Students get involved by constructing Mallard Duck nesting tubes.

Why balance is key when planning and managing park lands.

Introducing new Park Board Commissioner Howard Bates.

The pleasure of providing parks to county residents.

Students get involved by constructing Mallard Duck nesting tubes.
UPCOMING EVENTS  Mark your calendars!

EARTH DAY Extravaganza
with Natural Resource Management

Sunday, April 22 • 11 AM - 3 PM • The West Woods
• presentations by wildlife experts • live animals • Nature craft
• amphibian/reptile show & tell • wildlife discovery walks

Visit these parks between 10 AM & 1 PM to pick up a free milkweed plant!
Mother’s Day Giveaway: May 13 • The West Woods
Father's Day Giveaway: June 17 • Swine Creek Reservation
Watch our website or social media for any additional giveaways

Milkweed Giveaways

Sunday, June 10 • The West Woods

Registration 7 AM • Costume Contest 8:30 AM • Race/Walk 9 AM

Volunteers Needed
Fully Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible
Partially Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible
Nature’s Not To Be Missed
Program focused on unique encounters with Nature
Nature Scopes - Program tailored to our exclusive binocular program for Geauga County fifth-graders

Coming Soon to Claridon Woodlands

Watch our website or social media to learn when you can finally walk among the trees on the ropes course, climb the freeform boulder wall, kid-test the Nature-based playground, ride the single mountain bike track or pump track, and try your luck casting from the new fishing platform...all opening in May!

Nights Out in the Parks
A great way to spend a summer evening!

Amphitheater concerts at Big Creek Park, 7-8:30 PM
Erie Height Brass Ensemble 6/9
Northern Comfort Band 7/7
Long Time Gone 7/28
Upriver 8/25

Outdoor movie nights at Observatory Park
Activities begin at 8 PM, movies at dark
“Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle” 6/29
“Peter Rabbit” 7/14
Fan’s Choice: Vote For Your Favorite! 8/11
(details on page 17)

West Woods Wednesdays FARM MARKET
Beginning June 13 • 4 - 7 PM
Purchase locally grown/made items the second Wednesday of each month June through September at The West Woods’ picnic shelters

Spring 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.
Dear Geauga County Friends and Neighbors:

Congratulations to Director Oros, the hardworking Park Staff, and the dedicated Park Board for the highly successful “Frozen Fest.” More than 3,600 individuals attended – another record!

The Geauga Park District has received two major financial grants to preserve and protect sensitive streams in Geauga County.

Taken together, Frozen Fest and these stream protection grants demonstrate the Park District’s ability to Preserve, Conserve and Protect our natural resources, while providing Geauga County residents and families with opportunities to enjoy our wonderful county parks.

Special thanks to Len Barker, Chardon resident and the last Cleveland Indian’s pitcher to pitch a perfect game, for his 2 years of exemplary service as a Commissioner on the Geauga County Park Board. Len provided professional leadership to the Park Board and proved to be a steady hand of reason. He was clear, concise, and exhibited a common sense approach that was appreciated by all who worked with him on the Board.

Welcome to Howard Bates, as the newest appointee to the Park Board. Howard is a successful Geauga County business owner and avid supporter of our County Parks. Howard has served on the Berkshire School Board and the Great Geauga County Fair Board, including as President of the Fair Board. He will bring his public board experience, major business acumen, and an appreciation of the Geauga County Parks to the Park Board.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Timothy J. Grendell
Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge
Everything in Nature, from the smallest microscopic life forms in a pond to large roaming carnivores like wolves, rely on a key fundamental word: balance.

This is a seemingly simple word to understand at first glance. Upon further reflection, it becomes rather complicated. Throughout my years working across science disciplines, trudging the fields with botanists, listening to ecologists and exchanging experiences with practicing land managers, I have found one common thread. Managing park lands is all about this word, balance. Of course Geauga Park District’s mission boils down to this as well, human use in harmony with Nature.

The million-dollar question that Geauga Park District is faced with daily is, how do we strike this balance? How do we allow citizens the use of these great natural areas without negatively impacting Geauga County’s clean water, green trees, luscious plants and teeming wildlife?

Put another way, how do we responsibly develop a beautiful natural area so that everyone can enjoy this land and its wonderful creatures while leaving enough wildness to sustain wildlife? How do we ensure future generations will have a chance to marvel at its wonders, too?

How do we keep the “wild” in wildlife?

Responsibly developing and managing park land begins with knowing what resources we have. Documentation and inventories of baseline information – such as which species of birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, insects, plants, etc. inhabit our backyard forests, wetlands, streams and meadows – is a crucial starting point.
From the collection of baseline data, Geauga Park District writes guidelines, also known as natural resource management plans, to serve as critical “field guides” for the wise planning and development of the land, as well as the implementation of sustainable long-term management. The Park District also looks to another long-standing land management policy guiding all of its park development and management. This document allows for new development of park lands, but stresses the vast majority of this land be set aside as natural area for wildlife. Geauga Park District’s newest park, Claridon Woodlands, with its grand opening this summer, is a perfect example. All buildings, parking and active recreational areas were placed in already highly disturbed areas of the property (old fields), while a vast majority of the property was left untouched for wildlife and passive recreation, such as Nature trails and birdwatching.

It’s All About Balance

by Paul J. Pira, Park Biologist
Natural Resource Management

As it has in the past, Geauga Park District will continue to recognize and understand the parks’ important need for balance.

So, back to that word, balance – how much do humans really know about life on Earth and how it is balanced? Actually, very little.

One of the world’s most famous living scientists today, Dr. E.O. Wilson, states that we have only documented about 10 percent of all living creatures on Earth, and many of his colleagues support this claim. Essentially, we are living on an unexplored planet.

Think about it: that means that we have yet to understand more than 75 percent of all life on Earth. Can you imagine going to your family doctor and he tells you that medicine only knows about 10 percent of what is inside your body?

One of Geauga Park District’s most basic and fundamental jobs, and one we tackle every day as staff, is knowing what natural resources are present in the parks and how to balance the needs of natural areas and wildlife with those of park users. Geauga Park District undoubtedly will continue to ensure that both have a place in this great county – beautiful parcels of land for future generations to enjoy alongside clean water, healthy air and biological diversity for all residents.

Balance, what a simple word.
Spend Some Time at Frohring Meadows

Easy to access on Savage Road, just off Washington Street in Bainbridge Township, Frohring Meadows offers almost a mile of paved trail, 3.5 trail miles total.

Recent additions to this park include a new wetland to attract migrating shore birds and a new wildlife viewing platform for a sweeter spot to observe them.

On a nice day, walk the 100-acre prairie and see what's coming up, or head out to the woods. A formerly open-air shelter has also been enclosed to create a beautiful versatile lodge featuring a patio, two fireplaces and doors to let in that sweet spring air.

Field Notes:

A wet sedge meadow provides an important stop for migrating shore birds. Keep an eye out for sandpipers and Sandhill Cranes!

Trails here are considered easy to moderate with generally flat land – ideal for leisurely walking and cross country skiing.
Howard Bates

This December, Geauga County Juvenile/Probate Court Judge Timothy J. Grendell swore in Howard Bates as the newest member of the three-person Geauga Park District Board of Park Commissioners.

He replaces Len Barker, who fulfilled a two-year term on the board.

Mr. Bates is the owner and president of Arms Trucking Company in Claridon Township, proud father of four, and resident of Geauga County since 1973. He and his wife, Patricia, live in Burton.

Among goals for his term, he said, is getting more people outdoors and into the parks, where he enjoys walking. Swine Creek Reservation is his favorite park to visit; he also enjoys Observatory Park’s special events and programming.

Mr. Bates is a current member of the Volunteer Peace Officers’ Dependents Fund Board. Previously he also served as president of the Geauga County Fair Board, the Geauga County Agricultural Society and the Burton Middlefield Rotary Club, and on the boards of the Geauga Growth Partnership, Leadership Geauga, Berkshire Board of Education, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Burton Township Zoning Commission.

Of Mr. Bates’ appointment, Judge Grendell said, “Howard Bates will bring his unique knowledge of Geauga County as a long-time resident who has served on a variety of community boards, along with his impressive business acumen and love of the Geauga County parks, to benefit the residents of Geauga County.”
2. **Math in Nature**
   Monday, April 2, 1-4 PM
   The West Woods, Nature Center
   Drop in during listed hours for an afternoon of spring-break Nature math! Visitors can try different activity stations exploring math in Nature: learn to crochet a hyperbolic plane, track an earthquake, or test out some space math.

6. **Homeschool Days: Amphibian Awakening**
   (Ages 5-7 & 8-12)
   Friday, April 6, 2-3:30 PM
   The West Woods, Nature Center
   Search for frogs and salamanders that have awakened from hibernation to greet the spring. Uncover the habits, habitats, adaptations and life cycles of these captivating creatures. Adults may attend (need not register) or drop off child with waiver. Mostly outdoors; dress for the weather. Registration required.

6. **April Evening Adventure**
   Friday, April 6, 7:30-9 PM
   Eldon Russell Park
   A woodcock air show accompanied by a chorus full of Spring Peeper piping, Barred Owl bantering, beaver tail-slapping and Great Blue Heron flapping culminate in a memorable spring evening hike for families.

7. **Herons of Bath Road Van Trip**
   Saturday, April 7, 10 AM-2 PM
   The West Woods
   Bring your binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras to search for birds and explore the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Beaver Marsh and Bath Road Heronry. Bring a packed lunch for a picnic. Must be able to walk at least a mile on a flat, gravel surface. Registration required.

8. **Hidden Gems Hike: Claridon Woodlands**
   Sunday, April 8, 1-2:30 PM
   Claridon Woodlands
   Discover the variety of wetlands, streams, uplands and forests within your newest park, Claridon Woodlands! Must be able to hike 2 miles over gently rolling terrain.

8. **Warbler Warm-up**
   Sunday, April 8, 2-4 PM
   The West Woods, Nature Center
   Birders Matt Valencic and Kelly Koslowski present techniques for identifying spring warblers using color patterns, habitat, behaviors and song. For novice to intermediate birders; handouts provided. Walk follows to find early songbird migrants. Collaboration with the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland.

10. **Geauga Walkers**
    Tuesday, April 10, 1-2:30 PM
    The West Woods, Affelder House
    Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Also April 24.

12. **Timbertots: What’s the Weather?**
    (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
    Thursday, April 12, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Frohring Meadows
    Explore the wonderful world of weather with hands-on activities. Some outdoors, weather permitting; dress accordingly. Designed for a specified age group; older or younger siblings will not be considered registered participants. Also April 14. Registration required.

12. **Volunteer Orientation**
    Thursday, April 12, 2-3 PM & 7-8 PM
    The West Woods, Nature Center
    Find out about the opportunities for volunteers, and begin the application process to become an official volunteer. Paperwork includes background check for ages 18 and up; youth under 14 must volunteer with an adult. Registration required.

13. **Cloud Spotting**
    Friday, April 13, 7-8 PM
    Observatory Park
    Learn all about clouds and what they can teach us about the hidden forces ruling our atmosphere. Weather permitting, program will be followed by night-sky viewing using park telescopes until 11 PM. Also April 27.

14. **Bald Eagle Hike**
    Saturday, April 14, 10 AM-Noon
    Headwaters Park, Boathouse
    Learn amazing facts about Bald Eagles and hike to an active nest, rain or shine, hopefully to observe eagle activity! Must be able to hike 2 miles over rolling terrain.

14. **Night Sky Viewing**
    Saturday, April 14, 7-11 PM
    Observatory Park
    Join us at the Oberle Observatory to take in the wonders of the night sky using park telescopes. If it’s cloudy, we’ll be in the planetarium instead. Also April 28.

15. **Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**
    Sunday, April 15, 7:30-9:30 AM
    Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
    See a variety of birds as they return to prime breeding habitat during spring migration. Experienced leaders will assist participants with observation and identification. Dress for the weather; bring binoculars and bird guide. Also April 22 & 29 and May 6, 13 & 20 at different locations.

15. **The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**
    Sunday, April 15, 2-3 PM
    Observatory Park
    Discover 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. Also April 29.
21 Sharing Trails with Horses (For Hikers, Bikers and Other Trail Users)
Saturday, April 21, 10 AM-Noon
The West Woods
Horses and riders from Rich Bradshaw Training Stables of Burton will demonstrate trail etiquette and non-threatening ways to approach and safely co-exist with horseback riders. Bring your children, strollers and dogs for a chance to meet the horses; no additional horses, please.

21 Meet the Artists: Susan Hood & Sheila R. Dorris
Saturday, April 21, 2-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Meet two friends sharing a love of art and Nature: Susan Hood, with her display of landscape and floral paintings, and Sheila R. Dorris, with her collection of drawings, paintings, photography and mixed media. Light refreshments will be served.

22 Earth Day Extravaganza
Sunday, April 22, 11 AM-3 PM
The West Woods
Celebrate Earth Day locally during this interactive event with wildlife and conservation experts. Activities include talks, hands-on activities, educational and stewardship walks and more. Hosted by Geauga Park District’s Natural Resource Management staff. Complete schedule at bit.ly/gpdspecial.

22 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series
Sunday, April 22, 7:30-9:30 AM
Frohring Meadows
See description for April 15.

24 Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, April 24, 1-2:30 PM
The Rookery
See description for April 10.

25 After Work Wildflower Walk
Wednesday, April 25, 6:30-8 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House
Enjoy a diversity of colorful spring wildflowers emerging along the Falls Trail, and hear some fascinating folklore associated with them. Collaboration with Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio.

26 Elderberries: Wild About Wildflowers
Thursday, April 26, 9-11:30 AM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Join the Geauga County Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center for breakfast in the lodge at 9 AM, then enjoy a stroll as we reveal secrets of pollination, seed dispersal strategies and wildflower lore and legend. Registration required.

26 Maple Town Tune Traders
Thursday, April 26, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Singers and musicians combine short performance spots (by sign-up) with jam sessions. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Snacks to share welcome.

27 Astrotots: Reach for the Stars!
(Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Friday, April 27, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Come and find out for yourself that stargazing is amazing, learning what stars are, what they do, where they are and what they look like. Also April 28. Registration required.

27 Cloud Spotting
Friday, April 27, 7-8 PM
Observatory Park
See description for April 13.

28 Mason Bee Box Building Workshop
Saturday, April 28, 10 AM-Noon
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
See a short presentation about Mason Bees – their importance as pollinators and their flair for using mud to construct nursery chambers. Then construct your own box to help attract these beneficial insects to your yard. Bring a pair of pruners/scissors and a hammer. Fee: $10. Registration required.

28 Night-Sky Viewing
Saturday, April 28, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park
See description for April 14.

29 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series
Sunday, April 29, 7:30-9:30 AM
The Rookery
See description for April 15.

29 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show
Sunday, April 29, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
See description for April 15.

29 Nature Challenge
Sunday, April 29, 2-4 PM
The West Woods
Be a part of science history as we participate in the 2018 City Nature Challenge, a global competition celebrating local biodiversity. Our afternoon will be spent searching for as many plants and animals as we can via pond dipping, trail hikes and insect netting, to be recorded on iNaturalist.

29 The Full Frog Moon
Sunday, April 29, 8:30-9:30 PM
Observatory Park
Come learn what makes a full moon, meet a few frogs, and observe the rising ‘Frog Moon’ using park telescopes!
**Headwaters Horse Ride**  
Saturday, May 5, 1-3 PM  
Headwaters Park, Crystal Lake Picnic Area Rt. 608 Parking Lot  
Bring your horse for this leisurely 4-mile, naturalist-led ride enjoying wildflowers, an eagle nest, migratory birds and scenic lake views. Includes gravel, bridges and possibly bikes. A different ride takes place in the morning; riders may register for both rides and bring lunch to eat in between. Registration required.

**Timbertots: Flower Fun**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult)  
Thursday, May 3, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Big Creek Park, Deep Woods Shelter  
Find out how flowers can be fun with colors, counting and exploration! Program outdoors, weather permitting; dress accordingly. Designed for a specified age group; older or younger siblings will not be considered registered participants. Registration required.  
Also May 5.

**Fishing Opportunities in Geauga Park District**  
Friday, May 4, 7-8 PM  
The West Woods  
Come learn how the parks’ lakes and ponds are managed for sport fishing, the science that goes into providing you with great fishing holes; receive great tips on where, when and what to fish in various parks; and hear about Geauga County’s natural lakes.

**Maple Highlands Horse Ride**  
Saturday, May 5, 10 AM-12:30 PM  
Headwaters Park, Crystal Lake Picnic Area Rt. 608 Parking Lot  
Bring your horse for this leisurely 6-7 mile ride on the newly opened Maple Highlands Trail-South provides a peaceful tour of parks, farms and village. A different ride takes place in the afternoon; riders may register for both rides and bring lunch to eat in between. Registration required.

**Timbertots: Flower Fun**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult)  
Saturday, May 5, 2-3 PM  
B Benner Metzenbaum Park  
See description for May 3. Registration required.

**Annual Spring Wildflower Walk**  
Sunday, May 6, 1-2:30 PM  
Headwaters Park, Rt. 322 Entrance  
Take a naturalist-led hike to one of the best locations in the parks to find beautiful spring-blooming wildflowers, 1.5 miles along gently rolling terrain.

**Beautiful Blooms Wildflower Walk**  
Sunday, May 6, 1-2:30 PM  
The West Woods  
Visit one of the best birdwatching spots in the country to witness spring bird migration along the shores of Lake Erie. We’ll provide transportation and a naturalist to assist with bird identification; bring binoculars, water and sack lunch. Fee: $10, $25 out-of-county. Registration required.

**Ravine Exploration**  
Saturday, May 12, 6:30-10:30 AM  
The West Woods  
Venture into the rocky woodland ravines of this Park District preserve to discover deep rock ledges, cool streams, salamanders and other stream life. Includes slippery stream bottoms, steep grades and off-trail obstacles like downed trees and stream crossings. Dress for the weather with sturdy shoes. Held even in the event of rain. Registration required.

**Gazebo Drive**  
Sunday, May 13, 7:30-9:30 AM  
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove Shelter  
Join us at the Oberle Observatory to take in the wonders of the night sky using park telescopes. If it’s cloudy, we’ll be in the planetarium instead. Also May 26.

**Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**  
Saturday, May 12, 8-9:30 PM  
The West Woods  
Join our experts to see a variety of birds during spring migration. Experienced leaders will assist with observation and identification. Dress for the weather; bring binoculars and bird guide. Also May 13 and 20 at different locations.

**Frog Fest “Party Line” Call List**  
Sometime in May, 8-9:30 PM  
The West Woods  
Get your name on the call list to witness the noisy courtship behavior of Gray Tree Frogs and Green Frogs as they come home to woodland pools to breed. We’ll call when conditions are right, so expect short notice. Registration required.

**The Seneca Anomaly**  
Friday, May 11, 7-8 PM  
Observatory Park  
Is there an ancient meteor crater below Ohio’s Seneca County? Learn about an ongoing scientific investigation into Ohio’s ice-age past. Weather permitting, program will be followed by night-sky viewing using park telescopes until 11 PM.

**Claridon Woodlands Spring Bird Sit**  
Saturday, May 12, 6:30-10:30 AM  
Claridon Woodlands  
Let’s start a tally of birds in our newest park, seeing how many we can identify in 4 hours of “bird sitting” beside the back pond! Bring binoculars, scope, camera and chair to help a naturalist keep a list.

**Backcountry Night Sky Viewing**  
Saturday, May 12, 7-11 PM  
Observatory Park  
Join us at the Oberle Observatory to take in the wonders of the night sky using park telescopes. If it’s cloudy, we’ll be in the planetarium instead. Also May 26.

**Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**  
Sunday, May 13, 7:30-9:30 AM  
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove Shelter  
See description for May 6.
13 Mother's Day Milkweed Giveaway
Sunday, May 13, 10 AM-1 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Stop by to pick up a free milkweed plant for Mom in the effort to aid the Monarch Butterfly in its plight of population decline. Attracts many other species of pollinators to your yard as well. One pot per family.

13 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show
Sunday, May 13, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
Find out what to watch for in the night sky this week. Building open house 1-4 PM. Weather permitting, view the sun using safe solar-viewing equipment. Also May 27.

15 A Look into the Lives of Ohio’s Peregrine Falcons
Tuesday, May 15, 7-8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Chad and Chris Saladin provide insights into the behavior and ecology of Peregrine Falcons as witnessed over their years of monitoring them at Ohio nest sites, both officially for the Ohio Division of Wildlife and on their own once that project ended in 2015. Featuring a special appearance by live peregrine courtesy of Lake Metroparks. Collaboration with Blackbrook Audubon Society.

17 Elderberries: From Jungles to Geauga, Songbirds of Spring
Thursday, May 17, 9-11:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove Shelter
Join the Geauga County Department on Aging and UH Geauga Medical Center for breakfast, then look for colorful birds including orioles and warblers. Bring binoculars or try a pair of ours. Registration required.

19 Cuyahoga Family Canoe (Ages 5+ w/adult) Saturday, May 19, 1:30-3 PM, Eldon Russell Park

19 Astronomy Night with CVAS Saturday, May 19, 8-11 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lake Side Shelter
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to celebrate the stars and observe our amazing night sky! A variety of telescopes will be on hand to get a closer look. Cancelled if cloudy; call 440-279-0880 after 3 PM to check status.

20 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series
Sunday, May 20, 7:30-9:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge Shelter
Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with a variety of neo-tropical birds as they return to prime breeding habitat. See description for May 6.

20 Lake Kelso Kayak Sunday, May 20, 1-2:30 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Enjoy the wildlife and beautiful surroundings on the tranquil waters of Lake Kelso. Basic kayaking skills required; instruction not given. Held rain or shine, except in event of thunderstorm. Wear shoes to get wet or muddy and bring water. Registration required beginning May 13.

20 Bluebird Patrol Sunday, May 20, 1-2 PM
Frohring Meadows
Continue celebrating International Migratory Bird Day with Eastern Bluebirds. Learn the basics of becoming a bluebird landlord with Naturalist Tami Gingrich as she monitors boxes. Also learn to identify different species, observe different nests and eggs, and if there is an opportunity, watch nestlings be banded for scientific research.

22 Geauga Walkers Tuesday, May 22, 1-2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
See description for May 8.

24 Maple Town Tune Traders Thursday, May 24, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Singers and musicians combine short performance spots (by sign-up) with jam sessions. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing or simply enjoy as audience. Snacks to share welcome.

25 Kokedama String Garden Workshop Friday, May 25, 6:30-8 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Kokedama is a form of centuries-old Japanese garden art tied into the practice of bonsai. Join artisan Tracy Reid to create two beautiful Japanese Kokedama hanging moss ball planters. Refreshments provided. Fee: $24. Registration required.

25 The Seneca Anomaly Friday, May 25, 7-8 PM
Observatory Park
See description for May 11.

26 Tea & Wildflowers Saturday, May 26, 10-11:30 AM
Frohring Meadows, Katydid Shelter
Celebrate spring and its splendor with a tea party while trying the amazing flowers in bloom. There will be Holden stories, teas to taste and information on how to use the plants. Registration required.

26 Night Sky Viewing Saturday, May 26, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park
See description for May 12.

27 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show Sunday, May 27, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
See description for May 13.

27 The Full Corn-Planting Moon Sunday, May 27, 8:30-9:30 PM
Observatory Park
Hear the Navajo story that uses the sky to tell when planting season has arrived, then watch the (nearly) full moon rise over Observatory Park.

30 Nighthawk Canoe Float Wednesday, May 30, 8-10 PM
Eldon Russell Park
The Upper Cuyahoga River comes alive with wildlife at sundown! Witness the annual mayfly hatch and appearance of mysterious nighthawks drawn in for in-flight feeding. Ages 10+; 12+ to paddle. Participants must have basic canoe handling skills; no lessons. Registration required by phone beginning May 23.
2 National Trails Days: Hike Around the Reservoir
Saturday, June 2, 10 AM-2 PM
Headwaters Park, Rt. 608
Hike 7 miles on the preserve side of East Branch Reservoir not otherwise open to the public. Possibility of wildlife sightings. Pack a lunch and water bottle. Registration required.

3 Hidden Gems Hike: Swine Creek Valley
Sunday, June 3, 1-2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Valley Shelter
Explore this beautiful valley and the sights and sounds of late spring, 2 miles over hilly terrain and stream crossings. Registration required.

5 Geauga Walkers: Summer Picnic
Tuesday, June 5, 12-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge Shelter
Hike at noon, then annual potluck picnic at 1 PM; bring a dish to share. Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Geauga Walkers also June 19.

8 Grandparents Summer Picnic
Friday, June 8, 12-1:30 PM
Claridon Woodlands, Lodge
Enjoy our brand new park with a picnic, Nature activities and trail rides on the EZ Go Cart! In collaboration with the Chardon Senior Center, which provides hot dogs. Bring a dessert or side dish to share. Registration required.

9 Basic Learn To Kayak
(Ages 10+) Saturday, June 9, 9 AM-Noon, Bass Lake Preserve
Learn basic kayak handling techniques for flat water. No private kayaks or unregistered people. Shoes may get wet or muddy, bring water and change of clothes in case kayak overturns. Registration required by phone beginning May 26.

9 Basic Learn To Canoe
(Ages 10+) Saturday, June 9, 1-4 PM, Bass Lake Preserve
Learn basic canoe handling techniques for flat water. No private canoes or unregistered people. Shoes may get wet or muddy, so bring water and a change of clothes in case canoe overturns. Registration required by phone beginning May 26.

9 Night Sky Viewing
Saturday, June 9, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park
Take in the wonders of the night sky using park telescopes. If cloudy, we’ll be in the planetarium instead. Also June 23.

9 Nights Out in the Parks: Erie Heights Brass Ensemble
Saturday, June 9, 7-8:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Amphitheater
Enjoy a variety of sentimental love songs, sometimes called “torch songs,” under the stars! Refreshments served. Indoors if inclement weather.

10 Caveman Crawl 5K Trail Run & 1-Mile Fun Walk
Sunday, June 10, 7-11 AM
The West Woods
A one-of-a-kind trail run through wooded hills – costumes encouraged! Registration 7-8:30 AM, costume contest 8:30 AM, 5K run/walk at 9 AM. Apply at bit.ly/gpdcaveman, The West Woods Nature Center or Big Creek Park’s Meyer Center. Advanced registration: $20; additional charge day of race. Course is primarily well graded dirt and gravel. Awards for winning runners and creative costumes. Proceeds benefit the Chip Henry Institute for Outdoor Adventure. Registration required.

10 Polliwog Paddle Family Canoe
(Ages 5+ w/adult) Sunday, June 10, 2-4 PM, Eldon Russell Park
Easy-paced, short-distance float on the wildlife-rich Upper Cuyahoga River. Up to two kids 5-11 in middle; 10+ to paddle. Registration required by phone beginning June 2.

10 Polliwog Paddle Family Canoe
(Ages 5+ w/adult) Sunday, June 10, 2-4 PM, Eldon Russell Park
Easy-paced, short-distance float on the wildlife-rich Upper Cuyahoga River. Up to two kids 5-11 in middle; 10+ to paddle. Registration required by phone beginning June 2.

10 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show
Sunday, June 10, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
See what to watch for in the night sky this week. Building open house 1-4 PM. Weather permitting, also view the sun using safe solar-viewing equipment. Also June 24.

13 West Woods Wednesdays Farm Market
Wednesday, June 13, 4-7 PM
The West Woods
Purchase locally made/grown items at The West Woods the second Wednesday of each month this summer, June through September!

14 Veteran’s Appreciation Picnic
Thursday, June 14, 4:30-8 PM
Claridon Woodlands, Lodge
Geauga Park District celebrates our veterans on Flag Day with a special picnic to say thank you for serving our country! Veterans and a guest are welcome to enjoy food, live music and this exciting new park. Registration required.

16 Fly Fishing Family Day
Saturday, June 16, 1-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lake Side Shelter
Learning to fly fish is fun and easy! Join members of the North Coast Fly Fishers as they teach the basics of fly casting, fly tying and where to look for fish, then try your hand at catching aquatic insects in pond and stream – a great way to kick off a lifetime of angling. Fishing license required if you plan to wet your line.

16 Astronomy Night with CVAS
Saturday, June 16, 8:30-11:30 PM
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to celebrate the stars and observe our amazing night sky! A variety of telescopes will be on hand to get a closer look. Canceled if cloudy; call 440-279-0880 after 3 PM to check status.

17 Father’s Day Milkweed Giveaway
Sunday, June 17, 10 AM-1 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lakeside
Stop by to pick up a free milkweed plant for Dad in the effort to aid the Monarch Butterfly in its plight of population decline. Attracts many other species of pollinators to your yard as well. One pot per family.
17 **Almost-Summer Kayak**  
(Ages 12+) Sunday, June 17, 1-3 PM, Bass Lake Preserve  
*Summertime fun with an afternoon of kayaking. Eagles, waterfowl and a variety of other wildlife await our discovery! Dress for the weather. Registration required by phone beginning June 10.*

19 **Geauga Walkers**  
Tuesday, June 19, 1-2:30 PM  
Frohring Meadows  
*Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Also June 5.*

20 **Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer**  
(Ages 1-2 w/adult) Wednesday, June 20, 10-11 AM  
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve  
*Enjoy the start of summer with your little one as we see, smell and touch summertime in the park. Strollers and carriers welcome! Registration required.*

21 **Elderberries: Seniors at Claridon Woodlands**  
Thursday, June 21, 9-11:30 AM  
Claridon Woodlands, Lodge  
*Join the Geauga County Department on Aging and UH Geauga Medical Center for breakfast at 9 AM, then explore the ropes course, hiking trails (on foot or by EZ Go Cart), wildlife and fishing areas. Go “finny-dipping” and scoop up life in the ponds, too! Registration required.*

22 **Solstice Sunset Hike**  
Thursday, June 21, 8-9 PM  
Observatory Park  
*Take a 2-mile hike through the solar system on the longest day of the year, then watch the sun set on the first day of summer. Registration required.*

23 **Horseback Trail Ride (Walk, Trot & Canter)**  
Saturday, June 23, 10-11:30 AM  
Observatory Park  
*Faster-paced, naturalist-led trail ride. Walk-only riders should attend afternoon ride; may also register for both rides and bring lunch to eat in between. Trailer your horse to the park. Registration required.*

24 **Backcountry Hike**  
Sunday, June 24, 1-3 PM  
Sunnybrook Preserve  
*Off-trail adventure on rugged terrain; several miles of off-trail challenges with steep hills. Wear sturdy shoes with good traction that can get wet and muddy. Registration required.*

25 **The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**  
Sunday, June 24, 2-3 PM  
Observatory Park  
*See description for June 10.*

26 **Hound Hike**  
Sunday, June 24, 6-7 PM  
Observatory Park  
*A 2-mile hike with water stops for dogs. One, non-aggressive dog per handler, on leash at all times (8 ft. max). Must be able to fully control dog. Problematic dog(s) may be asked to leave. Registration required.*

27 **Nature Explorers: Summer Camp Sampler**  
(Ages 6-7) Wednesday, June 27, 10 AM-Noon, Big Creek Park  
*Try camp activities: ice breakers, field games, hiking, s’mores and more! Drop-off program; indoors and out. Also June 28 for ages 8-11. Registration required.*

28 **Timbertots: Life Under a Log**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Thursday, June 28, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Big Creek Park  
*Discover a world of critters under just one log! Designed for a specified age group; older or younger siblings not considered registered participants. Also June 30. Registration required.*

29 **Firefly Frolic**  
Friday, June 29, 8:30-10:30 PM  
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge  
*A magical hike reveals an array of species identified by colors, flash patterns and flight paths. Nets provided. Program begins with brief history of these amazing insects.*

30 **Timbertots: Life Under a Log**  
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Saturday, June 30, 10-11 AM, Big Creek Park  
*See description for June 28. Registration required.*

31 **Amazing Moths**  
Saturday, June 30, 10 PM-12 AM  
The West Woods, Affelder House  
*Join naturalists Tami Gingrich and Linda Gilbert, with other moth experts, as they use mercury vapor and black light stations to attract beautiful moths and other fascinating insects. Bring flashlight and camera.*
Get out for some fun!

REGISTRATION REQUIRED AT 440-286-9516

Junior Naturalist
$150/week - 9 AM-4 PM
Youth entering grades 5-7
Monday-Friday, June 11-15
Ready to explore and learn how to be a naturalist? If so, you’re in for an exciting week of exploring streams, lakes and forests for exciting wildlife such as macro-invertebrates, birds, amphibians, insects and more! Participants begin and end each day at The West Woods Nature Center.

Adventure Day Camps
$150/week - 9 AM-4 PM
Youth entering grades 5-7
Mondays-Fridays:
June 25 - 29
July 9-13
July 16-20
July 30 - Aug 3
August 6-10
Gear up for an exciting week of exploring, biking, kayaking, fishing, sending rockets high into the sky and more! Participants begin and end each day at The West Woods Nature Center.

Teens entering grades 8-10
Mondays-Fridays:
June 18 - 22
July 23 - 27
Get ready for an exciting week of exploring, biking, kayaking, fishing, archery, sending rockets high into the sky and trying out the brand new ropes course at Claridon Woodlands! Participants begin and end each day at The West Woods Nature Center.

Camp transportation is provided to other park locations for various activities facilitated by highly qualified staff. Schedules, waivers required of each participant, and other details are sent once registration is complete. Each camper must bring lunch, water and a raincoat in a backpack for daily activities. Other equipment is provided and included in the registration fee. Financial assistance is available; please call for details.

X-TREME Days
$30/day - 9 AM-4 PM
Teens entering grades 8-10

Monday, July 2
X-treme: Kayak River Challenge
Eldon Russell Park
The wilds of the Upper Cuyahoga River are home to a wondrous variety of birds and beasts. Experience this 10-mile ‘X-treme’ adventure as we paddle our way, discovering wildlife in and along the river. Bring a lunch and water bottle in a waterproof bag, as well as sunscreen and insect repellent that can be applied onsite if needed.

Tuesday, July 3
X-treme: High Ropes Adventure
Claridon Woodlands
Explore the new high ropes course at this brand new park. From there, campers will take The Maple Highlands Trail by bike to Headwaters Park, where they will kayak on the beautiful East Branch Reservoir, then hop back on their bikes and bike north back to Claridon Woodlands.

Thursday, July 5
X-treme: Kayak River Challenge
Eldon Russell Park
See description for July 2.

Friday, July 6
X-treme: High Ropes Adventure
Claridon Woodlands
See description for July 3.
This spring’s feature article was written by Park Biologist Paul Pira. As your former Natural Resource Manager, I had the privilege of hiring Paul in 2004. In his article, Paul talks about applying the word “balance” to managing the lands, plants and animals of Geauga Park District. It is a responsibility we take seriously.

As a park system of our type, we recognize the importance of ensuring that land and Nature is protected. We also recognize the importance of providing for your enjoyment and the enjoyment of the next generation of Geauga County residents. You may not know, but the law that defines us – in this case, Ohio Revised Code Chapter 1545 – defines our responsibilities for striking a balance between protecting parks and providing parks. One portion of 1545 states, “The board of park commissioners may acquire lands either within or without the park district for conversion into forest reserves and for the conservation of the natural resources of the state, including streams, lakes, submerged lands, and swamplands, and to those ends may create parks, parkways, forest reservations, and other reservations and afforest, develop, improve, protect, and promote the use of the same in such manner as the board deems conducive to the general welfare”.

For me, this is one of the most inspiring sections of the 1545 provision for park districts. It not only gives us the opportunity to set aside land for Nature, but it also gives us the opportunity to provide Nature to you. It speaks to the legacy of past boards, as well as the responsibility of current and future boards, to not only acquire lands, but also develop, improve and promote their use.

To that end, it is the desire of Geauga Park District that each of you experience one or more of your parks. We’ve worked hard to protect the Nature there, while still making it as accessible as possible. Our hope is to provide something for everyone. We want you to have fun in your parks. Whether you experience Nature in one of our 22 open parks, 77 trails or hundreds of naturalist-led programs offered each year, get out and strike a balance in your life. It’s somewhere between responsibility and relaxation.

I think famous conservationist John Muir said it best when he said, “Going to the woods is going home.” Let Geauga Park District be your home this spring – and for generations to come.

- John Oros
## Park Locations and Amenities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Amenities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass Lake Preserve</td>
<td>1145 Lakeview Drive, Munson, 44023</td>
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<td>The Maple Highlands Trail (TMHT)</td>
<td>TOTAL TRAIL MILEAGE: 20.7</td>
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</table>
**What Movie Will Show in August at Observatory Park?**

**FANS, YOU DECIDE!**

From June 1 to July 14, visit our website to vote for the vintage movie you’ve been wishing to re-watch or show a friend...we’ll be happy to host your watch party under this very dark night sky!

---

**Check out this two-stage "mystery cache" in Sunnybrook Preserve!**

**PART A:**

Expires December 31, 2018

Details on our website under Activities

**N 41° 31.813**

**W 081° 18.043**

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**ACCESSIBLE TRAILS • PAVED TRAILS SHOWING MILEAGE • OPEN SHELTERS • ENCLOSED LODGES • RESTROOMS • PLAYGROUNDS • HIKING • X-COUNTRY SKIING • HORSES • BICYCLES • CAMPING • FISHING • BOATS PERMITTED • SLED HILL • NATURE VIEWING AREA**

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<th>Hiking</th>
<th>X-Country Skiing</th>
<th>Horseriding</th>
<th>Bicycling</th>
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<th>Fishing</th>
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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.
Early last year, with help from Chagrin Falls Girl Scout Aly Brandt and some students in Mike Sustin’s West Geauga environmental science class, our Natural Resource Management team installed Mallard Duck nesting tubes at three parks: Orchard Hills Park, Frohring Meadows and Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve.

Nesting tubes make strong additions for public viewing and appreciation of wildlife, and can greatly benefit resident Mallard Ducks. Since Mallards usually nest on the ground, tubes boost their success by decreasing the likelihood of predation by raccoons, skunks and other predators. Tubes are elevated with a large stake and placed deep in the water, then the stake is covered with a large PVC pipe to inhibit hungry predators from climbing up for access.

Once nesting season ended last year, NRM removed all eight new tubes, took them apart, refilled them with fresh grass and placed them back into their original locations. One tube showed evidence that a nest had been there, so we are hopeful more of the tubes will be used for nesting this spring.

For information about building and using nesting tubes yourself, visit deltawaterfowl.org/hen-houses.
Vernal pools are special habitats that fill with rainwater in the fall, winter and spring and usually dry up in the summer. Because these pools are temporary, fish are not able to survive. Without fish to eat their eggs or larvae, then, amphibians such as Spring Peepers, Wood Frogs and Spotted Salamanders can use these pools to lay their eggs.

Look at this photo of a vernal pool and its surrounding habitat. Can you spot all 10 amphibians that have been placed in it?

**Frog vs. Toad**

**Do you know some of the differences?**

- Needs to live near water
- Smooth, moist skin that makes it look slimy
- Narrow body
- Higher, rounder, bulgier eyes
- Longer hind legs
- Takes long high jumps
- Has many predators
- Does not need to live near water
- Rough, dry, bumpy skin
- Wider body
- Lower, football-shaped eyes
- Shorter, less powerful hind legs
- Will run or take small hops rather than jump
- Does not have many predators (a toad’s skin lets out a bitter taste and smell that burns the eyes and nostrils of predators)

**Turn a toad into a frog!**

Turn the word TOAD into the word FROG by changing one letter to make a new word at each step. The clues on the right will help you, and the green circles indicate the letter that needs to be changed. Good luck!

- street
- study/leaf through
- toward the back
- phobia
- achievement
- deflated, spread out
- banner
- beat up, whip, lash

Answers to puzzles on bottom of back cover
FIND YOUR ADVENTURE
IN ONE OF YOUR 22 OPEN PARKS!

8th Annual
CAVEMAN CRAWL
5K TRAIL RUN
& 1-Mile Fun Walk
Sunday, June 10
The West Woods
9465 Kinsman Road, Russell Twp.
Walkers welcome in 5K
Cave garb encouraged!
All funds benefit summer camps & youth programs
Details at bit.ly/gpdncaveman

Answers from page 19
See highlighted shapes at right
Word ladder puzzle, in order:
TOAD, ROAD, READ, REAR, FEAR, FEAT, FLAT, FLAG, FLOG, FROG