

PORTAGE PARK DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter



Morgan Park

August 3, 2023

Greetings!

Summer is in full swing and the Parks are full of life! Whether you are enjoying the flowers in the meadow at Morgan Park or kayaking on Trail Lake, there are so many opportunities to enjoy this beautiful weather!

We have two big pieces of news! First, Jennifer White is back and in a new role! Second, the Park District will be on the levy this year! Big things are happening in Your Portage Parks and you can read more about both of these and more below!

August brings programming for everyone. If you're into birding, citizen science, yoga, observing lepidopterans, or hiking with friends, we have options for you!

Explore all programs and register on our [Things to Do page](#).

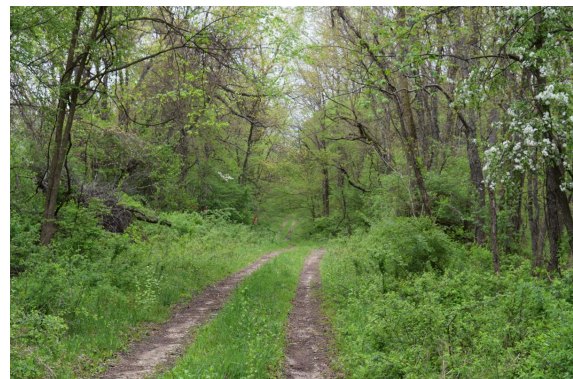
In the Parks

Park Levy Issue on November Ballot

The Park District's only property tax levy, which provides 95% of its operating budget, expires at the end of this year. The Park District Board of Commissioners has filed with the Board of Elections to place the issue of a 1 mill levy, comprised of a ½ mill replacement plus an additional ½ mill, on the November 7th ballot. The levy would cost the owner of a \$100,000 property \$35/year, or less than \$2.92/month. The funds are critical for operating safe, clean parks and continuing to create and open new parks and trails.

Since 2014, the Park District has added staff, equipment and vehicles, opened 4 new parks, acquired and conserved 1,335 acres, resurfaced 12 miles of hike and bike trail and presented hundreds of free programs for all ages and abilities. Thanks to partnerships, grants and donations, the Park District has been able to stretch levy dollars by bringing in an additional 60 cents for every levy dollar, used to improve and conserve our communities, for generations to come. Let's keep a good thing growing!

Please contact the Park District office with questions about the levy and plans for the future. For information about the levy campaign and how to get involved, please visit citizensforportageparks.com or email citizensforportageparks@gmail.com.



Welcome back, Jen!

Hello, Park Friends!

I am thrilled to return to the Portage Park District and lead our park education team as the new Education & Outreach Manager! Holly & Becca are incredible educators, and it is a privilege to work with them to share the magic and wonder of our natural areas with you. Big thanks to our park intern, Hannah, for sharing her talent and knowledge with us this summer.

Portage County has always felt like home to me. We are fortunate to have such



unique and beautiful natural resources to enjoy. I particularly love our plentiful and diverse wetlands, and it's pretty amazing to work in a county that has 5 major watersheds! When I am not exploring our park properties, some of my favorite things to do are tending my native plant gardens, surveying insects, birdwatching, kayaking, reading, enjoying my husband's gourmet cooking, walking my senior dog (Roxy is 17.5 and counting!), volunteering with the Stark County 4-H program, and maintaining my "favorite aunt" status with my 7 nieces and nephews!

I look forward to seeing you on the trail and at some of our upcoming programs and events. I welcome your feedback on our education programs and your suggestions for how we can better serve you. The best is yet to come!



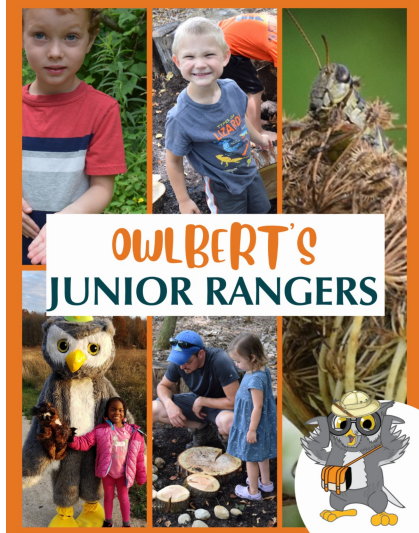
Portage Parks Receives Ohio Collaborative Certification

Portage Park District has received certification through the Ohio Collaborative Community Police Advisory Board, for having adopted Ranger law enforcement policies to ensure safe policing for safe communities. Portage Parks is fortunate to have excellent experienced rangers who patrol the parks on foot and by bike, meet park users, respond to concerns and interface with other law enforcement agencies in the county.



Last Call to Finish Your Junior Ranger Booklet!

We've been so pleased with your enthusiasm



toward our new Junior Ranger Program! Thank you for learning about your Portage Parks, our native flora and fauna, and upholding our mission!

If you haven't finished yet, do not fret! There is still time to complete your booklet and bring them to the Pinning Ceremony that will be held on Saturday, August 12.

[Register here!](#)

Portage Park District Deer Archery Program

Starting this fall, Portage Park District is initiating a pilot deer archery program, creating opportunities for nine selected hunters to hunt white-tailed deer. The program will occur throughout Ohio's 2023-24 deer archery season, which is September 30, 2023 through February 4, 2024, and adhere to the Ohio Division of Wildlife's 2023-24 Hunting Regulations. The unopened Kent Bog Expansion Preserve in Brimfield Twp. will have five designated areas for hunters. The southern 200-acre portion of Morgan Park, which is separated from the section open to daily use, will provide four designated hunting areas. All members of the public are welcome to apply for an opportunity. Hunters will be selected through a lottery process, with preference given to Portage County residents.

Portage Park District has started its deer archery program as a "pilot" program, meaning it is small scale to allow park staff to evaluate effectiveness and make improvements as needed. Selected hunters will participate in a survey adapted from the Ohio Division of Wildlife's Annual Bowhunter Survey. The survey will generate tallies of the numbers of deer seen and other wildlife spotted while hunting, providing valuable information for Portage Park District's overall natural resources management program. After this season, staff will determine whether and how the public lottery deer archery program will be continued in the future.

[Learn more and enter the lottery here.](#)

Upcoming Programs



NABA Butterfly Hike

Join us for our annual Butterfly Count at

Try our [self-guided hikes](#) at Trail Lake Park and Seneca Ponds!

All programs and events can be found on our [Things to Do page](#). Make sure you check out all the great ways to engage with nature!

Our education programs require registration - this helps us keep an optimal staff

Towner's Woods. Judy Semroc, from Nature Spark, will lead the public hike and help all participants to learn about butterflies and join in our survey. We will seek out both adult butterflies and caterpillars. Come and enjoy the beauty of our native butterflies.

[Register here for August 13.](#)

to participant ratio. Join us and learn about the natural world around us.

Upcoming Senior Hikes:

[Senior Hike - August 10](#)

[Senior Hike - August 24](#)

Visit our [YouTube channel](#).



River Health Workshop August 9 @ 10 AM

Join Water Protection Specialists from the Akron Water Supply Bureau as they lead us through water sampling and macroinvertebrate studies while we discuss the importance of understanding watersheds and water quality. Come prepared to get in the river if you are willing!

[Register here.](#)



Nature Sounds at Night July 13 @ 6 PM

Nature performs its own symphony every night – all we have to do is unplug and listen. Join us for the best free concert you'll hear all summer!

[Register here.](#)



Yoga in the Park with Sequoia Wellness August 17 @ 6:30 PM

Press the pause button on this busy summer as we enjoy yoga in the park. Sequoia Wellness will be leading us through this practice as we take a moment for ourselves.

[Register here.](#)

Portage Park District Foundation

Show Your Parks Love!

Get your t-shirt for just \$5.00 from the Portage Park District Foundation, available for pickup at the Park District Administration office, 705 Oakwood St., Ravenna.



Friends of the Parks



Reeds and Roots Skillshare

Portage Park District will have a table at the Reeds & Roots Skillshare Gathering in Kent on Saturday, August 26. Stop by and say hi in between the wonderful workshops that are being offered that day!

[Learn more here!](#)



Wild Hikes Challenge

Our **2023 theme is The Year of the Wood frog!** You'll even find some Wood frog facts on your hiking form this year.

To participate, download your **Wild Hikes form**, and complete hikes before December 31st to earn a hiking staff and/or a 2023 Wild Hikes medallion. Dogs can earn rewards too!

Our office is open for rewards pick-ups. [Email Eric](#) to schedule a time to get your rewards.

Visit our website

