

LAKE METROPARKS



volunteers

FALL 2026



Fall and holiday festivities abound at Lake Metroparks and your help is needed to bring them to life! Find your favorite event and sign up now!

Volunteer Highlight

by Nick Gustin, *Senior Golf Course Manager*

After working in the insurance business for 26 years, **Jim Varsey** asked himself, "What do I do now?" Luckily for Lake Metroparks, he decided to volunteer!

Growing up, Jim played basketball, baseball and softball. He was first introduced to golf by a friend, grew to love it, and the rest is history. After playing recreationally at Erie Shores Golf Course for years, he decided to volunteer as a golf marshal. He has been a staple on the Friday morning shift for many years. Jim and his wife Sharon love to golf at Erie Shores and other area courses on a regular basis.

Jim began volunteering for Lake Metroparks in 2002 and at the end of this year's golf season, he will have reached more than 2,800 service hours. Some of his volunteer hours have been spent helping in other areas including special events, fishing and as a hiking ambassador, but his passion remains with golf, where his best 18-hole score is 65.

Over the years, Jim has enjoyed working with a good crew on Friday mornings, but one volunteer stood out—his brother Ron. Jim and Ron shared Friday morning duties for several years ("two Varseys running the first tee—what could go wrong?") and always had a great time. Volunteering was a way for them to stay connected to people and fuel their love of sports. Jim says being a volunteer "is fun and rewarding" and he enjoys "meeting and working with new people." It is for these reasons that he keeps coming back each season.



The staff at Erie Shores appreciates Jim for his years of dedication and we thank him for the lifelong memories made on the course.

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Check out VIC or give us a call to sign up!

Fall into these volunteer opportunities this Autumn! **Bug Day** is back on September 6 at Penitentiary Glen with Bingo, crafts, temporary tattoos, and naturalist assistant positions. The Rangers will need adult parking assistants to help with **Village Peddler** at Farmpark on both September 12 and 13, varying shifts. Fishing enthusiasts who are 16 and older are needed for the annual **Family Fishing Derby** at Hidden Lake on the morning of September 19. There are openings at Farmpark for **Apple & Honey Harvest Weekend** September 19 & 20, **Horsepower Weekend** September 26 & 27, and **Corn and Pumpkin Weekend** October 3 & 4, with positions ranging from corny apple bar to pumpkin painting to car show parking and much more!

The spooky sounds of **Hoo-loween** are around the corner at Penitentiary Glen on October 2 & 3, with greeters, glow zone helpers, crafts, refreshments, photographers, hike sweeps and parking openings recently added.

November winds will bring seasonal favorites, including **Candy Land: Wild About Winter's** opening day on November 21 at Penitentiary Glen, where you can help as either a craft assistant, s'mores helper or campfire attendant on select days. **Holiday Ice & Lights Festival** returns for its second year at Farmpark on November 27–29. There will also be

additional December dates this year. Volunteer opportunities include greeters, cookie helpers, Santa's elves, crafts, scavenger hunts, ice monitors, wagon loaders and more. Sign up on VIC, call or email to save your spot.

Halloween Drive-Thru

Now that **summerween** is over, it's time to crawl out of your **crypt** and come show off your acting skills at Halloween Drive-thru! Volunteers are needed October 9-10, 16-18, and 23-25 evenings from 4:30-9:30 pm at a very **haunted** Farmpark. Don't **fear**—costumes, makeup and light snacks will be provided so you're sure to **glow** for your debut. It's sure to be **big top** fun! Ages 12-15 must be accompanied by an adult. School, scout, and youth groups are welcome. Don't be **petrified**, just complete the flyer to sign up! **Click here.**

Candy Land: Wild About Winter!

by Caitlin Ambrose, *Deputy Chief of Outdoor Connections*

Candy Land is a game many of us remember as children, and now it has been brought to life with a natural twist! The life-sized game board takes you on an adventure through an enchanting indoor display featuring a variety of habitats in winter. Scavenger hunts, a new craft and other activities are fun for the whole family! If you are looking to join in on the excitement, consider volunteering in one of the below positions.

Volunteers are needed as craft attendants, s'mores attendants (16+), and campfire & s'mores attendants (18+). Please note that the campfire & s'mores attendants are outdoor positions while the craft instructor is indoors. All placements are made on a first come, first served basis. Thank you for your help in making Candy Land a magical experience for visitors!

Lake Metroparks Volunteer Services

Volunteer Line 440-585-3041 x6418 volunteer@lakemetroparks.com

Lauren Pauline 440-585-3041 x6419 lpauline@lakemetroparks.com

Keep Us Informed

To help keep our records updated, please send us any changes to your address, telephone numbers or email. Keep in touch! If you would like to receive information from us via email, please forward your email address to volunteer@lakemetroparks.com.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES MISSION

Volunteer Services supports the Lake Metroparks' mission by providing a substantial resource of volunteers to enrich and expand Lake Metroparks services and programs as well as generate goodwill through citizen participation in Lake Metroparks.

THE MISSION OF LAKE METROPARKS

To conserve and preserve the natural resources of Lake County while providing a variety of safe, affordable and enjoyable educational and recreational programs and activities that enhance the quality of life in Lake County now and for generations to follow.

Discounted Volunteer Tickets

Volunteering has its perks! Apply code **VOL26** as the promo code when prompted to receive the discount. Please note that all ticket sales are online only.

Hoo-loween Volunteer Tickets

Current LMP volunteers will be eligible to purchase discounted tickets to this year's Hoo-loween event at Penitentiary Glen. To order tickets, volunteers must participate in the ticket sale on **Monday, August 31 beginning at 8 am.** Event nights are Friday, October 2 and Saturday, October 3. Time slots are 5:30, 6:45, 7:30, 8:45 and 9:30 pm.

Halloween Drive-thru Tickets

Current LMP volunteers will be eligible to receive one free ticket (one carload) to this year's Halloween Drive-thru event at Farmpark. To order your free ticket, volunteers must participate in the ticket sale online only on **Monday, September 14 beginning at 8 am.** Event nights are October 9-11, 16-18, and 23-25. Time slots are 6:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00 and 8:30 pm.

Breakfast with Santa Tickets

Current LMP volunteers will be eligible to purchase discounted tickets to this year's Breakfast with Santa event at Farmpark. To order tickets, volunteers must participate in the ticket sale on **Monday, October 26 beginning at 8 am.** Event dates are November 28 & 29 and December 5, 6, 12, 13, 19 & 20. Time slots are 9 am or 10:30 am.

Country Lights Drive-thru Tickets

Current LMP volunteers will be eligible to receive one free ticket (one carload) to this year's Country Lights Drive-thru event at Farmpark. To order your free ticket, volunteers will need to participate in the ticket sale online only on **Monday, November 2 beginning at 8 am.** Event nights are December 4-6, 11-13, 26 & 27. Time slots are 6:00, 6:30, 7:00, 7:30, 8:00 and 8:30 pm.

LAKE COUNTY PROBATE JUDGE

Mark J. Bartolotta

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS

Gretchen Skok DiSanto • Frank J. Polivka • John C. Redmond

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Paul Palagyi

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