

NOV•DEC '21

# GREEN ISLANDS

*Summit Metro Parks*



*Bi-monthly Magazine*

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Public Parks

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Centennial Giving  
— for the Next  
100 Years

Your Metro Parks are funded by a small Summit County real-estate tax.  
This magazine is an example of your public dollars at work.



Our parks are like green islands  
in an urban landscape.

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BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

- Herb Newman *Chair*
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- Tina Ughrin
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Green Islands can be downloaded online:  
[summitmetroparks.org](http://summitmetroparks.org)

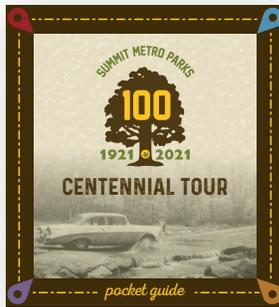
# BOARD of PARK commissioners



Joel D. Bailey                      Mark A. Spisak                      Herb Newman  
 Tonya Block                      Tina Ughrin

The park district's governing body is appointed by the Summit County Probate Judge. Commissioners serve overlapping three-year terms and are assisted by the executive director, who oversees the work of full-time and part-time employees, seasonal workers and volunteers.

## Take the CENTENNIAL TOUR



There's still time to finish the Centennial Tour! Visit 20 designated locations to earn a commemorative leather tag in honor of the park district's 100th anniversary. Complete a self-guided form (*available for download from [summitmetroparks100.org](http://summitmetroparks100.org) and in kiosks*) to earn your FREE reward.

### Collect your Centennial Tour reward

at one of our three nature centers or our administrative offices during regular business hours. Learn more at [summitmetroparks100.org](http://summitmetroparks100.org).





*Archery*



# THEN & NOW Recreation

Fads come and go and styles change, but some things have stayed the same over the past 100 years. Recreation in Summit Metro Parks is one thing that has remained constant through the decades.



*Biking*



*Fishing*



*Hiking*



*Picnics*



*Sledding*





# Benefits

*As Summit Metro Parks*

*wraps up its centennial year, this  
milestone serves as an important  
reminder of the value of parks and  
green space in Summit County —  
and beyond.*

Completed Cuyahoga  
River restoration at  
the Valley View Area

*~ Cascade Valley  
Metro Park*

# of Public Parks

## What have they done for you lately?

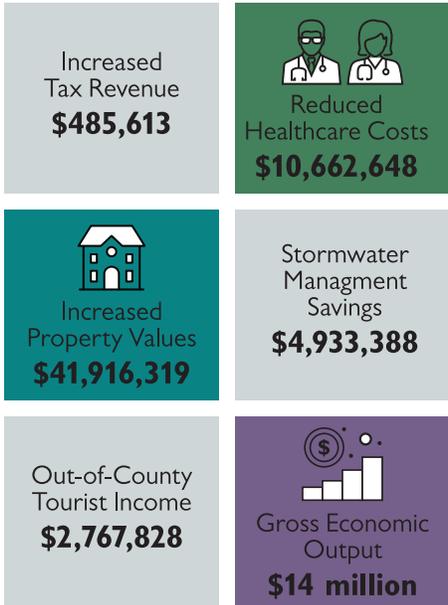
Stephanie Walton,  
Chief of Marketing & Communications

Much like water, sewer and public safety, public parks provide specific and measurable benefits to their communities through economic, health, environmental and social improvements. Established 100 years ago by forward-thinking visionaries, Summit Metro Parks now consists of 16 parks covering 14,000 acres — more than 5 percent of the total land area of Summit County! These parks include over 150 miles of trail, access to the Cuyahoga River, opportunities for fishing, cycling, mountain biking, camping, paddling — and so much more.

### Economic Value

Parks are a significant boost to local economies, with studies showing the real estate market consistently supports higher prices for property located close to parks and open space. In fact, 85 percent of respondents to a National Recreation & Parks Association (NRPA) survey indicated that they seek high-

### BENEFITS OF SUMMIT METRO PARKS



Source: An Economic Impact Analysis of Metro Parks, Serving Summit County (The University of Akron), 2012

quality parks and recreation amenities when choosing a place to live. Beyond benefiting the individual homeowner, higher home values also add to the tax base of local municipalities.

Parks have additionally been shown to drive economic development, with access to green space cited as a top amenity that businesses seek during relocation. They also create indirect

revenues from sports tournaments and special events such as arts, music and holiday festivals. Furthermore, the economic activity from hospitality expenditures, tourism, fuel, recreational equipment sales and many other private sector businesses drives real and sustained value to local and regional economies.

### Health & Wellness Benefits

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans were consuming nearly 11 hours of media a day and spending more than 90 percent of their time indoors, resulting in an overall decline in park visitation, hunting, fishing, camping and children's outdoor play over the past several decades. At the same time, approximately one in four Americans were living with depression or anxiety and half of all adults had a chronic health condition.

*continued on page 6*



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Meanwhile, a steadily-growing body of research demonstrates a significant correlation between time spent in nature and improved mental and physical health. We saw this play out in real time over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, with parks and trails nationwide experiencing record-breaking attendance. In Summit Metro Parks, visits increased by 20 percent, from 5 million to 6 million each year. According to studies by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, creating, improving and promoting places to be physically active can improve individual and community health and result in a 25 percent increase of residents who exercise at least three times per week. Studies continue to show that people who spend more time outdoors have reduced levels of stress, anxiety and depression, and lower incidences of diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure.

## Environmental Stewardship

Summit Metro Parks has always been, at its heart, a conservation organization.

Parks and protected green spaces are widely recognized for improving air and water quality, protecting groundwater, preventing flooding, reducing stormwater runoff, providing vegetative buffers to development and protecting connected habitats for wildlife. Summit Metro Parks is proud to be home to two large-scale connected green spaces: Liberty Park in Twinsburg consists of 3,000 connected acres and the Valley View Area now links 1,800 acres across Cascade Valley, Gorge and Sand Run Metro Parks.

As climate change becomes an increasing concern and communities look for ways to reduce or mitigate its impacts, parks can become part of the solution. Parks and trees can be one of the most effective tools to address increasing temperatures, and have been found to reduce heat by up to 17 degrees. The NRPA reports that nationwide, parks and urban tree canopies help sequester more than 90 million metric tons of carbon each year and filter pollutants such as harmful particulates. In Summit Metro Parks alone, this carbon storage is valued at nearly \$116 million. Parks such as Valley View that are designed with smart water management systems can reduce stormwater runoff, helping to guard against costly and dangerous floods.

## Quality of Life & Social Equity

Perhaps now more than ever, there is recognition of the important role that parks play in a community's quality of life. With an approval rating of over 90 percent, Summit Metro Parks has been providing a sense of cohesion and pride in the Summit County community for 100 years. In addition to their economic, health and environmental benefits, parks also provide gathering spaces for families and social groups of all ages, abilities and economic backgrounds, regardless of their ability to pay for access. Through programs and special events that connect people to nature, they also help create the next generation of land stewards who will ensure these treasures remain protected well into the future.

Summit County residents have long recognized the value of protected green space and have backed Summit Metro Parks with enthusiasm since 1921. Thank you for visiting us, and for your ongoing support in the form of levy approvals, volunteer hours, financial contributions and community partnerships. We look forward to serving you into our next century! 🌱

## Lisa King

Executive Director

*Lindsay Smith, Marketing & Public Relations Manager*

Throughout 2021, we've showcased key figures in the park district's first 100 years. Today, we are excited to set the groundwork for our next century of serving Summit County and are doing so under the leadership of the organization's first female executive director: Lisa King.

King began her career with Summit Metro Parks in 1998 as landscape architect and eventually served as chief of planning & development. She was appointed to serve as executive director in 2015, and since then has upheld the mission of Summit Metro Parks and focused on ways to bring the parks to the people, in addition to welcoming visitors at our sites.

When asked her hopes for the next century of Summit Metro Parks, King shared, "Having spent more than 20 years with SMP, I've seen and experienced many changes. I feel we are doing more today to connect with our community than we ever have before. We are living our mission every day. My wish for the next 100 years is three-fold: to remain warm and welcoming to all people, to be responsive to our visitors' needs, and to continue finding new ways to connect people to nature."

She added: "Sir David Attenborough said, 'No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced.' It will always be our job to connect people to nature in new ways and we must nurture future generations of land stewards, young and old, if we are to remain relevant to our communities. We look forward to doing just that for the next 100 years." 🌱



*Lisa King during her time as a landscape architect for Summit Metro Parks. | February 2000*



*Lisa King with Ohio Representative Emilia Sykes at the grand opening for the new Summit Lake Nature Center ~ Towpath Trail 2021*

# EXPLORE

## PROGRAMS & EVENTS

### NOVEMBER

Summit Metro Parks continues to monitor COVID-19 safety guidance and visitors are requested to follow the most recent recommendations of the Ohio Department of Health. Please visit [summitmetroparks.org](http://summitmetroparks.org) or call 330-865-8065 for the latest information on COVID-19 protocols.

Monday, November 1, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.

#### EYE SPY

Hit the trail any time during the month of November for a nature-themed game of Eye Spy! Begin by downloading or printing this month's Eye Spy list from our "Educational Activities and Resources" page under the "Things to Do" tab, then enjoy a stroll along the Towpath Trail in search of plants and animals along the way. You can also complete your search using the November 1 Instagram post (@summitmetroparks).

SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron 📍



Wednesday, November 3  
10 – 11 a.m. & 1 – 2 p.m.

#### VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS

Join our interpretive artist for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing. No experience is necessary; all you need are pencils, paper and a sense of humor. 🗣️ A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. 🕒 (10/22)

Wednesday, November 3  
6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

#### VIRTUAL: NATIVE PLANT PROPAGATION 101

Join us virtually to discover why November is the best time to start native seeds. We're talking stratification, scarification and dormancy. 🗣️ Zoom meeting ID: 848 0334 5194

Thursday, November 4  
10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

#### HOMESCHOOLERS: OWLS

Homeschoolers ages 7 to 10: Join a naturalist to discover the fascinating world of owls! Learn about some common species, what sounds they make, where to spot them and how they survive during the colder months. A hike and fire follow some activities in the outdoor shelter, so dress accordingly! F/Tuscarawas Meadows: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron 🕒 (10/20)

Thursday, November 4, 1 – 3 p.m.

#### HOMESCHOOLERS: OWLS

Homeschoolers ages 11 to 14. See description above. A hike and fire follow some activities in the outdoor shelter, so dress accordingly! F/Tuscarawas Meadows: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron 🕒 (10/20)



**Call: 330-865-8065** Advance registration required, beginning at 10 a.m. on the date in parentheses.



**Zoom: <https://zoom.us/join>** Key in the Meeting ID number.



**Web: 330tix.com** Online registration.



**Centennial-themed** programs and events.

(date) Registration start date  
\$ Fee  
👟 Fall Hiking Spree credit

BHT Bike & Hike Trail  
CV Cascade Valley  
DLQ Deep Lock Quarry  
FASN FA. Seiberling Nature Realm

F Firestone  
FR Furnace Run  
FT Freedom Trail  
GYH Goodyear Heights

G Gorge  
HH Hampton Hills  
LP Liberty Park  
MF Munroe Falls

NR Nimisila Reservoir  
ONW O'Neil Woods  
SC Silver Creek  
SFB Springfield Bog

SLNC Summit Lake Nature Center  
SR Sand Run  
TT Towpath Trail  
WH Wood Hollow

Friday, November 5, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

**SENIOR SAUNTER**

Whether you're a senior by age or just want to enjoy the outdoors at a leisurely pace, join us for a saunter along paved trails to savor the season as it transitions from fall to winter. Bring a mug to enjoy a warm beverage afterward. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 📍 (10/23)

Saturday, November 6  
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**HIKE FOR THE HEALTH OF IT**

Hike over four miles at a vigorous pace with few, if any, rest stops. Beginners are welcome, but talk to your doctor before beginning a new exercise routine. MF/Lake Area: 521 S. River Rd., Munroe Falls

Sunday, November 7, 8 – 10 a.m.

**SO LONG, DAYLIGHT SAVINGS**

Take advantage of the additional hour we get from turning back the clocks on an early morning hike with a naturalist. Enjoy fall foliage and observe signs of seasonal change as we learn why clocks around the world fall back in November and spring forward in March. SC/Big Oak: 5199 Medina Line Rd., Norton



**Get fit while you sit!**

Enjoy an exercise session with a certified BalloFlex instructor. BalloFlex is a seated workout that incorporates the elements of dance and fitness together in a safe, low impact and fun system. It is designed for all ages and abilities!

12:30 – 1 p.m.

**VIRTUAL 📺:**

Zoom meeting ID: 849 6465 8634

- Monday, November 1
- Thursday, November 4
- Monday, November 8
- Wednesday, November 10
- Thursday, November 11
- Monday, November 15
- Thursday, November 18
- Monday, November 22
- Wednesday, November 24
- Monday, November 29

Tuesday, November 9, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.

**SELF-GUIDED: STORYBOOK TRAIL**

Enjoy a fun, active walk along a self-guided story trail based on the book "Time to Sleep." Look for it along Black Bear Trail from November 9 through 14. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 📍

Thursday, November 11, 8 – 10 a.m.

**BIRD WALK ALONG THE BANKS**

Discover an avian haven of riparian forest along our mighty Cuyahoga River. Binoculars and drinking water are recommended. Be prepared for limited access to park amenities. CV/Valley View: 1212 Cuyhaoga St., Akron

Friday, November 12, 6 – 7 p.m.

**NIGHT VISION HIKE**

As the sun sets below the horizon and the world is cloaked in night, nocturnal animals wake up and start their day. Come experience their world and see through their eyes as we hike into the night under the glow of the stars. Bring a flashlight to help light your path! CV/Valley View: 1212 Cuyhaoga St., Akron

Saturday, November 13, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

**CANAL HISTORY**

Ever wonder what life was like in the 1800s along the canal? Find out how the Ohio & Erie Canal helped Ohio become a state as we stroll into the past on this hike. TT/Clinton: 2749 North St., Clinton

**HIKING SPREE SHIELD ASSISTANCE**

Is attaching the hiking spree shield more challenging than actually hiking the eight trails? Summit Metro Parks volunteers will gladly attach it for you at no charge. Please note: a small number of guests will be admitted inside at a time. Others will be asked to wait outdoors. Please dress for the weather!

1 – 3 p.m.

Saturday, November 6  
Saturday, November 13

FASN/Visitors Center:  
1828 Smith Rd., Akron

Saturday, November 20  
SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

Saturday, November 27  
FASN/Visitors Center:  
1828 Smith Rd., Akron



Sunday, November 14  
11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.



**HISTORY HIKE: FURNACE RUN**

Stroll with a naturalist to learn the history of Furnace Run Metro Park, including its connections to the invention of electric streetlamps, the Civilian Conservation Corps and even the Wizard of Oz! FR/Brushwood: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield 📍



# KINDEREALM: NATIVE AMERICANS

Children 3 to 6 and their adult companions: bring a blanket and curl up by a warm fire to learn through storytelling about the American Indians who inhabited and hunted in the Metro Parks. Program includes a craft and hike. Please make other arrangements for younger children unable to remain in infant seats or strollers.

**Saturday, November 13  
2 – 3 p.m.**

LP/Nature Center:  
9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg  
📞 (10/29)

**Saturday, November 20  
2 – 3 p.m.**

FASN/Seneca Deck:  
1828 Smith Rd., Akron  
📞 (11/13)



**Sunday, November 14, 1 – 3:30 p.m.**  
**GEOLOGY OF DEEP LOCK QUARRY**

Join a naturalist to learn how the Berea sandstone, shale and Sharon conglomerate were formed. We'll explore the history of Deep Lock Quarry and will find out how this area produced some of the highest quality sandstone for structural building blocks, the canal locks and grindstones. DLQ: 5779 Riverview Rd., Peninsula 🚶



**Sunday, November 14, 2 – 3 p.m.**  
**VIRTUAL: REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE & RETHINK!**

Join a naturalist for a presentation on the history of recycling, best practices for successful sorting and what the future holds in the world of waste management. Other eco-friendly practices like composting and upcycling will also be covered. A hike on the Towpath Trail will follow the discussion. 📺 Zoom meeting ID: 889 2540 8160

**Tuesday, November 16, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.**  
**SELF GUIDED: WILDLIFE HUMOR HIKE**

Need a little humor in your life? Hike Alder Trail between November 16 and November 22 to get a few chuckles and some exercise! Wildlife jokes will be located along the trail for your reading enjoyment. GYH/Pioneer: 550 Frazier Ave., Akron

**Wednesday, November 17  
10 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**WEEKDAY WALKERS**

In honor of Take a Hike Day, hit the trails with a naturalist for some exercise and observe some fall foliage and other sights along the way. GYH/Main Entrance: 2077 Newton St., Akron

**Wednesday, November 17  
10 – 11:30 a.m. & 1 – 2 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL: NATURE JOURNALING**

Join our interpretive artist for an inspiring virtual lesson in nature journaling as a technique for practicing mindfulness. 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering.

📞 (11/5)



**Thursday, November 18  
10 – 11:30 a.m.**

**CHICKADEE TRAINING 101**

The chickadees at Liberty Park aren't yet used to being fed by hand, so come help us establish the tradition! Bring an old, no-longer needed hat, scarf or mis-matched mitten that can be used to outfit a "chickadee trainer" scarecrow (items will remain outside all winter). Learn about chickadees and other inquisitive birds and how they can be coaxed to feed by hand, then try your luck at enticing one to take a seed from you. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

**Thursday, November 18  
1:30 – 2:30 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL: OWLS FOR KIDS**

Kids ages 7 to 11: Join us online to discover the fascinating world of owls! Learn about some common species, what sounds they make, where to spot them and how they survive during the colder months. 📺 Zoom meeting ID: 883 1549 9116





**Thursday, November 18**  
5 – 6:30 p.m. & 7 – 8:30 p.m.

**INTRO TO ARCHERY FOR FAMILIES**

Archery is one of the oldest arts still practiced today, and it's more accessible than ever. Families with children age 9 and older can learn international-style target archery together at our indoor range. Beginning and practiced archers are welcome. All equipment and hands-on instruction provided. Must be 50 inches or taller. Cost: \$15/family. F/Coventry Oaks: 40 Axline Ave., Akron 📞 (11/10) \$

**Thursday, November 18, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL: OWLS FOR ADULTS**

Join us online to discover the fascinating world of owls! Learn about some common species, what sounds they make, where to spot them and how they survive during the colder months. 📺 Zoom meeting ID: 835 7741 7539

**Friday, November 19, 6 – 7:30 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL: A ROYAL JAMBOREE**

Calling all princes and princesses! Get dressed up (if you would like) and enjoy the book "Do Princesses Wear Hiking Boots?" followed by fun nature crafts and activities. 📺 A Zoom link will be emailed to participants after registration and kits will be available for pick up. 📞 (11/11)

**Friday, November 19, 6:30 – 8 p.m.**

**NIGHT HIKE**

Explore life after sunset in the forest and wet meadow and discover ways we can help our wildlife neighbors that depend on the nocturnal world. Please bring a headlamp or flashlight to guide you. MF/Tallmadge Meadows: 1088 North Ave., Tallmadge

**Friday, November 19, 8 – 10 p.m.**

**FULL MOON HIKE & FIRE**

Join a naturalist as we hike around Liberty Park under the moonlit skies. We will discuss moon trivia and maybe even learn about some constellations. If the night air is brisk, we can warm up by the fire and enjoy some hot chocolate. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 🥾

**Saturday, November 20, 12 – 2 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL: NATURE ART FOR TEENS**

Do you have a creative spirit? Teens ages 13 to 17 can join our interpretive artist for lessons in nature-inspired art. 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. 📞 (11/12)

**Sunday, November 21**

12 – 1 p.m. & 2 – 3 p.m.

**VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS**

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All you need are a pencil and paper. 📺 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. 📞 (11/19)



**Sunday, November 21, 6 – 7:30 p.m.**

**OWLS & HOWLS**

Join a naturalist after dark to discover some of the park's most elusive and misunderstood residents. After a short presentation in the shelter, we will take a quiet hike to call these creatures with hopes they will respond. Bring your patience, curiosity and a small flashlight if you wish. For ages 6 and older. No dogs, please. WH: 2121 Barlow Rd., Hudson 🥾

**Monday, November 22, 7 – 8:30 p.m.**

**OWL PROWL**

Join a naturalist for an evening hike in search of owls. Learn some common owl calls, where to spot them and how they survive during the colder months. For ages 6 and older. No dogs, please. SC/Pheasant Run: 5000 Hametown Rd., Norton

**Saturday, November 27, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

**DISTANCE HIKE**

Lace up your hiking boots and grab your hiking stick and hat because it's time for another distance hike! We are going five miles on natural trails over the river and through the woods. Riding Run Conservation Area: 2247 Everett Rd., Peninsula

**Sunday, November 28, 1 – 3 p.m.**

**WINTER TREE AND SHRUB ID**

How do you properly identify a dogwood tree? By its "bark" of course! Join a naturalist to hike the trail, identifying many of the trees and shrubs along the way. By the end of the program, you will be able to easily tell the difference between spicebush, invasive honeysuckle, beech, maples, oaks and even dogwood trees. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg



**Tuesday, November 30, 3:30 – 5:30 pm**

**HIKE INTO TWILIGHT**

We'll explore nature at the close of day with one last Fall Hiking Spree hike along Ledges Trail, then enjoy a warm fire as twilight falls. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg 🥾

 **November 30 is #GivingTuesday**  
foundation.summitmetroparks.org



**DECEMBER**

*Wednesday, December 1, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.*

**EYE SPY**

Hit the trail any time during the month of December for a nature-themed game of Eye Spy! Begin by downloading or printing this month's Eye Spy list from our "Educational Activities and Resources" page under the "Things to Do" tab, then enjoy a stroll along Ledges Trail in search of geologic features, animals and more along the way. You can also complete your search using the December 1 Instagram post (@summitmetroparks). LP/ Twinsburg Ledges: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

*Wednesday, December 1  
10 – 11 a.m. & 1 – 2 p.m.*

**VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR ADULTS**

Join our interpretive artist for this entertaining virtual lesson in nature drawing. No experience is necessary; all you need are pencils, paper and a sense of humor.

📧 A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. 🕒 (11/27)



*Thursday, December 2, 10 – 11:30 a.m.*

**VIRTUAL: BEDTIME – SEE YOU NEXT SPRING!**

Young ones and their adult companions will join a naturalist online to learn about hibernation and some of the cool critters sleeping the winter away. 📺 Zoom meeting ID: 844 5160 6149



*Thursday, December 2, 1 – 3 p.m.*

**WINTER TREE I.D.**

No leaves? No problem! Learn the basics of tree identification with a naturalist using bark and twig arrangement and other distinguishing features. HH/Main Entrance: 2925 Akron-Peninsula Rd., Akron

*Saturday, December 4, 12 – 1:30 p.m.*

**WINTER BLAHS SENIOR PICNIC**

Are you missing the warm summer days and socializing in the parks while you picnic? Join us indoors to enjoy a picnic and activities to get rid of those winter blahs. We'll bring the hotdogs and visitors can bring their own drinks. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron 📞 (11/26)

*Saturday, December 4, 1 – 2:30 p.m.*

**GLACIAL GEOLOGY OF SUMMIT METRO PARKS**

Join a naturalist as we look at how the last Ice Age shaped many of the features in the Metro Parks. Learn about the kettle lakes, why the Cuyahoga River turns north and how Sand Run got its name. We will also point out glacial features in many of our parks. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

*Sunday, December 5, 1 – 2:30 p.m.*

**WINTER TREE ID**

Join a naturalist to learn how to recognize trees using the three Bs: Bark, Buds and Branches. Dress appropriately for the weather! SC/Big Oak: 5199 Medina Line Rd., Norton



**Get fit while you sit!**

Enjoy an exercise session with a certified BalloFlex instructor. BalloFlex is a seated workout that incorporates the elements of dance and fitness together in a safe, low impact and fun system. It is designed for all ages and abilities!

**12:30 – 1 p.m.**

**VIRTUAL 📺:**

Zoom meeting ID: 849 6465 8634

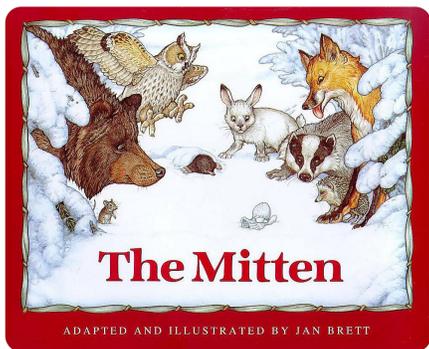
- Thursday, December 2*
- Monday, December 6*
- Wednesday, December 8*
- Thursday, December 9*
- Monday, December 13*
- Wednesday, December 15*
- Thursday, December 16*
- Monday, December 20*
- Thursday, December 23*

Tuesday, December 7, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.

**SELF-GUIDED:  
STORYBOOK TRAIL**

Bundle up and enjoy some exercise and fun following a self-guided story trail based on the book "The Mitten." Look for it along Downy Loop Trail between December 7 and 12.

WH: 2121 Barlow Rd., Hudson



Wednesday, December 8  
10 – 11 a.m. & 1 – 2 p.m.

**VIRTUAL: NATURE JOURNALING**

Join our interpretive artist for an inspiring virtual lesson in nature journaling as a technique for practicing mindfulness. A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. (12/3)

Wednesday, December 8  
5 – 6:30 p.m. & 7 – 8:30 p.m.

**ARCHERY GAMES FOR FAMILIES**

Families with children age 9 and older will play different games to build archery skills together in a fun and exciting way. Participants must have already taken our *Intro to Archery* program. All equipment and hands-on instruction provided. Must be 50 inches or taller. F/Coventry Oaks: 40 Axline Ave., Akron (12/4)

Thursday, December 9  
10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**HOMESCHOOLERS: EVERGREENS**

Homeschoolers ages 7 to 10 are invited to join a naturalist to explore all about the evergreen trees and shrubs that bring color and more to the winter world. Program will be mainly outdoors, so dress for the weather. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg (12/5)



Thursday, December 9, 1 – 3 p.m.

**HOMESCHOOLERS: EVERGREENS**

Homeschoolers ages 11 to 14 are invited to join a naturalist to explore all about the evergreen trees and shrubs that bring color and more to the winter world. Program will be mainly outdoors, so dress for the weather. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg (12/5)

Friday, December 10, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

**NIGHT OWLS**

Hike with a naturalist to learn about night creatures. Staff will attempt to call owls using recordings, with the hope of a response. Patience and silence are essential. For ages 6 and older. No dogs, please. F/Tuscarawas Meadows: 2620 Harrington Rd., Akron

Saturday, December 11, 9:30 – 10 a.m.

**VIRTUAL: WINTER NATURE TALES**

What are woodland animals doing to prepare for winter? Families with youngsters ages 2 to 6 are invited to learn this and more during this fun virtual story time. Zoom meeting ID: 838 4174 1606



Saturday, December 11, 12 – 1 p.m.

**VIRTUAL: NATURE ART FOR TEENS**

Do you have a creative spirit? Teens ages 13 to 17 can join our interpretive artist for lessons in nature-inspired art. A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. (12/1)

Saturday, December 11, 12 – 3 p.m.

**CHICKADEE TRAINING 102**

The chickadees at Liberty Park aren't yet used to being fed by hand, so come help us establish the tradition! Drop in anytime between 12 and 3 p.m. to learn about chickadees and other inquisitive birds and how they can be coaxed to feed by hand, then try your luck at enticing one to take a seed from you. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg





# KINDEREALM: EVERGREENS HIKE

Kids ages 3 to 6: Stop by the campfire area to enjoy a warm fire, then hike with your family to discover the wonder of evergreens. Stop along the trail to spot wildlife, learn fun facts about pine trees and enjoy the winter forest. Meet at the campfire area. Program will be moved under shelter if it rains.

**Sunday, December 5  
2 – 3:30 p.m.**

LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd.,  
Twinsburg

**Thursday, December 9, 6 – 7 p.m.**  
FASN/Campfire Area: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

**Saturday, December 11, 2 – 3:30 p.m.**  
FASN/Campfire Area: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron

**Sunday, December 12, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

## DISTANCE HIKE

Hike about five miles at a moderate pace along a gorgeous section of the Towpath Trail. Beginners are welcome, but talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine. Drinking water is recommended. SLNC: 411 Ira Ave., Akron

**Sunday, December 12  
12 – 1 p.m. & 2 – 3 p.m.**

## VIRTUAL: NATURE DRAWING FOR KIDS

Join our interpretive artist online for this entertaining lesson in nature drawing for kids ages 6 to 12. All you need are a pencil and paper. A Zoom invitation will be emailed to participants after registering. (12/2)

**Sunday, December 12, 1 – 2:30 p.m.**

## NATIVE EVERGREENS OF OHIO

What makes the best Christmas tree? Are all pine needles sharp? Is a “fir” tree furry? Do some lose all their needles each year? Ever see a three-pound pine cone or one two feet long? Join a naturalist as we answer these questions and learn about the native evergreens of Ohio. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

**Monday, December 13, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

## WINTER CRAFTING

Cozy up in the outdoor shelter at Liberty Park Nature Center with a crackling fire and hot cocoa as we create beautiful, seasonal arrangements using pine boughs and other natural elements. Materials are provided, but feel free to bring additional clippings, decor and a vase if you wish. All are welcome to create along with us, or just stop by to gather materials to take home and craft. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

**Wednesday, December 15  
6 a.m. – 11 p.m.**

## SELF GUIDED: TRACKS & SCAT DISCOVERY

Become #1 at identifying #2 and discover tracks along the way! Explore the hilly Schumacher Trail December 15 through December 22 to read about and discover clues our native wildlife leave behind. CV/ Schumacher Valley: 1690 Cuyahoga St., Akron



**Thursday, December 16, 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.**

## VIRTUAL: EVERGREENS FOR KIDS

Children ages 7 to 14 are invited to join us online to explore what’s special about the beautiful trees and shrubs that bring a touch of green to our forest even in the middle of winter. Zoom meeting ID: 895 2271 3853

**Thursday, December 16, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.**

## VIRTUAL: EVERGREENS FOR ADULTS

Evergreens provide more than just a sprinkle of green in winter. Discover the evergreen trees and shrubs of our area and learn how they are important. Zoom meeting ID: 819 3202 4291

**Friday, December 17, 5 – 6:30 p.m.**

## VIRTUAL: NATURE COOKIES FOR KIDS

Calling all kids! Crawl, dance and hop your way into learning about the fun wildlife that is living in your back yard and enjoy decorating a wildlife cookie. A zoom link will be emailed to participants after registration and kits will be available for pick up. (12/10)

**Saturday, December 18  
11 – 11:30 a.m. & 12 – 12:30 p.m.**

## VIRTUAL: NATURE KITCHEN – HOLIDAY POPCORN

Let’s bring nature and cooking together! Chef Dannika Stevenson of SipSavorSoul will host an interactive cooking lesson for kids 8 to 13 years old. The “Nature Kitchen” at Summit Metro Parks will highlight local produce and natural ingredients to make a tasty, kid-friendly recipe. This month, young chefs will make holiday popcorn! They will be given a recipe card, ingredients, and a favor to take home. Ingredient kits will be mailed to participants before the program. Cost: \$10/kit. **Ingredient kits can be picked up before the program.** (12/1) \$

**Saturday, December 18, 1 – 2:30 p.m.**

## S'MORE SEEDS, PLEASE

Experience some wildlife magic as you try your mitten at feeding the birds of SMP right from your hand. Afterward, cozy up by the fire and warm your belly with an ooey, gooey s'more. FASN/Campfire Area: 1828 Smith Rd., Akron



Sunday, December 19, 9:30 – 11 a.m.

**HIKE FOR THE HEALTH OF IT**

Get your heart pumping as we hike the challenging Black Bear and Ledges trails at a vigorous pace with few, if any, rest stops. Be prepared for potentially muddy and icy conditions and bring drinking water. Beginners are welcome, but talk to your doctor before beginning a new exercise routine. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg



Sunday, December 19, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

**PRAIRIE WINTER**

Life may be a bit quieter during the winter in prairie ecosystems, but there is still plenty to observe! Discover what's going on above and below the ground on a hike with a naturalist. SFB: 1400 Portage Line Rd., Springfield Twp.

Tuesday, December 21, 8 – 10 p.m.

**WINTER SOLSTICE HIKE AND FIRE**

Celebrate the shortest day of the year as we enjoy the crisp air while we walk Black Bear Trail. We will look for tracks and listen for owls as breeding season is underway. Following the hike, we'll enjoy some hot chocolate and a fire. LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Thursday, December 23, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

**VIRTUAL: COUNTING CHRISTMAS BIRDS**

Join us virtually to discover the importance of a citizen science effort that began 121 years ago! From irruptions to climate models, learn about the significance of this data and get to know some species you may see on Christmas Day. Zoom meeting ID: 856 5376 3612

Sunday, December 26, 6 a.m. – 11 p.m.

**SELF-GUIDED: STORYBOOK TRAIL**

Grab your coat and pull on your boots to experience a winter-themed tale any time between December 26 and January 1. As you hike Rock Creek Trail, read along with an adorable story full of cute critters. Don't forget your mittens! FR/Brushwood: 4955 Townsend Rd., Richfield



Friday, December 31, 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**100 YEARS OF MEMORIES**

On December 31, 1921, Summit County Common Pleas Probate Judge Lewis Slusser granted a petition for a new park district, and the Akron Metropolitan Park District was created. Drop in anytime between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. on our anniversary to discover and celebrate some of the amazing highlights from this century of being "Your Back Yard." LP/Nature Center: 9999 Liberty Rd., Twinsburg

Friday, December 31, 1 – 3 p.m.

**NEW YEAR'S EVE BIRD WALK**

End 2021 on an avian note! We'll search the banks of the Cuyahoga River for resident and migratory birds, like red-breasted nuthatches, golden-crowned kinglets and some floating waterfowl. Dress for the weather and bring binoculars and a guide. Meet at Brust Park. BHT/SR 91: 130 N. Main St., Munroe Falls



Celebrating **A CENTURY**

Friday, December 31

11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Drop in anytime between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. on our anniversary to discover and celebrate some of the amazing highlights from this century of being *Your Back Yard*. This outdoor celebration will include a self-guided history tour and other activities for all ages!

CV/Valley View: 1212 Cuyhaoga St., Akron



## Centennial Giving

— for the Next 100 Years



Jenn Gaylor's 2017 photo of her mother, Rose Gaylor, is reflective of their family's relationship with the parks.

~ "Though my mom passed away this year, she loved walking the parks with friends and family and this photo of her at Firestone Metro Park shows her in her element."

Jen M. Harvey, Chief of Philanthropy

A walk on the trails is a lot like life's journey. If we are lucky, we travel with joy and wonder. We pause at each inspiring vista or tiny leaf embellished with water droplets. We tread lightly, preserving the beauty for everyone who comes along, making memories with every step.

Rose Gaylor's enjoyment of the parks is now carried forward through many donations in her memory. Jenn Gaylor has decided to make a planned gift to honor her mother — a gift that will make a difference and keep this resource thriving for years to come.

If you have considered a bequest or other planned gift (set now for completion in the future), we'd like to add your name to the Green Islands

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Find out more at [foundation.summitmetroparks.org](http://foundation.summitmetroparks.org) and "Ways to Give," or contact

Jen M. Harvey | [jharvey@summitmetroparks.org](mailto:jharvey@summitmetroparks.org)  
 Chief of Philanthropy | (330) 867-5511 ext. 219



The Summit Metro Parks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that was established in 1991 to further the goals and mission of Summit Metro Parks. We are grateful to the many people, organizations, businesses and agencies who made gifts, grants and sponsorships January 1 through June 30, 2021. These donations and other forms of support create thriving parks that are a cornerstone of Summit County's quality of life, and benefit the park district's charitable, educational and scientific initiatives.

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*Sun Tracker* sculpture by Don Drumm



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*continued from page 16*

Legacy Society. Equally beneficial is a gift made now to the Summit Metro Parks Endowment. An endowment gift is a way to support the parks in a manner that provides for the long-term, and especially meaningful in this Centennial year.

If you've found that the parks have been important in your life, we invite you to pause for a moment on your journey, and create a Centennial Legacy for the next 100 years.

*Centennial Legacy Gifts*

Designate your gift for the Summit Metro Parks Foundation Endowment Fund, held at the Akron Community Foundation. Your gift remains invested for the long-term benefit of the park district.

**GREEN ISLANDS LEGACY SOCIETY**

We're grateful to those who have made a planned gift to the Summit Metro Parks Foundation or Summit Metro Parks. Those who have done so are recognized here as part of the Green Islands Legacy Society. Planned gifts (such as bequests) are a wonderful way to make a lasting difference for your parks.

- |                              |                             |
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