



The Communicator

A Message from the President

The 2019 Fall Meeting and Symposium is another one for the books. As usual, the only thing left to do is say Thank You! Thank you to everyone, ODNR Management, Parks and Watercraft Staff, District Managers, the presenters and the FPOSP officers and trustees. Our membership, Thank you for taking the day away from your park, traveling to our meeting. A special thanks to Director, Mary Mertz, for taking her time to attend her first FPOSP Symposium. We look forward to seeing you and your staff at future meetings. Last year was a great year. Take a look at the Membership letter, our group accomplishments are growing, our symposium and grant opportunities are back. We have even been asked to be a part of the Strategic Planning effort to provide focus and direction for the next three years. Better yet, take a look at the reasons to become a member of the FPOSP. If you need help making a decision or have any questions about the FPOSP, please do not hesitate to contact myself or any of the officers or trustees. We will help any group with any questions or concerns that you might have. Don't hesitate. Join and we will see you at the 2020 Fall Meeting and Symposium.



Group Spotlight– Burr Oak Alive!

Burr Oak Alive! has had some significant growth since its inception in 2011. This past year has been no different. In 2019 they have continued with their Mixers and Fundraising Train which helped contribute greatly financially. The support for their park naturalist included the Arbor Day event, wildflower tarp laying and Spooktacular.

Burr Oak Alive! received the FPOSP grant to help with their burr oak leaf carving, pictured here. It is a beautiful display to welcome visitors to the park. The Floatilla and support for the Bobcat Marathon were just a couple more things BOA are involved in at the park.

Great Job Burr Oak Alive!

NE District Trustee—Lynn Stamp

The new year 2020 has started out on a sad note, the Friends for the Preservation of Ohio State Parks lost Lynn Stamp on February 6th. Lynn's passing has left a void in our organization.

Lynn was the NE Trustee for our group and a whole lot more for the Portage Lakes region. She was Secretary for the Friends of Metro Parks Summit County for 20 years. She helped found the Friends of Portage Lakes State Parks, a Cub Scout pack, a Boy Scout troop and became President of Portage Lakes Advisory Council. She had a passion for conserving and managing natural resources, energy issues and environmental protection.

Coming from a journalism background she was meticulous in her note taking and she would ask many questions to make sure that the information was correct.

Our organization has not only lost a Trustee but lost a true friend and she will be missed. For her husband Lew and the entire Stamp family, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Help Discover All of Ohio's Bald Eagle Nests

For the first time in eight years, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Division of Wildlife is attempting to find every bald eagle nest in the Buckeye State and is asking citizen scientists to report their sightings of the national bird.



“The bald eagle’s remarkable comeback speaks volumes about Ohio’s conservation efforts,” said Gov. Mike DeWine. “With its population on the rise, the bald eagle will continue to serve as a powerful symbol for our state and our country for years to come.

Citizen scientists can submit sightings at wildohio.gov/reportwildlife from Saturday, Feb. 1, to Tuesday, March 31, 2020. Watch for updates of verified nests throughout the coming months at wildohio.gov.

Grant Opportunity

The FPOSP will continue the grant opportunities in 2020. We will have a matching grant not exceeding \$500 for 501c3 member groups in good standing and a \$275 grant to help member groups in good standing with fees to obtain their 501c3 tax exempt status with the IRS. The grant application can be found on our website.

Hocking Hills Visitor Center Receives First Place OPRA Award of Excellence

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) received four Ohio Parks and Recreation Association (OPRA) Awards of Excellence, including first place for the new Hocking Hills State Park Visitor Center, at OPRA's annual conference on Feb. 4.

"The Hocking Hills Visitor Center is a great starting point for any adventure at one of Ohio's finest parks," said ODNR Director Mary Mertz. "It's exciting to see the public's investment and years of work now paying dividends for visitors from all over."

Ohio's State Bird - The Cardinal from the Ohio History Connection

The Northern Cardinal, *Cardinalis Cardinalis*, was a rarity in Ohio before the 19th Century due to the state's heavily forested environment. Cardinals prefer a mixed habitat that includes woodlands, brushes, and open plains; therefore, the dense forest was not ideal conditions for the bird. When the European settlers began cutting down the forest to obtain fuel, spare land, and construction supplies, the natural surroundings became more suitable for Cardinals. By the late 1800s all of Ohio had become heavily populated with Cardinals. Today, cardinals live in all of Ohio's eighty-eight counties and can be found in both rural and urban settings.

Cardinals, especially the males, are known for their prominent red coloring and melodic whistling. They are social birds, but male Cardinals are aggressive when defending their territory, which can expand to upwards of four acres. Cardinals do not migrate, instead remaining in their nesting areas for the winter. They feed mainly on seeds but will also indulge in grains and sap. The males are the brightly red colored bird of the species with black facial markings and a head crest. In order to protect their nests and eggs the females are duller in color; typically displaying a grayish, brown-red tint over the body with a distinguishing red beak.. Cardinals are also prominent songbirds. They have a variety of melodic rhythms but are best known for their "What-cheer cheer-cheer" and "Who-it, who-it, who-it" sounds.

In recognition of the popularity of this bird, as well as their prominent color and singing abilities, the Ohio General Assembly designated the Northern Cardinal as the state bird of Ohio in 1933. Ohio is not the only state that holds the Cardinal in such a high regard; Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia have all adopted the Cardinal as their state bird as well.

Interested in become a trustee?

The FPOSP is looking to fill vacancies within our group. We are in need of trustees for the East, Northeast, Central and Southwest districts. If you are interested, complete the form on our website and someone will be in contact with you.

FPOSP 2020 Membership

Spring is right around the corner, so now is the time for your Friends group to join the Friends for the Preservation of Ohio State Parks (FPOSP).

Here's a Quick Recap of our 2019 Accomplishments:

- We awarded a matching grant to Burr Oak Alive during our annual Fall Symposium.
- We conducted another successful Fall symposium, based on attendee feedback. (rated 4.4/5.0)
- Two Board Members participated in the Blue Ribbon panel, an initiative of Director Mertz.
- The FPOSP participated in the sharing of ideas and attended the Friends of Michigan State Parks Summit

We strongly believe that you will benefit from your FPOSP membership, and that you'll receive valuable ongoing support and representation at the state level to help you succeed into the future.

- Receive 501 (c) (3) Support. If you don't already have your 501(c)(3), we can help you navigate through the application process. We can also advise which events may require your organization to have this standing.
- Get Fundraising Ideas. Because we network across all of Ohio's state parks, we can share best practices and ideas for projects and events along with templates to help you get started.
- Use our Matching Grants. As a FPOSP member with a 501(c)(3) and good standing, you will be eligible to apply for our matching grants to support your funding of events and projects. For those members that don't have their 501(c)(3), we have a grant opportunity where you may receive up to \$250 towards your 501(c)(3) filing fees.
- Attend our Fall Symposium. You'll receive updates from ODNR leadership on the state of Ohio State Parks and what they're planning in the future. You'll also be able to network among other Friends groups to learn what the best of the best are doing to help their parks succeed. Recent items of interest included liability insurance, ODNR approval of events, and the state K-9 program.

In a few words, your FPOSP membership is the most effective method for gaining insight into ODNR news, leveraging what other Friends groups are doing, and learning about new fundraising developments like our matching grant program.

This year, for those groups that have already completed their 2020 membership and for those that complete it prior to the April 30th deadline, we are offering one complimentary admission to our Fall Symposium. Further details will be provided for how to collect this offer as we get closer to the November 14th Symposium date.

We've even simplified the application process by including a link on our Website: [Join/Renew FPOSP Membership](#).

Why not join us today? If you have any questions, please reach out to any of our officers or trustees.