

# Park District Happenings



## Our Mission

The Waukegan Park District is committed to providing parks, facilities and leisure opportunities to our culturally diverse population through the resources of community involvement, dedicated staff and sound management.

## Roosevelt Park Receives Awards

The effects of urban storm water runoff, the century-old age of Roosevelt Park's infrastructure and the limited recreational amenities made this park a top priority for rehabilitation. Restoration of the park began in 2000 with a Section 319 Program from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to restore the drainage basin within the park. The open water pond converted to a vegetative wetland now aids in removing pollution and reducing sediment from moving downstream into Lake Michigan. Other improvements that included stabilization of eroding stream banks, installation of riffles to slow the flow of water, replacement of the dam and bridges, development of a loop pathway, removal of invasive plants and replanting native species. Volunteers were essential in the cleanup and restoration of the park.

Last summer, the final components of Roosevelt's master plan were completed. An elevated boardwalk now links the previous

pathways and enables visitors to enjoy the wetlands. A rain garden and a permeable paver parking lot further decrease storm water runoff. Educational signage informs visitors about pollution and describes the environmental role of Roosevelt Park and the Waukegan River in maintaining the water quality flowing into Lake Michigan.

Since beginning the project, the amount of pollution caused by urban runoff has decreased and the number and species of fish found in the River have increased. More variety and greater numbers of birds are found in the park, as well. The Roosevelt Park project was awarded the 2011 Outstanding Conservation Award from the Illinois Park and Recreation Association and was recognized as the Best Management Practices and Education Project from the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission in 2011.

## Introducing the Parks Maintenance Department

Frequently, Waukegan Park District staff are asked the secret to the District's success. Among the many contributing factors, one of the most important is the committed, skilled and professional employees. The Parks Maintenance Department plans how open spaces will be used and where plantings, play equipment and athletic fields are placed. They work with park neighbors to determine what types of activities are desired for a nearby park and choose equipment that supports the recreation and leisure activities. The Parks Maintenance staff are behind the scenes unsung heroes. You will find them busy at work from the early hours of the day until early evening, cutting grass, emptying trash, planting and caring for flowers, shrubs, trees and buildings. These employees ensure the 33 playgrounds within the Waukegan Park District are safe and equipped to delight children and that there is plenty of clean, mowed, welcoming space that enables families to gather and enjoy the outdoors. They organize community work and cleanup days in the parks, especially Roosevelt Park, where the latest was held on April 7. The 47 parks in Waukegan are beautiful natural spaces enjoyed by the whole community. In 2008, the Waukegan Park District conducted a community survey. The findings were affirming. Among those surveyed,



**Parks Department staff**

71% of respondents rated the quality of parks either "very high" or "high." When you see a parks worker in their yellow or green uniform shirt in your favorite park, give them a wave, and thank them for giving you their very best.

## The Waukegan Park District Honors Volunteers and Patrons

The Waukegan Park District held its annual Volunteer and Patron Recognition Reception on Thursday, February 23, at the Bonnie Brook Clubhouse. North Shore Gas was recognized as Patron of the Year. "North Shore Gas is a lead sponsor, funding the Wise Kids Outdoor program which explores environmental stewardship and the We Can! Program which leads campers through fun, interactive missions that help them learn about making healthy food choices and engages them in outdoor physical activity," stated Patricia Foley, Board President, as she



**Ann Darrow, winner of the Jack Benny Arts and Humanities Award, Claudia Freeman Superintendent of Cultural Arts and Patricia Foley, President, Waukegan Board of Commissioners**

presented the award. Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Midwest Generation whose 29 employees volunteered to create equipment and prepare the site for the Children's Garden. Midwest Generation also donated materials for the garden and maintained a garden box last summer. Ann Darrow



**Coach of the Year, Sam Johnson and Jay Lerner, Manager, Sports and Fitness**



**Todd Mundorf, Midwest Generation accepting the volunteer of the year award with WPD Commissioners Terry Duffy, President Patricia Foley, Commissioner Bill Sarocka, Commissioner Janet Kilkelly and Commissioner Wayne Motley**

received the Jack Benny Arts and Humanities Award recognizing her contributions to the Waukegan Historical Society, especially her assistance with the Oakwood Cemetery Walk. A new award was presented this year, Coach of the Year, to Sam Johnson which recognized his outstanding volunteer coaching of youth basketball, instilling in participants the notion of fair play and teamwork.

Twenty other volunteers and patrons received Community Service Awards for their exceptional efforts and commitment to the Waukegan Park District during 2011: Kelly Link, Sam Johnson, Roxanne Swanson, Waukegan Concert Chorus, Gryphon Media, Uline, Boy Scout Troop # 616, Boy Scout Troop #675, Todd Freer, Tod Schneider, Maurice and Mario Richardson, Christian Torres, Judy Warling, Walter Sivertsen, The Highly Improvables, Jim Talley, Katherine Hughes, Tom McBride and the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra.

The Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners and the Senior Staff extended their thanks to the approximately 120 volunteers and patrons in attendance.



### Our Web Site

Register for classes at your convenience, day or night. We have detailed information to help you, including instructions, policies and FAQs.

Visit our website at [www.waukeganparks.org](http://www.waukeganparks.org)

# Park District Happenings

## Waukegan Park District Personnel Receive Awards

Wayne Motley received the Illinois Association of Park District's Mike Cassidy Community Service Award recognizing his contributions during 17 years as a Waukegan Park District Board Member. This annual award is presented to a park district commissioner whose volunteer service to his or her community emulates the vision and voluntary efforts demonstrated by Mike Cassidy to improve the quality of life for those in his community. Recipients of the Commissioner Community Service Award demonstrate the highest example of community service, personal integrity and ingenuity. There is no doubt that Wayne has committed himself to make Waukegan a great place to live, work and play. In addition to his role on the park board, he has volunteered thousands of hours for a variety of community organizations. Like Mike Cassidy, for whom the award is named, Wayne also believes in the importance of "doing something good for the community, and contributing something for the future."

Greg Petry, Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District received the Robert Artz Distinguished Service Award. According to Illinois Parks and Recreation Association, the award recipient's efforts must have had a lasting value and must have created an awareness of the importance of parks and recreation among colleagues and the community in which the person works. Bill Clevenger, from Decatur Park District stated, "... (Petry) is an instrumental member of the IAPD Joint Legislative Committee; his service has been invaluable in the success of the Joint Legislative Breakfasts. He has played a key role in promoting legislative action for the benefit of parks, recreation, and conservation. Officials know him, trust him, and believe him when he advocates for our Illinois Park Districts. Because of his leadership, character, and enthusiasm, his park district has flourished, winning state and national awards for Waukegan Park District facilities, programs and services."

Late last fall, Mr. Petry was among the first to be tested and received the National Park and Recreation Association credential, Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE). The CPRE exam establishes a national standard for managerial, administrative and executive parks and recreation professionals and focuses on the practical knowledge and current real-world skills necessary in today's changing park and recreation environment.

## Waukegan SportsPark Wins Multiple Awards

The Waukegan SportsPark received the Outstanding Facility and Park Award from the Illinois Association of Park and Recreation. This award recognizes outstanding and unique achievements in the design and development of parks and recreation facilities. In addition, the SportsPark received the Illinois Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects Merit Award and the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission's Best Management Practices/Development Project

of the Year Award. Gewalt Hamilton received two awards for its design of the SportsPark—the 2011 Special Achievement Award from the American Council of Engineering Companies of Illinois-Engineering Excellence Awards Competition and the Project of the Year from the American Public Works Association—Chicago Metro Chapter. The Great Lakes Park Training Institute (GLPTI) recognized the Waukegan SportsPark with the Daniel Flaherty Park Excellence Award. This award is given to



**Wayne Motley, Commissioner and Greg Petry, Executive Director**

The Waukegan Park District received the Government Finance Officers Association Award—Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and the Distinguished Budget Presentation, both for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2011. "The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by the government and its management," according to GFOA Executive, Stephen Gauthier in his letter to the District. James Glogovsky, Superintendent of Finance & Administration received the Financial Reporting Achievement Award, which recognizes him as the individual responsible for the award-winning Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Earlier in 2011, the Waukegan Park District Budget was recognized with the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the GFOA. According to Wayne Motley, Waukegan Park District Treasurer, "These awards are the highest forms of recognition in the world of governmental finance and are a testament to the excellence of the Waukegan Park District and its staff." An impartial panel of finance professionals judges the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report to ensure the document meets the program's high standards of financial reporting and in the "spirit of full disclosure" clearly communicates the organization's financial story and motivates potential users and user groups to read the report. The Government Finance Officers Association is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,500 government finance professionals with offices in Chicago, IL, and Washington, D.C.

park facilities and programs that represent the cutting edge of the leisure movement throughout the United States. "The Waukegan SportsPark provides a significant impact on the community, it represents innovation and cost effective design, and the facility demonstrates the utilization of community input and resources," said GLPTI's Julia Erwin when describing the award.