

THE LICKING PARK DISTRICT NEEDS OHC & OTHERS

Hello OHC club members and other concerned people of the Licking Park District,

The Licking OHC has been approached to help the Licking Park Board keep the Infirmary Mound Park open and operating. Three groups have been asked to help: The Central Ohio Mounted Search Unit, our Licking OHC Chapter, and a group of volunteers, led by Darrell Hensley, a former park employee.

The Licking OHC officers met and came up with a tentative proposal to help maintain the equine trails by keeping them cleared, mowed, and in good riding shape. The chapter, also, volunteered to maintain the horse arenas (grass and sand), arena fencing and buildings, by mowing around the two arenas, maintaining the restroom up at the arenas, and mowing up from the gate entering the horse arena area and the grounds where horse trailers and cars park during events. The Licking OHC club approved this tentative proposal on March 28th.

Cinda Wilson, the president of the Licking OHC, the Central Ohio Mounted Search Unit and Darrell Hensley met with Cathy Fetter, Operations Administrator of the Licking Park District, on March 30th to discuss further the process of getting Infirmary Mound opened. It was pointed out that all three groups had submitted the same proposal. Each wanted to do the maintenance of the equine areas. It was decided that this needed to be a team effort by all groups. After having a discuss, it was agreed that since Darrell Hensley knew the park, he would be elected Team Leader and would head up the operations at Infirmary Mound. He will be responsible for seeing that all the work is done as well as heading up the volunteer program.

Darrell and his group will be maintaining the trails, mowing around the arenas, and mowing up from the gate entrance and the parking areas up at the arenas.

While Cathy was meeting with us, some of the board members were meeting with Goodwill Services to talk about contracting them to mow areas around the shelter houses, restrooms, pond, entrance to the park, and around park buildings. They would also be hired to clean the park office and James E. Bradley Center.

Cathy Fetter stressed to us that the maintenance of the equine areas was now covered, but for the park to open, other non-equine tasks had to be done. She quoted to us that the rental of the shelter houses helped pay for the maintenance and fuel for their maintenance equipment. After a discussion, the Central Ohio Mounted Search Team and Licking OHC agreed that our members could help in these areas. We must work together to preserve our Licking District Parks even if it goes out of our scope of horse chores. Licking OHC will still be responsible for maintenance on the arena building, fencing, and dragging of the arena before events.

Now comes the part that I'm asking our members and others who have been contacted to help in these non-equine chores listed below to step forward and sacrifice a small amount of their time and labor to take care of the park's needs:

1) Power washing the 5 shelter houses. I was told it would take about 15 minutes per shelter house. At the same time you would empty the trash container at the shelter house. It will only take about 1.5 hours each week for these tasks.

2) Power washing the 4 restrooms. Only if needed, you would replenish the toilet paper as in addition to the chemical additive used to control the smell. Only about 1 hour per week would be needed to complete this job.

The Park District has a motorized mule to be used in these duties. The power washer is mounted on the back of the mule and you would just drive up to the shelter house or restroom, hook up the hose and then start washing, continuing until all the units are washed. The trash can be loaded in the mule and dumped up by the office in a dumpster. You would not be required to do much in terms of walking or carrying heavy objects.

I told Darrell that I would like to see a pair of volunteers do this because of safety issues. I can go over on Thursday or Friday morning and get the jobs done but I would feel better to have a partner there to help in case there is a problem. The park is asking us to do this work on Thursday or Friday morning, afternoon, or evening because of rental of the shelter houses on the weekends. I know that I could give a few hours once a month to help. Can you?

Darrell will arrange a training day to show us how to operate the mule and power washer. Those volunteering to help will be trained on how to use the equipment.

I hope our members will consider about helping and step forward to keep the park open. If we can get a good turn out on this project, you should only have to do this once a month and even less frequently than that if more people sign up to help. Personally, I believe that donating just a couple hours of my time each month is certainly worth it if it means that the Infirmary Mound Park can stay open. The Park Board considers this a temporary measure. They will be working very hard to pass a new levy in November. Now we must do our part to help them in this time of transition.

Please reply to this e-mail if you wish to be added to the list of people willing to help. I will then turn the list of names over to Darrell and he will then follow up with me when the equipment is ready and when these services will start. You will then be sent a schedule showing when you would be working.

The park opening date is April 4th. This does not mean that the horse trails will be open at this time. The weather conditions will dictate this.

Thank you for your time and consideration. The OHC and Licking Park District appreciate your sacrifice.

Cinda Wilson, President
Licking County OHC
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