

Naturally Speaking

Winter 2021-2022



So Much to be Thankful For

It's hard to believe that 2021 is already over! It was a good one for many reasons in your county parks. We are thankful that the new year has brought at least a little more sense of normalcy as opposed to what 2020 was like. Programming staff was able to conduct new programs in person and some old favorites came back as well. Maintenance staff has had a busy year with high visitation and projects. I wanted to take a moment to reflect on the year and thank some of the people and partners that have made a difference in your parks this season.

The Healthcare Foundation of LaPorte granted \$250,000 for a new playground at Bluhm and matching funds for the Lincoln Trail extension. The LaPorte County Park Foundation funded the installation of a septic system and new restroom also at Bluhm and the County Council approved \$70,000 for the paving of the parking lot there as well. Invasive species were treated in 10 acres at Luhr County Park with funding from the LP County Park Foundation. Eagle Scout David Love constructed a lean to at Luhr to help keep more equipment under roof. Volunteers from Lippert Manufacturing came out to remove invasive plants in our wildlife corridor at Bluhm and spent another part of a day cutting back brush in an area that will soon be a new playground. The County Highway Department helped out with several projects including excavating the very large area for the new playground and placing that dirt on the edge of the newly paved parking lot at Bluhm.



Continued on next page



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 lparks@csinet.net
rangerjeremy@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org

Luhr Park Maintenance Facility 219-326-0524

Naturalist Office
Luhr County Park
3178 S. 150 West
LaPorte, IN 46350
219-324-5855
E-Mail natureniki@csinet.net
rangerlaura@csinet.net
www.laportecountyparks.org

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

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

(undeveloped)
Kankakee Property
Kankakee Township

Foundation Properties:

(undeveloped)
Sebert Property
Springfield Township

George R. Menkes Nature Preserve
Galena Township

Lastly, I wanted to thank the park maintenance staff for all their hard work this season. We are taking on much of the Bluhm improvements ourselves such as constructing the new restroom, grading and seeding, site prep and some of the concrete work. The willingness and skill of this small staff is just unbelievable and LaPorte County Parks is lucky to have them all. Nature Niki has even been seen out there helping out when she finds time. Our staff is the best!

I am sure I missed someone or some project but we are thankful for our supportive community and all partners that help make our parks shine. Come out and see the progress and beauty in your county parks!



*Jeremy Sobecki
Park Superintendent*

A Snapshot In Time-- 2021



The Shared Bikeways routes were updated and now use the Ride with GPS App.



Maintenance staff and others worked on the new parking lot and restrooms at Bluhm.



The naturalist staff did 90 School and Group programs with over 2500 participants.



The naturalist staff did 70 public programs with over 4000 participants.



The Maintenance staff moved this gazebo to Red Mill and remodeled it.



Removal of non-native plants continues at all of our parks. They are replaced with native species.

School Programs and Park Field Trips



Attention Formal Educators

Reptiles and Amphibians Oh My!

If you teach 1st or 2nd grade students in a school that is in LaPorte County, your classroom could have a visit from a park naturalist, along with reptiles and amphibians. During the visit the students will learn the basic differences between reptiles and amphibians, while getting up close and personal with each.

Pollinators Plus!



If you teach 2nd grade students in a school that is in LaPorte County, your classroom could have a visit from a park naturalist, and do fun pollination activities. During this visit students will learn the basics of pollination, play pollination games, and participate in a buggy 500 using wax worms.

Owls and More!

If you teach 3rd grade students in a school that is in LaPorte County, your classroom could have a visit from a park naturalist, and learn about owls. Students will look through owl pellets, learn about animal adaptations, discuss food chains /webs, and listen to owl calls.

Programs can be set up for individual classes with visits to each room lasting 45 minutes each. Program visits are free and will be offered December - March on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays.

Programs can take place anytime during the school day starting as early as 8 am. These programs meet the Life Science Standards---**1st grade**-- 1.LS.1/ 1.LS.2/1.LS.3 **2nd grade**--2.LS.1 / 2.LS.2 / 2.LS.3 **3rd grade**---3.LS.3 / 3.LS.4

Email- natureniki@csinet.net or call 219-324-5855 to schedule your classroom visit.



Field Trips

Attention Formal Educators,
Scout Leaders, and Groups.



You can schedule an organized program for your students or group at any of the county parks. The programs can be done on various topics that meet state standards and patch requirements. Visit www.laportecountyparks.org for sample programs. The programs are free. Email- natureniki@csinet.net or call 219-324-5855 for more information or to schedule your field trip/ park program.

Programs - Programs

Joyful Movement Easy Exercises Max 8

for All Ages
Luhr Park Nature Center
8:30 am Free
Call week before 219.325.8315



Shake, Rattle & Move is an "Easy Exercises for all abilities" join us for a low impact head-to-toe walkthrough of some easy exercises to help keep muscles and joints limber! From stretching, meditation and balance fun while sitting or standing.

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.

FREE - pre-registration required by calling 219-325-8315 one week in advance for each date to reserve your seat and avoid cancellation.

January 4, 11, 18, 25
February 1, 8, 15, 22
March 1, 8, 15





Programs - Programs - Programs

Barking up the wrong Tree

Join us for a 9-week email program starting in January to learn about trees. Email rangerlaura@csinet.net to get on the list for this class. In the subject line type "Tree ID". We will discuss four visual keys, leaf, bark pattern, flower, and nut or seed.

Parent and Child Discovery Days

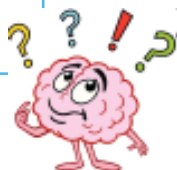


6-7:15 pm **Ages 3-8**
Luhr Park Nature Center
\$5.00 A Child / Per Program
An adult is required to participate.

- Jan. 12-Let it Snow
- Jan. 26-Flying Fun
- Feb. 9-Night Watch
- Feb. 23-Game Night
- Mar. 16-Hop, Drop, and Roll
- Mar. 30-Flower Power

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

Healthy Lifestyles



A delightful social club committed to help improve your quality of life. Come relax, enjoy nature, and have coffee or tea on the Parks with your new circle of friends. Luhr County Park from 9 - 10 am . Call at least one week in advance to register. 219-325-8315

March 2 Reboot & Program your Brain, Christine Curtis, RDH

April 13 Planting for Pollinators, Sacha Gee-Burns, Solid Waste District

Feed the Birds this Winter



February 17
Luhr Park Nature Center
1:00 - 4:00 Free

Come out to the Luhr Park Nature Center to make a bird feeder for our feathered friends. **No pre-registration is required.** Children must be accompanied by an adult. All Ages welcome

Nature Hunt in the Nature Center



March 1
Luhr Park
1:00 - 4:00 Free

You will be given a sheet of objects you have to find hidden in the nature center. **No pre-registration is required.** Children must be accompanied by an adult. All Ages welcome

Natures Tiny Tots

January 24
February 7, 28
March 14, 28
April 11, 18

10 - 11 am FREE Luhr Park
max total 12 (kids & parents)

Toddlers - Pre-School age

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

Come explore nature with your toddlers and preschoolers at Luhr Park. Designed for parents and grandparents to bring out the munchkins for some FUN. Enjoy music, dance with your kids, giggle, storytelling, hands-on activities, take a hike (weather permitting) and just have plain ole fun.

DIY Campground Grandma



April 6
Luhr Park
9 - 10 am

Meet Roxy Wiley author of DIY Campground Grandma. Learn about adventure ideas you can take with your kids. Tips to create and launch themes, surprises, crafts, photo tips & more. **Call at least one week in advance to signup & assure a spot 219-325-8315**



LaPorte County Park Programs

Mail this form with payment or pay in person at Red Mill County Park.
219-325-8315 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)
Registration / Payment due one week before program. \$5 A Child / Per Program

Name of child: _____

Age: _____

Check the program(s) you wish to attend.

___ Jan. 12 ___ Jan. 26 ___ Feb. 9

___ Feb. 23 ___ Mar. 16 ___ Mar. 30

_____ Total Amount Due (no refunds)

No registrations will be accepted after the due date or when the program is filled whichever comes first. If you are interested in a program, **avoid disappointment** and sign up right away. Space is limited for most programs, and registration is first-come, first-served. Also, most programs require a minimum number of participants. So, failure to sign up early may mean your program will be cancelled.



Save the Date!

Daddy Daughter Dance has new dates and location

Due to covid concerns the Daddy Daughter Dance is being moved to Luhr County Park and it will take place in the Morgan Shelter. The new dates are Friday, May 20 from 6-8 pm and Saturday, May 21 from 2-4 pm. **Registration and more information will be in the Spring Naturally Speaking Newsletter.**

C	S	M	F	S	N	O	W
O	C	B	R	C	S	M	H
A	A	Q	O	O	B	V	K
T	R	E	S	L	F	E	I
W	F	O	T	D	Q	S	Z
L	W	K	Y	Q	I	C	E
V	Q	W	I	G	L	O	O
H	W	I	N	T	E	R	N

COAT
COLD
FROST
ICE

IGLOO
SCARF
SNOW
WINTER



Visit our website for more
park information:



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:

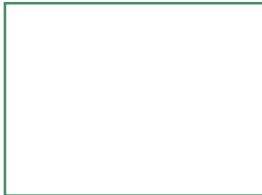
LaPorte County Parks
Attn: Superintendent
0185 S. Holmesville Rd.
LaPorte, IN 46350

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. 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
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LaPorte, IN 46350

