



## Parks Commission Recreation - Report 4/9/2025

### **Happening at Community Centers**

Dunbar is getting roof work and painting in parts of the building. West Central baseball field is under construction it will be state of the art once done. East Little Rock, Southwest & Stephens Community Centers renovations are still in progress...These centers are being updated with flooring, lights, painting and an overall brighter and appealing look!!!

\*\*With all that is going on each center hosted a Spring Break week that included daily activities and off-site outing and trips to various events/places such as Movie, Old State House, MacArthur Park and Museum, Kanis Park and Larry's Pizza.

### **Therapeutic Recreation**

Participants of the Time Out for TR program visited Blanchard Springs Caverns on March 21st. This was the first experience for all but one participant. There were 9 participants attending. The goal of this program was to offer new experiences to those involved. The outing was a great success.

### **Aging & Active**

The Aging & Active program held their St. Patrick's Day activities. East Little Rock had "Show N Tell" Day where they brought something unique to talk about. Southwest Seniors has a quilting class and completed their first quilt.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Outdoor Recreation will help plan and oversee the Parks Summer Day Camp program (formerly called the Summer Playground Program. Programs will include archery, fishing, bike safety and camping 101 skills development

### **Rebsamen Tennis**

March is the month that things begin to really move at the tennis center with the weather getting better. But due to dry conditions there was a fire on Wednesday, March 19 in the woods behind courts 8-12. We had to evacuate the facility around 5:00 PM as the fire approached the back of courts 9-12. Fire department were able to get the fire out right before it got to those courts. We lost a few windscreens on those courts but were overall pretty lucky as it could have been much worse. The area is very burnt back in those woods that stretch towards Boyle Park Rd. It continued to smolder for several days but got better each day.

### **First-Tee Golf**

We are collaborating with both the director and deputy director to devise a design for a cart storage building on our premises to ensure the secure housing of our golf carts overnight. Additionally, we have placed an order for new maintenance equipment, which is vital for upholding the quality of our turf. We have opted to return to a reservation book system for our tee times. This decision, reached in consultation with the facility supervisor at Rebsamen and I, is projected to save us over \$7,000 annually in operating costs.



## Parks Commission – Recreation Report 3/12/2025

### Dunbar Community Center

#### **After School Programs**

The after-school program at Dunbar Community Center includes our homework and activity program and basketball. Our programs have remained steady in attendance and revenue.

#### **Outdoor Youth Programs**

Spring programs include soccer, t-ball and baseball. Dunbar goal is to have enough for all teams in all sports.

#### **Spring Break**

Students were given an opportunity to go on various filed trip over the spring break period. Trips included a visit to a park for a lunch outing, bowling, and movies.

The after-school program at Dunbar Community Center includes our homework and activity program and basketball. Our programs have remained steady in attendance and revenue. Participants in each program could receive instruction from our on-hand instructors and learn the value of each recreational program. Students went to the Mosaic Templers center for a tour in honor of black history month.

Dunbar youth and Stephens teamed up to do a black history program as well.

### Stephens Community Center

#### **Star Student Program:**

The Star Student Afterschool Program is coming along just fine. We have 40 registered participants (80%). During Spring Break, the participants were treated to fun trips to the Movie, Old State House, MacArthur Park and Museum, Kanis Park and Larry's Pizza. We had a Fun Week.

#### **Youth Sports Program**

Programs for the Spring are Soccer, Baseball and T-Ball. We have 4 teams for Soccer.

#### **Adult Activities:**

The Men's 40 & Over League is right around the corner, we're getting ready for it. We are still waiting for the center to open.

#### **Facility Vacancies:**

1-Programmer, 2-Activity Assistants, 2-Part-Time Custodian or 1-Full Time Custodian.

#### **Maintenance:**

We are on the Reno stage which is an ongoing process. There has been a canopy placed over the back door, work done on the gym floor, bathrooms, the inside door removed, the front counter is up, a new Fire Extinguisher installed, order placed for Bleachers, Wall Padding has been done and Baseboard Trim needs to be done. Work Orders placed for Service on the Alarm, Security System and Phones.

### West Central Community Center

#### **Youth Sports Program:**

West Central has approximately 44 participants in our upcoming soccer program. We have 6 teams that will compete in the league. We hosted spring break camp March 24 – 28, 2025. Students were able to

attend the movies, first tee golf, McArthur Museum and the library. They also participated in various on-site activities.

**Karate/Dance:** The Karate and Dance programs have resumed, and participants are paying their monthly dues. Right now, we have approximately 10 in each class. The Karate is preparing for a competition on April 26 in St. Louis, Mo.

**West Central CC:**

Renovations for the baseball fields have begun. We are redecorating the gym with park and recreation logos. We have hosted training sessions for Park and Recreation and Human Resources this month.

4 neighborhood association meetings and two community program meetings.

Baseball/tee ball sign-ups have begun and will be played this year at interstate park.

**Rentals:**

The center had a total of 10 rentals for the month.

**Maintenance:**

We have work requests turned in for lights in certain areas of the building and new decal posters.

**Employment:**

We have a concessionaire, activity assistant and evening front desk receptionist to hire.

Currently looking at applications.

**Southwest Community Center**

**Youth Programs:** The afterschool Star Student Program enrollment numbers remain low, but we hope to see the increase seeing that our afterschool transportation Pilot program has begun. Our youth programs are down in enrollment at the time due to the renovation and construction going on at the facility.

**Youth Athletics:** We had a total of 6 soccer teams registered in the youth soccer league, our cheerleaders continue to shine in the community track and field and football has opened and recruiting at the schools, neighborhoods and surrounding areas.

**Adult Athletics:** Dance workout is held every Tuesday and Thursday 6pm-7pm averaging 30 participants regularly. We now offer low impact senior workout via video in which the numbers have grown to 15 participants aging from 50+.

**Special Events:** Due to renovations and construction all special events have been held on hold until the facilities are complete.

**ELR Community Center**

As the weather improves so does the park use, there have been several individuals utilizing the tennis court area for tennis and skating. Renovation is going well and nearing the end Looking forward to the overall completed project. Urban Forestry lifted the limbs on the back side of the building (looks GREAT) and LR Parks Crew took out hedges around the complex (waiting for removal of both). Maintenance continues to mow, weed eat, and pick up around the entire grounds. Horticulture maintains and mulch the flower islands as needed. Continuing to assist supervisor, help with Active & Aging program and attend various meetings as scheduled. Little Rock Police Department continue to use the back area/field for their dog training, (weather permitting). The community groups are still using the outdoor basketball/tennis courts and other areas to do exercises and fitness as the weather permits. They are there 4 to 5 days per week, with about 7 - 9 people. There is still some use of the field/park...daily/weekends, family gatherings, tennis court (hopefully to be refurbished as multi-use courts) for walking and playing matches, and other activities.

**Senior Programs: Active and Aging**

**\*\* Membership February – December \$1.50 per month. Registration at all sites will be continuous.**

The Aging & Active program held their St. Patrick's Day activities. East Little Rock had "Show n Tell" Day where they brought something unique to talk about. Southwest Seniors has a quilting class and completed their first quilt. All sites are preparing for their upcoming activities for the month of April which will include some fun Easter activities. Baptist Health Monthly Screening and Outreach, Sage Health, and Oak Street Clinic continues to visit the various sites. Baptist Health continues their outreach at each center monthly where they distribute healthy fresh foods. East Little Rock, Dunbar, Southwest, and West Central celebrated March Birthdays in various ways. They all also are continuing their outings, sports competition, field trips, crafts, such as bottle flowers, jewelry, decorating caps/hats, puzzles, t-shirts, and coloring.

**Dunbar Seniors:** St. Patrick's project, Music, Thursday field trips, Coloring, String Jewelry, Bingo, Senior Circle, Walking, Connect Four, Dominoes and Line Dancing Class, Bean Bag Baseball, Chair Exercise Class, and Baptist Health Outreach Monthly Screenings, Go Fish, Painting, and FUNDAY.

**East Little Rock Seniors:** St. Patrick's Day activity, Senior Fitness, Care Link workshop, Mind Bending, Silver Foxes Line Dance Class, Ceramics, Puzzles, Adult Coloring, Uno Card Game, Jewelry Making, Funtastic Friday, Nutrition Class and Funtastic Friday.

**Southwest Seniors:** St. Patrick's Day activity, Bowling, movies, Skip-Bo, Pool Competition, Card Games, Bingo, Bible Study, Chair Exercise, Walking Club, Baptist Health Speaker, Monthly Screenings and Healthy Food Outreach, Arts & Crafts, Table Games, Ring Toss, Pool, Cooking Class, Funday Friday.

**West Central Seniors:** Quilting, iPad class, table games, Pickleball, Chair Volleyball and Bean Bag Baseball games vs. Various Centers (both teams), Bean Bag Baseball Practice (both teams), Bible Study, Birthday Shout Out.

### **Therapeutic Recreation**

Participants of the Time Out for TR program visited Blanchard Springs Caverns on March 21st. This was the first experience for all but one participant. There were 9 participants attending. The goal of this program is to offer new experiences to those involved. The outing was a great success. The TR Branch Out Volunteer Crew will be volunteering with the Little Rock Zoo on Thursday, April 3rd. This is a continuous volunteer program partnership, and our participants are extremely supported and celebrated for their efforts. We appreciate the Lr Zoo staff for continuing to offer this experience. The Branch Out group is preparing for spring. We will be attending a play at Murry's Dinner Playhouse on April 2nd. This month will also include spring crafts, outdoor sports and games, Easter themed activities, a night out at the Arkansas Travelers and much more. The TR Division is in the planning stages for the 23rd Annual Therapeutic Recreation Arts Festival to be held on May 2, 2025, from 10:00am-1:00pm at the AR State Fairgrounds Hall of Industry. Currently there are 34 confirmed booth vendors which exceed our goal.

### **Jim Dailey Fitness & Aquatics**

#### **MEMBERSHIPS**

The facility seen an increase in new memberships for the month of March. The good weather played a part in that.

#### **FITNESS**

The fitness classes at Jim Dailey Fitness and Aquatic Center are performing exceptionally well. The facility has added another class, body sculpting, a class that uses weights, resistance bands, or bodyweight exercises to work different muscle groups, focusing on building lean muscle and boosting metabolism. The class is on Tuesdays and Thursdays @ 5:00 pm. Looking to add another class, it is increasing in participants.

### **SPECIAL ACTIVITIES**

\*\*The lifeguard pre-requisite swim test prep course has started in January. The class is going well. We had 4 people taking the course.

**Course Details:**

Start Date: January 19<sup>th</sup> - End Date: March 9<sup>th</sup> (dates added due to weather) Time: Sundays at 3:00 PM

**The Centre at University Park**

March was full of Fun, Excitement and Education. Spring wasn't the only thing that sprung up the month but here at The Centre at University Park was as well. Starting the month off with the work order meeting which they met twice (48), community programs (12) came in as well and had a productive meeting. NUSA has been dedicated to weekly meetings, and they met a total of three times this month (30). We had some awesome moments here this month as well, such as the LRFD having their promotional ceremony (150) the turnout was beautiful and everyone including family enjoyed every minute of it. That also brings me to the wonderful two-day training session with the procurement department, Camp Procurement (160) was very valuable and informative. Parks commission (25) is always on the up with the consistency as well as the Age friendly group (15). We had some new meetings happening this month Jennifer Glasgow (15) and Amber with the Office of Executive Administration (15) and we finished it off with some valuable information from HR (40) with Retirement benefits. Overall, the month here has come and gone with some informative and useful meetings, trainings and just gatherings. We're always excited about what's next and how we can continue to grow here at The Centre at University Park.

**Youth Athletics**

Soccer season registration took place this month and the season is set to start next month, there are 19 teams. Soccer will be played a Southwest Community Centers field. There will be the following divisions: 3 & 4 yrs old, 6 and under, 8 and under, 10 and under. The youth basketball season has ended, and all had a tremendous time, considering continued renovations. Registration is ongoing for cheerleading, and baseball/tee ball. Due to renovations at West Central field, the baseball/tee ball games will be played at Interstate Park this season. Kudos to all the staff at all centers for continuing to ensure everything is running smoothly.

**Adult Athletics**

**Interstate Park Program**

Field usage for Interstate sports complex has increased with the Sunday kickball league and Central high school team utilizing the field three. Also because of the construction of West central complex the community centers are also utilizing the sports complex along with other outside teams renting field for their practices.

**Adult Softball Program**

Interstate Adult softball has begun registration for the spring league has begun January 15, 2025, for Men, women, coed and church league. We have only two teams so far registered for our spring summer league at this time. The professional league which consisted of 15 teams last year will begin playing the first week of June.

**Summer Playground Program**

We are preparing for the summer program for 2025 in which registration will start online May 1, 2025. Met with Mike Simmons about new outdoor opportunities for the program this year.

**Allsop Park**

Allsop softball field has a total of 79 reservations as of March 26, 2025. The Hilcrest organization rents the fields for their youth baseball league.

**First Tee Golf**

As we welcome spring, we are pleased to announce our preparations for an enriching 2025 season at First Tee. We have several exciting events scheduled, starting with the spring US Kids Golf tournament on April 5. This tournament attracts young golfers and their families from across the state and neighboring regions to Central Arkansas, with an anticipated participation of over 100 individuals for this one-day event.

On April 12, the staff at First Tee of Central Arkansas will host the "Day at the Masters" tournament. During this event, each participating child is paired with a parent or guardian to play on our honors course, known for its par-three layout. This tournament is particularly special to me, as I always choose a First Tee member to partner with, ensuring a delightful experience for all involved.

Furthermore, on April 27, my team and I will conduct the Faded Rose Shootout, which will be a two-person scramble comprising 18 holes, designed to offer a day of enjoyable golf. The Faded Rose restaurant has kindly agreed to provide lunch for participants.

I would like to recognize some of our loyal patrons who recently dedicated their time to retrieving lost driving range balls from the surrounding woods. This assistance is invaluable in helping us maintain a sufficient stock of golf balls for our driving range. Additionally, this same group of gentlemen undertook the refurbishment of three benches on the golf course, replacing the wood to enhance the overall experience for our visitors. It is commendable to witness our regular customers taking such a vested interest in this cherished space.

As we receive new merchandise for our pro shop, we are excited to offer an updated selection of the latest golfing equipment, including golf balls, tees, and gloves, which are essential for the satisfaction of our clientele at First Tee.

We are collaborating with both the director and deputy director to devise a design for a cart storage building on our premises to ensure the secure housing of our golf carts overnight. Additionally, we have placed an order for new maintenance equipment, which is vital for upholding the quality of our turf. We have opted to return to a reservation book system for our tee times. This decision, reached in consultation with the facility supervisor at Rebsamen and I, is projected to save us over \$7,000 annually in operating costs.

We remain dedicated to keeping the public informed through our social media platforms regarding upcoming specials, including golf tournaments and unique events at First Tee. This year, we have established a partnership with the 2025 Golf Card, which will serve to attract new business to our facility while enhancing our marketing efforts, including radio advertisements and increased visibility within the community.

We look forward to expanding our rounds and revenue throughout this year and are enthusiastic about the prospects for a successful 2025 season

### **Rebsamen Golf**

Pro shop renovations are in progress and ongoing until completed. Upgraded equipment has been ordered and installed. Fireproofing in the kitchen has been upgraded. New menu has been designed and implemented. New name and logo are being designed. First golf event that was held on February 28 "Building an Earth" was a big success. The RWGA (Rebsamen Women's Golf Association) group had a successful kick off meeting on February 26 and started playing each Wednesday this month so far there has been 60+ ladies participating. We now have Coke products and a fountain drink machine, and they are a hit.

### **Rebsamen Tennis**

March is the month that things begin to really move at the tennis center with the weather getting better. There was a fire on Wednesday, March 19 in the woods behind courts 8-12. We had to evacuate the facility around 5:00 PM as the fire approached the back of courts 9-12. Fire department were able to get

the fire out right before it got to those courts. We lost a few windscreens on those courts but were overall pretty lucky as it could have been much worse. The area is very burnt back in those woods that stretch towards Boyle Park Rd. It continued to smolder for several days but gets better each day. Even with the above happening...We currently have over 50 USTA spring team tennis teams playing their seasons with Rebsamen being their home courts (our courts will be completely full-on weeknights and Sundays until mid-May with team tennis). Our first tournament of the year, the Polar Bear Jr Classic (March 8-9), had about 230 participants from around a dozen states, but unfortunately it was hampered by rain for most of the weekend. We had a tennis mixer on March 14 with a dozen players, the goal is to have one of these about once a month as they continue to grow. Raul and Janan's programs are now running strong with the temps getting better. Rebsamen Monday singles league continuing but with smaller numbers through team tennis season. Monday "Lasso" men's doubles league has begun and runs through October (entering its 26<sup>th</sup> year). Spring break the week of March 24-28, facility will be slower due to so many people out of town. Trying to finalize a golf cart for the maintenance crew at Rebsamen.

### **Museum of Arkansas Military History**

Museum attendance for March was 2,730. This number included: (1) on-site visitation, (2) special events, (3) virtual programming through the museum's mini-documentaries and interviews, and (4) off-site programming and outreach. On-site visits included 906 walk-in guests and 955 visitors to special events, tours, etc. during the month. In addition to Arkansas, guests came from Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin, as well as from Australia, Canada, Portugal and the United Kingdom. The museum's virtual documentaries/interviews received 517 new views during the month. Museum staff presented weekly programming to 58 students at Dunbar Community Center and 58 students at Stephens Community Center during March as part of the After School Program. Another 61 students were reached through the monthly 21st Century Program at J.A. Fair Preparatory Academy. The museum raised \$5,263 in March through donations and sponsorships, including \$2,500 from the law firm Wright Lindsey Jennings for the museum fundraiser in November. In the first quarter of 2025 the museum raised \$21,744 towards its annual goal of \$30,000. Gift shop sales for March were \$1,380 for a total of \$2,215 so far this year. *War Toys: Ukraine*, a traveling exhibit from Exhibits USA and Mid-America Arts Alliance in Kansas City, continues to receive favorable responses from visitors. The exhibit features photographs by Brian McCarty, an internationally recognized photographer, in conjunction with artwork drawn by Ukrainian children in the summer of 2022 following the Russian invasion of their country a few months earlier. It will remain at the museum through August 11. Museum staff is working with staff from the Arkansas Museum of Fine Arts to develop partnership opportunities while the exhibit is in Little Rock. In celebration of March as Women's History Month, the museum featured *The Codebreaker* as its monthly "Movies at MacArthur" film. The documentary showcased the contributions of Elizebeth Smith Friedman, an American cryptanalyst who deciphered enemy codes in both World Wars and helped to solve international smuggling cases during Prohibition. Attendance at the March 18 screening was 74. For the first three months of 2025, attendance at the "Movies at MacArthur" program totaled 160 persons, representing a 68% increase over last year's first quarter. Approximately 40 persons participated in a bus tour of Civil War sites associated with the Camden Expedition on March 22. The tour was led by Arkansas historian and author Mark Christ and included stops at Okolona, Prescott, Poison Spring, Camden, and Fordyce. The group enjoyed a catered meal at the historic McCollum-Chidester House in Camden. A summary of the tour was written by one of the attendees, Angie Faller, who also serves on the museum's advisory board. In partnership with the

Civil War Round Table of Arkansas the museum hosted “An Evening with General Grant” on March 25 and “An Evening with President Grant” on March 26. Living Historian Dr. Curt Fields, who has portrayed General Grant in numerous films and who was selected as the official representative for the U.S. Grant Boyhood Home Association in Georgetown, Ohio, presented programs on Grant’s life as both Civil War general and President of the United States. Approximately 145 persons attended one or both nights of the program. A photo of Dr. Fields as General Grant appeared in the March 26 issue of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. The museum will partner with the Clinton Presidential Library and Museum to celebrate Jazz Appreciation Month in April with music from the United States Air Force Band of Mid-America. The Shades of Blue jazz ensemble will play a free concert at the Clinton Library starting at 6 pm on April 9th. The 18-piece jazz band offers something for everyone - classic and modern jazz literature; patriotic music; and some “pops” selections featuring their fantastic vocalist. The museum has begun a partnership with Freedom Sings Arkansas, a non-profit whose mission is to work with veterans and active-duty military to tell their stories through the process of songwriting. Local songwriters will meet with area veterans at the museum on the second Monday of each month starting on April 14. For more information on the organization, visit their website at:

<https://www.freedom singsarkansas.org/>.

**Special Tours at the Museum in March included:**

Saline County Christian Academy on March 6 (23 elementary students)

Bryant School District on March 17 and 19 (295 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> graders)

Maumelle School District on March 20 (30 high school students)

New Horizons School on March 21 (25 elementary students)

**Programs and Special Events Coming Up April – June:**

April 9 – Concert, United States Air Force Band of Mid-America, Shades of Blue jazz ensemble at the Clinton Presidential Library, 6:00 pm

April 15 – Movies at MacArthur, *Model T's to War: Ambulances on the Western Front*, 6:30 – 8 pm (see attached)

April 26 – Arkansas State Archives Spring Symposium, *Lost Utopias: The Search for Arkansas's Vanished Tourist Attractions*, 12:30 – 4:00 pm

April 29 – Presentation by Hugh Mills on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of the Vietnam War

May 2 – 15th Annual “History on the Run” 5K Race, 7 pm

May 20 – Movies at MacArthur, *War Letters*, 6:30 – 8 pm

June – Little Rock School District Summer Enrichment Program Off-site and Field Trips

June – July – Summer Playground Program Off-site and Field Trips

June 1 - Spring Music at the Arsenal, 2 pm

June 7 – Congressman French Hill’s “Send-Off for the Service Academy Cadets” Reception,

June 8 – Concert, “Stars and Stripes Celebration for Flag Day” with Little Rock Wind Symphony, 7 pm

June 17 – Movies at MacArthur, *The Strange History of Don't Ask, Don't Tell*, 6:30 – 8 pm

**Outdoor Recreation**

3/9/25: Orienteering clinic was held at Boyle Park. 2pm-4pm, free program. 12 adults attended. This is one of several clinics being offered through a partnership with ORCA (Orienteering of Central AR).

3/12/25: Disc Golf pop-up at MacArthur Park. 9am-3pm. Free program, 19 adults attended. Attendance was low due to rain and cold temps. Outdoor Recreation has been brought on to help plan and oversee the Parks Summer Day Camp program (formerly called the Summer Playground Program). Support and guidance in programming and direct program facilitating will be provided by the Outdoor Recreation staff. Programs will include archery, fishing, bike safety and camping 101 skills development. Seal Solar has agreed to be a sponsor of the “Squatch Till You Drop” trail running event. The event is scheduled for Nov 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> and will be held at Allsopp Park. This is the second year for this event and the first time

Seal Solar will be a sponsor. Course design and layout for the 4/12/25 Conner Park disc golf pop-up has been completed with the help of the Parks Trails crew and Park's GIS Maintenance Intern, Luis Diaz. An e-newsletter for Outdoor Recreation is in the works and will be published mid-April.

Upcoming Outdoor Rec Programs:

-4/12/25-Disc Golf Pop-up at Conner Park. 10am-3pm. Free Program

-4/13/25-Orienteering clinic at Allsopp Park. 2pm-4pm, free program.

-Group Mt Bike rides start on 4/2/25 at Boyle Park and River Mt. 6pm-8pm, free program. The rides will continue weekly through Oct.

-Group road bike rides will start on 4/7/25 and continue through Oct. The rides start and end at Murray Park, at the big banana sculpture. 6pm-8pm.

-5/3/25- I will be the bike marshal for MacArthur Park's Run Through History 5k

To date, Outdoor Recreation has 72 events/programs on the 2025 calendar. The goal is to have at least 100 events offered in 2025. More to come!