

Inside the Winter 2025 Issue

Pre	sider	nt's (Corner.	 1
1 1 0		TUU '	COLLICI	 -

<u>Fundraisers</u>

<u>1 unuruisers</u>
MayFair2
Gift & Garden Shop.3
Garden Party4
Bus Trip5
E4.
Enents

Livenis

Fall Family	7
<u>Wegerzyn News</u>	

Member Walks............ 6

New Regional.....8 Parks Update.....9

Foundation

Mission/\	Vision10
Board of	Trustees10

President's Corner



As we approach the holiday season, it's time to shop for our family members and friends.

This year, consider giving the gift of a Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation membership. A gift membership is a thoughtful way to invite others to support the gardens we cherish so much.

The present gives your loved one reciprocal admission to other American Horticultural Society gardens across the country. It also provides the receiver with discounts at the Gift & Garden shop at the 2nd Street Market, and at various garden stores. See the complete list of benefits to a Foundation membership at wegerzyngardensfoundation.org/membership. Mostly importantly, membership continues to support the improvements made at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark and helps keep it a beautiful, enchanting place to explore in our community.

May Dordon, Wary Gordon, Foundation President

SAVE THE DATE MayFair at the Market 2026

Members-Only Sale
Thursday, April 30 from 4 - 6PM

Open to the Public Friday, May 1 from 11AM - 3PM Saturday, May 2 from 9AM - 3PM Sunday, May 3 from 11AM - 3PM Location
2nd Street Market
East end of the Market
600 E 2nd Street
Dayton, OH 45402



Gift & Garden Shop

By Carol Self

We're gearing up for the Christmas season at the Gift & Garden Shop at 2nd Street Market.

As always, we have plenty of tools and garden decor for the gardeners on your list and lots of stocking stuffers for the kiddos. Kids love our mineral specimens -- they're inexpensive, fun



to collect, and beautiful.

Our Eco Sox are always well-received gifts. Soft, warm and comfortable, and now available in a variety of colors and patterns.

Check out our new line of Charley Harper-designed bird houses and wind chimes. Charley Harper was a Cincinnati-based American Modernist artist



best known for his highly stylized wildlife prints, posters, and book illustrations, many of which feature cardinals. He produced artwork and designs for many nature-based organizations including The National Park Service, Cincinnati Zoo, Cincinnati

Nature Center, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Hamilton County (Ohio) Park District, and



Everglades National Park.

Our amaryllis and paperwhite narcissus bulbs are always popular and make lovely hostess gifts or decorations for your own home.

The Christmas tree is up in the shop and decorated with unusual ornaments for gifting or adding to your own collection.



Garden Party

By Rich Gillette



The 52nd Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation Garden Party on Sept. 11 was a success and helped raise money for future improvements to our wonderful gardens.

A big thank you goes out to the volunteers who helped create a great night of socializing and discovering new things at the gardens.

We also want to thank the businesses and people who donated to our silent auction and the sponsors of our event, including our major sponsor, the Jack W. and Sally Eichelberger Foundation.

Other sponsors of the event included: John and India Clarke, Coolidge Wall, Bruce and Loretta Hill, Houser Asphalt, Jessup Wealth Management, Siebenthalers, North Dayton Garden Center, Square One Salon and Spa, Ann and Jim Rougier, Thoms Mittlekamp, Grace Fasano, and Debbie and Steve Freeze.

"Children in the Dayton area will be able to enjoy our Children Garden for years to come thanks to our sponsors and the many people who attended the Garden Party. We appreciate the help of our volunteers who help make this night special," said Rich Gillette, vice president of the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation.



SAVE the DATE 2026 GARDEN PARTY



Thursday, September 10, 2026

Bus Trips

By Mary Gordon



The final bus trip for 2025 is about to hit the road. The group will depart from Wegerzyn on Thursday, December 11 to celebrate holidays and history in Troy, including stops at the WACO Air Mueseum and Bruckner Nature Center.



There are still spots left to join. Be sure to mail in or call by November 26 to reserve your spot.



September's trip featured stops at Kingwood Manor Gardens in Mansfield and Groovy Plant Ranch.



2026 Member Walks

By India Clarke



When bers on Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 2pm with Franz Kirchner, Five Rivers MetroParks Horticulture Technician. In case of hazardous weather, a back up date of Sunday, March 1, 2026 is on the calendar.

Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark currently has one of the largest witch hazel collections, by number of cultivars, in North America with more than 120 kinds of witch hazel.

Witch hazels are flowering plants boasting warm colors that also have medicinal properties. There are four main species – American witch hazel (H. virginiana), Chinese witch hazel (H. mollis), Ozark witch hazel (H. vernalis) and Japanese witch hazel (H. japonica) – and hundreds of cultivars (plant varieties that have been cultivated through selected breeding). These plants can be a variety of different colors and have incredibly fragrant blooms.

SAVE the DATES: 2026 Member Walks

- April 26, 2026 (a) 2PM Wildflower Walk
- June 28, 2026 @ 2PM What's in Bloom
- September 13, 2026 @ 2PM -Community Gardens & Foxton Court

Members Walk in the Community Gardens and North Trail

By India Clarke



n Sunday, September 7th, Ron Bicknell, Regional Park Manager, led a tour of the Community Gardens and the new North Trail. Sixteen members joined him for a lovely day walking around these areas that lie at the end of the asphalt road to Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark, past Jay Lake. We were thrilled to see former CEO of Five Rivers MetroPark, Marvin Olinsky, and his wife, Christine and enjoyed catching up with them.

The Community Gardens at Wegerzyn have been back there since around 1978. It holds the Guinness record for the longest contiguous community gardens! There are 300 total plots, 80x40 ft, for

rental from April 1 to October 15. Cost is now \$40 but had been \$20 for many years.





We now have online registration as of three years ago. The rows between

plots are mowed and there are water fixtures for gardeners access. They stipulate no chemicals to be used to keep it an organic community garden, hopefully.



The new North Trail is a part of Wegerzyn Gardens, due to the tornado damage that occurred during Memorial Day weekend in 2019. There was a badly damaged apartment complex and an abandoned old tree nursery north of the

park. The City of Dayton signed over these two properties to Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark and it was cleaned up with a grant from ODNR. FRMP then put in a paved trail that allows for a 1.5 mile bikeway loop. Great for a nice hike or bike ride to check out this new area.

This was Ron Bicknell's last week as Regional Park Manager and Wegerzyn now has a new Regional Park Manager, Randy Ryberg.



Fall Family Adventure

By Betty Hoevel

This year's event was a great success with wonderful weather, fine music and refreshments, a real magician, a fascinating story teller, and a crowd of nearly 800!



There were great crafts, including a make-your-own spider ring, fancy fox, and a paper plate owl and an origami owl demonstration and tree!







Games this year included the popular leaf jumping pools, a new climb-like-a-spider web, pumpkin maze, pumpkin ring toss, jack o lantern bean bag toss, and dress a scarecrow.

Story teller, Stephen Hollen, was able to join again this year for wonderful tales and kids and adults alike were spellbound.

New this year was also a moon phases and build your own constellation game led by astronomy volunteers in the Living Room.



Not to be missed were the education stations—Meet a Spider, Magic Squirrels, Tree Transformations, Nature's Antifreeze, and the prairie i-spy walk.

Fall Family Adventure is such fun for all ages!

Introduction to New Regional Park Manager

By Randy Ryberg

I y name is Randy Ryberg and I am very excited to be the new Northwest Zone Regional Manager. The Northwest Zone includes Aullwood Garden MetroPark, Englewood MetroPark, and of course Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark.



I started my career with Five Rivers MetroParks in 2014 as the Cycling Program Coordinator in the Recreation Department. As the inhouse expert for cycling and mountain biking, I worked with community partners, cycling advocates, and the cycling community on the amazing cycling assets we have in the region. One of my favorite of these is the MetroParks Mountain Biking Area (MoMBA). While in that position I worked with the park manager, staff, and volunteers on trail maintenance and projects at MoMBA. So, when the Park Manager position for Huffman and Eastwood, (which includes MoMBA) became

available in 2021 I was excited to apply and make a career change from programming and events to park operations.

I spent about four years as the Park Manager of Huffman and Eastwood MetroParks before transferring to Hills & Dales MetroPark, which is another one of my favorite parks. Having grown up in Kettering and settled there to raise my family, I was excited for the opportunity to be close to home and be the caretaker of such a unique natural and historical asset. But when I heard the news of Ron Bicknell's retirement, and the vacancy this would create I knew I was ready for the next step in my career so I quickly applied.

Since accepting the Regional Manager position I have been getting up to speed. I have enjoyed touring around the gardens and meeting the amazing staff that keep everything looking so great. I am looking forward to working with the staff, volunteers, and Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation in my new role.



2025 Park Updates

By Payton Johnson

As we come to the end of 2025 at Wegerzyn Gardens, we are grateful for another year of steady growth, renewal, and thoughtful improvements throughout the grounds. Thanks to the generosity of the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation,



one of the most visible accomplishments this season was the complete renovation of the Siebenthaler entrance landscape bed. Long filled with overgrown hedges that no longer reflected the garden's character, this space has now been transformed into a vibrant and welcoming feature. The new design showcases a rich blend of spring bulbs alongside a curated selection of shrubs, ornamental grasses, and blooming perennials, creating a beautiful sequence of color and texture that will greet visitors throughout the year.

Anothermajormilestonethisyearwasthecompletion of the final phase of plant installation in the Rain Garden. The Rain Garden serves as a strong focal point in the broader Arbor Garden space, and this bed was designed to showcase a variety of native and native cultivars that are moisture tolerant. With the support of the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation, we were able to finish the plant installations that will continue to enhance the garden's four-season interest, including around a thousand bulbs that will show off a variety of colors in spring. The

additions installed this year build upon the original planting and will help the rain garden serve as an enduring highlight for visitors as the surrounding area awaits its future transformation.

In addition to these landscape improvements, we also made progress on an important project within the Children's Discovery Garden. Over the winter months, we will be finalizing the purchase of new furniture, such as benches, tables and umbrellas. This is a welcomed upgrade that will greatly improve the comfort and functionality of this beloved space. Installation is anticipated for next year, and we look forward to offering families a refreshed and more accessible area to play, explore, and learn.

None of this work would be possible without the ongoing support of the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation, the dedication of our staff, and the countless hours contributed by volunteers. As these projects take root and begin to flourish, they reflect our broader commitment to maintaining a garden that is beautiful, educational, and inviting in every season.

We appreciate your continued support and look forward to welcoming you back in the coming year as these improvements come to life.



Winter 2025 Page 10



Treasurer. Secretary. MEMBE

Wegeryn Gardens Foundation Board of Trustees

OFFICERS

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Vice President	Rich Gillette
Treasurer	Loretta Hill
Secretary	Libby Freeze

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE

Elliott Haller
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Horticulture	Mary Gordon/Loretta Hill
Membership	. Jackie McArdle/Cindi Hillier
Foundation Historian	Jackie McArdle

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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

EX-OFFICIO

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

FOR QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, OR TO GET INVOLVED

Email:

contact@wegerzyngardensfoundation.org

Website:

wegerzyngardensfoundation.org

Find us on Facebook: WegerzynGardensFoundation WegerzynGardensGiftShop

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.