



# Bull's Run Newsletter

## Winter 2023

*Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum is a non-profit volunteer organization located in NE Butler County and serving the surrounding community. We are dedicated to preserving the natural area of Bull's Run and strive to develop the park as an environmental facility and educational resource for people of all ages.*



### **2023 In Review...A Note from our Board President**

Each year at Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum, we strive to fulfill our mission of preserving the natural area of Bull's Run while serving as an environmental education resource for all ages. 2023 has been no exception! At the end of 2022, we hired a new part-time naturalist, Melissa Proffitt, to continue providing the exceptional environmental education and land stewardship the community is accustomed to from Bull's Run. This year she continued staple programs such as Nature TOTS and guided hikes, and re-vamped the Campfire Stories with a Naturalist program. Public programs began in January with the Winter Tree ID class, a new Orchid Walk in February, along with the Great Backyard Bird Count. 49 birds encompassing 21 different species were observed at Bull's Run. The first session of Nature TOTS was also held, welcoming our youngest patrons and their caregivers out to the winter woods. Nature TOTS met again in May, August, and October to experience all 4 Ohio seasons. Melissa had assistance throughout the year from intern Alex Nix, a local Miami University student. Such internships help to prepare the next generation of environmental professionals. Alex re-designed our brochure, giving it an updated look and adding content such as the rain garden location. This new resource will be rolled out in 2024 to assist folks visiting the arboretum.

Wildflower walks were held multiple weeks in the spring to catch sight of our early spring wildflowers in March and April. April also brought out 32 amazing volunteers to help clean up the Arboretum during our Earth Day work day. We planted native tree seedlings, removed invasive species, and prepared the trails for spring and summer. During the summer months, Campfire Stories with a Naturalist returned with a partnership with the MidPoint Public Library, and we were awarded an education grant from Middletown Community Foundation to create environmental education loan kits for local schools. Also, Travel Butler County visited and did a feature article and TikTok about Bull's Run. Visit Travel Butler County's website and search for Bull's Run Arboretum to check it out. ([www.travelbutlercounty.com](http://www.travelbutlercounty.com))

In September we met with Blended Brood Farms about their Goats on the Go! program. We are exploring the possibility of utilizing this innovative method to use goats to eat invasive species such as winter creeper. Stay tuned for updates about this initiative in 2024! September also saw the return of our Fall Family Festival. We had fun nature games and crafts, pumpkin decorating, live animals, and a scavenger hunt hike. This event is always a great time and a wonderful, free family experience. Then in October we held our Annual Meeting at Middletown River Center. We will finish up the year volunteering at Light Up Middletown and holding our Annual Winter Bird Count in December. Read on to find out more about these events! And thank you everyone for a fantastic year.

# **New Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum Contributions** **Received since the Fall 2023 Newsletter**

## **Memberships**

Loren Ackerman  
Ric Brewer  
Ciara Elam  
LaVerne Hopper  
Aaron Quick  
Glen and Joan Shivers  
Joyce Williams

## **Additional Contributions**

Loren Ackerman  
LaVerne Hopper  
Aaron Quick  
Joyce Williams

## **Middletown Community Endowment**

Glen and Joan Shivers

## **Memorials**

*In loving memory of Wilson Breiel*  
Sara Breiel

*In loving memory of Dick Hopper*  
LaVerne Hopper

*In loving memory of Betsy Swope*  
Marcia Miller



*These memberships were received between 9/1/23 and 11/30/23. If our records do not reflect your records, please notify us and we will be sure to include you in our next newsletter where we list new contributions to Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum. Thank you for your support.*

## Thank You from the Naturalist

2023 has been an AMAZING first year as naturalist for Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum. I am excited and energized by the various projects we are doing, the people I have the privilege to work alongside, and the fantastic community members I have the pleasure of engaging with; all while being in the woods! I am so grateful to the Board of Directors for their faith in me, and to the community for how much you have welcomed me into this position. And there are so many awesome additions being planned for 2024! We will be continuing with our free environmental programming for the general public and including some special programming for our dedicated members.

I am currently busy preparing for Nature TOTS to return in February to explore the woods in the winter season, and getting the new education kits ready to go. But I hope to see you all in the woods many times over 2024!



## New Bull's Run Merch Available

Want to show your support for Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum? Then get one of our new logo ball caps! These will go great with your Bull's Run t-shirt. Don't have a t-shirt yet? Then get both. We have a variety of sizes in short sleeve (brown or green color) and long sleeve (green color only) tees. These can make great gift ideas for the nature lover in your household as funds raised through sales go directly to supporting the care and maintenance of the arboretum! T-shirts are \$20 each and hats are \$25 each. Please email [brnsaa@gmail.com](mailto:brnsaa@gmail.com) to place your order today!



*Volunteer Tom in new BRNSA hat*



*Former naturalist Sarah in BRNSA t-shirt (brown)*

## New Board Member Spotlight

Hello! My name is Krissy Grant. I was born and raised in Middletown, OH and I am a true Middie, graduating from Middletown HS back in 2006. I have my Associates and Bachelors degrees from Miami University, as well as my Masters degree from Walden University. I am currently living in Dayton with my husband Nathan. We have been married 4 years but together 12 years! We have a sweet 2-and-a-half-year-old daughter, Hannah, along with our two cats (Jan Snow and Tobhi) and our dog, a corgi named Duncan.

I am currently working at Health Carousel as an Account Manager, and I have been there almost two years. Previously I have worked in childcare with children ranging from 6 weeks old to school age, as well as in administration.

I enjoy being outside with my daughter (it is her happy place!) I love visiting family and letting Hannah spend time with her grandparents, shopping,

watching the Chicago Cubs play baseball, and play dates with friends and their kids! Some other fun facts about me are that my husband and I have birthdays only a day apart, and are both left-handed; I have been to over 45+ Dave Matthews Band concerts as my mom and I have been going since I was 10 - so I will let you do the math on that one; and finally, I have touched the Titanic (IT IS TRUE!)

I am looking forward to being a part of this team and learning how this organization helps to positively impact Middletown!



*Krissy and Hannah Grant*



*Nathan and Hannah Grant*



*Krissy Grant making paper snake*



*Krissy and Hannah Grant at Nature TOTS*

# **Thanks to all who help keep Bull's Run an important asset of the community!**

- ❖ Thanks to all of our Park Work Day volunteers for keeping Bull's Run beautiful!
- ❖ Thanks to Butler SWCD for helping with honeysuckle removal
- ❖ Thanks to Mike Wertz for moving mulch for trail maintenance
- ❖ Thanks to Josh Proffitt for removing downed trees/obstructions on the trails
- ❖ Thanks to Divers Garden and Pet Supplies for donating gourds to our Fall Family Festival
- ❖ Thanks Marge and Brad Kochunas for delivering bird seed
- ❖ Thanks to Nancy and Daryl Clark for putting up bird feeders for the winter
- ❖ Thanks to those who shop at Kroger and have enrolled in their community rewards program, listing **Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum –organization # MX093.**
- ❖ Thanks to everyone who “likes” us on Facebook and shares events
- ❖ Thanks to the Episcopal Church of the Ascension for their all-around support
- ❖ Thanks to Aaron Grant for maintaining our website
- ❖ Thanks to all Board members for their enduring support!
- ❖ Thanks to all of our wonderful 2023 members, we truly appreciate your support!



*Together we are making a difference!*  
*2024 Membership Form can be found on the website [www.bullsrn.org](http://www.bullsrn.org) or on pg 6*

## **More Ways To Get Involved with Bull's Run**

**Become a Board Member!** *Our volunteer board members are vital to continuing the work of Bull's Run. If you care about our mission, please consider joining us! Current board openings include:*

**Treasurer** Create Treasurer reports on BRNSA financials to share with other board members.

**Member at Large** Serve as general board member, offering suggestions for programming and helping to execute the various events held throughout the year.

### **Contribute time, talent or materials:**

**Volunteer on a Workday** with your own yard tools, or using some of ours, to help prepare the trails for tours, control invasive species or add to the diversity of plants. Individuals and groups welcomed.

**Volunteer to fill bird feeders this winter** from December - March. Contact [brnsaa@gmail.com](mailto:brnsaa@gmail.com) if interested!

**Take pictures of your visit to Bull's Run** and post them on our Facebook page or your own Instagram account. Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum is still one of Middletown's little-known gems of nature. Help us spread the word!

### **Kroger Community Rewards Program:**

Kroger Community Rewards makes fund-raising easy...all you must do is shop at Kroger and swipe your Plus Card! When you enroll, please choose Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum under Community Rewards. This will not affect your fuel rewards in any way. Our new organization number is MX093. If you have enrolled in the past, your account has already automatically changed the number for you.



**Membership Form  
2024**

Tax deductible

***Our Mission Statement***  
Bull's Run Nature Sanctuary and Arboretum is a non-profit volunteer organization located in NE Butler County and serving the surrounding community. We are dedicated to preserving the natural area of Bull's Run and strive to develop the park as an environmental facility and educational resource for people of all ages.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$40 Family (printed newsletter)                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Family (e-newsletter)  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$30 Individual (printed newsletter)                      \_\_\_\_\_ \$20 Individual (e-newsletter)  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Fundraising contribution  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to the Endowment Fund with Middletown Community  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution in Honor/Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

Please send an acknowledgement of memorial donation to:                      Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Check # \_\_\_\_\_                      Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Membership also payable on website)                      \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone#( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

To volunteer, schedule a program, tour, or speaker for your group, Contact Naturalist, Melissa Proffitt at 513-279-8958 or email [brnsaa@gmail.com](mailto:brnsaa@gmail.com). For event information visit [www.bullsrn.org](http://www.bullsrn.org) or our Facebook page.

**Mail to Bull's Run Arboretum, P.O. Box 425, Middletown, OH 45042-0425**



**Bull's Run Environmental Education Kits**



This year Bull's Run was generously awarded an Education Grant from the Middletown Community Foundation (MCF) to create environmental education program loan kits to be available to Middletown students and teachers at no cost! We are busy assembling these kits and creating content aligned to Ohio Science Learning Standards to support curriculum in Ohio classrooms. Thank you to MCF for helping connect us to the people of our community through this opportunity. These kits will contain hands-on biofacts and materials on topics from life cycles, native flora and fauna, trees and more! There will also be kits designed to help get students exploring outside with access to hiking guides and other go-to outdoor equipment. The Arboretum also serves as a fantastic "outdoor learning lab" that teachers can bring their students to further explore these environmental education concepts. The Arboretum is open free to groups every day from dawn to dusk. Our facilities include 8 picnic tables under a shelter house and a port-o-let (from March to November. Please note it is removed during the coldest months of the winter)

Bull's Run Arboretum will send out announcements to all of the schools in Middletown City School District with information on how teachers can request a loan kit to borrow for their classroom. Additionally, teachers can contact our naturalist Melissa at [brnsaa@gmail.com](mailto:brnsaa@gmail.com) if they are interested in scheduling a guided field trip.

## **Bull's Run Volunteers at Light Up Middletown**

Bull's Run volunteers will be greeters for Light Up Middletown on **December 7-13<sup>th</sup>**! LUM is celebrating its 24<sup>th</sup> year as the area's premiere drive -thru fantasy holiday light display. LUM is open every night Thanksgiving Through New Year's Eve from 6:00 PM - 10:00 PM - Open in all weather & Holidays. Admission by cash donation - you set the price!

### **Location:**

Smith Park  
Tytus and Verity Parkway  
500 Tytus Avenue  
Middletown, Ohio 45042

### **Directions:**

From 75 North or South take EXIT 32 (OHIO 122) and head WEST follow the red Light Up Middletown signs to Smith Park

Want to help greet visitors? Shifts are 2 hours long - 6-8 and 8-10. The shed is heated and the lights are beautiful. Simply smile and wave, and record how many vehicles visit the light display. For more information and to sign up, please go to <https://signup.com/go/yqtOBpL>





BULL'S RUN  
NATURE SANCTUARY  
AND ARBORETUM

P.O. Box 425  
Middletown, OH 45042



*Volunteers with Butler SWCD removing honeysuckle*



## **Mark Your Calendars For Upcoming Events**

### **December**

December 7 – 13, **Light Up Middletown**, 6:00 -10:00 pm

Saturday, December 16, **Winter Bird Count**, 10:00 am – 11:30 am

## **2024**

### **January**

Saturday, January 20, **Winter Tree Hike**, 10:00-11:30 am

### **February**

Sundays, February 4, 11, 18, 25, **Winter Nature TOTS**, 2:00 – 3:30p

Saturday, February 17, **Great Backyard Bird Count**, 10:00 – 11:30 am

Saturday, February 24, **Nature Hike (topic TBD)**, 10:00 – 11:30 am

### **March**

Saturday, March 23, **Park Work Day**, 9:30 am – 1:00 pm

Sunday, March 24, **Wildflower Walk**, 2:00 – 3:00 pm

For more information, please visit our website [www.bullsrn.org](http://www.bullsrn.org) or Facebook page  
Contact Bull's Run at [brnsaa@gmail.com](mailto:brnsaa@gmail.com), to schedule a tour or service project, or speak to your  
organization or for a program at Bull's Run