



# Recreation Division Annual Report



2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| YEAR END SUMMARY                          | 2     |
| STAFF NOTES                               | 3     |
| RECREATION PROGRAMS/ENROLLMENT            | 3-23  |
| VOLUNTEER NUMBERS                         | 23    |
| SPONSORSHIPS/DONATIONS                    | 23-24 |
| COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS/COMMUNITY OUTREACH | 24-26 |
| MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS                      | 26-27 |
| OTHER NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS             | 27-28 |

## YEAR END SUMMARY

Recreation is a key part of the quality of life in any community, and especially so in Appleton. We feel truly blessed to work for a community where leisure comes alive with a myriad of fun activities for the whole family. We are committed to providing balanced, value-focused programming for all ages and abilities.

In 2021 we saw more staff transitions with a new Customer Service Representative, a new Recreation Programmer, and the resignation of our Recreation Coordinator which we are in the process of filling. With new staff on board, we took the opportunity to meet with our division staff to refocus on our strategic planning initiatives and for staff to place more attention towards each of their programs.

Having new staff on board and working through all the transitions that come with restructuring, we were happy to see that our overall program numbers were very solid. We are still dealing with the effects of COVID as the beginning of the year we were unable to offer some of our programs due to not having access to Appleton Area School District Facilities. As of the fall we were granted access once again, so we have spent time developing mitigation plans to continue to provide a safe environment as well as continue to offer quality program to the community.

One of the things COVID has taught us is how much the community craves and enjoys family focused special events. We certainly feel this is a niche that we can provide and expand on. We offered twenty-two special events in 2021 with some new creative ones such as the Toy Ride-a long, Ties and Tiaras, Be Active Wisconsin, and the Park Explorer program. This is a program area we will continue to expand.

The big news in 2021 was the re-opening of the outdoor pools. While it was exciting to be opening the pools once again for the community we had our share of challenges with a new safety mitigation plan for swim lessons, open/lap swim, and rentals that caused some changes to the overall pool schedules. We also struggled with staffing shortages during periods of the summer that we had to work through.

We continue to place a high value on our partnerships and community outreach. Through these relationships we have seen great synergy and opportunities. We continue to evaluate these on a yearly basis to ensure we are continuing to meet the needs of the community and utilize our resources available to us.

We are looking forward to continuing to serve this great community in 2022!

## Staff Notes/Trainings

- Niki renewed her Certified Parks and Recreation Professional certification in March.
- Liz attended the Region 3 virtual learning opportunity on Friday, March 19.
- Stephanie Cheslock joined our team as the Customer Service Representative on April 13.
- Liz Konrath obtained her Certified Park and Recreation Professional Certification in April 2021.
- Liz attended the Attended the HealthSmart Resilience class that was offered on Tuesday, May 4 to all city employees. This class was presented by Mandie Dornfeld, Human Development and Relationships Educator Extension Winnebago County.
- Niki and Liz attended the monthly IPRA webinar series on how to Breathe and practical tips to handle the day-to-day stress of our responsibilities.
- Niki attended the monthly IPRA session on Equity and Inclusion – Beyond the Talk and Into Action which covered how to cultivate an agency environment that leads and sets and example for our community.
- Olivia Kovac resigned from her position as Recreation Programmer on July 29.
- Margaret completed her Marketing and Communications Certificate through the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) in August. The NRPA Marketing and Communications Certificate provides the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to build and execute effective park and recreation marketing and communication campaigns that will help you better connect with your community.
- Liz, Erin and Laura attended the Myers Brigg training provide by Charles La Torre, certified Psychologist. This training was coordinated through HR (Melody Lewis). They discussed their personality tendencies and how they can utilize these to improve their communication and teamwork. (Monday, August 30)
- Niki attended the monthly IPRA webinar session on Poking the Bear within which discussed the indicators of an unhealthy team culture and future success.
- Liz attended the Alonzo Kelly “The Art of Asking Better Questions” put on by CIVMIC on September 9. This was a 2.5-hour class that provided insight on cultural differences and how we approach communications at work with this in mind.
- Erin Zintek resigned as the Recreation Coordinator with her last day being November 29.
- Krystal Ganz joined our team as a Recreation Programmer on November 29.

## Recreation Programs / Enrollment

### Pre-School/Early Childhood

This year started out with all of our Appletots Early Education classes being canceled due to increased COVID numbers. In spring we were able to start offering in-person outdoor/indoor classes throughout the remaining of the year. These classes had limited numbers to allow for social distancing and were outdoors when weather allowed. Our teachers continue to offer a variety of recreational preschool classes with both Parent/Child Groovy Tots and Nature Tots as our most popular classes. This summer we also offered our Preschool Tots Extra class which is a 4-week



preschool introductory class that touches on preschool topics such as colors, letters, numbers and social interaction. We implemented safe guidelines and followed the City’s policies of social distancing as well as mask wearing when we were indoors.

Our summer Friday Fun classes continue to be a big hit in our community. These early childhood classes are a great hit with families with young children looking for things to do in the summer with their kids at various city parks. Every week our classes were full. We also partnered with the Appleton Fire and Police Department to offer safety instructions and show and tell during Paw Patrol Week.

Preschool Dance was canceled in the beginning of the year due to COVID; however, we were able to start offering in-person classes in both the summer and fall in both outdoor and indoor locations. These classes are always well attended by our preschool age children. We offer classes in tap, jazz, ballet and tumbling.

|                 | <u>Participants</u> |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| Preschool Tots  | 9                   |
| Appletots       | 54                  |
| Preschool Dance | 132                 |
| Friday Fun      | 328                 |
| Total           | 523                 |



**Youth Activities**

Our Youth Open Gym program did not take place this year. The Appleton Area School District did not allow community partners to rent their facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We have been excited to have the program up and running again for the the 2021-2022 season.

KidStage is our partnership program for kids ages 4 – 12 who have an interest in theatre skills. Due to COVID-19, were not able to run our winter session. Kidstage picked classes back up in spring showcasing a Suessical production. In the summer they ran 3 weeklong theater camps showcasing Cinderella. We finished the year with a fall class showcasing an Aladdin production. To help spread kids out and offer more opportunities, Kidstasge partnered with OuterEdge to offer these classes in their auditorium instead of the library.

Camp APRD was a great success this summer and kids were so happy to be back participating in fun camp activities. We offered 8 weeks with corresponding themes for each week. To service more kids in the community we allowed each family to enroll up to 3 weeks of camp.



This change allowed for more of a “camp experience” versus a day care option for families. We filled the camp weeks at 95% of the maximum capacity. We have made the decision moving forward in 2022 to change Appleton Memorial Park into a Playground site. After reviewing parent

surveys, reviewing enrollment numbers, and the program budget, it became clear to us we would be able to service more families in the community by making this change.

Skateboard class was scheduled to be held in conjunction with the NEST (North East Skateboard Trust) at the Telulah Skate Park. Six- 3 class sessions were held June – August with small groups. We offered a combo option with two classes which was a popular option. Overall, 90 out of 96 spots were filled.

Our marketing partnerships with Karate America and The Academy continue to offer karate instruction for ages 4-12 in a program called Karate Fun. Both organizations offered Karate Fun classes throughout the year. They both experienced growth in this program with a great turnout in classes.

Urban Riders is for our school age kids looking to learn how to safely bike on the road to some of their favorite destinations. We offer two levels of Urban Riders. Level one teaches trails & lanes and level two teaches more road safety skills. Both of these classes are out of Pierce Park.

We partnered with Einstein Project to offer Free Mobile Makerspace Experiences for the children and families in Appleton downtown parks this summer. Einstein Project staff and community volunteers lead these free age appropriate, skills-based activities to promote creativity and critical thinking. They offered Mobile Makerspace experiences in Pierce Park, Erb Park, Peabody and Kiwanis Park throughout July and August. They experienced a consistent turnout at each location with over 270 kids participating in July and August.

The summer playground program ran June 14 – August 12 at thirteen sites for ages 6-13. Final attendance for the summer was 10,734. This is down 3% from 2019 as we did have to set capacity limits on the program due to Covid. Special events included the Neighborhood Nights, Sports Afternoon, Wacky Olympics, Erb Pool play day, the Kickball tournament, picnic in the park, Children’s Week activities and breakfast in the park. Our top three attended sites for the summer were Vosters, Peabody, and Erb. Our lowest attended sites were Hoover, Linwood, and Schaefer. This drop-in program continues to be a staple in the City and provides a great opportunity to many children throughout the community.



|                        | <u>Participants</u> |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Open Gym               | 0                   |
| KidStage               | 174                 |
| Camp APRD              | 229                 |
| Playground Program     | 10,734              |
| Skateboard Instruction | 67                  |
| Urban Riders           | 23                  |
| Einstein Project       | 270                 |
| <hr/> Total            | <hr/> 11,497        |

## Youth Sports Leagues/Camps

Our 2021 Youth Basketball program looked different than any previous basketball season because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Appleton Area School District was still not allowing outside users in their facilities due to health and safety concerns. Without use of our normal space for our basketball program we had to change the way we approached the season. Since we were not able to have a full January and February weekend season, we changed our program to run when space was available.



At the beginning of March, we kicked off our Youth Basketball League on Wednesday nights. Our League was four weeks and was not a traditional style league. Due to health and safety concerns, we were only allowed to have teams practice among themselves and not play against other teams. These practices took place at the Community First Champion Center and safety guidelines were put in place to keep everyone healthy. These guidelines included temperature checks upon entry, wearing masks, social distancing, and no spectators watching the practices. The program was for Boys and Girls in grades 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It was very well received because of the lack of opportunities for Appleton area kids to play basketball during the pandemic. We had a limited number of courts and times that were available for us on Wednesday nights. While we maximized the number of kids that we were able to serve, we still had a waiting list for the program.

The second part of our basketball program began during the week of the Appleton Area School District Spring Break (March 29 – April 1). Monday through Thursday, we offered basketball for boys and girls in grades Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Most of the participants were in the younger age groups and did not have a chance to play on Wednesday nights. While not the optimal time to run a program since many families were out of town, we were able to provide a fun basketball experience for our participants.

Another program we held during Spring Break week was to allow players in our Wednesday evening basketball program to come and participate in a Skills Showcase at the Community First Champion Center. This was a fun program that was “value added” to our normal basketball program and provided an extra fun experience for the kids. Each player could show off some of the skills they had learned in our program while going through an obstacle course patterned after the NBA All-Star game skills competition.

We are happy to say that COVID-19 numbers were at a low enough level for us to host our sports leagues and programs this summer. The outdoor programming format allowed us to hold programs as “normal” as possible. The public was ready to come back and participate in these programs and the strong numbers across the board prove that these programs are still in high demand.

Our APRD youth baseball/softball/t-ball programs took their traditional place in the calendar with practices starting in May and games starting in June. The numbers were good for the program post-pandemic, and we had 734 kids play baseball/softball in 2021. As in the past we offered Kindergarten T-ball up to our Teen Core program for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade participants. The overall health of the program was strong across the board. Our T-Ball and coach pitch leagues for kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade participants had the closest numbers to previous years. Some rules for our leagues were changed slightly to allow kids to “come back” to baseball and develop some success. Using our core value of Skill Development as our guide, we were very careful to make the pitching side of the game something that was attainable for the kids. The 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade levels were able to work their way back into these skills after being away from the game for a year.



The sports program that has seen the biggest increase in numbers after taking last summer off is our youth tennis program. During the summer, we had 291 participants participate in our Tennis Lessons for kids ages 8 to 14 years old. These classes serve kids that are beginners, intermediate players, and advanced participants. These numbers are almost doubled from 2019. The numbers have also translated to our Little Hitters programs for kids ages 4 to 7 years old. We had 174 kids participate in the first session of the Little Hitters which was also double from the last time we ran the program in 2019. Tennis being an outdoor sport that naturally promotes social distancing is certainly part of the reason for the increase in 2021 numbers.



We will look to capitalize on this trend with surveying the parents and participants to see if additional sites outside of Erb and Pierce Parks would be used for the future. In addition to the increase in our normal Monday – Thursday classes, our Friday morning team tennis drop-in program saw great numbers. Each Friday we saw 30-40 of our participants from our normal programs come to Erb Park to play more tennis on Fridays. They enjoyed the game play and the chance to play against people from other classes.

Participation in our summer youth sports camps and activities was very good in 2021. All our sports camps were held at Erb Park and the program brings even more life to a very busy park. Our youth soccer camp participation remained strong, with classes being full of kids at present capacity. When classes were established, we had smaller class sizes this year due to the structure of the classes being in question. After the classes began, we allowed a few more kids into the classes from the wait lists. We had 95 total participants with each class also having a wait list.

Our basketball camps had overall strong numbers but did have a few open spots. We had 62 participants in our basketball camps.

Sports Exploration continues to be full of participants with us having 45 spots for ages 3- to 5-year-old. These three classes popularity will allow us to consider offering more classes for these age levels in the future.

Our Introduction to Golf classes were once again popular with participants ages 4 to 6 years old. We had 67 participants signed up for our two sessions. These introductory classes use the Starting New at Golf (SNAG) equipment and help introduce the game to the young kids before they take standard golf lessons. Our program is held at Reid Golf Course and allows quality time for families during this parent/child class. We will continue to work with Reid golf course to offer the public the best progression of classes possible for their children.

We continued our partnership with Appleton United Lacrosse for the fourth year. This camp focuses on scooping, throwing, catching the ball, shooting, basic rules of the game, as well as communication skills. The partnership continues to be successful. In June 2021, we had a total of 30 participants up from 20 in 2019.

The youth flag football league was back on Tuesday evenings and saw an increase in participation from 2019. Participation was spread out across the 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade levels. The increase did lead to more time/space being used at the Memorial Park softball fields. Game times were extended earlier and later than before, but families were very happy to be playing flag football after a year off. An observation that was noticed was that the kids at the younger level took longer than normal to improve their level of play. This was due to some of them not being able to play sports or participate in gym class over the last year due to Covid-19 restrictions. After a few weeks this gap from not playing started to close and we saw a lot of improvement in their overall development.



In July, our partners with Fox River Hurling Club, had a 4-week camp for kids ages 8-13 scheduled for July. They had 8 kids participate in camp. This program will be evaluated to see if it will be held moving forward due to the low interest.

During the summer of 2021 we brought back Challenger Soccer Camps back to the APRD. Two camps were scheduled and only the second camp in August was conducted. The first week of the camp was cancelled by Challenger sports due to lack of staff and participation. The camp in August used Memorial Park as a site and had smaller numbers than previous years. Next summer we will look for additional options for soccer sports camps.

The Milwaukee Bucks Youth Basketball Camps were held at the Champions Center during the summer of 2021. The camps were in flux due to space constraints with COVID-19 and the Milwaukee Bucks waiting to go ahead with the camps depending upon the status of COVID-19. The promotion of the camp in our program guide was still useful for the organizers and we helped to connect 220 basketball players to a high-quality basketball camp.



The 2021 youth soccer program continues to be one of the largest youth soccer programs in the Appleton area. It was good to be back with a normal format for practices and games. The 2021 program was run with very few restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The program participation numbers bounced back nicely after a year away from soccer. 840 participants in grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade signed up for the program. Overall the registration process was back to normal for soccer with some community members ending up on the wait list after inquiring about the program after it had started.



The soccer program utilized our community and neighborhood parks throughout the city for team soccer practices. Erb, Highview, and Colony Oaks parks were utilized for practices more than in the past with soccer lines and goals available for teams to use. Game play was held at the USA Youth Sports complex just as it had been prior to the pandemic. The fields at the USA Youth Sports Complex were used throughout the morning to early afternoon on Saturdays. The soccer program staff enjoyed a nice mix of older veterans that helped our new rookie referees during their introduction to working for APRD.

Jeff and Olivia worked with local high school cross country coaches to develop a youth running club for grades 4-12. The program got underway in the spring season with a solid 15 participants. There were some complications with the time and location in the spring, but that was remedied with a change in location for the fall session. With a strong staff, the program increased in the fall with 19 participants. Our hope is by continuing the Runners Club in 2022 it will bring more active children to enjoy the sport.

|                            | <u>Participants</u> |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Youth Basketball Leagues   | 184                 |
| Youth Baseball, SB, T-Ball | 734                 |
| Soccer League              | 840                 |
| Flag Football League       | 241                 |
| Youth Tennis Camp          | 291                 |
| Lacrosse Camp              | 30                  |
| Intro Hurling Camp         | 8                   |
| Little Hitters Tennis Camp | 174                 |
| Runners Club               | 34                  |
| Youth Basketball Camp      | 62                  |
| Youth Soccer Camp          | 95                  |
| Sports Exploration Camp    | 45                  |
| SNAG Golf Camp             | 67                  |
| Milwaukee Bucks Camp       | 220                 |
| Challenger Soccer Camp     | 34                  |
| Total                      | 3,059               |



## Teens

The Teen Core program was able to offer two of the three sports during the 2021 year. The Teen Core basketball program was not offered due to basketball having to be moved to March of 2021.



Teen Core Baseball/Softball had a great beginning to the season. The 19 participants and the staff enjoyed a transition to the true values of the teen core program. Allowing the kids to make decisions on the style and flow of the game has allowed them to be the true winners on the field.

After not having a typical Teen Core program in 2020 due to the pandemic 48 participants played Teen Core Soccer in 2021. The Teen Core soccer program continued with the philosophy of including players from all levels of play and giving the Teens the freedom to choose how the program is run. We give them the guidance necessary to make the choices to have fun playing soccer, but we also allow them to make the decisions for their time in our program. The participants enjoyed the Teen Core program as it was designed to be.

In coordination with our summer playground program, we offer a junior leader opportunity. This is a program set up to offer young adults who are ages 14 – 17 an opportunity to gain both experience and knowledge of the skills it takes to become a playground leader. This summer we had a total of 14 junior leaders which is one of the highest numbers we have ever had for the program.

|                       | <u>Participants</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Teen Core Leagues     | 67                  |
| Junior Leader Program | 14                  |
| Total                 | 81                  |

## Adult Activities



Our adult dance classes have continued to grow throughout the year with tap doubling their enrollment each session. The tap instructor, Ms. Danielle, brings a lot of energy to this class. We continue to partner with Navah Mirage to offer Belly Dance as well. These classes continue to be popular.

The Spanish classes are a great option for adults wanting to learn another language. We started off the year at the Scheig Center with three levels (beginner, intermediate and advanced) of Spanish. After reviewing program surveys, we determined the need for an evening beginner Spanish class. We started offering evening classes in addition to our 3 classes in the afternoon. Our beginner level evening class has been a huge hit. Our fall sessions transitioned back to the Appleton library.

Adult Tennis Lesson participation in 2021 had a bounce back year. We had 47 adults participate this summer after we were able to move back to our normal time and format. The Adults enjoyed the Tuesday and Thursday night format and we received great feedback on our instructors we provided for the program.



We continue to partner with Debbie Daanen Photography offering adult photography classes. This class teaches the participants how to use all the buttons and add-on features of a camera. Then they get a chance to practice what they learn taking pictures of the Scheig gardens. We offered two different sessions in May and July. Both sessions were well attended.

Our partnership with the New Horizons Music Fox Valley continued during the summer and in the fall. Their number of participants has decreased over the pandemic, but they are still interested in offering an opportunity for adults to play in their band and orchestra programs.

Our Seed Guild nature programming went well this year and we were able to host classes in the spring, summer, and fall. Seed Guild taught a broth Workshop, Herbalism for Kids, Wild Food Forging, and numerus herbal sessions on salve, tea gardens, and smudge incense. All classes are focused on teaching participants herbal remedies or healthy classes that can help boost immune systems.

We offered presentations with naturalist Rob Zimmer in 2021. The April - June classes were canceled due to low enrollment numbers. We did hold classes on Wild Orchids of Wisconsin and Prairie Peak on the restoration project.

|                    | <u>Participants</u> |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| Belly Dance        | 43                  |
| Tap Dance          | 27                  |
| Spanish            | 89                  |
| Seed Guild         | 38                  |
| Rob Zimmer         | 8                   |
| Tennis Lessons     | 47                  |
| Photography        | 25                  |
| New Horizons Music | 8                   |
| <hr/> Total        | <hr/> 285           |

**Adult Sports Leagues**

The Adult Flag Football League was back in 2021 with 10 teams that played a five week regular season with playoffs at the end of September. The league was played for the first time without referees because of lack of qualified officials available to work. This is a challenge throughout youth and adult sports. To help the games progress, field monitors or supervisors were used, but no formal officials...teams called their own. This will be something that we will need to consider for best practice in the future.



Adult pickleball leagues saw an all-time high in the number of participants. The program enjoyed 51 players and will look to find more court space this summer and in the future for people looking to play in leagues. With expanded facilities coming to the City of Appleton, this program has potential to grow.

|                         | <u>Participants</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Adult Flag Football     | 150                 |
| Adult Pickleball League | 51                  |
| <hr/>                   |                     |
| Total                   | 201                 |

### Aquatics

There was a lot of planning and preparation when it came to the pools/aquatics programs for the summer of 2021. Olivia and I spent a significant amount of time developing a pool re-opening guide that was presented to the health department and outlined all our Covid mitigation plans for open swim, swim lessons, swim meets, rentals, etc. The summer was one filled with high expectations and anticipation as the pools were closed in 2020.

There were so many people excited to be back at the pools this since we were not able to open last year. Overall, the aquatics staff had 95+ seasonal employees working at Erb and Mead Pools teaching swim lessons, guarding open swim, managing, waterslide attendants, concession employees, and cashiers. As a whole I would say that we had a very successful start to our pool season but as the summer went on, we had our fair share of challenges. We had issues with patrons at Erb and situations our Pool Managers were faced with handling. Part of this we will be able to fix with proper signage and rules posted.

Staff became burnt out towards the end of the summer due to long hours from us being short staffed. We were able to implement raises for them through the month of August as incentive which did help to motivate them to get through the rest of the season. We worked on team building and culture building including a fun Erb vs. Mead kickball game (see photos of the staff teams below).

**Erb Pool Staff Team**



**Mead Pool Staff Team**



## Swim Lessons

Swim lessons were not held at East or West Pool due to COVID during the winter, spring, or fall due to no access to the school pools. However, we are gearing up to offer in the beginning of 2022 with our approved mitigation plan submitted to AASD.



Swim lessons were offered during the summer at Erb and Mead Pools. We did implement some COVID safety procedures and one of those guidelines was to limit the number of participants in each class and space out the classes to allow for proper cleaning and social distancing. Evening lessons were not held at Erb this season. Overall, the programs were successful. At Erb Pool, we were at 81% for capacity. Mead offered both weekday and weeknight sessions and they were at 70.5% for capacity. Ten classes did need to be cancelled due to low enrollment.

|                        | <u>Participants</u>                  |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| East Pool Swim Lessons | 0 – canceled due to no school access |
| Erb Pool Swim Lessons  | 727                                  |
| Mead Pool Swim Lessons | 646                                  |
| West Pool Swim Lessons | 0 – canceled due to no school access |
| <u>Total</u>           | <u>1,373</u>                         |

## Open Swim

Unfortunately, we did not offer any open swim programming at West Pool in 2021 due to COVID and no access to the school pools. Our outdoor pools opened for the season on Friday, June 4. We had a little bit of everything the first month of the outdoor season, but it was mostly humid and sunny for most of the month of June. Weather continued to be favorable in July and August which made for a busy pool season.

Because of the way the admission was set up in RecTrac, only full paid daily attendance for both facilities could be found. This number does not take into account daily passholder visits. We are working to be able to pull these numbers for a more accurate attendance.

|   | <u>Participants</u>                  |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Erb and Mead Pool Daily Paid Attendance | 56,089                               |
| West Pool Open/Lap Swim                 | 0 – canceled due to no school access |
| <u>Total</u>                            | <u>56,089</u>                        |

## Aquatics Programs

Erb Pool was host to a July 24 snorkel class and July 25 scuba class in which we had 10 participants enrolled in each of the classes. Instruction and equipment were provided by Mountain Bay Scuba. We also held two kayak skills classes at Erb Pool which continued our partnership with Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers on July 26 & 28 and August 2 & 4. We also teamed up with the Fox Valley Rowing club to offer a Learn to Row class mid-July. All classes were held at the Fox Valley Rowing Club at Telulah Park.

|                     | <u>Participants</u> |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| Kayak Skills Class  | 12                  |
| Recreational Rowing | 11                  |
| Snorkeling          | 10                  |
| Discover Scuba      | 10                  |
| Total               | 43                  |

**Pool Rentals**

We have several options for rentals at the aquatic facilities. There are private rentals, open hour rentals, and birthday party packages. The shaded spaces with the cabana and on deck covers/ pavilions made for a fun yet safe environment for people to host rentals. The Oasis at Erb Pool was not allowed to be rented because of COVID restrictions. We eliminated weekday rentals and only had weekend rentals because of staffing restrictions.

|                    | <u>Rentals</u> |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Erb 50-Meter Pool  | 4              |
| Erb Pool – Leisure | 11             |
| Erb Pool- Both     | 2              |
| Mead Pool          | 14             |
| Erb Pool Cabana    | 2              |
| Erb Pool Oasis     | 0              |
| Erb Pool Birthday  | 21             |
| Mead Pool Shade    | 1              |
| Mead Pool Birthday | 7              |
| West Pool Birthday | 0              |
| Total Rentals      | 62             |

**Aquatic Special Events**

We did not have a majority of programs or special events during the year. We are hoping to provide specialty events in the upcoming year to get people involved in swimming and aquatics, for fun and safety.

The annual Dog Swim was held on Saturday, August 21 at Mead Pool. We once again had a time for the smaller dogs and the larger dogs. Feedback we received was very positive regarding the event.



|                        | <u>Participants</u> |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| Doggie Day at the Pool | 60                  |
| Total                  | 60                  |



Erb Pool was once again the site for two major swim meets hosted by the Fox Cities YMCA Swim Team. The Fox Cities Classic was held June 19 – 20 and the Bird Bath was held July 9 – 11. Management staff members work closely with members from the YMCA to make sure that the event is successful. In return for using the pool, the YMCA does allow Appleton Parks and Recreation swim pass holders to use any Fox Cities YMCA at no charge during the swim meets.

They are charged a rental fee to use the facility for the weekend. Appleton Parks and Recreation aquatic staff lifeguard the event as well as manage the facility.

### Swim Passes

Annual pool passes are available to City of Appleton residents for a discounted rate beginning in November and ending in early May. After the discount deadline, they may be purchased at the regular pass price. We offered this sale and price point for the 2021 season.

| Pass                             | Discount Price Sales | Full Price Sales | Total Sales  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| Adult Pass                       | 2                    | 16               | 18           |
| Senior Pass                      | 1                    | 17               | 18           |
| Youth Pass                       | 2                    | 45               | 47           |
| Family Pass                      | 55                   | 421              | 476          |
| Family Additional                | 138                  | 1194             | 1332         |
| Adult Punch Pass                 | 2                    | 35               | 37           |
| Senior Punch Pass                | 0                    | 9                | 9            |
| Youth Punch Pass                 | 0                    | 47               | 47           |
| <b>Total Pass Sales for 2021</b> |                      |                  | <b>1,984</b> |

### Pool Concessions

Erb and Mead Pool concessions had successful years. At Mead Pool we changed the menu compared to previous years by not selling hamburgers, quesadillas, walking tacos or grilled cheese. We did not receive any complaints about this change as we were able to introduce new menu items that have been of interest to the patrons.

The beginning of the summer was challenging in working with the orders and the vendors and determining the amount of product needed. We had such a warm start to the summer we were going through product very quickly. We had a little trouble with the vendor delivering food on time and products being in stock. One product that was affected this year is Dip N Dots. Dip N Dots corporation was having staff shortages, which had caused the company to reduce their flavors offered. We saw lower sales for Dip N Dots due to these product shortages.

| <b>2021</b> | <b>Revenues</b> | <b>Expenses</b> | <b>Net Revenue</b> |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Mead Pool   | \$39,640.60     | \$35,333.03     | \$4,307.57         |
| Erb Pool    | \$71,346.22     | \$38,939.03*    | \$                 |
|             | \$110,986.82    | \$              | \$                 |

\*Does not include Erb Concession staff wages as they were not being designated to the correct project number. Jeri Ohman in Finance is currently working on pulling these numbers for us.

### Fitness and Wellness

Fitness this year proved to be a great outlet for the participants in light of COVID-19. We were able to continue offering our fitness classes throughout the year with limited capacity. We added Tai Chi and Cardio Funk to our mix of classes. All classes were required to wear a mask during the class. When weather permitted, we offered our classes outdoors in various parks. We continue to coordinate with Pfefferle Management for space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the City

Center for our Zumba and Cardio Funk classes. The open mezzanine area allows for more space and ventilation for these high intensity classes. Our yoga classes and StrongBodies classes continue to be the most popular fitness classes that we offer.

This summer we partnered with Lisa Kramer to offer a Yoga in the Park class called “Rock Om” to start the Mile of Music week with an outdoor yoga class for ages. The weather was beautiful allowing for several community members to participate in this free event.

Our Mindfulness series with Joy Jordan was a great outlet for participants especially for those continued to be emotionally impacted by COVID. The Mindfulness classes include formal instruction on meditation, current mindfulness practices and working through how to control difficult emotions.



This year we entered into a new partnership with Christy Sprotte, owner and founder of Fox Valley Mindful Learners LLC. Christy, nationally certified School Psychologist provides mindfulness classes for tweens and teens in a fun, interactive approach using the trendy Escape Room theme to help unlock and decode the Mystery of the Mind. Christy offered a one-day retreat for parent/child to attend along with a teen and tween Mindfulness Mysteries 6-week class.

We continued partnering with Alo Health for free wellness presentations in the first two quarters. The Wellness topics included intermittent fasting, healthy grocery shopping tips/resources and seasonal allergies. These classes were offered as a pre-recorded option. Alo Health has recently opened a second location in Michigan and have decided to discontinue these webinars temporarily. We marketed these classes both to our community and internally with the City of Appleton employees.

|                               | <u>Participants</u> |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Zumba                         | 84                  |
| Pure Strength                 | 47                  |
| Yoga                          | 281                 |
| Yoga in the Park              | 60                  |
| Forever Fit                   | 10                  |
| Strong Bodies                 | 76                  |
| Mindfulness                   | 43                  |
| Mindfulness for Teens/Tweens  | 19                  |
| Mindfulness Mysteries Retreat | 11                  |
| Tai Chi                       | 54                  |
| Alo Health Presentations      | 92                  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>777</b>          |





## Unity Dance Academy



The annual Unity Dance Academy recital looked a little different this year due to COVID-19. Our normal venue at North High School was closed forcing us to find a safe location to showcase the many talents of our dancers. Unity Dance Academy ended our season with a performance review held outdoors at Pierce Park pavilion May 10-13. We had an amazing week celebrating the hard work of our students and staff. The weather held up, and we were able to dance all week long. Unity Dance Academy was able to purchase a vinyl floor for our dancers to safely perform safely on.

Our summer program began June 14<sup>th</sup>. We have a mix of in studio classes, and classes being held outdoors at Jones and Telulah pavilions. Our classes were almost to capacity. We also offered 4-week dance workshops that were helpful for dancers that didn't have the time to commit. We had 157 dancers register for youth summer dance classes

Fall Dance began on September 13. We offered 36 different classes in Ballet, Jazz, Lyrical, Tap, Hip Hop, Acro and Musical Theater. Our dancers and staff were excited to fully back into the studios. Our fall youth dance and acrobatics program did experience a 38% decrease in enrollments from the year prior. We also continued to limit class sizes to help spread the kids out in each studio. We had a total of 379 participants registering.



## Special Events/Trips

In January we implemented a new event called the Toy Ride-Along program (in partnership with the Police Department). This was a program where we encouraged young children to submit their toys to us and we distributed them to the Police Department to partake in everyday police officer tasks. We received many compliments and words of appreciation for doing this. There was also quite a bit of media coverage so we will chalk this one up as a success.

Our department was a co-creator of a new event for 2021 called the Be Active Wisconsin Community Challenge. During the month of March, we encouraged people to get out and be active. The community with the average active minutes based on number of participants was crowned the fittest community (unfortunately it was not Appleton...maybe 2022). This program was very well received state-wide with 40 communities participating and 1,601 total participants throughout the state. We heard so many success stories of how this event motivated people across the state to get active.



During the first quarter we offered two themed Trivia Nights. The first one was on February 5 and was targeted toward families with a Disney theme. The second one was held on March 5 and was geared towards adults with a 90's television shows theme. These were done using Kahoot as the platform and then it was administered through Zoom for all the participants. Feedback was that participants really enjoyed the events.

We worked to partner with Play It Again Sports on a Snowshoe Event for February 19 – 21. We encouraged families to get out and try snowshoeing in our parks. Play It Again offered discounts for snowshoe rentals for the event.

In a last effort to create some wintertime fun we launched a pop-up snow building contest. Participants were encouraged to make something creative out of snow and submit a photo for a chance to win prizes. It was fun to see all the submissions and the community engagement through voting on social media.



Our 5-month Park Explorer program wrapped up on September 30<sup>th</sup> with 204 teams participating. Each team consisted of an average of 4-5 players, so we were able to serve nearly 1000 people with this program. There were 192 park missions and 8 bonus missions available. We had 27 teams complete all the park missions and became "Ultimate Park Explorers", 8 teams completed all 200 missions. Overall, 11,356 missions were completed over the 5 months. With most expenses covered by sponsorships, it was a successful program that got people out into parks they typically would not frequent. We intend to do a survey to obtain more feedback from participants.

On June 18<sup>th</sup> we held our first ever Ties and Tiaras event. We had 46 couples including dads with daughters, moms and sons, best friends, and brothers and sisters. Our families enjoyed the magical evening held at the Scheig center and Appleton Memorial Park pavilion. The night included hair-dos, professional photos, games, crafts, a tea party, and a dance party. The Fox Cities Cycling Without Age donated 4 tri-shaws and the pilots to bike the couples from the Scheig Center to the pavilion.

We had two Kid's Fun Runs this summer. Both runs had an Olympic theme to honor the 2021 Summer Olympics. Our first run took place in July and the second was in August. Due to COVID-19, we changed up our registration into time slots to help manage the flow of people attending this special event. Although we did experience a lower-than-normal attendance, the kids still had a great time dressing up in their US apparel and running a fun race at Memorial Park. We partnered with Fleet Feet to offer race day set-up and staff along with music by Nick the DJ.



We had four movie on the hill events scheduled for 2021. Unfortunately, the first two were rained out. The other two were July 22 featuring Sandlot and August 12 featuring Raya and the Last Dragon. The movies kick off at dusk, but families come early as we have open canoe on the pond as well as children's games starting at 7:00 p.m. Both movies that did run were successful averaging about 250 people each movie.

#### Children's Week – July 25 – 31

The week kicked off with our Children's Week kick-off event which was a kids fun run at Appleton Memorial Park on Sunday evening for ages 2 – 12. Monday kids could go to Reid Golf Course from open to 3:00 p.m. and get a free small bucket of range balls to try out the driving range. Tuesday was a busy day as we held the Dance-o-Rama which is an opportunity for ages 4 – 18 to join us at the City Center Studios and experience a new genre of dance. This year we featured ballet, jazz, hip-hop, and acrobatics. Also on Tuesday was our Kids Rummage Sale from 9:00 – noon at Pierce Park. We had 28 youth vendors participate in selling gently used toys, games, clothes, and accessories while learning how to interact with people and conduct the sale of goods. We estimated another 200 came through the event for shopping.

Wednesday was the annual Children's Parade marching down College Ave. Our playground program group participated once again. Due to the weather the reception at City Park had to be cut short but all together it was a great event.

Thursday and Friday we held our annual Playground Fair at Pierce Park. The event goes from 2:00 – 8:00 p.m. each day. We do have a separate time on Friday from 12:30 – 2:00 for families with children with special needs. The event went really well! Having two new Playground Coordinators this summer, I was nervous how the event would go but Drew and Alli did a fantastic job, and we had a lot of support from our Recreation Division team during the event. Based on revenue this was the second highest attended fair to date.

Saturday, we added a new event to the lineup for Children's Week...thanks to a donor. It was a community mural on a wall outside the downtown Appleton YMCA. The artist designed it to be painted by number for the kids. It was great to be able to incorporate the arts component into Children's Week and everyone was happy with the results of the mural.



This year we planned to run four bus trips to Chicago, Madison and Door County. Due to COVID-19, we canceled all bus trips. In 2022, we are looking forward to adding Madison's Art Fair on the Square and the Farmer's Market.



In April, we teamed up with local Geo Cachers and the Wisconsin Geocaching Association (WGA) to offer a Cache In Trash Out (CITO) in celebration of Earth Day. This free event started with a Geocaching 101 presentation for first-time GeoCachers. After the presentation, families searched for geo caches hidden in Arbutus Park, Derks Park, Erb Park, Green Meadows, Linwood Park and Vosters Park. Families were encouraged to help preserve the natural beauty of our parks by picking up trash while hunting for different caches in the parks. At the end of the event, the WGA awarded the

Appleton Parks and Recreation with a CITO coin and donated \$150 to pay for the event supplies and food.

We offered two Parent's Night Out (PNO) events this year. The first PNO took place at Erb Park in June. Kids enjoyed playing team and individual sports, various crafts and pizza. In December we offered our second PNO. This is always a great hit for parents to get out on a date or get in some last-minute Christmas shopping.

This was our second year offering the Letters to Santa program. It continues to be a great program for kids to write to Santa and received a letter back before Christmas. We provide a template and Santa wish list for kids to fill out and drop off during the holiday season. The Recreation team enjoyed reading each letter and wrote back to 345 children, which was 124 more letters than last year.



When the pandemic began in 2020, Appleton Parks and Recreation team brainstormed safe, educational, and fun scavenger hunts for the community. The scavenger hunts involved collaboration and pooling of resources with other agencies, volunteers, and local business donations to demonstrate a joint effort in providing outstanding services amidst the pandemic. Each scavenger hunt was created to reach different populations and ages throughout the community. We experienced so much success with these scavenger hunts, we decided to include this in our 2021 program offering. We offered four unique scavenger hunts including an Appleton Historical Scavenger Hunt, The Great Ball Pursuit, The Great Holiday Dash, and The Silly Elf Hunt.



The Bike Rodeos continue to be a huge success that the community enjoys. Both the month of May (Bike to School Month) and June we partnered with East Central WI Regional Planning Commission/Safe Routes to School, Appleton Police and Appleton Bike Shop for both Bike Rodeos. Participants were taken through various stations teaching basic skills needed to bike safely on the road.

We continue to partner with the library offering a Story Walk<sup>®</sup> with monthly rotating books on display located on the trails behind the Scheig Center. This program is a collaboration with the Appleton Public Library. The Story Walk<sup>®</sup> was incorporated in many of our scavenger hunts and holiday events. It is impossible to calculate how many families enjoyed the Story Walk<sup>®</sup>, but we can estimate that approximately 300 families walked through the Story Walk<sup>®</sup> throughout the year.

After having a lot of fun and huge buzz in 2020, the Great Ball Pursuit was back for a second year. In August, 300 numbered tennis balls were spread throughout 19 of our parks. This year we chose four random numbers that were awarded gift certificates. Most of the balls were spotted and accounted for very quickly. The public enjoyed the "pursuit", and we look forward to doing this again next August.



We had our second Glow in the Park event that took place at the Scheig Center. We created a luminated story walk with a scavenger hunt, photo contest, pumpkin contest, and various Halloween games. This event went well, we had a great turn out and lot of people in the community enjoyed the event! We had eleven businesses sponsor candy, prizes, and financial support towards this event. Each kid left with a goodie bag full of Halloween treats, crafts and more. The story walk was lit by glow sticks, stringed lights and milk jugs that had a candlelight to help with the visibility on the walk.



We had such great feedback to our Great Holiday Dash in 2020, that we brought it back for 2021. This is a fun, covid-friendly road rally where teams “dash” around town to shoot short videos, take pictures, mark GPS spots, and answer trivia questions during the 3-hour competition. We again utilized the GooseChase app in which we uploaded 100 clues pertaining to our Christmas theme and Appleton Area businesses and landmarks. The top 5 teams took home cash prizes donated by Fox Communities Credit Union. We had 39 teams with an average of four people per team participate. We had no issues with the app as we did last year, and again, excellent feedback.

|                              | <u>Participants</u>                     |
|------------------------------|---|
| Toy Ride-Along               | 52                                      |
| Be Active Wisconsin          | 1,601                                   |
| Trivia Nights                | 54 <i>(30 for family, 24 for adult)</i> |
| Snowshoe Event               | 11                                      |
| Pop-up Snow Building         | 8                                       |
| Ties and Tiaras              | 92                                      |
| Be an Appleton Park Explorer | 816 <i>(204 Teams)</i>                  |
| Kids Fun Runs                | 162                                     |
| Scavenger Hunts              | 350                                     |
| Parent’s Night Out           | 39                                      |
| Letters to Santa             | 345                                     |
| Bike Rodeos                  | 105                                     |
| Kids Rummage Sale            | 228                                     |
| Movie on the Hill/Canoe      | 500                                     |
| Appleton Children’s Week     | 7,500                                   |
| Bus Trips                    | 0                                       |
| Story Walk                   | 300                                     |
| Great Ball Pursuit           | 300                                     |
| Glow in the Park             | 300 <i>(75 Families)</i>                |
| Great Holiday Dash           | 156 <i>(39 Teams)</i>                   |
| CITO                         | 100 <i>(30 Families)</i>                |
| <b>Total:</b>                | <b>13,019</b>                           |

## Facilities

### Scheig Center

46 rentals took place at the Scheig Center in 2021. Unfortunately, with COVID-19, we had to cancel some reservations in the beginning of the year through May. The Recreation Division has also continued their use of the Scheig Center by offering programs on-site such as Yoga, Strength Training, Tai Chi, Mindfulness, Appletots, and photography classes. Internal groups have been consistently using the Scheig Center as well. The Friends of the Gardens group meets to have their volunteer meetings throughout the year.



### Winter Recreation Facilities –

Opened December 29, 2020 and closed February 26, 2021

The winter season was met with much anticipation as many people were excited that we opened winter recreation this year. The season got off to a slow start as the weather was warm for a few weeks, which prevented us from opening Jones until January 25, 2021. Erb and Reid were open only on the weekends while Jones was open seven days per week. The 2020-2021 winter season was a mix of weather with some great outdoor days up to rain and unseasonable warm/cold temps. Once again, we flooded a hockey rink and recreational rink at Pierce Park to accommodate skaters and did some regrading of the park green space to make it easier to flood the hockey rink. Ice conditions were great this winter as the weather did remain relatively cold for most of February, and we did have a few days where kids were able to get out and sled. Numbers continue to disappoint at Erb Park as it is not being utilized as much as was anticipated.



Reid Winter Recreation Center was only open for 17 days but did have 2,213 recorded participants at the sled hill. Erb Park was only open during the weekends for a total of 9 days this winter and we only recorded 98 sledders and 74 skaters during open hours. We recorded over 575 hockey players at Jones rink this winter and it was very well received by the public.

**2022 Program Participants:**

| Program Category                                   | Participants  |
|--|---------------|
| Pre-School/Early Childhood                         | 523           |
| Youth Activities                                   | 11,497        |
| Youth Sports Leagues/Camps                         | 3,059         |
| Teens  | 81            |
| Adult Activities                                   | 285           |
| Adult Sports Leagues                               | 201           |
| Swim Lessons                                       | 1,373         |
| Open Swim  | 56,089        |
| Aquatics programs/events                           | 103           |
| Fitness/Wellness                                   | 777           |
| Unity Dance Academy                                | 536           |
| Special Events/Trips                               | 13,019        |
| Winter Recreation Facilities                       | 2,960         |
| <small>*only Reid, Erb, Jones get recorded</small> |               |
| <b>Total:</b>                                      | <b>90,503</b> |



## Volunteer Numbers

|                       |            |   |
|-----------------------|------------|---|
| Youth Basketball      | 29         | Coaches for leagues                                 |
| Youth Baseball        | 92         | Coaches for leagues                                 |
| Youth Flag Football   | 35         | Coaches for leagues                                 |
| Youth Soccer          | 88         | Coaches for leagues                                 |
| Unity Dance Recital   | 2          | Ushers, backstage volunteers                        |
| Playground Fair       | 42         | Volunteers to help with games/inflatables           |
| Junior Leader Program | 10         | Volunteer at Playground sites during summer program |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>298</b> |   |

## Sponsorships/Donations

**Donations:**

- The Wisconsin Geocaching Association donated \$150 to Appleton Parks and Recreation for putting on a Cache In Trash Out event in support of Earth Day.
- The Fox Cities Cycling Without Age donated 4 tri-shaws and the pilots for our Ties and Tiaras event.

- Received \$450 in total donations between The Academy, Kiwanis Club, and NEST for our Glow in the Park event. Received crafts, candy, and small giveaways/coupons from Funset Blvd, Timber Rattlers, APL, Girl Scouts, Wilmar Chocolates, Lamers, BFK, Debbie Daanen, Superbowl, and Johnson Financial Group.
- Kim Kamp’s family pumpkin farm donated pumpkins for the Glow in the Park event.
- \$9,500 was our portion of the proceeds given by local businesses and organizations toward Children’s Week events. This was up from \$8,000 in 2020.
- Building for Kids donated five 1-day memberships for the winners of the Silly Elf Hunt.
- The police, fire and Health Department all donated safety bags for the Emergency Preparedness week for Camp APRD.
- Fox Communities Credit Union once again provided us with a \$1,000 sponsorship for our Great Holiday Dash event in December. The money was used for cash prizes in exchange we used their logo in our marketing and also used their Appleton locations for clue placement where we were able to provide videos and pictures of our participants for their future marketing purposes.
- SCHEELS was the principal sponsor of our “Be A Park Explorer” program. They donated \$875 towards the use of the GooseChase App for the event along with some Backyard Games to use as prizes. ThedaCare donated \$200 to use for prizes and Festival Foods also donated \$40 in gift cards.

## Community Partnerships / Community Outreach

### **Community Partnerships:**

- Partnered with Fleet Feet and Nick the DJ to offer race logistics and music entertainment for our two Fun Runs.
- Partnered with Konrathink Inc. to provide Unity Dance Academy t-shirt designs for the recital performance at Pierce Park
- Partnered with Appleton Police and Fire Department for guest speakers during our Paw Patrol Friday Fun Theme Day.
- Partnered with the Public Health Department, Police Department, Fire Department and Gold Cross to offer an Emergency Preparedness “Camp 911” day for Camp APRD.
- Partnered with the Building for Kids to offer free 1-day membership for our Silly Elf Hunt.
- Partnered with Einstein Project to offer mobile stem activities throughout our city parks.
- Partnered with Wisconsin Geocaching Association to offer a Cache In Trash Out event to celebrate Earth Day.
- A continuation of the partnership with the Fox River Hurling Club, we offered an Intro Hurling Camp to kids and teens in the Appleton Community.
- Worked with Appleton Police Department, Gold Cross, and Appleton Fire Department to provide Emergency Procedures Training at Mead and Erb Pools.
- Partnered with Budding Chefs to offer youth cooking classes at the Scheig Center.
- Partnered with Fox Cities Cycling Without Age to offer bike rides for our Ties and Tiaras event along with A Day in the Park event.
- Partnered with the Appleton Public Library to offer Free Roaming Ruckus classes in various City Parks
- Partnered with East Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission for our two Bike Rodeos located at Mead Park and Jefferson Elementary School.



- Partnered with Debbie Daanen Photography to help market our Ties and Tiaras event. She did a free photo shoot that provided pictures for marketing.
- Partnered with the YMCA to offer Zumba and Yoga classes at Houdini and City Park.
- Partnered with the Building for Kids, the Appleton YMCA and other community businesses/organizations to host the 12<sup>th</sup> annual Children's Week.
- We continue to partner with the Appleton Public Library to offer monthly rotating books on our StoryWalk® in Memorial Park.
- Partnered with Jennifer Kornowski's (Navah Mirage Belly Dance) to provide adult belly dance classes in the studios for APRD participants.
- We continue work with Neenah, Menasha and Fox Crossing Parks and Recreation Departments along with the YMCA of Fox Cities for the annual "A Day in the Park (formerly senior games) which was held at Pierce Park on September 14. We had several sponsors including Thompson Center, Touchmark, Network Health, Eagle Point, and Highlands for financial program support.
- Partnered with Lisa Kramer with Sunny Side Up Yoga to offer Yoga in the Park on August 3.
- Partnered with Fox Wolf Watershed Alliance to offer weekly presentations to the Camp APRD participants
- Worked in coordination with Fox Valley Athletics to ensure the continued success of the adult softball leagues at Appleton Memorial Park. For the summer he had 121 total teams and for fall he had 30 teams.
- Partnered with Debbie Daanen Photography to provide two Fundamentals of Photography classes this summer at the Scheig Center.
- Continued our marketing partnership with Karate America and The Academy to offer Karate Fun classes for ages 4-12.
- Partnered with Joy Born to offer Mindfulness classes.
- Partnered with Alo Health to offer free health and wellness presentations to the community
- Partnered with Kidstage to offer fun theatre-based classes for ages 4-12.
- Partnered with Budding Chefs offering unique hands-on cooking classes for ages 3-8.
- Partnership continued with Tanya Rosenthal to teach babysitting training classes to 10- 15 year-olds.
- Partnered with Kari Witthuhn- Henning with the Seed Guild to provide Nature programs for adults.
- Continued partnership with Appleton United Lacrosse Club to work with youth grades 1- 8.
- North East Skateboarding Trust (NEST) continued to partner to give skateboarding lessons to youth ages 5-16.
- Mountain Bay Scuba was a partnership that provided snorkeling and scuba classes for youth and adults.
- Partnered Northeast Wisconsin Paddlers offered kayaking classes to children and adults.
- Continued partnership with the Fox Valley Rowing Club to offer Learn to Row Classes held at the Telulah Park Boat Launch.
- Partnered with NEW Horizon Fox Valley on the adult band/orchestra programs for 2021.

## Community Outreach:

Overall, our Community Outreach opportunities were limited this year due to COVID-19. Many businesses, organization, and schools were just not comfortable having outside groups coming in.



- Jeff shared summer program information on a virtual call with the Youth Advocacy Coalition. The April 8<sup>th</sup> event was attended by many local agencies and non-profits to share what we are doing during the CoVid-19 pandemic and what we were planning for the summer.
- Niki, Olivia and Jeff all attended the Appleton East virtual Job Fair on April 15<sup>th</sup> to recruit summer staff for APRD positions.
- Jeff attended the Highlands/Odyssey virtual Family Night on May 11<sup>th</sup>. The Family Night gave the APRD an opportunity to highlight upcoming summer programs for the elementary school families.

## Marketing Highlights

- Margaret created a new Marketing Stats Report that includes Facebook and Instagram insights along with website analytics and email marketing stats. She sends the report monthly which gives us great insight on how we are doing with our different platforms each month and where we may need to improve and where are customers are getting their information.
- In 2021, we posted 419 Facebook posts and 337 Instagram posts. Our Facebook reach was 1,160,421 and Instagram was 109,389. We attracted 2,218 new Facebook followers to bring us to 12,417. Our Instagram followers increased by 294, putting us at 2,150.
- Erin and Liz worked on a video that they posted on social media just before Valentine's Day encouraging people to take a breath and have a little "self-love". The video led them through some breathing/stretching exercises.
- The GooseChase App that we utilized for the Park Explorer Program allows us to capture all the video and photo footage that participants submit to complete each mission. Because of this, we now have a large content library of community members enjoying our parks.
- In 2021, we utilized a new Social Media calendar that Margaret created through Teams. This was extremely helpful to lay out what content was going out and to put reminders when certain programs needed promoting. This will be a very useful tool going forward as we can look back to year over year when we promoted certain events/programs.
- Niki appeared on Fox 11 and NBC 26 to promote the Be Active Wisconsin event.
- Margaret created an infographic that was used to update the public on the winter recreation amenities and what was available. This was an at-a-glance tool that made it easy for people to see what was open/closed.
- We continue to work to engage the community through our social media pages. A few of our fun, cultural posts including guess the number of Hershey Kisses in the jar for St. Patrick's Day and a Pop-up Snow building contest.



- The rec staff made a recruitment video to draw more attention to the Recreation Coordinator position that was available. Other videos that were made were promotions for our Youth Basketball League, Great Holiday Dash, SWAT workout, and Be a Park Explorer.
- We continued with our “APRD News You Can Use” newsletter. We sent a total of 22 newsletters for a total of 357,294 emails. 23% of those were opened. That is an above average open rate for these types of emails.
- We sent targeted email communications through Constant Contact. Overall we had 25 targeted emails to promote or update programs for a total of 72,458 emails. That average open rate is 58%.
- We started using Google Analytics to track our website usage. Over the course of 2021, we had 180,456 visitors to our website and 468,664 page views.
- Margaret and Niki attended monthly City Communication Team Meetings.
- July was Parks and Recreation Month. We changed our Facebook cover photo to celebrate the month.
- Once again, we developed and distributed two activity guides in 2021. The spring/summer one we chose not to print. Instead, a postcard was mailed to all residents stating the guide would be available digitally only on our website. This allowed us flexibility as programs changed.
- We had a lot of promotion/marketing for Children’s Week this year with US Venture hiring Element Marketing. I was involved with the creation of promotional videos, many in-studio radio appearances, live TV segments, etc.
- The Recreation Division staff participated in some of the Police Department’s social media days:



## Other Notable Accomplishments/Areas of Interest

- Created a spreadsheet to get to the customer service staff in Finance outlining all the parks/pavilions/facilities we needed blocked off in RecTrac for our spring/summer programs.
- Recreation Division staff have been participating in monthly safety topics/videos provided by Greg Hoekstra.
- One of my big projects in 2021 was setting up a new Team in Microsoft Teams for Customer Service staff. I created a OneNote notebook in the Team that has three different sections (main customer service, Recreation, Parks/Facilities). Under each of those sections are numerous pages that contain operating procedures and “how to” instructions for the staff. With everyone

have editing capabilities we will be able to use this notebook as our working document for our standard operating procedures.

- Jeff has been in contact with GG Leagues and a couple local gaming companies regarding offering esports leagues/tournaments. We are looking to implement this sometime in 2022.
- I worked in coordination with Legal Services, the Mayor and members of our team to develop an MOU with the Appleton City Band.

