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Just as ripples spread when a single pebble is dropped into water, the actions of individuals can have far-reaching impact. *The Ripple* is a special newsletter created by Cincinnati Nature Center for people looking for ideas and support in their efforts to protect nature.

GET INSPIRED!



Lean Into Your Strengths and Have Fun!

Article by Connie O'Connor

Taking action for the environment doesn't have to feel like hard work if you enjoy what you do. For lifelong learner and teacher Eric Gruenstein, his volunteer and civic path has involved meeting great people, learning new skills and facts, and guiding others. Read on to see how Eric leaned into his strengths and consider what that might look like in your own life. Consider how you might take action for nature in ways that support your passion.

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In You Want Something Done Right ... Run for Office!

Article by Connie O'Connor

National politics feels like a spectator sport to many Americans. We vote, then watch and comment from the sidelines as the game gets played. But local government, on the other hand, offers residents a meaningful chance to shape their communities. Township trustees, city or village council members, and school board members oversee issues that impact our daily lives. They direct decisions on zoning, public safety, economic development, parks and recreation, HOA rules and responsibilities, school policies and more.

Conservation-minded residents seek candidates that balance a healthy environment with a strong economy and vibrant community. But what if no such candidates can be found? Consider the old adage, "If you want something

done right, do it yourself!" On odd years like 2025, 2027 and 2029, Ohio communities hold non-partisan elections for local positions. The candidates vying for these offices are your neighbors, friends, and fellow community members. But it could also be you! You don't need to be a "career politician" to run for an elected position in your community, and in some cases, there may not be a lot of competition.

While city council, school board and trustee elections are still nonpartisan, that might not always be the case. A bill has recently been introduced in Columbus that would add partisan labels to local races. If it goes through, it might be harder for independents, moderates, and people who place policy over party to win local elections. So the time to run is now!

Some of our local leaders have been in office for 30–40 years because they continue to run and get re-elected. While their service may be commendable, a governing body can get complacent and out of touch with the changing needs and values of their communities over time. And if they run uncontested, local officials don't need to campaign, nor even explain their priorities or vision to voters. So while it may seem like the system is rigged, it isn't. It's simply because nobody stepped up to challenge the status quo. Will YOU?

Are you ready to make a difference? Click below for a booklet on how ordinary citizens like you can run for office!

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LEARN MORE TO DO MORE

The Message Matters

This video from Citizens' Climate Lobby reminds us that a healthy environment and stable climate is a bipartisan issue that impacts everyone. Is this approach different from other messages you've seen about climate change?



YOU'RE INVITED!

Below you will find invitations from Cincinnati Nature Center members who are hosting meet-ups around topics and skills that might positively impact conservation. This section of *The Ripple* helps people find each other, because we are better together!

Please note, all event participants who are not members of the Nature Center must pay daily admission.



Summer OCVN Course (Online & In-person)

Last Chance to Register is Tuesday, May 13!

The summer course allows you to do much of your learning online over your lunch break, and includes three field experiences that won't take up your whole weekend. If you have the flexibility to take a long lunch break twice a week, you'll enjoy the convenience of the live 90-minute online lectures on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The required field sessions will delight you with an evening of fireflies, spider eyeshine, and owls calling, plus two early Saturdays exploring fields, forests, ponds and streams. **The Summer Course runs May**

Click to
Register

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Warren County Park District

To get started, [click here](#) to complete this volunteer inquiry form. A list of Warren County Park District parks, and a current list of upcoming events (including the Volunteer Day on May 17 and Project Wild on May 29) can be found via the link below.

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NOTES FROM OUR READERS

"Green Burial" Options at Heritage Acres Memorial Sanctuary

I thought people might like to know that [Heritage Acres Memorial Sanctuary](#), located in Pierce Township, Clermont County, just celebrated its fifth anniversary. It is a nature sanctuary with hiking trails open to the public (free) as well as a place dedicated to the burial of people desiring a "Green Burial." "Green Burial" is an environmentally sound way to handle the remains of individuals after death. Find out more about "Green Burial" at the Heritage Acres Memorial Sanctuary website.

– Rowley Elliston

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Give Us Your Feedback

You're receiving this action-oriented newsletter because you signed up for it, because you are a graduate of the Nature Center's Ohio Certified Volunteer Naturalist program, or because you have completed *The Ripple Effect* online course.

Wouldn't it be great if everyone had better information about ways to act (and inspire others to act) for conservation? **Take a minute to share this electronic digest with your friends**—they'll thank you for it!

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