

# LATE SUMMER 2024



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## Chickasaw Forest Play Area

*Chickasaw Forest Play Area is officially opened*



The Chickasaw Forest Play Area was officially opened on July 8th and it was a well attended unveiling on a hot summer day! Speaking at the event were representatives from our partners at PlayCousins Collective, Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Louisville MSD, Metro United Way and Mayor Greenberg. Our Executive Director, Prasanthi Persad, spoke at the event, and shared our organization's pleasure to have raised the funding for this Forest Play Area through the Community Benefits Program of Louisville MSD. The next phase of design in the Forest Play Area will be the Sankofa Sanctuary, spearheaded by PlayCousins Collective and funded through Metro United Way. The Chickasaw Forest Play Area is a beautiful space with amazing views of the Ohio River - please come and see for yourself!



# NEW DEVELOPMENTS



The restored Chickasaw Pond was reopened on August 24th. The Natural Areas team helped paddlers launch canoes into the pond. There were many enthusiastic participants at the Family Canoe Day at Chickasaw Pond who took to the pond to explore.



The Chickasaw Pond Family Canoe Day began with a press conference led by Deputy Mayor Nicole George at which our Natural Areas Park Administrator, Jessica Kane, thanked her team and partners for their roles in the pond restoration.



## NEW DEVELOPMENTS



Tom Wallace Improvement Project has progressed this summer, with the official reopening coming soon! Boardwalk, bridge work and paving of the ADA-accessible path is now complete.



## New Hires!

### *Welcome Center Welcomes New Staff Assistant, Carter DeVore*



The Welcome Center brought aboard a new staff member, Carter DeVore. He is a native plant and history enthusiast, who also enjoys attending community programs or reading a book at the library. Carter is excited to be surrounded by the forest and to be working with others who care about taking care of it. He enjoys connecting with the world around him and guiding others to have stronger relationships with their every day surroundings. Be sure to stop by the Welcome Center and say hello!



## Land Management Perspectives

The Natural Areas Land Management team has had a packed summer! They have been focusing heavily on trail work and invasive species management, but still kept up with their routine maintenance duties. The team is now fully staffed with the addition of a new Forester I, Spencer Longacre (see the Staff Spotlight article for more on Spencer)

On the trail maintenance front, the team has trimmed vegetation, removed downed trees, rerouted trails to avoid hazardous areas and performed erosion control in Paul Yost.

Trail construction continues on the new trail at Horine, that is to be named the White Oak Ridge Trail. The trail is about 2/3 complete, and the team works with volunteers every

Wednesday Morning and on two Saturdays per month. If you are interested in volunteering with the team on trail construction, visit [here](#). The Land Management team also completed herbicide treatment for this year at McNeely for the Kentucky Glade Cress restoration project, which involved 27 acres. With the SummerWorks participants, Land Management worked on cleaning 1 acre of invasive species at Beargrass Creek Greenway. They also watered and maintained trees from the last two years of plantings, in addition to planting 22 trees at Tom Wallace and the newly acquired Grace property. They also painted the cabin on the Grace property with the maintenance team.

The Land Management crew continued with mowing and maintenance of the Louisville

Loop. They have also been taking prescribed fire training courses. Thanks to the Natural Areas Land Management team, our thousands of acres of natural areas, including Jefferson Memorial Forest, are well maintained and welcoming to guests!



## Staff Blog Spotlight



**A Profile of Devin Spurgeon, David Gootie, and Spencer Longacre**  
**This quarter we are highlighting three key members of the Natural Areas Land Management team!**

### 1. *Where did you grow up?*

**Devin:** I grew up in London, KY.

**David:** I was born here in Louisville, but most of my life, I lived across the river in Clarksville, Indiana

**Spencer:** I grew up in Valley Station, one block from Stuart Middle School.

### 2. *What drew you to the outdoors, both as a child and now?*

**Devin:** I have been interested in the outdoors for as long as I can remember. The house I grew up in had a small patch of woods. All of my siblings and the neighbor kids would build forts and play in the forest all summer. My grandparents would take me fishing and hunting. As I got older, I became interested in hiking and camping.

**David:** As a child my parents used to take us fishing a lot, and sometimes camping. I also spent a few years in the Boy Scouts which piqued my interest. As an adult, my love of watching wildlife keeps me outdoors, both in my spare time and at work.

**Spencer:** Plants!

### 3. *What does your day to day work entail?*

**Devin:** One of my favorite parts about this job is that the days rarely look the same. We do a variety of task which include trail work, tree removals, managing meadows and maintaining the Louisville Loop.

**David:** 1.It's pretty variable and no two days are usually the same. The work includes doing trail work, removing downed or unhealthy trees as well as invasive removal in meadows and woodland areas. Occasionally we mow grass along the Louisville Loop.

**Spencer:** Anything, from mowing to trail work to cleaning up the Louisville Loop.



## Staff Blog Spotlight of Devin Spurgeon, David Gootee and Spencer Longacre continued...

mow along the Louisville loop.

**Spencer:** Anything, from mowing to trail work to cleaning up the Louisville Loop.

#### 4. How did you get interested in your job?

**Devin:** During COVID I had the opportunity to work with the Landscape Division. That was my first outdoor job. I had been working in the special needs sector prior to that. I realized I enjoyed being outside all the time and didn't want to work indoors anymore.

**David:** Most of my adult life was spent in the printing/graphic arts industry, working at a production job indoors where I didn't even know what the weather was outside half the time. After doing that for years on end, I finally got the courage to change careers and switched to a horticultural position which led me here to JMF.

**Spencer:** A combination of hiking and volunteering outdoors most Saturdays

#### 5. What is your favorite local green space?

**Devin:** I've recently been spending more time at Bernheim.

**David:** Harrods Creek Park in Prospect.

**Spencer:** Tom Wallace Lake at Jefferson Memorial Forest (JMF).

#### 6. Do you have a favorite plant to find in nature?

**Devin:** Since working at JMF, I have been introduced to Trilliums. I enjoy finding those in the spring months.

**David:** Rattlesnake master.

*Thanks to Devin, David (who, like several of his Natural Areas colleagues, is a coffee lover!), and Spencer for taking the time to share their background and interests with us*



Devin Spurgeon  
Horticultural Park  
Worker



David Gootee  
Horticultural Park  
Worker



Spencer Longacre  
Forester I



Call the JMF Welcome Center to register!  
502-368-5404

## Natural Areas Programming Schedule

### Evening Archery

Sep 13 @ 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Join us for an introduction to archery and learn how to safely use a bow and arrow. This first session teaches familiarization with equipment as well as the form and skills needed to hit your marks. All equipment is provided. Program meets in Horine Reservation.

Ages: 10 and up. A parent/legal guardian must accompany anyone under the age of 18.

Pre-Registration required. Register Online or by calling 502-368-5404.

Fee: \$10/person

# URBAN CANOE ADVENTURE

Saturday, September 21st  
Shawnee Park Boat Ramp

Sunday, September 22nd  
Riverview Boat Ramp

11AM-3PM Each day  
Last boats at 2pm

LOUISVILLE PARKS AND RECREATION

JEFFERSON MEMORIAL FOREST

LOUISVILLE ECHO

REGISTER ONLINE

FOR A LISTING OF ALL EVENTS, CLICK HERE





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September 12, 2024

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