

Park District Farm Column 11 08 2008

The rich color tones of autumn have been drenched in the sunrise and sunset of our recent days and no where can they be enjoyed more along the paths of the Ashland County Park District. The rustle of leaves, the filtered sunbeams and the sound of the winter birds surround the observant hiker along the walking trails.

Along the path deep in Crall Woods, it has been reported, the flowers have appeared on the late blooming Witch Hazel. Through out all the parks, does and yearling fawns may be spotted, chipmonks scamper, squirrels chatter, woodpeckers hunt for a meal and red tail hawks fly above. Black Fork Bottom visitors may even catch a glimpse of a Trumpeter Swan or pheasants at Byers Woods or the Sandhill cranes at Cooke Memorial. Reports from park visitors of their nature finds vary from park to park, from week to week and from season to season.

During daylight hours many of the parks welcome hikers, but be aware the parks are designed for multiple uses and some are set aside for hunting during posted times. Please check the kiosk at Black Fork Bottoms, Cooke Memorial, Cool Springs and Gilliom Cherp for posted hunting hours. Byers Woods, Pine Hill, Freer Field and River Walk may also have posted announcements and visitors are urged to check each time they visit a park

for any possible new information.

Many wonder where to find these parks that receive such glowing reports.

All parks open to the public are posted with large welcome signs at the

entrance. Map spotters are available on the web site located at

www.ashlandcountyparksdistrict.com along with additional information on

each of the parks and more. The park's brochure is also a valuable tool

for park visitors.

The early fall was extremely busy for all the volunteers of the ACPD and

Friends. The Cooke Family Wildlife Conservation Area was opened with the

inauguration of the Golden Eagle Club, (whereby with a donation of \$1,000

to ACPD use of the Cooke bunkhouse and amenities for a weekend may be

scheduled), they had a booth at both Ashland and Loudonville Fairs,

served as a stop for the Farm Tour, kicked off the hunting season with

the lottery and hosted the Pheasants Forever Youth Hunt. They also

offered the Fall Hiking Spree along with nature walks and bird walks as

the scheduled. Boy Scouts utilized the parks for Eagle Scout projects

with at least three completing their goal and receiving their honors.

There will be a November Nature Walk held Sunday, November 9 at Cool

Springs from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. The parking lot is accessed off

State Route 95 near County Road 37 and Lake Fork. The next Bird Walk will

be from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 22 meeting at Byers Woods located off State Route 60 on County Road 1754 in the parking lot. The public is welcome. Dress for the weather.

Looking ahead, there is a Nature Walk at Crall Woods of Pine Hill Park on January 18, from 2-4. Participants will enjoy a winter hike at this beautiful park concluding at the Crall's family pond for refreshments.

Meet in the parking lot located south of US 224 on Twp. Rd 1601 in the northwest corner of the county. A Full Moon Walk will be at Byers Woods, February 8, 6:30-8 with participants taking a short hike and then end at a campfire in the woods. A children's story will be read and hot chocolate will be served.

The Ashland County Park District announces the upcoming Annual Holiday Potluck Dinner to be held on Monday, December 1, 2008 at Trinity Lutheran Church. The enjoyable social activity is slated to begin at 6:00 p.m. and will take the place of the December meeting. Many volunteers will be honored and all will be extended warm appreciation for their part in a successful year. Additional information may be accessed by contacting Director Sam Weyrick at 419-289-0463.

"Thanks to everyone involved in making the ACPD the great and growing success that it is," Tom Kruse, President of ACPD recently shared. "I

urge all to take a break from a busy schedule and enjoy a walk down a leaf covered trail and enjoy this season."