



Valley Volunteer



NPS/TED TOTTH

Stewardship for Our Trails

What does it take to ensure that the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) trail system remains top quality—for all people, for all time? TRAILS FOREVER, an initiative launched in 2009 by CVNP and the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park, is our guide.

It takes careful planning. Staff, partners, volunteers, visitors, advocacy groups, and neighbors helped the park draft a Trail Management Plan. Look for the final version this fall.

It takes attention to safety. Trailblazers and Paw Patrol educate visitors about the finer points of trail courtesy. Hike Assistants lend a hand on ranger-led programs.

It takes sweaty team work. Adopt-a-Trail (AAT), Cuyahoga Valley Trails Council (CVTC), Medina County Ohio

Blue Hen Falls Bridge Project

Over two June weekends, 42 AAT and CVTC volunteers worked alongside park staff to disassemble an old wooden bridge, install a 70-foot sustainable fiberglass bridge, and naturalize disturbed areas along the Blue Hen Falls Trail and the nearby Buckeye Trail.

“This project wouldn’t have been possible without the hundreds of hours contributed by volunteers, many of which assisted each day of the three-day project,” stated Trails Volunteer Coordinator Jeff Pettigrew.

This new bridge—along with the Stanford Trail and Brandywine Gorge Trail bridges built by CVTC in 2008 and 2009, respectively—is a symbol of the hard work and

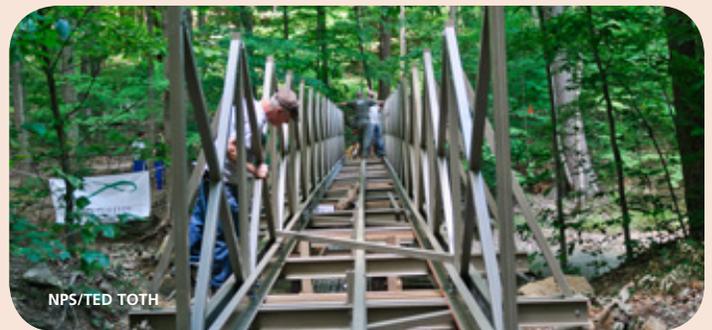
Horseman’s Council, Buckeye Trail Association, and other volunteers work tirelessly on trail enhancement projects.

It takes exceptional experiences. Encounters with Roving Historians and Artisans, Wildlife Watchers, and Visitor Center Assistants turn day trips into lifelong memories. Quest Crew helps visitors to playfully discover special places.

It takes generous individuals. Many volunteers have donated cash or made planned gifts supporting the TRAILS FOREVER Legacy Fund. Annual proceeds are reserved exclusively for CVNP’s trails. Recently, the fund surpassed \$1 million towards our \$10 million goal.

Volunteers, your stewardship is critical. Thanks for helping to ensure that CVNP trails truly are forever.

dedication of our trail volunteers. For information about trail maintenance opportunities, contact the volunteer office at 330-657-2299 or volunteer@forcvnp.org.



NPS/TED TOTTH

Inside Scoop



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley National Park

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www.conservancyforcvnp.org

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

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Cuyahoga Valley National Park's (CVNP) volunteer program is co-managed by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Together, we accomplish park goals through mutually beneficial volunteer experiences and engage people in the park, building a community of park stewards. Currently more than 5,700 Volunteers-In-Parks (VIPs) donate over 154,800 hours. We rely on these dedicated people to provide the highest level of quality services to our visitors and to help us protect America's heritage.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park encompasses 33,000 acres along the Cuyahoga River between Cleveland and Akron, Ohio. Managed by the National Park Service, CVNP combines cultural, historical, recreational, and natural activities in one setting.



NPS/MEG PLONA

Prescribed Fire Helps Restore Habitat

American Indians in Ohio used fire to improve habitat for wildlife and increase crop production, creating and maintaining park-like forests dominated by oaks and hickories. European settlers also used fire to clear and maintain land. Widespread fire suppression in the 1900s drastically changed Ohio's landscape, reducing native grassland and replacing oaks with maple forest.

In March 2012, trained fire crews from Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, CVNP staff, and volunteers used prescribed fire to control non-native plants in an old field in Boston Township. The park plans to continue using prescribed fire at other sites to manage invasive plants and improve wildlife habitat.



NPS/KEVIN SKERL

Make This Your Last Paper Copy

Would you like to receive your copy of the *Valley Volunteer* electronically? E-mail volunteer@forcvnp.org and indicate your full name and preferred e-mail address. If you want this option initiated in time for the next issue, please reply by January 31.

Opting in for this electronic copy will help Cuyahoga Valley National Park reduce paper usage and conserve energy. This is part of a park-wide effort to make our operations more environmentally and financially sustainable. Go green, save green!

Clean Your Closets

Do you have uniform items with the former VIP logo or that you no longer need? The old logo is in the shape of an arrowhead instead of a circle. You can drop off these items at the



volunteer office Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. If you need replacements, please call 330-657-2296 to check that the items are in stock. We're located at 1571 Boston Mills Road, Peninsula 44264.

Volunteering Across the U.S.A.

Bob and Eva Safranek are long-time VIPs at CVNP. After retirement, they bought a recreational vehicle (RV) and started spending their summers serving other national parks. They volunteered at Bryce Canyon NP in 2006 and 2011, Cape Hatteras NS in 2007, Yellowstone NP in 2008, and Shenandoah NP in 2009. As visitor center assistants and campground hosts, they enjoyed meeting and helping visitors. Special projects included translating Junior Ranger books into German, leading a program on sea turtles, and driving a park ambulance. Staying for a full season allowed them to explore each park in depth, travel to nearby national parks, and make new friends.

Interested in volunteering for a season at another national park? Visit www.volunteer.gov to view current opportunities. Bob and Eva recommend asking plenty of questions to help find a match that meets your interests and expectations. Some things to consider are shift commitments; housing or RV hookups; stipends; and the availability of laundry rooms, banks, grocery stores, television hookups, cell phone reception, and mail access. With nearly 400 national parks, there may be a position that is just right for you.



What's Happening in Boston?

Two large construction projects just south of Boston Store Visitor Center have been completed to address water-related problems. Leaving the parking lot along the Towpath Trail, have you noticed the “willow poles” and large stones along the Cuyahoga River? These are sustainable ways to help protect the riverbank from erosion. The stabilization project also included installation of “bendway” weirs, a culvert in the tributary that overflowed in 2011, and hundreds of native plants.

Continue south to see the constructed sanitary sewer and wetland system between the highway bridges. The new system improves Cuyahoga River water quality by replacing failing septic systems from nearby park buildings. Compared to a traditional sanitation system, it offers numerous sustainable benefits. These include lower capital cost, lower operation and maintenance costs, construction from mostly natural materials, no chemical additives, enhanced wildlife habitat, and increased treatment capacity over time. It uses minimal energy for treating waste waters through the use of a small circulation pump, native plants, microorganisms, wind, sun, and gravity.

Both projects ensure that significant resources will be protected.

Ice Box Cave Closed to Protect Bats

White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) is an infectious disease associated with the deaths of nearly 6 million bats in North America. Named for a distinctive fungal growth around muzzles and wings, the condition was first identified in New York in February 2006. WNS causes bats to awaken from their winter hibernation, burn up their body fat, and die of starvation.

When WNS first appeared in Summit County in January 2012, CVNP immediately closed Ice Box Cave. Although the fungus is spread primarily by bats, it can be carried on people's

clothing and equipment. Wildlife Watcher volunteers set up learning stations at the Ledges and other bat habitats to educate visitors about the closure. Volunteers also present games, activities, and information about the importance of bats for pollination, seed dispersal, and insect pest control.

Bats are dying. Help us protect them! Obey closures and report any unusual bat activity, such as bats flying nearby at all times of day and in all types of weather. While WNS does not appear to pose a threat to human health, stay away from sick or dead bats.



In the Spotlight



Introducing Roving Historians and Artisans

This past summer, Roving Historians and Artisans had their first successful season as the newest addition to the diverse Park Ambassador program. Often positioned at Canal Visitor Center and dressed in historic clothing, these VIPs help park visitors discover bygone ways of life in the Cuyahoga Valley. Visitors were treated to skilled pioneer demonstrations, such as spinning, soap carving, candle making, and butter churning. Through games and activities, the VIPs explain how the Ohio & Erie Canal effected everyday life locally, regionally, and nationally.

Do you have a historic skilled trade that you would like to share with park visitors? See the article on your right about becoming a Park Ambassador.

Health and Wellness Volunteers Reach Out

CVNP launched a new health and wellness initiative in June 2012. Over the summer, we piloted in Akron to residents who were unfamiliar with CVNP. The national park received a federal grant to support this initiative, which is funding two seasonal park rangers and a park newspaper to orient visitors and provide health and wellness messages. An inaugural group of 26 volunteers is helping shape the program by going to community events to promote the benefits of being outside and CVNP's recreational opportunities. Our 2013 goal is to extend the initiative to Cleveland.

Alternative Spring Break

During Alternative Spring Break 2012, 30 students from six local colleges and universities had the opportunity to spend an unseasonably warm and sunny weekend enjoying the park while providing valuable volunteer service. Projects included trail work with members of the CVTC; planting seeds and building raised beds at the park's native plant nursery; and constructing sustainable raised beds inside the hoop house at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center.



Information about the upcoming spring break, March 15 - 17, will be available by January. Visit www.nps.gov/cuva and click Support Your Park.

Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists

This program involves completing 40 hours of combined classroom and field-based instruction in local natural history, along with a requirement to complete 40 hours of volunteer service. Applications will be accepted starting at the Thursday, January 24 Open House; training begins on Friday, April 5. Fee. For more information, contact Connie Dages at 800-642-3297 ext. 100 or cdages@forcvnp.org.

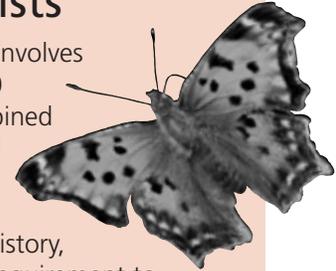


PHOTO ABOVE: © CHERYL OSGOOD

Become a Park Ambassador

Park Ambassadors help visitors enjoy and experience the park to the fullest. The job title serves as an umbrella for 19 individual groups whose common goal is to provide excellent interpretation, education, and visitor services. These groups include Wildlife Watchers, Paw Patrol, Visitor Center Assistants, Park Promoters, and Hike Assistants.

With over 300 volunteers and 15 volunteer supervisors, Park Ambassadors is one of the largest volunteer group in the park. These VIPs set up roving stations in the park to talk about nature and history, go into the community for public outreach, rent snowshoes, and assist with CVNP and Conservancy special events.

For more information on getting involved as a Park Ambassador, see page 7.



NPS/TED TOTH

Fred Glock assists Girl Scouts at RiverDay.

Shifting Safety Standards

Work-related incidents, accidents, and fatalities have been unacceptably high throughout the National Park Service (NPS) and at CVNP over the past decade. The Operational Leadership program was developed to help identify, mitigate, and manage risk in efforts to reduce workplace mishaps. The goal is to shift perceptions of NPS safety standards.

While all NPS employees are required to attend this training, CVNP is proactively engaging volunteers into this cultural change. Many volunteers took either the full 16-hour or the abbreviated class in 2012. More sessions will be offered in 2013.

Habitat Restoration Volunteer Fred Glock commented, “The best part of Operational Leadership is that most people I work with are now on the same page. It means that awareness is shared and anyone is respected for noticing and questioning something unsafe that may have been overlooked by others.”

Snow Safety

CVNP contractually implements a three-inch trigger for snow removal, which means that NO snow is plowed until a depth of three inches is measured. This first three inches of a snow event can be messy and cause havoc. On snowy days, please call CVNP’s severe weather hotline at 440-546-5961 for the status of park operations. Here are some tips to improve safety around park buildings and parking lots.

- Each building has a bag of salt to de-ice walkways and steps. Become familiar with its location and assist staff as needed. Tell your supervisor or building manager when a replacement bag of salt is needed.
- For severe or localized icing conditions in parking lots or at trailheads, call the Communications Center. The park can request de-icing service, if conditions warrant.
- Consider buying ice-traction coils to slip on over your boots. Park staff started using them several years ago and it has dramatically reduced winter slips and falls.

First Aid Training

Two levels of CPR and First Aid training are available for volunteers whose duties include responding to a medical emergency until professional help arrives. Other volunteers may attend as space allows. The list of safety training requirements can be found under Volunteer Training & Resources at www.conservancyforcvnp.org.

First Responder

Saturday, November 10

8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

First Aid, hands-only CPR, and Bloodborne Pathogens

CPR/AED/First Aid

Sunday, November 11

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

First Aid, Full CPR, AED, and Bloodborne Pathogens

To register, reply up to three business days before the class to 330-657-2299 or volunteer@forcvnp.org.



Did You Know?

Blacklegged ticks, commonly known as deer ticks, remain active on all but the very coldest days of the year. Once considered rare in Ohio, this tick dramatically increased its population size and range in 2011, spreading north into Summit and Lake counties. Blacklegged ticks can carry Lyme disease, a serious bacterial infection if left untreated.

To avoid tick exposure, tuck your pants into your socks before hiking; use repellants (e.g., 20% DEET) and follow label instructions; carefully inspect yourself, children, and pets after spending time outdoors; and shower within two hours of coming inside.



USDA Agricultural Research Service/Scott Bauer

Milestones & Transitions

Meet Jeff Pettigrew

In his new seasonal position, Jeff Pettigrew is coordinating volunteer trail work and projects. Reflecting on his new role, Jeff commented, “CVNP’s trail volunteer programs are important for enriching the park’s trails and keeping them safe for park visitors. It is a privilege to work with these passionate and dedicated volunteers.”

You may have met Jeff in his previous positions as a field instructor intern at the Cuyahoga Valley Environmental Education Center and as an interpretive park ranger.



Tracy Emrick is the new Countryside Initiative (CI) Coordinator. As a small-scale farmer, small business owner, and communication specialist, she will use her talents to assist CI farmers and farm volunteers.

Remembering Our Volunteers

Cynthia Greene, 64, passed away in May. She faithfully participated in the Medina County Ohio Horseman’s Council (MOHC) trail maintenance sessions and enjoyed camping with her MOHC friends. Cynthia also supported many of MOHC’s events in CVNP, including the Celebration Ride. She loved riding her horse, Whisper, on bridle trails here and in Cleveland Metroparks.

Dr. Evan Baltazzi, 93, passed away in June. He volunteered for over 30 years, educating and engaging thousands of visitors. He led historic lock demonstrations, supported other programs, and helped at visitor centers.

Both volunteers will be sadly missed.

If you know of a CVNP volunteer who has passed away or “retired” after years of service, please contact the volunteer office at volunteer@forcvnp.org or 330-657-2296.

Tallman Now Leads CVSR

After a nationwide search, Craig Tallman was selected as the new President and CEO of the Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad (CVSR). Craig has worked for national and international trucking firms since graduating from the University of Iowa in 1976. He transferred to this area 10 years ago, having last worked as group vice president for YRC Worldwide.



“I am excited about my new responsibilities at CVSR. The railroad is performing well and is an

enjoyable means to experience the nature and heritage of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Our volunteers are the backbone of how our railroad operates today and over the last 40 years.”

George Snider, CVSR board chairman, offered, “Craig is an engaged and engaging leader. His high-level experience in the transportation industry will help CVSR continue the

record-setting growth achieved by outgoing president Steve Wait.”

Happy Trails

Tom Dowler retired as a CVNP volunteer this spring after 18 years of service. He began volunteering in the inaugural Trailblazers group in 1994 and later transitioned to volunteering at Boston Store Visitor Center. In both roles, he particularly enjoyed helping and orienting visitors to this park.

Welcome

Brandon Henneman is the new development coordinator for the Conservancy, bringing extensive experience with development databases and with coordinating events and activities. He previously served as the volunteer manager for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

Milestone Awards

Congratulations to the following volunteers for achieving these milestones in their cumulative hours of service as of May 2012:

- **2,000 Hours:** Henry Fortlage, Rich Luke, Mary Jane Schremp, Laurie Toth
- **3,000 Hours:** Walt Strotz
- **4,000 Hours:** Jerry Finnell
- **5,000 Hours:** John Catalano



Volunteer Opportunities



Trailblazer Valerie Rice on patrol.

Make a Difference!

Learn about CVNP's diverse volunteer opportunities by visiting www.conservancyforcvnp.org and apply online. New opportunities are posted year-round. For more information or to request a mailed copy of the volunteer application, call the volunteer office at 330-657-2299.

Countryside Farmers' Markets

Join the excitement surrounding fresh and local foods. Opportunities include parking assistance, staffing information tables, setting-up and tearing-down, taking photographs, and assisting chefs with cooking demonstrations.

Habitat Restoration

September through November

Help restore biodiversity by removing invasive plants and collecting native seeds. Ages 7 and older. No long-term commitment needed. For schedules and more information, visit Support

Your Park at www.nps.gov/cuva or contact the volunteer office.

Park Ambassadors

See the Park Ambassador articles on page 4. Orientations are Saturday, February 2 from 10-11:30 a.m. or Wednesday, February 6 from 6:30 - 8 p.m. Pre-registration through the volunteer office is required. Apply by February 23.

Polar Express™

Friday, November 16 through Thursday, December 20

Merry individuals are needed to be Santas and elves aboard the train and at the North Pole. Train volunteers read the story, display images, sing, and serve hot cocoa and cookies. North Pole elves greet Santa and entertain train passengers. Apply online at www.cvsr.com/volunteer.aspx or call 330-657-1904.

Rail Rovers

Climb aboard CVSR and visit with passengers as they journey through CVNP. Distribute brochures, share information about the valley, and answer questions as you enjoy this historic railroad. Apply by January 31.

Santas and Elves at Trail Mix Peninsula

Saturdays and Sundays, November 24 through December 23

Spread holiday cheer at Trail Mix Peninsula. Be Santa or be an elf who assists with holiday programs, gift wrapping, photography, and greeting visitors.



Student Explorers

March through May

Educate students about CVNP resources. Programs involve hands-on activities and riding the train through the park. Weekday mornings. Apply by January 31.

Trailblazers

Be part of the park's hike, bike, and horse patrol by educating and assisting visitors. The informational meeting is Thursday, December 13 at 7 p.m. in Happy Days Lodge. Must be available for a 27-hour initial training and 40-hour annual time commitment. Apply by December 13.

Trail Maintenance

Perform trail upkeep and repairs with Adopt-a-Trail and Cuyahoga Valley Trails Council crews. Ages 7 and older. No long-term commitment needed. For schedules and additional information, visit Support Your Park at www.nps.gov/cuva or contact the volunteer office.





National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley National Park
15610 Vaughn Road
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CVNP Volunteer Orientation

CVNP Volunteer Orientation provides an overview of the NPS, CVNP, and the Conservancy. New volunteers are required to take this within six months. Experienced volunteers are also welcome.

Thursdays, November 15 or February 7 from 7 - 9 p.m., or Saturdays, January 12 or March 2, from 10 a.m. - noon. To register, reply up to three business days before the class to volunteer@forcvnp.org or 330-657-2299.



Training in Interpretation

Foundations of Interpretation introduces the theory and practice of interpretation. This is a prerequisite for other interpretation classes. Sunday, November 18 from 1 - 3 p.m.

Informal Interpretation trains you in one-on-one contacts with visitors. Wednesday, November 28 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

To register, reply up to three business days before the class to 330-657-2299 or volunteer@forcvnp.org. For spring dates, visit Support Your Park at www.nps.gov/cuva in January. Classes are also available online; contact Park Ranger Josh Bates at 330-657-2350 or josh_bates@nps.gov for details.

Enrichment Series

The Volunteer Enrichment Series is excellent training for all volunteers, providing up-to-date information so that you can excel as park stewards. All are invited to Happy Days Lodge on the second Tuesday of every month. Refreshments begin at 6:30 p.m. (unless otherwise noted) and lectures are from 7 - 8 p.m. On November 13 and February 12, refreshments begin at 6 p.m. and are followed by a volunteer awards presentation prior to the speaker.

Upcoming topics and speakers:

- **October 9**, Happenings from the Porch, Park Ranger Allison Powell, James A. Garfield National Historic Site
- **November 13**, Safety Leadership for Volunteers, Field Operations Supervisor Ivan Kassovic, Visitor and Resource Protection
- **December 11**, Nature's Notebook: An Update on Wildlife Monitoring Programs, Biologist Meg Plona
- **January 8**, Notorious Boston, Park Ranger Rebecca Jones Macko
- **February 12**, State of the Park, Superintendent Stan Austin
- **March 12**, Catching Up With the Conservancy, Conservancy Chief Executive Officer Deb Yandala

For a large-type version of this newsletter, call 440-546-5991 or 800-433-1986.