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# WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Waukegan Park District to Celebrate Kids to Parks Day**

**Waukegan, Illinois (May 17, 2022)** – The Waukegan Park District is celebrating Kids to Parks Day on Saturday, May 21, 2022 from 9am to 11am at Eugene P. King Park, located at 301 South Avenue. Organized by the National Park Trust, the mission of Kids to Parks Day is to foster future outdoor enthusiasts and help with developing the next generation of park stewards by engaging kids in memorable outdoor experiences.

2022 marks the twelfth anniversary of Kids to Parks Day. This year's event will feature sports activities, kite flying, and a guided walk with educational presentations about native plants and park history. Free popcorn and kites will be provided for participants, while supplies last.

Traditionally hosted on the third Saturday of May, Kids to Parks Day is a national day of outdoor play that encourages kids and families to get outside and create their own adventure at thousands of local park events and programs. National Park Trust works with cities and towns, teachers, families, park and public lands officials, and numerous sponsors and partners to make these events possible.

Preregistration is not required. More information about the Waukegan Park District's celebration of Kids to Parks Day is available at [waukeganparks.org/kidstoparksday](http://waukeganparks.org/kidstoparksday).

Janet E. Kilkelly, President of the Waukegan Park District Board of Commissioners, stated, "The Waukegan Park District is excited to join the National Park Trust in celebrating Kids to Parks Day again this year. Kids to Parks Day is an opportunity for local children and their families to enjoy outdoor play and discover new ways of engaging with the great outdoors."

Jay Lerner, Executive Director of the Waukegan Park District, stated, "There are many benefits in outdoor play for children's development. Kids to Parks Day focuses on park stewardship, outdoor recreation, nature, and history. The Waukegan Park District is proud to provide award-winning parks in neighborhoods across the city for kids to enjoy."

In 2020, the Waukegan Park District improved Eugene P. King Park with new amenities, including additional playground equipment, half-court basketball court, half-sized soccer field, improved baseball field, fitness challenge course, picnic shelter with grills, and a restroom. A large open field provides green space for recreational use and family gatherings.

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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 66 full-time and 290 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 in 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, 2021 and 2022.

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