Seedlings

Volume 3, Issue 1

Kids Explore the Wonders of Winter on Snowshoes

Get ready for some FUN this winter!!! Genesee County Parks, Recreation & Forestry has purchased full sets of snowshoes to fit kids ages 3 to 14 years old through a generous grant awarded by the Genesee County Youth Bureau.

5th Graders from Pembroke are unstoppable on their animal adaptations hike. Snowshoes are provided by the park in 2017.

The Park now provides snowshoe rental for up to 11 preschoolers, 25 elementary school students and 25 middle school students at any given time. This is in addition to the set of 25 adult sized snowshoe pairs that fit snowshoers ages 14 and up.

This is a huge step forward for winter programming, as the inventory of youth-sized snowshoes stood at 7 pairs in previous seasons. The County Parks offer year-round outdoor recreation and science education programs to schools, community youth organizations, scouts, and the public. Snowshoeing programs in particular offer healthy outdoor recreation and a unique science learning experience that keeps kids engaged and active during the winter months. With this quantity of youth snowshoes, the park has the flexibility to serve as many as 65 children in rotation during a special event or multi-activity educational program. Winter programs in 2017 also serve groups of multi-aged kids, thanks to the variety of snowshoe sizes available.

In addition to excursions through the wilds of Genesee County Park & Forest, we offer snowshoeing and winter hikes at DeWitt Recreation Area and outreach programs to schools, community centers, and other locations by request. We are looking forward to a fun-filled winter of public snowshoeing programs on Saturdays, moonlight snowshoeing for adults, science lessons for students, snowshoe hikes for scouts and community groups and more. Open snowshoe rental is $5/pair at Genesee County Park & Forest, see page 15 for details on upcoming winter explorations! Special thanks to the Genesee County Youth Bureau, Genesee County Youth Board, and the NYS Office of Child and Family Services who made this possible.

To book your winter adventure please contact Shannon Morley, Conservation Education Program Coordinator at 585-344-1122 or Shannon.Morley@co.genesee.ny.us.us.

Get your skates on!! The DeWitt Recreation Area skating rink is OPEN! The new outdoor rink currently measures 48 by 100 feet, and can be made bigger as necessary in future winters.

Use of the rink is FREE and available at posted times. The outdoor rink is skate at your own risk and bring your own skates.

Stick and puck hours 2-4pm Tuesdays and Thursdays

Rink Hours:

Public Skate:
M, W, F, Sa 10:00am - 4:00pm
(sticks and pucks are prohibited on the ice)
Tu, Th 10:00am – 2:00pm

Stick & Puck:
Tu, Th 2:00 – 4:00pm (No Figure skating)

See the parks website for full rules and details, and follow us on Facebook for up-to-date rink information and closings at https://www.facebook.com/Genesee-County-Parks-Recreation-Forestry-465144840306572/.

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Winter Trivia on page 5!

Interpretive Nature Center Winter Hours:

Thursday—Friday:
10 am—4 pm

Saturday—Sunday:
12—4 pm

Critters and Spiders Run Wild!!!

Creating critters out of nature's offerings.

Making some festive decorations.

People of all ages love using their imaginations.

Choosing what to use can be the hardest part.

Some unique creatures and their creators.

Creating critters and lasting memories.

Tarantulas: man's true best friend.

Sizing each other up.

WNY's Climate and the Great Lakes—by Lee Johnson

The time of year when snow falls and household heating bills rise has officially arrived in Western New York. The region is well noted for its abundant, sometimes record-breaking snowfalls, often receiving some of the highest amounts of wintry precipitation in the state. Western New Yorkers annually demonstrate the capacity to weather (pun intended) the harsh winter conditions they're faced with, but why do we live with these conditions more than neighboring regions?

As many who reside in the area are already aware, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario are the main cause for our winter-time hardships. While their influence on winter weather is clearly evident, the two Great Lakes that border the west and north ends of Western New York impact the surrounding land throughout the year, creating a climate that is distinct from other regions in New York State.

A snowblower is no match for the lake-effect snow that pummeled much of Western New York in the fall of 2014. (Buffalo)

Lake-effect snow is a familiar term for Western NY natives and a scary term for newcomers. Lake-effect snow is the result of cold air masses traveling over relatively warm bodies of water. In our scenario, late fall and winter winds, often from the northwest, travel over Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. The water in the lakes, still relatively warm from the heat absorbed during summer, evaporates into the layer of air immediately above the water, warming and humidifying it. The warm layer of air rises into the cold air masses above, causing the water vapor to desublimate into ice crystals inside the cloud, forming growing snow crystals. The newly formed snow is then deposited downwind, which typically lies east or southeast of lakeshores - exactly where we're located in relation to Lake Erie and parts of Lake Ontario.

Perhaps it's no surprise that both Buffalo and Rochester are routinely ranked near the summit of the snowiest major cities in the United States, receiving an average annual snowfall total of approximately 96.1 inches and 100.5 inches, respectively. Syracuse, while not found in Western New York but still within the borders of the Great Lakes basin, is considered the snowiest city in the United States, garnering a massive annual average of 126.3 inches, much of it consisting of lake-effect snow formed over Lake Ontario (source: Weather.com).

While lake-effect snow may capture most of the headlines, Lake Erie's and Ontario's influence on Western New York's climate can be felt year-round. During late summer and early to mid-fall, lake-effect rains occur throughout the region. Forming via similar mechanics as lake-effect snow, lake-effect rain materializes when temperatures in the lower atmosphere are above 0ºC (32°F). As all lake-effect precipitation begins as snow, a temperature above freezing is necessary in order for the snow to melt into rain. Higher relative humidity in the overriding air produces more widespread cloud cover during this time of year, explaining why fall in Western New York is often a dreary and grey season.

Summers in Western New York are typically dry. This dryness can be partially attributed to the properties of the Great Lakes. During summer, the lakes absorb heat from the air that lies in the lower atmosphere above the water, cooling it. Land surrounding the lakes reradiate heat back into the atmosphere, heating the air above the land to temperatures greater than that of the air immediately above lake waters. The air masses high above the lakes are often too warm to for any lake-effect precipitation to materialize and the cooling of the air immediately above the lakes inhibits the moist air from rising. These atmospheric conditions, the exact inverse of what occurs during fall and winter, act as a deterrent to proper precipitation production.

The Great Lakes basin. The area outlined in black represents Western New York.

Precipitation isn't the only climatic factor affected by the lakes' presence. The lakes assist in regulating the temperature of the surrounding landscapes, lowering average maximum temperatures during summer and raising average minimum temperatures during winter. Because water has such a high specific heat (the amount of heat required to raise the temperature of a substance by one degree), large bodies of water store heat and release heat slowly over time. During summer, the lakes absorb heat from the surrounding air, cooling the air and warming the water. The opposite occurs during winter, as the lakes release heat absorbed during the warm summer months back into the air, raising the temperature of the air. As a result, Western New Yorkers, particularly those who live close to the coastlines of the lakes, experience milder temperature extremes during the different seasons than inland parts of New York. Additionally, the lake's regulation of temperatures throughout the seasons allows for fruits typically grown in the southern US to be cultivated in this region, protecting them from dangerous frost. We enjoy the fruits of this effect in the successful vineyards of Western New York, protected by the moderating influence of Lake Erie, and in the wine country of the Finger Lakes Region.

It's difficult to describe Western New York without mentioning its proximity to Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. From record-breaking snowstorms in the winter to sunny, blue-skied summers, the denizens of Western New York truly live in a place unlike any other in the state.

Sources:
https://weather.com/storms/winter/news/20-snowiest-large-cities-america-20140130#/20
https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/P1004ICU.PDF?Dockey=P1004ICU.PDF
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http://www.miseagrant.umich.edu/lessons/lessons/by-broad-concept/earth-science/microclimates/

Amy Jessmer—Volunteer Coordinator

Hello Fellow ACORNS!

For those of you who do not already know me, my name is Amy Jessmer. I am the first Volunteer Coordinator at Genesee County Park and I am very excited to be working with all of you again. I worked as an Environmental Educator here at the park during Winter and Spring 2016 and ran at Run for the ACORNS (I was dressed as the hula dancer and I really only jogged!)

I am from the small town of Albion NY. Although I am fairly new to Genesee County I am learning about all it has to offer! I recently learned about Bourbon and Burgers, and my life has changed for the better! (Yumm!!!). I have my Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from SUNY Brockport, where I am also pursuing my Masters degree in Environmental Science. I swam for SUNY Brockport for 4 years and still enjoy swimming even though I am officially retired! My studies at Brockport led me to a two year position as a Research Technician at Braddock Bay, NY preforming post-restoration monitoring. That's fancy talk for "I counted Birds and Frogs to ensure the restoration efforts there are remaining successful." I have a strong obsession with frogs stemming from my childhood which was only strengthened over 2 years of surveying them!! (Ribbit Ribbit) I studied Disease Ecology, Parasitology, Water Quality, and Wildlife Management in South Africa in the summer of 2015 during an amazing internship which only added to my obsession with wildlife and exploring.

Don't worry, my life isn't all work and studies. I have fun too! I am an avid hunter (for conservation reasons only!) and I enjoy hiking, fishing and camping. I knit and make crafts any chance I get. I also enjoy snowshoeing, skiing, ice skating and all other fun outdoor activities.

I am excited for my experience here at the park. I hope to improve your experiences as volunteers and fellow nature enthusiasts. I am looking forward to working with each and every one of you this year and having some fun along the way!!

Excitedly,
Amy Jessmer

Helping nesting Snapping Turtles cross the road safely!

I wanted to be a Dolphin trainer when I was 6 years old. Swimming with dolphins in 2012 made me feel like a was 6 again!

Run For the ACORNS Tip: Dress silly and no one will notice you cant run!

Exploration Guides — AmeriCorps Volunteers

Want to help people appreciate nature and take advantage of all that the Genesee County Parks have to offer?

Seasonal Environmental Educator positions are available at Genesee County Park & Forest through Genesee County AmeriCorps.

* **Lead recreation and outdoor education programs at the parks.**
* **Guide Park Visitors**
* **Help with park improvement projects**
* **Earn some cash toward your education**

Brandi leads a Senses Hike at the Genesee County Park and Forest for Kindergarteners from Letchworth School.

AmeriCorps Volunteers make fun and interesting events and programs possible!!
For more information and to become a volunteer contact
Kathy Frank, Program Director of the Genesee County AmeriCorps at (585) 344-3960
http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/youthbureau/americorp.html

Fun Facts about Winter!

By Amy Jessmer

* Most snowflakes fall at a speed of 2 to 5 feet per second, roughly the same speed as a person walking casually through a park.

* Snow appears white because it is comprised of a bunch of individual ice crystals arranged together. When light hits snow, it bounces all around the ice crystals and the "color" of all the frequencies in the visible spectrum combined in equal measure is white. While white is the color we see in snow, individual ice crystals are actually translucent.

* The woolly mammoth was not the only "woolly" type of animal during the ice age! The woolly rhinoceros, also known as the Coelodonta, co-existed with the woolly mammoth. Similar to the woolly mammoth, the woolly rhino adapted to the cold with a furry coat and short ears. Fewer preserved woolly rhinos have been found, likely because they went extinct prior to the wooly mammoth. This is believed to be because of their inability to walk through deeper snow drifts due to their short legs. Could you imagine fuzzy rhinos wandering around?!
More information available at: http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/20497828 and http://blog.ted.com/10-fascinating-facts-about-woolly-mammoths/

* All 50 states have recorded snowfall. Snow is observed on the tallest volcano summits in Hawaii and trace amounts of snow reach the ground in northern Florida each year.

* One cubic foot of snow may contain between 1 and 2 million individual snowflakes.

Source: https://www.weather.gov/wrn/infographics_winter

ACORN Adventures

Watching Wildlife: FeederWatch and Nestwatch

The ACORNS have been busy this season - taking care of wildlife at the parks! Volunteers Jim Schmitt and George Squires installed 2 bird feeding stations in the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center! Not only do the feeders provide a tasty snack for residential and migratory birds, they also provide a unique observation opportunity for everyone at the park!! George also donated a spotting scope to the Interpretive Center Discover Zone for visitors and volunteers to observe birds at the feeding station.

Jim and George instilling the Bird Feeding Station

(Round of applause for them!)

Baby Bluebirds

Wildlife Monitoring Volunteer Coordinator Jerome Gentry connected the park with "FeederWatch" to make Genesee County Park & Forest an official FeederWatching station. What is FeederWatch, you ask?! Great Question! FeederWatch is a winter-long survey of birds visiting feeders in backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other designated areas all over North America. FeederWatch data helps scientists track the movement of winter bird populations and long-term trends of bird distribution. Although George and Jerome have been doing most of the observations, others are invited to join! The best part about FeederWatch is people of all skill levels can participate. Not sure you could do it?! Fear not bird lovers!! The ACORNS offers FeederWatch training! The donated spotting scope is located in the Interpretive Center and allows volunteers to do their observation from the warmth of the Discovery Zone window!! Come watch birds without freezing your tail feathers off!!

Don't be afraid you're going to be the only one participating in FeederWatch, other volunteers are joining in on the fun too! A troop of Attica cub scouts volunteered last month. This is a great service-learning science education opportunity for people of all ages and an overall great winter activity!

That isn't all that happened here!! The Park also started NestWatch! Oh you don't know what NestWatch is?! Well it is similar to FeederWatch in that it counts birds. NestWatch is nationwide monitoring program that tracks that status and trends in the reproductive biology of birds. This is done while the birds are nesting and includes the number of eggs laid, number of hatchlings, and how many hatchlings survive. This program is awesome too because anyone can participate, even children! NestWatch has been a blast thus far and is only getting better!! The park started with monitoring Bluebirds and within the last year we have added Wood Ducks to that list! And you guessed it, the ACORNS have training for NestWatch too!! Bring your friends and family and become a wildlife monitor! HOW COOL would that be?!

You never know what you will find while monitoring wildlife!

Mommy Tree swallow!

If you're interested in getting involved in FeederWatch or NestWatch and are already a ACORNS volunteer, please contact the Wildlife Monitoring Volunteer Coordinator Jerome Gentry. If you are not yet a volunteer and would like to become one please contact the Volunteer Coordinator Amy Jessmer at 585-344-1122 or ParkAmeriCorps@co.genesee.ny.us.

We hope you join the fun!!!!

Wildlife Stewardship Volunteers kept watch over 40 nest boxes at Genesee County Park & Forest and 10 nest boxes at DeWitt Recreation Area in 2016

Total fledglings for 2016:

Eastern Bluebirds: 17

Tree Swallows: 53

House Wrens: 54

Bluebird monitoring season begins again March 18th, 2017! Volunteers are trained on how to monitor the boxes once a week and help keep baby birds happy and healthy. Contact us at 585-344-1122 to volunteer this year!

Thank You ACORNS!!

Established in 2006, ACORNS gave huge support in their 10th year.

ACORNS Volunteer Organization Contributions for 2016

Volunteer Activities (Hours): (included but not limited to)

- Program Assistance for Outside Organizations (Schools, Scouts, Nursing Homes, Private groups, Clubs)
- Program Assistance with Park Public Programs and Special Events
- Volunteer assistance in direction of community service projects (United Way Make a Difference Day, Eagle Scout Projects, Day of Caring, community service volunteers, etc…)
- Outdoor Classroom construction
- Trail Maintenance
- Facility and Exhibit (live turtle, bee hive, taxidermy) Maintenance
- Interpretive Nature Center Visitor Services (Sitting) during public hours of operation
- Wildlife population monitoring and stewardship
- Marketing/public communication for park events and programs
- Educational contributions to Parks Newsletter (Seedlings)

January - December Volunteer Hours =	**2213.5**
Labor $ Savings to County Parks (NYS Average volunteer Rate $27.59) =	**$61,070**
Labor $ Savings to County Parks (Actual County Employee Rate $16.46) =	**$36,434**
Seasonal Groundskeepers =	**2.15 or**
AmeriCorps Volunteers (900 hr) =	**2.45**

Monetary /Material Donations:

1. Outdoor Classroom construction **$2,071.00**
   a. Material Donations (155 sq ft Pavers, 526 lin ft Aluminum Edging, 17 tons Stone Dust, 17 yds mulch, Deer Fencing, 11 Shrubs, 6 Log Benches)
   b. (2) Bird Feeding Stations **$ 383.00**
2. Pallet Storage Units (2) **$ 679.00**
3. AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator (900 hr position) **$2,400.00**
4. AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator Laptop **$1,310.00**

ACORNS 5K/10K Walk/Run:

- 216 registered participants
- $6,411.00 in profit
- $5,350.00 in sponsorships

ACORNS VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION DONATION TOTAL = ***$43,277.00***
(Time (County Rate $16.46), Material, Monetary)

ACORNS VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION DONATION TOTAL = ***$67,913.00***
(Time (NYS Rate $27.59), Material, Monetary)

Thank you for your support!!

Meet the ACORNS

(Association for the Conservation OF Recreational and Natural Spaces)

The ACORNS is the volunteer group formed to support the Genesee County Parks by assisting with environmental programs and park maintenance, offering recreational opportunities and promoting the parks.

ACORNS Board of Directors:

Julia Garver, President
Mary Yunker, Vice-President
Barbara Easton, Treasurer
Jerome Gentry, Secretary
Charlie Augrom
Sarah Balduf
Daisy Klein
Bill Moon
George Squires

Members:

The Acquard Family
Norm Argulsky
Charlie Augrom
Sarah Balduf
Josh Bachorski
Nancy Baker
Matt Britt
Mallory Broda
Barbara & Mike Easton
David & Marcia Gann
Julia Garver & Joe Ruh
The Gentry Family
Nancy Gerspacher
Brandi Giambrone
Jeffrey Gillard
Lynn Glarner
Peggy Grayson
Janis & Stuart Hempel
Sheila & Paul Hess
Kathy Jensen
Amy Jessmer
Lee Johnson
Daisy Klein
Hans Kunze
Sam & Esther Leadley
Emily LeMaster
Tami & Pete Loftus
Gordon Meek
Bill & Connie Moon
Shannon Morley
Terri & Michael Muehlig
Paul and Emma Osborn
Kathy Owen
Dave & Val Patten
Mary Jane Pearce
Todd Pratt
Jim Schmitt
The Scott Family
Mary Ann Silvernail
Clare & Ron Sloat
George Squires
Sandy & Dave Steele
Richard Stevens
Jim & Laurie Taille
Kathie Woika
Mary Yunker
Pam Zola

If your name is not on this list, it may be time to renew your membership!

Join us for ACORNS Volunteer Days on the 3rd Saturday of every month from 1 pm—3 pm. ACORNS meetings are held every 4th Tuesday evening of the month. Check website for location.
ACORNS website: **http://acorns.shutterfly.com**

RUN FOR THE ACORNS 2017

Sunday, October 1st

ACORNS is looking for a few great volunteers to help out and have fun! Contact us at https://runfortheacorns.shutterfly.com

ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center

2016 was a great year for the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center. Students and scouts picked herbs, pulled weeds, searched for camouflaged items, and practiced using their senses in the OLC during spring and summer classes. Volunteers, scouts, students and organizations made a difference and completed service projects as they donated their time and energy to building and finishing the walkways, tending the gardens, creating landscaping and protecting it from hungry deer! (see fencing around the shrubs).

This past fall, Park staff installed pavers for the benches where visitors and students can sit and enjoy the activity of birds at the feeding station in winter, or just listen to the rustling of aspen leaves in the summer. A balance beam was added to the Messy Materials area, where kids can use their imagination as they play with materials from nature.

Check out new developments in the OLC as 2017 gets underway, bringing students and all ages closer to nature. Coming this spring: a new gathering area for outdoor education programs, made by Jim Schmitt, from wood donated by Al Hanlon. Thanks to all for your support in making the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center a growing success.

Birds Flock to John Rembas Memorial Donation

Over a year ago the ACORNS were approached by the family of John Rembas about using donations in memory of John, who had recently passed away, for some kind of memorial at the park. Daughter Mary Ann Kirchoff said of her father, "He loved the Genesee County Park very much and our family designated the ACORNS as a donation site in his memory." The family wanted something that could honor both their father as well as their mother, Clara.

Bird Feeding Station

Discussions with the Rembas family proceeded at the same time as planning for the Outdoor Learning Center (OLC) at the park was underway. OLC plans included two bird feeding stations, so the ACORNS proposed funding them with the donations received in memory of John Rembas. The family was thrilled with the idea, and work on the memorial began. ACORNS member Jim Schmitt built two beautiful large platform feeders, and member George Squires designed and built the feeder stations. The bird feeding stations were completed this fall and pictures of the completed stations were sent to the Rembas family. The family responded with these kind words: "We cannot thank you - and all the volunteers enough for the time and effort put into this birdfeeder project. We hope it will serve to provide for the many birds, as well as provide enjoyment and learning for all. It is a wonderful tribute to our Mom and Dad."

Thanks to the generous donations in memory of John Rembas, the OLC not only has two wonderful bird feeding stations, but will have funding for bird food for the 2016-17 winter feeding season.

Volunteer work has always been essential to park stewardship, development and improvements. Service projects at the parks come in all types and sizes! For information on what you or your group can do for the parks please contact Paul Osborn, Parks Supervisor at 585-344-8508!

Save the Gills! - By Ally Miller, Abby Dambra, and Cameron Snell

In November of 2015, students from Le Roy Jr/Sr High School attended the Youth Ocean Conservation Summit at SUNY Stony Brook. The Summit was sponsored by Coastal Steward, an organization that monitors research on the coastal water of New York State including the Great Lakes and the ocean coasts. The students were interested in not only the quality of our local water, but also the steps taken in order to conduct a research project. While at the conference the students brainstormed possible areas of interest; contamination by microbeads or pharmaceuticals and their effects on aquatic life.

Once the students returned home from the conference they narrowed their focus by meeting with Peter Lent from the Oatka Watershed Committee and Helen Domske a professor at the University of Buffalo who is involved in the Sea Grant from Coastal Steward. During their discussions the students learned of many problems facing our local waterways. They reached the decision that it was important to address the effect of pharmaceuticals once they enter the water. Their project focused mainly on informing the public of its effect on aquatic life and on methods of proper disposal.

From the many grant applications the students from Leroy were one of the three high school groups awarded a grant in 2015. They used the grant money to create an interactive educational display outlining how chemicals and medications move from waste water into our food chain. Along with the display, the students created a brochure which contains detailed information about the effects of chemicals on many different organisms and proper disposal of pharmaceuticals in our communities. Paul Osborn generously agreed to house the display in the Interpretive Nature Center for Genesee County Park visitors.

In November of 2016 the director of Coastal Steward invited the Le Roy students Ally Miller, Abby Dambra, and Cameron Snell back to the 2016 Youth Ocean Conservation Summit to present their project to this year's attending high school groups. Scientists and researchers who spoke at the conference stressed the importance of networking and connections to successfully bring about change. The students came away from the conference realizing that was exactly what they had done by creating a network in their community and making other connections to their environment through this project.

Ally and Abby show off their interactive exhibit in the Discovery Zone of the Interpretive Nature Center
Photo credit: Sherri Lovieria, Science Teacher Leroy Jr Sr High School

It's Easy to Protect Your Water!

Drop your medications off in the box in the Lobby of the Genesee County Sherriff's Department and protect your healthy water supply, as well as the fish, amphibians and other aquatic creatures living in local waters.

Genesee County Sheriff's Dept

165 Park Rd, Batavia, NY 14020

Drug Drop Box Open 24/7
in the main lobby!

Planning Ahead

Picnic Pavilion Reservations 2017

Reservations will continue to be made using a mail-in, blind lottery draw. Picnic Permits must be in by March 3, 2017 for the blind lottery draw on the week of March 6, 2017. There will be no phone reservations as a check must accompany the Picnic Permit before a confirmation of the pavilion is sent. Permits received after March 3, 2017 will be on a first come/first serve basis. Confirmation letters will be sent out the week of March 13, 2017. Please do not call for your date until after March 19, 2017.

Feel free to make copies of the Picnic Permit for other dates or visit our website and download it at ***http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/docs/parks/Picnic_Permit2013.pdf***

PLEASE READ the FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

1) Reservations can be made on all large and small pavilions as per the fee schedule found on the parks website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/pavilion.html
2) There will be a fee for these reservations.
3) A Picnic Permit must be completed and sent and a check or money order must be included when you send in the permit. Checks or money orders MUST be made payable to the *GENESEE COUNTY TREASURER*. The fillable permit form is found on the parks website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/docs/Picnic_Permit2013_1Fillable.pdf
4) It is suggested you choose two possible dates or locations to minimize the chance of not receiving a reservation of your liking.
5) Please note both the Genesee County Park & Forest and Dewitt Recreation Area are CARRY IN/CARRY OUT Parks. There will be no receptacles for garbage and you will be responsible to take it out with you. The DeWitt Recreation Area has a NO ALCOHOL policy.
6) *All permits must be completed entirely*, including the HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT found at the bottom of the permit.
7) All Company Picnics are encouraged to fill out a Special Event Use Application Form. This form can be found on the parks website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/docs/Special_Events_Policies_and_Procedures_Final2013.pdf
8) Forms and additional information can be downloaded at *http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/parkreservations.html* and http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/new_departments/parks/permits.html

Ellicott Trail to Connect DeWitt to Downtown

The first pedestrian and bicycle path in Genesee County is coming to DeWitt Recreation Area in 2017!! Through collaborative efforts between the City of Batavia, Town of Batavia, State Senator's office, private landowners, the Genesee County Parks Department and community support, plans for a brand new pedestrian and bike trail have materialized and come to life.

Proposed Ellicott Trail route through Batavia

The Ellicott Trail is a multimodal path running east-west for 4.6 miles through roads, parks, wetlands and abandoned railway beds in the Town and City of Batavia. The Ellicott Trail will provide a new route through the city which includes off-road sections that are safer and more efficient for travelers. The trail will start on Seven Springs Road, pass over the CSX railway off of E. Main St Road, then winds its way through DeWitt Recreation Area. Construction of a boardwalk in DeWitt will give trail users a path over scenic wetlands in the park. From DeWitt the path leads to Lions Park and Elmwood Cemetery, down Ellicott St Road, and behind the proposed Ellicott Station development. The trail will then cross Tonawanda Creek via a new trail bridge on Walnut Street, travel past Williams Park to its western entrance at Pearl Street Rd.

We are excited about this new opportunity for exercise and outdoor recreation across the community, connecting DeWitt Recreation Area with activity centers in the city, shopping, and more. See page 10 to create a logo for Ellicott Trail and win some cash!

Ellicott Trail Sign Logo Contest

The hunt for the forthcoming Ellicott Trail's official sign logo is on! Submit your entry or entries by January 30th, 2017 and potentially win some extra cash in the process. Release your inner artist and help usher in the community's next great outdoor treasure!

ELLICOTT TRAIL

LOGO COMPETITION

3 PRIZES: $100 / $75 / $25

First Place / Second Place / Third Place

- The Steering Committee for the Ellicott Trail (ET) Project invite members of the community to submit logo designs to identify and brand the new 4.6 mile Ellicott Trail that will run from Route 33/Pearl Street at the western terminus to the eastern terminus at Seven Springs Road. The trail will proceed on designated roadways, along abandoned rail beds, across Tonawanda Creek, along a quiet cemetery, through DeWitt Park and out to Seven Springs Road. It is hoped the ET will one day connect to other bike trails beyond Genesee County.

- The ET is targeted to open in late 2017 and is being funded through a collaborative effort through the Transportation Enhancement Program, the City and Town of Batavia, a Municipal Facilities Grant through Senator Michael Razenhofer's Office and Genesee County Parks Department.

- The new logo will be employed on a wide range of applications including but not limited to all-weather exterior signs in a variety of sizes; way-finding maps; stainless steel sidewalk emblems; as well as potential banners, stickers and flyers (possibly hats or T-shirts for the grand opening!)
  - Due to the variety of applications, simple, single color design solutions that can be translated into stainless steel emblem are recommended.
  - Every entry must include the Trail's official name or initials, or both:
    - Ellicott Trail / E.T. / or both
  - In addition to the trail name, an additional graphic element or design solution is encouraged.

- All design entries should be approximately 8" x 8" in size.

- Submitting entries:
  - Send hard copies to: Lisa K. Casey, City of Batavia, One Batavia City Centre, Batavia, NY 14020
  - Electronic submittals via Email to: lcasey@batavianewyork.com
    - Emailed as JPG files, no smaller than 500KB / no larger than 3MB
  - There is no limit to the number of entries one person or team can submit.
  - No entries will be returned.
  - Winning entry becomes the exclusive property of the City and Town of Batavia for its unlimited use.
  - All entries must include designer's: Name / Address / Contact Phone Number / Email / Age
  - Questions? Contact Donna Rae Sutherland: dsutherland@genesee.edu or 585-343-0055 x 6616.

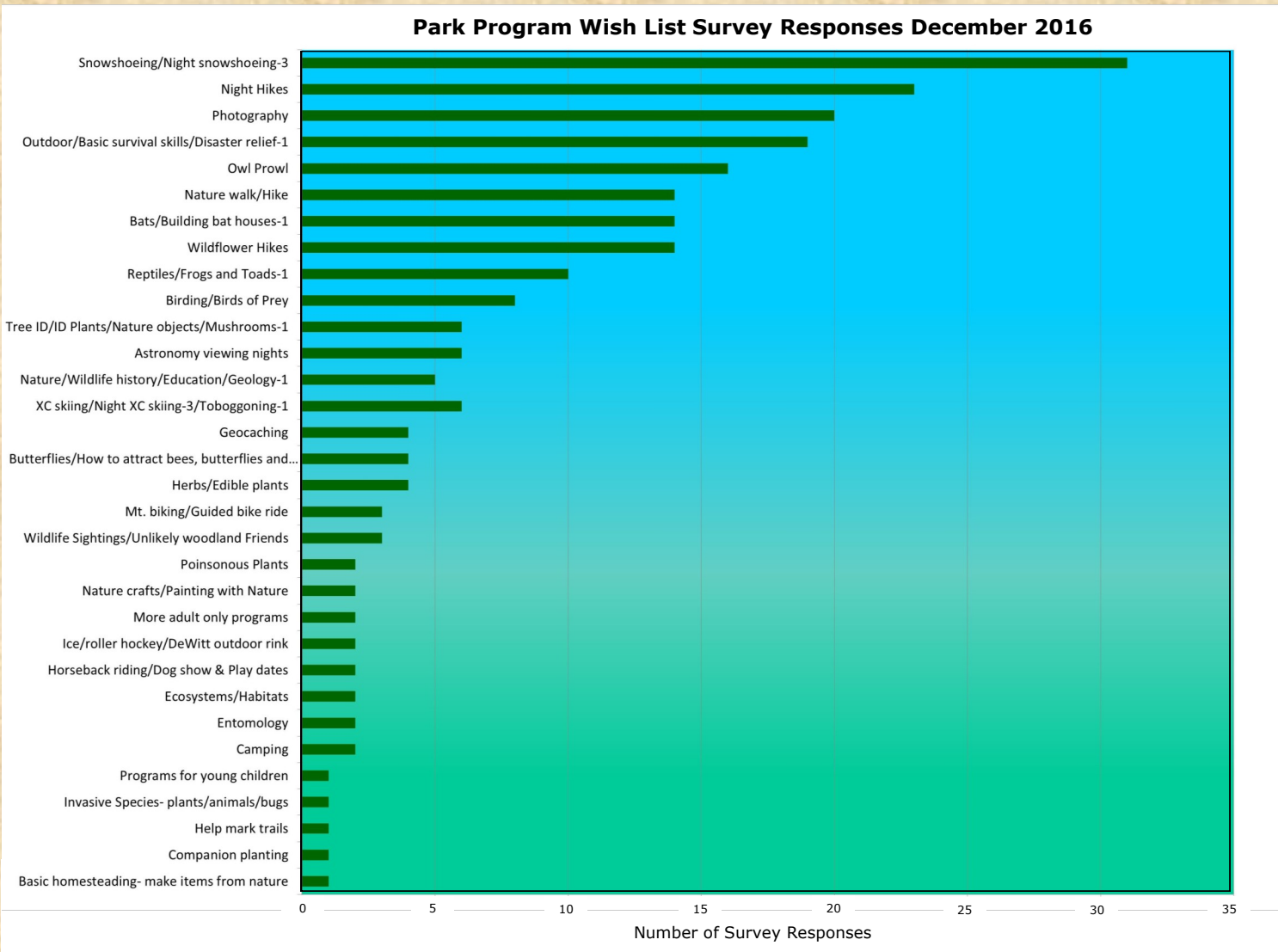
- **Deadline for all entries: January 30, 2017**

- The Ellicott Trail Steering Committee will select the winning entry in February 2017 and award the $100 First Prize, $75 Second Prize and $25 Third prize at a City of Batavia Council meeting in the spring of 2017. The Ellicott Steering Committee reserves the right to accept or refuse any or all entries, and is under no obligation in its selection process.

This graphic element is the current "place holder" being used by the engineers and Steering Committee during the planning and development. The circular design is advantageous, but not essential.

The Wish List Survey Results Are In!!

Last month Genesee County Parks, Recreation & Forestry conducted a survey about the kinds of recreational and education programs people are most interested in having at the parks. The survey was sent out via email, posted at the park, on our website and on our Facebook page. Here are the results!!



Give us your wish list!

Missed the survey? That's ok! If you would like to participate, please send the types of recreational and educational programs that you are interested in along with the season, days of the week, time of day that you visit the parks to the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Shannon.Morley@co.genesee.ny.us.

You asked for it, You got it!!

See page 14 for fun and learning at the parks in 2017!

Save the Date!! Coming in 2017…

Saturday Snowshoeing and Winter Hike
Saturdays in January and February, 1- 3 pm
Explore a new topic each week with a Naturalist! No experience needed! Hikes will go, snow or no snow.
January: 21st Black Creek Hike
February: 11th Animal Sweethearts, 25th Tracks in the Forest
Snowshoes provided or bring your own. $5/person, $15/family.

Moonlight Snowshoe Hike and Winter Walk
Saturday, February 11th 7:00 – 9:00 pm
Enjoy the tranquil beauty of the forest by moonlight. Moonlight hike will go, snow or no snow! Hike concludes with refreshments by a warm fire in Pavilion A. Ages 18 and over. Snowshoes are provided, or you may bring your own. $5/person, $15/family.

The Natural History of Luck
Saturday March 11th 1:30 – 3:00 pm
Nature is full of things believed to bring good luck, but where did these superstitions come from? Explore the world of local nature and luck as you hear the stories and legends and pass around examples -- maybe some good luck will rub off on you! Ages 6 and up. $5/person, $10/family.

Amphibian Adventure
Saturday April 15th
7 - 8:30pm Ages 5 and up *and* 9:30 – 11pm Ages 16 and up
Listen to the chorus of spring and get to know your small, slimy singing neighbors with Amphibian Adventure. After we learn to identify our pest-eating pals, we head into the wetlands and woodlands to search for them, listen to them, and find out what we can do to help take care of them. $5/person, $10/family.

Wild Planet Earth Day Celebration
At DeWitt Recreation Area
Saturday April 22nd 10 am – 2 pm
Earth Day is your chance to take care of your wild planet and your wild neighbors! Give back to the earth and help out with habitat cleanup and make cool stuff from recycled materials. Enjoy wild games and a Naturalist-guided hike to see where animals live, and what good things you can do for them!

Wildflower Walk
Saturday May 6th 1:30 – 3 pm
Spring beauty, trout lily, may apple… Hike with a Naturalist and learn the names, habits and adaptations of the forest's first flowers. Seize the day and enjoy the magic of spring while it lasts! $5/person, $10/family

Wild Moms
Saturday May 13th 10:30 - 12:30 And 1:30 – 3:30 pm
Animal moms of the wild have all different ways of taking care of their critters, from newborn to adulthood! From the familiar to the bizarre, learn how Mom always knows best, across the world and in your backyard. Program includes games and activities. Ages 4 and up. $5/person, $10/family

Geocaching
DeWitt Recreation Area
Saturday June 10th 10:30 am – 12 pm
Get out with a friend and try this hi-tech scavenger hunt sport! Create a team name or personal alias to let others know you were here. You never know what you'll find in a geocache! All equipment and GPS units provided. $5/person, $10/family.

Capturing Nature
At DeWitt Recreation Area, June 2017
Learn nature photography tricks of the trade and explore the park with a Naturalist. $5/person, $10/family

Wilderness Survival Basics
Summer 2017
Stranded. What should you do first? Where is the best place to build a shelter? How do you purify water? Are ants really edible? Join us and learn the basics of wilderness survival. $10/person, $20/family

Stories in the Stars
Friday August 11th 9 :30 pm – 11 pm
Grab a spot in the meadow and sit back for some entertainment, the way people did before Redbox or Netflix! Hear the stories behind summer's constellations and find out how the stars got their names. Program will be held outdoors. Bring a blanket or a chair to enjoy the view, far away from city lights and closer to nature's wild, uncompromising beauty. $5/person, $10/family. Rain Date: August 26th

Watching Monarchs
Saturday, September 9th 1:30 – 3 pm
September is Monarch Butterfly migration season in New York State!! Come to the meadow and learn about the fascinating lives of these large butterflies. Learn about butterfly tagging, explore their world and find out what people are doing to help them out!! $5/person, $10/family.

Math Gone Wild
Saturday, September 23rd 1:30 – 3:00 pm
Mathematics is found throughout nature, giving it the structure and beauty we so admire. Join us and learn the math behind some of nature's most common forms – inspect and measure it for yourself! Head outside with us and observe living examples of math's beauty that can't be tamed. $5/person, $10/family.

Capturing Nature 2
Saturday October 14th 1 – 3 pm
Bring your camera and capture the forest at the most colorful time of the year!! Learn nature photography basics and explore the park & forest with a Naturalist. $5/person, $10/family

Owl Prowl
Saturday, October 21st 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Which animal has big yellow eyes, 2-inch talons and likes to eat skunks?? Learn about owls on a night hike through the forest. Anything can happen on an owl prowl! Ages 4 and up. $5/person, $10/family.

Not Afraid Forest Night Hike
Saturday October 28th 7:00 – 8:30 pm
Creaky trees, howling animals, glowing eyes!!! Join us for a Halloween-themed nature night hike on the trails and learn about some of the things that go bump in the night. For ages 4 and up. $5/person, $10/family.

Haunted Forest Hike
Saturday, October 28th 9:30 - 11:00 pm
Hear the stories and visit some special sites of New York State's oldest county forest at night. Follow your guide on a hike into the woods. Is it haunted? We'll let you decide…Ages 12 and up. $5/person, $10/family.

Nature's Feast: Turkeys and More
Saturday November 18th 1:30 – 3 pm
What does our local nature's bounty have to offer for a Thanksgiving feast? Come learn about local wild food, edible plants and more from a Naturalist guide. $5/person, $10/family.

Create-a-Critter
Saturday, December 2nd 10:30 am – 1:00 pm
And 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm
Let your imagination run wild! Use craft materials gathered from nature. Hot glue and your creativity put it all together. Get away from it all and enjoy quiet time with your favorite people, your creation is a perfect gift! $5/person, $10/family.

Programs take place at the Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Nature Center, 11095 Bethany Center Rd, East Bethany, NY 14054 unless otherwise noted. Pre-registration is required for all programs. To register call (585) 344-1122. For more information visit our website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/, or contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Shannon.Morley@co.genesee.ny.us or (585) 344-1122.

Winter by Moonlight 2017

Owl Prowl

Discover the secrets of these mysterious, helpful birds of prey and explore the forest at night!! Listen for the calls of winged wildlife and the footsteps of stealthy critters. Anything can happen on an owl prowl! Recommended for ages 4 and up, $5/person $10/family. Pre-registration is required, call 585-344-1122 to reserve your spot!

Saturday, January 7th
7:00 — 8:30 pm

Moonlight Snowshoe Hike and Winter Walk

Enjoy the quiet beauty of the forest by moonlight! Hike starts with a brief snowshoeing lesson, followed by a trek through the forest and meadows. Night concludes with refreshments by a warm fire at pavilion A.
For ages 18 and over. Hike will go, snow or no snow!
Snowshoes are provided or bring your own, $5/person or $15/family.
Pre-registration is required, call 585-344-1122!

Saturday, January 14th and Saturday, February 11th
7:00 — 9:00 pm

Saturday Snowshoeing 2017
at Genesee County Park & Forest

Saturday Snowshoeing and Winter Hikes

Saturdays 1:00 — 3:00 pm

Explore a different topic each week with a Naturalist!
Hikes will go, snow or no snow.
Snowshoes are provided or bring your own.
$5/person, max fee $15/family.

January:
7th Winter's Wildlife
21st Black Creek Hike

February:
11th Animal Sweethearts
25th Tracks in the Forest

Pre-registration required! Call 585-344-1122

Snowshoe Trail Group Hikes

Saturdays 10:00 am — 12:00 pm

Make a memory this winter with your own guided snowshoe hike!

Private Naturalist-led hikes are available on Saturday mornings in January and February by reservation only.

$5/person, minimum group fee $75.

SNOWSHOE RENTALS

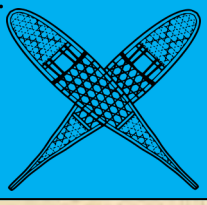
Snowshoes are available to rent at Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Nature Center through the months of December, January, February, and March, weather permitting. Rentals are available on a first come, first serve basis and must be used in the Park.

Hours:

10am-3pm Thursdays and Fridays

12pm-3pm Saturdays and Sundays

(Snowshoes must be returned to building by 3pm)



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Genesee County Park & Forest
Interpretive Nature Center

11095 Bethany Center Rd.
East Bethany, NY 14054

Phone: 585-344-1122
Fax: 585-343-6611

Visit
www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/

Black Creek Hike
Sat. January 21st
1:30 - 3:00 pm
$5/person, $10/family
Pre-Registration Required, Call 585-344-1122

Make a Difference!

*We are helping to keep the earth clean while earning new equipment and cash. You can help by saving **used cartridges** and **cell phones**! Just come by the Genesee County Park Interpretive Center and drop them off!*

Do you have nature-related books you would like to donate? We have a lending library for adults to sign out books, take home and read. When you're done, bring them back and sign out more! To donate books please call the Interpretive Center at 585-344--1122 or send an email to Shannon.Morley@co.genesee.ny.us. (Magazines and encyclopedias not needed)

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