



greatparks.org/volunteer

GRAPEVINE

Volunteer Information, News & Events



MAR
2023

Volunteer Spotlight



Jean Stead

Years of Service—10

Who in the world would you most like to share a meal with?

Having read the book "Where the Crawdads Sing" and recently seen the movie, I'd love to sit down with Delia Owens, author of the book. I'd pick her brain about how she came up with the story idea as well as does she have plans for another book in the near future.

What is your favorite Great Parks and why?

I often visit several Great Parks, but my favorite is Sharon Woods. After volunteering there on Tuesday afternoon at the Visitor Center, I will walk the Gorge Trail if the weather is good. It's a scenic trail with lots of shade and has a creek running along side of it with waterfalls. If you haven't walked the Gorge, give it a try.

What is your life motto? "It is what it is." Worthy of a T-shirt, but I don't have a tee printed with it. I've learned a long time ago there are some things in life that are not going to change. Stop fussing about it and get on with living.

Planning Project Update: Werk Road Public Engagement

Becky Osinski, Planning Project Manager

Did you know that our newest park – the Werk Road Property in Westwood – is being used as a test ground for developing a more inclusive public engagement process for Great Parks?



In addition to working with our master planning consultant, MKSK, we've also hired New Reach Community Consulting to help us learn and deploy best practices for collaborating with surrounding community members, partners and stakeholders. We're paying extra attention to finding ways to offer opportunities to traditionally marginalized groups (e.g., low income, minority, disabled) to participate in planning efforts.

These extra efforts include being mindful of meeting people where they are, removing barriers to participation and communicating with them in ways that make the most sense for them. As part of the Werk Road public engagement plan, we've put together an Advisory Group of representatives from various Westwood community organizations, such as Westwood Works and Westwood CURC, as well as groups already working in these neighborhoods, such as Groundworks ORV and Adventure Crew.

The Advisory Group's invaluable insight at our first meeting in October was instrumental in helping refine a plan for reaching out to people, and the public survey that is currently open already has 1,591 responses! The input collected from this survey will be used to create deeper-dive questions for future focus groups and one-on-one interviews and, ultimately, to develop park plan concepts for staff and the public to review in the spring.

The goal is not only to strengthen our community engagement process for the development of the Werk Road park, but to also create an innovative community engagement playbook, gathering our learnings to inform practices in development of future projects throughout the park district.

Special shout out to Madison Stanley (Planning Administrator) and Kara Schirmer (Grants Manager) for getting a \$25,000 grant to help support this!

MARCH BLOG

A Walk in the Park: Trails for Pups
<https://blog.greatparks.org/2022/11/a-walk-in-the-park-trails-for-pups/>

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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 for volunteer meetings and team updates, just come and enjoy! Bring a snack to share if you like. Coffee and tea will be provided. Meetings will take place from 6–7:30 p.m. with networking and refreshments from 6–6:15 p.m. There is always time to ask questions and socialize at the end of each meeting. If you are bringing a snack to share, arrive a few minutes early and be sure to bring serving utensils.

Mar 21—Join us and Great Parks Conservation Biologist, Jack Stenger, for an animal-themed March meeting! Jack will be updating us on many of our different monitoring programs, from bluebirds, bats, snakes, and more! We will be meeting in the Sharon Woods Auditorium.

• **Joining Virtually:** For the first time, 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.

May 16—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.

March 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>

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

Golf—orange

Natural Resources—purple

Reminder!

Make sure to RSVP for a project and event before attending. If you can no longer make it, cancel your shift sign up on MIP or reach out to the staff let them know. Every project and event listed will have the contact info of the staff person leading the project.

Adopt-A-Hole Volunteers at the Mill Race Golf Course

Apr – Sep, mornings one day per week

Are you an early bird who enjoys all things golf? We are looking for volunteers to come in once a week to help take care of the 3 golf course holes they've "adopted." Volunteers are expected to arrive between 6:45 and 7:15 a.m. before the golfers begin play. You can work at your own pace. Work will include filling divots on tee boxes and fairways, along with fixing ball marks on the greens. Volunteers will be asked to attend a small meeting with our golf staff before getting started. Meet at the Mill Race Pro Shop. To volunteer, contact Andrew Horner at ahorner@greatparks.org or phone 513-825-3770. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Golf Maintenance–Mill Race \[Golf/Central\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Fernbank

Thu 3/2, 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Sharon Woods

Wed 3/8, noon – 2 p.m.

Come out to Sharon Woods to help remove invasive shrub species from the hike-bike trail. Also 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 Blaha at jblaha@greatparks.org or phone 513-646-4217. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Sharon Woods \[C&P/East\]](#)

Kilby Road Trash Pickup at Campbell Lakes

Sun 3/12, noon – 2 p.m.

Help us keep park property clean along the scenic Miami River. Volunteers will walk on park property near and on Kilby road to search for trash and other "treasures." Expect rough terrain and be prepared to work near roads that can get busy. Meet at the Campbell Lakes 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–Campbell Lakes \[C&P/West\]](#)

Litter Pickup at Woodland Mound

Mon 3/13, 10 a.m. – noon

We need your help to keep our parks free of litter! Come out to Steamboat Bend and assist us in picking up trash that washes up from the Ohio River. Litter grabbers and supplies will be provided. Meet at the Steamboat Bend 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 Triple Creek

Tue 3/14, 9 a.m. – noon

Come to one of our lesser-known parks to assist in removing invasive species. Triple Creek is mostly known for its four manicured softball fields, but there are some great natural spaces and a fishing pond to enjoy as well! Meet at the parking lot by the lake. 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–Triple Creek \[C&P/Central\]](#)

Woody Invasive Removal at Little Miami

Wed 3/15, 9 a.m. – noon

Join us at Little Miami and help us remove invasive woody species and restore a wonderful meadow. Meet at Monarch Heaven Meadow, located on the backside of the golf course (180 Moore Rd). 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–Little Miami \[C&P/East\]](#)

Soccer Setup at Francis RecreAcres

Wed 3/15, noon – 2 p.m.

Let's get this soccer season started! We will be placing soccer nets on the soccer goals for the upcoming season. Volunteers will be walking the soccer fields, ladders, and install the soccer nets. Meet at the Francis RecreAcres parking lot. 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–Francis RecreAcres \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Fernbank

Thu 3/16, 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Lawn Maintenance at Glenwood Gardens

Thu 3/16, 9 a.m. – noon

Get out this winter at Glenwood Gardens and help pick up sticks. You heard that right! To maintain our beautiful landscape spaces, we need help removing sticks and debris from our lawns so mowers can come through. 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 \[C&P/Central\]](#)

Invasive Plant Removal at Mitchell Memorial Forest

Fri 3/17, 9 – 11 a.m.

Volunteers and staff will be removing invasive plant species from Mitchell Memorial Forest. The focus will be 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Harry Potter Storybook Weekend at Glenwood Gardens

Fri 3/17 & Sat 3/18, 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Sun 3/19, 12:15 – 4:15 p.m.

Join us in a variety of activities based around our story-book friend! Guests will get to find out their Hogwarts House, make a wand, learn some parseltongue and much more. Meet at the Garden Workshop in the High-field Discovery Garden. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Miranda Sadler at msadler@greatparks.org or call 513-771-8733. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Interpreter Programs–Glenwood Gardens \[Edu & Events/Central\]](#)

Vine Clearing at Werk Road Property

Sat 3/18, 9 a.m. – noon

Come check out the latest addition to Great Parks on the West Side and help better the area in the process! Winter creeper and porcelain berry are highly invasive, choking vines that are taking over in areas of the park. Help us clear the area and create space for native species to grow! Meet at Werk Road property (2918 Werk Rd.), there are no parking spaces available 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Invasive Plant Removal at Woodland Mound

Mon 3/20, 10 a.m. – noon

Come out to Woodland Mound and assist in removal of invasive species from 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 back-yards 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 by phone 513-673-1102. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Stew Crew–Woodland Mound \[C&P/East\]](#)

Range Ball Popping Party at Miami Whitewater

Tue 3/21, 9 – 11 a.m.

We will be on the driving range recovering range balls embedded in the ground which we cannot get to with normal methods of recovery. Expelling these balls from the ground is important to our operation to have enough inventory to operate for the season. Meet at the Golf Course Clubhouse. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Mike Uffman at muffman@greatparks.org or phone 513-367-4627. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Golf Maintenance–Meadow Links \[Golf/Central\]](#)

Brush Removal at Embshoff Woods

Wed 3/22, 9 a.m. – noon

Did you know there's more than 300 acres of green space tucked away in Delhi? Embshoff Woods Nature Preserve was opened in 1982 and was formerly a horse farm. Now it's home to several picnic shelters, a disc golf course, and a parcours trail. Help us clean up the area by clearing brush, woody debris, and invasive species from a few areas. Meet at Mossycup Hill Shelter. 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–Embshoff Woods \[C&P/West\]](#)

Bluebird Box Maintenance at Sharon Woods

Wed 3/22, noon – 2 p.m.

Come out to Sharon Woods to help replace, relocate, and provide predator protection to our bluebird boxes. Learn about our conservation efforts for bluebirds at Great Parks, and how you can do it at home. We will be walking through grassland so long pants and closed toe shoes are required! Meet at the Island Grove parking lot. 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 \[C&P/East\]](#)

Ohio Valley Forestry Fellowship Tree Bagging Event at Glenwood Gardens

Wed 3/22, 6 – 8 p.m.

Ohio Valley Forestry Fellowship is teaming up with Great Parks and Taking Root for the 2023 Cincinnati Public School Free Tree giveaway. Join us as we bag and box tree seedlings that will later be distributed to Cincinnati Public School students in Hamilton County and inspire the next generation to plant trees! Food will be provided! Meet at the Glenwood Gardens Tech Center (377 Sheffield Road, Woodlawn, Ohio). To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact volunteer@greatparks.org or phone 513-521-7275. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Reforestation–Glenwood Gardens \[Natural Resources/Central\]](#)

Trail Day at Miami Whitewater

Thu 3/23, 9 a.m. – noon

Trail maintenance is an important part of the way we connect with the public and keep guests safe and engaged while on the trail. As the weather starts to warm up, more park guests will be using our fine trails, and these trails need constant upkeep to stay usable. Volunteers will help clear waterbars, trim brush, and report any issues along the trails. Depending on the turnout of the day we will work on any of the following: Timberlakes, Badlands, and/or Oakleaf. Meet at the Timberlakes 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Range Ball Popping Party at Meadow Links **Tue 3/28, 8 – 10 a.m.**

We will be on the driving range recovering range balls embedded in the ground which cannot get to with normal methods of recovery. Expelling these balls from the ground is important to our operation to have enough inventory to operate for the season. Meet at the Meadow Links Pro Shop. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Matt Starr at mstarr@greatparks.org or phone 513-825-3701. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Golf Maintenance—Meadow Links \[Golf/Central\]](#)

Landscape Revival at Francis RecreAcres **Wed 3/29, noon – 2 p.m.**

Come out to Francis RecreAcres to help revive the landscape beds. We will remove portions of landscape beds and replace with grass seed, paint the playground posts, and plant ornamental grasses. Meet at the Francis RecreAcres parking lot. 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—Francis RecreAcres \[C&P/East\]](#)

Invasive Removal at Fernbank **Thu 3/30, 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 honey-suckle, 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 \[C&P/West\]](#)

Instinct: Woman-Made, Nature Inspired **Program at Fernbank**

Fri 3/31 & Sat 4/1, 4:30 – 8:30 p.m.

From prehistoric petroglyphs and bone carvings to megalithic stone temples and ornately decorated pottery, the origins of artistry have always been intrinsically tied to the natural world and the instinct for creation. This art show, in honor of Women's History Month, will feature 8 local women artists who find in nature a source of inspiration. Come celebrate their work, meet the artists, and bask in the beauty of nature inspired art. Volunteers will help set up, greet guests, cleanup, and enjoy the art! Meet at the Fernbank Lodge. To volunteer, sign up on your MIP Calendar/List. For questions, contact Megan Hague at mhague@greatparks.org and Jack Fogle at jfogle@greatparks.org, or call 513-202-7890. For volunteers ages 14 and up. [Interpreter Programs—Fernbank \[Edu & Events/West\]](#)



Shout Outs

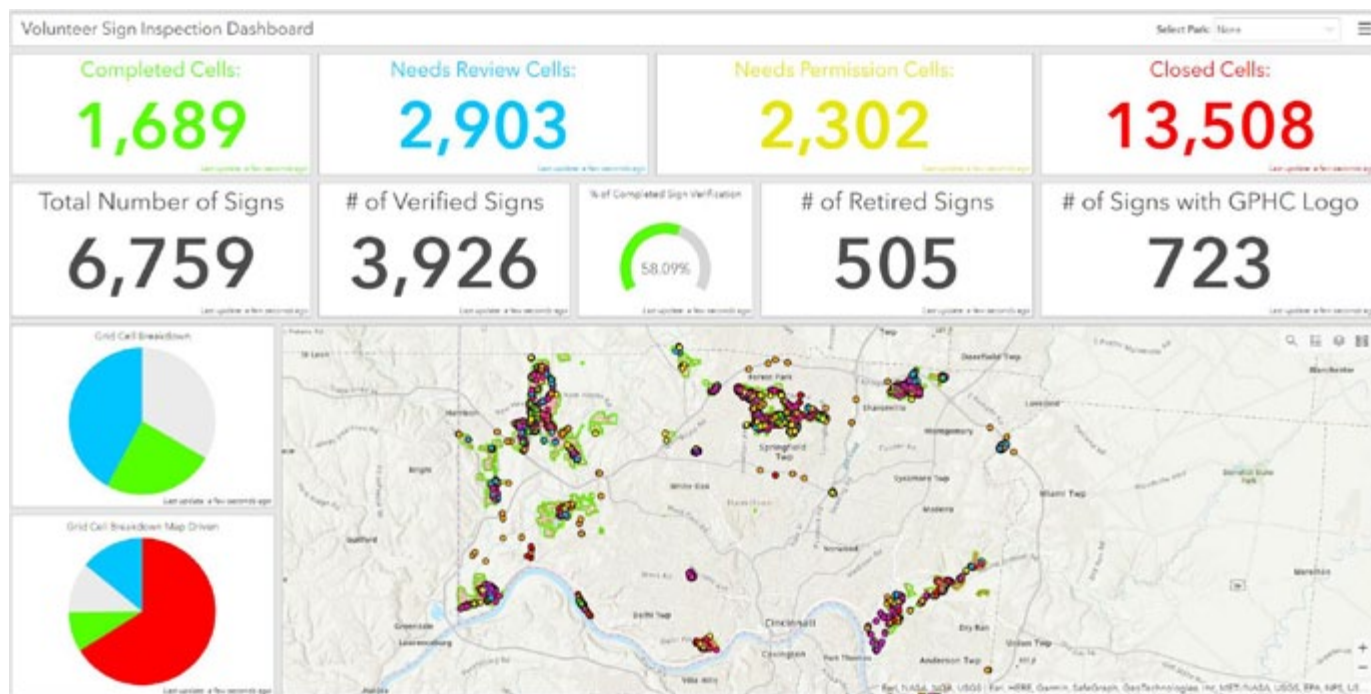
Thank you Angie, Susan, and John, for coming out to help remove blue tubes on trees. When that was done we did trash pick up along Route 4 and at Trillium Trails, gathering 10 bags of trash. I'm always looking forward to the third Thursday of the month, so I can work with my volunteer friends. Thanks for the volunteer work at Great Parks where you can always 'Find Your Wild'.

– Shaun McClary, Glenwood Gardens Conservation & Parks Technician

Shout Outs (cont.)

Planning is almost two months into a new project to take stock of the literally thousands of signs located in and around our parks. An updated GIS inventory of all our signs will enable us to get a better understanding of the number, condition and types of signs and more efficiently prioritize replacement and repairs. This project is being carried out by four amazing Great Parks' volunteers: Jon & Calista France, Elmer Weingartner and Kirk Kavanaugh. Armed with iPads and a knowledge of the Field Maps app, they're documenting every permanent sign in the park district. Since the project kicked off in September, they have verified more than 3,900 signs! The data they are collecting is invaluable to planning and improving our parks, and we're so appreciative of their help.

– Becky Osinski, Planning Project Manager



Empty 2-liter Plastic Bottles Needed!

We are looking to collect around 300-400 empty 2-liter plastic bottles by April 14th for our Out of this World education program at Sharon Woods!

The plastic bottles will be used for a rocket activity where guests will be able to use their art skills to decorate the bottles. At the end, we will encourage people to either recycle the bottles or take them home. We expect anywhere from 200-300 people for the weekend (not including people who only come for the sensory friendly part of the event) so it's ideal to have a surplus of bottles available before the event.

This is a great way to reuse a common trash item! Bottles should be cleaned before turning them in and caps needs to be left on. If you are bringing more than a dozen bottles, please make sure they are placed in a garbage bag when you drop them off.

Volunteers can drop the bottles off with our front desk staff at the Sharon Centre.

