

Manitou Days Treasure Hunt
Fox Meadow Park, White Bear Township

Pre-Hunt Rhymes:

*Hey! Did you hear? There's a new medallion this year
Transparent, quite polar, and containing our stamp.
New to the game, he or she longs for a genuine name
Which will officially be chosen by this year's champ.*

*So if over this hunt you rejoice, consider a naming choice
One that is fun, of honor, or has a community shine.
Something improper will be put through the chopper:
We do reserve the right to politely decline.*

Clue #1:

*White Bear's most secretive event, we now proudly present
Township and city lands are the stars of our show.
Parks eagerly await you, quirky clues will gently bait you
Property privately owned and golf? Just say no.*

*While it is fun that we assign, do draw a line
Between behaviors innocuous and those with flaw.
Ordinances to follow – the warnings aren't hollow
Enforced faithfully by the long arm of the law.*

Explanation:

While the first clue welcomed hunters to the search, the clue was completely structured around a lonely brown and white sign found on the south end of the park. The first word of each line matches that on the sign (with the exception of the first two lines of the second stanza, which direct hunters to “draw a line” like the long white line seen on the sign). The final line of the first stanza also points to the red “No Golf” sign posted immediately below the other sign.

Clue #2:

*On a wintry day we first made our way
And immediately saw all that lay in store.
A rooftop view, a shredded yew
More sights than words there at the fore.*

*With so much to win, give that wheel a spin
All but five can be selected for free.
It's merely a point of view, but for such a high IQ
They seem unfit for an elementary spelling bee.*

Explanation:

The first stanza hinted to visual cues from the parking lots area of the park. In the winter when there were no leaves, Public Storage (“see what lay in store”), a billboard advertising Rudy’s Rooftop Redeye Grill (“rooftop view”), and Langer’s Tree Service, whose sign totes its quality mulch (“shredded yew”). “More sights than words” told hunters that all of these were visual clues and also hinted to a metal placard near the parking lot that stands empty. The second stanza pointed at Smarte Carte, a well-known local company headquartered near Fox Meadow Park. The word “wheel” hinted at the products sold by the company. “High IQ” hinted at the word “smart.” The clue also hints to the fact that both words in the company name are not traditionally spelled. The first two lines hinted that they extra letters are vowels (in Wheel of Fortune, the five primary vowels must be purchased).

Clue #3:

*Where water meets land you usually see sand
But here pillars will greet your eye.
An unmistakable sight -- by both day and night
Striking fixtures there in the sky.*

*Consider borders and barking orders
Around our cone of influence.
Although several on the sides, only one resides
Near a place of youthful confluence.*

Explanation:

The Shoreview (combine “where water meets land” and “see”) Towers (“pillars”) can be seen to the west of the park. The second stanza pointed to an interesting observation we had at the park. The first line invited hunters to consider the “borders” of the park and the trees (“barking”) along that boundary. Many pines (“cone” and “several on the sides”) can be seen. Yet only *one* pine is actually found within the bounds of the park and is located near the playground (“place of youthful confluence”).

Clue #4:

*A wedge in airs southerly ties to a figure motherly
Recall a carol’s feast or complete a mon.
“Résoudre” the ruse, then mind your Ps and these cues
C’mon down, it’s time to get your game on!*

*For those wandering slumped, looking stumped
Here's a diamond most alimentary.
Once onsite, you'll see it's quite right
To keep your thinking sedimentary.*

Explanation:

The first stanza spoke to the streets around Fox Meadow Park. The third line started with the word "résoudre," which is a French word for "to solve or decipher." "Rues" (pronounced the same as "ruse") is the French word for "streets." If you look at your map, there are several streets in the immediate area that start with the letter P ("Parkway," "Parkridge Dr," "Pondview Ln," "Pondview Drive," "Parkway Ponds," "Park Valley Ln," "Preserve Pl," etc...) and then a standout: Wild Goose Ln, which became the primary focus of the clue. "Wedge" is a name for the V-formation that geese make on their migration routes and "figure motherly" hinted at Mother Goose. "Carol's feast" hinted at Charles Dickens' goose feast in The Christmas Carol. If you complete "mon" with goose you arrive at "mongoose," a common creature in Africa and Asia. Even if you missed those references, "down" and "game" also hinted at goose. The second stanza pointed to a very large stump at the entrance of the park, which was actually considered as a spot to hide the medallion. So, too, was a large pile of rocks ("sedimentary") northeast of the stump. "Onsite" is also the name of the brand of port-a-potty next to the rock pile.

Clue #5:

*Develop a fixation for numerical notation
Then label operations larger and smaller.
You say, "Math? Oh dear!" But have no fear:
Mother and son run above our hidden dollar.*

*Once in the park, seek the damp and dark:
In perpetual night it waits.
Hunt like a hound, on and off the ground
A stone's throw from barrier gates.*

Explanation:

The first stanza pointed to several yellow and back street signs indicating sharp curves along White Bear Parkway, which resemble "less than" and "greater than" signs commonly used in mathematical notation. Doe Circle and Bambi Lane ("deer" and "mother and son") can found due north ("above") of the medallion's actual hiding spot. The second stanza placed the medallion tucked within the hole of a tree. The inside of the hole was dark and damp. "On and off the ground" hinted to hunters that, unlike most years, the medallion was not resting on the earth. "A stone's throw from barrier gates" spoke to gates found in the parking lot at Cortec, a business to the southwest of the medallion's hiding spot.

Clue #6:

*Come cast about and you'll hear them shout
News and bluster just itchin' to besmirch.
Take a network name; sound out a leading dame
These unlikely companions will narrow your search.*

*Hear the muses call in the winds of fall
Their woebegone tune may evoke a tear.
Yet, hope springs eternal in rebirth vernal
All seasons to love on this tilted sphere.*

Explanation:

The first stanza involved cable news circuit, which seems to be full of “bluster” and folks trying to “besmirch” the other side of the political aisle. Cable was hinted at with “Come cast” (“Comcast”) in the first line and “news” in the second. If you take the network “Fox” and combine it with a MSNBC Anchor, “Rachel Maddow,” you could arrive at “Fox Maddow,” which sounds very similar to the park’s name. The second stanza mentioned “tilted sphere,” which pointed to an object in the playground with exactly that shape.

Clue #7:

*You'd all do well to channel a bell
In this game, communication truly is key.
Hang up the can and the connecting strand
The Township's paid the installation fee.*

*Uninformed wandering and daylight squandering
Are the signs of a treasure hunt beginner.
But, handless precision and tunnel vision
Are the makings of a true treasure hunt winner.*

Explanation:

The first stanza hinted at a “telephone” feature in the playground area, which allows two people to stand at quite a distance and hear each other through small speaker/receivers. “Bell” hinted at Alexander Graham Bell, credited with inventing the telephone. “Hang up” also hinted at a large orange billboard with those words. Furthermore, the first stanza officially narrowed the hunt to White Bear Township. “Tunnel vision” in the second stanza pointed to a tunnel in the playground, made to look like a log while “handless precision” pointed to the soccer field found at the center of the park.

Clue #8:

*Always playing sly, just beyond the eye
In quiet meadows he does sing.
Red or gray, you may just hear him say:
"Ring-ding-ding-ding-dingeringeding!"*

Explanation:

This clue officially revealed the park. In 2013, the group Ylvis released a song called *What Does The Fox Say?* in which the last line of this clue can be found. If you take the word "Fox" and combine it with "meadow" in the second line, you arrive at "Fox Meadow."

Clue #9:

*To help make it disappear, we played amateur engineer
Locate a false bottom in a cavern most dank.
A fun guy stands guard, but don't be barred
Give that false bottom a big polar bear yank.*

Explanation:

Hidden within the hole of a tree, this clue expelled a little more information on how it was hidden. First, we took piece of thick cardboard and cut it to a size where it would fit snugly into the tree hole. We filled the area below the false bottom with moss and mushrooms ("fun guy") from a nearby tree. The finder would have to move the mushroom and moss aside, reach up into the hole, give it "a big polar bear yank."

Clue #10:

*Your hand should be far up the hole of a tree
Fox Meadow is the chosen place.
Sitting like a boss atop cardboard, fungi and moss
To the bravest reacher wins the race!*

Explanation:

Final directions to the treasure's whereabouts. Thank you for participating and see you in 2016!

Exact Location of the Treasure:

