
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Receives Illinois Arts Council Grant

Waukegan, Illinois (September 28, 2020) – The Illinois Arts Council has awarded the Waukegan Park District a grant of \$18,700 from state funds for general operating support. The District has been a proud recipient of this grant in the past. Funding support from the Illinois Arts Council enables the District to provide free and low-cost cultural arts programs and events for the Waukegan community.

The Waukegan Park District provides programming focused in arts, culture and history. Patrons of all ages enjoy taking lessons in music, dance, and art at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts in Bowen Park. The Waukegan History Museum, operated jointly with the Waukegan Historical Society, exhibits and preserves the rich history of Waukegan. The history outreach program, consisting of community and school presentations as well as guided walking tours, reaches around 10,000 participants annually. History operations for the District and Historical Society are expanding to the historic Carnegie Library.

The Waukegan Park District provides annual cultural events throughout the year including the Ray Bradbury *Dandelion Wine* Arts & Music Festival, Oakwood Cemetery Walk, Joseph A. Favero Memorial “Do-It-Yourself” *Messiah* Concert, Young People’s Family Concert, Day of the Dead, Movies in the Parks, and Arts Park.

The Waukegan Park District is also the parent organization of the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and the Waukegan Concert Chorus, two long-standing cultural institutions.

The Waukegan Park District provides in-person programming for over 18,000 cultural arts participants. Following the impact of facility closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual cultural arts programming created by the District has reached over 60,000 people.

For more information, contact Ty at trohrer@waukeganparks.org.

About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 50 properties and more than 737 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan’s Greg Petry SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, disc golf course, dog exercise area and agility course, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, splash pads, and sports courts including basketball, tennis and pickleball. 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 award-winning District employs 63 full-time and over 230 part-time, 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). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and maintains a Level A Loss Control Program. The District has received Government Finance Officer Association awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eight consecutive years. The district was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, and 2019.

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