
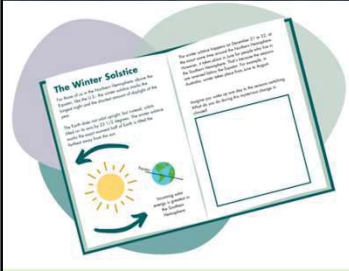



Cuyahoga Connections



Cuyahoga Connections Volume
Four

- Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park
- Project Leaders/Managers: Conservancy Programs Team
- Type:
 - Education & safety
 - Nature
- Monthly set of CVNP online activities and resources
- Year Started: 2020





County: Summit

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FOR CUYAHOGA VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

Cuyahoga Connections is an online educational resource from the Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park. Each month, a new volume of Cuyahoga Connections is released on our website. Each monthly volume has a theme, such as “Geology,” “Trees and Leaves,” or “CVNP History.” Each volume includes a free downloadable nature journal, a recommended “book of the month” for kids, and a “challenge” activity that focuses on getting families out into the National Park and outdoors in their communities. We always ask participants to share their challenge results with us via email and online.

Check it out here: [Connecting with Your Park | Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park \(conservancyforcvnp.org\)](https://www.conservancyforcvnp.org/experience/connecting-with-your-park/) <https://www.conservancyforcvnp.org/experience/connecting-with-your-park/>

We worked with the National Park Service to purchase copies of books of the month for teachers and students throughout Northeast Ohio, through their “Read with a Ranger” program.

This program series evolved out of a need for Conservancy virtual programming at the beginning of the pandemic. We needed a way to connect with our teachers, homeschool networks and families in a way that was safe & engaging. We wanted to bring the National Park (and its trails!) “home” to our audience during this difficult time.

Interesting lessons learned/best practices: how to do graphic design for the nature journals, centering our work around a monthly theme to guide content development, using multiple forms of media – video, text, audio – to engage all learners, integrating educational activities with social media

REQUIRED: Provide contact information in case we need to contact you about this program.

Name: Sam Harsh
Phone #: 419-345-0405 (cell)
E-mail address: sharsh@forcvnp.org

Cuyahoga Connections



Cuyahoga Connections Volume Eight

- **Participants:** Who – Teachers, families, kids ; How many annually? **Over 1600 participants** from summer of 2020 - present
- **3 staff**
- **Location:** All virtual
- **Program frequency:** Monthly

DIY: Mini Compost Jar



Did you know even composting on a small scale can benefit your home garden ...
Continue reading

Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park



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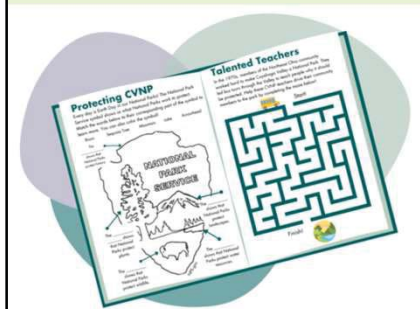
Having the online infrastructure to do this is crucial. We have our own website, online web design software (Canva), and an email service we use to promote this program to our e-newsletter audience (MailChimp). We also promoted each volume on social media.

Developing the journal is time-consuming, and probably takes about 8-10 hours a month for a staff person to complete.

We worked with our retail team to decide on each book of the month, and had to coordinate with them to be able to offer the book in our Conservancy retail stores & on our online store in tandem with the release of each volume.

Otherwise, there is no added cost for supplies – just a cost for staff time. The only transportation needed would be folks using their own means of transportation to get outside or to the National Park. We worked hard to make a lot of our activities accessible to do in any park/green space, not just CVNP.

Cuyahoga Connections



- This program is unique because we're able to offer a variety of mediums for learners of all kinds to engage with CVNP content. Whether you're looking to journal, read, do arts & crafts, do a family activity, or go on a nature hike, Cuyahoga Connections has an element for everyone.
- **Benefits and Results:** *Benefits* – accessible to a wider audience, makes nature accessible to more people ; *Results* – Became one of our most popular online offerings, thousands of views, increased web traffic
- **Transferability:** Most elements of this program can be done virtually anywhere

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Benefits to our community: Providing an accessible means to engage with CVNP and other park spaces, and learn along the way. All of our content is free and accessible from virtually anywhere. This has also been a great resource for teachers during the pandemic, in both traditional classrooms and homeschool settings.

Benefits to our organization: We are driving traffic to our website, which indirectly promotes additional donations and membership signups for our organization (which supports CVNP!). This program has also driven traffic to our online store, which has brought in thousands of dollars of revenue for us this year.

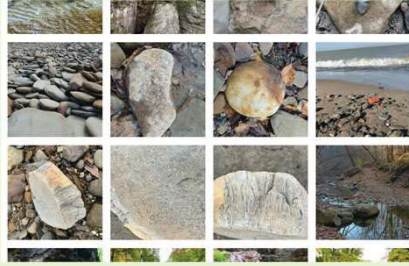
Working with the National Park Service, we were able to provide copies of books of the month to different schools in Northeast Ohio. Park Service rangers would hold "Read with a Ranger" programs featuring these books, and we'd send videos of their reading sessions to teachers to use in their classrooms.

We are hearing from people that previously had never engaged with us. For our Virtual Rock Collection, we voted on our top 3 favorites and those folks won some CVNP merch – we had some great conversations with them and were able to feature their photos in some of our other publications.

Cuyahoga Connections

Virtual Community Rock Collection

Participants submitted their rock photos to us and we posted them online!



Parent Comments:

- Kept kids occupied for hours
- Loved participating as a family



Our History Hike challenge in March got a lot of online engagement!



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There are many more examples of social media posts and engagement that we couldn't fit into the slide! We have received many general comments from parents and teachers about how useful the nature journals have been in the classroom and at home.

Our Cuyahoga Connections webpages on our website are in the top 3 most-visited parts of our website (really only beaten by our online store).

We asked people to share photos of cool rocks with us for a virtual rock collection. We ended up with dozens of contributors and a very cool online photo album....that rocks!

For our History Hike challenge in March, we asked folks to take a trip to different historical areas along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath in CVNP. A lot of folks emailed us that they had never been to some of these places & learned a lot about park history – all while being able to spend time in the park with their families. It's also one of our most-engaged with social media posts this year.