



SUMMER NEWSLETTER

May-August 2026

**Parks & Recreation
Millage Ballot Proposal
Info on page 4!*

**OAKLAND TOWNSHIP
PARKS AND RECREATION**

oaklandtwpmi.gov • 248.651.7810

GENERAL INFORMATION

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Director.....1
 Staff Update..... 1-2
 In Memoriam3
 Parks Millage Ballot Proposal Q&A ...4
 Dinosaur Hill Birthday, Dogs.....5
 Music in the Meadows.....6
 Recreation.....7
 Arts & Enrichment.....8-10
 Detroit Institute of Arts 11
 Fitness & Wellness10-12
 Archery 13
 Summer Camps.....14-15
 Nature Programs..... 15-17
 Stewardship..... 18-22
 Cranberry Lake Historic District... 23-24
 Historical Society.....25
 Paint Creek Trail26-27
 What's New in the Parks28
 Parks Map.....29

Office Location:

Paint Creek Cider Mill
 4480 Orion Road, Second floor.
 Rochester, MI, 48306

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8:00am - 4:30pm

Park Hours:

Dawn to Dusk

Website:

Oaklandtwpmi.gov/parks-recreation

Staff

Administration

Director

Ben McLoskey

Administrative Assistant

Michele Rutledge

Receptionist/Program Clerk

Aria Hughes

Stewardship

Natural Areas

Stewardship Manager

Dr. Benjamin

VanderWeide

Stewardship Specialist

Grant VanderLaan

Stewardship Seasonals:

Kelly Craig

Olivia Franklin

Paige Williams

Torrey Murcott

Maintenance

Interim Maintenance

Foreman

Bill Beverly

Maintenance Seasonals:

Dan Barton, Todd Hartzell

Recreation

Recreation Manager

Arianna Stringer

Program & Marketing

Coordinator

Hanna Muntz

Archery Coordinator

Clif Selent

Archery Instructor

Michael Thor

Recreation Staff

Brooke Patrician, Conner

Dolecki, Makena Jensen

Commissioners

Emily Barkham, Chair
 Daniel Simon, Vice Chair
 Heidi Beverly, Treasurer
 Jim Quesenberry, Secretary
 Jim Fostey, Commissioner
 Christine Garrett, Commissioner
 Cathy Rooney, Commissioner

2026 Commission Meetings

The PRC meets on the second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. in the main conference room of the Oakland Township Hall.

May 13th, 2026	September 9th, 2026
June 10th, 2026	October 14th, 2026
July 8th, 2026	November 11th, 2026
August 12th, 2026	December 9th, 2026



“A society grows great when old men plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.”
-Greek Proverb

Oakland Township Parks lost a devoted friend, colleague, and lifelong township resident earlier this year. Doug Caruso was a man who embodied the above proverb, as he dedicated much of his life to improving the world around him, by using his experience, enthusiasm, and selfless approach to everyday life to contribute to the township he called home.

Doug joined Oakland Township Parks & Recreation as the Maintenance Foreman over 15 years ago, after growing up in Oakland Township and serving as caretaker, along with his wife Lisa, at both Cranberry Lake Farm and Lost Lake Nature Park. He was known for his vast historical knowledge of Oakland Township as well as his expertise in construction and maintenance. The OTPR team aims to honor Doug’s legacy by carrying on his work and the department’s mission.

This year, we look to renew the Parks & Recreation Millage that will continue to fund our efforts over the next ten years. We encourage you to reach out with any questions regarding this upcoming ballot, and thank you in advance for your continued support as we carry on his work and “plant trees whose shade we may never sit under”.

Doug’s daily impact and one-of-a-kind presence will be greatly missed, but his memory and immeasurable contributions will endure in the land he loved and the community he served.

Sincerely,
Ben McLoskey
Director, Oakland Township Parks & Recreation

Staff Update

Welcome back **Hanna Muntz** who was part of our Stewardship staff last summer and is now joining our Recreation Team as the Program and Marketing Coordinator. Coming from a naturalist and conservation background, she hopes to bring a new perspective to recreation.

Hanna is an avid lover of the outdoors and enjoys backpacking, running, climbing, and integrating her art into all her hobbies. Hanna is passionate about our parks and looks forward to providing fresh recreational opportunities to Oakland Township residents.



Welcome back **Brooke (Left), Makena (Center),** and **Connor (Right)** to the recreation team! Brooke and Makena will be working in Archery while also assisting with programs and helping set up soccer fields throughout the season. Connor is returning to support Coach Clif and Coach Michael on the Archery range. We’re excited to have them back for another great summer!

STAFF UPDATE



Todd Hartzell (left), Seasonal Maintenance Technician is new to our team this year. Todd enjoys spending time with his family, playing softball and golf, as well as hunting and hiking at his family cabin up north.



Dan Barton (right), Seasonal Maintenance Technician is returning for his tenth year. Dan is part of a four person team that keep the parks safe, clean and in great order! We are glad to welcome Dan back for another year. Welcome Todd and Dan!



Welcome to **Olivia Franklin**, who joins the team as a Land Stewardship Technician! Olivia graduated from Michigan State University in 2023 with a B.S. in Environmental Biology/Zoology. She has spent the past 3 summers working as a research technician doing field surveys for insects such as squash bees, bumble bees, Papaipema moths, and the federally endangered Poweshiek skipperling. She is very glad to be back home in Oakland County after spending the past 5 years in East Lansing. In her free time you might find her doing yoga, cooking/baking, and spending time with her friends, family, and 6 cats. She is looking forward to joining the Oakland Township Parks & Recreation team to gain new skills and contribute her insect knowledge!



Welcome to **Paige Williams**, who joins the team as a Land Stewardship Technician! Paige graduated from Indiana University in 2025 with a degree in Environmental Sustainability Studies and a minor in Environmental Science. During her time at IU, she was a co-founder of a restoration club, completed an honors thesis monitoring and mapping wildflower populations in urban woodlands and has experience delineating wetlands for environmental consulting firms. She is looking forward to expanding her skills in environmental monitoring, plant ID, and invasive species removal. She is setting down new roots in Michigan and very excited to be working with Oakland Township Parks and Recreation. You can find her hiking, exploring more of Michigan, and curled up with a good book.



Welcome to **Torrey Murcott**, an undergrad at Calvin University in Grand Rapids. Torrey expects to graduate in 2027 with a BS in Environmental Health and Conservation. In her free time, she enjoys physical exercise like weightlifting, biking, rock climbing, and playing rugby. The previous summers she worked as a land steward for Calvin University and as a field research student - even after long days working in the summer heat, she loved getting to spend more time outside in my free time. Other hobbies she has include being creative like drawing, sculpting, painting, etc., and gardening, including taking care of house plants. She looks forward to being out in the field with the team and furthering her experience!



Welcome to **Kelly Craig**! Kelly graduated from Michigan State University in 2024 with a degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Management. In the past, she has been a technician on several different wildlife research studies, including songbird nest monitoring, assessing impacts of human recreation on wildlife in Michigan state parks, and conducting point counts of migratory birds. In the future, she hopes to work in science education, and is eager to begin working with Oakland Township Parks & Recreation to learn more about land management and diversify her knowledge and skillset as a biologist.

IN MEMORIAM OF DOUG CARUSO

Dedicated and Esteemed Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Employee

Doug Caruso; long-time employee, friend, resident, and supporter of Oakland Township, passed away unexpectedly on February 14, 2026.



Lisa and Doug Caruso

Doug joined Oakland Township Parks and Recreation as the Maintenance Foreman almost 15 years ago after growing up in Oakland Township and acting as caretaker, along with his wife Lisa, at both Cranberry Lake Farm and Lost Lake Nature Park.

Doug was known for his historical knowledge and love of Oakland Township and his expertise in facility construction and maintenance. He guided numerous Oakland Township park maintenance and improvement projects including the addition of electricity, drinking water, trails, play equipment, parking lots, restrooms and more; all of which increased the enjoyment, safety, and accessibility of Oakland Township parks.

Doug was a warm and welcoming ambassador for all Oakland Township parks, including the Paint Creek Trail, and loved to answer all visitor questions and provide helpful information. His smiling face and enthusiasm brightened the days of all who were fortunate to meet him and know him.

Doug's contributions to Oakland Township are inestimable and his presence and guidance will be greatly missed. We at Oakland Township Parks and Recreation extend our deepest condolences to Doug's wife, Lisa, his children, and his grandchildren at this difficult time.



Upcoming!

Parks & Recreation Millage Ballot Proposal: Q&A

What is the purpose of the proposed Parks and Recreation Millage renewal?

To continue operating, maintaining, and improving Oakland Township's parks — including its parks, recreation facilities and offerings, and Oakland Township's 5.3-mile section of the Paint Creek Trail. The 0.7307 mill renewal will fund the Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission (OTPRC) in meeting its core obligations and advancing strategic capital improvements, including:

- **Management of over ~1,500 acres of parkland and natural areas** — including Bear Creek Nature Park, Blue Heron Environmental Area, Charles Ilsley Park, Cranberry Lake Park, Draper Twin Lake Park, Gallagher Creek Park, Lost Lake Nature Park, Marsh View Park, and Mill Race Trail, as well as supplemental maintenance of lands acquired through the Land Preservation Millage and private donation.
- **Paint Creek Trail maintenance and long-term resurfacing** — continued safety inspections, routine upkeep, and funding for the scheduled 15-year limestone surface replacement on Oakland Township's 5.3-mile corridor.
- **Year-round recreation programming** — nature appreciation, environmental education, fitness and wellness, outdoor adventure, and lifetime sports programming serving residents of all ages and abilities.
- **Signature community events** — including Music in the Meadows Summer Concert Series, Goodison Good Tyme Fall Festival, and the Winter Carnival at Bear Creek Nature Park.
- **Facility improvements** and repairs to trails, park amenities, Nature Center, playing fields and basketball court.
- **Marsh View Park improvements** — addition of pickleball courts, playground replacement, accessible picnic area, and expanded trail loop, supported in part by state grant funding.

Why is renewal of the Parks and Recreation Millage on the ballot this year?

The 0.7307 mill levy approved by voters in 2016 is **set to expire on December 31, 2026**. Since then, the Headlee Amendment has automatically reduced the rate to 0.6865 mills. This renewal restores the levy to the rate voters originally approved and is not a new tax.

What will happen if the Parks and Recreation Millage is not renewed?

If the millage is not renewed, funds currently used for the maintenance and improvement of Oakland Township Parks and the Paint Creek Trail and for the support of Parks and Recreation staff and Paint Creek Trail staff/security patrols would no longer be available. The Township may not be able to find alternative sources of funding for these programs and improvements.

If approved, how much more would the renewal cost me starting in 2027?

For the median OT home valued of \$600,000, the difference is **\$13.26 per year, or \$1.11 per month**.

Across all home values, the incremental difference is:

- \$100,000 home: +\$2.20/year — about 18 cents/month
- \$250,000 home: +\$5.53/year — about 46 cents/month
- \$500,000 home: +\$11.05/year — about 92 cents/month

When will this proposal be on the ballot?

This newsletter went to print prior to the Board of Trustees formally adopting the ballot proposal. The Parks & Recreation Millage renewal is anticipated to appear on either the **August or November 2026 ballot**.

Where can I learn about Oakland Township Parks and this proposed millage renewal?

Visit the Parks and Recreation page at [Oaklandtwpmi.gov/parks-recreation](https://oaklandtwpmi.gov/parks-recreation) for info on parks, program offerings, trail maps, upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and our 2025–2029 Parks & Rec Master Plan.



CELEBRATE YOUR CHILD'S BIRTHDAY AT LOST LAKE WITH DINOSAUR HILL NATURE PRESERVE

**\$200 FOR:
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES
OUTDOOR GUIDED HIKE W/ A NATURALIST
GOODIE BAGS
BOOKING OR MORE INFORMATION: CALL (248) 651-7810**

A SUMMER REMINDER

DOGS MUST BE ON LEASH



*Oakland Charter Township Ordinance Chapter 299-27(12) states:
All persons walking or exercising pets in a park are required to clean up all debris resulting from the pets.*

Pets must be on a leash not exceeding six (6) feet in length and under control at all times.

**Violation of this Ordinance:
\$500 FINE**



As summer settles in, please help us keep Oakland Township Parks enjoyable for everyone!
Pets must be on a leash at all times, and owners must clean up behind them.

Music IN THE Meadows

FREE Outdoor Concert. 7:00pm-9:00pm
Bring Blankets! Gates Open at 5:00pm

South for Winter



Friday, June 12 Bear Creek Nature Park

With a blend of harmony-driven duets, foot-stomping folk and bluesy murder ballads, New Zealand-formed and Nashville-based South for Winter's sound is as eclectic as their origins. The act combines elements such as percussive guitar, mandolin, banjo, classically-trained cello, suitcase stomp, poetic lyricism, and haunting melodies into a genre-bending sound described by American Songwriter as "impeccable".

Folk/Americana

Friday, July 31 Cranberry Lake Farm

FREE Historic Tours 6-6:45pm

The Ivybrooke Strings Quartet has delighted audiences for over 25 years, performing at weddings, concerts, parties, and community events. Known for their versatility, the group offers a diverse repertoire ranging from classical favorites to popular and nostalgic tunes. Comprised of talented musicians connected through the Rochester Symphony Orchestra, Ivybrooke Strings is one of the area's most sought-after ensembles. Available for any special occasion, they bring elegance and memorable music to every performance.

Ivybrooke Strings Quartet



Classical

Mark Blomsteel



Friday, August 7 Bear Creek Nature Park

Mark Blomsteel is a Dutch-American, Michigan-based country singer-songwriter and Nashville recording artist known for his powerful, bright voice and inspiring journey. Legally blind since childhood, he began writing songs at age 11 and went on to achieve international success, earning multiple Dutch CMA Awards and a prestigious award at the Texas Sounds International CMA Awards. Mark continues to tour worldwide, connecting with fans through heartfelt songs that blend country with pop, rock, and R&B influences.

Country

In case of bad weather, concerts will be held indoors at Rochester Christian Church, 4435 N Rochester Rd (on the corner of Snell and Rochester). Call 248-651-4440 ext 299 on the day of the event to verify location.



Register Online at:
Oaklandtownship.recdesk.com
or scan the QR Code >>>



REGISTRATION OPTIONS

.....

1. Online:

We encourage everyone to register online at:
Oaklandtownship.recdesk.com

You can register for Oakland Township programs any time, anywhere you have an internet connection, using a credit card (*MasterCard, Visa, or Discover*).
If you need assistance with program registration, call our office at: (248)651-7810

2. In Person or by Phone

Visit us at our office location or call **(248)651-7810** to register.

You can pay by credit card (*MasterCard, Visa, American Express, or Discover*), as well as cash or check. Payment is due at the time of registration.

Office located at the Paint Creek Cider Mill (2nd Floor) 4480 Orion Rd., Rochester, MI 48306

Registration and waiver forms must be signed by each registrant or the parents/guardians of minor to participate in our programs.

OAKLAND TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION PROGRAM REFUND POLICY

.....

Registrants will receive a full refund for programs cancelled by Oakland Township Parks and Recreation. Registrants withdrawing more than 4 business days prior to the program start date will receive a refund, less a \$5.00 administration fee.

.....

No refunds will be made if withdrawing less than 4 business days from program start date.

All registrants wishing to withdraw must do so during regular business hours:

Monday-Friday, 8am-4:30pm by phone at 248-651-7810.

Registration open NOW!

.....

ARTS & ENRICHMENT

Certified Babysitter/CPR/First Aid & Safe Home Alone

Tuesday, May 12th (5:30pm - 8:30pm) OR
Thursday, July 16th (5:30pm - 8:30pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 9+*

Learn to be safe and responsible. Build confidence. Have a competitive edge over other babysitters. Topics include first aid, when and how to call 911, CPR with manikin practice, choking, and basic care methods like feeding and diapering! Students will also learn how to be safe and responsible when home alone, including the importance of not giving out personal information and what to do if somebody comes to the door. Students who successfully complete the course requirements will receive a certificate of completion for Certified Babysitter/CPR/First Aid course by Live SafeAcademy (valid for two years).

Residents: \$75 Non-Residents: \$80

Parent & Child Garden Collage

Saturday, June 13th (10am - 11am)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 2-6*

You and your child will follow easy step-by-step instructions as you create matching collages with a garden theme. Using bio paint and painted collage materials, we'll create a whimsical collage of a flower garden. Children must be accompanied by a caregiver.

Residents: \$40 Non-Residents: \$45

K-Pop Demon Hunters

Saturday, July 11th (9am - 12pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 5-12*

Step into the world of KPop Demon Hunters and bring Derpy and Sussie to life in this exciting drawing class! Kids will learn to draw these lovable characters as they explore techniques to capture their playful personalities. This class combines creativity, fandom fun, and artistic skill-building! Please pack a nut free snack and drink for your child.

Residents: \$40 Non-Residents: \$45



Toddler Tunes

Wednesdays, July 15th - August 19th
(9:30am - 10:10am)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 1-3*

Toddler Tunes is a playful, interactive class where toddlers and their grown-ups explore music together through singing, movement, and hands-on instruments. Each week includes drums and shakers, dancing and scarves, bubbles, parachute play, and simple songs designed to build rhythm, coordination, and confidence—all in a supportive environment. Want to try this class out? Select one or more timeslots online!

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

Tunes and Tales

Wednesdays, July 15th - August 19th
(10:20am - 11:00am)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 3-6*

An Immersive class that blends storytime with active music making. Each week, students explore a children's book through songs, instruments, movement, and playful music games inspired by the story's theme. Children will sing, play percussion instruments, move their bodies, and engage their imaginations while building early music skills like steady beat, listening, and musical expression. Want to try this class out? Select one or more timeslots online!

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

Drums in the Sun

Wednesdays, July 15th - August 19th
(11:10am - 12:00pm)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 6-12*

An energetic, inclusive drumming class where students explore rhythm using hand drums, bucket drums, steel pan, and culturally significant drums from around the world. Students will learn the basics of rhythm, tempo, and ensemble playing while collaborating in a fun, drum circle setting. No prior music experience is required, just a willingness to try something new and make some noise! Want to try this class out? Select one or more timeslots online!

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

Intro to Guitar

Wednesdays, July 15th - August 19th
(12:20pm - 1:30pm)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 10-15*

A fun, low-pressure introduction to guitar for tweens and teens! In this 6-week small group class, students will learn basic chords, strumming patterns, rhythm, and simple songs while making new friends. This is a bring your lunch class—students can eat, socialize, and then dive into guitar together in a relaxed, summer camp style atmosphere. Students can borrow a guitar, or bring their own.

Residents: \$72 Non-Residents: \$90



Adult Arts & Enrichment

Paint Like Bob Ross

Tuesdays (6pm - 9pm)

#1 May 26th - Midnight Surf

#2 June 23rd - Deep Woods

#3 July 21st - Spectacular Sunset

#4 August 25th - Northern Lights

Lost Lake Nature Park *Ages 12+*

Learn to Paint like Bob Ross in just one day!

Join Certified Instructor Ted Simpson, as he guides you through a complete oil painting in one session. Create big mountains, fluffy clouds and of course, lots of happy little trees. Learn the techniques to paint your own masterpiece that will amaze friends and family.

All supplies included, no previous experience is needed!

Each class is a different painting.

Visit www.NaturesBrushStudio.com for pictures of all classes.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$70 Per Painting.



Sketching History at the Paint Creek Cider Mill

Thursdays, June 25th - July 16th
(9am - 8pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 18+*

Join us at the historic Paint Creek Cider Mill! Draw inspiration from the architecture of the building, historic artifacts, and beautiful stained-glass windows! Students can expect to focus on observational drawing, perspective, and draftsmanship as they translate the views to their page.

Residents can use code "OAK" at checkout for \$25 off. Register at PCCArt.org

Residents: \$155 with code "OAK"

Non-Residents: \$180

Needle Felted Florals Workshop

Friday, July 10th

(6pm - 8pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 18+*

Explore the amazing world of needle felting by learning the ins-and-outs of creating your favorite florals out of wool and felt! Participants will get hands-on instruction and experience using fiber needles to emboss and craft wool shapes on soft felt surfaces, all finished off with an embroidery hoop frame. Hosted in partnership with Paint Creek Center for the Arts. Oakland Township Residents can use code "OAK" at checkout for \$10 off registration fees. All supplies included.

Register at PCCArt.org

Residents: \$20 with code "OAK"

Non-Residents: \$30

Art On The Paint Creek Trail
Thursdays, July 23rd - August 13th
(9am - 12pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 18+*
 The Paint Creek Cider Mill is located on the beautiful Paint Creek Trail. Spend your summer mornings outside collecting inspiration along the way. Students are encouraged to work with their preferred medium while translating the large and small vistas they see into beautiful works of art! Residents can use code "OAK" at checkout for \$25 off.

Register at PCCArt.org
Residents: \$155 with code "OAK" Non-Residents: \$180



Mixed Media Cyanotype Nature Prints Workshop

Friday, August 14th
(6pm - 8:30pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 18+*
 Used by photographers and fine artists alike, cyanotype is a creative photosensitive medium that is used to capture nature prints in vibrant blue and white hues. Learn to create these snapshots using the power of the sun and UV light while also embellishing prints with other mediums, such as watercolor and ink! Participants will walk away with beautiful nature-inspired art prints of their own making. Hosted in partnership with Paint Creek Center for the Arts. Oakland Township Residents can use code "OAK" at checkout for \$10 off. All supplies included. **Register at PCCArt.org**

Residents: \$20 with code "OAK" Non-Residents: \$30

FITNESS & WELLNESS

Nine & Dine: Couples Golf Night League at WestWynd

First Tee Time: 4pm

WestWynd Golf Course, 4161 N. Adams Rd. Oakland Township, MI 48306

REGISTER ONE PERSON PER COUPLE FOR THIS EVENT! Enjoy a fun-filled day with your partner at our Couples Golf & Dinner Event. Golf 9 holes with a cart, then return for a delicious dinner for two. A limited menu will be provided at the course prior to golfing, where you can choose your dinner. After golfing, dinner will be served, offering a perfect end to your day on the green.



Sunday, May 31st
Sunday, June 7th
Sunday, June 14th
Sunday, June 28th

Sunday, July 12th
Sunday, July 19th
Sunday, August 2nd
Sunday, August 9th



Residents: \$850 Non-Residents: \$875 Per Couple.

Strong Muscles, Healthy Joints

Wednesdays (11am - 12pm)

#1 May 6th - June 10th
#2 June 17th - July 22nd
#3 July 29th - Sept. 2nd

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 18+*
 Low-impact 1-hour fitness sessions include a variety of exercises designed to support joint health and improve muscular strength. Each class begins with head-to-toe stretching, followed by a combination of motions specifically aimed at maintaining and/or improving mobility and flexibility while at the same time. Sessions include a brief endurance set. Several of the exercises model those supported by the Arthritis Foundation. Class involves a combination of seated and standing motions, but can be adapted to sitting only.

Residents: \$80 Non-Residents: \$85

ZenBeatz Meditation Walk

Saturday (1pm - 2pm)

#1 May 2nd
#2 July 11th

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 13+*
 A mindful walking experience designed to help participants reset, breathe, and reconnect with their bodies. Each participant wears wireless headphones that deliver a soothing blend of calming music and a gentle guided meditation, creating an immersive, distraction free environment. The guidance walks participants through breathwork, grounding techniques, and mindful awareness as they move along a peaceful outdoor route.

Residents: \$12 Non-Residents: \$15

DETROIT INSTITUTE OF ARTS

Inside | Out

A Detroit Institute of Art and Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Partnership



Jockeys on Horseback before Distant Hills.
Paint Creek Trail Safety Path

We are proud to announce our partnership with Detroit Institute of Arts as part of the **2026 Inside|Out** program. Installation will be completed in late May and will include eight art exhibits within key areas of the following parks: **Bear Creek Nature Park, Gallagher Creek Park,** and portions of the **Paint Creek Trail**. These exhibits are available for viewing until October, don't miss out on your chance to see some beautiful art in our parks!

Next time you're out in our parks, stop by and take a second to discover the new installations on display. You may even recognize some of the artists! Featuring works from Vincent Van Gogh, William Maw Egley, and more, each piece invites you to pause, reflect, and see iconic masterpieces set against the natural beauty of the outdoors.

We'd love to see all our park users enjoying this new offering! Take a photo with any of the artworks and tag us on Facebook at **Oakland Township Parks and Recreation Commission** for a chance to be featured on our page!



Bank of the Oise at Auvers
Paint Creek Trail

DIA Bus Tour

Saturday, June 6th (10am - 12pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 12+*

This guided bus tour brings world-class artwork into the natural beauty of Oakland Township, featuring installations at Bear Creek Nature Park, Gallagher Creek Park, and along the Paint Creek Trail. The experience begins at the Paint Creek Cider Mill, where you'll enjoy a brief, leisurely walk along the trail. A knowledgeable DIA docent will guide you through select pieces, offering insight into the artwork and its connection to the surrounding landscape. At each stop, the docent will continue to share engaging commentary, helping you connect more deeply with the art placed throughout these scenic outdoor settings. Light walking on trails is required to view all works.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7



Ellen's Isle, Loch Katrine
Bear Creek Nature Park Overlook



Scan the QR code to view an interactive map with all DIA artwork locations in Oakland Township Parks.

FITNESS & WELLNESS

Meditation Mondays: Yin Yoga

Mondays (4:45pm - 5:45pm)

#1 May 18th - June 22nd

#2 June 29th - Aug. 3rd

#3 Aug. 10th - Sept. 14th

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 12+*

Soak up the beautiful sights and sound of nature at Bear Creek Nature Park as you enjoy slow gentle stretches and the practice of yin yoga. Guided meditation will be offered to enhance the experience as you release stress and tension mind and body.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

Lakeside Meditative Yoga

Thursdays (5pm - 6pm)

#1 June 4th - July 9th

#2 July 16th - Aug. 20th

Lost Lake Nature Park *Ages 12+*

Enjoy slow, mindful movement, stretches and meditation along beautiful Lost Lake.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

ZenBeatz Glow Party

Friday (7pm - 8pm)

#1 June 5th

#2 August 7th

Paint Creek Trail *All Ages*

A high energy, music powered walking experience that feels like a moving dance party. Participants wear glowing headphones and follow a guided route filled with upbeat music, rhythm breaks, and optional dance along moments. Glow sticks and headphones are provided, creating a colorful, family friendly atmosphere that lights up the night. Perfect for all ages and all fitness levels.

Residents: \$12 Non-Residents: \$15

All Levels Yoga

Sundays (9:30am - 10:30am)

1 June 7th - July 12th

2 July 19th - Aug. 23rd

3 Aug. 30th - Oct. 4th

Cranberry Lake Farm *Ages 12+*

Join Up Dog Yoga and Oakland Township Parks and Recreation as they team up to bring you high quality yoga! All Levels classes will accommodate all skill levels with an option to modify.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72

Mommy and Me Yoga

Tuesdays (9:30am - 10:30am)

#1 June 9th - July 14th

#2 July 21st - Aug. 25th

#3 Sept. 1st - Oct. 6th

Bear Creek Nature Park *Adults 18+, Kids 3+*

This class offers a peaceful and fun bonding experience, where moms and their little ones can connect through gentle yoga poses, mindfulness, and play. Perfect for enhancing flexibility, relaxation, and building a strong bond with your child while soaking up the sights and sounds of nature. One registration per adult.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$72 Per Adult.

Puppy Yoga in the Park

Saturday, July 18th (10am - 11am)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Ages 12+*

Join us for a relaxed outdoor yoga session at Bear Creek Nature Park, featuring adoptable puppies from Michigan Animal Rescue League. This one-time class is open to all experience levels and offers a light, beginner-friendly flow with time to interact with the puppies throughout the session. Please bring your own mat and water bottle.

Residents: \$15 Non-Residents: \$20



ARCHERY

Archery Club

Tuesdays (5pm - 6pm)

#1 May 26th - June 30th

#2 July 21st - Aug. 25th

Marsh View Park Archery Range *Ages 10-18*

Joining an archery club is a great way to achieve your archery goals, make new friends and have fun! Shooting year-round will improve your accuracy, efficiency and confidence. You'll benefit from tips and tricks others share with you, and, most importantly, enhance your overall archery experience. Use our equipment or bring your own.

Prerequisite: Must have completed Beginner & Next Step Archery course.

Residents: \$75 Non-Residents: \$90

Junior Olympic Archery Development (JOAD)

Wednesdays (5pm - 6pm)

#1 May 27th - July 1st

#2 July 22nd - Aug. 26th

Marsh View Park Archery Range *Ages 10-8*

We are excited to offer this new opportunity for our shooters looking to advance their technique and earn achievement awards. JOAD will focus on your shooting skills, technique, and process. We will go in depth into how we shoot and discuss ways to improve. All participants must be a member of USA Archery. Use our equipment or bring your own.

***(Must have coach evaluation or recommendation to register)* Please contact us at OTPR.JOAD@gmail.com to see if you are a good fit for JOAD.**

Residents: \$72 Non-Residents: \$90

Beginning Archery

Saturdays (9:00am - 10:30am)

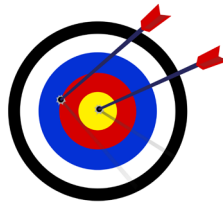
#1 May 30th - June 27th

#2 July 11th - Aug. 8th

Mondays (5:00pm - 6:30pm)

#1 June 1st - June 29th

#2 July 6th - Aug. 3rd



Marsh View Park Archery Range *Ages 8+*

Looking for something new and fun to try on a beautiful summer day? This fun class is for you and your family! Our instructors will cover safety, equipment and basic fundamentals of shooting.

Residents: \$90 Non-Residents: \$112

Next Step Archery

Saturdays (10:45am - 11:45am)

#1 May 30th - June 27th

#2 July 11th - Aug. 8th

Marsh View Park Archery Range *Ages 8+*

Once you've completed our Beginning Archery program, take your skills to the next level by improving your form, discover the use of sights to improve your aim, and sharpen your release skills to prepare yourself for competition or to simply master the target during practice.

Prerequisite: Must have completed a Beginning Archery class or its equivalent.

Residents: \$60 Non-Residents: \$75

Open Range Shoot Free for All Ages

Marsh View Park Archery Range

Practice your archery skills during these open hours! Range supervised by certified USA Archery Instructors. Not sure how to shoot? Our instructors can assist you with our **1st Shot Demo Program** - 5 minute teaching time/demo during Open Range Shoot Session Times. Bows, arrows and targets provided or bring your own.

Children between 8 and 17 years of age must be accompanied by an adult.

Registration required for each 1 hour session.

Thursdays

May 21st - Sept. 3rd

5:00pm - 6:00pm

6:00pm - 7:00pm

7:00pm - 8:00pm

Saturdays

June 20th - Aug. 22nd*

No Sessions* 7/5

12:00pm - 1:00pm

1:00pm - 2:00pm

2:00pm - 3:00pm

3:00pm - 4:00pm

Sundays

June 21st - Aug. 23rd*

No Sessions* 7/6

12:00pm - 1:00pm

1:00pm - 2:00pm

2:00pm - 3:00pm

3:00pm - 4:00pm

SUMMER CAMPS

NASA: Academy of Future Space Explorers

Monday June 15th - Friday June 19th
1pm - 5pm

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 5-12*

Mad Science has teamed up with NASA in a quest for exploration! We'll take a voyage of discovery into the atmosphere and beyond as we explore planets, moons, and other space phenomena in our solar system. Things will heat up as we examine the sun and other stars and discover the difficulties of space travel! Kids will get a firsthand experience of the challenges of living in space as they build circuits while training to be an astronaut. We'll learn about the various technologies that make space exploration possible while bouncing lasers around the room! Kids will build their own Mad Science Skyblazer Rocket and participate in a real "NASA" style rocket launch. Campers will receive many cool NASA take homes!

Residents: \$260 Non-Residents: \$275

Explore Archery Camp

Monday June 22nd - Friday June 26th
10am - 12:30pm

Marsh View Park Archery Range *Ages 8+*

Explore Archery is an innovative education program focused on the introducing beginners to the lifelong sport of target archery. In Explore Archery, campers earn achievement awards through active participation in individual and team building activities that teach fundamental skills. This camp is not based on a campers' athletic abilities or their capabilities to shoot a perfect score. It is a fun, reading, and most important- safe!

Residents: \$150 Non-Residents: \$188

Brixology Camp

Monday July 6th - Friday July 10th
1pm - 5pm

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 7-12*

Children learn about different types of engineering and then team up to construct a different engineering-themed project using LEGO® bricks. We'll learn about aerospace engineering while assembling a space station. We'll explore mechanical engineering as we build boats and vehicles. That's not all! From carnival rides to drawing machines, mechanical animals to truss bridges, your future engineer will build upon their creativity to solve real-world design challenges, while developing their problem-solving and team-building skills. Campers receive daily custom Mad Science take homes.

Residents: \$260 Non-Residents: \$275

Fizzy, Fun, & Slime Lab

Monday, July 13th - Thursday, July 16th
(1pm - 4pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 5-12*

Kids will create rainbow fizz, erupting ice cream cone volcanoes, water bead stress balls, and an array of ooey gooey slime creations.

This hands-on camp is packed with science & messy fun! Please pack a nut-free snack and drink for your child.

Residents: \$110 Non-Residents: \$115

Basic Outdoor Skills Camp

Monday July 20th - Friday July 24th
10am - 12:30pm

Various Oakland Township Parks *Grades 6th-8th*

This camp will introduce a variety of fun outdoor activities including archery, kayaking, and fishing (catch & release). This course covers survival skills like reading a map/compass, recognizing your surroundings, fire starting, shelter building, obtaining drinkable water, wild plant identification and animal observation. Camp meets in different Oakland Township Park each day.

Residents: \$150 Non-Residents: \$188



Wild Kids of Lost Lake

Monday July 27th - Friday July 31st
10am - 3pm

Lost Lake Nature Park *Ages 6-10*

For the true park experience, you need to join us for our Wild Kids of Lost Lake summer camp. This week long day camp features five themed days inundated with fun. We'll be exploring habitats while searching for life. This camp will feature a variety of scientific and educational activities. We will picnic outside whenever the weather permits so bring a bagged lunch to keep your little scientist fueled so they can continue sweep-netting insects, finding frogs, and enjoying the beautiful surroundings of Lost Lake.

Residents: \$140 Non-Residents: \$170

Next Step Outdoor Skills Camp

Monday Aug. 3rd - Friday Aug. 7th
10am - 1pm

Various Oakland Township Parks

Grades 6th-8th

An extension of our Basic Outdoors Skills Camp, activities range from archery refresher skills, target shooting games and beginning bow hunting, kayaking, fishing (including lure building), animal identification and tracking, plant identification and wild edible plants, land navigation, and survival skills. Camp will finish up with a Challenge Day to test your skills.

Prerequisite: Must have taken Basic Outdoor Skills Camp or Equivalent

Residents: \$180 Non-Residents: \$225



Cosmic Creators Lab

Mon. Aug. 10th - Thurs. Aug. 13th
(1pm - 4pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 5-12*

Blast off into a space-filled adventure! In this hands-on science class, kids will create marshmallow constellations, craft galaxies in a jar, and build their own solar system. It's a fun, creative journey through the wonders of our universe! Please pack a nut-free snack and drink for your child.

Residents: \$110 Non-Residents: \$115

FREE! Drop in Nature Programs

All programs take place at Lost Lake Nature Center. All Ages.

For 2026, we're turning Lost Lake Nature Park into a different habitat each month! Travel the world without setting foot on an airplane or ship as we transport you to:

June - Coasts

Tidal Pools and Mud Flats

Saturday, June 13th (12pm - 3pm)

Lost Lake Nature Park

July - Ocean

Open Ocean & The Deep Sea

Saturday, July 11th (12pm - 3pm)

Lost Lake Nature Park

August - Rivers

Mississippi and the Nile

Saturday, August 8th (12pm - 3pm)

Lost Lake Nature Park

Each open house includes an awesome craft, outside games, and inside models and biofacts to immerse yourself in another place! Every world traveler needs a passport, so we'll be providing each visitor a passport booklet that you can get stamped with each open house you attend! Show us your passport at the December open houses to get a special prize!



NATURE PROGRAMS

Magical Monarchs

Thursday, May 28th (5:30pm - 7pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 10+*

Monarchs are the most recognizable butterflies around. Their numbers have declined by 90% over the past 2 decades, and they need our help. Join us to learn about their annual migration, lifecycle, what you can do to help them, how to create a habitat, and how to rear them. LIVE SPECIMENS: Based on seasonal availability.

Residents: \$7 Non-Residents: \$10

Interpretive Dog Walk - Seven Ponds Nature Center

Saturday, June 13th (9am - 10am)

Bear Creek Nature Park *All Ages*

Join a Seven Ponds Nature Center naturalist for a morning dog walk. We'll take in the sights, sounds, and smells of the trail! Your dog must be on a lead and socialized around other people and dogs.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Summer Solstice Scavenger Hunt

Sunday, June 21st (2pm - 3:30pm)

Cranberry Lake Farm *All Ages*

There are so many mysteries that dwell adjacent to the trail which we often overlook. These natural wonders are often small and subtle and can easily be missed unless actively searching for them. Join us as we engage in a scavenger hunt across the park to find these items of intrigue! Adventurers will be given clues, riddles and a map to take upon the trails to search for specific natural items and landmarks. Those who find everything on their list will be able to claim a small reward at the farmhouse!

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Dino Dance Party

Saturday, July 18th (10am - 11am)

Gallagher Creek Park *PreK Ages 3-5*

Put on your finest dinosaur clothes and join us to dance to Dino songs, make a Dino craft, and play a round of Dino Says. We'll enjoy a dino snack then wind down while digging for fossils in the portable fossil dig.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Pollinator Conservation & Monitoring Workshop

Friday, July 17th (4pm - 5:30pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill & Paint Creek Trail Wet Praire
Ages 12+ (under 16 must be accompanied by an adult)

This community science and field talk will introduce the basics of using iNaturalist for monitoring biodiversity, highlighting Michigan's native pollinators. We encourage participants to have a smartphone and/or camera for documenting pollinators. Wear comfortable walking shoes

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Family Field Netting - Seven Ponds Nature Center

Saturday, July 25th (2pm - 4pm)

Lost Lake Nature Park *All Ages*

What insects are waiting in the plants around us? Bring out your inner entomologist and join us for an excursion into the grasses to find what insects are active this time of year. All supplies will be provided. Just bring your curiosity.

All caregivers must remain on site for the entirety of the program.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Who is in the Water?

Sunday, July 26th (10am - 11:30am)

Bear Creek Nature Park *Families*

Explore Bear Creek as we dip nets in the water to capture & identify the larval stages of insects (macroinvertebrates). The creatures we find can tell us how healthy Bear Creek is. Make a diving beetle craft.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7



Kid's Birding Adventure - Seven Ponds Nature Center

Saturday, August 15th (9am - 11am)

Cranberry Lake Park *Ages 8-14*

Look! Up in the sky! It's a bird, it's a plane, it's a...oh wait, it is a bird after all. Have you ever wondered about the birds in your backyard? Let's identify them together! We will use our eyes, ears, and a set of binoculars in our quest to find as many bird species as we can. Kid-friendly binoculars will be provided.

All caregivers must remain on site for the entirety of the program.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

S'more Summer Campfire

Friday, August 21st (6pm - 7:30pm)

Lost Lake Nature Park *All Ages*

As summer comes to a close, we're always looking for some more. Make s'mores at our campfire as we reminisce about this summer's programs and create our favorite summer crafts-friendship bracelets.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7



Adult Nature Programs

Birding 101

Saturday, May 30th (9am - 12pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill & Bear Creek Nature Park

Ages 16+

This introductory short course provides you with basic information about birds and birdwatching. Learning about birds' behavior and how they interact with the world will increase your birdwatching experience. This course will discuss techniques to improve your birding skills.

Residents: \$12 Non-Residents: \$15

Basics of Land Conservation

Tuesday, June 16th (5:30pm - 7:30pm)

Bear Creek Nature Park Pavilion *Ages 16+*

Did you know that some of Oakland Township's park land is legally protected in a natural state, never converted to other uses? Join us at Bear Creek Nature Park for a land protection discussion with Six Rivers Land Conservancy's Conservation and Stewardship Director. Bring your questions about conservation biology, ecological restoration in Southeast Michigan, and ways individual landowners can protect the beautiful natural areas on their property for generations to come. Afterwards, we'll take a quick hike to the protected area within the park.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Nature Notecard Workshop

Saturday, June 27th (10am - 11:30am)

Lost Lake Nature Center *Ages 55+*

Explore the use of natural materials in your everyday stationary. Using a combination of dried flowers, seed paper, stamps, & more, we'll be making five nature notecards to take home.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Macro Mania - Oakland County

Thursday, July 30th (5pm - 7pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 16+*

Learn why ecologists collect aquatic macroinvertebrates to better understand water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams. This class will take a hands-on approach to collecting and identifying macroinvertebrates as well as discussing some basic metrics gained from a sample.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

Michigan Invasive Species

Thursday, August 6th (5:30pm - 7:30pm)

Paint Creek Cider Mill *Ages 10+*

What makes a species 'invasive'? Who do I tell if I find one? How do I get rid of it and why would I want to? Let's explore some of the more common invasive species that you are likely to encounter in your home garden.

Residents: \$7 Non-Residents: \$10

Michigan's Bats

Sunday, August 16th (8pm - 9:30pm)

Charles Illesley Park *Ages 18+*

Join us as we explore the 9 species of bats which help keep our skies free from mosquitoes. We will get up close with a bat skeleton to see how they're able to achieve flight, learn about the processes & senses needed for echolocation, & even learn a few tips & tricks for keeping bats out of our own homes! We will head out on the trails to try & hear bats actively hunting at the park using an Echometer Touch! Participants will take home the instructions needed to build their own bat houses.

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7

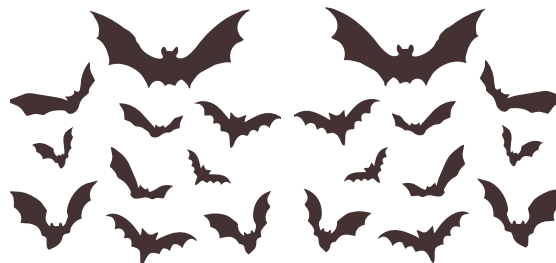
Bat Hike at Cranberry Lake

Friday, August 21st (8pm - 10pm)

Cranberry Lake *Ages 16+*

Join Six Rivers and Oakland Township Parks on a guided evening bat hike at Cranberry Lake Park. You'll learn all about the bats of SE Michigan, how to identify them and monitor their calls using Echo Meters!

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$7





Get Involved: Volunteers Needed!

Our natural areas stewardship team continues to improve habitat in our parks! It's important for us to help you connect with and care for nature in our parks, so we've added opportunities for you to get involved in meaningful ways. Volunteers help with nest box monitoring, lake monitoring, photo monitoring, seed collecting, seed cleaning, seed planting, invasive shrub control, and more! Learn more about our natural areas stewardship programs and events at oaklandnaturalareas.com and on page 20. We fit opportunities to your availability and interests.

To get involved visit: <https://oaklandnaturalareas.com/volunteer-calendar/volunteer-opportunities>

Thank You Fall 2025 - Winter 2026 Volunteers!

These volunteers collectively contributed 801 hours from October 2025 through January 2026! Thanks to each and every one of you for contributing your time to make our parks better for people and nature.

Bonnie Abiko, Karin Bickle, James Brook, Aaron Carroll, Madison Christol, Mack Dalton, Beth Delaney, Mindy Denninger, Ron Fadoir, Patrick Falle, Susan Forgie, Jim Fostey, Olivia Franklin, Christine Garrett, Susanne Greenlee, George Hartsig, Louise Hartung, Frank Imbrunone, Vanessa Imbrunone, Mark Isken, Andy Kaminski, Bill Kamman, David Klionsky, Dave Kramer, Leah Lord, Irene Louisignau, Holly Mac Mahon, Michael Mallon, Cam Mannino, Peggy McCatty, Michelle McClellan, Elizabeth McKellar, Jarred McPherson, Vinnie Morganti, Lisa Muenzenberger, Hanna Muntz, Lily Pagac, Stephanie Patil, Donna Perkins, Skylee Principe, Jon Reed, Bob Schrader, Dale Sigelko, Jenny Sigelko, Rita Ski, Katie Smith, Katri Studtmann, Dawn Sun, Brendan Tekiele, Emily Vander Laan, Aaron VanderWeide, Anthony VanderWeide, Debbie VanderWeide, Elizabeth Vincent, Susan Young

2026 Controlled Burns in Oakland Township Parks

Oakland Township Parks and Recreation will conduct prescribed burns in Spring 2026 between February and Mid-May, and in Fall 2026 between September and early December.

Locations include **Bear Creek Nature Park, Blue Heron Environmental Area, Charles Ilsley Park, Cranberry Lake Park, Gallagher Creek Park, Lost Lake Nature Park, Marsh View Park, Stony Creek Ravine Nature Park, Watershed Ridge Park, and natural areas along the Paint Creek Trail.**

Historically, fire occurred regularly in natural communities of southeast Michigan. Our prairies, oak savannas, oak woodlands, and even some wetlands are not only adapted to fire, but require fire for their continued existence. We use prescribed burns to help restore ecological function to these natural communities.

Prescribed burns are conducted by a trained fire crew and done with permission from the local fire department. Although burns create smoke, we work to minimize the amount of smoke produced and limit public exposure to the smoke. We consult the weather forecast in the morning before making the decision to burn, so we cannot schedule prescribed burns for a specific day.

You can find more information about controlled burns at oaklandnaturalareas.com/prescribed-fire.

STEWARDSHIP

Volunteer Spotlight: Michael Mallon



There it stood. A giant stick work sculpture. Five chambers winding around and into each other, each one woven saplings into waves of flowing walls, curvy thresholds, and peek-a-boo openings. Created by artist Patrick Dougherty in 2021, with 150 volunteers ~ chopping non-natives, bundling sticks, digging holes, hand weaving wood. We marveled at this nature maze, this enchanting addition to our neighborhood in the Eliza Howell Park on the west side of Detroit. The sculpture seemed to rise out of the Earth and dance.

For my wife Elizabeth, inspired by the experience, she decided to make a stick work sculpture with her students at Upland Hills School. That led her to **Dr. Ben, Natural Areas Stewardship Manager for Oakland Township Parks & Recreation (OTPR)**, and a patch of buckthorn. And then our family ended up as caretakers here at **Lost Lake Nature Park**.

Sometimes volunteer experiences can change your life like that. Meeting new people, sharing in care and purpose, attempting things at the edges of possibility - when good people get together to do good things, there's always a good chance that some surprise magic will come of it all. At the very least, it helps to shape us into more helpful humans. Volunteering has transformed my life, in predictable and surprising ways. It's made me a better person, led me places I've never dreamed of, and gifted me lifelong friends.

In my senior year, attending University of Detroit Jesuit, while volunteering weekly at the COTS homeless shelter, I discovered my lifelong passion for educating kids. I've since been educating kids for the past 23 years! What a gift.

When I volunteered with Patch Adams' Gesundheit Institute, I got trained in the art of humanitarian clowning, and ended up down in NE Peru to be part of a long term community revitalization project in Belen, Iquitos - joining with other clowns who doubled as doctors, artists, and educators. The experience was both heartbreaking and inspiring, and shattered ideas of what I thought was possible.

After Peru, I couldn't volunteer again for a short burst. I left my teaching job in Clarkston to volunteer teach and live at Mahpiya Lúta (Red Cloud Indian School) on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD for two years. This experience deepened my spirituality and gave me lifelong friends. As a volunteer, you sometimes get access to things you otherwise wouldn't - because people know you are there to help, you start with some trust and can build relationships more quickly.

In my experience, your heart as a volunteer just grows. After Pine Ridge, I started the non-profit Superhero Training Academy and have since been doing community work for the past 12 years. In 2014, I moved to the Brightmoor neighborhood of Detroit to join with neighbors, working with thousands of volunteers each summer, we have been able to do things that would be way less possible on our own: building pocket parks, repurposing abandoned houses, housing homeless, designing food systems, planting native gardens and painting murals.

The OTPR volunteer community is top notch. I've found similar spirit in this volunteer community - good people with great care and clear purpose, making things more possible for each other, and for our Earth. My volunteer time is more limited now that I am raising a family, but I have been fortunate to get involved in a few areas. The trainings are thorough and you can learn so much. Some of the areas I've experienced that you may like:

Vernal Pool Patrol: Essential protection for precious habitat. Meditative, great for kids, direct connection with funky and amazing creatures, like fairy shrimp that look like muppets, slimy spotted salamander eggs, and frog songs.

Burn Crew: Essential for restoration of native ecosystems. Originally practiced by native peoples. This is a rare opportunity and a good challenge, made extra possible by Ben and Grant's great leadership and a well experienced crew that can help you learn in small steps. If you've ever been mesmerized by a campfire, try a burn sometime.

Native Gardens: We've been planting different areas at Lost Lake Nature Park for the past two years, and we'll continue into the future. Join us for one of our next native planting parties in 2026.

Finally, last fall we had our first "**Friends of Lost Lake**" gathering. We're just starting to assemble a local group of folks that want to be in relationship with the creatures and natural areas here. Stay tuned for our Spring gathering - we'll be connecting to and caring for some of the creatures. Reach out if you want to meet some of the creatures or special places at Lost Lake ~ **Michael (248) 921-6461**. Hopefully you'll jump into one of the volunteer opportunities and make some new friends that also care for the Earth.

STEWARDSHIP

Natural Area Stewardship Events

Please join us for one of our events! Updated information and any last-minute changes to these events can be found on our Natural Areas Notebook website at oaklandnaturalareas.com.

Weekly Bird Walks

Join our friendly birders every Wednesday from May to August.

We want to document the bird species using natural areas in our parks so that we can work to improve their habitat. Bird walks start at 8 am and last about 2 hours. Some extra binoculars are available.

- 1st Wednesday of month – **Bear Creek Nature Park**
- 2nd Wednesday of month – **Watershed Ridge Park**
- 3rd Wednesday of month – **Fox Nature Preserve**
- 4th Wednesday of month – **Marsh View Park**
- 5th Wednesday of month – **Draper Twin Lake Park**

Celebrate Spring, Pull Garlic Mustard!

Garlic mustard and dame's rocket push out the native plants that our wildlife need. We need your help to remove these invasive plants from our parks! Workdays will be cancelled if the weather is bad. All volunteers must sign a waiver (with minor's waiver signed by a guardian), and minors under 14 must also be accompanied by a guardian. **Our workdays on April 28 and May 12 will be in the evening from 6-8 pm!**

- **Tuesday, April 28th, 6pm - 8pm:** Bear Creek Nature Park. Meet at 740 W. Snell Road, Rochester, MI.
- **Tuesday, May 5th, 9am - 12pm:** Watershed Ridge Park. Meet at 1880 W. Buell Road, Oakland, MI.
- **Tuesday, May 12th, 6pm - 8pm:** Paint Creek Trail. Meet at the Paint Creek Cider Mill, 4480 Orion Rd.
- **Tuesday, May 19th, 9am - 12pm:** Cranberry Lake Park. Meet at the north lot 635 W. Romeo Rd, Oakland, MI

Invasive Shrub Workdays at Bear Creek Nature Park

Tuesdays, July 7th, July 14th, July 21st, July 28th - 9am - 12pm

We will be removing invasive shrubs such as glossy buckthorn and autumn olive to help native species thrive around the perimeter of the northern marsh at Bear Creek Nature Park. Wear solid boots, long pants, and a long-sleeved shirt and bring water and a snack. Tools and training will be provided.

Meet in the Snell parking lot at 740 W. Snell Road, Rochester, MI 48306.



Natural Areas Stewardship Summer Social

Thursday, July 23rd, 6pm - 8pm at Bear Creek Nature Park

Come join us for our summer celebration of natural areas stewardship in Oakland Township! Learn about habitat restoration and volunteer opportunities in our parks while connecting with others involved in our programs. Drop ins welcome, bring your family and friends!

Volunteers Needed

Would you like to learn new skills, work with a great team, and get more involved in local conservation? Our natural areas stewardship volunteers help native seed collecting, prescribed fire, invasive species control, photo monitoring, pollinator garden maintenance, outreach, and more! We fit opportunities to your availability and interests. No special skills required. We'll provide all training and tools you'll need. To learn visit <https://oaklandnaturalareas.com/volunteer-calendar/volunteer-opportunities/>.

STEWARDSHIP

Adams High School T-Shirt Design Contest

By Grant Vander Laan, Stewardship Specialist

In 2025, I had the opportunity to partner with Rochester Adams High School and Amy Limon's digital art class to create a volunteer T-shirt. We provide our natural areas stewardship volunteers with T-shirts to increase their visibility while they are working in our parks, and this collaboration gave us a meaningful way to connect art, community, and stewardship.

Each student created a unique design inspired by themes of our park like trees, wildflowers, wildlife, community, etc. Each design reflected the student's creativity and thoughtful connection to the natural spaces our volunteers help care for.

Dr. Ben VanderWeide (Stewardship Manager), Arianna Stringer (Recreation Manager), and I voted on the designs and selected Kazey Luke's artwork as the winning T-shirt design. The design was simple yet visually appealing, and we felt it would resonate with all our volunteers. We also selected designs by Priya Arun and Robbie Stachura to be made into patches, stickers, and other items that will be given to volunteers as a thank-you for their hard work.

We want to thank not only the winners of our contest, but the entire class for their creativity and effort. Be on the lookout in our parks: you may spot our volunteers proudly wearing these student-designed shirts!

In 2025 alone, our volunteers contributed over 2,000 hours! If you are interested in volunteering and being able to rock one of these awesome volunteer shirts, visit our website for more information on volunteer opportunities.



Rochester Adams students Robbie Stachura, Priya Arun, and Kazey Luke (L-R) with their winning artwork.



Winning T-Shirt design by Rochester Adams student Kazey Luke

STEWARDSHIP

INVASIVE SPECIES TREATMENT NOTICE

Oakland Township Parks & Recreation hereby provides notice to the public and property owners for the 2026 control of invasive plants in wetlands within township park properties including Phragmites australis ssp. australis (Common reed), invasive cattails (*Typha latifolia* and *Typha x glauca*), reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), glossy buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), invasive honeysuckle (non-native *Lonicera* species), Oriental bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), common privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), crown vetch (*Securigera varia*), wild parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*), teasel (*Dipsacus* sp.), purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) in township park properties. Invasive plants can limit access to water bodies for people and wildlife, impair habitat for native plant and animals, lower property values, create a fire hazard, and cause infrastructure damage. By managing these invasive species, we seek to improve habitat for native plants, pollinators, and wildlife. If you have any other questions about invasive species, please contact Oakland Township Parks & Recreation (see information below).

Herbicide Applicators:

Oakland Township Parks and Recreation natural areas stewardship staff that have been certified as Commercial Pesticide Applicators with the State of Michigan will be conducting invasive species treatment.

Schedule & Treatment Locations:

Treatment will take place in 2026 throughout the park system. Treatment dates will depend on weather and the appropriate treatment timing for each target species.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bear Creek Nature Park | Mill Race Trail |
| Blue Heron Environmental Area | O'Connor Nature Park |
| Charles Ilsley Park | Paint Creek Trail Right-of-Way |
| Cranberry Lake Park | Paint Creek Heritage Area Wet Prairie |
| Draper Twin Lake Park | Paint Creek Heritage Area – Fen |
| Fox Nature Preserve | Paint Creek Junction |
| Gallagher Creek Park | Stony Creek Ravine Nature Park |
| Lost Lake Nature Park | Watershed Ridge Park |
| Marsh View Park | |

Herbicide, Methods of Application & Re-Entry Restrictions:

Herbicides in wetlands will be applied under Michigan EGLE Aquatic Nuisance Control Certificate of Coverage No. ANC9410241. In wetlands aquatic herbicides and adjuvants will be used, including AquaNeat (glyphosate), Renovate 3 (triclopyr), Garlon 3a (triclopyr), Hi-Light (tracer dye), Cygnet Plus (drift control, surfactant), or approved equivalent products. Foliar applications will be applied by backpack sprayer or by hand wicking. Cut stump applications will be applied with wicking herbicide daubers. The herbicide will be tank mixed.

Do not enter treated areas until the spray has dried.

Contact Information:

If you have any questions or would like additional information, please contact:

Oakland Township Parks & Recreation
4393 Collins Road, Rochester, MI 48306
248-651-7810



Cranberry Lake Farm Historic District

388 W. Predmore Road, Oakland



Spring is in the air for the love of gardening!

May 15th, 10am - 12pm

We are looking for volunteers who enjoy planting, weeding, and watering around the Story Garden and farmstead. We have several garden areas that are in need for adoption! On May 15 at 10am to noon, join us for a tour of the grounds, garden tea party, and craft for a 'Call for Gardeners' Day.

Please reserve your seat at bbarber@oaklandtwpmi.gov

Beekeeping Workshops

Saturdays 12pm - 1:30pm

1 May 2nd

2 June 27th

3 August 15th



Instructor Dawn Gialanella local beekeeper and owner of the Golden Acre Apiary, noticed how few pollinators were visiting her garden. She began her study of the honeybee and searched how best to bring the bees to the surrounding area. Each workshop covers a different topic from starting, hive management, to honey harvest! **Please reserve your seat at bbarber@oaklandtwpmi.gov**

Residents: \$5 Non-Residents: \$8

Painting "Plein Aire"

Tuesdays 10am - 2pm

1 June 16th

2 July 21st

3 August 18th

4 September 15th



Outdoors in the historic grounds providing beautiful landscape views and subjects. Instruction by Janet Almstadt-Davison who will provide individual attention and teaching technique in both realism and abstraction styles. Workshops cover variety of techniques each month. A materials list of recommended supplies is available upon registration.

All artists mediums welcome.

Class Fee: \$30 Please reserve your seat at bbarber@oaklandtwpmi.gov

Please reserve your seat at bbarber@oaklandtwpmi.gov

Free Square Dancing Fun!

Saturday, August 8th 5pm - 8pm

Flumerfelt Barn, Cranberry Lake Farm

The Golden Griffon Stringtet callers Jim & Loretta McKinney will be teaching old-time dances that consist of easy moves with spoken directions so everyone has fun. The best dance music from a large collection of recordings. They have been dancing since 1988. *Please wear or bring comfortable, low-heeled, shoes. No previous dance experience necessary.*



*We are open
for your special gathering!*



CELEBRATE WITH US AMERICA TURNS 250

SUNDAY JUNE 14, 2026 1 PM TO 4 PM
CRANBERRY LAKE FARM HISTORIC DISTRICT
388 W. PREDMORE RD, OAKLAND MI 48363



Oakland Twp's celebration of America's semi quincentennial on Flag Day with special musical

concert by the Saline Fiddlers Philharmonic, America's premier youth fiddling show from Saline, MI astounds audiences every time the group plays. The musicians, from Saline High School, present an energetic show that features a diverse range of music from American folk, fiddle, bluegrass, jazz, western swing, and Celtic traditions. Spirited vocals and Appalachian step dancing combine with the instrumentals to create an unforgettable live performance. Please bring a lawn chair or a blanket, in case we run out of ours!

Bring the family to enjoy the celebration with **Patriotic Games** on the lawn, have a hotdog and popcorn (*while supplies last*). An educational exhibit will be on display in the Flumerfelt Barn 'Celebrating Patriotism of our Settlers' Learn about The Declaration of Independence, our first settlements, prosperity, and townhall meetings to establish order and goodwill.



The event and exhibit have been made possible in part by a major grant from America250MI funds. Concert sponsors Greater Michigan Assoc. of Realtors and Oakland Twp HDC. Refreshments from Kroger's and Emagine Theatres. We thank our planning committee: The Paint Creek Questers 709, John Crawford DAR, OTHS, and the Oakland Twp HDC.



We invite the community to join the Oakland Township Historical Society located at **Cranberry Lake Farm, 384 W. Predmore Road, Oakland Township (OT)**. Founded in 1974, the Society aims to bring together people interested in history generally and in the history of OT particularly. Our non-profit organization offers opportunities for members and visitors alike. Check out our website and Facebook page for more information about our programs, collections, membership, volunteer opportunities, donation interests, and the historical posts. **Questions? Send an email to othspresident@gmail.com**

PROGRAMS, PRESENTATIONS AND POTLUCKS - OH MY!

“Writing Your Memoir” Workshop led by Gloria John, PhD.
Saturday, March 21st 9:30am - 11:30am
 Paint Creek United Methodist Church, 4420 Collins Rd., Goodison.
Members: Free Non-Members: \$10

“The Story of the Van Doran Coverlets”
(1800s Stoney Creek Village) Presented by Laverne Webster
Wednesday, April 1st 7pm
 Rochester Mills Beer Company Private Room.
Dinner at 5:30pm, seperate checks.

May Field Trip
 Details to be posted on our social media sites.

Potluck & “The American Revolution: We the People” by Robert Doran-Brockway, Project Director with America250MI
Wednesday, June 3rd Potluck at 6:30pm, “The American Revolution: We the People” at 7:15pm
 Cranberry Lake Farm, Flumerfelt Barn.



COMING SOON...

Historic Homes of Oakland Township
 This book features original photographs and historical details for 30 homes and 15 landmarks. This second edition is 50 years in the making! Watch our social media for availability.

CALLING ALL GARDENERS!



Individuals, groups, and scouts, we need you! Please adopt and care for a flower bed or herb pot(s), or donate time or flowers. We could use help with weeding, watering, and planting. We hope to spruce up the gardens and attract more visitors and butterflies! Text **248-860-9945**

WE LOVE OUR VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS!

We accept vintage furniture, tools, décor, kitchenware, china, and collectables, to name a few, for our museum & barn sale.

DON'T MISS OUT...

Open archives research at the Main House, Cranberry Lake Farm. Wednesday afternoons by appointment.

Whether you are a long-time resident or have just settled in, we hope you will join us.

Here's to growing and learning alongside you for years to come!



VINTAGE HAT DISPLAY

Now at the Paint Creek Cider Mill
 A large collection of women's and men's early 19th-century hats and accessories.



www.instagram.com/oaklandtwphistoricalsociety



www.facebook.com/OTHSMI

www.oaklandtownshiphistoricalsociety.org



Remembering Doug Caruso- Words from the Paint Creek Trail Manager

Our parks family suffered an immeasurable loss with the recent passing of Doug Caruso. He played an integral role in making the Oakland Township parks system and the Paint Creek Trail what we know and love.

Doug was a lifelong resident of Oakland Township, and he was a treasure-trove of stories. He shared with



Doug Caruso with the Goodison Station signal booth that he and his father restored. Railroad communication booths like this allowed operators to instruct a train to pull off the track onto a “spur” or sidetrack so that another train could safely pass.

me that his grandparents operated a restaurant in Detroit. They would take the train to the countryside to enjoy a respite from their busy lives. On one such trip, they noticed a “For Sale” sign on property alongside the railroad tracks, and soon afterwards became the proud owners of that land and a small cabin that sat on it. Their new home was in Goodison, just across the creek from what is now the Paint Creek Cider Mill. That is how Doug came to have roots in Oakland Township.

Doug worked with OTPR for many years, initially as a contractor and later as OTPR’s Maintenance Foreman. He was masterful at operating equipment, he could fix just about anything, and it seemed that he knew everyone. Have you ever noticed the Goodison Station signal booth located at Paint Creek Junction Park? Doug and his father lovingly restored this little historic gem, which was once located by the Gallagher Road crossing. It is a beautiful example of Doug’s craftsmanship and his dedication to this community.

We will miss Doug’s friendliness, his ability to work so well with and guide others, and his caring ways. Above all, Doug was a kind man and a good soul. We will miss him dearly, and we are keeping his family close to our hearts.



Bridge 31.7 Replacement

Progress continues on the replacement of the bridge at the 31.7 mile marker, located between the Ludlow/ Woodward and Tienken Road crossings. After removing the old bridge, the contractor built new abutments on either side of the Paint Creek. At the end of February, the new single-span bridge arrived in pieces. The bridge was then assembled and set in place, and decking was installed. The contractor will reconstruct the stairway, repair the trail surfacing, and replant native plantings along the trail edges. The trail will be open for use later this spring, and look for a grand opening this summer. To receive updates on the project, text PCTBRIDGE to 38276 to add your mobile number to the PCTBRIDGE group.

Detroit Institute of Arts – Inside/Out Program

The Paint Creek Trailways Commission is excited to partner with **Oakland Township Parks and Recreation** to share the DIA's **Inside/Out** program with you. The DIA will install high-quality reproductions of two of their pieces of artwork along the Paint Creek Trail – one by the safety path connector at Flagstar Bank, and the other on the north side of the Gallagher Road crossing. The art will remain in place until late fall 2026. (See page 11 of this newsletter to sign up for a docent-led bus tour of other DIA artwork in Oakland Township.)



Communicate

Use clear signals to indicate your intentions.

Always check behind you when turning, especially if reversing direction.

USE HEADPHONES WITH CAUTION

Contact Us:

Trail Manager Ingrid R. Kliffel: manager@paintcreektrail.org

Trail Office Phone: **(248)651-9260**

Web: paintcreektrail.org

The office is located at the **Paint Creek Cider Mill, 2nd Floor, 4480 Orion Road, Rochester, MI 48306.**

Love your Trail – Pull Garlic Mustard!

Meet at the Paint Creek Cider Mill on Tuesday, May 12th, 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. Work alongside OTPR's stewardship staff and the Paint Creek Trail Manager. We will be removing garlic mustard and dame's rocket, two plants that push out the native plants that our wildlife need.

This event will be cancelled in inclement weather.

Labor Day Bridge 5K Run and Walk

The Labor Day Bridge Walk is back for 2026! Join us on Monday, September 7th at the Kiwanis Pavilion in Rochester Municipal Park for this family-friendly event. Check-in is at 8:00 a.m., and step-off is at 9:00 a.m. Watch the website for details. www.paintcreektrail.org



WHAT'S NEW in the PARKS

Lost Lake Nature Park Nature Center Remodeling

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing a warm and welcoming educational environment for our community, our maintenance and recreation teams recently partnered up to complete a series of exciting updates to the Lost Lake Nature Center. We refreshed the interior with a fresh coat of paint, added new furniture that's interactive for kids, and installed new artwork that celebrates local wildlife and landscapes.



Taxidermy Exhibit Before

One of the most notable improvements was the update to our taxidermy exhibit, which has been thoughtfully reorganized to highlight Michigan's native fauna.

Check out the new and improved space at our upcoming open houses located on page 15.



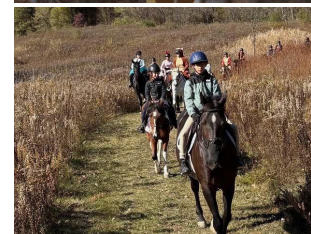
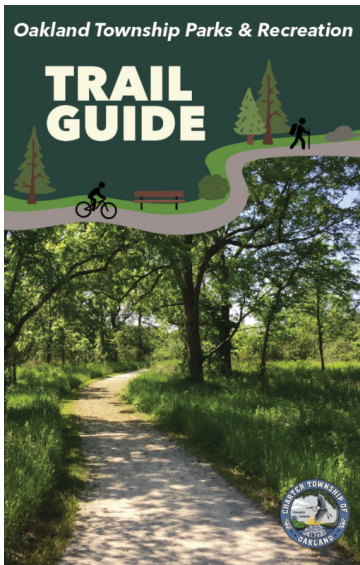
Taxidermy Exhibit After

Trail Updates Around Our Parks

We've made significant trail improvements across our parks within the last several months and are still working on ongoing projects to enhance visitor experience. We are installing new signage with updated park maps and trailhead information to help guests easily navigate each park.

At Watershed Ridge Park, we added on trails to the existing loop and enlarged the parking lot to better accommodate visitors. In addition, a parking lot was added off of Lake George Road in Fox Nature Reserve for easier access to Fox South trails.

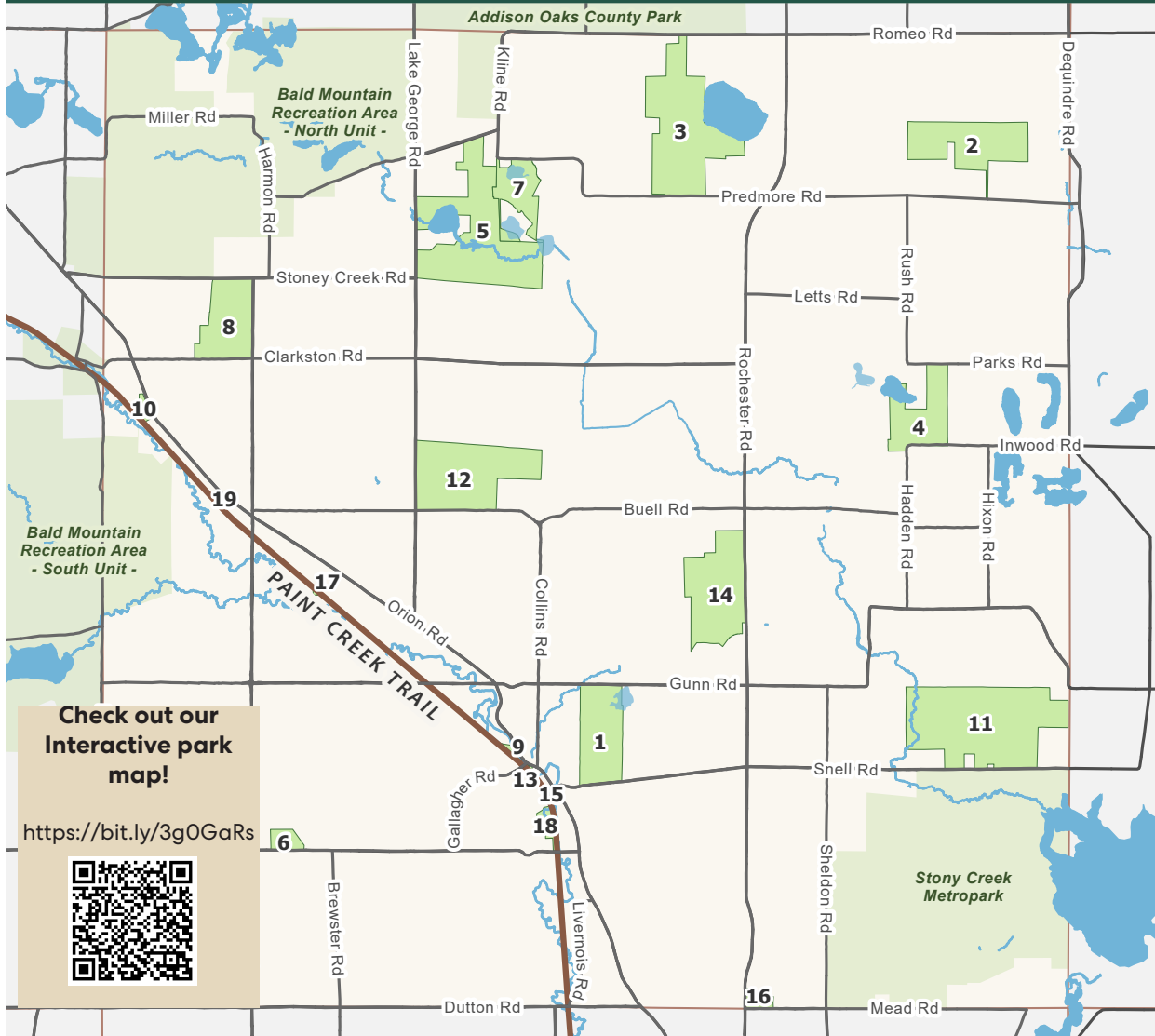
Thanks to the collaborative effort of our stewardship and maintenance teams last summer, the newly developed trails at Marsh View Park have been visited and are enjoyed by some furry equestrian neighbors!



COMING SOON! OTPR TRAIL GUIDE

We are excited to launch our newly created comprehensive trail guide that includes maps of all parks to better serve the needs of our park users.

OAKLAND TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION



Check out our Interactive park map!
<https://bit.ly/3g0GaRs>

Community Parks and Recreation Areas

1. Bear Creek Nature Park
2. Charles Ilsley Park
3. Cranberry Lake Park
4. Draper Twin Lake Park
5. Fox Nature Preserve
6. Gallagher Creek Park
7. Lost Lake Nature Park
8. Marsh View Park
9. Mill Race Trail
10. Paint Creek Junction
11. Stony Creek Ravine Nature Park
12. Watershed Ridge Park
13. Paint Creek Cider Mill (Parks Office)

Conservation Areas

14. Blue Heron Environmental Area
15. Mill Creek Crossing
16. O'Connor Nature Park
17. Paint Creek Heritage Area: Fen
18. Paint Creek Heritage Area: Wet Prairie
19. Paint Creek Trail Parcel



oaklandtwpmi.gov/parks-recreation

Parks Office: (248) 651-7810
 4480 Orion Rd, Rochester, MI 48306

Parks and Recreation Commission
Charter Township of Oakland
4393 Collins Road
Rochester, MI 48306-1670

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
ROCHESTER, MI
PERMIT NO 73

Phone: (248) 651-7810
Fax: (248) 601-0106
oaklandtwpmi.gov

ECR WSS

POSTAL CUSTOMER



FREE EVENT **KIDS** **FREE EVENT**
SUMMER KICKOFF
BEAR CREEK NATURE PARK
JUNE 10
12-2PM

Kickoff your summer with Oakland Township in this free community event!

BOUNCE HOUSES
FIELD GAMES WITH PRIZES
FREE KONA ICE TRUCK*
BALLOON TWISTER
NATURE TABLE

*FIRST 100 PEOPLE

The poster features a vibrant illustration of a park scene. In the foreground, a young girl in orange overalls and a boy in a white shirt are holding a wooden sign. The sign lists activities: Bounce Houses, Field Games with Prizes, Free Kona Ice Truck, Balloon Twister, and Nature Table. In the background, there are colorful bounce houses, a pink ice truck, a girl sitting on a picnic blanket, and a boy holding a red balloon. The sky is blue with stylized clouds and leaves.