

PARKEXPLORER

GEAUGA PARK DISTRICT ACTIVITY GUIDE



WINTER 2018

4 Discover an excellent way to escape cabin fever, cross country skiing

9 Find out how you can win up to four kayaks this summer

9 Have you noticed our new look? The website is also in for a change

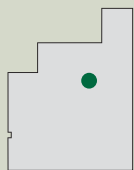
10 Recognitions for achievements in conservation and recreation

UPCOMING EVENTS *Mark your calendars!*



NEW PARK OPENING!

Introducing Claridon Woodlands



The newest addition to your Geauga Park District opens January 2. Claridon Woodlands is a beautiful piece of property that truly showcases Nature's finest attributes. Come walk the trails this winter and preview what's in store when the lodge and recreational amenities officially open later this year; more information can be found on page 11.



SNOWSHOE CALL LIST



SIGN UP NOW THROUGH MARCH 1

Register to get your name on our list for naturalist-led programs "called into action" whenever conditions are right for snowshoeing! Snowshoe programs may be called any time to any Geauga Park District park. Bring your own snowshoes or borrow ours, which will be available onsite first come, first served.

FROZEN FEST

Free winter activities
for the whole family!

Sunday, January 28 • 11 AM - 4 PM

The West Woods in Russell Twp.

- Winter hikes • Face painting
- Bird in the Hand • Snowshoe borrowing
- Ice sculptures • Refreshments • Live music
- Sled dog meet-n-greets • Crafts
- Guest appearances by a famous winter snowman, a reindeer herder, ice princesses and live reindeer!



Sundays, March 4, 11 & 18
Noon - 4 PM

Swine Creek Reservation
in Middlefield Twp.

- Visit the sugarhouse and sample the syrup
- Gather sap with a horse-drawn sap sled
- Costumed interpreters • Live music indoors



Frog Fest & Salamander Call List



Sometime March 1 - April 10,
8-9:30 PM at The West Woods

Register to get your name on a call list to witness the natural phenomenon of spring breeding behavior of Wood Frogs, Spring Peepers and possibly large salamanders on a warm, rainy night.



WINTER PROGRAMS *on pages 6-8*

- 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



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

Upcoming Events	2
Feature Article	4
January Programs	6
February Programs	7
March Programs	8
Park News	9
From the Executive Director	10
Geocaching	10
Fun Page	11

Park Mission

The mission of Geauga Park District is to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County and to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year.

Park Hours

Daily 6 AM - 11 PM

Big Creek Park's Donald W. Meyer Center is open weekdays 10 AM - 4:30 PM

The West Woods Nature Center is open daily 10 AM - 4:30 PM

Observatory Park is open daily until 11 PM from Labor Day to Memorial Day
Observatory Park's Robert McCullough Science Center and Oberle Observatory are open 2nd & 4th Fridays & Saturdays of each month 6 - 11 PM and every other Sunday of each month 1 - 4 PM
For weather conditions the day of outdoor programs, please call 440-279-0820

The Maple Highlands Trail is open daily dawn till dusk

Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve is open daily 6 AM - 9 PM

For more information on your parks, programs or events
Phone: 440-286-9516
Fax: 440-286-1285

Online: www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
info@geaugaparkdistrict.org

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS PROBATE DIVISION GEauga COUNTY

TIMOTHY J GRENDALL – JUDGE

Courthouse Annex, 2nd Floor
231 Main Street, Suite 200 • Chardon, Ohio 44024
Voice: 440-279-1830
geaugacourts.org



FROM THE BENCH

Dear Geauga County Friends and Neighbors:

The winter snows will soon convert the 10,000+ acres of Geauga County Parks into a winter wonderland.

I hope you will take some time to enjoy the winter magic and great outdoor recreational opportunities available at Geauga County's amazing Parks.

You can experience nature's beauty as you walk along a park trail, learn to snowshoe or cross-country ski, ride a sled, or enjoy the warmth of a crackling fire in one of the Park's many pavilions. For the real hearty, you can camp in one of the lean-to camp sites at Headwaters Park (reservation and nominal fee required).

The fourth year of Frozen Fest will be held at the West Woods in Russell Township on January 28, 2018. This program provides a great opportunity for Geauga seniors, singles, and families to enjoy the best winter experience in the County.

This winter, I hope you and your family will take some time to connect with your amazing Geauga County Parks.

Hope to see you this winter at the Parks.

Timothy J. Grendall
Gauga County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge

Board of Park Commissioners



Len Barker



Jackie Dottore



Andrej N. Lah

Executive Director



John Oros

Park Board Meetings

Dates and times are subject to change. Find the current list on our website under About Your Parks, then Park Board, or call 440-286-9516.



FEATURING PARK FRIENDS

Gliding Atop a Blanket of White

by William Schwing

**No matter where you go or how fast
you move, try cross country skiing
for an enjoyable winter experience**

Many people view winter as a time of decreased activity when one is forced to remain indoors. It doesn't need to be that way. One can be just as active in winter, if not more so, when enjoying the sport of cross country skiing.

Imagine gliding along the same trails you covered in the summer, only now the landscape is blanketed in a coat of white. Picture seeing the simple, still beauty of the woods in winter, your breath the only sound.

People that enjoy the outdoors find that winter is as dramatic an act as any in Nature's seasonal soap opera. Many birds, such as juncos, can be seen making a hard-earned living. With so little food evident, one wonders how they survive in the seemingly harsh environment. Footprints in the snow record the activities of woodland denizens like deer and rabbits. A line of squirrel tracks in the snow, that suddenly ends with the imprint of feathers on either side, records where a bird of prey captured a squirrel. There is as much information to learn about how animals use the landscape by going out in winter as by going out in summer. Those lucky enough to see a Red Fox in its gorgeous winter coat will never forget encountering this gem of a wildlife sighting.

If you want to try cross-country skiing, don't be intimidated by the need for special equipment. There are many places that rent skis. Little athletic skill is required, as one can get started with a gentle walking motion. Then, as you gain confidence in your abilities, you can add more glide to each step and soon be moving comfortably along.

Many people cite cold temperatures as a reason to stay indoors, but when properly attired, one can be comfortable for hours outside by dressing in a few well-chosen layers. Instead of wearing big bulky layers of clothes, use multiple layers of fabrics that breathe and provide warmth, like wool and moisture-wicking fabrics. Avoid cotton, as it gets heavy when wet and loses its insulation value.

Are you concerned about weight gain during the winter months? Cross-country skiing is a great calorie-burner; one can burn 400-900 calories per hour depending on the activity level. It is a great way to stay in shape and train for other sports, as one uses both the arms and legs to propel oneself along.

We are fortunate in Geauga County to have many places suitable for cross country skiing. Many hiking trails make good ski trails, as well. Additionally the Park District grooms trails at Orchard Hills and Mountain Run Station which provides a good surface for skiing and grooves in the snow that help direct the skis to keep them moving in a straight line.

Gauga Park District is pleased this winter to once again groom trails at Orchard Hills Park and along The Maple Highlands Trail between Mountain Run Station in Chardon and Claridon Troy Road. Visit our social media for grooming updates.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

William Schwing has been a volunteer with the Geauga Park District for six years, working on projects as diverse as counting the numbers of snakes found in a park and monitoring bluebird nests. He works at the Cleveland Clinic and enjoys being out in Nature, hiking with his dogs, and the opportunity to contribute to the further success of the Geauga Park District. His favorite snakes are Milk snakes and black rat snakes.



Snowshoe Call List continues through March 1 (details on page 2)

2 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, January 2, 1-2:30 PM
Sunnybrook Preserve

Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1 1/2 miles long. Naturalist led. If 20° or below, call to confirm. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Also January 16 & 30.

2 Full Moon: The Wolf Moon

Tuesday, January 2, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
The earliest "full moon-rise" of the year! Explore the lives of wolves, and watch the moon rise using park telescopes, weather permitting. ♿

6 Backcountry Hike: Ravines, Rocks & Ledges

Saturday, January 6, 12:30-3:30 PM, The Rookery
Off-trail adventure into rock ledges, streams and ravines. Should be capable of hiking several miles off-trail. Dress for the weather with good footwear! Registration required. ♿

7 Learn to Cross Country Ski

Sunday, January 7, Noon-2 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
Learn about proper clothing, equipment and technique. Indoor presentation followed by outdoor instruction. Ski rental available in advance from Geiger's (440-247-4900) with special rate of \$17. Registration required. ♿

7 Travelogue: Girl Scout World Center "Our Chalet" in Switzerland

Sunday, January 7, 2-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Adult Girl Scout Rachel Sauder shares her adventures in the international scouting world and discoveries in the Swiss Bernese Alps. Great info to plan a trip with your troop! ♿

10 Volunteer Orientation

Wednesday, January 10, 2-3 PM & 7-8 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Find out about volunteer opportunities and begin the application process. Background check for ages 18+; under 14 must volunteer with an adult. Registration required. ♿

11 Astrotots: Planet Pals! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Thursday, January 11, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Explore the night sky inside our inflatable planetarium – sure to be an out-of-this-world adventure! Also January 13. Registration required. ♿

12 Plants in Space

Friday, January 12, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
Learn about plants that have been to space and how they can help clean your air. Night sky viewing until 11 PM using the Oberle telescope, weather permitting. Also January 26. ♿



13 Astrotots: Planet Pals! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Saturday, January 13, 1-2 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
See description for January 11. Registration required. ♿

13 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, January 13, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
Observe the night sky using a giant research-grade telescope! A planetarium show if inclement weather. Also January 27. ♿

14 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, January 14, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park
Learn about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. Plus, view the sun using our safe, solar-viewing equipment. Also January 28. ♿

14 Travelogue: Explore the Azores

Sunday, January 14, 2-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Travel with Joanne Orichella to Terceira Island, a volcanic island in the Azores located off the coast of Portugal. See picturesque countrysides, urban cities and the traditional festival of "running with the bulls." ♿

16 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, January 16, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
See description for January 2. Also January 30.

18 Elderberries: Wildlife in Winter

Thursday, January 18, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Our Senior Days have been re-branded as "Elderberries: Seniors Ripe for Adventure!" Indoor presentation on ways wildlife contends with winter. Refreshments provided. A collaboration with the Geauga Dept on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. Registration required. ♿

20 Learn to Snowshoe

Saturday, January 20, 9-11 AM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Learn about proper clothing, equipment and technique. Indoor presentation followed by outdoor instruction and a snowshoe hike. Borrow snowshoes or bring your own! Ages 8+. Registration required. ♿

20 Lake Erie Winter Van Trip

Saturday, January 20, Noon-4 PM
The West Woods
Discover the beautiful frozen shores of Lake Erie! Locations to be determined. Must be able to hike several miles in cold and wind. Bring a snack and water. Registration required. ♿

21 Timbertots: Wonderful Woodpeckers (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Sunday, January 21, 2-3 PM
Sunnybrook Preserve, Lodge
Go in search of these feathered friends and make something to attract them to your yard. Also January 23. Registration required. ♿

21 Travelogue: The Four Jewels of California

Sunday, January 21, 2-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join Bill & Sue Berger as they revisit their travels to Kings Canyon, Sequoia, Yosemite and Death Valley — their beauty, geology and significance to our heritage. ♿

23 Timbertots: Wonderful Woodpeckers (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Tuesday, January 23, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
See description for January 21. Registration required. ♿

25 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, January 25, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Informal performances followed by a jam session. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing or simply enjoy. Snacks to share welcome. ♿

26 Plants in Space

Friday, January 26, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
See description for January 12. ♿

27 Scout Day: Wolf Cub Scout Paws on the Path

Saturday, January 27, 2-3:30 PM, Observatory Park
Work on requirements 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 and take an outdoor winter hike to observe seasonal Nature. Registration required. ♿

27 Scout Day: Cadette Girl Scouts Night Owl Badge

Saturday, January 27, 6-8 PM, Observatory Park
Uncover mysteries of the world after dark, exploring the night sky! All badge requirements will be covered during the program. Registration required. ♿

27 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, January 27, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
See description for January 13. ♿

28 Frozen Fest

Sunday, January 28, 11 AM-4 PM, The West Woods
Enjoy an afternoon of free winter fun! Visit <http://bit.ly/gpdspecial> for the schedule including live reindeer; appearances by ice princesses, a reindeer herder and a winter snowman; snowshoeing; live ice carving, face painting, live music, refreshments and more! ♿

28 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, January 28, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park
See description for January 14. ♿

30 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, January 30, 1-2:30 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
See description for January 2. Also January 16.

31 Partial Lunar Eclipse

Wednesday, January 31, 6:30-8 AM, Observatory Park
A "blue moon" and partial lunar eclipse at the same time! Cancelled if weather conditions are cloudy. ♿

3 Nature Break: Women's Retreat

Saturday, February 3, 9 AM-12:30 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Re-energize by joining in Nature-themed activities. Soup and salad lunch. Fee: \$6. Dress in layers for outside comfort and perhaps a change for aerobics. **Registration required.**

3 Winter Hawk Watch Van Trip

Saturday, February 3, 10 AM-Noon & 1-3 PM

Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge

Venture into Amish farmland for Rough-legged Hawks, Harriers, Kestrels and other winter birds of open country. Bring binoculars. **Registration required.**

4 Travelogue: Wild Orchids Across North America

Sunday, February 4, 2-3 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Join Tom Sampliner, past Native Plant Society president, as he shares some of his favorite found wild orchids. Presented in conjunction with the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio.

4 Sweet Memories of Maple Sugaring

Sunday, February 4, 3:30-5 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Members of the Ohio Maple Producers Association share recollections of syrup-making with hopes of audience participation. Bring old photos and sugaring items for show and tell.

9 Homeschool Days: Amazing Mammals (Ages 5-8 & 9-12)

Friday, February 9, 2-3:30 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Introduction to the diversity of Geauga mammals and their adaptations. Indoor program followed by outdoor exploration. Dress for the weather. **Registration required.**

9 Meet the Artists: Julie Cook & Hap Howle

Friday, February 9, 7-9 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Meet and view each artist's diverse work inspired by Nature. Refreshments served.

9 Mapping the Milky Way

Friday, February 9, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park

Learn how humans figured out our place in the galaxy without leaving home. Night sky viewing until 11 PM using park telescopes, weather permitting. Also February 23.

10 Maple 101 Workshop

Saturday, February 10, 9 AM-Noon

The West Woods, Nature Center

Learn everything you need to know, from tree biology and identification to producing the finished product. **Registration through Geauga County OSU Extension at 440-834-4656.**

10 Scout Day: Bear Cub Scouts Fur, Feathers & Ferns Core Adventure

Saturday, February 10, 2-3:30 PM

Observatory Park

Work on requirements 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 while exploring Observatory Park. Dress for the weather. **Registration required.**

10 Scout Day: Senior & Ambassador Girl Scouts Astronomy Night

Saturday, February 10, 6-8 PM, Observatory Park

Investigate space and learn stories of constellations. All requirements for the Sky Badge will be covered. Dress for the weather. **Registration required.**

10 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, February 10, 7-11 PM

Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station

Observe the night sky using a giant research-grade telescope! A planetarium show if inclement weather. Also February 24.

11 Travelogue: Thoroughbred Racing – In Search of a Triple Crown

Sunday, February 11, 2-3 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Join Naturalists Tami Gingrich and Linda Gilbert as they share their trip to the Kentucky Bluegrass. Tour premiere thoroughbred farms in the country, view workouts at two racetracks, visit the grave of Secretariat, and get an up-close encounter with the 2015 Triple Crown winner.

11 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, February 11, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park

Learn about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. Also view the sun using safe equipment. Also February 25.

13 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, February 13, 1-2:30 PM

Big Creek Park, Maple Grove Shelter

Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1 1/2 miles long. Naturalist led. If 20° or below, call to confirm. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Also February 27.

15 Elderberries: Snowbelted

Thursday, February 15, 1-2:30 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Our Senior Days have been re-branded as "Elderberries: Seniors Ripe for Adventure!" Look back at whopping winter weather and share your winter memories with refreshments. Collaboration with the Geauga Department on Aging and UH Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.**

16 Timbertots: Big Birds! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Friday, February 16, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM

Bass Lake Preserve, Lodge

Explore the amazing lives of eagles, owls and hawks...oh my! Dress for the weather. Also February 17. **Registration required.**

16 Great Backyard Bird Count

Friday, February 16, 11 AM-4 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Participate in this worldwide bird count coordinated by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society. Stop by during program hours to help compile a list of birds seen at the windows! Also February 17 & 18.

17 Timbertots: Big Birds! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Saturday, February 17, 10-11 AM

The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge

See description for February 16. **Registration required.**

17 Great Backyard Bird Count

Saturday, February 17, 11 AM-4 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

See description for February 16. Also February 18.

17 Tales from the Tree Stand

Saturday, February 17, 1-3 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Wildlife watchers, share your observations seen from a bird's eye view — the treetops! Bring your stories or come listen to the tales. Photos or short videos on a flash drive may help illustrate your story.

17 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, February 17, 7-11 PM

Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station

Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society for night sky viewing with the restored telescope and see the amazing new facility.

18 Great Backyard Bird Count

Sunday, February 18, 11 AM-4 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

See description for February 16.

18 Travelogue: Wandering Ohio – A Buckeye Trail Thru-Hike

Sunday, February 18, 2-3 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

In 2016, Chuck and Beth Hewett completed a 1,400-mile, 76-day hike on the Buckeye Trail. Join them as they share their journey about Nature and all the people they met along the way.

18 eBird: Everything You Ever Wanted to Know

Sunday, February 18, 3:30-4:15 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

In conjunction with the Great Backyard Bird Count, learn how to use the eBird app and database, and what kinds of cool things you can do with it to enhance your birding experience.

19 X-treme Winter Fun Day (Ages 12-17)

Monday, February 19, 1-4 PM, Orchard Hills Park

Spend your day off having winter fun outside with friends. Try our snowshoes, bring sleds to ride, and warm up by a fire with hot cocoa and s'mores. Dress for weather. Drop-off program; must have signed waiver. **Registration required.**

22 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, February 22, 7-10 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Informal performances followed by a jam session. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing or simply enjoy. Snacks to share welcome.

23 Sap Bucket Painting Workshop

Friday, February 23, 6:30-9 PM

The West Woods, Nature Center

Join artist Robert Kolcum to paint a beautiful woodland sugaring scene on a sap bucket. Fee: \$35 includes materials, wine and cheese. Ages 21+. **Registration required.**

23 Mapping the Milky Way

Friday, February 23, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park

See description for February 9.

February programs continued on page 9

Frog Fest & Salamander Call List

Sometime between March 1 and April 10, 8-9:30 PM, The West Woods

Witness spring breeding behavior of amphibians as they move into woodland pools. Notification by phone day of program. Dress for the weather. Bring flashlights. **Registration required.**



1 Full Moon Program: The Worm Moon

Thursday, March 1, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
Get a grip on earthworm anatomy and behavior, then watch the full moon rise using park telescopes, weather permitting.

3 Make A Bluebird House

Saturday, March 3, 1-3 PM, Big Creek Park
Build a bluebird house and get some pointers on where and when to place it to attract tenants. Fee: \$10. **Registration required.**

4 Maple Driving Tour

Sunday, March 4, 10 AM-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Sugar House
This is a featured stop on both the Maple Madness Tour and the Northeast Ohio Maple Tour. Sap collecting with a horse-drawn sap sled from 1-4 PM. Also featured on the tours March 11. Visit www.ohiomaple.org for more information about the statewide tour and www.facebook.com/MapleSyrupProducersofNEOhio for a complete listing of sugar houses that will be open for the regional tour.

4 Sap's-a-Risin'!

Sunday, March 4, Noon-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
Get a sweet taste of how methods have evolved from Native American traditions to today! Gather sap with a horse-drawn sap sled and experience historical tapping, gathering and boiling methods, then warm up with live music by the Oak Island Sunk Jumpers and maple treats in the lodge. Also March 11 and 18.

7 Beech Leaf Disease Update

Wednesday, March 7, 7-8:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
An update on Beech Leaf Disease and how it is affecting Northeast Ohio woodlands. Presented in conjunction with the Native Plant Society of Northeast Ohio.

8 Timbertots: Maple Sugar Time! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Thursday, March 8, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
Collecting sap and visiting the sugar house are some fun things we'll do to learn about how maple syrup comes from maple trees! Outdoors; dress for the weather. Snow boots encouraged. Also March 10. **Registration required.**

9 Weather Satellites & How To Use Them

Friday, March 9, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
Learn how to access satellite data from home and make your own forecasts! Night sky viewing using park telescopes until 11 PM, weather permitting. Also March 23.

10 Coffee with the Birds

Saturday, March 10, 8-10:30 AM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Enjoy birds while sipping a cup of shade-grown coffee. Discuss benefits of this environmental product and help with bird identification.

10 Scout Day: Brownie Girl Scouts Outdoor Art Creator Badge

Saturday, March 10, 9-11 AM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Covering requirements 1, 2 and 4. Bring a camera or phone for photography requirements. **Registration required.**

10 Scout Day: Boy Scout Nature Merit Badge

Saturday, March 10, 1-3:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Covers requirements 1, 2, 3 and part of 4. Merit badge counselor will be on site. Bring merit badge worksheets and Blue Card. **Registration required.**

10 Timbertots: Maple Sugar Time! (Ages 3-5 w/adult)

Saturday, March 10, 3-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
See description for March 8. **Registration required.**

10 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, March 10, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
Use the giant research-grade telescope to view the sky! If inclement weather, join us for a planetarium show instead. Also March 24.

10 30th Annual Tree Tapper's Ball

Saturday, March 10, 7:30-10:30 PM
Parkman Community House, Parkman, OH
Celebrate maple season with our 30th annual square dance. Taught in fun fashion with The Sap Run Revelers providing old-time string band music. **Registration required and begins February 26; limit of eight per registering group.**

11 Maple Driving Tour

Sunday, March 11, 10 AM-5 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
See description for March 4.

11 Sap's-a-Risin'!

Sunday, March 11, Noon-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
See description for March 4. Performances by Mr. Haney String Band featured in the lodge. Also March 18.

11 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, March 11, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park
Learn about what to watch for in the night sky. Building open house 1-4 PM. Also view the sun using our safe, solar-viewing equipment. Also March 25.

13 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, March 13, 1-2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
Hikes for active seniors 1 to 1½ miles long. Naturalist led. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2137. Also March 27.

15 Elderberries: A Sweet Treat from the Trees

Thursday, March 15, 11:30 AM-2:30 PM, Swine Creek Reservation
Our Senior Days have been re-branded as "Elderberries: Seniors Ripe for Adventure!" Have lunch with the Geauga County Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center, then discover the secrets of pure Geauga Gold...maple syrup! **Registration required.**

17 Backcountry Heron Hike

Saturday, March 17, 1-3 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Venture off trail to the site of a heron nesting colony with possible views of Great Blue Herons! Two-mile round-trip hike; wet and muddy with uneven terrain. **Registration required.**

18 Sap's-a-Risin'!

Sunday, March 18, Noon-4 PM
Swine Creek Reservation
See description for March 4. Performances by the Real Deal String Band featured in the lodge. Also March 4 and 11.

22 Maple Town Tune Traders

Thursday, March 22, 7-10 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Informal performances followed by a jam session. All musical genres, instruments and musicianship levels welcome. Come to play, sing or simply enjoy. Snacks to share welcome.

23 Weather Satellites & How To Use Them

Friday, March 23, 7-8 PM, Observatory Park
See description for March 9.

24 March of the Salamanders

Saturday, March 24, 9-10:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove Shelter
Learn about the amazing amphibian migration into vernal pools and check preset traps in search of salamanders and other aquatic critters.

24 Egg Hunt: Nature Style

Saturday, March 24, 1:30-4 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Stop in and celebrate spring by following clues to hidden eggs and fun facts while working for a fun prize! Two levels of scavenger hunt available: 5 & under and 6 & up.

24 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, March 24, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
See description for March 10.

25 Spring Wings Waterfowl Watch

Sunday, March 25, 9-11 AM
LaDue Reservoir, Boat House
View loons, grebes, ducks and other migrants as well as Bald Eagles. First come, first served for a seat in the park van; others caravan behind. Meet at the LaDue boat parking area at Valley and Washington streets. Bring binoculars.

25 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, March 25, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park
See description for March 11.

MARCH *continued*

27 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, March 27, 1-2:30 PM
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve
See description for March 13.

28 Grandparents in the Park: Spring Break

Wednesday, March 28, 10-11:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Cherry Room
Grandparents and grandchildren enjoy a day of fun Nature activities. Please bring a snack to share. Dress for the weather. **Registration required.** ♿

30 "Full Moon Rising" Glass Painting Workshop

Friday, March 30, 6:30-8:30 PM, Observatory Park
Paint a rising moon on a set of two drink glasses, or use as candle holders. Fee: \$30 includes materials and refreshments. May also bring beverage of choice. Ages 15+. **Registration required.** ♿

FEBRUARY *continued from page 7*

24 Nature Explorers: All About Birds (Ages 6-7 & 8-11)

Saturday, February 24, 12:30-2:30 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
View mist netting and bird banding, play bird games, and head outdoors in search of birds. Dress for the weather. Drop-off by 12:30 PM and pick-up by 2:30 PM. Signed waivers required. **Registration required.** ♿

24 Winter Tree ID Hike

Saturday, February 24, 1-3 PM
Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park
Discover the diversity of trees at this park. Learn to identify trees by their bark and buds. Hike approximately a mile over hilly terrain. Be prepared for winter weather. **Registration required.** ♿

24 Bring In Your Telescope

Saturday, February 24, 3-5 PM, Observatory Park
Drop in for some practice setting up and using your telescope, followed by night sky viewing. ♿

24 Nassau Night Sky Viewing

Saturday, February 24, 7-11 PM,
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
See description for February 10. ♿

25 Travelogue: Iceland – Land of Ice, Ash & Waterfalls

Sunday, February 25, 2-3 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Join Shane Wohlken on a journey through these breathtaking waterfalls, mountains, crater lakes, glaciers, icebergs and seaside towns. ♿

25 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show

Sunday, February 25, 2-3 PM, Observatory Park
See description for February 11. ♿

27 Geauga Walkers

Tuesday, February 27, 1-2:30 PM
Beartown Lakes Reservation
See description for February 13.



**WIN UP TO
4 KAYAKS,
LIFE VESTS
& PADDLES!**

...plus, get email updates
personalized to your interests

Enter to win & read official rules at
<http://bit.ly/gpdgiveaway2018>



UPDATING OUR PARK PUBLICATIONS A NEW LOOK IN 2018

Have you noticed this publication looks a little different? Surprise — you're getting a sneak peek of our new Activity Guide, coming in Spring 2018!

Soon you'll be getting more pages of great park content: bigger pictures and text, enhanced program descriptions, park and project spotlights, featured youth programming, and a regular reference for all your park amenity FAQs.

The expanded guide will also explore species found in Geauga County, seasonal sights to enjoy, and timely environmental concerns of our Nature specialists.

Excited now? Just wait till you see our redesigned website in early 2018! Stunning photography, mobile-optimized navigation, a fun adventure-searching tool and much more...watch our social media for updates!

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS

Welcome to 2018. As we start the new year, I would like to recognize just a few exciting projects and accomplishments. They are a tribute to you, our Geauga County residents. You continue to support our mission and make your Geauga Park District the success story that it is.

In recognition of our mission to conserve and protect our county's natural resources, Geauga Park District has received a grant for a stream restoration project at Bessie Benner Metzenbaum Park. Funding in the amount of up to \$260,765 comes through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), which funds the implementation of stormwater and stream restoration projects. The grant and corresponding fund considers strong projects to be those that produce significant pollutant load reductions for nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment in affected watersheds. In this case, the Griswold Creek stream restoration project will improve water quality for the residents of Chester and Russell townships.

Gauga Park District is also working toward receiving funding through the Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP). The Park District has been ranked 4th in the state of Ohio for restoration projects for Bass



Beaver Creek in Munson, looking north downstream toward Bass Lake

Lake Preserve's Beaver Creek stream restoration. With an award pending of up to \$842,840, this project will restore approximately 1,800 linear feet of channelized stream to a more natural and stable stream profile.

Additionally, in our mission to provide outdoor recreational experiences to all county residents, Geauga Park District is proud to be recognized this season by our peer organization, the Ohio Parks & Recreation Association, with a first place award in the \$1-\$2.5 million capital improvement projects category for the restoration of your Nassau Astronomical Station. The 2017 OPRA Awards of Excellence recognize organizations statewide that embody vision, dedication and demonstration of excellence in parks and recreation.

This is not the first time Geauga Park District has received an OPRA Award of Excellence. In 2013, the Park District received the coveted OPRA Governor's Award for its covered bridge project, spanning the east branch of the Cuyahoga River along The Maple Highlands Trail-South. The OPRA Governor's Award recognizes one award, of all of the year's first place winners, that has made the most significant impact in the lives of Ohioans. This year's Awards of Excellence

will be presented during the 2018 OPRA Conference on January 30 in Sandusky. Needless to say, we are excited and hopeful that Nassau's Award of Excellence also puts us in the running for the 2018 Governor's Award!

In closing, Geauga Park District's staff and Board of Park Commissioners thank you for your continued support. Our mission to preserve, conserve and protect the natural features of Geauga County, and to provide outdoor recreational experiences to our residents of every age, every ability and at all times of the year, would not be possible without the ever-present support of you, our residents. We celebrate our awards and recognition with you.

Thank you!

- John Oros

ADVENTURES in Geocaching

The first cache of 2018 is a regular cache located at Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve in Burton Twp.

Expires January 31, 2019
Details at <http://bit.ly/gpdgeocache>

*The park drive or Glacier Trail will take you to the garage/maintenance area.
A recent park house removal makes an unmarked trail more visible.
Winter is the best time to search – leaves off the trees make a clear lake perch.
North of the garages, a huge trunk you should spot. Behind it, an unimproved trail is your start.
Follow the overgrown drive of Lake Kelso's previous owner, Eric Westgren, Who managed a private fishing club here from the 1950s to 70s.
Over downed trees and twigs of poison ivy, enjoy the view to your right.
A glimpse of the Osprey platform you should soon sight.
Two large white pines mark the old house location;
A pile of railroad ties and lumber is your search destination.*

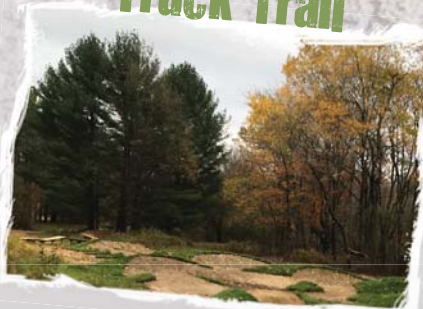
PART 1
N 41° 26.782
W 081° 10.554

Awesome New Adventures in 2018!

TAPPER'S FUN PaGE



Pump Track / Single Mountain Bike Track Trail



You're always looking for things to do, and Geauga Park District wants you to be outside in Nature — hey, we make a great team! Starting January 2, you can walk the trails at your new **Claridon Woodlands** to see what's in store for you and your friends when all the other amenities open up later this year!

Watch our website and social media for updates about the opening of the scenic lodge and recreational facilities at this new park, located at 11383 Claridon Troy Road in Claridon.

Nature-Based Playground

Fishing Platform

Ropes Course



Free Form Boulder Wall



Nature Detective: Tracks in the Snow

One fun thing to do outside in the wintertime is looking for tracks in the snow. The parks are full of them, but even your backyard can tell you what's been cutting through!

Here are some common tracks you may see in your yard. Can you identify them without looking at the explanations below?



Rabbit (1) and squirrel (2) tracks are very similar. The difference: the rabbit's front paws are staggered, with one in front of the other, whereas the squirrel's front paws are even.

Opossum (3) tracks are very recognizable, as each foot has five toes and the rear foot has a distinct toe looking like a thumb. The fingers are usually widely spread.

Raccoon (4) tracks contain five toes on the front and hind feet and resemble elongated, small human hand prints. Similar-looking are muskrat and beaver tracks.

Deer (5) tracks are pretty easy to identify, since we don't have elk and antelope in Geauga County. Tracks have two toes (hooves) that are pointed toward the top.

Dog (6) tracks can look very similar to those of fox and coyote. However, the middle toes on a dog are closer to the heel pad, whereas the others' sit well above the outer toes. Dog paws are also more rounded; coyotes' are more oval.



Geauga Park District
9160 Robinson Road
Chardon, OH 44024-9148

FIND YOUR ADVENTURE

IN ONE OF YOUR
22 OPEN PARKS!



440-286-9516 • www.geaugaparkdistrict.org



♻️ Printed on paper using 10% post-consumer waste.

**Celebrate
Winter**
at Geauga Park District's

FROZEN FEST

SUNDAY, JAN. 28
11 AM - 4 PM
The West Woods
in Russell Twp.
Free winter
activities
for the
whole
family!