

ASHEVILLE

Parks & Recreation



Annual Report 2013-2014



Table of Contents

Letter from the Director.....	2
Recreation and Community Programming	3 – 4
Facility Enhancements	5
WNC Nature Center – Vision Plan of 2020.....	6
Planning and Development.....	7 - 8
Public Projects.....	9
Staff.....	10
Partnerships.....	11 - 12

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Letter from the Director...

On behalf of the City of Asheville Parks and Recreation Department, I am happy to present the 2013-2014 Annual Report. This has been quite a year for our department! The year was filled with change, a staffing re-structure, embracing new roles, introducing new programs, and notably after 35 years saying farewell to the Bele Chere festival. All of these changes lay the groundwork for improving and redefining who we are, and how we connect with our community.

During the year, our recreation center staff sought and obtained national certifications, attended trainings, seminars and programs that aim to raise the bar for the quality our citizens have come to expect. At the North Carolina Recreation and Park Association Conference, our Therapeutic Recreation (TR) Program won the "Best New TR Program Award" for Therapeutic Recreation and Drums. Whether national, state, or locally trained, all of these efforts go into making us better, and make a better offering for our citizens. Our efforts reap tremendous rewards for the Parks and Recreation staff and the population we serve.

The recreational needs of today are certainly different than the needs of 50 years ago, but one thing remains the same: the need for a safe recreational experience. We offer a safe environment for the citizens of Asheville; one that is affordable and diverse, and that enriches and nourishes. Recreational pursuits of all kinds are available to all ages and abilities. We are focused on improving the safety and accessibility of our parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers.

We will continue to strive to make Asheville Parks and Recreation Department the first place you look for quality and affordable recreation experiences and programs.



Our mission is to enhance your quality of life by providing diverse cultural and recreation experiences.

Roderick Simmons, Director

Recreation and Community Programming

*“It is in his pleasure that a man really lives; it is from his leisure that he constructs the true fabric of self.”
~Agnes Repplier~*

Our goal is to provide Asheville’s citizens with a quality, safe recreation experience. Through our Facebook account citizens can be more connected to us; more aware of all we have to offer, and most important – an opportunity to create and engage in a dialogue with the department.



www.facebook.com/APRCA

The Department participated in the Summer Camp Expo for the first time this year and distributed new marketing materials. Informing the community of our affordable, quality programs is helping to identify our Department as the first choice for recreation. The programs and services we produce are made better when there is communication and collaboration with the community.



New programs:

Glass Work at Harvest House
Beyond-the-Page Comic Camp
Parking Lot Picasso Camp

Zumba/Line Dance



Breakfast with Santa



Youth Volleyball



Therapeutic Recreation and Drums (TRAD)



Youth Garden and Healthy Eating



FITKids Asheville

FITKids
AT Stephens-Lee Community Center



Beyond the Page Comics Camp

Lake Eden Arts Festival (LEAF) Club

Facility Enhancements

Investing resources into facility enhancements is necessary to maintain community assets and to improve the customer experience. This year, we made several key improvements to ball fields, recreation centers, and safety.

Montford Recreation Center Gymnasium Improvements



- Six new ball field scoreboards
- New batting cages at West Asheville Park
- 4 new sound systems in recreation centers
- New and updated security camera systems
- 2 new gymnasium floors in recreation centers

Riverside Cemetery



Riverside Cemetery was featured in American Cemetery Magazine, awarded a Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence, and voted the best cemetery in Western North Carolina in the Mountain Xpress poll. The cemetery also launched a new website, which includes all the information from a recent Geographic Information Systems (GIS) study and a more user friendly format for both desktops and mobile devices. Information from the ground penetrating study was used to open two new sections with more than 300 new gravesites.



WNC Nature Center

Red Wolf/Arachnid Adventure



Funded through the US Fish and Wildlife, Friends of the Nature Center, and the State of North Carolina, the newly renovated red wolf exhibit give guests a chance to learn more about the conservation history of the world's most endangered *canid*. Presently, less than 400 red wolves are alive today, with fewer than 200 in the wild. Since 2005, the Nature Center has had seven red wolf pups. The experience features new viewing areas, upgraded interpretive elements, a new accessible boardwalk up to the exhibit area and a new spider-themed "Arachnid Adventure" playground.



Hellbender Exhibit



The Hellbender is the largest species of salamander in North America and is the third largest species in the world. They can be found in cold, fast moving streams throughout the Eastern US including many areas in and around the Asheville area. Funded through Friends of the Nature Center and the Glass Foundation, the Nature Center added an exciting new exhibit for Hellbenders and northern brook trout. The custom designed, 200-gallon aquarium allows guest to view these incredible animals from all angles. Behind the scenes state of the art life support system allow staff to make rapid water changes and to increase/decrease turbidity in the water flow.



Planning and Development

Accessibility Audit and Transition Plan

The Accessibility Audit and Transition Plan was completed to determine compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The final report identified over 6,000 physical barriers among all 63 parks, special facilities, recreation centers, and greenways. In addition, the audit allowed the development of an ADA Transition Plan that seeks to selectively remove existing barriers, make one in three programs accessible and develop a schedule for the implementation of the plan and identify funding sources.



Montford Center Complex Master Plan



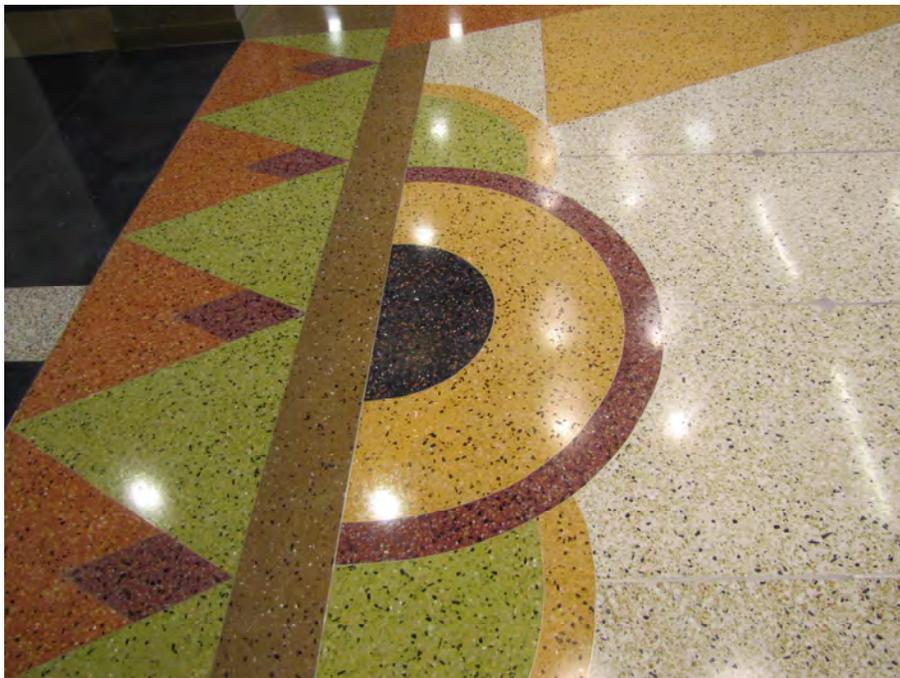
Montford Complex Master Plan identifies the highest and best use for the park. Consultants completed a site inventory and analysis, programming and facility needs, and concept development. Public open-house meetings were held to help create a final plan that addresses site issues such as vehicular and pedestrian circulation, lighting, and security; and plans for improvements to existing facilities (basketball, ball field) and new facilities (playground, arrival plazas, restroom facilities).

"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work."

~ Daniel Hudson Burnham ~

Public Art

As part of the major renovation to Asheville's US Cellular Center, the terrazzo floor artwork, 'Rhythm of Time' was installed in the lobby floor. The colorful, art deco image was created by Arizona artist Joan Weissman, and installed by the third generation of Asheville Tile and installer of the original Civic Center Terrazzo floor. The floor and the vibrant colors created a stunning public art feature the community can be proud of.



Staff

The Parks and Recreation Department is fortunate to have many trained professionals all working to create quality recreation experiences. From State-level recognition for program development, completion of advanced degrees, and participation in courses and workshops, our staff is dedicated to continuous improvement and professional development.



Professional accomplishments, certifications, and program recognitions:

Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist

Certified Personal Trainer

First Aid and CPR

Licensed Recreational Therapist

Masters in Public Administration

WNC Tennis Coach of the Year



Attendance and Development:

Adapted Aquatics Workshop

Behavior Modification Workshop

Customer Service Workshop

Leading by Strengths Workshop

National Afterschool Conference

North Carolina Parks & Recreation-Therapeutic Recreation Section Conference

North Carolina Recreation and Park Association Region 9 State Officer

North Carolina Recreational Therapy Association Conference

Parks and Recreation Maintenance Management School



Volunteers and Partnerships

Our success would not be possible without the assistance of the many volunteers, partners, and sponsors who believe in our mission. This year, our volunteers, partners and sponsors donated time and resources to help improve our dog parks, develop the next tennis phenomenon, and develop new greenways. With their help we are able to expand the world view of children through nutrition and literacy, and to make a mad dash for Easter eggs. They provide us with the means to have a safe and relaxing walk along the river, to have wide open space in which to run with man's best friend, and a place to have a Tom Sawyer moment while fishing off the pier.

This year volunteers donated 23,900 hours to help children at recreation centers, assist at Senior Games, feed animals at the WNC Nature Center, and help run tennis clinics at Aston Park Tennis Center. All of this time is valuable and is the equivalent of \$432,590!

Thank you to all of those individuals and businesses that continue to help provide quality and diverse recreation experiences and programs.

City Council appointed Recreation Advisory Board

Hutch Kerns, Chair
Josh O'Conner, Vice Chair
Todd Dunnuck
Ashley Arrington
Barry Mundt
Bob Pierce
Kimberly Reed
Patrick Dennehy
Wayne Wheeler, past Chair
Mildred Nance-Carson
Jordan Veale
John Parrish



Pete Wall, Roderick Simmons, and Wayne Wheeler at the ribbon cutting ceremony at Montford Recreation Center

Welcome to our new partners and sponsors

Asheville Housing Authority Resident Council
Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity
Achievement (ABIPA)
East of Riverway Initiative
Friends of Hominy Creek Greenway
Grove Park Sunset Mountain Neighborhood
Association
Mission Hospital

Nestle Purina Pet Care Company
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission
United States Tennis Association
University of North Carolina Asheville
Foundation
Velosports
Western Carolina University



As always, we are thankful for our ongoing partners and our hardworking and selfless volunteers

Asheville Buncombe Youth Soccer Association
Asheville Parks and Greenways Foundation
Beloved
Big Brothers and Sisters
Bojangles
Buncombe County Council on Aging
Downtown Area Neighborhood Residents
Friends of the Nature Center

LEAF Community Arts
Men's Garden Club of Asheville
Montford Neighborhood Association
Pope Golf
Recreation Advisory Board
Shiloh Community Association
United States Fish and Wildlife
Vet Rec Program
YMCA





Asheville Parks and Recreation Summer Staff 2014