

WEGERZYN  GARDENS
FOUNDATION

The Garden Bridge

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I am proud to introduce myself as your President of the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation. My name is Mary Gordon and Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark is one of my favorite places to visit in the Dayton area. There are always new blooms (even in winter) and lots of hidden gems in the Children's Discovery Garden. It's why I joined the Foundation board back in 2016 and now serve as President.

During this time, I have met many people who share the same love of the park as I do. It has been inspiring to see how much the volunteers for the Foundation care about the on-going support of the MetroPark, and how much time they are willing to give to help keep the park looking fresh and exciting. While there are many ways to volunteer, including the Gift & Garden Shop, children's programming, MayFair, and the annual Garden Party, you don't often hear about the time served on the Foundation's board. Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation is now in need of board members to ensure a bright future for the park. Board members attend 4 annual meetings where they vote on spending to support park projects, and ways to raise awareness and funds for the park. We are looking for individuals who may have experience in legal, financial, or event planning, but most importantly, share a love for exploring the outdoors and plants at Wegerzyn Gardens. Please reach out to contact@wegezzyngardensfoundation.org if you want to learn more about Foundation opportunities. In the meantime, I hope to see you in the gardens.



Mary Gordon, Foundation President

Members Learn About Witch Hazel During Winter Walk



By Mary Gordon

Foundation members braved the cold in late February to learn more about one of the nation's largest witch hazel collections located at Wegerzyn Gardens MetoPark. Many witch hazel shrubs and trees were in bloom, showing off a great collection of color with the snow covering the ground. Witch hazel expert Rob Schilb answered questions from the group and shared maintenance details for keeping witch hazel in your own yard. Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation plans to hold another walk in late fall to see the autumn-blooming witch hazels in the park's collection.

Save the Date



Garden Party 2024



Thursday, September 12

Member Meetup Walks Planned in the Gardens in 2024

By Jackie McArdle

Walk and talk with Wegerzyn foundation members, volunteers and staff to enjoy our Gardens as they bloom throughout the seasons and learn about all of the exciting plans and projects now underway thanks to your loyal support. Special featured areas each month:



- April 21, 2:00PM - The Marie Aull Nature Trail and Children's Discovery Garden.
- May 19, 2:00PM - The greenhouse, tropicals and annuals planting.
- June 23, 2:00PM - What's in Bloom in June and the new Rain Garden.
- July 14, 7:00PM* - Woodland and Prairie plants in bloom.
- August 18, 7:00PM* - The Community Gardens and newly acquired property plans.
- September 29, 2:00PM - The river corridor and Jay Lake/Flying Field
- October 13, 2:00PM - Fall colors and new happenings in the Children's Discovery Garden.
- November 3, 2:00PM - Fall/winter blooming



Witch hazels and winter greenery.

** July & August Walks start at 7:00PM to avoid the heat of the day.*

Gift & Garden Shop has Excellent Mother's Day Gifts

By Carol Self

It's officially spring and we hope you're as excited as we are. The Foundation's Gift & Garden Shop buyers are busily restocking merchandise in anticipation of the growing season. Mothers' Day will be here soon and we have unique gift items that

will please a garden-loving mom.

Our lovely glass wind chimes have been a real hit since we began stocking them for the holidays. They'll make great Mothers' Day gifts, too.



In addition to our usual garden tools and ornaments, we have added a new display of Five Rivers MetroParks items. Show your support of our wonderful parks system with a logoed water bottle or tote bag. We also offer bat houses hand-made by MetroParks volunteers and unique activity kits.



And don't forget our always-fabulous house plants. Some new greenery is a great way to freshen up the indoors any time of year.

We hope to see you soon at 2nd Street Market

Bus Trips Ready to Hit the Road in 2024

By Mary Gordon

A trio of exciting bus trips are being planned for the coming year, starting with the first one on June 5. That trip will take participants to Maysville, Kentucky, and include a trip to the **Kentucky Gateway Museum, Old Washington, and Natrop's Nursery.**

A second trip on September 10 will visit Amish country with several stops including **The Amish and Mennonite Heritage Center and Walnut Creek Cheese and Market.**

The final trip of 2024 is planned for December 10 and will feature lots of botanical information at the **Lloyd Library in Cincinnati and the Krohn Conservatory.**

Watch for brochures and registration information coming soon.



MayFair at the Market Adds More Shopping Hours

By Mary Gordon

Stop by the Second Street Market during the first weekend in May to support Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation's MayFair at the Market Plant Sale. **The sale will be open to members only on Friday, May 3 from 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.** on the east end of the building. The sale will then open to the general public during regular market hours through the weekend. This year, MayFair at the Market will feature a greater variety of plants including tomatoes, peppers, herbs, annuals, and perennials. Remember to bring your membership card to receive a discount on your purchase. Anyone may join or renew their membership at the sale. Regular market hours are 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Friday, May 3; 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. on Saturday, May 4; 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 5. Proceeds from the sale help support projects and programs at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark.



2024 Funding

By Ron Bicknell and Allison Bush

The Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark staff is excited to follow through and implement improvements funded by the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation for the 2024 season.

New Garden Instruments

One of the more popular areas of the Children's Discovery Garden is the Music Maze where



children of all ages can be heard composing music from a variety of quirky instruments. The original group of features were

installed in 2006 and were mainly wood based and were starting to show their age. As there are now many more interesting options available, we felt it



was time to replace some of the more worn items and are adding a new lily pad cymbal along with a set of four steel petal drum flowers. These have been delivered and we intend on having them installed by Memorial Day.

Cargo Trike

One of Five Rivers MetroParks Strategic Plan focus areas for 2024-2027 is climate change mitigation. Each park area in the agency has a Green Team member looking at ways we can be more environmentally friendly. Dave Gibbs, Wegerzyn

2024 Funding Continued



Park Manager, is our representative in that group. Dave manages the vehicle and equipment fleet at the park which includes battery powered golf carts and an electric mower. He had the idea of utilizing a three-wheel cargo bike for tasks around the gardens and throughout the park, further reducing vehicle emissions and reducing sound pollution. With funding provided by the Foundation the bike was delivered and is now part of our rolling fleet.

Rain Garden

The inspiration for the rain gardens within Wegerzyn Gardens' Arbor Garden was sparked during a walk-through of the park following a rain event. There was a lot of rainwater pooling in the Arbor Garden landscape beds and paver areas around these beds. It became obvious rainwater was sheeting off the North Plaza's impervious surfaces and flowing into the nearest landscape beds. The idea of redesigning these beds was already in the back of mind. With the problem of water runoff and the grade of our garden beds, I was determined to collaborate with Mother Nature and work with the existing beds to create a



rain garden.

What is a rain garden, you may ask? Essentially, a rain garden is a landscape area designed to collect and absorb water—typically in landscapes with depressions, at the bottom of slopes, and constantly flooding areas. Native plants are planted in rain gardens as they are low maintenance, drought tolerant (a rain garden is only “wet” when it rains), have an expansive root system, high absorption rate, and benefit wildlife. Rain gardens are a natural way to combat man-made problems and protect local waterways.

Five Rivers MetroParks' strategic plan focuses on reducing climate change by increasing the agency's carbon sink, educating the public about climate change, and incorporating climate change mitigation into our parks. Rain gardens help address two major issues: stormwater pollution and excess flooding. Wegerzyn Gardens' rain gardens are designed with native plants and organic soils, which will remove 90% of contaminants and allow for more water to return to the ground, reducing runoff. Educating the public on the benefits of Rain Gardens and how they can be incorporated into a property is one way Five Rivers MetroParks and the Wegerzyn Garden Foundation are promoting conservation and sustainability.

Additional items funded by the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation for this year include the contract trimming of the tall taxus hedge that surrounds the Garden Green lawn area, and cleaning and sealing of the arbor garden structure, replaced by the Foundation in 2018.

We are very appreciative of the dedicated support and enthusiasm you provide to this unique gem that shines in the Miami Valley.

Help Needed for MayFair

There are three ways you can help support Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation's MayFair at the Market sale.

1. **Volunteers** are needed to help check out shoppers during the sale hours. Training can be provided during your shift. If you are interested in helping, please email Lisa Brown at lbrown0815@yahoo.com.
2. **Donate pass-along plants.** Plants can be dropped off anytime now through April 22 at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark just outside the gate by the greenhouse. The greenhouse sits behind the main building. These are plants you may be dividing in your own yard or just looking to rehome. Plants can be in any size container or bag. Please label name of plant, bloom color and bloom season. Popsicles sticks or a plant tag work great for this. Plant containers and carrying trays/boxes would also be appreciated. Small shrubs or trees can also be donated.
3. Finally, **shop** at the sale at the 2nd Street Market during regular business hours the first weekend of May or attend the members-only sale Friday, May 3, 8-11 a.m.

MISSION

To conduct fundraising, increase awareness, and support the programs and continued development of Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark, a facility of Five Rivers MetroParks. A 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

VISION

Wegerzyn will be a conduit of community support enabling Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark to be a preeminent regional public garden that fosters personal connections to nature through horticulture.

WEGERZYN GARDENS FOUNDATION 2024 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

OFFICERS

President.....Mary Gordon
Vice President.....Rich Gillette
Treasurer.....Loretta Hill
Secretary.....Libby Freeze

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

.....Elliott Haller
.....Katie Herzog

COUNCIL CHAIRS

Adult Education.....Donna Zobrist
Gift & Garden Shop.....Lisa Brown
Horticulture.....Mary Gordon/Loretta Hill
Membership.....Jackie McArdle/Cindi Hillier
Youth Education.....Richard Wilson

Foundation Historian.....Jackie McArdle

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

MayFair.....Loretta Hill/Mary Gordon
Garden Party.....Libby Freeze/Jessica Wagner/
Rich Gillette

EX-OFFICIO

Five Rivers MetroParks
Chief Executive Officer.....Karen Hesser
Chief of Philanthropy.....Alexis Larsen

FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR TO GET INVOLVED

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