When the parks become a backdrop for special family traditions

Judge Grendell names Pat Preston Park Commissioner

Adventure camps present summer fun for grades 5 through 10

How can we all celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day?
• 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.

SPRING PROGRAMS on pages 8-13

• 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.

Mark your calendars!

10th ANNIVERSARY
CAVEMAN CRAWL
5K TRAIL RUN & 1-Mile Fun Walk

Saturday, April 18 • 11 AM - 3 PM • The West Woods
• Wildlife presentations • Live animals • Nature craft
• Amphibian/reptile displays • Bird banding
• Garlic mustard challenge with prizes • Food truck

Sunday, June 14 • The West Woods
Challenge yourself to this one-of-a-kind trail run through wooded hills — cave garb encouraged. Also this year, all who complete the course earn a 10th anniversary commemorative medal!
Registration 7 AM • Costume Contest 8:30 AM • Race/Walk 9 AM

Claridon Woodlands’ high ropes course opens Sunday, May 24
Hours: Friday through Monday, 10:30 AM - 6 PM (last group up at 5 PM)

Take home a free milkweed plant to help the troubled Monarch population! One pot per person, please.

Mother’s Day Giveaway: Sunday, May 10, 10 AM - 12:30 PM at The West Woods Nature Center
Father’s Day Giveaway: Sunday, June 21, 9:30 AM - Noon at Claridon Woodlands

Milkweed Giveaways

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

Amphitheater concerts at Big Creek Park (BC) or Claridon Woodlands (CW); 7 - 8:30 PM
Outdoor movie nights at Observatory Park; activities begin at 8 PM, movies at dark

Chardon Polka Band 6/13 (BC)
Jumanji: The Next Level (PG-13) 6/20
Long Time Gone 7/18 (BC)
The Martian (PG-13) 7/11
Hiram Rapids Stumblers 8/15 (CW)
The Pop Tarts 8/29 (BC)
Up (PG) 8/8

Geauga Gems Trekking Series Program fulfills one of the naturalist-led requirements toward your Trekking Series award
Nature’s Not To Be Missed - Program focused on unique encounters with Nature
Fully Wheelchair/Stroller Accessible
Nature Scopes - Program recommended for our fifth-grade Nature Scopes students

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
A seasonal guide to the programs, special events and news of Geauga Park District

Dear Geauga County Friends and Neighbors,

Congratulations to Director Oros, the hardworking Park Staff, and the dedicated Park Board for another excellent “Frozen Fest,” a highlight of winter in Geauga County.

You know how much I love our Great Geauga County Parks! Let’s see what others in Geauga County are saying:

“As always Nora is just excellent! I cannot say enough about her. What an asset to the Geauga Park community. I will be at the next program.” (Timbertots: Searching for Squirrels)

“Frozen Fest was phenomenal! Every single employee & volunteer was so great & really made it a fun day for the kids! Thank you for putting this on!” (Frozen Fest)

“All of the volunteers at Frozen Fest were very helpful and caring. They took time to work with our grandchildren to make them feel special.” (Frozen Fest)

“Frozen Fest is supremely executed and the staff at The West Woods who are directly involved deserve a huge round of applause. The happiness that exudes from this day is second to none. Thank you!” (Frozen Fest)

As spring reawakens the natural wonders in our Parks, I hope you and your family will take some time to use and enjoy them.

Hope to see you at the Parks!

Sincerely,

Timothy J. Grendell
Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court Judge

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 till 1 AM from Memorial Day to Labor Day and till 11 PM from Labor Day to Memorial Day; its 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

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

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org info@geaugaparkdistrict.org

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More than 90 years ago, in July of 1927, the Covert family came together in a Chardon Methodist church to visit with relatives from as far away as California. After that first family reunion, the Coverts recognized a need to come together each year, God willing, on the last Sunday of July to share a meal, enjoy the outdoors, play games and visit with relatives who they often didn’t see but once a year.

Today, this reunion carries the name Covert-Davis Reunion, as Miss Mary Covert was married to James Davis, and the descendants of these two families find it important to come together and record their history. They have continued the tradition of meeting annually on the last Sunday of July since 1927. During the war years, the families agreed that the reunion should be postponed until after the war, as many of the young men were away from home. Three children (two in Geauga County and one in California), now in their 80s and 90s, from the Covert and Davis families that started this long-running event are still attending today.

For many years, the reunion was held in Willoughby Hills at Cleveland Metroparks’ Squire’s Castle. Then the families decided they were outgrowing the location with respect to shelter and picnicking space and sought out alternative locations further east in Geauga County. Rain or shine, the multiple options of the Geauga County park system fit the needs best of the growing family. Its shelters, playgrounds, open spaces and natural habitats were certainly a draw to continue the reunion tradition. The West Woods, Big Creek Park, The Rookery, Sunnybrook Preserve, Orchard Hills Park and Frohring Meadows, most recently, have all taken rank among the parks chosen.

Each year the families came together...
to share a potluck meal, play games and eat fresh fruit pies and ice cream to wrap up the day. In the early days, games for the children included a peanut/candy toss on the grass and relay races. Adults would play a very competitive baseball game, accompanied by fresh-squeezed lemonade to quench the thirst of all those playing in the hot sun. Following the games, the adults would sit together and record the history of the year gone by, taking minutes and updating births, deaths and marriages in a leather-bound folio (still in use today). A hat would be passed to collect money for prizes for the children’s games, as well as the ice cream that had been kept cool by dry ice. Most of the reunions would end by dusk, just as mosquitoes began to arrive on the scene.

Many old traditions of this family reunion remain intact to this day. The meal is always a pleaser, with some timeless favorite recipes returning each year. Games continue to be key in drawing this competitive family together. No matter how old or young, we are always in it to win it! Today’s games include sack relay races, a water balloon toss, tug o’ war and a raw egg toss. Scavenger hunts along the trails and through the woods entertain the children, while adults have the business meeting or indulge in a cornhole tournament or family history trivial pursuit game. Minutes are written each year, and officers are elected on alternate years to take care of upcoming reunion details such as the park reservation, shelter set-up and organizing games and ice cream.

Recently, the family sold printed T-shirts with a maple leaf logo to its members to raise funds for a 90-year commemorative plaque for one of the park benches. A more recent highlight of this tradition is the homemade/homegrown item auction. Propagated plants, crocheted afghans, canned goods, up-cycled bird houses and famous fudge are some of the favorite returning items that bring in money for the following year and another wonderful reunion.

This year, the Covert-Davis Reunion will celebrate its 91st year at Frohring Meadows. We’ve watched this park from its infancy of grass growing in with no trees to a pleasant balance of shade from the sun and open space to run, play and roll down hills. Geauga Park District has done a beautiful job of preserving these open spaces for the enjoyment of generations to come. Our families continue to come from as far away as California for this long-running family reunion. Come on out and start your own!
There’s good reason Big Creek Park has a fabulous reputation among hikers.

This trail system is one of the best in the county, with nine routes totaling 3.8 miles that present a choose-your-own-adventure for all ages and abilities, including some that were greatly improved at the end of 2019!

Wildflowers abound this time of year. In fact, two of the trails are even named for them. For a good challenge, search the map on our website for the mile-long Hemlock Trail. The statewide Buckeye Trail travels a portion of the park. And if that’s still not enough of a hike for you, take your vehicle over to one of the separate Tupelo Pond/Bridge Trail entrances for two more trails with 2.9 miles to explore!

Then there’s the view. Totaling 644 acres, Big Creek Park is bisected south to north by Big Creek, creating a landscape of varied relief. Most of the land is a rich beech-maple woods, attracting many species of songbirds that migrate from the tropics to nest in mature forests. Small streams divide the uplands, exposing glacial deposits and bedrock in their ravines. And clay slumps and floodplains are home to many distinctive plant species, which Geauga County can feel proud to protect.

Facilities here include the brand new Deep Woods Lodge and two shelters, all reservable, as well as the Donald W. Meyer Administrative Center (open weekdays 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) and Frances S. Hall Amphitheater, home of summertime performances. Watch for announcements this spring when reservations open for the new “tree house camping” facility, too!

You might also make it a point to schedule a springtime scavenger hunt seeking the unique new playground near Maple Grove Shelter, new fishing piers, campgrounds, activity field backstop, sand volleyball court and tetherball for a complete tour of this awesome park close to home.
Introducing new commissioner

Pat Preston

Pat Preston, owner of Preston Superstore in Burton, was sworn in by Judge Tim Grendell, as a Commissioner of the Geauga Park District on December 30, 2019, for a term commencing January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2022. Preston took over for Andrej Lah, who completed his term on December 31, 2019.

A Geauga County resident for nearly 30 years, Preston has a long history of dedication to the community. Preston said of running Preston Superstore, “It is a lot of responsibility and we take it very seriously. We also contribute where we can to make things better.”

Through his business, Preston has been a mainstay in the community and has supported many community organizations, including Cardinal Local School District, UH Geauga, the Newbury Bicentennial, St. Helen Computer Lab and Geauga County STARS for Autistic children. He even sponsored the Geauga County stop on the Experimental Aircraft Association’s (EEA) national Air Tour of its 1920s Ford Tri-Motor aircraft.

Judge Grendell reflected on his latest appointment this way: “Pat Preston understands the great benefits that our County Parks provide to Geauga County residents. Mr. Preston will bring his diverse knowledge, appreciation for nature, and business experience to the Board.

“My philosophy on these unelected local board positions is that there should not be only a few people who are appointed for a lifetime, and their three-year terms are designed to give other residents an opportunity to play a role in the decision making process for the parks that they pay for with their hard-earned tax dollars. I am confident that with this new addition to the Board, it will continue to balance preservation and conservation with recreational uses of the parks, and continue to make our County’s Parks even better than ever.”

POETRY & PROSE - 3 AGE CATEGORIES - GET PUBLISHED - WIN $ PRIZES
Enter Geauga Park District’s 25th Annual Nature Writing Contest
Entries accepted through May 1
Get your application at http://bit.ly/gpdnwc2020 or at The West Woods Nature Center or Big Creek Park’s Meyer Center

Plus, save the date for the 29th Annual Nature Arts Festival
Sunday, August 2, at Big Creek Park, including a new-and-improved Nature Writing Winners Coffeehouse event!

Thank You to All of Our Generous Donors

Debbie Remias  Memorial Bench Plaque - Beartown Lakes Reservation  500.00
John & Meta Dennis Trust  Unrestricted donation  39,000.00
Scott & Carol Kenney  Unrestricted donation  75.00
Geauga Walkers Group  Unrestricted donation  100.00
Christopher Reeder  Engraved paver - The West Woods Nature Center In memory of George L. Reeder  375.00
Cleveland Foundation  Lewis & Ruth Affelder Fund  470.75
Junction Auto Sales  Caveman Crawl sponsorship  500.00
Louise Foster  K9 donation  150.00
April Oros  K9 donation  50.00
Geauga Park District patrons  K9 donation  150.00
Interstate Towing & Transport  K9 donation  400.00
Edward Carrol  K9 donation  75.00

Donations to Geauga Park District November 2019 through January 2020
Sunset Nature Stroll
Thursday, April 2, 7 - 8:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park
Enjoy a beautiful stroll through the park around sunset. We’ll watch for wildlife as some are settling down for the night, while others are just getting up. Registration required.

Hunter Education Course (Day 1)
Saturday, April 4, 9 AM - 3 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Training on hunter safety, archery, ammunition, ethics and conservation during this two-day course. Attendance both days (also April 11) is required. Quiz given at the end of the course. Under age 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration is required through the Ohio Division of Wildlife at https://oh-web.s3licensing.com/Event/Index.

Spring Exploration of the Upper Chagrin
Saturday, April 4, 10 AM - Noon & 1 - 3 PM, Offsite
Hike where marsh marigolds, Virginia bluebells and other wildflowers carpet the wetlands bordering the Chagrin River. A challenging hike with muddy paths and stream crossings. Wear sturdy, waterproof footwear. Park your vehicle and be driven to the start of the hike in a park van. Details provided to those who register. Registration required.

Egg Hunt: Nature Style
Saturday, April 4, 1:30- 3 PM
The West Woods
Celebrate spring by following clues indoors and out to hidden eggs and fun facts. Find them all and get a fun prize! Drop in anytime during program hours. Scavenger hunts for preschool and school age children.

Bald Eagle Hike
Sunday, April 5, 12 - 1:30 PM & 2:30 - 4 PM, Headwaters Park, Boathouse
Learn amazing facts about Bald Eagles and hike to an active nest, rain or shine, hopefully to observe eagle activity! Should be able to hike two miles over rolling terrain. Registration required.

Warbler Warm-up
Sunday, April 5, 2 - 3:30 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center
Noted local birders present techniques for ID’ing spring warblers using color patterns, habitat, behaviors and song. For novice to intermediate birders with handouts provided. Walk follows to find early songbird migrants. A collaboration with the Audubon Society of Greater Cleveland.

Hypertufa Trough Workshop
Sunday, April 5, 2 - 5 PM,
Claridon Woodlands
Fee: $33 (county resident), $37 (out of county resident) Join artisan Cyndi Konopka to create a planter from cement, peat moss and vermiculite. Fee covers most supplies (see participant supply list). Dress for mess. Refreshments served. Registration required.

Geauga Skywatchers Club: The Moon
Monday, April 6, 6:30 - 7:30 PM
Bainbridge Public Library
Phases, eclipses and moonwalks; explore the moon in fascinating detail. Learn about the library’s new telescope-lending program and how to use a telescope to view the moon. Registration required at https://geaugalibrary.libcal.com. Registration required.

The Full Frog Moon
Tuesday, April 7, 7:30 - 8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Come and learn what makes a full moon, meet a few frogs, and observe the rising “Frog Moon” using the park telescopes! Registration required.

Timbertots: Feathered Friends
(Ages 3 - 5 w/adult)
Friday, April 10, 10 - 11 AM & 1 - 2 PM, The West Woods
Join Nora the Explorer to discover the amazing lives of birds! Parly outdoors, weather permitting; dress accordingly. Older or younger siblings not considered registered participants. Registration required. Also April 11.

Earthquakes in Ohio
Friday, April 10, 7 - 8 PM
Observatory Park
Learn the history of Ohio’s earthquakes, followed by telescope viewing until 11 PM, weather permitting. Also April 24.

Hunter Education Course (Day 2)
Saturday, April 11, 9 AM - 3 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
See description for April 4. Registration required through the Ohio Division of Wildlife at https://oh-web.s3licensing.com/Event/Index.

Nature Trek Fitness Hike
Saturday, April 11, 10 - 11:30 AM
Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve, Route 44 Lot
Welcome springtime by exploring around a lake on a paved trail. Held rain or shine, so dress accordingly. Registration required.

Timbertots: Feathered Friends
(Ages 3 - 5 w/adult)
Saturday, April 11, 3 - 4 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
See description for April 10. Registration required.

Nassau Night Sky Viewing
Saturday, April 11, 7 - 11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
Observe the wonders of the night sky using a giant research-grade telescope! If inclement weather, join us for a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead.

Annual Spring Bird Walk Series
Sunday, April 12, 7:30 - 9:30 AM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
See birds as they return to prime breeding habitat during spring migration. Experienced leaders will assist with observation and identification. Dress for the weather; bring binoculars and bird guide. At different locations April 19, 26, May 3, 10 and 17.

Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, April 14, 1 - 2:30 PM
Headwaters Park, Route 322 Lot
Naturalist-led hike 1 to 1 ½ miles long for active seniors. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-275-2126. Also April 28.

Elderberries: Nature Photography & Bird Walk
Thursday, April 16, 9 - 11:30 AM
Frohring Meadows, Katydidd Lodge
Discuss tips on how to capture great images, followed by a bird walk. Begins with pancake breakfast. A collaboration with Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. Registration required.

Astrotots: Satellites, Robots & Probes, Oh My!
(Ages 3 - 5 w/adult)
Friday, April 17, 10 - 11 AM & 1 - 2 PM, Observatory Park
Oodles of machines have been rocketed into space. Discover cool facts about them and create a fun space craft designed by Commander Melvin, our Astrotot mascot. Registration required. Also April 18.

April Evening Adventure
Friday, April 17, 7:30 - 9 PM
Eldon Russell Park
A woodcock air show accompanied by Spring Peeper piping, Barred Owl bantering, beaver tail slapping and Great Blue Heron flapping will culminate in a spring evening hike for families.

Early Morning Winnowing Walk
Saturday, April 18, 7 - 8:30 AM
Frohring Meadows
Witness the amazing courtship flight of a seldom seen wetland species, the Common Snipe. Males perform their unique winnowing displays with the sunrise as a backdrop.
18 **Astrotots: Satellites, Robots & Probes, Oh My!** (Ages 3-5 w/adult) Saturday, April 18, 10-11 AM, Observatory Park
See description for April 17. **Registration required.**

18 **Signs of Spring Hike**
Saturday, April 18, 9:30-11:30 AM
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge Shelter
Hike in search of sights and sounds of spring before celebrating the 50th anniversary of Earth Day! Dress for the weather with sturdy footwear; 2-3 miles with hills, rain or shine. **Registration required.**

18 **Earth Day Celebration**
Saturday, April 18, 11 AM-3 PM
The West Woods
Celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day with live animals, bird banding, wildlife presentations, a garlic mustard challenge with prizes, a Nature craft, a food truck and more! See website for schedule of events. 🌐

18 **Scout Day: Junior Girl Scouts - Geocacher Badge**
Saturday, April 18, 9:30-11:30 AM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
A morning of high-tech hide and seek as you work toward your badge. Bring your own GPS unit or enabled device, or use ours. **Registration required by phone only at 440-279-0880.**

18 **Scout Day: Wolf Cubs Finding Your Way Elective**
Saturday, April 18, 1-3 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Discover how to use a map and compass to locate objects and go on a hike. **Registration required by phone only at 440-279-0880.**

18 **Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS**
Saturday, April 18, 7-11 PM, Observatory Park, Nassau
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky using our amazing 36-inch-telescope! Discover this amazing facility and all it has to offer. Canceled if cloudy. 🌙

19 **Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**
Sunday, April 19, 7:30-9:30 AM
Frohring Meadows
See description for April 12. At different locations 26, May 3, 10 and 17. 🌳

19 **Bald Eagle Van Trip**
Sunday, April 19, Noon-4 PM
The West Woods
Learn amazing facts about Bald Eagles. Search for eagle activity and nests located in Geauga County. Should be able to hike at least 1/2 mile over rolling terrain. Bring binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras, a snack and water. **Registration required.**

19 **Nature Trek Fitness Hike**
Sunday, April 19, 1-2:30PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge
Learn some cool Nature facts while burning calories! Should be able to hike at least three miles. Rain or shine; dress accordingly; bring water. **Registration required.**

23 **Maple Town Tune Traders**
Thursday, April 23, 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. 🎧

24 **Earthquakes in Ohio**
Friday, April 24, 7-8 PM
Observatory Park
See description for April 10. 🌋

24 **Meet the Artist**
Friday, April 24, 7-9 PM
The West Woods, Nature Center

25 **Lesser Celandine, An Undesirable Beauty**
Saturday, April 25, 12:30-1:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
The abundant and beautiful flowers of lesser celandine disguise an invasive, aggressive menace to other wildflowers, gardens and lawns in your neighborhood. Join park staff to learn how to get rid of this plant, benefit your local wildlife, and help spread the word among your neighbors. 🌱

25 **Wildflowers & Invasives Backcountry Hike**
Saturday, April 25, 1-3:30 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
A rugged off-trail hike into woodland ravines. See spring wildflowers and view the invasive, aggressive lesser celandine. Must be capable of several miles of off-trail hiking. Dress for the weather; wear sturdy boots for wet terrain. **Registration required.**

25 **Nassau Night Sky Viewing**
Saturday, April 25, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau Astronomical Station
See description for April 11. 🌌

26 **Lake Erie Bluffs Birding Van Trip**
Sunday, April 26, 6:45-11:15 AM
The West Woods
Bring binoculars, spotting scopes and cameras to explore this unique habitat for spring migrating birds. Reserve a seat on the van or drive yourself and meet at Lake Erie Bluffs; Dress for the weather with sturdy footwear and bring a snack and water. See website for trip details. **Registration required.**

26 **Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**
Sunday, April 26, 7:30-9:30 AM
The Rookery
See description for April 12. At different locations 19, May 3, 10 and 17. 🐦

26 **Hidden Gems Hike: Explore Whitlam Woods**
Sunday, April 26, 1-3 PM
Whitlam Woods
Discover this often-overlooked hidden gem of a park as we hike its beautiful hemlock ravines, rain or shine. Ability to hike two miles over hilly terrain. **Registration required.**

26 **The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**
Sunday, April 26, 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. Also view the sun using our safe solar-viewing equipment, weather permitting. 🌌

28 **Geauga Walkers**
Tuesday, April 28, 1-2:30 PM
The Rookery
See description for April 14. 🩺

29 **Geauga Cyclists Kickoff & Safety Meeting**
Wednesday, April 29, 4-5 PM
Chardon Heritage House, 111 E Park St, Chardon, OH 44024
Ages 55 and older, join us for a bike safety session as we kick off a new biking group: the Geauga Cyclists! Review basic bike safety in advance of our weekly Geauga Cyclists rides, set for each Wednesday at 4 PM at Mountain Run Station. 🚲

29 **The Rookery Through the Seasons Hike: Spring**
Wednesday, April 29, 6:30-8 PM
The Rookery, Great Blue Heron Lodge
Enjoy spring wildflowers such as white trout lily and anemones on this easy hike, one in a series to discover the changing flora along the Interurban Trail. A collaboration with the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio. **Registration required.**

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**Fully Accessible**

**Nature Scopes**

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Visit www.geaugaparkdistrict.org for more information.
MAY

2 Nature Explorers: All About Birds (Ages 6-7 & 8-11) Saturday, May 2, 1-3 PM
Big Creek Park, Deep Woods Lodge
Find migratory birds returning to their spring/summer homes, play bird games, and other activities indoors and out. Drop-off program. Registration and waivers required.

2 Bilingual Chinese/English Wildflower Walk Saturday, May 2, 2-3 PM
The West Woods
Learn the surprising variety of Ohio’s native spring wildflowers conducted in Mandarin Chinese and English! Whatever language you speak, you’ll discover something new. Registration required.

3 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series Sunday, May 3, 7:30-9:30 AM
Eldon Russell Park
See birds during spring migration as they return home to prime breeding habitat. Experienced leaders will assist with observation and identification. Dress for the weather; bring binoculars and bird guide. Also May 10 and 17 at different locations.

3 Late Afternoon Tea & Wildflower Walk Sunday, May 3, 4-5:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Deep Woods Lodge
Enjoy a variety of teas and pastries similar to the British “afternoon tea” time, then go for a short hike to look at wildflowers in bloom. Rain or shine. Registration required.

4 Geauga Skywatchers Club: Astrolabes - Part 1 Monday, May 4, 6:30-7:30 PM
Geauga West Library
Learn about our oldest multifunction computer, the astrolabe, and discover the secrets it holds. Also learn about the library’s telescope-lending program and basics on how to use a telescope to view the moon. Registration required at https://geaugalibrary.libcal.com.

5 Magee Marsh Birding Van Trip Tuesday, May 5, 6 AM-6 PM
The West Woods
Fee: $10 (Geauga county resident), $25 (out-of-county resident) Visit one of the best bird-watching spots in the country to witness spring migration along the shores of Lake Erie. Transportation provided. Naturalists will assist with bird identification. Bring binoculars, water and sack lunch. Registration required.

6 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride Wednesday, May 6, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station
Ages 55 and older, join this senior bike group riding The Maple Highlands Trail each Wednesday at 4 PM. Bring your own bike, helmet and water, and meet in the parking lot for an escorted ride! Also May 13, 20 & 27.

7 Full Moon Hike Thursday, May 7, 8:30-9:30 PM
Observatory Park
Explore the woods and wetlands after dark. A two-mile hike over level terrain, searching for nocturnal wildlife, then see the rising full moon through telescopes, weather permitting. Registration required for hiking portion.

8 Homeschool Days: Bees & Blossoms (Ages 5-7 & 8-12) Friday, May 8, 2-3:30 PM
Clardon Woodlands
Learn about pollinators and their importance through hands on activities. Sample some honey too! Adults may attend (need not register) or drop off child with waiver. Mostly outdoors; dress for the weather. Registration required.

8 Exoplanets Friday, May 8, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
Weird worlds have been discovered outside of our solar system. Learn about exoplanets and how you can participate in the search for more, followed by night sky viewing using the park telescopes until 11 PM, weather permitting.

9 Ansel’s Cave Hike: Spring Exploration Saturday, May 9, 9-11 AM
The West Woods
Naturalist-led two-mile hike exploring spring sights and sounds at Ansel’s Cave, rain or shine – a rare opportunity to go into this restricted area! Registration required.

9 Wildlife-Friendly Backyards Van Trip Saturday, May 9, 1-4 PM
The West Woods
Visit two local backyards which have been transformed into wildlife sanctuaries. Explore each backyard alongside the homeowners. Dress for the weather. Registration required.

9 Nassau Night Sky Viewing Saturday, May 9, 9-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
Observe the wonders of the night sky using a giant research-grade telescope! If weather prevents sky viewing, enjoy a planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center instead.

10 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series Sunday, May 10, 7:30-9:30 AM
Big Creek Park, Aspen Grove
See description for May 3. Also May 17 at different location.

10 Mother’s Day Milkweed Giveaway Sunday, May 10, 10 AM -12:30 PM
The West Woods
Give your mom a gift to benefit Monarch Butterflies. Stop by anytime between the specified hours and pick up a free pot of native milkweed and/or plant your own seeds to take home and grow. One pot per person.

10 Wildflower Wanderings Walk Sunday, May 10, 1-2:30 PM
Headwaters Park, Rt. 322 Entrance
A naturalist-led hike to one of the best locations in the Park District to find spring-blooming wildflowers, 1½ miles along gently rolling terrain.

12 Geauga Walkers Tuesday, May 12, 1-2:30 PM
Big Creek Park, Deep Woods
Naturalist-led hike 1 to 1½ miles long for active seniors. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126.

13 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride Wednesday, May 13, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station
See description for May 6.

15 Mid-May Migrants Evening Bird Walk Friday, May 15, 7-8:30 PM
Holbrook Hollows, Horse Parking Lot
Enjoy an evening bird walk and discover what mid-May migrants are passing through this new park. Bring binoculars and bird field guide.

16 Hidden Gems Hike: Discovering the Wonders of Spring! Saturday, May 16, 9-11 AM
The Rookery
Discover natural springtime wonders along the beautiful trails of The Rookery! Outdoors, so dress for the weather. Registration required.

16 Campfire Cooking: Forks & Foil Saturday, May 16, 11 AM - 1 PM
Big Creek Park, Maple Grove
Get inspired for your next camping adventure! Learn to create foil meals packed with sausage, onions, peppers and other veggies. Hot dogs on standby for picky eaters. Registration required.
**16 Geauga Gems Trekking Series Hike**
Saturday, May 16, 2-4 PM
Big Creek Park, Tupelo Pond
Explore the beautiful Creek Trail on this naturalist-led hike. Hike is at least three miles over hilly terrain rain or shine; dress accordingly and bring water. **Registration required.**

**16 Nassau Astronomy Night with CVAS**
Saturday, May 16, 7-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
Join members of the Chagrin Valley Astronomical Society to take in the wonders of the night sky using our amazing 36-inch-mirrored telescope! Discover this amazing facility and all it has to offer. Cancelled if cloudy. 

**17 Annual Spring Bird Walk Series**
Sunday, May 17, 7:30-9:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge
See description for May 3. Also May 10 at different location.

**17 Lake Kelso Kayak**
Sunday, May 17, 1-2:30 PM
Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
Enjoy wildlife and the beautiful surroundings of these tranquil waters. Basic skills required; instruction not given. Held rain or shine except thunderstorms. Wear shoes to get wet or muddy and bring drinking water. **Registration required** beginning May 10. Life vests also required.

**18 Blackbrook Audubon: The Wildlife of Bass Lake**
Tuesday, May 19, 7-9 PM
Big Creek Park, Meyer Center
Nature enthusiast Chris Parker has documented the wonderful wildlife that occurs at Bass Lake Preserve. Join him to experience his close encounters with Bald Eagles, river otters, mink, osprey, swans, loons, Prothonotary Warblers and much more. A collaboration with Blackbrook Audubon Society.

**19 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride**
Wednesday, May 20, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station
See description for May 6.

**20 Elderberries: Welcome to a Woodland**
Thursday, May 21, 11:30 AM-1:30 PM, Claridon Woodlands
Go on a treasure hunt for mysterious boxes with examples of diverse wildlife to learn their ecological connections. Light lunch served. A collaboration with Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. **Registration required.**

**22 Timbertots: Flower Fun**
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Friday, May 22, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Headwaters Park, Crystal Lake Picnic Area
Find out how flowers can be fun with colors, counting and exploration! Program outdoors, dress accordingly. **Registration required.**

**22 Exoplanets**
Friday, May 22, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
See description for May 8.

**22 Timbertots: Flower Fun**
(Ages 3-5 w/adult) Saturday, May 23, 10-11 AM, Big Creek Park, Deep Woods
See description for May 22. **Registration required.**

**23 Hound Hike/Pack Walk with the Chagrin Valley Beagles**
Saturday, May 23, 10 AM-Noon
Sunnybrook Preserve
Bring your dog for a spring walk on woodland trails with the wiggly-waggy pack of the Chagrin Valley Beagles, and some dog training fun led by professional dog trainers. Walkers without dogs also welcome. See website for details. **Registration required**; arrive a few minutes early to check in.

**23 Maple Highlands Trail Walk**
Saturday, May 23, 2-4 PM
Mountain Run Station, Chardon Rotary Shelter
A two-mile spring hike from Mountain Run Station to South Street and back again to discover the sights and sounds that surround us. **Registration required.**

**23 Nassau Night Sky Viewing**
Saturday, May 23, 9-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
See May 9 for description.

**24 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show**
Sunday, May 24, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
A planetarium presentation 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, weather permitting.

**26 Geauga Walkers**
Tuesday, May 26, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods, Affelder House
Naturalist-led hike 1 to 1 ½ miles long for active seniors. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126.

**27 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride**
Wednesday, May 27, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station, Parking Lot
See description for May 6.

**27 After Work Wildflower Walk**
Wednesday, May 27, 6:30-8 PM
Beartown Lakes Reservation
Enjoy a walk to find late-blooming spring wildflowers along wooded trail and wetland areas. A collaboration with the Native Plant Society of Northeastern Ohio. **Registration required.**

**28 Maple Town Tune Traders**
Thursday, May 28, 7-10 PM
The West Woods
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.

**30 Exploring the Preserve: Backcountry Hike**
Saturday, May 30, 10 AM-Noon & 1:30-3:30 PM
Stafford Preserve in Chesterland
Off-trail hike into a mature woodland. See spring wildflowers, ravines, streams and the history of the land. Rugged, wet terrain; must be physically capable of several miles of off-trail hiking. Wear sturdy boots with good traction. **Registration required.** Directions sent after registration.

**31 Horseback Trail Ride (Walk, Trot & Canter)**
Sunday, May 31, 10-11:30 AM
Observatory Park, Cygnus Shelter
Bring your own horse to enjoy the spring woodlands from the saddle on this naturalist-led trail ride at a walk, trot and canter. See details on website. **Registration required.**

**31 Horseback Trail Ride (Walk Only)**
Sunday, May 31, 1-3 PM
Observatory Park, Grounds
Bring your own horse to enjoy the spring woodlands from the saddle on this walk-only naturalist-led trail ride. See details on website. **Registration required.**

**31 Frog Fest Hike**
Sunday, May 31, 8-9:30 PM
The West Woods
Enjoy the sights and sounds of spring as we hike the Discovery Trail in search of frog activity along the trail and in woodland breeding pools, rain or shine, so dress for the weather. Approximately 1/2 mile. Flashlights recommended. **Registration required.**

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[www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org) • PARK EXPLORER
1. Geauga Skywatchers Club: Astrolabes - Part 2
   Monday, June 1, 6:30-7:30 PM
   Geauga West Library
   Learn about our oldest multifunction computer, build your own working astrolabe, and discover the secrets it holds. Also learn about the library’s new telescope-lending program and some basics on how to use a telescope to view the moon. Registration required at https://geaugalibrary.libcal.com.

2. Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride
   Wednesday, June 3, 4-5:30 PM
   Mountain Run Station
   Ages 55 and older, join this senior bike group riding The Maple Highlands Trail each Wednesday at 4 PM. Bring your own bike, helmet and water, and meet in the parking lot for an escorted ride! Also June 10, 17 & 24.

3. Evening Hike
   Friday, June 5, 7-8 PM
   Observatory Park
   June brings late sunsets. Join us for a two-mile evening hike to look and listen for crepuscular wildlife at Observatory Park, then stick around for the full moon program at 9 PM if you’d like. Registration required.

4. The Full Strawberry Moon
   Friday, June 5, 9-10 PM
   Observatory Park
   June’s full moon is “The Strawberry Moon.” Come and get a taste of some strawberries and their history, then watch the full moon rise using park telescopes!

5. Basic Learn to Kayak
   Saturday, June 6, 9 AM- Noon
   Burton Wetlands Nature Preserve
   Learn basic kayak-handling techniques for safe kayaking on flat water. Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Phone registration begins May 30. Wear shoes to get wet or muddy, and bring water and a change of clothes. Registration required.

6. National Trails Days: Hike Around the Reservoir
   Saturday, June 6, 10 AM-2 PM
   Headwaters Park, Rte 608
   Main Parking Lot
   Take a seven-mile hike around the East Branch Reservoir, including the preserve side not normally open to the public. Woody trails offer the possibility of wildlife sightings including eagles and osprey. Pack a lunch and water bottle. A short portion of the walk will be on Routes 608 and 322. Registration required.

7. Forest Exploration & History Hike
   Sunday, June 7, 11 AM-noon
   Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge
   Explore the forest and learn about this park’s history and unique features. Approximately 1.5 miles of easy to moderate trail. Registration required.

8. Family Fun at the Park!
   Sunday, June 7, 1 - 2:30 PM
   Swine Creek Reservation, Lake Side
   Celebrate warm weather with a day outside in the park. Explore the pond, a meadow and a playground! Some activities might be in wet/muddy areas; dress appropriately. Registration required.

9. Polliwog Paddle Family Canoe (Ages 5+ w/adult)
   Sunday, June 7, 2-4 PM, Eldon Russell Park, Horwath’s Landing
   Families with children 5 years and older, take an easy-paced, short-distance canoe float on the wildlife-rich Upper Cuyahoga River. Phone registration begins May 31 at 440-279-0880. Registration required.

10. Geauga Walkers: Summer Picnic
    Tuesday, June 9, 12-2:30 PM
    Frohripping Meadows
    Naturalist-led hike 1 to 1½ miles long for active seniors. Annual picnic with a short hike at noon followed by a potluck lunch at 1 PM, bring a dish to share. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126.

11. How Far Are the Stars?
    Friday, June 12, 7-8:30 PM
    Observatory Park
    Find out how humans figured out the distance to the stars! If weather permits, program will be followed by night sky viewing until 11 PM. Also June 26.

12. Dragon-Hunting Van Trip: Morgan Park, Portage County
    Saturday, June 13, 12:30-4:30 PM
    The West Woods
    Hike in one of Portage County’s newer parks in search of dragonflies and damselflies, exploring meadows, wetlands and surrounding habitats. Bring lunch and water. Registration required.

13. Nights Out in the Parks: Chardon Polka Band
    Saturday, June 13, 7-8:30 PM
    Big Creek Park, Amphitheater
    Enjoy your favorite polka tunes with a twist! Refreshments served. Inside if inclement weather.

14. Nassau Night Sky Viewing
    Saturday, June 13, 9-11 PM
    Observatory Park, Nassau
    Observe the wonders of the night sky using this facility’s giant research-grade telescope! A planetarium presentation in the McCullough Science Center if inclement weather.

15. Caveman Crawl 5K Trail Run & 1-Mile Fun Walk
    Sunday, June 14, 7-11 AM
    The West Woods
    Fee: $20 for advance registration
    Registration forms also at The West Woods Nature Center and Big Creek Park’s Meyer Center. Walkers welcome! Proceeds benefit the Chip Henry Institute for Outdoor Adventure.

16. Veteran’s Appreciation Picnic
    Sunday, June 14, 1-4 PM
    Big Creek Park, Deep Woods Lodge
    Celebrate our veterans on Flag Day with a special picnic to say thank you for serving our country! Veterans, with up to one guest each, are welcome to enjoy food and fun at this new lodge in Big Creek Park. Registration required.

17. Cuyahoga Kayak (Age 12+ w/adult)
    Sunday, June 14, 1:30 - 4 PM, Eldon Russell Park
    Explore the wilds of the Upper Cuyahoga River, home to a wondrous variety of birds and beasts. Must have experience. Under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Registration required beginning June 7.

18. Toddler Time: Sensing the Summer (Ages 1-2 w/adult)
    Tuesday, June 16, 10-11 AM
    Walter C. Best Wildlife Preserve, Sunset Shelter
    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.
17 Timbertots: Bees & Blossoms (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Wednesday, June 17, 10-11 AM & 1-2 PM, Frohring Meadows
Explore the amazing lives of bees and other animals that help flowers to bloom through fun activities and exploration! Older or younger siblings will not be considered registered participants. Registration required. Also June 20.

17 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride
Wednesday, June 17, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station
See description for June 3. Also June 10 & 17.

18 Elderberries: Dragon Hunting
Thursday, June 18, 9-11:30 AM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
No suit of armor needed for these dragons! An up-close chance to see the wonders and variety of these winged residents. Program begins with breakfast. A collaboration with Geauga Department on Aging and University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center. Registration required.

20 Welcoming Summer Walk
Saturday, June 20, 10-11:30 AM
Orchard Hills Park
Take a guided hike to discover this unique park’s many habitats: pond, fields and orchards. Approximately 1.5 miles on a gravel trail. Registration required.

20 Timbertots: Bees & Blossoms (Ages 3-5 w/adult)
Saturday, June 20, 3-4 PM
Orchard Hills Park, Lodge
See description for June 17. Registration required.

20 Movie Night: “Jumanji: The Next Level”
Saturday, June 20, 8-11:30 PM
Observatory Park
Pre-show activities begin at 8 PM and include the Geauga County Public Library’s Fun Bus. Free popcorn and lemonade. Bring blankets and lawn chairs. Will be shown indoors if inclement weather. Movie is rated PG-13. Night sky viewing after the movie, weather permitting.

21 Father’s Day Milkweed Giveaway
Sunday, June 21, 10 AM - Noon
Claridon Woodlands
Dad likes plants too! To aid the struggling Monarch Butterfly population, we’ll hand out free pots of native milkweed for you to plant. One pot per person.

23 Geauga Walkers
Tuesday, June 23, 1-2:30 PM
Observatory Park
Naturalist-led hike 1 to 1½ miles long for active seniors. Call Geauga Senior Center for full schedule, 440-279-2126.

24 Grandparents in the Park: School’s Out!
Wednesday, June 24, 1-2:30 PM
Holbrook Hollows
Celebrate the beginning of summer with your grandchildren and a Nature scavenger hunt, craft and snack! Mostly outdoors; dress for the weather; sandals and flip flops not recommended. Please bring a snack to share. Registration required.

24 Geauga Cyclists Weekly Ride
Wednesday, June 24, 4-5:30 PM
Mountain Run Station
See description for June 3. Also June 10 & 24.

25 Maple Town Tune Traders
Thursday, June 25, 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. Registration required.

26 How Far Are The Stars?
Friday, June 26, 7-8:30 PM
Observatory Park
See description for June 12.

26 Epic Firefly Adventure
Friday, June 26, 9-11 PM
Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge
Fun for all on this good ol’ fashioned lightning bug hunt. Help capture these elusive insects to fill a giant jar with light. Begins inside with an amusing presentation on firefly biology. Then grab a provided net and head outside!

27 Tree Frogs, Tadpoles & Toadlets
Saturday, June 27, 1-3 PM
The West Woods, Turkey Ridge
Discover the tiny toads and tree frogs near their springtime pools, and dip into the water with provided nets to find aquatic life while we share some natural history of these amazing creatures.

27 Nassau Night Sky Viewing
Saturday, June 27, 9-11 PM
Observatory Park, Nassau
See description for June 13.

27 Moth Madness
Saturday, June 27, 10 PM - 1 AM
Holbrook Hollows
Bring your curiosity and a flashlight to the Old Ironsides Trail to see what species have been attracted to our lights. Naturalists will be monitoring them all night. Cameras also welcome to capture awesome images of some night-flying insects!

28 Horseback Trail Ride (Walk, Trot & Canter)
Sunday, June 28, 10 AM - Noon
Holbrook Hollows
Bring your horse for this naturalist-led walk, trot and canter trail ride, moving out together at a faster pace. See details on website. Registration required.

28 Horseback Trail Ride (Walk Only)
Sunday, June 28, 1-3:30 PM
Holbrook Hollows
Bring your own horse for this walk-only naturalist-led trail ride, enjoying the summer woodlands from the saddle at a leisurely pace in the company of other riders. See website for details. Registration required.

28 The BUZZ About Native Pollinators
Sunday, June 28, 1-2:30 PM
The West Woods
Not only are insect pollinators important, they are also remarkable – and important to our lives! Let’s explore the world of cuckoo bees, orchard mason bees, leaf-cutter bees and so many more. After our indoor presentation, take a short walk to look for active pollinators.

28 The Sky Tonight Planetarium Show
Sunday, June 28, 2-3 PM
Observatory Park
A planetarium presentation 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, weather permitting.

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org • PARK EXPLORER
Junior Naturalist
9 AM-4 PM - $150/week
(out-of-county $175/week)
Youth entering grades 5-7
Monday-Friday, June 22-26
Ready to explore and learn how to be a naturalist? Sign up for this exciting week of exploring streams, lakes and forests for exciting wildlife: macro-invertebrates, birds, amphibians, insects and more!

Adventure Day Camps
9 AM-4 PM - $150/week (out-of-county $175/week)
Youth entering grades 5-7
Mondays - Fridays:
June 8-12; July 6-10; July 13-17; July 27-31; August 3-7
Are you adventure ready!? When you sign up for one of these exciting weeks, you’re in for a great time exploring, hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, sending rockets high into the sky and more!

X-TREME Days
9 AM-4 PM - $30/day (out-of-county $35/day)
Teens entering grades 8-10
Mondays - Fridays:
June 15 -19
July 20 - 24
Get ready for an exciting week of exploring, biking, kayaking, fishing, archery, sending rockets high into the sky and tackling the ropes course at Claridon Woodlands!

X-TREME Days 9 AM-4 PM - $30/day (out-of-county $35/day)
Teens entering grades 8-10
Thursday, July 9
X-treme: Kayak Adventure
Eldon Russell Park
The wilds of the Upper Cuyahoga River are home to a wondrous variety of birds and beasts. Embark on a 10-mile adventure discovering plants and wildlife in and along the river. Meet camp staff at Eldon Russell Park and arrange for pick-up at Camp Hi Canoe Livery in Hiram.

Thursday, July 16
X-treme: High Ropes Adventure
Claridon Woodlands
Meet camp staff at Claridon Woodlands to explore the high ropes course that towers more than 30 feet high and features 10 exciting challenge elements – an adventurous day for sure!

Thursday, July 30
X-treme: Biking Adventure
Claridon Woodlands
Claridon Woodlands is home base for this biking adventure. Join camp staff to ride north to Mountain Run Station, then south to Tare Creek Parkway along The Maple Highlands Trail, an adventure totaling 22 miles!
I hope you enjoyed the article about the Covert-Davis family reunions in this edition of your Park Explorer. Reading about the lasting legacy of these gatherings reminded me that we truly live in a special county. With a heritage and legacy dating back to 1927 in Chardon, there must be something special about Geauga County and this family that keeps bringing people back. I was thrilled to read about the role Geauga Park District has played in creating a special place for these reunions, and to hear stories about their interactions with Nature. It was also fun hearing about their time spent playing in the parks: on park playgrounds and utilizing our shelters, creative games and activities crafted by the family, and of course all of that great food that comes with family gatherings.

At the same time, this family recognizes the importance of protecting our diverse habitats and ecosystems for many reunions to come. These happy memories speak volumes to the role parks play in people’s lives, and Geauga Park District couldn’t be more proud to host the Covert-Davis family reunion. How exciting to hear they are celebrating their 91st year at Frohring Meadows this year. We hope this tradition of family and fun continues for years to come.

We are entering a new decade. What a perfect time to start a family tradition of your own. Your parks are waiting for you and your family to craft a lasting legacy, and one of 25 open parks is waiting to host. With these plans, you will get the opportunity to hike trails to see beautiful spring wildflowers, hear a variety of songbirds, and take a moment to relax and soak in the spring sunshine on a park bench. As winter turns to spring, a variety of naturalist programs and recreational offerings also await you. Whatever your spring venture, we hope you get out often. Get out and play! Get out and enjoy your Geauga parks!

John Oros
Executive Director
Join Geauga Cyclists!

Seniors ages 55 and older, bring your bike, helmet and water bottle to become part of a fun, FREE group that rides Wednesday afternoons along The Maple Highlands Trail.

Our goal is to make your ride a little more enjoyable, as well as provide someone to ride with who can help if you have a problem. Each ride will be led by someone from one of the collaborative partners. Cycling is one of the best exercises for aging bodies; it works your cardiovascular system to keep your heart healthy. And because cycling is a low-impact sport, it also reduces strain on your joints while you exercise.

For more information, come to the Kickoff & Safety Meeting on Wednesday, April 29, at 4 PM at the Chardon Heritage House on Chardon Square. Details on page 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park Location</th>
<th>Trail Miles</th>
<th>Amenities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bass Lake Preserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>11445 Lakeview Road, Munson, 44024</td>
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<tr>
<td>NO TRAILS AVAILABLE; BOATING BY PERMIT ONLY</td>
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<td>Beartown Lakes Reservation</td>
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<td>Big Creek Park - Horse Trail</td>
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<td>Big Creek Park - Tupelo Pond</td>
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<td>City of Chardon: 1.2 and City of Middlefield: 0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to trail also from Claridon Woodlands, Headwaters Park &amp; Swine Creek Reservation; horses permitted on south section only</td>
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<td>Mountain Run Station - Access to TMHT</td>
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<td>MILEAGE OF LINK ACCESSING TMHT: 0.4</td>
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Check out this new cache at South Newbury Union Chapel, celebrating 100 years of women voting!
Expires January 1, 2021. Details on our website under Activities

To find the geocache, head east from the parking lot along the mowed path. You’ll pass a large, wooden bat colony house. Keep following the mowed path through a thorny thicket until you reach a clearing. The geocache is concealed beneath an old cherry log.

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<th>Restrooms</th>
<th>Playgrounds</th>
<th>Hiking</th>
<th>X-Country Skiing</th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Bicycles</th>
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<th>Fishing</th>
<th>Boating</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.

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What can I do to help wildlife? What a simple yet complex question. I receive this inquiry in one form or another quite often from people, and I always try to answer it with the same response: Think local…real local…like your own backyard.

This will also be the theme of Geauga Park District’s celebration of this year’s 50th anniversary of Earth Day. So, what exactly can you do with your own backyard to improve the Earth and make a difference for wildlife? Come and see!

Geauga Park District will host its annual Earth Day Extravaganza on Saturday, April 18, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at The West Woods, featuring a fantastic live birds of prey show from Cleveland Museum of Natural History ambassador Harvey Webster at 1:30 p.m. We will have so much more for you to do, too, including wild bird netting and banding, lots of live reptiles and amphibians for show-and-tell, kids’ crafts and guest speakers on improving your backyard for wildlife. There will also be discussions on bird feeding, tree and wildflower giveaways, great prizes for competitions, and even a food truck!

There is truly something for everyone to do to help wildlife. This spring, we hope you’ll come to The West Woods on April 18 to learn what you can do for all of Earth’s inhabitants – starting with your own backyard – in honor of Earth Day’s big year.
We love Trees

...and with good reason! Trees are a very valuable natural resource. They supply us with some amazing things, from material resources like wood, which we use to make homes, create furniture and manufacture paper products, to health resources like the air we breathe and our parks, which provide us with places to relax and connect with Nature.

Some more reasons why trees are so important to us:

• Trees and plants take in carbon dioxide and release oxygen into the air, providing what we need to breathe.
• Trees help cool the earth by creating shade and giving off moisture. They act like huge pumps that cycle water up from the soil and back into the air through their leaves.
• Trees provide habitats for wildlife and food for many different animals, as well as people!

Earth Day reminds us of the importance of tree conservation.

When we cut trees down for their many uses, new trees must be planted to regrow naturally and maintain our environment’s important balance.

We all know paper is made from trees. But did you know that you can make your own? What a fun way to learn about recycling!

There are many different ways to do this, and plenty of resources available online to show you how. But here is one simple, kid-friendly method:

To create small pieces of recycled paper, you will need:

Used paper (can be construction paper, newspaper, office paper, magazine paper, junk mail, envelopes, etc.)

A blender, large bowl, sponge, water, paper towels and a couple cloth towels

1. Tear all the paper into small pieces, put the pieces in a large bowl, and add enough water to cover the paper. Then let it sit for a few hours, occasionally using your hands to mush the paper and rub it together to soften it.

2. Place the contents of the bowl in a blender and blend the contents to get a watery, pulpy consistency like oatmeal. Add more water if necessary to keep it watery.

3. Lay a cloth towel flat. Then lay some paper towels over the towel. Take a small handful of the paper pulp and drop it onto the paper towels. Using your hands, spread it out and press it down to flatten it into a thin layer. Then use a sponge to push it down to absorb the water and flatten the pulp. Wring out the sponge, then continue using it to pat.

4. Finally, flip the paper you’ve made with the paper towel onto a dry cloth towel and peel away the paper towel. Let it dry for about 24 hours before using it.

Turn the word COLD into the word WARM 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!

C O L D

past tense of sell bottom of shoe painful/sensitive past tense of wear small, legless invertebrate

W A R M

past tense of sell bottom of shoe painful/sensitive past tense of wear small, legless invertebrate

Answers found on bottom of back cover.

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org • PARKEXPLORER 19
10th ANNIVERSARY
CAVEMAN
CRAWL
5K TRAIL RUN
& 1-Mile Fun Walk
Sunday, June 14
The West Woods
9465 Kinsman Road
Russell Twp.
Walkers welcome in 5K
Cave garb encouraged!

Details at bit.ly/gpdcaveman
All funds benefit summer camps & youth programs

www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
440-286-9516

Answers to word ladder: sold, sole, sore, wore, worm