



Children enjoy the new playground at Orchard Hills Park in Chesterland during an ice cream social sponsored by Judge Tim Grendell and the Park Board Commissioners.

## Observations from the Bench of Judge Tim Grendell

"Thanks to our taxpayers' generous tax dollars, our county parks are currently well funded with money for additional programs and land purchases."

# THE TRUTH IS...



## Our County Parks Are For ALL Geauga County Residents

We are fortunate in Geauga County to have beautiful county parks for the use and enjoyment of county residents. Sometimes, however, affection for our parks can generate an emotional response, especially by those who have difficulty adjusting to change. While such reaction is explainable, the truth should NOT be allowed to fall prey to emotionally driven misrepresentation or misstatements of the facts.



"It is an honor and privilege to serve all residents of Geauga County as their Park Commissioner." When all is said and done, Geauga Park District will continue to operate in a manner that preserves and conserves these valuable natural resources while providing appropriate recreational opportunities, with sufficient funds to accomplish all of these purposes.

Commissioner **Brian Johnston**

**"As a 20-plus year member of Geauga Park District Staff it is exciting to see new opportunities on the horizon. I have long advocated the importance of serving all residents of Geauga County, particularly those who pay taxes to our parks. The installation of basic recreational amenities affirms our commitment to a greater variety of park users. We hope to continue to do this through providing more exciting opportunities to a variety of nature lovers and outdoor enthusiasts. We will remain vigilant in maintaining our mission of preservation, conservation, and protection; all while continuing to serve more Geauga County residents now and into the future."** **Director John Oros**

1. Our great county parks provide families and individuals with a place to picnic and enjoy nature.
2. Geauga County has spent over \$100,000,000 for the acquisition, maintenance, and operation of our wonderful county parks.
3. Geauga County has over 9,500 acres of park land (Lake County, which has 2 ½ times more people, has less acres of county parks).
4. Geauga County has enough county park lands to accommodate the recreational and preservation wishes of ALL Geauga County residents.
5. A few individuals believe that use of our county parks should be greatly restricted. However, there is no reason why thoughtfully selected portions of our county parks cannot be used for playgrounds by picnic areas, cross-country skiing, controlled hunting (for game management), bocce ball, volleyball, soccer, horseshoes, and snowmobiling (1 or 2 specified locations, during limited daytime hours, with a park permit).
6. The vast majority of the Geauga County Parks will remain as natural as ever. In fact, substantial acres of county park-owned land are not even open or accessible to Geauga County residents for preservation/conservation reasons.
7. OIL AND GAS DRILLING, LOGGING, AND NON-RESCUE ATV USE SHOULD BE PROHIBITED IN OUR COUNTY PARKS.
8. Amending the Park District's Bylaws to allow limited and regulated recreational uses in our county parks recognizes that our parks are for ALL Geauga County residents, not just a select elite few.

1. The Park District was expected to have an excess cash balance of approximately \$9,000,000 in 2015.
2. The Park District is expected to spend between \$5,000,000 to \$7,000,000 in 2015.
3. Even with the suspension of one tax levy, the Park District will collect more than \$5,000,000 in taxes from Geauga County property owners in 2015. That is about twice the amount Geauga County spends on Senior Adults and children in need of services.
4. The Park District now is expected to have more than \$8,000,000 of excess cash in the bank at the end of 2015.
5. No previously board approved programs or land acquisitions have been eliminated or unfunded by the current board.
6. More naturalist programs have been added and can be expected.
7. In 2013, the former director was warned by the County Budget Commission about the Park District's excess revenue situation.
8. Suspending the 0.70 mill 1986 tax levy will save Geauga County homeowners money in 2015 and will have NO adverse impact on the great parks or park programs. The Park Board CAN seek reinstatement of collection of the tax if funds are needed.
9. County Budget Commission tax collection suspension assures that tax revenues are collected under a levy when needed for current or expected operational purposes. Such adjustment by the Budget Commission, even with a voter approved levy is specifically permitted under Ohio law, and as such, does not disenfranchise the vote of the people.
10. Suspending the 1986 tax levy will keep the faith with Geauga County taxpayers and comply with Ohio law.
11. If individuals want to donate to the Park District, you can do so by making a donation to the Park District or Geauga Park District



"The Mission of the Park District is to preserve, conserve, and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year. My mission is to enthusiastically welcome all residents into the Geauga County Parks to explore, learn, and identify all that Geauga County has to offer in our remarkable outdoors and fabulous facilities."

Commissioner **Mary Ruth Shumway**

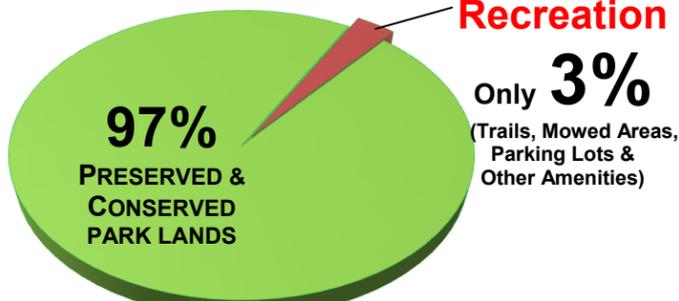


"I want to assure everyone that the Geauga Park District is thriving. With your generous support we continue to be good stewards of the land you purchased and good stewards of the taxes you have given us. Our educational programs are expanding. In cooperation with our local school systems we are engaging more of our children in the wonders of the natural world. For all taxpayers, we are exploring ways for people of all ages and all abilities to responsibly enjoy our wonderful parks. Thank you for your continued support."

Commissioner **Lou Mucci**

Excerpt from 2015 Budget Hearings Worksheet Presented August 11, 2014, 11:30 AM by Michele Pennell representing Geauga Park District

General Fund	Estimated 1/1/2015 Unencumbered Cash Balance	\$5,848,297.88
	Estimated Revenue	\$6,579,884.42
	Estimated Expense	-\$6,443,703.54
	<b>Estimated 12/31/2015 Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$5,984,478.76</b>
<b>Requested</b>	<b>\$6,579,884.42</b>	<b>Approved</b> \$6,579,884.42
Construction Fund Q41	Estimated 1/1/2015 Unencumbered Cash Balance	\$3,404,601.83
	Estimated Revenue	\$514,500.00
	Estimated Expense	-\$875,000.00
	<b>Estimated 12/31/2015 Cash Balance</b>	<b>\$3,044,101.83</b>



Geauga County has Over 9,500 Acres of Park Lands