

The background of the cover is a photograph of a garden. In the foreground, a large, vibrant blue cornflower is in focus. Behind it, a white flower with a yellow center is in focus, and a bee is perched on it. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green field.

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

*Cover photo by Cierra Strawser*



#### Foundation Park Conservancy 2019 Board Members

Kim Rose, President  
Michael Percy, Vice President  
Melanie Bolender, Secretary  
David Stuller, Treasurer  
Sam Barone  
David Carpenter  
Susan Kahrl  
Jennifer Odenweller  
Matt Starr

#### Ariel-Foundation Park Leadership Team

Mark Fritz, Operations  
Jody Holland, Nature Programs  
Carrie Haver, Marketing  
Megan Evans, Reservations  
Jeff Boucher, Food/Beverage  
Skip Trask, Sound/Lights Tech

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

*By Kim Rose, Board President*

The Foundation Park Conservancy Board meets annually to reflect on the past and plan for the future. As part of this process we review our Vision and Mission statements for compliance and to determine if they remain appropriate.

### **Our Vision**

*To be a world class example of adaptive reuse that honors its industrial heritage and is the focal point for recreation, entertainment, and social interaction in Knox County.*

### **Our Mission**

*To lead and support the economic stability, preservation, development, programming, and promotion of Ariel-Foundation Park in collaboration with the City of Mount Vernon.*

In 2019, the Conservancy was presented with a number of changes that caused the Board to reflect on these statements. The Board believed the CA&C Depot needed more use and exposure. Working with the Knox County/Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce and the City of Mount Vernon, we were able to work through issues so the Chamber could occupy this building for their office space. This allowed for establishment of a critically needed front door to our community to become occupied on a full-time basis, greeting guests to our community.

The Conservancy, with the assistance of the Ariel Foundation, also had an opportunity to expand its footprint to the new Riverview Parking area. This gift to the City of Mount Vernon has now come under the management of the Conservancy. A collaboration between the City of Mount Vernon and the Mount Vernon Rotary Club will provide a new entrance to Ariel-Foundation Park, while serving as an important link between the Kokosing Gap Trail, the Heart of Ohio Trail, and the businesses of downtown Mount Vernon.

It has been the Board's dream to expand the use of west Ariel-Foundation Park. Last spring, we took a chance and planted the wildflower/pollinator garden. With ample rain, these 16 acres developed beautifully. With this success, the garden will be expanded for 2020. Please plan on strolling through the flowers this summer and fall.

Adding doors to the Schnormeier Event Center was a delicate balance of preserving the park's industrial heritage and supporting programming and economic development. Our Facilities Committee Chair, Michael Percy, spent many hours working with the State of Ohio, our architects and planners, the City engineer and City administration to complete this project. The addition of the doors has expanded the use of this wonderful facility.

When Ariel-Foundation Park was in its planning stages, Ted Schnormeier used the Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham, Alabama, as the model of historical heritage. The Sloss Furnaces are often featured in bridal magazines. Ted saw something we missed. Last year, as the facility became more secure and reliable as a venue, the park hosted 16 weddings. Ariel-Foundation Park is rapidly becoming regionally known as a wedding venue.

The 4th of July celebration is embraced as the community's event, celebrated on the 4th like it is supposed to be. Last year thousands enjoyed a spectacular concert and an even better fireworks display. Our 2020 fifth year anniversary will be even bigger.

We increased the programming in 2019 with the addition of kayak safety courses. Paddles for Heroes, a local nonprofit organization, kindly donated a handicapped accessible launch which assisted this program.

The landscape of Ariel-Foundation Park continues to grow and strengthen, adding to its beauty. The Board has worked diligently to create realistic growth and programming while still dreaming big. It has been an interesting balance of which we are proud. Your support and gifts continue to be greatly appreciated. We look forward to an exciting fifth year anniversary.



**20,000**  
annual event attendees



**16**  
weddings/receptions



**65**  
individuals trained in the Park's first year of Beginner Kayak Safety Courses



**112**  
trees planted



**61** zip codes from  
**13** states  
visited the Clock House/Museum



**180**  
pounds of wildflower seed planted



**257**  
event bookings/reservations



**400+**  
fitness program participants



**2,000+**  
volunteer hours



# EVENTS/PROGRAMMING

## Concert Series

With the tremendous support of local and regional business and organizations, the Park was proud to present its fifth year of free concert programming. The eight events showcased local favorites and regional headliners. The park's goal is to bring a variety of quality, live entertainment to our community; create memorable family experiences; and encourage people to explore their park.

## July 4 Independence Day Celebration

It takes a monumental coordinated effort to put together the large July 4 event at the park every year. We are grateful to local law enforcement, fire personnel, City staff and leaders, our event sponsors, food vendors, and dozens of volunteers who make this a successful event year after year. TUSK, the ultimate Fleetwood Mac tribute band, played to an audience of more than 10,000 people while the brilliant fireworks display dazzled park guests as the stunning finish to a wonderful day.

## Fitness Activities

Hundreds of community members engage in the park's free fitness programs each year. Our 2019 offerings included Tai Chi, yoga, Zumba, cardio/step, Crossfit, cardio drumming, krav maga/self defense, and a special kids THRIVE program. We are grateful to our partners and sponsors who make this programming possible.

## Movie Mondays

This year the park was pleased to present three recently released family friendly movies, one in June, July and August. They continue to be a hit with families looking for affordable entertainment. Through our partnership with Domino's, the park offers one free slice of pizza to children during the movie.

## Rastin Challenge

This year brought more than 90 first responders to the park to compete and celebrate camaraderie through the Rastin Challenge. We were excited to award our second scholarships for higher education to local first responders Sgt. Dan Selby with the Knox Co. Sheriff's Office and Matthew Sites with the Central Ohio Joint Fire District. The K9 competition continued to be of special interest to spectators. Through the generosity of local sponsors, the Never Forget 9/11 Memorial traveling exhibit was also part of the day, drawing more than 1,400 guests in the eight hours it was open. We were also privileged to host New York police officer John Lambkin and firefighter Joe Gavitt as they told about their personal 9/11 experiences.

## First Day Hike

More than 80 people enjoyed our second annual First Day Hike, held nationally on January 1. Volunteers stoke the bonfire where hikers get warm before and after their walk,

as well as lead hiking groups through the park, telling about history, nature, and park activities. This year, we added a free lunch of chili and cornbread to the delight of park guests. Everyone enjoyed getting outside, learning more about their park on a one-hour walk, and recommitting to a healthier lifestyle for 2019.

## Kids to Parks Day

A national initiative to get more children active at their local and state parks, Kids to Parks day grew to become a community day for children at the park, featuring more than 40 Knox County agencies and organizations who serve children and families. Children participated in recycling education, tricycle and bicycle safety courses, planting of milkweed at the park, SPI's ant "citizen science" projects, and more.

## Trick-or-Treat Trail

This event saw an estimated 1,500 park guests, enjoying trick-or-treating with more than 50 local businesses and organizations. Children and families could also participated in face painting, games, and dancing to the DJ's selection of thrilling sounds.

## Candles & Carols

Held on December 20, this event brought the community together for a seasonal music celebration and walk through more than 600 luminaries. Two local choral ensembles led Christmas carols and event-goers enjoyed free cookies, hot chocolate and coffee thanks to our generous sponsors. The 2019 event was in memory of Ann Schnormeier.

## NEW IN 2019

### Beginner Kayak Safety Courses

With the addition of Jody Holland, Nature Coordinator, the park was able to offer basic kayaking courses every other Saturday, May through September. Sixty individuals participated from across central Ohio. Jody is a certified kayak/canoe instructor and brings a wealth of personal paddle and water safety expertise to the park. The park also purchased seven kayaks, oars, personal flotation devices, and other safety equipment for these courses. We look forward to hosting more water-based programming in 2020.

### WADE: "Music for River and People"

The park was privileged to have Mount Vernon native Aaron Hoke Doenges, an artist residing in Nashville, bring his award-winning WADE interactive sound art installation to the downtown footbridge this summer. Real time data about the Kokosing, the Walhonding, and the Muskingum Rivers' depth and flow was pulled from the United States Geological Survey website and transformed into changing pitches and dynamics of the piece. As the rivers' depths changed, the notes also rose and fell. People walking over the bridge also impacted the "music."



# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

In support of the mission of the Foundation Park Conservancy, we continue to improve and enhance the facilities at the park. Many of our activities are elective, but sometimes maintenance or upgrades become necessary. We have also continued to focus on enhancing safety and security with added cameras and extended wifi signals throughout the park.

## Completed This Year

- Fire alarm and sensor system in the Event Center
- ADA ramp on the Event Center stage
- Remote lighting system for Rastin Tower, downtown footbridge, and historic viaduct
- Repairing roof of elevator shaft
- Asbestos survey
- ADA kayak launch (donated by Paddle for Heroes)
- Parking lot by kayak launch
- Memorial benches
- Water fountain at Schnormeier Event Center
- Wildflower/pollinator garden
- Sunset swing installations

**Total Investment: \$194,000+**

## Partnership Projects

- Harmony Playground at Memorial Park
- Riverview/Heritage Park in downtown Mount Vernon

## In Process

Several projects are in various stages of development at the park:

- Continued development of wildflower/pollinator garden
- Building of service garage
- Repairing the dike breach on the west lake/Kokosing River
- Paving of roadway on north side of central lake

The park's desire is to continually improve the beauty, environment, and structures on its 265-acre property. This includes care of the grass, lakes, trees, buildings, sidewalks, parking lots, restrooms, picnic areas, and more. We appreciate our partnership with the City of Mount Vernon which makes much of this possible, along with community support and dedicated staff and volunteers.

# VOLUNTEERS

Ariel-Foundation Park is fortunate to have an active body of volunteers who welcome people to the Urton Clock House, assist with concerts at the Schnormeier Event Center, perform grounds maintenance, and assist with special community events like the Trick-or-Treat Trail, Candles & Carols, and the winter hikes. **Together, they donated more than 2,000 hours of service to the park, for a value of \$50,860** (according to the hourly dollar figure established by Independent Sector).

There were many groups who staffed the Urton Clock House/Museum in 2019 including:

- Apple Valley Singers
- Budget Blinds
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Exchange Club
- First Congregational United Church of Christ
- Gay Street United Methodist Church
- Heritage Singers
- Knox County Career Center/ROTC Program
- Knox County Kayakers
- Knox County Landmarks Foundation
- Mount Vernon Association of Police Chaplains and Half-Units
- Mount Vernon City Council
- Mount Vernon Fire Department
- Mount Vernon Mah Jong Group

- Mount Vernon Municipal Court
- Mount Vernon Players
- Mount Vernon Police Department
- Mount Zion Lodge #9
- Psi Iota Xi
- Signs on the Square
- SubAlpine Hiking Club
- Town and Country Garden Club

## Volunteer of the Year

**Dan Bockover** (shown below, left, with family and friends) was recognized as 2019's Volunteer of the Year at Ariel-Foundation Park. He assisted by staffing the Urton Clock House Museum, often at the last-minute when someone had canceled. He also worked numerous events, always with a cheerful, selfless attitude, willing to help in whatever ways he was asked.

## Volunteers Needed for 2020

In 2020, we will continue to welcome individual and service organizations to "Adopt a Weekend" at the Clock House Museum from May through September, so we can keep the doors open for local and out-of-town visitors. Also, please consider signing up on the Park website to assist with events/activities all year long or contact Volunteer Coordinator Susan Kahrl at [stkahrl@yahoo.com](mailto:stkahrl@yahoo.com).



**2,000+**

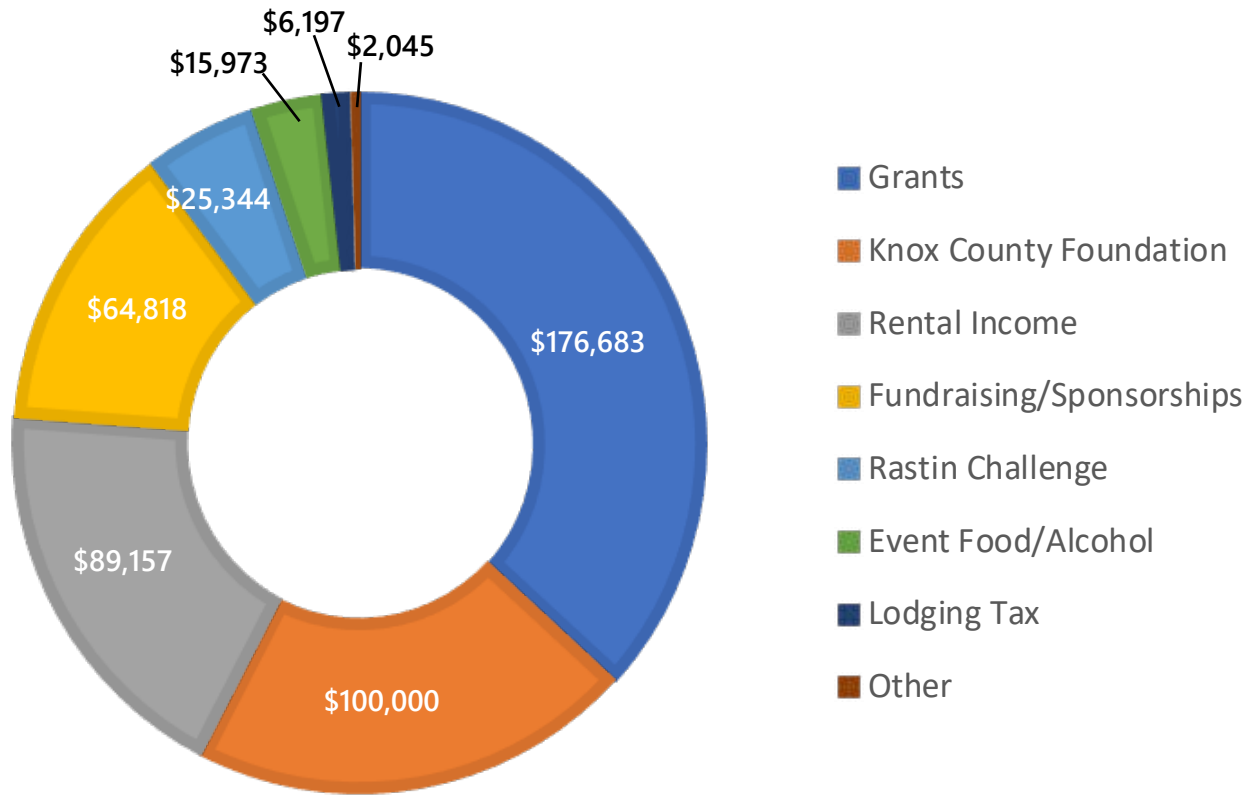
volunteer hours

**\$50,860**

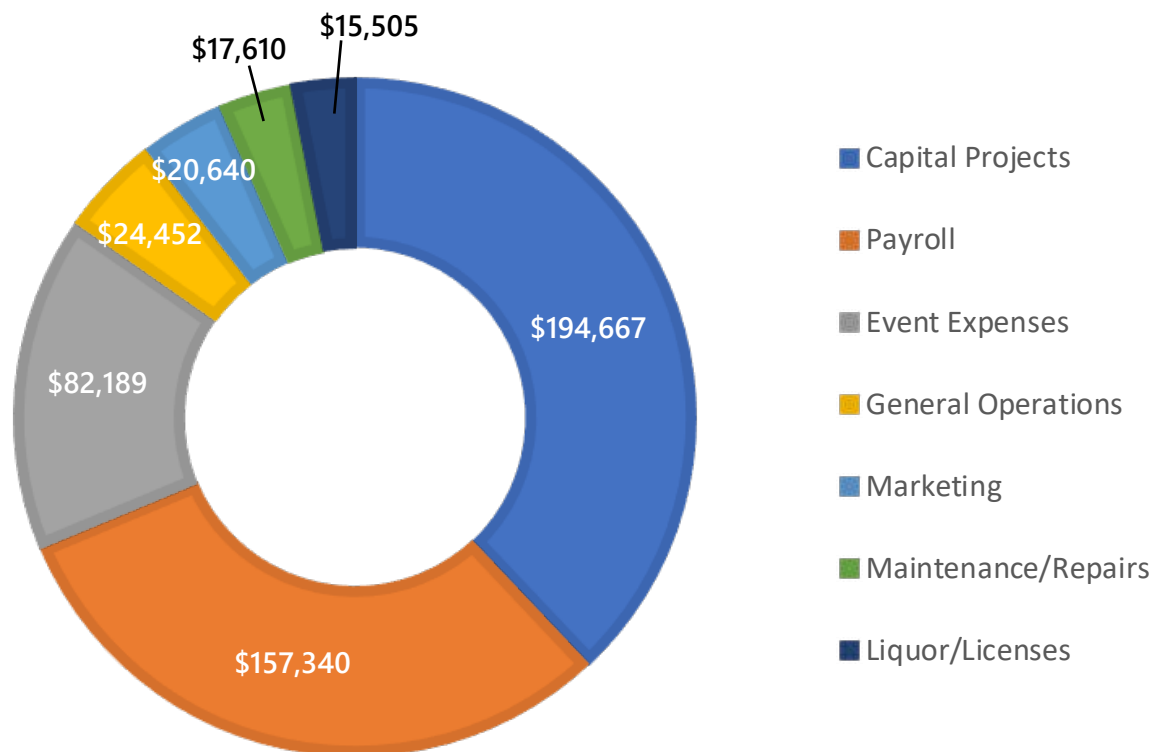
value

# FINANCIAL REPORTS

**2019 Income: \$480,217**



**2019 Expenses: \$512,403**





# DEVELOPMENT

*By Melanie Bolender, Development Coordinator*

Since the creation of Ariel-Foundation Park nearly five years ago, we have seen a rebirth of Mount Vernon's downtown business district. During 2020, a revitalized riverfront park will be opened, further enhancing the connection between the park and downtown restaurants and businesses. Advocates for Ariel-Foundation Park can take pride in the positive impact the park is having on our community.

The Foundation Park Conservancy strives to be a careful steward of all financial gifts to the park. Numerous individuals, businesses and organizations support the park in a variety of ways. Donations and sponsorships provide the free Summer Concert Series that is enjoyed by many from Knox County and beyond. "Friends of the Park" support the annual maintenance and operating expenses of the park. Program sponsors allow the Conservancy to offer various programs such as Tai Chi and yoga. Several businesses provide "in-kind" gifts such as equipment rental and grass fertilization. The Conservancy has also been awarded grants from local and state funders, and various philanthropic foundations.

Many entities work together to maintain, manage and improve the park: Foundation Park Conservancy, the City of Mount Vernon, Knox County Parks, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Shade Tree Commission, the Kokosing Gap Trail and the Heart of Ohio Trail, to name a few. Ariel-Foundation Park appreciates these ongoing partnerships.

Numerous people can take pride in playing a role in the growth and continued improvement of Ariel-Foundation Park. Anyone who contributes time, talent or treasure to the park strengthens the "foundation" for the ongoing success of the park. Gifts to the park are truly an investment in our community. Because of you, Ariel-Foundation Park has become a premiere park which is enjoyed not only by local citizens of all ages and backgrounds but is also attracting visitors from central Ohio and beyond.

***We are deeply grateful for your support of Ariel- Foundation Park! Thank you!***

## Friends of the Park

### **Tower Friends: \$1,000 or more**

James and Maureen Buchwald  
Travis Lauritsen  
David and Anne McElroy  
Marc and Jen Odenweller  
Mark and Denise Ramser

### **Terrace Friends: \$500-999**

Lanning's Foods  
Amy D. Murnen  
Parrish O'Neill & Associates  
David and Christy Rigg  
United Aggregates  
Gordy and Fran Yance

### **Tree Friends: \$250-499**

Sam and Paula Barone  
CTS  
Robert Drews  
Ellis Brothers  
Bryan Hayes  
Cameron and Christine Keaton  
Doug Leonard  
Michael Percy and  
Nicole Pagano Percy  
Gary and Mary Randall  
Joe and Kay Randall  
Fred and Deb Reeder  
Kim and Pam Rose  
Keith and Vicki Sant  
Kurt and Sandra Schisler  
David and Kim Stuller

### **Trail Friends: \$100-249**

Anonymous  
Barbara Barry  
Keith and Kate Burley  
Melanie Bolender  
Barry Bowden  
Charles and Kelly Brenneman  
Mary Elder  
Ron and Candy Fox  
Morgan and Aly Giles  
Phil and Dina Herald  
Timothy and Susan Kahrl  
Kiwanis Club of Mount Vernon Ohio  
Gerald and Barbara Lindstrom  
Richard and Peggy Mavis  
Richard and Susan Murray  
Joe and Sally Nelson  
Peoples Bank of Gambier  
Larry and Sarah Reed  
RCI Mechanical/Stafford Plumbing  
Robert and Patricia Ronk  
Carol Shurlow  
Ora Smith  
Susan Sukys  
Ian and Charlotte Watson  
Mary Whitacre

### **Other Friends:**

David and Jeanette Carpenter  
Miklos and Patricia Dudevszky  
Martha Stuller



## Concert Series Sponsors

### Platinum: \$5,000 or more

Ariel Corporation  
First-Knox National Bank  
Knox Community Hospital  
Knox County Foundation  
*KnoxPages.com*  
*Mount Vernon News*  
*WMVO/WQIO*

### Gold: \$2,500

The Energy Cooperative  
Griffin Insurance  
Ohio Arts Council/Art Works/National  
Endowment for the Arts  
*Ohio Rental*  
Gordy and Fran Yance

### Silver: \$1,250

Alan Bazzoli, MD  
Critchfield Critchfield & Johnston  
Delta Dental of Ohio  
Brian Howe Family Dentistry  
Kenyon College  
Kokosing River Productions  
LeFurjah Family Fund  
Mortellaro's McDonalds  
*Mount Vernon Grand Hotel*  
White Castle

### Bronze: \$750

Brenneman Lumber  
Conway's Eastside Pharmacy  
*Derr Designs*  
Donley Ford  
Event Setters Party Rental  
Gary and Carolyn Gray  
*Lanning's Foods*  
Real Estate Showcase

## Movie Monday Sponsors

Youth Philanthropy Initiative, Knox County Foundation  
*Southside Diner*  
*Domino's Pizza*

## Trick-or-Treat Trail Sponsors

Sara Mankins, Edward Jones Financial Advisor  
e-Merge Real Estate  
Griffin Insurance  
Kim and Pam Rose  
Tavaci School of Performing Arts

## Summer Fitness Sponsors

Kahrl & Co. Insurance  
Knox County Health Department  
Ohio Eastern Star Home  
Public Library of Mount Vernon &  
Knox County

## Candles & Carols Sponsors

Ted Schnormeier  
Kim and Pam Rose  
*Coleman Family Gallery*  
*Knox County Kayakers*  
*Lanning's Foods*  
*Psi Iota Xi*  
*Tim Hortons*  
*Williams Flowers*

## Grants

Ariel Foundation  
Knox Community Foundation  
Ohio Arts Council/National  
Endowment for the Arts

*In-kind sponsors are listed in italics.*

## Rastin Challenge Sponsors

### \$1,000 or more

Tom Rastin  
CES Credit Union  
Donley Ford-Lincoln  
Knox County Safety Council

### \$500

Central Ohio Technical College  
Custom Wired Solutions  
Heartland Promotional Products  
First-Knox National Bank  
*Galls*  
Specialty Outdoor Services  
We Lov Pets  
YMCA of Mount Vernon

### \$250

All-American Fire Equipment, Inc.  
Blubaugh Body & Frame  
Jeff and Norma Boucher  
Complete Care Animal Hospital  
Fire Safety Services  
Firstnet AT&T  
Flapper's Bar & Grille  
Flying Cross/Vertx  
Gault Plaza Cleaners  
Get Healthy Knox Coalition  
*Good Impressions Printing*  
Griffin Insurance  
*Katie J Photography*  
KIS Dog Training  
Knox Community Hospital  
Music-2-Go  
Ohio Funeral Support Services  
Survival Flight  
*Tim Hortons*  
Tristate Armor Sales

## Tower/Bridge/Viaduct Lighting Partners

Cindy Callahan  
Phaedra Fawcett  
Karen Gall  
Tim Geiger  
Knox County 9-1-1\*  
Knox County Board of Developmental  
Disabilities  
Knox County Department of Child and  
Family Services  
Knox County Suicide Prevention  
Coalition  
Jennifer Meeks  
MTVarts

New Directions\*  
Michael Percy  
Riverside Recovery Services  
Rotary Club of Mount Vernon  
Martha Rowe  
Ryan Severance  
Jessica Adams Smith\*  
Crystal Stacey  
David Stuller\*

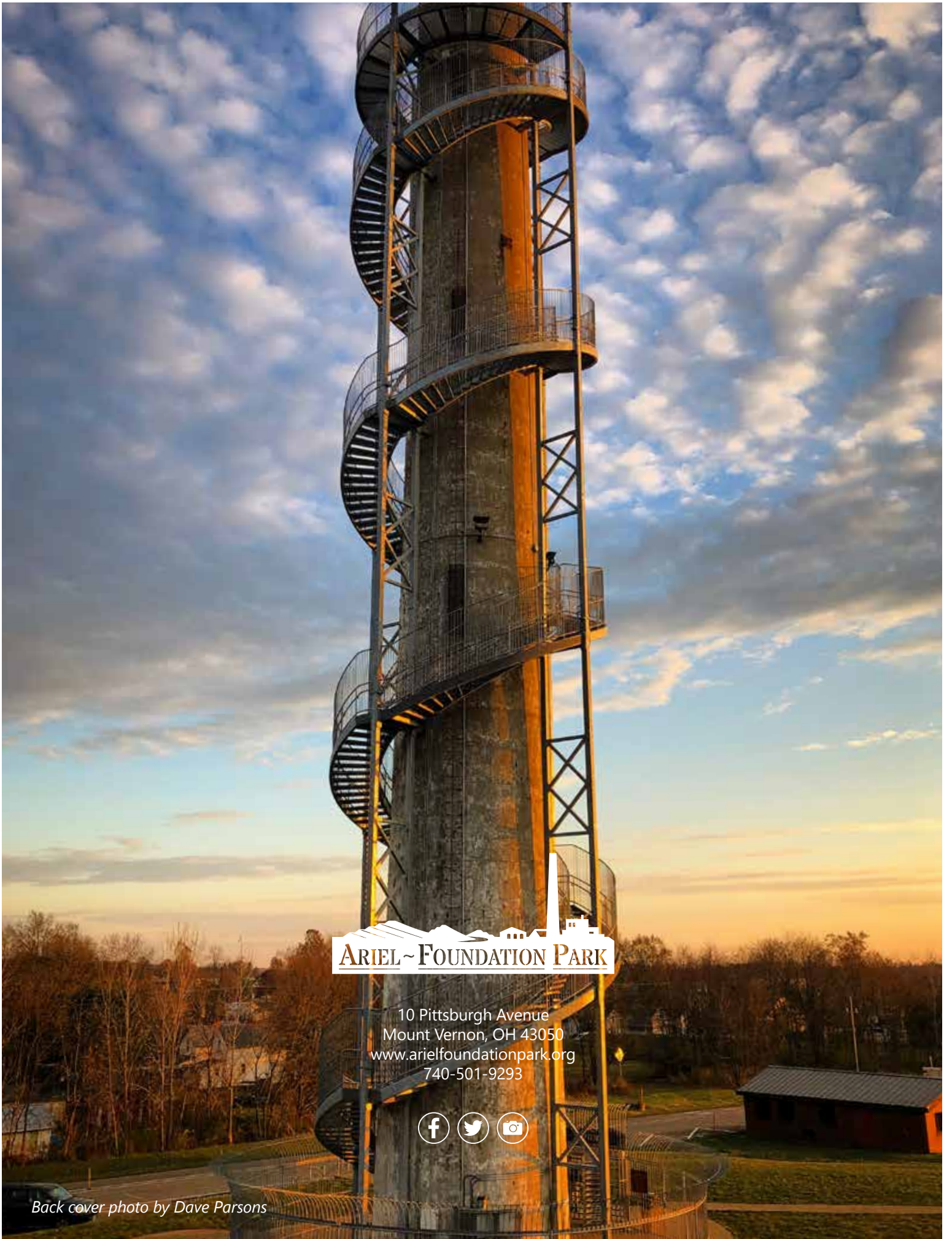
## Sunset Swing Sponsors

Kim and Pam Rose  
Ann Schnomeier Memorial  
Ed and Sue Sims  
TruCut Landscaping and Lawn Care



*The Tunnel to Towers Foundation 9/11 Mobile Exhibit saw more than 1,400 visitors at the Park during the 2019 Rastin Challenge.*

*\*Sponsored more than one lighting.*



**ARIEL ~ FOUNDATION PARK**

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*Back cover photo by Dave Parsons*