

LAKE METROPARKS

FARM PARK

Almanac



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FARMPARK IS A LAKE METROPARKS FACILITY. Farmpark’s mission is to provide a connection to our agricultural roots while helping people understand where our food and clothing come from. *Farmpark Almanac* is published three times a year by Lake Metroparks. This publication is sent free to Farmpark members.

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ISSN 1545-3162  Printed on recycled paper.

The Early Years of the Draft Horse Program at Farmpark

by Steve Ohmes, Assistant Farmpark Administrator

When discussing the early years of the draft horse program at Lake Metroparks Farmpark, the first thought is of Ernie Hall and the multi-breed six-horse draft hitch. The hitch was created to educate the public about different breeds of draft horses working together. As Ernie approached retirement age in the 1990s, the multi-breed six-horse hitch ceased to exist at Farmpark. Although the hitch was gone, it was by no means forgotten.

In 2017, Johnathan Squibbs was hired as the draft horse manager. At the time, the park was home to four draft horses, two Belgians and two Percherons. Building on the goal to bring back the six-horse hitch to Farmpark, we began to partner with the Robison family. We hitch our two black Percheron horses with four of the Robison’s black Percherons in a hitch used for exhibits at Farmpark, parades and the county fair.

With the increased demonstrations at the park and parades, the hitch’s exposure increased. Because of its popularity, we decided

to restore our parade wagon. The wagon was built in 1997 by J.W. Schut Custom Hitch Wagons in Hopkins, Michigan to the specifications of Ernie Hall. After 28 years of use, the wagon was showing its age and the decision was made to have the builder refurbish it. The walnut body was refinished, the wheels, pole and undercarriage were repainted and the signs were redesigned.

Farmpark visitors have always had a keen interest in horses, and one of the breeds we receive the most questions on is the Clydesdale. To add to our education abilities and meet the interests of the public, we recently added a pair of Clydesdales to our team. Farmpark is now home to three breeds of draft horses, and we are able to highlight their similarities, differences and uses on the farm to a very interested public.

After spending eight years building towards a six-horse multi-breed hitch, Johnathan and our dedicated staff and volunteers hooked all three teams together—Belgians, Percherons and Clydesdales—to pull the show wagon this March, marking the first time that had been done in 25 years! We invite you to come out to Farmpark to learn about all three of the beautiful draft breeds we have on the farm.



COVER PHOTO
by Earl Linaburg

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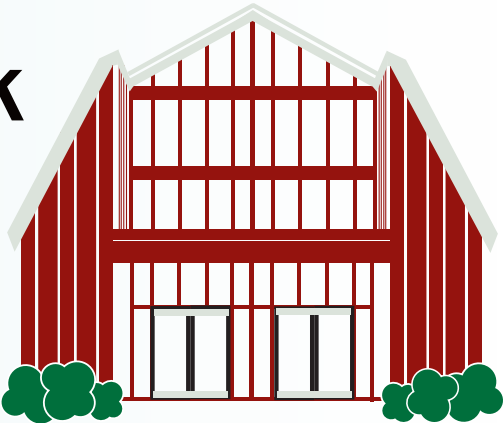
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A Decade of Farmpark Improvements & Projects for members to enjoy!

Lake Metroparks Farmpark’s mission is to provide a connection to our agricultural roots while helping people understand where our food and fiber come from. Open since 1990, Farmpark has made many improvements to enhance the visitor experience. Here’s a snapshot of the past ten years:



- Projects:
- Showman’s Circle Playground and covered shelter
 - Hilltop and Machinery Building
 - Outdoor arena
 - Wagon-loading shed
 - Pond shelter and fishing dock
 - Flush restrooms in Festival Field
 - Renovation of Main Pavilion
 - New wagons to transport guests around the park
 - Milking stand for popular cow milking demonstrations
 - Seating and audio-visual equipment in the theater
 - Exhibits on fruits and vegetables, beekeeping and honey production, hydroponics, backyard and organic gardening, grains and more
 - Garden railroad display
 - All-America Selections Display Garden
 - Renovation to parade wagon

- New events:
- FarmFest
 - Dairy Days
 - Horsepower Weekend
 - Lamb Jam
 - Ice Festival
 - Pairing dinners
 - Historical Engine Society Antique Power Exhibition
 - The Spring Showdown
 - Western Reserve Homestead Summit
 - Lake County Farm Bureau Cattle Clinic
 - 4-H Livestock Quality Assurance



Hilltop area



Main pavilion



Western Reserve Homestead Summit



Pairing Dinner

- Farmpark benefits from the help of volunteers from many organizations and individuals. We greatly appreciate the support of:
- 4-H
 - Historical Engine Society
 - Lake County Beekeepers of Ohio
 - Lake County Farm Bureau
 - Northeast Ohio Garden Railroad Society
 - OSU Extension
 - The All-American Select Seed Organization
 - Western Reserve Spinners & Weavers

Farmpark CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

PAUL REVERE'S RUN CORN MAZE

September 2 to October 5

Farmpark is celebrating the 250th Anniversary of Paul Revere's ride to alert colonists that the British were coming. Like Paul Revere on his famous ride, make your way through the corn maze to avoid the British Colonial Army. As you move through the maze, find the lanterns Revere used as a signal for the colonists. Maze is included in Farmpark admission and is open Tuesday through Sunday 9 am to 5 pm.

September 7 Lake County FREE DAY

LAKE METROPARKS SENIOR DAY

Presented by Laketrans & Ken Ganley Subaru Wickliffe

September 11, 9 am to 1 pm

Event features a guest speaker, Bingo games with prizes, catch and release fishing (11 am to 1 pm) and a vendor showcase (9 am to noon) featuring products and services important to today's seniors. Enjoy Farmpark activities and demonstrations all day! Also pre-register for a free lunch in the pond pavilion. Free health screenings from 9 am to 12:30 pm by University Hospitals; registration recommended. To register for the health screenings and/or lunch, call 440-358-7275.

VILLAGE PEDDLER FESTIVAL

September 14 & 15

The Village Peddler Festival has spent more than four decades bringing a quaint American marketplace (175+ vendors) and music to Northeast Ohio! You will find some of your favorite artists and some new ones, too! Special admission rates apply. Farmpark will be closed for regular daily admission and programming.

September 16 Lake County FREE DAY

HORSEPOWER WEEKEND

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Mentor

September 20 & 21

Witness history unfold from animal-powered agriculture to thunderous muscle cars of yesteryear. Watch the progression of agricultural technology all in one field. Draft animal power to modern cabbled tractors will demonstrate a wide variety of implements. Visitors can enjoy antique tractor displays, equipment demonstrations such as corn grinding and Farmpark's regular weekend presentations. Fall activities will be in full swing! Register for the annual car show noon to 4 pm on Sunday (fee to register \$5 online).



EARL LINABURG

APPLE & HONEY HARVEST WEEKEND

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Subaru Wickliffe

September 27 & 28

Witness many traditional harvest activities and discover how apple butter and cider are made. Take a tour of the "Johnny Appleseed Trail." Learn about bees and their role in pollination, how honey is harvested, pollinator-friendly plants and how bees contribute to many products that we use daily. Enjoy harvest activities including apple-themed crafts.

OCTOBER

FALL HARVEST PAIRING DINNER

Thursday, October 2, 5:30 to 9 pm

\$65* per person, pre-registration required at lakemetroparks.com or call 440-358-7275

Savor the harvests of the fall season in the unique setting of the machinery building, offering picturesque views overlooking Farmpark's fields. Learn how cider is made from tree to pressing, then take a tour of the apple orchard and gardens with Farmpark's horticulture education specialist. After the demonstrations, sit down for a harvest themed meal while enjoying wine from a local winery.

**A refund will be given if the Registration Department is notified by the participant at least five days prior to the dinner. Failure to attend the dinner will be considered a forfeiture of all materials supplied and money paid.*

CORN & PUMPKIN WEEKEND

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Mentor

October 4 & 5

Celebrate the harvest season! Younger visitors can challenge each other in a game of pumpkin bowling, make fall crafts and paint pumpkins (\$3) to take home. This weekend will also be your last chance to get lost in the corn maze.

October 5 Lake County FREE DAY



EARL LINABURG

HALLOWEEN DRIVE-THRU

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Mentor & Ken Ganley Subaru Wickliffe

October 10 - 12, 17 - 19, 24 - 26

Time slots: 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30 pm; Fee: \$27.50 per carload (maximum of three tickets per family or Farmpark membership)

Travel Farmpark's trails and roadways after dark in the comfort of your own vehicle and experience many playfully frightful sites throughout the park. Because of the lack of darkness 6:30 and 7 pm time slots are best suited for younger children. All ages, PG-5

Sale dates: (online only)

- Lake County residents & Farmpark members: Monday, September 22 at 8 am
- Open sales: Tuesday, September 23 at 8 am

Farmpark membership must be current as of noon on Monday, September 15 and remain current on day of purchase.

October 21 Lake County FREE DAY

NOVEMBER

November 2 Lake County FREE DAY

November 18 Lake County FREE DAY

HOLIDAY ICE & LIGHTS FESTIVAL

November 28, 29 & 30, noon to 9 pm

Kick off your holiday adventures with a brand-new family event! Share in all of Santa and Mrs. Claus' favorite holiday activities at Farmpark. They will be on hand to celebrate the season with visitors during this special holiday weekend. Be sure to bundle up and head outside to sit on Santa's special North Pole throne made of ice. While outside, check out some of northeast Ohio's best ice carvers as they create your favorite holiday characters. Each evening as the sun sets, hop on a wagon and enjoy a ride through Farmpark's classic light displays. Make sure to visit the Well Bred Shed and the arena. Farmpark staff and volunteers developed a special holiday-themed equine show (with Santa's approval) to celebrate the start of the holiday season.

Santa and his elves from the Northern Ohio Garden Railroad Society will set up his tremendous North Pole Train Display in the Exhibit Hall. Don't miss a visit to the North Pole Cookie Shop that will feature Mrs. Claus' famous (and Santa's favorite) sugar cookies and frosting for you to decorate and take home (small additional fee).

After you have taken the wagon ride to experience the holiday magic of traditional and musical light displays, be sure to stop in the theater to visit with Santa in his sleigh and share all your holiday wishes.

Daily admission fees apply.

 **Ken Ganley**
SUBARU WICKLIFFE

 **Ken Ganley**
CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP RAM MENTOR

Farmpark is open year-round Tuesday through Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm.

Closed Mondays (except Presidents' Day), Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas & New Year's Day.

Regular Farmpark admission is waived for Lake County residents on **"FREE DAY"** (Proof of Lake County residency required).

Admission during Vintage Ohio and Village Peddler Festival is not included as a membership benefit as special hours and rates apply.

For more information about Farmpark programs and events:
440-256-2122 • 800-366-3276 • lakemetroparks.com

DECEMBER

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Mentor & Ken Ganley Subaru Wickliffe

November 29 & 30, December 6 & 7, 13 & 14, 20 & 21

Time slots: Breakfast 9 am or 10:30 am
Fee: \$5 younger than 2, \$25 ages 2 and older

Enjoy breakfast and a visit with Santa in the café, then continue your visit with Santa on his sleigh. From there, enjoy a winter wagon ride around Farmpark, stopping off at the arena to witness a holiday-themed equine presentation. Stay all day and enjoy Farmpark's regular daily activities!

Please note this is a family activity: children must be accompanied by an adult. Due to space limitations, ALL participants, including children younger than 2, MUST be registered.

Pony rides are available in the arena for \$6 (cash, debit, or credit).
Breakfast menu: French toast, scrambled eggs, bacon, sausage, breakfast potatoes, coffee, juice, milk

Sale dates: (online only)

- Lake County residents & Farmpark members: Monday, November 3 at 8 am
- Open sales: Tuesday, November 4 at 8 am

Farmpark membership must be current as of noon on Monday, Oct. 20 and remain current on day of purchase.

COUNTRY LIGHTS DRIVE-THRU

Exclusively presented by Ken Ganley Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram Mentor & Ken Ganley Subaru Wickliffe

December 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, 26-28

Time slots: 6, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 8, 8:30 pm; Fee: \$27.50 per carload (maximum of three carload tickets per family or Farmpark membership)

This year will feature some familiar lighting displays throughout Farmpark as visitors enjoy the experience from the warmth of their own vehicles.

Sale dates: (online only)

- Lake County residents & Farmpark members: Monday, October 27 at 8 am
- Open sales: Tuesday, October 28 at 8 am

Farmpark membership must be current as of noon on Monday, Oct. 20 and remain current on day of purchase

December 7 Lake County FREE DAY

December 16 Lake County FREE DAY

Lake County free days are presented by

 **Ken Ganley**
SUBARU WICKLIFFE

 **Ken Ganley**
CHRYSLER DODGE JEEP RAM MENTOR

NO SOIL, NO PROBLEM: Unlocking the Power of Hydroponics

by Daniel Wylie, Horticulture Manager

Hydroponics: Farming Without Soil

Hydroponics is an innovative way to grow plants without the use of soil. It relies on a nutrient-rich water solution to deliver essential minerals directly to plant roots. This technique is rapidly gaining popularity around the world, particularly in urban areas and regions where traditional farming faces challenges due to climate, space or poor soil quality. It also is becoming more popular among homeowners as the interest to grow our own food increases and many small-scale systems are readily available on the market. As the global demand for food increases and natural resources become more limited, hydroponics presents a sustainable, efficient and forward-looking solution for agricultural production.

How Hydroponics Works

In a hydroponic system, plants are grown in a controlled environment where their roots are either suspended directly in the nutrient solution or supported by a porous growing medium such as perlite, vermiculite, rock wool or coconut coir. These mediums provide stability for the plants while ensuring that roots can access oxygen and moisture. The key to hydroponics is the precise delivery of nutrients where everything a plant would normally get from soil is supplied in the water.

There are several types of hydroponic systems, including deep water culture, nutrient film technique (NFT), aeroponics, wick systems, ebb and flow, grow bags and newer systems such as Bato buckets, living walls and grow towers. Each has its own advantages and is suited for different scales and crop types. NFT systems, for example, are commonly used for leafy greens like lettuce and basil, while Bato buckets are best for tall crops, such as tomatoes and cucumbers.

Benefits of Hydroponics

One of the most significant advantages of hydroponics is its efficient use of resources. Traditional farming often requires large amounts of water, much of which is lost to evaporation or runoff. In contrast, hydroponic systems recycle water and nutrients, reducing water use by up to 90 percent. Because the growing system is carefully controlled, crops grow faster and are less susceptible to pests and diseases, reducing the need for pesticides and herbicides.

Another major benefit is space efficiency. Hydroponics can be used in vertical farms and stacked systems, allowing growers to produce more food in less area. This makes it ideal for urban farming



and locations where land is limited. It also allows for year-round production, independent of seasonal changes, thanks to the use of greenhouses and artificial lighting. This availability also has a huge advantage for restaurants as the demand for fresh quality ingredients increases, as well as access to unique or hard to find crops such as wasabi or microgreens.

Challenges & Considerations

Despite its many advantages, hydroponic systems come with some challenges. Initial setup costs can be high, particularly for automated or large-scale systems for commercial growers. Maintaining a hydroponic system requires careful monitoring of pH levels, nutrient concentrations, water temperature and oxygen levels. There is also the need to clean the system between every crop to prevent plant diseases and pests from accumulating.

Additionally, hydroponics often relies on electricity to power pumps, lights and climate control systems, and if a system fails, an entire crop could be lost. However, generators and renewable energy sources like solar panels are becoming common as safeguards.

The Future of Farming

As urban populations grow, hydroponics enables fresh locally grown produce to be available in places where farming was once impossible—such as rooftops, shipping containers or even outer space, where NASA has experimented with hydroponics for long-duration space missions.

In education, hydroponic kits are becoming popular tools in classrooms, helping students learn about plant biology, sustainability and food systems. In developing countries, low-cost hydroponic systems are helping communities grow food in areas with scarce water and poor soil.

Hydroponics is more than just a trend—it's a transformative agricultural technique that addresses many of the challenges facing global food production today. With continued research and innovation, hydroponics could play a vital role in feeding the planet sustainably and efficiently in the years to come.

We invite you to visit the Plant Science Center at Lake Metroparks Farmpark year-round Tuesday through Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm.

New! LAKE METROPARKS FARM PARK

HOLIDAY

Ice & Lights
FESTIVAL

Kick off your holiday adventures with a brand-new family event: Holiday Ice & Lights Festival at Lake Metroparks Farmpark! Share in all of Santa and Mrs. Claus' favorite holiday activities at Farmpark. They will be on hand to celebrate the season with visitors during this special holiday weekend.

Be sure to bundle up and head outside to sit on Santa's special North Pole throne made of ice. While outside, check out some of northeast Ohio's best ice carvers as they create your favorite holiday characters. There will be plenty of icy photo opportunities to capture a special photo for your holiday cards.

Each evening as the sun sets, hop on a wagon and enjoy a ride through Farmpark's classic light displays.

Make sure to visit the Well Bred Shed and the arena. Farmpark staff and volunteers developed a special holiday-themed equine show (with Santa's approval) to celebrate the start of the holiday season.

Santa and his elves from the Northern Ohio Garden Railroad Society will set up his tremendous North Pole Train Display in the Exhibit Hall. Be sure to pick up the scavenger hunt and find all of the fun details hidden throughout the display.

Don't miss a visit to the North Pole Cookie Shop that will feature Mrs. Claus' famous (and Santa's favorite) sugar cookies and frosting for you to decorate and take home (small additional fee).

Ready to warm up? Check out Santa and Mrs. Claus' favorite local vendors for warm drinks and other treats.

Once you've made your way around the park and experienced all of the holiday magic, be sure to stop in the theater to visit Santa in his sleigh. On your way out, check off your holiday shopping list at the Farmpark gift shop.

Join us for the all-new Holiday Ice & Lights Festival at Lake Metroparks Farmpark to experience holiday magic like never before!

November 28, 29 & 30
noon to 9 pm

Lake Metroparks Farmpark

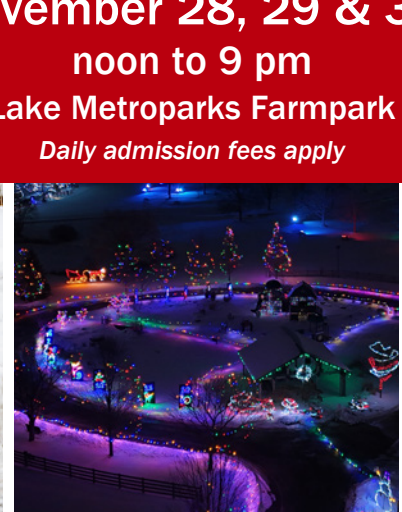
Daily admission fees apply



EARL LINABURG



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Gift Shop

unique country gifts

Take home a little bit of the country.

440-256-2122 x3161

No admission charge to visit gift shop, excludes most special events.
VISA, MasterCard and Discover accepted • Discount for Farmpark members

Take home charming country gifts, unique items for the home and garden, greeting cards, Naked Bee lotion, Dionis goat milk products, Farmpark's own maple syrup as well as assorted snacks and drinks.

