

Join Us for the First Annual Grand Explorers' Trail Race!

What can we say? This trail race is Grand:
Grand River, Grand Ravines, Grand bridges, and Grand views!

The course starts at Grand River County Park winding you through a natural surface trail until you hit the newly completed Idema Explorers Trail segment that leads you along the Grand River to Grand Ravines County Park.

If you are running (or walking!) the 5K, you will turn around at this point. If you are running the 10K, you will continue to wind yourself through Grand Ravines Park, around the dog park, through the meadow, across the Idema suspension bridge, and back through the woods to Grand River Park. Sounds pretty GRAND, doesn't it?

Bring the whole family! There is also a 1-mile kids run/walk. After the kids' event, there will be a nature-themed craft for kids provided by Ottawa County Parks.

Bring your dog, too! We'll have prizes for the first dogs across the finish line. We ask that you register your dog (dogs participate for free) so we know how many dogs will be participating.

To learn more and register, run over to the race [website](#).

Net proceeds from this event support the Ottawa County Parks Foundation.

Race Update #1

We are now about four weeks out from the Grand Explorer's Trail Race and we wanted to give you some preliminary information to let you know about the plans for race day. We are excited about running the race in these two beautiful parks and hope you will let your friends know about this great opportunity to enjoy the amazing Ottawa County park system. The rains came a month ago and rebirth is visible everywhere that you look in the parks. The spring ephemerals have finished blooming and now the trees are budding and flowering throughout the parks.

Dogs

After much discussion and many requests from runners, we are going to allow dogs on a 6-foot leash (max) to run the race with their handlers. Due to the initial narrowness of the trail, we will use a staggered start to start any runners with dogs at the back of the pack. There is a section of the trail that is out-and-back so we do ask that any runners with dogs take the necessary steps (e.g. shortening the leash, stepping to the side, etc.) when encountering runners coming the other direction. We are excited about offering the option to run with dogs and may even have a few prizes for the top dogs.

Walkers

We have received numerous questions from people wondering if they can walk the course. Yes, the 5K should not be a problem. The timing company will be set up until 10:30 am. That allows two hours for race completion. For the 10K, it can also be walked in that amount of time but that would take a good effort to do it. You are welcome to walk the 10K course but it is possible that you will finish after the clock

has been put away. You can still participate in all of the festivities for the day. You may want to print out a map of the course and take it with you if you think you will be on the course for longer than two hours. We will be closing up at 11:30 am as there are other reservations for the park facilities that day.

Arrival Time on Race Day

On Race Day, the Kids' Fun Run starts at 8:00 am and the course does utilize the driveway into the park. It is preferable that you arrive before 8:00 so be aware that if you arrive after 8:00 you may have to wait a few minutes for the kids to clear the driveway before parking. We will have volunteers directing traffic that morning.

Course Notes

5K Course - The 5K course is a little longer than 5K, probably closer to 3.4 miles. There isn't a good way to shorten it so we just want you to know that it will probably not be a PR course for you.

10K Course - The 10K course is also a little longer, probably closer to 6.4 miles and does include a section that descends on stairs in Grand Ravines Park. If the stairs are wet you will want to be careful as wet wood can be slippery. We plan to have a volunteer in this area of the park.

Directions to the Park

Please be aware that the start/finish area is at Grand River County Park. Google Maps will give you the correct routing to get there. Do not go to Grand Ravines North or South! These parks are nearly adjacent to each other and are similarly-named, which does cause confusion at times.

Visiting the Park

If you want to visit the parks ahead of time, now is a great time to go. The river has receded (it often overflows its banks in the spring) and the entire course is accessible. Be aware that the non-paved sections can still be muddy right now but generally dry out well by June.