

Recreation Outreach Programs

By Karen Reis, Recreation Manager

Ten years ago, Lake Metroparks initiated the Recreation Outreach program as a result of the need to better accommodate the programming dynamics of our local community. A well established recreation program base was already in existence, but it generally catered to families and individuals. The Recreation Outreach Program is structured to accommodate school groups, scouts, and community groups allowing them to experience a recreational adventure while in an educational setting. The success of the program is a result of accommodating groups with a menu of opportunities throughout the year. Many opportunities can also be brought to your own "backyard" as a traveling program. This makes the programs more affordable for the groups as it eliminates their transportation costs and allows us to provide multiple groups with a quality experience during a limited time period.

Our seasonal offering of programs creates opportunities for groups to participate year-round in our activities. These programs include our ever popular "Survivor Challenge" that can accommodate large groups of participants and helps to create team building and cooperation. We also offer many Girl Scout and Boy Scout requirements that help leaders complete badges. Since the outreach program began in 1997 with 44 programs, this program has grown to offer 536 programs servicing 9,511 participants in 2005.

Our outreach programs are offered year-round and provide seasonal activities for our participants to choose from. These activities are provided as a traveling program, which allows us to go to your facility or you can come to one of our parks at your personally scheduled time. These programs include a variety of adventure and educational activities, Outdoor Education Days and birthday parties. The selections provide a variety of active and passive activities, including golf, cross-country skiing and pie baking. Other activities include geocaching, fishing, kayaking and capture the flag, just to name a few. Birthday party themes are equally varied with options changing with each season. Most programs are one hour in length.

The Lake Metroparks Recreation Outreach Program has allowed us to reach a much greater number of participants. Flexibility in activities and utilizing down times of facilities and staff has made the program a success. Outreach programs are available seven days a week. School groups utilize the traveling cross-country ski and golf programs as a complement to regular gym classes. These activities are used as rewards, to meet badge requirements, or just for fun. Please call Karen Reis at (440) 256-2126 for more information or to request a brochure.

