



# COUNTY OF KENOSHA

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News release

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Kenosha County opens Fox River Park Overnight Lodge**

SALEM LAKES – A newly renovated facility within Kenosha County’s Fox River Park will provide overnight camp accommodations for scouts and other civic groups.

Kenosha County Parks staff along with community volunteers and local businesses recently put the finishing touches on the Fox River Park Overnight Lodge, which is located in a house with a history of multiple uses since the 1930s.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house at the overnight lodge will be held at 5 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 23. Fox River Park is located at 9521 304<sup>th</sup> Ave. in the Village of Salem Lakes.

The lodge can sleep up to 22 people and offers amenities including a large multipurpose room with tables and chairs, a kitchen, bunkbeds and an outdoor fire pit. It is available for rental by qualified nonprofit and community-based organizations to hold meetings and overnight stays.

“This is another great, unique amenity that Kenosha County Parks is offering to the community,” said Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser. “In my past days as a scout leader, we would have loved to have the opportunity to take troops to a place like this, seemingly remote but so close to home.”

The facility that now houses the lodge was first built and utilized by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), as it developed much of Fox River Park during the 1930s. After the CCC was disbanded, the facility was converted into a Park Superintendent residence, where park managers lived onsite. It later served as the Kenosha County Parks west-end office until that was relocated to KD Park, and in recent years was an underutilized storage facility for miscellaneous park supplies.

Since 2016, following up on County Executive Kreuser’s vision of offering overnight camping to scouts and other groups, local Eagle Scouts candidates, volunteers from Vail Resorts’ Wilmot Mountain Ski Resort and Kenosha County Parks staff have completed projects to transform the house into a facility that can accommodate 18 youths and four adult chaperones overnight.

“The house and adjacent Fox River Park offer all the amenities needed for youth groups to experience the parks in a setting that was otherwise not available in the past,” said Kenosha County Parks Director Matthew Collins. “Thanks to our many volunteers who made this possible.”

Among those volunteers, Austin Schwarz completed his Eagle Scout project with the construction of a fire pit and patio outside of the overnight lodge. Alex Rubenacker also accomplished the rank of Eagle Scout with the construction of eight bunkbeds.

Significantly, more than 50 volunteers from Wilmot Mountain assisted with numerous tasks to the lodge including upgrading lighting, replacing fascia boards, scraping and painting exterior window sills, landscaping and interior cleaning.

“Kenosha County staff provided the final touches to make this facility ready to its next stage of useful life, as it provides a unique venue for our residents to get our youth outside and experience the Kenosha County Parks,” Collins said.

Photos of the facility are available online at <http://www.kenoshacounty.org/1979/Overnight-Lodge>. For more information about how to book reservations, please call the Kenosha County Division of Parks at 262-857-1869.

More details about the entire Kenosha County Parks system are at <http://parks.kenoshacounty.org> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/KenoshaCountyParks>.

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