Martin Luther King Day of Service

Joe Von Allmen, Volunteer Engagement Specialist

The history behind Martin Luther King Day as a federal holiday is a testament to perseverance just as much as Martin Luther King Jr. was. The call for a holiday to commemorate the civil rights leader followed almost immediately after his assassination in 1968, but the bill as an official federal holiday wouldn’t be signed until 1983.

Some states celebrated much earlier than others, while some resisted. In efforts to avoid using Dr. King’s name, states decided to pair the holiday with others such as “Civil Rights Day.” Some states even went as far as combining it with “Robert E. Lee Day”. But these states were no match for the persistent advocates for Dr. King as now it is fully recognized around the country as the only federal holiday that is also a National Day of Service.

Those who championed the success of MLK Day fought long and hard to make sure there was recognition for the man who inspired so many. John Conyers first proposed the bill in 1968 and continued to do so every year until it was eventually voted on and passed. Stevie Wonder used his aptitude for music and celebrity status to gain support of people all over the country by including a tribute to Dr. King on his album “Hotter Than July.” Coretta Scott King would simply not take no for an answer for the fifteen years she fought to get her late husband the recognition and respect she felt he deserved. She gathered millions of signatures in support of the holiday and presented them to Congress several times. The bill finally passed in overwhelming support with a vote of 338 to 90.

Without the persistence of those closest to King and the ones he inspired, we would not have this holiday and day of service that are a testament of a man who sought to make the world a better place for all.

This year on Martin Luther King Day, Great Parks will be hosting an event at the Nature Center at the Summit where volunteers will be picking up litter and joining together over warm refreshments to invoke the sense of community and togetherness Dr. King often spoke about. We recognize this day of service as an opportunity to remember that with persistence and determination, people can make a difference.

For more information, check out page four of the GrapeVINE!

JANUARY BLOG
Spectacular Spiders with Special Skills
https://blog.greatparks.org/2022/12/spectacular-spiders-with-special-skills/

CONNECT WITH GREAT PARKS
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Volunteer Meeting

We are back in person! Volunteer meetings are a great way to meet new people, hear about upcoming volunteer opportunities and learn something interesting from an exciting lineup of guest speakers. No need to RSVP, just come and enjoy! Bring a snack to share. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Joining Virtually: For the first time ever, we will be attempting a hybrid model for our bi-monthly meetings! So if you can’t make it in person you can tune in live from home! Login information will be shared via email as we get closer to the date.

Jan 24- Join us and Great Parks Conservation Biologist, Jack Stenger, for an animal themed January meeting! Jack will be updating us on many of our different monitoring programs, from bluebirds, bats, snakes, and more!

Mar 21- TBD

When recording your hours in MIP for volunteer meetings, log them under Volunteer Meeting – Training [Volunteer Engagement]. Training hours may be doubled. Drive time to and from the training may be included but not doubled.

January Volunteer Opportunities

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
Community Projects – teal

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

Reminder!

Make sure to RSVP for a project and event before attending, this helps our staff determine tools, supplies, staffing, etc. If you can no longer come let the staff leading the event know. Every project and event listed will have the contact info of the staff person leading the project.

Winter Woodland: Bringing the Outside In at Farbach-Werner

Wed – Fri 1/4-1/20, 10:45 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Step out of the cold and into a cozy winter woodland scene right in Ellenwood Nature Barn! Volunteers will welcome park guests to the barn and help them make a craft alongside a warm winter fire. Meet at the Ellenwood Nature Barn. Volunteers will interact with guests and help with a craft. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Paul Seevers at pseevers@greatparks.org or phone 513-728-2813. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Interpreter Programs – Farbach-Werner [Edu & Events/Central]

Invasive Removal at Fernbank

Thu 1/5, 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? Invasive species threaten all of this! Invasives like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and garlic mustard aggressively out-compete native wildflowers, trees, and other native plants. Come help us tackle invaders and keep our trails great for generations to come! Meet at Sycamore Trailhead. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Hannah Riess at hriess@greatparks.org or phone 513-728-2813. For volunteers ages 14 and up. Stew Crew – Fernbank [C&P/West]

Annual Winter Hike Series

Sat 1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28, 2/4, 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.
The Annual Winter Hike Series is back for 2023! This is one of our most popular programs of the year and we’d love to have your help for one, several or the whole series. Whether you are interested in leading a group, being follow-up support, or lending a hand serving soup, we

Bluebird spotted at Glenwood Gardens
need you! Please note this is an entirely outdoor event, and hikes range between 4-5.5 miles over uneven terrain. Some hikes are more challenging than others and are almost never canceled due to the weather, so be prepared for cold, snow, and rain. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Suzanne Roth at sroth@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-0075. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Winter Hike–Park Name [Edu & Events]**

Hikes start at 10 a.m. **Volunteers must be present for a 9:30 pre-hike meeting.**

- Sat 1/7 – Winton Woods
- Sat 1/14 – Sharon Woods
- Sat 1/21 – Woodland Mound
- Sat 1/28 – Shawnee Lookout
- Sat 2/4 – Miami Whitewater Forest

**Invasive Plant Removal at Woodland Mound**

Mon 1/9, noon – 2 p.m.

Come out to Woodland Mound and assist in removal of invasive species on our new extension of the Hedgeapple Trail. Invasive species are a threat to the ecosystem by diminishing biodiversity and taking away resources from native species. This provides an opportunity to learn what invasive plants could be present in your own backyards and how to properly treat them. 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 phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew–Woodland Mound [C&P/East]**

**Litter Pickup at Richardson Forest Preserve**

Tue 1/10, 9 – 11 a.m.

Come out and help us protect our 413 acre nature preserve! Richardson is the home to some rare native plant species such as skunk cabbage, marsh marigold, and five-angled dodder. Clearing out litter in the area will help our native animals and plants flourish! Meet at the end of Lick Rd. 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–Richardson [C&P/Central]**

**Woody Invasive Removal at Avoca Trail**

Tue 1/10, 9 a.m. – noon

Join us at Avoca Trailhead and help us remove invasive species from the riparian forest that funs alongside the Little Miami River. Meet at Avoca Park (8063 Wooster Pike). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact John Walker at jwalker@greatparks.org or phone 513-272-4131. For volunteers 14 and up. **Stew Crew–Avoca [C&P/East]**

**Nature Game Night at The Summit Center**

Tue 1/10, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Enjoy a cozy night indoors while helping guests of all ages play different plant and animal-themed board games. This will also be a great opportunity to learn about birds, dinosaurs, gardening, national parks and even fungi while enjoying a warm cup of hot cocoa. Meet at the Nature Center at the Summit. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Abbey Ketterer at aketterer@greatparks.org or phone 513-716-7327. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Interpreter Programs–The Summit Center [Edu & Events/East]**

**River Cleanup at Shawnee Lookout**

Wed 1/11, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Shawnee Lookout is looking for help cleaning up litter in our sensitive riparian areas. Winter is the perfect opportunity to find litter in our forests along the Great Miami River. Flood debris often accumulates in low spots covered in vegetation in the warmer seasons, making winter the perfect time to clean up these areas. Hot cocoa and coffee will be provided! Meet at the Shawnee Lookout boat ramp on Lawrenceburg Rd across from the Ranger Station. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew–Shawnee Lookout [C&P/West]**

**Equipment Maintenance at Sharon Woods**

Wed 1/11, noon – 2 p.m.

New year, new tools (kind of)! Learn how we properly maintain our equipment and how we prep for another season of invasive removal. We will be tightening and sharpening our loppers and hand pruners for effective cutting. Volunteers will be working inside the maintenance building. Meet at the Sharon Woods Maintenance Shop (11355 Swing Road). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew–Sharon Woods [C&P/East]**

**Autumn Olive Removal at Miami Whitewater Forest**

Thu 1/12, 9 – 11 a.m.

Help us continue the fight against pesky non-native species. The campground is not busy this time of year so it’s the perfect time to do some work to help our native areas flourish. We will be cutting autumn olive, and other invasives we may encounter. Meet at the Miami Whitewater Campground 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]**
Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods
Fri 1/13, noon – 2 p.m.
Honeysuckle takes up a lot of space in our forest understory where native species could grow – it also keeps us from getting a great view of the forest! We will be removing this invasive plant along the Kingfisher Trail for both the ecosystem and humans alike. Meet at the Kingfisher Trailhead. 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]**

Vine Clearing at Werk Road
Sat 1/14, 9 a.m. – noon
Come check out one of the latest additions to the Great Parks on the West Side and better the area in the process! Winter creeper and porcelain berry are highly invasive choking vines that are taking over areas of the park. Help us clear it and create space for native species to grow! Meet at Werk Road property (2918 Werk Rd.). There are no parking spaces available in the park 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]**

Winter Woodland: Music in the Barn at Farbach-Werner Nature Preserve
Sat 1/14, 1:30 – 4 p.m.
Step into the magic of the Winter Woodland exhibit, warm up by the fire and enjoy a musical presentation by members of the Cincinnati Dulcimer Society. Volunteers will host the dulcimer group and make guests feel welcome. Meet at the Ellenwood Nature Barn. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Stephanie Morris at smorris@greatparks.org or phone 513-385-4811. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Interpreter Programs – Farbach-Werner [Edu & Events/Central]**

Martin Luther King Day at The Summit Center
Mon 1/16, noon – 2 p.m.
Let’s celebrate Martin Luther King Day together with a walk and litter pick up in the neighborhood of Roselawn. Afterwards, there will be refreshments and open house style programing hosted at the Nature Center at the Summit. We hope you can make it! Meet at the front of the church. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. Family and friends are welcome at this community volunteer event! If you plan to bring a guest please register them on our [website](#). For questions, contact Joe Von Allmen at jvonallmen@greatparks.org or phone 513-245-7471. For volunteers of all ages. **Community Projects – Martin Luther King Day**

Invasive Removal at Fernbank
Thu 1/19, 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? Invasive species threaten all of this! Invasives like honeysuckle, winter creeper, and garlic mustard aggressively outcompete native wildflowers, trees, and other native plants. Come help us tackle invasives at Fernbank and keep our trails great for generations to come! 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]**

Tree Maintenance and Litter Pickup at Glenwood Gardens
Thu 1/19, 9 a.m. – noon
Get out this winter and help us with a few projects! We will be removing blue tubes on trees that have grown out of them as well as picking up litter. Meet at the service drive gate towards the back of the main parking lot. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Shaun McClary at smcclary@greatparks.org or phone 513-869-9525. For volunteers ages 14 and up. **Stew Crew – Glenwood Gardens [C&P/Central]**

Honeysuckle Removal at Winton Woods
Fri 1/20, noon – 2 p.m.
Come help us clear honeysuckle from Kingfisher Trail. Our goal is to create a better hiking experience for everyone by removing this invasive plant. We will be creating space for native species to grow up in place of what we cut. Meet at the Kingfisher Trailhead. 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]**

Tree Tube Removal at Miami Whitewater
Sun 1/22, noon – 2 p.m.
Join us in a winter project! Recent mowing has increased access to a natural area at the beginning of the park. This has exposed plastic tree tubes which need to be pulled out of vines and debris. Meet at the Dry Fork Meadow 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 14 and up. **Stew Crew – Miami Whitewater [C&P/West]**
**Landscaping at Woodland Mound**  
Mon 1/23, noon – 2 p.m.  
Come out to Woodland Mound and help us make our Seasoongood Visitor Center look beautiful. We’ll be pruning low hanging branches from landscape beds and memorial trees. Meet at the Seasoongood 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]]

**Restroom Makeover at Lake Isabella**  
Wed 1/25, noon – 2 p.m.  
Help us reinvigorate Lake Isabella’s boathouse restrooms. We will be cleaning and painting them for the New Year. Wear your painting clothes and bring your painting skills! Meet at the Lake Isabella boathouse. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Jessica Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up.  
[Stew Crew–Lake Isabella [C&P/East]]

**Winter Invasive Removal at Shawnee Lookout**  
Wed 1/25, 9:30 – 11:30 a.m.  
Join the Shawnee Lookout Conservation & Parks team as we work on winter tree identification, and woody invasive removal along the park entrance road. Help us make a lasting first impression on the many people who visit Great Parks for historical interpretation programs, animal watching, hiking, adventuring and relaxation. Hot cocoa and coffee will be provided! Meet at the Eagle’s Landing parking lot (former golf course clubhouse). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Alex Hearing at ahearing@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 16 and up.  
[Stew Crew–Shawnee Lookout [C&P/West]]

**Shout Out**

I want to give a big shoutout to the volunteers who came out to Woodland Mound on November 16th. They braved the elements, and thanks to them we were able to remove 10 bags of trash from a dumpsite off the parcours trail. Sharon Brodbeck, Bob Brodbeck, Gregory Voorhies, Mike King, Michael Fink, and Lisa Neumeier were a great help and we were happy to have them out!

—Jeremy Barkley, Park Manager at Woodland Mound & Withrow Nature Preserve

greatparks.org/volunteer
Recycling Continues this Season at Great Parks!

Holiday Lights Recycling returns to Great Parks thanks to a continuing partnership with Cohen, the leading recycler of metal and electronics in the Midwest.

Drop off broken or unwanted lights in marked bins located at six Great Parks locations between December 1, 2022, and February 1, 2023.

Farbach-Werner Nature Preserve: Ellenwood Nature Barn
3455 Poole Road, Cincinnati, OH 45239

Glenwood Gardens: Entrance near the restrooms
10397 Springfield Pike, Cincinnati, OH 45215

Miami Whitewater Forest: Visitor Center
9001 Mt. Hope Road, Harrison, OH 45030

Sharon Woods: Sharon Centre
11450 Lebanon Road, Sharonville, OH 45241

Winton Woods: Winton Centre
10245 Winton Road, Cincinnati, OH 45231

Woodland Mound: Seasongood Nature Center
8250 Old Kellogg Road, Cincinnati, OH 45255

**We ask that ONLY lights be placed in bins. No bags, boxes or containers of any kind!

This is the ninth year for the program that keeps lights out of landfills and gives them new life by refining the precious metals and materials to produce new products. Over the past eight years, over 26,600 pounds of lights have been recycled. The program also gives back to ongoing Great Parks conservation efforts thanks to a generous donation from Cohen each year.

For more information, visit https://www.greatparks.org/discovery/projects/holiday-lights-recycling. For more information about Cohen Recycling and their regional efforts with the program, visit https://www.cohenusa.com/.