

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

RICHFIELD
JOINT RECREATION
DISTRICT



RICHFIELD
Joint Recreation District

Richfield
HERITAGE
PRESERVE

Photo courtesy of Don Tyler

Mission Statement

The mission of the RJRD is to safeguard, support and maintain the natural properties of Richfield while encouraging recreational and educational opportunities in our community.

Thank you to the residents of the Village of Richfield and Richfield Township for supporting Richfield Heritage Preserve.

Richfield Joint Recreation District

RJRD Board of Trustees is the governing body for the Richfield Heritage Preserve, a 336-acre preserve offering visitors access to lakes, streams and wooded trails any day of the year from dawn to dusk.

The RJRD Board of Trustees is made up of seven members. The Richfield Village Council and the Richfield Township Trustees each appoint three Board Members to represent the two entities.

These six Board Members then elect a seventh Board Member. Each Board member serves a three-year term.

Anita Gantner
RJRD Board
Chair

Mike Selig
RJRD Board
Vice Chair

Holly Price
RJRD Board
Secretary

Dave Wehner
RJRD Board
Treasurer

Steve McPeake

Mark Robeson

Mike Lyons

RHP Park Director

RJRD Staff

RJRD Volunteers

Park Affiliates:

Baldwin Wallace

Buckeye Trail Association

Cuyahoga Valley Career Center

Friends of Richfield Heritage Preserve

Ohio Horseman's Council

Ohio Operating Engineers

Oviatt House Incorporated

Richfield Historical Society

Western Reserve Land Conservancy



PARK DIRECTOR – JOHN PIEPSNY

I have just completed my first full year at Richfield Heritage Preserve, and what a year it was! In 2023, we installed a new management software system to improve registration for our programs and special events, as well as the reservation process for our rentals. We had 85 booked rentals at the Lodge and started our first year of camping reservations! We introduced some amazing programs, such as the Goat Derby and Music Festival, and continued to have our traditional programs, such as the Snowbird Festival, Trick or Treat on the Trail, and many more! We have improved trails, reduced the number of latrines on the property, and enhanced some shelters. New in 2023, we launched our Spring/Summer Brochure listing all our programs, special events, and classes! We are also most proud of the support from the community, as Issue 16 was supported by the residents, allowing us to continue our operations into the next ten years! 2023 was a year to remember, and we are so thankful for the residents of Richfield Township and the Village of Richfield who support it!





MAINTENANCE TECH

Maintenance Tech Chris Moore completed his 3rd year at the park

- Landscaping and park maintenance
- Assisted with weddings and volunteer groups
- Park vehicle maintenance
- Snow removal

Richfield
HERITAGE
PRESERVE



THE LODGE

- 85 weddings, corporate events, and social events occurred in the Lodge for 2023, with over 6000 guests experiencing The Lodge and Richfield Heritage Preserve
- 5 Community Events were held at The Lodge
- 55 events have already been scheduled for 2025
- Complete kitchen and bridal suite renovation, including bridal suite expansion
- Updated landscaping
- Lighting added to Lodge Feature Wall



A scenic view of a bridge over a river with autumn foliage in the background. The bridge is a metal truss structure with a chain-link fence railing. The river is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding trees. The trees are in various stages of autumn, with some showing bright orange and red leaves, while others are still green. The sky is a clear blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and picturesque.

GRANTS

RJRD was awarded funding in the amount of \$60,000.00 through the Nature Works grant program to replace the Upper Lake bridge.

STRUCTURE CHAMPION PROGRAM

Richfield Heritage Preserve (RHP)
Structure Champion Program

The Richfield Joint Recreation District's (RJRD) strategic plan for Richfield Heritage Preserve (RHP) recommends a building champion program.

RJRD has developed four mission-driven priorities to consider when making decisions about the future of the Preserve:

- High-quality park amenities
- Sustainable operations
- Engagement of Richfield residents
- Resource stewardship and education



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**RICHFIELD HERITAGE PRESERVE
STRUCTURE CHAMPION PROGRAM**

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LEVY

On November 7th, Richfield voters approved Issue 16, a 0.5 mill replacement levy. The money generated from the levy allows the Park District to maintain and enhance the park to a quality level that the residents expect, provide safe experiences, and offer programs and events that thousands of residents attend and enjoy each year.



Please Vote FOR Issue 16

Richfield
HERITAGE
PRESERVE

In November 2014 the residents of Richfield Township and the Village of Richfield passed two Issues to purchase and maintain what is now Richfield Heritage Preserve, creating Richfield Joint Recreation District. Thanks to their foresight, this property is protected and available to all to enjoy. Now it is time to renew the operating levy so that the park can continue to be maintained, improved, and enriched to provide the educational and recreational opportunities the voters envisioned.

Richfield Joint Recreation District is the smallest item on your tax bill. Issue 16 is a replacement levy at the same millage as the original. While many thousands of volunteer hours have been spent at the park, funds are needed to operate the park and provide basic maintenance and supplies. Ongoing improvements have been made since 2014:

- Remodel of The Lodge as a popular event venue
- Refurbishing of Lower and Upper Lake dams
- Upgrade and connection of wastewater treatment plant
- Current restoration of Amity House
- Strategic Plan and new trail map of park ... and more!

Richfield Heritage Preserve is a unique oasis within our community. Continuing the investment we made in this special property, at only **\$18.00 PER YEAR** for every \$100,000 in property value, will provide ongoing support to the enhancement of our shared park. Considering the median home value in Richfield (\$439,000), for less than a quarter a day, these 336 acres are yours to explore and enjoy. We hope you will visit often to experience the beauty and character of your park. The benefits are endless!

Vote FOR Issue 16
and say **YES** to Richfield Heritage Preserve.

FIND ADVENTURE in your park!

Paid for by the Coalition for Greater Richfield



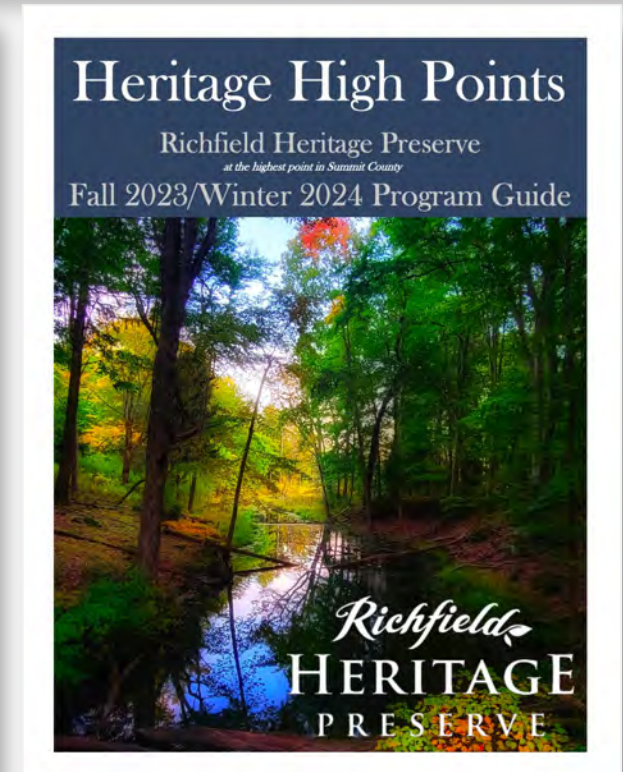
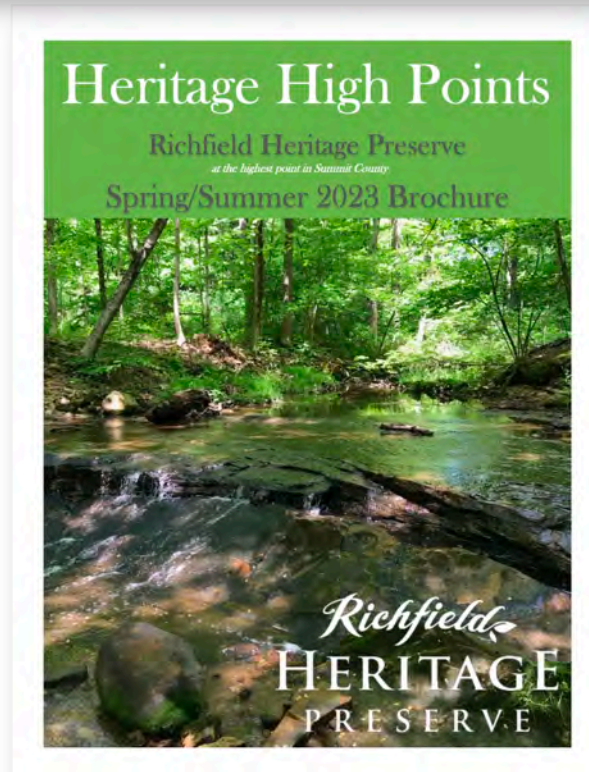
COMMUNITY

- A banner featuring a photo of the park was displayed at the Ohio Parks and Recreation Annual Conference and Trade Show
- RJRD participated in the Richfield Community Days event and parade
- RJRD hosted an open house
- RJRD hosted a Richfield resident thank you picnic

PUBLICATIONS

RHP NEWSLETTER PROGRAM GUIDE

- RHP published twelve electronic 'Footnotes' newsletters to keep the community informed on what's happening at the park.
- Editors: Polly Wheeler and Susan Czaplicki
- RHP published two 'Heritage High Points' program guides to keep the community informed of programs and events at the park.



STRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

- Installed gravel pathways at Mable Smith Shelter
- Certificate of Occupancy for Chagrin Cabin
- Installed seasonal non-potable water at High Lea, Waterfront, and Chagrin
- Leveled the Pack Out Building's floor
- Painted the exteriors of the Lodge and Lodge latrine





TRAIL AND ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

- Re-routed the bridle trail to eliminate two stream crossings
- Installed a new boardwalk on the High Lea trail
- Extended a section of turnpike construction along the Buckeye Trail
- Regraded Garfield Hill
- New pavement in front of the Lodge

STRUCTURES REMOVED

- Fernwood Latrine
- Beechcliff Latrine
- Far Away Pines Latrine
- Wayside Latrine
- Paddler Latrine
- Paddler Shelter
- Windy Hill Platform Tent Bases





EVENTS

RJRD co-hosted four events at the park:

- Snowbird Festival
- Goat Derby
- Waterfront Music Fest
- Trick or Treat on the Trail and Spooky Tales

PROGRAMS

- Summer Camp
- Nature Cyanotypes Workshop
- CraveNature Cleveland Yoga
- Richfield Library Story Hour
- Richfield Library Adult Book Discussion
- Nature Buddies
- Orienteering Training
- OneTreeLove Yoga and Stand-Up Paddleboard





YOUTH ART CONTEST

RHP hosted a Youth Art Contest for K - 6 students in public, private, or home schools.

Their art depicted native plants, animals, or natural landscapes found in Ohio.

Prizes were awarded to the top entries in K-3 and 4-6 grade levels.



PHOTO CONTEST

RHP hosted its 4th annual
Discover Your Outdoor Experience at RHP photo contest.



BLUEBIRD MONITOR PROGRAM

The RHP Bluebird Monitor Program completed its 3rd year under the direction of RHP Bluebird Trail Coordinator Claudia Souders. Trained RJRD volunteers monitored 17 bluebird boxes at the park from March through August.

2023 QUICK SUMMARY

17

Total Nest Sites

29

Total Nesting Attempts

106

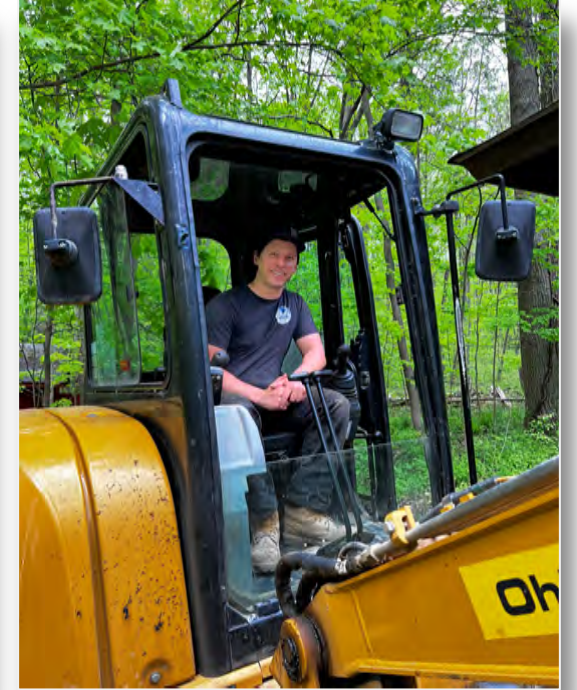
Total Eggs

80

Total Young

47

Total Fledglings

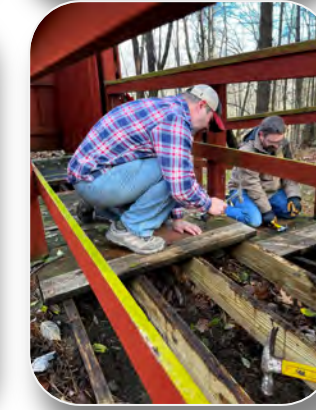


VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are vital to the success of the park. Their unwavering commitment, hard work, and dedication have led to numerous improvements and enhancements, making the park more enjoyable and welcoming.

CORPORATE GROUPS

- Leaf Home
- Ernst & Young
- Thompson Hine
- Burns & McDonnell
- CLA
- National Interstate
- CESO
- Cohen & Company
- Sequoia Financial
- DocuSign
- CISCO
- Hyland Software



EAGLE SCOUT

Five picnic tables were constructed by Lukas Graber, a senior at Highland High School and a Troop 526 member, as part of his Eagle Scout project.

Lukas was eager to contribute positively to the preserve and worked hard to develop his leadership and time management skills while leading a diverse group of helpers.





Richfield Joint Recreation District
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