A record-breaking 262 people gathered at Genesee County Park & Forest on the frosty morning of October 6th, 2019. Upbeat rock music filled the grassy field as friendly ACORNS members greeted runners at the registration tent. Runners and walkers exchanged smiles and conversation while they put on their race shirts and bibs, stretched in the field and congregated at picnic tables. ACORNS volunteers set up coffee, donuts, juice, yogurt and a multitude of healthy snacks by a crackling fire in Pavilion B. Sunrise brightened the sky as the race MC gave announcements and people of all ages headed to the start line for the 7th annual Run for the ACORNS.

Run for the ACORNS!! is a 5k/10k run and walk through the Genesee County Park & Forest. The route takes you past quiet ponds and wetlands, over streams and through forests on wide park trails and paved roads. Rolling hills and variable terrain make the trail challenging enough for competitive runners and interesting enough for casual walkers to enjoy. The event has grown each year thanks to the generous donations and sponsorships from the community.

The 2019 post-race awards ceremony was sponsored by Brothers. Thanks to D&R Depot for their race cup donation and Eli Fish for their bib donation. Top race sponsors included Akima, Tompkins Bank of Castile, Clark Patterson Lee, Brothers International, and Carquest Genesee Auto Supply. Race participants and fans enjoyed generously donated coffee from Tim Horton’s and fresh fruit juices from Red Jacket Orchard.

We thank our runners, walkers, volunteers, sponsors, and all who contributed for their hard work in making this event a growing success since 2012!!

Congratulations to the winners of Run for the ACORNS 2019:

10K Age Groups (Winners listed male, female):
1st Place: Chad Minuto, Michelle Abdella
2nd Place: Jeremy Wheeler, Melissa Miller
20-29: Alistair Holden, Ashley Waite
30-39: Jim Stack, Katherine Harris
40-49: Seth Adanti, Jessica Weinman
50-59: John Krantz, Carol Vanderberg
60-69: Roger Cowan, Jennifer Ruh
2 Person Relay: Overall: Team M&M Margot Sovocool

5K Age Groups (Winners listed male, female):
1st Place: William Sikes, Kelsey Weaver
2nd Place: Tyler Stetson, Jessica Beal
14 & under: Elijah Abdella, Abagail Williams
15-19: Matthew Smith, Kathleen Nolan
20-29: Ty Demmer, Jacquelin Janis
30-39: David Hastings, Kathleen Noble
40-49: Dwane Weatheriel, Christa Boldt
50-59: Kevin Sheehan, Nancy Clark
60-69: Lin Jursted, Connie Haag
70 and over: Gordon Lew, Lucy Sargent

All race proceeds go to the Association for the Conservation of Recreational and Natural Spaces (ACORNS), the nonprofit “Friends of the Park” group. ACORNS uses their funds to support the Genesee County Parks in many ways, including the development of the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center, purchase of program equipment and supplies, and provision of a full-time seasonal internship position through the Student Conservation Association (SCA).

We hope you’ll join the fun next year at Run for the ACORNS on Sunday October 4th, 2020. You’re “NUTS” if you don’t! 😊
Critter Creations and More

The OLC gets decorated with tasty treats for wildlife!

A garland of cranberries, peanuts, popcorn and fruits is hung in the OLC for the live critters.

A gorgeous tree!

A beautiful swan!

Mother and baby owl.

National Hike Day, November 17th
Internships Available

Meet New People, Help the Parks, Have FUN!!

Interns make park events and programs possible!!

- Get experience in Outdoor Education and Recreation
- Lead and assist recreation and outdoor education programs at the parks
  - Guide park visitors
- Help with park improvement projects
  - Monitor park wildlife

Every intern makes a BIG difference!!

Contact: Shannon Lyaski, Conservation Education Program Coordinator at (585) 344-1122
Shannon.Lyaski@co.genesee.ny.us

RSVP – Volunteering for 55 and Older

The Genesee County Park has been partnering with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) since 2002, where interested volunteers 55 and older have found meaningful volunteer activities close to nature and to their hearts. In Genesee County, over 325 adults serve our community as RSVP members. Their volunteer experiences range from one-time events to weekly placements in one or more of our 20+ partner agencies. You can volunteer as little or as much as you desire with the Genesee County Parks and with other agencies in our community who rely on volunteers to achieve their mission and goals. RSVP strives to connect volunteers with fruitful experiences based on individual interests and abilities, so that together we can improve the quality of life in our community.

For more information call the Genesee County Office for the Aging (OFA) RSVP Volunteer Placement Program at 585-343-1611.

Scout Opportunities

Genesee County Park & Forest and DeWitt Recreation Area provide volunteer opportunities for Scouts of all ages. Scouts earn service hours by:

- Assisting with programs
- Creating trail signs
- Monitoring nest boxes
- Maintaining and working in the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center
- Hosting duties and cleaning the Interpretive Nature Center
- Providing turtle care
- Participating in a number of other volunteer activities and events.

Bronze, Silver, Gold Award projects and Eagle Scout projects also available.

Eagle Scout Projects please contact Paul Osborn at (585) 344-8508. For Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award Projects please contact Shannon Lyaski at (585) 344-1122.
Park Updates

Ellicott Trail to open at DeWitt Recreation Area in 2020!

The Ellicott Trail starts at Seven Springs road and runs along the old railroad bed into the city of Batavia. From there the trail jogs down E. Main Street to Blondie’s Sip n Dip Ice Cream, then turn off the road into the wetlands of DeWitt Recreation Area. The trail enters the east end of DeWitt Recreation Area, then takes a boardwalk over the wetland and meets the eastern shore of DeWitt Lake. From this picturesque spot the trail turns to the right and follows the Lakeside Trail around the lake, then follows the east edge of the walking loop trail and exits onto Cedar Street at the southern park entrance. The trail continues from Cedar Street down Edwards Street, up Buell Street to Webster Ave and through St. Joseph’s Cemetery.

Currently under construction is a seating area on the eastern shore of DeWitt Lake, perfect for enjoying the view of the western sky at sunset!

The bridge and trail are expected to be open for public use in April of 2020. We are very excited for you to come enjoy this new multiuse trail and all that it has to offer, at DeWitt Recreation Area and along the way!!
Planning Ahead

Picnic Pavilion Reservations 2020

Reservations will continue to be made using a mail-in, blind lottery draw. Picnic Permits must be in by February 28, 2020 for the blind lottery draw on the week of March 2, 2020. There will be no phone reservations as a check must accompany the Picnic Permit before a confirmation of the pavilion is sent. Permits received after March 2, 2020 will be on a first come/first serve basis. Confirmation letters will be sent out the week of March 9, 2020. Please do not call for your date until after March 16, 2020.

Feel free to make copies of the Picnic Permit for other dates or visit our website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/parkreservations.html

PLEASE READ the FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

1) Reservations can be made on all large and small pavilions as per the fee schedule listed on the Genesee County Parks website.

3) A Picnic Permit must be completed and a check or money order must be included when you send in the permit. Checks or money orders MUST be made payable to the GENESEE COUNTY TREASURER.

4) It is suggested you choose two possible dates or locations to minimize the chance of not receiving a reservation of your liking.

5) Please note both the Genesee County Park & Forest and Dewitt Recreation Area are CARRY IN/CARRY OUT Parks. There will be no receptacles for garbage and you will be responsible to take it out with you. The DeWitt Recreation Area has a NO ALCOHOL policy.

6) All permits must be completed entirely, including the HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT found at the bottom of the permit.

7) All Company Picnics are encouraged to fill out a Special Event Use Application Form.

8) This form and additional information will be sent upon request or can be downloaded at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/parkreservations.html

If you have questions, please call (585) 344-8508 Monday thru Friday 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Thank you for your understanding and assistance in making this process more efficient!
ACORNS Adventures

National Take a Hike Day

Ever wish there was a special holiday just for hiking? THERE IS!! National Take a Hike Day was established by the American Hiking Society to encourage everyone to get out and hit the trails to enjoy nature with healthy outdoor exercise. This year the ACORNS lead a free guided hike for the public to celebrate National Hike Day 2019 on Sunday November 17th at the Genesee County Park & Forest. The sun was shining bright as an enthusiastic group of 14 people met at the Interpretive Nature Center and set out on their hike. The trails took the group on a 2.6 mile trip through the forest and past wetlands and creeks. The chilly air kept the snow crunchy and the trails free of mud, and everyone gratefully enjoyed trail improvements in the form of walkways and bridges built by Camp Hard Hat in recent years. The woods were surprisingly quiet and not busy with wildlife, giving a relaxed feel to the day. Hikers lost track of time and their worries, one of the volunteers asked, “Where we?”.

Warm drinks and snacks were waiting at the Interpretive Nature Center when the hikers returned. Another guided hike in the park was enjoyed by whomever wished to join, thanks to the fabulous teamwork and enthusiasm of the ACORNS!

Mark your calendars and stay tuned for details on the next National Hike Day guided hike at the Genesee County Park & Forest on Saturday, November 14th 2020! Hope to see you there!

The ACORNS OLC

SUNY Geneseo FORCES teamed up with ACORNS to give the OLC some TLC as the gardening season drew to a close. They gathered natural toys for kids to use in the Messy Materials area, removed encroaching weeds from the walkways and seating areas and performed various winterizing tasks. Thank you FORCES for all of your help!

Volunteers are needed to help give the OLC the TLC it needs to stay looking great and growing year by year. Every little bit helps, even if it’s just 1 hour of work. Together we can create a gorgeous place for visitors and students to enjoy year round!! Call 585-344-1122 to find out how you can help.

First Day Hike 2020!

FREE public guided hike on January 1st each year, offered by ACORNS

87 people of all ages joined the ACORNS for the First Day Hike 2020! A 2-mile hike and a 3-mile hike took us over snowy trails through the forest, wetlands and meadows. Teenagers frolicked in the reeds while grownups chatted and the little ones took it all in from their cozy hiking backpacks. Fresh air, winter bird songs and tasty snacks were enjoyed by all. See you next year on January 1st, 2021! Pictured left: Most but not all of the ACORNS volunteers who made this hike happen.
Thank You ACORNS!!!

Association for the Conservation of Recreational and Natural Spaces (ACORNS) Contributions 2019

Volunteer Activities (Service Hours) included but were not limited to:

- Program assistance for outside organizations (Schools, Scouts, Nursing Homes, Private groups, Clubs)
- Program assistance with park public programs, special events and camps
- Leading and coordination of recreational and educational public programs including First Day Hike, Bluebird Nest Box Monitoring, Guided Dog Walks, Night Sky Tour and Stargazing, Watching Monarchs, Run for the ACORNS!!!, Birdwatching with Project Feederwatch.
- Volunteer assistance in direction of community service projects (United Way Make a Difference Day, Day of Caring, community service volunteers, etc...)
- ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center construction and maintenance
- Trail maintenance
- Facility and exhibit maintenance (Aquatic turtle care, live honeybee observation hive)
- Interpretive Nature Center Visitor Services during public hours of operation
- Wildlife population monitoring and stewardship
- Coordination and leading of staff and volunteer trainings and outings
- Community outreach event assistance (community fairs and festivals)
- Marketing/public communication for park events and programs
- Educational contributions to Parks Newsletter (Seedlings)
- Assistance with Environmental Science Camp and Camp Hard Hat

January - December Volunteer Hours = 2,522

Labor $ Savings to County Parks (NYS Average Volunteer Rate $27.59) = $69,581.98

Labor $ Savings to County Parks (Actual County Employee Rate $15.23) = $38,410.06

Staffing equivalent: Seasonal Groundskeepers = 2.42

OR

Staffing equivalent: SCA Interns (16 week) = 3.94

Thank you for your support!!
The ACORNS is the volunteer group formed to support the Genesee County Parks by assisting with environmental programs and park maintenance, offering recreational opportunities and promoting the parks.

ACORNS Board of Directors:
- Julia Garver, President
- Sarah Balduf, Vice-President
- George Squires, Treasurer
- Jerome Gentry, Secretary
- Sam Leadley
- Bill Moon
- Lewis Tandy
- Pete Stanbridge
- Jeff Langdon

Members:
The Allen Family
Charlie Augrom
Bruce and Nancy Baker
Robert and Jane Balbick
Sarah Balduf
Tom & Linda Clark
Guy & Patricia Clark, Jr.
Bart & Sue Dambra
Barb & Mike Easton
Kayla Edmonds
Marjorie & Jim Fulmer
Dave & Marcia Gann
Julia Garver & Joe Ruh
The Gentry Family
Kathy Gilhooly
Peggy Grayson
Craig & Amy Hardie
Sheila Hess
The Kent Family
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Jeff & Priscilla Langdon
Sam & Esther Leadley
Tami & Pete Loftus
Shannon Lyaski
Glenn Merrill
John Midla
Bill & Connie Moon
Terri & Michael Muehlig
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Paul and Emma Osborn
Kathleen Purcel
Jim Schmitt
Claire & Ron Sloat
George Squires
Pete Stanbridge
Dave & Sandy Steele
Jim Taillie
Lewis & Bonnie Tandy
The Vandenbosch Family
Ashley Waite
Jack Walsh
Kathie Woika
Nick Zinni
Pam Zola

Remember to renew your membership for 2020! Send renewals to ACORNS at PO Box 787 Stafford, NY 14143.

To renew or become a member, please visit the ACORNS website or contact Lewis Tandy, ACORNS Membership Specialist at ltandy@rochester.rr.com.

ACORNS meetings are held every 4th Tuesday evening of the month. Check ACORNS website for location.

Hey Amazon Shoppers!!!
By using AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the Association for the Conservation Of Recreational and National Spaces (ACORNS), when you follow this link:

https://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-8939341

Run for the ACORNS 2020
Sunday, October 4th
ACORNS is looking for a few great volunteers to help out and have fun! Contact us at

https://www.geneseeacorns.org/
Winter Wonderland Hikes
Snow is Our Home
Saturday, January 11th: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
*Rain date: Saturday, January 18th: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
Mammals in Winter
Saturday, February 8th: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
*Rain date: Saturday, February 15th: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
Track the secret lives of wild animals and discover how they survive the year’s harshest season! Hike is about 2 miles long over moderate terrain. Snowshoes may be used, weather permitting, and are provided or you may bring your own. No previous experience needed! $5/person, max $15/family, snowshoe rental included.

Winter Fun Night Snowshoe Hikes
First Hike: Saturday, January 11th: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
*Rain date: Saturday, January 18th: 7:00 pm—9:00 pm
Second Hike: Saturday, February 8th: 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
*Rain date: Saturday, February 15th: 7:00 pm—9:00 pm
Enjoy the beauty of the forest at night on a hike through meadows, along creeks, and into woodlands. Hikes begin and end at Pavilion A on Raymond Rd. Choose between a hike about 2 miles long over easy terrain or a hike about 3 miles long over moderate terrain. Both hikes include snacks by a warm fire. For ages 18 and over. Snowshoes may be used, weather permitting, and are provided or you may bring your own. No previous experience needed! $5/person, max $15/family.

Birding Walks
Saturdays March 7th, April 4th, May 2nd, May 16th: 7:00 am-10:00 am
Come enjoy a birding walk at New York State’s First County Forest! Birding walk is led by a birding guide and takes you through meadow, forest and wetland habitats to help you identify the birds by sound and sight. Perfect for beginner and experienced birders. Meet at Pavilion A. Walk is approximately 1 mile long over easy terrain. This program is FREE.

Tree ID Hike
Saturday, March 7th: 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
Add more to your daily landscape and learn your trees! Learn to recognize types of trees by their bark, twigs, and branches. Find out what is special about each species and how they are useful to humans and wildlife.
$5/person, $10/family.

Guided Dog Walks
Saturdays April 18th and May 9th: 10:00 am-11:00 am
Bring your best friend and join us for a guided dog walk at the park! This guided walk is great for socialization and healthy exercise! Dogs must be on a leash at all times. Current license or proof of rabies vaccination required. Aggressive dogs will not be allowed to participate. This program is FREE.

Amphibian Adventure
Saturday April 18th: 7:30 pm—9:00 pm
Come get to know your small, slimy, singing neighbors and pest-eating pals. Hear the chorus of spring and learn about amphibians, search for them, and discover how to help them. We will head into the wetlands and woodlands on a night hike to visit them in their habitat! Dress for the weather, rain or shine! $5/person, $10/family.

Earth Day Park Cleanup at DeWitt Recreation Area
Saturday April 25th: 10:00 am-2:00 pm
Give back and help clean up DeWitt Recreation Area to keep the habitat safe for wildlife. Make cool stuff from recycled materials, enjoy outdoor games and take a guided nature hike! Discover what you can do every day to make your world healthier. Scouts can earn badge requirements and service hours! Program is FREE.

Free Fishing Day & the Kendra Haacke Memorial Fishing Derby
Saturday May 2nd: 10:00 am–1:00 pm
Join the Genesee County Parks along with the Oakfield-Alabama Lions Club and try out fishing! Perfect for beginners! Program meets at Pavilion 3. Friendly guides will be on hand to assist you. No fishing license required. This is part of NYSDEC’s Free Fishing Weekend! Fishing gear provided or bring your own. Kids up to age 16 can join the fun and get the chance to win a prize. This program is FREE!

Honeybees
Saturday July 11th: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Discover the fascinating world of honeybees and see a live beehive in action! Beekeepers explain the lifecycle and different jobs of bees while sharing cool facts and their experiences in caring for these amazing creatures. $5/person, $10/family.

Environmental Science Camp
Monday-Friday July 13th—17th: 9:00 am-4:00 pm daily
Students entering 7th – 10th grade explore different topics of Environmental Science with outdoor activities guided by professionals. This week-long adventure includes wildlife surveys, field and stream studies, outdoor recreation, a field trip, and more! Camp materials, t-shirt, lunch and snacks provided.

Kayaking at DeWitt Recreation Area
Session 1: Saturday July 25th: 10:00 am–12:00 pm
Session 2: 1:00 pm-3:00 pm
Seize the day with a guided kayak tour of DeWitt Lake! Explore the lake by water and discover a new world at the boat launch at DeWitt Recreation Area. No experience needed, lesson provided! Rent a kayak or bring your own. Kayak rentals with life vests are provided by Adventures in Fitness Inc. Solo kayak rentals are available for ages 12 and up, tandem kayak rentals are available for kids under 12 and must be piloted by an adult. Guided tour fee is $20/person w/o rental, $25/person w/ rental, $12/session for children 12 and under.

Turtle Painting
Saturday August 8th: 11:00 am–12:00 pm
Come meet Ruby the Red-eared Slider. Learn all about her aquatic turtle lifestyle and then watch her create a painting for you to take home! 1 painting per person. $5/painting.

Radical Reptiles
Saturday August 8th: 1:00 pm–2:00 pm
Reptiles are awesome!! Come see a live animal presentation of turtles, tortoises, snakes, skinks, and lizards from the Buffalo Zoo and meet them up close and personal! See real animal artifacts and discover the amazing lives of these scaly friends. Space is limited, call to register today! $7/person.

Programs take place at the Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Nature Center, 11095 Bethany Center Rd, East Bethany, NY 14054 unless otherwise noted. Pre-registration is required for all programs. To register call (585) 344-1122. For more information visit our website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/ or contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Shannon.Lyski@co.genesee.ny.us or (585) 344-1122.
Winter Fun Night Snowshoe Hikes
Enjoy the beauty of the forest at night! Join us for a trek along creeks and through meadows and woodlands. Hikes begin and end at Pavilion A and include refreshments by a warm fire. Ages 18 and over. Please leave pets at home. Snowshoes may be used, weather permitting, and are provided or you may bring your own. No previous experience needed, snowshoeing lesson included! $5/person, max $15/family, snowshoe rental included.
Pre-registration is required, call 585-344-1122!
Saturday, January 25th  and Saturday, February 8th*
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm
*Rain date: Saturday, February 15th

Winter Wonderland Hikes
Saturdays 1:00 - 3:00pm
Snow is Our Home
Saturday, February 22nd
Track the secret lives of wild animals and find out how they use snow to help survive winter!
Mammals in Winter
Saturday, February 8th*
Hike and discover the many adaptations of mammals during the year’s harshest season.
Snowshoes may be used, weather permitting, and are provided or you may bring your own.
No previous experience needed!
$5/person, max $15/family, snowshoe rental included
Please pre-register by calling 585-344-1122!
*Rain date: Saturday, February 15th

Private Group Snowshoe Hikes
Make a memory this winter with your own guided snowshoe hike!
Private Naturalist-led hikes are available for your group by reservation on Saturdays in January and February 10:00 am - 12:00pm.
Snowshoes are provided or you may bring your own.
No experience needed. Snowshoeing lesson included!
$5/person, min. group fee $75, rental included.
Please pre-register by calling 585-344-1122!

Snowshoe Rentals
Snowshoes are available to rent at Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Nature Center through the months of December, January, February, and March, weather permitting. Rentals are available on a first come, first serve basis and must be used in the Park.

Hours:
10am-3pm Thursdays and Fridays
12pm-3pm Saturdays and Sundays
(Snowshoes must be returned to building by 3pm)

Programs take place at the Genesee County Park & Forest Interpretive Nature Center, 11095 Bethany Center Rd, East Bethany, NY 14054 unless otherwise noted. Pre-registration is required for all programs. To register call (585) 344-1122. For more information visit our website at http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/, or contact Shannon Lyaski at Shannon.Lyaski@co.genesee.ny.us or (585) 344-1122.
DeWitt Recreation Area Ice Rink

Get Your Skates Ready!!

The DeWitt Recreation Area skating rink will be up again for your enjoyment this winter season. Use of the rink is FREE and available at posted times. The outdoor rink is skate at your own risk and bring your own skates.

**Public Skate:**
(Sticks and pucks are prohibited on the ice)
- M, W, Sa, Sun. 10:00 am - 4:00 pm
- Tu, Th 10:00 am -2:00 pm
- Fri. 10:00 am -7:30 pm

**Stick & Puck:**
- Tu, Th 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm (No Figure skating)

There will be extended hours with lighting available on Friday evenings. This opportunity is being provided by the Kiwanis Club of Batavia. See the parks website for full rules and details, and follow us on Facebook for up-to-date rink information and closings https://www.facebook.com/Genesee-County-Parks-Recreation-Forestry-5144840306572/.
Do you have nature-related books you would like to donate? We have a lending library for adults to sign out books, take home and read. When you’re done, bring them back and sign out more!
To donate books please call the Interpretive Center at 585-344--1122 or send an email to Shannon.Lyaski@co.genesee.ny.us. (Magazines and encyclopedias not needed)

Hey Amazon Shoppers!!!
By using AmazonSmile, Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the Association for the Conservation Of Recreational and National Spaces (ACORNS), when you follow this link:
https://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-8939341

Collect used printer cartridges to help us earn...
We are helping to keep the earth clean while earning new equipment and cash. You can help by saving used ink and toner cartridges! Just come by the Genesee County Park Interpretive Center and drop them off at the front desk!

Make a Difference!

Visit www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/