for a 150-seat open-air pavilion with attached restrooms, a 300-car lighted parking lot, an ADA playground, and a multi-purpose/bocce pavilion. The improvements will be located on part of the former Ohio Edison Right-Of-Way that was acquired in 1997, and the former Boardman Supply Co. property, which was acquired in 1999. The property is virtually treeless and is ideal for recreational development; thereby, eliminating the need to encroach on any part of the 167 acres of Natural Habitat in order to provide these much needed recreational assets.

The West Quadrant stands on a portion of an adjacent 26+ acres purchased by the Park in 1997 from Ohio Edison Company and on 3.93 acres of abandoned baseball fields formerly owned by the Boardman Supply Company that were acquired in 1999. With great foresight, the Board of Park Commissioners acquired these virtually treeless properties so that the Park could better meet the ever-increasing demands placed on them by the hundreds of thousands of annual visitors; and, most importantly, eliminating the need to encroach on the 167 acres of natural habitat in order to develop additional recreational facilities to satisfy such demands. Funds for this project were generated from a group of community-minded benefactors, two (2) ODNR NatureWorks grants, ODNR Scrap Tire grant, and Park funds.

April 26, 2001 – Governor Bob Taft visits Boardman Park. The Park was selected by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Office of Governor Taft from a four county area as the host site, where the Governor distributed over \$500,000.00 in NatureWorks Grants to 13 public entities, with the Park receiving a \$131,000.00 grant for its West Quadrant Improvement project. Governor Taft commented during his presentation, "*Boardman Park is one of the finest, small parks in the State of Ohio.*" Phase I of the Project consisted of the construction of the 150-seat open-air pavilion with attached restrooms and a lighted, gravel parking lot for 300 cars.

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May 2001 – St. James Meeting House awarded an Ohio Historical Marker. The Boardman Historical Society spearheaded the efforts to receive this Marker. The Historical Society and the Park was awarded \$1,000.00 grant for the Marker by the Ohio Historical Marker Program and the Longaberger Legacy Initiative.

February 2002 – Upon the successful completion of the 1992 Master Plan, the Board of Park Commissioners adopts a second Master Plan. The Park hired the consulting firm of Brandstetter Carroll Zofcin Inc. This was a Citizen Driven Plan, which consisted of Master Plan Advisory Committee made up of 77 members of the community. There was additional input from numerous focus groups. The Plan calls for several major improvements to the existing Park: construct a walking trail through the Park, which would connect all the Park Facilities; completion of the West Quadrant Improvements project; expansion/renovation of the Georgeanna Parker Activity Center and the Boardman Community Center; the exterior renovation of St. James Meeting House; connect the Historical Village to a public sanitary system; the expansion of Parking Lots; and establish a village green and an arboretum in the Historical Village. The Plan also calls for the following: the acquisition of additional property South of the Park; the development of a trail system connecting the Park with the Boardman Local School system, other recreational facilities and neighborhoods; the development of a community/senior center.

May 2002 – Mark S. Luke replaces Jack R. Russell as a park Commissioner.

August 24, 2002 – St. James Meeting House is struck by lightning at 3 AM. A passerby driving on U.S. Route 224 calls 911. The Township Fire Department saves the Historical Landmark from total destruction. The Bell Tower and Steeple suffers extensive damage, with considerable smoke and water damage to the interior. Total damage is \$228,000.00.

Memorial Day 2003 – The memorial to the Veterans of Boardman is dedicated at the Maag Outdoor Arts Theatre. The Memorial consists of a large granite monument, which is inscribed to read – *“This Memorial is dedicated in honor of those who served in the Armed Forces of the United States of America. Their bravery and loyalty defines the character of this great nation.”* Located above and behind the Monument is a bronze eagle mounted on a granite pedestal (donated by C.R. Smith, Jr.), with three flagpoles positioned behind the Monument. The Memorial is connected to the Theatre by a brick walkway.

2003 – First “Supper with Santa” & “Evening with the Easter Bunny” - Families enjoy supper with various holiday characters such as Santa and the Easter Bunny. After dinner, families then make crafts, and take a picture with the character. There is no better way to celebrate the holiday season than with Santa or the Easter Bunny.

June 30, 2003 – First “Adventure Camp” - The Park provides an educational and fun environment for children ages six through 12 to learn and grow by enjoying outside activities. Kids stay active during the Summer by participating in daily educational programs focusing on Science, Sports, Theatre, Arts & Crafts, and Team Building.

September 10, 2003 – Thomas C. Masters Pavilion – The 150-seat Open-Air pavilion is dedicated in honor of Thomas C. Masters, who served as a Park Board Commissioner for 21 years (1977 – 1998), serving as Chairman of the Board from 1980 – 1998. The Pavilion is part of the West Quadrant Improvement project.

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Summer 2004 – The Exterior Renovation of St. James Meeting House – Over the years, time and the elements had taken their toll on the exterior of the structure. There was an excessive buildup of lead based paint, which was causing severe checking and cracking of the paint. Additionally, there were large amounts of trim pieces, moldings and siding material that had deteriorated over the years.

Therefore, plans were made to restore the exterior in time for the Bicentennial of Boardman in the year 2005. With a commitment not to compromise the historical value of St. James, the scope of the work called for all materials to be replicated to the original specifications. The Project also included the installation of architecturally correct storm windows over the Stained Glass windows, and the restoration of the masonry for the porches at the side entrances. The costliest aspect of the Project was the removal and disposal of the lead-based paint that had accumulated over the years.

Fortunately, the Pittsburgh Paint & Glass Company had recently developed a paint product, named “Timeless” that eliminated the need to completely remove the existing lead-based paint from the structure. The total cost of the Project was \$195,000. A capital campaign was initiated to raise monies to help defray the cost of the restoration project. Over \$146,000, was raised not only to restore, but most importantly, to preserve this historical landmark for the future generations of our Community.

February 13, 2004 – First Father-Daughter Dance - Dads and daughters enjoy an evening of dinner and dancing on Valentine’s Day weekend. Fathers who have a daughter(s) age 5 to 12 to enjoy a semi-formal dinner/dance. Dinner is provided along with DJ, professional photo, and lots of dancing.

2005 – The Bicentennial of Boardman Township. The Bicentennial Time Capsule is buried in the Park across from St. James Meeting House, and the Bicentennial Rock is placed over it.

Spring 2006 – West Quadrant Playground is installed at the Masters Pavilion area. The realization of the Playground is made possible in part through the generous donations from Christina Beard and the Mary Helen Furin Children’s Fund.

September 2006 – The Lariccia Family Bocce Pavilion – a Multi-Purpose/Bocce Court Pavilion - This open-air pavilion will provide two (2) regulation bocce courts, which are the first public courts in Mahoning County. Additionally, because of its unique design, a portable floor system can be placed over the Bocce Courts; thereby, providing 5,800 square feet of floor space under roof. This feature will give the Pavilion a multi-use dimension, facilitating programs, special events and other Community functions. The Pavilion is named after one of the Park’s most generous supporters Anthony J. Lariccia and his family. Mr. Lariccia has not only contributed to the completion of the Bocce Pavilion, but also most generously supported the renovation of Boardman’s most prominent landmark St. James Meeting House. In addition to the support of Mr. Lariccia, the Park received a NatureWorks Grant in order to subsidize the cost of the Pavilion. This colonial-styled facility with its lighted cupola was designed by Robert Mastriana of The 4M Company and built by Brock Builders, Inc. for the contract amount of \$205,000. The Park received ODNr Nature Works grant in the amount of \$65,800.

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Fall 2006 – Asphalt Paving of the West Quadrant Parking Lot, with asphalt made from Scrap Tires. The Park was awarded \$100,000.00 grant by the ODNR Division of Recycling & Litter Prevention under its Scrap Tire Grant program.

December 18, 2006 – W. Fenton Meredith Memorial Fund For The Benefit of St. James Meeting House. The Fund was created through a bequest from W. Fenton Meredith, who passed away April 21, 2005. Mr. Meredith was a lifelong Boardman resident, as well as a lifelong student of genealogy, and the history of the area. In 1969, Mr. Meredith wrote and published the book, *Think on These Things: An Appreciation of Historic St. James Episcopal Church*. The work has been credited with providing the conceptual basis for the preservation of this historic Boardman landmark which now sits in Boardman Township Park. St. James Episcopal Church was the first Episcopal Church in Ohio, built in 1828 by the family of Elijah Boardman, for whom the Township is named. The church was moved from its original location to Boardman Park in 1972 and renamed St. James Meeting House, due in part to the efforts of Mr. Meredith. As the Meeting House approaches its bicentennial, it continues to provide one of the area’s most popular locations for weddings and other gatherings. Mr. Meredith’s bequest will ensure that the Meeting House will remain a jewel of the Community.

2007 – 60th Anniversary of the Park – Over the years, the seed has grown into a community park, rich in natural beauty, comprised of 227-contiguous-acres greenspace, which are located in the heart of Boardman Township. It should be acknowledged that through the efforts of past and current Boards of Park Commissioners, the size of the Park has more than tripled since 1947, providing areas for recreational purposes, as well as tracts of land devoted to undisturbed natural habitat which are traversed only by nature trails, and all the while operating within its budget and not receiving any significant increase in real property tax revenue since the founding of the Park District. Of the 227 acres, approximately 60 acres are developed with a diversity of recreational facilities: open-air pavilions, indoor meeting rooms, tennis courts, softball fields, sand volleyball courts, a Hike & Bike Trail, and two of the most popular and unique children's playgrounds in the area - Kids' Town and Tot's Town. The balance, 167 acres, is preserved for natural habitat, which supports many native species of plants and animals and is an excellent representative of Ohio's glaciated Beech/Maple forests and lowland hardwood forests. It is these two diverse, yet balanced, uses that truly make Boardman Township Park the "Green Oasis" of the Community.

May 2008 – John Jamieson is appointed to the Park Board, replacing Mark Luke

May 2009 – Joyce Mistovich appointed to the Park Board, replacing Denise Gorski

2009 Renovation and Expansion of the Boardman Community Center, the renovations and expansion completely changed the facility in both appearance and functionality. The expanded usage provides the citizens of our Community and the surrounding area a magnificent place to gather and celebrate life’s special occasions. The project features: new commercial kitchen, renovated and enlarged restrooms; new HVAC equipment; and the renovation and expansion of the Boardman Rotary Room.

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The seating in the Room has been increased to 120 from the previous seating of 48; the Room was originally 1,380 square and now is 2,100 square feet. The Building was designed by The 4M Company, LLC, a Boardman architectural firm; and utilizes “green” materials for 82% of the renovation. The building was designed to sit in its natural element, while incorporating as much green technology as possible. The Budget for the Project was established at \$1,075,200.00, with the actual cost of construction being \$1,019,700.00, resulting in a savings of \$55,500.00. Tony Lariccia and his family were the first donors to become involved in the Boardman Park Capital Campaign, presenting a substantial gift to the citizens of Boardman. Mr. Lariccia donated \$200,000 to the Park. The successful completion of the Project is to the credit of the 4M Company and all the Contractors, DSV Builders, Tri-Area Electric, York Mahoning and Komar Plumbing, who worked diligently and methodically to accomplish their goal.

2010 Renovation of the Oswald Detchon House - Similar to the problem with St. James, time and the elements had taken their toll on the exterior of the structure. There was an excessive buildup of lead based paint, which was causing severe checking and cracking of the paint. So, it was decided to install James Hardy Board over the existing siding. Brock Builders, Inc. was the contractor. The contract was \$26,540.

2010 North Trail – The construction of the North Trail enables visitors to discover the beauty and diversity of the Park. While walking the new North Trail. The Trail located on the East side of the Main Drive of the Park, starts at the Boardman Park Lariccia Family Community Center and travels North to the Bicentennial Rock of Boardman, which is across from St. James Meetings House. The Trail provides a safe and accessible pathway to Park facilities and to a variety of recreational opportunities. Development of the Trail is according to the Park’s Master Plan and its Mission Statement: To provide a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities in order to enhance the quality of life for the Community. Prior to the completion of the Trail, walkers and joggers used the Main Drive, where they were subjected to the hazards of motor vehicles. Now, they are able to walk or exercise in an environment designed to enhance their Park experience. Via the Eisenhower Branch, Trail Users will be able to enjoy the natural areas of the Park. The Eisenhower Branch will connect the North Trail to the Park’s Nature Trail system located within the 167 acres of natural habitat, as well as the Hike & Bike Trail.

The surface of the North Trail is asphalt pavement, with the Eisenhower Branch constructed of recycled asphalt. The Trail is 8 feet wide and is approximately one (1) mile in length and is ADA accessible. The Nature Trail system consists of eight (8) Trails, with a total length of 2.7 miles; thereby, making the total for all Trails in the Park over 4 miles in length. The design of the Trail includes two (2) relatively new concepts: 1) Meandering - the Trail winds between and around trees, while staying outside of the drip line of the Trees. The purpose of this concept is twofold: first, to prevent root damage during construction, and secondly, to enhance the aesthetics of the Trail. 2) Elevated Walks – the Trail is constructed above grade. The benefit of this concept is also twofold: first and similar to Meandering, to prevent root damage, except it is used where Meandering is not possible, and secondly, to keep the Trail above areas that are wet, which will help prevent water damage. The total cost of the Project was \$314,717. Funding for the Trail was provided by a grant \$148,000 from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Recreational Trail Program, a gift from Alltel, and the Park District’s Capital Improvement Budget.

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2011 Town Crier Readers’ Choice Award – The Park is the recipient of the Town Crier Reader’s Choice Award *“The Best Place for Family Recreation.”* Since 1998 the Park has been the proud recipient of the award ten times.

September 2011 – Marge Hartman’s Paws Town dog park was dedicated on September 1st. Paws Town was the first enclosed dog park in Mahoning County, which is a fenced-in area for dogs to exercise and play off-leash in a controlled environment under the supervision of their owners. Paws Town is 3.25 acres, which is divided into Large Dog and Small Dog play areas, with a double gate entry system. The Park features amenities such as drinking fountains, benches, fire hydrants and a dog wash area. Paws Town is a member’s only dog park. The realization of the dog park was made possible through the efforts of the Friends of Paws Town under the leadership of Jason & Abbey Loree. Financially, the Marge Hartman Trust made a major contribution to the dog park.

2013 - Renovation and Expansion of the Georgeanna Parker Activity Center – After 37 years the Georgeanna Parker Activity Center is renovated and expanded. The project consisted of the following: expansion of the Park Office to include a larger reception area, an office for the Recreation Director, employee lunchroom, and an ADA family restroom. The renovation also included throughout the entire building: new flooring, lighting, windows, doors. All the replacements were with Eco Friendly materials. Additionally, the technology equipment was upgraded and tables and chairs in the Activity Room were replaced, as well as counters and cabinets in the Office. The architect was Robert Mastriana of the 4M Company, and the general contractor was the Joseph Sylvester Construction Company. The cost of the project was \$400,000.

May 2013 - Trent Cailor appointed to the Park Board, replacing Dr. Robert Johnson

November 2013 – The Park proudly receives The Mahoning County Friend of 4-H Award for 2013. In presenting the award Janice Hanna quoted: “As the Mahoning County 4-H Educator, I would like to express my appreciation to Boardman Township Park for the opportunity to facilitate the mission of 4-H at the historic Southern Stables. The mission of 4-H is to empower youth to reach their full potential to become contributing citizens, working and learning in partnership with caring adults, which is very similar to the mission of the Park. The partnership with Boardman Township Park is an opportunity of a lifetime because rarely do 4-H programs have facilities to use as needed, for a wide variety of events for all ages and interest areas.” Over the years, both the Park and 4-H have supported each other in many events and activities.

May 2014 – Josh Zarlenga appointed to the Park Board, replacing John Jamieson

2014 Chengelis Trust – The Park was named as a beneficiary of the Nicholas H. Chengelis Trust, with the funding provided by the Trust designated to plant trees and maintain existing trees.

Dr. James Chengelis, brother of Nicholas, partially funded the Trust. Dr. Chengelis was a strong supporter of the trees and landscape of the Park, as well as the environment. In 2012 Dr. Chengelis had this to say *“When I was in the second grade, and we had a lesson about the brain and neurons; my sister took me to*

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Boardman Park and taught me that the neurons connect ideas and thoughts in our brain and that the trees are like neurons. They connect the earth to the Universe. I still remember that lesson. As a family, my parents took us to Boardman Park for picnics and to appreciate the beauty of nature. I too feel strongly about giving back to the earth, and on a local level back to my home, Boardman, Ohio. I am proud to be from Boardman, this is where my roots are.”

September 2015 - Treasurer Josh Mandel Announces Partnership with the Park to Post Checkbook on OhioCheckbook.com, which sets a new national standard for government transparency and for the first time in Ohio history puts all state spending information on the internet. OhioCheckbook.com recently earned Ohio the number one ranking in the country for government transparency. Boardman Township Park District is the first park district in Northeast Ohio and the second park district in the state to partner and post their information on OhioCheckbook.com

2016 Davey Resource Group Long -Term Tree Management Plan - Boardman Township Park, in a proactive effort to preserve its natural beauty employed the services of the Davey Resource Group a division of The Davey Tree Expert Company. The Davey Resource Group, with its team of International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborists and trained scientists developed a long-term tree management plan for the Park. Over 600 trees were inventoried and assessed. The Management Plan consisted of the following parts: 1) Tree Inventory using the latest GIS and GPS technologies to identify accurate tree locations and planting site locations, 2) Tree Assessment by an Arborist of the Davey Resource Group, the data collected was used by the Park to manage the trees and plan for the future. Each tree was evaluated and graded to determine condition, safety risk, and maintenance needs. 3) Long-term management recommendations such as species selection, planting programs, and a schedule of maintenance activities to keep trees healthy. Summary of Inventory data that relates to tree planting, listing of tree removals and three species recommended for their replacement, with input from Park management, map of Park trees/removals and tree planting specifications and tree planting list. The Tree Management Plan is essential to developing a healthier, safer, efficiently managed tree population and most importantly, preserving the Green Oasis as a viable community resource. Trees not only enhance the beauty of our park, but also provide health benefits, shade, and habitats. The trees in the Park are the foundation of its landscape and provide habitats and food source for birds and other wildlife; the trees are also valuable assets for the community that clean the air, reduce storm water runoff, decrease energy costs, absorb sound and buffer noise, and increase property values. The Tree Management Plan reinforces the Park’s purpose to create wholesome opportunities to live and interact with family, friends, and neighbors, which are opportunities for living, learning, and leading full and productive lives as well as avenues for people to experience purpose, pleasure, health, and well-being.

September 2016 - The Arni Nashbar Family Donates 16 Acres of Natural Habitat to the Green Oasis. The Arni Nashbar Family most generously donates 16 acres of natural habitat to the Park.

The property is located on Southern Blvd. near Western Reserve Road and is a beautifully wooded natural area that includes 8.35 acres of jurisdictional wetlands. The generosity of the Nashbars greatly facilitates the Park’s mission to preserve areas of natural habitat for the benefit of our Community.

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2016 Disc Golf Course – The first nine holes were completed. This was the first Disc Gold Course in Mahoning County. Disc golf is played much like traditional golf. Instead of a ball and clubs, however, players use a flying disc, or Frisbee®. The sport was formalized in the 1970's. People have enjoyed disc golf for over thirty years. Today, its unique combination of challenge, fun, and affordability has made it one of the fastest growing sports in the world. A local committee of volunteers from the Mahoning Valley Disc Golf Association (MVDG) under the leadership of Justin Edwards researched and assessed the interests of the community regarding the establishment of a disc golf course in Boardman Park. The results indicate that there was a very high interest in the sport. Therefore, the nine-hole course was constructed. The Course was integrated into the park setting while not disrupting other activities. The course utilizes existing trees, landscaping, and terrain to create a unique playing experience.

May 2017 – Kenneth G. Goldsboro appointed to the Park Board, replacing Josh Zarlenga

In 2018 the Park completed the expansion of its Disc Golf course to 18-Holes. An additional 9-Holes play through the wooded natural area of the Park. Each hole is densely wooded and provides water hazards and elevation changes, with two holes playing over McKay's Run creek. This natural environment not only provides players with an appreciation of the beauty of nature, but also provides a greater challenge than the family friendly front 9-Holes. This was the first Disc Golf course in Mahoning County to feature 9-Holes through a heavily wooded natural area. The Course was designed by Justin Edwards, and members of the MVDG volunteered in the construction and is sanctioned by the Professional Disc Golf Association.

March 2018 - Unveiling of the Master Plan for the Southern Park Historic District

The Southern Park Historic District consists of a conglomerate of properties that are the remaining tracks of land once comprising this valuable piece of Boardman Township's heritage. In April of 2016, under the auspices of the Boardman Township Park District, a group of Boardman community leaders, educators and interested citizens came together to form the Planning Committee. Their purpose was to develop a vision for the Southern Park Historic District. After numerous community conversations, this community-minded group determined the Southern Park Historic District should: Connect with and interpret the rich history of the Southern Park Racetrack's place in Boardman Township's heritage. Cultivate and provide a natural park-like environment for its users. Provide the community with places for recreational, educational, and family oriented activities. Provide the Community with alternative gathering and meeting spaces that are accessible to all people. Create a new regional destination that is safe, engaging, and unique. The three legacies of Southern Park Racetrack are the Southern Park Stables the H.H. Stambaugh Barn, and the Smith Family Homestead. Established in 1908, the Southern Park Racetrack was a sports landmark in the area. It consisted of 55 acres with a half-mile racetrack, numerous barns, a grandstand, dance hall, flower gardens, picnic areas and baseball fields.

The Racetrack was the enterprise of Senator David Tod, H.H. Stambaugh and Attorney David Arrel. It was a popular site for thoroughbred horse racing and, later, high school track meets. Southern Park was a favorite destination for Youngstown City residents, who traveled the Youngstown & Southern Railway streetcar, wishing to relax in the country while enjoying the many amenities that it had to offer.

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Southern Park Stables, located at 126 Washington Boulevard, was the private training stable for Attorney David Arrel's thoroughbred racing stock. The Stables are one of the two remaining structures of the Southern Park Racetrack complex. In 1986, the Stables were placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Renowned Youngstown Vindicator Reporter and accomplished equestrian, Janie Jenkins purchased the property, where she rode her horses and lived from 1946 to 1993. In 1993, Ms. Jenkins deeded the property to the Boardman Township Park District with restrictions to preserve the Stables and leave the 8.3 acres in a natural state.

Ms. Jenkins in her history of Southern Stables and Southern Park Racetrack wrote the following:

According to an article headlined "Youngstown's New Racing Plant" in "The Horse Review" of Dec. 15, 1915, Southern Park Trotting Track at Southern Park in Boardman Township was "in the country where there is sunshine, trees and an alluring pastoral environment." The inaugural meet at the track, which was the enterprise of two men whom the magazine dubbed "The Iron City Gentlemen," Sen. David Tod and H.H. Stambaugh, both prominent in city circles and worthy endeavors, was on July 15, 1915.

Sadly, Janie passed away in April 2012 and will be long remembered for her wit and love of animals. In 1999 she received the Award of Merit for Historic Preservation from the Ohio Historical Society and in 2005 the Mahoning Valley Historical Society presented her with the Award of Achievement for historic preservation.

The Smith Family Homestead and the H.H. Stambaugh Barn are the other historic pieces of the Master Plan. Founder and owner of Compco Industries and Adamas Lapidary and Gem Shop, Clarence R. Smith, Jr. grew up in the residence at the dead end of Raupp Avenue. After his parent's death, Clarence continued to live at "the homestead" where he raised his family with his wife Rose Marie (Poschner) and operated his businesses. Included at the Homestead is the large and beautiful barn that was built by H.H. Stambaugh. While serving on the Board of Trustees at Youngstown State University, The Public Library of Youngstown and Mahoning County, Butler Wick & Co. and the Western Reserve Port Authority, Mr. Smith quickly became a major influence in the Mahoning Valley. In 2015, the Smith Family donated "the homestead" to Boardman Township, who, in turn, entrusted the property to the Boardman Township Park District.

The Planning Committee has drafted the following Mission Statement for the Southern Park Historic District: *The Smith Family Homestead at Southern Park provides a unique opportunity for its visitors to engage, captivate and educate themselves through exploration of our heritage, our natural environment, and the resources in our community.*

From the Mission Statement the following primary and unique components have evolved:

- A. Southern Park Stables - Reactivation and restoration of the historic Stables and their properties into a working equine training facility
- B. Washington Parkette - Conversion of the existing garage into an open-air picnic shelter with amenities along with establishing the initial phase of the labyrinth of bridle/hiking trails that will meander throughout the District

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- C. Southern Park Promenade - Transformation of Raupp Avenue into the main pedestrian gateway/vehicular hub from which all other activity zones emanate
- D. Nature's Playground - A continuation of the bridle/hiking trails and educational amenities including interactive nature-based learning stations
- E. Cultural Grove - A continuation of the bridle/hiking trails, among a grove nestled with culturally based activity stations, meeting areas, and an open-air auditorium
- F. Smith Family Homestead - Nexus of the District containing meeting spaces, natural and man-made environments

The Master Plan is the result of many hours of diligent work and thoughtful design by the Planning Committee. Members of the Committee: Scott Lenhart, President; Edie Davidson, Vice President; Laura Frost, Secretary; Marcy Hughes, Secretary; Jerry Blasco, Gwen Smith-Darnell, John Fryda, Shannon Holdridge, Howard Mettee, Joyce Mistovich, Chairwoman, Park Board; Dan Slagle, Jr., Executive Director; Joe Sylvester, Jr.; and architects, Ronald Faniro and Frank Rulli.

2019 – The Park sets an all-time attendance record, with 542,870 people visiting the Park. The continued increase in the number of Park visitors clearly demonstrates that Boardman Park is one of the most popular areas for family recreation in the Mahoning Valley. The popularity of the Park can be attributed to our community’s positive response and enthusiastic participation in the diverse and multigenerational programs we offer year-round, as well as our unique footprint of recreational facilities.

2019 The Friends of Boardman Park is Established. A group of over 30 dedicated individuals came together to form the Friends of Boardman Park, who were interested in keeping Boardman Park a treasure in our community that will last for generations to come. They also realized the vital role that Boardman Park plays in keeping Boardman “A Nice Place to Call Home.” They organized as a non-profit organization and adopted a set of Bylaws that included the mission statement: *To preserve Boardman Park as a viable recreational and natural resource by sponsoring educational, recreational and cultural events in the Park, and to raise funds for the enhancement of the Park.*

September 2019 - American Food Forest Donates 11 Acres of Greenspace – The Board of Trustees of American Food Forest donates 11 acres of natural habitat and greenspace to the Park. The property is located on Hopkins Road and is the site of the former Kerrigan Nursery. Approximately, one-third of the property is natural habitat, with the balance being greenspace that includes a variety of trees and shrubs. The generosity of American Food Forest greatly facilitates the Park’s mission to preserve areas of natural habitat and greenspace for the benefit of our Community. The addition of the property brings the Park’s total acreage to 294 acres, with 186 acres devoted to the preservation of greenspace and natural habitat.

November 2019 - State Senator Michael A. Rulli issued a Proclamation honoring Boardman Township Park District. The Proclamation recognized the Park District for its 71 years of providing a diversity of recreational and education opportunities in an environment that lends itself to pleasant family experiences, and to preserve areas of natural habitat, and further cites the adopted Master Plan and its

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Mission Statement, from which evolved a unique and diverse footprint of recreational facilities and programs. The Proclamation continued to declare that the Park has grown into a community park, rich in natural beauty, comprised of 243 contiguous acres of fertile greenspace located in the heart of Boardman, which is the reason it is commonly known as the “Green Oasis”, and whereas, today over 500,000 people a year enjoy visiting the Park and appreciate its endless benefits. The benefits at the Green Oasis are endless... the preservation of 294 Acres of greenspace that provide critical environmental functions that contribute to many of life’s essentials: mitigating stormwater run-off, cleaning the water & the air and returning oxygen to the atmosphere, and preserves 183 acres of natural habitat, which protects many native species of plants and animals, facilitates a biodiversity and establishes an ecological integrity; facilitates social interaction and promotes a healthy lifestyle by creating wholesome opportunities to live and interact with family, friends, neighbors, and communities; these benefits strengthen the Community, transform lives, and protect the future.

Since its beginnings, the Mission of the Park has been to provide the community with a diversity of recreational and educational opportunities, as well as to preserve areas of undisturbed natural habitat. The Board of Park Commissioners and its staff have never wavered from this mission. In addition, throughout the decades they have worked diligently to meet the recreational needs of the Township, while serving as prudent stewards of the tax dollars entrusted to them. Please be assured that they will continue to pursue this mission to ensure that the "Green Oasis" remains evergreen.

Board of Park Commissioners:

Lewis Barger	1947 – 1967	Joyce L. Mistovich	2009 - Present
Atty. Hugh W. Manchester	1947 – 1969	Josh Zarlenga	2014 - 2017
Ralph P. Smith	1947 – 1968	Trent H. Cailor	2013 - Present
Philip J. Posser	1967 – 1991	Kenneth G. Goldsboro	2017 - Present
Frank Showalter	1968 – 1977		
Atty. Frank Mastriana	1969 – 1975	Superintendents:	
Atty. George C. Economus	1975 – 1996	Homer V. Holl, Sr.	1949 - 1951
Thomas C. Masters	1977 – 1998	Charles C. Wedekind	1951 - 1956
Janie S. Jenkins	1991 – 2000	Ivor N. Jenkins	1956 - 1975
Gwen Smith-Darnell	2000 – 2002	John E. Holzbach	1975 - 1992
Jack R. Russell	1996 – 2002	Daniel N. Slagle, Jr.	1992 - Present
Robert C. Johnson	1998 – 2013		
Denise L. Gorski	2002 – 2008		
Mark S. Luke	2002 – 2008		
John L. Jamieson	2008 – 2014		

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History of Public Grants:

- **1996: ODNR NatureWorks Grant No. MAHO-001 - \$85,000.00 - the East Quadrant Improvement Project, which made possible the construction of the Elton Beard Cabin,**
- **2001: ODNR Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant No. 39-01244 - \$132,000 - the initial West Quadrant Improvement Project Phase I, which made possible the construction of the 150-seat open-air Thomas C. Masters Pavilion with attached restrooms and a lighted gravel parking lot for 300 cars,**
- **2005: ODNR NatureWorks Grant – No. MAHO-022 - \$65,853 - West Quadrant Project Phase III, which made possible the construction of a Multi-Purpose/Bocce Court Pavilion,**
- **2001 and 2002: The Park District has received two (2) reimbursement grants - \$100,000 - from the Recycling Division of Mahoning County to renovate Kids’ Town Creative Playground with lumber made from recycled materials,**
- **2006: ODNR Division of Recycling & Litter Prevention - \$100,000 – Scrap Tire Grant, which made possible the asphalt paving of the 300-car West Quadrant Parking Lot.**
- **2010: ODNR Recreational Trail Program - \$148,000 – North Trail project**