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# WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Waukegan Park District Celebrates Arbor Day**

**Waukegan, Illinois (April 29, 2022)** – The Waukegan Park District is celebrating Arbor Day on Friday, April 29, 2022, by planting ten white dogwood trees. The GFWC IL - Waukegan Woman’s Club donated the trees to commemorate the day. Ed Brady and Brad Wedge from the Parks Department were selected to plant the trees. Once the trees reach maturity, they will be transplanted to neighborhood parks across Waukegan.

Traditionally, the Waukegan Park District invites local students to plant trees at parks on Arbor Day. However, due to the pandemic, students from Ms. Treister’s class at Glen Flora Elementary School submitted questions about trees that were answered virtually by horticulture experts in the Parks Department. The educational video is available at [waukeganparks.org/arborday](http://waukeganparks.org/arborday).

Julius Sterling Morton, who had a passion for planting trees helped establish the first Arbor Day on April 10, 1872, in Nebraska City, Nebraska. It is estimated that nearly one million trees were planted that day. Today, Arbor Day is celebrated on the last Friday in April to encourage individuals to plant trees and many communities traditionally take the opportunity to organize tree plantings on or around the holiday. Sterling Morton stated, “Other holidays repose upon the past; Arbor Day proposes for the future.”

Jacqueline Herrera Giron, President of the Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners, stated, “Trees are of invaluable importance to our environment and are vital for healthy communities. The Waukegan Park District is thankful for the donation of trees from the GFWC IL - Waukegan Woman’s Club and encourages our community to plant trees in their own yards to help clean our air and to beautify our neighborhoods.”

Quincy Bejster, Superintendent of Parks, stated, “To commemorate Arbor Day, the Waukegan Park District selected Ed Brady and Brad Wedge from the Parks Department to plant our commemorative trees. The trees donated by the GFWC IL - Waukegan Woman’s Club will eventually be transplanted to neighborhood parks. This year, the Waukegan Park District is planting over one hundred trees throughout parks in Waukegan.”

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## **About the Waukegan Park District**

Established on December 26, 1916, the Waukegan Park District (WPD) 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 WPD include the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center, 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 need populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Arts and cultural activities are provided by the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, and the Waukegan History Museum. We offer something for everyone!

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 WPD employs 64 full-time and about 235 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 WPD has received Government Finance Officer Association (GFOA) awards for Distinguished Budget Presentation and Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting for eleven consecutive years and received the coveted GFOA Triple Crown Award recognizing the WPD's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting and Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for 2019. The WPD 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.

JP/02/28/2022

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