

Year-end Mailing Schedule

Yep! 2022 is coming to an end pretty darn quick, so it's time we get busy and start wrapping up the year! That means your year-end packet, which includes your 2023 motor vehicle permit, will arrive in your mailbox in just a few weeks. We can use your help making this year-end project as seamless as possible!




1. To ensure you receive your packet in a timely manner make sure your mailing address is up-to-date. You can check this yourself by logging into your MIP account and navigating to the "My Profile" tab in the upper right hand corner of your home page. Click on "Contact Information" in the drop down menu, make changes if needed, and hit "save".
2. Make sure your volunteer hours are up-to-date. We'll accept 2022 hours anytime, but they are most useful to the park district if they are entered before the end of the year. This will ensure the data is included in the Great Parks Annual Report which we can then leverage for future grant dollars. If your hours come in after the end of the year, you will still get credit for them but Great Parks cannot include them in grant applications or community-building efforts. In other words, turning in late hours is great for you but a big whomp-whomp for Great Parks!
3. The question comes up over and over again - how many hours do I need to turn in to remain an active volunteer? The answer is - we do not have a minimum hour requirement. As long as you are actively engaged in the organization, you are still an important member of our team. However, if we notice you do not have hours turned in your volunteer engagement team will most likely reach out to you via phone or email to make sure everything is a-o-k!
4. We are permanently lowering recreation card requirements. If you contributed 50 hours of service in 2022 you will receive one 2023 recreation card. If you contributed 250 service hours in 2022 you will receive two. 2022 recreation cards will expire at the end of this year so if you have any punches left, use them up soon.
5. Your year-end packet will contain one 2023 motor vehicle permit and one 2023 time sheet along with other fun stuff.
6. Check out the year-end schedule below -
 - Today: Catch up on recording your volunteer hours and make sure your mailing address is up-to-date
 - Friday, December 9: Packets with 2023 MVPs are mailed
 - Friday, January 6: 2023 recreation cards are mailed. **To avoid delays, be sure all of your hours are in no later than December 31!**
 - Friday, January 6: You may begin requesting second motor vehicle permits. Don't forget, second motor vehicle permits are for your use only and are not meant to be shared with others.



NOVEMBER BLOG

Closer Than You Might Think: Animal Relatives
<https://blog.greatparks.org/2022/09/closer-than-you-might-think-animal-relatives/>

CONNECT WITH GREAT PARKS

 facebook.com/GreatParksHC
 twitter.com/greatparks
 instagram.com/great_parks

Volunteer Spotlight



Denise Olden

Years of Service—10

What is your favorite Great Park and why? Sharon Woods. Not only is it close to my home, it offers several hiking routes, the serenity of the lake, and waterfalls along the Gorge. Experiencing every season is a delight.

What is your favorite volunteer activity? Helping with the Winter Hike Series. It's great to meet other hearty souls that don't let Cincinnati weather get in the way of enjoying nature.

When you're not at Great Parks, where might we find you? For the last 3 years, I've volunteered for the National Park Service. This involves a 2-3 month commitment at a park or National Wildlife Refuge. I meet people from all over the world that love our National Park treasures.

What are you most excited about right now? I recently joined the Great Parks team as an employee at Sharon Woods. What a great group of people who are teaching me new skills! This gives me more opportunities to interact with visitors and share my enthusiasm for nature.

November Volunteer Opportunities

For all Stew Crew projects - participants should bring work gloves, hand sanitizer, insect repellent, water, snacks and wear long pants, boots or sturdy shoes. Tools will be provided.

Link to parks and park maps (where you can find meeting locations)—<https://www.greatparks.org/parks>

Link to record your service hours—<https://app.betterimpact.com/Login/Login>

In order to make different volunteer opportunities more noticeable we will be color coding projects and programs based on their department. Please refer to the key below:

Conservation & Parks—green

Education & Events—blue

Special Events—dark blue

Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods

Wed 11/2, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Come out to Sharon Woods to help remove invasive shrub species along a rest-room access trail from the Hike-Bike Trail. Learn what invasive plants could be present in your backyards and how to properly remove them. Meet at the Lakeside Lodge parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Stephen at jstephen@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew—Sharon Woods \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Winton Woods

Fri 11/4, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Invasive species removal is an important part of keeping our natural areas healthy. Help us remove honeysuckle around the Cherry Hill Shelter which will encourage growth of native wild flowers. Meet at Cherry Hill Shelter off of Golf View Rd. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Reagan Farmer at rfarmer@greatparks.org or phone 513-267-5263. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew—Winton Woods \[C&P/Central\]](#)

Dorothy Kranz Memorial Bed Planting at Withrow Nature Preserve

Sat 11/5, 9 a.m. – noon

Over 40 years ago, Dorothy Kranz founded the volunteer program at Great Parks! Help us give her memorial garden some TLC by planting native pollinator plugs. This will also be a great opportunity to learn more about how you can include native plants in your own landscape. Meet at the Withrow Nature Preserve parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jeremy Barkley at jbarkley@greatparks.org or by phone 724-814-1008. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew—Withrow \[C&P/East\]](#)

1800's Harvest Jamboree at Shawnee Lookout

Sat 11/5 & Sun 11/6, noon – 5:30 p.m.

Join park guests as they enjoy a historic jubilee from 19th century Ohio. Guests will enjoy traditional foods, frontier festivities, tomahawk tossing and pioneer games. Volunteers will welcome guests, handout food and facilitate games. Meet at the Historic Building Area. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jack Fogle at jfogle@greatparks.org or phone 513-258-7643. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Interpreter Events—Shawnee Lookout \[Edu & Events/West\]](#)

Landscaping at Woodland Mound

Mon 11/7, 10 a.m. – noon

Come out to Woodland Mound and assist us in making our Seasongood Visitor Center look beautiful by pruning low hanging branches from landscape beds and memorial trees. Meet at the Seasongood parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/list. For questions, contact Elissa Oliveira at Eoliveira@greatparks.org or by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew](#)

[Crew–Woodland Mound \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Newberry Wildlife Sanctuary

Tue 11/8, 9 a.m. – noon

Newberry Wildlife Sanctuary is a state-dedicated natural area. These 100 acres are home to a variety of plant and animal species that live among waterfalls and wooded hillsides. We need your help clearing honeysuckle from this high-value area. Meet at Newberry Sanctuary, 5300 Sheits Road. Park at the bend in the road close to 275. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Paul Steuer at psteuer@greatparks.org or phone 513-260-1124. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–](#)

[Newberry \[C&P/Central\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods

Wed 11/9, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Come out to Sharon Woods and help remove invasive shrub species along a restroom access trail from the Hike-Bike Trail. Learn what invasive plants could be present in your backyards and how to properly remove them. Meet at the Lakeside Lodge parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Stephen at jstephen@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Sharon Woods \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Fernbank Park

Thu 11/10, 9 – 11 a.m.

Think about your favorite part of a hike – is it the wildlife, the peaceful calm of the woods, the fresh air? Maybe it's birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Come help us tackle destructive invasives and keep our trails great for future generations to enjoy. Meet at Sycamore Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew](#)

[Crew–Fernbank \[C&P/West\]](#)

Vine Clearing at Werk Road

Fri 11/11, 9 a.m. – noon

Come check out one of the latest West-side additions to Great Parks and better the area in the process! Help us clear invasive plants and create space for native species to grow! Meet at Werk Road property, 2918 Werk Rd. There are no parking spaces available on the property so park on McKinley Avenue and walk in to meet at the old barn. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up.

[Stew Crew–Werk Rd \[C&P/West\]](#)

Litter Pickup at Woodland Mound

Wed 11/16, 10 a.m. – noon

We need your help to keep our parks beautiful and free of litter. Come out to Woodland Mound and assist us in picking up trash that was left behind in our woods and on our Parours trail. Litter grabbers and supplies will be provided. Meet at the Weston Shelter parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/list. For questions, contact Elissa Oliveira at Eoliveira@greatparks.org or by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up.

[Stew Crew–Woodland Mound \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods

Wed 11/16, 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Come out to Sharon Woods to help remove invasive shrub species along a restroom access trail from the Hike-Bike Trail. Learn what invasive plants could be present in your backyards and how to properly remove them. Meet at the Lakeside Lodge parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Stephen at jstephen@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Sharon Woods](#)

[\[C&P/East\]](#)

Controlled Burn Preparation at Glenwood Gardens

Thu 11/17, 9 a.m. – noon

Help us cut back woody plants from a future prescribed burn area. Meet at the Glenwood Gardens Maintenance Building, 377 Sheffield Rd. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Shaun McClary at smccclary@greatparks.org or phone 513-869-9525. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Glenwood](#)

[Gardens \[C&P/Central\]](#)

Holiday on the Farm at Parky's Farm

Thu 11/17 – Sun 12/18 (Thu, Fri, Sat & Sun), 5 – 9 p.m.

Mon 12/19 – Thu 12/23 (Mon – Fri), 5 – 9 p.m.

Join us for Parky's Inaugural Holiday on the Farm event. Guests will stroll a Christmas Tree Trail, enjoy festive lights while taking a wagon ride, sip on adult beverages in a beer garden and warm up inside while listening to carolers, or outside while roasting marshmallows around a toasty camp fire.

And of course, Santa will be on hand for photos with young and old alike! We need lots of help to make this event a success. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jamie Piccola at jpiccola@greatparks.org or phone 513-245-7478. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Special Events–Holiday on the Farm \[Edu & Events/Central\]](#)

Invasive Plant Removal at Mitchell Memorial Forest Fri 11/18, 9 – 11 a.m.

Volunteers and staff will be removing invasive plant species from Mitchell Memorial Forest. The main focus will be working on invasive plants in higher-quality natural areas near the Mountain Bike Trail to help preserve the beauty of these forested hills. Meet at the Mitchell Memorial Forest Maintenance Building. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Gregor Bundy at gbundy@greatparks.org or phone 513-658-2577. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Mitchell Memorial \[C&P/West\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Miami Whitewater Forest Fri 11/18, 9 – 11 a.m.

Tall Grass Prairie Trail features a beautiful boardwalk and a winding trail through a prairie full of native plants. Help us remove invasive honeysuckle and Autumn olive along the trail. Meet at Tallgrass Prairie Trail parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or phone 513-910-5067. For volunteers ages 18 and up. [Stew Crew–Miami Whitewater \[C&P/West\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Winton Woods Fri 11/18, noon – 2 p.m.

Come help us remove invasive honeysuckle, which grows densely and out-competes many of our native species so they are unable to thrive. It's also a great way to get outside and explore our parks! Meet at the Cherry Hill Shelter off of Golf View Rd. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hayley Miner at hminer@greatparks.org or phone 513-340-8033. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Winton Woods \[C&P/Central\]](#)

All Things Autumn at Glenwood Gardens Sat 11/19, noon – 4:30 p.m.

Fall is finally here! Come and help our guests enjoy a Fall stroll, relax at the campfire, play games, learn about nature and try Fall crafts. Activities will be ongoing so guests can explore at their own pace. Meet at the Garden Loop Trail. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Ellen Meehan at emeehan@greatparks.org or phone 513-728-3638. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Interpreter Programs–Glenwood Gardens \[Edu & Events/Central\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Fernbank

Tue 11/22, 9 – 11 a.m.

Think about your favorite part of a hike – is it the wildlife, the peaceful calm of the woods, the fresh air? Maybe it's birdwatching or seeing some nice spring wildflowers? Come help us tackle destructive invasive plants and keep our trails great for future generations to enjoy. Meet at Sycamore Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-296-7465. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Fernbank \[C&P/West\]](#)

Timberlakes Tree Planting at Miami Whitewater Sun 11/27, noon – 2 p.m.

Recently a large section of the Timberlakes trail was re-routed to create a new and more sustainable section. Join us as we plant small trees and shrubs on the bare, decommissioned part of the trail. This will be a great project to come back and look at for years to come. Meet at Timberlakes Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact AJ Norton at anorton@greatparks.org or phone 513-910-5067. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Miami Whitewater \[C&P/West\]](#)

Invasive Plant Removal at Withrow Nature Preserve Mon 11/28, 9 a.m. – noon

Come out and help us remove invasive species along Trout Lily Trail. Invasive species threaten the ecosystem by diminishing biodiversity and taking away resources from native species. Meet at the Withrow Nature Preserve parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/list. For questions, contact Elissa Oliveira at Eoliveira@greatparks.org or by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Withrow \[C&P/East\]](#)



Volunteers getting in the weeds at the Shaker Trace Nursery!

Great Parks Team—

Great Parks is thrilled to announce the launch of Find Your Wild, a new campaign and a tagline to inspire the region with unique experiences to enjoy throughout our system of 22 parks and preserves. Find Your Wild is the first big step toward modernizing the identity of Great Parks.



We are also proud to unveil one of the most visible elements of the new Great Parks identity, our new acorn mark, a bold and iconic visualization of the promise and possibilities available from the nearly 18,000 acres of land at Great Parks. The acorn design represents the seeds of change Greats Parks is planting for the community and the future. It can be interpreted as hills, trees, or water, with a unique, nature-based personal takeaway for every guest.

If you attended the Volunteer Meeting on October 6, you’ve already heard a lot about this new campaign. There will be much more to share in the coming weeks and months. Keep an eye on the GrapeVINE and those Fantastic Friday emails for more information!

FAQS: New Seed, New Story.

What is Find Your Wild? Find Your Wild is our new tagline. It is initially being launched with Find Your Wild program-ming and a marketing campaign. A new website, FindYourWild.com will also be launching. The website will include inspiring and new ways for users to enjoy our destinations. Greatparks.org will continue to be the primary source of Great Parks information.

How much will this cost? The new brand strategy was accounted for in the park district’s budget and is only a small part of the significant investment approved by voters. Items impacted by the new brand strategy are already accounted for in the current park district operational model which requires ongoing replacement of branded items including but not limited to signage, uniforms, and printed materials.

Why do we need this? To develop consistent imagery and messaging that connects with our community and to those who are not aware of who we are and what we provide.

Tell me more about the acorn mark. Our new acorn mark is only one part of a much larger, refreshed, and modern-ized brand identity. The acorn represents the seeds of change that are within our hands. The acorn incorporates visuals of hills, trees, waves, and other natural imagery.

Is Great Parks getting a new name? Not at this time. Extensive consideration has gone into the brand strategy and we are excited to refocus and move forward with a new mark, tagline and identity as we continue to deliver on our master plan priorities.

Why now? The process to develop a brand strategy was an outcome from our master planning process. Then, when the pandemic hit, and our visitation numbers soared, it became even more clear that we needed to re-think our strategy. Establishing a solid brand is also a strategic business practice prioritized by successful public & private entities that serve a large audience.



Shout Outs!

Thanks to everyone for coming out in September and conquering honeysuckle at Glenwood Gardens. We couldn’t do this without Great Parks volunteers!

—Shaun McClary, Conservation and Parks Technician at Glenwood Gardens.

Hello Wonderful Volunteers:

We are sending a very special thank you to all of you for your contributions of time, spirit, and enthusiasm for our latest Storybook Weekend, The Very Hungry Caterpillar. Young and old alike appreciated the effort each of you gave. This was evident by their smiles, joyful participation, and their embracing a sense of wonder. Thanks again and Best Wishes!

—Susan Sumner, Central Region Interpreter

2022 Volunteer Celebration Event!

September 22, 2022

Thank you to everyone who came out to celebrate with us! It was so great to see everyone all together again. It goes without saying that we could not accomplish everything we do at Great Parks without each and every one of you.

A special thank you and congratulations to our 2022 Award Recipients! We are so grateful and proud to have you on our team. Check out more photos from the event [here!](#)

40 years of service

Marjie Becus

35 years of service

None this year!

30 years of service

Valerie Dauwe

25 years of service

Clara Howe

20 years of service

Jim Doerger

Mindy Gelhausen

Barb Gerwe

Todd Houston

Nancy Jones

Chuck Kowzan

Eileen Lackey

Amy Weightman

15 years of service

Gordon Allen

Kathy Argo

Brian Bamberger

Phil Bross

Cheryl Brown

Tracy Brumett

Linda Bruner

Ken Croll

Bill Curtis

Gia Giammarinaro

Ernie Gilkeson

Mary Gilkeson

Caroline Hesse

Tom Rauck

Kathy Siegroth

Sharon Spitznagel

Jon Walters

Troy Warnken

10 years of service

David Carter

Janice Carter

Michael Draper

Steve Dressing

Dennis Gentry

Wain Graman

Bob Hinklin

John Mercurio

Denise Olden

Del Pickett

Jo Ann Schweitzer

Steve Schweitzer

Tracie Sergent

Jean Stead

Tom Thoman

Bruce Wainz

