

# PARKS PLUS!

A QUARTERLY GUIDE TO THE ACTIVITIES,  
PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES OF  
LAKE METROPARKS

**Lake County Probate Judge**  
Ted Klammer

**Lake Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners**  
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Frank J. Polivka

The Park Board invites you to join us at an upcoming Board of Park Commissioners meeting and let us know how Lake Metroparks is doing. Meetings are held at Lake Metroparks Administrative Offices in Concord Township. For a meeting schedule please call 440-639-7275.

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Front cover:  
Spring Paddle on the Grand by Brian Fowler

A letter from a

## *nature neighbor*

Dear Friends,

Although my kind is fairly common across the eastern U.S., early spring may be the only time that you have a chance to see me! The warming temperature on a rainy night in early spring triggers my instincts to crawl out of hiding and find a nearby forest pond. Females lay their eggs in the pond and the next generation of spotted salamanders is born. These ponds found in our forests during springtime are essential for my family's survival! They are called vernal pools (vernal means spring), and they often dry up when summer arrives.

I spend most of the year out of sight in hardwood forests where it is dark and damp, underneath leaves and logs or in underground burrows made by other animals. My home is a great place to find my favorite foods, which I hunt at night: worms, insects, spiders, slugs and millipedes—YUM! I am pretty large for a salamander (average length is 7 inches) and I can live up to 20 years in the wild. If you sign up for one of the Amphibian Discovery Hikes in the parks (page 28), maybe you and I can get better acquainted!

Your neighbor,  
Spotted Salamander  
(*Ambystoma maculatum*)

*The warming temperature on a rainy night in early spring triggers my instincts to crawl out of hiding and find a nearby forest pond.*



Did You Know?  
If conditions are just right, there can be hundreds of spotted salamanders migrating to vernal pools on the same night!

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Spring 2012

*Keep this activity guide!  
Information inside  
is relevant until  
June 1, 2012*

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### DID YOU KNOW?

- *Parks Plus!* is available online at lakemetroparks.com.
- *Parks Plus!* is inserted four times a year in *The News-Herald*.

Look for the summer issue:

Sunday, May 6 inserted in *The News-Herald* (home delivery only)

- *Parks Plus!* may be picked up when you visit a Lake Metroparks facility including Farmpark, Penitentiary Glen Nature Center, Lake Metroparks Registration Department, Administrative Offices and more.
- *Parks Plus!* will be directly mailed to households that have registered for a Lake Metroparks program or reserved a shelter or facility within the previous 12 months.