



Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation

Fall 2004



Continuing the Tradition

Facility Expansions & Additions Update

Since the adoption of its 5 year plan earlier this year, the WCPARC has moved forward confidently to make improvements to its already diverse parks and recreation system. Major projects, either just completed or in process are described below:

Independence Lake Beach Center

"Not Just a Summer Park Anymore"

If you haven't already, it's time to take a fresh look at Independence Lake County Park, a local favorite for more than 25 years. The park's recently completed and beautiful Beach Center Complex includes an expanded headquarters and information center, meeting room, modern restrooms, beach shower facility, and snack concession with adjacent outdoor patio. The new Beach Center and the recently expanded trail and nature interpretive facilities provide new ways to

enjoy this wonderful park on a year-round basis. Offering fantastic views of Independence Lake and surrounding landscape, the headquarters meeting room, which can be rented for various functions, features a gas fireplace to provide a cozy atmosphere for wintertime uses. So think of Independence Lake County Park when you want to host a gathering in a beautiful, natural setting, *any time of year.*

Rolling Hills Disc Golf Course

"Something Old, Something New"

Washtenaw County's first disc golf course, the 9-hole course at Rolling Hills County Park, has been renovated and expanded to a regulation 18-holes. Improvements include amateur and pro tees, concrete tee pads, new targets and signage and practice

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The new Beach Center at Independence Lake County Park

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Contact Us!

parks.ewashtenaw.org

734.971.6337

From the Director

Robert L. Tetens

On November 2, 2004, voters in Washtenaw County will be asked to renew the ¼ mill operational levy for the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC). First approved in 1976 and subsequently renewed in 1984 and 1994, the ten-year millage is essential to the continued operation of the County parks system.

Established by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners in August of 1973, the Commission is celebrating its 31st year of providing a wide range of parks, facilities and recreational opportunities for County residents. From a system that included just 4 small roadside picnic parks, the WCPARC has grown to include 5 major parks, 4 small/medium parks, 2 historical sites, the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center, the Rolling Hills Water Park and the award-winning Pierce Lake Golf Course.

In addition to providing basic operational support for the parks system, the levy has also allowed for the continued development of existing facilities and the addition of new parks throughout the County. In the ten years since the millage was last renewed, the Commission acquired and restored the historic Sharon Mills Park site; expanded our premier nature preserve, Park Lyndon, with the acquisition of an additional 130 acres; and purchased the 100 acre Staebler farm for a future park in Superior Twp.

Examples of recent facility enhancements include the addition of the Lazy River ride at the Rolling Hills Water Park; expansion of the cardiovascular and weight training rooms at the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center; and the new beach center complex at Independence Lake Park.

How are we doing? In a survey conducted last year, 81% of respondents said they would support the renewal of the millage. An equal level of support was indicated for two of the Commission's important ongoing initiatives—the development of a countywide non-motorized trail network and the preservation of natural areas, wildlife habitat and open space. Further evidence of our success is attendance, which now totals over 800,000 visitors each year in County parks.

Looking ahead, the 5 Year Parks & Recreation Master Plan recently adopted by the Commission will serve as the road map for the continued development and success of the parks and recreation system, which in turn contributes immeasurably to the quality of life for all County residents.

Please remember to Vote on November 2, 2004. ♪



View from the River Raisin bridge at the Ervin Preserve, a recently purchased NAPP property, Bridgewater Twp.

what's NAPPening? Natural Areas Preservation Program Update

The Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission announces two important property purchases made through its Natural Areas Preservation Program (NAPP). Both properties are located in the southwestern portion of Washtenaw County and both border the River Raisin, contributing to the protection of the second largest watershed in the County (River Raisin). Visitor access to these natural areas will be provided later this year.

Ervin Preserve

- 70 acres, Bridgewater Township
- adjacent to previously purchased Stucki Preserve
- both sides of the River Raisin – approximately 3000 linear feet of frontage (each side)
- high quality woods and wetlands, cropland (10 acres)

Leonard Preserve

- 205 acres, Manchester and Sharon Townships
- just northwest of the village of Manchester
- western (southern) bank of the River Raisin, approximately one mile of frontage
- purchased in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, which acquired the adjoining 40 acres, with house and out buildings
- mostly high quality woods and wetlands, rolling terrain, cropland (45 acres) ♪

Facility Expansions, *continued from cover*

areas. Additional improvements are also planned including concession/disc sales, a message posting board and bench seating. The expansion was aided by a loyal group of individual and club members who worked with Commission staff in course planning, layout and vegetation clearing. For the uninitiated, disc golf is a sport played like traditional golf but with discs that are thrown at an above ground target instead of a hole in the ground. Challenging, inexpensive, and lots of fun, disc golf provides a great opportunity to get outdoors and stay fit.

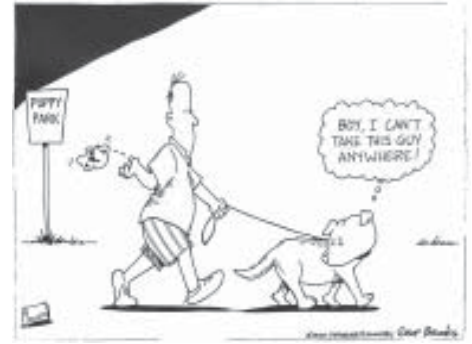
County Farm Park "No Cookie-Cutter Playground"

A new children's playground is being planned for County Farm Park in the vicinity of the main park shelter near the Platt Road parking lot. This playground definitely will not be just another conventional park type play area. The truly unique playscape will be specially designed to promote

imaginative exploration and discovery, and foster spontaneous free play.

To capitalize on the history and character of the park, the project will incorporate a "farm and garden" theme and will provide a safe, stimulating and fun place to play. Physically, it is expected to combine both commercially available and custom designed play features. In addition, it will provide gardens and natural elements in an informal, naturalistic setting that will nurture a love of nature and the outdoors. When completed the project will permit youngsters of all abilities to pursue self-initiated and self-directed play and learning in a pleasurable and sensory rich setting.

Project design is progressing with the assistance of the Center for Independent Living, a citizen advisory committee, and community focus groups. The playground is scheduled to be available for public use in the spring of 2005.



Washtenaw County/ Ann Arbor Dog Park "Who's Letting the Dogs Out?"

Thanks to a creative and collaborative partnership arrangement between WCPARC and the City of Ann Arbor, the area's first public dog park is closer to becoming a reality. Promising initial inter-agency discussions involving resource commitments from both the City and County are clearing the way for a permanent, off-leash dog park.

The dog park development agreement (yet to be finalized), proposes to build the park on City property in Ann Arbor with WCPARC assuming primary responsibility for its development. It is also anticipated that the Ann Arbor Canine Social Club will assist in project planning and with monitoring and maintenance of the completed facility. More information regarding this initiative will follow as project plans and agreements are further developed and finalized. The pending dog park project is an excellent example of government and private organizations pooling their resources and working together to better serve local citizens. ♪

Ray Essell, Park Planner



A hearty "thank you" to all the volunteers that helped expand the Rolling Hills Disc Golf course from 9 holes to 18 holes!

Habitat Improvements at Parker Mill

Removal of invasive exotics makes way for native species

Parker Mill County Park, located in Ann Arbor Township, is a rural historic and nature park anchored by the nineteenth century Parker grist mill and cider mill. The park protects the lower reach of Fleming Creek, which joins the Huron River adjacent to the southern park boundary. Three important trails are located in the park:

- the Sugarbush Trail, a ¼ mile walking trail through maple woods
- a 1 mile paved bike/jogging trail which links with Ann Arbor's Gallup Park
- the Hoyt G. Post Trail, a 1.3 mile nature boardwalk that winds along Fleming Creek, into a floodplain forest, reaching the Huron River

Natural Features

Although there are some open areas in the park, the majority of the area is wooded. Generally, the degree of natural character tends to increase as one moves further into the park. The southern end of the park comprises a bottomland forest of good natural quality and diversity. Despite the overall high quality of the area, invasive, non-native plant species, such as buckthorn, privet and honeysuckle, are found throughout the park. These invasive species are most objectionable in areas adjacent to Fleming Creek, the Hoyt Post Trail and the Huron River, since they degrade the otherwise excellent natural characteristics of the park.

Habitat Enhancement

To address the invasive plant problem the followings steps were identified to reach the goal of improving the

habitat and biological diversity:

- identify and remove invasive species
- plant native species where invasive species have been removed
- maintain new plants until they become established
- apply appropriate management practices to promote native vegetation and discourage invasives

Project Sponsor

In the fall of 2003, WCPARC's intentions to improve the habitat quality of Parker Mill were given a financial boost by a development in Ann Arbor Township.

The Township approved a residential development on Earhart Road that required a considerable amount of tree removal. The developer agreed to compensate for the loss of vegetation (known as "mitigation") as a condition of approval for the plan. Since there was insufficient room to plant trees and shrubs on-site, Ann Arbor Township asked WCPARC if Parker Mill could serve as the mitigation site. WCPARC was delighted to participate, since it enabled the Commission to move forward with the previously planned, but at that time unfunded, habitat improvements. Accordingly, the developer, Earhart Partners L.L.C., has provided WCPARC with \$25,000 which is being expended to purchase trees and other plant materials and

(continued on page 10)



Freeing the Oak...these before and after pictures show how many invasive plants were removed!



*Honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*, top) and buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*, bottom) are two of the invasive plants targeted.*

**New Building Hours!
MLMRC will now open
at 6 am, Mon-Fri**



Frequently Asked Questions...

Do I have to be a member to use the facilities or attend a class?

- No, anyone can register for swim classes, “drop-in” on a fitness class, or pay a daily fee to use the facilities

What is a “drop-in” class?

- You do not register for fitness classes, instead you can drop-in on any class whenever it fits your schedule (except Tai Chi)

What is a “punch card”?

- Good for 10 drop-ins to any class (except Instructional Swim & Tai Chi)
- Discounted rate saves \$\$!
- Can be shared with friends and family
- Expires at the end of the calendar year
- Does not guarantee a spot in any class

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Drop-In Class Fee Schedule

	Resident (per visit)	Non-Resident (per visit)	Punch Card (10 visits)
Adult (16-61)	\$5	\$7	\$32
Senior (62+)	\$4	\$5	\$22
Disabled	\$4	\$5	\$22

MLMRC Info

Facilities & Programs

- Track (1/12 mile)
- Gymnasium
- Heated Pool
- Cardiovascular Training Area
- Strength Training Area
- Locker Rooms
- Assisted Care Locker Rooms
- Fitness & Swimming Classes

Come on Down!

2960 Washtenaw Ave.
(at Platt Rd.)
Ann Arbor, Michigan
734.971.6355

Building Hours

Mon - Fri, 6 am - 10 pm
 Sat, 8 am - 6 pm
 Sun, Noon - 10 pm
 (Closed Thanksgiving, Nov 25
 and Christmas, Dec 24 & 25)

Adult Fitness & Dance

Fitness Pilates I & II

Increase core strength and flexibility of the spine with a wide variety of exercises. You will experience improved posture, alignment and an increased mind-body connection.

Kickboxing

This workout uses kicks, punches, blocks and combinations to create an incredible workout. Participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves as this class involves bag work.

Power Sculpting

Intervals of aerobics and conditioning. Fast paced, easy to follow and very effective fat burner.

Sculpting & Conditioning

Designed to strengthen and tone the total body. This mildly aerobic workout is adaptable yet challenging for all fitness levels. Hand held weights, tubes & bands are provided.

Aerobic Strength Training (A.S.T.)

This 1.5 hour class will do it all, give you a 30 minute aerobic workout as well as tone, strengthen and firm your entire body.

Dance

Learn basic moves for the *Foxtrot*, *Waltz*, *Rumba*, *Swing*, *Ballroom*, and *Salsa*. No partners needed.

Step & Ball

This class will soon be your favorite. We have combined the Fat burner section of a step class and added the conditioning benefits of the ball. Join us for a great workout!

Step I & II

This fun aerobic workout has a third of the impact and twice the benefits. Concentrating on lower extremities makes this class an excellent fat burner. 1, 2, 3... step!

Hatha Yoga

The physical practice of yoga that involves moving in and out of different positions called "asanas". This class involves breathing and meditative exercise. All levels welcome.

Tai-Chi

The main purpose of this training is to harmonize the body and mind to deal better with stressful situations. This progressive class will calm the mind and relax the body. **Pre-registration required.** \$30 for 10 wks, Fridays, 6:40pm, Oct 2-Dec 11.

Light Aerobics

Work off those calories and build your cardio fitness in this aerobic dance class. No dance experience necessary.

Butts & Guts

1 hour of core strength training at its best. Concentrated abdominal work and back muscle conditioning to give you the abs you want!

Turbo Kick

Work on punches kicks and drills, aerobic and anaerobic. Class includes bag work, plus weights and tubes for conditioning. Participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves.

Pilates Yoga Fusion

You'll feel stronger and leaner after taking this class. We have combined the best of yoga—flexibility and versatility—with the benefits of Pilates—core strength and alignment.

Super Session

An intense, 1.5 hour workout with step, strength training and stretch with Yoga/Pilates. Challenging for all levels. Sundays, dates TBA.

Cardio Mix

This workout can be a combination of high/low aerobics. Step and muscle conditioning. Always different, never boring. Excellent cross training.

Step Mix

Come join this fun class. Burn the fat in this great cardio workout with one step....or more. For all levels.

Teen Conditioning

Combines aerobic training, step and kickboxing. Weights, bands and balls used in the conditioning portion.

Weight Room Orientation

Have questions about our weight room? Our staff will show you how to use the equipment with the proper amount of weight and repetition to help you reach your goals! (Sign up for class at the front desk, dates and times vary)

Seniors

Senior Aerobics

Big Band and contemporary music make aerobic exercise lots of fun. This 1-hour class requires 45 minutes of standing and finishes with balance exercises and light weight resistance. M/F 9:15 - 10:15 am

Senior Stretch Fit

Combines basic stretching, and Pilates-like exercises with standing, wall and floor work. Benefits include muscle flexibility, increased range of motion and general well being. T/TH 10:45 - 11:45 am

Senior Sculpt

Hand weights, bands and resistant tubing tone muscles, while improving strength and balance. 45 minutes. T/TH 8:30 - 9:30 am

Senior Step Aerobics

Each person has a step unit and chair (for balance and support). Sharpen balance awareness and increase cardiovascular and muscle endurance. M/W 8:15 - 9:00 am

For up to the minute changes to class schedules, call the...

Aerobic Hotline

971.6337 ext. 352

Updated every morning and occasionally during the day due to emergencies.

Get in the Pool!

Youth Swim

Infant Toddler

(6 mos-2 yrs with adult) With adult participation, infants and toddlers learn to enjoy water activities. Songs and games teach the children water comfort. One adult per child.

Pre-School 1

(2-4 yrs with adult) Through songs and games, and with adult help, pre-school aged children learn water comfort and simple water skills. One adult per child.

Pre-School 2

(4-5 yrs with adult) These children will begin to practice Young Swimmer 1 skills. This class is for kids who aren't ready to be in the water without a parent. One adult per child.

Young Swimmer 1

(At least 4 yrs of age) A great class for beginners! Children with little or no water experience will learn water comfort, supported floating and kicking, and basic arm movement.

Young Swimmer 2

(Ages 4-5) Children already comfortable in the water will practice swimming skills without support. Floating, kicking, front and back crawls and safety skills will be taught.

Level 2

(At least 5 yrs of age) Children who can float and kick on both front and back without support begin to complete their strokes. Focus will be on stroke completion and technique.

Level 3

(Must pass Level 2 or Aquatic Programmer permission) Learn to combine and coordinate basic swimming skills into complete strokes. Rhythmic breathing will be introduced; front & back crawls, treading water and safety skills will improve.

Level 4

(Must pass Level 3 or Aquatic Programmer permission) Students

Swim Classes, 5-week Sessions

Sessn.	Register	Classes	Sessn.	Register	Classes*
A	Sep 4-21	Adult: Sep 22-Oct 20 Youth: Sep 25-Oct 23	B	Oct 23-Nov 2	Adult: Nov 3-Dec 8 Youth: Nov 6-Dec 11

Closed Thanksgiving, Nov 25; Christmas, Dec 24 & 25

improve stroke technique and endurance. Skills taught include 25-yard front & back crawls, breaststroke, sidestroke, sculling and rescue techniques.

Level 5/6

(Must pass level 4 or Aquatic Programmer permission) Students will refine and improve all strokes learned while increasing endurance and stroke efficiency. More distance is introduced. Butterfly, open turns and rescue skills also taught.

	Sec#	Fee
Infant Toddler		
SA 11:15-11:45	51010	\$30
Pre-school 1		
SA 10:35-11:05	51020	\$30
SA 11:50-12:20	51021	\$30
Pre-school 2		
SA 10:00-10:30	51030	\$30
Young Swimmer 1		
SA 10:00-10:30	51040	\$30
SA 11:15-11:45	51041	\$30
SA 12:30-1:00	51042	\$30
Young Swimmer 2		
SA 10:35-11:05	51050	\$30
SA 11:50-12:20	51051	\$30
SA 12:30-1:00	51052	\$30
Level 2		
SA 10:00-10:35	51060	\$30
SA 11:15-11:50	51061	\$30
SA 11:50-12:25	51062	\$30
Level 3		
SA 10:35-11:15	51070	\$30
SA 12:30-1:10	51071	\$30
Level 4		
SA 11:50-12:30	51080	\$30
Level 5/6		
SA 12:30-1:10	51090	\$30

Children who are not 100% potty trained must wear diapers with training pants and a swimsuit

Observation windows on the main floor overlooking the pool are suitable for viewing swim classes.

You may watch classes from the deck on the 1st and last days only.

Adult Swim

Instructional Swim

Two instructors will divide the class into two skill levels on the 1st day. Classes are designed for adults who wish to learn to swim, improve strokes or just learn to be comfortable in the water. Sorry, no drop-ins.

Wednesdays, 7:00 - 8:00 pm
52410: Sep 22 - Oct 20, \$36

Adult Water Exercise

Easy Toning

For beginning exercisers, older adults and others looking for a low to moderate intensity workout. Focus on upper & lower body stretching, range of motion and strength exercise. No swimming skills required.

M, T, Th 9 - 10 am

Aqua Aerobics

Increase and maintain aerobic fitness without the impact or sweat of a traditional aerobics class. You will also spend time on warming up, cooling down, and "floor work" exercises. No swimming skills required.

M 8 - 9 pm
T 10 - 11 am
W 9 - 10 am; 8 - 9 pm
Th 10 - 11 am
F 9 - 10 am
Sat 9 - 10 am

Health & Fitness at the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center

Pool Schedule

No one under 18 years is admitted to Adult Lap Swim
An adult must accompany children under 12 years at all times

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6-9am	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap 8-9	Rec Center Opens at 12
9-10am	Easy Toning	Easy Toning	Aqua Aerobics	Easy Toning	Aqua Aerobics	Aqua Aerobics	
10-11am	Open Swim	Aqua Aerobics	Open Swim	Aqua Aerobics	Open Swim	Youth Classes 10-1:15	
11-1pm	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap		Adult Lap 12-2
1-5pm	Open Swim	Open Swim	Open Swim	Closed for Cleaning 1-6*	Open Swim	Open Swim 1:15-4:30	Open Swim 2-8
5-7pm	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap 6-7	Adult Lap	Adult Lap 4:30-5:45	
7-8pm	Swim Class	Open Swim	Swim Class	Open Swim	Open Swim	Rec Center Closes at 6	
8-9pm	Aqua Aerobics						
9-9:45pm	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap	Adult Lap		

*On the 1st Thursday of each month, the Pool is closed from 1:00 pm, Thursday until 10:00 am, Friday for maintenance and cleaning. Locker rooms are closed for cleaning Mon-Fri: Men's - 10:10-10:40am, Women's - 2:00-2:30pm & 5:45-6:00 pm.

Gym Schedule		WEST GYM	EAST GYM
Sunday	12:00 - 2:00 2:30 - 5:00 5:30 - 6:45 6:45 - 8:00 8:15 - 9:45	Adult Basketball Adult Volleyball Family Teens Adult Badminton	Adult Basketball Family Volleyball Family Teens Adult Badminton
Monday	6:00 - 10:30 10:30 - 2:30 3:00 - 5:15 5:30 - 7:30 7:45 - 9:45	Open Open Teens Adult Basketball Open Badminton	6:00 - 10:30 10:30 - 2:30 3:00 - 5:15 5:30 - 7:30 7:45 - 9:45
Tuesday	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 3:00 3:30 - 5:45 6:00 - 7:45 8:00 - 9:45	Open Adult Volleyball Open Closed for classes Adult BB 25+	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 3:00 3:30 - 5:45 6:00 - 7:45 8:00 - 9:45
Wednesday	6:00 - 3:00 3:00 - 5:15 5:30 - 7:30 8:00 - 9:45	Open Teens Adult Basketball Adult Volleyball	6:00 - 3:00 3:00 - 5:15 5:30 - 7:30 8:00 - 9:45
Thursday	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 5:45 6:00 - 7:45 8:00 - 9:45	Open Adult Volleyball Closed for classes Wheelchair BB	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 5:45 6:00 - 7:45 8:00 - 9:45
Friday	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 7:15 7:30 - 9:45	Open Teens Adult Badminton	6:00 - 12:00 12:30 - 7:15 7:30 - 9:45
Saturday	8:00 - 11:30 12:00 - 2:30 3:00 - 5:45	Adult BB 30+ Teens Open Badminton	8:00 - 11:30 12:00 - 2:30 3:00 - 5:45

Nature and Interpretive Programs

September

Sunday, Sept. 5th
"Tours of Sharon Mills"
Sharon Mills
Tours begin at 1 and 3 pm.
Mill building open 1-4 pm.

Sunday, Sept. 12th, 1 pm
"Asters, Goldenrods and
Grasses of the Prairie"
Independence Lake
Meet in main parking lot.
Park entry fee required.

Saturday, Sept. 25th, 10 am
"Marvelous Mushrooms!"
Park Lyndon South - East Lot
An introduction to mushrooms.

Sunday, Sept. 26th
"Tour a Pioneer Grist Mill"
Parker Mill
Stop by anytime from 1-5 pm;
full tours begin at 1 and 3 pm.

October

Saturday, Oct. 2nd and Sunday,
Oct. 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th
"Tour a Pioneer Grist Mill"
Parker Mill
Stop by anytime from 1-5 pm;
full tours begin at 1 and 3 pm!

Saturday, Oct. 2nd, 10am-4 pm
"Make Your Own Cider!"
Parker Mill
Appointments on the half hour,
bring your own bushel of apples
and your own containers.
Pre-registration is required, call
971.6337, ext. 318

Sunday, Oct. 10th, 10 am
"Lyndon's Trees, Fall Color Hike"
Park Lyndon North

Sunday, Oct. 10th & 17th, 1-4 pm
"Tours of Sharon Mills"
Sharon Mills
Tours begin at 1 and 3 pm.

Saturday, Oct. 23rd, 10 am
"Exploring the Autumn Woods,
Children's Program"
County Farm Park
Meet in the Medford parking lot.

November

Sunday, Nov. 7th, 2 pm
"Exploring the Brauer Woods"
Brauer Nature Preserve
Located on Parker Road, (west
side) just south of Waters Road.

Friday, Nov. 12th, 7:30 pm
"Fall Stars and Planets"
Independence Lake
Bonfire to follow star gazing!
Rain date: Saturday, Nov. 13th.
Park entry fee required.

For more information or to register for cider-making, contact Faye Stoner at 734.971.6337 x318
-or- stonerf@ewashtenaw.org; download park maps online at parks.ewashtenaw.org



Garden Corner A Fall Garden Mini-Tour

Surely, one of the joys of fall is the brilliant leaf color changes of Maples, Ashes, Sumac—even Poison Ivy!

Just walking to the front of the Recreation Center in autumn you may still see the vibrant light green foliage of Red Twig Dogwood (*Cornus stolonifera*) and darker green of the Highbush Cranberry shrubs (*Viburnum trilobum*) contrasting with the deep purple leaves and red berries of Rockspray Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*) sweeping low in front. The brilliant reds of tiny tree leaves, may

differ from the narrow white and green stripes and feathery pink flower-heads of the bushy *Miscanthus* silver grasses, yet are complimented by the shorter yet richly rose and then sienna colored *Sedum* flowers and translucent light yellow of frost-tinged *Hostas*. The native Prairie Cordgrass (*Spartina pectinata*) swirls gracefully in the cooling air, and you may notice that some are braided to keep the paths clear.

Oh, and look for the interesting pods of the "volunteer" milkweed plants as some start to pop and spill-forth

the fluffs of wind-lifted "fairy" seeds. I leave some of these volunteer milkweeds in clusters, as they are food for declining populations of Monarch butterflies and several moths.

Spring and summer certainly have a beautiful parade of flowers and colors, yet especially wonderful "sight treats" can be found in your County parks in fall and winter too. Please, take frequent walks and enjoy "garden tours" in all your County parks—your senses will be engaged throughout all seasons! ☺

Kathy McKee, Park Horticulturist

Exploring Indy's Ecosystems

New Interpretive Signage at Independence Lake

Independence Lake County Park is home to an impressive variety of healthy, high quality ecosystem types. These include mature oak-hickory woodlands, sensitive wetlands, a tallgrass prairie remnant and several lakes and ponds. As you explore the several miles of trails that wind through the park, keep an eye out for new interpretive signage that examines each of these ecosystem types more closely.

Learning what makes a wetland a wetland or a prairie a prairie, or how these different ecosystem types benefit the environment are just a few of the things you might take away from the signs. Specific plants and

critters that you might spot along the trail are also highlighted. Color photos and graphics and lots of "fun facts" appeal to all ages.

An introductory sign located at the main parking area will orient you to the locations of the new signage... so get out there and explore! ♪

Lynn Berni, Park Planning Intern



One of the six new interpretive signs in the park.

Attention All WCPARC Volunteers...

Come join us for a

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner!

Date: Thu, Sept 23rd
Time: 5pm
Place: Independence Lake Beach Center
What: We'll grill hot dogs & hamburgers (vegan provided)
Bring a dish to pass, if you wish

For more info call Kathy McKee at 734.971.6337 x317

R.S.V.P. by Sept 10th

Habitat Improvements at Parker Mill, continued from page 4

to pay the cost for removal of invasive species from park property.

Habitat Improvement Program

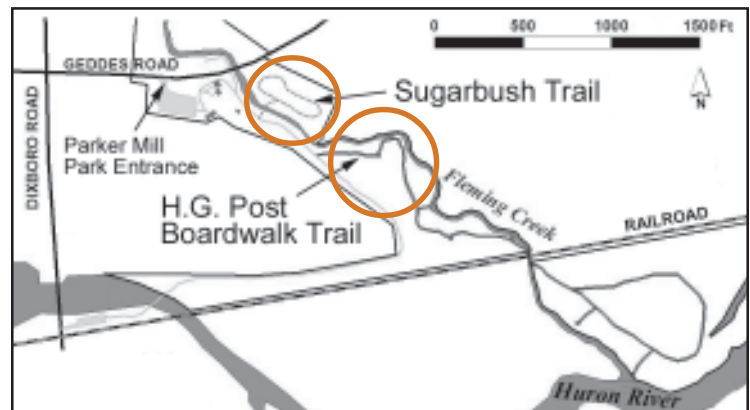
The main objective of this program is to increase native flora and the overall natural characteristics of the woodlands in Parker Mill County Park. A combined approach was initiated in the spring of 2004: removal of invasive species and planting/re-establishment of native species in strategic locations. The areas chosen as highest priority are most visible to the public using the park's popular trail system. Invasive species removal and planting and care of trees and shrubs are being performed by local contractors. Commission staff will augment plant diversity by planting native woodland herbaceous species

later this year. Next year, Phase II of the program will include controlled burns to stimulate the growth of native species and discourage the growth of invasives. These changes to the woodlands in Parker Mill County Park are both important and significant.

Areas that are re-established to native vegetation will expand and improve the natural character of adjacent areas over time. Improvement of the native flora will also

yield an increase in native fauna. Eventually, a denser more diverse flora will beneficially impact the water quality of Fleming Creek and, in turn, the Huron River. ♪

Richard Kent, Park Planner
Kathy McKee, Park Horticulturist



Invasive plant removal project areas are circled in orange

Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation Facilities

- 1** Park Lyndon County Park
18801 N. Territorial Rd., Lyndon Twp
- 2** Pierce Lake Golf Course
1175 South Main St., Chelsea
- 3** Independence Lake County Park
3200 Jennings Rd., Webster Twp
- 4** Parker Mill County Park
4650 Geddes Rd., Ann Arbor Twp
- 5** County Farm County Park
2230 Platt Rd., Ann Arbor
- 5** Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center
2960 Washtenaw Ave., Ann Arbor
- 6** Rolling Hills County Park/Water Park
7660 Stony Creek Rd., Ypsilanti Twp
- 7** Sharon Mills County Park
5701 Sharon Hollow Rd., Sharon Twp



Visit us online at parks.ewashtenaw.org for park maps and more info!

WCPARC Swim Registration Form

Please use one form per person. The form may be copied.

Name _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Home Ph: _____ Work Ph: _____

Circle One: Youth (3-17) Adult (18-61) Senior (62+)

Class#	Class Title	Day & Time	Fee	
Total				

- Check this form for accuracy! Registration cannot be processed if payment is incorrect.
- We do not accept credit cards.
- Mailing payment does not guarantee a spot in the class.
- We will contact you ONLY if there is a problem with your registration.

Make Checks Payable to: WCPARC

Register in Person at:
WCPARC
 Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center
 P.O. Box 8645
 Ann Arbor, MI 48107

Signature _____ Date _____

(parents must sign for children under 18)

WAIVER: I attest that I am/my child is physically capable of participating in the above programs for which I have registered and hereby release WCPARC from any responsibility whatsoever for personal injuries, damages or loss of equipment resulting from participation.

Amount Time Date Staff Initials
 Check# Cash Receipt#

Washtenaw County
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Director

inside...

- ✓ NAPP preserves another 275 acres...p. 2
- ✓ Rolling Hills **disc golf** expands to 18 holes...p. 1
- ✓ New interpretive signage at Independence Lake ...p. 10
- ✓ Washtenaw County's very **first dog park** is in the works...p. 3
- ✓ Habitat improvements at Parker Mill...p. 4
- ✓ Volunteer Appreciation Dinner...p. 10



next time...

- ✓ Results of the *Natural Features Inventories* conducted at Osborne Mill, Park Lyndon and Sharon Mills county parks
- ✓ Opportunities for public access to the NAPP nature preserves



**Washtenaw
County**
Parks & Recreation
Fall 2004 Newsletter

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tel 734.971.6337
fax 734.971.6386
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