

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Celebrates Black History Month

Waukegan, Illinois (February 1, 2023) – The Waukegan Park District will celebrate Black History Month with special programming throughout the month of February. The programs and events will honor African Americans and their contributions to arts, culture, and local history. Preregistration is required for some programs.

The following programs and events will be offered during Black History Month:

- **Waukegan’s African American Historical Sites Self-Guided Tour on the Waukegan History Museum Companion App available on Wednesday, February 1, 2023 (Free)**
The Waukegan History Museum Companion App will feature a self-guided tour that will take users to important historic sites that help tell Waukegan’s African American story.
- **Waukegan’s African American Past Pop-Up Exhibit on Display from Thursday, February 2, 2023 to Tuesday, February 28, 2023 at the Haines House Museum (Free)**
The pop-up exhibit will feature stories of Waukegan’s African American past, including the Underground Railroad, early pioneers and leaders, the segregated community of Frog Island, and the desegregation of Whittier School.
- **Black History Celebration on Saturday, February 11, 2023 from 3pm to 5pm at the Jack Benny Center for the Arts (Free)**
From musical and dance performances to dramatic readings, the celebration will feature live performances from African American artists. Preregistration is not required.
- **Black History Month Banner Craft on Wednesday, February 15, 2023 from 6pm to 7pm at the Belvidere Recreation Center (\$5/\$7)***
Participants will learn about the accomplishments and contributions of African Americans while creating a banner that will be displayed at the Belvidere Recreation Center.
- **Soul Food with Sylvia on Saturday, February 25, 2023 from 11am to 1pm at the Jane Addams Center (\$6/\$8)***
Sylvia England, Founder and Executive Director of the African American Museum at the England Manor, will demonstrate the cooking of a traditional soul food dish. Preregistration is required.

*Resident and nonresident fees are listed in the following order: Resident Fee/Nonresident Fee.

In addition, the Waukegan History Museum will be offering free outreach programs for local classes and community organizations: “Waukegan and the Underground Railroad” and “Influential African Americans in Waukegan”.

More information is available at waukeganparks.org/blackhistorymonth.

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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 the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Triple Crown Award for receiving the GFOA's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, Popular Annual Financial Reporting Award, and the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. The WPD was awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013, and was named a Gold Medal Finalist in 2012, 2013, 2019, 2021 and 2022.

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