

## **Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department 2018 Annual Report**

On behalf of the dedicated staff of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department, I am pleased to present our 2018 Annual Report. The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department had an historic year in 2018. The year brought new facilities online and featured multiple park and trail improvements. Our year-round programs and special events saw steady growth during the year and we are very excited about the opportunities and challenges coming our way in 2019.

### **CAPRA Reaccreditation**

The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department was awarded re-accreditation by The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). CAPRA accreditation is the only national accreditation for park and recreation agencies and is a measure of an agency's overall operations, management and service to the community.

CAPRA Accreditation is based on an agency's compliance with 151 standards for national accreditation. CAPRA found that The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department met or exceeded all 151 standards with zero unmet standards. There are currently only 171 accredited park and recreation agencies across the country and 10 in the State of Georgia.

The Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA) accredits park and recreation agencies for excellence in operation and service. Charged with providing high quality services and experiences, park and recreation agencies across the United States turn to CAPRA Accreditation as a credible and efficient means of achieving these goals, while providing assurance to the public that the agency meets national standards of best practices

I was honored to accept the CAPRA Accreditation designation at the annual NRPA *Best of the Best* Award Ceremony in Indianapolis, Indiana in September. I am extremely proud of my staff for maintaining CAPRA Accreditation but also successfully complying with 100% of the 151 national standards.

### **Staff Development**

Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department staff participated in several training opportunities in 2018. Park and Trail Maintenance Division team members completed DOT Flagging Training in October. In the Spring of 2018, all Maintenance Division and Special Events staff participated in joint Landing Zone training with Woodstock Fire Department personnel at the Northside Hospital-

Cherokee Amphitheater. Other staff training sessions in 2018 included classes in FEMA Incident Response, leadership development, customer service, communications and marketing.

Two staff members, Administrative Coordinator Heather Gaddis and Special Events Coordinator Marybeth Stockdale earned their Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) classification from the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). I am very proud of their accomplishment and dedication to the residents of Woodstock and the Parks and Recreation profession.

### **Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater**

The Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater had its first full year of operation during 2017. The facility is the “Flagship” of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department and has become a centerpiece in Downtown Woodstock.

The Amphitheater hosted 24 events in 2018 with over 85,000 estimated attendees. Events in 2018 included: The Woodstock Summer Concert Series (five concerts), Easter in Woodstock, Ghost Army Fest, Taste and Sound of Woodstock, Power in Unity, Kicking for Miracles, Zombie Fest, Music Mondays in May, Summer Movies in the Park Series (three events), the inaugural Bacon and Banjos Festival, Sunset Symphony, and KidsFest (Woodstock annual Halloween Festival).

Several of these events have already been scheduled to be hosted again in the NHC Amphitheater in 2019. With a full slate of City of Woodstock special events already scheduled for 2019, we are looking forward to an outstanding upcoming year.

### **Special Events 2018**

The Special Events Division had a very successful event season in 2018. Combined with the events hosted in the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater, The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department hosted 37 special events with over 150,000 estimated attendees.

The 2018 Special Event season kicked off on Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup> with the City’s Arbor Day Celebration. The City of Woodstock gave away 800 tree seedlings for residents to plant at their homes. Each seedling came with a tree care guide.

The City’s annual *Greenstock Day* was held on Saturday April 21, 2018. The annual event features city wide yard sales and recycling event. The city-wide yard sale had 34 registered garage sales throughout Woodstock, 9 of which were community sales. The annual recycling event collected over 11,000 lbs. of electronics, 900 lbs. of batteries, 9,660 lbs. of paper was shredded, and almost 4 tons of other recyclables were collected. Over 340 cars carrying 427 people came through the event.

The 2018 *Movies in the Park*, sponsored by Northside Hospital-Cherokee, included *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle* on June 16<sup>th</sup>. *Star Wars: The Last Jedi* on July 21<sup>st</sup> had a great crowd in the beginning, but rain made most leave. Those who stayed, went up on stage and watched the remainder of the film there. *Sherlock Gnomes* on August 18 was cancelled due to rain and the *Greatest Showman* on September 15<sup>th</sup> went off without a hitch!

We celebrated our 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Woodstock Summer Concert Series* at the new Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater in 2018. Bands included the Swingin' Medallions on May 12<sup>th</sup>, Love and Theft on June 9<sup>th</sup>, Departure on July 14<sup>th</sup>, Everclear on August 11<sup>th</sup> and finally 38 Special on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 56,000 people attended the concerts this year.

Unfortunately, rain forced the *City of Woodstock Memorial Day Ceremony* on Monday May 28<sup>th</sup> indoors to the Elm Street Theater. Over 400 attendees came to pay their respect to those that have given the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

The City's Annual *July 4<sup>th</sup> Spectacular Parade, Festival and Fireworks* were very successful. An estimated 6,000 people came in to Downtown Woodstock to watch the parade and attend the festival in The Park at City Center. The annual 5K Freedom Run had over 750 runners in this year's event. Our annual Fireworks display brought an estimated 30,000 to the highway 92 and 575 corridor to watch the display.

The 2018 September *Brown Bag Concert Series* featured a free lunchtime concert on each Thursday at The Park at City Center. This year's concerts featured, A Theory of Now, David Keenum, "Mr. Jason" Koornick, and Matt Wilson. We had great weather for each concert and had more than 200 attendees at each performance.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Annual *Woodstock 9/11 Day of Remembrance* had over 300 in attendance that heard from guest speakers, Retired Cherokee County Sheriff Roger Garrison, and USAF Major Andrew Marino. This year introduced the Above & Beyond Chorus from Hillside UMC Woodstock.

The annual *Woodstock Elementary School Downtown Walking Tour* was held on Friday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. Over 320 third graders made their way to The Park at City Center, The Chambers at City Center and the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater to learn about the history of the City of Woodstock and the services it provides. The highlights of their trip are a question and answer session with Mayor Henriques and Juanita Hughes, and demonstrations by Police K9 and Fire Department uniform and equipment.

Our annual *KidsFest* was held on Wednesday, October 31. This year's event featured Halloween trick or treat activities for our younger ghouls and goblins, including moonwalks, DJ Ronnie, Tim the Magician, Adam the Juggler, games, the ever-popular stringed apple and pumpkin bowling games, face painting, costume contest, and candy give-away. This event is held on Halloween as a safe alternative to trick-or-treating. This year the event was moved down to the Northside

Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater green to accommodate strollers and the large crowds. It was very well received and will now be its new home.

On Sunday, November 11th, the City hosted its annual *Veterans Day Ceremony* in The Park at City Center. This celebration honors America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, willingness to serve, and sacrifice for the common good. The Marine Corps League Detachment #1311 in Woodstock, the American Legion Post 316, and the Warriors' Watch Riders, helped us celebrate our veterans who have given us our liberty and freedom. The event featured a Candlelight ceremony and music.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual *Tis the Season to be Green Recycle Event* took place on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup>. To celebrate National Recycling Week, we offered document shredding and recycled electronics, batteries, textiles, cell phones, light bulbs, glasses, magazines and newspapers. We collected over 8,000 lbs. of electronics and 3 tons of other recyclables. We shredded almost 9,000 lbs. of paper. We had over 229 cars carrying 308 people come through the event. People from as far away as Covington and Carrollton visited the event.

Unfortunately, the *2018 Christmas Jubilee Parade of Lights and Festival* that was scheduled for Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> had to be cancelled due to heavy rains and flooding. As an alternative for participants, the Parks and Recreation Department was able to host *An Evening with Santa* indoors at the Chambers at City Center. Lots of families came by to enjoy hot chocolate and cider, cupcake decorating, crafts and hanging out with the "man in red". *Santa's Mailbox* was available from December 1 – 17, 2018 for parents and children to drop off their letters to Santa. This year more than 350 children mailed letters to Santa.

The *Chambers at City Center* hosted more than 15 Public Input Meetings, 14 HOA Meetings, and three Chamber of Commerce breakfasts. Through the year many more meetings and training sessions were held there by City of Woodstock Departments, the DDA, Planning Commission, Fire Department, Citizens Public Safety Academy, Main Street Woodstock, Mastermind, Council meetings, Sojourn Church Sunday School, Elm Street meetings and receptions, GROW, Morning Buzz, Mayor's Youth Advisory Council, 4 luncheons, and a wedding.

Staff is currently planning and preparing the 2019 Special Event Calendar and expects another banner year from the department.

## **The William G. Long Senior Center**

The William G. Long Senior Center had a very productive and exciting year in 2018. There are currently 624 registered members at the Senior Center with 199 new members joining in 2018. The Center had an average of 49 daily participants utilizing the Center with over 12,200 annual visits.

Senior Center members enjoyed multiple trips and tours during the year, including: Atlanta Braves games, the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, white water rafting on the Nantahala River, the Falany Performing Arts Center to see The Drifters in concert, a cruise on the Southern Belle Tennessee River Boat, tours of SunTrust Park and the Mercedes Benz Stadium, riding the Blue Ridge Railroad through the North Georgia mountains, and tours of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation museum, the National Weather Service and many more.

Additionally, the Center had 97 members take two extended day trips in 2018. The trips were an eight-day cruise to the Western Caribbean and a weeklong trip to Myrtle Beach and Charleston South Carolina.

The Center offered 19 special events hosted on-site in addition to our regularly scheduled daily programs and activities. Event highlights included: A Valentine's Day Party, a St. Patrick's Day Party, Mother's Day and Father's Day Luncheons, hosting the Wii Bowling and Billiards events for the Cherokee County Senior Olympics, a Black History Month Luncheon, a Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon and a New Year's Eve Party.

Multiple special interest classes were offered at the Center in 2018. Classes included many informational topics featuring: Wills and Probates, Foot Care, Hearing Screening, Flu shots, beginning and intermediate Bridge and Mahjongg classes and Medicare 101.

Construction of the 2,400 square-foot Multi-Purpose Room/Addition to the Senior Center was completed in January 2018. This addition has provided much needed space and has allowed the Senior Center to more than double the size of the AARP Smart Driver class and allowed us to host our annual Senior Picnic, Thanksgiving and Christmas lunches, each of which has at least 150 people in attendance. It has also given us the needed space to schedule three exercise classes per week.

## **Rubes Creek Connector Trail**

The Rubes Creek Connector Trail was completed in January 2018. The ¼ mile extension runs adjacent to Arnold Mill Road connecting the Rubes Creek Trail to the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater and Downtown Woodstock.

## **Thank You**

As 2018 ends, we would like to thank all our program participants, patrons and volunteers as well as our Community Partners, and event sponsors. The investment of your time and financial contributions has helped us provide recreational opportunities and special events for the City of Woodstock and surrounding areas. We truly appreciate your support and are looking forward a fun and productive 2019.

Best Regards,

*Preston Pooser*

Preston Pooser, CPRE  
Parks and Recreation Director