

Upper Arlington Rotary Club



ROTARYVIEW

ROTARY: MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

JULY 18, 2017

Tim Moloney Executive Director of Metro Parks

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Ginny Barney introduced today's speaker **Tim Moloney**, Executive Director of Metro Parks. Tim is a former Director of Parks & Recreation for the City of Upper Arlington.

Metro Parks is not part of any other government agency. The organization is governed by a three member board of Park Commissioners. Interestingly, under Ohio law, park Commissioners are appointed by probate judges. Tim thinks this is good in that probate judgeships are stable and not as political in nature as other entities.

We saw an overview map of the Metro Park system which highlighted the fact that the current parks almost form a ring around the I-270 outerbelt. Metro Parks is currently working to develop facilities inside the outerbelt. An example of this is Scioto Audubon Park which is now open on what was formerly known as the Whittier peninsula. The park is on land that was previously occupied by the City of Columbus auto impound lot. One feature of the park is the largest man made climbing wall in the United States.

In addition to maintaining existing facilities, Metro Parks is also focused on opening new parks. Scioto Audubon is one example and the Battelle-Darby Creek nature center is another example. These and

other parks demonstrate how, if given the chance, wildlife will naturally return to areas previously developed or otherwise made less habitable.

Tim shared some facts and figures about the system.

- The parks attract over 10 million visitors per year – more than the combined attendance of other major attractions in central Ohio such as OSU football and basketball, Blue Jackets hockey and Columbus Clippers baseball combined.
- There are five state nature preserves in the system.
- The system has 300 miles of trails – 200 of which are paved.
- Metro Parks is staffed by 200 full time employees and 180 part time/seasonal employees.

One initiative that is proving to be successful and popular is an effort to bring every fifth grade student in Central Ohio school districts to a Metro Park each year. So far, over 8,500 students have participated. The district works with the various school districts to coordinate the program.

When Metro Parks asked for a new tax levy in 2009 there were nine goals established. All nine of those goals have now been realized.

Tim addressed the now public fact that the park system is currently working with the landowner and a developer to look at creating a metro park at the quarry site in the Riverside Drive / Trabue Road area. The vision is to have a combination of park land and residential land. There are a good number of geologic features on the property including a waterfall that lend themselves to creating an excellent outdoor space for the community. Phase I planning includes 65 to 70 acres devoted to a new Metro Park and the same amount of space devoted to residential development. A goal is to acquire the land by the end of this year with an eye toward an initial ribbon cutting in 2019.

Finally, Tim pointed out that Metro Parks are "only" open every day – 365 days a year for our enjoyment.

GREETERS

July 25

Cullie Rechner
Wade Giffin

August 1

Tom McClain
Steve Rish

August 8

Jimmy Rogers
Brendan King

REGISTRATION DESK

July 25

Chris Taylor
Tracy Harbold

August 1

Jon Hellstedt
Bill Mielke

August 8

Jim Hamilton
Rich Simpson

CALENDAR

July 25

Celeste Lauer
American Cancer Society's Road to Recovery

Host: Tom Davis

August 1

Congressman Steve Stivers (R-OH)
Congressional Update

Hosts: Jeanine Hummer & Brad Frick

August 8

Emily Little
Bitcoin/Cyber Currency

Hosts: Mike O'Sullivan & Tom McClain

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Submit your volunteer opportunity to herb@herbgillen.com for inclusion in the Rotaryview Newsletter.

SOCIAL EVENTS

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The Meeting

President **Dave Dewey** asked **Bob Prior** to offer the Invocation and lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Christine Taylor introduced visiting Rotarian **Manana Fribley** from the Westerville Sunrise Club. **Wade Giffin** introduced his guest **Tyler Norris**. We were also joined today by incoming member **Josh Green** who will be inducted next week.

In a "Getting to Know You" segment we heard from recent new member **Allison Russo**.

Allison is a Policy Research Director for a consulting firm based in Washington DC. She and her family live in UA where her children attend Barrington Elementary School. In the category of surprising things you may not know about her she was a member of a washboard band. Her specialties were kazoo and cymbals but on a good day she would be allowed to play the spoons.

We learned that, sadly, new Rotary International president-elect **Sam Owori** from Uganda has passed away.

Dave showed a one minute What Is Rotary animated video as a reminder about the purpose of Rotary. He also highlighted the fact that water projects, slavery and human trafficking were major projects of discussion at the recent Rotary International Convention in Atlanta.

The club's Board of Directors recently approved new financial support for Ronald McDonald House and ongoing support for the Furniture Bank and the Special Olympics track program.

We recognized those members who achieved perfect engagement for the 2016-17 year.



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Notes and Announcements

John Huneck announced that the next YWCA Family Center meal service will be on Monday, July 31. Sign-up forms will be available next week.

Yvonne Perotti announced that the newly approved support for Ronald McDonald House will kick off with the provision of a meal on Thursday, September 7. We will need about 10 members to help pick up and deliver the food. She noted that the facility is the largest Ronald McDonald House in the United States and needs to be seen to be fully appreciated.

Yvonne also reminded our red badge holders to contact her if they were having any problems accomplishing the steps toward their blue badge. She noted that some folks are taking too long to move in that direction.

Don Leach proudly announced the arrival of his first grandson – his second contribution to the grandparents club.

Tom Westfall announced that, with the retirement of **Carolyn Helmuth**, we are transitioning to a new system for billing and related club records. His wife Mindy will be helping out in the transition. He asked us to bear with them as the transition is made. A new billing will be coming out soon. We will now be using the club's P.O. Box as the return address for checks and correspondence. That information will be in the new billings.

