

Parks and Recreation Annual Report 2022

SPECIAL EVENTS

The 2022 Special Event season kicked off on Friday, February 18th with the City's **Arbor Day** Celebration. The City of Woodstock gave away 750 tree seedlings for residents to plant at their homes. Trees included Dogwood, Eastern Redbud, Catalpa, and Crepe Myrtle. Each seedling also came with a tree care guide. Trees were planted in honor of employees celebrating 20 years of employment with the city. Congratulations to Water and Sewer Maintenance Technician, **William "Billy" Dunneback**. His name was also added to a plaque at City Hall.

The City's annual **Greenstock Day** was held on Saturday, April 30th. The annual event features city wide yard sales and a recycling/paper shredding event. The city-wide yard sale had 30 registered residential garage sales and 14 community sales throughout Woodstock. The annual recycling event collected over 14,291 lbs. of electronics, 767.2 lbs. of batteries, 100 lbs. of textiles, 13,820 lbs. of paper was shredded, and .32 tons of other recyclables was collected. 444 cars carrying 569 people came through the event.

The City of Woodstock **Memorial Day Ceremony** was held on Monday, May 30th. There was an estimated 500 attendees during the ceremony held in the gazebo at The Park at City Center. Speakers from the American Legion Post 316 and Marine Corps League Detachment 1311 gave honor to those who fought and died to keep us free. The Cobb New Horizons Band and the Marine Corps League Ceremonial Rifle Team made the ceremony even more special.

The **24th Annual Woodstock Summer Concert Series** kicked off in May with Marshall Charloff & Purple Xperience reproducing the best of Prince's look and sounds! Sister Hazel returned in June with Drew Holcomb & the Neighbors playing in the heat of July! The Black Jacket Symphony returned and rocked the house in August with their spot on reproduction of the Eagles "Hotel California" album and their greatest hits. Country music superstar and American Idol Winner, Scotty McCreery closed out the series on a beautiful night and entertained an estimated 10,000 enthusiastic fans! Another exciting lineup is in the works for 2023 and will be announced later this month.

The City's Annual **July 4th Spectacular** parade, festival, and 5k Freedom Run was hit with an estimated 11,100 people attending the parade and festival. The annual fireworks display brought an estimated 20,000 spectators to the Highway 92 and 575 corridor to watch the display which finished just as the rain started to pour! The Freedom Run in the morning had over 500 participants. There were 77 parade units that marched down Main Street, 29 vendors in the park, and 9 food vendors serving up summertime treats. Parade float winners are as follows, "Best Holiday Float" Cub Scout Pack 999, "Most Original Float" Crossroads Veterinary Hospital, "The People's Choice Award" Bug Busters, Inc., "Most Spirited Golf Cart Award" Kent Aabye, and the "History & Heritage Award" went to Trail Life Troop 0184.

The annual Woodstock **9/11 Day of Remembrance** had an estimated 400 participants. The ceremony featured members of American Heritage Girls from Troop 2012, Momentum Church, the Above & Beyond Chorus from Hillside United Methodist Church, Mayor Caldwell, the AJROTC from Kings Academy, and guest speakers Police Chief Jones, Fire Chief Soumas, and retired Air Force Colonel, Quentin Thomas. A special thank you to Adam Dreyer and Charlie Fisher who donated the 9/11 first responder and victim flags displayed during the ceremony.

The annual **3rd Grade Woodstock Elementary School Downtown Walking Tour** took place on October 21st. 300 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 were a question and answer session with Mayor Caldwell and Kyle Bennett, and the demonstrations by Police K9, and Fire Department uniforms and equipment.

On October 14th the **Sunset Symphony** featuring the Cobb New Horizons Band, played music “From Broadway to Hollywood” for over 300 spectators. All enjoyed a relaxing night under the stars. The band offers senior adults, with musical instrument experience, the opportunity to join an actively performing concert band.

For the third year, the “**Halloween Trail of Tricks and Treats**” was a great success! It introduced the residents of Woodstock to the Rubes Creek Trail as they walked along collecting toys, candy, and trinkets from the Parks and Recreation staff and vendors lined up along the trail. Many enjoyed the Skeleton City featuring fun skeleton displays that entertained everyone as they enjoyed the nighttime trail walk. Over 2,500 people attended the event. DJ Ronnie played music for those waiting in line. This event is held on Halloween as a safe alternative to trick-or-treating.

For **Veterans Day** on Friday, November 11th, the annual ceremony was held at the William G. Long Senior Center due to bad weather. Approximately 80 people attended, a little less than normal participation but weather was definitely a factor. Black Rifle Coffee Company Woodstock supplied coffee and donuts after the event for our Veterans meet and greet. The ceremony was presented by The City of Woodstock, Marine Corps League Woodstock Detachment 1311, and American Legion Post 316 South Cherokee County. Despite the weather, the setup and planning was ideal so the Veterans Day Ceremony will remain indoors in 2023.

The “**Tis the Season to be Green**” **Recycle Event** took place on Saturday, November 19th. To celebrate National Recycling Week, the event offered document shredding and recycled electronics, batteries, cell phones, CFL bulbs, glasses, hearing aids, textiles, magazines, and newspapers. Collected that day were 14,085 lbs. of electronics, 1,192 lbs. of batteries, .86 tons of waste, 375 lbs. of textiles, and .69 tons of other recyclables such as cardboard, magazines, and newspaper. There 440 cars carrying 577 people that were counted at the event.

On December 3rd, the Parks and Recreation Department presented **The Christmas Jubilee & Parade of Lights!** An estimated 10,000 people attended the parade and an additional 5,000 visited The Park at City Center for Christmas Jubilee. There were 109 parade units, 8 food vendors, and 23 vendors who all helped make the event a huge success. Overwhelmingly, all staff who worked the event said this was the largest Christmas Jubilee to date. Parade float winners are as follows, “Best Holiday Float” Ready Mix USA, “Most Original Float” Hearts and Hands Therapy Services, “The People’s Choice Award” Let’s Pretend Publishing, “Most Spirited Golf Cart Award” Kent Aabye, and the “History & Heritage Award” went to The Little River Marina Crew ‘22.

PARK/TRAIL/AMPHITHEATER RENTALS

There were 12 other events that were held at the Northside Hospital Cherokee Amphitheater, Noonday Creek Trail, and Dupree Park.

RECREATION

As opportunities continue to present, recreation programming is growing and meeting the needs of the citizens of Woodstock. 2022 was a year of improving existing brands and programs, creating new opportunities, and expanding the department's reach in nature and conservation. In addition, six new pickleball courts gave rise to new leagues and new programming/coaching opportunities.

The 24th year of the **Brown Bag Concert Series** was enjoyed by over 800 people in the City Park. Acts for 2022 in May included Surrender Hill, Mark Miller, Wyatt Espalin and Justin Monday, and September included Scott Puckett, Dave Ellis, Matt Jackson, Kurt Thomas, and Mitchell Phillips. With great weather in May and September, the tunes and leisure were welcomed.

AMPED in the Park, our free monthly collaborative fitness offering in the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater saw nearly 500 participants April – October. Local fitness providers, like Strongside and Twisted Cycle who saw 100+ participants and others, provided vital fitness instruction one Saturday every month the duration of the program.

Our collaboration with Foxtale Book Shoppe, **Storytime Live!** that brought storybook/movie characters Fancy Nancy, Darth Vader, Buzz Lightyear, Captain Marvel, Mirabel, Scooby Doo and Spider Gwen to the Gazebo at City Park April through October continued to be successful with over 500 kids enjoying the program. July continues to be the struggle month, however, as with several programs, and may need some innovation.

With jingle in his step, jolly, old St. Nick answered letters from close to 400 children sent to the North Pole during our **Santa Mail** program beginning right after Thanksgiving.

With the Sequoyah Regional Library System as a partner, the **Trailstory** program brought for children's books to Trestle Rock Trail, Noonday Creek Trail, Rubes Creek Trail and Towne Lake Pass Trail in April, June, August, and October. Titles included, *Last Stop on Market Street*, *Walter's Wonderful Web*, *The Hike*, and *A Tale of Two Beasts*.

Dupree Park Field Space continued to provide youth sports as we collaborated with i9 Sports throughout the year for youth baseball, flag football and soccer and summer multi-sport camps, Upward Soccer in the fall and Healthy Kids Running Series in the spring and fall. In total, over 1,000 children had the opportunity to pursue recreational sports.

Woodstock's **Adopt-a-Trail** program continued to keep the trails trash and hazard-free in 2022. Nine sections of trail on Noonday Creek Trail, Rubes Creek Trail, Towne Lake Pass Trail, and Trestle Rock Trail were monitored and cleaned by Woodstock organizations and individuals.

Quarterly **Leave No Trace Awareness Workshops** were offered with no registrations. This is to be readdressed in 2023 as Park or Trail cleanups with Leave No Trace education as a component banking on a more interactive, on-site approach than a classroom scenario.

Our introduction to recreational activities brand "**Discovering**" offered over 40 classes in 2022 with Disc Golf, Paddleboarding, Pickleball leading the way. We added Archery, Beekeeping, Fishing, Pickleball for Kids, Stitchcraft, Tennis, Tennis for Kids and Ultimate Frisbee. Most were successful, but Stitchcraft, Tennis and Ultimate Frisbee were low/no registration. Win some, lose some.

Essential Gardening classes grew this year by adding Canning & Preserving, Fermenting Basics and Painting Gourds and in conjunction with the **Woodstock Community Garden**, which added fifteen 10'x10' spaces in the spring 2022, and the **Butterfly Gardeners** program, which added butterfly gardens at the William G. Long Senior Center and Woodstock Park, Woodstock Parks and Recreation continues to offer diverse and vibrant horticulture and ecological programming.

In 2022, the “**SKILLS**” brand was created to introduce Woodstock citizen into self-development programming. The first two classes were SKILLS – Gun Safety, where we partnered with the Woodstock Police Department, and SKILLS – First Aid, where we partnered with the Woodstock Fire Department with SKILLS – Gun Safety being well-attended.

Activating play and creativity is a main tenant of recreation and the newly created **Rocks!** series, where every other month folks gather to paint and distribute river rocks throughout Woodstock was real fun. America Rocks! Pollination Rocks! Dias de Muertos Rocks! and 'Tis the Season Rocks brought nearly 100 people together for this fun, interactive, community-driven activity.

With the six new **Dupree Park Pickleball Courts**, we added several new leagues, including intermediate and advanced mixed and women's doubles, to our existing beginner leagues. This was a marginal success with the competitive side straining logistics, staff and, ultimately, fun. As we enter 2023, pickleball league are actively being reevaluated. The big win was adding the monthly class **+55 Pickleball Practice and Play**, an instructor led pickleball class for individuals 55 years and older that wanted to improve their skill and have some fun. Offered for a month every Wednesday morning from May through October, and a one-month test run in August in the evening, the program was full every month.

SENIOR CENTER

The William G. Long Senior Center has returned to its normal operating hours from 9am-4pm Monday through Friday. Heather Gilliland was hired in March 2022 to fill the Senior Center Recreation Specialist role. Heather has jumped into her new role helping with trips, luncheons- including set-up and break-down of the event rooms, teaching Fit over 50 on Friday mornings, helping with special events, and will be helping facilitate the start-up of some new and exciting groups to come. Gayle Bautz, one of our part-time Recreation Aide's, retired in December 2022. Gayle was our Line Dance instructor and Mahjong teacher, and a wonderful assistant with all activities at the center and will be truly missed in her role. The Senior Center made a successful trip to Dollywood on November 8th, 2022, our first overnight trip since Covid-19 began. Julie Markley, the Senior Center Coordinator, continues to thrive in her role and has added many exciting Day Trips and programming to the calendar, and has had great success since beginning at the Senior Center last year.

Senior Center memberships at the time of this report are 615, with a goal of reaching 650 by the end of June. Last year the center averaged 29 members a day for drop-in activities. This year the average number of members per day for drop-in activities is 44. The center offered 212 programs with 4,140 registrations. Members took 43 trips, attended 10 Holiday Luncheons, 138 center programs and 19 weekly fitness and dance programs.

The new golf simulator that was installed last year has been upgraded this year to offer more options for players to enjoy. A new wall was built in the billiard room to create a separate activity space. A new treadmill, elliptical, and exercise bicycle were installed in the activity space for members to use during operating hours. The Garden Club members started their community garden last spring and had great success with growing vegetables all season. Julie has added a highly requested nutrition & weight management group to the calendar that Heather will lead beginning in February of 2023. As our memberships grow, and programming gains popularity, programs frequently reach capacity with a substantial waiting list for members who were unable to register in time. The need for recreational programming space, and the need for community groups to meet, continues to grow. As a result, the center continues to get smaller and smaller in terms of sharing space. However, the staff continue to be creative and forward thinking in terms of finding solutions to the space restrictions as they arise.

2022 was a better year for the Senior Center as members made their way back into the facility for activities after Covid-19 and new members joined. The Senior Center held an Open House in 2022 that was extremely successful for new residents to learn about our center, meet other members, enjoy a day at the center, and join in on the fun. The center entered a float in the Christmas Jubilee Parade in 2022 as well, which was a great opportunity to get involved in the community and advertise for new members. We hope to hire a new recreation aide this year, continue to provide our members with quality programs, events, and recreational opportunities, and grow our memberships. The Parks and Recreation department staff are looking forward to the success of 2023.

MAINTENANCE

The Parks and Recreation Maintenance Division became fully staffed this year with six Park Maintenance Workers, one Park Maintenance Crew Leader and one Park Operations Coordinator.

At Woofstock Park, a large-scale drainage project for the large breed and small breed sections of Woofstock Dog Park was completed, and new mulch was put down on both areas. The project has relieved the drainage problems that existed. Future projects at Woofstock Park include the addition of ten more parking spaces in the small breed section parking lot.

The kayak launch at Rope Mill Park was washed downstream, in late 2021, by fast moving flood waters and was damaged extensively. A replacement kayak launch was set up this year and cables were added to secure the launch to the bank to prevent this from reoccurring.

A new clock was installed within The Park at City Center and is a beautiful addition to the hometown feel of the park. The fountain received a facelift with a new interior paint coat and replacement of a pump.

Dupree Park received the most transformations this year with the addition of six new pickleball courts and two new tennis courts, including a new fence, benches, and LED lights with timers. The maintenance team worked to correct erosion along the shoreline by adding mulch, rip rap, boulders, and shrubbery. The project has been successful in slowing the shoreline deterioration and a deterrent for the ducks. In December, three new mountain bike features were added to the Family Mountain Bike trails. The ramps

include two new rollers and a split decision feature, allowing riders to decide whether to take the straight ladder or to go left and ride off the drop. This will be a fun addition to the trails!

The maintenance department completed additional projects throughout the year to enhance the park and facilities amenities. The construction of twelve new garden plots was completed in early spring to allow for additional community garden participation. The senior center received two raised garden beds to benefit their new gardening program. At the Downtown playground, new fencing was installed, and fresh mulch added. New water bottle filling stations were added at Rope Mill Park, Dupree Park and Woofstock Park. To further efforts to maintain cleanliness at our park restrooms, time locks were added to restroom doors at Dupree Park, Rope Mill Park, Northside Cherokee Amphitheater and the Downtown restrooms.

Future projects include the addition of a restroom building at the Dupree Park tennis and pickleball courts, a new maintenance facility, extension of the Rubes Creek Trail and Trestle Rock trail, and construction of Little River Park.

ADMINISTRATION

Personnel Highlights

Admin Team: The City announced the hiring of a new Director, Brian Borden!
Brian Borden – New Hire (2023), Heather Gaddis- 19 Years of Service

Recreation Team: The senior center hired a new Recreation Specialist and Bus Driver!
Marybeth Stockdale- 16 Years of Service, Jamey Snyder- 9 Years of Service, Julie Markley- 1 Year of Service, and new hires- Heather Gilliland and James James

Maintenance Team: We have a fully staffed maintenance team!
Jeff Armstrong- 16 Years of Service, Brad Baker- 3 Years of Service, Ryan Gobie- 8 Years of Service
Torie Lindley- 2 Years of Service, Kelvin Jones- 1 Year of Service and newly hired employees- Dillon Morgan, Grant Wiseman and Brian Lagasse

Professional Memberships

National Recreation and Parks Association- Premier Agency Membership and CAPRA Accredited
Georgia Recreation and Parks Association- Agency Membership and District 5 Membership
Southeast Festival and Events Association- Marybeth Stockdale
Event Safety Alliance- Marybeth Stockdale
Supporter of Leave No Trace

Training

CPR/AED Training and Renewals

Leave No Trace Training- Instructed by Jamey Snyder - All department personnel

Nine out of ten people who visit the outdoors are uninformed about Leave No Trace and minimizing their impacts. Leave No Trace training is helping to instill an outdoor ethic in all those who enjoy spending time outside. At the core of these trainings are the Seven Principles of Leave No Trace.

ATSSA Flagger Certification- Maintenance Team

A comprehensive skill building training class that meets Georgia DOT and Federal requirements for training. The course trains personnel to provide safe temporary traffic operations during work on the roadway.

GRPA Maintenance Management School Year 1 – Brad Baker

Comprehensive Training for your Maintenance Personnel

The GRPA Maintenance Management School has been in existence for over a decade and continues to offer the highest quality training for maintenance personnel employed by parks and recreation agencies. Experts from both the public and private sector teach classes on a broad range of maintenance-related topics. Classroom direction and hands-on experiences are used to provide the best possible learning environment.

NRPA Communications and Marketing Certificate Program- Marybeth Stockdale

The [NRPA Marketing and Communications Certificate](#) provides park and recreation professionals with the knowledge, skills and strategies needed to build and execute effective park and recreation marketing and communications campaigns that will help you better connect with your community. By completing this four-course online certificate program, you will gain the skills necessary to:

- Develop strong marketing and communications plans designed specifically for parks and recreation.
- Conduct market research and analysis to help identify your community's needs and how to reach them.
- Align your marketing and communications efforts with your agency's strategic plan, mission and values.
- Identify proper evaluation and reporting strategies that will help inform future marketing strategies.

Certification Renewals – CPRP- Heather Gaddis, Marybeth Stockdale, Jamey Snyder

The Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) certification is the national standard for all parks and recreation professionals who want to be at the forefront of their profession. Attaining the CPRP designation shows that you have met education and experience qualifications, and illustrates your commitment to the profession as well as your knowledge and understanding of key concepts within parks and recreation.

Notary Public Renewal – Heather Gaddis

GRPA Maintenance Field Day – Maintenance Team- Included Field Education Sessions and Vendor

Product Demonstrations- Education Sessions Included: Infield Maintenance, Equipment Maintenance, Playground Safety, Lake Management, Tennis Court Maintenance, Electrical Basics, Trail Maintenance, Emergency Location Markers, Irrigation Maintenance, Basic Plumbing

GMA Diversity Equity and Inclusion Training- Heather Gaddis, Marybeth Stockdale, Jamey Snyder, Jeff Armstrong, Julie Markley, Heather Gilliland

CAPRA Accreditation Webinar Series- Heather Gaddis, Marybeth Stockdale

What is CAPRA? What does it mean to become CAPRA Accredited? Participate in this webinar series — whether you are a professional, represent an agency or are a visitor (new and renewing) — to learn the answers to these questions and more. Information covered will help park and recreation professionals prepare to participate in the CAPRA process and visitors to serve on visit teams. The webinar series will

cover a general overview of CAPRA and the accreditation process; the 10 sections of the CAPRA National Standards; guidelines for creating your self-assessment report and collecting your evidence of compliance; responsibilities of reviewers and visit team members; things to expect with your agency's site or virtual visit; ways to get involved in CAPRA; and a list of resources to help you along the way.

IT Security Awareness Training- Completed by all personnel with City emails

First Aid Training – Instructed by Jamey Snyder - PT Seasonal Recreation Aides

Reservations and Community Programs

The Chambers at City Center

The Chambers at City Center hosted 14 public input meetings, 9 homeowner association meetings, 5 rentals for private groups for trainings, 31 city department reservations, monthly Planning and Zoning Board and Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meetings, 7 INWDSTK meetings, 3 Chamber of Commerce Regional Issues meetings, and 20 events and meetings for Woodstock Arts. The total utilizations this year is 113.

Dupree Park Pavilion Rentals

Dupree Park pavilion rentals began in March of 2022. The pavilions hosted 65 reservations this year and 2 City of Woodstock employee picnics.

Blood Drives

The city partnered with LifeSouth to host 2 community blood drives with 26 donors; collecting enough units to save 72 lives.

Commemorative Bricks

21 Commemorative Bricks were installed at The Park at City Center.

The commemorative brick program was established in 1997, in celebration of the City's centennial. The program is an opportunity to enrich the lifestyle of the City of Woodstock residents. The program helps beautify the city and enables individuals, companies, and organizations to honor someone. The purchase of a commemorative brick includes a custom engraved brick placed around the fountain in The Park at City Center, a brick locator map, and a certificate.