



++ Parks & Recreation
++ Annual Report
++ 2022-2023



Prepared By ++
Shore Strategies, LLC ++
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Letter from the Director



Kent County
Commissioners
Ronald H. Fithian
President

Kent County Parks and Recreation is pleased to present our 2023 Annual report. I want to express sincere gratitude to everyone involved in Parks and Recreation through 2023 as we continue to provide high quality programming and facilities for everyone to enjoy.

Albert H. Nickerson
John F. Price
Shelley Heller
County Administrator

We welcomed several new staff members to our team over the past 12 months, and I am excited to be working with a dedicated visionary team who continuously strive to implement innovative and thoughtful approaches to programming, operations, and safety. We intentionally design programs and experiences that foster a sense of belonging, engaging our diverse community by focusing on our natural human need for play and social connections.

Parks & Recreation
Advisory Board
James "Greg" Welch Jr.
Chair

During my first full year as Director for the Department, I worked closely with the team to develop goals and aspirations, to provide:

Richard "Rick" Myers
Vice Chair
Faye Little
Member
Mary Fisher
Member
Joyce Moody
Member

- Excellent customer service in a welcoming/friendly environment in partnership with other community partners
- Broad distribution of program information to keep the community informed
- A variety of environmental, health, wellness, aquatics, and sports programs for youth, teens, adults, and seniors

Trish McGee
Board of Ed Member
Jane Welsh
Member
Drew Davis

Looking to the future, Kent County Parks and Recreation aims to increase public awareness of our programs, events, and outings. We will showcase our mission and values through diverse programming and increased collaboration. We will continue to welcome partnerships with organizations, non-profits, and other agencies to enhance our programming and build community engagement, and awareness of all Parks and Recreation has to offer.

Student Representative
Melissa Landon
Student Representative
Albert H. Dickerson

We would especially like to thank our Commissioners, Advisory Board, and County Administrator for their continued support in making recreational opportunities available throughout the County.

County Commissioner
Jillyn Coleman,
Director

We look forward to seeing you at one of our parks, facilities, or programs soon. Please follow us on social media and/or sign up for updates at kentparksandrec.org, as we have lots of great things happening and we want to share it all with you!

Parks & Recreation
Dan Mattson
Deputy Director
Public Works

Jill Coleman,

Jill Coleman, Director

Our Team

Recreation Team



Recreation Program Team

Sandy Adams, Haili Walbert, Marva Kumpf, Heidi Haigis,
Tara Barns-Short, Jessica Plum, Michelle Morgan

Parks Team

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Department of Public Works Team

Greg Welsh, Jr, Patrick Collihan, Dan Mattson, Mark
Dixon, Adrian Dean, Denny Dalrymple

The programs, parks, and facilities provided by Kent County are possible because of the dedicated team of recreation and parks professionals. While the Recreation Team (from Parks & Recreation) coordinates 100+ programs annually, the Parks Team (from the Department of Public Works) is responsible for the maintenance of Kent County's 289 acres of parks and open space.

Vision & Mission

Vision

To become a leading-edge provider of recreational services that create community through people, parks, and programs.

Mission

To create balanced opportunities for our patrons to play, learn, and grow through our programs and parks.

Department Goals

- Enhance existing and provide new recreational programs to meet the recreational needs of all County residents.
- Provide for the varied recreational needs and interests of citizens and visitors in Kent County by developing and enhancing parks and recreation facilities throughout the County.
- Enhance and promote the preservation and recreational use of public open space and natural resources.
- Increase opportunities for youth to be actively engaged in their communities and the natural environment.
- Recruit, retain, and reward a workforce of committed, passionate parks and recreation professionals.



++ Program Growth & ++ Expansion

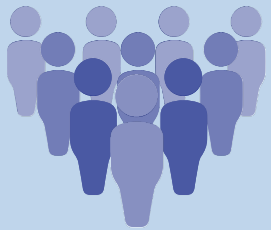
In 2023, KCPR offered a total of 103 programs for all ages. Responding to community demand, KCPR's program staff focused on expanding recreational programming. Highlights include Kent's Youth Indoor Soccer Program that attracted 90 youngsters, 4 to 12 years old, for a skills development program. Aspiring young players have also widened the department's volleyball program. Building on its co-ed youth sand volleyball league, KCPR's youth league provides a foundation for young athletes interested in high school play.

New programs in 2023 included:

- Beach Volleyball
- Boys & Girls Club Teen Hub
- Extended Holiday Camp Days
- Fall Adult Softball
- Gymnastics Open Play
- Softball Little League
- Summer Softball Drills Clinic
- Volleyball Clinics
- Volleyball Drills and Skills
- Volleyball League
- WAC Basketball Clinics
- WAC Field Hockey Clinics
- WAC Softball Clinics
- Youth Indoor Soccer



Recreation by the Numbers



1351

Total Program Participation



103

Programs Offered



30

Scholarships Provided



180

Summer Camp and After School Program Participants



243

Recreational KCPR Sports League Participants



671

Community Center Individual Memberships



2000+

Community Event Attendees



15

Community Events

Parks & Facilities

The flagship of Kent County’s parks and recreation facilities is the Kent County Community Center and Pool in Worton. Situated next to Kent County High School, the Community Center is a recreational hotspot for the county, hosting literally hundreds of games and activities for players and their fans throughout the year.

In 2023, 671 individuals held annual memberships at the Community Center. Memberships allow individuals to access the Community Center for various activities from camps to pickleball to pool use in the Summer months. The Community Center also offers nonprofits a group membership to bring groups to use the facility.

Swimming is Cool in Kent
KCPR offers children, individuals, and families access to an array of swimming options at the Community Center, Bayside and Millington Pools, as well as Betterton Beach. In total, there were 31,630 visits to Kent County swimming facilities:

- KCCC Pool: 10,282
- Bayside Pool: 988
- Millington Pool: 2,122
- Betterton Beach: 18,238



In addition to using its athletic fields and facilities to directly provide hundreds of hours of programming opportunities for Kent County residents, the county also makes facilities available for private rentals. In 2023, there were a total of 181 rentals at our parks and recreation facilities, including:

- Pavilions: 49
- Community Center: 114
- Athletic Fields: 6
- Pools: 12



Capital Investments & Improvements



Local investment combined with the State of Maryland's Program Open Space and Local Parks & Playground Initiative funding resulted in \$675,509 and the opportunity for significant rehabilitation and replacement projects in 2023.



Worton Park

- Retrofitted lights (LED lighting for Baseball field and Lighted Multipurpose field at Worton Park) \$372,594
- Replaced playground equipment and swings \$105,290
- Replaced pavilion roof \$15,760



Millington Park

- Replaced tennis courts and included addition of pickleball lines
- Replaced basketball post, backboard, and half court lines
- Repaved parking area and rerouted entrance \$148,265

Edesville Park



- Installed a new swing set \$9,700



Betterton Beach

- Installed a new roof at Betterton Beach Pavilion \$14,550

Bayside Pool

- Installed slip proof flooring in bathhouse \$4,500



Partnerships

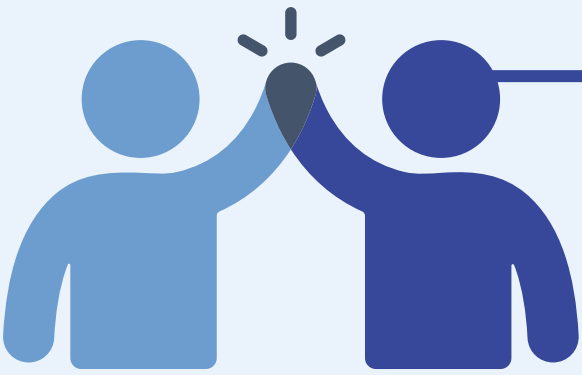
Among its goals for 2023, the KCPR team focused on enhancing and expanding its collaboration with other community organizations that are also committed to the health and wellbeing of Kent County residents. Through these partnerships, KCPR has connected with residents of all ages. From pre-school activities with Kent County Judy Center and the Kent Family Center, to afterschool programs with Minary's Dream Alliance and Boys & Girls Club of Harford & Cecil Counties, to youth sports clinics with Washington College, KCPR is continuously looking for new and creative ways to bring more opportunities to Kent residents.



2023 Partners

- Animal Care Shelter of Kent County
- Boys & Girls Club of Harford & Cecil Counties
- Chestertown Volunteer Fire Company
- Friends of East Neck Island
- Kent County Health Department
- Kent County Judy Center (Galena, Garnet, and Rock Hall)
- Kent County Public Library
- Kent County Public Schools
- Kent County Sheriff's Office
- Kent County Spartans Football & Cheer
- Kent Family Center
- Kent Goes Purple
- Kent Museum
- Lion's Club
- Lockbriar Farms
- MD Snap-Education
- Minary's Dream Alliance
- Queen Anne's County Parks & Recreation
- Recovery in Motion
- Shore Elite Wrestling
- Tip-Top Tots
- Washington College Men's & Women's Basketball Teams
- Washington College Men's & Women's Soccer Teams
- Washington College Softball Team
- Washington College Women's Field Hockey Team





Partner Spotlight



Wayne Gilchrest

Wayne Gilchrest has built a lifetime of sharing his love of Kent County's natural environments with Kent County residents. As a teacher, a legislator, and a local environmental advocate and outdoorsman, Wayne currently volunteers for Kent County Parks & Recreation to lead a monthly Senior Hike, September through May. On the second Tuesday of the month, a group of 5 to 18 outdoor enthusiasts gather at the Sassafras Natural Resource Management Area to hike together at various locations on state and county natural areas.



While there are no specific themes for the hikes, Wayne encourages discussions based on various natural and historical landmarks along the trail. "For example," explains Jessica Plummer, Program Coordinator for KCPR, "a stop to look at a beaver dam can lead to a mini lesson about beaver habitat and discussion of the beavers' role in the environment."



KCPR relies on volunteers to offer many of the programs in its parks and facilities and is thankful for Wayne and others for all they do for their community. Hike on, Wayne!

Community Events



Teen Luau

During 2023, the Kent County Parks and Recreation Team provided activities for kids, youth, and families and we didn't forget the dogs either. More than 2,000 individuals, and a few dogs, enjoyed a range of events. Highlighted are just a few.



Fall Harvest



Betterton Beach Clean Up



+ + + +
+ + + +

Fishing Derby



Doggie Poolooza



2023

Year in Review



Kent County
MARYLAND
Parks & Recreation