

# 2025 - 2026 Fall & Winter Parks & Recreation Guide

1,000 Acres. 20 Parks. One City.



[mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov)

  [CityofPortageMI](#)

*320 Library Lane, Portage, MI 49002*

*(269) 329-4522*



# Portage Parks & Recreation Fall & Winter Activities

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## Portage Parks Foundation

The Portage Parks Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization providing opportunities for individuals, volunteer groups, neighborhood associations, and businesses to actively support the maintenance, enhancement, and beautification of parks, trails, and green spaces in Portage. The foundation's goal is to promote, create awareness, and secure funding for City of Portage parks. To learn more about the Portage Parks Foundation and funding opportunities, visit [portageparksfoundation.org](http://portageparksfoundation.org) or email

[contact@portageparksfoundation.org](mailto:contact@portageparksfoundation.org).



## Donate To The Parks Foundation

Donations to the Portage Parks Foundation support a trail endowment, a program scholarship fund, tree planting, parks projects, and more. Gifts can be made by check payable to the Portage Parks Foundation and mailed or delivered to Portage Parks & Recreation, 320 Library Lane. Donations by card can be made online at [portageparksfoundation.org/fundraisers-%26-donate](http://portageparksfoundation.org/fundraisers-%26-donate).



## Program Registration & Facility Rentals

To register for programs or reserve a park facility, visit [mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov) and click on the "Register Now!" button. Reservations can also be made in person at Portage Parks & Recreation, 320 Library Lane. Registration for programs featured in this guide will open on **September 2, 2025**, unless otherwise noted.

## Program Accessibility

The City of Portage is committed to ensuring that all Parks & Recreation programs are accessible to everyone. We strive to provide inclusive opportunities that accommodate individuals of all abilities. If you or a family member require special accommodations to participate in a program, please contact Portage Parks & Recreation at (269) 329-4522. Our staff will work with you to provide reasonable accommodations and ensure a positive and welcoming experience.

## Youth Recreation Scholarships Available

Portage youth, ages 18 and under, living in a household meeting established income guidelines, may be eligible for financial assistance for certain recreation programs. Contact Portage Parks & Recreation for more information at (269) 329-4522.

## Online Recreation Catalog and Reservation System

**NEW!**

**CIVICREC**<sup>®</sup>

Starting **September 2, 2025**, Portage Parks & Recreation is moving to a new software platform to make registration easier and more accessible for you! If you have participated in programs or events in the past, registration will look a little different this year. Participants will need to create a new account this season. If you need assistance creating your new account or would like to sign up for a program listed in this brochure, visit our website at [mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov) or stop by our office at 320 Library Lane during normal business hours, and we will help you get started!

Portage Parks & Recreation has partnered with Civic Plus to implement its Recreation Management software. The cloud-based solution allows residents greater visibility into Parks & Recreation activities, classes, sports, youth leagues, and memberships, as well as more convenient online registration and payment. It will also allow residents to search for and reserve community facilities, such as pavilions and shelters, all conveniently online.

The Civic Plus Recreation Management software is intuitive and easy for residents to use. It is mobile-friendly, allowing community members to search for local activities and events, register, and remit payment from any smartphone or tablet. Please call Portage Parks & Recreation at (269) 329-4522 if you have any questions.

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# Portage Bikeway, Trail System, & Cross Country Ski Areas

Enjoy a winter stroll along the Portage Creek Bicentennial Park Trail, plowed all winter for year-round enjoyment (weather permitting).

**Cross Country Ski at Eliason Nature Reserve & West Lake Nature Preserve.** Break out your skis and snowshoes for a winter adventure. Cross-country ski or snowshoe all winter (weather permitting). Please note that these trails are not groomed.

Check out the map below for heated restrooms, bike lanes, recreational trails, and cross-country ski areas.



PARKS MAP



## 280 Romence Road

The Ice Rink at Millennium Park is set to open for the 2025 - 2026 winter season on Friday, December 12, weather permitting. This spacious outdoor refrigerated rink offers a top-quality skating surface along with skate rentals, skate sharpening, snack concessions, restrooms, and lockers. Ice resurfacing occurs from 3 - 4 PM when rink hours are 12 - 8 PM.

### Holiday Hours

#### December

12 .....	Opening Day .....	3 - 9 PM
13 - 14 .....	Opening Weekend .....	12 - 8 PM
15 - 18 .....	Monday - Thursday .....	CLOSED
19 - 23 .....	Winter Holiday Hours .....	12 - 8 PM
24 .....	Christmas Eve .....	12 - 5 PM
25 .....	Christmas .....	CLOSED
26 - 30 .....	Winter Holiday Hours .....	12 - 8 PM

#### January

1 - 4 .....	Winter Holiday Hours .....	12 - 8 PM
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### Regular Hours: January 5 - March 3

Mondays - Thursdays .....	CLOSED
Fridays .....	3 - 9 PM
Saturdays & Sundays .....	12 - 8 PM

Call (269) 324-9200 for  
current ice rink conditions!

### Themed Skate Nights

#### Glow Party

Light up the night at the Ice Rink at Millennium Park! Grab a glow stick, throw on your brightest neon gear, and hit the ice for an electrifying evening of skating fun. With colorful lights and high-energy vibes, this is one party you won't want to miss!

- » Friday, January 9, 7 - 9 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



#### Disco Fever

Break out the bell-bottoms and boogie down at the Millennium Park Ice Rink! Dress in your best retro style and groove to the greatest disco hits while you skate the night away. It's a throwback party on ice you won't want to miss!

- » Friday, January 23, 7 - 9 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



### Rates

Opening Skate.....	\$5
Skate Rental.....	\$3
Skate Sharpening .....	\$5
Skate Card (Expires March 1, 2026) .....	\$25

#### Ten punches, each good for one:

- ※ Open Skate
- ※ Skate Rentals
- ※ Skate Sharpening



## Santa Skate

Lace up your skates and celebrate the season with a magical afternoon on the ice! Join Santa Claus at the Ice Rink at Millennium Park for holiday music, cheerful fun, and unforgettable photo opportunities. Bring your camera to capture special memories with family and friends - Santa can't wait to see you there!

- » Saturday, December 20, 1 - 3 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



## New Year's Eve Skate Party

Glide into the New Year with a family-friendly celebration on the ice! Spend your New Year's Eve with upbeat music, party lighting after dark, and a special countdown at 7 PM to coincide with New Year's at the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, UK. This is a fantastic opportunity to welcome the New Year together with friends and family!

- » Wednesday, December 31, 5 - 8 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



## Mascot Madness

Join us for a fun-tastic afternoon at the Ice Rink at Millennium Park, where you can skate with a crazy bunch of mascots in the wild! Bring your friends and family to enjoy the ice and snap a selfie with local favorites like Portage Park's "Mr. Crispy," "Slappy" from the Kalamazoo Wings, "Porter" from the Kalamazoo Growlers, and many more!

- » Saturday, January 17, 1 - 2 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



## Valentine's Day Skate

Celebrate Valentine's Day on the ice with someone special! Glide hand-in-hand to your favorite love songs and ballads at the Ice Rink at Millennium Park. Whether it's a date night or a fun outing with friends, this charming afternoon is the perfect way to share the love.

- » Saturday, February 14, 5 - 8 PM
- » \$5 Open Skate | \$3 Skate Rental (No registration required)



## Blandford Nature Center's *Wildlife Presentations*

Engage your curiosity and learn about animal ambassadors from the Blandford Nature Center's unique Wildlife Presentations. Participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a chaperone. Seats are limited to 30 per session.



- » **Session 1:** 11 AM - 12 PM
- » **Session 2:** 12 - 1 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per seat (Registration required)

### ***Blandford's Wildlife*** NEW!

Learn about Blandford's wildlife ambassador animals and why they live at the Blandford Nature Center. This presentation includes a variety of animals, including a turtle, rabbit, falcon, and owl. This presentation is appropriate for all ages.

- » Friday, October 10
- » Registration required by October 9



### ***Story Time with the Animals*** NEW!

Enjoy a few stories with special animal guests and their natural artifacts. Meet a turtle, rabbit, and owl. This presentation is designed for Pre-K through Kindergarten, though all ages are welcome.

- » Monday, October 20
- » Registration required by October 17



### ***Wildlife with a Backbone*** NEW!

Learn about vertebrate groups, their unique qualities, and habitats. Hands-on props highlight adaptations that different vertebrates use for protection, warmth, and food gathering. Live examples of a reptile, bird, and mammal will be included in the presentation. This presentation is designed for grades 2 through 6, but all ages are welcome.

- » Saturday, November 8
- » Registration required by November 7



## Kalamazoo Nature Center's Animal Ambassadors

Animals that may be present at this program include a corn snake, milk snake, eastern box turtle, frog, Madagascar hissing cockroach, or a curly-haired tarantula. The presence of specific animals is not guaranteed. Participants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a chaperone.

- » **Session 1:** 10 - 11 AM
- » **Session 2:** 11:30 AM - 12:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per seat (Registration required)

### Creature Features

**NEW!**

Learn about the habitats, diets, and adaptations of Kalamazoo Nature Center's animal ambassadors. Get an up-close look at different bio facts and meet a live animal handled by one of the KNC-trained educators. This program is designed for all ages.

- » Saturday, February 7
- » Registration required by February 6



### Who Eats Whom?

**NEW!**

Build a food chain from the ground up and follow the energy from producers to consumers, from sunlight to soil. Get active, meet a live animal, and discover who eats whom in the forest. Learn about the flow of energy, components of the food chain, animal traits, and survival. This program is designed for first to fifth-grade students, but all ages are welcome.

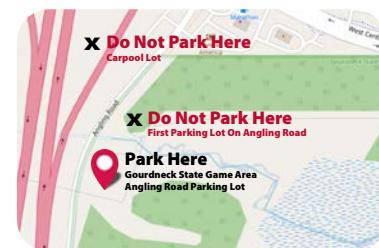
- » Saturday, February 21
- » Registration required by February 20



## Hike with a Biologist: Winter Tracking & Tree ID

Shake off the winter blues, bundle up, and unearth the wonders of the Gourdneck State Game Area with biologists from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Discover ways animals and plants adapt, survive, and thrive during winter in Michigan. Learn to track animals, see signs of animal activity, and discover different ways animals inhabit the winter landscape. Participants will also learn about tree and plant identification. While all ages are welcome, this program requires walking off-trail on old footpaths. Please wear weather-appropriate clothing and closed-toed shoes for a comfortable experience.

- » Saturday, January 17, 10 - 11 AM
- » Gourdneck State Game Area Trailhead off Angling Road
- » FREE (Registration required)





## Terra Talks

"Terra Talks" is a transformative lecture series and call to action for community engagement and environmental stewardship. Embrace the opportunity to transform your backyard and become a guardian of the environment. This educational series delves into the heart of land management and explores the delicate balance between human activity and ecological preservation.

- » Fridays at 6 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE (Registration required)

### ***Oak Savannas as a Model for Native Plant Gardens***

**NEW!**

**Speaker: Mike Weis, Dropseed**

Learn about oak savanna ecosystems and how they benefit local wildlife. Mike Weis delves into how you can plant a native garden in your backyard, inspired by resilient and disappearing oak savannah ecosystems. Bring back oaks and watch your backyard turn into a pollinator oasis.

- » November 7



### ***Fighting with Fire***

**NEW!**

**Speaker: Kyle Martin, Kalamazoo Nature Center**

Prescribed burns are a hot land management tool everybody's talking about! Learn how land managers use fire to fight fire, restore native landscapes, and manage invasive species. This talk will also cover the history of fire, indigenous land management, the differences between prescribed fires and wildfires, and the special role fire plays in restoring healthy landscapes. Learn about native plants, wildlife, and ecosystems that depend on fire to thrive.

- » November 14



## Terra Talks (Cont.)

### Invasive Species Spotlight: Mile-A-Minute Weed

NEW!

**Speaker: April Savickas, BCK CISMA**

Learn how to identify and manage Mile-A-Minute weed. Mile-a-minute weed, *Persicaria perfoliata*, gets its common name from its uncanny ability to grow up to six inches a day! This unfettered growth allows the vine to smother trees and shrubs and poses a threat to many plants and food sources for native wildlife. Find out how you can help eradicate this aggressive invader from Michigan by attending this program!

» March 13



### Backyard Birding Basics

NEW!

**Speaker: Donna Keller, Audubon Society of Kalamazoo**

Do you want to invite more birds to your yard? Donna Keller from the Audubon Society of Kalamazoo will discuss how to manage your yard to attract birds, including the role that native plants play in feeding birds and ways to provide birds with shelter and water. Find tips for welcoming birds into your yard, explore technology and apps for identifying and keeping track of avian visitors, and become an avian advocate!

» March 20



### Designing Native Plant Gardens: Minimizing the 'Error' in Trial and Error

**Speaker: Mike Weis, Dropseed**

Back by popular demand! Plan your native plant garden for the 2026 season and beyond. Learn tips and tricks from Mike Weis, owner of Dropseed, a local native plant landscaper. Explore Mike's journey over the years and find out how to set your native plant garden up for success over the long term.

» March 27



Call to Artists 

Attention local Portage artists! Share your knowledge, skills, and interests with other artists in your community. Join our FREE Portage Community Arts Committee. Explore exhibition and selling opportunities, work with other artists, teach classes, and share your craft! To get started, contact our Outreach Representative at (269) 329-4522 to learn more or email [mypark.portagemi.gov](mailto:mypark.portagemi.gov).



## Glassblowing Workshop

Join us for a hands-on glassblowing workshop with John Rath from Left Brain Hot Glass. Create a beautiful glass pumpkin or holiday ornament. All materials and safety equipment will be provided. Glassblowing sessions will occur in fifteen-minute segments. **Glass pieces take about 90 minutes to cool before they are ready to take home, so please plan your pickup accordingly.**



- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$40 per participant, per session (Registration required by Wednesday, October 22)

Paid participants are welcome to stay for the entire workshop to see all of the ornaments and designs throughout the glassblowing process. **If registering for a session, participants must be available during the date and time slot selected at registration.**

- » **Session 1:** Thursday, October 23, 3 - 8 PM
- » **Session 2:** Friday, October 24, 3 - 8 PM
- » **Session 3:** Saturday, October 25, 12 - 5 PM
- » **Session 4:** Sunday, October 26, 12 - 5 PM

## Art Sampler **NEW!**

Experiment with novel mediums below and unleash your inner artist. Art supplies will be provided for each session. Participants may bring their own supplies, if desired.

- » Tuesdays, 6 - 7:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$40 per session (Registration required)

### **Linocut**

Create your own unique artwork with instructors from the Kalamazoo Book Arts Center. Carve a unique design into rubber-stamping material with linocut tools. Students will practice reproducing their image onto paper. This project uses sharp tools and is designed for participants ages 12 and up.

- » February 3



### **Japanese Bookbinding**

Learn to make your own journal using a soft cover Japanese binding technique. A Japanese "stab book" is a soft cover book featuring decorative stitching in the binding – and the best part is *no glue required!* Decorative cover pages will be available. Participants take home their hand-made journals for drawing, writing, or scrapbooking. This program is designed for ages 10 and up.

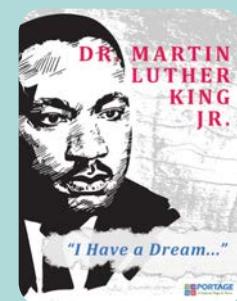
- » February 17



### **Remembering Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Exhibit**

Explore the life and influence of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and honor his lasting legacy. Visit City Hall in January to celebrate his birthday. View an exhibit dedicated to his work, and explore little-known facts about his influence and work in today's world.

- » January 5 - 30, during normal business hours
- » City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE (No registration required)



## Portage Culinary Academy

The Portage Culinary Academy offers hands-on cooking classes for all skill levels - experienced chefs or those just starting in the kitchen. The program fee includes all supplies, ingredients, and take-home meals. With limited space and high demand, these classes fill up quickly, so don't wait to register! Each class is limited to a maximum of 10 participants.

- » Thursdays, 5:30 - 7 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$45 per participant, per class (Registration required)



### **Pumpkin Shell Soup**

Spice up your fall menu with a savory dish that blends seasonal vegetables, pumpkin, and the irresistible flavor of bacon. Chef Chauncey will show you how to harness the magic of bacon to elevate a fall medley that's crave-worthy, comforting, and sure to have friends and neighbors asking for seconds.

- » October 16



### **Baba Gannoush**

Chef Chauncey teaches how to make Baba Gannoush, the father of all side dishes and appetizers! Learn to use eggplant to make a healthy, smoky, delicious dip that will have you coming back for more. Try this with toasted pita chips and a side of artichoke mornay for a fun taste test at the end of class.

- » February 19



### **Brunswick Stew**

Roll up your sleeves and dive into Southern cooking with an all-new class featuring Brunswick Stew - a hearty, time-honored staple that's sure to impress. Chef Chauncey will guide you through the steps, sharing expert tips and regional techniques to help you master this classic Southern dish.

- » March 5





## Kingpins Drumline

The Kingpins Drumline provides a drumming program specifically tailored for performers of all abilities. Drumming provides a thrilling outlet for exciting performances, where the unique capabilities of each participant are encouraged. Participants learn to listen, follow suggestions, work together, and develop the confidence to perform publicly. **Enjoy a LIVE performance at the Overlander Bandshell on April 16, weather permitting.**

- » Thursdays, March 12 - April 9, 6 - 7 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE (Registration required)



**LIVE PERFORMANCE: APRIL 16, 6 - 7 PM  
OVERLANDER BANDSHELL (7810 SHAVER ROAD)  
RAIN LOCATION: PORTAGE PARKS & RECREATION (320 LIBRARY LANE)  
FREE (NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED)**

## Creative Corners NEW!

### Monster Mash Graveyard

Be part of this year's Monster Mash. Design a spooky gravestone to display in the Monster Mash Cemetery. This one-hour program is tailored for artists of all abilities. Please wear clothing that can get messy. The program fee covers materials used. Participants are encouraged to bring a chaperone. Artwork designed for this workshop will be on display at the 2025 Monster Mash Event (see page 25 for more details). Gravestones must be picked up at Ramona Park Monday, October 20 from 9 AM to 2 PM or Tuesday, October 21 from 4 to 8 PM. All remaining gravestones will be disposed of by the city.

- » Wednesday, October 1, 6 - 7 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$5 per participant (Registration required)





## Dance Classes

### **Session 1**

- » Thursdays, October 2 - November 20 **No Class November 6**
- » Schrier Park (850 West Osterhout Avenue)
- » Registration required by Wednesday, October 1

### **Session 2**

- » Thursdays, January 15 - February 26
- » Schrier Park (850 West Osterhout Avenue)
- » Registration required by Wednesday, January 14

### **Beginning Line Dance – Level 1**

Step up and build your confidence on the dance floor. Explore line dance techniques with local dance instructor, Debra Snell. No partner needed, but bring a friend if you'd like! Learn the basic steps to popular songs and routines, make new friends, and enjoy an evening devoted to dance.

- » 5:20 - 6:10 PM
- » \$50 per participant (Registration required)



### **Intermediate Line Dance – Level 2**

Take your dance skills to the next level! If you enjoyed our Beginning Line Dancing course and are ready for more, this class is for you. Experience in Beginning Line Dancing or an equivalent course, as determined by the instructor, is recommended for this session.

- » 6:15 - 7:05 PM
- » \$50 per participant (Registration required)

### **Social Dancing for Couples**

Perfect the art of dancing together! This class covers a variety of dance techniques. Explore and practice popular moves to get you and your partner out on the dance floor with confidence and style.

- » 7:10 - 8 PM
- » \$75 per participant (Registration required)



## Adult Summer Softball League - Organizational Meetings

All team managers or team representatives should attend this meeting to gather information on the registration process, rule highlights, updates, and more. New teams are welcome to attend. For more information about adult softball leagues, please visit [cityballportage.com](http://cityballportage.com).

- » Monday, February 16
  - » 5:30 PM - Over 50 League Organizational Meeting
  - » 6:30 PM - Co-Ed and Men's Organizational Meeting
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)



## Ping Pong

### Ping Pong Clinic NEW!

Looking to sharpen your table tennis skills, meet new people, and enjoy some fast-paced fun? Join our Recreational Ping Pong Clinic – a relaxed, welcoming environment for players of all levels! This program is for beginners wanting to practice the basics and intermediate players looking to improve your skills. Practice drills, games, and strategies are tailored to your skill level. Maximum of 16 participants. Ages 18 and over.

- » Monday, January 5, 6 - 7:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$10 per participant (Registration required)



### Recreational League

Relax after work with friends and join this ten-week Ping Pong league! This newly designed program gives you a chance to practice singles and doubles ping pong in a relaxing and uncompetitive format. Learn to keep score and hone your skills in a stress-free environment. Maximum of 16 participants. Ages 18 and over.

- » Wednesdays, January 7 - March 11, 5:30 - 6:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$50 per participant (Registration required)



### Competitive League

Pick up your paddle and compete for a chance to win a league trophy! Participants in this league will be competitive, so be sure to bring your A-game. There will be opportunities to play singles and doubles in this league. Maximum of 12 participants. Ages 18 and over.

- » Wednesdays, January 7 - March 11, 6:45 - 7:45 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$50 per participant (Registration required)





## Qigong: Five Animal Frolics

**NEW!**

**Wu Qin Xi (五禽戲)** or the "Five Animal Frolics," is a traditional Chinese exercise system that mimics the movements and characteristics of five animals: tiger, deer, bear, monkey, and crane. Instructor Tao Ping teaches students about the qualities each animal represents and aims to strengthen specific areas of the body while promoting energy (**qi**) flow. This program is designed for children, ages 5 and up, and adults.

- » Tuesdays, January 6 - March 10, 10 - 11 AM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$75 per participant (Registration required)



## Introduction to Tai Chi

**NEW!**

This is your year to improve your physical and mental health with instructor and Tai Chi Master Cheng Tao, visiting professor of the Hainecke Institute with Western Michigan University. Try out this ten-week program, often described as meditation in motion. Tai Chi is a traditional Chinese martial art, originally developed as a self-defense technique, which has evolved into a gentle exercise program and is suitable for people of all ages and physical conditions. It does not require special equipment and can be performed either standing or seated, making it an excellent activity for participants who want to maintain their mobility, strength, and mental clarity.

- » Tuesdays, January 6 - March 10, 9 - 9:50 AM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$75 per participant (Registration required)



## YOGA

Looking for a way to unwind and connect to your body? Join Apral, a 500-hour Certified Yoga Instructor, for a gentle, supportive yoga class that will leave you feeling renewed. Yoga is a judgment-free practice where all levels and bodies are welcome. So, whether you're a beginner or advanced yogi, this practice is for you! This program is available to participants ages 16+ and will have a maximum of 25 participants. Register once for \$40 for four weeks or drop in for \$10 per session.

- » Wednesdays, October 29 - November 19, 7 PM
- » Schrier Park (850 West Osterhout Avenue)
- » \$40 for four weeks (Registration required)
  - » Drop-ins available, \$10 per class





## Portage Farmers Market

Whether you are still holding onto the last flavors of summer or happily looking forward to all things autumnal, the market still has lots of fresh produce to make your taste buds' dreams come true. Join us for cider and coffee, delicious baked goods, locally raised meats, live music, food trucks, and more.

- » Sundays through October 12, 9 AM - 1 PM
- » Portage City Hall (7900 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE & open to the public (No patron fee)



## Farmers Market Vendor Meeting

Are you curious about selling your products at the Portage Farmers Market? Come to this informational meeting to learn what is involved to become a vendor and what is new at the market in 2026.

- » Thursday, February 26, 6:30 - 8 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE (No registration required)

## Holiday Market

Get a jump on your holiday shopping at the Portage Holiday Market! Find unique gifts for friends and family, as well as tasty treats you can bring to Thanksgiving. Support local businesses selling beautiful handmade gifts, gourmet food, amazing art, and holiday goodies. Mark your calendar now!

- » Sunday, November 23, 11 AM - 3 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE & open to the public (No patron fee)



## Cozy Market NEW!

When February rolls around, winter begins to seem a little dreary. Let's make it cozy instead! Introducing the Portage Cozy Market - a market dedicated to all things cozy.

Reinvigorate your winter experience with a cup of tea and a custom-made blanket to keep you warm. Browse a variety of vendors selling hot beverages, comfort foods, and things that will help you enjoy that "cozy feeling" at home, such as good books, warm blankets, scented candles, and much more.

- » Sunday, February 1, 11 AM - 3 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE & open to the public (No patron fee)



**Apply Online at [portagemi.gov/940](http://portagemi.gov/940) to become a vendor!**

## IdeaWorx

Transform your ideas into reality with IdeaWorx business development programs. These small group classes are designed to help entrepreneurs learn the skills necessary to transform their dreams into thriving business ventures.



### Home-Based Food Businesses - Cottage Food Law 101

Thinking about starting a food business? Many people start right in their home kitchen, and you can, too! Rules and laws are in place to keep consumers safe, and it is important that you know them.

Join Kellie Jordan from the MSU Extension in this interactive class, where you'll learn the ins and outs of running a food-based business from your home using the Cottage Food Law. Class participants will receive a Certificate of Completion from the MSU Extension.



- » Thursday, October 16, 6 - 8:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$15 per participant, per class (Registration required)

### Canning Workshop – Jams & Jellies

Make jams and jellies from frozen berries under the direction of Kellie Jordan from MSU Extension. This workshop is designed to help you learn the basics of safe canning. For those who are interested in selling home-made jams and jellies, this class will provide information regarding Cottage Food Law, so you know what kinds of canned foods you are allowed to sell and how to label them. Everyone will take home a jar of jam after this exciting workshop.



- » Thursday, January 15, 6 - 8 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » \$15 per participant, per class (Registration required)

### Custom Branding with Canva

Take your small business to the next level with custom-made branding materials. In this class, you'll learn how to design eye-catching business cards, labels, signs, and other tools for your business using Canva, a free, user-friendly graphic design platform.



At the end of the class, visit the Makerspace at the Portage District Library, where you will see how easy it is to use laser engravers, sublimation printers, and other equipment to turn your design into reality.



No design or tech experience needed. Participants are encouraged to bring their laptops to follow along, but a small number will be available for participants who cannot bring their own.

- » Wednesday, March 18, 6 - 7:30 PM
- » Portage Parks & Recreation (320 Library Lane)
- » FREE (Registration required)

## Black History Month: *Green Book*

### Presenter: Candacy Taylor

In celebration of the 11th annual Black History Month Presentation, the City of Portage will host a special speaker at the Air Zoo, 6151 Portage Road. This year's speaker is author, travel writer, and explorer, Candacy Taylor. After the program, stick around for autographs and book signing of her best-selling book, *Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America*. The *Green Book* assisted African American travelers on the road with information, including safe places to eat and essential services during a time of institutionalized racial segregation. Candacy Taylor is the leading *Green Book* expert in the country. *Overground Railroad* made The New York Times' most notable books of the year, Oprah Magazine's top 26 travel books, and National Geographic's top 10 list of books by women.



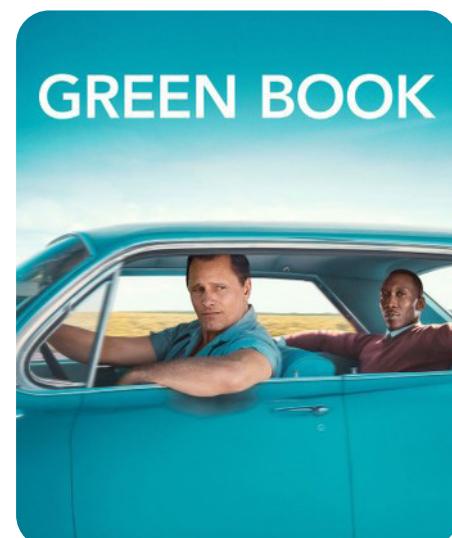
Taylor was a fellow at the Hutchins Center at Harvard University under the direction of Dr. Henry Louis Gates Jr. She curated *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a 3500-square-foot exhibition that will tour 14 US museums by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) from 2020 to 2026. Taylor is a National Geographic Explorer, and her projects have been funded by the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Park Service, the National Trust, and the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Her work has been featured in over 80 media outlets, including *The Atlantic*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, *The Economist*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune Magazine*, and *Time Magazine*.

- » Friday, February 6, 6 PM
- » Air Zoo (6151 Portage Road)
- » FREE (No registration required)

## Black History Month Movie: *Green Book*

View the film, *Green Book*, at the Portage Zhang Senior Center. The film pays homage to *The Negro Motorist Green Book*, a guidebook for African-American travelers, founded by Victor Hugo Green in 1936. Mahershala Ali and Viggo Mortensen star in the film inspired by the true story of pianist Don Shirley's tour of the Midwest and Deep South with driver and bodyguard, Frank "Tony Lip" Vellelonga.

- » Friday, January 30, 6 PM
- » Portage Zhang Senior Center (203 East Centre Avenue)
- » FREE (No registration required)





## Monster Mash & *Ghostbusters* (1984) Movie

There's something strange in the neighborhood. Strap on your Nuclear Accelerator and grab your Proton Pack, there are ghosts loose in Ramona Park that you need to trap at this year's Monster Mash! Show off your favorite Halloween costume at this family-friendly event, where you will find Halloween-themed decorations, a spooky trail hayride, merry-not-scary magic shows, pumpkin carving demos, a live DJ, food trucks, and more. After the festivities, enjoy a drive-in-style movie featuring the 1984 classic ***Ghostbusters*** starting around dusk. Parking for the movie begins at 5:30 PM on a first-come, first-served basis.

- » Saturday, October 18, 3 - 7 PM
- » Ramona Park (8600 South Sprinkle Road)
- » FREE (No registration required)



**Drive-In-Style  
Movie around Dusk**



## Monster Mash Graveyard

Be part of this year's Monster Mash. Design a gravestone to display in the Monster Mash Cemetery. All gravestones must be made of wood or plywood at least 1/2 inch thick and have a protective topcoat for outdoor use. The size must be no smaller than 2' x 2' and no larger than 4' x 8'. Gravestones must be cut into any shape (please do not drop off a 4' x 8' square sheet of plywood) and must only depict fictional characters, be family-friendly, and non-denominational. No real names allowed. Please ensure your gravestone is weather-proof for outdoor display.



Deliver your completed Gravestones to the Department of Public Works by Friday, October 3. Gravestones must be picked up at Ramona Park on Monday, October 20, between 9 AM and 2 PM, or on Tuesday, October 21, between 4 and 8 PM. Remaining gravestones will be disposed of by the city.

- » Gravestone Drop Off: September 15 - October 3
  - » Department of Public Works (7719 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » Gravestone Pickup: October 20, 9 AM - 2 PM or October 21, 4 - 8 PM
  - » Ramona Park (8600 South Sprinkle Road) at the Monster Mash Cemetery
- » FREE (No registration required)

## Winter Blast Half Marathon, 10K, 5K

The highly anticipated return of the Portage Winter Blast Half Marathon 10K, and 5K celebration of health, wellness, and fitness will mark its 13th year on Sunday, February 22, with a health and wellness expo. Packet pickup is on Saturday, February 21, at Loy Norrix High School. This signature event is a partnership between the Kalamazoo Area Runners (KAR) and the City of Portage for runners to traverse the scenic Portage trail system, featuring a combination of paved bike paths and paved roadway winding through the picturesque parklands.

All races start and finish at Loy Norrix High School (606 East Kilgore Road), where ample parking and accommodations are available. Following your run, enjoy post-race refreshments, sponsor tables, live entertainment, and an awards celebration. The Half Marathon is capped at 1,500 participants. Local roads will be closed intermittently during the event and will fully reopen by 12 PM.

- » Sunday, February 22, 2026, 8 AM
- » Loy Norrix High School (606 East Kilgore Road)

**Scan the  
QR Code  
to Register**



## Holiday Card & Tree Walk

Join the holiday magic at Celery Flats! Every year, families, businesses, civic groups, and organizations come together to create a festive wonderland during the annual Holiday Card & Tree Walk. Experience the joy and community spirit as we transform Celery Flats into a dazzling display of holiday cheer!

### Holiday Cards

Get creative and craft a personalized seasonal card for the Portage Holiday Card & Tree Walk! Your card should depict a winter, non-denominational holiday theme, painted on a 4'x8' sheet of plywood (at least  $\frac{1}{2}$ " thick) and painted white on the backside. Ensure it's weatherproof for outdoor display. These festive cards will be installed in an upright position at the Celery Flats Historical Area, adding to the holiday cheer. Deliver your completed card to the Department of Public Works by November 4 for installation. Cards need to be retrieved between January 13 to 20. Cards remaining after this time will be disposed of by the city.

- » Card Drop Off: October 1 - November 4
- » Card Pick Up: January 13 - January 20, 2026
- » Department of Public Works (7719 South Westnedge Avenue)
- » FREE (Registration required by November 1)

### Holiday Trees

Decorate a holiday tree in the Celery Flats Historical Area to spread the joy and celebrate the season! Trees and 300-count warm white lights will be provided; use your own decorations and artistic flair to show Portage your holiday spirit. Reserve your tree online or in person while supplies last. Pick up your decorations from January 2 to 6, 2026. Trees will be disposed of by the city along with any remaining decorations after January 6. Don't miss this chance to contribute to the festive atmosphere!

- » Decorate your tree from November 25 - December 1
- » Decoration Pick Up: January 2 - 6, 2026, at Celery Flats Historical Area (7335 Garden Lane)
- » FREE (Registration required by November 1, while supplies last)



## Traditional Holiday & Tree Lighting Celebration

Celebrate the magic of the season at the annual Portage Traditional Holiday and Tree Lighting Celebration at the Mayor's Tree in the City Centre. This cherished event begins with the reading of the winning "I Love Portage" essay by Portage students. The festivities continue with Portage High School singers heralding the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus.

Stuart Manor will host Santa and Mrs. Claus, who will greet children and listen to their holiday wishes while spreading festive cheer. The 1856 one-room Schoolhouse hosts letter writing to Santa. Listen to the choir and live brass band, marvel at the ice sculpture demonstrations, and warm your hands by a toasty fire. Enjoy complimentary milk and cookies provided by the Portage Community Center (donations accepted).

- » Saturday, December 6, 6 PM
- » The City Centre & Celery Flats Historical Area (7335 Garden Lane)
- » FREE (No registration required)



# YOUR BACKYARD IS BIGGER THAN YOU THINK

1,000 Acres. 20 Parks. One City.



**Eliason Nature Reserve** on West Osterhout Avenue features 141 acres with a 1.6 mile asphalt trail passing through upland and wetland ecosystems, with connections to Bishop's Bog and Schrier Park via wetland wildlife boardwalk. The scenic landscape provides the opportunity for spotting animal tracks while on a serene hike. Eliason Nature Reserve is the perfect place for snow-shoeing and cross-country skiing on its unplowed trails during wintertime.



Find your special place in the parks of Portage.

[mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov)

REGISTER AT [mypark.portagemi.gov](http://mypark.portagemi.gov)

REGISTER NOW!

