

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.

Waukegan Park District Achieves Distinguished Agency Accreditation

The Waukegan Park District received the prestigious Distinguished Agency Accreditation from the Joint Distinguished Park and Recreation Agency Accreditation Committee. The Accreditation is for 2010-2015 and follows the Distinguished Agency Award first achieved in 2005. The District earned a total of 490.706 points out of 500 points. Bonus points were earned in the areas of management and special facilities. As of December 2010, only 13 of approximately 300 Illinois Park Districts had earned this Accreditation.

In a letter from the committee chairpersons to the District, it was stated, "The Waukegan Park District Board and staff are to be congratulated on this achievement. By dedicating the time to go through the review and compilation of materials, as well as the evaluation process, the

Waukegan Park District has shown a commitment to meeting the highest standards of our profession. This accomplishment is most noteworthy and reflects credit upon the Board of Park Commissioners, the Executive Director, the administration team and the entire park district staff. When a district earns enough base points to achieve Accreditation, it is apparent that every facet of the organization is deserving of recognition."

Board of Commissioners President Wayne Motley is pleased by the Accreditation decision, stating: "The Waukegan Park District has high standards of excellence and this recognition by peer professionals confirms we are truly serving the community of Waukegan by delivering exceptional facilities, programs and services."

Arbor Day Celebration

The front cover of the 2011 Spring Waukegan Park District *Recreation Connection* is a photograph taken at last year's Arbor Day tree planting celebration. Students from Washington Elementary School helped plant three new elm trees in Belvidere Park. Joining the students were Waukegan residents as well as park district and city officials. A tree seedling was given to all attending the celebration to encourage the planting of more trees.

Arbor Day (arbor means tree in Latin) is a celebration and tradition started by Julius Sterling Morton who was a journalist that moved from Michigan to Nebraska. He missed the trees and worked in his adopted state to plant trees and improve agricultural techniques. Mr. Morton initiated the first Arbor Day on April 10, 1872 in Nebraska, with prizes offered to Nebraska counties and individuals for the most trees planted that day. Many schools had classrooms of students plant a tree with the idea that the class would be responsible for the care of their specific tree. More than a million trees were planted that first Arbor Day. Other states began to observe Arbor Day and by the late 1800's, schools nationwide were observing the tradition by having children plant trees. Today, although the date is not the same in every country, Arbor Day

is celebrated around the world. Arbor Day dates in each country generally coincide with the best days to plant trees for that area.

In Waukegan, the annual tradition continues—trees are planted, information about their importance is distributed and children are educated on how to identify and care for them. As we move closer to this year's Arbor Day on April 29, go to the website, www.waukeganparks.org or call 847-360-4725 for more information about our local commemoration of the holiday.



Bedrosian Park Receives Highest Award for Excellence

The Waukegan Park District received the 2010 Illinois Park and Recreation Association's Outstanding Facility and Parks Award for Bedrosian Park which was enlarged, renovated and reopened last July. The Award recognizes public agencies for their exceptional and unique achievements in design and development; competition for the award is statewide. The District has received the Outstanding Facility and Parks Award most recently for the Field House Sports and Fitness Center (2008) and Veterans Plaza in Washington Park (2006).



Bedrosian Park

Bedrosian Park was named in 1949 after John Bedrosian, a civic activist, attorney and outstanding athlete.

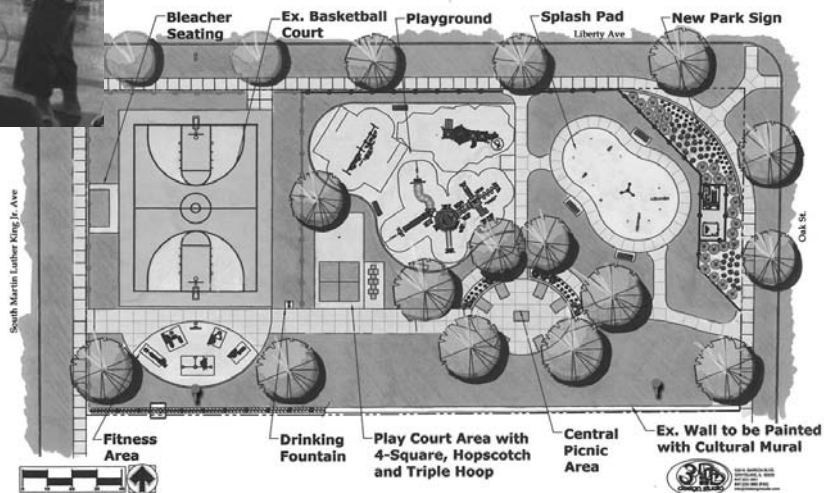
Bedrosian Park's expansion included a larger playground and new play equipment designed for children ages 2-12, fitness equipment stations, a picnic area, painted four square and hopscotch areas, a triple

hoop basket and mural wall. The park, designed to attract children, youths and families outdoors, increases physical activity and serves as a fun gathering place that fosters social interaction among neighbors.



hoop basket and mural wall. A favorite component is a water spray area, a big hit on hot summer days. The existing basketball court, a popular site for pick-up basketball games, was enhanced with new color coating and spectator bleachers.

Other special elements include a wall mural created by Waukegan High School teacher, Ted Injasulian and the landscaping



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The Benefits of Walking

What beneficial exercise can be done by almost anyone, alone or with others, indoors or outdoors, fits into almost any schedule, needs no fancy equipment and doesn't cost anything? The answer is walking, of course! "Walking has the lowest dropout rate of any physical activity. It's the simplest positive change you can make to effectively improve your heart health," states The American Heart Association. It just takes 30 minutes of brisk walking a day to build better fitness. How can something so simple, so relaxing and so enjoyable actually be good for you and fun too! Once you start looking for opportunities to walk, you will be surprised at how many there are.

Scientific research shows that a key to maintaining good health is physical exercise. Walking is one of the most beneficial ways to reduce risk and prevent heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis and diabetes. It assists in controlling body weight and maintaining overall flexibility and mental well-being. It can even reduce joint pain and swelling associated with arthritis. A study done at Loughbrough University demonstrated that walkers taking three shorter ten-minute walks were more successful at weight loss and reducing their waist circumference than those taking one long 30-minute walk; however physical fitness improved at an identical rate.

People who are active and fit have approximately half the cardiovascular disease of unfit people. They are less likely to fall and suffer injuries such as hip fractures because their bones have been strengthened by physical activity. The joints of fit people are less likely to sustain injuries since they have a greater range of movement and muscles are more flexible. Make a commitment today to start walking and become more fit.

To assist you in becoming healthier, the Waukegan Park District has fifteen parks with outdoor walking trails or loops.

The Field House Sports and Fitness Center has a 1/7 mile suspended indoor walking track that is open to Fitness Center members. (A monthly pass to the walking track is \$20 for residents and \$25 for non-residents. Daily passes are \$3 for residents and \$4 for non-residents.) Waukegan Park District Residents are encouraged to use the free walking times at the Field House Sports and Fitness Center, Monday-Friday, 9:30am-11am, 2-3:30pm and 7:30-9pm.

<http://www.americanheart.org>

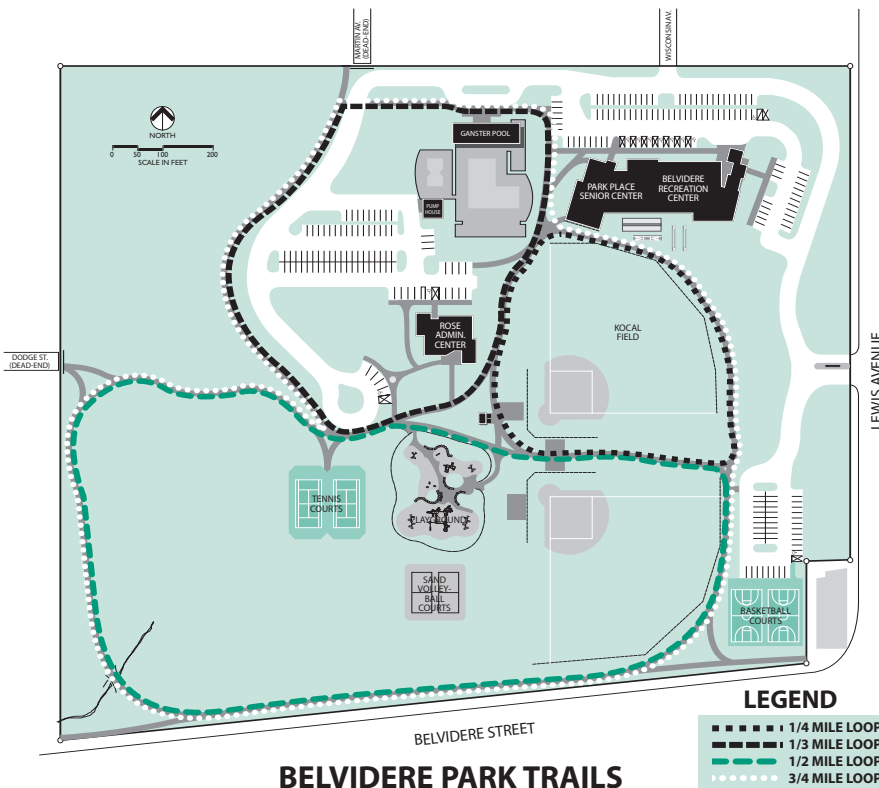
<http://www.coolwalking.com/benefits.html>

<http://health.howstuffworks.com/wellness/diet-fitness/exercise/benefitsofwalking.htm>

Waukegan Park District Parks with Walking Trails

See the map on page 76 for locations. Visit www.waukeganparks.org to download maps!

- Arbor Park
- Belvidere Park (Shown at right)
- Bevier Park
- Bowen Park
- Country Lane
- Henry Pfau Callahan Park
- Hinkston Park
- Larsen Nature Preserve
- Park in the Glen
- Powell Park
- Ray Bradbury Park
- Roosevelt Park
- Rudd Farm Park
- Serenity Park
- Washington Park



BELVIDERE PARK TRAILS

Thank You Volunteers!

Volunteers are an essential component in the success of the Waukegan Park District. We use volunteers to help staff all of our large community events. Our volunteer jobs vary from stuffing plastic eggs for Eggstravaganza and ushering at Bowen Park Theatre to setting the pace and leading races at Turkey Trot and helping with the Partners in Parks Golf Outing. Our coaches for youth athletics are volunteers and so are judges for the American Independence Festivities and the pizza contest. The Bowling Tournament, Polar Bear Plunge registration and serving food at the Valentine's Day Dance are popular Special Recreation volunteer posts.



Many community groups volunteer with our Parks Department to clean up Waukegan River ravines and remove invasive plant species. Regardless of the volunteer's role, our volunteers have fun, meet other people and leave with the satisfaction that they have made a difference and contributed to the community. If you have never volunteered for the Waukegan Park District, please consider doing so. On behalf of the Board and Waukegan Park District staff, thank you to all of our 2010 volunteers for giving so generously of their time and talent. The photos on this page highlight a few 2010 volunteers working at events.



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



Interested in volunteering?

See pages 47 or 67 to complete the Volunteer Interest Form or obtain contact information to call about a specific interest.