

Help raise dollars for Westerville bikeways

To the Editor:

The Westerville Parks Foundation is proud to be the fundraising arm of the Westerville Parks and Recreation Department, recently named one of the best in the nation by being awarded the National Gold Medal for excellence in parks and recreation management.

The Parks Foundation has recently begun a new fundraising campaign, called Adopt-a-Foot, an Adopt-a-Bikeway program which offers companies the opportunity to give back to their community by working with their city government to sponsor and enhance a portion of the Westerville Bikeway and Leisure Path System.

Networks of leisure paths connect communities, open up opportunities for exploration and bring people together. Trails provide for open and inviting environments surrounded by green space.

They are built near Alum Creek, Hoover Reservoir, along parks, businesses and open off-street spaces. Trails create space for cyclists and pedestrians to enjoy a little more of their day.

Whether it's a jogger getting some exercise or a cyclist on their way to work, trails serve recreational and transportation purposes by increasing Westerville's green space and expanding the existing bikeway network.

Westerville's trails also offer regional and statewide biking opportunities. It is part of the 453-mile Ohio-to-Erie Trail, which spans the state from Cincinnati to Cleveland.

Funds raised from this program will go to further enhance the Westerville Bikeway and Leisure Path System with amenities such as benches placed along trails, bike racks in strategic locations, trail heads and informational kiosks, picnic plazas, trail markers and brochure maps.

The goal of the program is to raise \$121,440 for bikeway enhancements to Westerville's 23 miles of scenic bikeways and we have already reached a current total of \$95,040 thanks to the generous sponsorships of Gold partners Mount Carmel St. Ann's, Nationwide Children's Hospital and American Electric Power; and Silver partners Ohio Health and Roush Honda.

A variety of sponsorship opportunities are available with varying giving levels and benefits for this wonderful program that further connects our citizens and businesses to the natural beauty of Westerville. Let's make it our mission to continually improve the quality of life in our community. For more information please contact the Westerville Parks Foundation at (614) 901-6530.

**Ron Shankman, chairman
Westerville Parks Foundation**