



STAFF REPORT

TO: Parks & Recreation Commission

FROM: Sierra Hietala, Recreation Coordinator
Bryce Shearen, CPRP, Parks & Recreation/Community Services Director

DATE: June 2, 2022

RE: Recreation Updates

ACTION REQUESTED

Informational Update. No action is requested.

BACKGROUND

Program & Event Recap:

- *Arbor Day:* City staff hosted the annual Arbor Day celebration on Friday, May 6 at 1:00 p.m. This year we had three schools in attendance, which ended up being about 100 kids. We included a word from the mayor and Parks and Recreation staff, a few songs from the 4th graders, a tree planting, and refreshments afterward. We received lots of positive feedback, and we look forward to hosting again next year.
- *5K Sap Run:* The 2022 5K Sap Run took place May 7 at Lake Gervais. We had a total of 100 participants sign up for the race, which is almost double since the first year. Staff would like to thank the sponsors, runners, volunteers, and staff who assisted throughout the planning and day-of coordination. Staff sent out feedback surveys to both volunteers and runners and was welcomed with overwhelmingly positive results, and helpful ideas to implement next year.
- *City-Wide Garage Sale:* The annual City-Wide Garage Sale took place Thursday, May 19, until Saturday, May 21. We had 43 registered sales, but saw many more throughout the city! Staff heard from many residents that they are happy the City coordinates this event and others who look forward to it every year!
- *Pollinator Planting Event:* Great River Greening had a total turnout of about 45+ volunteers for the Pollinator Planting Event on May 21 at Thunder Bay. Together participants planted pollinator-friendly grasses and forbs in newly restored pockets of Thunder Bay Park. These pockets of flowers and grasses will provide a much-needed resource for pollinators moving through the corridor. Great River Greening is also hosting a Pollinator Identification event in June at Thunder Bay, which we will discuss in upcoming events.
- *Wildlife Walk:* Carpenter Nature Center (CNC) hosted a Wildlife Walk for youth ages 6-10 at Spooner Park on May 21! Participants enjoyed a guided hike through Spooner with a Naturalist from CNC. Youth learned how to identify local plants and animals, how to use their brand-new binoculars, and met the Nature Center's Animal Ambassadors (including the Barred Owl)! Staff received glowing feedback from parents/guardians and hopes to continue this program in the future.
- *T-Ball:* Four teams were formed this summer for the T-Ball program. Practices have begun and games are scheduled to start on June 2.

Upcoming Recreation:

- *Little Canada Farmers Market:* Staff is excited to begin the Little Canada Farmers Market next Monday. The Market season is Mondays, June 6-October 3, from 2-6 PM at 2920 Rice Street.

This year we have 14 vendors, who are listed below:

- The Farm of Minnesota- Organic produce
- Vang Family Farm- Produce
- Yang Produce- Produce
- Heide Family Farm- Eggs, chicken, bread, canned goods
- R & R Cultivation- Gourmet Mushrooms
- Wonder Paper Art- Pop-up cards
- Svihel Vegetable Farm- Produce and honey
- Try to Keep it Clean- Hand-crafted soaps, lotions, and more
- Norte Café Roasters- Bags of Columbian Coffee
- Wisconsin Cheese Outlet- Wisconsin cheese, pickled foods, and corn
- Sarah May's Self-Care- Self-care products like salts, lotions, body butter, lip balm, and more
- Roobibs- baby bibs, burp cloths, baby clothes
- Kettle Corn- Freshly made kettle corn
- Master Gardener- Bill Suchy

The Farmers Market is now accepting SNAP/EBT and WIC and is implementing the Power of Produce, which is a youth-focused program for ages 4-12. Each youth participant who signs up will receive a \$2 token which can be used to purchase fresh fruits or vegetables from our vendors. Our goal with the Power of Produce is to encourage family participation at the market and inspire youth to make healthy food choices. Thank you to the LCRA who is sponsoring the Power of Produce this year. We look forward to increasing our Farmers Market visitors by providing different payment options for our residents.

- *Rondeau Park Subcommittee Meeting:* On May 19 the Rondeau Park Subcommittee met to discuss the Rondeau Park community build. Staff has completed the SignUpGenius for volunteers, and committee members are working on handing out flyers to residents who are close to Rondeau and will get the information posted on the website and social media.



Volunteer Sign Up for Rondeau
Park Community Build

- *Ice Cream Social & Movies in the Park:* City Staff is excited to announce the schedule for the 2022 Ice Cream Social which takes place on July 28, 2022, from 6-8 PM.
 - 6:00 - 7:00 PM- LCFD Fire Truck
 - 6:00 – 8:00 PM- Ice Cream from Culvers

- 6:15 - 6:45 PM- Magician
- 7:00 - 7:45 PM- Live Music by Will Hale and the Tadpole Parade

Following the Ice Cream Social, we will host Movies in the Park on softball field 5, which will begin at Dusk. The family-friendly movie for July is Sing 2. Sing 2 was chosen by local fourth graders, and was a unanimous vote!

- *Adult Programs:* Upcoming adult programs include:
 - *Master Gardener-* Be a pest detective – July 7
 - *Defensive Drivers Refresher Courses* – July 11 & July 12

Youth programs include:

- *Archery Lessons*
- *Adult Trips:* Staff has been extended an invitation to join an Adult Trip group with surrounding cities. Residents can keep an eye on the newsletter for upcoming Adult Trips.

General:

- *Rondeau Park:* Most of the site work including grading and stormwater enhancements has been completed and the concrete path, bench pads, and bike rack area have been poured. The trails are scheduled to be paved next week and landscaping and turf restoration are to follow. The shelter installation date is yet to be determined, but everything is on track for the site to be ready for the community build in mid-July.
- *Gervais Mill Park:* We are still waiting for a final review from the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office, but have received word from the MnDNR that due to the delay they will allow the City to move forward with the grant agreement. We are hoping to get those documents signed soon and can get the project out to bid.
- *Goats:* The goats are scheduled to return to Spooner Park this weekend.