
WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Steve Sadin Honored with Illinois Parks' Top Journalist Award

Waukegan, Illinois (October 16, 2021) – Steve Sadin, a freelance reporter for the *Lake County News-Sun*, was honored with the Illinois Parks' Top Journalist Award by the Illinois Association of Park Districts at their 2021 Best of the Best Awards Gala. The award recognizes a print, radio, and television medium or individual reporter/journalist that has provided responsible and comprehensive coverage of Illinois park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation, and special recreation agencies at the statewide and/or local level. Steve was nominated by the Waukegan Park District.

Steve has been a freelance reporter for the *Lake County News-Sun* since July 2020, covering news in Waukegan and the surrounding communities. From new playgrounds to recreation programs, Steve's stories have helped increase awareness of the impact that the Waukegan Park District has in the community. When Steve is covering a new playground or a special event, he makes sure to ask the youth about their thoughts with the responses often being the headlines on the front page of the newspaper, like a recent article quoting a local girl about a playground idea.

Throughout the pandemic, Steve has covered the critical role the Waukegan Park District has played in Waukegan with stories about the virtual programming available for individuals to stay safe at home while also being active. Steve's reporting helps to recognize how the park district is responding to the needs of the community.

Jacqueline Herrera Giron, President of the Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners, stated, "Steve's stories in the *Lake County News-Sun* are unique because they truly capture the excitement that the Waukegan Park District provides for the community, especially with the inclusion of youth among his interviewees. Steve truly values the Waukegan Park District and other nearby park districts as critical community resources."

Jay Lerner, Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District, stated, "The exemplary coverage of the Waukegan Park District in the *Lake County News-Sun* is due to Steve's effort to foster a positive relationship with our Community Relations Department to actively bring awareness of park happenings in our community. Steve's reporting helps to recognize how the park district is responding to the needs of the community."

Steve Sadin, stated, "The Waukegan Park District's Community Relations Department and its Executive Director, Jay Lerner, are always there when there is a story and their input, along with the Waukegan residents who talk about the parks, make the stories what they are. I report what they tell me. They make the stories."

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About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the District has 53 properties and more than 742 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, Jack Benny Center for the Arts, Waukegan's Greg Petry SportsPark, Waukegan Skate Park, BMX Track, SplashZone, Percussion Playground, 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. We offer something for everyone!

The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA). The District employs 64 full-time and nearly 200 part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees and is recognized by the IPRA as an Exceptional Workplace.

Nationally accredited by the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and State accredited through the IAPD Distinguished Agency Accreditation. The District has received Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA) awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for ten consecutive years and received the coveted GFOA Triple Crown Award recognizing the District's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting and Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2019. The Waukegan Park District was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013 and named a Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, 2019, and 2021.

TJA/07/22/2021

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