

Ashland County Park District Offers Summer Activities

By Joyce L. Ritchie

The calendar of summer events for the Ashland County Park District is filled with many activities. Members will have assisted at the Kids Day to be held at the Ashland County Conservation Farm with many preregistered youth participating the first Saturday of June. The Western Reserve Carriage Club will convene at Byers Woods Sunday, June 15. at 11:00 a.m. There will be club members present on the trails with their horses and carriages for much of the day. Observers are welcome. The Friends of the Park will be represented at the Strawberry Festival at Polk on Saturday June 21 from noon until 4 p.m. On June 28, a program on the Bobolinks will be held at Byers Woods and on July 5, the Friends of the Park will participate in the activities of Balloonfest at Freer Field and also host a BioBlitz at the Audubon Wetlands.

The National Parks System is offering a National Natural Landmarks Photo contest and since Crall Woods of Pine Hill Park is a NNL, the park's web master Meridith Teehan has already posted participation guidelines on the web site. The information can also be found on the NPS website at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/nnl/photocontest/index.cfm>.

The Cool Springs committee announces with the help of the Hayesville Cub Scout Pack 702, they will develop a clearing for boats, parking lot, and sign. The scouts will assist with the clearing for new marked trails, clearing debris and the making and managing of bird houses. The committee

is working hard for the public use.

Ashland County Park District will partner with Greater Mohican Audubon Society to host Bobolinks at Byers Woods on Saturday, June 28. The beautiful bird visitors from Argentina are declining in numbers. The birds need grassland habitats and love hay fields. Unfortunately, hay mowing usually takes place in June, and the Bobolink chicks aren't ready to fledge until early-to-mid-July. Byers Woods as a closed landfill with its the trash cells seeded in grasses and makes a perfect place to welcome the Bobolinks. An exciting schedule of events for this celebration of Bobolinks includes Tim Leslie, of Tri-County Birders, leading a beginner's birdwalk from 9 to 11 in the morning. Chautauqua presents a workshop on famous writer and naturalist, Henry David Thoreau from 11 to 12 Noon. GMAS members will set up spotting scopes for Bobolink viewing and Jack Laughlin and Sam Weyrick of Ashland County Park District will offer grilled hot dogs from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The day will conclude with Warren Uxley of GMAS and the Crawford County Park District who will teach a butterfly workshop at the beautiful Byers Woods butterfly garden from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.. Please check this web site for more details: <http://gmasohio.org>.

While the Park District has ten parks, a few are not ready for the public either for hiking or for hunting. Information is available on the web site along with maps and basic information on each park. Open to the public are Crall Woods of Pine Hill, Byers Woods, River Walk, Black Fork Bottoms Hunting Area, Freer Field and the Cool Springs Conservation Park. The Cooke Family Conservation Park is slated for Grand Opening on August 16, 2008.

Check out the web site at www.ashlandcountyparksdistrict.com for additional information on the parks and the support group Friends of the Parks. Monthly meetings are open to the public and are held on the first Monday evening at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Ashland beginning at 6:30 p.m. barring a holiday schedule.