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# WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Waukegan Park District Celebrates Midlane Parks Ribbon Cuttings**

**Waukegan, Illinois (July 7th, 2021)** – The Waukegan Park District officially opened Friendship Park and Hilltop Park, located at 3104 N Augusta Drive and 3000 N Southern Hills, respectively. These parks were newly renovated to serve the surrounding neighborhood with improved walking paths, seating, fencing, and playground equipment. Friendship Park is the first Waukegan Park District Park to feature a buddy bench.

The naming of Friendship Park was inspired by local resident, 9 year old, Angelina White who responded to a request for community input. Angelina wanted to combine her love of playgrounds and meeting new people. She introduced the concept of a buddy bench, a special place where kids can sit to signal that they are looking for a new buddy or friend to play with.

At the ribbon cutting, Angelina commented, “This Park will help kids like me make new friends and have fun playing at the park.” Angelina’s giving spirit and spunk are displayed for all to see in the attached photo on the Buddy Bench at Friendship Park

#### **About the Waukegan Park District**

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 50 properties and more than 740 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 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 employs 63 full-time and over 230 part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees and is recognized by the IPRA as an Exceptional Workplace. Accreditation is maintained 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). The District has received Government Finance Officer Association awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for ten 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, 2019, and 2021.

JP/05/10/2021

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