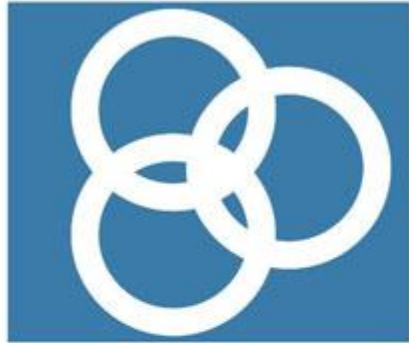


From: West Michigan Strategic Alliance [par@wm-alliance.org]
Sent: Friday, October 15, 2010 9:01 AM
To: info@wm-alliance.org
Subject: WMSA October E-Newsletter



WEST MICHIGAN
STRATEGIC
ALLIANCE

Celebrating our 10th year

Monthly Newsletter October 2010

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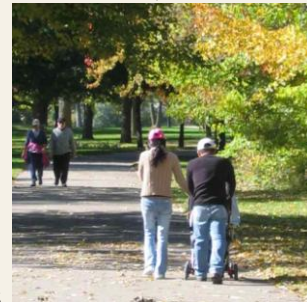
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WMSA Provides Inventory for 123,000 Acres of West Michigan Parks

The eight-county West Michigan region is home to more than 123,000 acres of park and recreation land. Now, the West Michigan Strategic Alliance (WMSA) is offering a database inventory of all that land for use by government leaders, businesses, residents and visitors. The inventory was completed this past summer by Susie Matteson, an intern working with WMSA's Green Infrastructure Initiative.



The [West Michigan Parks and Recreation Inventory](#) lists parkland by county, city, or township with links to online information where available. The database lists the acreage, address, and various recreational uses for each property. Uses range from sports fields to hiking trails and water access.

"West Michigan is fortunate to have so much land designated for recreation," said Elaine Sterrett Isely, WMSA's Green Infrastructure Project Manager. "These parks attract visitors and encourage residents to move throughout the eight-county region, both of which contribute to the local economy." [Click here](#) to read the entire story.



**Did You Know?
Interesting facts
about West Michigan**

[The Allegan State Game Area](#) is comprised of over 50,000 acres.

The [Fred Meijer White Pine Trail](#) is the longest rail/trail system in the State of Michigan (95.26 miles long)

Newaygo County is home to over 234 lakes.



On the Road with Literacy to Work

In September 2010, the Literacy to Work Initiative in partnership with Zeeland Public Schools, Ottawa Area Intermediate School District and the Literacy Center of West Michigan, began offering high quality ESL (English as a Second Language), ABE (Adult Basic Education), and GED (General Equivalency Diploma) preparation to residents in Ottawa County. “Students seem committed and excited as they recognize the potential benefits for their futures” recently remarked Steve Machiele, Literacy to Work GED Instructor with Zeeland Adult Education regarding students’ enthusiasm about the program.

As of the end of September 2010, the program has twenty-two students enrolled in the program and has issued GED testing vouchers to twelve students. Five students have already completed their GED testing and are awaiting their scores. One student has received full-time employment. Steve anticipates that every week he will have students completing their GED instruction and testing. Students are eager to complete the Literacy to Work program including the “plus” components which have begun and are still slowly being phased in. Financial Literacy classes will begin later this month and will be provided by Huntington Bank.

For more information on how you can get involved or contribute to the Literacy to Work Initiative, please contact Jessica Materson at (616) 622-4085 or <mailto:%20jmaterson@wm-alliance.org>.

Ottawa County Presents: Fifth Annual Water Quality Forum

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming Fifth Annual Water Quality Forum, presented by Ottawa County, on Monday, November 1, 2010. [Click here](#) for a copy of the Registration form or [click here](#) for more information.



The 'Green Space'

If you are interested in sharing news about the West Michigan region, providing content or would like to suggest a topic for the WMSA monthly newsletter, please email info@wm-alliance.org

Owasippe Fall Festival

The 4,800 acre Owasippe Scout Reservation in Muskegon County is the oldest boy scout camp in the United States. This privately-owned property is being opened to the public on October 15-17 and 22-24 to introduce what Owasippe has to offer. Property owner, the Chicago Area Council of Boy Scout, has made an agreement with the Owasippe Outdoor Education Center to manage the property during the off-season. This fall festival is intended to encourage more public usage. [Click here](#) to here to read the full story.

Look for additional information on WMSA's Owasippe Demonstration Project in next month's E-newsletter.

Regional Spotlight:

Local First Presents: Fall on The Farm

Enjoy a fun filled afternoon of family-friendly fun and activities during Fall on the Farm with Local First (Saturday, October 16, 2010) at [Grassfields Farm!](#) Bring the whole family and enjoy:

- Delicious, fall-inspired food and treats
- Pumpkin painting, wagon rides, and family activities
- Guided tours of the farm and creamery

Everything is included for just \$12 for adults and \$6 for children (ages 2 and under are FREE). And no family will pay more than \$40! To purchase tickets or for more information, visit the Local First website at:

<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=76201308&msgid=1015565&act=SO G3&c=381565&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.localfirst.com>.

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About the West Michigan Strategic Alliance

The West Michigan Strategic Alliance serves as a catalyst for regional collaboration among the businesses, institutions and governmental units serving more than 1.4 million people living in an eight-county region including: Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo and Ottawa. WMSA works to encourage a regional mindset, which will foster collaboration on critical issues that impact how we live, learn, work and play. Additional information is available at

<http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=76201308&msgid=1015565&act=SO>

[G3&c=381565&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.wm-alliance.org%2F](http://www.wm-alliance.org)

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