



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

### **Dunbar and West Central Community Centers**

These centers accommodated the youth basketball leagues due to renovations. Dunbar also served during January and February as a warming center as well as an overnight shelter for the unhoused community during the frigid cold and inclement weather. During those evenings West Central continued to host ALL GAMES Mondays – Saturdays. Continued, HUGE SHOUT OUTS TO THESE COMMUNITY CENTERS!!!

### **East Little Rock, Southwest & Stephens Community Centers**

Still in progress...These centers are still under renovations and will be updated with flooring, lights, painting and an overall brighter and appealing look.

### **Therapeutic Recreation**

The Branch Out Volunteer crew volunteered for the Under the Stars Prom event hosted by Fellowship Bible Church: Embrace Special Needs Program. This is an annual event for special needs adults and serves hundreds.

### **Outdoor Recreation**

Took part in a training offered by the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals called “Outdoor Recreation Marketing Bootcamp. The training was offered at a cost of \$100 but he obtained a scholarship, so the training was free. 2/19/25: Also took part in a webinar looking at the EXPLORES Act and its impact on access and participation in outdoor recreation.

### **Adult Athletics**

Field Rental reservations opened on January 15, 2025, for ballfields and court rentals as of February 25, 2025, there are: Allsop Park has 72 reservations, and Court Rental 1. Hillcrest organization has inquired and may have a schedule by next month.

### **Rebsamen Tennis**

We have 50+ USTA teams for Team Tennis this spring

We are completely booked on Monday – Thursday nights as well as weekend afternoons from now until mid-May. These numbers are significantly on the increase due to the new LED lighting.

### **First-Tee/Rebsamen Golf**

Our maintenance staff has also started tree trimming and keeping the exterior of the golf course clear of sticks and debris, particularly along the Western Hills side of the property. I would like to give a shout-out to our maintenance crew for their hard work in covering the greens at both First Tee and Rebsamen. This process was done in January and again in February, it is important. Rebsamen first golf event was held on February 28 it was “Building an Earth”. The RWGA (Rebsamen Women’s Golf Association) group held their annual kick off meeting on February 26 and will start playing in March.



## 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. 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.

#### Youth Basketball Program

Youth basketball continued to play this month; regular season wrapped up the last week of the month by playing make-up games from the snow days. Teams are wrapped up tournament play the last week of this month.

#### Cold Weather/Warming Shelter

Dunbar operated as a warming center and shelter once again this month due to the extremely cold weather and icy conditions. We saw several people in the shelter each night and staff were on hand from various departments to meet the needs of our homeless citizens.

### Stephens Community Center

#### Star Student Program:

The Star Student Afterschool Program is coming along just fine. We have 37 registered participants (74%). Working with the school on a Black History Program for February 27, 2025, at 5:30 pm. We Had an Afterschool Valentine Sock Hop on February 13, 2025, at 3:30 pm.

#### Youth Sports Program

Programs for the Fall are Youth Basketball (5 teams 59 participants) and Cheerleaders (21 participants). Working on recruiting for Soccer, Baseball and T-Ball.

#### Adult Activities:

The Men's 40 & Over League is right around the corner, we're getting ready for it.

#### 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, work being done in the bathrooms, the inside door removed, the front counter is up, a Fire Extinguisher installed, order placed for Bleachers, Wall Padding, and Baseboard Trim for the Gym. Work orders are in for Service on the Alarm and Security System.

### West Central Community Center

#### Youth Sports Program:

West Central had 210 participants in the youth basketball program. Our 4<sup>th</sup>&5<sup>th</sup> grade season has ended with West Central Esquire winning the league and Tournament Championships. In 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> grade West Central Runners won the tournament championship and SW Panthers won the league championship. In

K & 1<sup>st</sup> grade the championship game will be played February 27<sup>th</sup>. West Central DaKlan won the league championship.

**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.

**West Central CC:**

Renovations for the baseball fields have begun. We are redecorating the gym with park and recreation logos. IT had a two-day training session. There was an HBCU college tour event held in our gym this month.

**Rentals:**

The center had a total of 6 rentals for the month.

**Maintenance:**

We have a work request is in for lights in certain areas of the building.

**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 7 basketball teams registered in the youth basketball league, several teams dropped out due to participation numbers within the teams. Three of our teams made it to the playoffs with our 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders being first place in their division. Teams were practicing twice a week at 6pm at Jim Dailey Fitness Center until the renovation is complete at Southwest Community Center. Our cheerleaders continue to shine in the community. Registration for soccer, 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 put on hold until the facilities are complete.

**ELR Community Center**

Renovation is going well and almost near the end. Workers have installed floors in the additional 2 rooms, painting, & ceiling tiles. The gym floor has been installed and lines for the various courts have been painted. Other work will continue until the project is completed. LR Parks Crew took out hedges around the complex (waiting for removal). The neighborhood meetings are still being held First Baptist Church located at East Ninth & Calhoun Streets. Maintenance continues to mow, weed eat, and pick up around the entire grounds. Urban Forestry began to lift the branches on the trees, will continue when the grounds are drier. 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 of 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 were closed some due to the weather. They held their valentine activities right before the weather hit. Upon their return they were right back in the grove. West Central and East Little Rock joined together and had popcorn and a movie day. Celebrated Black History Month in various ways. Southwest had a speaker from UAMS and West Central had a speaker to speak on fire safety. They are preparing for their upcoming activities for the month of March. 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. East Little Rock, Dunbar, Southwest, and West Central celebrated February Birthdays in various ways. They all also are continuing their outings, field trips, crafts, such as bottle flowers, jewelry, decorating caps/hats, puzzles, t-shirts, and coloring.

**Dunbar Seniors:** Valentine project, 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:** Valentine day party, 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:** Valentine Kin & Queen party, Bowling, movies, Skip-Bo, Pool Competition, Card Games, Bingo, Bible Study, Chair Exercise, Walking Club, Baptist Health Monthly Screening and Healthy Food Outreach, Arts & Crafts, Table Games, Ring Toss, Pool, Cooking Class, Funday Friday.

**West Central Seniors:** 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**

Programs for spring include the Branch Out Adult Day Program, Time Out for TR, and Community Outings. The Branch Out group unwrapped medals for the Marathon and continued their training for participating in the Little Rock Marathon. We tracked our miles and will finish our final mile at the All-Abilities Division race on March 1<sup>st</sup> at 1:00pm. The Branch Out Volunteer crew volunteered for the Under the Stars Prom event hosted by Fellowship Bible Church: Embrace Special Needs Program. This is an annual event for special needs adults and serves hundreds. The TR Branch Out program will continue volunteer efforts with the Little Rock Zoo, the Parks and Recreation department, the Under the Stars Special Needs Prom Event, Camp Aldersgate, and the Little Rock Marathon. The registration goal is 18 for Branch Out program and we have 19. Registration is currently still open for all programs.

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

#### **MEMBERSHIPS**

The facility seen a small increase in new memberships for the month of February. There could have been a larger increase but due to the weather it was not.

#### **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**

\*\*Started a Commit to Fit 6-Week Challenge. The event is going well. We had 30 people registered for the activity.

Challenge Duration: January 6th through February 17<sup>th</sup> (dates added due to weather)

What's Included: Personalized Fitness Assessment & Plan:

Everyone had a 1:1 fitness assessment with one of our certified personal trainer members, during this time January 6th-11th. It included: A full fitness assessment, Health questionnaire; Goal-setting discussion; and Individualized fitness plan that showed their needs. Stay on Track for 6 Weeks: Follow your custom fitness plan with classes, activities, and strategies provided by our expert team to ensure success. Reassess & Celebrate Your Progress: At the end of the challenge, Feb. 18-22(the time was extended due to the weather).

\*\*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**

During February, despite the weather, we start off every month with a positive note regardless of what's going on, cancelations, weather etc. We had the pleasure of having the I.T. team here having a two-day training course (100). They were all so eager to learn the new tools that have been offered to them to utilize as an awesome front for the City of Little Rock. That led us to the work order meeting (24) and the Age friendly Orientation (10) was in preparation for more knowledge and expanding the group.

NUSA (6) came in with Joan and she always has it together with the group to better it and make sure the neighborhood is being heard and doing better. Lastly, the Parks Commission (24) ended us out with a bang! It's good to sit in with them and listen to what's going on in the Parks and Rec world and seeing how to grow, excel and execute in every area. We're always ready and prepared for what's next!

## **Youth Athletics**

The youth basketball season has almost ended and there was a lot of adapting and adjusting that had to be done due to the second round of winter weather and continued renovations, but through it all we are having a great season. Also, due to the February warming shelter at Dunbar, West Central hosted ALL the games (Monday – Thursday & Saturday) which could have been stressful but with dedicated staff it ran smoothly. Registration is ongoing for cheerleading, soccer, and baseball/tee ball. Kudos to all the staff at all centers for continuing to ensure everything is running smoothly.

## **Adult Athletics**

### **Interstate/Allsop Park Program**

Field Rental reservations opened on January 15, 2025, for ballfields and court rentals as of February 25, 2025, there are: Allsop Park has 72 reservations, and Court Rental 1. Hillcrest organization has inquired and may have a schedule by next month.

### **Adult Softball Program**

Interstate Adult softball has begun registration for the spring league began January 15, 2025, for Men, women, coed and church league.

### **Summer Playground Program**

We are preparing for the summer program for 2025 in which registration will start online May 1, 2025

### **First Tee Golf**

What can we say about this Arkansas weather? It's been quite unpredictable, similar to my golf game lately. On the positive side, we've enjoyed some wonderful days that provided our golfers with a taste of spring, which always translates to good revenue for the course. This month, we met with the Parks Director to discuss how we would like to utilize the funds allocated from the bond money set aside for golf. We have begun the process of ordering new equipment for both golf courses. Additionally, we are looking to build a cart barn/pavilion storage area here at First Tee. One of the design aspects we want to incorporate is an open structure, allowing customers to walk in and retrieve a golf cart easily. This setup would help reduce costs associated with part-time salaries for facility staff. Furthermore, we are planning to initiate a two-phase installation of cart paths on the golf course. As we know, golf carts are our primary revenue source, and the absence of cart paths limits our ability to generate revenue, especially during wet days. During some downtime this month, we were able to do some cleaning and organizing, as well as preparing for the event booking season and doing a bit of merchandising in the pro shop. Our maintenance staff has also started tree trimming and keeping the exterior of the golf course clear of sticks and debris, particularly along the Western Hills side of the property. I would like to give a shout-out to our maintenance crew for their hard work in covering the greens at both First Tee and Rebsamen. The process of covering and uncovering the greens is challenging and requires a significant number of people, especially at Rebsamen. As we know, these are slower months for golf, so we are most definitely looking forward to spring, which is just around the corner.

### **Rebsamen Golf**

Greens were covered again this month from February 14 – 25 due to the ice/snow winter weather which saved our greens but impacted revenue. Pro shop renovations are in progress and ongoing until completed. First golf event was held on February 28 it was “Building an Earth”. The RWGA (Rebsamen Women’s Golf Association) group held their annual kick off meeting on February 26 and will start playing in March. We now have Coke products and a fountain drink machine. Looking to hire more staff this year.

### **Rebsamen Tennis**

February for Rebsamen Tennis was a slow month as we dealt with multiple days of rain then one week of snow/ice as well as low temps. When we have snow/ice and the temperatures don't rise above freezing for a few days, the snow/ice will linger on the courts for up to a week. This slows us down regarding play obviously. We had no events in February these start in March. Team Tennis began towards the end of February. The good news: We have 50+ USTA teams for Team Tennis this spring. We are completely booked on Monday – Thursday nights as well as weekend afternoons from now until mid-May. These numbers are significantly on the increase due to the new LED lighting. Raul and Janan's programs are moving along and will increase in participation as the weather improves. The Rebsamen Monday league is still going through the winter and is well attended when the weather cooperates (up to 12 courts per each Monday). Finalizing a contract for a leased golf cart for our maintenance crew.

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

Museum attendance for February (through 2/26) was 1,611. 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 446 walk-in guests and 365 visitors to special events, tours, etc. during the month. In addition to Arkansas, guests came from Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas,

and Virginia as well as from France, Peru, South Korea and Spain. The museum's virtual documentaries/interviews received 574 new views during February. During February, museum staff presented weekly programming to 87 students at Dunbar Community Center and 63 students at Stephens Community Center as part of the After School Program. Another 76 students were reached through the monthly 21st Century Program at J.A. Fair Preparatory Academy. The museum raised \$14,326 in February through donations and sponsorships, including \$5,000 from Stephens Inc., \$2,500 from the Legacy Capital Wealth Partners, and \$1,000 from George and Linda Norton for the museum fundraiser in November. Former Commissioner Helen T. Leigh made her annual contribution of \$4,500 to assist with maintenance of the museum lawn. In just the first two months of 2025 the museum has raised \$16,481 towards its goal of raising \$30,000 each year in outside funding. Gift shop sales for February were \$573.14, which represented a 3% increase over February of last year. *War Toys: Ukraine*, a traveling exhibit from Exhibits USA and Mid-America Arts Alliance in Kansas City, opened on February 4, the exhibit was curated by Brian McCarty, an internationally recognized photographer who founded the nonprofit organization War Toys to address the effects of displacement and war-related trauma on children. The exhibit features photographs by McCarty in conjunction with artwork drawn by Ukrainian children in the summer of 2022 after the Russian invasion of their country a few months earlier. The exhibit will remain at the museum through August 11. The exhibit received coverage in the February 5 and February 10 issues of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. More than 50 people attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Vintage Military Gear Show on February 16. The show featured original and reproduction memorabilia from Civil War, World Wars I and II, and Vietnam military from Arthur Eschenburg and Hayden Lang, two exhibitors from the museum's vintage military vehicle show last October. A photograph of the event appeared in the February 17 issue of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. In recognition of African American History Month, the Museum installed a historical marker commemorating the contributions of African American soldiers in the Civil War on February 22. The marker is located behind the museum in MacArthur Park. 55 people attended the dedication which included a program on the United States Colored Troops in Arkansas by Civil War historian Mark Christ. Among the guests were State Representative Denise Ennett and descendants of some of the soldiers who served in the USCT. News segments on the installation of the new historical marker appeared on both KARK Channel 11 and KLRT Fox 16. Links to the coverage are listed below.

<https://www.kark.com/video/historic-marker-unveiled-at-macarthur-military-museum-honoring-civil-war-soldiers-in-arkansas/10481267/>

<https://www.fox16.com/video/historic-marker-unveiled-at-macarthur-military-museum-honoring-civil-war-soldiers-in-arkansas/10481299/>

Little Rock TV filmed the event, and a video is available via the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjIYFmlvyY4>

The “Movies at MacArthur” film for February was rescheduled due to inclement weather. *The Search for Kennedy’s PT 109* was screened on February 26 and had 52 people in attendance. The March film, *The Codebreaker*, is scheduled for March 18 to commemorate Women’s History Month. The documentary relates the contributions of Elizebeth Smith Friedman, the ground-breaking cryptanalyst whose painstaking work to decode thousands of messages for the U.S. government would send infamous gangsters to prison in the 1930s and bring down a massive, near-invisible Nazi spy ring in WWII. Together with her husband, the legendary cryptologist William Friedman, Elizebeth helped develop the methods that led to the creation of the powerful new science of cryptology and laid the foundation for modern codebreaking today. The museum has finalized its 2025 schedule of “On the Road with Mark

Christ" bus tours of Arkansas Civil War sites. The next tour is scheduled for March 22 and will feature the Camden Expedition sites. The Camden Expedition was a Federal campaign that launched from the Arsenal grounds on March 23, 1864, returning to Little Rock on May 3. It was the final campaign conducted by the Union Army in south Arkansas during the Civil War and was designed to meet up with additional Union troops in north Louisiana and invade Texas. Stops will include battle sites at Prairie D'Ane in Prescott, Poinson Spring, Marks' Mills and Jenkins Ferry. Lunch will be provided at the McCollum-Chidester House in Camden, General Frederick Steele's headquarters for the two weeks he was in that town. The fall bus tour, scheduled for September 6, will include Civil War sites in the Delta, including visits to Arkansas Post and Lakeport Plantation. Two members of the museum staff – Stephan McAtee and Shane Lind – successfully completed training in the Certified Tourism Ambassador program offered by the Little Rock Convention and Visitors Bureau. In partnership with the Civil War Round Table of Arkansas the museum will host "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, will present programs on Grant's career as both Civil War general and President of the United States.

#### Programs and Special Events Coming Up in March:

- March 18 – Movies at MacArthur, *The Codebreaker*, 6:30 – 8 pm
- March 22 – "On the Road with Mark Christ – Camden Expedition" bus tour, 7 am – 7 pm
- March 25 – "An Evening with Gen. Ulysses S. Grant," featuring Dr. Curt Fields, 7 – 9 pm
- March 26 – "An Evening with President Grant," featuring Dr. Curt Fields, 7 – 9 pm

#### **Outdoor Recreation**

I hosted an orienteering clinic at War Memorial on 2/9/25 from 1pm-5pm. This was a collaboration between Outdoor Rec and ORCA (Orienteering of Central Arkansas). This is the first of several clinics. 2/18 &19/25: I took part in a training offered by the Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals called "Outdoor Recreation Marketing Bootcamp. The training was offered at a cost of \$100 but I obtained a scholarship, so the training is free. 2/19/25: I took part in a webinar looking at the EXPLORES Act and its impact on access and participation in outdoor recreation. I will be a part of the Bike Support Team for the Marathon on March 2nd. I took part in the pre-event briefings on 2/26/25 and again on 3/2/25. Registration for the 2025 "Squatch Till You Drop" trail running event is now open. The event is scheduled for 11/8 & 9/25. 2/12/25: Hosted Kim Daily advisory board meeting at War Memorial office. The War Memorial Facilities binder has been created, which includes the facilities SOPs. Hosted Parks Maintenance divisional meeting at War Memorial office. Outdoor Recreation will have a booth at the Marathon Expo. Attended the MacArthur Group weekly meeting to report on Outdoor Rec programming scheduled for MacArthur Park.

#### **Upcoming Outdoor Rec Programs at MacArthur Park:**

- 3/15/25-Disc Golf Pop-up. 10am-3pm. Free Program
- 5/3/25- I will be the bike marshal for the 5k run
- October (date TBD)- Bike rodeo

To date, Outdoor Recreation has 67 events/programs on the 2025 calendar. More to come!