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Community

Spotlight Events

So Many Ways to Discover Presque Isle

The state park is a second home for many Erie natives

 by Kalli Oberlander  July 17, 2019 at 10:30 AM



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It's safe to say that Presque Isle is a defining place for Erie. With its beautiful beaches, lush hiking trails, bike paths, wildlife, and of course — the "you need to see it to believe it" sunsets — the state park is a second home for many Erie natives and those who come from all over to witness the amazing natural beauties the Peninsula has

to offer.

Jon DeMarco, Executive Director of the Presque Isle Partnership, explains that "while the Presque Isle Partnership is the overall coordinator for this event, it's really our community and the vendors that bring us together."

The greatest challenge in this event is simple — what should you do first? There are so many activities going on that one would find it hard to fit everything in for the three-day festival. For instance, you could participate in a new event, such as the Discover Presque Isle 5K on Saturday morning at 7 a.m., which "includes a t-shirt and a pancake breakfast voucher for Saturday or Sunday. It's a fun and healthy option for families," states DeMarco.

In addition to the 5K, another new discovery will be taking place on Beach 1. "We're working with a new nonprofit this year, the Erie Wellness Network, which will focus on health and related activities. People can come and do yoga and pilates, and we hope that people enjoy it this year so we can continue to implement it and have it grow in the future," says DeMarco.

Whether or not you're athletic, the Smith's Volleyball Challenge at Beach 6 never disappoints, starting at 9 a.m. on Saturday morning. If that's not your style, the kite flyers at Sunset Point also know how to keep the party going. "Sunset Point is always done up to the nines. A group of kite flyers get together for Discover Presque Isle and set up the beach for a beautiful display," DeMarco says. Plus, the S.O.N.S. (Save Our Native Species) of Lake Erie Fishing Club make sure that family fishing is safe and ready for everyone coming to enjoy this event.

"We have so many different craft and food vendors, and I can't imagine summer without live music, a giant bonfire, and a sand sculpture contest at Beach 8," DeMarco enthused.

Discover Presque Isle is not only an exciting way to celebrate and enjoy the park, but it's also the perfect time to give back. Currently, there are buttons for sale at Sara's and the Tom Ridge Environmental Center gift shop that enter you in for a chance to win up to \$1,000, a brand new paddleboat, a brand new kayak, as well as 80 different generous donations from the craft vendors. They are five dollars per button, and a very simple way to give back to the peninsula.

Donations help to keep the park maintained as well as set up new developments such as better handicap access around the entire park. If you truly want the full Presque Isle experience, take it from park veteran DeMarco: "To fully enjoy the park and get the full Presque Isle experience, you should get out of your car as much as you can. Bike, walk, or even head out to the water and swim or kayak."

Whether you're an Erie native or not, it's important to never take Presque Isle for granted. Its beauty needs to be celebrated. If you find yourself wondering why it's so important to keep our peninsula well-maintained and to be enjoyed by all, then perhaps you need to take a little time and discover Presque Isle yourself. — Kalli Oberlander

Friday through Sunday, sunrise to sunset (with live music going until 10:15 Saturday night) // Presque Isle State Park // Free admission // For a full list of all the activities being offered, please visit discoverpi.com

