

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Local Family Finds Adventure in Grayslake Parks**

**Grayslake, IL.** What started as a simple attempt to spend more time outside turned into so much more. When Grayslake resident Victoria Esmail committed to spend 1,000 hours outside with her family, she started looking for new destinations. Visiting different parks in town seemed like a reasonable goal.

Esmail turned to the Grayslake Community Park District for inspiration, since the district maintains 33 parks with 23 different playgrounds in Grayslake and Hainesville. “I wanted to try new parks, see new parts of town, and give my son a bit of adventure in a time when adventure is harder to come by,” said Esmail. And so the Grayslake Parks Challenge began.

So far, the Esmail family has visited 16 parks. “We designate Monday afternoon as a park day – sometimes it’s a new one, sometimes it’s a repeat of a favorite,” said Esmail. Jones Island has emerged as a favorite destination. Located on Grays Lake, Jones Island Park (243 Harvey Avenue, Grayslake) features a playground, beach, fishing, boat launch for canoes or kayaks, sand volleyball courts, a picnic shelter and ice skating (seasonally). “My son can easily explore the playground and wander the water areas. He also loves all the bird houses,” added Esmail.

To others considering the Parks Challenge, Esmail’s recommendation is to “Simply start! Pick one of the parks listed on the Grayslake Park District’s website – maybe it’s one you drive by, maybe it’s the closest, maybe it’s one you have seen photos of – and get started.”

The interactive Park Map at [glpd.com](http://glpd.com) makes it easy to find new parks to explore. Search by park name or filter by feature, so you can know a little more about the park before you go. Looking for somewhere with a basketball court? Try Hunter’s Ridge (1233 Meadowlark Ln) or Tooterville (411 Signal Ln). Need to work on your backhand? Try the tennis courts at Cambridge Park (291 Buckingham Dr).

Since beginning the Parks Challenge, Victoria and her husband Tyler welcomed baby Finley to the family. Although she’s only a month old, Finley has already visited a number of parks with her big brother Jaxson (3 years).

Esmail hopes sharing her story will encourage other families to get outside and enjoy what the Grayslake Park District has to offer.

#### **About the Grayslake Park District:**

Established in 1959, the Grayslake Park District has 33 park sites with over 240 acres of open space, wetlands, playgrounds, and ballfields. It offers hundreds of programs including youth and adult sports leagues, youth sports classes, a dance studio, a public golf course, adult day trips, fitness classes, day camps, family special events, and much more. Find Your Fun at [www.glpd.com](http://www.glpd.com) or follow @grayslakeparkdistrict on Facebook and Instagram.

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Pictures included



Victoria Esmail with her son Jaxson and daughter Finley at the Central Park playground in Grayslake.