Bird Watching Takes Flight

Bird watching has become the fastest growing outdoor activity in the United States. According to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, over 45 million Americans spend time bird watching. It’s easy to see why the hobby has become so popular because anyone can participate and it’s easy to get started. All you need is a bird book (or a readily available birding app) and a pair of binoculars.

Mentor is home to some of the best birding locations in Northeast Ohio. Mentor Lagoons Nature Preserve, Mentor Marsh State Nature Preserve and Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve are all part of the Lake Erie Birding Trail which extends along the Erie shore from Conneaut to Toledo. Over 400 species of birds have been spotted along the lakeshore. During the spring migration (typically March through May), Woodpeckers, Sparrows, Rusty Blackbirds and Warblers are all common visitors on their way to nesting areas. Veteran’s Park is another excellent location to spot waterfowl and other birds.

Get started by attending the Mentor Marsh’s Bald Eagle Fest and Silent Auction on May 3rd from 12 to 5 PM at the Carol H. Sweet Nature Center, 5185 Corduroy Road. Among a host of Eagle related activities, guided hikes will be offered to see the Bald Eagle nesting site. Call 257-0777 to register. Later in May, Mentor Recreation will help you learn about birds migrating through the Mentor Lagoons. The Spring Bird Walk led by City of Mentor Naturalists is May 9th from 9 to 11 AM. Register by calling 974-5720.

Headlands Dunes Boardwalk

Last October, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources announced an exciting project at the Headlands Dunes State Nature Preserve. The agency will be constructing a 800 foot boardwalk that will provide increased access to the dunes and lakefront for disabled, elderly, and other residents unable to manage walking the sandy terrain. The boardwalk will traverse the preserve, giving visitors views of the magnificent lake dunes and a place to watch the many birds and butterflies that stop to rest at the sight during the spring and fall migrations.

The boardwalk will lead to an observation deck 60 feet from the water’s edge, providing a vista to enjoy the ever-changing beauty of Lake Erie. Construction on the project is scheduled to begin in late summer and be completed by the end of the year.
Get In On The Fun at a Mentor Summer Camp

The Mentor Parks and Recreation Department offers fun and exciting summer camp experiences for youth ages 4 to 14. Summer camps give participants a chance to learn new things, enhance sports skills and just have fun. Day Camps come complete with swim lessons and field trips. Sports Camps include fencing, Cleveland Indians baseball, and volleyball camps. Discovery camps teach skills like art, cooking and outdoor skills. Whatever you choose, your kids are sure to have fun. For a complete listing of Summer camps offered, check out the 2015 Summer Camp Guide online at cityofmentor.com/play/summercamps.

Purchase Your Pool Pass Now

Mentor pools will be open before you know it, and you can be ready by purchasing your Pool Pass now. The pass is good for admission at any of Mentor's aquatics facilities all summer long. Pool passes are on sale at the Mentor Recreation Department, weekdays between 8 AM and 5 PM. If you’re a resident purchasing a new pass, remember to bring a current utility bill with your name and address and a photo ID as proof of residency. If you purchased a pass last year, you may renew it online at cityofmentor.com/play/aquatics.

Early Bird Savings: Buy your pool pass any time between April 1st – 30th, and pay last year’s pass rates. Avoid the long lines of summer and save!

Keeping Mentor’s Kids Safe

For 25 years Mentor Safety Town has taught kids ages 4 to 6 years about important safety lessons - including school bus and fire safety, stranger danger and road rules. The program is offered by the Junior Women's Club of Mentor in conjunction with the Mentor Police and Fire Departments. Registration for the week-long sessions is in progress. Session 1 is offered June 8-12 and Session 2 will take place June 22 – 26. Both morning and afternoon sessions are offered. Registration forms are available at the Mentor Public Library or at mentorjuniorwomen.org. Cost is $40 if you register before April 15th. All sessions are held at St. John Vianney Church, 7575 Bellflower Road.

Get Ready To Tee Off

Learn to play golf or brush up on your game with the Black Brook Golf Academy. PGA Golf Professionals Tim Ausperk, Tom Sloat, and Assistant Golf Professional Wayne Hovatin provide instruction for both youth and adults. Improve your stance, learn the proper grip and work on pitching, chipping and putting. Classes begin in April. Younger golfers can take advantage of Golf Camps offered during the summer at Black Brook. Junior golfers receive concentrated instruction focusing on swing technique and the short game.

Golf is a game that can be enjoyed for a lifetime and learning the fundamentals early is the basis for a sport that can be played and enjoyed for years to come. Camps are offered in both June and July. To register, call 440-974-5720, or online at cityofmentor.com/play/teaclass/golf.

Calendar of Events

March 12
Ladies Night Out
Wildwood Cultural Center
“Unique Nails”
Register: 974-5720
Residents: $10/Nonresidents: $12

March 28
Kids Egg Hunt
Wildwood Cultural Center
Register: 974-5720
Residents: $6/Nonresident: $10

April 22
2015 MACC Restaurant Showcase
Mentor Ice Arena
6 – 8 PM
Call 255-1616 for tickets

April 25
Senior Center Garage Sale
Mentor Senior Center
9 AM – 3 PM

May 8
Wildwood Singers Concert
Mentor Senior Center
7:30 PM Tickets: $5

May 16
Wildwood Garden Club Plant Sale
Wildwood Cultural Center
11 AM – 2 PM

May 16
Heroes Day
Great Lakes Mall
Honoring our local Police Officers & Firemen.

Visit cityofmentor.com, or call 974-5720 for information on city events.
Springbrook Gardens Remains Green

When 86-year-old Jack Schultz, owner of Springbrook Gardens, decided to retire and close the historic nursery on Heisley Road, he hoped that the 50 plus acre parcel might remain intact and not be developed for housing or commercial use.

That hope became reality when Mentor City Council voted to purchase the land at the December 2, 2014 Council Meeting.

According to Ward 1 Councilman Bob Shiner, “It’s an opportunity of a lifetime to save 53 acres in the heart of Mentor.”

Springbrook Gardens has been a Mentor landmark since Jack and his father Elmer founded it in 1946. The business originally concentrated on growing shrubs and evergreens.

Jack shushed the focus 10 years later to growing rare and hard to produce perennials and selling them wholesale to the mail order market. The idea was a great success!

Springbrook Gardens became a top producer of perennials sold through garden centers and retail stores to produce perennials and selling them wholesale to the mail order market. The idea was a great success!

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Heisley Road Widening Project

Get ready. Orange barrels will soon be the norm on Heisley Road between Jackson Street and Mentor Avenue, as the much anticipated street widening project gets underway this spring. This portion of Heisley Road services over 20,000 cars per day, and during peak traffic hours backups do occur. The widening project will add two additional lanes to help alleviate traffic. Utility relocation is already underway and is anticipated to be completed in June. Traffic will be maintained during the project with the addition of temporary pavement lanes that will keep cars moving through the construction as the permanent lanes are built. The project is expected to be completed in 2016.

STARTING A BUSINESS?

MEACO CAN HELP

A strong local economy is essential to a vibrant community. Attracting and nurturing businesses, both large and small, is one of the keys to Mentor’s success. For over 30 years, the Mentor Economic Assistance Corporation (MEACO) has helped small businesses obtain long-term, low-interest loans for building construction, expansion or new equipment purchases.

MEACO is a not-for-profit Certified Development Corporation which works in conjunction with the City, U.S. Small Business Administration and local banks. It was established to help stimulate small business growth in Mentor and has since expanded to assist small businesses throughout Northeast Ohio.

Some of the businesses MEACO has helped grow locally include Cleveland Plumbing Supply, Visual Graphics, World Wines and Dental Specialists of Lake County.

If you are considering starting or expanding a business, find out how MEACO can help through its SBA Small Business 504 Loan Program or Mentor Small Business Loan Fund. Contact Tom Thielman, MEACO Executive Director at 974-5739 or visit the MEACO website at meacoweb.com.