PARK EXPLORER
GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT ACTIVITY GUIDE

FALL 2019

4 A review of the parks’ accomplishments, responsibility & vision
7 Get the 4 W’s of the all-new Geauga Skywatchers Club
14 Fall is a fine time for fishing — but what can be caught in these waters?
15 How parks are planned has a lot to do with keeping them healthy

Photo by Bernice Betty
UPCOMING EVENTS
Mark your calendars!

Celebrate autumn with fun, FREE activities for all ages!
Saturday & Sunday, October 5 & 6, 1-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation · Middlefield
Horse-drawn wagon rides, fishing, kayaking, face painting & fall treats for sale — plus, on Saturday only, shop for locally handmade items at the all-new Homespun Market!

Saturdays & Sundays, 1-5 PM
October 12, 13, 19 & 20
Swine Creek Reservation · Middlefield
Revel in the season’s sights, sounds & scents aboard a horse-drawn wagon! Free passes ensure first-come, first-served boarding.

Saturday, November 9 · 10 AM - 4 PM
The West Woods Nature Center · Russell
Shop this unique, Nature-themed juried craft show & visit the Mistletoe Market for handmade gifts created by youth artisans.

Saturday, December 7, Noon-3 PM
The West Woods Nature Center · Russell
Let’s come together for this "make and GIVE" event to create 300+ evergreen decorations that will accompany meals home-delivered to seniors by the Geauga County Department on Aging this holiday season! All supplies provided.

Add some magic to the longest night of the year!
Saturday, December 21, 7:30-9:30 PM
The West Woods Nature Center · Russell
Featuring a self-guided candlelit stroll through the forest, interactive skits with costumed interpreters, music by the Pilgrim Brass Choir, refreshments & more

FALL PROGRAMS on pages 8-13

- Registration is required in advance for limited enrollment programs on a first come, first served basis. Registration can be completed online or at 440-286-9516.
- Programs may be cancelled in the event of severe weather or a storm warning.
- Programs are generally free of charge; those with fees are noted. Payment of fees must be made at the time of registration with a credit/debit card.
- Registration fees are refundable up to five days prior to the event, or if the Park District cancels the program.
- If you or a member of your family has special needs, please call the Park District regarding available accessibility accommodations.

Volunteers Needed
Fully Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible
Nature’s Not To Be Missed - Program focused on unique encounters with Nature
Nature Scopes - Program recommended for our fifth-grade Nature Scopes students
A seasonal guide to the programs, special events and news of Geauga Park District

Dear Park Friends and Geauga County Neighbors,

Geauga County Parks offer amazing opportunities to enjoy nature’s colors this Fall. Most of the over 10,000 acres are preserved in their natural condition, providing animal habitat and protecting our County’s beautiful natural resources. For example, the Ohio endangered plant, the Swamp Red Currant, is thriving in a protected forest wetland.

The Geauga County Park District maintains twenty-five (25) parks for the use and benefit of Geauga County residents.

You know how I feel about our wonderful parks. Here is what others are saying:

“Enjoyed my first retirement program. Looking forward to more fun times at the parks.” (Elderberries: Paddling and Peddling in the Park)

“Astrotots is a gift to our little ones, and Jann Glove is fantastic every time. Thank you for continued astronomy programming for the kiddos – it’s giving them such incredible perspective.” [Astrotots: Once Upon a Time (Ages 3-5)]

“Such a wonderful kayak trip with friendly and knowledgeable leaders. Thank you so much!!!!” (Grand River Kayak)

“I love the new lodge and park at Holbrook Hollows.” (Holbrook Hollows, Lodge)

“Our park district is fantastic! Every time I have needed a facility for our larger extended family there is a shelter or lodge available. You are constantly updating the existing facilities and adding more. Thank you for your work!” (Beartown Lakes Reservation, North Point)

I hope you and your family will take some time to enjoy YOUR wonderful Geauga County Parks this Fall. Hope to see YOU at the parks!

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Grendell
Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge
The word park means something different to each of us. Wikipedia defines a park as an area of natural, semi-natural or planted space set aside for human enjoyment and recreation, or for the protection of wildlife or natural habitats.

Here in Geauga County, we now have 25 parks open to the public that meet many of these criteria. In achieving a more accessible park system, our management team came together last year to evaluate Geauga Park District parks and the roles they play in contributing to our county.

From that evaluation came three words that can define the success of any organization — accomplishment, responsibility and vision — that also best frame our commitment to you, the Geauga County resident.

First, we are proud to celebrate our accomplishments. In the last 20 years, we have opened 15 new parks. This began in 2000 with work on The Maple Highlands Trail. Today this trail provides more than 20 miles of paved trail for your hiking and biking enjoyment. It begins at the Lake County line to the north and travels south through Chardon into Middlefield, practically touching Trumbull County at Swine Creek Reservation.

Other noteworthy accomplishments include the opening of The West Woods and its nature center, as well as Observatory Park and its Robert McCullough Science Center, Oberle Observatory and Nassau Astronomical Station. These parks are two of your largest land holdings, each totaling more than 1,000 acres and providing critical habitats and ecosystems for a variety of species.

Last year we were proud to open Claridon Woodlands, with its state-of-the-art lodge, high ropes course, bouldering wall, bicycle track and Nature-based playground. This year we celebrated the opening of Holbrook Hollows and its state-of-the-art lodge, Nature-themed-based playground and excellent trails.
These are just a few of the accomplishments that make Geauga Park District a place to access and enjoy Nature and recreation, and something in which you should also take great pride.

In celebrating our accomplishments, staff are also reminded of our responsibility to our county and to you. We take this responsibility seriously. Our maintenance, construction and ranger staff work hard to provide clean, safe and well maintained parks. Our naturalist staff provide Nature-based programs and special events focusing on all ages and abilities at all times of the year. We are humbled to be public servants with a responsibility to provide great parks and programs to you.

Finally, we are reminded of the importance of maintaining vision. Our vision is to continue to provide residents with opportunities to access some of the most pristine lands in Geauga County. Accessibility is important given that you, as a Geauga resident, have made such significant investments in Geauga Park District through the purchase of park land and park infrastructure. We hope to continue to invest in the future for you, creating dynamic parks and programs in places like Welton’s Gorge and Veterans Legacy Woods. We must also remain visionary in the necessity of maintaining existing infrastructure and providing updates to older parks, and we plan to continue to do both very well.

Geauga Park District strives to be known for providing quality experiences in all of our parks. As we continue to evaluate our accomplishments, responsibilities and vision, we maintain: Geauga parks are for you! Please continue to utilize and support them as we look to the future. And whatever the parks mean to you, I invite and encourage you to get outside and find a park to enjoy today!

Meet the Director
Thursday, October 24, 7-8:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge

What has your Park District done since 2000, and what is the vision for the future? Hear it from John Oros himself.
What makes Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve a cool and unique place to visit? Located in Burton and Newbury townships, it’s part of a 1,000-acre system of kettle bogs, lower slope seeps and wetland flats known as the Cuyahoga Wetlands — an area that has remained relatively undisturbed since the last Ice Age.

Burton Wetlands supports many rare and unusual bog plants, such as the large cranberry and the carnivorous sundew, seen only by boat at the south end of the lake. Please avoid the lush poison sumac along lake’s edge by staying on the trail and observation deck. We promise the view is just great from there!

Birdwatchers will not be disappointed with a visit: Bald Eagles, Ospreys, Tundra Swans, Common Loons and a wide variety of migratory ducks and songbirds are seen on the lake at various times throughout the year.

Also make sure to cross the road, where the Kettle Trail enables hikers and cross country skiers to get a closer look at the rolling glacial topography of a large meadow, as well as a forest with oak, beech and maple trees. Visit a beaver pond, observe white pines, and see lush ferns edging the Wild Calla Kettle.

Although public boating and fishing is not permitted on Lake Kelso due to the vulnerability of these habitats, naturalist-led programs provide opportunities to get out on the water and experience this amazing property up close.

Field Notes:
The plant life and trees around Lake Kelso are some of the first in Geauga County to change color every year. Challenge yourself to visit Burton Wetlands a few times throughout the season and enjoy its evolution from green to fiery red, orange and gold!
The 5 W’s of the GEAUGA Skywatchers Club

Who?
You! Anyone with an interest in astronomy is welcome to join. Activities are geared toward grades 6-12.

What?
Monthly lectures and activities with experts and educators, special access to Observatory Park, telescopes available for checkout at the libraries & an optional system of club advancement.

Where/When?
View upcoming meetings on pages 8, 10 and 12, or on meetup.com, then register at geaugalibrary.net.

Why?
To teach the wonders of the solar system and universe while honing skills in mathematics, engineering, optics, observing, reason and critical thinking; to inspire the next generation of working scientists in our community; and to inspire you to “Look Up!”

Thank You to All of Our Generous Donors

Donations to Geauga Park District May through July 2019

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1 Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, October 1, 1-2:30 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule at 440-279-2126. Also October 15 and 29.

5 Timbertots: Tree Treasures! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Saturday, October 5, 10-11 AM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
Go on a treasure hunt with Nora the Explorer as we look for all of the amazing things trees give us. Outdoor program. Dress for the weather. Registration required. Also October 8.

6 Jump into Fall Days
Sunday, October 6, 1-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
Celebration of autumn with hands-on activities for all ages: free horse-drawn wagon rides, a new Homespun Market selling handmade items (Saturday only), kayaking, fishing, face painting, balloon creations, a food truck, seasonal treats and much more. Wagon rides are first come, first served 1-4 PM.

7 Geauga Skywatchers Club: Sundials, Latitude & Time
Monday, October 7, 6:30-7:30 PM
Geauga County Public Library, Bainbridge Branch
The second monthly meeting of our new astronomy club! Learn how to tell time without a watch, and about sundials, latitude, longitude, time zones, the equation of time, and a bit of the history of time-telling. Then use a compass and ruler to draw and build your own working sundial! Led by Dr. George Trumble, president of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society. Registration required beginning August 15 at geaugalibrary.net. Prospective members may also visit meetup.com to find dates and times of future club lectures and activities.

8 Timbertots: Tree Treasures! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Tuesday, October 8, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
See October 5 description. Registration required.

11 Friends & Wine Card-Making Workshop
Friday, October 11, 6:30-8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Fee: $14 Geauga residents, $17 out-of-county residents. “Make up with your make-up” by resurrecting your blue eyeshadow and forgotten lipsticks to utilize them as paints, creating Nature-themed greeting cards with artisan Angela Giampo. Bring outdated/unused cosmetics or use some new stock provided. Complete with snacks and wine! Registration required.

11 Meet the Artists
Friday, October 11, 7-9 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Meet artists Cindy Ceroky and Rosemary Skocdopole and explore the beauty of Nature through their images rendered in paintings. Refreshments served. Show runs through January 22.

11 Ancient American Skywatchers
Friday, October 11, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Learn about the ancient astronomers of North America, from the builders of Ohio’s vast earthworks to the creators of the great medicine wheels. Followed by night-sky viewing with park telescopes until 11 PM, weather permitting. Also October 25.

12 Horse-drawn Wagon Rides
Saturday, October 12, 1-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter
Enjoy the sights, sounds and scents of fall with a horse-drawn wagon ride! Free passes ensure first come, first served boarding. Rides last about a half hour and are cancelled by bad weather. No pets. Last ride leaves at 4:30 p.m. Also October 13, 19 & 20.

12 Fall Color Canoe Float
Saturday, October 12, 1-3 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Paddle along the peaceful shores of this ancient glacial lake and enjoy the autumn color and wildlife of Lake Kelsa. Participants should have canoeing ability/experience. Rain or shine, except in thunderstorm, so dress for weather. Ages 10-+; must be 12+ to paddle. Registration required by phone beginning October 4.

12 Horse-drawn Wagon Rides
Sunday, October 13, 1-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter
See October 12 description. Also October 19 & 20.

13 Earthquake Van Trip
Sunday, October 13, 1-5 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Take a tour of earthquake-related sites in Northeast Ohio. Be prepared to take a short walk at each stop, and bring along a snack for the road. Registration required.

13 Full Moon: The Buck Moon
Sunday, October 13, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
October’s full moon is named after old hunting traditions. Learn some moon legends, then watch the full moon rise using park telescopes, weather permitting.

13 Full Moon Sky Viewing
Saturday, October 12, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility’s giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead. Also October 26.
15 **Geauga Walkers**  
Tuesday, October 15, 1-2:30 PM  
Headwaters Park, Route 608  
Main Parking Lot  
See October 1 description. Also October 29.

16 **Beaded Spider Workshop**  
Wednesday, October 16, 6-8 PM  
The West Woods, Affelder House  
Fee: $33 Geauga residents, $37 out-of-county residents. Join jewelry artist Fran Rafiani to learn about the Ukrainian legend of the Christmas spider and create your own two-inch beaded arachnid utilizing copper, silver and gold-colored wire and assorted glass beads. Ages 14+. Refreshments served. Registration required (and very limited).

17 **Elderberries: Fall Wagon Ride**  
Thursday, October 17, 11:30 AM-2:30 PM, Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter  
Come along on a naturalist-led wagon ride to enjoy natural wonders unique to autumn! As part of this special seasonal event, the Geauga County Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center will also host a picnic lunch for you at 11:30 AM. Registration required.

18 **Astrotots: Meet Mars**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Friday, October 18, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM  
Observatory Park  
Meet Mars, a planet that maybe once was home to living things! It’s a world much the same, but very different from our Earth. Discover its mountains, moons and many myths. Learn, laugh, sing, dance and make a mini Mars Rocket! Registration required. Also October 19.

19 **Astrotots: Meet Mars**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Saturday, October 19, 10-11 AM  
Observatory Park  
See October 18 description. Registration required.

19 **Cross-country Fall Colors Van Trip**  
Saturday, October 19, 10 AM-3 PM  
The West Woods  
Join a naturalist on this van trip to visit areas around the county with spectacular views of fall colors. We’ll begin at The West Woods and head northeast to Punderson State Park, Burton and Chardon. Bring a packed lunch. We’ll also stop at the Burton Log Cabin for maple treats. Registration required.

19 **Horse-drawn Wagon Rides**  
Saturday, October 19, 1-5 PM  
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter  
See October 12 description. Also October 13 & 20.

19 **Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS**  
Saturday, October 19, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station  
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky using our amazing 36-inch-mirrored telescope! Stop in to discover this facility and everything it has to offer. Cancelled if cloudy.

20 **Ansel’s Cave Hike: Autumn Exploration**  
Sunday, October 20, 9-11 AM  
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge Shelter  
Join a naturalist for this two-mile hike exploring what autumn offers, featuring a rare opportunity to go into the restricted area of Ansel’s Cave. Rain or shine. Registration required. Also October 13 & 19.

20 **Horse-drawn Wagon Rides**  
Sunday, October 20, 1-5 PM  
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter  
See October 12 description. Also October 13 & 19.

21 **Maple Town Tune Traders**  
Thursday, October 24, 7-10 PM  
The West Woods, Nature Center  
Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments are welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round. Snacks to share welcome. Inquiries to Dan Best 440-279-0883.

21 **Meet the Director**  
Thursday, October 24, 7-8:30 PM  
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge  
What has Geauga Park District accomplished in these past 20 years, and what are its goals? Attend one of these presentations to find out from Executive Director John Oros himself.

25 **Ancient American Skywatchers**  
Friday, October 25, 7-8:30 PM  
Observatory Park  
See October 11 description.

26 **Scout Day: Junior Girl Scout Outdoor Skills Day**  
Saturday, October 26, 9 AM-Noon  
Chickagami Park, Pine Grove Shelter  
Let’s put our scouting skills to the test! Practice fire building, orienteering, outdoor cooking and knot tying, plus make a delicious campfire treat! Registration required.

26 **Fall Hike Around the Reservoir**  
Saturday, October 26, 10 AM-2 PM  
Headwaters Park, Route 608, Main Parking Lot  
Join a naturalist for a seven-mile hike around East Branch Reservoir not normally open to the public. Sightings may include eagles and waterfowl. Pack a lunch and water bottle. Registration required.

26 **Scout Day: Webelos Outdoor Skills Day**  
Saturday, October 26, 1-4 PM  
Chickagami Park, Pine Grove Shelter  
Put scouting skills to the test! Practice fire building, orienteering, outdoor cooking and knot tying, plus make a delicious campfire treat! Webelos I & II welcome. Registration required.

26 **Nassau Night Sky Viewing**  
Saturday, October 26, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station  
See October 12 description.

27 **Hidden Gems Hike: Russell Uplands Preserve**  
Sunday, October 27, 1-3 PM  
Russell Uplands Preserve  
Hike two miles over hilly terrain and through a beautiful forest to discover the hidden gems found here in the fall. Carpooling recommended; parking is limited. No restrooms in this park. Rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Registration required.

27 **The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**  
Sunday, October 27, 2-3 PM  
Observatory Park  
Join us for a planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky this week. Building open house 1-4 PM. Weather permitting, also view the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment.

29 **Geauga Walkers**  
Tuesday, October 29, 1-2:30 PM  
Beartown Lakes Reservation, North Point Shelter  
See October 1 description. Also October 15.
2 Backcountry Hike: Preserved Property
Saturday, November 2, 1-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join Pete McDonald of the Western Reserve Land Conservancy to explore a local privately preserved property, discovering wildlife and learning the importance of preserved lands. Meet at The West Woods for transportation in a park van. Rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Registration required.

2 Timbertots: Turkey Time! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Saturday, November 2, 10-11 AM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
What goes gobble-gobble and struts around the park? Preschoolers having fun learning about turkeys! Activities indoors and out, so dress for the weather. Registration required. Also November 4.

3 Know Your Scat!
Sunday, November 3, 2-2:45 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Sometimes folks are alerted to the presence of an animal by observing a clue: a footprint, an antler, a sign of feeding behavior, or sometimes scat. How good are you at scatology? We’ll put you to the test with this fun program to see just who knows their s – t (scat)! If you’d like to try your hand at making some authentic-looking scat replicas, also register for the Scat-making 101 session immediately following this program.

3 Scat-making 101
Sunday, November 3, 3-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
After attending Know Your Scat, learn how to make an authentic-looking replica of scat from baking clay and other materials. Registration required.

4 Timbertots: Turkey Time! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Monday, November 4, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
See November 3 description. Registration required.

4 Geauga Skywatchers Club: Telescopes, From Galileo to Cassiopeia
Monday, November 4, 6:30-7:30 PM
Geauga County Public Library, Geauga West Branch
The third meeting of our new club! Learn about telescopes and make your own optical instrument with the guidance of Martin Mullet of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society. Learn about the libraries’ new telescope lending program and basics on how to view the moons of Jupiter and rings of Saturn! Followed by a parking lot star party, weather permitting. Registration required beginning August 15 at geaugalibrary.net. Prospective members may also visit meetup.com to find dates and times of other future club lectures and activities.

8 Homeschool Days: Awesome Astronomy
(Ages 5-7 & 8-12) Friday, November 8, 1:30-3:30 PM, Observatory Park
Discover constellations, planets and more with a planetarium show and fun astronomy activities. Mostly indoors. Then we’ll travel to the Nassau Astronomical Station. Adults may attend (need not register) or drop off children with signed waivers. Attending parents will drive their children to Nassau; park staff will transport the others. Registration required.

8 The Shape of the Earth
Friday, November 8, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Just how did humans puzzle out the shape of our world? Learn all about how the sky helped us map Earth. Followed by night-sky viewing with park telescopes until 11 PM, weather permitting. Also November 22.

9 Veterans Legacy Woods Reception
Saturday, November 9, 9-11 AM
Veterans Legacy Woods
Armed Forces veterans and your families, enjoy the splendor of autumn at Veterans Legacy Woods, one of our newest parks, with engaging activities, a naturalist-led hike, EZ Go Cart tours and refreshments.

9 Holly Days Artisan Boutique & Mistletoe Market
Saturday, November 9, 10 AM-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Browse a premier selection of Nature-themed holiday decor and gifts for sale by regional artisans. Our Mistletoe Market also features handmade gifts created by young artisans. The perfect opportunity to find unique, handmade items for everyone on your list!

9 Campfire Cooking: Dutch Ovens
Saturday, November 9, 11 AM-1 PM
Sunnybrook Preserve, Lodge
Learn a new skill and get inspired for your next camping adventure! Together we’ll create some camping cuisine over a campfire in Dutch ovens, followed by dessert. Registration required.

9 Nassau Night Sky Viewing
Saturday, November 9, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility’s giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead. Also November 23.

10 Backcountry Hike: Exploring the Preserve
Sunday, November 10, 12:30-3:30 PM, The Rookery
Join a naturalist for an on-and-off-trail adventure exploring the seldom-visited preserve area of The Rookery. Rugged, potentially wet terrain; must be physically capable of up to four miles of on and off-trail hiking. Dress for the weather and wear sturdy boots or shoes. Registration required.

10 Native American Games
Sunday, November 10, 1:30-3:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Join a naturalist to play some fun, traditional games that Native American children played to develop skills which made them better hunters. Registration required.

11 Transit of Mercury
Monday, November 11, 8 AM-2 PM, Observatory Park
Mercury crosses between Earth and the sun in this rare “mini-eclipse.” Drop in anytime during these hours to try to catch a glimpse of this seldom-seen planet. Cancelled if weather conditions prevent us from viewing the sun.

12 Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, November 12, 1-2:30 PM
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve, Sunset Shelter
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1 ½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126. Also November 26.
17 Winging It: Waterfowl on the Move
Sunday, November 17, 8-10 AM
LaDue Reservoir, Boathouse Parking
Meet up at the LaDue parking area on Valley Road to bird LaDue Reservoir for Common Loons, Bald Eagles and waterfowl during prime migration time. Spotting scopes provided. Van seats available first come, first served. If van fills, caravan behind.

21 Elderberries: Trail Cam Treasures
Thursday, November 21, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Seniors, discover the unseen presence of a variety of wildlife including coyote, fox, deer, otter, weasel, raccoon, turkey vulture and flying squirrel captured on video – a visual treat sure to delight and amaze! Coffee and pastries served. A collaboration with the Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. Registration required.

21 Maple Town Tune Traders
Thursday, November 21, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments are welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round. Snacks to share welcome.

22 Ohio's Owls Night Hike
Friday, November 22, 6-7:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove Shelter
Owls are amazing creatures that live in our woods. Discover some of their nocturnal adaptations as we search the night for them and listen for their calls.

22 The Shape of the Earth
Friday, November 22, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
See November 8 description.

23 Nature Explorers: All About Owls (Ages 6-7 & 8-11)
Saturday, November 23, 1-3 PM, Holbrook Hollows, Lodge
Owls are highly successful nocturnal predators whose adaptations are amazingly designed. Check out owl pellets, learn owl calls, and hunt for owl habitat. Program indoors and outdoors, so dress for the weather. Drop-off program. Registration required.

23 Nassau Night Sky Viewing
Saturday, November 23, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
See November 9 description.
DECEMBER

1 The State of Our Dragons & Damsels
Sunday, December 1, 3-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
The Ohio Odonata Society (for dragonflies and damselflies) is winding up its final year of a statewide survey that began in 2017. Come learn the status of these colorful aerial predators, which ones have increased or decreased, and who’s new to our state. Also hear what Geauga Park District has contributed to this survey.

5 Holiday Open House with Bill Hixson
Thursday, December 5, 6:30-8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join Geauga Arts Council for a holiday open house featuring a presentation by Bill Hixson, accomplished floral designer who has assisted with holiday decorating at The White House for more than 30 years. Refreshments served.

7 Greens for Giving
Saturday, December 7, Noon-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join Geauga Park District at this “make and GIVE” event to create 300+ evergreen decorations that will accompany home-delivered meals to seniors by the Geauga County Department on Aging. Brighten a senior’s holiday season with your thoughtful creation! All supplies provided.

8 Holbrook Hollows Winter Hike
Sunday, December 8, 1-2:30 PM
Holbrook Hollows, Lodge
Join a naturalist to explore the trails of this new park, discovering Nature in the winter landscapes of forest and meadow. Program outdoors, so dress for the weather. Expect hilly terrain.

7 Holiday Greens Workshop
Saturday, December 7, 9 AM-Noon & 1-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Fee: $27. Decorate for the holidays by making a beautiful arrangement from fresh evergreens. Select from four options: 1) Outdoor Wreath; 2) Swag; 3) Wire Basket Arrangement; 4) Holiday Pot of Greens. Visit our website’s News & Updates page for photos resembling each project and more specific project descriptions. A wide variety of ribbon, evergreens and pine cones will be provided; bring any additional accents you may wish to add. Candles will also be provided, or bring your own to match your decor. Bring pruners and a plastic bag to protect your car seat from water.

8 Fire-Building Techniques
Sunday, December 8, 1-2:30 PM
Headwaters Park, Boathouse
With cold weather on the way, it may be good to practice some fire-building skills. We’ll explore techniques primitive to modern, then roast a marshmallow or two.

8 Timbertots: Evergreen Artists! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Sunday, December 8, 2-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Discover through fun activities all the reasons why evergreens are excellent, in Nature and at home! We’ll use real greens to make a centerpiece to take home, with bows and pine cones provided; bring small decorations if desired, and hand clippers if you have them. Partially outdoors, so dress for the weather.

9 Timbertots: Evergreen Artists! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Monday, December 9, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, The West Woods, Nature Center
See December 8 description.

9 Geauga Skywatchers Club: Constellations, Hop-Skip & Jump
Monday, December 9, 6:30-7:30 PM
Geauga County Public Library, Middlefield Branch
The fourth meeting of our new astronomy club! How do you find your way around the night sky? Martin Mullet of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society will take you on a breathtaking guided tour, showing you how to star-hop from place to place by identifying constellations. Learn the interesting back-stories of these star groupings, and tons of interesting trivia.

Registration required beginning August 15 at geaugalibrary.net. Prospective members may also visit meetup.com to find dates and times of other future club lectures and activities.

10 Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, December 10, Noon-2:45 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. This is the annual holiday potluck luncheon, so please bring a dish to share. Hike at noon, lunch at 1 PM, then indoor presentation. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126.

12 Elderberries: Ansel Savage of The West Woods
Thursday, December 12, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Seniors, join us to meet the legendary and mysterious Ansel Savage, of Ansel’s Cave fame, as he steps out of the past to set the record straight regarding his 19th century days of yore in The West Woods. Coffee and pastries served. A collaboration with Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center.

Registration required.

PARKEXPLORER • www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
12 **Full Moon: The Black Bear Moon**
Thursday, December 12, 6-7:30 PM, Observatory Park
Learn all about black bears who manage to be both busy and restful during the wintertime, then watch the rising full moon using park telescopes.

13 **Track a Meteor**
Friday, December 13, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Learn how you can help track meteors to find out where they come from and where on Earth they might have landed. Followed by night-sky viewing with park telescopes until 11 PM, weather permitting. Also December 27.

14 **Ho Ho Ho Hiking with Santa & Buddy the Elf**
Saturday, December 14, 12:30-2 PM & 2:30-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Discover the wonders of the season on a magical hike with Santa Claus and Buddy the Elf! Santa will also be available after the hike for photos and wish lists. Registration required.

15 **Nassau Night Sky Viewing**
Saturday, December 14, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility’s giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead. Also December 28.

16 **Maple Town Tune Traders**
Thursday, December 19, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Musicians of all levels, genres and instruments are welcome. Short performances followed by sharing of songs and tunes in the round. Snacks to share welcome.

17 **Winter Solstice Celebration**
Saturday, December 21, 7:30-9:30 PM, The West Woods
Celebrate the longest night of the year as we explore the roots of our modern holiday celebrations indoors and out. Enjoy treats, hot beverages and music by the Pilgrim Brass Choir; make a solstice-themed craft; stroll the self-guided Solstice Traditions Trail, complete with a bonfire; and watch interactive skits by costumed interpreters of solstice traditions from various civilizations. Dress for the weather.

18 **Winter Bird Banding Station**
Sunday, December 29, 2-3:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Stop by our banding station any time during designated hours for a close-up look at some of our winter resident birds with Naturalist Tami Gingrich. Birds will be captured in mist nets, banded and measured before being released – a great opportunity for photos!

19 **The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**
Sunday, December 29, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
Join us for a planetarium presentation about what to watch for in the night sky this week. Building open house 1-4 PM. Weather permitting, also view the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment.

20 **Whatever-the-Weather Venture**
Sunday, December 29, 2-3:30 PM
Big Creek Park
It may be a bit optimistic, but we’re hoping for snow for this one. If conditions are just right for snowshoeing, that is what we’ll do. If not, we’ll take a cold-weather hike. Whatever the weather, let’s get outside! Borrow a pair of our snowshoes or bring your own. Ages 8+. Registration required.

21 **Nassau Night Sky Viewing**
Saturday, December 28, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park
Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility’s giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead. Also December 28.

22 **New Year’s Eve Nature Celebration**
Tuesday, December 31, 11 AM-12:30 PM
Veterans Legacy Woods, Banquet Facility
Celebrate New Year’s Eve at the new Veteran’s Legacy Woods with fun activities for all ages! There will even be a “toast” at 12:00 (noon)! Pizza and beverages provided. Program mostly indoors, but may be partially outdoors if weather permits. Registration required.

23 **Grandparents in the Park: Nature Detectives**
Thursday, January 2, 2020, 1:30-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Attention all super-sleuth grandparents and grandkids: test your detective skills by helping solve Nature clues in an interactive way! Program entirely indoors. Please bring a snack to share; beverages provided. Registration required.

24 **Full Moon: The Black Bear Moon**
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JANUARY

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Thursday, January 2, 2020, 1:30-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Attention all super-sleuth grandparents and grandkids: test your detective skills by helping solve Nature clues in an interactive way! Program entirely indoors. Please bring a snack to share; beverages provided. Registration required.
Choosing to cast your line in Geauga Park District means choosing from a variety of 11 scenic lakes and small ponds, with opportunities to catch all of the species shown here.

Fishing is permitted at these parks, most offering accessible docks for year-round fishing:

- BASS LAKE PRESERVE
- BEARTOWN LAKES RESERVATION
- BIG CREEK PARK
- CLARIDON WOODLANDS
- ELDON RUSSELL PARK
- HEADWATERS PARK
- ORCHARD HILLS PARK
- SWINE CREEK RESERVATION
- THE WEST WOODS
- TUPELO POND
- IN BIG CREEK PARK
- VETERANS LEGACY WOODS
- WALTER C. BEST WILDLIFE PRESERVE

To fish the parks, anyone 16 or older is required to have a valid Ohio fishing license (annual, 1-day or 3-day), which are easy to obtain on the Ohio Department of Natural Resources’ website or from a local fishing license vendor.

Our website also makes it easy to plan your fishing trip. Select Fishing under Activities to see all the fishable parks on a map; learn which fish live in which parks; consider programs and events where you can try fishing; and review other guidelines and rules that help us all care for the parks and their wild residents.

Already fishing in the parks? Join our “Fishing in Geauga Park District” group on Facebook!

TRIVIA:
More than 17,400 fish have been stocked in park waters since 2008!
Master Planning for Parks

As the early stages of the park design process come to a close, the resulting Master Plan serves as a long-range vision for the development of new and existing parks, as well as capital improvements.

Master planning is a critical step that provides staff the opportunity to develop initial budgets and timelines, prioritize improvements, and identify restoration opportunities for native habitats such as meadow, scrub brush and deforested areas. All of these were part of Orchard Hills Park’s original Master Plan, which included the transformation of a former golf course from mostly mowed turf to a 237-acre park with only seven mowed acres. In the eight years since its opening, the majority of the park has undergone meadow restoration and reforestation that are today very noticeable and enjoyable for visitors.

The process of creating a Master Plan typically begins with collaboration between Geauga Park District’s Natural Resource Management team and planning staff. Management plans are prepared to provide baseline biological and ecological data that will guide proper management and protection of the property’s natural resources. Planners utilize this information to develop the design and layout of proposed improvements. Wise and thoughtful development fits within previously impacted areas or minimizes impact on the property’s natural features.

Throughout the process for new parks or major capital improvements, careful attention to detail is given to the location of new facilities. The Judge Lester Taylor Lodge at Claridon Woodlands was placed to take advantage of views of the existing pond and mature eastern white pines. It rests in an area that does not have an adverse impact on the park, while allowing people to experience some fantastic seasonal views.

Holbrook Hollows’ trail network was developed through a woods along ravines, allowing visitors to enjoy Nature while avoiding impact to streams and wetlands, which are some of the great natural resources of this newly opened park.

The importance of collaboration and communication between Geauga Park District’s departments when developing Master Plans cannot be overstated. This process garners input and feedback on everything from program development, for the types of activities or amenities an existing or new park may offer, to restoration opportunities that may exist on a property, to simply where a new trail may go to allow for enjoyable views of beautiful natural features like Affelder Falls.

Through the master planning and design process, now underway at Welton’s Gorge in preparation for development in 2020, Geauga Park District continues to pursue its mission to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide opportunities for residents to enjoy Nature and the Great Outdoors any time of the year. I invite you to look for and enjoy the benefits of this process during your next visit to your favorite Geauga Park District park.

Matt McCue
Director of Planning & Operations

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# Park Locations and Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Location</th>
<th>Street Address</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>ZIP Code</th>
<th>Trail Mileage</th>
<th>Features</th>
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<td>Bass Lake Preserve</td>
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*ICONS LISTED AT RIGHT IN THE ORDER THEY APPEAR*
Check out this new cache at Russell Uplands Preserve

Expires January 1, 2020
Details on our website under Activities

Please note: At the cache site, beware the stinging nettle and slippery moss. Safety concerns are mild throughout the rest of the park; poison ivy and stinging insects are low. Terrain is gently rolling, with elevation changes of fewer than 50 feet along the entire trail. There are no restrooms, and parking is limited to about six vehicles.

### ACCESSIBLE TRAILS • PAVED TRAILS • OPEN SHELTERS • ENCLOSED LODGES • RESTROOMS • PLAYGROUNDS • HIKING

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<th>Facility</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<th>Open Shelters</th>
<th>Enclosed Lodges</th>
<th>Restrooms</th>
<th>Playgrounds</th>
<th>Hiking</th>
<th>X-Country Skiing</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Bicycles</th>
<th>Camping</th>
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Please note: At the cache site, beware the stinging nettle and slippery moss. Safety concerns are mild throughout the rest of the park; poison ivy and stinging insects are low. Terrain is gently rolling, with elevation changes of fewer than 50 feet along the entire trail. There are no restrooms, and parking is limited to about six vehicles.

View the current fee schedule on our website under Reservations. All enclosed lodges, but not all open shelters, are equipped with electricity. Boating on Bass Lake requires a permit. Permitted watercraft are kayaks, canoes and electric motors; gasoline engines are permitted only in Eldon Russell Park. Learn more on our website under Activities.
Geauga Park District is fortunate to be home to so many unique habitats. One is created by the Eastern Hemlock tree, one of the few native evergreens found in Ohio. These typically grow in and around steep ravines, providing soil stabilization, shade to nearby streams, and habitat for a variety of species. You can find hemlock woodlands in your parks with visits to Big Creek Park, Whitlam Woods or Orchard Hills Park.

There is a problem, however. Our area is also now home to a non-native insect pest from Asia called the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA). This very small, parasitic insect attaches itself to the underside of the hemlock’s needle base and feeds on the tree’s carbohydrates. Because the HWA has no native predators, it can reproduce in such large numbers that it will eventually kill the tree.

Our Natural Resource Management team has been surveying your parks for the presence of the HWA and are preparing ways to deal with this potential threat.

If you have hemlock trees in your yard or in your woodlands, please take the time to inspect them. October through March is the best time to survey for the HWA. You can learn more about this pest, and how to help your trees and report your findings, at the Ohio Division of Forestry website at http://ohiodnr.gov/hwa.

Should you have any questions or need any help identifying the HWA yourself, feel free to contact me at jfirem@geaugaparkdistrict.org or 440-279-0822.
Leaf Stencil Art

What You Need:
Newspaper to protect table surface, black construction paper, craft paint (white & some assorted colors), flat paintbrush or sponge brush, leaves, scrap paper, kitchen sponge (may cut up)

1. Brush white paint onto the vein side of the leaf. Be sure to paint the entire surface with a thin coat. Place painted leaf on black paper. Cover with a piece of scrap paper and gently rub the leaf to transfer the paint.

2. Lift up the scrap paper, then carefully lift up the leaf. (Wow! Looks really cool!) Repeat this 2 or 3 more times and don't be afraid to go off the page. Also watch so you don't smudge the leaves you already transferred.

3. Take small pieces of kitchen sponge and use them to sponge other colors on around the leaves. Make sure you leave a little bit of the black paper showing through. What a beautiful work of Nature art!

Idea: Create 3 or 4 of these with different color schemes and different leaves, then frame them and hang them on your wall together as one piece.
Find your adventure

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Free horse-drawn wagon rides, fishing, kayaking, spiders, face painting & so much more!

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Revel in the season’s sights, sounds & scents! Free passes onsite for first-come, first-served boarding

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440-286-9516