Greater Cleveland Volunteers
Connecting you with opportunities to serve

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## Give Back and Make a Difference This Holiday Season!

The season of giving is here, and what better way to spread holiday cheer than by making a difference in our community?

For more than 50 years, Greater Cleveland Volunteers has connected people with meaningful volunteer opportunities that strengthen the local community. Your generosity helps us continue connecting volunteers with local nonprofits, supporting students through literacy tutoring, and bringing companionship to socially isolated older adults.

Just $5 a month helps us create more opportunities to serve, connect and make a lasting impact in Cuyahoga County. Give today at **greaterclevelandvolunteers.org/support-us** or scan the QR code. Thank you for your support!

Greater Cleveland Volunteers is an AmeriCorps Seniors grantee and receives funds through their RSVP program.
The views expressed in this newsletter are the author's and do not represent AmeriCorps.

Greater Cleveland Volunteers
Connecting you with opportunities to serve
November/December 2026 • Vol. LIV, No. V

# 8th Annual Cleveland Pickle Fest® a Huge Success



More than 5,500 people stopped by Mall C in Downtown Cleveland on Saturday, Oct. 3 to enjoy a day celebrating volunteerism and all things pickles! About 90 volunteers and 70 vendors helped volunteerism shine at the 8th annual Cleveland Pickle Fest®.

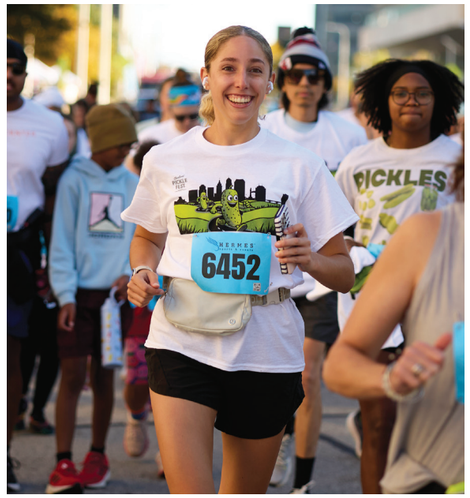
The festival kicked off with pickle-perfect racing weather for the inaugural Cleveland Pickle Fest® 5K. The annual youth and adult pickle-eating contests were a big hit, as was the Pickle Pup Pageant. Böaterhead and Jasmin Jeanise kept the crowd singing and dancing all afternoon.

Cleveland Pickle Fest® is Greater Cleveland Volunteers' biggest fundraiser of the year. The event supports important work in the community, from tutoring students in grades 1-4 to improve literacy to keeping older adults from feeling isolated to helping fight hunger, assisting at arts and cultural events, and so much more. By attending and supporting Cleveland Pickle Fest®, guests help countless individuals throughout Cuyahoga County, and that's a pretty big dill!

"Cleveland Pickle Fest® gives us a unique opportunity to bring people together, introduce them to Greater Cleveland Volunteers, and raise funds that help advance our mission to connect volunteers to meaningful volunteer opportunities throughout Cuyahoga County," said GCV Development Director Stefanie Merkosky. "We're proud of how the festival has grown and thankful to everyone who helps make it possible each year."

A special thank you goes out to our volunteers, sponsors, vendors, board of directors, and staff members who helped make this year's festival such a success.

# Photo Highlights From Cleveland Pickle Fest® 2026


















*Photos courtesy of Bruce Orr, Kim Wasielewski, Rosemary Flanagan, and Dennis and Marianne Glazer*

# GCV Holds First-Ever Volunteer Fairs in October

Nearly 140 people joined Greater Cleveland Volunteers at its first-ever Volunteer Fairs this fall. Two fairs were held in October: one at the Fairview Park Library and the other at the South Euclid-Lyndhurst Library.

Thirty-two partner agencies participated in the fairs, giving attendees the chance to have one-on-one discussions to learn about their missions and available volunteer opportunities. A variety of sectors were represented, including hunger, disaster relief, social services and older adult services, health, housing, education and youth empowerment, and more.

Those in attendance also had the chance to meet staff members from Greater Cleveland Volunteers and learn more about its volunteer programs that help strengthen the community, including AARP Foundation Experience Corps, Chat Pals, and AmeriCorps Seniors RSVP.

A big thank you to our sponsors, Cuyahoga County Public Library and Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, who helped make our events successful. We look forward to being able to connect with more people at future fairs!

Visit facebook.com/greaterclevelandvolunteers to view photos from the event.

## Upcoming Event Opportunities

**Holiday Toy Giveaway**: Volunteers are needed to support a Holiday Toy Giveaway in Cleveland's Hough neighborhood on Tuesday, Dec. 15 through Sunday, Dec. 20 from 5 to 8 p.m. Volunteers will play an important role in helping ensure local families receive holiday toys by assisting with event setup, organizing and distributing toys, directing participants, and helping with cleanup and breakdown at the conclusion of the event. This is a great opportunity to give back to the community, spread holiday cheer, and help make the holidays brighter for families in need! Volunteers should be prepared to stand for extended periods and assist with lifting.

**December Warehouse Sale**: Hospice volunteers bring comfort to patients and their loved ones in a variety of ways, including fundraising efforts. Your efforts can contribute to a successful Warehouse Sale in the Collinwood neighborhood. Assistance is needed with moving furniture and sales floor help. Three shifts are available: Saturday, Dec. 5 from 8:30 a.m.-noon or 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 6 from noon-3 p.m.

Visit **greaterclevols.vsyslive.com** to learn more about these great volunteer opportunities and others throughout Cuyahoga County. Contact Program Manager Nancy Dzurnak at contact@greaterclevelandvolunteers.org or 216-391-9500 x2123 for additional information.