Grant program provides ADA project funding

Oakland County Parks and Recreation awarded more than $28,000 in Americans with Disabilities Act internal mini grants that have been allocated to various projects as the parks system continues efforts to make recreation accessible to all. Projects include:

- Accessible parking for the Cottage Island deluxe yurt at Groveland Oaks Campground. The yurt itself meets ADA accessibility standards. Also, an accessible, two-tiered water fountain/water bottle filling station will be installed at the Blue Water Grill.

- Two kayak outriggers for Addison Oaks, Groveland Oaks and Independence Oaks county parks. These stabilize the kayak and help prevent tipping.

- A floating beach chair at Independence Oaks County Park beach that transitions from land to water. This, in addition to the new beach mat, will make it easier to access the beach and water.

- Accessible parking spaces and path at Springfield Oaks Golf Course. The parking spaces will be added on the upper level of blacktop near the grill room entrance. The path will be installed between the two levels outside the pro shop/Bunkers Bar & Grill.

- A hand pedal boat at Independence Oaks County Park. Already in operation at Groveland Oaks and Addison Oaks county parks, hand pedal boats are useful for people with spinal cord injuries or limited leg strength.

Save the date for this year’s Summer Daze, scheduled for 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 3 at Independence Oaks County Park. Watch for more information in the summer newsletter and sign up for email notifications by visiting Oakgov.com/subscribe/Pages/default.aspx

TESTIMONIAL

"I just wanted to tell you that my daughter attends the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Adaptive Recreation Social events regularly. She is a special needs young woman who otherwise has limited social opportunities outside of family outings and events. She looks forward to these monthly events.

Very few people realize that our special needs children want the same opportunities as non-disabled people. I’m glad you and your department and the county recognize this need. They enjoy company of friends, the music and dancing and eating out. These events are something for them to look forward to. The varied monthly themes of the parties are fun too and keep things fresh with new ideas.

Our kids, no matter their challenges, are welcomed without judgment. I appreciate that more than my child does, because I know I can relax and not have to fear that someone will make her or me feel like she doesn’t belong. Keep up the good work and thanks!"

Elizabeth Budesky, Marlie’s mom

Learn about upcoming Adaptive Recreation activities and park offerings at OaklandCountyParks.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mexican Fiesta
May 15, 6-8 p.m., Waterford Oaks Activity Center
Register by May 8

Summer Splash
June 18, 6-8 p.m., Groveland Oaks County Park
Register by June 11

Red, White and Blue Picnic
June 27, 6-8 p.m., Clawson City Park
Register by June 20

For more information, call 248-424-7081, email Adaptive@oakgov.com or stop by the office at 27725 Greenfield Road, Southfield, MI 48076
ADAPTIVE DISCOUNT PROGRAM

Individuals with disabilities receive discounted rates on annual vehicle permits and daily park entry, camping and golf fees. Call 248-424-7081 for more information or visit OaklandCountyParks.com for an application to save money while having fun.

FEATURING AMENITIES:
GROVELAND OAKS COUNTY PARK

Groveland Oaks County Park is an active day use park and campground. Located just north of Holly, it opens for the 2019 season April 26.

Among the park’s features are Stewart Lake; a sandy lifeguarded beach; miniature golf; campground recreation program; bike, pedal boat, kayak and corcl rental; fishing pier; children’s playscapes; trails; and the Blue Water Grill.

Camping is a fantastic way to make memories with friends and family members. Campsites, cabins and yurts with accessible features are available.

While enjoying rest and relaxation, check out the hand operated pedal boats, accessible picnic tables and paved trails.

A Mobi-mat non-slip roll-out pathway with a patented 3-D design surface allows individuals of all abilities, including wheelchair users, to access Stewart Lake.

Hippocampe wheelchairs, which can be self-propelled, are available for individuals with disabilities to access trails and the beaches. Handcycles are available to rent as well.

Call 248-858-1400 for more information and reservations.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Gary Smithson is a familiar face to adaptive recreation participants. He loves volunteering for all adaptive recreation socials and is an enthusiastic volunteer who always has a smile on his face, which brings smiles to other volunteers, staff and participants.

Smithson is always just one phone call away when his assistance is needed. He is willing to tackle any job from scooping ice cream, running carnival games or overseeing the registration table. He also helps out behind the scenes with wrapping holiday gifts and preparing mailings.

It doesn’t matter what the event - he is ready to donate his time and talents.

This year, his volunteer duties will also include helping out with the fishing component at the weekly Adventure Day.

Smithson has volunteered with Oakland County Parks and Recreation since 2015. In addition to adaptive recreation events, he helps as a campground volunteer at Groveland Oaks County Park and many other special events.

The success of many recreation programs depends on volunteers.

Join us to make a difference, meet new people or expand a hobby – we have the perfect volunteer opportunity for you.

Know me for my abilities, not my disability.

- Robert M. Hensel