

Column Submission for the Ashland County Park District

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"In God We Trust"

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Snow gently falls, piling high in lanes and pathways and hides the dreary winter lands. Ashland County Park District again offers the brave at heart to enjoy a fine winter walk down one of the paths of the fine parks in the area. While parking could at times be a challenge, dressed for the weather, the winter delights are said to be treasures of the heart. The bright colors of Cardinals and Blue Jays streak from tree to tree, the sounds of a woodpecker resound through the woods and many other winter feathered friends abound within the trees and cover of the area. Dress for the weather and take a hike at Byers Woods or Crall Woods for a treat for the whole family.

The volunteers have worked hard to get the parks available for the public and continue the work to keep them open. Without additional funds and manpower, occasionally, access to a park could be a challenge with a downed tree following a storm or parking not yet cleared of deep snow. Yet, it is amazing how quickly the volunteers respond to the challenge and have the parks readied for visitors.

With eight of the ten parks in the County District open to the public, funds are often on the agenda. The Ashland County Park District Commissioners, Tom Kruse, Sam Weyrick and Bob DeSanto are pleased to announce the opening of a designated account with the Ashland County Community Foundation. Funds entrusted through the foundation are invested to provide a stream of income and preserves the value of the contributions received. They provide growth of principle and interest serving the donor, the nonprofit organizations and the community-at-large. The ACCF is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation that provides a means for people to make gifts to enhance the quality of life in Ashland County and has accepted the grant application from the Ashland County Park District, a 501(c) (3) tax-exempt organization. For additional information, please contact the foundation at 300 College Avenue in Ashland, check them out on the web site at [www.ashlandcountycommunityfoundation.org](http://www.ashlandcountycommunityfoundation.org) or call them at 419-281-4733.

The next public event the Park District has scheduled is the Full Moon Walk planned for Sunday, February 8 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Byers Woods. All are invited to enjoy a short winter hike and a campfire in the

park. A children's story will be read and hot chocolate will be served. Those attending should meet in the Byers Woods parking lot at 671 County Road 1754 and be dressed for the weather.

Plans are also made for the Third Family Nature Day slated for Saturday March 21 from 10 to 2 at 1155 East Main Street in Ashland. The public is invited to join the ACPD and Friends of the Park for nature crafts, artifact dig, tree cookies, bird identification, pet bunnies to stroke and bluebird boxes to make among other activities.

The Park Commissioners and volunteers are on track to open two additional parks in 2009 and are always ready for additional volunteers and suggestions. The public is welcome to attend their monthly meetings scheduled for the first Monday of each month, barring a holiday, at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland. The February meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. and hold a variety of items on the agenda for the year. Be sure to check out the web site for directions to the parks, contact information and more on this vital part of what continues to make Ashland County Some Place Special at their site at [www.ashlandcountyparksdistrict.com](http://www.ashlandcountyparksdistrict.com)