

# PORTAGE PARK DISTRICT

## Monthly Newsletter



Changing Leaves at Morgan Park, photo:: Ken Christensen

---

October 6 | 2022

Greetings!

As we move into Fall, we are seeing so many beautiful changes in the landscape. Take a moment to appreciate each and every new color or view in YOUR Portage Parks.

Don't miss a chance to help us name our new trail at Dix Park and tell us about your Park Rx program experience.

This month we are having a Spicebush Scavenger Hunt and our program calendar is filled with a myriad of great programs to enjoy! Find all programs on our [Things to Do page](#).

## In the Parks

**From the Trail**

**Author: Chief Ranger Kevin Nietert**

I have been working for the Portage Park District since February, and I genuinely love the experience. Everyone I have met on the trails enjoys the parks, whether hiking, biking, birding, or walking their dog. They all have one thing in common, to be outdoors and experience nature. To continue to make this possible and keep our parks a safe place to enjoy nature and recreation, we all must do our part. Below are some safety tips to keep in mind when in the parks and some general reminders about park rules.

I look forward to meeting you on the trails and appreciate your help working together to keep our parks a wonderful place for all to enjoy.



### **Safety Tips when Hiking, Biking, Walking, or Jogging:**

- Stay on the trails. Going off trail is harmful to the natural habitat and is not safe.
- Be prepared by bringing and drinking enough water to stay hydrated.
- Know your limits.
- Have a way to communicate in case of emergency, by bringing your cell phone.
- Spray for mosquitoes and check for ticks.
- Dogs are some of the best trail companions but must be on a leash. Please be respectful of other park visitors and property by picking up pet feces and disposing of it properly.
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Don't wear headphones. Being able to hear your surroundings will allow you to notice someone you would not notice otherwise.
- When alone, avoid secluded areas where there are places to hide. Vary the route you take. Do not take the same route every day.
- Wear bright-colored clothing so that you can easily be seen.
- Stay to the right on trails and pass to the left.
- Always let someone know when you begin, the route you will be taking, and when you plan to return.
- Cyclists should wear helmets, ride in a single file line at a reasonable and prudent speed, and sound a warning when passing others.

[Read on for more safety tips and information on how to report suspicious activity.](#)

## **We want to hear from YOU!**

### **A New Trail to Explore at Dix Park**

The improvements to Dix Park continue! Our newest trail needs a name, and we want you to select a favorite from the choices below.

Choose the trail name for Dix Park!

**Bombus Trail (the genus for bumble bees)**

Select

**Bunting Trail (for Indigo Buntings often seen at this location)**

Select

### **Park Rx Survey**

Park Rx is a program designed to help you explore the health benefits of nature. We launched our Park Rx programming in 2019 with several partners in Portage County.



## PROGRAMS FOR YOUR HEALTH!



As the program grows, we'd love your feedback! Click the link below to tell us about your experience with the programs or what programs you'd like to see in the future.

[Take our survey](#)

## Upcoming Programs

### SPICE BUSH HUNT



[portageparkdistrict.org](http://portageparkdistrict.org)

### Go on a Spicebush Scavenger Hunt!

Why a Spicebush hunt? Well, whether you are team PSL (pumpkin spice latte) or not, we believe everyone should be team Spicebush!

#### Earn the Spicebush Hunt sticker reward:

- Visit each park location - Follow the trail to find the Owlbert cutout attached to a Spicebush.
- Take a selfie with Owlbert and the Spicebush.
- When you're done with all of your hikes - submit your completed hikes!
- We will mail your reward, or you can pick it up at a rewards pickup event. We have 100 sticker rewards - [register now!](#)

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

**Upcoming Senior Hikes:**  
[Senior Hike - October 20](#)

Visit our [YouTube channel](#).



### Native Seed Collection Clinic -

Learn how to procure native seeds with our Natural Areas Steward, Bob Lange! Many of our native plants require a period of cold temperatures in order to germinate, called stratification. Learn about which of our species need to be planted in the fall.

**Space is limited!**

[Register here.](#)



### Curious about Chlorophyll -

Bring your cameras and join us for a hike to enjoy the vibrant color displays that fall brings! We will talk about the science behind leaf changes, and what our trees are doing over winter, while enjoying the autumn views. Plan to dress in layers, take lots of photos, and enjoy some recreation while learning with us. photo: Jennifer Robinson

[Register here.](#)



### Toadstool Trek-

Join us for a hike to learn more about our native fungi kingdom members. **Emmet Roberts** will lead this engaging hike, share tips for identifying different species of fungus, and point out unique finds along the way. Please remember that foraging for mushrooms is not permitted in Portage Park District parks. photo: Cindy Siebenthal

[Register here.](#)



## 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!

Wild Hikes rewards pickups will be scheduled throughout the fall and winter. Visit our [Things to Do page](#) to register for these events.

Visit our website

