

ENHANCING YOUR OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

CAMPAIGN *for*
THE NATURE CENTER
at SHAKER LAKES



Photo: Margaret Giltinan with gazebo artist and builder, Matt Parker.

CREATING A LEGACY ON THE ALL PEOPLE'S TRAIL: ROSE FOUNDATION GAZEBO

More than 50 years ago, our community saved a unique green space, preserving the natural habitats around the Nature Center and creating a legacy of environmental protection. Today, we continue to support that legacy and enrich lives through nature education and conservation. Throughout our history, impassioned community support has been a mainstay of our success. Today, we are receiving tremendous support from individuals and foundations for the campaign for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes: Enhancing Your Outdoor Classroom. This campaign will completely restore and enhance our outdoor facilities to ensure future generations can continue to enjoy the Nature Center and its surrounding habitats.

One such gift came from Margaret Rose Giltinan, who helped secure the future of the All People's Trail through a generous lead gift toward the Rose Foundation Gazebo. Her gift recognizes years spent at the Nature Center with her daughters, who would play for hours in the Doan Brook. They attended camps and family programs and spent countless hours together on the trails.

When considering how to support the Capital Campaign, the All People's Trail was an obvious choice for Margaret. She welcomed the opportunity, not only because of her own memories of the beloved landmark, but also because she wanted to provide a place for others to create special moments at the Nature Center. As Margaret says, "People stroll around the boardwalk to take a breath and enjoy their surroundings. The gazebo will give people a meeting point or a place to stop and enjoy a sunset and take it all in; I can picture people building memories there."

"I recall seeing the blueprint for the Clark Freeway, how it cut through the Doan Brook, the houses and Hathaway Brown. I can't imagine a Shaker Heights without those things. It would be completely different."

— MARGARET GILTINAN

Margaret grew up in Shaker Heights, attending Hathaway Brown and spending a lot of time in the surrounding neighborhood. She believes that the Nature Center is an important asset for the cities of Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights and recognizes the mutually beneficial relationship: “The Nature Center supports the community and the community supports the Nature Center.” Margaret sees the Capital Campaign as a continuation of the activism that created the Nature Center and an opportunity to give back to our beautiful city.



Margaret wished to provide something meaningful and lasting to the community, and she knew that her gift was going to the right place. After years of serving on the Endowment Foundation Board, Margaret feels assured of the organization’s long-term sustainability and has confidence in the direction of the board and leadership. “I have watched the growth and development of the Nature Center over the last 20 years and I believe in the leadership’s ability to make the right decisions for the organization.”

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GENERATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP: THE LAVELLE FAMILY AMPHITHEATER

For many, a lifetime love of nature begins during childhood. Outdoor play instills an appreciation for the natural world, and with that appreciation comes an instinct to protect it. This is the story of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes. The story of civic-minded adults who fought to preserve their community's natural habitats and the generations that follow who continue to activate that legacy—a legacy of community, environmental stewardship and nature education.

The Lavelle Family Amphitheater represents a collective lead gift that honors one family's experience with and dedication to the Nature Center. Nancy and Neal Lavelle and each of their three children have made a significant contribution to Enhancing Your Outdoor Classroom: The Campaign for the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, providing a unique place of solace for the community and creating a literal outdoor classroom surrounded by the sights and sounds of nature.



Like many, David Lavelle's connection to the outdoors as a child formed his sense of environmental stewardship and civic engagement as an adult. His mother, Nancy Lavelle, was actively involved in the Nature Center and a member of the Board of Trustees for many years. He remembers spending time at the Nature Center as a child, playing in the Doan Brook while his mother was attending to business or involved in a meeting, "She always told me not to fall into the brook and I would inevitably come back soaking wet."

“The Nature Center is important to our community and it exists as an outdoor classroom for kids that aren’t really able to get that, including kids from the Cleveland Metropolitan School District who take part in our Applied Science for Kids program.”

— DAVID LAVELLE

Today he remains committed to the Nature Center, having served on the Board of Trustees from 2006–2015, and now serving as a Co-Chair of the Capital Campaign. For David and his family, giving back to the community has always been a priority, and nature education is a particularly important avenue for their generosity.

Encouraging others to support the Nature Center, he recognizes the responsibility we have as a community to invest in our public green spaces. “The Nature Center could have been eliminated by a freeway. It was funded by the people who founded it. It’s critical that we continue to preserve it so that it can remain an asset to the community.”

The Nature Center is a private, nonprofit organization that thrives on community membership and independent fundraising efforts. The capital improvements will address aging infrastructure, create exciting new enhancements, and keep the Nature Center relevant well into the future. To learn more about this vital endeavor and how your support can make a meaningful impact, please contact us.

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**KEEPING NATURE CENTRAL
TO OUR MISSION:**

THE BARBER HABITAT RESTORATION FUND

Our forests, wetlands and stream corridors inspired one of our founding trustees, Kathleen Barber, to devote herself to the Freeway Fight from 1963 to 1970. Her children continue to support the

Nature Center through a fund created in her honor in 2014. Donations to this fund are supporting an essential component of our current capital campaign: the comprehensive restoration of the Nature Center's 20-acre property to ensure the continued health of our habitats and preserve the Nature Center's value as a National Environmental Education Study Area and a National Audubon Important Bird Area.

For the first time since the All People's Trail was completed 37 years ago, the Nature Center has the opportunity to address threats to biodiversity throughout its entire 20 acres. As the former All People's Trail is demolished and reconstructed, we can access the Doan Brook floodplain and remove large stands of invasive and non-native shrubs and crack willow trees, replacing them with native species that will provide vital habitat both for nesting birds and migrating birds. As we reimagine and renovate the Stearns Trail, we can enhance wetlands, address deer browse, and foster the understory of our forests, making them more resilient in an ever-changing environment. Throughout our site, we envision a healthy, diverse ecosystem that provides countless benefits, offering food sources and shelter for wildlife, providing ecosystem services such as improved water quality, and serving as a destination for people of all ages.





To realize this vision, our goal is to raise at least \$250,000 for comprehensive habitat restoration and enhancement throughout our 20 acres. Funds designated for this purpose will be placed in the Barber Habitat Restoration Fund. Many individuals have already contributed to this fund, including Kathleen's son John, who previously served as President of the Board of Trustees and currently volunteers on habitat restoration projects throughout the Shaker Parklands.

Restoration activities during and after the campaign will include aggressively removing non-native plant species, replacing them with trees, shrubs, and perennials native to northeast Ohio, and monitoring plantings as they grow. Improving the health and diversity of our forests and wetlands will ensure they remain the centerpiece of the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and its educational programs. Just as previous generations preserved this natural area from development, we must now take action to ensure that it remains a living example of Ohio's native landscape for generations to come.

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"We stopped acres of concrete from being planted in the Shaker Parklands. Now we cannot simply let nature takes its course—we must aggressively plant native trees, shrubs, and perennials to rebuild the health of our habitat. For insects, for birds, and for us."

— JOHN BARBER



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