



ERIE METROPARKS



Biennial Report *2017-2018*

Letter from the Executive Director, Amy Bowman-Moore

The following pages contain an overview of the activities and accomplishments of YOUR Erie MetroParks for 2017 and 2018. We continue to be excellent stewards of YOUR funding and, more importantly, YOUR lands.

Both 2017 and 2018 were outstanding years for YOUR Park District.

The following pages highlight notable improvements, efficiencies, statistics of interest and changes realized in 2017 and 2018.

The staff continues to improve the park district by concentrating on the following areas: capital improvements, policies, planning, branding and natural resource management.

The following listed highlights are mentioned in the upcoming pages:

- In 2018, Erie MetroParks celebrated its 50th anniversary with a series of “Party in the Parks” events that kicked off on July 8 with a 50th Birthday Party and continued every other Sunday through October.
- Many capital improvements have been made to enhance the park district.
- New social media platforms were designed and implemented.
- Several partnerships were strengthened with more events and support.
- The Operations Department continues to care for the all areas to a level of excellence. Providing outstanding fields for sports play and maintaining natural areas. Support for this department continues through equipment replacement schedules.
- Marketing is leading with the latest branding trends and demographic analysis to best inform and serve ALL of Erie MetroParks users and stakeholders.
- Volunteer relations continue to be strong.
- Visitors and Erie County residents alike, continued to use Erie MetroParks for recreation, education, and conservation services at record levels.

The staff continues to bring outstanding programming and stewardship to YOUR Park District. The Erie MetroParks staff is a very qualified group. With degrees and certifications varying from Marine Biology to Wildlife Management, from Recreation Administration to Environmental Education, etc. most members of the staff are CPR/AED and First Aid certified and some are First Responders for their communities.

Please review and enjoy the following pages recounting 2017 and 2018. The staff of Erie MetroParks and I are proud to serve you.

Once more, the Board of Commissioners, the staff, and I... thank you for your support and participation. Please come out and see what YOUR Erie MetroParks have to offer.

Erie MetroParks

3910 Perkins Avenue, Huron, OH 44839

Phone 419-625-7783/ Fax 419-621-4217

Web: www.eriemetroparks.org/ E-Mail: behere@eriemetroparks.org

Commissioners

Don Mears, Chairperson

Troy Wisehart, Vice-Chairperson

Margaret Murray, Vice-Chairperson

*Commissioners meet the second Wednesday- 1PM at Osborn MetroPark in the Maple Grove Center, 3109 Hull Rd. Huron, OH.



Executive Director

Amy Bowman-Moore

419-625-7783 ext. 226

E-Mail: amoore@eriemetroparks.org

Erie MetroParks Mission Statement

Under the provisions of the Ohio Revised Code, the mission of Erie MetroParks is to preserve, conserve, protect, and enhance the natural and unique historical resources of the park district. Further to provide opportunities for visitors and residents to use, enjoy, understand and appreciate these resources in a responsible, sustainable manner

Prepared by Sue Daniel, Scheduling Coordinator/ Administrative Assistant, March 2019

2017-2018 PROGRESS

Erie MetroParks strives to support and develop an ever-increasing range of services and facilities for the citizens of Erie County. By initiating new ideas, utilizing improved technology, and completing numerous improvement projects; the park district remains strong and continues to be one of the area's most valuable assets.

DEVELOPMENTS & IMPROVEMENTS

Erie MetroParks continues to update the administration of the park district. We annually or biennially review our strategic plans for all of the parks, the by-laws, all the policies, manuals and all of the job descriptions. Erie MetroParks consolidated the Administrative and Program offices into the Frost Center and the Operations Department at the Maple Grove Center. We also reorganized the staff for optimum efficiency. Below, are highlights from the various park departments.

ADMINISTRATION

Erie MetroParks is largely supported by two general property tax levies that allow us to serve our local community. Erie County property taxes made up \$2 million of an approximately \$2.5 million dollar operating budget each year, approximately \$36.31 annually for a homeowner with a valued home of \$100,000. Erie MetroParks is grateful for the public's support and will continue to provide all county residents with unique educational and recreational opportunities rooted from our mission statement.

Park administrative staff continually endeavored to drive down variable costs as well as renegotiating contracts on fixed costs. For example, in the last biennium, copier lease and supplies decreased by about 27%, and legal fees continued to decline by an astounding 78%, saving a collective \$136,500!

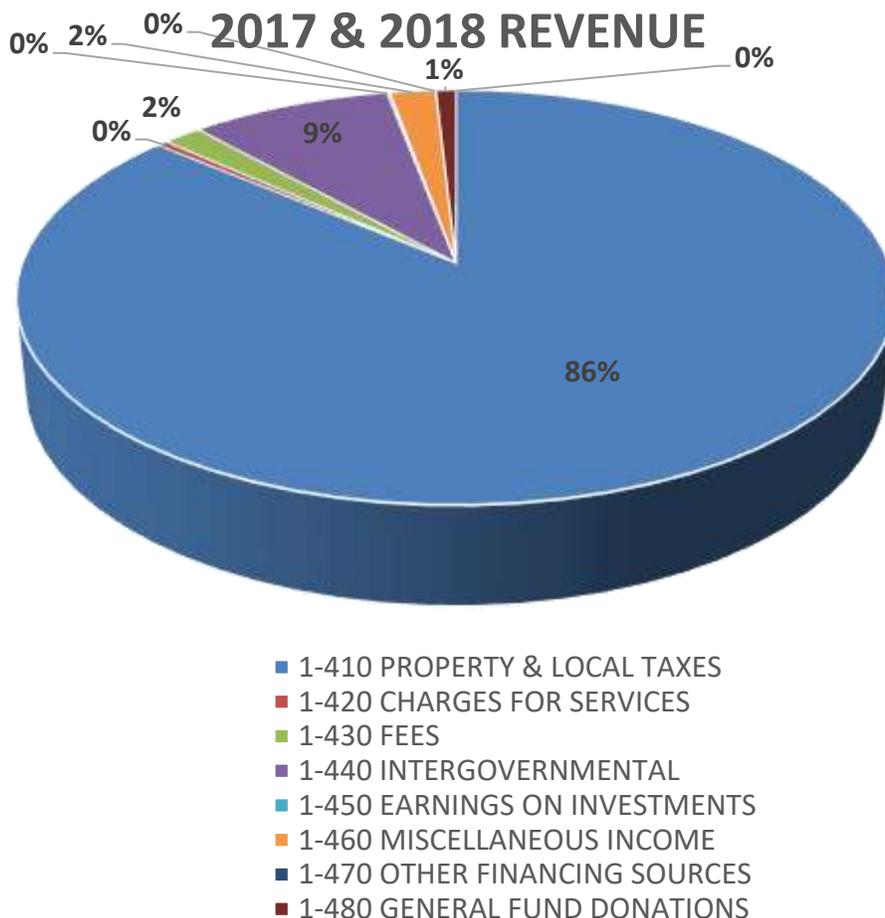
Freeing up additional monies enabled Erie MetroParks to allot more for capital improvement project (detailed within the operations section). Additionally, the park district awarded \$47,000 to smaller government entities for park improvements across the county. Recipients included Groton Township, Margaretta Township, Oxford Township and the City of Vermilion Parks Department.

Finally, park team members worked diligently to remain within the budget established by the Board of Park Commissioners. Erie MetroParks' staff members supported local vendors with park purchases; pouring revenue back into our local economy.

The Erie MetroParks Employee Guide underwent its biennial audit. Existing policies were reviewed, evaluated, and updated, if necessary and according to state laws.

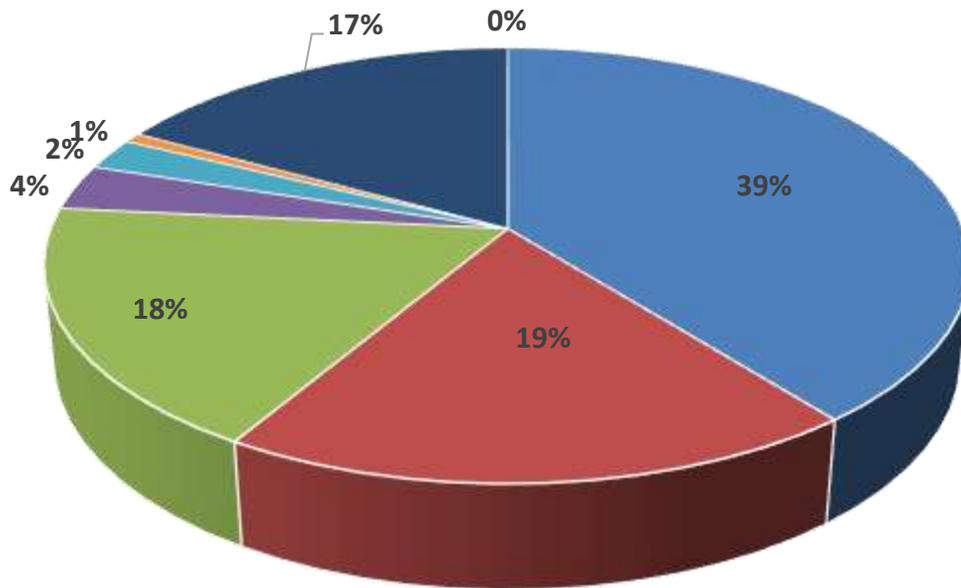
See the breakdown of Erie MetroParks' revenue and expenditures over the biennium from the General Fund below:

General Fund	Revenue	2017	2018	Total
1-410	PROPERTY & LOCAL TAXES	\$ 2,090,280.59	\$ 2,109,337.20	\$ 4,199,617.79
1-420	CHARGES FOR SERVICES	\$ 21,192.00	\$ -	\$ 21,192.00
1-430	FEES	\$ 44,524.52	\$ 38,082.50	\$ 82,607.02
1-440	INTERGOVERNMENTAL	\$ 213,294.74	\$ 209,339.57	\$ 422,634.31
1-450	EARNINGS ON INVESTMENTS	\$ 2,496.38	\$ 3,321.72	\$ 5,818.10
1-460	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$ 47,354.87	\$ 47,979.72	\$ 95,334.59
1-470	OTHER FINANCING SOURCES	\$ 1,098.04	\$ -	\$ 1,098.04
1-480	GENERAL FUND DONATIONS	\$ 24,148.35	\$ 18,033.73	\$ 42,182.08
1-CC2	UNENCUMBERED CASH CARRYOVER	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 2,444,389.49	\$ 2,426,094.44	\$ 4,870,483.93



General Fund	Expenses	2017	2018	Total
1-511	EMPLOYEE SALARIES	\$ 709,225.14	\$ 737,767.85	\$ 1,446,992.99
1-512	FRINGE BENEFITS	\$ 346,219.77	\$ 360,162.98	\$ 706,382.75
1-520	PURCHASED SERVICES	\$ 324,979.68	\$ 245,793.36	\$ 570,773.04
1-530	SUPPLIES & MATERIALS	\$ 61,262.96	\$ 66,868.20	\$ 128,131.16
1-540	OTHER EXPENSES	\$ 42,487.24	\$ 84,756.31	\$ 127,243.55
1-541	SWA YOUTH EXPENSES	\$ 13,000.00	\$ 13,863.00	\$ 26,863.00
1-550	CAPITAL OUTLAY	\$ 306,208.06	\$ 422,073.53	\$ 728,281.59
1-590	OTHER FINANCING USES	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$ 1,803,382.85	\$ 1,931,285.23	\$ 3,734,668.08

2017 & 2018 Expenditures



- 1-511 EMPLOYEE SALARIES
- 1-512 FRINGE BENEFITS
- 1-520 PURCHASED SERVICES
- 1-530 SUPPLIES & MATERIALS
- 1-540 OTHER EXPENSES
- 1-541 SWA YOUTH EXPENSES
- 1-550 CAPITAL OUTLAY
- 1-590 OTHER FINANCING USES

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Several capital improvement projects were completed over the last two years.

2017 Capital Projects

Osborn MetroPark

- Installed a new floor in the Erie Room and adjoining offices
- Built and installed the cottage, slide, and other amenities at The Children's Forest
- Installed new roofs on Shelters # 1,2,3 and 4
- Repointed the Shelter #1 fireplace chimney
- Repaired Maple Grove Center chimney
- Replaced windows in the Maintenance Barn

East Sandusky Bay MetroPark

- Electrical work at the Enchanted Cottage
- Masonry work at the Enchanted Cottage
- Installed a new roof on the Enchanted Cottage and garage
- Demolished and disposed of a small shed

Castalia Quarry MetroPark

- Fenced in the bat cave area and addressed vandalism issues

Wakefield Beach MetroPark

- Used ground penetrating radar to address break wall issue, and fill in sink holes

Milan Towpath MetroPark

- Obtained cost estimates and formulated a plan to fix the bridge

Edison Woods MetroPark

- Repaired the Smokey Road Barn
- Poured new floors in both barns on Smokey Road
- Repaired the Deehr Road trail culvert

East Sandusky Bay MetroPark- Steinen Life Estate Area

- Fixed the driveway back to Life Estate, widened- safer
- Removed trees and brush from around the house
- Capped wells at the house
- Formulated a plan for removal of house and restoration of area.



2018 CAPITAL PROJECTS

Osborn MetroPark

- Renovated Shelter #4- new epoxy floor installed, steel ceiling installed, painted inside, installed new doors and windows, new refrigerator, cabinets, countertops, etc. in the kitchen area
- Installed a new roof with Durolast Membrane, over the Erie Room and adjacent offices
- Removed and replaced the Northwoods Lift Station



East Sandusky Bay MetroPark

- Installed a new boat dock for non-motorized watercraft



East Sandusky Bay MetroPark- Steinen Life Estate Area

- Steinen Life Estate Area- Completed asbestos removal and removed the house structure
- Cleared seven acres of land
- Replaced the culverts and fixed the stone driveway and parking lot
- Removed trees and brush from around the driveways and lanes
- Filled in the holes

Edison Woods MetroPark

- Completed asbestos removal and removed the house structure
- Completed trail improvements including resurfacing, water diversion, and trail correction
- Installed new signage for the park, including maps, and blazes for navigation
- Fixed the SR 61 parking lot for horse trailer parking



The Coupling MetroPark

- Fixed the canoe racks, better access- made more user-friendly



Birmingham School MetroPark

- Resurfaced the basketball court and installed new equipment and playground mulch



DONATIONS

2017 Donor Names

Boy Scout Troop 31
Mr. Todd Gardner
Perkins Township
Huron Township
Heritage Society of Erie County
Robert Wright
St. Mary's Boy Scout Troop 7
Marlene Rockwell
Friends of Old Woman Creek
Providence Care Center
Thomas M. Stockdale
Milan Presbyterian Church
Mike Heydinger
Erie Co. Community Foundation
Mr. & Mrs. David Foster
Mr. & Mrs. Daryl Deering
Friends of Erie MetroParks
Bob & Sue Stockdale
Sandusky Rotary Club

Immaculate Conception Church
Boy Scout Troop 31
Corso's Flower & Garden Center
Sandusky Memorial Day Association
Rengel Law Office
Providence Care Center
Ali Todi
Firelands Audubon Society
Kingston Residence of Vermilion LLC
Various
Laurel School
David & Melissa Bauman
Firelands Pioneer Power Association
Garth Flittner
Mr. & Mrs. David Clark
Down to Earth Garden Club
Linda Ashar
Shore Thing Enterprises, LLC.
Jenifer Foes

2018 Donor Names

Providence Care Center
The Commons of Providence
Darlene Round
The Heritage Society of Erie Co.
Firelands Audubon Society
United Methodist Women/Trinity
United Methodist Church
Friends of Erie MetroParks
Patricia Smith
BGSU Firelands
Erie County Chapter OHC
James & Dianne Miears
Andrew & Phyllis Jean Konz
Various Erie MetroParks Staff
Deborah Lewis

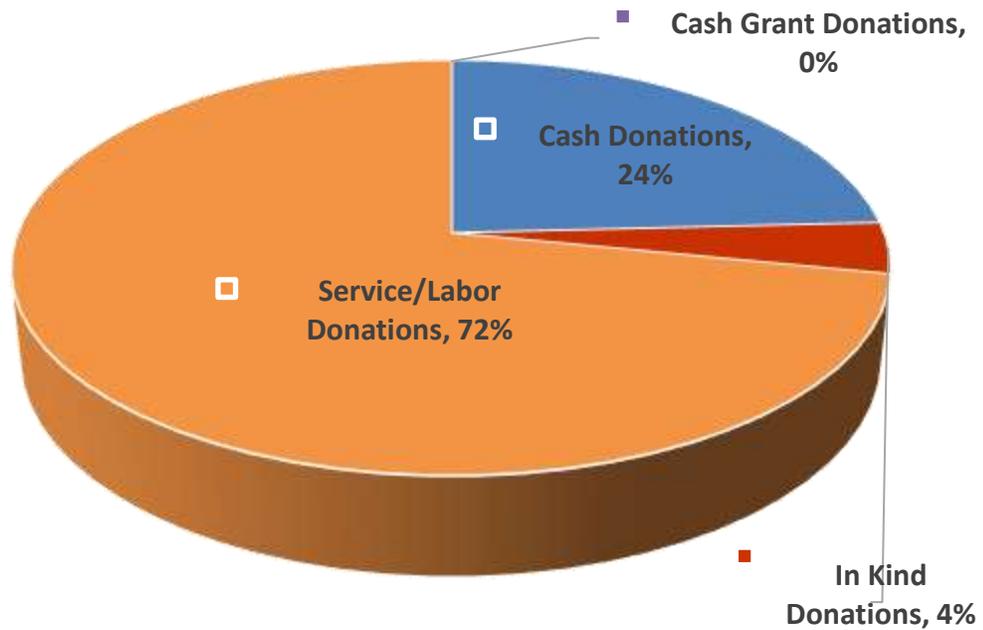
Majorie A. Latimer
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Velliquette
Erie Metro Live Steamers, Inc.
Teresa Potts
Firelands Pioneer Power Assn
Kingston Residence of Vermilion LLC
Sandusky Memorial Day Association
Friends of Old Woman Creek, Assn, Inc.
David & Jacquelyn Clark Charitable
Foundation
Ronald & Theresa Davidson
Jerry Eakin
Ohio Department of Transportation
Various

The donation of labor and volunteer service time comprised a large portion of our donations in both 2017 and 2018. Our volunteers are an invaluable resource here at Erie MetroParks.

Summary of 2017 Donations

Cash Donations	\$ 24,123.35
In-Kind Donations	\$ 3,957.90
Service/Labor Donations	\$ 71,664.99
Cash-Grant Donations	\$ -
2017 Donations Grand Total	\$ 99,746.24

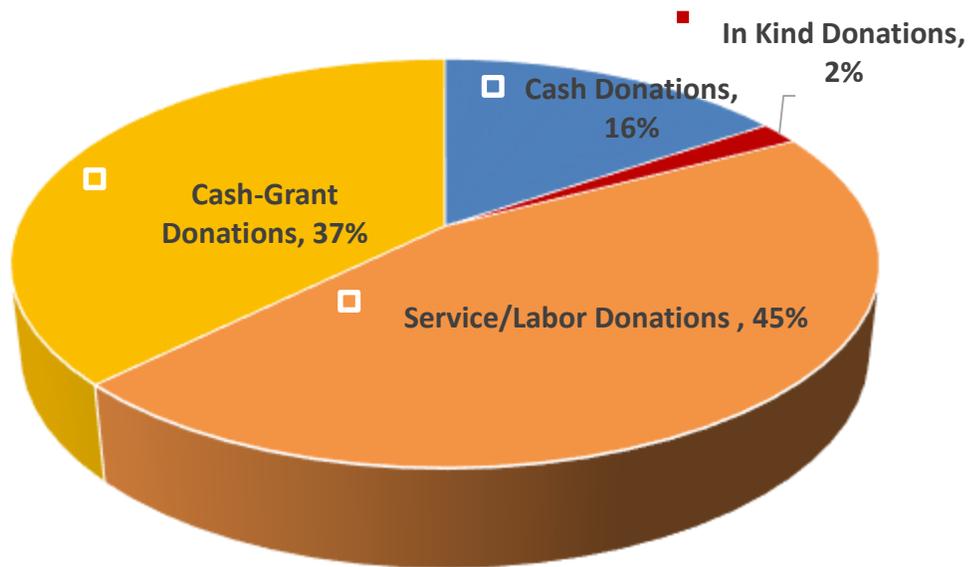
2017 Donations At A Glance



Summary of 2018 Donations

Cash Donations	\$ 18,033.73
In-Kind Donations	\$ 2,062.00
Service/Labor Donations	\$ 52,796.30
Cash-Grant Donations	\$ 43,468.00
2018 Donations Grand Total	
	\$ 116,360.03

2018 Donations At A Glance



GRANTS

Erie MetroParks received a Grant from the Ohio Department of Transportation through the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association in 2018 for paving the access road between the Maple Grove Center and the Frost Center. Additional parking spaces were also paved at the Maple Grove Center for visitors of the Erie MetroParks Bark Park. The value of the grant was \$43,468.

OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

2017 HIGHLIGHTS/ ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Various Parks

- Provided routine maintenance standards and checks to keep parks, trails, playgrounds and facilities safe, clean and well groomed
- Large unsafe trees removed from various parks
- Rented mini excavator to replace several water hydrants at OPK and EWP
- All Operations maintenance staff renewed pesticide certification and licensing
- Installed various mulches at Osborn MetroPark and James McBride Arboretum
- Restriped the paved parking areas throughout the park system

Castalia Quarry MetroPark

- Reinstalled water bars and filled in erosion ruts
- Arm mowed to cut back trails and invasive honeysuckle
- Reset parking blocks
- Installed fencing and cameras to secure bat cave area
- Installed new bulletin board

Pelton Park

- Contracted Tree Experts to cut down two hazardous dead ash trees

James H. McBride Arboretum

- Replaced and secured decking on the Deering Terrace
- Fixed lighting on the restroom building
- Coordinated and collaborated with students from South Central High School on community service day, mulching as needed
- Cold patched the pot holes
- Power washed and repainted benches on the Deering Terrace
- Provided mowing, mulching, aeration, bed maintenance, etc.

Osborn MetroPark

- Rented a skid steer with mulcher implement to help in control of invasive species
- Aerated and fertilized the athletic fields in the fall after seasonal use
- Community Gardens were prepped and plotted out for the public to plant
- Coordinated and collaborated with students from South Central High school on community service day at the park
- Coordinated and collaborated two work nights at the park with the FEMP
- Prepped the area and installed base for the diorama area in Erie Room
- Amphitheater area- installed new seating and filled in sink hole
- Planted perennials/ annuals in prominent beds around the park

- Repaired the Dildine Ditch culvert
- Performed maintenance on Barnyard
- Installed new bulletin board

East Sandusky Bay MetroPark

- Filled in ruts going to Observation Deck
- Coordinated the eradication of the bees at the Weiland rental house
- Installed a new furnace at the Weiland rental house
- Steinen Life Estate area- mowed trails, opened up entrance, planted food plots
- Installed new entrance signs at Putman Marsh, Eagle Point
- Prepped buoys and installed in Putnam Marsh

Huron River Path MetroPark

- Removed Greenway signs and reinstalled missing barriers
- Cut back vegetation along trails
- Installed additional gravel where needed
- Cleaned and re-stained Kara Deering Deck & Bridge

Milan Towpath MetroPark

- Removed Greenway signs
- Cut back vegetation along trails
- Installed new bulletin board

The Coupling MetroPark

- Cut back vegetation and opened up trails
- Cut back and opened up the pond area
- Performed maintenance and upkeep on reservable facilities

Edison Woods MetroPark

- Cut back vegetation and opened up trails
- Performed maintenance on bridges, gates, fencing etc.
- Coordinated with Ohio Horseman's Council to complete trail work
- Installed culverts for water diversion on two trails

Hoffman Forest MetroPark

- Cut back vegetation and opened up trails
- Added more fill to area of old cistern
- Added signs, fixed broken fences, routine maintenance, etc.

Birmingham School MetroPark

- Performed maintenance on play equipment
- Installed additional barrier posts and split railing

- Filled potholes with 411 stone
- Fixed flagpole for trustees

Wakefield Beach MetroPark

- Coordinated and collaborated with the City of Vermilion to have Wakefield beach cleaned up by Vermilion High school students during their community Spring cleanup day
- Fixed the sink holes and cleaned the beach



IN-HOUSE WORK/ PROJECTS

Which resulted in substantial cost savings to the Park District.

- In house mechanical repairs and labor on vehicles and equipment brought in an estimated savings of \$4,400.
- Large deduction of vehicle repair costs sent out for repairs
- Creation of a fabrication and mechanical shop areas for building and repair projects
- Fabrication of a yard roller for turf work
- Fabrication of tables and pallet bench seating for the outdoor workspace area
- Construction of play items for the Children's Forest and amphitheater area
- Leaf collection box for Gator
- Fenders for landscape trailer
- Four wheeler chainsaw rack and tool box
- Rack for tent pole storage
- Tool box bracket for flatbed truck
- Winch straps for landscape trailers
- Weight bracket for rear of Bobcat
- Rack for shovels and tools for maintenance barn
- Shelf for banner/ sign storage in loft of barn
- Shop Press





EQUIPMENT ACQUISITIONS FOR 2017

- 2017 Full Size Pick Up Truck-Ford F-250 Super Duty SRW 4x4 Regular Cab, trailering package
- 2017 8' Western Snowplow w/ deflector
- 2017 Full Size Pick Up Truck-Ford F-250 Super Duty SRW 4x4 Regular Cab, trailering package
- 2017 Mower-John Deere Z970R Commercial Z Trak, 72" cut, Diesel, Zero Turn Mower

2017 TRAINING, CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

- Ohio Turf Foundation conference and trade show
- Ohio Parks and Recreation Association conference and trade show
- Woodland, Wildlife and Water conference
- National Trails Conference (Mark attended)
- GIS training w/Natural Resource Management
- Natural Resource burn management training
- In-house EMP safety training (including seasonal employees)



SPECIAL EVENTS OPERATIONS PROVIDED PREP AND SUPPORT, HOST PARK

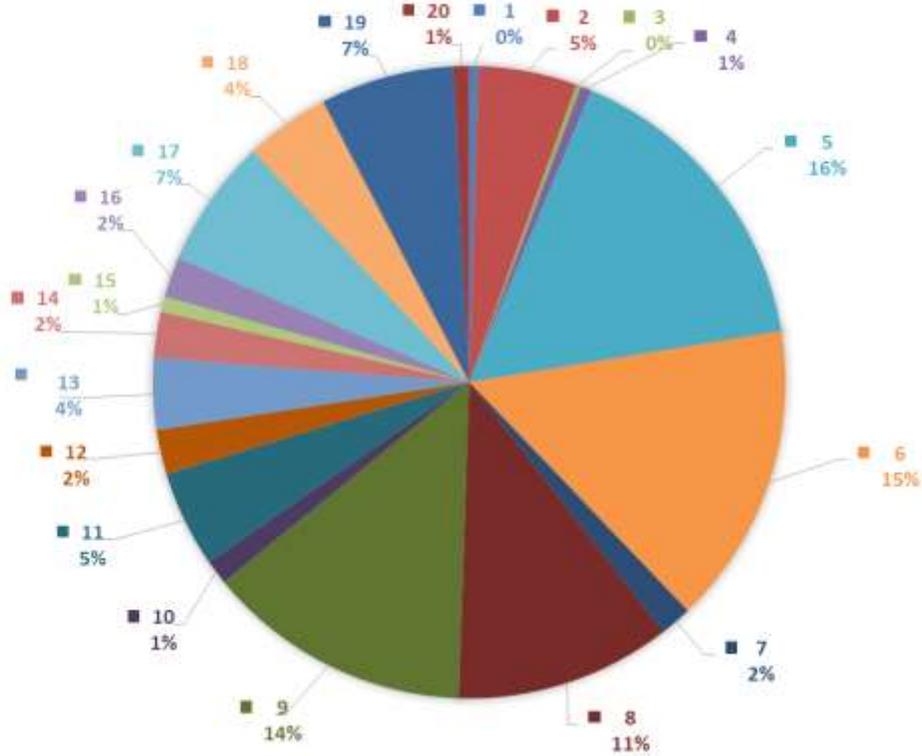
- Ohio Parks and Recreation Trade Show-Kalahari Resort
- Friends of Erie MetroParks Annual Gathering-Frost center, Osborn MetroPark
- Earth Day Extravaganza-Osborn MetroPark
- Bay Area Soccer League Spring/Fall leagues-Osborn MetroPark
- Run the Rock 5K-CQR
- Firelands Symphony mini concerts-James H. McBride Arboretum
- Multiple weddings- James H. McBride Arboretum
- ODNR Waterfowl drawing-Osborn MetroPark
- Sandusky Area Rotary Club annual picnic/gathering-Osborn MetroPark
- Friends of Erie MetroParks work nights for "Go Take a Hike"- Osborn MetroPark
- Friends of Erie MetroParks " Go Take a Hike event"-Osborn MetroPark
- Harvest Happenings-Osborn MetroPark
- EMP Natural Resource Management's Annual Deer hunt-Edison Woods MetroPark
- Ohio Horseman Council's annual Poker Run and camp out's-Edison Woods MetroPark
- Renewed partnership with West Huron Youth Club- Joseph Steinen Wildlife Area

2017 Work Order Tracking

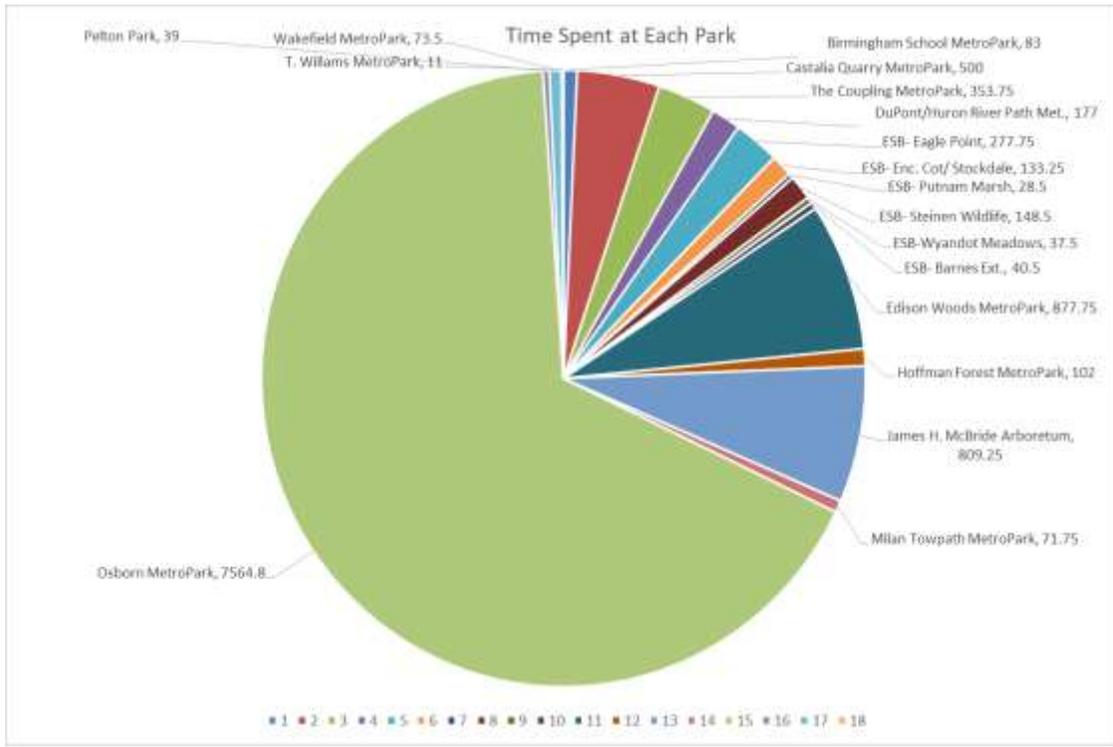
TOTAL HOURS SPENT ON EACH TASK

Task	BRM	CQR	TCR	DPM/HRP	ESB-EP	ESB-EC	ESB-PM	ESB-SW	WSB-V	ESB-Ba	EWP	HFM	JMA	MTM	OPK	PP	WBM	TWM	TOTAL
1 Invasive Species Control						1	1	5			6				41				54
2 Landscape Maintenance			12	0.5	17	4.5		2	1		2.5	4	318		208				569.75
3 Lawn Fertilization															29				29
4 Lawn/Weed Control	1				0.5	1							10		48	1			61.5
5 Facility Maint./Repairs	80.5	125	19	41.5	39.5			6			73.5	3.5	28		1400	9			1825.3
6 Mowing	6.5	81.5	53.25	54	82.25	27.75	16	59	36.5	22	219	14.5	223	30.3	806.5	3.5	7	7	1749
7 Lot/Driveway Maint.	4	24	3	15	3	3		41			14	4.5	2.5		31.5	1.5	36		183
8 Office Work/Mtgs.			5	1.5		2		9.5		14	7				1211		2.5		1252
9 Restroom Maintenance		13.5									1.5		111		1415				1541
10 Snow Removal	5	18.5	13	8.5	11	2					7	5		2.5	66	2			140.5
11 Trail Work	2	111	37	35.5	39.5			6	3.5	201.75	28	3.5	11.5		69	11			559.25
12 Training											1	2			255				258
13 Tree Work		6	35.5	35	37	2		3			71	8	16.5	13.5	184	5			416.5
14 Spring/Fall Cleanup	53	2	3		9.5	7.5		2			8	3	79		80		16.5		263.5
15 Safety Inspections	9		13		2.5	1.5		3			13	6	3		38				89
16 Service Checks	1.5	41.5	47.5	3.5	20	10.5	0.5	3			33	17.5	4.5	7	30	6	7		233
17 Vehicle/ Equip Repair				2.5							17		2.5		728				750
18 Spec. Ev./Prog Asst.		7.5	1.5	2	9	4	9				90	2			364				489
19 Imp. Of Sites	1	114				26	2	3			100	4	7	7	509.5		2.5		776
20 Other			5		5	1		6		1	12.5		1		52		2	4	89.5
Totals	83	500	353.8	177	277.75	133.3	28.5	148.5	37.5	40.5	877.75	102	809	71.8	7565	39	73.5	11	11328.8

TOTAL HOURS SPENT ON EACH TASK



TOTAL HOURS SPENT AT EACH PARK		Hours	Labor Cost
1	Birmingham School Metro	83	\$ 1,660.00
2	Castalia Quarry MetroPar	500	\$ 10,000.00
3	The Coupling MetroPark	353.75	\$ 7,075.00
4	DuPont/Huron River Path	177	\$ 3,540.00
5	ESB- Eagle Point	277.75	\$ 5,555.00
6	ESB- Enc. Cot/ Stockdale	133.25	\$ 2,665.00
7	ESB- Putnam Marsh	28.5	\$ 570.00
8	ESB- Steinen Wildlife	148.5	\$ 2,970.00
9	ESB-Wyandot Meadows	37.5	\$ 750.00
10	ESB- Barnes Ext.	40.5	\$ 810.00
11	Edison Woods MetroPark	877.75	\$ 17,555.00
12	Hoffman Forest MetroPa	102	\$ 2,040.00
13	James H. McBride Arbore	809.25	\$ 16,185.00
14	Milan Towpath MetroPar	71.75	\$ 1,435.00
15	Osborn MetroPark	7564.8	\$151,296.00
16	Pelton Park	39	\$ 780.00
17	Wakefield MetroPark	73.5	\$ 1,470.00
18	T. Willams MetroPark	11	\$ 220.00
Totals		11329	\$226,576.00



2018 HIGHLIGHTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Various Parks

- Provided routine maintenance standards and checks to keep parks, trails, playgrounds and facilities safe, clean and well groomed
- Removed large, unsafe trees from various parks
- Used the mini excavator to replace several water hydrants at Osborn MetroPark and Edison Woods MetroPark
- Installed various mulches at Osborn MetroPark and Birmingham School MetroPark
- Restriped the paved parking areas throughout the park system
- Repaired the split rail fencing at several parks

Castalia Quarry MetroPark

- Reinstalled water bars and filled in erosion ruts
- Used the arm mower to cut back the trails and invasive honeysuckle
- Repainted the parking lot lines
- Installed a new bulletin board

Pelton Park

- Fixed fence along property lines as requested

James H. McBride Arboretum

- Provided mowing, landscape bed maintenance, etc. throughout the Arboretum
- Cut down and removed several dead pine trees
- Provided spring clean-up
- Provided prairie grass meadow management

Osborn MetroPark

- Rented a skid steer with mulcher implement to help in the control of invasive species at the park
- Aerated and fertilized the soccer fields in the Fall after seasonal use
- Prepped and plotted out the Community Gardens for the public to plant
- Planted perennials/ annuals in prominent beds around the park
- Performed maintenance on The Barnyard
- Installed a new bulletin board
- Removed trees in various areas
- Installed black top coating on the drive from the barn to Maple Grove Center-ODOT grant
- Installed a new berm around new asphalt drive coating
- Re-widened the Perimeter Path
- Completed improvements to The Barnyard paddock

- Cleared the northern fence line
- Painted offices in The Frost Center
- Repaired the water hydrant
- Replaced the old gas tanks, entered into a contract with Sunrise Cooperative, had Firelands Electric rewire and bring the gas pumps up to current code
- Partnered with Erie County for parking lot line painting

East Sandusky Bay MetroPark

- Steinen Life Estate area- mowed the trails, opened up the entrance, planted food plots
- Installed new bulletin boards
- Filled in tree root holes
- Eradicated the raccoons from Enchanted Cottage
- Coordinated and collaborated with South Central High School students to do a spring clean-up at the Enchanted Cottage



Huron River Path MetroPark

- Cut back the vegetation along trails
- Installed additional gravel where needed
- Removed trash and fallen trees on a regular basis

Milan Towpath MetroPark

- Cut back the vegetation along trails
- Installed a new bulletin board

The Coupling MetroPark

- Cut back the vegetation and opened up trails
- Performed maintenance and upkeep on the reservable facilities
- Painted the inside of the train cars
- Installed a new floor and painted inside the storage area in the Depot
- Replaced the broken septic tank lid
- Organized the pole barn for better storage

Edison Woods MetroPark

- Cut back the vegetation and opened up trails
- Coordinated with the Ohio Horseman's Council for ongoing trail work
- Installed culverts for water diversion on two trails
- Installed a hot water tank in Smokey Road office, that was removed from the demo house
- Installed parking lot lights
- Coordinated and collaborated on two Friends of Erie MetroParks work nights
- Fixed the Dogwood Loop, Upland Oak, Ghost Railroad, and Cranberry Creek Trails
- Installed new maps with white posts for better visibility
- Added blazes to trails to aid in navigation
- Fixed the parking lot for the horse trailers at SR 61 parking lot
- Cleaned ditches and creeks to fix the water problems on southwest side of the park
- Cleaned up the Mason Road property for demolition

Hoffman Forest MetroPark

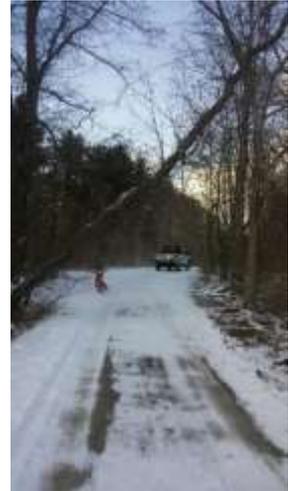
- Cut back the vegetation and opened up trails
- Added signs, fixed broken fences, routine maintenance, etc.
- Installed a new bulletin board

Birmingham School MetroPark

- Performed maintenance of play equipment
- Installed additional barrier posts and split railing
- Filled potholes with 411 stone
- Installed a new bulletin board
- Resurfaced the basketball court
- Cleaned up the pea gravel and installed engineered wood fiber for safety at the playground

Wakefield Beach MetroPark

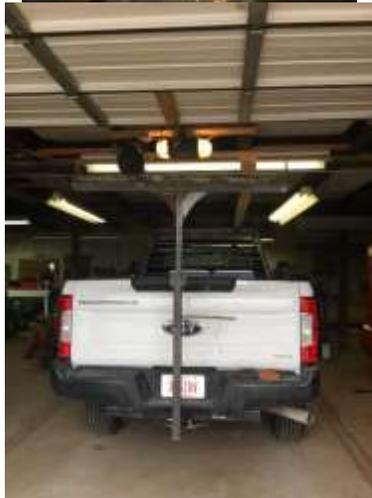
- Coordinated and collaborated with the City of Vermilion to have Wakefield beach cleaned up by Vermilion High school students during their community Spring cleanup day
- Installed a new bench and sandstone pad
- Coordinated the bench and picnic table donations from Vermilion non-profit group- Shore Thing



IN-HOUSE WORK/ PROJECTS

Which resulted in substantial cost savings to the Park District.

- In house mechanical repairs and labor on vehicles and equipment brought in an estimated savings of \$8,000.
- Fabricated the back rack on the truck- Unit #9
- Fabricated the new gas pump steps
- Tin sided fuel shed
- Fabrication of old wagon for trail work for Edison Woods MetroPark
- Fabricated a rack to hold saws
- Repaired The Coupling MetroPark canoe rack
- Completed ramp work
- Installed truck box on Unit #3 dump truck
- Built a Flintstone car for the Children's Forest





EQUIPMENT ACQUISITIONS FOR 2018

- 2018 John Deere Compact Excavator 50G, with 24" Heavy Duty Bucket, 34" Ditch Cleaning Bucket, two hydraulic clamps.
- 2018 Brush Hound 30-EX-HD Brush Mower (Attachment for Excavator)



2018 TRAINING, CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

- Two employees attended the Midwest Green Industry Conference
- Ohio Parks and Recreation Association Conference and Trade Show
- Woodland, Wildlife and Water Conference
- Two employees completed Ohio Prescribed Fire Manager Training
- In-house EMP safety training (including seasonal employees)



SPECIAL EVENTS THAT OPERATIONS STAFF PROVIDED PREP AND SUPPORT, HOST PARK

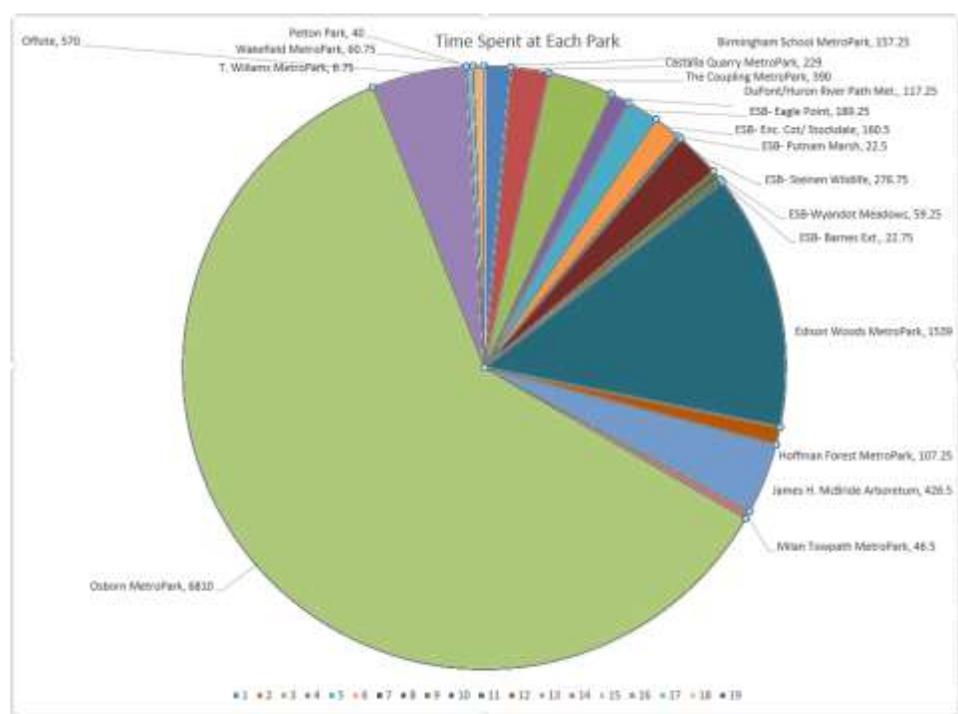
- Ohio Parks and Recreation Association Conference and Trade Show-Kalahari Resort
- Friends of Erie MetroParks Annual Gathering-Frost Center, Osborn MetroPark
- Earth Day Extravaganza-Osborn MetroPark
- Bay Area Soccer League Spring/Fall leagues--Osborn MetroPark
- EMP 50th Anniversary- Party In The Parks events- various parks
- Run the Rock 5K-Castalia Quarry MetroPark
- Firelands Symphony mini concerts-James H. McBride Arboretum
- ODNR Waterfowl drawing-Osborn MetroPark
- Sandusky Area Rotary Club annual picnic/gathering-Osborn MetroPark
- Friends of Erie MetroParks work nights for "Go Take a Hike"- Edison Woods MetroPark
- Friends of Erie MetroParks " Go Take a Hike event"-Edison Woods MetroPark
- Harvest Happenings Community Festival-Osborn MetroPark
- EMP Natural Resource Management's Annual Deer hunt- Edison Woods MetroPark
- Ohio Horseman Council's annual Poker Run and camp out's- Edison Woods MetroPark
- Partnership with West Huron Youth Club at Joseph Steinen Wildlife Area

2018 Work Order Tracking

Task	BRM	CQR	TCR	DPM/HRF	ESB-EP	ESB-EC	ESB-PM	ESB-SW	ESB-Wy	ESB-Bar	EWP	HFM	JMA	MTM	OPK	Offsite	PP	WBM	TWM	total
1 Invasive Species Control	1.5							0.5		2	2.5	1	4.5		42.00					54
2 Landscape Maintenance	8.5			2		7		7			1.5	2	99.25		137.50			4		268.75
3 Lawn Fertilization															14.50					14.5
4 Lawn/Weed Control		1.5		3											27.50					32
5 Facility Maint./Repairs	7.5	33		155	8	21	50.5		1		18.5	10		899.50					1.25	1219.25
6 Mowing	72.5	54		80.5	50.75	75.25		19	68.75	47.75	12.75	186.5	34.5	238	28.5	832.75		20.5	23.5	1845.5
7 Lot/Driveway Maint.				2	7	8			6			3	2	1.5	35.50			4		89
8 Office Work/Mtgs.				5		1	1	1				2			1229.25	8			1	1240.25
9 Restroom Maintenance															1721.50					1730
10 Snow Removal	3.5	24.5		4	4.5	4	2		1	0.5		8	3.5	1	0.5	49.75		3		109.75
11 Trail Work				56.5	21	14.5	42			14	2		133	20	2	78.50			2	385.5
12 Training					2										44.50	209				253.5
13 Tree Work	2	6.5		5.5	20	4.5					60.75	14.5		7	84.50			1		206.25
14 Spring/Fall Cleanup	6.25	6		12.5	1	3	28.5		1			4	0.5	74	3	77.00			6	229.75
15 Safety Ins/ Service Chks	9.5	24.5		54	5.5	17.5	13	2.5	0.5	4.5		25.25	6.25	6.75	4.5	32.25		6.5	5.25	243.75
16 Offsite												2.5			2.25	320				324.75
17 Vehicle/ Equip Maint.					1.5							27.5		1	885.00			1		916
18 Spec. Ev./Prog Asst.		4		36		9	14.5		2			137.5	7		274.25	23				507.25
19 Imp. Of Sites	46	1		6	6	4	44		175			899			1	305.50			1	1507.5
20 Other									4.5	8	7.5		0.5		4.50	12				37
Totals	157.25	229	990	117.25	189.25	160.5	22.5	276.75	59.25	22.75	1539	107.25	426.5	46.5	6810	570	40	60.75	6.75	11231.25



2018						
TOTAL HOURS SPENT AT EACH PARK						
					Hours	Labor Cost
1	Birmingham School MetroPark				157.25	\$ 3,302.25
2	Castalia Quarry MetroPark				229	\$ 4,809.00
3	The Coupling MetroPark				390	\$ 8,190.00
4	DuPont/Huron River Path Met.				117.25	\$ 2,462.25
5	ESB- Eagle Point				189.25	\$ 3,974.25
6	ESB- Enc. Cot/ Stockdale				160.5	\$ 3,370.50
7	ESB- Putnam Marsh				22.5	\$ 472.50
8	ESB- Steinen Wildlife				276.75	\$ 5,811.75
9	ESB-Wyandot Meadows				59.25	\$ 1,244.25
10	ESB- Barnes Ext.				22.75	\$ 477.75
11	Edison Woods MetroPark				1539	\$ 32,319.00
12	Hoffman Forest MetroPark				107.25	\$ 2,252.25
13	James H. McBride Arboretum				426.5	\$ 8,956.50
14	Milan Towpath MetroPark				46.5	\$ 976.50
15	Osborn MetroPark				6810	\$143,010.00
16	Offsite				570	\$ 11,970.00
17	Pelton Park				40	\$ 840.00
18	Wakefield MetroPark				60.75	\$ 1,275.75
19	T. Willams MetroPark				6.75	\$ 141.75
Totals					11231.25	\$235,856.25



NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT 2017

Controlled Burns/ Meadow Management

The burn season in 2017 was shortened by an early warm spring, which greened up fields prematurely. Burns were completed at Edison Woods MetroPark, James H. McBride Arboretum, and Steinen Wildlife Area. Most of the Mason Road field at Edison Woods MetroPark was burned, as well as the small field west of it, totaling 57 acres. The prairie planting areas within James H. McBride Arboretum and part of the northeast meadow burned well, as did a portion of the front field at Steinen Wildlife Area A. Overall burns totaled 87.25 acres.



In 2017, we continued our mowing rotation with the Fecon unit (a brush cutting attachment) at Osborn MetroPark. This is a continuation of work that was started in 2015. The meadows are cut on a rotation so there is a variety of growth levels on the landscape for wildlife. Eighteen acres were mowed in 2017.





MetroPark Property Projects

Lakeside Daisy monitoring continued in 2017 on the North Rim, West Cove and Upper South Rim at Castalia Quarry MetroPark. Seedlings and flowering plants were found at all three locations and are increasing and spreading each year. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service dispersed more Lakeside Daisy seed on the upper South rim in the fall. Shrubs were cut on the upper South rim to reduce encroaching and shading on the population.



The state listed plant Inland Sea Rocket (*Cakile edulenta*) was not located in 2016 at Wakefield MetroPark, however over 30 plants were found in 2017, that also bloomed. These plants were found a little higher on the beach as the sand has moved higher up to the grass area from weather patterns and beach grooming.

Monarch waystations were created in 2016 at Osborn MetroPark behind the Frost Center and by the parking lot at Wyandot Meadows MetroPark. The waystations have been monitored throughout the season and inventoried to which pollinator plants appeared from our seed mix. New plants added this year were (Baptisa, Wild Quinine, Tall Blazing Star and Smooth Aster) in addition to some common milkweed seeds. The waystation at Osborn was well enough established to be eligible to become an "Official Monarch Waystation" through the Monarch Watch program. It is now listed as a certified monarch stop over site and is signed. Throughout the MetroParks existing milkweed patches were maintained in our meadows and milkweed seed was collected for future dispersal.

Tree Planting Project at Edison Woods MetroPark

Monitoring of the trees planted in 'field 6' continued in 2017. Survival percentage is low, but growth is good in those surviving. Final success of this planting is not yet determined. Sycamore, Red Maple, and Swamp White Oak have survived better than the other species. No more trees will be planted in this field, but establishment monitoring will continue in future.

Property Updates

Erie MetroParks is now responsible for managing the Steinen Life-Estate property. We are working with the West Huron Youth Club on their hunting procedures as well as developing trail and natural resources plans and a house removal for 2018.

Invasive and Nuisance Species Control

Crowley's Vegetation was awarded a contract to spray scattered patches of Common Reed Grass at Barnes Addition, Wyandot Wetland Meadows and Eagle Point. Most of the areas sprayed were follow up control. Crowley's also sprayed Reed Canary Grass within the mitigation pools at Edison Woods. A population of European Frog-Bit (*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*) was newly discovered east of the observation deck/point at Barnes Extension (*see picture below*). The area was noted and sprayed by Crowley's Vegetation. Monitoring and further control efforts will most likely be necessary.



Bob Bryson with the marsh master was hired again to continue follow up treatment in Plum Brook. He chemically retreated any existing phragmites. We are continuing to see a decrease in the Phragmites throughout Plum Brook and an increase in native vegetation.

Park staff continued with efforts to manage invasive and nuisance plant species. **Lesser Celandine** (*Ranunculus ficaria*) at Edison Woods MetroPark, Hoffman Forest MetroPark, Wyandot/Barnes Extension and DuPont Marsh, **Poison Hemlock** (*Conium maculatum*) at Edison Woods MetroPark and Wyandot/Barnes Extension, **Autumn Olive** (*Eleagnus umbellata*) at Osborn MetroPark, Eagle Point, Wyandot/Barnes Extension, Edison Woods MetroPark, and The Coupling MetroPark, **Purple Loosestrife**

(*Lythrum salicaria*) at Steinen Wildlife Area and Barnes Extension, **Teasel** at Wyandot/Barnes Extension and **Compass Plant** at Osborn MetroPark. **Chinese Wintercreeper** vines were cut in the Southwoods at Osborn MetroPark.

The primary materials used for control are Glyphosate based products, which include Roundup and other brands for uplands and Rodeo brand for wetland applications. A Triclopyr based product was used for woody plant control on a spot treatment basis. We passed a random pesticide inspection by the Department of Agriculture early in the year. They specifically checked our chemical application record keeping.

Loosestrife beetles were collected at Lake Metropark in the spring and distributed on the Purple Loosestrife populations at Barnes and Steinen for biological control. Some beetle presence was already noted on the loosestrife leaves prior to beetle distribution. We are interested in seeing if the beetle presence will help reduce the number of flowering plants and if burning/spraying will have any effect on the beetle numbers.



Wildlife Management

Ed Boose, an Erie MetroParks volunteer, monitors some of the Bluebird boxes that are distributed around Osborn MetroPark and James H. McBride Arboretum, Monica Klarer, another Erie MetroParks volunteer, monitors the additional boxes that are at Osborn MetroPark. She had 3 bluebird nests with 13 eggs and 13 bluebirds fledged.

Controlled Deer Hunt & Steinen Youth Lottery

Erie MetroParks has conducted a yearly deer count since 2012 to determine the estimated deer population. The counts are completed using an infrared camera to detect heat signatures from individual deer. That data along with documentation of deer browsing has supported having a small controlled hunt to reduce the deer herd and provide Ohio sportsman hunting opportunities. Thus, a sixth controlled hunt was held in 2017.

During a portion of the state-wide deer gun week (November 27th - December 1st) a controlled deer hunt was put on at Edison Woods MetroPark. A lottery card drawing was held for an adult only deer gun hunt. Each application was \$5 to apply, and multiple application were permitted. For each day, Monday-Friday, 6 names were drawn totaling 30 hunters. Each of those selected hunters could bring a partner to hunt on a designated day until noon, for a total of 60 hunters. Rules and Regulations, Erie MetroParks permit, location map and zone maps were mailed to each hunter in advanced, giving each hunter an opportunity to scout out their zone prior. We received a total of 401 applications for the controlled hunt. There were 23 deer were harvested during the five-day hunt. Out of those 23 harvested, 12 were bucks or button bucks and 11 were does. We continue to receive positive feedback on the hunting opportunity we provide.



The Steinen Youth Lottery took place in August and we had an estimated 15 kids participate. Attendance increase from previous years as several of the youth that are a part of the West Huron Youth Club participated. Each youth had opportunities to sign up for multiple dates for Archery, Upland Game and Trapping.

Geographic Information System

The Nature Conservancy received grant funds to collect invasive species data from different entities in the Lake Erie region. Erie MetroParks participated in this invasive mapping by mapping invasive species in 7 park locations and entering the findings into GIS. We received \$921 compensation for this work.

Wildlife Surveys

As in prior years, sites visits were done at Berlin Heights Ravine, Thomas Williams MetroPark and Howe Breeze Hill Farm to ensure compliance with the easement restrictions. Most other parks were visited at least once, if not more, to record bird and

other wildlife species. In total, 147 bird species were found in 2017. Overall, 222 bird species have been found in the last 23 years.

A trail camera was placed throughout the year in different MetroParks to capture pictures/videos of what wildlife is roaming within the park. These photos are shared with the naturalists for program use and are also posted on social media for Trail Camera Thursdays. A highlight was a beaver that was captured on camera at Eagle Point!



Special Permits

Several special permits are issued every year for numerous studies and projects throughout Erie MetroParks properties. The following permits have been issued for natural resource related projects.

Edison Woods MetroPark:

John Lavelle continued to catalog the animals that live in the waters of wetlands and ephemeral pools throughout Edison Woods MetroPark. A one-liter sample of water will be removed several times a year for this study. His permit has been approved to continue into 2018.

Kate Pilacky with Western Reserve Land Conservancy was granted a permit to collect seeds from prairie plants in the Edison Woods MetroPark meadows.

Craig Davis with the Great Lakes Environmental Center received a permit to collect soil samples for a wetland assessment.

Ohio EPA was issued a permit to collect soil samples for chemical and textural analyses to evaluate background metal concentrations in Erie County soils.

A permit was issued to Metroparks of Toledo Area to take Sandusky City Schools to collect pond samples from vernal pools and identify plants, soil, water temperature and any macroinvertebrates. The students will be using the GLOBE website to report their findings.

Annette Evans with the University of Connecticut was issued a permit to remove no more than 33 salamanders at Edison Woods MetroPark for further study.

Steinen Life-Estate:

West Huron Youth Club authorized to hunt and trap on park property in designated areas during appropriate seasons.

Osborn MetroPark:

Briar Middle School, in partnership with BGSU citizen science research project and the Toledo Zoo received a permit to catch and tag monarchs for a nationwide database and release them. They will also collect bumblebees for data collection and release them. Sandusky Middle School, in partnership with BGSU citizen science research project also received a permit to catch and tag monarchs and bumblebees for data collection.

Castalia Quarry MetroPark:

Craig Davis with the Great Lakes Environmental Center received a permit to collect soil samples for a wetland assessment. He will be assessing the mitigated wetlands; some plant specimens may be taken for ID verification.

Dawn Gerlica with The Holden Arboretum to collect seeds/small cuttings from native plants that will be used to propagate and plant in established habitats within Myrtle Holden Wildflower Garden to increase collection diversity of Ohio species represented.

Putnam Marsh Nature Preserve:

Tom Denbow with Biohabitats was authorized to conduct sediment assessments along East Sandusky Bay MetroPark to assess the characteristic and depth of sediments in the area for future development. They will also be accessing submerged aquatic plants/emergent vegetation.

NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT 2018**Controlled Burns/ Meadow Management**

The burn season in 2018 was hampered by wet spring conditions. Burns were completed at Wyandot Meadows and Barnes Extension, James H. McBride Arboretum, and Castalia Quarry MetroPark. The main field at Wyandot Meadows excluding the western edge and some of the southern planted meadows at the Barnes Extension burned well. The prairie planting areas within James H. McBride Arboretum were burned on their usual annual basis. The native prairie areas at Castalia Quarry MetroPark have responded well to a spring burn. Overall burns totaled 70 acres.

In 2018 we continued our mowing rotation with the Fecon unit (a brush cutting attachment) at Osborn MetroPark, which was started in 2015. The meadows are cut on a rotation so there is a variety of growth levels on the landscape for wildlife. Twelve acres were mowed in 2018.

MetroPark Property Projects

Lakeside Daisy monitoring continued in 2018 on the North Rim, West Cove and Upper South Rim at Castalia Quarry MetroPark. Seedlings and flowering plants were found at all three locations and are increasing and spreading each year. U.S. Fish & Wildlife

Service dispersed more Lakeside Daisy seed on the North Rim, and upper South rim in November. Red Cedars were cut on the upper South rim to reduce encroaching and shading on the population.

The Inland Sea Rocket (*Cakile edulenta*) was once again abundant in 2018. The plants are still found a little higher on the beach as the sand has moved higher up to the grass area with weather patterns and beach grooming in past years. A decent population of Common milkweed was also noted around the area the sea rockets was growing. These plants were flagged so they would not get mowed down as it is an important source for monarchs.

A monarch waystation was created in 2016 at Osborn MetroPark behind the Frost Center and by the parking lot at Wyandot Meadows MetroPark. The waystations have been monitored throughout the season to inventory what pollinator plants appeared from our seed mix. Several small plugs were added to the OPK patch this year that were donated from Shanz Nursery, including Butterfly Weed, Yellow Coneflower, Purple Coneflower, Mountain Mint, Autumn Sneezeweed, and Prairie Blazing.



Bee and butterfly activity on the pollinator patch were submitted through iNaturalist to help with research projects.

Milkweed seed was collected from the meadows for future dispersal and seed requests. We had seed requests from Venice Elementary and a couple visitors who stopped into the nature center.

Tree Planting Project at Edison Woods MetroPark

Monitoring of the trees planted in 'field 6' continued in 2018. Survival percentage is low, but growth is good in those surviving. Final success of this planting is not yet determined. Sycamore, Red Maple, and Swamp White Oak have survived better than the other species. No more trees will be planted in this field, but establishment monitoring will continue in future.

Property Updates

At Wakefield MetroPark a new section was acquired along the beach (West of the Wakefield parcel) this year that is owned by the City of Vermilion. Erie MetroParks holds a conservation easement on the parcel, and an inspection will take place yearly.

The land clearing project at Steinen Life-Estate property began in 2018. 7 acres were cleared, root raked, and seeded with Annual Rye. Follow up woody control and eventually seeding of a prairie mix will be to follow.



Indian Pipe was noted for the first time at Hoffman Forest MetroPark. It is a perennial wildflower that lacks chlorophyll and feeds from tree roots.



Invasive and Nuisance Species Control

Crowley's Vegetation was awarded a contract to spray scattered patches of Common Reed Grass at Eagle Point and Wyandot Wetland Meadows including a small section of Flowering Rush at Barnes Extension and Eagle Point. Most of the areas sprayed were follow up control.

Bob Bryson with the marsh master was hired to continue follow up treatment in Plum Brook. He chemically retreated any existing phragmites. The phragmites throughout the areas is mostly controlled, so monitoring and follow up treatment when necessary will take place.



The USFWS received a grant and reached out to Erie MetroParks with the opportunity for a 50% cost share to aerial spray herbicide for phragmites along the shoreline of East Sandusky Bay. A total of 50 acres was sprayed in September of 2018.

We are starting to notice an increase in invasive species moving in to some of the shoreline areas along Putnam Marsh. European Frog-Bit, Flowering Rush, Eurasian Watermilfoil and Curly Leaf Pondweed to name a few (*see pictures below*). Plans are in the works to try to combat some of these unwanted species.



Park staff continued with efforts to manage invasive and nuisance plant species in 2018. **Lesser Celandine** (*Ranunculus ficaria*) at Edison Woods MetroParks, Hoffman Forest MetroPark and Dupont Marsh State Nature Preserve, **Poison Hemlock** (*Conium maculatum*) at Edison Woods MetroPark and Wyandot/Barnes Extension, **Autumn Olive** (*Eleagnus umbellata*) at Castalia Quarry MetroPark, **Teasel** at Wyandot/Barnes Extension. New growth of **Chinese Wintercreeper** vines were cut in the Southwoods at Osborn MetroPark.

The primary materials used for control are Glyphosate based products, which include Roundup and other brands for uplands and Rodeo brand for wetland applications. A Triclopyr based product (Element brand) was used for woody plant control on a spot treatment basis. An imazapyr product (Polaris brand) was used on a small scale against Flowering Rush.

In 2017, loosestrife beetles were collected at Lake Metropark in the spring and distributed on the Purple Loosestrife populations at Barnes and Steinen for biological control. Some beetle presence was already noted on the loosestrife leaves prior to beetle distribution. 2018 monitoring revealed that there was still beetle activity causing

some leaf damage, but it did not appear to be reducing the loosestrife population at this point (see pictures below).



Wildlife Management

Ed Boose, one of Erie MetroParks volunteers, monitors some of the Bluebird boxes that are distributed around Osborn MetroPark and James H. McBride Arboretum, Monica Klarer, another one of Erie MetroParks volunteers monitors the additional boxes that are at Osborn MetroPark. Out of the 15 boxes she monitored, she had 5 bluebird nests (15 fledged), 9 tree swallow nests (29 fledged), 2 house wren nests (7 fledged) and 1 house sparrow nest (eggs were removed).

To help ODNR Division of Wildlife with their bat monitoring we monitored 2 sites within Erie MetroParks for roosting locations. The first site was a bat box located on the maintenance barn at Osborn MetroPark, but no bat activity was noted. However, an active roosting location at Edison Woods MetroPark, Smokey road office was found. The survey was conducted twice during the summer at dusk. The first survey was early June (before the pups can fly) and 66 bats were counted. The second survey was in July (after the pups can fly) and 144 bats were counted leaving the roost. The species was either Little Brown or Big Brown bat, but it was not determined which species it was. This information was sent to ODNR to help them evaluate the prevalence and location of summer bat colonies.

Controlled Deer Hunt & Steinen Youth Lottery

Erie MetroParks has conducted a yearly deer count since 2012 to determine the estimated deer population. Those population numbers along with documentation of deer browsing has supported having small controlled hunts to reduce the deer herd and provide Ohio sportsman hunting opportunities. In addition to our in-house deer count we also had an aerial deer count done in 2018 to compare data which showed to be similar. Erie MetroParks successfully conducted the 7th controlled hunt in 2018.

During a portion of the state-wide deer gun week (November 26th - November 30th) a controlled deer hunt was put on at Edison Woods MetroPark. A lottery card drawing was held for an adult only deer gun hunt. For each day, Monday-Friday, 6 names were drawn totaling 30 hunters. Each of those selected hunters could bring a partner to hunt on a designated day until noon, for a total of 60 hunters. 2 mobility impaired hunters were drawn this year, a hunting blind was set up on the boardwalk in Zone 8 for easy accessibility. Rules and Regulations, Erie MetroParks permit, location map and zone maps were sent out to each hunter in advanced, giving each hunter an opportunity to scout out their zone prior. We received a total of 381 entries for the controlled hunt. 22 deer were harvested during the 5-day hunt. Of those 22, 12 were bucks or button bucks and 10 were does.

The Steinen Youth Lottery took place in August and we had another year of good attendance for youth interested in Trapping, Archery & Upland Game.

Wildlife Surveys

As in prior years, sites visits were done at Berlin Heights Ravine, Thomas Williams MetroPark and Howe Breeze Hill Farm to check on compliance with the easement restrictions. Most other parks were visited at least once, if not more, to record bird and other wildlife species. In total, 155 bird species were found by staff in 2018. Overall, 223 bird species have been found by staff in the last 23 years.

A trail camera was placed throughout the year in different MetroParks to capture pictures/videos of what wildlife is roaming within the park. Photos are then shared with the naturalists for their program use and are also posted on social media for Trail Camera Thursdays. We are continuing to see beaver activity at Eagle Point- Plum Brook.

Monarch butterfly monitoring for Monarch Joint Venture was done at priority sites in Erie County this year. We are working on building up volunteer interest to continue monitoring and data submission moving forward for the nationwide research effort.

Eagle nests throughout Erie County are monitored on a yearly basis. Park closures will take place if necessary.

Special Permits

Several special permits are issued every year for numerous studies and projects throughout Erie MetroParks properties. The following permits have been issued for natural resource related projects.



Edison Woods MetroPark:

Paige Reeher surveyed floral, bee, and habitat to identify and count all flowering species in a designated area. All surveys will be incorporated into a state-wide survey in search of *Bombus affinis* and *Bombus terricola*. Permission was also granted for Wyandot Meadows.

John Lavelle continued to catalog the animals that live in the waters of wetlands and ephemeral pools throughout Edison Woods MetroPark. A one-liter sample of water will be removed several times a year for this study. His permit has been approved to continue into 2019.

Kate Pilacky with Western Reserve Land Conservancy was granted a permit to collect seeds from prairie plants in the Edison Woods MetroPark meadows. The seeds will be used for planting in a prairie.

The Toledo Zoo and Aquarium was authorized to remove water samples to determine if the Kirtland snake is present. All Kirtland snakes will be marked with PIT tags for future identification. This was also authorized for East Sandusky Bay (Eagle Point & Wyandot)

The University of Akron, biology department sampled areas of Edison Woods MetroPark for Monkeyflower during the flowering season. Once fruit appears the fruit will be removed for further study.

A permit was issued to Metroparks of Toledo Area to take Sandusky City Schools to collect pond samples from vernal pools and identify plants, soil, water temperature and any macroinvertebrates. The students will be using the GLOBE website to report their findings.

Annette Evans with the University of Connecticut was issued a permit to remove no more than 33 salamanders at Edison Woods MetroPark for further study.

Steinen Life-Estate:

West Huron Youth Club authorized to hunt and trap on park property in designated areas during appropriate seasons.

Osborn MetroPark:

Permission was given to Jerry Eakin to maintain an active bee hive and remove any honey. Signs near the location will be posted to inform the public of the hive.

The Erie County health department did a tick drag throughout the meadows to determine if Black Legged Deer ticks are present. Ticks were removed for identification. Permission was granted for most MetroParks properties that had suitable habitat.

Barnes Extension:

Gary Toll was authorized to place duck boxes in various locations along East Sandusky Bay, they will be put in mid-March and removed in mid-October. He also put up fencing to protect turtle eggs in May-June at Barnes.

VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT 2017



After working with Erie MetroParks volunteers for the last 6 years, Beki Hinline (Volunteer Coordinator) was encouraged and humbled to be a part of their team. Each volunteer generously gives their time for a cause they believe in. Erie MetroParks is fortunate to have individuals who feel the park district makes a difference in the Erie County Community.

The Friends of Erie MetroParks continued to provide many services for Erie MetroParks. The group highlighted Osborn MetroPark this year. A new outdoor meeting space was created behind the Frost Center! They also improved the trails in the South Woods, fixed shelters and more! They hosted the 14th annual Go Take a Hike at Osborn MetroPark and the 4th annual Run the Rock 5k at Castalia Quarry MetroPark.

Pride Academy, through the Sandusky City School District, continued to volunteer at least once a month. They volunteered approximately 442 hours in 2017. In addition to Pride Academy, Erie Metro Live Steamers continued to expand at East Sandusky Bay MetroPark. During the course of the year they added many feet of track and a new loading area. They logged an impressive 2,499 hours. In December, the Park District recognized Tim and Lynn Sparks for their work at Edison Woods MetroPark. They worked very closely with Park Service Technician, Mark Malone, to assist him in a trail maintenance project.

Based on the State of Ohio Minimum Wage, \$8.15/hour, the monetary value of Erie MetroParks volunteers in 2017 was \$71,664.99. According to Independent Sector, the dollar value of a volunteer hour in Ohio in 2016 (most recent value available) is \$24.14. According to Erie MetroParks' recorded number of volunteer hours, the work completed is valued at \$212,269.06.

VOLUNTEER DEPARTMENT 2018

The Volunteer Department is an important and vital part of any organization, such as Erie MetroParks. In the third quarter of 2018, Beki Hinline resigned and Sandy Flittner, Visitor Service Coordinator assumed the role of Volunteer Coordinator. Since she has only recently taken on the main responsibilities of the Volunteer Department, this report will be based on the numbers that she has been able to gather. Though new to this

position, she has worked with many of our volunteers throughout the years. She looks forward to the opportunity to work more closely with these amazing, giving people.

Erie MetroParks has a strong and solid base with our established partnerships. Because of this, the focus of this coming year will be to re-establish our individual volunteer program. This year saw an extreme decrease in the use of individual volunteers which translates into increased staff time. Steps are being taken to update the records of the Volunteer Department and to establish communication between existing volunteers as well as encouraging potential new volunteers.

The main partnerships include our Friends of Erie MetroParks, Erie Metro Live Steamers, Pride Academy through the Sandusky City School District, and the Ohio Horseman's Council of Erie County. These groups work hard and add a depth to the Erie MetroParks system that could not be reached without them. We are indebted to their support, time, efforts, and contributions to Erie MetroParks.

This year, the hours of the Ohio Horseman's Council of Erie County (OHC) will be tracked under the Erie MetroParks Groups. Through the years, including 2018, this group has helped construct and maintain the trails and parking areas at Edison Woods MetroPark. They were responsible for raising the funds and building the Horseman's Shelter at the Smokey Road site, adding electricity a few years later. This shelter is used by groups during overnight camping, for programs including Nature Camp, and by individuals for outings. This year, OHC spent 632 hours improving the trails.

In the following report, you will see by the numbers, our use of volunteers has diminished in the past few years. Between 2017 and 2018, 2,432.25 fewer volunteer hours were tracked. Several sections that have not been used in the past 4 years have been removed from the report.

According to Independent Sector, the dollar value of a volunteer hour in Ohio in 2018 was \$24.69. According to Erie MetroParks' recorded number of volunteer hours, the work completed is valued at \$157,053.09. I look forward to restoring a strong volunteer force.



2018 Volunteer Summary

Section	Area	Park	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
EMP DEPARTMENTS							
ADMINISTRATION	General Office	OPK	69.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Board of Commissioners	Various	553.00	522.00	432.00	421.00	432.00
ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT			622.00	522.00	432.00	421.00	432.00
PROGRAM	Barnyard Programs	Barnyard	35.00	22.00	40.00	37.00	10.00
	Barnyard Operation	Barnyard	865.00	950.00	1005.00	1101.00	866.00
	Interpretive Programs	Various	55.00	47.50	19.50	11.00	0.00
	Nature Camp	OPK	3.00	12.50	112.00	56.00	55.00
	Butterfly Monitoring	JMA/OPK	80.00	81.00	7.00	0.00	0.00
	Bluebird Monitoring	JMA	28.00	25.00	25.00	17.00	16.00
	Bee Keeping Programs	OPK					35.00
	Bee Keeping Operations	OPK				87.00	5.00
INTERPRETIVE DEPARTMENT			1066.00	1138.00	1208.50	1222.00	987.00
RECREATION	Canoe/Kayak Programs	TCR	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	RECREATION DEPARTMENT			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
SPECIAL EVENTS	Earth Day Extravaganza	OPK	68.50	2.00	46.00	47.00	0.00
	Erie County Fair	Offsite	29.50	16.00	28.00	31.00	0.00
	Easter Egg Hunt	OPK	NA	NA	12.00	7.00	0.00
	Harvest Happenings	OPK	239.00	138.00	160.00	197.00	70.50
	Party In The Parks (One year only)	Various					9.50
SPECIAL EVENTS DEPARTMENT			337.00	156.00	246.00	282.00	80.00
OPERATIONS:	Construction/ Maintenance	Various	328.00	206.00	276.00	415.25	32.00
	Projects/Horticulture	Various	751.00	470.00	319.00	44.00	245.00
	Eagle Scout Projects	Various	0.00	267.00	550.50	0.00	0.00
	Dog Park Monitors	OPK	2.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Habitat Healers - Adopt a Park	Various	1200.00	1042.00	1010.00	1049.00	0.00
	Prescribed Burns	Various	21.00	30.50	0.00	14.50	9.00
OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT			2302.00	2015.50	2155.50	1522.75	286.00
EMP DEPARTMENT TOTALS			4393.00	3831.00	4042.00	3447.75	1353.00

2018 Volunteer Summary con't							
Section	Area	Park	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
EMP GROUPS							
FRIENDS OF EMP	Annual Gathering		252.00	165.00	180.00	180.00	180.00
	Board & Committee Members		138.00	222.00	837.00	1442.50	1465.00
	Committees & Miscellaneous		409.00	440.00	60.00	306.00	60.00
	Special Events		659.00	231.00	288.00	232.00	113.00
	Organization & Communications		525.00	93.00	75.50	64.00	62.00
	Workdays		272.00	135.00	183.00	180.00	93.00
	TOTAL: FRIENDS OF EMP		2255.00	1286.00	1623.50	2404.50	1973.00
ERIE METRO LIVE STEAMERS	Club Promotion		0.00	0.00	*	*	*
	Meetings		190.00	68.50	*	*	*
	Misc. Site work, etc		196.00	2362.00	*	*	*
	TOTAL: EMLS		386.00	2431.00	2278.00	2499.00	2699.00
OHIO HORSEMAN'S COUNCIL	Edison Woods MetroPark Trail Work					*	632.00
	TOTAL: OHC						632.00
PRIDE ACADEMY SANDUSKY HS	Program Services		273.00	70.50	216.00	117.00	336.00
	Administration		78.00	38.50	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Operations		297.00	182.00	148.00	325.00	0.00
	TOTAL: PRIDE ACADEMY		648.00	291.00	364.00	442.00	336.00
EMP GROUP TOTALS			4574.00	4977.00	5285.50	5345.50	5008.00
TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS:			8967.00	8808.00	9327.50	8793.25	6361.00

MARKETING DEPARTMENT 2017

Summary:

The Marketing Department experienced many subtle but important changes throughout 2017. A new color scheme, marketing template and refreshed logo were put into use during the year. These changes were incorporated throughout the website, social media, signage, print media and more. With the addition of Ethan Unzicker, IT Specialist, design work was vastly improved. Included in this report are data driven details to show what marketing was used, how it was applied and why it is important.

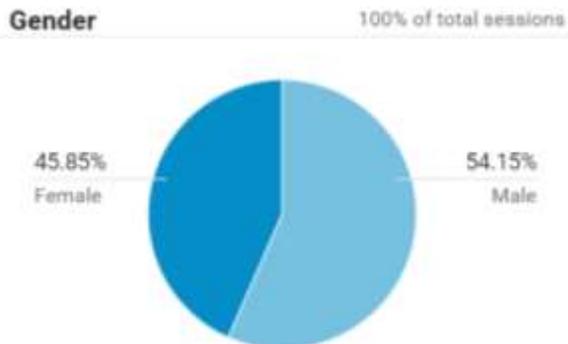
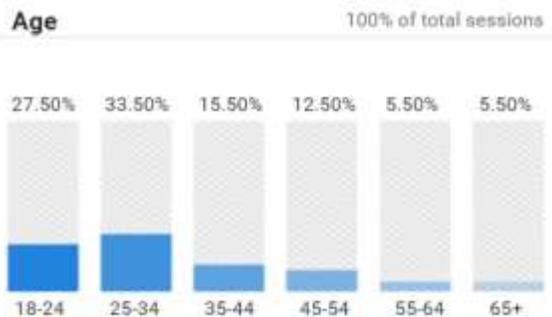
Website

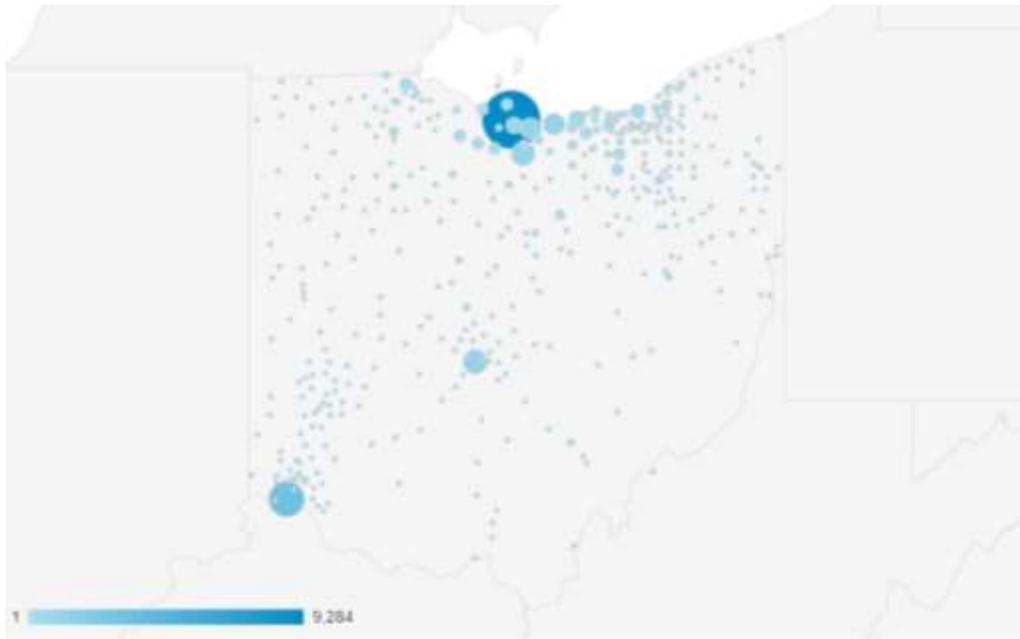
This year the Erie MetroParks website was a continual work in progress. The website was completely redesigned in 2016 and with the addition of a new IT Specialist who has a background in design, the website was enhanced even further in 2017. Many features were improved such as ability to access park and program information.

The website now functions as an interactive tool for external and internal users. The site experienced more visitors than ever before and is also used as a presentation tool by staff. The graphics below show who uses our site, where they are from and what they are looking for.

Total visits to ErieMetroParks.org: 35,452

Who uses our website:





How did they find us:

Organic Search: when a visitor searches Erie MetroParks or something related in a search engine.

Direct: typed eriemetroparks.org into browser

Referral: clicked on link to our site from another site

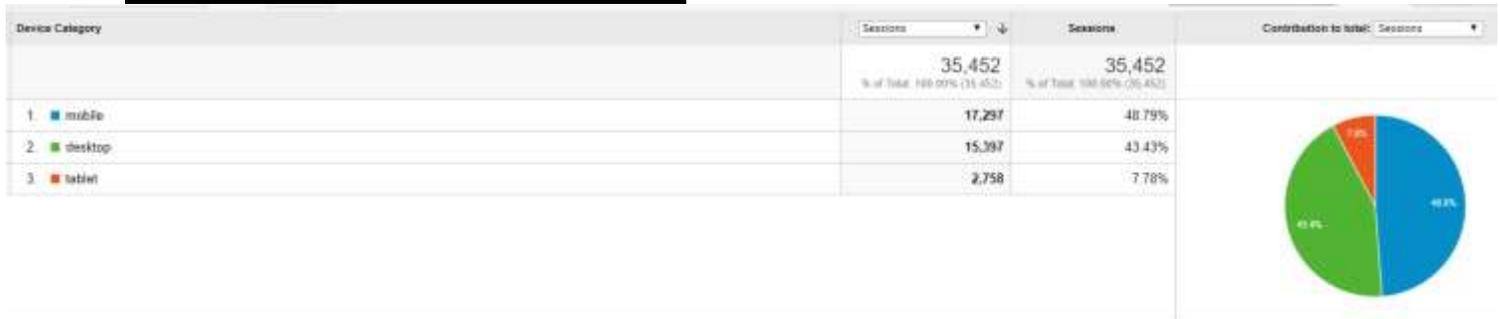
Social: clicked on link to our site from social media



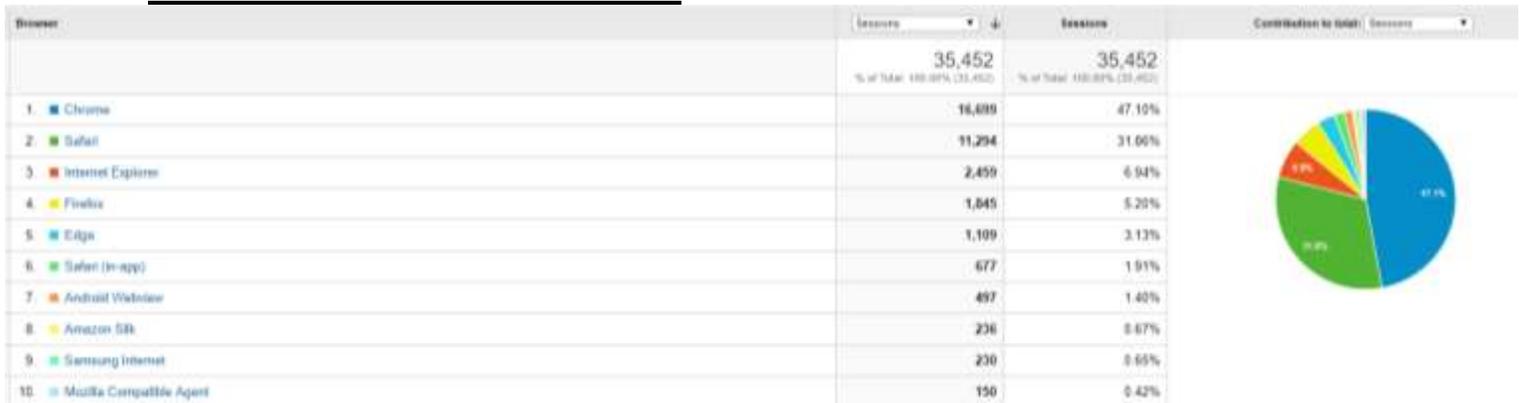
Social Media:



What technology do our visitors use:



What browsers do our visitors use:



If on a mobile device or tablet:



What are users looking at:

Page Title	Pages	Pages	Contribution to total
	85,881 % of total: 100.00% (85,881)	85,881 % of total: 100.00% (85,881)	
1 Erie MetroParks Erie MetroParks	11,870	13.82%	
2 Erie MetroParks Discover It - Home	10,048	11.70%	
3 Your Erie MetroParks	7,602	8.85%	
4 Erie MetroParks Discover It - Programs	3,593	4.18%	
5 Programs Archive Erie MetroParks	3,576	4.16%	
6 Erie MetroParks - Erie MetroParks	3,056	3.56%	
7 Erie MetroParks Discover It - Parks	2,705	3.15%	
8 Harvest Happenings Erie MetroParks	1,685	1.96%	
9 Edsall Woods MetroPark Erie MetroParks	1,527	1.78%	
10 Erie MetroParks Discover It - Employment	1,391	1.62%	

The Inside Trail

The Inside Trail was an effective communication tool during the year. The Executive Director decided to add a section called “Note from the Director.” This section has been well received and allows for flexibility in sharing special park news. The average industry open rate was approximately 20%, by referring to the data below; you will see our average open rate was over 24%. When comparing Erie MetroParks’ click-through and bounce rates to similar industries, *The Inside Trail*, again performed better than average. The bounce rate was reduced significantly after the March newsletter with the assistance of Constant Contact customer service. With the help of the Reservation Staff, 116 new subscribers were added to the contact list.



Date Sent	Time Sent	Campaign Name	Total Sent	Open Rate	Mobile Open Rate	Desktop Open Rate	Click Through Rate	Bounce Rate	Unsubscribes
Thu, Nov 30	2:00 PM	The Inside Trail: December 2017	2187	22.40%	47.90%	52.10%	14.00%	4.00%	3
Wed, Nov 8	2:53 PM	The Inside Trail: November 2018	2189	23.70%	48.90%	51.10%	14.10%	6.70%	4
Thu, Sep 28	12:30 PM	The Inside Trail: October 2017	2179	23.10%	50.10%	49.90%	18.70%	3.30%	1
Tue, Sep 5	3:11 PM	The Inside Trail: September 2017	2174	23.20%	40.80%	59.20%	20.80%	3.70%	3
Fri, Jul 28	12:36 PM	The Inside Trail: August 2017	2162	23.70%	50.70%	49.30%	21.30%	3.00%	1
Thu, Jun 29	2:21 PM	The Inside Trail: July 2017	2160	24.40%	45.10%	54.90%	16.20%	2.90%	5
Wed, May 31	3:16 PM	The Inside Trail: June 2017	2150	24.40%	51.10%	48.90%	16.40%	3.20%	6
Tue, May 2	10:31 AM	The Inside Trail: May 2017	2166	26.10%	49.80%	50.20%	17.70%	7.70%	6
Mon, Apr 3	12:33 PM	The Inside Trail: April 2017	2057	25.00%	49.80%	50.20%	24.30%	2.50%	4
Tue, Feb 28	2:00 PM	The Inside Trail: March 2017	2314	26.30%	43.50%	56.50%	17.00%	14.70%	3
Tue, Jan 31	3:00 PM	The Inside Trail: February 2017	2312	25.30%	42.90%	57.10%	16.50%	15.30%	4
Wed, Jan 4	2:16 PM	The Inside Trail: January 2017	2303	27.00%	44.60%	55.40%	25.00%	14.50%	0
Averages				24.55%	47.10%	52.90%	18.50%	6.79%	

Signage

Many signs were updated and added throughout the year. Safety signage at Castalia Quarry MetroPark was enhanced. Banners and bulletin boards were also updated during the year. A historical interpretive sign was added at Hoffman Forest MetroPark to round out the improvements completed during 2016. Signage at East Sandusky Bay and shelter signs at Osborn MetroPark were also updated.

Media Relations

Throughout the year, The Sandusky Register published approximately 60 news articles mentioning Erie MetroParks. Marketing materials, press releases and program schedules continue to be sent to about 50 media contacts on a regular basis. Relationships with BAS Broadcasting and Elyria-Lorain Broadcasting have grown, showing an increase in the promotion of programs and events on the radio.

Advertising

Advertising dollars were primarily distributed among print, digital and radio this year. Feedback from program attendees showed that radio advertising was effective in the past so more money was funneled through two local stations. We spent the year building relationships to increase paid ads, no-cost program promotion and on-air interviews. The second major expense in the advertising budget came from Facebook ads. Programs and videos were promoted throughout the year and the outcome was very positive. Print ads were primarily through the Serving Our Seniors quarterly publication.

Social Media

Social media continued to be a great, low cost marketing tool to assist in branding and promoting Erie MetroParks. Hootsuite, a social media management tool, continued to be helpful but lost some functionality during the year. We will be looking to see if there is a more favorable alternative. Erie MetroParks maintains Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. There are many factors of success when evaluating social media posts. To determine if our efforts are successful or not we must evaluate demographics, reach, content and other metrics.

Facebook:

Marketing on Facebook continued to grow. We have added over 500 individuals to our targeted audience and have grown in reach and interaction with our fans. I look forward to growing those numbers as social media becomes more and more useful. General demographic studies show that 71% of our Facebook fans are women. The majority of these women falls between 35-44 years old. The majority of men who follow our Facebook page fall into the same age range. A high percentage of our Facebook audience lives in Sandusky. Based on these statistics we use Facebook to primarily market our programs. Our programs are attended mostly by families with young children and moms do the majority of family activity planning. These statistics have held consistently throughout the last 3 years. The reach of our post is also greatly affected by content. Erie MetroParks posts that contained a video or picture reached far more Facebook users than without. The highest performing posts all included a type of media

(video, photo or link) paired with the information that was being shared. Below you will see examples of how many people were reached by posts with pictures and video. The Train Ride post was the top performing post of the year. It reached 6,654 people and had over 11,000 impressions on Facebook users. The Lotus Flower video had 1.3K views and over 8,000 impressions since originally posted in July. As video is becoming more and more popular, we have been increasingly using it to reach our audience.



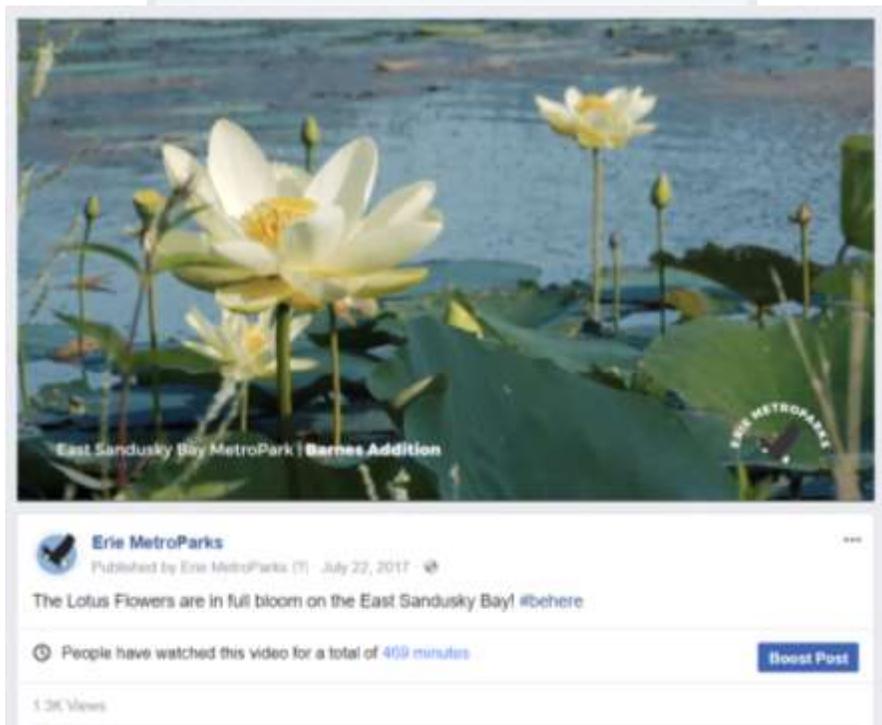
Erie MetroParks
Published by Hootsuite (T) · August 10, 2017 · 🌐

Train Rides! Sat. Aug. 12, 1-3pm. Erie Metro Live Steamers will have miniature steam-powered engines available to pull passengers through the park! Fun for all! All rides are weather dependent. East Sandusky Bay MetroPark, Eagle Point, 3819 Cleveland Rd, Sandusky.



👤 6,654 people reached [Boost Post](#)

👍 Likes 💬 Comment ➦ Share 🐦 ↗



East Sandusky Bay MetroPark | Barnes Addition

Erie MetroParks
Published by Erie MetroParks (T) · July 22, 2017 · 🌐

The Lotus Flowers are in full bloom on the East Sandusky Bay! #behere

🕒 People have watched this video for a total of 459 minutes [Boost Post](#)

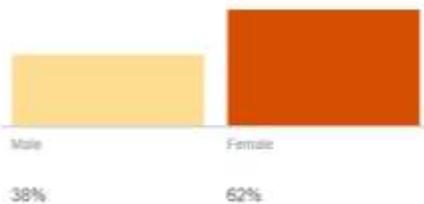
1.3K views

Twitter:

Twitter is used almost daily to promote park news. The established trend of media outlets and professionals following Erie MetroParks through Twitter has remained steady during 2017. Erie MetroParks has 1,291 followers, an increase of 74. Other local organizations and users such as Lake Erie Shore's and Islands, Andy Ouriel, and City of Sandusky regularly retweet and interact with Erie MetroParks. The most successful tweets included a picture or links to a photo. The information below provided demographic information to aid in marketing to appropriate audiences.



Gender



Household income categories



Age

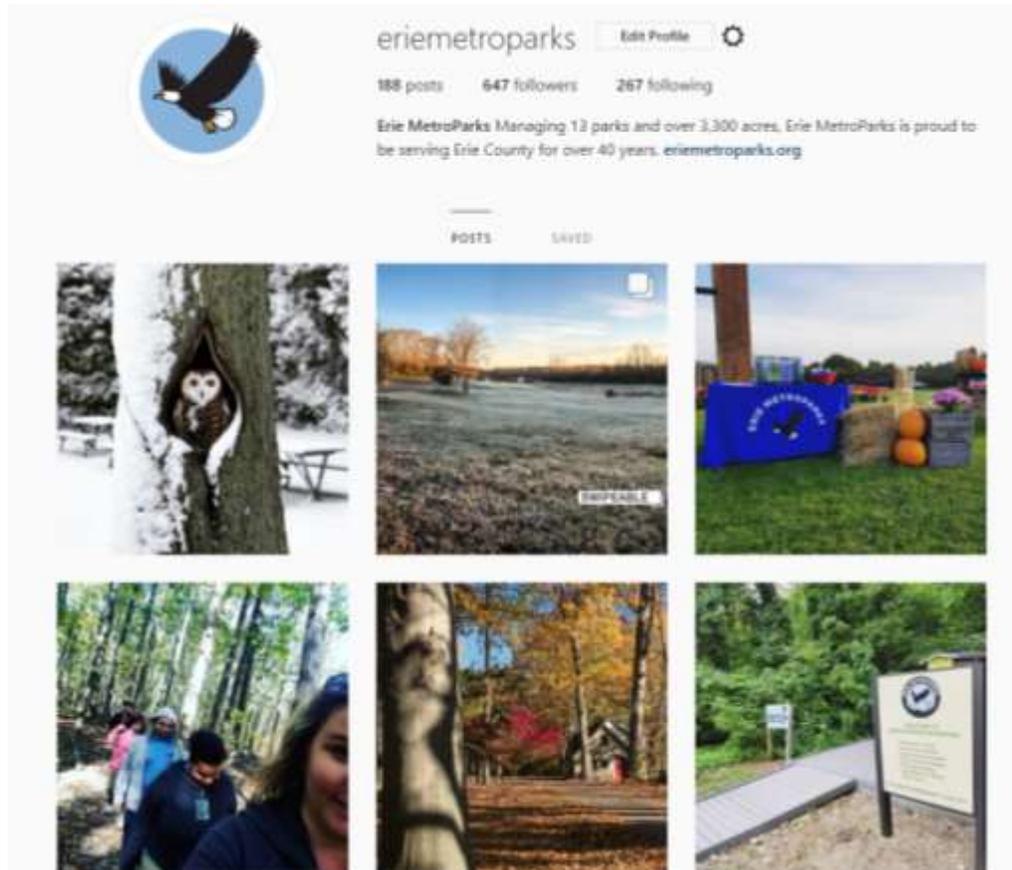


Education (highest level completed)



Instagram:

Instagram has continued to be a positive way to increase awareness of Erie MetroParks. Erie MetroParks' account has experienced a 20% increase in number of followers (525 followers to 647). Short videos, edited photos, nature scenes and more have been the highlight of this social media account. As our followers grow, so do the number of people who tag our account. A few times each month our account is tagged in beautiful pictures taken by our park guests. We will continue to grow the reach of this account.



YouTube:

As video has become a staple in successful marketing plans across the industry, Erie MetroParks increased the use of video to promote the park district in 2017. The number of views and time spent on each video has continued to grow. These videos were also shared on Facebook. As a test, advertising dollars were spent on one YouTube to see what type of response we would receive. The results of that test shows Castalia Quarry MetroPark video was a huge success. As we move forward with the professionally produced videos by New Departure Films, we will continue to allocate marketing dollars to YouTube.

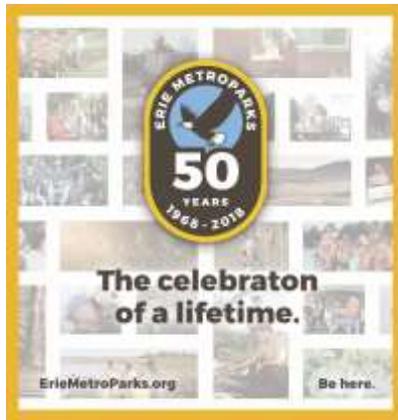
Videos	Watch Time (Minutes)	Total Views
2017		
Prescribed Burns	246	107
Dress for the Mess	47	40
Wet and Wild Camp	51	35
The Great Outdoors Camp	54	30
Monarchs	23	21
American Lotus at Erie MetroParks	104	100
Morning Paddle on East Sandusky Bay	55	48
Harvest Happenings 2017	63	57
Castalia Quarry MetroPark	5112	10736
2016		
Harvest Happenings 2016	128	95
Go Take a Hike: Hoffman Forest	50	54
Erie Metro Live Steamers Bridge	45	51
2012		
Go Take A Hike - East Sandusky Bay MetroPark, Eagle Point.wmv	25	24
August 2016 Trail Cam	17	37
Butterfly Catch & Release	17	20
Amphibians Part 1, Spotted Salamander.wmv	11	20
Amphibians Part 3, Spring Peeper	9	16
Amphibians Part 2, American Toad.wmv	6	8
Prescribed Burn 2012	2	2

MARKETING DEPARTMENT 2018

2018 proved to be another successful year for the Marketing department of Erie MetroParks.

This report will break down some of the tactics and strategies implemented by Erie MetroParks as categorized by what is known as the PESO system. PESO is an acronym for various types of marketing and advertisement opportunities that are taken advantage of. The four opportunities are Paid (radio/TV ads, banners and flyers, social media ads, etc), Earned (existing relationships such as news outlets, partnerships with local business, etc), Shared (organic marketing, word-of-mouth, social media posts, etc), and Owned (company website, on-site bulletin boards, etc).

PAID



Erie MetroParks had many unique opportunities for paid advertisement and promotion in 2018, as it was both the 50th anniversary of the park district as well as the bicentennial of the City of Sandusky. To celebrate the districts 50th anniversary, parties were held in several of the parks through the year and these parties were advertised with a combination of paid and free advertisement. The Sandusky Register also printed 4 unique Bicentennial Editions of their newspaper which featured local business and organizations. This presented a unique opportunity for Erie MetroParks to purchase paid ads highlighting the celebration of our 50th year of operation as well as advertise the parties.

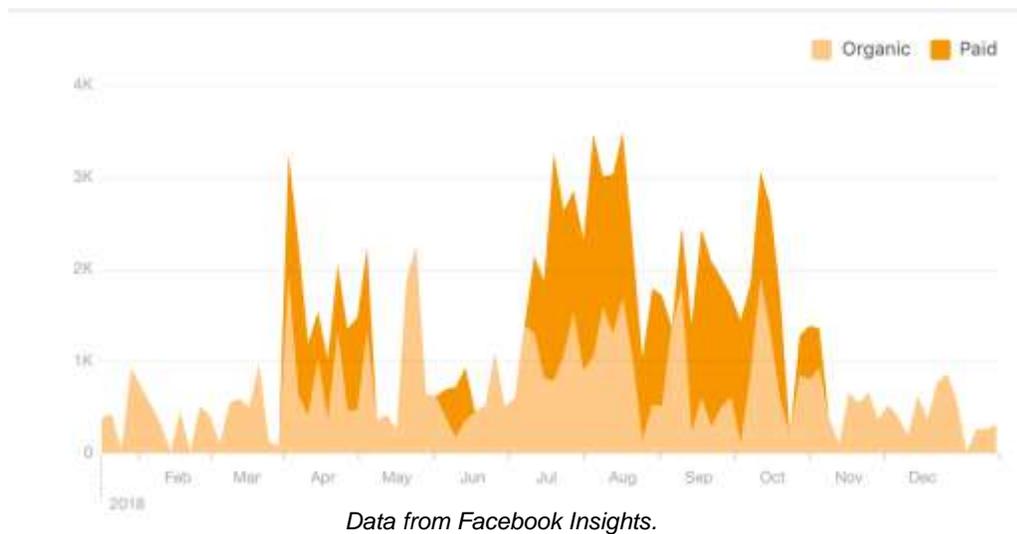


In addition to the print advertisement in the Sandusky Register, Erie MetroParks also had advertisements placed in the quarterly periodical of Serving Our Seniors, and had special edition, 50th anniversary brochures printed to be handed out at the parties. These brochures had a retro design and featured a timeline of Erie MetroParks history.

Other areas of paid advertisement include radio and social media. Erie MetroParks maintained a working relationship with BAS broadcasting as well as Elyria Lorain Broadcasting. Paid advertisements for programs and events were played on these

networks as well as in-studio interviews, which were conducted at no extra charge to the district.

Social Media advertisement accounted for less than 10% of the annual advertisement budget but continued to have the highest ROI for advertisement efforts. As an example, a video posted to Facebook with no paid advertisement was watched just under 600 times. A video that was 'boosted' with paid promotion of \$150 gathered over 6600 views. Paid posts average about a 100% increased reach over non-paid. Erie MetroParks will continue to evaluate the ROI of payed advertisements and promotions and focus on the most effective networks of communication.



EARNED

Erie MetroParks has earned many valuable connections through its relationships with local business, agencies, and philanthropic citizens over the past 5 decades. The relationships have provided opportunities for positive word of Erie MetroParks services and amenities to spread at no cost to the agency.

Events such as the 50th Anniversary Party and Harvest Happenings are covered by local news agencies, included video recaps from BCSN. BAS Broadcasting, in addition to the paid advertisement slots purchased by Erie MetroParks, interviewed the former Marketing Manager Beki Hinline about these events. These agencies provide coverage of these events at no cost.

Erie MetroParks relationship with local school districts also provide opportunities for people to hear about our events and programs. Our annual Nature Camps are able to be advertised in all elementary classrooms with a send-home flyer. The only cost to this is Erie MetroParks' cost to print the flyers.

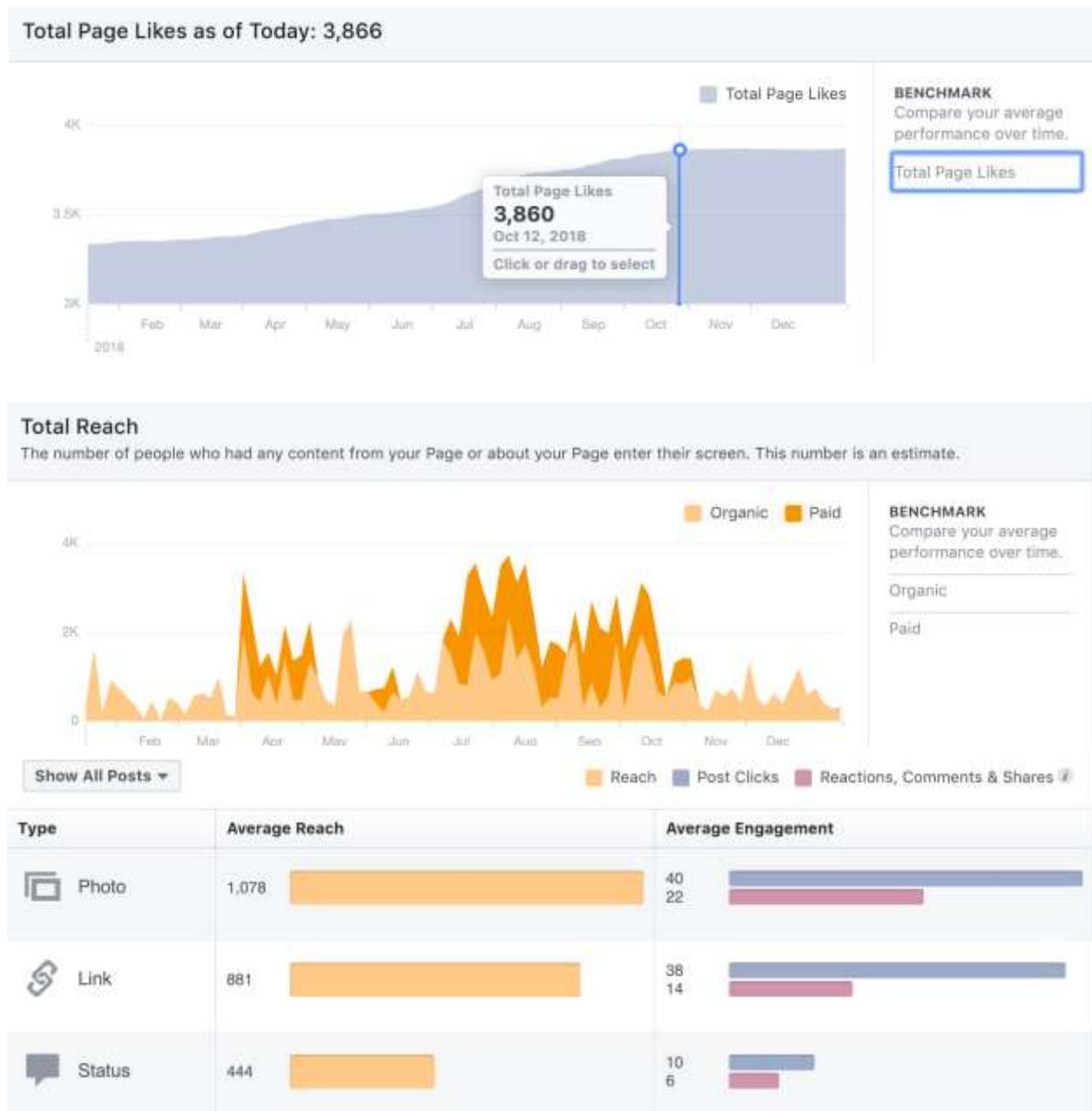
SHARED

Organic, shared information is the main focus of all Erie MetroParks marketing. Erie MetroParks is active on 4 major social networking sites: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter.

Below are some images showing the reach and engagement of Erie MetroParks content on these platforms.

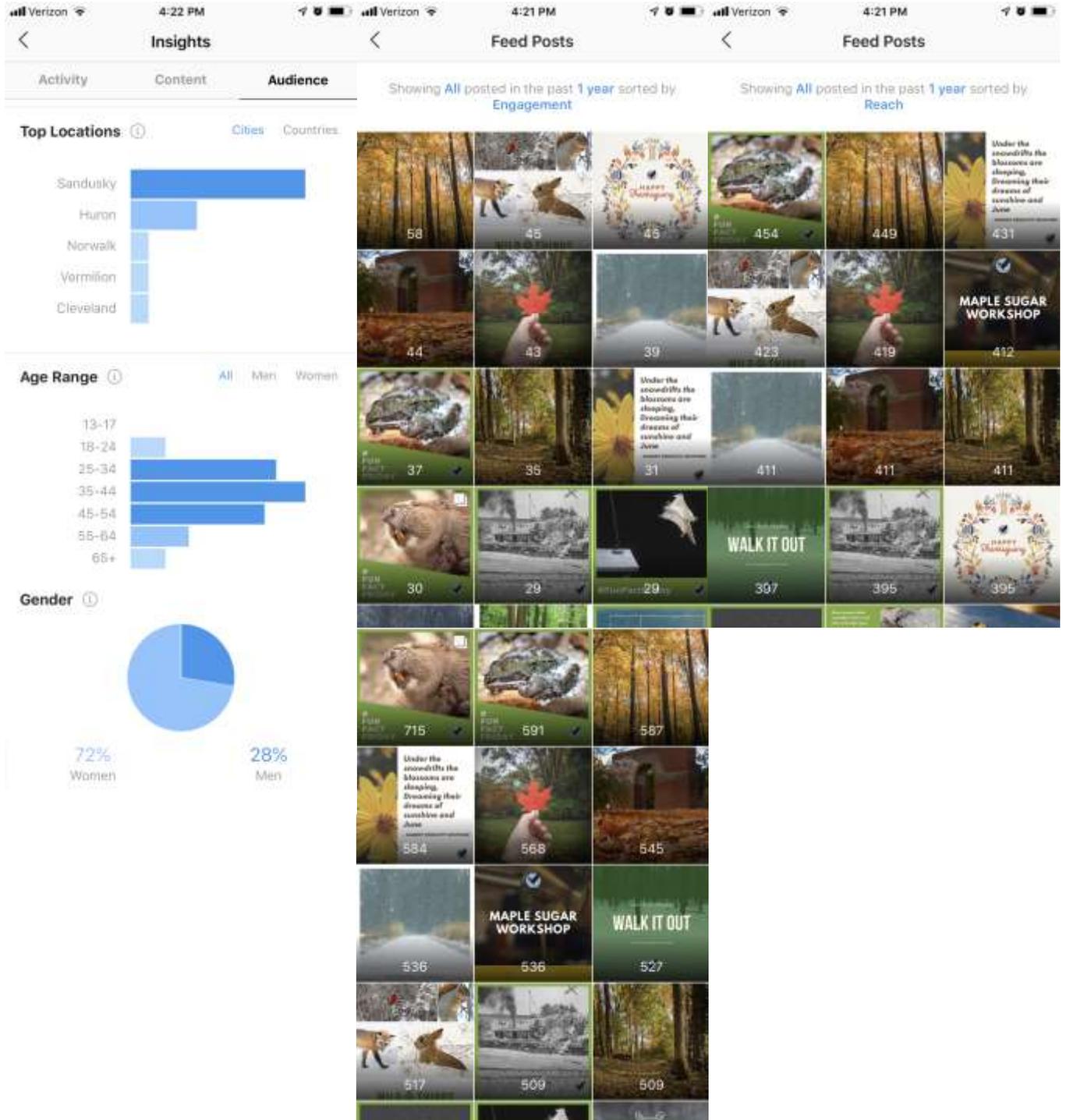
Facebook

(February 7th, 2019)



Popularity of Different Post Types

Instagram



Twitter

Twitter Publishing Behavior

SENT MESSAGE CONTENT



CONVERSATION BEHAVIOR (LAST 100 TWEETS)

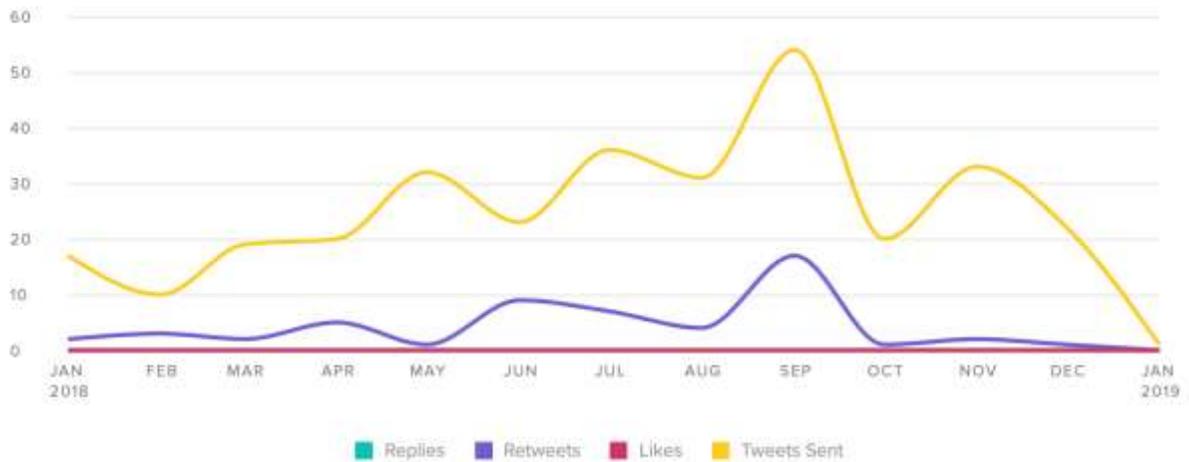


CONTACT BEHAVIOR (ALL TWEETS)

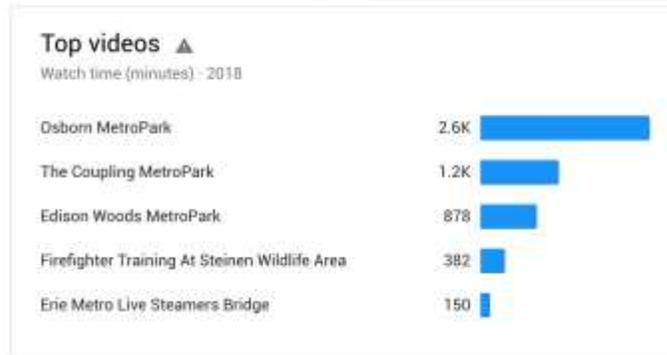
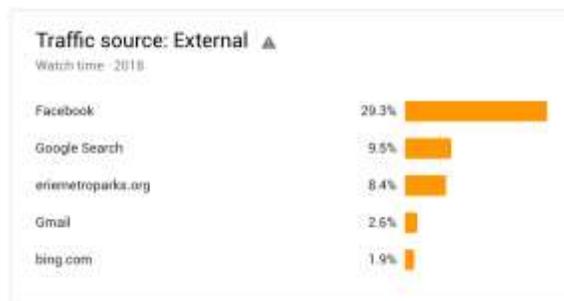
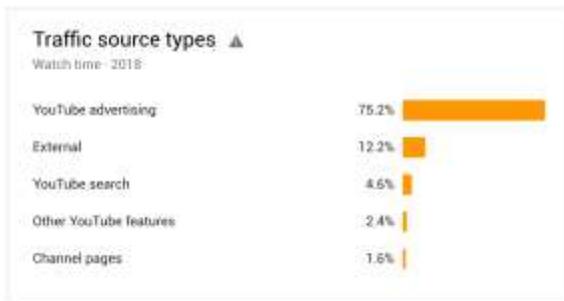
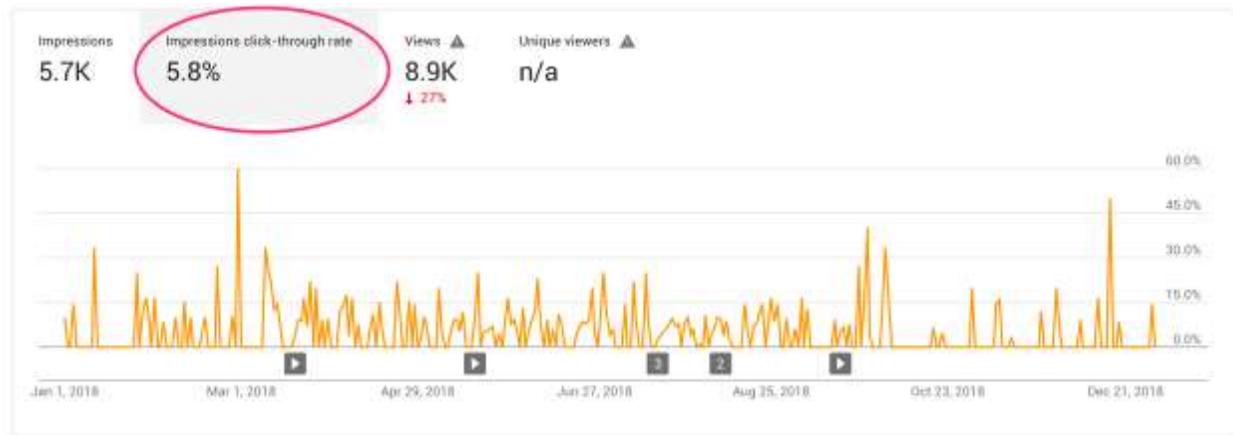
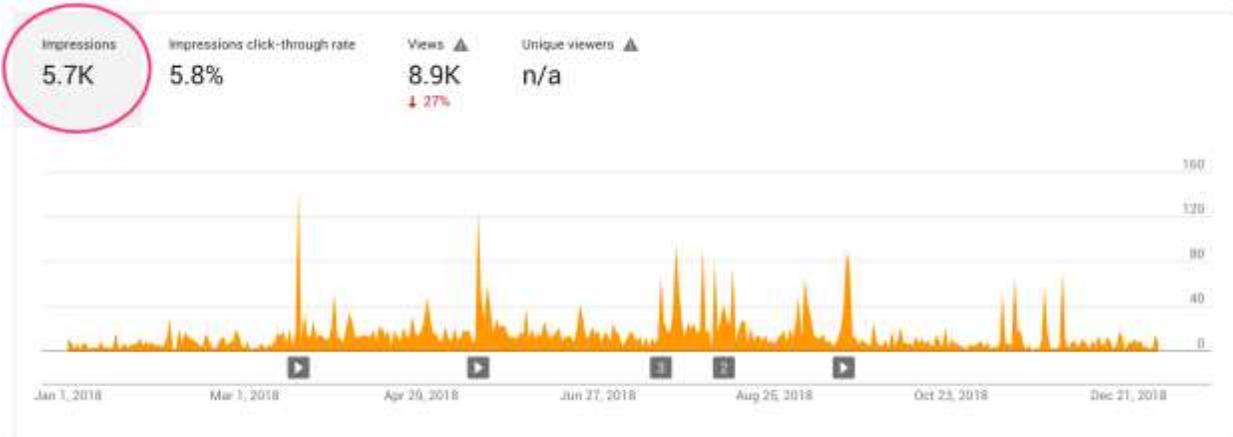


Twitter Engagement

ENGAGEMENT COUNT



YouTube



Summary of Social Media

Facebook continues to give Erie MetroParks the greatest return on investment and return on effort for shared advertisement and promotion. Instagram follows closely behind. Twitter sees very low conversion rates in terms of follower engagement, however it is still believed to be a worthwhile social network to post to periodically. YouTube proves to be a very valuable resource for paid, video advertisement, although organic growth is minimal.

OWNED

Erie MetroParks owns several assets that serve to distribute materials that support the marketing efforts of the agency. These assets have been categorized below into 2 categories of Physical and Digital.

Digital

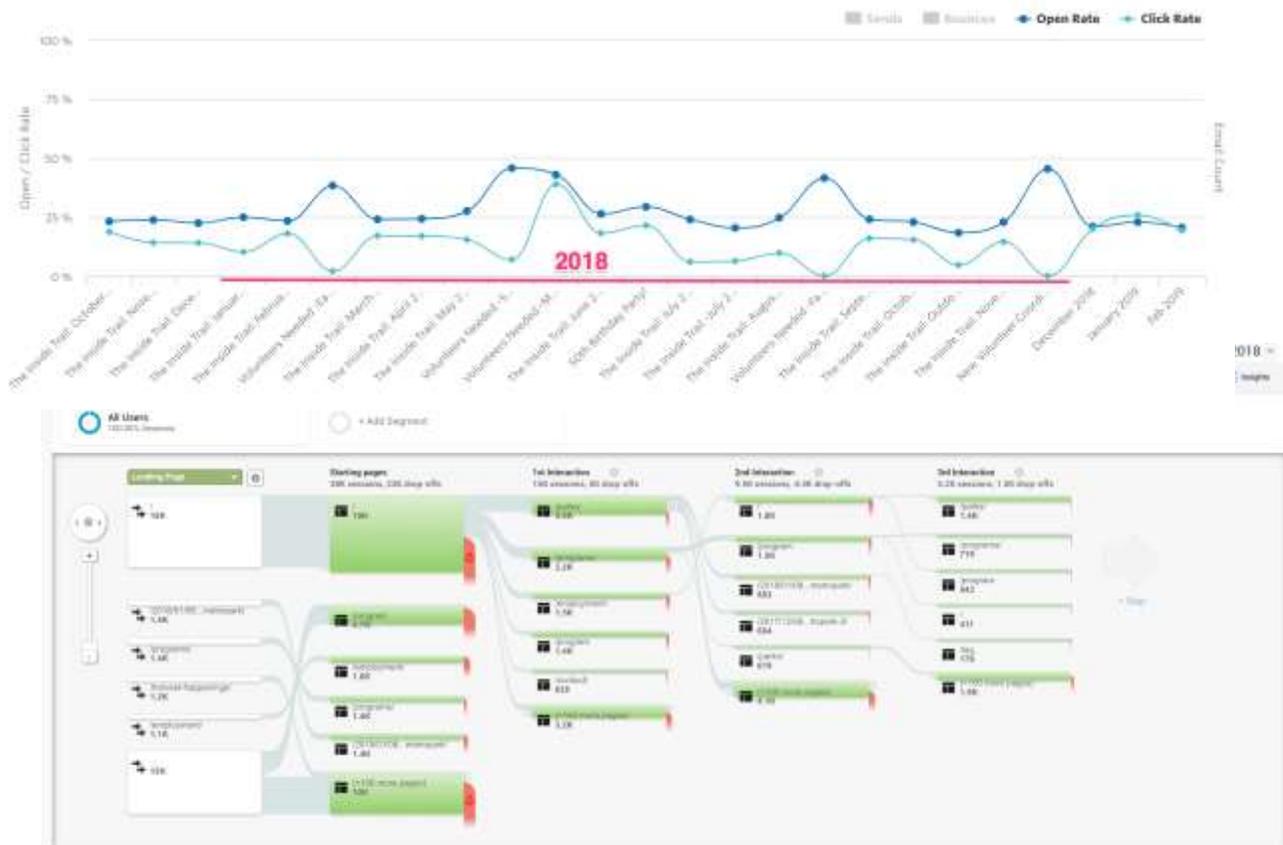
WEBSITE

Erie MetroParks' website (eriemetroparks.org) continues to be the single most comprehensive source of information about the organization available to the public. Users of the website are able to locate a MetroPark on a map, view information about each park, see a list of all programs, register for programs and events, access natural resources management plans, view board meeting minutes and much more. Below is an overview of visits made to the website over the course of 2018.



EMAIL NEWSLETTER

Erie MetroParks continues to send emailed newsletters under the title The Inside Trail. This newsletter contains information about upcoming programs and events as well a note from Director Amy-Bowman Moore. The current number of subscribers is 2274. The graph below show percentage of emails opened for each campaign sent, as well as the percentage of recipients who clicked a link within the email.



Banners



Interpretive Panels

HOFFMAN FOREST METROPARK



Hoffman Forest MetroPark was originally purchased by Dr. & Mrs. Lowell Hoffman in 1976, who leased the property to Erie MetroParks starting in 1996. In late 2015, working with Western Reserve Land Conservancy, the land was permanently acquired by Erie MetroParks and continues to reflect the original owners' commitment to conservation and environmental education.



Two intermittent branches of Old Woman Creek run through the property, making it part of a rare freshwater estuary with a wooded stream corridor. It has a run of steelhead trout in the spring, and several less common creatures have been found over the years including Mink, Fox Snakes and Box Turtles. The stream area is also a diverse area for plants.



Hoffman Forest MetroPark is a prime example of reforestation. Dr. Hoffman planted many White Pine and Red Oak trees - a legacy that lives along side many 100+ year old trees that early settlers planted for lumber use. The MetroPark is also home to Ohio Buckeye, Spicebush, Orange Orange and Paw-Paw Trees.



In 2018, The Friends of Erie MetroParks adopted Hoffman Forest. Through their generosity and hard work, stairs were added to make the PawPaw Trail more accessible. They also uncovered the foundation of an old barn and created what is now called the "Rustic Retreat" near the parking lot.

ERIE METROPARKS

Trail Maps

EDISON WOODS METROPARK



Dogwood Loop (3mi)	Adventure Walkway (4mi)	North Creek Trail (2mi)
Chestnut Road (3.5mi)	Big Meadow (1mi)	East Oak Hickory (1mi)
Deehy Road Trail (2mi)	Thornapple (2mi)	West Oak Hickory (1.5mi)
North Ridge (4mi)	Cranberry Creek (7mi)	Parking
South Ridge (2.5mi)	Smokey Woods Trail (2mi)	Horse Trailer Parking
Prairie Trails	Upland Oak (2mi)	

- Rose Mallow Pond
- Menches
- Emergency Locations



TRAIL BLAZE LEGEND		
Start of Trail	Continue Straight	Trail Turns Right
Trail Turns Left	Spur Leading to New Trail	End of Trail

Summary

Erie MetroParks Marketing continued to extend its reach in 2018, gaining more followers on social media and more engaged users through other marketing means.

Perhaps the most notable change in the department was the departure of Beki Hineline who served as the Marketing Manager for the past several years. Beki brought the marketing efforts of Erie MetroPark to new heights during her tenure and she will be greatly missed by the staff. Erie MetroParks IT Specialist Ethan Unzicker, who has worked closer with the Marketing department since 2016, took over the responsibilities of marketing efforts in October of 2018.

VISITOR SERVICE DEPARTMENT 2017

The Visitor Service Department, located in the Frost Center, is the heartbeat of the MetroParks. This is where visitors stop in or call to find out about our parks, facilities, and programs. They answer questions, make reservations for our facilities, and register callers for our programs. They introduce visitors to our 13 parks, the ever expanding Nature Center, the variety of programs offered to everyone from babies to boomers and beyond, and to the varied history of our parks. It is heartwarming when a newly retired visitor sees all the different program opportunities such as kayaking or archery, or when a young mother learns about the nature center and the various Park Pals or Adventure Tot programs for their little one. Many return time and again to visit.



Lynda retired around 2003 and was looking for things to do. She discovered Erie MetroParks Programs and is a regular at the hiking, kayaking, archery, fitness, and nature programs.

Another role of the Visitor Service Department is that of providing support to all Erie MetroParks Staff. They address the concerns and complaints that may come up, contacting staff if necessary and following through with the caller/visitor. They help with copying, faxing, and mailing, as well as making sure the staff has the supplies they need.

Special Permits are an important aspect of their job, one that keeps growing each year. Special Permits are required whenever a group or individual would like to engage in an activity prohibited in the Erie MetroParks Rules and Regulations. These permits are written by the Visitor Service Department and approved by the Executive Director. This department issues permits for those doing research, camps such as Stein Hospice Camp CAN, fundraiser walk/runs, or large group activities such as soccer. This year, drone usage grew in popularity; an information sheet specific for drone use was created and added.

Our facilities are well used and are in demand. Improvements made this year for the shelters included new roofs on all four, and the refurbishing of the chimney for Shelter #1. Shelter #4 is scheduled for renovations in 2018. The Erie MetroParks and facilities are a great benefit to Erie County Residents and visitors.

Reservable Facilities Comparison Chart

Number of Visitor Occasions through Reservations 2015-2018

Facility	2015	2016	2017	2018
Osborn MetroPark Cross Country Trail	1,575	1,720	1,650	4,430
Osborn MetroPark Picnic Shelters	5,712	9,342	8,873	8,577
Osborn MetroPark Soccer Fields	10,215	7,814	10,646	11,296
Osborn MetroPark Firelands Room	3,802	5,935	5,489	6,299
Osborn MetroPark Maple Grove Center	325	153	210	214
The Coupling MetroPark Canoes	144	316	187	146
The Coupling MetroPark Depot	173	190	205	226
The Coupling MetroPark Overnights	17	30	28	25
James McBride Arboretum	3,325	1,700	415	n/a
Edison Woods MetroPark Shelter	155	194	111	130
Enchanted Cottage at Eagle Point MetroPark	25	80	111	130
Total Visitor Occasions	25,468	27,474	27,925	31,473

VISITOR SERVICE DEPARTMENT 2018

The Visitor Service Department, located in the Frost Center, is often the first impression people will have of Erie MetroParks. They answer and direct all the calls coming through the main line, greet those walking through the doors, and answer and direct the emails sent through the Erie MetroParks website. The number of walk-in visitors continues to increase, giving our department a chance to introduce them to all the amazing offerings Erie MetroParks has. The Visitor Service Department saw one change in 2018; Marla Legg, Reservation Specialist retired and long-time employee Sandy Flittner, Visitor Service Coordinator, was promoted to full-time status. This has given the department more cohesion in the day to day operations and our service to Erie County residents.

A total of 46 Special Permits were issued from the Visitor Service Department in 2018, one more than 2017. The permits cover a wide range of topics; including a continued Salamander Study for a Doctorate Degree, a short video production, bee keeping, pet parade, seed collecting, soccer, Sheriff's Department training, and the list goes on. These permits allow us to plan for staff scheduling, facility scheduling, and the park visitor's utilization of Erie MetroParks resources.

Coordinating the reservation of garden plots in the Community Gardens are another aspect of this department. The Community Gardens were originally ran by the Men's Garden Club of Erie County but with their membership decreasing, it was handed to this department in 2011. In the beginning there would be a line waiting on the first day applications were accepted. Many of those people who had reserved spots for years have moved or become unable to garden. For a few years, demand for the gardens slowed; last year saw a resurgence in numbers. Several young families and a few people who were new to the area reserved garden plots. We did have all 40 available spots reserved; but as in previous years a few are not planted or are started and not kept up. The department is not only responsible for registration, they coordinate with the Operations staff on getting the gardens ready, contacting the garden holders with plot information and other correspondence during the season.

Keeping the lobby area stocked with our brochures and maintaining the display board is part of the responsibilities of the Visitor Service Department. In honor of our 50th Anniversary, the lobby featured many pictures from the parks through the years. Historic news articles and excerpts from newsletters were changed regularly to featured what had happened during the corresponding time period in Erie MetroParks history. It was rewarding to see the many visitors stop and look at the display, often they would point out different pictures to their companions. One visitor spotted herself in one of the photos with Fred Deering. She stopped in to talk and returned with her own pictures and stories of Erie MetroParks beginnings. Gail Burke had originally helped with our first levy and was familiar with the many people who dedicated their time to make Erie MetroParks what it is today. Her story and pictures have been captured for our future.

The picture of Gail along with a few other pictures from the display are featured below.



One of the most important aspects of this department is signing people up for Erie MetroParks programs. This year they had 1,742 program reservations (not including Nature Camp); of which 523 were through the internet. Their busiest day on the phones was the first day of registration for our Nature Camps. With two people answering the

calls, by 10:00 am, 2 weeks of camp were filled, by 11:00 am there was only 1 space left in the 4th week, and 7 spaces in the 2nd week. Internet registrations were a surprise. There were 4 people who registered for camps by 12:17 AM.

Reserving facilities is a major part of the Visitor Service Department. Osborn MetroPark continued to be the place to reserve for parties, showers, reunions, and other events due in part to our low cost and central location. One of our most popular facilities, Shelter #4, received some much-needed refurbishment. As the only enclosed shelter, offering protection in inclement weather while also allowing openness during nice weather, it is one of our most sought-after facilities. Originally the building served as a storage building. With the need for more shelters as the use of Osborn MetroPark grew, it was remodeled into a shelter in the spring of 1990 by the Sandusky High School Vocational Carpentry class. After 17 years of use, updates were needed. Erie MetroParks staff did an excellent job. Below you will see some of the improvements. The change from picnic tables to tables and chairs has increased the usability for different events and created a more open feeling. Those visitors who had reserved Shelter #4 in the past, were surprised and excited by the changes.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT 2017

In 2017, the IT department introduced new technologies into daily park operations and saw increased value in those technologies already in use.



One of the earliest accomplishments was Ethan Unzicker earning his Remote Airman Certificate, allowing Erie MetroParks to incorporate drone technology into our marketing and natural resource strategies. Aerial photography and video from drone can be used to create unique marketing content, and, with the assistance of mobile

applications, the drone can capture high-resolution maps that can be used to track the growth and decline of plant species in our parks. In order to further educate the public on drone technology, as well as rules a safety, He formed a public Drone Pilots Forum. This public program is open to everyone, regardless of their experience with drones. The forum is way for people to stay up to date on rapidly changing rules and regulations as well as share tips to best utilize drone technology.



Ethan Unzicker also piloted and was involved with the conceptual design of the new Outdoor Workspace behind the Frost Center. This project brought new life to an area of Osborn MetroPark that saw little use after the closing of the swimming pool. In addition to create an initial concept proposal, He created a 3D model of the proposed workspace, giving all parties involved a clearer picture of the end goal and allowing decisions to be made with more accuracy.

In 2017, Erie MetroParks closed a section of Castalia Quarry MetroPark to the public because of safety concerns. Although fences were constructed around the area, patrons were still entering the area. In an effort to better monitor the area, the IT department introduced a system of trail cameras in the closed section. One of these camera uses a cellular signal to send pictures almost immediately to our email so we could monitor the area in near real-time and coordinate with the Erie County Sheriff's office.

In addition to these new technologies, the IT department continued to increase the use of existing equipment of strategies in 2017. Working with the marketing department, 7 videos were created and distributed via social media highlighting park operations including public programming, annual Nature Camps, and natural resources. The IT and Marketing departments also worked with a local film production company, New Departure Films, to create high-quality commercial videos which will be used as Ads throughout 2018. An initial test release of one of these videos received over 10,000 views on Facebook alone. Views on Facebook alone throughout 2018. An initial test release of one of these videos received over 10,000 views on Facebook alone.

The Marketing and IT departments also undertook the task of redesigning all of the existing brochures and flyers that provide the public with information about park properties and services. Many of these were completed in 2017 with the remaining to be completed in early 2018. As part of this process, Ethan create a custom 50 year anniversary logo to be used on publication and promotional materials throughout 2018.

All of these accomplishments were in addition to the routine maintenance of computers, servers, and other digital assets of Erie MetroParks performed by the IT department.

This included an upgrade to the Frost Center Server, allowing for separate storage for the many large files created by our in-house marketing efforts. Files such as photos, videos, and Photoshop documents now have their own storage location, freeing up hundreds of gigabytes worth of space on the main server.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT 2018

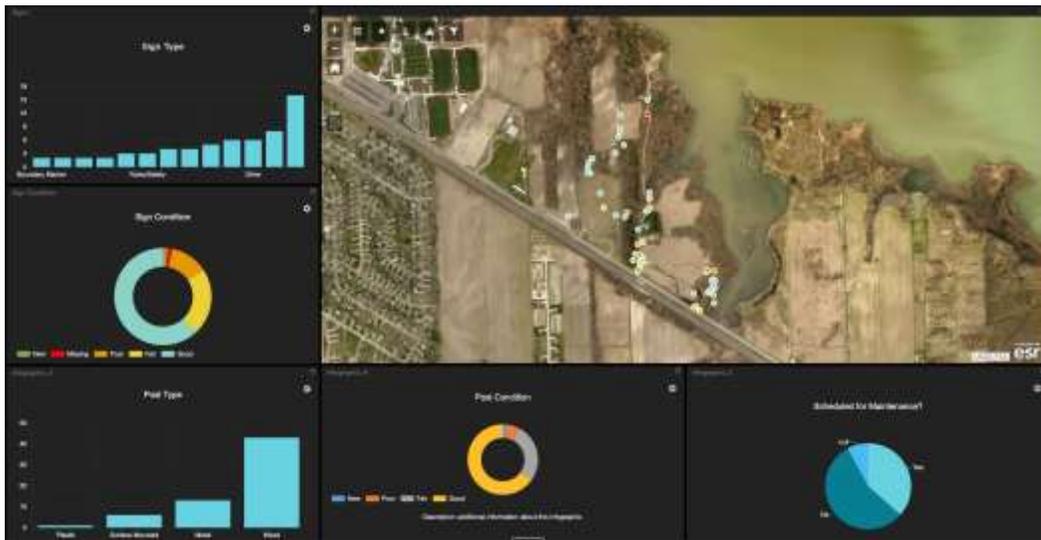
2018 brought about the culmination of many years of work in the IT department of Erie MetroParks. The server upgrades that were started under the purview of Bill Hilty several years ago reached a new zenith this year as the once separate servers of the Frost Center and the Maple Grove center were finally merged into a single location. This upgrade was made possible with the installation of two, network-managed firewalls from Cisco Meraki, installed with the help of local contractor John Winters.



In addition to allowing management of these servers from a single location, the installation of these firewalls added another layer of security to Erie MetroParks information technologies. Perhaps most importantly, the merging of these two servers, which is done virtually through a Visual Private Network (VPN) tunnel, allows the physical hardware of both servers to remain on-site and their respective locations. With these systems in place, Erie MetroParks server data can be backed up offsite, protecting resources in the event of a loss of

data at one location due to a catastrophic hardware failure or an event such as a fire. The redundancy of the servers also allow one system to act as a replacement server in the event that one fails.

The IT Specialist continued to work closely with the Marketing department in producing design and digital media materials. As part of a larger initiative for marketing to manage signage through the parks, the IT Specialist developed a GIS tool to collect an audit of all signs within the parks. The tool collects the GPS location, a picture, and details about the sign, its post, and the condition of the materials. This information is then able to be viewed on a map, reviewed in a spreadsheet and otherwise organized in order to prioritize sign replacement and maintenance, to be viewed on a map, reviewed in a spreadsheet and otherwise organized in order to prioritize sign replacement and maintenance.



As the IT Specialist, Ethan Unzicker also maintained the operation of all Erie MetroParks employee workstations, troubleshooting hardware and software issues as needed. Additionally, 3 computers were updated according to a newly developed Minimum Performance Standard set in place. All computers in the future will be equipped with a minimum of 8GB of RAM, a solid-state hard drive of at least 150GB of storage, and a processor with speeds of at least 3.8 GHz with 4 cores. These minimum standards currently exceed the needed power for most work done by office staff. However, by ensuring computers are more powerful than what is needed, Erie MetroParks is able to have computers that are capable of handling even the most demanding tasks for the longest time possible. Additionally, since computers that are replaced often get handed down to other employees with older computers, having more capable computers ensure that hand-me-down computers are still capable, usable machines.

PROGRAM SERVICES DEPARTMENT 2017

Brooke Scott was hired as the Seasonal Program Assistant and was a huge help during Nature Camp! Even though the Programs Department was short staffed due to Cheryl Kilmer and Melissa Bauman being on maternity leave, the number of total programs only decreased by 26 from 2016 to 2017.

In 2017, The Programs Staff continued to work to increase program attendance for general public programming. In 2016 attendance was an average of 21 people and in 2017 the average attendance was 25.

The Programs Department made a goal to categorize the programs offered by Nature, Outdoor Recreation, Wellness, and Other. These were assigned percentages to be met and all goals were met!

A goal was set to evaluate “MetroPark Hikers” attendance in hopes to increase attendance for the series. The average attendance from 2015 was 5 and dropped to 3 in 2016. In 2017 the average attendance was 7! Staff moved the evening Hikers program to Monday instead of Wednesday and left the Wednesday program in place. Melissa Bauman redesigned the “Walk With A Doc” program which was renamed “Walk it Out”. In the summer months, Walk It Out includes a learning portion which could be with a naturalist, with a local police agency or fitness instructor. This program was well received!

Due to the loss of soccer and lacrosse tournaments, overall program attendance numbers were affected. The attendance for the Fair was also changed to better reflect the actual attendance of the event. It was reported in the past as 45,000+, but more like 3,000 attend.

PROGRAM SERVICES DEPARTMENT 2018

2018 was a big year of staff transitioning for the Program Department. Bill Smith-Graves, Outdoor Recreation Specialist, retired from Erie MetroParks after 26.74 years of service in June. Mike Hensley was hired in April as a full-time Naturalist II (Goal #1) and has been a great addition to the programs department. Brooke Scott was hired back as the Seasonal Program Assistant and was a huge help during Nature Camp! Amy Kromer was hired as an additional Seasonal Program Assistant to help with the Party in the Parks special events. Marketing & Programs Manager, Beki Hineline, resigned from Erie MetroParks in October to take a job closer to home.

Upon Beki Hineline leaving, the Programs Department was restructured and transferred responsibilities to various staff. Melissa Bauman took on more manager responsibilities, planning special events and assisting with paddle programs. Mike Hensley took on the lead of archery and paddle programs. Mike is now a certified Archery 2 instructor (Goal #3). The departmental goal (#2) of a naturalist being Kayak/Canoe certified instructor was pushed back to 2019, time permitting. Cheryl Kilmer is now assisting with archery programs and leading the PRIDE Academy volunteer group.

In 2018, The Programs Staff continued to work to increase program attendance for general public programming. In 2016, attendance was an average of 21 people, in 2017 the average attendance was 25 and in 2018 the average attendance was 26.

Melissa Bauman created a core curriculum guide for educators. It included all currently offered programs and which grade and curriculum standards they adhere to. In 2018, there was a 67% increase in the number of school programs presented compared to 2017.

Art in the Park is one of the most popular programs offered to the general public and has been consistently full all year. Erie MetroParks has partnered with the Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities on a grant through the Wightman-Wieber Foundation to provide an inclusive art program. Fifteen participants from ECBDD and

15 participants from EMP can attend the program. The grant has allowed guest instructors to come in and teach the classes and pay for needed supplies.

Cheryl Kilmer applied for and received a \$1,500 grant from the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association Foundation for a “Backpack Explorer” program. She was able to purchase 15 backpacks that will be used for insect programs that include a bug catcher, net and notebook. There is a second set of 15 backpacks to be used for a birding program that includes a bird guide, binoculars and a field notebook.

Party in the Parks (Goal #4) was a series of special events offered to the general public to celebrate Erie MetroParks 50th anniversary. The series kicked off on July 8 with a 50th Birthday Party and continued every other Sunday through October. There was a Family Picnic at The Coupling MetroPark with lunch provided as well as canoe trips. A morning bird hike with bird friendly coffee was offered at Hoffman Forest MetroPark. Family Fun Day was offered at Community Foundation Preserve at Eagle Point and included an ice cream social and train rides with Erie Metro Live Steamers. Osborn MetroPark hosted Lake Erie Wing Watch, which was a festival celebrating things with wings and included a keynote speaker, Joe Dorrian with the Ohio Falconry School. Harvest Happenings is an annual event that was included in the party series with added features such as bounce houses. Weather was a major factor with the parties and even caused two planned events (Go Take a Hike and Movie Night) to be canceled.

The staff raised and released hundreds of monarch butterflies and participated in Monarch Watch and tagged 94 butterflies throughout the summer.





Program Services Totals				
	2016	2017	2018	
General Public				
Attendance	7474	8886	8225	
Number of Programs	354	349	320	
Average Attendance	21	25	26	
Scout/Youth Group				
Attendance	1181	932	1343	
Number of Programs	75	68	54	
Average Attendance	16	14	25	
Other Groups/Organizations (Requested)				
Attendance	1207	818	665	
Number of Programs	52	45	38	
Average Attendance	23	18	18	
School Programs (Requested)				
K-12 Attendance	1761	1984	2888	
Number of Programs	47	55	82	
Average Attendance	37	36	35	
Preschool Attendance	920	799	814	
Number of Programs	38	27	28	
Average Attendance	24	30	29	
Bike Safety Programs				
Attendance	125	0	0	
Number of Programs	1	0	0	
Average Attendance	125	0	0	
Total Above Programs				
Attendance	12668	13419	13935	
Number of Programs	567	544	522	
Average Attendance	22	25	27	
Special Events				
Total Attendance	84357	21795	19944	
Total Events	21	18	24	
Grand Totals				
Attendance	97025	35214	33879	
Special Events & Programs	588	562	546	

The staff collaborated with the following organizations to bring programs and events to Erie County residents in 2017 and 2018:

Erie MetroParks collaborated with the following organizations to bring programs and events to Erie County residents:	
Back to the Wild	Huron Police Department
BGSU Firelands	Lake Erie Island Conservancy
City of Sandusky Parks and Recreation Department	Lake Erie Islands Nature and Wildlife
Erie County Board of Developmental Disabilities	ODNR Division of Watercraft
Erie County Chapter - Ohio Horseman's Council	ODNR Division of Wildlife
Erie County Children's Services	Old Woman Creek
Erie County Health Department	Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge
Erie County Sheriff Department	Perkins Police Department
Erie County Solid Waste District	Pioneer Power
Erie Metro Live Steamers	Quarry Hill Orchards
Erie Soil and Water Conservation District	Sandusky Library
Firelands Audubon Society	Sandusky Police Department
Friends of Erie MetroParks	Sandusky River Valley Beekeeping Association
Friends of Magee Marsh	The Commons of Providence
Friends of Old Woman Creek State Nature Preserve	Toledo MetroParks
Friends of Sandusky City Greenhouse	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Friends of the Sandusky City Greenhouse	Vacationland Federal Credit Union

PARTNERSHIPS

Erie MetroParks and

....**The Friends of Erie MetroParks** continued to provide many services for Erie MetroParks. They continue to host the popular program, Go Take a Hike at a different park each year. They helped with various projects at the host park. They hosted an annual 5k event, Run the Rock at Castalia Quarry MetroPark. The Friends of Erie MetroParks logged an impressive 4,355.50 volunteer hours in 2017 & 2018 serving the Park District. Erie MetroParks is very appreciative of their continued efforts!



... **The Erie County Solid Waste District, Erie Soil & Water Conservation District, the Erie County Health Department** came together to put on **Earth Day Extravaganza** at Osborn MetroPark. The event continues to evolve each year, as a free public event to celebrate Earth Day. It is an exciting outdoor event, providing fun and education along with live music and prizes with over 2,300 people attending!



...**Pride Academy**, through Sandusky City School District, continued to visit Erie MetroParks weekly for volunteer work. Pride Academy routinely logged many hours cleaning, completing operational projects and assisting with administrative and program projects. This group is also to meet state curriculum educational standards at the same time. Pride Academy logged over 442 hours in 2017, and they logged almost 336 hours in 2018.



...**Erie Metro Live Steamers** received their 501c3 non- profit status in 2014 and began offering public rides on the train tracks installed at Eagle Point, East Sandusky Bay MetroPark. The energy and enthusiasm of this group of hobby model railroaders is infectious and they enjoy sharing their passion with the public. They completed about 2,499 volunteer hours in 2017 and almost 2,700 hours in 2018. They always welcome new members.