



Summer has hit... or has it? After a sweltering week and a half, we are now enjoying spring-like weather. But don't get too comfortable as the heat will be returning.

A new Mission Statement and refreshed direction: The Stewards of Metro Parks organization is three years old. We have passed the infant stage of just trying to make sense of what we want to do and now we are experimenting, or toddling, to see how we can best support Metro Parks in its mission. We have simplified...a trend that is attractive to many. Below is a statement that the Board believes better defines who we are and what we wish to accomplish.

Our mission is to support Metro Parks so current and future generations have access to and value our natural places.

Second Annual Bison Bowl: What a fantastic day, Saturday, June 11, at Scioto Audubon Metro Park turned out to be!!! It started a bit ominous, the fields were wet and only 3 of the 4 fields could be used, but the sun came out, all of the players were excellent sports and the play was exciting. We might have invented a new sport: mud kickball. There were many instances of spectacular plays that were enhanced by the slip-sliding gymnastics of holding on to a wet kickball and trying to keep a solid footing on wet grass. The noon exhibition game between the Metro Parks Stampede and the Channel 10 TV team was a close match up. The MP Stampede won by one run. Our **2011 Bison Bowl champs was the Loose Moose team from Abercrombie & Fitch**. Again, a hard won battle with their opponents, Team Special Ed.

There are many pictures on the Stewards Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Stewards-of-Metro-Parks/136934279702492>. Visit and take a look at the day. And, please note the pictures of the 2011 Bison Bowl Champs: Loose Moose team members look happy and muddy while holding their bison trophies.

"Logo-Wear": There have been questions about purchasing clothing that has the Stewards logo on it. The Stewards logo, which is a green mitten sassafras leaf (shown above, in the header of every newsletter), can be purchased through Land's End. If you are interested in purchasing logowear, please contact Debra Knapke (dknapke@columbus.rr.com) and instructions will be sent to you.

Garden Tips: With the sun out and the bugs biting, it is important to cover up with protective clothing and use sunscreen and bug repellents. The Environmental Working Group has assessed many sunscreens that are on the market and some are safer than others. It is especially important that you use safer sunscreens on children. With their higher surface area to volume ratio (more skin with relation to their small body size) they are more affected by the chemicals that are in "protective" products. Take a look at EWG's sunscreen guide on their website: <http://breakingnews.ewg.org/2011sunscreen/>

For bug repellents...many products contain DEET, a common ingredient in insect repellents that was formulated after WWII by the military to be used in future conflicts that were in tropical locations. It was initially used as a pesticide, and caution should be used when applying it. Do not breathe the vapors and do not apply it to skin that is abraded or cut. There are other options that use essential oils of plants. While these can be less harmful, please be aware that anyone can be sensitive to an essential oil. Always test a new product on a small area of skin before applying it to your body.

Environmental Tips: As the summer officially begins, now is a good time to rethink about mowing the lawn! Even though we'll continue to see rain and thunderstorms, the heat of summer does tend to 'bake' our lawns. A couple of reminders and tips for the grass-- grass goes dormant, not dead; and it is natural for grass to turn brown during lack of rain. One good thunderstorm with the rain *and* the nitrogen released through the lightning, and the grass will be green again. Watering lawns can be a waste of water. If you do water, water 1 or maybe 2 times/week and give the ground a good soaking. Daily watering is not recommended or necessary. When you mow your lawn, leave the grass clippings. They will release nitrogen, keeping the grass greener longer and will also help maintain moisture in the soil (and overtime, they help build the soil as well). Thatch only happens when the grass cuttings are too thick--which usually means the grass is being cut too short.

Moving indoors during hot months, there is a great desire for that "burst" of cold air when we walk through the door. For your health's sake (and also for the sake of the environment), avoid those cold bursts and turn the thermostat higher. Think of removing the humidity versus chilling the air-- that's what your air conditioner can do at a higher temperature setting. And it helps avoid those headaches and chills that can occur from going from hot and humid to very cold over and over.

Touch a Park! Stewards of Metro Parks supports and furthers the work of our Metro Parks
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