



Conservation group challenges metro east residents to explore local parks this holiday season

November 15 2018 3:01 PM



MASCOUTAH - HeartLands Conservancy is partnering with the Alpine Shop and Davey Resource Group to challenge people to get outdoors this holiday season. The third annual Jingle Hike Challenge begins on Thanksgiving Day (Thursday, November 22) and runs through New Year's Day (Tuesday, January 1).

Jingle bells are tied to trees in twelve parks throughout the Metro East. Participants have six weeks to visit the parks, find each tree, take a selfie with the bell, and post the photo to Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using #jinglehike. Participants can also email photos to treks@heartlandsconservancy.org.

For each photo submission, participants will be entered to win prizes. If a person finds six or more of the trees, he or she will be entered to win the grand prize – a \$325 gift card to the Alpine Shop. Bonus entries will be awarded for correctly identifying the tree species. Other prizes include gear from the Alpine Shop and Toolen's Running Start.

HeartLands Conservancy created the Jingle Hike Challenge to increase awareness of the Metro East's outstanding parks and natural areas. "Part of our mission is to engage people with nature, even in the winter. The challenge encourages people to take a break to enjoy the outdoors and explore our beautiful region," said Mary Vandevord, President and CEO of HeartLands Conservancy.

This year's park locations include Piasa Park, Chouteau Island, Malcolm W. Memorial Park, Watershed Nature Center, Signal Hill Outdoor Classroom, Rock Springs Park, Trenton Community Park, Silver Creek Nature Preserve, Washington County State Conservation Area, Konarcik Park, Miner Park, and Fort de Chartres.

There is no fee for participating in the challenge, but participants must be at least 14 years old to win prizes. A map of all twelve parks and instructions will be available at HeartLands Conservancy, the Alpine Shop, Toolen's Running Start, and several other locations in the region. More information and a printable map can also be found online at <https://www.heartlandsconservancy.org/jingle2018.php>.

Winners will be drawn January 3 and announced on HeartLands Conservancy's website and social media. Follow HeartLands Conservancy on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for hints on bell locations and other challenge information.

ABOUT HEARTLANDS CONSERVANCY

HeartLands Conservancy, a nonprofit serving southwestern Illinois since 1989, is devoted to the conservation of open spaces, sustainable and environmentally friendly

community planning, and engaging our neighbors with nature. We are investing in the nature of southwestern Illinois. Visit: www.HeartLandsConservancy.org for more information.