

Oculus Arboretum

Made by Trygve Nordberg

Ascend the path, and you will be confronted by a concrete structure inviting you to submerge your face into its headset made from the same material. Close your eyes for 30 seconds and let your eyes adjust.

Open your eyes, and your visual field will fragment through an underground network of one hundred optical cables, branching out in every direction like a root system. These tentacles emerge from the terrain surrounding you, forming an array of ocular antennas embedded in the native plant life.

Your eyes are watching the output of a photon-sensitive orchestra made up of fiber-optic cables, each streaming color and light back to your non-virtual display at the speed of light.

Soften your gaze, and you may start to notice subtle flickers or shimmers coming from one of the many "pixels" floating in space before you. What exactly is happening on the other end? Could it be a gust of wind? A rattling leaf? A caterpillar crawling? A fleeting cloud shadow? A chickadee landing? Perhaps a rabbit scurrying through a bush?

Momentary constellations continue to form and dissipate as dappled light and shadow trickle through the layered flora. This immersive display will evolve moment to moment, season to season, and year to year, influenced by the growth and decay in the surrounding one-hundred-foot radius.

This sculpture uses no electricity or electronics. It repurposes the language of virtual reality and fiber optic communication to forge a new kind of raw "perception instrument" to aid humans in accessing the very same natural systems that these technologies slowly alienate us from.



The mission of Three Rivers Park District is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system.

Silverwood Park's Mission Is:

Through quality experiences in nature and the arts, we foster lasting connections to the environment, each other and ourselves.



Volunteer Opportunities

Program Assistant Opportunities

Make and Mingle Market

Thursday, December 7
5:00PM-8:00PM

Event Assistants (2 Volunteers). Assist with art-making and fun holiday craft ideas. Best for those who enjoy working with adults in a laid back atmosphere.

Make and Mingle: Hibernial

Friday, December 15
6:00PM-9:00PM

Event Assistants (3-4 Volunteers). Assist with art-making or other roles during our seasonal Make and Mingle Event. Best for those who enjoy working with adults and a laid back atmosphere. Must be 21+.



Free Family Fun Day: Puppet Art Adventures

Sundays, December 10, January 14,
February 11
12:30PM-3PM

Art Assistants (2-4 Volunteers). Assist families and children with making art and learning about nature after a puppet show. Program runs from 1PM-3PM with a puppet show promptly at 1PM. This program will take place outdoors as the weather permits and is best for folks who enjoy enthusiastically explaining instructions and are comfortable standing for most of the program.

Try It: Ice Fishing

Sunday, January 21
12PM-4PM

Event Assistants (2-3 Volunteers). Help folks try ice fishing on Silver Lake. Assist with directing event-goers to where activities are happening. Best for those comfortable being outdoors in the cold and who enjoy socializing over winter sports.

Frozen Foot Golf Snow Sculpting

Sunday, January 28
10AM-1PM

Art and Event Assistants (2-3 Volunteers). Come and help as artists and community members sculpt a frozen mini foot golf course for everyone to enjoy. We also need assistance with signing in folks who are sculpting a course. Open play will happen in the afternoon from 2PM-3PM. Best for those who are comfortable being outdoors and assisting with some fun snow play and art installation.

Midwinter Melt

Friday, February 2
6:00PM-9PM

Event Assistants (2-3 Volunteers). Embrace the fun of cold weather. Help families make art, participate in activities on a frozen lake, and enjoy the mid-point between winter and spring. Best for those who enjoy working with children and are comfortable being outdoors for long periods of time. Some activities will be indoors.



To volunteer for any of these opportunities, please call or email Seth Eberle at seth.eberle@threeriversparks.org or 612-508-6217. He will connect you with the staff person leading the program or project.