

# contents

From the Hilltop: Eating & Growing Locally .....	2
Spot-lite: Welcome J&J .....	3
Farmpark Calendar.....	4
In Good Season: Ramie: What's That? .....	6
Science & Education: Randall Lineback Cattle .....	7

## COVER PHOTO

Sheep shearing by Rollie Anderson

## LAKE COUNTY PROBATE JUDGE

Ted Klammer

## BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Ellen Foley Kessler, Mark P. Oesterle, Frank J. Polivka

## INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Stephen W. Madewell

## EDITORS

Andy Baker, Denise Gressley, Sharon Metzung

## GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Meredith Nicoletti

## FARMPARK IS A LAKE METROPARKS FACILITY.

Farmpark's mission is to help our urban society understand how farmers raise food, fiber and other products that sustain and enhance human life.

Farmpark Almanac is published three times a year by Lake Metroparks.

This publication is sent free to Farmpark members. For an annual subscription, please mail a \$10 check or money order (payable to Lake Metroparks) to: Farmpark Almanac Subscriptions, Lake Metroparks Farmpark, 8800 Chardon Rd., Kirtland, Ohio 44094.

© 2009 Lake Metroparks, all rights reserved. lakemetroparks.com

ISSN 1545-3162  Printed on recycled paper.

Lake Metroparks does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, nationality or disability in employment, services, programs or activities.

Should special assistance be required in visiting facilities and/or participating in programs or activities of Lake Metroparks, please call 800-669-9226 or 440-358-7275 at least 48 hours in advance.

## Eating & Growing Locally

by Andy Baker, FARMPARK ADMINISTRATOR

# FROM the HILLTOP



**WHAT CHANGE A YEAR MAKES.** Last winter when I wrote for the 2008 summer Almanac, the price of energy, corn and wheat were going up and dairying was profitable. Today, we are in a major recession. Gasoline is at half its 2008 peak cost and corn is back to where it started a year ago. Today, some dairy farmers are forced to sell off their herds as the price of milk hardly covers the cost of production. Unfortunately, the pressures that gave us last year's high prices can easily resurface when the economy picks up again. We can help our local farm economy persevere through this economic downturn by buying local to insure that locally grown food will be available for the next generation.

Today is also a great opportunity to grow our own food. There is a lot of untapped potential in our landscapes for providing food. Some municipalities have even begun to look at modifying zoning restrictions on raising farm animals like chickens. Gardening and raising animals have great therapeutic value and are a way to bring nature into our lives and reintroduce future generations to where their food comes from. You can discover do-it-yourself farming at Farmpark. We'll show you how to grow vegetables and fruits in various settings, how to make a chicken tractor for your garden, how to compost and how to keep bees. Even if you don't choose to do it yourself, you can gain an appreciation for those that do and support our local farm economy by shopping at Farmpark's weekly farmers' market or any of the many farmers' markets throughout Northeast Ohio. Either way you'll get better tasting, more nutritious and safer food.