



RECREATION DIVISION YEAR END REPORT



2017

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YEAR END SUMMARY

2017 was a very exciting year for the Recreation Division. The biggest highlight was the opening of the Erb Pool and park. This was a large project for our department as a whole and it was great to be a part of something that will continue to serve our community for years to come. With this project taking place we saw our ups and downs as far as programming. It was interesting and surprising to see the effect that having to move programs from Erb Park this summer played on the overall participation numbers. Staff called it the “Erb effect” as it was noticeable programs that were off sited for the summer saw a decline in participation. It will be nice to have the park back for programming in 2018.

Another huge undertaking for 2017 was the transition of the concession operations at Mead and Erb Pools moving to internal management. Significant time was spent preparing RFQ’s, meeting with vendors, determining menus, hiring staff, developing operation manuals and the day to day inventory and controls that needed to be in place to be successful.

We saw huge success in our partnerships for 2017 including a couple new partnerships like the Milwaukee Bucks Youth Basketball Camp and the Youth La Crosse Camp. As part of our initiative to expand our adult programming we were also able to offer some new adult fitness programs through our partnership with the fire department and police department as well as small group personal training and ballet barre. A fall trip to Door County was also added to our adult program lineup.

As our overall numbers were up for 2017, there were a couple noticeable declines in programs...mostly our special events. We ended up with a run of bad weather during our Kids Fun Runs and our Movie on the Hill events that caused us to cancel some of the dates. We also saw a decline in the Teen Programming (despite the kick off of our Teen Core program) due to the decrease in teen events that were offered at the pools this summer. This will rebound in 2018 as we will have both outdoor pools open all summer and will have more time to spend on the aquatic special events.

We were very excited to welcome two new staff members to our team in 2017. Elizabeth Konrath started as the part-time Recreation Coordinator in September and Margaret Collett started as the part-time Administrative Assistant in November. Both have been great additions to our team and we are very excited about their enthusiasm and energy they bring to their roles.

Staff Notes

- Kabel attended the Association of Aquatic Professionals Annual Conference in St. Petersburg, FL, February 5-9. He received a grant for the association that covered full conference registration and 1 night's stay at the hotel.
- Julie completed a Video Production for Mobile Devices course through Fox Valley Technical College in March.
- April 7, Nate attended and presented at the WPRA Spring Workshop about attracting and retaining millennial workers in seasonal positions.
- May 24 was our Recreation Coordinator Lisa Volkman's last day.
- Nate renewed his CPRP Certification in July 2017.
- Elizabeth Konrath was hired as our new Recreation Coordinator. Elizabeth's first day with our department was September 18.
- Chelsey and Elizabeth attended CVMIC's Recreation Roundtable discussion on October 20.
- Kabel attended a CVMIC training on December 6 about policy revision.
- Julie Miskoviak announced her resignation as Administrative Assistant for the Recreation Division. Over September-October we reviewed applications, held interviews and hired Margaret Collett who started on October 30.
- UDA was able to send three of their instructors to Dance Masters Training to continue to advance their dance education in November.
- Nate completed the Team USA "Safe Sports" Certification (a certification for preventing physical, emotional and sexual abuse in a youth sports setting).
- Nate, Kabel and Chelsey attended the WPRA Annual Conference, November 2-4 in Wisconsin Dells.

Recreation Programs / Enrollment

Pre-School/Early Childhood

Our Little Learners program (ages 3 - 5) has made several curriculum improvements to help transition and prepare the students for kindergarten. The Preschool program has started to align with the Wisconsin Early Model Learning Standards (WEMLS). Throughout the year we had special visitors/speaker, had field trips to places like the Building for Kids, and ended the year with Christmas caroling through City Hall. By the end of the session our participants are able to write their name and start to learn numbers and letters to prepare them for Kindergarten. We continue to offer preschool dance and tumbling on Saturday mornings. This year we increased our participants by 13% with a total of 175. We had five Tap-Jazz-Ballet classes and six Tumbling classes. All the classes were full.



Our Friday Fun program that runs mid-June through mid-August for ages 3-6 saw another consistent year. Overall the total participation for summer was 373 participants. This year we implemented new themes such as Disney Junior Day and Mad Scientists. Due to parent's feedback, we will be increasing the age groups and combining the first two classes. We will



have a total of two classes, so siblings can be in classes together or take back to back classes without a gap in the middle.

	<u>Participants</u>
Little Learners	59
Teacher and Me	25
Tap-Ballet-Jazz	69
Tumbling	106
Friday Fun	373
Total	632

Youth Activities

Our youth open gym program at Ferber Elementary School returned in 2017 and had another strong year of attendance. This program ran from November 26, 2016 through March 4, 2017. Participation rose 15+% overall, and featured our largest attendance day on record with 110 participants on February 11. Our strong 2017 attendance led to the decision to add a second location for the 2017/2018 Open Gym season (McKinley Elementary).

KidStage is our partnership program for kids ages 5 – 12 who have an interest in theatre skills. This program continues to be very popular in the community. They experienced a 21% growth this year, but did experience some growing pains with it and will be capping their classes going forward to ensure the quality program we want to provide our participants with.



Camp APRD saw a huge increase (25%) this year over the previous year. We ran all 8 weeks of camp with 5 of them at capacity with waitlists. Since other summer programs were opening registration early, we decided to make ours open in January too. This along with new and exciting theme weeks made for a great camp experience for our participants! We also extended hours to 7:30-4:30 p.m. at no additional cost to parents, to help with schedules of working parents. Costs will be adjusted in 2018 to increase our cost recovery for added staff time.

Backyard Hackers continues to be a great partnership program for us. This is a computer based children's programming class for ages 6-9+. We ran 12 classes at the Scheig Center this summer with 5 of those full.

We continued our partnership with Michael Cotter to teach babysitting classes to the public for kids ages 10-14. We offered three classes in 2017, but unfortunately due to increased fees for Mr. Cotter, we are unable to continue this partnership.

Our Learn to Skateboard class continues to be a popular one for youth in the Fox Valley. Instruction is provided by members from the Surfin' Bird Skate Shop in downtown Appleton and is held at the Telulah Park Skate Park on Saturday mornings in July and August.

Our partner programs with Karate America's Karate Fun program continues to be a success with a growth of 37% over last year. This is a great way to introduce children to Karate plus they get a free uniform.

Unfortunately, we are still unable to find a Parkour Instructor. Wisconsin Parkour has no other instructor certified in the area outside of James. We have reached out to a new Warrior Jungle Gym that is opening in December in De Pere to see about a partnership with Parkour or Little Ninja classes. We will continue to look at other resources and to look for additional instructors.

This is the second year we ran our Urban Riders program for ages 8 – 12 that took place at Pierce Park. Our goal was to make it known that this was not a "learn to ride your bike" course but it was a great opportunity to have kids build confidence while learning how to navigate intersections, roadways and changing lanes properly.

The summer playground program wrapped up on Thursday, August 10. Final attendance for the summer was 10,435. This is down 10% from 2016. The reason for the change is we did not have Erb Park open this summer due to all the construction...which is one of our busiest sites for this program. We also did not have program on Tuesday, July 4th and decided to open only four sites on July 3rd due to the lack of staff available to work. So for 2017 we had 14 locations open at either park sites or school sites. Special events run by the playground staff this year included: ice cream social night, the kickball tournament, Oscar Day, wacky olympics, breakfast in the park, Mead pool play day, farewell swim and dance, and the king and queen gala. Our plan moving into 2018 is to eliminate Jaycee as a site due to the continued low attendance and hire an additional staff person for the Erb Park site as we are anticipating this being a largely attended site. This drop in program continues to be a staple in the City and provides a great opportunity to many children throughout the City at no cost.



	<u>Participants</u>
Open Gym	1,039
Backyard Hackers	127
Babysitter Class	63
KidStage	153
Karate	123
Camp APRD	208
Playground Program	10,435
Archery Instruction	25
Parkour	38- Two Spring Classes
Skateboard Instruction	31
Urban Riders	12
Total	12,254

Youth Sports Leagues/Camps

2017 was another year of strong growth for our youth sports leagues, as we observed significant growth in all programs. The youth basketball program continued its strong momentum, increasing participation levels by nearly 20% over 2016, with 424 children participating. There has been an enthusiastic turnout at the K through 2nd grade levels, as well as strong retention and modest growth in the 3rd-6th grade levels. We are starting to see the quality of play improve significantly at the 3rd – 6th grade levels, which we believe is due to these children reaping the benefits of starting their basketball experience at a younger age level, which only became available through our program in 2015.



Our youth baseball, softball and t-ball programs saw their 3rd consecutive summer of growth, as the program cracked the 800 player mark for the first time since adopting an evening league format. Overall, the league grew by 7% over 2016 numbers, finishing at 806 participants (compared with 755 in 2016). T-Ball participation was particularly strong this year, with 290 children registered. This establishes a very strong foundation for future years, as we have seen a high level of program satisfaction and program retention, thanks to the implementation of a high quality curriculum at all levels, and a growing positive reputation in the region.

The Fall Youth Soccer League experienced its 3rd consecutive year of program growth, increasing to 905 participants in 2017, up from 886 in 2016. Our collaboration with the Challenger British Soccer Academy entered its 4th year, and continued to pay dividends in the way we prepare coaches and develop our players in our youngest age levels. We continue to see strong, predictable skill development in our younger age groups, and this development is starting to exhibit itself in the quality of play at the higher levels as well, as our participants age into the more advanced age groups. We've experienced a high level of program loyalty, and strong conviction amongst players, coaches, parents and spectators to our stated program values.

Youth Flag Football numbers were consistent with 2016 numbers only dropping three participants. Kickball numbers have dropped decreasing 30 participants from 2016. We will be spending time in the off-season determining if the youth kickball league is a program we want to continue or if we would like to expend our time and budget towards another youth sports effort.

New for the summer of 2017 was a youth lacrosse camp that was taught by members of the Appleton United Lacrosse Club coaches and players. The camp ran June 5 – July 10 at the Hoover Park soccer field for both boys and girls ages 6-9. In the first year, we had 15 participants out of a class max of 20. Sticks and practice “Swax Lax” balls were provided by Appleton United as well as all instruction. Kids practiced scooping, throwing, and catching the ball, basic rules of the game, as well as communication skills and shooting. This is the beginning of another partnership program and community relationship in the Fox Valley.





The 2017 youth sports camps had some mixed results in 2017, with some notable success stories, and some setbacks. Our youth tennis programming experienced some significant declines. Our Youth Tennis Camp for kids 8-14 experienced a 20% participation drop from 2016, and our Little Hitters program for 4-7 year olds saw a 5% drop. We believe the loss of Erb Park for tennis programming in the summer had a significant effect on program numbers, due to the number of families who attempt to consolidate program registrations (tennis & swim lessons, for example). We expect to see a recovery with tennis numbers as we migrate back to Erb in 2018. A youth tennis success story was the launch of our Junior Team Tennis league, which officially replaced our open Friday Match Play opportunity. This Junior Team

Tennis program, in collaboration with the Wisconsin chapter of the USTA, provided a more formal, team based format that successfully combined a variety of skill levels onto teams that competed weekly. This format helped generate more commitment and more reliable attendance each week, which contributed greatly to the overall experience for our participants.

Our Intro Golf Camp experienced significant growth, thanks to an expanded number of class options for families to choose from. This helped relieve the wait lists we experienced in 2016, and better satisfy program demand. This year's program served 116 participants, up from 72 in 2016. We believe this program will continue to show promise for more growth as awareness of the program continues to build. We also believe it will continue to feed some of the youth golf lessons and leagues being offered by Reid Golf Course.

Our youth baseball camps and youth soccer camps experienced significant declines in 2017, each by about 8%. With significant growth in the youngest age groups of our youth t-ball and youth soccer leagues, it's reasonable to assume that some of the decline can be explained by families choosing the league option over the camp option. The loss of Erb Park as a location for sports camps also prevented families from bundling their summer activity registrations, thus further exaggerating the decline. With prolonged declines in youth baseball camp participation, we have decided to convert this camp to an intro basketball camp in 2018, in the hopes that this will provide a summer basketball option we have been lacking.

Our Sports Exploration Camp for 3-5 year olds, on the other hand, once again filled to capacity in 2017, a sign that demand is still strong amongst families looking to give their young children opportunities to develop their motor skills and explore their interests.

Challenger British Soccer Academy once again hosted 2 week long youth soccer camps in 2017, one in mid-July, and the other in mid-August. Combined, these camps hosted 65 participants, a slight decline from 2016. We are continuing to evaluate the viability of offering 2 Challenger camps in the summer.

Our biggest success story of the summer camp season was the first annual Milwaukee Bucks Youth Basketball Camp. This camp sold out at 150 participants, which made the Appleton camp the largest attended Bucks Camp in the state of Wisconsin (out of 25 other locations / camps). The Bucks were obviously thrilled with the turnout and pulled out all the stops to make sure that this camp was memorable for the kids involved, and to help create momentum for next year. This

included an enthusiastic, skilled coaching staff, as well as appearances from the Rim Rockers acrobatics team, Bango, and an appearance from former Bucks player Fred Roberts, who participated with and gave a motivational speech to the kids.

	<u>Participants</u>
Youth Basketball Leagues	424
Youth Baseball, SB, T-Ball	806
Kickball League	65
Soccer League	905
Flag Football League	190
Youth Tennis Camp	166
Lacrosse Camp	15
Little Hitters Tennis Camp	132
Youth Baseball Camp	71
Youth Soccer Camp	138
Sports Exploration Camp	60
SNAG Golf Camp	116
Challenger Soccer Camp	65
Total	3,153

Teens

In September of 2017, we successfully launched our newest teen program, Teen Core, which was the result of a focused planning process that began in the spring of 2017. Teen Core, in concept, is designed to be a year round set of programs, including leagues, events, and learn to play opportunities. This particular program was designed as a pilot program to introduce the concept to a group of participants we hope will make up a consistent, core group. This 4 week pilot program highlighted a different activity / sport each week, and offered a post-game meal. We hosted 16 participants, and the enthusiasm each child and family had during this program makes us very enthusiastic about future offerings.



In 2017 we had 14 individuals apply and get accepted into our Junior Leader Program which is a program 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 was up by one participant from 2016.

	<u>Participants</u>
Teen Core	16
Junior Leader Program	14
Total	30

Adult Activities

Our adult dance classes have gone through several changes in 2017. Our Belly Dance Instructor left UDA and became a partner for us for adult classes. Our tap instructor from the past couple years took a job in another state and we had to find a new instructor, which was not easy. Our numbers are low due to cancelling the first session and trying to grow the class with a new instructor. We are working on building up our adult dance classes for 2018.

The Spanish classes continue to grow in popularity and this year experienced a 33% increase. We offer three levels and see participants wanting to continue to expand their skills.

Our continued Mindfulness series with Joy Jordan has been a huge hit and she is expanding her class offerings, including a new Mindfulness for the Holidays. The Mindfulness classes include formal instruction on meditation, current mindfulness practices and working through how to control difficult emotions.

Our adult tennis lesson participation was down slightly in 2017, serving 48 participants, down from 54 in 2016.

Our continued partnership with Debbie Daanen Photography to offer adult photography classes has been a great addition to our program line-up for adult enrichment. This is our third year offering the class and it was just about to capacity.

	<u>Participants</u>
Belly Dance	<i>0-New Partnership</i>
Tap Dance	8
Spanish	134
Mindfulness	117
Tennis Lessons	48
Photography	17
Total	324



Adult Sports Leagues



Our adult flag football league was down three teams from 2016 and ended with a total of 18 teams. Each team had a roster of about 10-15 people totaling approximately 225 participants (down 21% from 2016). The season consisted of a five-game regular season with a single elimination tournament to crown the champion. Games are played on Wednesday evenings at Appleton Memorial Park beginning in early September and concluding in late October. We ended up cutting one division this year as we did not have the staff to ref 3 fields. It has been

getting harder and harder to secure quality refs for these leagues as the pay is low and the level of stress with these games is pretty high.

The Adult Tennis League took a big step back in 2017. After strong program growth in 2016, combined with some significant registration and scheduling improvements, we were surprised by the lack of enthusiasm for the program this year. The league was down almost 50% from

2016, with only 19 participants joining the program. Most of the new participants we acquired in 2016 did not return in 2017, which is troubling because it indicates the league in general did not provide a positive experience for its participants. With fewer participants, matching up people of similar ability for healthy competition proved difficult, and the high maintenance nature of program made up of individual competitors is forcing us to strongly re-consider if we should offer a competitive tennis program in 2018, or put our attention elsewhere.

	<u>Participants</u>
Adult Flag Football	225
Adult Tennis League	19
Total	244

Aquatics

2017 was an exciting time for Appleton Parks and Recreation as we unveiled a brand new aquatic facility at Erb Park on July 12, 2017. A grand opening / ribbon cutting ceremony was held at the pool with members from Appleton Common Council, Miron Construction, Appleton Parks, Recreation and Facilities Management Department, and Mayor Hanna in attendance. Members from the community lined up for the ceremony as well as the opportunity to be the first ones to go swimming in the pool. In addition to opening a new aquatic facility, Appleton Parks and Recreation also regained management of our concession stands at the pools making it the first time in over 10 years that this happened.



Our swim lesson program continues to be one of our department's most popular recreational offering as 2,406 participants enrolled in our learn to swim program in 2017. This number would have been even greater if we hadn't missed two earlier sessions of lessons at Erb Pool due to construction. Some program highlights include a record 729 participants at Mead Pool, the most we have ever seen enroll at Mead Pool. It also was the beginning of a new era of lessons at Erb Pool with 687 people registering for lessons at the always popular location. Our swim lesson enrollment fees increased \$5 which gave our revenues a boost of \$12,030 in 2017. We offered one session of swim lessons at West Pool this summer to provide employees an opportunity to work while Erb Pool was being built which is something that we normally do not provide. Attendance was pretty low during this session which further supports only having 1 location for indoor lessons during the summer time (East High School).



	<u>Participants</u>
East Swim Lessons	533
Erb Pool Lessons	687
Mead Lessons	729
West Pool Lessons	457
Total	2,406

2017 was definitely a memorable year as we open the new Erb and the community responded in a big way. We had over 42,000 people come check out what everyone was talking about, 22,000+ patron increase from the old Erb Pool just one year ago and approximately 35 days less time to do it. Erb Pool even had more people than Mead Pool, which was open by early June this summer. Over all, we had our best year ever as an open swim facility bringing in 86,600 patrons.

	<u>Participants</u>
Erb Pool Open/Lap Swim	42,277
Mead Pool Open/Lap Swim	41,644
West Pool Open/Lap Swim	2,679
Total	86,600

Appleton Parks and Recreation also offers some non-traditional aquatic programming for youth, adults, and even dogs at our indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities in 2017. We teamed up with North East Wisconsin Paddlers to offer a Kayak Skills class at the new Erb Pool, the Fox Valley Rowing Club offered a rowing class at the Telulah Park Boat Launch, and we partnered with Mountain Bay Scuba to offer Snorkeling and Scuba classes at Erb Pool.



	<u>Participants</u>
Kayak Skills Class	11
Recreational Rowing	19
Snorkeling	20
Discover Scuba	19
Total	69

Pool Rentals

With the construction of a new pool, we added birthday party packages and private rentals at Erb Pool much like we have in place at Mead. We had 32 private / birthday party rentals at Erb Pool and 27 rentals at Mead Pool in 2017 generating \$10,574 in revenues. In 2018 we will be focusing on how to continue promoting private rentals at the pools, especially with the addition of the Cabana and Oasis areas at the new Erb Pool.

Aquatic Special Events

We did not offer as many special events at our pools this year as we concentrated more on opening a new facility as well as two new concession stands. We will bring back some events in 2018 to make the pools the place to be this summer.



	<u>Participants</u>
Winter Water Carnival	89
Spring Fling	61
Splash Bash	67
Free Day – Erb	643
Free Day – Mead	178
Doggie Day at the Pool	65
Log Rolling	100
Total	1,203

Swim Passes

In 2017, we sold a total of 395 swim passes. Swim Passes are good for use at Erb, Mead, and West Pools throughout the year. In addition to swim passes, we also sold 252 swim punch cards which generated \$3,176 in revenue. These punch cards provided the user 12 swim admissions good for Erb, Mead, and West Pools as well.

Pool Concessions

Another new development in 2017 was the operation and management of concession stands at Erb and Mead Pools. This was a huge undertaking as we had to plan for new staff, renovation of Mead concession stand, a new point of sale system at Erb, getting prices from vendors, setting up equipment, etc. Our concession stands made \$10,122 in gross revenue, but we will aim to make even more of a profit next summer by creating efficiencies in staffing, ordering, and slight price increases.

Erb Pool – Expenses - \$33,228 / Revenues - \$43,208 = \$9,980

Mead Pool – Expenses - \$38,001 / Revenues - \$38,446 = \$445

Fitness and Wellness

Fitness is an area that we continue to look at trends and figure out what participants are looking for. One hot trend right now is Ballet Barre that we decided to give a try. We offered a class through one of our UDA Instructors. Our Yoga classes at the Scheig Center continue to be a hit. We added a class and then lost an instructor, then hired a new one. Our Zumba classes continue to be popular with a 30% growth, but had an instructor step away due to a pregnancy and could not find someone to take the class in her absence. We renamed Bootcamp to Body 360 and have 12 enrolled for the winter session. The class did go down to one day, due to lack of studio space. Unity Dance academy continues to grow, which forces fitness to take a step back. We have overall seen great growth in our fitness programs that have solid instructors.



During the third quarter we wrapped up our partnership with Empower Yoga to provide yoga in the park on Wednesday evenings at City Park. This program is extremely successful attracting

approximately 200-300 participants per week.

In partnership with the City of Appleton's Fire Department we held a second workout in our series (first one was with the S.W.A.T team) on Saturday, July 15. This was another successful partnership. The participants loved the event and the Fire Department staff did a fantastic job putting this together and are excited about working with us on future programs.



(It is important to note that in the past our older adult fitness programs were drop-in format so participants were counted each time they came to class. Now that we require registration for programs the total participants the numbers will appear less because of this.)

	<u>Participants</u>
Zumba	87
Bootcamp/Strength	93
Yoga	164
Ballet Barre	15
Fleet Feet Running programs	1
Yoga in the park	3,000
Police/S.W.A.T.	40
Older Adult Exercise classes	212 (winter) was a drop in program
	198- Registrations
Total	3,810

Unity Dance Academy

The annual Unity Dance Academy recital was held at Xavier High School in March where the theme was "The 80's". Just over 550 registrants from 48 classes participated in the recital. Four recitals were held: Friday 6:00 p.m. for Intermediate and Advanced students, Saturday 10:00 a.m. was Beginner and Intermediate, Saturday at 1:00 p.m. was for Beginner and Advanced and Saturday 4:00 p.m. was for Intermediate and advanced. Ticket sales were done through showclix.com. There were 2,312 total tickets sold which was a 77% sell through. Five family and 3 business advertisements were sold to offset the price of the program booklet for the show.



Staff worked very hard to put on these performances and it showed by the huge success we had throughout that weekend. This summer, UDA participated in Children's Week by putting on Dance-O-Rama. This was a day long event that kids could try different styles of dance at no cost. On November 21st Unity was invited to participate in the annual Christmas Parade. We had 99 participants march along with 5 instructors and several volunteer parents. In all 2017 dance and acrobatic programs there was a total of 725 participants.

Special Events/Trips

Our Movie on the Hill series had a tough year with the weather. Our first two events which were June 22 (Sing) and July 7 (Secret Life of Pets) saw poor weather. Our July 20 movie (Star Wars:



Rogue One) was the first movie we had decent weather for. Despite the good weather numbers still seemed down from the normal attendance. This could be in part to the extreme heat we had or the fact that the movie was PG-13. Our August 11 (Finding Dory) movie event saw more normal attendance with approximately 300 people in attendance. Along with the movies we also provide the Open Canoe program for families to take advantage of. For the season we had 16 adults participate in open canoe and 40 youth.

The Children's Week Proclamation was presented by Dean Gazza at the July 5th Council meeting. Children's Week took place July 23 – 29 which is our largest special event of the year. We partnered with 25 businesses/organizations within the community to put this event on. Thousands of youth were able to come out and participate in events such as free day at the pools, free day at the YMCA, the Children's Parade (which was rained out so transferred into a party at the Building for Kids), the Playground Fair, and many more. This year we also added a Children's Week Kick-Off party at the new Erb Pool where we were able to do children's games, family games, have a DJ, and provide contests and give-aways.

The Fifth Annual Kids Rummage Sale was held at Pierce Park on Monday, July 24. We had another maximum 34 vendor tables at the event and a beautiful day. All vendors had the option to donate items at the end of the day and we ended up donating a full truck bed full of used toys, games, clothes, and many other items!



The Kid's Fun Runs had an unusual year as we ended up having to cancel two of the four events due to heavy rain. With the two runs that did take place we saw a 15% increase in participation, with an average race attendance of 200 (an increase of 30 participants per event over 2016). Our partnership with Fleet Feet Sports continues to produce an engaging event that consistently generates great public response. Adding in the theme runs, such as wear superhero costumes was a big hit!

We expanded our adult bus trips and went to Door County on October 13 for the annual Fall Festival and to view the fall foliage. We received great feedback on the trip. Our Chicago trip we run for adults was once again at capacity with a waitlist. We are very excited to add a spring Chicago trip due to overwhelming feedback from participants for 2018.

Parents Night Out was a hit with parents but we learned we need to remind parents of the event since they register so early in advance. We had some not show up as they forgot.

Santa calling numbers increased by 28%, due to our increased awareness with the sign and marketing on Facebook. It worked well to have it only on one night, instead of two.

	<u>Participants</u>
Kid's Fun Runs	758
Parent's Night Out	19
Santa Calling	250
Bike Rodeos	78
Kids Rummage Sale	34 vendors
Movie on the Hill/Canoe	406
Appleton Children's Parade	2500
Playground Fair	4000
Door County Trip	44
Chicago Trip	100
Total	8,189



Facilities

Scheig Center

83 rentals took place at the Scheig Center in 2017 which is a 15% increase. It would have been more, but was less due to the construction of the brick pavers the building was closed for part of May. The Scheig Center and gardens continues to be a great place for bridal/baby showers, anniversary parties, graduations, and weddings. The Recreation Division has also continued their use of the Scheig Center by offering programs on-site such as fitness classes like yoga, Zumba®, Mindfulness, Small Group Training, Backyard Hackers – STEM based program, and photography classes. Internal groups have started to use the Scheig Center on a regular basis including the Human Resources Department, the Health Department, Finance and the Library. Once a month the Friends of the Gardens meets to have their volunteer meeting and held their first Volunteer Appreciation Celebration that the City was invited to.

Winter Recreation Facilities – Opened December 23, 2016 and closed February 12, 2017

We utilized 3 locations in 2016-2017 for our winter recreation centers; Reid Golf Course, Appleton Memorial Park, and Pierce Park. We had a pretty poor winter weather-wise with virtually no significant snow fall and very mild temperatures making it difficult to get a solid ice rink or provide sledding/skiing opportunities for outdoor enthusiast in Appleton

We only had a total of 818 recorded participants utilize our facilities this past year. A new warming shelter / concession stand at Pierce Park was somewhat successful, but it was not an ideal location for this type of activity. The ice rink under the pavilion quickly became a local favorite and received a lot of positive feedback from our community. We decided to bring it back again this winter and we made some upgrades to the hockey rink to help it hold water a little more efficiently. We have decided to not open Appleton Memorial Park in 2017-2018 because of it's remote location and small attendance. New in 2017-2018 is the operation of a new sledding hill and ice rink at Erb Park along with full concessions and warming area. The end of 2017 was bitterly cold without a lot of snowfall, but people seemed to be enjoying / using the facility.



The new recreational skating rink under the pavilion at Pierce Park opened for the 2016-2017 season and was a huge hit!

2017 Program Participants:

Program Category	Participants
Pre-School/Early Childhood	632
Youth Activities	12,254
Youth Sports Leagues/Camps	3,153
Teens	30
Adult Activities	324
Adult Sports Leagues	244
Swim Lessons	2,406
Open Swim	86,600
Aquatics programs/events	1,272
Fitness/Wellness	3,810
Unity Dance Academy	725
Special Events/Trips	8,189
Winter Recreation Facilities	818
Total:	120,457



Volunteer Numbers

Youth Basketball	64	Coaches for leagues
Youth Baseball	108	Coaches for leagues
Youth Flag Football	27	Coaches for leagues
Youth Kickball	8	Coaches for leagues
Youth Soccer	104	Coaches for leagues
Unity Dance Recital	24	Ushers, backstage volunteers
Playground Fair	38	Volunteers to help with games/inflatables
Junior Leader Program	14	Volunteer at Playground sites during summer program
Total	387	

Sponsorships/Donations

Donations:

In 2017 we once again invited businesses/organizations to support the families of the Fox Cities by sponsoring Appleton Children's Week. Funds raised through sponsorship efforts benefited The Building for Kids, Appleton Parks and Recreation and the Appleton YMCA. This year our portion of the proceeds totaled \$5,000. Other items were donated to be used as prizes/raffles as well.

Once again, the Community First Fox Cities Marathon awarded us a grant in the amount of \$1,000 for use towards Appleton Kid's Fun Runs to continue to promote healthy options of fun and fitness to families in our community.

Two anonymous Appleton residents donated youth league player fees to cover the entry fee of any player in need, who did not qualify for a fee waiver. The total contribution was approximately \$100, but indicates an opportunity we may want to explore further as we consider the future of our fee waiver policy and marketing effort.

Community Partnerships / Community Outreach

Community Partnerships:

- Partnered with Empower Yoga to offer free yoga in the park at City Park for 15 weeks beginning in late spring and running through the summer. This was an awesome opportunity to showcase our park and provide a free wellness option to those in our community.
- Fleet Feet Sports – we continue to partner with Fleet Feet Sports, Community First Fox Cities Marathon, Orthopedic Sports Institute of the Fox Valley, and Mom's Run this Town on the Appleton Kids Fun Runs. We averaged 200 kids per fun run.
- Partnered with the Northeast Stormwater Consortium to provide educational programming for our Camp APRD program.
- Camp APRD partnered with the Forestry Division to have them come out once a week to do demonstrations about tree climbing etc. The kids even get harnessed up and get the chance to climb a tree.
- New partnership with the Milwaukee Bucks to provide a one-week youth basketball camp during the summer of 2017 to the Appleton community. Camp was well attended, selling out at 150 participants.
- Continued partnership with 95.3 WSCO radio station to host a quarterly in-studio conversation to discuss youth sports topics and events. Late in 2017, this relationship evolved into a monthly in-studio appearance with WHBY on the show HBY Sports Night.
- Partnered with the United States Tennis Association to structure and launch a Junior Team Tennis league program, which replaces our Friday Open Match Play.



- Partnered with the Boy Scouts to provide activities for our playground program sites once a week. This year they had a new format where they focused more on STEM based learning.
- Partnered with the Building for Kids and the Appleton YMCA to host the 8th annual Children's Week. This year we added a new kick-off party that took place at Erb Pool as well as a brand new website that was launched for the event: www.appletonchildrensweek.com.
- Partnered with the Library to get books in our playground program sites for kids to check out and bring back (similar concept to free little library). This helped keep kids reading throughout the summer.
- Once again we partnered with the Appleton Public Library on their summer reading program. We developed some "missions" for the readers to complete that incorporate either our parks or programs.
- Partnered with the Police Department to provide a presentation for summer Playground Leaders on creating a safe environment for our participants and what to look for at their park that might be suspicious behavior.
- Partnered with Xcel Sports to provide soccer fields for our Challenger Soccer Camps taking place in July and August.
- Partnered with British Challenger Soccer to host two soccer camps, one July 24 – 28 and the second one August 14 – 18. Camps were for ages 3 – 16.
- Engaged in initial conversations with the Head Basketball Coach for UW – Fox Valley in regards to giving our APRD basketball teams the opportunity to play on the court of in-season home games during halftime, to increase visibility of the APRD basketball program.
- We partnered with the Appleton Library to assist them with their Summer Reading Program. We provided Sonja Rusch, Outreach Specialist, space at Erb Pool every Thursday and Mead Pool every Monday to read stories to kids at the pool.
- Worked with Appleton Police Department, Gold Cross, And Appleton Fire Department to provide Emergency Procedures Training at Erb and Mead Pools.
- Continue work with Neenah and Menasha Parks and Recreation Departments and the Y of Fox Cities for the annual senior games which was held at Pierce Park this year. This group meets monthly in preparation for this event. There were over 150 in attendance at this year's event.
- Partnered with Even Start Literacy / Fox Valley Technical College to offer swim lessons for minorities at Erb Pool.
- Work with 3 local swim teams to host swim team practices at Erb Pool throughout the summer.
- Partnered with Debbie Daanen Photography to provide a Fundamentals of Photography class for the third year in a row. The class was close to capacity with 17 participants.
- In partnership with Mike Cotter we had 31 students registered for our Babysitting Training Course that took place at the Scheig Center.
- A continued partnership with Backyard Hackers where kids ages 5-14 sign up to learn about code by coding, scratch, app creation, Minecraft (computer programming type programs) started this summer.
- Our partnership fitness classes we run with Karate America East including Kickboxing and DDP Yoga continue to run. The numbers have been fairly low. The good thing is they combine our registration with registration they take on-site and the classes always run.
- New partnership with Appleton United Lacrosse Club to offer a youth lacrosse camp.
- Our Karate Fun Classes that we partner with Karate America on had good registration. This is a fairly easy program for us to manage as they provide all the instruction and uniforms for the participants and we manage registration and marketing.

- Partnered with Wisconsin Parkour for our first spring class, but then discontinued classes. We continue to look at other options to add Parkour back to our class offerings.
- Our partnership with Mountain Bay Scuba to run our Snorkeling and Discover Scuba classes continue to be successful. Participation numbers doubled in both classes in 2017.
- Partnered with the Fox Valley Rowing Club to provide Recreational Rowing classes for ages 15 and up.
- We developed a new partnership with Edward Jones to provide a series of financial planning classes for adults. The classes were free and were offered in July. Unfortunately we did not get enough attendance to run the classes so we will be exploring new ways to market the classes.
- In partnership with Surfin Bird Skate Shop, we offered skateboarding lessons for ages 6-17 at the Telulah Skate Park.
- Partnered with Joy Born to offer Mindfulness classes. Classes have been so successful that we are now offering a Mindfulness 101 and a Mindfulness 201.
- We started a new partnership to offer fitness classes to the city through the S.W.A.T. Team and Fire Fighters. This was a huge hit and was full with 20 participants at each class. We plan to add an additional class of each in 2018.
- We added small group training classes with Collett Performance with Margaret Collett this summer. Her classes were full with 12 participants for the first session and opened up two additional spots for the second session for a total of 14 participants.
- A new children's program was Yoga for Kids with a certified yoga instructor, Nancy Harrington. Nancy offered weekly sessions, summer camps and a PJ party.
- We completed a new four year agreement with Fox Cities Adult Athletics to continue providing the adult softball services at Appleton Memorial Park.

Community Outreach:

- On Sunday, January 29 we had staff present at the Go Valley Kids Expos that took place at Appleton North High School. We were on hand to talk about our programs/services we offer. They had over 1,500 in attendance.
- Tuesday, March 14 Niki attended the Fox Valley Lutheran High School Career Fair. This is an opportunity for sophomores and juniors to talk to professionals about what it takes to be in their profession. Students were able to ask questions of the professionals regarding our schooling, experience prior to receiving our job, what is a typical day in our job, salary range for our position, etc.
- April 25 staff attended a summer school registration kick-off at Kaleidoscope Middle School.
- Recreation staff was present at the Fox Cities Kidz Expo event on Saturday, April 8th from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. that was held at Fox Valley Technical College and was put on by the Appleton-Fox Cities Kiwanis. They estimated there was approximately 3,000 in attendance for the event.
- We attended the Health Fair at Johnston Elementary on April 18 where we provided information to the public about upcoming programs, parks, and distributed Appleton City Guides.
- Participated in the Great Pumpkin Halloween Event at Country Inn and Suites for families with children with special needs.



- Attended and had a booth to distribute information at the Sierra Club's Earth Day Event at Telulah Park on Saturday, April 22.
- Attended a community day at Columbus Elementary School in April to talk with school families about upcoming programming opportunities for children.
- Nate had initial conversations with representatives of Outagamie County Youth & Family Services, to explore opportunities for teens in their care to engage in programming opportunities and volunteering opportunities.
- Attended a Boys & Girls Club Career Day in September, giving teens an opportunity to talk with him about his career path, ask questions, and explore seasonal job opportunities that they could take advantage of.
- Kabel Helmbrecht and members of his aquatic staff represented the City of Appleton on the Miron Construction Float during the annual Flag Day Parade on June 10. The float was a huge hit and promoted the grand opening of Erb Pool on July 10.



The float from the Flag Day Parade.

Marketing Highlights

- Our new digital display sign went up in Appleton Memorial Park by the Ballard Rd. entrance. Julie, Nate and I were all trained by Watchfire on how to create messages for the sign. So far it has been easy to manage and we have received positive comments on the sign.
- We decided to no longer advertise in the Great Valley Guide that is distributed but instead to use that money to do targeted marketing with Go Valley Kids. So far this has been a success in terms of the number of people seeing the information. Their owner who has a background in graphic design even offered to design our flyer for Children's Week.
- Our social media calendar was created by Julie and refined by staff. We used this calendar as a guideline for our social media outlets (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) regarding what to post and when to avoid overlay of advertising within our division.
- We welcomed Stellar Blue Technology back on March 28th for a training on our current marketing practices and to gain insight into where social media marketing is headed.
- Was able to secure the cover photo spot for the City Guide which featured a photo from the youth soccer league.
- Our Facebook page reached our 5,000th like on Sunday, March 5. We did a campaign for people to share our post and encourage their friends to join our page so we could get to the 5,000 mark. We ended up giving away a family swim pass for the person who was the 5,000th like.
- A Spring Break activity flyer was created that promoted the activities taking place over the spring break timeframe. 100 color copies of the flyer were printed to set out at West Pool and Customer Service. The flyer was also posted to our website and Facebook pages.
- Julie created a video through her class at the Tech that showed the different ways to register for a program. The video has been shared on the website and Facebook page.



- Printed 3,000 full color sports league/camp flyers, distributed to the Appleton Area School District offices, private schools, pick up sites, sporting goods stores and customer service areas in the City.
- Renewed our relationship with WSCO “The Score” radio for quarterly advertisements to promote our youth sports programs, and provide a quarterly in-studio opportunity to discuss current youth sports topics and expand the reach of our youth sports philosophy.
- Utilized “Youth Sports Tuesdays” to leverage our social media presence (primarily Facebook) to highlight engaging youth sports topics, promote program philosophy and advertise registration opportunities for upcoming programs.
- We successfully launched our Children’s Week website. Because there are three beneficiaries to Children’s Week which includes the Appleton Parks and Recreation, the Appleton YMCA and the Building for Kids...we all had information on our individual websites. Our Children’s Week committee decided it was time to consolidate all information to one channel. The website looks amazing and will be a useful tool for individuals seeking information about the event.
www.appletonchildrensweek.com
- Kabel appeared on Good Day Wisconsin to promote the opening of Erb Pool.
- Dean and Niki met with the Mayor and Chad to discuss the future of the City Guide. New ideas were tossed around for the future direction so we are excited to see where that leads.
- Worked with HR on the development of a 15 second commercial to promote City of Appleton seasonal positions. The commercial will run for 4 weeks starting the week of February 20. We were able to use the video on our Facebook page to help promote open positions.

Other Notable Accomplishments/Areas of Interest

- We held our first ever Job Fair on Thursday, January 5, 2017 at the Scheig Center from 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. There were a total of 39 attendees total. Greg, Kabel, Nate, Jeff and I were all on hand to talk with attendees about job opportunities, brief descriptions of the position and also conduct short face to face interviews. Many of the attendees were in high school (14 – 17 years of age). Staff agreed that there was a benefit to holding the job fair so we will continue to do this in the future.
- We worked with Pfefferle on completing a new lease for the studio space in City Center Plaza. The lease now includes Studio 3 and the large waiting room which used to be under a month to month agreement.
- APRD was awarded a \$5,000 Level III grant from the United States Tennis Association for the reconstruction of the Colony Oaks tennis courts, the result of a 12 month grant application and technical review process and collaboration between the Recreation Programmer and Grounds Manager.
- Worked with the leaders of Appleton Little League to create a joint 2017 field use strategy that enables each organization to accommodate growth with limited, fixed space available.
- The Pre-Tournament Checklist for all tournament users at Appleton Memorial Park was revised. This checklist gathered information such as base distance, mound length, fencing, and scoreboard operations just to name a few. This has been very beneficial for both the users and Grounds Crew to help them prepare for tournaments ahead of time. During the months of April-June, we have coordinated 15 large tournaments at Appleton Memorial Park.

- In September, Nate attended a seminar hosted by Neenah High School, featuring speaker John O'Sullivan, founder of Changing the Game Project. Nate had an opportunity to share success stories with John about the adoption and implementation of many of their concepts and strategies within the Appleton Parks & Recreation youth sports programs, and was asked to provide data and commentary to assist John with a current project about the organization impact on youth sports participation. This report was provided to John in October, and was very well received. He is hoping to include anecdotes about APRD's program in his upcoming project, and has teased the idea of having Nate discuss this in more detail on an upcoming national podcast.
- Revised Pool Rental Policy and Aquatic Fees policy in 2017.
- Developed new Aquatic Special Events Policy to manage swim meets at Erb Pool in 2017.
- Revised Athletic Field Reservation Policy to help more efficiently manage our athletic fields and ball diamonds in 2017.
- Installed and operated a new point of sale software program for concessions operations at Erb Pool. This same system will be installed at Mead Pool in 2018.

Fee Waiver Numbers:

In 2017 we had a total of 185 programs/class registrations that were discounted to a total cost of \$5,030. There were also 280 total pool coupons and 7 family pool passes given on the fee waiver program for a total discount of \$8,414.

Total discount for 2017 = \$13,444. This is a 46% increase from 2016.

