



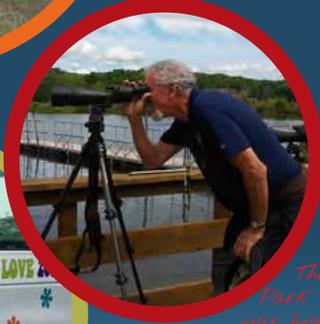
# 2017 • 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY REPORT



# Report to the Community



*Little Chicago Clothing Co., a Canton-based apparel company, designed a special 50th anniversary logo that was showcased on t-shirts and give away items throughout the year.*



*The 2017 Special Park District Forum was hosted by Stark Parks.*



*Staff dubbed the Summer of 2017 the "Summer of Love" as a tribute to the original in 1967, our founding year.*

As a representative of the Stark Parks Board of Commissioners, I want to take this opportunity to thank the community for a year full of celebration, reflection, and excitement. In 2017, we commemorated the 50th anniversary of Stark Parks with year-long festivities, including special events, fun campaigns, the opening of a new park (Fry Family Park in Magnolia) and a new trail (the Pioneer Trail in Canton). The enthusiasm surrounding this milestone was outstanding. With staff, volunteers, community supporters, and Stark County residents, we took a look back at our humble roots, while looking ahead to where we want to go.

From just two parks in 1967, Stark Parks has grown and expanded to become a truly countywide system. With 14 parks, 4 lakes, and over 110 miles of trails, we're proud to have connected people, spaces, and community resources. In addition, we've enhanced educational programs, community events, and conservation efforts. We've made incredible progress regarding public safety, as we've taken more measures now than ever to keep our park and trail users safe. Our staff and volunteers have gone above and beyond to provide the best possible experiences.

We thank you, Stark County residents, for the last 50 years. We thank you for your support and your passion. We ask you to adventure with us into the next 50 years, as we can't wait to see where we'll go.

Andrew Hayden, Chairperson Park Board of Commissioners

## **2017 Board of Commissioners**

Denise Freeland ● William Bryan ● Charles Ringer ● Patricia Quick

## *2018 Board of Commissioners*

Andrew Hayden, Chairperson ● Denise Freeland ● William Bryan ● Charles Ringer ● Patricia Quick



# '17 Highlights & Milestones

## Stark Parks held a year-long 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The highlights of the year included:

- Kicking off the anniversary with an [online scavenger hunt](#) to celebrate the new website that debuted on the official 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary date, Feb. 17.
- FeLeap sharing his [Annual Birthday Bash](#) with Stark Parks for a special golden anniversary celebration.
- [Discount Days](#) on the 17<sup>th</sup> of every month (in conjunction with the official Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> date) at the marinas and Lily Pad Gift Shop.
- A [special graphic](#) (bottom left) that was designed and used on limited edition apparel and giveaways throughout the year.

- A [“Summer of Love” Campaign](#) throughout the summer as a nod to the year of incorporation, 1967.
- Ending the year-long celebration with a [“50 Ways to Get Your Stark Parks On!”](#) drawing for anyone who completed 25



of 50 suggested ways to enjoy Stark Parks. Deborah Daskalov, the lucky winner of the drawing, received a \$500 gift card in partnership with Ernie's' Bike Shop.

- In addition to the anniversary celebration, Stark Parks staff hosted over 100 park directors and management staff from across the United States, and into Canada at the annual [Special Park District Conference](#).
- Three [eaglets](#) were born at Walborn Reservoir - totalling 22 eaglets in 12 years!
- The [Celebration Gardens](#) were officially dedicated at Molly Stark Park on June 3.
- Stark Parks opened [Fry Family Park](#) on August 26, named after the first park director, Richard Fry, and his family.
- In conjunction with the City of Canton and Malone University, the 1.34 mile [Pioneer Trail](#) was opened connecting Market Ave. and Cleveland Ave.
- [Tam O' Shanter](#) and Stark Parks entered into an agreement for the eventual purchase of 200+ acres of the existing golf course to convert to park lands.

# Trail & Greenway System (as of 13017)



8,053 acres of land  
 121.48 miles of shared trail  
 37.77 miles of equestrian trails

2017 New Parks & Trails  
 Fry Family Park (350 acres)  
 Pioneer Trail (1.34 miles)



For staff, 2017 wasn't just a year of celebration, but also a year of reflection and strategic planning. While quality has always remained important, it's something we strive to improve every year. Stark Parks' mission is the backbone of the organization and as it evolves, so should the mission. Stark Parks staff worked together to revise the mission to better reflect the purpose of the park, as well as the vision for the future.

Stark Parks' mission is to preserve, manage, and connect natural areas to serve the community through recreation, conservation and education.

Signage has been a major focus and continues to develop. Carsonite confidence markers have been added to natural surface areas at Walborn Reservoir in the effort to provide better wayfinding. Quail Hollow is the next park to add this system.

Crews have begun implementing an updated kiosk standard in new parks and replacing permanent kiosks that are in need of extensive repair.



The Hike-A-Hundred Club is increasing in popularity so much so that the requests to bike and run made it necessary to add those components too. Now you can do one, two, or all three under the new umbrella program **Healthy Adventures!**

202 Hike-A-Hundred members exceeded their collective goal of hiking 50,000 miles in Stark Parks, and hiked 50,257.40 miles!



Hike-A-Hundred Club Selfie!

**Connecting and serving the community lies at the core of Stark Parks' mission. Using physical spaces, like parks and trails, as well as recreation and education, people and places continue to be linked via an extensive system of trails and a wide variety of programs.**

**In 2017, the [BikeSmart](#) bike share program continued to remain popular. Launched in June 2015, the nation's first FREE bike sharing program has seen 8,667 trips with 1,900 active members.**

**The program has encouraged Stark County residents to explore their community, as well as began a partnership with Stark Parks, the Stark County District Library, and Canton City Parks and Recreation.**



*The annual Family Summer Serenades final concert at Petros Lake Park is a great time to bring out the entire family!*

**2017 was a record year all over! Revenue was at an all time high in all sales and rentals.**

**Despite low water levels at Walborn Reservoir, both Sippo Lake and Walborn Marinas recorded total revenue of \$121,118.**

**The Lily Pad Gift Shop, located inside the Exploration Gateway, brought in \$41,192 - a 20.8% increase from 2016.**

**Rentals of Park facilities (shelters, Clubhouse, Quail HollowManor House, and all banquet rooms) brought in more than \$82,000 – that's a 25% increase over 2016. Of that \$82,000, the banquet rooms inside the Exploration Gateway brought in more than \$47,000 which is a 29% increase over 2016.**



**Patrol Hours in 2017**  
totalled 17,354 hours.  
Alternate patrol method hours  
(bike, atv, boat) were 1,906 hours  
or approximately 11%.

**2017 arrests totaled 63,**  
decreasing 12.5% from 2016.

**2017 verbal warnings totaled 667,**  
increasing 13% from 2016.

**2017 written warnings totaled 215,**  
increasing 17% from 2016.

**In September, Park Rangers hosted the second annual "Ranger for a Day," giving hundreds of children and their families the opportunity to complete a scavenger hunt, try on a ballistics vest, climb in ranger vehicles, and experience being a Stark Parks Ranger!**

**Additional  
Ranger Training in  
2017 included:**

**Trauma Informed  
Policing**

**Practical Application  
of Force**

**Officer & Community  
Wellness**



# Communication & Outreach



**Social media platforms continue to grow in both followers and engagement, and now reach 19,944 individuals across mediums.**

**The quarterly newsletter continues to reach 86,000 households in Stark County, and has drawn online support.**

**Outreach booth numbers continue to rise with over 180 community events attended in 2017!**

**With the help of news releases, Stark Parks received \$153,459.02 in “free” publicity!**



# Wildlife & Conservation Efforts

In 2017, the Wildlife Center staff and volunteers were housed out of a temporary facility at Fichtner Park in Hartville, awaiting the completion of a new facility at Sippo Lake Park. In this transition year, **1,278** animals were cared for by Stark Parks' staff and volunteers. That's a **24.42% decrease** from 2016's 1,691 intakes. The 2017 release rate was an impressive 70%!

In the spring, the former wildlife facility at the west entrance of Sippo Lake Park was demolished, and construction began on the Joseph J. and Helen M. Wildlife Conservation Center. The new state-of-the-art facility will be dedicated to the rehabilitation and conservation of local wildlife, and will feature technologically-advanced clinic and exam rooms, as well as live animal exhibits to showcase native animals live in the wild.

*Paisley, one of Stark Parks' wildlife ambassadors.*



# Programming & Special Events

**Many new series and programs were introduced in 2017, offering a variety of opportunities for different interests. A few of the new programs included:**

**Frogwatch**

**Pinterest Parties**

**A day-long Hike-a-thon**

**“Cache for Coins” Geo-Tour with the FeLeap’s Favorites additional adventure**

**In 2017, Stark Parks held 1,057 programs with 41,927 total participants!**



# Volunteer & Staff Highlights



*Students from St. Paul*

*Our people are our success.*

At Stark Parks, we're surrounded by great people every day. Volunteers are a crucial component in many areas of park operation. Our volunteers maintain our trail systems, rehabilitate wildlife, protect important natural, historic, and cultural resources, and assist in educating and engaging our local community to increase support for the parks. They make a vital contribution to Stark County and the community!

Stark Parks benefited from the help of 67 group service projects and twelve Adopt-a-Trail groups. Volunteers totaled **21,926 hours** serving the people, places, and wildlife in 2017. In 2016, 345 individual volunteers and 47 organizations and community groups graciously donated a total of 21,457 hours in Stark Parks.

**Based on an hourly rate equal to \$23.07 per hour** (valued by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 2014) **volunteers have contributed the equivalent of \$495,013 to the park in 2017! The Stark County Park District would need to hire 12 full-time employees to match what these volunteers do!**

Employee of the Year  
**Aimee Engelhart**

Employee of the 1st Quarter  
**Jeff Reilly**

Employee of the 3rd Quarter  
**Aimee Engelhart**

Employee of the 2nd Quarter  
**Talula Koch**

Employee of the 4th Quarter  
**Jason Yost**



Community Pride  
**Berkley Fishing Team**



Lifetime Achievement  
**Alan and Lee Dolan**



Volunteer of the Year  
**Jen Quartz**



Spotlight Award  
**Nancy Cochoy**



Spotlight Award  
**Dwight Sammet**



Rising Star Award  
**Denny & Mary Williams**



Rising Star Award  
**Stacey Bailey**

# 2017 Financial Report

Park Levy	6,864,711	48.55%
Note Sale Proceeds	1,600,000	11.32%
Intergovernmental Reimbursements	185,899	1.31%
State Government Shared Revenue	9,014	0.06%
Carryover from 2016	3,568,858	25.24%
Grants		
Federal (Emergency Management Agency)	565,412	4.00%
Federal (Environmental Protection Agency)	200,000	1.41%
State (Emergency Management Agency)	75,197	0.53%
Local (Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District)	162,104	1.15%
Local (Stark County Health Department)	50,944	0.36%
Private (Public Entities Pool of Ohio)	500	0.00%
Private (Live Well Stark County)	37,288	0.26%
Private (ACE)	49,486	0.35%
Private (Creating Healthy Communities)	14,085	0.10%
Marinas & Magnolia Flouring Mills	166,190	1.18%
Lily Pad	48,487	0.34%
Rentals and User Fees	83,290	0.59%
Rentals and User Fees -Exploration Gateway	42,628	0.30%
Fines and Forfeitures	289	0.00%
Gifts and Donations	332,098	2.35%
Investment Income	40,247	0.28%
Jury Duty	15	0.00%
Miscellaneous	1,003	0.01%
Ranger Training Program	5,050	0.04%
Real Estate	8,150	0.06%
Reimbursements	9,101	0.06%
Royalties	3,475	0.02%
Sale of Fixed Assets	15,000	0.11%

**2017 Revenues** **\$14,138,521 100%**

Personnel & Fringes/Operating	4,052,390	28.66%
Capital Projects		
Buildings	291,929	2.06%
Equipment	51,703	0.37%
Design Engineering	151,572	1.07%
Vehicles	225,924	1.60%
Exploration Gateway (EG)	65,909	0.47%
Fry Family Park	103,555	0.73%
Land/Related Exp	621,342	4.39%
Bridge Replacements	15,288	0.11%
Infrastructure	337,319	2.39%
Improvements	22,855	0.16%
Wildlife Conservation Center	2,760,658	19.53%
Supplies	434,159	3.07%
Utilities	272,835	1.93%
Purchased Services	1,107,721	7.83%
Payment on Note	715,000	5.06%
Interest on Note	8,723	0.06%
Sales Tax	10,763	0.08%
Property Tax and Assessments	37,272	0.26%
Special Events/Projects	112,689	0.80%
Carryover into 2018	2,738,917	19.37%

**2017 Expenditures** **\$14,138,521 100%**