

# RECREATION

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020





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# WE ARE RECREATION

The Recreation Department provides Wheaton Park District residents and nonresidents with a wide variety of programs, events, trips and services year-round. Individuals of all ages, abilities and interests are considered when developing programs with the goal of providing opportunities for everyone to live their best lives.



This dynamic team of ten full-time staff have over 130 years of combined service at the Wheaton Park District. During a global pandemic, we have created new and innovative programs for the community, along with modifying long-time community favorites.

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**CRISTIN HANDLON CPRP**, CREATIVE ARTS & VARIED INTEREST SUPERVISOR

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**MEGANN PANEK**, MARY LUBKO CENTER MANAGER

**SUE VASILEV**, REGISTRATION MANAGER

**MATTHEW WROBEL**, ADULT EDUCATION & RECREATION SUPERVISOR

Let us help you discover new adventures,  
reach your goals, increase your knowledge  
and most of all, have fun doing it!

# ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT

The Wheaton Park District Recreation Department is comprised of nine business units which offer comprehensive year-round programs for all age groups and interests at a number of facilities throughout the Wheaton Park District.

## Mission Statement

To aspire to provide programs, events and services that reach all age groups and interests and align with our vision, values and community feedback.

## Vision Statement

We, the Recreation Department Team, commit to improving our programming reach, balance, and frequency of use in ways that benefit, encourage and promote lifelong leisure.

### Recreation 2020 Rallying Cry "How Can I Help?"

The Recreation Department truly embodied team spirit this year with each member willing to step in and get the job done wherever needed. Offices were relocated and staff shifted their schedules to fill the gaps caused by our reduced staff.

### 10 full time staff members took on the following NEW responsibilities:

- Community Center facility scheduling for internal programs and meetings and external rentals
- Community Center Front Desk Attendant shifts, assisting with desk operations during busy times
- Handling all administrative, education and operation tasks at Lincoln Marsh
- Subbing in Preschool classrooms
- Special Events for various departments
- Site supervising at the Central Athletic Complex
- Handling all administrative and operation tasks (including daily cleaning) at the Mary Lubko Center
- Travel Coordinator duties at the Mary Lubko Center included cancelling/rescheduling day trips and working with extended travel companies and patrons
- Custodial duties at the Community Center for summer camp which included cleaning bathrooms, mopping the hallways and taking out the trash
- Camp supervision

- ADULT EDUCATION
- CAMPS
- COMMUNITY CENTER
- CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS
- LINCOLN MARSH ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

- LINCOLN MARSH CHALLENGE COURSE
- MARY LUBKO CENTER
- PRESCHOOL & EARLY CHILDHOOD
- VARIED INTEREST



# BENEFITS OF RECREATION

The Wheaton Park District Recreation Department offers a wide variety of programs, events and services that align with the National Recreation & Park Association's three pillars:

## HEALTH & WELLNESS

- Provide opportunities for group, partner and personal development
- Positively impact social, emotional, intellectual and physical well-being
- Expand knowledge, explore new interests and develop new hobbies



## CONSERVATION

- Outdoor programs and activities further appreciation for the natural world
- Promote the "reduce, reuse & recycle" initiative
- Provide valuable community benefits including storm water storage, water quality improvement and wildlife habitat



## SOCIAL EQUALITY

- Provide opportunities to interact cooperatively with people from diverse backgrounds and abilities
- Equal fun for everyone!
- Promote community engagement by building self-esteem and establishing friendships



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Wheaton Park District Recreation Department continually strives to provide the community with the highest quality programs and services. 2020 highlights are listed below:

## Committee Involvement

- The Green Team
- Health and Wellness
- V.A.L.U.E.S
- Safety committee



## Certification & Accreditation

- Daytime Community Center Manager obtained CPRP (Certified Park & Recreation Professional) certification
- Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor renewed her Medic First Aid CPR/AED Instructor certification
- Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor and Preschool and Camps Manager maintained and renewed CPRP certification
- Preschool and Camps Manager maintained and renewed American Camp Association accreditation status
- Adult Education & Recreation Supervisor received Medic First Aid CPR/AED Instructor certification for Infant, Child and Adult
- Adult Education & Recreation Supervisor was certified as an Esports Program Director

## Professional Development

- Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor was selected as NRPA Revenue Development and Management School Extern
- Lincoln Marsh Program Assistant and Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor presented at the IPRA conference
- Conference attendance: Illinois Park & Recreation Association
- Additional trainings completed: PDRMA online, Cyber Security, VSI 3.1 Rec Trac





# ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONTINUED

## Wheaton Park District Event Involvement

- Environmental Education Supervisor designed and hosted a golf hole at the Mad-For-Plaid Mini Golf event benefiting the DuPage County Historical Museum Foundation and Wheaton Public Library
- Staff served/played an integral role in the Children's activity tent at Ice-A-Palooza

## Community Involvement

- Adult Education and Recreation Supervisor is a member of IMPACT WHEATON (Igniting Meaningful Partnerships and Activities for our Communities Teens)
- Adult Education and Recreation Supervisor served as the President of the Kiwanis Club of Wheaton
- Daytime Community Center Manager served as the Vice President of the Kiwanis Club of Wheaton
- Daytime Community Center Manager serves on the Play for All Foundation Board

## Other Achievements

- Mary Lubko Center Manager is a member of the IPRA Senior Committee and member of Active Adult Network
- Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor is a member of IPRA's Teen Committee, serving as Chairperson for IPRA Teen Battle of the Bands State Competition
- Creative Arts & Varied Interest Supervisor is a member of IPRA's Cultural Arts Committee
- Adult Education & Recreation Supervisor is a member of the IPRA Special Event Section Committee
- Lincoln Marsh Program Manager and Program Assistant are members of IPRA Nature Task Force Committee



# RECREATION: SILVER LININGS OF COVID-19

## Rec to Go programs:

Pottery-at-Home kits, holiday craft packs, Nature To Go program kits (Owls, Space, Insects), Pre-school kits and adult craft packs.



## Modified Programming Successes:

Parking Lot Bingo, Pottery-at-Home packs, Halloween Is Still Happening, "Get Ready for Santa" kits, Scout Zoom programs, & Pizza with Santa modified to Drive Thru Santa.

**10+ MODIFIED SPECIAL  
EVENTS OFFERED!**

## Brand New COVID-19 Inspired Programming:

- You've been Grinchd
- Virtual Music lessons
- Virtual Dance classes
- Pottery-At-Home packs
- Acrylic Creative Painting (to-go packs)
- Nature To Go program kits
- Self-guided Geocaching
- Themed Scavenger Hunts at Lincoln Marsh
- Candy Cane Hunts
- Wide Horizons Virtual Preschool
- Story and Craft at Toohey
- Toohey Park Craft Packs
- Requested private adventures: night hike, scavenger hunt, & geocaching
- Parking Lot Bingo
- Elvis Extravaganza

**NEW  
PROGRAMS!**

## Adapted Special Events:

Halloween Happening (2 evenings), Pizza With Santa modified to Drive Thru Santa, Parking Lot Bingo and Virtual Fish O Rama

**COVID-19 FRIENDLY SPECIAL EVENTS**

## COVID-19 Inspirations We Will Keep:

### Virtual:

- Option for virtual music lessons
- Virtual options for requested programs
- Virtual Wide Horizons Preschool class for 2021-22

### In Person:

- Nature Wide Horizons Preschool class for 2021-22
- Small "VIP experience" Halloween event offerings
- Home deliveries i.e. You've been Grinchd.
- Requested private adventures at Lincoln Marsh
- Themed Scavenger Hunts at Lincoln Marsh

### Rec To Go:

- Pottery-at-Home packs
- Holiday themed packs
- Acrylic Creative Painting (to-go packs)
- Craft kits
- Nature To Go program kits

**KEEPING WHAT  
WORKED**

## COVID-19 Takeaways:

- People appreciate us, and the ability to choose for themselves whether they would like virtual or in person.
- The personalization "VIP" experience of Halloween Happening was a hit!
- Lincoln Marsh trails and nature play area has seen a dramatic increase in use through the pandemic as people find comfort in the outdoors.
- We are finding alternate ways to engage our community at the Lincoln Marsh with a variety of new virtual, in person and Nature To Go programs for group and individuals.
- Craft packs are here to stay!

***Taking it to 2021...***



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Program Net Profits		2017	2018	2019	2020
Adult Education	Revenue	\$79,597	\$82,053	\$85,855	\$36,155
	Expenses	\$47,920	\$50,240	\$52,942	\$23,778
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$31,677</b>	<b>\$31,813</b>	<b>\$32,913</b>	<b>\$12,376</b>
Camps	Revenue	\$365,562	\$363,521	\$370,394	\$59,648
	Expenses	\$198,849	\$239,367	\$224,644	\$43,381
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$166,713</b>	<b>\$124,154</b>	<b>\$145,750</b>	<b>\$16,268</b>
Creative & Performing Arts	Revenue	\$140,350	\$131,215	\$133,897	\$56,874
	Expenses	\$81,768	\$78,353	\$75,352	\$36,707
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$58,581</b>	<b>\$52,862</b>	<b>\$58,545</b>	<b>\$20,167</b>
Environmental Education	Revenue	\$68,611	\$74,434	\$71,659	\$13,008
	Expenses	\$27,277	\$28,785	\$29,099	\$4,675
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$41,335</b>	<b>\$45,649</b>	<b>\$42,560</b>	<b>\$8,333</b>
Challenge Course	Revenue	\$116,795	\$110,534	\$99,520	\$0
	Expenses	\$55,269	\$48,858	\$49,025	\$8,226
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$61,526</b>	<b>\$61,676</b>	<b>\$50,495</b>	<b>(\$8,226)</b>
Mary Lubko Center	Revenue	\$280,423	\$239,823	\$239,509	\$28,011
	Expenses	\$265,860	\$233,711	\$230,626	\$40,768
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$14,563</b>	<b>\$6,112</b>	<b>\$8,883</b>	<b>(\$12,757)</b>
Preschool & Early Childhood	Revenue	\$283,885	\$313,822	\$322,458	\$161,522
	Expenses	\$159,380	\$194,186	\$195,503	\$106,867
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$124,505</b>	<b>\$119,636</b>	<b>\$126,955</b>	<b>\$54,655</b>
Varied Interest	Revenue	\$127,200	\$133,425	\$133,180	\$25,918
	Expenses	\$84,582	\$90,950	\$80,397	\$15,382
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$42,618</b>	<b>\$42,474</b>	<b>\$52,784</b>	<b>\$10,536</b>
Seasonal Programs	Revenue	\$11,342	\$12,024	\$12,101	\$4,842
	Expenses	\$8,489	\$7,705	\$7,936	\$1,766
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$2,853</b>	<b>\$4,319</b>	<b>\$4,164</b>	<b>\$3,076</b>
<b>Total</b>	Revenue	\$1,473,765	\$1,460,850	\$1,468,572	\$385,977
	Expenses	\$929,395	\$972,155	\$945,523	\$281,549
	<b>Net Profit</b>	<b>\$544,371</b>	<b>\$488,696</b>	<b>\$523,049</b>	<b>\$104,427</b>
Administrative & Facility Net Operating Costs		2017	2018	2019	2020
Community Center	Revenue	\$65,100	\$59,486	\$53,996	\$12,081
	Expenses	\$547,903	\$562,007	\$544,511	\$417,687
	<b>Net Operating Cost</b>	<b>(\$482,803)</b>	<b>(\$502,522)</b>	<b>(\$490,515)</b>	<b>(\$405,606)</b>
Lincoln Marsh/Warming Shelter	Revenue	\$208	\$1,460	\$752	\$312
	Expenses	\$324,632	\$331,397	\$336,993	\$237,140
	<b>Net Operating Cost</b>	<b>(\$324,424)</b>	<b>(\$329,937)</b>	<b>(\$336,241)</b>	<b>(\$236,828)</b>
Mary Lubko Center	Revenue	\$7,925	\$7,925	\$4,300	\$150
	Expenses	\$130,510	\$144,230	\$133,948	\$104,829
	<b>Net Operating Cost</b>	<b>(\$122,585)</b>	<b>(\$136,305)</b>	<b>(\$129,648)</b>	<b>(\$104,679)</b>
Other Administrative Areas*	Revenue	n/a	n/a	n/a	\$1,643
	Expenses	\$270,721	\$279,014	\$293,627	\$308,296
	<b>Net Operating Cost</b>	<b>(\$270,721)</b>	<b>(\$279,014)</b>	<b>(\$293,627)</b>	<b>(\$306,653)</b>
<b>Total</b>	Revenue	\$73,233	\$68,871	\$59,047	\$14,186
	Expenses	\$1,273,766	\$1,316,648	\$1,309,079	\$1,067,951
	<b>Net Operating Cost</b>	<b>(\$1,200,533)</b>	<b>(\$1,247,777)</b>	<b>(\$1,250,031)</b>	<b>(\$1,053,765)</b>

\*Includes revenue for garden plot rentals and administrative expenses for Adult Education, Camps, Creative & Performing Arts, Preschool & Early Childhood, Varied Interest, Seasonal Programs, Director of Recreation.

2020 unaudited year-end figures.

# 2020 BY THE NUMBERS

2020! It was the year of the pandemic, the year of face masks, hand sanitizers, but also the year of adaptability and innovation for the Recreation Department.

During the second half of 2020, we endlessly adapted plans for programming and events to continue engaging the public, minimize any pauses in programming and drive revenue while providing the best customer experience during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.



**REVENUE \$400,162**

**EXPENSES \$1,349,500**

**NET (\$949,338)**

**PROGRAMS OFFERED 1388**

**PARTICIPATION TOTAL 6429**



# MARKETING

In 2020, the Recreation Department and Marketing Department worked closely together with one unified goal of promoting our programs, offerings, events and continuing to best serve our community. The marketing department helps support the recreation department by providing us a voice to the community and assuring our communication to the public is exceptional.

The recreation department's marketing efforts consist of our seasonal program guide, which is traditionally delivered to 26,000+ households each season, targeted marketing techniques via direct mail, e-blasts, and social media outreach and print materials. In 2020, we had two print guides, followed by virtual guides and virtual marketing for the remainder of the year.

## Specialized Marketing:

- 45+ dedicated e-blasts for recreation programs
- Adult Education specialized marketing flyers created and distributed for Pickleball programs
- Dedicated monthly newsletter and e-blasts focusing on the recreation department offerings
- Camp Information Table hosted at the Community Center to "market in-person" our upcoming summer camp program
- Program guide shifted to a virtual guide due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This allowed new opportunities for a "living" guide that we can edit as programs change and as new programs are added.

## Social Media/E-Blasts:

- 20+ social media posts
- Facebook events for Halloween is Still Happening, Preschool Open House, MLC events and Lincoln Marsh programs
- Utilization of social media platforms to share pictures from our events and programs. This offered a way to share photos to participants who were enrolled and also acted as a way to promote the programs for the future.
- Utilization of "live stories" on Facebook and Instagram to showcase actual live happenings at our events and programs

## Partnerships:

- Cooperative programming offered with Glen Ellyn, Winfield, Lombard, Bloomingdale, Warrenville and Carol Stream Park Districts to increase registration and program offerings
- Partnerships with local government agencies including School District 200, Wheaton Fire Department, Wheaton Police Department and Wheaton Public Library
- Mary Lubko Center partnered with Brookdale of Lisle to teach a balance class to seniors
- 29th consecutive year partnered with Wheaton Kiwanis Club for first ever virtual self-guided Fish-O-Rama
- Lincoln Marsh partnered with the Conservation Foundation to offer a free Nature and Forest Therapy walk

**20+**

social media posts

**\$5,000+**

sponsorship dollars  
secured for recreation  
programs & events



# SPECIAL EVENTS

Each year the Wheaton Park District Recreation Department hosts several events. Below are some highlights from 2020:

## DADDY/DAUGHTER PRINCESS BALL | FEBRUARY 21



Dads and daughters make special memories at the ball while enjoying great music, dancing, sundae bar and a surprise guest visit! Commemorative photos are taken during the first hour.

Community Center | Target age: 4-10 with dad

**170**  
**ATTENDEES**

## PARKING LOT BINGO | JULY - OCTOBER



This multi-generational event was the perfect way to get out of the house and have some socially distanced fun. Patrons used disposable bingo cards and crayons for a fun-filled hour of bingo. Winners honked their horns to celebrate their victory!

Community Center Parking Lot | Target Age: All ages

**170**  
**ATTENDEES**

## ELVIS EXTRAVAGANZA | AUGUST 27



We took a break from the heat as we welcomed the “coolest” guy around, Jerry Armstrong, as he performed Elvis’ greatest hits and even threw in a touch of comedy.

Community Center | Target age: Adults

**45**  
**ATTENDEES**



# SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINUED

## HALLOWEEN IS STILL HAPPENING! | OCTOBER 20 & 22



It's a spooktacular night of crafts, games, and more! Guests enjoyed a modified version of our traditional Halloween Happening event.

Community Center | Target age: All ages

60  
ATTENDEES

## DRIVE-THRU SANTA EVENT | DECEMBER 11



Visit with Santa safely from your car! Enjoy lights and festive music! All children receive a goodie bag.

Toohy Park Building & Parking Lot | Target age: All ages

200+  
ATTENDEES  
70  
CARS REGISTERED

## YOU'VE BEEN GRINCHED | DECEMBER 14 - 18



Our elves were busy "Grinching" over 70 lucky households with holiday cheer from family and friends. "Grinched" patrons received a yard sign and a porch full of candy canes to sweeten their season!

City of Wheaton | Target age: All ages

69  
HOMES GRINCHED

# ADULT EDUCATION

Adult Education was created in April 2000 and replaced the adult education program formerly offered by School District 200 (CUSD 200). Starting in 2007, it was decided that a narrower offering of programs lessen cancellation rates.

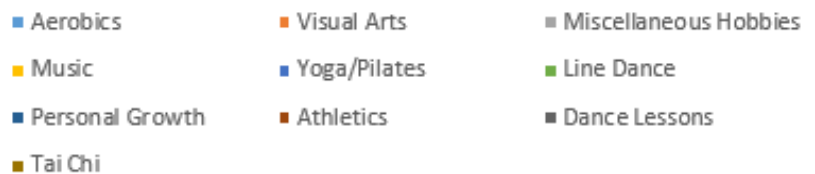
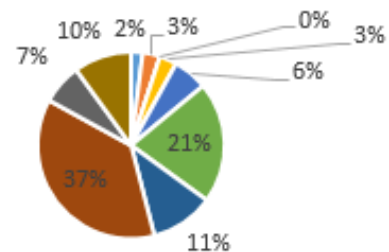
## TRENDS

- Flexible times and days of programs offered
- Expansion of indoor Pickleball play
- Virtual programming
- Esports

## CHALLENGES

- COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted operations and presented numerous new challenges. With the implementation of strict guidelines, we were able to safely offer virtual and in-person programming when programming resumed in June 2020.

Total Participation  
619



## MOVING FORWARD

- Continue to offer a wide range of programming
- Working with the competition in the surrounding area to offer cooperative programming
- Life Sport programs and clubs that individuals can participate well into their later years
- Offering virtual programming for adults and kids

# CAMPS

The Wheaton Park District summer camp programs thrive in the Wheaton community. We offer a variety of camps including six that are American Camp Association Accredited Camps. Camp locations and time frames vary - camps are held at the Community Center, Toohey Park, Rathje Park, Northside Park and the Central Athletic Complex. We strive to assure our camp programs are fun, safe, affordable and flexible.



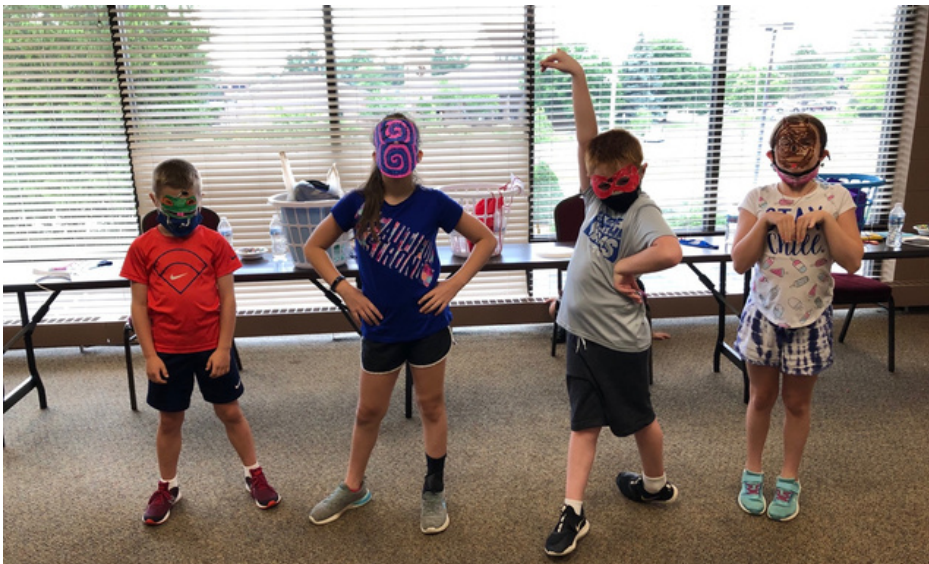
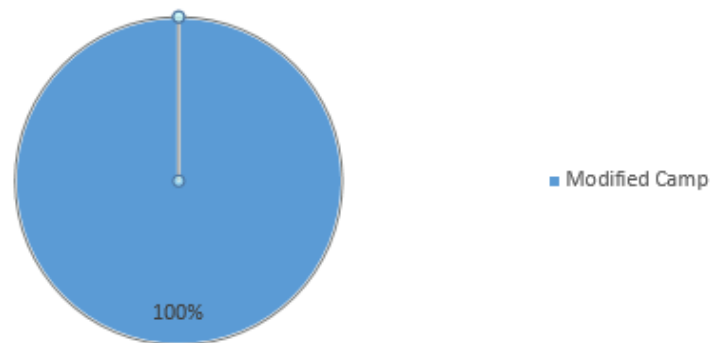
## TRENDS

- Wide variety of program offerings that make the Wheaton Park District an ideal option for campers who want new activities
- Flexible registration options

## CHALLENGES

- COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted camp operations and presented numerous new challenges. We implemented strict guidelines to safely offer the first in-person programming after the Wheaton Park District resumed programming in June 2020.

Program Attendance:  
212



## MOVING FORWARD



- Continue to offer the best quality summer camp options for the residents of Wheaton
- Stay creative and innovative! With changing guidelines, we are ready to pivot and assure our camps are the most safe, fun and affordable in the Wheaton area!
- Seek re-accreditation through ACA by completing necessary paperwork and successful site visit.
- Maintain current camp payment plan offering 25% due at time of registration, followed by three additional 25% payments on June 1, July 1 and August 1.



# COMMUNITY CENTER

The Wheaton Park District Community Center is a 122,000 square foot recreation center located at 1777 S. Blanchard St. in Wheaton, IL. The Community Center houses Parks Plus Fitness Center, a 7,500 square foot fitness center, Kidz Kingdom Child Care, several meeting/specialty rooms and a new indoor track with improved surfacing and wider two lane format. Community Center frontline personnel happily assist patrons with activity registrations, purchasing passes and memberships, processing photo ID's and much more.



## VISION STATEMENT

The Community Center is committed to meeting or exceeding facility expectations by providing fast, friendly and helpful service. We exist to promote a strong sense of community by ensuring the Community Center is available to and used by individuals, groups and organizations.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a safe, inviting and well-maintained facility that meets the recreational, educational and social needs of the residents and user groups.

## TRENDS

- Indoor track usage became increasingly popular. A reservation system was implemented to control limits according to state guidance and for contact tracing purposes.

## MOVING FORWARD



- Rec Trac software migration

## LEISURESHIP PROGRAM

The Wheaton Park District Leisureship Program was established to help provide recreation programs and facilities to all Wheaton Park District residents, regardless of economic situation. The Wheaton Park District provides free or reduced program/facility fees for qualified residents.

- 15 Families served
- \$2,049 Fee assistance provided
- \$1,309.68 Fundraising efforts

# CREATIVE & PERFORMING ARTS

The Wheaton Park District Creative Arts programs have goals to provide high-quality classes in a non-competitive environment. Participants are encouraged to become technically proficient in their craft and at the same time build self-esteem, cooperation, leadership skills and have fun! We offer unique opportunities, such as Pottery, that are not offered in the surrounding areas due to lack of supplies and equipment. These programs provide the participants with positive mental, physical and even emotional benefits.

## TRENDS

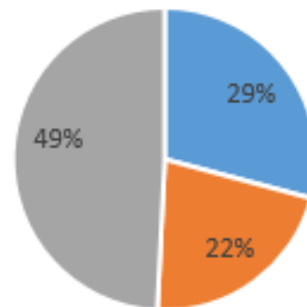
- Pottery-At-Home kits were an alternate way to engage participants from the safety of their home. 40+ participants picked up kits that included clay, tools, stencils and additional supplies to create masterpieces at home by following a staff led video. They later dropped them off at the Community Center to be glazed and fired.
- Children's Playhouse held a workshop for veteran actors to keep them engaged.
- Dance and Music were able to pivot to a virtual format.



Program Attendance:  
638

## CHALLENGES

- COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the Creative and Performing Arts operation, including reduced program offerings and reduced part-time staff.
- Pottery is a unique programming area that generally needs to be done in-person in a studio.
- Children's Playhouse production was halted due to gathering size limits.



■ Theatre (Playhouse, Shining Star) ■ Dance (+ Irish Dance)  
■ Creative Arts (Arts, Pottery, Music)

## MOVING FORWARD



- Changes to dance program including obtaining new instructors and restructuring class offerings.
- Children's Playhouse fundraising ideas continue to assist in building a library of costumes and set pieces to enhance our productions and offset the cost of the play wrights.
- New seasonal Pottery workshops will be introduced such as Mother's Day and Father's Day Workshops.

# LINCOLN MARSH

Lincoln Marsh Natural Area is 151 acres comprised of woodlands, marshes and prairies which are highly valued for recreation, education and environmental reasons. There are two business units serving patrons at the Lincoln Marsh: Environmental Education and Challenge Course.

## MISSION

To increase awareness and appreciation for our connections to the earth and to each other through educational and social experiences in a healthy ecosystem.

## Challenge Course

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff made the difficult decision to not open the Challenge Course in 2020. The health, safety and operation challenges related to the challenge course under gathering limitations, social distancing and increased sanitation protocols for what would be an abbreviated season were evaluated in making this recommendation.

## Environmental Education

Hands-on activities promote interaction with an appreciation of the natural world through discovery and exploration.

## TRENDS

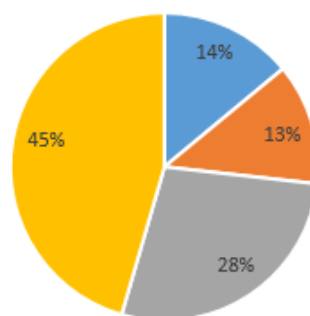
- Addressing safety concerns and social distancing helped families feel that they could safely attend seasonal brochure programs.
- Creating new opportunities to engage with our shareholders including but not limited to virtual programs, flashlight scavenger hunts and Nature To Go programs kits.

## CHALLENGES

- Once schools reopened to in-person learning, state mitigations did not allow students to be bussed for field trips and environmental education staff were not permitted to visit school for outreach programs.
- Adapting and modifying all programs to meet COVID-19 guidelines while maintaining the quality of the content and continuing to make them effective for the participants.
- Scheduling additional programs to accommodate waitlists while still meeting state guidelines.



Program Attendance:  
1,457



- Scout Programs
- Field Trips/Birthday Parties
- Outreach Programs
- Quarterly Guide Programs

## MOVING FORWARD



- Market and promote outreach and field trip opportunities to requested groups when they are able to invite us back into their schools or able to return to in person programming at Lincoln Marsh.
- Perform a program analysis to determine the needs and wants of badge programs of local scout leaders.
- Continue to work with other local park districts to cooperatively offer programs.
- Assess and adapt daily camp outlines.



# MARY LUBKO CENTER

The Mary Lubko Center (MLC) faced a unique 2020. With the population we serve being the most at risk, it was even more important that we were successful in supporting our community members to age well. In the midst of a global pandemic, many more community members continued to stay home and rely on the programs we provided. The MLC evolved quickly to fulfill numerous needs and remained a vibrant community of eager participants, great instructors and dedicated staff.

While our year ended much differently than it began, our programming needed to adjust during the pandemic so we could continue to provide programming, resources and life enrichment opportunities. Preventing social isolation through interesting, helpful, fun programs and broad outreach remains core to our mission.

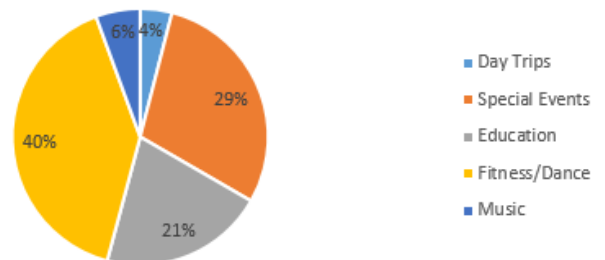
## TRENDS

- **Fitness Classes**- our fitness patrons were eager to return to in-person classes, resulting in classes which sold out quickly. Class numbers were limited and the floors were marked to ensure proper social distancing.
- **Parking Lot Bingo** - this fun, new event reached out to several generations with grandparents bringing their grandchildren, seniors and families of all ages. We offered several sold out events throughout the summer and fall in the Community Center Parking Lot.
- **Craft Kits** - the MLC staff was able to "upcycle" several of the items we had in order to create several craft kits: book page wreath, puzzle piece canvas and the very popular no-sew gnome.
- **You've Been Grinched** - MLC staff took the lead on the "You've Been Grinched" program in December. The Recreation Team delivered candy canes and yard signs to almost 70 local homes.
- **Memorial Room Events**- Senior Center events had to shift to using the Memorial Room for our Afternoon with Elvis event in August so we could maintain social distancing.



**Program Attendance:**  
**1,246**

\* Total would rise to 1,828 if drop-in included



## CHALLENGES

- Our seniors didn't embrace the virtual programming that was popular with other departments. After speaking with many members, they wanted to wait until it was safe to return to in-person classes. Due to the state and federal restrictions, our day trips, extended travel and several weekly drop-in groups were not eligible to meet.

## MOVING FORWARD

In 2021, we look forward to returning to our popular day trips. We have secured a partnership with Glen Ellyn Park District to partner on trips which will help boost our registration numbers and help keep costs down. Extended Travel will return in 2022.

# PRESCHOOL & EARLY CHILDHOOD

Wide Horizons preschool is a play-based preschool program which has been a staple in our community since the 1970's. The preschool program provides our youngest residents a safe and welcoming learning environment, focused on building confidence, kindergarten readiness and social and emotional development. Toohey Park hosts a variety of early childhood classes for ages 1-6. These classes focus on "learning through play" and work to build socialization skills, cooperative play skills and fine and gross motor development. Safety City, a miniature downtown Wheaton, complete with buildings, sidewalks and traffic signals provides children a unique opportunity to learning all things safety! Our early childhood special interest programs allow participants the opportunity to experience music classes, cooking programs, early childhood athletics, birthday parties, special events, arts & crafts and more!

## TRENDS

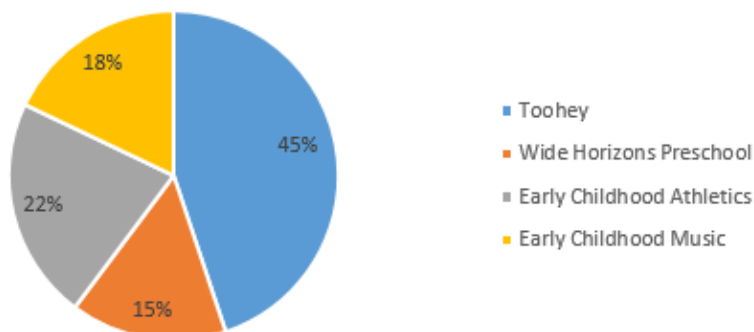
- Virtual preschool highly sought after due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Assure our classes are offered at the most appropriate time and price to make it easier on the families to sign up for multiple programs.
- Parents like to build their child's week based on their child's own special interests and schedule.



## CHALLENGES

- COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted preschool operations. We were able to successfully align with the "education" guidelines from the county to continue to allow seamless in-person learning for our families.

Program Attendance:  
508



## MOVING FORWARD



- Offer Nature based Wide Horizons Preschool Program to offer an outdoor option in collaboration with the Lincoln Marsh.
- Strive to continuously offer the popular, as well as the new, early childhood programming to stay current with trends in the market.
- Continue to allow our current families the opportunity to register during "priority registration" prior to resident registration date.
- Maintain affordable registration options, with only a \$50 enrollment fee to hold your space and monthly payment options.

# VARIED INTEREST

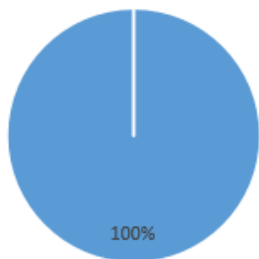
Varied interest programs offered through the Wheaton Park District include day, evening, weekend, camp, individual, parent-child, family, special events, parties and workshop opportunities, computer classes, horsemanship, volunteerism, babysitting, magic, technology, science, trips, teens, foreign language, fencing and more. Classes are held at the Community Center, Central Athletic Complex, contractual satellite locations and cooperative Park District partnership facilities.

Many households consider Varied Interest programs as additional expenses. It is our goal to continue to provide fun and educational programs at an affordable price.

## TRENDS

- Camp I Don't Know was merged with the modified summer camp offerings.
- Foreign Language and Magic classes were able to pivot to a virtual platform to provide a safe programming platform.
- Tenth successful Summer Babysitter's Showcase took place in July, which incorporates safe practices, CPR and First Aide Training and activity planning for teens.
- Creation of Rec-to-Go Kits such as Santa Kits and NYE Kits.

Program Attendance:  
453



■ Programs including Fencing, Ice Skating, Glitzy Girls, Horsemanship, Science, Magic, Roller Skating, CIDK, Zone Parties, etc.

## CHALLENGES

- Targeting the interest of teens, ages 11-14, is difficult as more teens are becoming "latchkey kids" and choosing to stay home instead of attend day camps.
- COVID-19 pandemic greatly impacted the Varied Interest operations
  - Zone Parties were unavailable due to state restrictions from March through December.
  - Many contractual programming companies opted to suspend offerings including Roller Skating, Kids Science Labs, Computer Explorers and Mindfulness classes.



## MOVING FORWARD



- Reinstate Zone Birthday Parties with the addition of Contractual options such as Slime, Magic and Glitzy Girls.
- Increase cooperative opportunities for General Interest and Teen Programming with additional surrounding Park Districts.
- Reinstate the Counselor in Training Camp program in Summer 2022.
- Continue trying new programs and trends for youth and teens based on pop culture and interests. Ideas include Mini-Golf Camp/Group, Gaming Tournaments and Teen Outreach.



# TESTIMONIALS

"Thank you for continuing to find creative ways to offer safe activities to the community at this time." - Lincoln Marsh Participant

"I just wanted to say thank you to the teachers and yourself for all that you've done. I appreciate all the fantastic communication that you have set into place. Of course we are sad to not finish the school year, but completely appreciate your commitment to the community."  
- Wide Horizons Participant

"Thank you Wheaton Park District for rethinking your events and programs this year, This event brought magic to every family who participated."  
- Event participant

"An opportunity to save Halloween for my family. It was very well done, a lot of effort for just a few due to restrictions beyond your control - I am so grateful the WPD created and went through with this event when it probably would have been easier for you to cancel or not try to host anything in the first place. Great Job!!!  
What an excellent time."  
- Halloween Happening Participant

*"I just wanted to send a word of thanks to you and your teams for successfully running the modified camp option this summer. "*  
*- Summer Camp parent*

**"Thank you! I love all these fun ideas you guys have been putting together! ."**  
**- Mary Lubko Center Participant**

"The Lincoln Marsh staff is amazing! They are good with the kids and they make learning fun. Even during COVID, I feel comfortable with my daughter in their care. She always comes away from classes/events excited about what she did/learned.  
Thank you!"  
- Lincoln Marsh Parent

"My kids have loved doing these pottery at home craft kits and it gives us something to do during the day!  
Thank you for this safe option to still show their creativity." - Pottery Parent

**"I just wanted to say thank you for all of the work, time and care put into the virtual Wide Horizons program. Ms. Kelly is amazing and we are so grateful for empathy, care and dedication." - Wide Horizons Parent**

**" I have not seen my mother-in-law in months due to COVID so I bought these for us to do over Zoom together!! We chatted today while assembling our holiday gnomes...what a great way to spend my Sunday!! Loved it, and so did she." - Mary Lubko Participant**

"We couldn't wait to get back in the studio and are grateful to have an outlet during a tough time. Mary is wonderful! Safe and friendly environment and we are so glad to be back!"  
- Pottery Participant

**"Just thank you again for everyone that stood out in the freezing rain so our kids could have some semblance of normalcy. We are always grateful for the WPD but so much more this year. " - Drive Thru Santa Participant**



# RECREATION