

Quarterly Update



Foundation
for Geauga Parks

APRIL - MAY - JUNE 2025

New Community Wellness Trail

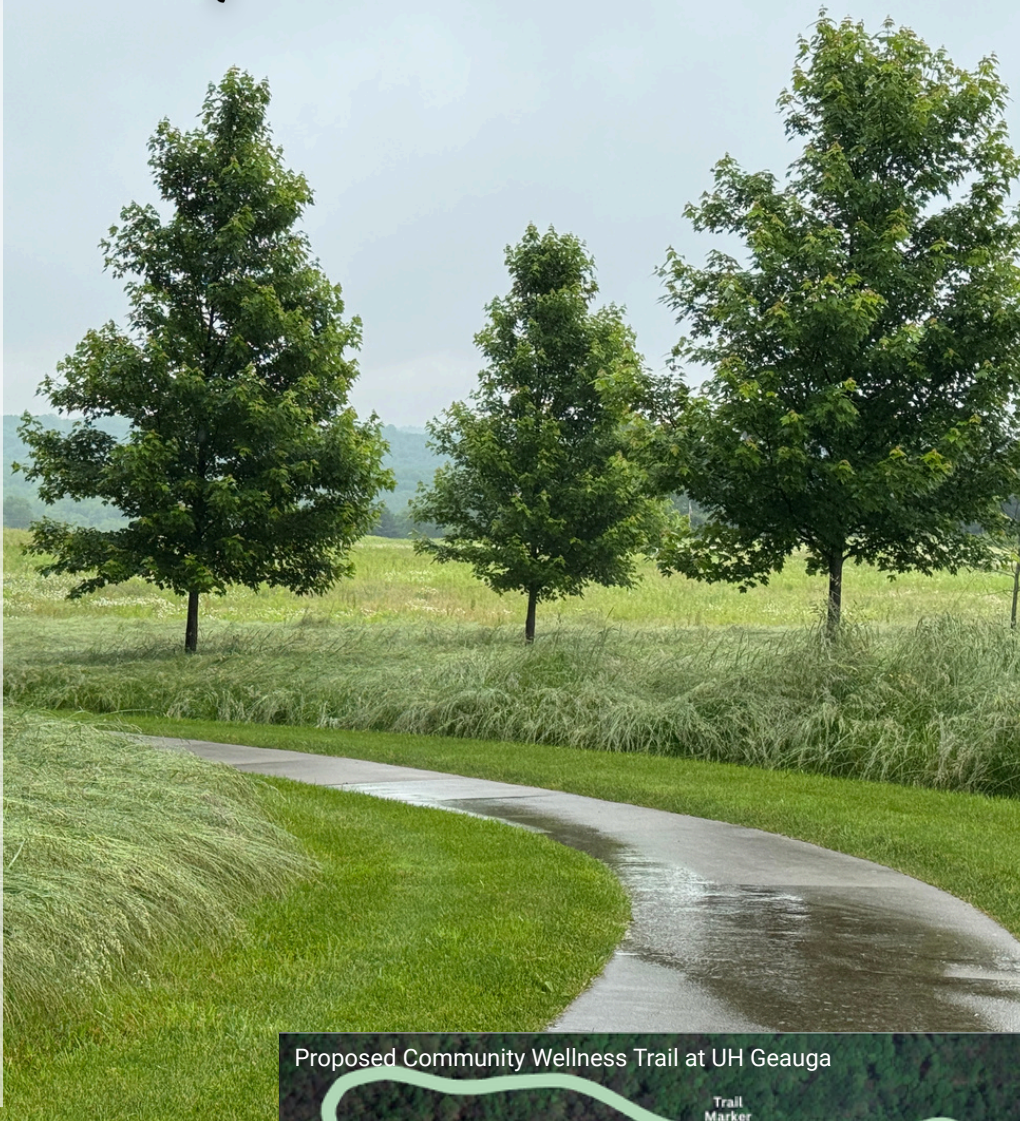
This gorgeous view isn't part of the park system, it's the view from UH Geauga Medical Center.

The Foundation for Geauga Parks is proud to partner with University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center to create a new 0.8-mile Community Wellness Trail—a peaceful, accessible path winding through the forested beauty of the hospital's campus.

Designed for patients, staff, visitors, and the community, the trail offers a calming retreat that supports physical and mental well-being. As UH Geauga shared: "This partnership enhances community wellness and aligns with our mission—To Heal, To Teach, To Discover."

With walking areas currently limited to a few short sidewalks and parking lots, the campus will soon welcome a safe new trail open to all—including 30,000+ patients, 1,000 hospital staff, and 500 nearby employees.

The Foundation for Geauga Parks has pledged \$50,000 over five years toward the project and secured a \$10,000 cornerstone gift from Patterson Fruit Farm.



BIG CHANGES AT THE FOUNDATION

We're excited to announce our move to a new office in the Mayvalley Building in Chesterland—offering better value, more amenities, and improved services.

We've also refreshed our logo (shown at right) - while the iconic Geauga County-shaped leaf remains, it's now paired with a modern font, our tagline, and a new color palette inspired by the natural spaces we protect—wildlife, wetlands, waterways, trees and plants, trails, and parks.

A new website is in design that will better highlight Foundation projects and achievements, encourage connection with Geauga County natural spaces and offer attractive donation opportunities that spark investment.

Proposed Community Wellness Trail at UH Geauga



 **Foundation
for Geauga Parks**
Connecting Community with Nature

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Erin Stevenson
*Advancement
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Finance

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We are so fortunate to have active, involved Trustees! Here are just some of the places where they have represented the Foundation. Our Trustees also work on a variety of projects and committees to benefit Geauga County natural spaces.



Engelina Koberna speaking
at the *Hiking through Grief*
screening



Keith Corkwell at a Nature
Scopes field trip at the
Rookery



Jodi Smoley, Liz Basich and
Erin Stevenson at the UH
Family Health & Safety Day



Carl Brondel, Keith Corkwell
and Eric Sukalac at the UH
Family Health & Safety Day



Marcia Owen and Carl
Brondel at the Rookery for
Nature Scopes



Liz Basich, Keith Corkwell,
Sheryl Vernon and Mark
Sarlson at the *Hiking
through Grief* screening



Mark Sarlson at the
Scholarship Award event at
Blue Heron Preserve



Andy Bushman, Christine
Davidson, Bill Lundstrom
and Carl Brondel at the
Scholarship Award event



David Patterson and Andy
Bushman at the Rookery for
Nature Scopes



Bill Lundstrom at Nature
Scopes at the Rookery



David and Pam Patterson at
the *Hiking through Grief*
screening



Christine Davidson and Liz
Basich at a meetup with
Power of JOY hikers



Hiking Through Grief Documentary Gains Momentum

The documentary *Hiking Through Grief* is capturing attention for its heartfelt exploration of loss, healing, and the power of connection through nature. Created to support individuals navigating the often isolating path of grief, the film offers education, comfort, and hope—promoting deeper understanding and empathy for those experiencing profound loss.

A recent private screening at the UH Family Health & Safety Day showcased the film to a local audience, featuring remarks by **producer and Foundation trustee Engelina Koberna**, along with Patricia Kazcuk, a Geauga County resident and one of the documentary's featured voices.

The film addresses a critical societal need: the lack of emotional support for those grieving. Through powerful personal stories and nature-based experiences, *Hiking Through Grief* illustrates how healing and resilience can emerge from shared journeys—especially in the calming presence of the natural world. Local landmarks such as Geauga County's scenic parks and trails are prominently featured, as is the inspiring "Power of JOy" hiking club.

Filming concluded in December 2024, and the documentary is now in post-production, with plans for wide distribution and educational use. The team is also developing a reflective guide and facilitator's manual to help professionals use the film in therapeutic, healthcare, and educational settings.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUPPORT THIS INITIATIVE?

Currently, the project is in Phase II of its fundraising campaign—"Hiking Through Grief: Moving Forward"—with a goal of raising \$25,000. These funds will support final post-production, marketing, outreach efforts, and film festival submissions. Tax-deductible donations are welcome:



<https://tinyurl.com/yxrfkef4>



The Foundation for Geauga Parks
8228 Mayfield Rd., Suite 2A-1
Chesterland, OH 44026

(Write "Hiking Through Grief" on the memo line.)

HIKE-A-THON

H I K E • R I D E • B I K E • R U N

 **Foundation**
for Geauga Parks
Connecting Community with Nature

June 15 - July 31, 2025



All new this year! Since the cave is still undergoing renovations, the Caveman Crawl - a family fun run - was postponed again this year. We elected to try a new fund-raising event that encourages people to interact with our parks and trails and forms new connections with sponsors and the community.

Individuals and Teams (like the Power of JOy hiking group at left) solicit donations for the miles they hike, horseback ride, bike or run between June 15-July 31. Participants can win prizes along the way. Our terrific sponsors donated funds or provided in-kind gifts and discounts for Hike-A-Thoners.

Thank You Sponsors



Andy & Nancy Bushman



The Lundstrom Family



Voltaic
Software



Sagamore Hill Consulting
A Veteran Owned Limited Liability Company



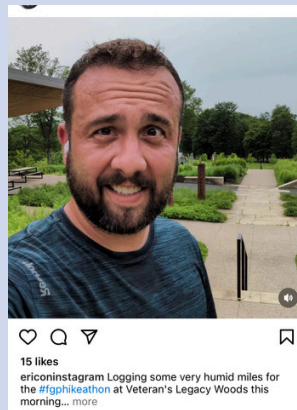
in the bubble
PRODUCTIONS



Seen on social
media:



#fgphikeathon



Looking Forward

foundationforgeaugaparks.org

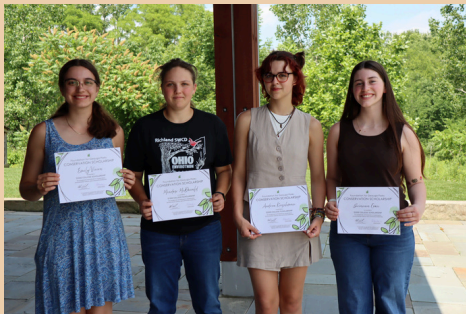
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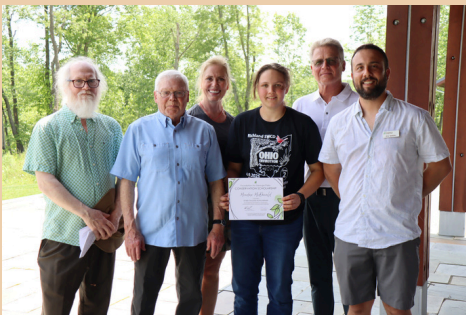
This year, the Foundation proudly awarded \$10,000 in scholarships to six outstanding local students. Selected by our Scholarship Committee, these students have shown exceptional dedication to conservation, environmental science, and community leadership—and are all pursuing environmentally focused studies in college.



The event was held on a very hot day at the beautiful Blue Heron Preserve.



Scholarship recipients (L to R): Emily Vieira, Meadow McDonald, Andrea Kirschman and Seiana Coon. Not pictured: Thomas Wilson and Luke Schaedler.



Recipient Meadow McDonald with Scholarship Committee members Andy Bushman, Bill Lundstrom, Christine Davidson, Carl Brondel and Eric Sukalac. Not pictured: Marcia Owen and Lee Imhoff.

Conservation Scholarship Program

\$2,000 Awards



Thomas Wilson

Kenston High School → Rutgers University

A Nature Scopes alum, Thomas still treasures his binoculars. He's producing a Geauga Parks video and completing a capstone with the Park District. He led sustainability efforts at school and helped Kenston's Science Olympiad team place 9th in the state.



Seiana Coon

Chardon High School → The Ohio State University

Seiana's passion for environmental science started with Science Olympiad. A Nature Scopes graduate, she plans to research water quality and geologic mapping, and was selected for a science trip to Western Canada.



Emily Vieira

West Geauga High School → Otterbein University

Emily earned her Girl Scout Gold Award by educating the public about invasive species. She created a website, hosted events, and completed a wildlife-focused senior project at Penitentiary Glen.



Andrea Kirschman

Kenston High School → University of Indianapolis

Andrea's capstone at the Cleveland History Museum reflects her deep interest in sustainability and earth systems. She's passionate about fieldwork and finding solutions to environmental challenges.

\$1,000 Awards



Meadow McDonald

Chardon High School → Westminster College

Raised on a farm, Meadow has a strong connection to conservation. A four-year Envirothon participant and 4-H member, she hopes to work with ODNR to protect Ohio's natural resources.



Luke Schaedler

Kenston High School → Kent State University

Another proud Nature Scopes alum, Luke remains dedicated to environmental responsibility. He's active in Envirothon, Future Farmers of America, and Leadership Geauga, with plans to pursue a career in environmental compliance.



Nature Scopes

Nature Scopes is a year-long program for Geauga County fifth graders that brings science to life through hands-on outdoor lessons aligned with Ohio's science standards. Led by Geauga Park District naturalists, students explore nature in six interactive sessions, culminating in a May field day where students receive their own binoculars and field guide to keep—tools to inspire a lifelong love of the outdoors. Donations to the Foundation for Geauga Parks make these lasting gifts possible.



Since 2003, the Foundation for Geauga Parks has equipped 13,500+ Geauga County students with binoculars and field guides!

SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING IN NATURE SCOPES

- Agape Christian Academy
- Berkshire Middle School
- Cardinal Elementary School
- Chardon Middle School
- Kenston Middle School
- Lindsey Elementary School
- Notre Dame Elementary School
- St. Anselm School
- St. Helen School
- St. Mary's School

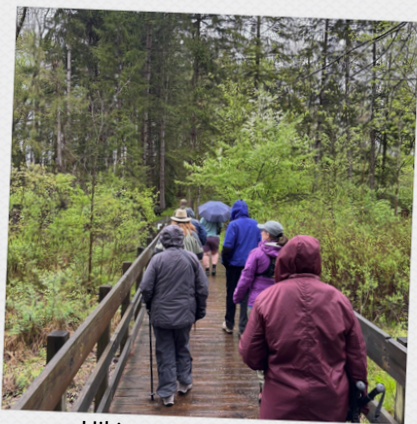


Nature Scopes Comes Full Circle

Two high school interns assisting at recent Nature Scopes field trips were once participants themselves—each brought the same binoculars they received years ago through the Foundation's support. Both now have internships with the Geauga Park District, and one earned a Conservation Scholarship this year. A true full-circle moment!



Explorer Series Adventures



Hiking at Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park for the Explorer Series: Summit Trail Saunter for Wildflowers.



Partnering with Covia Best Sand on the June Explorer Series - Someday Sanctuary for Wildlife.



Naturalist Dan Best leading the Snipe Hunt and Twilight Timberdoodle Explorer Series session.

UH Family Health & Safety Day

As part of a joint fundraising effort, the Foundation was invited to set up a booth at the UH Family Health & Safety Day in June. The rainy day didn't keep the community from attending, and we had the opportunity to inform local residents about the Foundation's mission. We even registered a few new people for the Hike-A-Thon! A big thank you to those who volunteered to staff the booth!



Trustee Jodi Smoley sharing the mission with community members



Foundation Awards Grant for Nature Writing Contest

The Foundation approved a Geauga Park District grant request through our Small Grant program. We approved \$450 to be used as awards for their Nature Writing Contest.

Twilight Untamed

SAVE THE DATE!

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2025, 8:00 PM
The Schoolyard Studio, Burton

Join us for an unforgettable evening of music, food, and adventure under the stars.

Featuring live music by  **SOUTHBOUND**

All proceeds support the conservation, preservation, and development of Geauga County parks, trails, and natural spaces.

 **Foundation for Geauga Parks**



8228 Mayfield Road, Suite 2A-1
Chesterland, OH 44026

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Explorer Series
Guided Outings

**Creating a Cold-Water Trout
Stream**
August 2, 10:00 AM-Noon
Veterans Legacy Woods

Pollinators Aplenty
September 6, 1:00-3:00PM
Frohring Meadows

FREE with RSVP:
foundationforgeaugaparks.org

ROTARY Club of Burton-Middlefield presents the

**Maple Splash
FESTIVAL**

Sponsored by
PRESTON




JULY 12, 2025
Century Village, Burton, OH | 2p - 9p

*Come visit the
Foundation for Geauga
Parks booth at the
Maple Splash Festival!*



Our mission goes beyond trails
and trees. We're investing in
people—connecting kids to
nature, supporting conservation
efforts, and building a legacy of
stewardship that will benefit
Gauga County for generations
to come.

Donate online by
using the QR
code or visiting
FoundationforGaugaParks.org



Name _____

Street _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____

☐ My donation is a tribute.

☐ My donation is a memorial.

Tribute Name _____

Make checks payable to: Foundation for Geauga Parks

Please apply my donation to:

- ☐ Greatest need (unrestricted)
- ☐ Park & Trail Enhancement
- ☐ Nature Education
- ☐ Geauga Skywatchers
- ☐ Bridle Trails
- ☐ Pollinator Program
- ☐ Dan Best Nature Awareness
- ☐ Hiking Through Grief
Documentary Film
- ☐ UH Geauga Community
Wellness Trail