



volunteers

SUMMER 2026



Spend some time at the beach for boating programs or help at larger events like the Pirate Triathlon, Dairy Days or Nature Game Day!

Happy Retirement



Congratulations to our long-time **Volunteer Coordinator Beverly Caduff** on her recent retirement. Beverly started as an Interpreter at Farmpark in 1993. She shifted roles in 1999 to an Event Specialist in the volunteer department and later became Volunteer Coordinator. She was stationed at Farmpark, Penitentiary Glen Reservation, Lakefront Lodge, and finally at Concord Woods Nature Center.

Bev has been a mentor and friend to many over the last 33 years. Many of you met her while she was organizing volunteers for largescale events like Halloween and Santa's Workshop. Anyone who knows Bev knows how big her heart is, her willingness to share food, and the happiness she gets from teaching, even if it's as simple as how to sew a button. We wish her well in her next chapter. Congrats on your retirement, Bev!

Maple Syrup Superheroes

Congratulations to Farmpark staff and volunteers for earning second place honors for their amber maple syrup in the Out of County Class at the 2026 Geauga County Maple Festival. Staff worked to produce maple syrup along with volunteers **Don Jones, Earl Linaburg, Archie Doud, Don Berlin, Gary Goodge, Kim Cook and Michael Ujcich**. Unfortunately, the award-winning syrup is sold out for the season.

Volunteer Highlight

by Tammy O'Neil, *Wildlife Care Manager*

Karen Podojil has been a dedicated Lake Metroparks volunteer for more than 16 years. She began in animal care in the Well Bred Shed at Lake Metroparks Farmpark and later joined the volunteer team at the Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center at Penitentiary Glen Reservation. She has also served as a Trail Safety Ambassador and has volunteered in the Lake Metroparks booth at the Lake County Fair for many years. In all, Karen has dedicated almost 6,000 hours of service to Lake Metroparks so far.



Karen's love for animals is evident in her volunteer work at the Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center. She is the kind of volunteer every wildlife center dreams of having because she brings warmth that fills a room before she even says a word, and the animals seem to know it too. With a heart as generous as her time, Karen shows up for our wildlife patients with endless kindness, steady dedication and a deep compassion that shines through in everything she does.

A lover of musicals, she is known for singing to the animals as she works, turning routine care into something a little more joyful. Whether it is a soft tune during feeding or humming while cleaning, Karen adds a spark of cheer that makes even the busiest days brighter.

Karen makes an enormous impact at the Kevin P. Clinton Wildlife Center. She is deeply appreciated, greatly respected and truly cherished as part of our wildlife team. Thank you Karen for your tireless dedication to Lake Metroparks and area wildlife.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Check out VIC or give us a call to sign up!

Summer is full steam ahead! Thank you to those of you who have already signed up for some of our events. Don't fret—there are still some openings available to get involved.

Dairy Days at Farmpark has an opening on June 20 to make popcorn. **Snakes, Turtles and More** returns to Penitentiary Glen Reservation on June 28 and we're looking for game assistants, craft helpers, naturalist aides, parking help, and a photographer. **Adult volunteers with backgrounds in science** are needed to help with **Science Fair Prep Camp** at Jordan Creek Park. Day-long openings for the camp are June 30 and July 1. Contact us if you're interested.

Get in the game! Obstacle course masters, game zone masters, a game show stagehand, and a game room sidekick are needed for **Nature Game Day** at Penitentiary Glen Reservation on July 18. Lake Metroparks will be at the **Lake County Fair** in Painesville July 28 to August 2. Tent attendants are needed with afternoon and evening shifts still available on most dates.

August 2 marks this year's **Pirate Triathlon**. Run and bike course monitors are needed the most, with some openings for the food tent, transition area, hill, and swim chute remaining. Volunteers 16 and older may sign up with a parent in certain areas.

Volunteers are needed at Fairport Harbor Lakefront Park to assist guests with PFDs and boarding boats for both **Adapted Boating** on August 8 and **Breakfast in the Parks** on August 19. Volunteers may be 16 and older.

Watch for **Super Star Party** (August 8 at Penitentiary Glen) and **Old-Fashioned Picnic** (August 29 at Painesville Township Park) volunteer opportunities coming soon!

Lake Metroparks Volunteer Services

Volunteer Line 440-585-3041 x6418 volunteer@lakemetroparks.com

Lauren Pauline 440-585-3041 x6419 lpauline@lakemetroparks.com

Keep Us Informed

To help keep our records updated, please send us any changes to your address, telephone numbers or email. Keep in touch! If you would like to receive information from us via email, please forward your email address to volunteer@lakemetroparks.com.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES MISSION

Volunteer Services supports the Lake Metroparks' mission by providing a substantial resource of volunteers to enrich and expand Lake Metroparks services and programs as well as generate goodwill through citizen participation in Lake Metroparks.

THE MISSION OF LAKE METROPARKS

To conserve and preserve the natural resources of Lake County while providing a variety of safe, affordable and enjoyable educational and recreational programs and activities that enhance the quality of life in Lake County now and for generations to follow.



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Summer Fishing Help Needed

Volunteers ages 18 and older are needed as fishing helpers this summer at park programs, requested programs, day camps and adapted programs. A general knowledge of fishing is required. Volunteers should be able to assist with baiting hooks, casting, reeling in and removing fish from hooks. Fishing helpers must work well with children, seniors, the adapted population and park staff. A complete list of fishing opportunities is available from Volunteer Services.

Youth Volunteers

The summer day camp season is underway! There's still time to sign up to assist counselors. Camps are held at various park locations including Fairport Harbor Lakefront Park, Farmpark, Penitentiary Glen Reservation, Jordan Creek Park, Children's Schoolhouse Nature Park and Chapin Forest Reservation. Camp descriptions can be found in the spring *Parks Plus!* or online. Volunteers must be between 12 and 17 years of age. Please call Volunteer Services at 440-585-3041 x6418 or email volunteer@lakemetroparks.com for the list of openings.

LAKE COUNTY PROBATE JUDGE

Mark J. Bartolotta

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Gretchen Skok DiSanto • Frank J. Polivka • John C. Redmond

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Paul Palagy

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