

The water is calling in Ozaukee County

By the Ozaukee County Tourism Council

We are fortunate here in Ozaukee County to have an abundance of rivers, creeks and ponds and to be located alongside the great Lake Michigan. With the emergence of sun and summer temperatures, many of us are ready for water activities and adventures.

Paddle sports such as canoeing, kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) are popular activities for all ages. If you are looking to purchase equipment, Sherper's in Port Washington sells paddle sport equipment and will hopefully soon be renting kayaks, canoes and SUPs on South Beach in Port Washington. Check their website for updates. Silent Wake, LLC in Fredonia offers a unique kayak service for kayakers of all skill levels. They are an outfitter, educator and Paddle Retreat offering skills training as well as coordinated trips of varying lengths. Visit their website at silentwake.com to inquire about opportunities to paddle in and around Ozaukee County.

Treasures of Oz provides detailed information to help with independent kayak and canoe river trips. They offer maps and photos of key spots to assist with navigation, current water levels and flow; the Milwaukee Urban Water Trail; the developing Lake Michigan Water Trail; and weather and wind conditions. Visit the Treasures of Oz website at treasuresofoz.org to download maps and other information.

The Milwaukee Riverkeepers, in conjunction with the Ozaukee County Planning and Parks Department, recently came out with their new, expanded Milwaukee Urban Water Trail Map. The Milwaukee Urban Water Trail helps

connect the Greater Milwaukee area with three rivers. The newest edition connects a large natural stretch of the Milwaukee River and its tributaries in Ozaukee County to the more urban stretches of rivers in Milwaukee County. The map also connects the three rivers to access points along Lake Michigan. It includes amenities such as parking, restrooms, points of interest, hazards including rapids and dams, and more. These maps are printed on water- and tear-resistant paper. To receive a map, visit the website or email info@milwaukeekeeper.org.

Fishing

Another way to enjoy beautiful Lake Michigan is a day offshore on a fishing charter. Fishing charter businesses such as C&D Charters LLC, Iverson SportFishing LLC, and Reel Screamer Sportfishing, with their well-appointed boats and experienced captains, make chartering a boat easy at the marina in Port Washington. The good work of the Great Lakes Sport Fishermen-Ozaukee Chapter helps protect and improve Lake Michigan's salmon and trout fishery. For more information on each of these charters, visit ozaukeetourism.com. There is also a public launch at the Port Washington Marina to enjoy the lake from your own boat.

Riveredge Nature Center offers many safe ways to enjoy the water. The Center offers paddling trips and Parent/Grandparent & Child Treks including tubing, kayaking and canoeing, as well as private paddles for families. Riveredge Adventure Guide will be in Grafton on Friday and later in August for Grafton residents and at Waubedonia Park in Fredonia on Saturday for Saukville residents ages 10+ providing the

opportunity to learn about their local rivers in one-person kayaks. Registration is required. Visit the Riveredge Nature Center website events page at www.riveredgenaturecenter.org/events.

Riverwalks

There are also plenty of ways to enjoy the water from the shore. Grafton, Mequon, Cedarburg and Thiensville all offer picturesque riverwalks. There is a Mequon-Thiensville Fishway that features an underwater camera to monitor fish and wildlife species passing through. The underwater fish cam can be viewed at any time by visiting www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/1248/Fishway-Camera.

Two Ozaukee County parks, including Virmond County Park in Mequon and Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve in Grafton, offer beautiful views of Lake Michigan from the 100-foot bluffs, as well as trails, bridges and stairways leading down to beautiful beaches, perfect for rock collecting and frolicking in the waves. In Port Washington, South Beach is a sandy, dog-friendly stretch that's popular with families in the summer. The harbor, marina, breakwaters and lighthouses near the popular downtown area offer delightful views and great places to stroll and explore. Upper Lake Park offers one of the best views of Lake Michigan in the area. Any one of the multiple overlook areas offers unobstructed views of Lake Michigan and the city of Port Washington, and only 83 steps separate Upper Lake Park from the North Beach.

Harrington Beach State Park in Belgium offers seven miles of hiking trails, including a mile-long beach with warm sands, picturesque dunes



Photo courtesy of Eric Curtain

Kayakers enjoy the scenery of the Milwaukee River in Fredonia.

and the remains of a 700-foot pier that was used in the early 1900s for shipping the limestone that was quarried and processed at the park. A short hike inland takes you to Quarry Lake, 45 feet deep at its deepest point. A gentle three-quarter mile crushed rock path will take you around the lake where you can enjoy quarry edges and fishing piers. Swimming is not allowed in Quarry Lake. You need a park sticker to enter.

And while many pools are closed for the summer, for cool fun on a hot summer day head up to the Splash Pad in Belgium. More information can be found at www.village.belgium.wi.us.

For information on safety protocols and operations during this time, we recommend you contact the businesses or consult their websites for details. For information on all these activities and more, pick up a copy of the Ozaukee Coun-



Submitted photo

South Beach in Port Washington.

ty Tourism Guide available at area chambers and visitor centers, and partner businesses around the county, as well as kiosks on the Ozaukee Interurban Trail or visit www.ozaukee-tourism.com and follow the

Ozaukee County Tourism Facebook page. On behalf of the Ozaukee County Tourism Council, thank you for helping to make Ozaukee County a wonderful place for all to live, work and visit!