

GROUP HOLDS FUNDRAISER FOR JUNCTION TRAILS PARK PLAN



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A bike connection, botanical gardens, scenic river walk, eight-sided visitors and conference center, child's water play area, inn and restaurant are just a few of the dreams Citizens for a Better Milford have for a park in historic downtown Milford.

The group is working to design this Junction Trails Park along 37 acres on the east and west banks of the Little Miami River. The park summary and overall schematics have been completed, but the group needs a little help raising the money to commission phased graphic designs.

"If you just read the summary ... it's very difficult to visualize all that it entails. If we divide that plan up into phases and do a summary and graphics for each phase, it will be much (easier) to understand," said Steve Boller, member of Citizens for a Better Milford.

Boller said the graphics will be used in presentations to the local, state and federal governments as well as organizations who offer grant money to help attain funding for the Junction Trails Park.

Citizens for a Better Milford, recently incorporated as the non-profit organization Junction Trails Park, Inc., is hosting a "Learn Fest" fundraiser to raise money for these graphics. The event is 5

p.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday, May 2, at the American Legion Post 450, located at 450 Victor Stier Drive in Milford.

During the event, group members will be talking about the Junction Trails Park plan and answering questions. There also will be picnic-style food and entertainment. Tickets are \$10 and can either be bought at the door or from Boller at 831-7703 or at wsb62@netzero.net.

"We would like Milford citizens to show up by far and by large ... The more people we get energized who like this concept, the better shot we have at building it," Boller said. "We haven't talked to a single person about this park who doesn't think this is a good idea, but we need more support."

The group also has two funds set-up at National Bank & Trust. To donate, visit any National Bank & Trust and ask to donate to either the Junction Trails Park or the Milford High School memorial, which will be a memorial to both the 1957 undefeated football team and members of the school staff who have become revered community members.

Citizens for a Better Milford has been working with the city of Milford's parks and recreation committee for about six months. The two groups talk about ideas and funding and have worked to incorporate each others ideas into

their respective plans. However, at this time, the Junction Trails Park design is separate from the city of Milford's Riverside I and Riverside II park plans. As such, the fundraiser is not a city sanctioned event, Boller said. Citizens for a Better Milford have been talking to people at the state and federal level about the Junction Trails Park plan. They have presented ideas to use the river to generate electricity; have a visitor's center complete with classrooms, office spaces and a conference area; build scenic walkways and a botanical gardens and much more. They also would like to see the park lined with mom-and-pop-type shops.

Even though this park plan might seem a bit lofty, Citizens for a Better Milford members are hopeful.

"We feel this is something that definitely can happen. Is it going to happen tomorrow? No. But we think it will definitely happen," said Citizens for a Better Milford member Tammy Pschesang. "This park has a lot of positive potential."

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