

PORTAGE PARK DISTRICT

Monthly Newsletter



Trail Lake Park, Photo: Jennifer Robinson

July 7 | 2022

Greetings!

We hope you are taking advantage of the great weather to enjoy YOUR Portage Parks and enjoy programs this summer. Our first Ride with a Ranger took place this past Saturday! You can join Chief Ranger Neitert for a bike ride on the first Saturday each month. You'll find registration on our [Things to Do page](#).

This month we are sharing our gratitude for many things including the work of Board Commissioner Scott McKinney as he moves on to his next journey, our partners for the 2022 bioblitz, and participants in the Portage Park District Foundation's Perfect Pet contest! Read on to learn more.

In the Parks

Thank You Commissioner Scott McKinney for your service to Portage Parks!

Commissioner Scott McKinney is retiring from the Portage Park District Board. Commissioner McKinney has left a

strong legacy for YOUR Portage Parks and his leadership and talents will be missed.

"Commissioner McKinney has been an integral member of the Park District team for over a decade, during a time of great change and growth. His knowledge, wisdom, and character have been invaluable to our success—we greatly appreciate the countless hours he volunteered for the Park District and the mark he made on our park legacy for future generations", said Christine Craycroft, Executive Director.

The Portage Park District is governed by a five-member Board of unpaid Commissioners, appointed for renewable 3-year terms by the Portage County Probate Court Judge, Patricia Smith. Commissioners are dedicated to advancing the mission of the Park District and are responsible for approving policies, annual budgets and job descriptions. Interested candidates for Commissioner can learn more and obtain an application for consideration by visiting the [website here](#).



Learn more about Commissioner McKinney and his tenure with Portage Park District

"Being involved with the Portage Park District has been one of the most rewarding things that I have done. I look forward to seeing what the talented board and staff are able to do in the coming years!" - Commissioner Scott McKinney

How did you get started with the Portage Parks? What inspired you to help?

I have always appreciated the outdoors - especially camping, hiking, and boating. My undergraduate degree is in recreation management and when I was working on my master's degree, I focused a number of my projects on the park district.

I am inspired to help because the environment is important to everyone. Clean air and clean water are something that we cannot take for granted and the mission of the park is to preserve these things. It is particularly important for me to be involved so my kids, and all future generations, have green spaces to enjoy.

What does the park's growth mean to you? What do you think it means to Portage County?

For many years, the park district did great things with no levy and very little money. Look around us and you will see that we are surrounded by amazing and very well-funded park districts and metro parks. Having passed our first levy in 2014, the park district has finally been able to make some real progress in the growth of parks and conservation. I'm astounded at the level of grant support that the skillful Chris Craycroft is able to secure - making our local dollar go even further. This growth is a community legacy for us all to be proud of.

[Read the full interview here.](#)



Eagle Creek Greenway Phase I Bioblitz **Author: Bob Lange, Natural Areas Steward**

On June 10 and 11, Portage Park District hosted its 2022 Bioblitz at our Eagle Creek Greenway Preserve in Hiram Twp. A bioblitz is a set time period in which participants try to discover, observe and identify as many species of living organisms as possible within a given area. A bioblitz is an invaluable tool, amassing a large amount of meaningful information to guide natural resource management and future park developments.

Participants included skilled professionals and volunteers that

specialize in identifying various groups of plant and animal life. Many are folks who routinely work alongside us in conservation as team members from other park districts, state agencies, and environmental firms. Organizations who attended this year's bioblitz: Davey Resource Group, EnviroScience, Firem Forestry Consulting, Geauga Park District, Medina County Park District, Summit Metroparks, Cleveland Metroparks, Ohio Department of Natural Areas and Preserves, Hiram College, Kent State University, The Nature Conservancy and Northeast Ohio Native Plant Society.

Additional help was provided by staff and students from Hiram College's James H. Barrow Field Station and Kent State University, along with Portage Park District's volunteers and staff. Over 60 people contributed to the success of this event. We are grateful to have such a strong, supportive collective of fellow conservationists and volunteers willing to devote their time and expertise to our efforts!

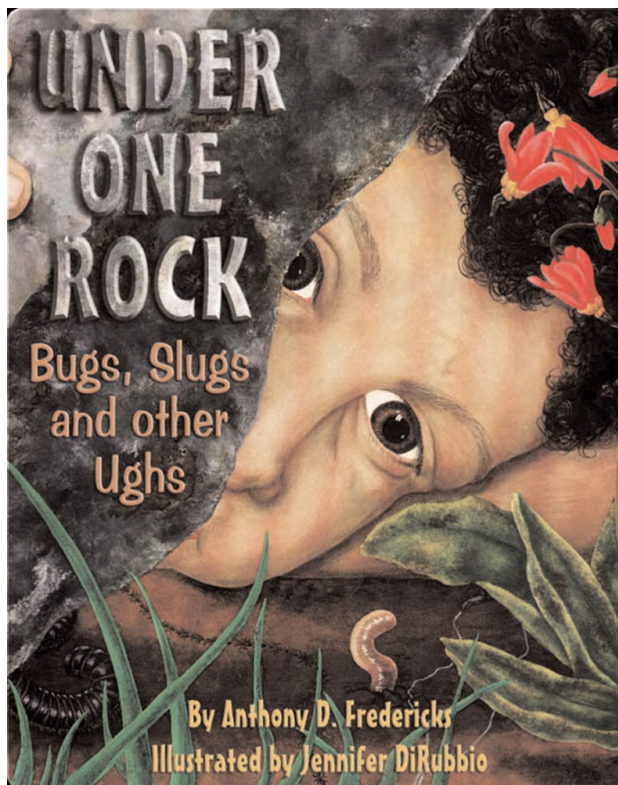
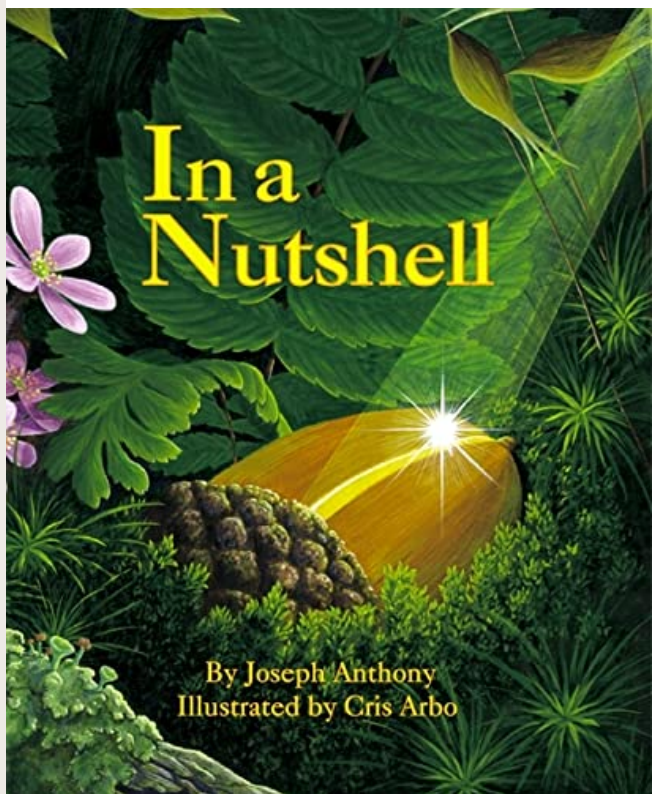
To date, we have tallies of nearly **400 plant species and over 130 animal species** observed and identified during the two-day event! The final results are pending further processing. These numbers are a true testament to the biodiversity being protected and conserved at Eagle Creek Greenway Preserve.

Stay tuned for a final summary of bioblitz results in our 2022 Annual Report!

Dix Park Story Trail

Last month you helped us narrow down our book choices for the Story Trail at Dix Park. Now it's time to choose the very first book - vote below!

Save the Date for trail opening! August 6, 12-2 p.m. More information and registration coming soon!



Choose our first Story Trail book!

In a Nutshell

Select

Under one Rock

Select

Upcoming Programs



Mothing with Certified Volunteer Naturalist, Joe DeFuria!

Moths are one of the most diverse, beautiful, and plentiful groups of insects in Ohio. They play a critical role in the ecological food chain and the majority of species are most active at night. There is at least twenty times the number of species of moths in Ohio as there are butterflies!

- [An Evening with the Moths](#)
- [Mothing at Towner's Woods](#)

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

Upcoming Senior Hikes:

[Senior Hike - July 14](#)

[Senior Hike - July 28](#)

Portage DD Special Olympics Hike Club - open to all ages and abilities:

[Hike Club - July 14](#)

[Hike Club - July 28](#)

You can also visit our [YouTube channel](#) to view past programs you missed or want to hear again.



Owlbert's Adventure: Yoga for Kids-

Did you know that time spent in nature has measurable health benefits for adults and children? Come join us for yoga in the park! Guest 200

Hour Certified Yoga Instructor, Lydia Scherer, will guide us through yoga poses that remind us of animals that live right here in Portage



Art in the Park -

The landscape views at Trail Lake Park are gorgeous this time of year! We invite you to bring your own sketchbook or art media of your choice and join us for a casual artistic experience. Our staff will be demonstrating a fun meadow painting technique and we will have basic art supplies on hand if you do not



Caterpillar Safari -

Come on a meadow safari with us to search for caterpillars to observe!

Caterpillars are vital to our ecological food webs. Learn about their cool adaptations for survival and their importance to other animals in the ecosystem. Be ready to explore the flowering meadow and surrounding

County.
[Register here.](#)

have your own.
[Register here.](#)

area at Dix Park.
[Register here.](#)

Foundation News



PERFECT PET OF PORTAGE
PHOTO CONTEST

#1 Other - Sarah
Best in Show - Booker T. Cat

#1 & #2 Dog (tie) - Duncan & Skye
#1 Cat - Cudi

Thank You for Supporting Trails & Tails!

Portage Park District FOUNDATION
Madonio Animal Trust

Brimfield Insurance Group
Family & COMMUNITY SERVICES, INC.
Memorial animal hospital
North Water BREWING CO.
OVER EASY
PORTAGE COMMUNITY BANK

Congratulations to our Perfect Pets!

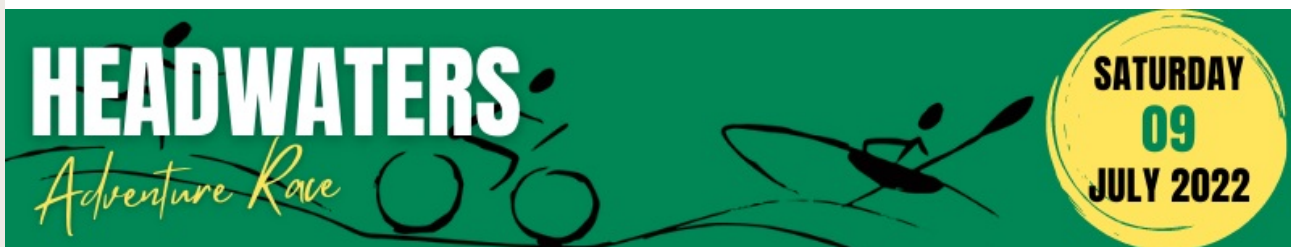
We believe that all our pets are perfect and we appreciate your help in raising funds for the [Portage Park District Foundation](#) and the [Madonio Animal Trust](#).

This fundraising **event raised \$11,125** with the net proceeds being split evenly between our two organizations.

Don't forget that the annual Dog Days of Summer will be held on August 20 in Downtown Kent from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Sponsored by the Madonio Animal Trust, this is a fun, family-friendly event celebrating dogs. For more information [click here](#).

Finally, enjoy some Booker T Beer at [North Water Brewing Co](#) during the month of July. This beer was specially brewed for the best in show winner, Booker T. Cat, and it's purrrfect.

Thank you again for your support of these two great causes!



HEADWATERS
Adventure Race

SATURDAY 09 JULY 2022



Reforest Portage Parks

Leave a lasting gift for generations to come!

Portage Park District FOUNDATION

Photo: Rob Blair

Wild Hikes Challenge



To participate, download your [Wild Hikes form](#), and complete hikes before December 31st to earn a hiking staff and/or a 2022 Wild Hikes medallion. Dogs can earn rewards too!

[Visit our website](#) to find more opportunities to pick up your rewards.

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