



# Naturally Speaking

Newsletter for the friends of the LaPorte County Parks.

Spring / Summer 2019



## One Quarter of a Century!! Wow

A lot of things have happened over the last 25 years. The first cell phones were just coming out at a price of around \$4,000, we bought our music on CD's, Michael Jordan retired from the NBA (the first time) and Bill Clinton was our president.

Can you believe that Niki Schmutte has served as the Chief Naturalist for LaPorte County Parks for the last 25 years? Anyone who knows Niki or has been to one of her programs, knows what she puts into making our interpretive program the best it can be. After doing something for that long many people would think that you'd get burned out. Just this year Niki decided to take on more than she probably ever has as far as programming. She opened her winter schedule up and started doing programs in the LaPorte County Schools throughout the winter. As a result of this and the quality of the programs our staff does, we had more program participants in 2018 than we've ever had.



What Niki has done for our park programming and department is amazing and knowing Niki, I doubt that she's anywhere near slowing down. Thank you Niki for 25 years and let's hope your next quarter century with the Parks Department is just as exciting!!

*Jeremy Sobecki  
Park Superintendent*

**Administrative Office**  
**Red Mill County Park**  
**Open: 7am-12pm/12:30pm-5pm**  
**Monday - Thursday**  
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.  
LaPorte, IN 46350  
219-325-8315  
Fax 219-325-8317  
E-Mail [lcparcs@csinet.net](mailto:lcparcs@csinet.net)  
[rangerjeremy@csinet.net](mailto:rangerjeremy@csinet.net)  
[www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org)

**Naturalist Office**  
**Luhr County Park**  
3178 S. 150 West  
LaPorte, IN 46350  
219-324-5855  
E-Mail [natureniki@csinet.net](mailto:natureniki@csinet.net)  
[rangerlaura@csinet.net](mailto:rangerlaura@csinet.net)  
[www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org)

**Luhr Park Maintenance**  
**Facility** 219-326-0524

**Creek Ridge County Park**  
7943 W. 400 North  
Michigan City, IN 46360

**Bluhm County Park**  
3855 S. 1100 West  
Westville, IN 46391

**(undeveloped)**  
**Kankakee Property**  
Kankakee Township

### Foundation Properties:

**(undeveloped)**  
**Sebert Property**  
Springfield Township

**George R. Menkes**  
**Nature Preserve**  
Galena Township

# Programs - Programs - Programs

## Kids Fishing Fun Day

Saturday, June 1  
9 - 11am



Luhr Park All Ages  
Children must be accompanied by an adult. Co-Sponsored by the Northwest Indiana Steelheaders. Home Run Hot Dog Concessions will be at the event. **No pre-registration required. Free**

## Parent and Child Discovery Days



6-7:15 pm Luhr Park

**Ages 3-8**

\$5.00 A Child / Per Program

An adult is required to participate.

**June 12-** 1 Fish, 2 Fish

**June 26-** Play Trail Adventure

**July 17-** Butterfly Fun

**July 24-** Ambitious Amphibians

**July 31-** Was that a Hummingbird?

**August 7-** Powerful Plants

**Pre-registration and payment is required one week before each program. See page 5**

## Tea for Two

June 10

Luhr Park

6:00 - 7:15 p.m.

\$15 per pair and \$5 each additional child. Ages 4 and up



### **“Wear your favorite Hat”**

Explore a whimsical celebration brimming with craft time, specialty cupcakes, snacks, storytime and fun memories. Pre-registration and payment is due by June 4. See page 6

## Family Fishing Nights

April 30, June 19, July 18

6-7:30 pm Luhr Park

All ages welcome

Come out to the Pond at Luhr Park for an evening of fishing. A limited number of poles and bait will be provided. No fishing licenses are required during the family fishing programs. Children must be accompanied by an adult. **FREE** - Pre-registration is required at least one week in advance.

Call 219-325-8315



## Make and Take Craft Weekends

Luhr Park Nature Center 1-4 pm  
**April 20, May 25, 26, June 8, 9  
July 20, 21, August 17, 18**

Stop at the nature center to make a craft. All ages welcome but children must be accompanied by an adult. The crafts will be available while supplies last. Free

**No pre-registration required.**

## Cardboard Weaving Class

May 11 and 12

10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Ages 13 and up

Luhr Park Nature Center

\$5 per person

Come Saturday or Sunday to make a rug coaster. Hemlock Heather will be teaching this class Children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration and payment is due by May 2. See page 5



## Tuesday Treasures

Tuesdays at Luhr Park 9am - 12pm **Ages 6-13**

Parents are not required to participate or stay during the program. \$8.00 per person / per program. All programs include arts and crafts.

**June-18 Nature Matters-** Participants will learn there are several elements working together in nature.

**June-25 Hook Line and Sinker-** Participants will try to catch the “big one” while learning about fishing.

**July-16 Insect Extravaganza-** Join us for a “hands-on” approach to the world of bugs.

**July-23 Animal Communication-** What made that call? Learn the sounds of nature.

**July-30 Ducks Unlimited-** Come learn all about ducks and explore their lives.



**Pre-registration and payment is required one week before each program. See page 5**

# Programs - Programs - Programs

## Healthy Lifestyles



**9-10 am Luhr Park**

A delightful social club committed to help improve your quality of life. Plus you'll keep up with the health trends, gardening, medical information and balancing your active lifestyle. Come relax, enjoy nature, and have coffee or tea on the Parks with your new circle of friends. Free.

**June 5** - A Journey into Health; a Plant Based Path, Marcy Daily,

**July 3** - Three habits of a happy confident life, by Wendy Taddeucci

**August 7** - Healthy cooking for one or two, Katie Sarver, Wellness Outreach LaPorte Hospital.

**September 11** - Clean it up with homemade cleansers - Sacha Gee-Burns, Solid Waste District

Call 219-325-8315 one week in advance to reserve your spot.

## Nature's Tiny Tots (Free)

Come explore nature with toddlers and preschoolers in our Nature Center.

10 – 11 am Luhr County Park  
Toddlers – Pre-School age

Call at least one week in advance to sign up & assure a spot  
219-325-8315

April 22  
June 3, 17  
July 1, 15, 29  
August 12, 26



## Tree Identification Hike For beginners

June 22 and 23  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm  
Weather Pending  
Ages 13 and up



Learn how to use a tree identification chart and go on a hike with Hemlock Heather. The program is geared toward beginners. The hikes are **free** but pre-registration is required.

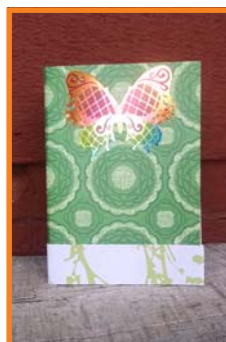


Children must be accompanied by an adult. Call 219-325-8315 by June 13 to reserve your spot.

## Book Making Class

July 6  
Luhr Park  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm  
\$20 per person  
Ages 13 and up

Join Hemlock Heather while she instructs you on making these cool books. All supplies will be provided, children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration and payment is required on or before June 27. See page 5



## Paint and Create Canvas

July 20  
Luhr Park  
10:30 am-12:30 pm  
\$15 per person  
Ages 10 and up

Come on out to the Nature Center for tons of painting fun. Hemlock Heather will lead you on an adventure painting a 8 X 10 animal canvas. All supplies will be provided, children must be accompanied by an adult. Seating is limited so reserve your spot today. Pre-registration and payment is required on or before July 11. See page 5



## PJ Time with your stuffed friend

July 22 Free  
10:30-11:15 am  
Luhr Park  
Ages 2-11



Come to the nature center in your pj's and bring your favorite stuffed animal. We will have story time, snacks and fun. Geared towards kids ages 2-11 years old. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Space is limited. Free. Pre-registration is required one week before the program. Call 219-325-8315.



# Programs - Programs - Programs

## Rock Painting Class

August 3  
Luhr Park  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm  
\$5 per person  
All Ages



Bring two of your favorite rocks to this fun craft session. Hemlock Heather will give you hints and pointers on how to make the perfect work of art. All supplies will be provided, children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration and payment is required on or before July 25. See page 6

## Zentangle Animal Coloring and Tile Craft

August 31  
Luhr Park  
10:30 am - 12:30 pm  
\$20 per person  
Ages 13 and up

Hemlock Heather will guide you on this craft journey. All supplies will be provided, children must be accompanied by an adult. Pre-registration and payment is required on or before August 22. See page 6



## Pioneer Days



September 28 & 29  
10 am - 4 pm  
Creek Ridge County Park  
\$2 for Adults  
\$1 Child or Seniors

Step into the past, visit with historically clad re-enactors and vendors. Bring the whole family and experience outdoor cooking, crafts, candle dipping, wagon rides, food, and much more.

No pre-registration required.



## Joyful Movement

Luhr County Park inside the Nature Center  
4 week sessions - 45 min. 4:00 - 4:45 pm  
\$10 per session/per person



Shake, Rattle and Move is perfect for all ages and abilities. Join us for a low-impact mindfulness, while stretching, meditation, heart pumping and balance fun. Whatever level you feel comfortable, sit or stand with this safe, easy to perform, self-paced program will improve your flexibility, balance, strength and stamina. Come out and enjoy the warm sunshine, quite nature and view wildlife along the way.

Pre-registration and payment required one week before each session starts. See Page 6

Session #1 (\$10 per person)  
May 28, 30  
June 4, 6  
June 11, 13  
June 18, 20

Session #2 (\$10 per person)  
July 16, 18  
July 23, 25  
July 30, August 1  
August 6, 8





# LaPorte County Park Programs

Mail this form with payment or pay in person at Red Mill County Park.  
219-325-8315 [www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org)

Make Checks Payable to:  
LaPorte County Parks Dept.

Mail this form and payment to:  
LaPorte County Parks Dept.  
Program Registration  
0185 South Holmesville Road  
LaPorte, IN 46350

Name of Person filling out registration: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the Naturally Speaking Newsletter Email \_\_\_\_\_ or Snail Mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Parent / Child Discovery Days (Ages 3-8)

Wednesday nights 6:00 - 7:15pm at Luhr Park  
Registration due one week before program.

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the program(s) you wish to attend.  
\$5 A Child / Per Program

\_\_\_ June 12    \_\_\_ June 26    \_\_\_ July 17

\_\_\_ July 24    \_\_\_ July 31    \_\_\_ August 7

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Cardboard Weaving Class

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the Date you want to attend

May 11 \_\_\_ or May 12 \_\_\_

\$5 Per Person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Book Making Class July 6

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\$20 Per Person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Tuesday Treasures (Ages 6-13)

Tuesday Mornings 9 am - 12 pm at Luhr Park  
Registration due one week before program.

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the program(s) you wish to attend. \$8.00 per program.

\_\_\_ June 18    \_\_\_ June 25    \_\_\_ July 16

\_\_\_ July 23    \_\_\_ July 30

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Paint and Create Canvas July 20

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\$15 Per Person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)



# LaPorte County Park Programs

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LaPorte, IN 46350

Name of Person filling out registration: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the Naturally Speaking Newsletter Email \_\_\_\_\_ or Snail Mail \_\_\_\_\_

## Joyful Movement

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Check the Session you want to attend

Session #1 \_\_\_\_\_ or Session #2 \_\_\_\_\_  
May- June July- August

\$10 per session / per person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Tea for Two

June 10, \$15 per pair and \$5 each additional child

Name of Adult: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Child: \_\_\_\_\_

Childs Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and age of additional Children:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Rock Painting Class

August 3, \$5 per person

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\$5 Per Person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

## Zentangle Animal Coloring and Tile Craft

August 31, \$20 per person

Name of Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

\$20 Per Person

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

# 2018 Park Award Winners

## Outstanding Park Service Award

Tom Thode has served on the LaPorte County Park Foundation Board for over a decade and will be retiring from the board in 2019. He and his wife have been ardent park supporters and cheerleaders for many more years than that. Tom has faithfully attended board meetings and volunteered at events during his tenure on the board. For the past two years he has served as the board secretary.



## Organization Of The Year Award

Employees from Qubit Networks and New Age Telecom donated their time to do several improvement and habitat projects at Luhr County Park in 2018. Several employees came to Luhr to provide labor to plant native plants in a new butterfly garden, remove protective tree tubes from newly planted trees, removed invasive species from newly acquired land, and cut back brush in our wildlife viewing area behind our nature center.



## Volunteer Of The Year Award

Matt Sebert volunteered to donate time and skills to finish concrete for the new restroom at Luhr County Park as part of our Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant. He donated his time and expertise in 2018 during the planning portion of the restroom and finished the concrete floor.



Bluhm, Creek Ridge, Luhr, and Red Mill County Parks are open 7 am to sunset daily. The Luhr Park Nature Center is open Tuesday - Thursday and Saturday - Sunday from 1-4 pm. The Administrative Offices at Red Mill are open Monday - Thursday 7 am - 12 pm / 12:30pm - 5 pm.



### LaPorte County Parks Staff

Jeremy Sobacki- Superintendent  
 Char Kalk- Office & Finance Manager  
 "Nature" Niki Schmutte- Chief Naturalist  
 "Ranger" Laura Moyer - Rec. and Ed. Programmer  
 Bob Goethals- Maintenance Supervisor  
 Boyd Lomow - Maintenance Technician  
 Barb Janeczko - Maintenance Technician

### Seasonal Staff / Part-time

"Ranger" Joanne Janisch - Naturalist Assistant  
 "Hemlock" Heather Banas- Nature Center Attendant  
 Sharon Bonner - Office  
 Ken Havlin - Gate Keeper

### Park Board

Ronald Knickrehm- President  
 Brian Root- Vice President  
 Mary Foell  
 Erin Lozano  
 Amanda Nebelung  
 Jim Holifield  
 Kate Ardissono

### Foundation Board

Stephanie Oberlie, President  
 Sandy Menne  
 Bill Hedge  
 Steve King  
 Liz Kaminski  
 Ed Merrion  
 Amy Riehle  
 Jim Jessup

### County Commissioners

Dr. Vidya Kora  
 Sheila Brillson- Matias  
 Richard Mrozinski

### County Council Members

Jeff Santana  
 John Sullivan  
 Randall Novak  
 Mark Yagelski  
 Terry Garner  
 Michael Rosenbaum  
 Mike Mollenhauer

Visit our website for more  
park information:



[www.laportecountyparks.org](http://www.laportecountyparks.org)

Regulations of the U.S. Department of Interior strictly prohibit unlawful discrimination in departmental programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or disability. Any person who believes he or she has been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility; or who desires further information regarding Title VI or subtitle A of title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Pub. L. 101-336, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities should write to:

LaPorte County Parks  
Attn: Superintendent  
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.  
LaPorte, IN 46350

National Park Service  
Attn.: Director Equal  
Opportunity Program  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

## Receive this newsletter by email

To receive this newsletter by email send us a message at [natureniki@csinet.net](mailto:natureniki@csinet.net). Please include Naturally Speaking in your subject. In the message please include your full name and email address you would like to receive the newsletter at.

**All the Parks are  
Open 7am to  
sunset daily.**

LaPorte County Parks  
Administrative Office  
Red Mill County Park  
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.  
LaPorte, IN 46350

