



Cub Run Stream Valley's

Snowflake Trail



"Is there any chance of something like this again?" asked Brigid Bludau after a family visit to Cub Run Stream Valley's Snowflake Trail last winter.

Yes! The free, nature-themed scavenger hunt will make a return this year from Thanksgiving through the holiday season.

The trails behind Cub Run Rec Center are one of the many lesser-known gems in the Park Authority's 420 parks. Last winter, Cub Run Naturalist and Historian Chris Terpak-Malm (aka Grandmother Frost) marked a roughly one-mile trail at the park with snowflake symbols and QR codes containing video clues. Folks who scanned the QR codes discovered that Grandmother Frost had lost her holiday gifts for the woodland animals at Cub Run and needed help to find them. Participants could follow clues to the gifts while learning about the animals who inhabit the woods.



"I wanted kids to have fun outside. I wanted them to learn a little bit, run through the woods, and giggle at some silly elements," said Terpak-Malm. The goal was to create a family-friendly way to get everyone outdoors during the COVID-19 shutdowns, and visitors of all ages were swept up in the fun.

"WE LOVED IT!!," Bludau wrote. "I have four children and we spent three hours on the trails and playground." Malm said she especially enjoyed hearing from parents who said that as soon as their kids completed the trail, they wanted to start all over again.

More trails are planned for the future.



Holiday Gift Guide



Shop locally this holiday season and support your favorite parks with a shopping spree through the Park Authority's gift shops. You'll find truly unique objects and gifts with a different appeal.

Show you have a green thumb for gift giving with a stop at the Green Spring Gardens Gift and Plant Shops. Thrill your favorite gardener with plants that do well in local growing conditions or with a whimsical garden-inspired gift.

Return to a simpler time with an open hearth cookbook, hand-made soaps, flour sack towels or spiced mug mats from Sully Historic Site's Squirrel's Nest Museum Gift Shop.

Find farm-inspired gifts, such as old-fashioned games, puzzles, tractors, toy farm animals and tools for young gardeners, as well as items for equestrian and history enthusiasts, at the Country Store at Frying Pan Farm Park.

Shop the Colvin Run Mill General Store for the foodie on your list and purchase fresh, stone-ground whole-wheat flour, white and yellow cornmeal, and white grits. Find recipes online for tasty breads, cookies and pretzels using the grains.

Check out the pro shop at the Laurel Hill Golf Club for the latest in golf apparel and equipment, or purchase Golf Fairfax gift cards that can be used for shopping, greens and range fees, or food and beverages at Park Authority golf courses.

Of course, you can never go wrong with a Park Authority gift card. Friends and family can use the cards for classes, camps, mini golf, and admission to Rec Centers. It's never too early for holiday shopping!

