



Photo credit_ Ian Marshall



Portage Park District

August 2020 Newsletter

Our staff

Portage Parks Staff Updates

Portage Parks continues to grow our staff to match our growing park system-here's the latest:

Kudos to Andrea Metzler, who was promoted to **Public Engagement Manager**, on her 3-year anniversary with the Park District. Andrea and our **Education Coordinator** Jennifer White are always creatively providing ways for the public to learn about and connect with the parks, aided by the many talented volunteers whom Andrea also manages. We're looking forward to future IRL (in real life) opportunities to engage, but for now please connect with us virtually and enjoy the parks!

We're also happy to introduce our full-time new hires this year in the **Operations Department**: Daniel Mars was recently hired as a **Maintenance Worker III**, joining **Maintenance Worker II**'s, Logan Carpenter and Andy Hagat. They all do an amazing job keeping the parks safe and clean while working on various park improvement tasks as we continue to grow and develop.

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Remote education

GameTime: Nature Scattergories

Do you love to play the game Scattergories? Invite for friends and family to register for this game with a nature twist! [Register](#)

Wetlands & Watersheds

Join us virtually to find out what the big deal is about the wetlands and watersheds in our area.

Our **Natural Areas Stewardship Seasonal Technicians**, Lindsay Leightner, Emmet Roberts, and Tomas Curtis who was promoted to **Seasonal Natural Areas Specialist** this year have returned this year, and have been busy working on land restoration and biological inventories of park properties.

Say hi if you see us while you're out and let us know how we can make the parks better for you.

In the parks

Share the Trail: Trail Etiquette



This year we are excited to see that our parks and trails are busier than ever with users of all ages and abilities, including many new users. We love providing these beautiful places for healthy (and physically distanced) recreation, especially when outdoor exercise in nature is so important. Please help keep our trails safe and welcoming to all by following these guidelines for kind and courteous trail use:

- Stay right, pass on left
- Maintain a safe speed; signal when passing
- Cyclists yield to pedestrians
- Be alert, don't block trail
- Control dogs on short leashes, remove pet waste

Portage Park District Foundation

Virtual Environmental Conservation Awardees Dinner



The Portage Park District Foundation will recognize this year's conservation awardees virtually on **September 12 at 5:30 p.m.** Invitations to the virtual event will be available soon. [Click here](#) to make sure you receive the registration link for this special virtual event.

Funding for parks

Prepare to be amazed!
[Register](#)

Nature Newbies: Bug Fun

Nature newbie? Do insects and creepy crawlies creep you out? This program is for you!
[Register](#)

GameTime: Family Feud

Make your own family of friends. Join us and meet some new friends! It's going to a fun Family Feud-style game night!
[Register](#)

In the news

Along the Way: Trail Lake Park a home run for Portage Park District

[Click here](#) to read more

Eklund tours Morgan Park

[Click here](#) to read more

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Great American Outdoors Act

With overwhelming bipartisan support, Congress passed and President Trump signed into law the **Great American Outdoors Act** that assures full, permanent funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) to support conservation and parks. The 50+ year LWCF is funded by a portion of offshore oil and gas royalties, not taxes, and with this new law all those promised funds will now go for the purposes intended. Portage Park District received a \$300,000 grant in 2018 to help acquire the upcoming Trail Lake Park, and we look forward to more opportunities!

Wild Hikes Challenge 2020 - Year of the Owl

2020 ushers in the Year of the Owl for the Portage Park District Wild Hikes Challenge. Our trusty mascot, Owlbert, is particularly excited about this year's theme. Owls are fascinating, mysterious creatures that are abundant in our county.



To participate complete 8 of the following trails before December 31st to earn a hiking staff (1st year) and/or a 2020 Wild Hikes medallion. Forms can be downloaded [here](#).

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