



Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation

Winter 2005/2006



Winter Activities to Warm You Up WCPARC Facilities Provide Wintertime Action

Winter is a fact of life in Washtenaw County Michigan. Some folks have little enthusiasm for the cold and often dreary days it brings, while others love the snow and the activities only made possible by a frozen landscape. If you're here from December to March you really should take advantage of what nature has to offer. Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation provides numerous venues and activities to enjoy the pleasures of this "coolest" of seasons.

Independence Lake Park offers the widest range of winter activities for you to explore. When the snow comes, we groom a network of cross-country ski trails through the scenic landscape. The trails are always there for walking, but they are more beautiful and more fun when the park is blanketed with snow.

Ice fishing and skating are allowed when the lake surface freezes (to a safe depth of 6"), usually around the middle of January. The Beach Center is open year-round with heated restrooms. Park Naturalists provide special winter-oriented programs. Following on from last year, the highlight of the winter season will be the *2nd Annual Independence Lake Park Ice Fishing Derby* on Saturday February 11, 2006. For more information, see our Calendar on the back page or call the park at (734) 449-4437.

Rolling Hills Park has been a winter family favorite for many years. The diverse landscape of woodland, prairie, old fields, and turf areas is particularly attractive under a cover of snow. One of the larger "rolling" hills has been
(continued on page 10)



Bring your sled or rent toboggans at the Rolling Hills Park sledding hill!

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Contact Us!
parks@ewashtenaw.org
parks.ewashtenaw.org
(734) 971-6337

From the Director

Robert L. Tetens

You can feel the excitement and sense of accomplishment in the parks and recreation department, and among WCPARC Commissioners, following an exceptional year of operations, park expansion, trail development and land preservation. Record temperatures resulted in one of the busiest summers in our 32-year history. Rolling Hills Water Park and the beaches at Independence Lake Park were at capacity more often than not. Contrary to national trends, participation at the award-winning Pierce Lake Golf Course has remained strong, and patrons of the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center continue to pursue indoor fitness activities and programs, regardless of the season.

Consistent with our 5-year parks and recreation plan goals, we acquired land to expand existing parks in Ypsilanti, Webster and Sharon townships. The Commission is poised to initiate development at these expanded parks, adding to the opportunities already provided to County residents and visitors. The Border To Border Trail (B2B) continues to move ahead with construction planned for key segments in 2006. The Commission is also working with various partners to build connecting trails to link communities and activity centers throughout the County. Finally, our land preservation efforts have resulted in the purchase of additional waterfront land in both Scio and Manchester Townships. Natural features inventories and management plans will be prepared for all nature preserves, facilitating protection of our native landscapes.

It's difficult to express the excitement and intensity with which the talented people pictured below approach their work. We take great pride in our accomplishments and encourage everyone to visit our many facilities.



Happy Holidays from the Staff of Washtenaw County Parks & Recreation!

NAPP News

Natural Areas Preservation Program

Total Protected Land (since 2001): 780 acres

The largest natural area in the County's system of NAPP preserves just got even bigger! A 32-acre addition along the southern boundary of the Leonard Preserve was purchased in September, bringing the property to a total of 237 acres. Formerly owned by the Beaudoin family, the addition is a mix of rolling pasture land, woodlands and wetlands. The land slopes to the west providing lovely scenic vistas of the western skyline. So now you have even more reasons to visit the Leonard Preserve in Manchester Township, a diverse and rich landscape which protects nearly one mile of River Raisin shoreline. The preserve entrance is at the end of Union Street in Manchester. When the street bears left and turns to gravel, keep going and the parking area is on the right.

In other NAPP news, WCPARC recently installed a sign at the LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve on Vreeland Road in Superior Township. This new sign recognizes the collaboration between the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy (owners of LeFurge Woods) and Washtenaw County to expand the preserve. NAPP funds were used to purchase a conservation easement on 64 acres of LeFurge Woods Preserve's 325 total acres. ∞



Don't Stay Inside!

So Much to See and Enjoy in the Winter Landscape

Colder weather is here. For some folks, spending time in the outdoors loses its appeal—the summer birds are gone, the leaves have fallen, the asters are done blooming. But there are still lots of interesting and sometimes awesome things in the natural world to look for and observe.

Enjoying plants this time of year is very different from looking for blooming wildflowers or practicing tree identification with the leaves present. There are fewer plants and less color, but there are plenty of botanical challenges to keep you busy. Instead of looking for flower color, notice a winter wildflower's leaf arrangement. If you are hiking near a wetland, and the plant you are admiring has leaves in a whorl around the stem, you are almost guaranteed to be looking at Joe-pye Weed; leaves opposite each other on an angular stem could be a mint. Practice your tree ID using the buds to guide you. Sulfur yellow buds that look somewhat velvety tell you immediately you are looking at a bitternut hickory tree; long slender brown buds that are

quite pointed are clues that you are admiring a beech tree.

There are fewer species of birds to observe, but as we move into winter, birding can still be fun and challenging. Pay attention as you walk and notice if any sandhill cranes or turkey vultures are still around. When do you see the first tree sparrow of the winter? Get out to see if you can be "at the right place, at the right time" to hear and see the beautiful flocks of tundra swans that sometimes fly over our part of Michigan in December.

I've only mentioned birds and plants, but there are many other things in nature to enjoy and appreciate this time of year—it's fun to look for signs of deer and other mammals, to hunt for colors in the mostly brown and tan fields, to enjoy the lighting and shadows of a January sunset. Check out our calendar and join one of the naturalists for an outing. There's lots to see and enjoy! We can suggest books to help with winter plant identification, so feel free to



The characteristic smooth gray bark, spiky nut, and pointed bud of the American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*, top); American tree sparrow (*Spizella arborea*, bottom)

contact our office. Yes, it's colder, but put on those layers, wool socks, and cold weather boots and head out to your favorite trails in a County park or preserve. ☞

Faye Stoner, Parks Naturalist

Border To Border Trail Update

Trail Signs Up In Ann Arbor Parks

In collaboration with City of Ann Arbor Parks & Recreation, this fall WCPARC installed ten trail maps along the Ann Arbor segment of the Border To Border Trail—extending 5.7 miles from Gallup to Bandemer Parks. In addition to maps, look for directional arrows to help you navigate some sections of the trail,

such as getting from Gallup Park to Riverside Park along Fuller Drive. Kudos to Park Planning Intern Mark Dennis for developing this series of B2B trail maps, which include closeup maps for each sign location, an Ann Arbor context map, and an illustration of the entire B2B trail (some areas are in planning; others are still conceptual). ☞



Look for new B2B trail maps and directional arrows along the trail from Gallup to Bandemer Parks

Park Eagles

WCPARC Teams Up With the Boy Scouts of America

Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation and the Boy Scouts of America Great Sauk Trail Council have developed a close relationship by collaborating on three projects in the past year. In the fall of 2004, Jim Hughes of Troop 111 began his Eagle Scout Project to construct walking trails in the Devine Preserve in Scio Township. Over the course of several work days

throughout the season, Jim led about 15 scouts and adults in defining the trails by placing tree branches along the edges of a route mapped out by County staff. This demarcation will help visitors to stay on the trails and away from environmentally sensitive areas. Jim and his team also installed marker posts at trail intersections in the preserve. This Eagle Scout project enhances the visitor's

experience of the native wooded uplands and adjacent wetlands on the property.

During the summer of this year another community organization benefited from an Eagle Scout project led by Matt Majkowski of Troop 1. The project goal was the restoration of Swift Run Creek at the SafeHouse Center in Pittsfield Township. The project will reduce both pollution and erosion of the creek, and will reduce run-off into the nearby Huron River. Matt impressed all the adult supervisors (from the Township, SafeHouse and Washtenaw County Parks) with his organizational ability and execution of the project objectives. The workers of Troop 1 and their adult helpers did an excellent job of removing invasive vegetation (phragmites, buckthorn, autumn

olive and multiflora rose) and planting native plants in their place. Matt's team also built a wood chip path from the parking lot encircling the detention pond, and erected a sign designating the trail starting point.

The most recent collaboration between WCPARC and the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) was the United Way Day of Caring on September 15, 2005. Each year since 1999 WCPARC staff members have worked one day at a participating United Way agency, usually on a landscaping or building improvement project. This year thirteen WCPARC employees assembled at the BSA headquarters on Huron Parkway in Ann Arbor. The entire day was dedicated to landscape maintenance on the grounds of the office building. Maintenance and Administrative personnel worked together to trim trees and shrubs, remove dead ash trees, weed landscape beds, plant flowers, clean gutters, spread mulch and remove invasive plants.

Employees of other county departments also provided willing workers, including Human Services, Facilities Management, and Veteran Services. Everyone felt a real sense of accomplishment when the tools were loaded back into the trucks at the end of the day. The improvement to the site was dramatic. This WCPARC/BSA collaboration is clearly a winner and, not surprisingly, there are rumors of more projects in the pipeline. ♪

Richard Kent, Park Planner



Jim Hughes (right) and fellow scouts from Troop 111 building nature trails for his Eagle Scout Project.



At Day of Caring 2005, County staff spruce up the landscape at the Boy Scouts of America Great Sauk Trail Council headquarters in Ann Arbor.

Health & Fitness at the Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center

Winter 2005/2006

(734) 971-6355

Keep your New Year's resolutions
this year!



In the Know...

Do I have to register ahead of time for classes?

Only for Instructional Swim and Ta-Ji. All other classes are drop-in.

Do I have to purchase a punch card?

No, but it will save you money! Punch cards are good for 10 fitness classes, including Aqua Aerobics. They can be shared with friends and family and are good through the end of the calendar year.

I forgot to pick up a class schedule, how do I know what classes are going on today?

Call the AEROBIC HOTLINE at (734) 971-6355. Each day of the week has its own extension number, see page 6 for details.

Drop-In Class Fee Schedule

| | Resident* (per visit) | Non-Resident* (per visit) | Punch Card (10 visits) |
|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Adult (16-61) | \$6 | \$8 | \$35 |
| Senior (62+) | \$4 | \$5 | \$25 |
| Disabled | \$4 | \$5 | \$25 |

* Fees effective January 1, 2006

Facilities & Programs

Track (1/12 mile)
Gymnasium
Heated Pool
Cardiovascular Training Area
Strength Training Area
Locker Rooms
Assisted Care Locker Rooms
Classes:

Fitness (Adult & Senior)
Swim** (Adult & Youth)
Weight/Cardio Room Orientation

**Registration forms available at the Rec Center front desk or online at parks.ewashtenaw.org

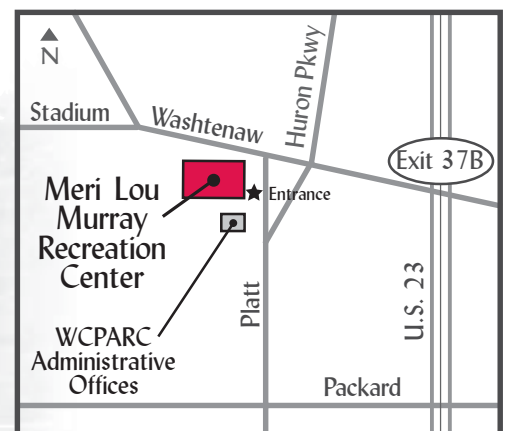
Building Hours*

Mon - Fri, 6am - 10pm
Sat, 8am - 6pm
Sun, Noon - 10pm

*Closed at 4pm Christmas Eve,
Dec 24 & New Year's Eve, Dec 31;
Closed all day Christmas Day,
Dec 25 & New Year's Day, Jan 1

Come on Down!

2960 Washtenaw Avenue
(entrance is on Platt Road)
Ann Arbor, Michigan
(734) 971-6355



Adult Fitness “Drop-In” Classes

Fitness Pilates I & II

Increase core strength and flexibility of the spine, improve posture, alignment and mind-body connection.

Kickboxing

Kicks, punches, blocks & combos create an incredible workout. Bag work; participants are encouraged to bring their own gloves.

Power Sculpting

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

Sculpt & Condition

Strengthen and tone the total body. Mildly aerobic workout is adaptable yet challenging for all fitness levels. Hand held weights, tubes and bands are provided.

Step

Fun aerobic workout with one-third the impact and twice the benefits. Concentrating on lower extremities makes this class an excellent fat burner. (Step II: *Advanced choreography and/or intensity*)

Step & Ball

Combines the fat burner section of a step class with the added conditioning benefits of the ball.

Turbo Kick

This ultimate cardiovascular challenge will improve agility and overall cardiovascular fitness! Combines techniques from group aerobics, dance, self defense and kickboxing.

Super Session

Intense, 1.5 hour workout with step, strength training, kickboxing and Yoga/Pilates stretching. Challenging for all levels.

Cardio Mix

Can be a combination of high/low aerobics, step and muscle conditioning. Always different, never boring. Excellent cross training.

Light Aerobics

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



Pilates Yoga (Pi/Yo) Fusion

Feel stronger and leaner with a combo of the best of yoga—flexibility and versatility—and the benefits of Pilates—core strength and alignment.

Hatha Yoga

Physical practice of yoga that involves moving in and out of different positions called “asanas”. Involves breathing and meditative exercise. All levels welcome.

TaJi

Harmonize the body and mind to better handle stressful situations. Registration required. Sorry, no drop-ins.

Adult \$35/Senior \$25, 10 weeks

Dance

Join Eric and learn basic moves for the Foxtrot, Waltz, Rumba, Swing, Ballroom, and Salsa. No partners needed.



Seniors

Senior Aerobics

Big Band and contemporary music! Requires 45 minutes of standing, finishes with balance exercises and light weight resistance.

Senior Stretch Fit

Basic stretching, yoga-like exercises standing, wall and floor work. Improve muscle flexibility, increase range of motion and general well being.

Senior Sculpt & Condition

Hand weights, bands and resistant tubing tone muscles, while improving strength and balance.

Senior Step Aerobics

Sharpen balance awareness and increase cardiovascular and muscle endurance. Everyone has a step unit and chair (for balance and support).

Aerobic Hotline

Class Schedules
Cancellation Notices
(734) 971-6355...

| | |
|----------|----------|
| Mon x751 | Fri x755 |
| Tue x752 | Sat x756 |
| Wed x753 | Sun x757 |
| Thu x754 | |

Weight & Cardio Room Orientation

Have questions? Our certified instructors 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

Instructional Swim Classes, 7-week Session

| Session | Register | Classes |
|---------|-------------|--|
| A | Dec 10 - 31 | Adult: Jan 4 - Feb 15 Youth: Jan 7 - Feb 18 |

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

(18 mos-3 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

(3-5 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 with 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 with Aquatic Programmer permission) Students improve stroke technique and endurance. 25-yard front & back crawls, breaststroke, sidestroke, sculling and rescue techniques.

Level 5/6

(Must pass level 4 or with 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 | | |
| Sat 11:15-11:45 | 21010 | \$35 |
| Pre-school 1 | | |
| Sat 10:35-11:05 | 21020 | \$35 |
| Sat 11:50-12:20 | 21021 | \$35 |
| Pre-school 2 | | |
| Sat 10:00-10:30 | 21030 | \$35 |
| Young Swimmer 1 | | |
| Sat 10:00-10:30 | 21040 | \$35 |
| Sat 11:15-11:45 | 21041 | \$35 |
| Sat 12:30-1:00 | 21042 | \$35 |
| Young Swimmer 2 | | |
| Sat 10:35-11:05 | 21050 | \$35 |
| Sat 11:50-12:20 | 21051 | \$35 |
| Sat 12:30-1:00 | 21052 | \$35 |
| Level 2 | | |
| Sat 10:00-10:35 | 21060 | \$35 |
| Sat 11:15-11:50 | 21061 | \$35 |
| Sat 11:50-12:25 | 21062 | \$35 |
| Level 3 | | |
| Sat 10:35-11:15 | 21070 | \$35 |
| Sat 12:30-1:10 | 21071 | \$35 |
| Level 4 | | |
| Sat 11:50-12:30 | 21080 | \$35 |
| Level 5/6 | | |
| Sat 12:30-1:10 | 21090 | \$35 |

**price increase reflects the change from a 5-week to a 7-week session

PLEASE READ

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

You may watch swim classes from the deck on the 1st & last days only; on all other days use the main floor observation windows

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. Registration required. Sorry, no drop-ins.

Wed, 7-8 pm; Sec #22410, \$45**



Adult Water Exercise

Aqua Aerobics/Easy Toning

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.

Pool Schedule

Fall 2005 - Spring 2006

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 Swim Classes 10-1:15 | |
| 11-1pm | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | | |
| 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 | Adult Lap 8-9:45 |
| 8-9pm | Aqua Aerobics | | Aqua Aerobics | | | | |
| 9-9:45pm | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | Adult Lap | | |

CLEANING & MAINTENANCE CLOSURES – Pool*: Closed from 1-6pm every Thursday, AND on the first Thu/Fri of each month the pool is closed from 1pm on Thu to 9am on Fri; **Locker Rooms:** Closed M-F, Men's 10:15-10:45am, Women's- 2:00-2:30pm; **Track:** Closed M-F from 1:30-2pm

| Gym Schedule | | (subject to change without notice) | |
|------------------|--|---|---|
| WEST GYM | EAST GYM | WEST GYM | EAST GYM |
| Sunday | Adult Basketball Adult Volleyball Family Teens Adult Badminton | 12:00-2:00 2:30-5:00 5:30-6:45 6:45-8:00 8:15-9:45 | Adult Basketball Family Volleyball Family Teens Adult Badminton |
| Monday | Open Closed for Class Teens Adult Basketball Adult Badminton | 6:00-8:45 9:00-12:00 12:30-5:15 5:30-7:30 7:45-9:45 | Open Closed for Class Open Adult Basketball Adult Badminton |
| Tuesday | Open Adult Volleyball Open Closed for Class Adult Volleyball | 6:00-12:00 12:00-5:45 6:00-7:30 7:45-9:45 | Open Open Closed for Class Adult BB 25+ |
| Wednesday | Open Closed for Class Open Adult Basketball Adult Volleyball | 6:00-8:45 9:00-12:00 12:30-5:15 5:30-7:30 7:45-9:45 | Open Closed for Class Open Adult Basketball Adult Badminton |
| Thursday | Open Adult Volleyball Closed for class Wheelchair BB | 6:00-12:00 12:00-5:45 6:00-7:30 7:45-9:45 | Open Open Closed for class Adult Volleyball |
| Friday | Open Adult Badminton | 6am-7pm 7:30-9:45 | Open/Teen Adult Badminton |
| Saturday | Adult BB 30+ Teens Open Badminton | 8:00-11:30 12:00-2:30 3:00-5:45 | Open/Community Teens Adult Volleyball |

Garden Corner

Workers & Projects of the 2005 Season

I am grateful to have had the opportunity to work with many inspirational people at our County parks this past season. In particular, seasonal workers Michael Ferszt, Ron Fielder, and Vance Porter made it possible to complete many landscaping projects. At Sharon Mills, Michael and I planted several new “old-fashioned” plants including colorful perennials around the mill. This fall we’ll be planting another 250 daffodil bulbs for a wonderful sweep of yellow early next spring! Ron gave extra initiative to his daily garden “operations” by adding a variety of garden delights for patrons of the Water Park at Rolling Hills, and Vance takes great pride in maintaining the rock gardens around the Clubhouse and 9th Tee at Pierce Lake Golf Course.

Master Gardeners Jeannie Morofino and Jane Vanbolt contributed to a

better plan, soil improvements, and plantings of dozens of new native plants at the Parker Mill Demonstration Gardens. Look for more color, diversity, and informational signs next season.

Besides their helping hands with garden clean-ups at Independence Lake’s SprayPlay gardens, Master Gardeners Susan Snyder and Maris Laporter gave new life to a forgotten sandstone bordered garden that you may admire on your walk from the parking lot to the Beach Center. *[Identify all the new plants there and win a twice-blooming iris tuber! Call me for details.]* Also, I would like to thank Sarahjane Allin (Sharon Mills),



Parks Horticulturist Kathy Squiers (left) with Master Gardeners Susan Snyder and Maris Laporter at their revamped sandstone bed in Independence Lake Park.

Robert Devereaux (photos), Bob Miller (Rolling Hills), Ellie Unterbrink (Pierce Lake), and many others for their special contributions to park gardens. My heartfelt **Thank You** to everyone who makes me proud to say “I’m the Washtenaw County Parks Horticulturist!” ☺

*Kathy Squiers, Parks Horticulturist
(734) 971-6337 x317*

Meet Our Staff

“The ROC” is our nickname for the Parks Commission’s **Roving Operations Crew**. The crew was formed in the spring of 2002 when Independence Lake Park expanded to year-round operations and required a maintenance crew to be stationed there full-time. The new maintenance crew—The ROC— was needed to maintain County Farm Park and eight other parks without dedicated maintenance personnel on-site.

Stationed at the County Farm Barn, this small but efficient group (reinforced in the warm months with several experienced and dependable seasonal employees) takes care of Cavanaugh Lake, County Farm Park, Osborne Mill, Park Lyndon, Parker Mill, Park Northfield, Sharon Mills, Staebler Farm, Superior Center, and the NAPP preserves. Pictured left to right are the full time employees of the ROC: John Meriwether, Mike O’Leary (Supervisor) and Ed Wojtan.

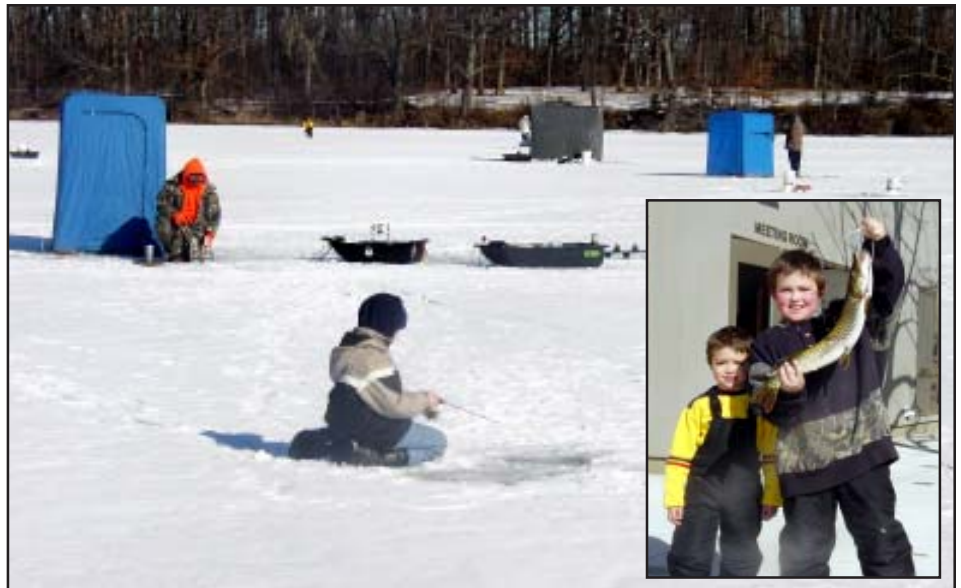


WINTER ACTIVITIES

continued from Cover

developed as a family sledding hill with an average ride length of about 150 to 200 feet. The hill is lit for nighttime sledding enjoyment. The park's varied terrain is also ideal for cross-country skiing. Three groomed trails are available to choose from, varying in length (up to 1.5 miles) and difficulty. The shortest trail is about one half mile in length and is lit by torches for safe and enjoyable night use. Cross-country ski packages, toboggans, and tubes that really scoot down the hill are available for rent. The 18-hole disc golf course at Rolling Hills, known as "The Hills", is open year-round and offers a great way to get some exercise in the winter. The park's rolling terrain, and open and wooded areas provide a nearly ideal setting for this fun sport. If you need to warm up, bring your own hot cocoa and snacks to enjoy by the fireplace at the recently renovated park headquarters. When the days begin to lengthen noticeably again in late February, the park becomes a great location to spot migratory birds returning from their southern, wintering locations. Until then, wrap up and come enjoy the beauty of a snow-covered landscape. Call Rolling Hills at (734) 484-9676 for more information about park activities and events this winter.

Of course, cross-country skiing is not limited to the groomed trails at Independence Lake and Rolling Hills parks. Snow-cover permitting, the trails at **County Farm Park** make for excellent skiing in the heart of Ann Arbor. If you work in A2, throw your skis in the car and come out for a ski during lunch or after work! And don't forget that



1st Annual Independence Lake Ice Fishing Derby at Independence Lake Park last winter. (Inset) Sean & Chris Petz hold up their winning catch! Mark your calendars for this year's Derby on February 11th (see back page for details)

walking and hiking, the simplest of exercise activities, are encouraged year-round in all County parks and nature preserves. While the gates to some facilities are kept locked in winter, visitors are allowed entry on foot from dawn to dusk. Walking is one of the safest ways to get the exercise we all need to stay healthy, so don't let "Old Man Winter" keep you inside. And, on the coldest and nastiest of days,

remember that our **Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center** offers 50,000+ square feet of recreational space for your use and enjoyment. Despite the weather outside you can exercise indoors on a range of equipment and facilities or take a variety of fitness classes. See pages 5-8 for more information on what the Rec Center has to offer or call (734) 971-6355. ☞

Richard Kent, Park Planner

2006 Vehicle Permit Sales

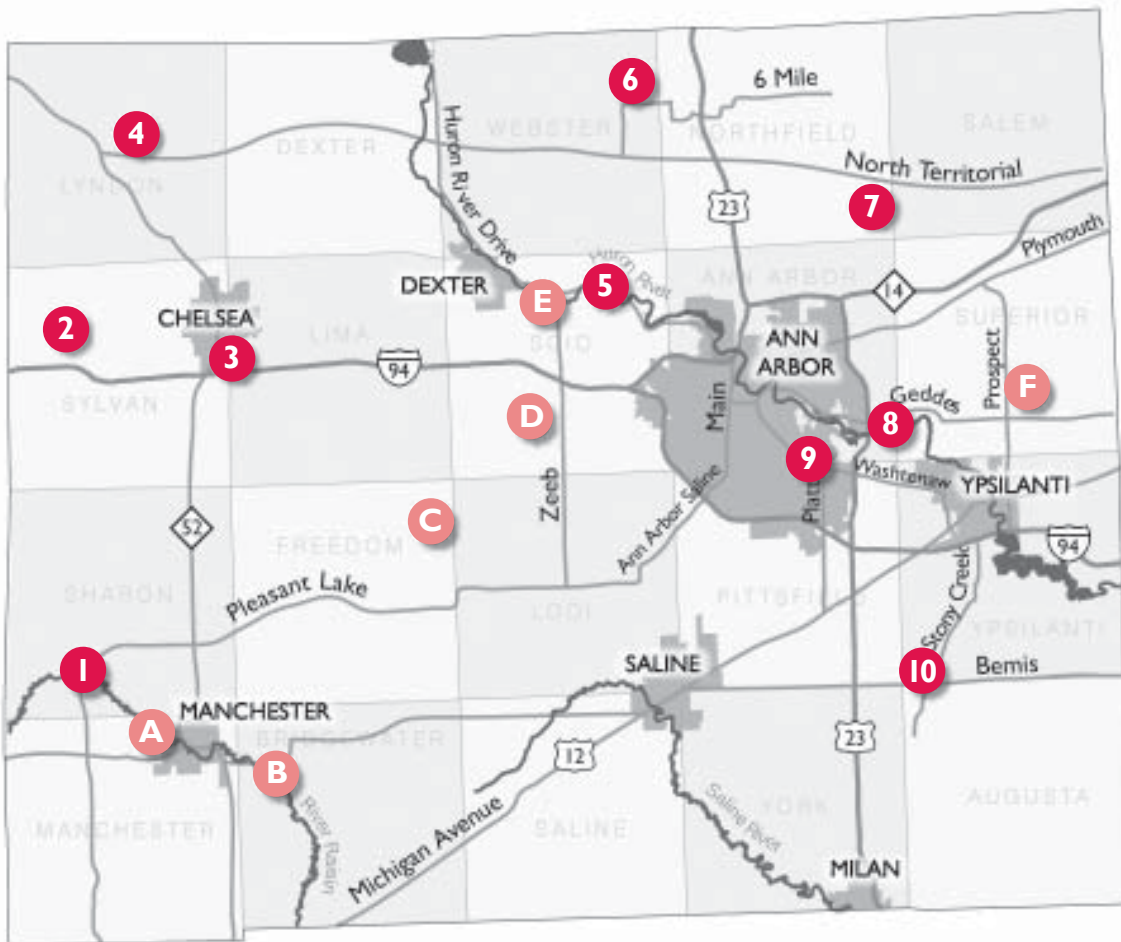
Annual Vehicle Permit sales begin January 3, 2006 at the park headquarters of Independence Lake and Rolling Hills County Parks. \$20 for Washtenaw County residents; \$38 for nonresidents.

2006 Picnic Pavilion Reservations

2006 Picnic Pavilion reservations will begin January 3, 2006. Independence Lake Park features 4 units: **Beach Center** seats 120 people, **Independence Woods and Meadows Edge** seat 90 each, and the **Group Center** seats 480. Rolling Hills County Park features six units: **Prairie** seats 180, **Woodlands** seats 90, and there are four family-sized units that seat 12 each. Indoor space for meetings or picnics is also available at both parks.

**For more info: Independence Lake (734) 449-4437
Rolling Hills (734) 484-9676**

Visit us online for park maps, park info and directions!
parks.ewashtenaw.org



Parks & Recreation Facilities

- 1** Sharon Mills Park
5701 Sharon Hollow Road, Sharon Township
- 2** Cavanaugh Lake Park
Cavanaugh Lake Road, Sylvan Township
- 3** Pierce Lake Golf Course & Park (734) 475-5858
1175 South Main Street, Chelsea
- 4** Park Lyndon
18801 North Territorial Road, Lyndon Township
- 5** Osborne Mill Preserve
East Delhi Road, Scio Township
- 6** Independence Lake Park, (734) 449-4437
3200 Jennings Road, Webster Township
- 7** Park Northfield
Pontiac Trail, Northfield Township
- 8** Parker Mill Park
4650 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor Township
- 9** Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center, (734) 971-6355
Corner of Washtenaw & Platt, Ann Arbor
-and-
County Farm Park
2230 Platt Road, Ann Arbor
- 10** Rolling Hills Park & Water Park, (734) 484-9676 & 484-9655
7660 Stony Creek Road, Ypsilanti Township

Nature Preserves (purchased with NAPP funds)*

- A** Leonard Preserve 32-acre addition purchased Sep'05!
Union Street, Manchester
- B** Ervin-Stucki Preserve
Clinton Road, Bridgewater Township
- C** Brauer Preserve
Parker Road, Freedom Township
- D** DeVine Preserve
Liberty Road, 1/2 mile west of Zeeb, Scio Township
- E** Burns-Stokes Preserve
Zeeb Road, Scio Township
- F** LeFurge Woods Nature Preserve
Vreeland Road, Superior Township
(NAPP funds purchased a conservation easement on 64 acres of this preserve; the 325-acre preserve is owned by the Southeast Michigan Land Conservancy)

*The DeVine and Leonard Preserves have entry signs and parking. DeVine also has rustic nature trails. The LeFurge Woods Preserve has a trail starting from Vreeland Road (sign erected Fall 2005). Currently all other preserves lack entry signage. Call for detailed directions.

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Director

Calendar of Events & Programs

Map on page 11

FREE unless
noted otherwise

Visit us online for
calendar updates

December

Sat, December 3

◆ **“Almost Winter” Bird Hike (FS), 9-11am**
Hot drinks in lodge afterwards.
Rolling Hills, vehicle entry fee

Sun, December 4

◆ **Hiking Along the Huron: Exploring the Burns-Stokes Preserve (FS & CM), 2-4pm**
Come explore the newest Natural Areas Preservation Program property with Parks Naturalists Faye Stoner & Catherine Marquardt! Park in the Sweepster lot off Zeeb Road, just north of the river (look for signs).

Sun, December 11

◆ **On the Whitetail’s Trail! (FS), 2-4pm**
Short indoor talk with slides, followed by a hike in the woods and wetlands. Fun program for kids and adults.
Independence Lake, meet at Beach Center, vehicle entry fee

January

Sun, January 8

◆ **Annual Winter Hike & Potluck (FS), 10am-2pm.** A short hike followed by a potluck at the cabin. Note: cabin is a five minute walk, uphill from parking lot.
Park Lyndon South, East lot

Sat, January 14

◆ **Going on an Animal Hunt! A Program for Kids (FS), 1-2:30pm**
We’ll search for active “winter woods” animals and the signs they leave behind. Hot drinks provided afterwards.
County Farm Park, Medford Road entrance

◆ **Under the Wolf Moon (FS), 7-9pm**
We’ll call owls, view winter stars, look for night mammals and more! Hot drinks around fire afterwards. *Independence Lake, meet at Beach Center, vehicle entry fee*

Sat, January 28

Workday: County Farm Park, 1-3pm
Help cut invasive shrubs and small trees from the oak-hickory woods. Please bring gloves, loppers, and pruning saws, if you have them. If not, tools will be provided.
County Farm Park, Medford Road entrance

Sun, January 29

◆ **Winter Plant ID (CM), 1-3pm**
Learn how to identify winter plants by looking at seeds, pods, and general shapes.
Independence Lake, vehicle entry fee

February

Sun, February 5

◆ **“End of a Winter Day” Hike & Bonfire (FS), 4pm-??** We’ll hike to one of the wetlands to explore and enjoy winter twilight time, then head back to the pavilion for drinks and snacks around the fireplace. *Park Lyndon North*

Sat, February 11

2nd Annual Independence Lake Ice Fishing Derby, 7am-dusk.
Come join us for another fun-filled day of competition with prizes and a raffle! Registration begins at 7am for two competitive categories: Pike Fish and Pan Fish. *Registration fee TBD, call for more info, (734) 449-4437.* Two competitive age groups: kids and adults. Bring your own bait. No alcohol, ATV’s or snowmobiles.
Independence Lake, vehicle entry fee

Sat, February 18

◆ **Winter Tree ID (CM), 1-3pm**
Learn how to identify trees by buds, bark, seeds and other features of winter.
Osborne Mill Preserve

Sun, February 19

◆ **From Woods to Wetlands: A Nature Outing for Families (FS), 2-3:30pm**
Come and learn about some of the neat things found in these two different habitats. In case of a thaw, wear boots that can get muddy. *DeVine Preserve*

March

Sat, March 4

◆ **Sap to Syrup: Doing it Yourself (FS), 1-2:30pm.** Learn how to identify and tap maple trees, then how to boil the sap to delicious maple syrup! We’ll be inside and outside, so dress for the weather. **Participation is limited and pre-registration is required, call 971-6337, ext. 318**
County Farm Park, Administration Building, Platt Road entrance

◆ **Nature & Interpretive Programs, for more info contact our Parks Naturalists:**
Faye Stoner (FS) at stonerf@ewashtenaw.org or (734) 971-6337 x318
Catherine Marquardt (CM) at marquardtc@ewashtenaw.org

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