



Winter at Morgan Park, photo credit: Jennifer Robinson



# Portage Park District

## January 2020 Newsletter

### In the parks

#### 2020 Vision and excitement

**Author: Jennifer White, education program coordinator**

Happy new year and welcome to a new decade! I have been reflecting this past week on how grateful I am to be part of the Portage Park District as we enter this decade with enthusiasm and 2020 vision.

The mission of the Portage Park District is to conserve Portage County's natural heritage and provide opportunities for its appreciation and enjoyment. As you'll see below, there are plenty of plans and projects happening in your parks. Our staff is committed to meeting our expectation of excellence, maintaining your trust, connecting people to the wonder of our local natural areas, and evaluating and adjusting to meet the needs of the public. I am thrilled to share some of our 2020 program plans with you!

#### New programs

I am looking forward to serving my first winter and spring seasons with the park. Among traditional nature education programs and guided hikes, we have some exciting new initiatives and program series planned. I hope you will be as motivated as I am to

### This Issue

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[Park family](#)

### Upcoming programs

#### Park Rx: Yoga for back health

Jan. 7, 6-7 p.m.

#### Reduce your waste

Jan. 11, 10-11:30 a.m.

#### Winter Tree ID

Jan. 14, 4-5 p.m.

#### An introduction to Ohio's prehistoric cultures

Jan. 16, 7-8 p.m.

#### Winter wildlife walk

Jan. 18, 10-11 a.m.

#### For the birds

Jan. 22, 6-7 p.m.

participate in Owlbert's owl adventures for our younger participants, citizen science data collection for butterfly and insect enthusiasts, a birding club to document our feathered residents in our parks, or a photography series to learn and enjoy capturing those special nature moments. Maybe it's my soil & water conservation background, but I am extra excited about our 2020 rain garden demonstration project and workshop series! This hands-on project is funded by the [Ohio Environmental Education Fund](#) and will teach you how to plan and plant your very own functional rain garden to improve local water quality.



## Park Rx

By now you have likely heard about or participated in our Park Rx program. It is a prescription for health to help you get healthy and stay healthy while enjoying our Portage Parks. Consider taking your next step to health by registering for our [Park Rx Winter Series](#). The classes are located inside and focus on nutrition, strength and meditation. We will be offering seasonal Park Rx series to support your health goals and get you outside when the weather breaks so that you can take advantage of the mental and physical benefits of fresh air and natural surroundings.

## Wild Hikes Challenge

The [Wild Hikes Challenge](#) is in its thirteenth year and we have seen steady participation growth and anticipate a surge in hikers this year. Hike just 8 of the challenge hikes and you can earn your hiking staff (1st-timers) and your Year of the Owl badge.



We look forward to listening to your needs with the precision of specialized owl ears, adjusting our course as needed with the ease of an owl in silent flight, and planning our conservation, education and recreation programs with 2020 vision! My vision for our park education program is to connect you to our shared natural world. It's valuable to remember that we are all on this earthly ride together and that everything is connected.

Thank you for joining me on this journey and thank you for supporting and enjoying YOUR Portage Park District!

## Our park family

[A special visit from Rory and Baby Reyna](#)

## Winter Animal Signs

Jan. 24, 4-5 p.m.

## Park Rx: Reading food labels

Jan. 28, 5-6 p.m.

## Mystery of Snowflakes

Jan. 29, 4-5 p.m.

Visit our [Things to Do](#) page for more information and registration.

Click the image below to visit our website to download a program flyer.

JANUARY	
Date	Event
1	Winter Walk
2	Winter Walk
3	Winter Walk
4	Winter Walk
5	Winter Walk
6	Winter Walk
7	Winter Walk
8	Winter Walk
9	Winter Walk
10	Winter Walk
11	Winter Walk
12	Winter Walk
13	Winter Walk
14	Winter Walk
15	Winter Walk
16	Winter Walk
17	Winter Walk
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25	Winter Walk
26	Winter Walk
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29	Winter Walk
30	Winter Walk
31	Winter Walk

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## 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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