

**We are grateful for the following individuals who helped
bring Sacred Embrace to life**

Donation of equipment, materials and service

Farren Allen – *gate construction and materials*
Steven Clemons of Artistic Fencing – *gate installation*
Jerome Hagan, Hagan Construction Service - *soil*
Jergens Construction – *soil*
Marianist Environmental Education Center - *coordination*
Marianist Property Management – *equipment & grounds assistance*
Mary Klunk, Five Rivers Metro Parks – *native seedlings*
Pate Family – *gateposts*
Society of Mary at Mt. St. John – *native plants*

Mound construction, planting, and coordination

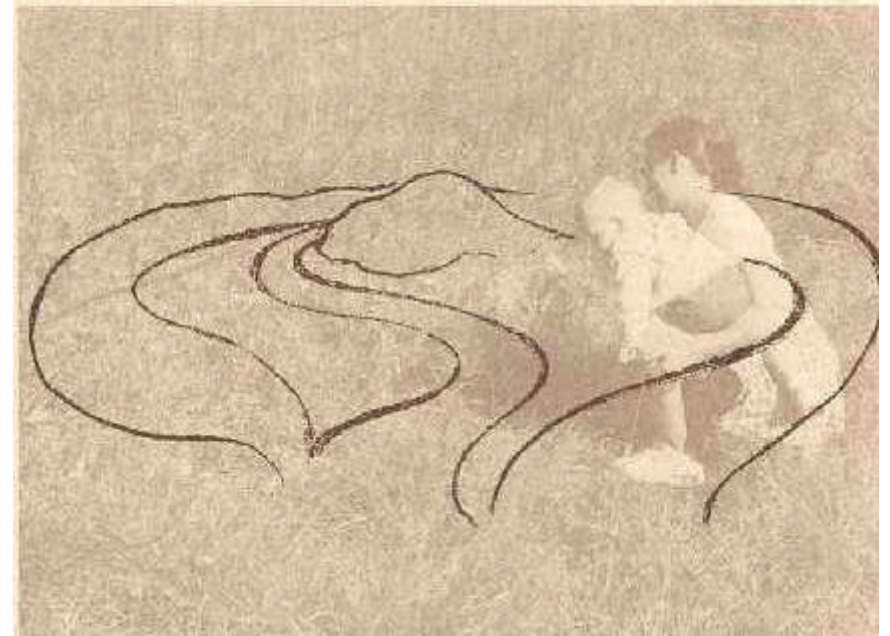
Carrie Pate
Don Geiger SM
Leanne Jablonski FMI
Steve O'Neil SM
Denis Conover
Michele Banker

MEEC is grateful for the support of volunteers who help us maintain Sacred Embrace and other natural areas in the Mount St. John Nature Preserve. Volunteer work days are held the first Saturday of each month from March through November. Youth or adult group volunteer experiences are available by appointment. For more information, contact MEEC at 937/429.3582 or meec@udayton.edu, or visit www.udayton.edu/~meec.

Marianist Environmental Education Center
Restoring Communities of Land & People

St. Joseph Hall, Mount St. John
4435 E. Patterson Road
Dayton, OH 45430
Phone: 937/429.3582
FAX: 937/429.3195
meec@udayton.edu
www.udayton.edu/~meec

Sacred Embrace



*A living EarthWork inviting
you on a meditative journey*

Designed by Carrie Pate
Maintained by the Marianist Environmental Education Center
Located at Mount St. John, Beavercreek Ohio

THE CONCEPTION of Sacred Embrace was Cincinnati artist Carrie Pate's response

to a deep-felt call to live in connection with the processes of art and the earth. Construction began in late winter of 1997, when volunteers sculpted the scape. With the aim of transforming a barren site at the nature trailhead, over 200 cubic yards of soil were moved from former construction sites nearby. In the spirit of environmental restoration, native Ohio prairie perennials were planted to enhance the surface of the mounds. These wild species adapt well to the terrain, making it unique and beautiful. We have planted over 38 species totaling over 2500 transplants. The seedlings were grown predominantly from seeds collected on Mt. St. John and cultivated in our greenhouse and herb nursery over the winter.

Typical of prairie plants, the seedlings spend their first year developing deep root systems and then bloom and produce seeds after two to three years. Much of the seed will fall to the ground establishing more plants in years to come. To ensure that the vulnerable seedlings are not dominated by non-native plants, many hours have been spent removing "weeds". The native plants represent our desire to experience and learn about the land as it is, and thus to curb our human tendencies to dominate and plow up and change without understanding the natural community around us. Native prairie perennials provide a low maintenance landscape as the below ground food reserves enable the plants to withstand droughts and other stresses. Through natural succession the plants will compete with each other and eventually form harmonious, interdependent relationships.

At the entrance to Sacred Embrace, is a gate with a blossom-like design that repeats the earthwork's shape. The gate is a symbol of the visitor's conscious choice to enter a journey of discovery. Once through the gate, the path unfolds, leading to a place where inner and outer worlds unite. On this path, the traveler is invited to ascend the meditation mound and pause for reflection. The outer rim of the earthwork creates a shape that embraces those within. The walls are akin to the skin of a fruit; providing protection for the nourishment of the seeds within. As the journeyer emerges to the main trail, fruits from the reflection time become grace to be shared.

Naturally occurring landscapes like those found at the Mt. St. John Nature Preserve are distinctive and beautiful, but with each passing year it becomes more and more difficult to protect these precious ecosystems. Although there is no quick replacement for lost ecosystems, you can help by establishing native plants in your own landscape. Surrounding our homes and businesses with a wild environment, even a small one, can help to ensure the survival of the plants and animals that make our part of the world so unique and special.

Sacred Embrace is a living art form that will change with the seasons and grow into its beauty with time. We invite you to visit this landscape through the changing seasons of the years to come and become a part of its evolution. You can help its natural growth by allowing the flowers to live their full life course – take only pictures and memories.

Apiaceae -- Parsley Family

Eryngium yuccifolium – Rattlesnake master

Asclepiadaceae -- Milkweed Family

Asclepias tuberosa – Butterfly weed

Caryophyllaceae – Pink Family

Silene regia – Royal catchfly

Compositae – Composite Family

Aster lateriflorus – Calico aster

Aster novae-angliae - New England aster

Coreopsis lanceolata – Lance-leaved coreopsis

Echinacea purpurea – Purple coneflower

Helianthus mollis – Stiff-leaved sunflower

Heliopsis helianthoides – Oxeye sunflower

Kuhna eupatorioides – False boneset

Liatris aspera – Rough blazing star

Liatris spicata – Dense blazing star

Liatris squarrosa – Scaly blazing star

Rudbeckia fulgida – Orange coneflower

Rudbeckia hirta – Black-eyed susan

Rudbeckia triloba – Thin-leaved coneflower

Silphium integrifolium – Common rosinweed

Silphium trifoliatum – Whorled rosinweed

Vernonia altissima – Tall ironweed

Crassulaceae – Stonecrop Family

Sedum ternatum – Wild stonecrop

Fabaceae – Pea Family

Cassia fasciculata – Partridge pea

Fabaceae – Pea Family cont.

Baptisia australis – Blue false indigo

Baptisia leucantha – White false indigo

Gramineae – Grass Family

Bouteloua curtipendula – Side-oats grama

Buchloe dactyloides – Buffalo grass

Schizachyrium scoparium – Little bluestem

Sorghastrum nutans – Indian grass

Sporobolus heterolepis – Prairie drop-seed

Labiatae – Mint Family

Pycnanthemum tenuifolium – Narrow-leaved mountain mint

Pycnanthemum incanum - Hoary mountain mint

Liliaceae – Lily Family

Allium cernuum – Nodding wild onion

Ranunculaceae – Crowfoot Family

Anemone virginiana – Tall anemone

Aquilegia canadensis – Wild columbine

Rosaceae – Rose Family

Filipendula rubra – Queen-of-the-prairie

Scrophulariaceae – Figwort Family

Penstemon digitalis – Foxglove

beardtongue

Penstemon hirsutus – Hairy beardtongue

Veronicastrum virginicum – Culver's root

Verbenaceae – Vervain Family

Verbena hastata – Blue vervain