A proposal to expand green space in Clintonville at its southern entrance on N. High Street, and create a Gateway Park that connects to a walkway along the entire length of Glen Echo Ravine. Sponsored by the Lower Olentangy Urban Arboretum in cooperation with Friends Of The Ravines, Friends of the Lower Olentangy Watershed, Glen Echo Neighbors Civic Association, and United Crestview Area Neighbors.
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Preface

Once in a great while, opportunities arise where groups of caring individuals with a shared vision are able to rescue a neglected community treasure, and ultimately restore it to its original splendor once. Local examples include the Ohio Theater and Elevator Brewery and Draught Haus in Columbus, and Frank Lloyd Wright’s Westcott House in Springfield.

Such an opportunity has recently arisen. A commercial property sitting on landfill that was used to bury part of Glen Echo Ravine is for sale. Why developers would want to hide such a picturesque feature from view is hard to imagine, and it is something that should never have happened in the first place.

Reacquiring this strategic property as public land presents a once in a generation opportunity to restore the original form and function of Glen Echo Ravine, a Clintonville treasure. Will you help?
Abstract

The Opportunity

The White Castle property, located at the intersection of Arcadia Avenue and N. High Street, Clintonville’s southern boundary, is currently for sale with a list price of $825,000. The restaurant has been demolished; the purchase is vacant land.

This price tag essentially puts this property beyond the reach of the Recreation and Parks Department of Columbus, which has been actively involved in the preservation of Glen Echo Ravine by acquiring landlocked, “affordable” private parcels of land congruent to the ravine as they have become available.

A public/private cost sharing partnership to acquire this parcel and return it to public land has been initiated - similar to that which made possible the Scioto Mile. The dream of making Glen Echo Ravine a prominent feature on High Street and ultimately restoring the entire stream channel is within reach.

Going Forward

After this property is purchased, the next phase would continue the public/private partnership, and involve converting the land into a Gateway Park by removing the landfill in order to restore the stream currently routed underground through a culvert. Once the channel is cleared of debris, the slopes can be planted with native trees and wildflowers.

The completed Gateway Park is intended to attract visitors and beautify this primary commercial corridor in Clintonville. This park will also be an access point for a planned walking trail called for in the Clintonville Neighborhood Plan that will ultimately span the entire length of Glen Echo Ravine. Such a trail would give our children a place to explore, get exercise, and learn about nature.

A restored, uninterrupted, and forested corridor would also facilitate the movement of wildlife from the riverine forests bordering the Olentangy River to Glen Echo Park.

This prospectus is designed to
• educate you about Glen Echo Ravine and Park,
• point out the challenges this ravine has endured by man’s hand,
• what area groups have been doing to undo the wrongdoing,
• give a closer look at the community’s goals,
• and inform on how you can help give our children a lasting legacy by pledging your support today at www.LOUA.org
The Natural History of Glen Echo Ravine

**Between 14,000 and 28,000 Years Ago**

Glacial activity formed a series of ravines in Franklin County. As the glaciers retreated, the areas they had scoured gradually became covered with deciduous forest, forming the extensive biome in which we now live. While most of the forests in the urban areas of Columbus have long since been cleared for development, some forests still persist along the major river corridors and in the ravines that border them. Clintonville residents are fortunate to have several forested ravines in their midst, all with streams flowing through them.

Because of their contour and the nearly constant seepage of water, ravines tend to be cool, moist places. Accordingly, plants and animals found in ravines tend to be somewhat different than those found in surrounding areas. Trees species such as the American Beech and Chinquapin Oak that thrive in cool, humid environments are commonly found in ravine habitats. Glen Echo Ravine is a green oasis in a comparatively treeless neighborhood.

The ravine is verdant with a fairly diverse collection of native wildflowers. It is also home to a great number of resident and migratory birds. Several butterfly host plants including Pawpaw and Spicebush grow in the Glen Echo Ravine.

**Post-development**

The photo below is a birds eye view of Glen Echo Ravine today. The ravine area is bounded by the thick green line. But currently, not all the land within those green lines are public; therefore, the sense of urgency to purchase Glen Echo land as it becomes available exists. Those privately owned land areas are further detailed later in this report under “Reconnecting Isolated Fragments to form A Greater Glen Echo Park” on page ?.
Impacts of Human Settlement in the Area

Change versus Adaptation
Humans are unique among all mammals. Rather than adapting to existing environments, humans characteristically change environments to suit their needs. Thus it is not surprising that historically parts of the ravine have been subjected to a number of man-made disturbances.

The 1800s
In the early 1800s, areas surrounding Glen Echo Ravine were being cleared for agricultural purposes.

During the Civil War, an army encampment called Camp Thomas was established in an area adjacent to Glen Echo Ravine where it crosses N. High Street. The camp commander was said to be Lew Wallace, the author of *Ben Hur*.

In the 1880s this area became part of a popular and prosperous Olentangy Amusement Park which finally closed in the late 1930s.

In the late 1800s the now defunct American Sewer Pipe Company occupied the current site of Old North High School, and a portion of the ravine at one time contained a rail line that serviced this company. The bridge for this rail line remains just east of the Calumet St. Bridge.

The 1900s
In the early 1900s, the areas surrounding Glen Echo Ravine started changing from agricultural areas to dense housing developments. In 1912, nearly four acres of Glen Echo Ravine was conveyed to the city by a private real estate company. This land became Glen Echo Park.

As neighborhood development forged ahead in the 1920s, sanitary sewer lines were installed directly beneath the ravine’s stream bed. Later, the City of Columbus routed storm sewers from several neighborhoods into the stream channel, resulting in periodic chemical pollution and an unnaturally deep channel.

In 1929, the ravine west of N. High Street was filled in to build a White Castle restaurant, and part of the stream was channeled through a buried conduit. (photos located in Abstract).

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, more of Glen Echo Ravine was filled in on the east and west side of Indianola Avenue just north of the Indianola Avenue Bridge to build apartment buildings as shown below.
Impacts of Human Settlement in the Area

In 1960, a school was built on the south flank of Glen Echo Ravine just east of the Calumet Street Bridge as shown below. The aerial photo shows the large, impervious asphalt parking lot which drains into the ravine.

The 1970's saw more fill-in, this time it was opposite the White Castle property on N. High Street. This is the point in which the stream begins being channeled through a buried conduit.

Late 1900s

The status of Glen Echo Ravine was accessed in the early 1970s and the results of that assessment were presented in the 1974 Labrenz Riemer Watercourse Planning Report. The report stated that “Glen Echo Ravine is a natural open space not found in many urban areas. The development, in view of the ravine character, must remain simple.” The report recommended limited vehicular access to Glen Echo Park, and in 1975, private vehicles were denied access to the Park.

In the late 1970s, the portion of Glen Echo Ravine west of High Street was threatened with rezoning that would allow the ravine to be filled in and a large grocery store built on the site. A group of concerned citizens organized to form the Citizens Against Glen Echo Rezoning (CAGER) and were able to collect a sufficient number of signatures to put the proposed rezoning on a city-wide ballot, and the initiative to rezone Glen Echo Ravine was defeated.

About the same time, the Department of Recreation and Parks made improvements in the Glen Echo Park area which included new playground equipment and tennis courts. These improvements drew in more foot traffic which had a negative impact on the sensitive areas of park including the shale slopes, where no under-story plants held the soil. The steep slopes in the park became precariously unstable. Also in the late 1970s, Glen Echo Ravine just east of N. High Street was filled in and developed, resulting in more of the stream being routed through a buried conduit. During the 1980s, the playground equipment was vandalized, the tennis courts that flooded during heavy rains fell into disrepair and by the 1990s, Glen Echo Park was primarily a gathering place for truant school students, the homeless, and the occasional dog walker.
**Turning Point**

**A Growing Awareness**

Historically in urban areas, developers often supersede conservation. One of the reasons for this trend is the exorbitant costs of urban real estate. Only people with deep pockets can afford most parcels of land that become available. As a result, a significant amount of precious open space in our cities is lost annually.

Recently there has been a paradigm shift in the way we view urban greenspace. We now realize that the quality of urban life depends largely on the amount and caliber of greenspaces that are easily accessible. Greenspace improves the ecological, social, and economic health of urban areas. Trees aren’t merely a thing of beauty, and they are increasingly considered to play a vital role in the protection of the urban environment. Trees have the ability to calm traffic, lower air temperatures, and cut down on pollution. As few as 20 trees can offset the pollution of one car driven 60 miles daily. Trees have also been shown to have a calming effect on people and can actually lower blood pressure. Another benefit of trees is that they combat the problem of increased urban runoff.

There has been a growing awareness of the importance of greenspace in Clintonville, and this has spurred the formation of several non-profit civic and citizen organizations focused on ecological restoration. These citizen organizations have partnered with civic associations and the City’s Recreation and Parks Department to improve community greenspace.

**Friends Of The Ravines**

The first citizens group to advocate for the preservation and restoration of community greenspace was Friends of the Ravines (FOR). FOR grew out of the Clintonville Area Commission’s Ravine Committee, which was formed in the mid-1990s.

FOR has an impressive track record of receiving grants that benefit Glen Echo Ravine. Much of the money raised has been dedicated to slope and stream restoration projects in Glen Echo Park. FOR began the restoration of the northern slope of Glen Echo Ravine in 2000 with a $25,000 restoration grant from The Columbus Foundation. The first phase restored the slope west of the shale cliff which had been stripped of all understory growth. The second phase, funded by a $20,000 grant from The Columbus Foundation, restored the south slope from North Fourth Street to the intersection of Glenmawr Avenue and Cliffside Drive. An additional grant of $4,200 (for educational outreach, native plant stock, and interpretive signage) was awarded by the NiSource Environmental Challenge Fund in 2003. In 2005, The Columbus Foundation awarded FOR $10,855 for a continuation of the south slope restoration. Additional funds totaling $5,830 were received the same year from the NiSource Environmental Challenge Fund, the Clintonville Fund, and Keep Franklin County Beautiful. This part of the project restored the area west of the stone wall and east of the wooden steps from Cliffside Drive—the steepest grade on the south side of the ravine.

Burgeoning public support of the Glen Echo Slope Restoration complicated efforts of Columbus Department of Sewers and Drains (DSOD) to rehabilitate the sanitary sewer running beneath Glen Echo stream. Several public meetings were held by the DSOD in...
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an attempt to quell public concern about the DSOD project’s potential to damage the slope and stream restoration. DSOD went back to the drawing board and dramatically revised its rehabilitation plans. On November 8, 2007, DSOD held a two-hour Stakeholder Workshop with FOR, Glen Echo Neighbors Civic Association, and United Crestview Area Neighbors. DSOD agreed that all restoration activities would occur when the ground was frozen, thus minimizing damage from heavy equipment, and that re-vegetation plans would include all native species.

Also In 2007, the Columbus Foundation awarded FOR a third conservation grant, totaling $3,500, for the beautification of the east entrance of Glen Echo Park and the reforestation of the south slope. Volunteers from the neighborhood planted native tree species on the slopes including oaks, redbud, dogwoods, and pawpaw. In 2009 and 2011, FOR again received Neighborhood Partnership Grants totaling $6,400. Proceeds from these grants have and will be used for plantings to stabilize the slopes of Glen Echo Ravine.

Glen Echo Neighbors Civic Association

In 2006, The Glen Echo Neighborhood Civic Association (GENCA) registered as a non-profit corporation with the State of Ohio and as a Civic Association with the Department of Development. The Mission of GENCA is to work in behalf of the residents of the Glen Echo Neighborhood to improve the quality of life and protect and preserve its neighborhood’s resources.

GENCA’s greatest natural resource is greenspace: its boundaries embrace three center boulevards, a portal park, and Glen Echo Park/Ravine. GENCA is located at the most western part of the University District and includes approximately 475 households. Residents of the Glen Echo neighborhood have a lengthy history of being proactive, with many residents serving on the University Area Commission. GENCA has sponsored numerous Earth Day events in Glen Echo Ravine. Two of its residents have received the University Area Commission’s coveted Pavey Award for their outstanding leadership in the Glen Echo Ravine Restoration.

Columbus Department of Recreation and Parks

Beginning in the 1980s, the City’s Department of Recreation and Parks began purchasing land along Glen Echo Ravine and converting it into parkland. These include the Walker and Tampone Tracts, and Portal Park. In 2004, Columbus Recreation and Parks Department received a $335,000 conservation grant from the state’s Clean Ohio Conservation Fund for a first of its kind project in Greater Columbus—recreating Glen Echo Run’s flood plain to slow and control the flow of water. Municipal organizations including Green Columbus and Keep Columbus Beautiful have also helped out by helping to organize and supply tools for clean-up events.

The last such event organized by FOR was held on July 30th. Volunteers were joined by city employees Karl Hoessle and Tyrone Fagan who brought a chain saw and a chipper. These events have made the growing public areas of Glen Echo Ravine more frequented by Clintonville residents for recreational purposes. Some walk or run the trails within the parkland of Glen Echo for exercise. Others come to look for birds, the fastest-growing outdoor activity in the United States; Glen Echo is a great place to view some amazingly beautiful migrant birds including scarlet tanagers and indigo buntings. Glen Echo is also a place to visit for simple relaxation, reducing stress and mental fatigue and contributing to people’s enjoyment and well-being.
Turning Point

Neighborhood Volunteers

In addition to having a greater than average amount of greenspace in its environs, Clintonville is also fortunate to have a good number of people who are willing to volunteer their time for the sake of the entire community.

Greenspace restoration projects have a strong social component in that they help bring communities together. When citizens band together and work for the greater good, the experience is energizing and empowering. Community care of greenspace is essential if these areas are to thrive. The highly fragmentary nature of most urban greenspace makes these areas highly susceptible to degradation from the forces of erosion and the invasion of exotic plants. Because of the high human populations in areas surrounding these forested spaces, trash is often carelessly discarded, accumulating over time. Accordingly, all but the largest urban forested areas must be managed in perpetuity. Maintaining local greenspace can easily involve the local community because anyone can participate. All that is needed is energy and commitment, and the residents of south Clintonville seem to have an ample supply of both. They have demonstrated time and again their love for this small patch of forest by engaging in volunteer activities geared towards improving Glen Echo Ravine.

This groundswell of community involvement appears to have taken root on Earth Day, April 22, 2000. On that date, Glen Echo Ravine became a recognized community worksite, and for every year since this initial event, Glen Echo Ravine has been included in the list of sanctioned Earth Day worksites in the greater Columbus area. As mentioned, much of the slope and stream restoration that began in 2000 and was recently completed came about through the efforts of volunteers.

In 2010, two worksites in Glen Echo were officially recognized by the sponsoring organization, Green Columbus. One of the worksites was in the park itself; the other worksite targeted the recently added Walker Tract, which was full of trash and completely choked with invasive plants. The volunteer turnout for the initial work session at the Walker Tract totaled over 50 people. A significant amount of trash and invasive plants were removed from this area, and over 200 trees were planted. The Earth Day event was followed by a total of seven work-sessions that targeted both Glen Echo Park and the Walker Tract. For Earth Day 2011, two worksites were again held in Glen Echo Ravine, and we have since had two well-attended work sessions. At this point in time, we estimate that about 40% of the Walker Tract has been cleared of invasive plants, a feat achieved mainly through volunteerism.

Area residents volunteering their time in Glen Echo Ravine
A Closer Look at Community’s Goals

“Daylighting” Glen Echo Ravine at N. High Street

Part of making urban areas more “livable” involves leveraging their local assets. One of Clintonville’s assets is its location, only a short distance from The Ohio State University and the downtown area. Another great Clintonville asset is its forested ravines.

Myopic development has rendered most of Clintonville’s ravines invisible along N. High Street. We believe that Clintonville’s ravines are features that, if emphasized, have the potential to draw people to N. High Street by breaking up the monotony of a seemingly endless parade of buildings and blacktop. There is a paucity of green-space on N. High Street, as evidenced by Portal Park being the one and only park that occurs on the street north of the downtown area. One has to travel an additional two miles north to get to the next N. High Street green-space, Whetstone Park. In Clintonville, the commercial corridor of N. High Street is within walking distance of one of the most densely packed neighborhoods in the city. There are shops and restaurants on the street, yet many Clintonville residents end up driving elsewhere to shop and dine. Altering this dynamic would benefit business, the community, and the environment.

“Walkable” and “bikeable” neighborhoods are becoming highly desirable places to live. Clintonville is ideally suited to become such a place. Walkable neighborhoods help the environment by limiting the use of automobiles, promote health through exercise, and increase property values. We believe that if Clintonville’s business district were to be developed smartly to include attractive greenspace as well as additional shopping and dining opportunities, more residents and visitors would be attracted to the area. And what better place to begin an aesthetic upgrade of Clintonville’s business district than at its entry? Presently, Glen Echo Ravine, which forms a natural boundary between the University District and Clintonville, is imperceptible from N. High Street. It is truly perplexing that one of Clintonville’s most attractive assets remains hidden from view on perhaps the busiest thoroughfare through this area. Why not show it off?

We would like to see an attractive Gateway Park established on the White Castle property. Since the White Castle property is located directly across the street from Portal Park, the two parcels would form a green gateway at the entrance to south Clintonville.

Key to both the creation of a park and the ultimate restoration of Glen Echo Ravine would be “daylighting” currently buried portions of the stream channel. Daylighting is the practice of returning a stream that had been routed through a culvert back to its natural state. This process is gaining traction in the United States. Examples include Jordan Creek in Springfield, Missouri, and Madrona Park Creek in Seattle, both of which are in the process of being daylighted.

Removing the stream from a culvert allows for water infiltration, which improves water quality downstream by removing pollutants. Wildlife habitat, as well as eye-pleasing greenspace, is expanded through stream daylighting. This process can also save money by eliminating the need to repair or replace decaying culverts. The park we see occupying the site would be a mixture of natural and contrived elements. We envision a stone patio with flower gardens next to a stone stairwell leading down to the stream. Ultimately, when the entire channel is daylighted, we hope to see a bridge spanning Glen Echo Ravine on N. High Street. This would be a particularly attractive feature because people love to linger on bridges and watch the water flow. Since a significant number of tourists from both the U.S. and abroad visit Clintonville’s Park of Roses annually, we feel that further greening of our area would augment the tourist draw to the Park of Roses and add incentive a more lengthy stay in Clintonville.
Clintonville is extremely fortunate in that some elements of the original forest ecosystem persist in ravines, small parks, and river corridors along the Olentangy River. These areas continue to provide refuge for wildlife. Unfortunately, there is no form of permanent protection for many of these forested areas.

One of our goals is to ultimately see all of the forested areas of Glen Echo Ravine turned into public parkland. Currently, a significant portion of forested Glen Echo Ravine is in private hands. There are many reasons why a larger community park in Clintonville makes sense for area residents. One of them is to improve the function of this urban ecosystem. Larger forested areas tend to create their own microclimate. No matter how hot or dry it is in surrounding areas, it is cool and moist within a forest. This is partly due to tree canopies effectively blocking the warming and drying effects of sunlight and wind. Also, as water evaporates from the leaves of plants, moisture is released and evaporative cooling takes place. Since the soil in forests is generally covered and insulated by a layer of dead leaves, it tends to remain cool and moist and protected from erosion.

When larger tracts of forest become reduced in size, each fragment essentially becomes an exposed island. This is precisely what has happened in Glen Echo Ravine. It is currently comprised of two isolated forested fragments east and west of High Street. Urban forest fragments are more prone to drying out because of warmer temperatures and more wind in the surrounding, largely treeless neighborhoods. All of the impermeable surfaces that surround Glen Echo Ravine have produced increased runoff during heavy rains that washed away much of the insulating leaf litter and accelerated soil erosion. This situation has become exacerbated by climate change. Central Ohio is experiencing a long-term increase in frequency of storms that drop heavy rain in short periods, and this trend is predicted to continue.

Another consequence of forest fragmentation is invasion by alien plant species. The edges of forest fragments tend to provide ideal access to aggressive and opportunistic plant species including ground cover planted on adjacent private property. The influence of the forest edge increases as the overall size of a forest decreases. Since virtually all invasive plants are exotic, they are not recognized as food by native plant-feeding insects or microbes, and thus have a competitive advantage over native species.
A Closer Look at Community’s Goals

Another problem with a reduction in the size of a forest is the loss of biodiversity. Because of a strong correlation between the overall size of an area and the number of species it can support, not all the greenspace in our area is equivalent. Thus, the larger forest patches that exist in our community tend to be more species-rich.

One solution to the problems of habitat fragmentation is to link the fragments together by land acquisition and to buffer these islands from the effects of heating and drying by adding more forested land around them. Columbus Recreation and Parks has been an actively involved in the preservation of Glen Echo Ravine by acquiring private parcels of forested land that border this watershed as they have become available. Connecting the two isolated fragments of Glen Echo ravine not only will improve the function of this ecosystem, it will also promote an increase in the species found there.

Buffering of the ravine is currently underway thanks to the Columbus’ Department of Forestry and a grant from the Columbus Foundation. The funds will be used by the Lower Olentangy Urban Arboretum to plant native trees in the tree-lawns in the neighborhoods surrounding Glen Echo ravine and in between the Glen Echo and Walhalla which will help protect the ravines from erosion and exposure and to combat climate change through carbon sequestration.

Walking Trail Connecting I-71 to the Olentangy River

In addition to being a perfect site for a green gateway into Clintonville, purchase of the White Castle site would be the key to potentially opening up a portion of Glen Echo Ravine locked away from Clintonville’s residents for many years.

One of the components of Clintonville’s Neighborhood Plan is the establishment of a walking trail that runs the length of Glen Echo Ravine. Such a trail, when complete, would extend about a mile, providing children and adults with an opportunity to explore the ravine and get needed exercise in an inviting outdoor setting. Such a trail would also offer an attractive shaded pathway to N. High Street, the main commercial street in Clintonville.

Before Clintonville was developed, all of the ravines extended from their points of origin to the Olentangy River, and the ravines served as natural corridors for movement of both humans and wildlife. Once developers filled in Glen Echo on the west side of N. High Street and put in a building, they set into motion a process that ultimately curtailed access to Glen Echo Ravine west of this Street. The landfill and the White Castle Restaurant itself now blocked the stream channel. The subsequent construction of the Riverview Apartments in the late 1930s on both sides of the Glen Echo Ravine west of N. High Street completed the isolation process. The western part of Glen Echo is now overgrown with invasive plants.

Because this area is hidden and remote, it has become an encampment for the homeless. A recent effort to clean up this area by concerned members of the neighborhood produced 200 bags of trash. Efforts by the city to persuade the homeless living in Glen Echo Ravine to relocate to shelters have failed, probably due in part to the secluded nature of this property and its proximity to frequently visited sites like the neighborhood post office where the homeless can solicit donations. Homelessness is a complicated and delicate issue, but since these people are camped along a waterway that empties into a major river used for recreation, they are unwittingly furthering the degradation of a community resource.

Daylighting the stream at N. High Street would be the initial step to re-opening the western portion of Glen Echo Ravine to foot traffic. Movement of people through the ravine combined with the removal of invasive plants would render the site far less desirable as an encampment, and perhaps this would be the catalyst needed to convince the homeless who live there to re-locate to appropriate shelters.
A Closer Look at Community’s Goals

Legal access to the remainder of the western fragment of Glen Echo could be achieved through easements or purchasing the greenspace from Olentangy Village. Currently it is possible to walk less than half a mile on existing trails on publicly owned land. It is our hope to eventually extend trails a half mile more so that they would extend all the way from I-71 to the Olentangy River. If this trail was situated within the confines of the Glen Echo Ravine for its entire length, hikers and joggers would be spared from having to deal with traffic.

A Lasting Gift to our Children

In the United States, 80% of people now live in cities or their suburbs. Urban areas can be viewed as the antithesis of the wilderness settings inhabited by our distant ancestors. There is a lack of natural beauty in urban areas and little opportunity for people to grow their own food. It is not surprising that there is a growing disconnect among urban residents and the importance of the natural world.

Children may have little say as to where they grow up despite the fact that their surroundings will have a profound impact on their perception of the world. It should come to no surprise that children that have grown up in highly insular urban situations think that produce and dairy goods originate at neighborhood super markets rather than farms. Air controlled malls have replaced woodlands as playgrounds for our teens. Children that have been raised without contact with natural environments are said to have “NDD” or Nature Deficit Disorder. Natural environments have been shown to play a pivotal role in the mental, physical, emotional and spiritual development of children. An understanding of the local environment helps promote a sense of security in children. When children play outdoors, these activities encourage creativity and enhance cognitive development. Exploration of the natural world also promotes a strong sense of belonging. When a child builds a positive relationship with a place outdoors, they are not likely to abuse that place.

Part and parcel with our efforts to expand our local public greenspace is to teach neighborhood children about the importance of environmental stewardship. Our children will be able to witness the restoration process as it moves forward and see first-hand the tangible results of those efforts as they materialize.

We are partnering with instructors at Indianola Informal K8 to ensure that students are aware of the importance of the natural environment. The science curriculum at the middle school involves exposure to different topics of outdoor education. Beginning in the K/1 classes, students learn about seeds, insects, and other animals; 2nd graders focus on plants; and 3rd and 4th graders learn about soil and plants. Students in 6th grade learn about the importance of ecology while 7th graders are taught earth science.

The outdoors is said to be the greatest classroom and ready access to a quality forest ecosystem will enable students to encounter wildlife they have never seen before and to see and hear for the first time things that rural children take for granted.
How You Can Help

What Has Already Been Done

Once we discovered that the White Castle property had come on the market, we contacted White Castle Corporation in the hope that they might be willing to donate the land to the City of Columbus as a tax write-off. Their reply was that because of the poor economy, they need the revenue from the sale of this site. The quest to turn this property green is obviously time sensitive. The site has already been in contract once, but this fell through. To make the outlined goals a reality, we are:

- in communication with property owner’s representative
- in communication with the City of Columbus to determine their resource commitment
- soliciting private funds through press releases and social media
- researching grant opportunities and sources of public funding
- providing you with this prospectus to solicit a financial pledge to proposed restoration project.

Registering Your Pledge

You can register your pledge by visiting the arboretum’s website, www.LOUA.org and clicking on the “Pledge Here” button.

And once you’ve done that, please help spread the word. Please inform us of other philanthropic entities that might be willing to support this cause.

And finally, come with one of us to visit Glen Echo Ravine! Come see why we value this local resource and why we wish to improve its quality.