

Hit the trail — Independence Oaks has 3

By LEM MESSEE
Outdoors writer

Some like an organized tour. Others like to walk the trails of Independence Oaks County Park themselves.

In either event, Kathleen Daugherty is prepared.

The county parks naturalist has organized a dozen programs so far this year. She has plans for others this summer on insects, astronomy, backpacking and nature study. During the school year, Ms. Daugherty guided dozens of groups along the trails.

But you may also walk any of the three trails in this 830-acre county park yourself. First, pick up a map at the park entrance, on Sashabaw two miles north of I-75 near Clarkston.

Ms. Daugherty gave us this rundown on the trails:

- Lakeshore — 90-minute walk. "The trail is fairly level. It goes through fields and forest and is the easiest of the trails."

- Rockridge — 2.7 miles. "There are more hills and moraines on this trail, and it's mostly wooded. There's also an observation tower."

- Springlake Trail — 3.2 miles. "It's hilly and goes through forest and forest openings."

Numbered posts along the trails correspond to numbers in the guide. The guide describes black willows, a spring creek, sensitive fern, a pike rearing station and something every outdoorsman needs to know — poison ivy and poison sumac.

Independence Oaks also offers swim-

outdoors

ming in Crooked Lake, fishing and organized group camping.

THE OAKLAND County Sheriff's Marine Division will present two pleasure boating classes in the Law Enforcement Building's Civil Defense Room, 1201 N. Telegraph, July 26 and Aug. 2. They run from 9 a.m. to noon.

State law requires a child between the ages of 12 and 16, while operating a boat equipped with a six or more horsepower engine, be accompanied by an adult or have a valid boating safety certificate.

A boating safety certificate will be issued to those 12 or older upon successful completion of the six-hour class requirement. This course is free of charge. Call the marine division at 858-4991 to pre-register.

AN EVENING nature cruise aboard the "Island Queen" is on tonight at Kensington Metropark.

Naturalist Bob Hotelling will describe the natural and human history of the lake, and you can see Canada geese, herons and other lake residents. Bring cameras and binoculars.

There's a charge of \$1.50 per person besides the vehicle entry permit. To be sure you get aboard, call the park office at 685-1561 for a reservation.

KENSINGTON'S bike-hike trail is being extended a mile. J.D. Armstrong Landscape Co. of Fraser won the \$65,000 contract. Work is to be completed by next May.

Kensington Metropark currently has five miles of bike-hike trail from the east boat launch through the woods near Island Road. The new project will extend the trail to the west boat launch.

Park entrances are on Kent Lake Road and Kensington Road north of I-96 in western Oakland County.

New classes start Monday at YMCA

The Birmingham Family YMCA, 400 E. Lincoln, is holding registration for its second session of summer classes next week. Classes will meet twice a week for four weeks.

Swimming instruction will be offered for infants with parents, pres-

choolers, school age children and adults. Classes in physical education will also be offered for preschoolers and school age children.

For additional information call 644-9036.



Parks Naturalist Kathleen Daugherty is prepared to introduce the environment to groups getting back to nature.

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