On November 8, 2011, after nearly two-years of fundraising, planning, and building, the “Little Woods” nature play area was dedicated with the message of “Get Outside and Play.” After more than a decade and tens of thousands of children, the Little Woods area is ready for an update.

Located behind the Andrew J. Conner Nature Center, the space dedicated to the Little Woods will nearly double in size with the entire area reimagined with new elements to allow children to explore independently within a defined space. The benefits of nature play are well-documented for its positive effects on children’s feelings of independence, connection to the outdoors and helping them develop their decision-making and risk-tolerance skills. The conceptual design for the enhanced Little Woods was completed by Rusty Keeler, author of “Adventures in Risky Play” and owner of Earth Play, a design firm which specializes in creating master plans for nature play areas.

The master plan for the redesigned Little Woods calls for lots of loose pieces for building and manipulating, logs to balance on, a play hut, bridges to skip across and plenty of nooks and crannies for exploration, creativity, and imagination. Jennifer Farrar, Executive Director, notes, “The Little Woods has created countless ways for youngsters to explore, build a connection to the outdoors and build self-assurance over the past decade. We are thrilled that funding from Erie Insurance and Penelec is allowing us to complete a much-needed update and expansion for the next generation of kids in our community.”

The new Little Woods will also include an exciting way for individuals to be part of this renovation and rebirth through the purchase of fence pickets! A portion of the Little Woods will be enclosed with a colorful picket fence. This “Pickets for Play” fundraiser is a chance to buy and personalize the pickets used in the construction of the new fence. Available for $100 each, 2 for $175, or 3 for $250, once purchased, you and your family will have the opportunity to truly make them your own by painting them in your own special way. Add your family names, initials, handprints or special designs to your sponsored pickets to commemorate your connection to Asbury Woods and your belief in the power of nature to shape our children.

Only 220 fence pickets are available so don’t delay! Simply complete and return the enclosed envelope or visit https://www.asburywoods.org/donate/ways-to-give/ to secure yours today.
Happy Summer!

As the temperatures rise, Asbury Woods is ready for a summer full of awesome activities for all ages. As we continue with the Year of Water theme in 2023, we are excited to offer a three-part series for adults that will provide unique glimpses into our local water systems. Also, going along with the Year of Water, in August, Asbury Woods will host our first Fish Field Day. Learn about the fish that depend on our local waterways, test for water quality, learn about sustainable fishing practices and check out our latest batch of trout in the Trout in the Classroom tank.

Of course, all your favorite Asbury Woods activities are on the docket, as well! Kids and adults alike will delight in adventures such as creek walks, First Friday campfires, and our weekly Nature Safari and Drop In and Discover programs. We are also gearing up to welcome over 400 kids for summer camps! Asbury Woods summer camps provide a classic summer experience of outdoor exploration and adventure, creating positive nature encounters that we hope will last a lifetime!

Summer is also our opportunity to make improvements to the property and this year a signature project is the redesign and expansion of the much-beloved Little Woods. We’re excited to bring a fresh take to this creative play space and nearly double the size of the Little Woods. It provides an incredible opportunity to let children have independent, child-guided play in a safe and contained area. Also, our Pickets for Play fundraiser is a fun way to donate to Asbury Woods while adding your personal touch to the new picket fence that will be part of the Little Woods. See the enclosed envelope for pricing or visit our website. We’ll have painting parties over the summer where you can personalize your picket! The dollars raised through this project will support our work in environmental education and help us continue to take care of these treasured 216 acres.

Summer is a magnificent time to visit Asbury Woods. I hope you’ll take advantage of all we have to offer -- whether you visit the trails, attend a program, hike to the creek, take in the wildflowers or marvel at the variety of habitats, there is something for everyone at Asbury Woods. See you in the Woods this summer!

From the Woods,

Jennifer Farrar, CFRE
Executive Director

Vision Statement: Asbury Woods strives to realize a future for Northwestern Pennsylvania where appreciation for and protection of natural places is a deeply held personal and community value.

The Mission of Asbury Woods is to inspire a greater connection to the natural world by protecting, managing and interpreting our property; providing outdoor recreational opportunities; and offering environmental education experiences.
Lake Erie Cyclefest

July 27 - 30, 2023
Registration required

Lake Erie Cyclefest is a four-day celebration of all things bike! Six unique riding events will be offered at locations across Erie County and will benefit several local nonprofit organizations, including Asbury Woods. To learn more visit: www.asburywoods.org/events/cyclefest/

Tour de West County | Saturday, July 29, 8 a.m.
Asbury Woods is thrilled to be carrying forward the ride tradition of Tour de West County, a mix of routes that utilize portions of the original rides while mixing in new sights, roads, and challenges. Tour de West County offers choices of 12, 25, or 50-mile ride routes and will feature a post-ride picnic for registered cyclists.

Sponsored by:

Fish Field Day

August 26, 2023
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
FREE, open to the public

Join Asbury Woods and local partners for this fun-filled day exploring fish! Get up close and personal with our resident trout through our Trout in the Classroom program. Meet living creatures that are on a trout’s menu, test water quality to see if fish can survive, and learn all about tying flies and fly fishing. Families are sure to have a swimming good time!
Homeschool Summer Series
Dates: June 14, July 25, August 15
Time: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.
Age: Ages 5 – 7 accompanied by an adult, Ages 8 – 14 may attend unaccompanied.
Location: June & August at Nature Center, July at Brown’s Farm
Supporting Donor Fee: $8
Program Fee: $10
June 14 – Pond Safari
Explore the living things in our wetlands.
July 25 – Kid’s Creek Walk
Hike to the creek and explore the critters living there.
August 15 – Children’s Yoga and Relaxation Hike
Take a mental health day and enjoy yoga and a relaxation hike in nature.

Preschool Outdoor Yoga with Abi
Dates: Wednesdays
Session 1: June 7 – 28
Session 2: July 5 – 26 (not July 12)
Session 3: August 9 – 30
Time: 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.
Age: 2 – 5 years with an adult
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $45 per session
Program Fee: $60 per session
Join your child in a relaxing, fun, bonding, and balancing yoga class! This class will teach your child to be calm, meditate, be silly, and be peaceful! Please bring a yoga mat or towel, water, sunglasses, SPF, bug spray, and weather appropriate clothing. The class will take place indoors during inclement weather.

Veterinary Medicine 101 Day Camp
Dates: Thursday, July 6
Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Age: 12 – 16 years
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $75
Program Fee: $90
Are you interested in a career in veterinary medicine? Join certified veterinary technician, Patti Cioccio, for this day full of lessons and activities designed to teach you about this career field. Topics will include general wellness exams, bandaging, suturing, anatomy, CPR practice, and much more. This is a great starting point for anyone wanting to learn more about the field of veterinary medicine.

Drop-in and Discover
Dates: May 6 – August 19 (no drop-in Aug. 26)
Time: 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.
Age: All ages
Location: Nature Center
FREE
No pre-registration required.
Looking for something wild to do? Stop in each Saturday to discover something new about the natural world. No pre-registration required. Check our website for upcoming themes www.asburywoods.org/programs/program-schedule/
Drop-in and Discover is presented by National Fuel
Family Owl Prowl
**Date:** Wednesday, June 7  
**Time:** 8:00 – 9:30 p.m.  
**Age:** All Ages  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $6  
**Program Fee:** $8  

Kids and adults alike will delight in this unique evening learning about owls and attempting to get them to answer our calls. The program includes a brief indoor portion followed by a hike on the trails.

Wildflower Walk
**Date:** Saturday, May 6  
**Time:** 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.  
**Age:** All Ages  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $3  
**Program Fee:** $5

Experience the magic of Asbury Woods’ spring wildflowers on this hike through our property with a Naturalist.

Pond Safari
**Date:** Saturday, May 27  
**Time:** 2:30 – 3:30 p.m.  
**Age:** All Ages  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $5  
**Program Fee:** $7

What animals will you find as you explore the watery habitats at Asbury Woods? We will provide the equipment to explore these wetland habitats.

First Friday Campfires
**Date:** Fridays, June 2, July 7, August 4  
**Time:** 7:30 – 9:30 p.m.  
**Age:** All Ages  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Free, no pre-registration required**

Bring your chairs and hangout by the campfire behind the Nature Center on the first Friday of every month throughout the summer. S’mores ingredients will be available for purchase in our gift shop.

Twilight Treks
**Dates:** Tuesdays June 13, July 11, August 29  
**Time:** 8:00 – 9:00 p.m.  
**Age:** Adults and children ages 10 and up  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $3  
**Program Fee:** $5

Enjoy the beauty of Asbury Woods as the sun dips below the horizon on this guided hike with a Naturalist.

Summer Solstice Hike
**Date:** Wednesday, June 21  
**Time:** 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
**Age:** All Ages  
**Location:** Brown’s Farm  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $3  
**Program Fee:** $5

Celebrate the official start of summer with a guided hike at Brown’s Farm.

Creek Walk
**Date:** Saturday, July 29  
**Time:** 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. or  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 29  
**Time:** 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.  
**Age:** Adults and children 8 years and up  
**Location:** Brown’s Farm  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $5  
**Program Fee:** $7

Come with us on a hike to Walnut Creek from Brown’s Farm and learn all about the impact of this important water resource.

Family Geocaching
**Date:** Saturday, July 15  
**Time:** 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.  
**Age:** Adults and children 8 years and up  
**Location:** Nature Center  
**Supporting Donor Fee:** $5  
**Program Fee:** $7

Participate in the world’s largest treasure hunt! Learn how to use a handheld GPS and find geocaches in the woods using our “practice” cache course. Then, set out on your own to find official geocaches at Asbury Woods, in Erie County, and around the world!

Nature in Your Neighborhood
**Every Thursday, June 15 – August 17**  
**2:00 – 3:00 p.m.**  
**All Ages**  
**FREE, open to the public**

Join Asbury Woods for hands-on, minds-on nature and science-based activities every Thursday at different city parks throughout the summer. Hooked on Books for Kids will be partnering with Asbury Woods to hand out a nature-themed book to each child attending.

- June 15: Bayview Park  
  **Underwater Creatures**, Find Creatures Big and Small
- June 22: Rodger Young Park  
  *I Spy!* Nature Scavenger Hunt
- June 29: Perry Square  
  **Insides & Outsides**, Explore Animal Pelts & Skulls
- July 6: Washington Park  
  **What’s in My Water?** Testing Water Quality
- July 13: McKinley Park  
  **Bees & Butterflies**, All About Pollinators
- July 20: Bayview Park  
  *I Spy!* Nature Scavenger Hunt
- July 27: Rodger Young Park  
  **Underwater Creatures**, Find Creatures Big and Small
- August 3: Perry Square  
  **Bees & Butterflies**, All About Pollinators
- August 10: McKinley Park  
  **Insides & Outsides**, Explore Animal Pelts & Skulls
- August 17: Washington Park  
  **What’s in My Water?** Testing Water Quality

**Sponsored by**

H. Richard Obermanns

The Erie Community Foundation

Helping today... Shaping tomorrow
Happy Hour Hikes
Dates: Fridays, May 19, June 30, July 28, and August 25
Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Age: Adults 21 years and older
Location: May and June at Nature Center, July and August at Brown’s Farm
Supporting Donor Fee: $10
Program Fee: $12

Unwind each month this summer as you enjoy a beautiful, guided hike through Asbury Woods followed by a refreshing beer or seltzer after the hike.

Cold Process Soap Making
Date: Thursday, May 25
Time: 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
Age: Adults
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $28
Program Fee: $32
Includes all supplies.

Experience the magic of soapmaking using regular kitchen equipment and inexpensive ingredients. Each attendee will make 2 bars of soap from natural ingredients. This class will be taught by an experienced soap maker and all safety equipment will be provided.

Outdoor Yoga with Abi
Dates: Thursdays
Session 1: June 8 – 29
Session 2: July 6 – 27 (not July 13)
Session 3: August 10 – 31
Time: 8:30 – 9:45 a.m.
Age: Ages 16 and up
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $50 per session
Program Fee: $65 per session

A yoga program where classes take place in the beautiful outdoors! Students learn body movements, breathing, and mental relaxation while relieving stress and maintaining health and well-being. Please bring a yoga mat or towel, water, sunglasses, SPF, bug spray, and weather appropriate clothing. The class will take place indoors during inclement weather.

Asbury Woods provides a natural setting that makes a perfect backdrop to any special occasion. We have several unique and beautiful rooms and areas on the grounds that would make your special occasion a memorable experience for you and your guests.

Visit our website to see spaces and pricing asburywoods.org/rentals/

Family Compass Course
Date: Saturday, August 12
Time: 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Age: Adults and children 8 years and up
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $5
Program Fee: $7

Work together and with a compass to find your way through our compass courses. This guided program will take place on our trails so be sure to dress for the weather.

Mushroom Discovery Hikes
Dates: Sunday, April 30
Time: 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.
or Dates: Saturday, June 24
Time: 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Age: Adults and Teens
Location: Nature Center
Supporting Donor Fee: $5
Program Fee: $7

Join local mushroom hunters as they share how to identify a wide range of fungi while strolling the Asbury Woods property. April 30 will be led by Dr. Matthew Gacura from Gannon University and June 24 will be led by John Vanco and Kelly Armor, avid amateur mycologists. Asbury Woods does not allow harvesting, so be ready to enjoy the hunt and take home only memories and photos.

Dog Days of Summer
Dates: Mondays, May 8, June 19, July 10, and August 14
Time: 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.
Age: Adults
Location: Nature Center May and August, Brown’s Farm June and July
FREE, registration required

Dog Days are back! Join ABC Certified Dog Trainer Lynn Yusz for a guided hike with your four-legged companion through the beautiful Asbury Woods trail system. Please only one dog per person.
ADULTS

**Flower Pressing**
*Date:* Tuesday, June 27  
*Time:* 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
*Age:* Adults  
*Location:* Nature Center  
*Supporting Donor Fee:* $6  
*Program Fee:* $8  

Summer is a wonderful time to take in all the wildflowers at Asbury Woods. During this program you will collect and press wildflowers. *Note: flowers take time to dry after being pressed and can be picked up after July 24.*

**Scarf Painting**
*Date:* Friday, August 4  
*Time:* 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.  
*Age:* Ages 16 and up  
*Location:* Nature Center  
*Supporting Donor Fee:* $45  
*Program Fee:* $55  

Does your wardrobe need a lift? Join PAWilds teaching artist Julie Mader for a beginner-friendly silk painting workshop. Participants will use dyes formulated for silk fibers to turn a blank scarf into wearable art. Students are encouraged to have a color palette in mind or bring along an inspirational photo. *Note: Dyes will be steam-set by Julie in her studio after the workshop and will be available for pickup 2 weeks after the workshop date.*

**Pressed Flower Craft**
*Date:* Tuesday, August 8  
*Time:* 6:00 – 7:00 p.m.  
*Age:* Ages 16 and up  
*Location:* Nature Center  
*Supporting Donor Fee:* $15  
*Program Fee:* $18  

Use pressed flowers to create a unique glass candle jar. All materials will be provided but you are welcome to also bring your own pressed and dried flowers.

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**Water Systems Tours**
For our Year of Water, Asbury Woods is taking you on a summer-long tour of our local water systems. Join us as we explore freshwater conservation at Headwaters Park, drinking water at Erie Water Works, and the Tom Ridge Environmental Center.

**Water Conservation at Headwaters Park**
*Date:* Tuesday, June 6  
*Time:* 4:00 – 5:30 p.m.  
*Age:* Adults  
*Location:* Headwaters Park, 1927 Wager Road  
*Program Fee:* FREE, registration required  

Join us at Headwaters Park with the Erie County Conservation District to learn about protecting our local freshwater ecosystems.

**Water Testing at Tom Ridge Environmental Center**
*Date:* Thursday, July 13  
*Time:* 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
*Age:* Adults  
*Location:* Tom Ridge Environmental Center, 301 Peninsula Drive  
*Program Fee:* FREE, registration required  

Meet us at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center to learn how the Regional Science Consortium tests local freshwater to make sure the public stays safe. We will also see a tour of the testing laboratory.

**Drinking Water at Erie Water Works**
*Date:* Wednesday, August 9  
*Time:* 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
*Age:* Adults  
*Location:* The foot of Sommerheim Drive in Millcreek Township  
*Program Fee:* FREE, registration required  

Let’s go to Erie Water Works’ Wadlelewski Water Treatment Plant to tour their newly renovated facility and learn about the state of the art filtration system EWW uses to treat drinking water.

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*Pre-registration is required for all programs, unless otherwise noted*
Try our Low Ropes Experience!

Our low ropes course is a great team building experience for work colleagues, college clubs, and families! With the help of a trained program facilitator, groups grow their skills in team building, communication, problem-solving, risk-taking and leadership in an outdoor setting. The Asbury Woods Low Ropes Course is a positive, physically active experience that invites participants to challenge themselves in new ways.

To schedule your low ropes experience contact Sarah Bennett at (814) 836-6178 or sbennett@asburywoods.org.

Upcoming Donor Events

Generous donors are the foundation of our ability to fulfill our mission. Throughout the year, we schedule events to gather with donors to celebrate shared success, offer insights into strategic planning initiatives, update on behind-the-scenes plans, and more. Save the date for the following events:

- Director’s Breakfast, donors who have donated $500 or more this fiscal year are invited to breakfast with Jennifer Farrar on June 14, 2023.
- Annual Meeting, donors who have given $250 or more this fiscal year are invited to attend the celebration of success and gratitude, along with a short business meeting with the board of directors on September 19, 2023.

Invitations to follow.