



CHRIS ABELE, MILWAUKEE COUNTY EXECUTIVE
JAMES KEEGAN, INTERIM DIRECTOR OF PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE

For Immediate Release:

Contact: Jeff Baudry
(414) 257-4575
jbaudry@milwcnty.com

National Kids to Parks Day, May 18th

Milwaukee, WI (May 6, 2013) Area families are invited to take part in the grassroots movement to “discover the parks through play,” Saturday, May 18, in the Milwaukee County Parks. This event is the National Park Trust’s third annual National Kids to Parks Day.

“I encourage families to play in our wonderful Milwaukee County Parks. Whether visiting a neighborhood park or venturing out to play golf or explore our natural areas, you’ll be taking an important step toward a healthier lifestyle,” said County Executive Chris Abele.

According to the CDC, in 2011, 17% of students in Milwaukee, were considered obese (above the 95th percentile for BMI); 24% did not participate in an hour of physical activity on any day; and 43% watched TV for 3 hours or more on an average school day. Experts found this obesity epidemic is leading to skyrocketing rates of type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and elevated cholesterol levels in children.

“Let’s take this opportunity to use National Kids to Parks Day as the first day of many to develop more active and healthy lifestyles as we enjoy our parks and recreational facilities,” said Abele.

The Parks Department suggests a variety of activities for National Kids to Parks Day.

Play in the Parks can begin with a sunrise golf tee off. The “Family Foursome” lets a family of four bring their own clubs and play a Par-3 course for \$20. The Par 3 courses are Doyme, 5300 W. Wells St.; Lake, 3233 E. Kenwood Blvd.; Madison, 9800 W. Glendale Ave.; Noyes, 8235 W. Good Hope Rd.; and Zablocki, 3717 W. Howard Ave. Play is on a first-come, first-served basis. In the absence of a golf starter, families may use the self-pay stations. Hours are sunrise-dusk. For more information, call the Golf Office at (414) 257-8024.

-more-

ADDRESS
9480 Watertown Plank Road
Wauwatosa, WI 53226-3560

PHONE/FAX
ph: **414 / 257 PARK** (7275)
fax: 414 / 257 6466



EMAIL
parks@milwcnty.com

WEBSITE
countyparks.com

Exploration continues with Ziggi Packs at Wehr Nature Center, 9701 W. College Ave. A Ziggi Pack is a small backpack filled with all the tools needed for a discovery hike. The pack includes a field guide, binoculars, hand lenses and more. With the pack checked out, children and their families can hit the trails to explore the wetlands, oak savanna, prairie, and woodlands. For toddlers, the Early-Childhood Nature Playspace, adjacent to the Visitor Center, is designed as a safe, yet natural environment for the very young to interact with nature. Hours are 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. (Ziggi Packs must be turned in by 4 p.m.) Parking is \$3 per car. For more information, call Wehr at (414) 425-8550.

In addition to observing outdoor blooms and plantings at Boerner Botanical Gardens and viewing the indoor spring floral show at The Mitchell Park Domes, scavenger hunts are planned as a bonus activity for families.

Boerner Botanical Gardens, 9400 Boerner Drive, is offering scavenger-hunt participants a chance to win program passes, garden passes, or an annual membership to the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens. Hours are 8 a.m.-dusk. Admission is charged. For more information, call the Friends of Boerner Botanical Gardens at (414) 525-5661.

The Domes, 524 S. Layton Blvd., has on display in the Show Dome “Blue Bayou,” featuring a white gazebo, Mardi Gras décor, blue hydrangeas, tulips, lilies, and other spring flowers. The scavenger hunt at The Domes will focus on plants and animals in the Tropical and Desert domes. Hours are 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission is charged. For more information, call The Domes at (414) 257-5600.

Exploring the Parks by bike is the focus of the Oak Leaf Discovery Tour (OLDT). The tour visits 24 park locations along or near the Oak Leaf Trail. At each location, participants stamp their OLDT passport or write a key word. Those who collect a minimum number of stamps and keywords may register their passports to be eligible to win prizes at the end-of-summer party. A single passport is \$4; however, families may collect stamps and keywords on a piece of paper as well. For more information, call the Park People at (414) 273-7275.

Another trails option for residents who want to connect more deeply with nature is the new Forked Aster Hiking Trail System. The varied trails meander through natural communities from grasslands to wetlands and woodlands. Along the trails, as conditions allow, families see native plants and wildlife, get exercise, and enjoy the escape from a hectic lifestyle. Trails are located throughout Milwaukee County. For more information, go to <http://county.milwaukee.gov/ForkedAsterTrail>

For full-body workouts in 13 Milwaukee County Parks, families can take advantage of the HeliosMultigyms. These structures, with built-in exercise stations, use body weight to work all major muscle groups. From abdominal crunches, to calf raises, and triceps dips, these workouts will have residents swimsuit-ready in no time. For more information, go to <http://county.milwaukee.gov/HeliosMultigyms>

-more-

For families with children age 2-12, the Washington Park play trail offers the opportunity to be immersed in nature. As they walk along the trail, families discover six nature-inspired play pockets interwoven with mature trees and open lawn areas. Play elements include a giant bee, colorful mushrooms, and enormous lifelike logs. Interpretive signage helps visitors understand the natural world around them. A video tour is available at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NGnH30mLac&feature=share&list=UUKJO2A15D0ZJsUmooYX2foA>

Additional activities on National Kids to Parks Day can be found at <http://county.milwaukee.gov/ParksCalendar>

National Park Trust (NPT) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving parks today and creating park stewards for tomorrow. As people spend more time indoors and as successive generations grow up with less of a connection to nature, NPT wants to build a greater awareness and appreciation for the importance of the country's public lands and parks. More information about the work of NPT is available at www.parktrust.org

For other events in the Milwaukee County Parks, call (414) 257-PARK (7275) or visit countyparks.com

###