



# Seedlings

Volume 9, Issue 4

## Music in the Park Provides a Swinging Good Time



Music in the Park attendees enjoy the Batavia Swing Band under the sunset

Over 230 people gathered at DeWitt Recreation Area on August 10th for the annual Music in the Park, presented by the ACORNS (Association for Conservation of Recreational and Natural Spaces).

This year the Batavia Swing Band was joined by a vocalist and serenaded the crowd with tunes both from modern times and a few oldies. Ice cream was available thanks to the Pink Cow ice cream truck. The sugary treats and good music got more than a few people on their feet and on the dance floor! It was wonderful to see our community come together for a fun, family-friendly summer event by the water.



Music in the Park 2024

Thank you to all who make Music in the Park possible each year!

If you would like to learn more about the ACORNS, and how you can get involved, please visit:  
[www.geneseecorn.org/](http://www.geneseecorn.org/)



### In This Issue

Music in the Park	1
Summer Camps at Genesee County Park	2–3
Thank You Intern Kieran Kelley	4
Run for the ACORNS	5
Fall Program Schedule	6–8
Volunteer Opportunities	9
Meet the ACORNS	10–11
Rex and the GCP Dog Patrol	12–13
New E-Reservation System!	14

**Yes! WE'RE OPEN**

### Interpretive Nature Center Hours October–May:

Thursday–Friday:  
10 am–4 pm

Saturday–Sunday:  
12–4 pm





# Environmental Science Summer Camp at Genesee County Park

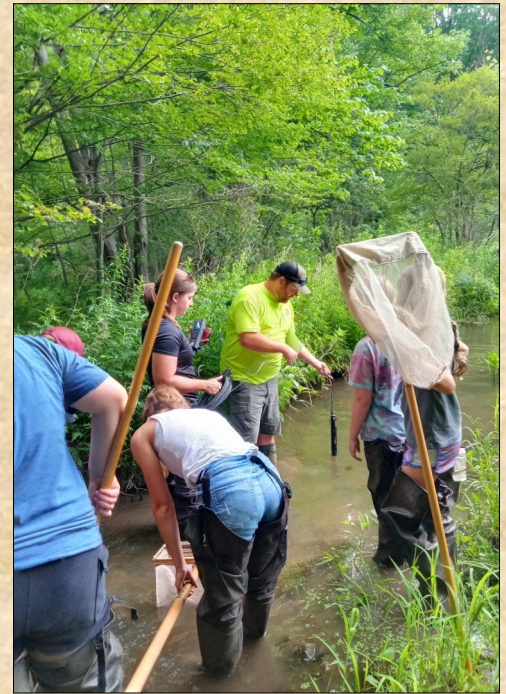
Summer is all about camp at the Genesee County Parks! We had a blast hosting two annual day camps this summer—Environmental Science Summer Camp and Camp Hard Hat. Both camps engage students in hands-on activities throughout the park that aim to inspire them to explore careers in the environmental science and skilled trades fields.

Environmental Science Summer Camp is for students entering 7th—10th grade and includes 5 days of hands-on activities and field trips. Our schedule was jam packed! We did a stream study with scientists from the Genesee County Soil & Water Conservation District, learned survival skills with NYS Parks, had some friendly competition with an Olympics-themed day, took a field trip to Letchworth State Park, learned about wilderness first aid, and met a Environmental Conservation Officer and their K-9 partner!



Environmental Science Summer Camp at Letchworth State Park

The next generation is going to be an important part of protecting our environment! Attending Environmental Science Summer Camp is a great way to spark an interest in the natural world and all of the related career paths to explore. Hope to see you there in 2025!



Visiting environmental professionals from NY State Parks, NY Department of Environmental Conservation and the Genesee County Soil and Water Conservation District visit Environmental Science Camp!



# Happy 10 Years to Camp Hard Hat!

Camp Hard Hat celebrated its ten year anniversary this year in the place where it all began, Genesee County Park & Forest.

Karyn Winters of the Business Education Alliance (BEA) and Rich Monroe and Kelly Mileham of the GV BOCES Building Trades program assembled 30 campers ages 12 to 15 for the 10th annual Camp Hard Hat at Genesee County Park.

This week-long day camp provides students with an opportunity to learn about the skilled trades and then put that knowledge into action. Each year they build something and unveil it at the end of camp. These are no small feats—Camp Hard Hat campers have built everything from picnic tables and bird nest boxes to bridges and pavilions! You'll notice dedication signs hung on each of their projects throughout the park.



Camp Hard Hat instructors, counselors, and campers cut the ribbon to unveil the bridge they built near Pavilion A.

*Photo credit: The Daily News*

This year, campers spent their week building a brand new bridge near Pavilion A. In addition to that, they refreshed the mulch around playgrounds at the park to help keep everyone safe when playing and fixed up posts along the Conservation Trail.

In addition to learning the principles of design, construction, and safety, campers learned about careers from guest speakers and industry leaders! Through Camp Hard Hat, they are introduced to careers and opportunities that they may not have been aware of, opening the door to possibilities as they think about their futures!

Check out this newsletters edition of the "Rex and the GCP Dog Patrol" cartoon which features a story about Camp Hard Hat on page #13.



Camp Hard Hat campers working hard to build a bridge near Pavilion A.

*Photo credit: Camp Hard Hat*

Get ready for summer camp at the Genesee County Parks! If you would like to receive an email when camp registration opens in 2025, contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov or call (585) 344—1122.



## Thank You Environmental Education Intern Kieran Kelley!

Seedlings,

Hello! It's Kieran again, and let me start this letter by saying how honored I am to have been given such a great opportunity to intern at the park this summer. Getting a chance to be part of environmental education programs for hundreds of people has been such an amazing experience.

This internship was admittedly initially outside of my comfort zone. My experience with macroinvertebrates was limited to crayfish hunting. My kayaking experience was next to zero. The last time I had touched a fishing pole might have been during George Bush's presidency. Now I know to flip over rocks in creeks to find caddisfly casings, I have quadrupled the amount of times I have kayaked this summer, and while I'm no master angler, I can put together a fishing pole. This whole experience expanded my love for nature, and has given me some tools to share this appreciation with others.

To the ACORNS, I have learned so much from you all and I continue to be inspired by your dedication to the park. Thank you so much for sharing this special place with me this summer and for everything you do. To Ruby, thank you for allowing me to feed and walk you this summer with minimal scratching. I will miss our chats. And of course, I could not write a goodbye letter without a massive thank you to Claudia. Your help throughout this entire process has been invaluable. I could not have asked for a better person to work for this summer!

Even though my time as an intern has come to a close, I will always remember and cherish my summer here at the Genesee County Park and Forest. I look forward to coming back to visit and I hope to see all of you again very soon!

-Kieran

P.S. If you're someone reading this article considering whether or not to apply to this internship, do it!



Kieran kayaking at DeWitt Recreation Area (left) and teaching about honeybees (right)



## Join the Run for the ACORNS on Sunday, October 6th!

Come join us at the Genesee County Park & Forest Sunday on October 6, 2024. If you can't make it that day there will be a virtual option to run the 5K or 10K course at the park between 7AM Friday October 4 and 5PM Saturday October 5, 2024 using the mobile RaceJoy tracking app.

Walk or run on single and double track trails through the forest, along a creek and up and down rolling hills in the Genesee County Park & Forest, with an estimated 100 feet of climb in the 10K loop. Trails are very wide and easy to negotiate (minimal rocks and roots). The course starts on asphalt and then leads into the woods for a truly beautiful run through the countryside.

All proceeds benefit ACORNS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) "friends of the park" group that supports the Genesee County parks by connecting people with nature through outdoor learning, education and fun!



WE PROUDLY PRESENT THE 12TH ANNUAL

# 2024 RUN FOR THE ACORNS

SUNDAY OCTOBER 6, 2024

## 5K/10K TRAIL RUN/WALK

WITH A VIRTUAL OPTION

GENESEE COUNTY PARK & FOREST - AREA B, EAST BETHANY, NY 14054  
CHECK-IN STARTS AT 8:00 A.M.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION OPTIONS:  
[HTTPS://WWW.GENESEEACORNS.ORG/RUN](https://www.geneseeacorns.org/run)  
[HTTPS://RUNSIGNUP.COM/RACE/?RACEID=35565](https://runsignup.com/race/?raceid=35565)  
GENESEEACORNS@GMAIL.COM



PROCEEDS BENEFIT THE GENESEE COUNTY PARKS AND BREAST CANCER RESEARCH & AWARENESS!



Smiling Runners and Walkers at the Run For the ACORNS!



# Fall Programs at the Genesee County Parks 2024

## Guided Dog Walks

Saturday, September 7th at Genesee County Park &  
Saturday, November 16th at DeWitt Recreation Area  
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.

\$5/dog. Proceeds benefit Volunteers for Animals.

## Honeybee Demonstration

Wednesday, September 18th | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Join us to learn more about the honeybees that live at Genesee County Park! Led by Charlie, the "Bee Man" and long-time park volunteer! With over 50 years of experience beekeeping, Charlie will share his insights, stories, and fun facts all about honeybees.

This program includes a live beehive demonstration and honey taste-test!

\$5/person, \$10/family. Meet at Interpretive Center.

## Watching Monarchs

Saturday, September 21st | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Capture the last few days of summer with a visit to a butterfly meadow and a journey into their world! See how butterflies are tagged and released as part of a nation-wide Monarch Butterfly conservation project.

Kids can explore the meadow with nets and bug catchers! Recommended for ages 4 and up!

\$5/person, \$10/family. Meet at Interpretive Center.



Monarch Butterfly

## Grandparents Day at DeWitt Recreation Area

Saturday, September 28th | 10:00 am - 1:00 pm  
Kids and their grandparents are invited to DeWitt Recreation Area for a day of outdoor fun! Enjoy a variety of nature-themed activities such as scavenger hunts, geocaching, bug catching, and fishing.

Meet at DeWitt Recreation Area Pavilion 2.

Cost for attendance is \$5/child and \$5/parent;

Grandparents are FREE.

## Run for the ACORNS

Sunday, October 6th

9:00 am 10K Start, 9:15 am 5k Start

Come join us at the Genesee County Park & Forest for a fun run or walk in the woods! All proceeds benefit ACORNS, a non-profit 501(c)(3) "friends of the park" group that supports the Genesee County parks by connecting people with nature through outdoor learning, education and fun!



Run for the ACORNS finishers

## Fall Foliage Sunset Walk

Saturday, October 19th | 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Fall colors come alive in WNY! Join us as for a gentle walk through meadow and forest habitats to enjoy the beautiful colors of fall foliage, wildflowers, and the sunset at Genesee County Park & Forest.

\$5/person, \$10/family. Meet at Interpretive Center.





# Fall Programs at the Genesee County Parks 2024

## Winter Woods Walk

Wednesday, December 4th | 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

Explore the Winter Woods at Genesee County Park and discover something new! We'll trek through the frozen forest, discovering tracks in the snow and winter wildlife. Snowshoes will be available to borrow, weather permitting.

\$5/person, \$10/family. Meet at Interpretive Center.

## Create a Critter

Saturday, December 14th

Session 1: 10:00 am-12:00 pm Session 2: 1:00 pm-3:00 pm

Let your imagination run WILD! Meet in the activity room of the Interpretive Nature Center for an eclectic spread of natural craft materials. Hot glue together a perfect gift for your loved ones, make edible garlands and ornaments for wildlife and trim the trees in the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center!

There will be two sessions on Saturday, December 14th; the first will take place from 10:00am to 12:00pm, second from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. \$5/person, \$10/family. Meet at Interpretive Center.



Critter Creations and fun at our annual Create a Critter program!

## More Information and Registration at:

<https://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/eventsprograms.php>

**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 visit our website <http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks/>, or contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at [Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov](mailto:Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov) or (585) 344-1122.**



# Fall Program Flyers 2024

GENESEE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY

## Guided Walks



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Fall colors come alive in WNY! Join us as for a gentle walk through meadow and forest habitats to enjoy the beautiful colors of fall foliage, wildflowers, and the sunset at Genesee County Park & Forest. Meet at the GCP Interpretive Center Parking Lot. Program Fees help support the park! Cost for attendance is \$5 per person or \$10 per family.

**Guided Dog Walk at DeWitt Recreation Area | Saturday, November 16th | 10AM - 11 AM**

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. \$5 / dog. Proceeds benefit Volunteers for Animals! Meet at DeWitt Recreation Area Pavilion 2.

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**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/GenCoParkRegistration>

**Questions?** Contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov or (585) 344-1122



GENESEE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY

## Watching Monarchs



**Saturday, September 21st | 1 PM - 3 PM**

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Recommended for ages 4 and up! Meet at the GCP Interpretive Center.

Program Fees help support the park! Cost for attendance is \$5 per person or \$10 per family.



**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/GenCoParkRegistration>



**Questions?** Contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov or (585) 344-1122



GENESEE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY

## CELEBRATE GRANDPARENTS DAY

AT DEWITT RECREATION AREA

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28TH | 10 AM - 1 PM**

Kids and their grandparents are invited to DeWitt Recreation Area for a day of outdoor fun! Enjoy a variety of nature-themed activities such as scavenger hunts, geocaching, bug catching, and fishing.

Program Fees help support the park! Cost for attendance is \$5/child and \$5/parent; grandparents are FREE.



**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/GenCoParkRegistration>



**Questions?** Contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov or (585) 344-1122



GENESEE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION & FORESTRY

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This program includes a live beehive demonstration and honey taste-test!

Program fees help support the park! Cost for attendance is \$5 per person or \$10 per family.



Honey will be available for sale! Proceeds benefit the Genesee County ACORNs!



**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/GenCoParkRegistration>

**Questions?** Contact the Conservation Education Program Coordinator at Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov or (585) 344-1122





# Internships and Volunteer Positions Available

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

**Volunteers make park events and programs possible!!**

- Maintain exhibits at Interpretive Nature Center
- \* Lead and assist recreation and outdoor education programs at the parks
  - \* Guide park visitors
  - \* Help with park improvement projects
  - \* Monitor park wildlife
  - \* Get experience

**Contact: Claudia Nusstein, Conservation Education Program Coordinator at (585) 344-1122 or email [Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov](mailto:Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov)**

## 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 at the Genesee County Park 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 RSVP Volunteer Placement Program at 585-343-1611 or visit the RSVP of Genesee County website

[https://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/office\\_for\\_the\\_aging/volunteer\\_opportunities.php](https://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/office_for_the_aging/volunteer_opportunities.php)

## Scout Opportunities

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

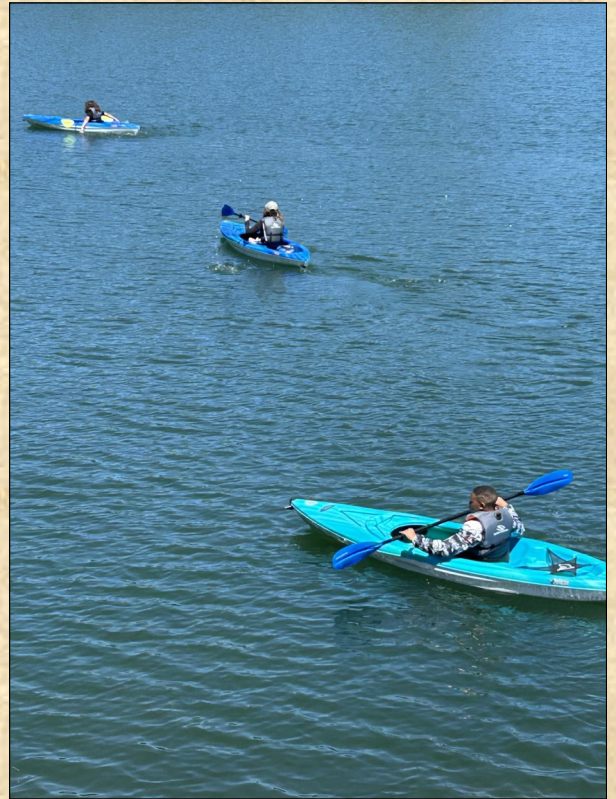
- 🌐 **Assisting with programs**
  - 🌐 **Creating trail signs**
  - 🌐 **Monitoring nest boxes**
- 🌐 **Maintaining and working in the ACORNS Outdoor Learning Center**
- 🌐 **Hosting duties and cleaning the Interpretive Nature Center**
- 🌐 **Providing turtle care**
- 🌐 **Participating in a number of other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

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

**Please contact Claudia Nusstein at (585) 344-1122 or email [Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov](mailto:Claudia.Nusstein@geneseeny.gov)**



# ACORNS Highlights from Summer 2024



ACORNS lead students in kayaking at DeWitt Recreation Area



ACORNS at Music in the Park (top), Lewis teaching about honeybees (middle) and George guiding a pollinator adventure in the meadow!



Lewis and Chris spend the day sprucing up the Outdoor Learning Center!



# Meet the ACORNS

(Association for the Conservation Of Recreational and Natural Spaces)

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:

*Chris Caputi President*  
*Ashley Waite Vice President*  
*Julia Garver Treasurer*  
*Kathy Woika Secretary*  
*Ashley Waite Membership Specialist*  
Chris Nickerson  
Jerome Gentry  
Lewis Tandy  
George Squires  
Pete Stanbridge

## Members:

Gabe & Michelle Abdella  
The Allen Family  
Charlie Augrom and Lucy Sargent  
Nancy Balbick  
Sarah Balduf  
Sam & Ann Barone  
Jenna Benedict  
Beth Berkemeier  
Brian & Renee Burns  
Melissa & Christopher Caputi  
Sonya & Carl Christensen  
Guy & Patricia Clark  
Tom & Linda Clark  
Adam Clark  
The Dambra Family  
Alea Delong  
Barb & Mike Easton  
Julia Garver & Joe Ruh  
The Gentry Family

Barb Easton  
Esther Leadley  
The Lyaski Family  
Cassandra Pettry & James Nesbitt  
Shelia & Paul Hess  
Bernard Hoerbelt  
Brian Kemp  
Jeff & Priscilla Langdon  
Mary Lou & Jack Lemkuil  
Kathy Lee  
The Lewis Family  
Krysia & Jon Mager  
Kyle & Ashley McKeown  
Mary Miller  
Katie Mohler  
Bill & Connie Moon  
Jim & Claudia Morrison  
Sharon Mosher  
Christine & Brad Nickerson

The Nusstein Family  
The Osborn Family  
Pat Patota  
David Rumsby  
Jim Schmitt  
George Squires  
Pete Stanbridge  
Sandy & Dave Steele  
Lewis & Bonnie Tandy  
Kristin Turturo  
Chase & Bianca Vallance  
The Vandenbosch Family  
Evan Verbanic  
Mitchell & Morgan Wardell  
Kathie & Jack Woika  
Kayrn Winters  
Pam Zola

## Remember to renew your membership for 2024!

*If you are not on this list, that means you need to renew your membership.*

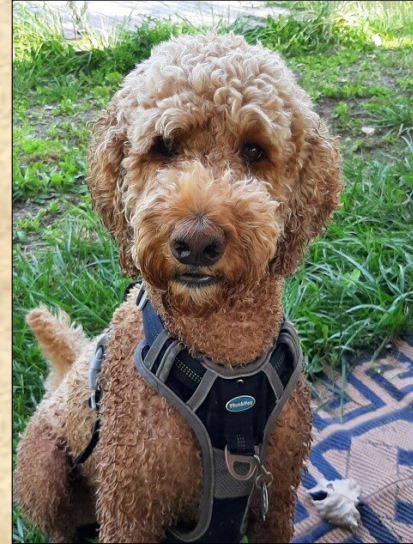
To renew or become a member, please visit the ACORNS website or contact Ashley McKeown, ACORNS Membership Specialist at [acornsoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:acornsoutreach@gmail.com) Send renewals to ACORNS at PO Box 787 Stafford, NY 14143.

ACORNS meetings are held every 4th Wednesday evening of the month except December.



# Rex Introduces the Genesee County Park Dog Patrol

Hi! Rex here, in this issue of Seedlings I would like to introduce you to Sparky and Piper, two new members of the Genesee County Park Dog Patrol! The GCP Dog Patrol highlights our furry friends who love spending time at the park.



Sparky (left) and Piper (right)

Sparky is a 7 month old Golden Retriever. You may remember in a previous issue, we lost Bailey. Sparky lives with Bailey's humans! She is full of life and always wants to play even when I don't. She will grow and make Bailey proud of her role with the GCP dog patrol!

Piper is a 2 year old Golden Doodle. Piper is great at helping with hikes and keeping everyone safe. He is especially good at calming down first time dogs that are sometimes nervous on the walks. He has a great ability to know just what they need!

I recently ran into Sparky and Piper with a group of dogs I did not know. They told me that they were with a group doing training with Miss Victoria! They love it! They meet new friends, learn some neat stuff, and get treats! What a great park we all work at. We're so lucky to have amazing trails, guided dog walks, wonderful friends, and training.

For more information about all of the great dog events at the park, please call the park office at 585-344-1122!

Would your dog like to join Rex and the GCP Dog Patrol? Join Rex's monthly dog walks on Saturdays from April—November. Save the date for:

**September 7th at Genesee County Park & Forest  
and November 16th at DeWitt Rec Area**

Register for Dog Walks here <https://bit.ly/GenCoParkRegistration> or by calling 585-344-1122



# REX!

## & THE GCP DOG PATROL

Illustrated by Calista Light.  
Written by Pete Stanbridge.



*The Camp Hard Hat Team: Karyn Winters of the Business Education Alliance (BEA), Rich Monroe and Kelly Mileham of the GV BOCES Building Trades, and Rex of the GCP Dog Patrol!*





**Genesee County Park & Forest  
Interpretive Nature Center**

11095 Bethany Center Rd, East Bethany, NY 14054

Phone: 585-344-1122

[www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks](http://www.co.genesee.ny.us/departments/parks)

**NEW E-RESERVATION SYSTEM!**



The Genesee County Parks Department is thrilled to announce the launch of a new e-reservation system for pavilions at DeWitt Recreation Area and Genesee County Park & Forest!

Easily book your favorite pavilion online 24/7  
with real-time availability!

Access the system directly at: [bit.ly/GenCoPavilion](https://bit.ly/GenCoPavilion)



Genesee County Parks,  
Recreation & Forestry

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