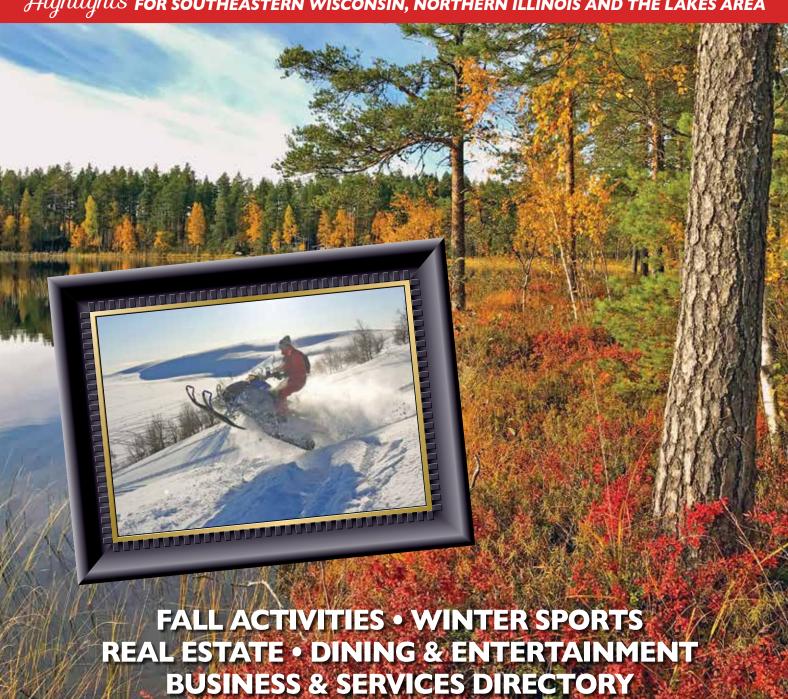


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Hike Lake County challenge underway

The Lake County Forest Preserves has a challenge – or seven of them – for you. Grab your walking shoes and head to the trails to participate in the Hike Lake County program while enjoying fall breezes and autumn colors. Medical research shows that being outdoors in nature has many wellness benefits. Hike Lake County provides a way to get a dose of wellness while walking in a beautiful preserve.

Complete seven of 12 designated walks before Nov. 30 and earn a free commemorative shield for your walking stick or a zipper pull. Each year features different trails and a colorful new shield or zipper pull, (while supplies last). Bicycling or horseback riding do not count toward the program.

At each selected preserve, look for Hike Lake County logo signs at the preserve entrance and trailhead to get you on the right route.

To get started, walkers need an official travel log to record your routes, which can be found on lcfpd.org. Every walker needs their own. Let a canine companion join in the fun and complete the hikes with you. Record their name on the travel log and the dog will receive a free commemorative dog tag (up to three dogs).

To receive a free dog tag, zipper pull or commemorative shield for your walking stick, submit online, or mail it with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Lake County Forest Preserves, 1899 W. Winchester Road, Libertyville, IL 60048 by

Jan. 31, 2023

Walkers can also stop by the general office at 1899 W. Winchester Road, Libertyville or the Ryerson Welcome Center at 21950 N. Riverwoods Road, Riverwoods, to pick up free commemorative materials. Centers are open Tuesday through Saturday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or Sunday, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The 2022 Hike Lake County locations include: Buffalo Creek, Ethel's Woods/Raven Glen, Grant Woods, Greenbelt, Hastings Lake, Independence Grove, Lakewood, Marl Flat, Old School, Edward L. Ryerson Conservation Area, Spring Bluff and Van Patten Woods.

For more information and travel log visit lcfpd.org.

Hike Lake County is an annual walking program that encourages residents to explore a variety of forest preserves. Participants are encouraged to complete seven walks before Nov. 30 to receive a commemorative shield or zipper pull.

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Area dog parks provide open spaces

By Sandra Landen Machaj

CORRESPONDENT

Passing by the Lake County Forest Preserves in Wauconda, it is not unusual to see a fenced in area with dogs running freely, chasing a ball, or frolicking with another dog or two, while their owners stand nearby watching them play.

They appear much like a mother supervising her toddler at the children's play lot. For this is one of five dog parks, available in the Lake County Forest Preserves where the dogs of the area can have free rein, and not be confined to a leash as they enjoy some time out in the sun.

In 1958 when the Lake County Forest Preserves became a reality, there was no thought that in later years there would be dog parks within the system. In fact, the idea of a dog park was not envisioned in the early plans for the Forest Preserve District.

The original plans were to preserve the unique ecosystems of the area and to prevent overdevelopment of the land. As more people spread out from Chicago and made their homes in the cleaner air and open land of Lake County, more land was developed leaving less in its natural state. The preserve has continued to protect the open land as was the original intention, but have also added additional interesting activities for the residents of Lake County to enjoy. One such of these activities is the dog parks.

"The Forest Preserves opened Libertyville Dog Training Area back in the lates 70s or early 80s. Hunters used it to train their bird dogs," Chief Operations Officer Mike Tully said. "Slowly more dog walkers and less hunters used it. We mowed more often and renamed the area."

The area became known as the dog exercise area and began to attract additional dog walkers. As more dog owners turned to the forest preserves to walk their dogs giving them exercise, the need for areas where the dogs could be safely let off their leashes and allowed to run and play became more apparent.

The first of the actual dog parks, as they are known today, was Independence Grove, which was transformed from the original Libertyville Dog Training Area.

It opened transformed into a dog park

in 1986. It was followed by Lakewood in Wauconda in 1998. Duck Farm, Prairie Wolf, and Waukegan Savannah. The parks were completed in the late 1990s to 2002 as interest in the exercise areas increased.

Part of the rise in to having a large area where dogs can enjoy being free to run and play may stem from the increasing number of dogs found in homes today. While dogs have been popular pets for many years, the past couple of years when families have bonded together at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, has seen an increase in families and even single residents adopting a single dog and some even two or more dogs for company.

With the responsibility for the dogs comes the responsibility of providing them with adequate exercise for their health. Their own back yards may not be large enough or fenced in to allow the dogs to run and play as needed.

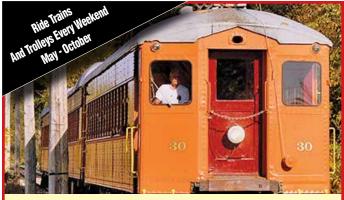
So, while the dog parks were in place and continued to attract more visitors, it was the parking areas that needed to be increased in size to accommodate the increased number of automobiles.

"Dog exercise areas have grown

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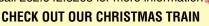
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This dog enjoys a view of the beautiful lake at the Independence Grove Dog Park. Is he looking for a drink, or trying to decide how to get through the fence for a cooling swim?



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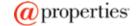
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1802887 - Lakefront estate on 142' of sand frontage on Lauderdale "Gold Coast" situated on manicured 1.28 wooded acres completely fenced and gated. That's just the start to this lakefront dream. The lake greets you as you walk into the 4BD, 4.5 bath main house with open foyer to eat-in Ktch and lakeside dining room, LR with fireplace and slider to screened porch with vaulted ceiling. Master en-suite lakeside with private deck. Family room walk-out to cement patio. Brick fireplace and wet-bar plus 4th BD and Bath. Rare wet hoat house with 2 Bd, 1 bath guest cottage above with full ktch, living room and screened porch all vaulted. This gets even better with a 36 x 30 storage garage with 4 finished rooms all vaulted heated and cooled. Plus, another 3.5 heated detached garage, \$4,499,700

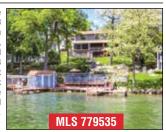






1779535 - Located on 65' of prime Middle Lake swim frontage with Southern exposure you'll find this 4 BD, 3.5 Bath 3,968 sq ft 2 story with walk-out lower level. The lake welcomes you as soon as you step inside. Fabulous kitchen with large island, granite tops, SS appliances and French staircase to upner level leading to master bedroom en-suite. Upper level also offers 3 large bedrooms and full bath. Lower level family room walk out to cement patio and fire-pit lakeside. Family room offer brick fireplace, game room, additional eat-in kitchen, full bath and large storage area. Multiple decks lakeside leads to boat house and piers. Make your lifetime memories here on Lauderdale Lakes. \$1,999,900









1802899 - Tranquility can be found overlooking peaceful Lake Benedict in this estate like setting featuring main house with separate coach house on Nippersink Golf Course. The best of both worlds. Main house features 7 Bdrm, 5 baths, LR with vaulted ceilings, fireplace, wood floors and extended lake views. Eat in kitchen with sliding glass door to cement patio overlooking 17th Green and 18th Tee, plus dinette area and formal dining room. Two Master en-suit Bdrms with one featuring a fireplace. 20x20 lakeside deck off entrance. Finished lower-level walk-out featuring Family Room, Rec-Room, 2 bdrms, 2 full baths and den. Coach house is 3 hdrm. 2 hath with Master en-suite, 3.5 detached. garage plus storage shed. \$1,200,000

the property protected by metal fence. \$2,100,000

in popularity over the years. All the venues have seen parking lot expansions due to their popularity," said Randy Seeback, director of Planning and Land Preservation for the Lake County Forest Preserve District.

Having an open space where dogs are able to roam free, requires rules to keep the dogs and their owners safe. All dogs coming into the dog park must be at least four months of age and the owner must decide if it is wise for a small dog or a puppy to be off leash.

Ticks are a problem for dogs both in early spring and again in the fall. The Forest Preserve District does not spray for ticks in the dog parks. They suggest speaking to your veterinarian about what you can do to avoid tick infestation. Keeping the dog out of tall vegetation during the peak times may be one option. The other may be to walk the dog on trails while on a leash to prevent them from wandering into the tall grass areas.

Just as pet owners are expected to do when walking their dog in public they are expected to clean up after their pet in the dog park. An \$85 fine can be levied if owners fail to do this.

Where to let the dogs out

With five dog parks in the Lake County Forest Preserves District spread out through the county there is sure to be one near you. Pick the one closest to you or try them all.

Duck Farm Dog Park Grand Ave (Route 132) west of Route 83 Lake Villa

Independence Grove Dog Park

Milwaukee Avenue (route 21) North of Buckley Road (137) Libertyville

Lakewood Dog Park 176 and Fairfield Avenue Wauconda

Prairie Wolf Dog Park Waukegan Road (route 43) south of Old Mill And north of Half Day Road (Route 22) • Lake Forest

Waukegan Savanna Dog Park York House Road, east of Delany Road • Waukegan

Children are allowed to accompany their parents to the dog park with the dog but may not attend without an adult.

Each of the dog parks offers a different experience for you and your dog as the size of the park and the amenities are different.

Independence Grove

Independence Grove Dog Park was named the best dog park by North Shore magazine. It consists of 30 acres and is fenced on two sides. The park features open fields, wooded areas, and a large pond for the dogs to enjoy a swim. Keep an eye on your pet so he doesn't stray. This park also connects to Casey Trail and the Des Plaines River Trail. When on the trails, the dog must be leashed as they pass through Independence Grove Forest Preserve where dogs are not allowed. So, stay on the trail and all will be well.

Duck Farm

Duck Farm Dog Park is a 48-acre, fenced-

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 9



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHELSEA BEYER Catch All the Action



PHOTO COURTESY OF TERI KRIEGER Catch All the Action

above: Sitting politely in front of the raised roots of this tree at Lakewood Dog Park, this dog debates about crawling into the opening for a cooling rest. left: After a very satisfying swim in the lake at Independence Grove Dog Park, a dog returns to the shore. Two of the parks have swimming areas. below: While the brown dog may have caught the tennis ball, his black and white friend keeps up with him as they race through Duck Farm Dog Park.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KELLY MORGENSEN Catch All the Action

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in area, allowing for dogs to run and play without fear of them getting out. There are open fields and grass trails for you to enjoy with your pet. Toilets and drinking fountain are also available.

Lakewood

Lakewood Dog Park was originally on the south side of Highway 176 in 1998 but in 2002 was moved to the north side of Highway 176 to create more space. The 66-acre park is entirely fenced and features large open meadows where dogs can run and play or perhaps take a nap in the meadow. The park has mowed trails, a water hand pump and comfortable shade shelters with seating, and toilets.

Prairie Wolf

Prairie Wolf Dog Park is a 44-acre dog park that is fenced and offers a swimming pond outside the gates at the east end of the park. The dog must be watched if taken out the gates to enjoy the swimming pond so it does not stray.

The park contains training enclosures to work on those skills that still need to be mastered. Fields and trails make this park fun for dogs and owners. Toilets, water, and drinking fountains are available.

Waukegan Savanna

Waukegan Savanna Dog Park is the newest and smallest of the parks. At only 11 entirely fenced-in acres, it provides a special area that the others do not have – a separate enclosed area for small dogs weighing less than 25 pounds. The open savanna is a favorite area for dogs to meander. This park also includes shade shelters with seating, drinking water and toilets.

With so many choices, it should not be difficult to find the best park for your pet to enjoy and enjoy spending time with other friendly dog owners in the area.

Kim Mikus Croke, media and community relations specialist at the Lake County Forest Preserve District, said last year about 9,000 annual permits were sold as were 11,000 daily permits for dogs of the area to visit the parks.

Permits are required to attend the dog parks. Each permit is usable at any of the five dog parks in the system.

To purchase a yearly pass, the dog must have proof of a current rabies vaccination and be wearing their tag with their number on it.

Included with the dog park permit is a parking sticker for the automobile that is used to drive the dog to the park. The parking lots at the dog parks are restricted to visitors to the dog park with a current

Two vehicle stickers are routinely included with each dog park yearly pass.



LAKE COUNTY FOREST PRESERVES PHOTO Catch All the Action



top: The shelter in the Waukegan Park is a place for the dog owners to relax and watch their dogs as they enjoy the flat open run of the savannah. It is also a good place for the dogs to cool off after a hot day of play. **above:** After a long run in the park, these two are ready for a drink of water.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MICHELLE SEYMOUR Catch All the Action

A third may be purchased when purchasing the yearly pass. All automobiles must be registered to the same address. Daily passes include only one vehicle sticker.

Both residents of Lake County and may use the dog parks but the cost for the passes are different. Residents are charged \$50 for the first dog and \$15 for each additional dog (up to three).

For nonresidents the cost is higher. For the yearly pass, the charge is \$150. For the first dog and \$75 for each additional dog.

The preserve recommends purchasing a daily pass and trying out the various parks before committing to a yearly park pass to see if your pet thrives in the dog park environment and socializes well with other

dogs.

Daily passes are \$25 for the first dog and \$15 each additional dog up to three for residents. For non-residents, the daily fee is \$75 for the primary dog and \$20 for each additional dog brought into the park.

The dog passes are available at the general office in Libertyville by phone or in person visit. Call 847-367-6640 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., or at the Operations and Public Safety location in Lake Villa, 847-968-3400 from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

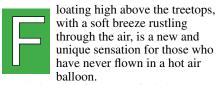
For that very special dog consider purchasing a Dog Park Permit Gift Certificate as a special treat to introduce them to life at the dog park.



Lake Geneva Balloon Company helps people fulfill their soaring dreams

by Sandra Landen Machaj

CORRESPONDENT



The beauty of nature unfolds below as the balloon travels over open land, the heart of the city, or over a scenic body of water. In this area that body of water is usually Geneva Lake, Lake Como, or the White River.

For John Trione, chief pilot and owner of the Lake Geneva Balloon Company, each flight is a new experience that he enjoys sharing with guests.

"Many of our customers who are booking a flight with us are doing this as a first time experience," Trione said. "They are often ready to experience a balloon ride as a special treat, and as an item to check off their bucket lists. They may be celebrating an anniversary, birthday, or other important event, or using the flight as an elegant way to propose.'

"I am an official marriage officiant and have performed marriage ceremonies up in the balloon," Trione shared. "Since the number of people in the basket of the balloon is limited to 2 or 8 depending on the size of the basket, having me be the officiant leaves space for one more guest of the bridal party."



FLIGHTS OF

FALLING FOR BALLOONS

For Trione, his love of ballooning began over 20 years ago, June 27, 1997, to be exact, when he and his then wife took their first flight as a celebration for their 10th anniversary. He fell in love with ballooning and knew that this would not be his only flight. He began working with ground crews on setting up and retrieving the balloons and also took lessons to learn how to fly a balloon. He then took the FAA test and flew with an FAA Examiner to become a certified commercial pilot.

Once his license was obtained, he became a member of the balloon racing circuit travelling around the Midwest. While he competed against some of the best pilots in the country, he was also sharpening his flying skills.

Twenty years ago, he opened the Lake Geneva Balloon Company to share his love of ballooning with others and never looked back. Each day, he continues to share his love of flying the balloon and introducing others to the joy of ballooning.

A CHANCE TO SOAR

While some prospective customers

are somewhat hesitant about the flight, they quickly become enamored with the idea of floating above the trees and looking at the world from a very different prospective.

"Balloon flying is a fair weather sport," said Trione. "We only fly when the weather is stable and the winds are mild. That means that often the trips may be cancelled at the last minute if the weather changes making a flight unsafe."

For that, there are only two times daily when the flights take off. They are right before sunrise or right before sunset. This is the most stable time for the weather. Flights are often cancelled several times due to weather before the flight is finally

Before making a reservation, it is important to learn all that you can about flying in a balloon, including the reasons for flights being cancelled and who should not attempt a flight. On the website lakegenevaballoon.com there is a complete list of information that you riders to know, including frequently asked auestions.

"If the answer is not there, feel free to call or email us. We are always glad to answer any questions," Trione said.

"Most healthy people can fly, and even some who aren't healthy, depending on their limitations," he said. "We do not fly pregnant women at any stage of the pregnancy and children must be at least 8 years of age and a minimum of 40 inches tall. At 40 inches they can see over the basket edge. Parents may not hold children in the basket. Children too must stand the entire hour."

In order to fly, you should have not had any surgeries or joint replacements within 2 years, and no broken bones. One must be able to stand for one hour as there is nowhere to sit in the basket and everyone needs to be able to hold on during the landing.

"Unfortunately, our baskets are not handicap accessible so you must be able to climb into them," Trione said.

SCHEDULING A FLIGHT

For those who wish to experience a balloon ride, Trione recommends making the reservation as soon as possible. In the Lake Geneva area, there are limited times when flights can be scheduled because of the instability of the Midwest weather.

"We only schedule at two times each day and during certain months of the year. One of these is the sunrise flight which at this time of year has us gathering about 4:15 in the morning and there is also a sunset flight towards evening," said Trione. "Often the first flight you schedule may be cancelled due to weather conditions."

Their current schedule for flights is January and February weekend flights only. No flights scheduled in March or April. From May to September both the sunrise and the sunset flights are held seven days a week, weather permitting. But as they move into October and November, they go back to weekend only flights, through the second weekend in November. They do not fly the balloons in December.

Once your flight is scheduled, you can expect to hear from your pilot who makes the decision on whether it is safe to fly. Then you will receive a "meet or no meet" call around 7 p.m. the night before a morning flight and a wakeup call time for the morning will be scheduled.

Since most people are not used to being up to meet around 4:15 a.m., many flyers need that morning call. Afternoon flights will receive a call about 1 p.m. the day of the flight to let them know if it is a go or no go.

Dressing correctly will make the trip more enjoyable. Trione recommends

dressing as if you are going for a hike in the woods. That is, long pants, socks that cover your ankles and closed toe shoes such as sneakers or boots. Comfortable clothing and shoes will make getting into and out of the basket much easier.

THE FUN BEGINS

Participants will meet at the Balloonport, N3241 Highway H, Lake Geneva, at the prescribed time. They will need a photo ID, the risk waiver, the previously purchased flight certificate, and the final payment for the trip. Once the business is taken care of, the participants will be transported to the launch site in a 15-passenger van.

And then the fun begins.

The launch sites vary depending on the wind direction and whether you will be hovering across Lake Como, Geneva Lake or following the White River near Burlington.

According to Trione, the sunrises on Lake Como are breathtaking, the White River run is exquisite, and viewing Lake Geneva and Geneva Lake from the air is always a beautiful sight. The launch site for Lake Como is often the Calvary Church of Lake Como while the Burlington Airport

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



opposite: A couple enjoy their chance to ride the winds in a hot air balloon. above: Pilot and owner John Trione of Lake Geneva Balloon Company poses with a group riders.

BALLOON COMPANY . CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

begins your flight along the White River.

When the van arrives at the launch site, the team will begin to assemble the balloon for takeoff. The balloon itself is 70 feet tall and brightly colored, a mighty impressive sight. Participants are able to watch the balloon being readied for flight or are welcome to help the crew put it together.

With pilot and participants in the wicker basket, the pilot will lift the balloon slowly into the air. Before you realize it, you are above the treetops enjoying the scene of peace and serenity. You move gently with the breeze as the pilot controls the ascension of the balloon.

A SENSE OF SERENITY

While hot air balloons have an altitude record of 90,000 feet, these passenger flights range from treetops up to 2,500 feet above the surface.

"As we travel above the treetops, the real joy is watching the passengers as they are happy and smiling, enjoying the ride. There is a childlike wonder on their faces as they return to a state of childhood and serenity. They let their troubles roll off their shoulders and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the flight."

The balloon pilot remains in radio touch with the ground crew, known as the chase crew, although as the pilot locates a suitable landing spot the crew often has to hurry ahead to get permission to land on private property.

"We are respectful of property and do not land near animals or on growing crops," added Trione. "We have



agreements with many landowners to land on their property but sometimes the wind brings us to other areas and we must seek permission to land."

The set up and take down team works together as a family. They are always looking for additional members to work with them and will train. Members must be over 14 years of age with a work permit, be able to lift 50 to 75 pounds and most importantly able to get up early and be on site at the appropriate meeting time.

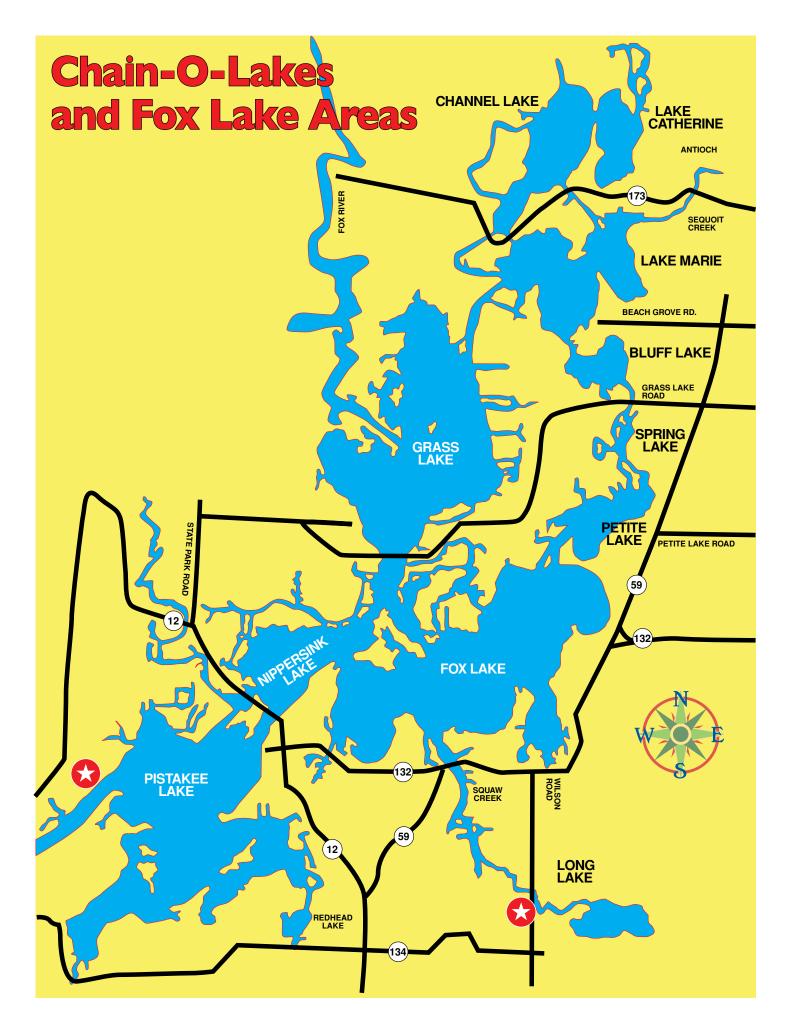
The entire experience lasts about three hours with one hour of that time in the air. After the ride, passengers are returned to the Balloonport to enjoy a celebration of champagne and snacks.

A certificate of completion suitable for framing is mailed to riders.

For information or to schedule a ride, contact Lake Geneva Balloon Company, N3341 Highway H, Lake Geneva, at 262-206-3975 or visit lakegenevaballoon.com.



above: Balloons in flight provide a glimpse at spectacular vistas. **top:** Lake Geneva Balloon Company owner John Trione poses with a gondola that transports his customers to the sky.





By Sandra Landen Machaj

CORRESPONDENT

Is there a better way to spend a late summer or early fall day than cruising along the Chain O'Lakes, enjoying the soft breeze against your face as you enjoy the beauty of the area? No there doesn't seem to be.

The best way to enjoy some time on the Chain is on a Chain O'Lakes Boat Tour where one can sit back and enjoy the view while learning more about the beauty and history of the area.

The Chain O'Lakes is a unique area of 15 interconnected lakes, covering 7,100 acres of water, stretching from the Wisconsin border at Antioch where the Fox River enters the Chain to Johnsburg where it leaves the Chain to make its way down through the State of Illinois.

The lakes connect by channels, many of them man-made, is the busiest inland recreational waterway in the United States according to Fox Waterway Executive Director Joseph Keller.

The Chain offers a variety of lakes, each well known for different reasons, that makes it the perfect place to enjoy the beauty and the history of the area.

"The Chain O'Lakes is a rich area,

known for its wildlife, colorful history, folklore and resorts along the Chain that brings in many visitors," said Captain Dan Shaughnessy, owner of Chain O'Lakes Boat Tours in Antioch.

Shaughnessy, who grew up on the Chain O'Lakes and continues to make this area his home, started Chain O'Lakes Boat Tours to share his love of the lakes with others. As a U.S. Coast Guard Certified Master Captain and an EMT, one can feel very safe and comfortable on his tours.

While many lake tours are a "one size fits all," a tour with Captain Dan is very specialized to your needs. He offers a variety of tours or will custom design the tour of your dreams.

"We prefer the small group tour of two to six participants where everyone has concierge service and can enjoy the trip," Shaughnessy said. "Each tour can be scheduled for two, four or six hours depending on how much of the Chain one wishes to cover."

The boat used for his concierge tours is a 2019 model, 22-foot Tritoon. A Tritoon is a pontoon that instead of having just two large aluminum tubes under the deck, has a third tube in the center of the boat giving the passengers a more even ride as the weight is better distributed over the water.

DAN SHAUGHNESSY OF CHAIN O'LAKES BOAT TOURS Catch All the Action

Even the interior of the boat with its light gray upholstery is comfortable and relaxing. The overhead may be raised on sunny days to provide shade on the boat, making certain that everyone is comfortable.

People enjoy the lakes for different reasons and the variety of tours offered by Chain O'Lakes Boat Tours offers so many different tours of varying lengths, that there is sure to include one that appeals to you. If not, Captain Dan will custom create one for you.

The lakes of the Chain vary. The larger lakes are very built up along the shore and have a rich history of early settlers to the land. Others are more raw, with natural grasses along the shores making them a haven for wildlife. Both these scenarios are the basis for special tours.

Bird-watching tours

More than 230 different species of birds are found along the Chain O'Lakes including Bald Eagles, swans, pelicans, Sandhill Cranes, Great Blue Herons, White Herons, geese and many more. Some of the species are seen at certain times of the year as they migrate north for the summer while others make the Chain O'Lakes their home.

The bird-watching tours usually leave



between 5 and 6 p.m. and are scheduled for two hours. When taking a bird-watching tour remember to bring a camera. Binoculars are provided for the tours.

Tours for all tastes

Among the additional cruises offered are an early morning coffee tour, lakeside lunch tour, historical tours, and sunset charcuterie tours. Each tour offers a variety of information.

While the early risers among you may want to take a morning coffee tour, when the lakes are empty and serene, the other end of the day, the Sunset Charcuterie tour celebrates the end of the day where visitors enjoy the beauty of sunset on the lake while enjoying a board of charcuterie. While no alcohol is provided on the tour, visitors may bring their own.

The sunset cruise is the great place to celebrate an anniversary or perhaps the perfect place and time to pop that question. A private proposal or proposing with a few friends or family members present will make the moment perfect and memorable.

Historical tours

"Among the most popular tours are the historical tours and the wild life tours," said Shaughnessy. "People always seem to enjoy seeing the unique wildlife on the lakes. They also enjoy hearing the stories of the past."

The historical tours follow the history of early life on the lakes from the time when the Native Americans lived in the area and hunted and fished the chain, through the early 1900s when the big resorts such as the Mineola were the place to be with their

stories of surviving prohibition and the colorful stories of the Chicago gangsters and their presence on the Chain.

The tours have been well researched, combining the folklore stories of the area and the historical knowledge from the local historians. On many of the tours, Captain Dan shares historic photos of life on the shore and buildings that may have not survived through the years with the passengers.

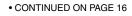
Grass Lake was a favorite place to visit from the late 1800s, when the entire lake was filled with Egyptian Lotus and the beautiful fragrance of the blooming lotus filled the air. While the lotus no longer fills the whole lake, there are many lotus beds found on the lake today. Visitors to the Chain can still enjoy the beauty and aroma of the lotus in bloom.

Kamiya, Sargoch and their daughter from Chicago took a recent tour with Chain O'Lakes Boat Tours while spending a few days relaxing at the Cypress Resort in Antioch.

"The lotus, especially the Egyptian Lotus were of interest to us and they were beautiful. We were surprised at the number of birds that we saw along the lake," Kamiya said. "It was a wonderful trip and very relaxing."

Lunch on the lakes

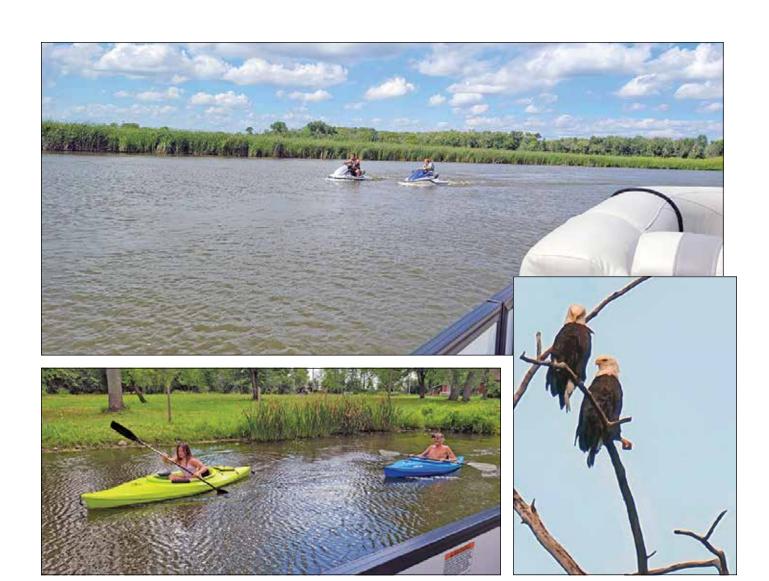
The Lakeside Lunch Tours combine a tour of the lakes with a stop for lunch at one of the local restaurants along the shore. The lunch can be as low key as stopping at a McDonald's along the water to a higher





SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ Catch All the Action

opposite: Captain Dan Shaughnessy is pictured with his wife, Jenny, on the pontoon enjoying the beauty of the sunset on the lake after a busy day. above right: Captain Dan pilots the boat along the Chain O'Lakes as he points out wildlife and historical sites along the way. top: Tours leave from the pier at the Cypress Resort. Cypress Resort has a nice beach that is enjoyed by guests staying at the resort.



BOAT RIDE • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

end choice.

Depending on the length of the tour and the direction you are taking, you may wish to stop at the McHenry Country Club or Port Edwards in Algonquin. Or there are places in between, casual and comfortable, such as Moretti's for pizza, Dockers for a salad or a hamburger on Pistakee Lake or El Puerto, on Nippersink Lake, if you are in the mood for Mexican fare. You choose where to stop or let the captain make the choice for you. One or more stops may be made.

The lunch tours or the River Run tours are a four- or six-hour tour. The River Run tour with a four-hour time, are able to travel down the Fox River up to the locks. The six-hour tour goes all the way, through the locks to Algonquin.

Perhaps you need arranging a larger

group tour than the two- to six-person tours generally booked. This may be for a large group such as a work group, anniversary party, or birthday treat. These can be accommodated by calling Captain Dan at 847-521-0668 to arrange.

All the tours are listed on the website and can be booked on line, for the day and time of your choice, with the exception of tours more than six participants. Water is supplied on all tours. No alcoholic beverages are served on board but you may bring your own. Glass of any kind is not allowed in the boat.

Bring a camera for the chance to take beautiful pictures. Don't forget to apply sunscreen before leaving on the tour. The sun reflecting off the water can cause sunburn when you are on the boat for several hours. If you are looking for an interesting way to spend time at the Chain O'Lakes, any one of the specialized boat tours will give you an unforgettable day on the water and help you learn more about the history of the Chain. The tours are suitable for all ages.

Contact Chain O'Lakes Boat Tours and plan your fall tour now and enjoy the beautiful change of colors along the lakes.

Chain O'Lake Boat Tours can be reached by calling Captain Dan or emailing him at Dan@ChainOLakesBoatTours.com.

For more specific information about the tours and to make a reservation, visit ChainOLakesBoatTours.com.

Tours leave from the Cypress Resort, 25635 W. Hermann Ave., Antioch. Or arrangements may be able to be made to pick up the party at your location.

top: To enjoy the fun of the speed of a jet ski, the best time to be out on the lake is during the week. The many weekend boaters make the lakes too crowded to find peace of the open water. **left:** Kayakers enjoy a ride through the channels. While on the lakes or in the channel, there will be other boaters, kayakers and even jet skiers out on the lake. **right:** Among the wildlife to be viewed along the Chain O'Lakes are eagles such as these who nest in the area.

SANDRA LANDEN MACHAJ and DAN SHAUGHNESSY OF CHAIN O'LAKES BOAT TOURS Catch All the Action

Snowmobile safety tips to stay safe on the trails

Snowmobiling can be an exhilarating experience and a fun past time for the winter season, but it can also be very dangerous if the proper safety precautions are not taken. To help keep you safe, we've compiled a list of important snowmobile safety tips.

Take a snowmobile safety course

Many states require a snowmobile certificate and each state has its own rules and regulations. A snowmobile safety course will instruct you on how to ride safely and responsibly and teach you the rules. It is especially essential for first time drivers or riders. You will learn riding techniques to help you operate the snowmobile and avoid hazards

Check forecast, trail conditions

It is always a good idea to check the weather and trail conditions to plan ahead. If the trail is frozen, the wind chill is too low, or a blizzard with white out conditions is in the forecast, you will want to plan your ride for another day. Checking the weather also helps you select the proper clothing for the day.

Wear appropriate clothes, gear

Staying warm and dry during your ride will make it more enjoyable and safer. Wear a snowmobile suit, which commonly consists of a jacket and insulated bibs. Under your snowmobile suit, dress in layers. Stay away from cotton because if it gets wet, it will freeze. Choose polyester blends to wick moisture away from your body. In addition, wear goggles or a face shield if you do not have a full-face helmet, socks (no cotton), waterproof gloves, winter hat, facemask and winter boots. Always wear a DOT-approved helmet, not only to keep you warm but to also protect your head from injury. Make sure children have a helmet that properly fits.

Inspect your snowmobile

Make sure your snowmobile is running properly before heading out on the trail. Having your owner's manual handy on your ride is a good idea for extra safety. It is important to follow the recommended service schedule to keep it maintained and running smoothly. Before each ride, check fuel and oil levels, battery, brakes, drive belt, skis, throttle, handlebars, headlights and taillights. Also, make sure you allow

your snowmobile time to run for at least a minute to warm up before taking off.

Bring a buddy

Riding with a friend or in a group is fun and also safer, especially on trails you have never taken before. Someone else can help you if your snowmobile breaks down or if you get into an accident. It is also recommended to tell a friend or family member your plans and route for your ride in case you do get stranded. Keep in mind that cell phones don't always work in remote areas.

Be prepared

Keep a basic first-aid kit in the snowmobile in case of injury. It should include: disinfecting wipes, bandages, hand sanitizer, gauze, adhesive tape and Band-Aids. In addition, carry an emergency kit with waterproof matches, flashlight, compass, map, blanket, water, snacks and a knife. A repair kit is also essential and should include: duct tape, tools, spare belt, tow rope, spark plugs and pry bar.

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



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Stay alert

It is important to be observant and watch for obstacles in your path, such as rocks, fallen trees, barbed wire fences, ditches, open water, other snowmobiles, snow banks, animals, hikers and skiers.

Avoid frozen rivers

It is impossible to gauge the thickness of ice. Ice can easily crack and give way under your snowmobile.

Do not speed

Driving at a moderate pace will allow you to react to an unexpected occurrence on your trail and avoid an accident. Many trails have posted speed limits to follow.

Stay on the trail

Marked trails are safer because they have been groomed for you and are less likely to have hazards. Going off trail can result in accidents because you are treading on unfamiliar terrain.



STOCK PHOTO Catch All the Action

Also, many "public" trails run close to private property. Unless you have received permission from the landowner, stay on the marked trail. Failure to do so can also result in the trail being closed to the public in the future. Be a responsible rider by following the posted

signs and trail markers.

Age appropriate activity

It is also strongly recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics that children under the age of 16 do not operate a snowmobile. The reason for this is because they may lack the skills needed to safely operate the vehicle and due to their stature can be easily injured.

Children younger than 6 should never ride as a passenger according to the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The snowmobile can ride rough and it takes a strong person to hold on tight, especially for long periods of time. Children younger than six lack this strength.

Do not overload your snowmobile

Make sure you check your manufacturer's guide for the

approved number of passengers and also the amount of weight it can carry. Exceeding these maximums either from an additional passenger or heavy gear can increase your chances of accidents and injuries.

Never drink and drive

Just like driving a car, operating a snowmobile while impaired can lead to delayed responses and cause accidents.

Do not pull anything

Snowmobiles are not designed to pull sleds, skiers or saucers and it is very unsafe to do so.

For further protection, your snowmobile needs insurance coverage that's different from what your auto or homeowners insurance can provide. Markel offers specialized snowmobile insurance coverage tailored to meet your needs. Visit markelinsurance.com.







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Prepare for a sledding adventure

Dashing through the snow in a one-horse open sleigh ...

Winter holidays are made all the more merry with the addition of some outdoor recreation. Sleighs and sleds are par for the Christmas course, especially when a bounty of snow is in the forecast.

Sledding has been part of snowy celebrations for ages. Sledding is a funfilled activity, but it can be made an even better time, and a little safer, if revelers learn a little more about it.

Sled styles

Sleds come in many different styles, each with its own advantages. Sleds with metal blades will work like ice skates, balancing riders' weight on two metal runners. These sleds can work well during icy conditions or with hard-packed snow.

Toboggans can fit multiple people, which can increase the fun factor and downhill speeds. Saucer-style sleds are good for

one or two people. Foam liners on some saucers can absorb shock for riders, making those downhill bumps a little easier on the backside. Keep in mind that sleds with steering mechanisms are easier to control, which can equate to safer sledding.

Layer up

It is best to dress in layers when going sledding Even if it seems warm at home, it may be colder and windier at the top of hills. Sweating when it's cold out can increase a person's risk for hypothermia.

According to experts at Timberline Trails, a person who works up a sweat and comes in contact with ambient air when taking a break will feel an immediate chill. This is called evaporative danger, and can be remedied by dressing in layers and trying to stay dry.

Invest in a helmet

Using a helmet while sledding is a good idea, especially for children. At high

speeds, a blow to the head can cause a concussion or worse.

Let others go first

Wait until some sledders have already gone downhill, allowing them to compact the snow, which should make for a smooth ride

Choose safe hills, such as those that are free of bare spots, holes, trees, and obstructions, and do not end abruptly at a road. Hills with a long, flat areas at the end make for easy, safe stopping.

Safety first

Put safety first when sledding. Sled during the daytime so visibility is better. Keep arms and legs on the sled, and only sled feet-first, advises the National Safety Council.

By keeping these guidelines in mind, sledders can make sure this popular winter activity is as safe as it is fun.

(METRO CREATIVE)

By taking a few safety precautions, sledding can be a safe and fun activity for families. Bundle up, grab the toboggan and head on out to the sledding hills.

STOCK PHOTO Catch All the Action



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