

Park Happenings

Waukegan Park District's 100th Year Birthday – December 26, 2016

The Waukegan Park District was established on December 26, 1916 with the passage of a successful referendum led by the Waukegan Women's Club, the Waukegan Park Day Association and the Waukegan Chamber of Commerce. The earliest parks followed a comprehensive plan that had been created in 1906 by Perkins and Hamilton, a Chicago architectural firm. Many of the first parks contained portions of Waukegan's extensive ravine system and were landscaped with sweeping green spaces and trees. From those early days, the district has grown to 48 sites and more than 735 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook Golf Course purchased in 1931, a bold move made at the height of the Great Depression.

By its 25th year, the district had acquired 12 parks totaling over 225 acres. From the end of the World War II through the early 1960's, the District expanded recreational facilities in parks, including tennis courts, basketball courts, playgrounds, picnic areas and ball diamonds. In 1956, an outdoor pool was built and in 1963, a special piece of property was acquired. This land, known as the Joseph T. Bowen Country Club, had

opened in 1912 as a summer retreat for Chicago's urban youth who attended the Hull House. It had been purchased by social reformer Louise deKoven Bowen at the request of her friend Jane Addams and operated for 50 summers as a place for children of Hull House to experience the "country life".

The District's 50th anniversary was celebrated at the new administration building in Belvidere Park in 1966. A big change occurred in 1967 when the City of Waukegan agreed to transfer City owned parks to the park district. In 1970, the City formally transferred all City run recreation and playground programs to the park district. Now the park district was the principal provider of parks and recreation.

During its 70th year, the District continued the tradition of providing first quality parks and recreation facilities with the dedication of the Jack Benny Center for the Arts and the Bonnie Brook Clubhouse. In 1987, a new comprehensive plan was undertaken to mark the 75th anniversary in 1991. That fall, the Property Tax Limitation Act established a tax cap and eliminated non-referendum bonding for the district, a major setback. The District turned its focus to installing new playgrounds and capitalizing on important partnerships. In 1996, Waukegan residents recognized the important role of the district in the community and overwhelmingly passed a referendum to increase the corporate rate of the park district by \$.25 to support capital improvement projects.

fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. This fall, the indoor pool addition to the Field House will open and is the only indoor pool in the community of 90,000.

A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone!

The District employs 61 full-time and over 250 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation

Agencies (CAPRA), the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation with a Level A Loss Control Program. The District was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.



Those funds combined with State of Illinois grants, enabled the district to continue to grow and provide the community with excellent parks and facilities. In 2007, Bowen Park's new playground was dedicated and the Field House Sports and Fitness Center opened followed by the opening of the Waukegan SportsPark in 2011. The Field House and SportsPark are economic engines contributing \$15M to the local economy annually.

District properties are still managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Other facilities operated by the district include the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports

We invite you to join us for the Centennial Birthday Party and Kickoff. At 4:30pm, Commissioners will host an open house at the Belvidere Recreation Center. Also, enjoy a bonfire and hot chocolate followed by fireworks in Belvidere Park on Monday, December 26 at 5:30pm.

Indoor Pool Opening Soon

Introducing Waukegan Park District Aquatics Center Staff

Sam Stevens is the Fitness and Aquatics Supervisor. Sam is a Waukegan native and has worked at the Waukegan Park District for 10 years. He manages the fitness and aquatics center and is responsible for the programming for both facilities. Sam has a B.S. in Sports Management from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

Christine Pfau was hired in June, 2016 as the new Aquatics Specialist. Christine graduated from North Central College, in Naperville, IL, with a Master of Science in Sports Leadership and received her Bachelor of Science in Health and Human Sciences from Northern Illinois University, in DeKalb, IL. Christine has obtained fitness, personal training and lifeguard certifications.



Aquatics Center staff, left to right: Vinson Needler - JEM, Christine Pfau, Jerica Cyr - JEM, Alyssa Moore - JEM and Sam Stevens.

Jeff Ellis Management (JEM) has been contracted to manage the new aquatics center. All lifeguards will be certified and employed by JEM. Vinson Needler, Jerica Cyr and Alyssa Moore are JEM managers

assigned to the Waukegan Park District. Lifeguards for the new aquatics center are needed and if you are interested in being a lifeguard, please visit: <https://www.jeffellismanagement.com/>

Citizen Science Managing Snow and Ice at Home

Winter is around the corner. The age old question in our area is how to keep steps and sidewalks free of ice and snow. No one wants to slip and fall on the ice and since ice forms when temperatures reach 32 degrees Fahrenheit, and water freezes and transform into ice and snow, our residents experience this dilemma often during the winter months.

Approximately 60% of American households reportedly use rock salt or other salt products to melt the snow and ice during winter. We tend to use rock salt from our local stores in order to have safe and clean walkways and driveways because it is relatively inexpensive and effective. While it does a great job at clearing away the snow and ice, it is harmful to pets, other animals, and landscape vegetation.

Melting ice and snow that has been treated with ice melters containing potassium chloride makes its way into storm drains, creeks, and rivers which eventually contaminates our water bodies. Chloride chemicals in de-icing products stay in the water and damage aquatic plant life, which in turn, reduces healthy vegetation that animals, fish and other natural organisms depend on for food.



What we can do is use de-icing salt wisely and sparingly. Physically remove as much snow and ice before applying de-icing salt. Use just enough de-icing salt to keep high traffic areas clean of ice and sweep up un-dissolved product. Monitor the weather, sodium chloride doesn't work in temperatures below 15 degrees Fahrenheit.

Check-out the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission and Lake County Health Department Publication on "Too Much Salt in Our Winter Maintenance Recipe-Tips for Managing Snow and Ice at Home" at <http://www.lakecountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/3047>

Park Happenings

African-American Influences on the Community and Waukegan Park District

Dr. Eugene P. King—Many of our parks are named for prominent people who were important on either on a national or local level. Your assumption might be that King Park, 401 South Avenue, is named in recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; however, it is named after Waukegan's Dr. Eugene P. King (1893-1961).

Dr. Eugene P. King was an icon and role model in Waukegan for more than 30 years. He was a respected medical surgeon and known for his dedication to the youth of Waukegan's African American community. Dr. King moved into the area in the late 1920s after serving in World War I as a Second Lieutenant in a Field Artillery Unit where he was wounded three times.

King realized the need for recreation programs for African Americans. He established male and female baseball and basketball teams as an alternative to the local school teams. King pushed for integration in school athletics, but this would not be accomplished until the 1950s. He realized that youngsters could benefit from athletics in many ways, including good health and fitness. Dr. King's motto was "to make men and women out of boys and girls through clean wholesome athletics."

Dr. King was a master horticulturist and established a community garden in a segregated part of Waukegan's west side known as Frog Island. His immense garden was one-quarter mile wide and four city blocks long. It was a year round venture that used crews of young boys and teenagers to plow, plant, and harvest the garden. The food produced was distributed among the families in the community. Through his garden, Dr. King taught young people good work ethics.

Dr. Eugene P. King's enormous influence on African American youths lives on through Eugene King Park (formerly South Avenue Park) dedicated July 13, 1971.

Plans are in the works for a new community garden to be established in King Park and the

Waukegan Park District is proud to continue the legacy of Waukegan's Dr. Eugene P. King.

George Bridges is the first African American elected to the Waukegan Park District Board in 2013, the current Park District President, and Waukegan Fire Chief since October 2015. He is a strong advocate for employing and preparing Waukegan youth to become leaders in our community. He established the George Bridges 5K Run/Walk this past September; proceeds benefited Special Recreation.

Attorney **George Bridges** became the General Corporation Counsel for the Waukegan Park District Board this year. He was the first and only African American judge for the 19th Judicial Circuit, retiring in January 2016 after more than 20 years on the bench. Previously he served as the Waukegan Police Chief two times and as an Assistant Lake County States Attorney.

Jimmy Cooks has worked at the Waukegan Park District for nearly 30 years. He serves as a crew leader and is sought out by other employees and parks patrons as a knowledgeable resource. The pride he has for the District is demonstrated daily in his work and interactions with his colleagues and parks customers.

Andrea Danks is the Government and Community Relations Representative for North

Shore Gas and a great friend to the Waukegan Park District. Because of Andrea's involvement and advocacy, the District has received grants over the years to support environmental stewardship programs such as the summer camp Nature Navigator, Wise Kids Outdoors, Organ Wise, and most recently the company provided a large grant to support teaching Waukegan children to SwimSmart. The program at the new pool is free of charge. North Shore Gas has been recognized by the Illinois Association of Park Districts for its partnership with the Waukegan Park District.

Andrew Frazier has been a youth basketball coach for over 30 years. He has been a positive force in many young men's lives with his basketball wisdom and skill, his sense of sportsmanship and fair play and his no-nonsense yet caring manner. Andrew received the Waukegan Park District 2009 Volunteer of the Year and the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Good Sportsmanship Award also in 2009.

Ervin Jacobs, a parks and maintenance employee for 30 years provides daily services throughout the district and is known for his excellent customer service with internal and external customers. Ervin can be found cooking at many district wide functions, tending the campfire at Halloweenfest and unloading cars at the Community Recycling event. He is a role



George Bridges, George Bridges and Marc Jones



Jimmy Cooks and Ervin Jacobs

model for other employees and his positive attitude and leadership is much appreciated.

Dr. Patrick D. Jimerson was the first African American Waukegan Park District Commissioner. He was appointed to the Waukegan Park Board in 2005 and served until 2007. During his tenure, he helped dedicate Veterans Memorial Plaza and the BMX Track at Henry Pfau Callahan Park, as well the Field House in Hinkston Park.

Commissioner Marc Jones, elected in 2015, is in his second year on the Waukegan Park District

Board of Commissioners. As the second African American elected to the Board, Commissioner Jones advocates for the benefits of the park district to the whole community. An enthusiastic supporter of District, he values the importance of giving back to his community and public service. Marc fosters important connections and relationships with other community organizations.

Patricia Jones served on the Waukegan Park District's 75th Anniversary Committee. She currently holds the position of Waukegan Township Supervisor. She was appointed to the

role in 1993 and she is the first African American to hold that position. During her tenure, the Waukegan Township and Waukegan Park District have built collaborative relationships including the sharing of a building in Belvidere Park that houses Park Place Senior Center and the Belvidere Recreation Center.

Ralph McLean has been an umpire for 45 years and officiated at more than 5000 Waukegan Park District games. He embodies athletic sportsmanship and leadership mentoring dozens of local umpires. Players, coaches and community members respect his professional character, his knowledge of baseball and the fair application of rules. Ralph was recognized by the Illinois Association of Park Districts with the 2014 Good Sportsman Award.

Della Steele was named the Park District's "Volunteer of the Year" in 2015 for devotion and support of the district. Della has served on the Recreation Program Advisory Board for five years and on the American Independence Parade Committee for eleven years. For her own part, she has provided invaluable history of Waukegan's "Frog Island," which was an African American neighborhood from the 1920s to 1940s.

Family Health and Wellness Challenge

Families are invited to get "fit" together by participating in this fun challenge of **100 Hours of Recreation** in observance of the **Waukegan Park District's 100th Year**.

Included in the Family Health and Wellness Challenge are recreation programs that address various areas of wellness including: social, behavioral, emotional, physical and cognitive. The challenge runs from December 26, 2016 through December 27, 2017. Families as a team must participate in at least 25 hours of recreation programming during each quarter. Quarters will parallel the program guide seasons which the Park District follows each year.

Winter: December 1st – February 28th

Spring: March 1st – May 31st

Summer: June 1st – August 31st

Fall: September 1st – November 30th

Obtain your new time sheets at the end of every quarter, after returning the previous quarter to any one of these facilities: the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, Jack Benny Center for the Arts or Belvidere Recreation Center

Each season's time sheet will identify a date the time sheet will need to be returned. The hours recorded for that season will count toward your 100 hours; whether you completed less than, greater than, or equal to 25 hours in that quarter. Incentives and prizes will be awarded at the end of each quarter and at the end of the year. On December 27, 2017, families who participated in 100 hours for the four seasons will be entered into a drawing. Three winners will be drawn to receive prizes. For more information, please see page 10 or call 847-360-4706.

Health & Wellness FAMILY CHALLENGE



A unique health and wellness challenge that invites families to think outside of the box when it comes to being “fit”. Enhancing your quality of life through behavioral, mental, emotional, physical, and/or cognitive health and wellness activities is our primary goal.

December 26, 2016, kicks off the Waukegan Park Districts’ 100th birthday year. As part of this Centennial celebration year, we challenge you and your family to track program participation by completing 100 hours of recreation in the 360 days of the Centennial year. Each season will be considered a “quarter” or season, with a 25 hour minimum goal for each.

Simply register each family member for the challenge at any one of our facilities and obtain a time sheet for the winter season of this challenge.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!

1. Quarterly goals are set at 25 hours of recreation participation from a family, as a whole. Participation in programs or events must be documented and initialed by park district staff.
2. Ongoing programs do not count! (i. e.:B.A.S.E, W.H.O trips, summer camp) If you are questioning if the program will be counted, please ask!
3. Each family member’s name will be entered into a quarterly raffle upon completion of 25 hours or more! Only those families who complete at least 25 hours will be entered into the raffle.
4. If you do NOT complete the minimum 25 hours for the raffle before the quarter end date- NO WORRIES! You should still turn in your time sheet by the intended due date and have your hours added to your total! (Families will need to participate in more programs in future quarters to try and reach 100!)
5. Remember to pick up your new hours sheet after you turn in your previous quarter time sheet.
6. You do not need to complete 25 hours each quarter. The 25 hours per quarter is a good way to stay on track. However, be sure to bump up your hours of participation in other quarters if you are under hours in other quarters.
7. Families who complete 100 hours by December 26, 2017 will be entered into the final raffle. Three prizes will be up for raffle.
8. Only family member names listed on the time sheet will be entered into the quarterly and final raffles.
9. Prizes are TBD—Keep your time sheet in a safe and accessible place. Lost sheets with staff initials cannot be replaced. Please submit all completed time sheets to any of our locations with ATTN: JAMIE TEICHMANN.

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT OUR COMMITMENT TO YOU

MISSION STATEMENT

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

VISION STATEMENT

An innovative park district that creatively adapts to our evolving community and provides exceptional parks, recreation and cultural arts that benefit all.

VALUES STATEMENT

- **Accountability...** We will work to achieve the most effective and efficient use of our financial resources while striving for the best return on the use of our assets.
- **Excellence...** We will strive for the best in everything we do.
- **Integrity...** We will practice steadfast adherence to a high moral and ethical code, and we will reliably deliver on what we say we are going to do.
- **Service Oriented...** We will focus our efforts on our customers and will operate the District based on the needs of the community.
- **Working Together...** We will work WITH one another.
- **Sustainability...** The Board and staff will use a collaborative and cooperative team based approach that results in the best possible decisions for the long term greater good of the entire community.



9.6.16

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT



Hablamos Español



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