

Walking down Memory Lane in beautiful Ohio has seemed to occupy more memory space than usual recently. Wondering if the days of maple syrup were too short, or if the daffodils would bloom before Easter, if the cherry and apple flowers would survive the frosts or if the wild flowers in the woods were out. Days of childhood would afford more time for walks to the woods for an identification assignment, time to just sit quietly and hear the newly arrived migrating birds singing in the trees, a babbling brook or a wild creature scampering away.

My Memory Lane was created while in the course of ordinary daily activities on the family farm. The Ashland County Park District has worked tirelessly to assist in you while you make some memories of your own. They offer in part bird walks, wildflower walks, hiking, fishing, hunting, scenic views, grassy knolls and soon, river boating.

The public is invited to join the Ashland County Park District, Saturday, May 15 to open its newest park, Hopkins Landing. Those attending should bring canoes and kayaks for this special initiation of the park. Coordinators Dave and Michelle Howe will lead a canoe float down the Jerome Fork River to Hopkins Landing. Attendees will meet at River Walk Natural Area located along County Road 1575 in time to begin paddling at 10:00 a.m. Plans are to arrive at Hopkins Landing about 1:00 p.m. for a light cookout on site along County Road 175. Carpooling to return to the vehicles will be discussed upon making the reservation. Life vests are required and water bottles and light snacks are suggested. While there is no charge for this program, reservations are required. A limited number of canoes and kayaks will be available to borrow by contacting Dave or Michelle at their home phone, 419-282-6877. Please leave a message and a callback number for your return call. Program is weather permitting. A sincere note of appreciation is extended to all participating in the log jam removal project along Jerome Fork spearheaded by the Ashland County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Etched in memory I still hear, "Drifting with the current on a moonlit stream, While above the Heavens in their glory gleam, And the stars on high, Twinkle in the sky... Beautiful Ohio in dreams again I see," as my father would croon. With the new park opening, maybe more folks will join in the song proclaiming the wonders of our beautiful state and continue to discover why Ashland County is someplace special and why the ACPD works to that end.

Tim Leslie and Louise Fleming, volunteers with the Ashland County Park District, invite the public to join for a bird walk at Cooke Family Wildlife Conservation Area, Sunday morning, May 2, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This park is located along SR 13 just south of the SR 604 intersection. Migratory birds should be returning or passing through and attendees will learn some identification tips and enjoy both seeing and hearing the birds.

This same day, Sam Weyrick, volunteer with the Ashland County Park District will be available for a wildflower walk at Sandusky Hollow from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Special treats of spring will be observed at this park near the city of Ashland on Sunday, May 2.

The following Sunday, May 9, from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sam Weyrick, will again be available for a wildflower walk at Crall Woods, a part of Pine Hill Park, located in the north west corner of the county along CR 1601 south of US 224 in Ruggles Township. The public will enjoy the later wildflowers in this very special habitat!

The Ashland County Friends of the Park continue to offer many activities, receive fishing permits for the Cooke Family Park at only \$25, annual memberships for singles and families, endowment funds and Golden Eagle Club memberships.

Those wishing to discover more should check out these two web sites; for more about the Ashland County Park District, the location of each of the ten parks check out www.ashlandcountyparksdistrict.com and for more about the history of Ohio's state song, "Beautiful Ohio", check out www.ohiohistorycentral.org.