

Preservation Parks of Delaware County



MARCH-MAY 2014

This issue includes:

Message to the Community
Nature Hikes/Programs
Monarchs & Milkweed
You Say Potato ...
Hound Hikes
Railroad Fun
Summer Explorers Camps
Golden Marathon
Volunteer Naturalists

Programs & Events

March-May 2014

Spring ...

... Spring here is at first so wary,
And then so spare that even the birds act like strangers,
Trying out the strange air with a hesitant chirp or two,
And then subsiding. But the season intensifies by degrees,
Imperceptibly, while the colors deepen out of memory,
The flowers bloom and the thick leaves gleam in the sunlight ...

From a poem by John Koethe

Ospreys: An Ohio Success Story

When Preservation Parks held its first Osprey Homecoming celebration in 2006, Ospreys were an endangered species in Ohio. Lost habitat and the use of toxic pesticides contributed to their decline over the years. Still, we had a reason to celebrate eight years ago, because Ospreys were nesting on platforms in Alum Creek Reservoir, across the road from Hogback Ridge Preserve. That was thanks to dedicated wildlife professionals and volunteers who had worked together since 1996 to bring these raptors back to Ohio and to provide them with places to raise their young. By 2009, Ospreys had made enough of a comeback to be upgraded to “threatened.” And three short years later, in 2012, they were even removed from that list. They were considered a success in Ohio, with 145 babies produced in 110 nests in 2012. We invite you to join in the celebration, as we welcome Ospreys back from their winter homes in South America. We’ll be joined by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and some of the volunteers who made the comeback possible!

Osprey Homecoming Sunday, April 13, 1 - 4 p.m.
Hogback Ridge Preserve, 2656 Hogback Road
Free family event
Spotting scopes; activities; information on current endangered and threatened species in Ohio





Message to the Community — By Executive Director Rita A. Au

As I write this, we are experiencing the coldest weather in 20 years. Yet, our park officers report that we have visitors in the parks! This indicates to me that the Preservation Parks system is a vital part of the Delaware County community.

Also indicative of the value of Preservation Parks to the Delaware County residents is the 21% increase in attendance at our public programs and the 18% increase to our nature centers. These increases are part of the overall 29% increase over 2012 in the visitation to the park system. If you visited the parks for any reason during 2013, you were one of almost 160,000 visitors.

While we continued to ensure the cleanliness and safety of our parks, we also upgraded and increased the Park District facilities to better serve the public. (See selected listing below.) Some of these improvements may not be visible to the public, and some are to assist with park operations, but all are designed and implemented to allow us to provide additional services to you. All were accomplished while working within the planned 2013 budget, as the charts below show.

We look forward to 2014 as another exciting year at Preservation Parks, with the probable opening of Ottawa Creek Preserve in Thompson Township, and with the construction of a flush toilet facility at Blues Creek Preserve and additional trails at Shale Hollow Preserve.

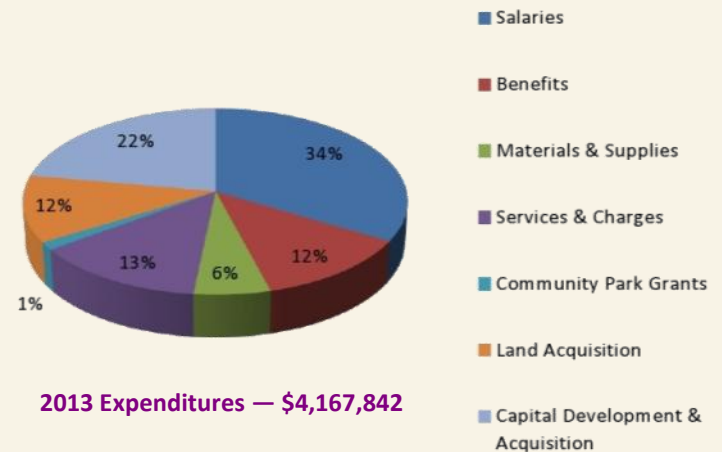
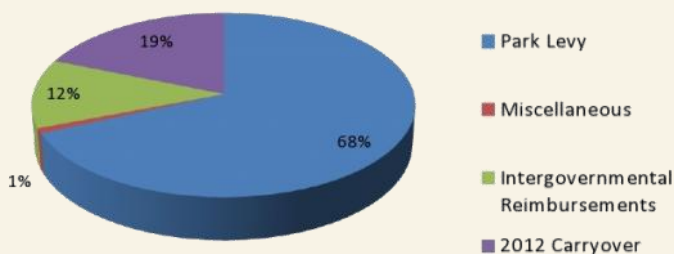
On a final note, I will retire this spring after 25 years of service with Preservation Parks. As its first executive director, I am proud of the progress the Park District has made, from the start of my tenure in 1989, with no land, to the 1,234 acres now preserved around Delaware County.

There were times, before the first levy was approved in 1999, when each year the levy did *not* pass seemed to last much longer than 12 months. Since 2001, however, when we opened the first two parks – Big Walnut Community Trail and Blues Creek Preserve – it is sometimes hard to comprehend how quickly the years have progressed and how much we have accomplished in such a short time (Ottawa Creek Preserve will be the 11th park opened since 2001). That development has been accomplished through the hard work of one of the most talented and dedicated park staffs in the State.

But, none of it would have been possible without your support at the ballot of our vision to preserve some of the natural and historic features of our county by creating a park system for the residents of Delaware County. Thank you for that support; it has allowed Preservation Parks to enhance the quality of life in Delaware County.

It has been a privilege to be a part of the creation of one of the finest natural areas park systems in Ohio. See you in the parks!

2013 Available Funds — \$4,592,772



2013 Expenditures — \$4,167,842

Selected 2013 Park Improvements

Blues Creek Preserve

Replaced boardwalks with gravel on Shagbark Hickory Trail

Char-Mar Ridge Preserve

Installed interpretive signage to wildlife blind

Deer Haven Preserve

Installed conduit for future parking lot lighting

Emily Traphagen Preserve

Modified pond dam for safety purposes

Gallant Farm Preserve

Installed new information kiosk

Installed fencing around pasture

Added Preservation Parks logo to granary

Gallant Woods Preserve

Created connector trail to Gallant Farm Preserve

Installed interpretive signage in Gateway Interpretive Pavilion

Hoover Scenic Trail

Constructed parking lot and installed entry sign

Shale Hollow Preserve

Moved South Zone maintenance operations and Division of

Law Enforcement to former construction company warehouse

Completed renovation of McKay Lodge

Constructed entrance drive and parking lot; installed entry signs

Constructed 1.1-mile trail

Installed safety barricade at top of Overlook Trail

Opened the park to the public December 8

e-mail: contactparks@preservationparks.com



Programs marked with ❖ require advance registration; call 740-524-8600, ext. 3, or e-mail: register@preservationparks.com. Also, be aware that some hikes will be wet and muddy; wear appropriate footwear.

MARCH

Saturday, March 1 — Birding by Ear

Want to try your "ear" at birding? Join us as we focus on 10 common birds that are frequently seen and heard in Delaware County.

10 a.m. *DHP* — ages 9+

Thursday, March 6 — Preschool Park Pals: Simple Science ❖

Explore several stations where your little scientist can perform his or her own fun science experiments. We might get a little messy! Registration required by March 3.

10 a.m. *DHP* — ages 4-5

Saturday, March 8 — Birds of Char-Mar

Join a **Columbus Audubon Society** leader to discover what birds are present in the woods and on the pond at Char-Mar Ridge Preserve. We'll walk the entire 1.7-mile loop trail. Bring your binoculars; we will have a few on hand as well. All levels of birders are welcome!

8:30 a.m. *CMRP* — ages 10+

Saturday, March 8 — Vernal Pool Hike ❖

We will hike to a vernal pool and look for clues from the annual spring amphibian migration. We will focus on Jefferson and Spotted Salamanders. Wear waterproof boots and be prepared for off-trail hiking. Cameras are encouraged. Meet at the Lodge. Registration required by March 5.

10:30 a.m. *SHP* — ages 18+, but children may accompany parents

Sunday, March 9 — Robin's Secret

Walk the trails at Deer Haven Preserve and hunt for the American Robin nests hidden along the trail. Open the plastic eggs, follow the clues, solve the riddle and win a prize!

Noon - 4 p.m. *DHP* — all ages

Friday, March 14 — Dance of the Hokumpoke

It isn't spring in central Ohio until we have heard and observed the annual ritual of the Hokumpoke. This odd little creature takes to the meadows of central Ohio to dance a little jig, complete with its own music, all in an effort to attract the opposite sex. Binoculars are encouraged.

7 p.m. *BCP* — ages 7+

Saturday, March 15 — Card Party

Playing cards have been around for centuries. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, card games provided a much-needed diversion and a reason for neighbors to get together. Come to the farm for an afternoon of card games. Play old favorites such as pinochle, euchre, bridge, rummy or even Go Fish! Don't know how to play?

No problem; we will teach you.

1 - 4 p.m. *GFP* — all ages

Sunday, March 16 — Paint in the Park

Let the great outdoors inspire you to become an artist for the day! If the weather is nice, canvases will be set up along the trail. Pick up the provided paint and brushes, and create a natural masterpiece.

10 a.m. - 2 p.m. *ETP* — all ages

Thursday, March 20 — Homeschool Adventures: Shale Hollow Pt. 2 ❖

Join us for this off-trail hike into the southern section of Shale Hollow Preserve. We'll explore more of the park's geology, focusing on concretions, different types of shale, and more. Waterproof boots are recommended and cameras are suggested. Space is limited and registration is required by March 17.

10 a.m. *SHP* — ages 7+

Sunday, March 23 — Heron Happenings

The Great Blue Herons have returned to their nests! We will start at The Lodge at Deer Haven Preserve to learn about their life cycle, and then we'll carpool to a nearby heronry. Once there, we'll use spotting scopes to observe the fascinating behaviors exhibited by the courting herons.

2 p.m. *DHP* — ages 7+

Sunday, March 30 — Salamander Sunday

Ohio is home to many species of salamanders. See several up close while learning about these amazing amphibians.

Noon - 4 p.m. *SHP* — all ages

APRIL

Saturday, April 5 — Breathtaking Beaks

Start off the morning with a guided bird-watching hike with the **Columbus Audubon Society**, which begins at 8:30 a.m. Then head into The Lodge for coffee and to view the bird beak display. Fun activities and crafts through the day will help you discover all the different jobs that beaks perform. Binoculars are suggested for the morning hike; we will have some binoculars to loan.

8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. *DHP* — ages 5+

Thursday, April 10 — Preschool Park Pals: Nests ❖

Our feathered friends are building safe shelters for eggs. We will learn how they build nests, and see if we can build one as well. Registration required by April 6.

10 a.m. *DHP* — ages 4-5

Saturday, April 12 — More Than Just Pots

Clay comes out of the earth and can be used for everything from roof tiles to dinner plates. Let's have some fun with this versatile material, while making useful items like plant markers, scented pendants or brown sugar discs. Be prepared to get your hands dirty!

1 p.m. *GFP* — ages 5+

Thursday, April 17 — Homeschool Adventures: Spring on the Farm ❖

This month, we will explore Gallant Farm Preserve, and see how farm families of the 1930s and '40s welcomed spring. Learn about life of that era, and take part in some chores around the farm. Space is limited and registration is required by April 14.

10 a.m. *GFP* — ages 7+

Saturday, April 19 — Beneath the Surface ❖

Join Park District staff as we hike off-trail to explore wetland habitats. Bring waterproof boots, cameras and binoculars to help us witness springtime activity in our largest park. Meet at the Sled Hill Parking Lot. Registration required by April 16.

9 a.m. *GWP* — ages 18+, but children may accompany parents

Saturday, April 26 — Wildflower Ways

The woodlands are exploding with every color imaginable, as the spring wildflowers burst forth in their annual rite of spring. Join us on a leisurely hike and familiarize yourself with the names and folklore of the many woodland spring wildflowers.

2 p.m. *SHP* — ages 7+

Sunday, April 27 — Over a Barrel

Homesteads in the 1930s got their water either from wells or from rainfall, which farmers would need to store. Many homes had a rain barrel, which collected water from roof runoff. That water could then be used to water the farm garden. Come help put in a rain barrel, and learn about its uses and other ways to collect and use rain water.

2 p.m. *GFP* — Ages 7+

Spring Beauties

Cover photo by Angela Lilly





2656 Hogback Road, Sunbury OH 43074

MAY**Saturday, May 3 — Fantastic Frogs**

The spring night air is full of croaks and trills. Meet at the shelter to learn about the frog species that are making these noises. Explore the different calls by jumping right into the wetlands. Boots are recommended.

6 p.m. GWP — all ages

Saturday, May 3 — Let's Go Fly a Kite!

One of the most fun things to do on a blustery spring day is to send a kite sailing into the clouds. Come to the farm to decorate a paper kite and send it flying!

1 p.m. GFP — ages 7+

Sunday, May 4 — Tricky Traps

Animals are not the only living organisms designed for catching bugs. Ohio is home to several carnivorous plants. We will learn about the different species as we start a small garden.

2 p.m. SHP — ages 8+

Thursday, May 8 — Preschool Park Pals: Froggy Fun ❖

Leap over to The Lodge and learn about our hopping friends through fun, hands-on activities. Registration required by May 5.

10 a.m. DHP — ages 4-5

Friday, May 9 — Sounds of the Night Hike

Sounds erupt from all corners of the woods and fields in the spring. We'll venture into the darkness, listen for the sounds of the night, and learn what makes those sounds and why.

8:30 p.m. BCP — ages 7+

Saturday, May 10 — Bike at Blues

Bring your bike and enjoy a ride on the Blues Creek Preserve nature trails. Bike safety information will be available. This is a one-time-only program opportunity!

9 a.m. - 3 p.m. BCP — all ages

Saturday, May 17 — Chick Check

The Tree Swallow grid should be in full swing with eggs and nestlings. Help a naturalist check the nests for chicks, age them, and record the data. Be prepared for off-trail conditions, including ticks, thorns and poison ivy.

10 a.m. GWP — ages 7+

Saturday, May 17 — Perennially Speaking

Planting a garden every year is a lot of work, but there are some plants that only have to be planted once — then they come up year after year. In the 1930s, the perennials planted included rhubarb, asparagus, and blackberries. Come to the farm to help plant perennials and learn about their importance to a 1930s farm.

1 p.m. GFP — all ages

Sunday, May 18 — World of Water

Come explore the most eco-friendly thing you can do — grow native plants! Join us as we start planting our rain garden. Learn about water and native plants through fun activities and crafts. Create a rain droplet and make a pledge to conserve water.

2 p.m. SHP — ages 5+

Thursday, May 22 — Homeschool Adventures: Sound Symphony

We are bombarded in spring with a variety of sounds, from songs of the many returning birds, to the loud "peeping" of the spring peepers or the lone call from a coyote. This month, we'll learn how sounds are produced and how various animals "hear" to survive.

10 a.m. DHP — ages 7+

Friday, May 23 — Fishing Fun ❖

Learn fishing basics, such as how to set up your rod and reel and what bait to use, and meet some of our native fish up close. Afterward, try your hand at catching the "big one." Registration required by May 19.

6 p.m. HRP — ages 16 and under, accompanied by an adult

(A program of Delaware Family Fridays — visit the web site for more information.)

Saturday, May 24 — Wild and Wonderful Wetlands ❖

Hike off-trail with Preservation Parks staff and explore wetland habitat. Bring waterproof boots and binoculars as we expand on our April wetlands program and experience more springtime activity. Meet at the Sled Hill Parking Lot. Registration required by May 19.

9 a.m. GWP — ages 18+, but children may accompany parents

Sunday, May 25 — Fishing Fun ❖

Learn fishing basics, such as how to set up your rod and reel and what bait to use, and meet some of our native fish up close and personal. Afterward, try your hand at catching the "big one." Registration required by May 19.

5 p.m. BCP — ages 16 and under, accompanied by an adult

Saturday, May 31 — Returning to the Earth

On a small farm during the Great Depression of the 1930s, there might not have been money for commercial fertilizers. Many small farms included compost piles containing plant waste, manure from livestock, and other organic materials. Come to the farm and learn how composting was done in the 1930s and '40s, and learn how you can compost today.

10 a.m. GFP — all ages

**Monarchs & Milkweed for Educators** ❖

Would you like to be part of the 2014 "Fall Monarch Butterfly Tagging Program?" Monarch Kits for Education provides teachers the opportunity — at no cost to the teacher or school — to raise, tag and release monarch butterflies right in the classroom! Discover the steps needed for your school to become a part of this amazing insect journey. Limited kits are available on a first-come, first-served basis. A separate opportunity for home school groups is available.

Participants should register for one of three dates: April 6, April 8 and April 10. All programs will be held from 6 to 7 p.m. at Deer Haven Preserve, 4183 Liberty Road. *Registration is required by March 30.*

You Say Potato ... ❖

Potatoes were a staple food on a 1930s farm. They were a good source of energy and could be stored for a long time in the root cellar. Help us plant potatoes while learning about their cultivation and uses. The time and date for this program will be set as weather conditions permit. Email or call to be placed on a call list.

All Aboard for Railroad Fun!

The Delaware County Model Railroaders Group holds two open houses a month at **The Trailhouse at Big Walnut Community Trail**. Visitors can help run the trains and learn about model railroading, the development of the railroad industry in America, and the romance of trains. As time goes on, the display will continue to take shape, with tracks, scenery and buildings gradually being added — paralleling the gradual growth of tracks, buildings and towns throughout the United States.

Saturdays 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. March 15, April 12 and May 17

Sundays Noon - 4 p.m. March 16, April 13 and May 18

Hound Hikes

Bring your socialized canine for a 1- to 2-mile walk along our pet-friendly trails. Hound Hike canines receive bandanas, and a paw-print stamp for each hike completed. After 10 stamps, participants will receive a prize. Meet at **6 p.m.** at the information kiosk.

March 10	Emily Traphagen Preserve	;	April 28	Gallant Woods Preserve
March 26	Char-Mar Ridge Preserve	;	May 12	Deer Haven Preserve
April 16	Hogback Ridge Preserve	;	May 21	Shale Hollow Preserve



Summer Explorers Day Camps

Registration forms and complete information about all camps can be found at www.preservationparks.com and by calling 740-524-8600, ext. 3.

Nature Camps

Make friends and memories this summer while experiencing nature and the great outdoors during our Nature Camps. Participants can learn about different habitats through hikes and hands-on exploration, discover a wide variety of plants and animals, go fishing, learn outdoor survival skills, search for frogs, play games, participate in crafts, travel to different parks and so much more. Don't sit inside bored this summer. Get out and enjoy all nature has to offer!

Animal Buddies - age 8 Fee: \$110

Dates: Session I: June 16-20 [Registration deadline June 2]
 Session II: June 23-27 [Registration deadline June 9]
 Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 Place: Deer Haven Preserve, with travel to other locations
 Limit: 12 participants



Habitat Explorers - age 9 Fee: \$110

Dates: Session I: July 7-11 [Registration deadline June 23]
 Session II: July 14-18 [Registration deadline June 30]
 Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 Place: Deer Haven Preserve, with travel to other locations
 Limit: 12 participants.

Outdoor Adventurers - age 10 Fee: \$125

Dates: July 28-August 1 [Registration deadline July 14]
 Time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 Place: Deer Haven Preserve, with travel to other locations
 Limit: 12 participants.

Farm Camps

Join us this summer for three Farm Camps at the Gallant Farm Preserve. Have fun while learning about life on a 1930s and 1940s Delaware County farm through fun hands-on activities. Doing farm chores, learning about farm tools and equipment, experiencing life in the farmhouse, cooking on a woodstove, fishing, games and more will highlight each week. Field trips to other farm sites are sure to add to the experiences that participants will remember long after the summer is gone.

Farm Buddies - ages 7 - 8 Fee: \$100

Dates: June 9-13 [Registration deadline May 26]
 Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 Place: Gallant Farm Preserve
 Limit: 12 participants



Farm Explorers - ages 9 - 10 Fee: \$110

Dates: June 23-27 [Registration deadline June 9]
 Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 Place: Gallant Farm Preserve
 Limit: 12 participants



Farm Hands - ages 11 - 12 Fee: \$125

Dates: July 21-25 [Registration deadline July 7]
 Time: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 Place: Gallant Farm Preserve
 Limit: 12 participants

Park Key

- Big Walnut Community Trail (**BWCT**)
168 S. Vernon St., Sunbury
- Blues Creek Preserve (**BCP**)
9627 Fontanelle Road, Ostrander
- Char-Mar Ridge Preserve (**CMRP**)
7741 Lewis Center Road, Westerville
- Deer Haven Preserve (**DHP**)
4183 Liberty Road, Delaware
- Emily Traphagen Preserve (**ETP**)
5094 Seldom Seen Road, Powell
- Gallant Farm Preserve (**GFP**)
2150 Buttermilk Hill Road, Delaware
- Gallant Woods Preserve (**GWP**)
2151 Buttermilk Hill Road, Delaware
- Hogback Ridge Preserve (**HRP**)
2656 Hogback Road, Sunbury
- Shale Hollow Preserve (**SHP**)
6320 Artesian Run, Lewis Center

Golden Marathon

The Golden Marathon, a partnership with the Delaware County Senior Center, meets nearly every Monday for a 1- to 2-mile walk. Information, including addresses, is available by calling 740-524-8600, ext. 6, or at: www.preservationparks.com.

Spring walks begin at 1:30 p.m.

Most **March** walks (March 10, 17, 24 & 31) will be held at Polaris Fashion Place, 1500 Polaris Parkway. Meet at the food court. For these walks, if the high temperature for the day is predicted to be more than 40 degrees, we'll walk at Deer Haven Preserve.

March 1: We'll walk for breakfast, from the Senior Center to Camp Lazarus, for the Maple Syrup Festival! 9:30 a.m.; \$10 per person.

April & May walks will be held at these locations:

- | | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| April 7 | Shale Hollow Preserve |
| April 14 | Gallant Woods Preserve |
| April 21 | Blues Creek Preserve |
| April 28 | Camp Lazarus |
| May 5 | Highbanks MetroPark |
| May 12 | Emily Traphagen Preserve |
| May 19 | Char-Mar Ridge Preserve |



Indicia

Parks Open 8 a.m.-Sunset Daily

District Office

Education Office

Mary McCoy Nature Center

2656 Hogback Road

Sunbury, Ohio 43074

740-524-8600

Hours: 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Mon-Fri

Noon-5 p.m. Sat/Sun*

(* Mary McCoy Nature Center only)

The Lodge Nature Center at

Deer Haven Preserve

4183 Liberty Road

Delaware, Ohio 43015

740-362-0283

Hours: Noon-5 p.m. Daily

Gallant Farm Preserve

2150 Buttermilk Hill Road

Delaware, Ohio 43015

740-595-3020

Hours: Park – 8 a.m.-Sunset Daily

Buildings Noon-5 p.m. Thur-Sun

Or Current Resident



Preservation Parks of Delaware County

Calendar of Programs and Events

March — May 2014

Coming Soon to Delaware County.....The Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist Program

Preservation Parks is excited to announce a new initiative that will provide natural resources training to volunteers, and conservation and education assistance to area organizations. A new central Ohio chapter of the Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program is being created to serve Delaware and Franklin counties. The Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program (OCVN) is a statewide initiative administered by the Ohio State University Extension in cooperation with a state steering committee. The mission of the OCVN program is "to promote awareness and citizen stewardship of Ohio's natural resources through science-based education and community service." The program is modeled after the very successful OSU Extension Master Gardener Program.

Preservation Parks, OSU Extension and Stratford Ecological Center have taken the lead to help offer the first training class, beginning in September 2014. The eleven-week hands-on program will feature topics such as aquatic life, plants, mammals, ecological concepts, geology and more, taught by highly qualified natural resource professionals and volunteers. The first class will be open to 30 people. Those who complete the class will become Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalists and are then expected to donate 40 hours a year to environmental/natural resources organizations of their choosing.

Preservation Parks is proud to be a partner in this innovative and successful volunteer training opportunity right here in Central Ohio, and we look forward to our involvement in the new OCVN chapter. For those interested in participating in the first class, additional details will be forthcoming regarding the application process, registration fee, and specific class dates.

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." – Unknown

Rich Niccum, Education Services Manager

