Letter from the Mayor

Dear Friends,

It is such a pleasure to share this 2013 Parks and Recreation Guide with you. We have had a busy season with several ribbon-cuttings to celebrate park improvements and the opening of new facilities. This guide includes information about several of those projects.

Our new West Hills Tennis Center now offers public restrooms and showers to accompany the park’s 11 tennis courts. The new facility will help us to attract large tennis tournaments to Knoxville. There have been other improvements at various sites, including the Lonsdale Recreation Center, Morningside Park, and the Larry Cox Senior Center.

There is a new river access point, too. Last fall, we unveiled the first blueway directional signage that features river access at Island River Drive. A temporary launch at the future Suttree Landing Park on the South Waterfront was also opened. As a kayaker myself, I know these new drop-ins will be enjoyed by many.

Our partnership with Outdoor Knoxville has sparked a renewed interest in outdoor activities. The Urban Wilderness has trails that are among the best in the country. This year, Outdoor Knoxville was featured in national publications: Reuters listed Knoxville and the Urban Wilderness as one of the Top 10 U.S. Destinations in October; and the Urban Wilderness was also featured in the New York Post.

One of our Parks and Recreation Department’s biggest initiatives is Let’s Move! A health campaign spearheaded by First Lady Michelle Obama, Let’s Move! encourages children to live healthy lifestyles. We are now an official “Let’s Move! City” after meeting park availability criteria, along with other requirements. I recently had the honor to visit the White House and participate on a panel about our Let’s Move! activities as a guest of Mrs. Obama’s. In fact, she recognized Knoxville’s greenway system, maps and signage during her speech to kick off the panel discussion.

With more than 2,000 acres of parks and 85 miles of greenways and trails, there are plenty of opportunities for children and families to get out and exercise.

Of course, there are a host of other offerings to choose from to get healthy: ballfields, recreation centers, dog parks and golf courses. All in all, our parks make Knoxville a great place to live, work and play.

Sincerely,

Madeline Rogero,
Mayor

Letter from Deputy to the Mayor/Chief Operating Officer

Greetings,

Welcome to the 2013 Knoxville Parks and Recreation Guide. I’m sure you will find the guide to be quite useful and will learn more about the wonderful opportunities available within our system.

The Parks and Recreation Department is one of several that fall under operations within the City of Knoxville. As Deputy to the Mayor/Chief operating officer, I am proud of the work Director Joe Walsh and his staff are doing to bring our residents a high quality of life. Some of the other departments within operations include Engineering, Public Service and Fleet. A new public works complex will be built soon, which will help to increase efficiency for services to citizens.

One of the most enjoyable aspects of our parks is the beautiful greenways. I am an avid runner who has trained many miles along our greenways and trails, preparing for marathons and competitive races. It was along the Third Creek Greenway that I mustered the courage to plant the seed that will offer children some active leisure time as alternatives to excessive screen time.

With more than 2,000 acres of parks and 85 miles of greenways and trails, there are plenty of opportunities for children and families to get out and exercise. Others have taken notice, too. The “National Rails to Trails” blog featured Third Creek Greenway as “10 Great Things Happening in Tennessee” and Southern Living featured Neyland Greenway in its “SEC Official Tailgating Cookbook.”

While the national accolades are appreciated, our first obligation is to you. We will continue to keep our parks, recreation centers, ballfields and greenways in the best shape possible for all to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Christi Branscom
Deputy to the Mayor/Chief Operating Officer

Letter from the Director

Under the leadership of Mayor Rogero, the land dedicated to park use within the city continues to grow, along with the greenway and trail system, as well as us offering a greater opportunity to participate in a variety of diverse programs. This has truly been one of the most exciting years ever for me in my 21 years with the Parks and Recreation Department. We continue to expand our many partnerships, which allow us to do more things for a greater number of citizens in Knoxville to reach more of the people who want to enhance their free time in our community. I am proud to head up a department of such a great group of hardworking professionals who strive to provide quality customer service to our thousands of customers every day.

I am particularly excited about a recent effort we are making to introduce non-traditional sports to children who may not have been exposed to these activities before. With the challenge of taking on the childhood obesity epidemic, our hope is to plant the seed that will offer children some active leisure time as alternatives to excessive screen time.

I hope you can use this guide to answer your questions and to get you thinking about what fun and exciting things you can do with your leisure time. At our recreation centers, in one of our many sports leagues, on a greenway, in a swimming pool, on the tennis court or on one of our two city golf courses, our goal is to make your experience a positive one.

So whether you are a retired individual, a working adult, a student or someone just visiting our community, I encourage you to get out and play!

Joe Walsh,
Director, Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department
The free After-School Program offered each weekday for children ages 6 through 12 at the City’s 13 rec centers emphasizes bodies in motion.

“We make a point to incorporate active games that get the kids moving,” said Joe Walsh, Knoxville Parks and Recreation director. “Plus, we try to nudge them towards healthy eating by offering a healthy snack initiative.”

In conjunction with the Knox County Health Department, the After-School Program provides participating children with “Go” snacks, based on the concept of an eating program through Knox County Schools called the “Go, Slow, Whoa.” “Go” snacks started this fall as a replacement for the N.E.A.T. nutrition program.

In the program, “Go” snacks signify those that fall in the optimal food groups and are lowest in fat, added sugar and calories; “Slow” snacks are those that still may provide nutrients, but are higher in fat, added sugar and calories; “Whoa” snacks offer very little nutritional value and are highest in fat, added sugar and calories.

Partners in the program started this based on the premise that teaching children good eating habits will pay off not just over time but also now, as youngsters get active in the After-School Program.

“We always try to introduce new games,” said Kristin Manuel, who is recreation superintendent over the centers. “One of the games we’re introducing this year is pickleball.”

While pickleball is being offered for different ages throughout the rec centers by the Parks and Recreation Athletics division, kids are expected to take to the sport, too. It uses elements of badminton, tennis, volleyball and wiffle ball. From new sports to classic ones like dodge ball, the After-School program provides plenty of ways to have fun and get fit.
During the course of two brief years, Knoxville community leaders have transformed a grassroots effort into part of a national initiative and captured a No. 1 ranking and the interest of First Lady Michelle Obama.

For Knoxville, the Let’s Move! campaign has exposed thousands of kids to methods that lead to a healthier lifestyle.

Let’s Move! is a national initiative launched by Michelle Obama that addresses the rising childhood obesity epidemic with a slogan of “America’s move to raise a healthier generation of kids.”

“The great thing about Let’s Move! is that it is not a partisan issue,” said Mayor Madeline Rogero. “We all can agree that we want our kids to be in their best health and approach their adult life with the best opportunities possible.”

Coordinated School Health and Knoxville Parks and Recreation partnered in 2011 to start a “greenway of activities” event, ultimately dubbed the Knoxville Let’s Move! Event.

More than 30 organizations joined as planning partners for the event in a joint effort to encourage Knoxville youth to eat healthier and move more outside.

The initial event proved to be a huge success, with more than 1,000 children participating. More than 50 vendors offered activities and giveaways to kids. Walgreens provided pedometers that kids used as they walked around and had...
Despite drizzling rain, the 8-and-under kids were eager to race in the 50-yard dash at the 2013 Let’s Move! Event in Knoxville.

their “Let’s Move! Adventure Maps” stamped for activities completed in order to be entered for door prizes.

“The most impressive thing about this event is the variety of groups and individuals that got involved to help out,” said Joe Walsh, director of Knoxville Parks and Recreation. “Corporations participated as sponsors – Home Depot gave away 1,000 tomato plants for kids to take home and plant; nonprofits like the Knoxville Track Club held foot races; and other local companies like River Sports allowed free kayaking on the pond in Victor Ashe Park. There was virtually something for everyone to try.

“I’m grateful to be a part of this movement that has truly become communitywide,” Walsh said. “I think we’re all especially grateful to Aneisa McDonald (of Coordinated School Health) for approaching us about an event like this.”

Walsh and McDonald have served as co-chairs of the 2012-2014 Let’s Move! Events. Over the course of the event’s development, Knoxville and Knox County became involved with an extension of the Let’s Move! campaign, called Let’s Move! Cities, Towns and Counties initiative, which is administered by the National League of Cities in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The City of Knoxville and Knox County were ranked No. 1 in the country among the initiative’s goals in 2013.

This past July, Mayor Madeline Rogero was invited by Mrs. Obama and the National League of Cities to speak on a panel at the White House about Knoxville’s successful experience with Let’s Move!.

“It was an honor to speak at the White House about the hard work of our community leaders,” said Mayor Rogero. “It’s the perfect investment, really. We’re investing in our children’s health and introducing them to our community assets so that they can one day live out their adult lives to the fullest in our community.”

Doing the same old thing is not part of the game plan for the City of Knoxville’s Parks and Recreation Department.

Always a leader in promoting physical activity among children and adults, the department has taken the Let’s move! initiative to heart by stepping up health and fitness protocols in every possible situation.

Parks and Recreation staff members partner with schools, the health department, the Coalition on Childhood Obesity and other organizations to educate and encourage young people.

“The Coalition is funded through Children’s Hospital and was started to improve the health of children by reducing childhood obesity,” said Coalition Coordinator Kindall Aaron. “We focus on identifying areas with higher obesity rates and providing solutions to address this issue through a network of partnerships. We realize that we cannot fight this battle alone, it’s going to take the convincing and moving of a networked community.”

Knoxville Parks and Recreation has been a big partner of the Coalition.

“I really see Parks and Recreation as trying to be a role model or trendsetter,” said Joe Walsh, director. “We need to provide the facilities and non-parents alike to increase the sense of community. Fitness, health and safety are big concerns at the schools.

“We are partnering with recreation centers on after-school programming, and some of the Community Schools are opening up the school to children before school starts to do a walking program, often along a City greenway,” said Welch. “At Lonsdale Elementary School, there’s a walking schoolbus program providing a safe way for children to walk to and from school through the use of parents as volunteers.”

Liliano Burbano, Safe Routes to School coordinator for the Knox County Health Department, said that kids who walk or bike to school are in the minority, but there are good reasons to change that.

“Walking to school is not just good for kids and parents, but it’s also how we build healthy communities,” said Burbano. “We get to know each other through protecting our kids and providing a safe environment for them to walk to school.”

Another bonus to walking to school can be measured academically.

“When kids have physical activity in the morning, they get to school ready to learn,” said Burbano. “Also, when parents walk to school with them, it reduces tardiness and increases attendance. It’s a win-win. We get kids to be active and fight childhood obesity, but we are also building healthy communities. People are more active, and they don’t rely on cars to go everywhere.”

Above, students from Christenberry Elementary walk through the breezeway to Christenberry Community Center. Christenberry is one of seven schools that have been designated Community Schools, serving as hubs in the community for improving health, quality of life and educational outcomes.
Youth Sports Commissions are independent organizations that, with the help of many volunteers, provide positive and safe environments for Knoxville’s youth to develop.

DIVISIONS
Basketball – 17U, 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U
(Sports offered by 6U leagues)
Baseball – 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U, 6U co-ed T Ball
(Sports offered by 5U Weeball)
Softball – 14U, 12U, 10U, 8U, 6U co-ed T Ball
Football – 14U, 12U, 11U, 10U, 9U, 8U, 7U
(Sports offered by 6U Flag Football)

Baby Bobcats Football
Sports Offered – Football
Commissioner – Jason Nance
Contact Number – 865-394-4408
Contact Email – jnan5964@gmail.com
Parks Used – Gresham MS Field, Inskip Field

Baby Roadrunners
Sports Offered – Football
Commissioner – Melvin Tate
Contact Number – 865-384-4408
Parks Used – Claude Walker Field, Skyline Park

East Knoxville Athletic Association
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball
Commissioner – William Anderson II
Contact Number – 865-388-5249
Contact Email – william.anderson@knoxschools.org
Parks Used – Claude Walker Field, Skyline Park

Fountain City Youth Sports
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball
Bobcats Football
Website – www.fountaincitysports.org
Commissioner – Elizabeth DeBusk
Contact Number – Park 865-688-1961
Contact Email – elizabeth@fountaincitysports.com
Parks Used – Fountain City Ballfield, Inskip Field

North Knoxville
Knoxville Falcons
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Football
Commissioner – Larry Cox
Contact Number – 865-216-1065
Contact Email – larrygibbscox@aol.com
Parks Used – Christenberry Field, Alice Bell Field

Northwest Knoxville
Northwest Youth Sports
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Football
Commissioner – Greg Tye
Contact Number – 865-384-1700
Contact Email – gtye101@gmail.com
Parks Used – Baggett Field

Rule Christian Academy
Sports Offered – Basketball, Football
Commissioner – Richard Buntyn
Contact Number – 865-321-0685
Contact Email – rbuntyn@tmim.org
Parks Used – Baggett Field

South Knoxville Youth Sports
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Football
Commissioner – Julia Weissinger
Contact Number – 865-384-406-1048
Contact Email – julia.weissinger@knoxschools.org
Parks Used – Maynard Glenn Field, Rock City Field

Bearden Youth Sports
Sports Offered – Basketball, Football
Commissioner – Vic Berry (BB), Bob Dixon (FB)
Contact Number – Vic: 865-300-7406
Bob: 865-216-8826
Contact Email – Vic: TPSVictor@aol.com
Bob: bdixon9@gmail.com
Parks Used – West Hills Park, Bearden MS Ballfield

Knox Youth Sports
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Flag Football, Lacrosse
Website – www.knoxsports.com
Commissioner – Ann Marie Conaty
Contact Number – 865-584-6403
Contact Email – kysamc@aol.com
Parks Used – Lakeside Park Ballfields, Sequoyah Hill Park Field

Rocky Hill Baseball
Sports Offered – Baseball
Website – www.rockyhilballpark.com
Commissioner – Gary Pritchett
Contact Number – 865-244-6121
Contact Email – garyp60@bellsouth.net
Parks Used – Rocky Hill Ballpark

West Bearden Basketball League
Sports Offered – Basketball
Website – www.wbbleague.com
Commissioner – Robert Hewgley
Contact Number – 865-258-3786
Contact Email – RHewgley@msn.com

Center City Youth Sports Program (CCYSP)
Sports Offered – Basketball, Baseball, Softball, Football
Commissioner – Churchie Riley
Contact Number – 865-919-5937
Contact Email – antariley01@hotmail.com
Parks Used – Malcolm Martin Park

ADULT
Baseball
Ed Bailey Baseball League
Registration: Apr. 28-May 16
League Season: May 27 through August
Game Locations: Ridley-Helton & West HS
Days of Week: Mon. & Thurs.
Division: Men’s
Season: Summer
Fees: $250/team or $400/team to play 2 nights

Basketball Recreational League
Registration: Oct. 28-Nov. 15
League Season: Dec. 2 through February
Game Locations: Rec Centers
Days of Week: 6U, 8U, 10U, 12U, 14U
Division: Competitive
Season: Winter
Fees: $400/team

Basketball Competitive League
Registration: Oct. 28-Dec. 13
League Season: Jan. 6 through February
Game Locations: Rec Centers
Days of Week: Games-Mon. & Wed. nights
Division: Competitive
Season: Winter
Fees: $400/team

Fall/Winter Kickball
Registration: Sept. 17-Oct. 9
League Season: Oct. 13 to mid-December
Game Locations: Safety City
Days of Week: Monday afternoons
Division: Coed
Season: Fall
Fees: $250/team

Spring Kickball
Registration: March 14-April 8
League Season: April 14 through end of June
Game Locations: TBD
Days of Week: Mon. & Wed. nights
Division: Coed
Season: Spring
Fees: $250/team or $400/team to play 2 nights

Summer Kickball
Registration: July 1-July 29
League Season: July 4 through end of October
Game Locations: TBD
Days of Week: Mon. & Wed. nights
Division: Co-Ed
Season: Summer
Fees: $250/team or $400/team to play 2 nights

Pickleball
Registration: Open Gym
League Season: Ongoing
Game Locations: Deane Hill Rec Center
Days of Week: Mon. & Thurs.
Division: Men’s, Coed, 50-plus
Season: Spring
Fees: Free

Spring Softball
Registration: Feb. 24-March 14
League Season: April 7 through end of June
Game Locations: Caswell Park
Days of Week: 1 night per week leagues offered on
Mon. & Thurs.
Division: Men’s, Coed, 50-plus
Season: Spring
Fees: $250/team or $400/team to play 2 nights

Fall Softball
Registration: July 7-July 25
League Season: Aug. 4 through mid-October
Game Locations: Caswell Park
Days of Week: 1 night per week leagues offered on
Mon. & Thurs.
Division: Men’s, Coed
Season: Fall
Fees: $250/team or $400/team to play 2 nights

Senior Fun Softball
Registration: Ongoing
League Season: April through October
Game Locations: Caswell Park
Days of Week: Tues. & Thurs.
Division: Coed
Season: Ongoing
Fees: $10/person

Copyright Knoxville News Sentinel, Thursday, October 17, 2013

Gavin O’Neal kicks the ball during the City’s adult kickball league at Ridley-Helton Field at the site of the old Bill Meyer Stadium.
Introducing our youth to new sports

Making sure every kid has the opportunity to experience sports other than baseball, basketball and football is something the Parks and Recreation Department has made a new focus.

Who knows where the next Serena Williams, Mia Hamm, Michelle Wie, Davis Tarwater or Reid Priddy will come from?

Putting “alternative” sports programs in place is the responsibility of the new sports outreach coordinator for the City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department. Nikki Crutcher, a 10-year Parks and Recreation employee, started the job in February.

“Her job is to work with the community, neighborhoods and schools to reach kids at an early age and introduce them to those sports,” said Joe Walsh, director of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Crutcher’s focus is bringing sports such as tennis, soccer, golf, swimming and volleyball to children in underprivileged and underserved areas to help them develop a lifelong interest in physical activities.

“In middle schools in Knoxville, you have basketball and track and field that are sanctioned sports,” she said. “Any other sport is considered a club sport, and parents have to organize it or a teacher or volunteer. Unless you have a dedicated individual, a lot of kids miss out.

“We’re just trying to bridge that gap and work with agencies like AYSO and Knoxville Youth Athletics and Phoenix Rising Volleyball to give these kids those opportunities.”

Crutcher’s first step was to pilot a “sports diversity camp” at two East Knoxville rec centers that run summer playground programs.

“We took the kids who signed up from those two centers. They were able to stay at the center or we transported them to the track, to the tennis courts, to the pools, and we introduced as many sports as we could throughout those eight weeks. “It was a whirlwind summer,” said Crutcher, who hopes to expand the camp to more centers next year.

This fall, in partnership with AYSO, Parks and Recreation has started a soccer program for 5- to 8-year-olds at Holston River Park.

“I’ve been pleased with the results of the first year,” said Crutcher. “We’ve got a lot of great parents involved. I anticipate that same energy when we do it again in the spring.”

Walsh expects the leagues will grow as word of mouth and energy for the new sports opportunities spread.

“This is about getting kids out there and moving,” he said. “We’re all created with our own special talents. We all have different interests that light us up. Our goal is to provide as many kids as possible with as many choices as possible.”

For more information on new alternative sports opportunities, please call Nikki Crutcher at 865-215-1409.

Winter Volleyball
Registration: Nov. 15-Dec. 4
League Season: Dec. 8 to mid-February
Game Locations: Cumberland Estates Rec Center
Days of Week: Sun. afternoons & Wed. evenings
Division: B
Season: Winter
Fees: $160/team

Spring Volleyball
Registration: Jan. 15-Feb. 25
League Season: March 2 to mid-May
Game Locations: Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill
Days of Week: Sun. afternoons & Wed. evenings
Division: A, B, & C
Season: Spring
Fees: $160/team

Summer Volleyball
Registration: April 15-May 27
League Season: June 1 to mid-August
Game Locations: Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill
Days of Week: Sun. afternoons & Wed. evenings
Division: A, B, & C
Season: Summer
Fees: $160/team

Fall Volleyball
Registration: July 28-Aug. 26
League Season: Sept. 3 to mid-November
Game Locations: Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill
Days of Week: Sun. afternoons & Wed. evenings
Division: A, B, & C
Season: Fall
Fees: $160/team

For all league information, please visit www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

YOUTH

Basketball
Registration: Oct. & Nov.
League Season: Dec. through Feb.
Game Locations: Rec Centers

Baseball
Registration: Feb. & March
League Season: March through June
Game Locations: Ballfields

Softball
Registration: Feb. & March
League Season: March through June
Game Locations: Ballfields

Football
Registration: May-July
League Season: July-Nov.
Game Locations: John Tarleton & Schumpert Park

Softball (Fall 14 & under)
Registration: July
Game Locations: Caswell Park

Contact local youth sports commission for more information and to register

Travis Turner, 7, practices dribbling a soccer ball towards the goal at Holston River Park under the supervision of Nikki Crutcher, the Knoxville sports outreach coordinator.
Mayor Madeline Rogero knows what it’s like to “escape” without leaving Knoxville. An avid kayaker, she loves paddling on the local rivers.

“You can put in at Holston Hills and paddle downtown, and you go through stretches where you don’t realize that you’re in the middle of the city because there are still areas along those riverbanks that are not developed,” said Rogero. “It’s a beautiful river. You see all the wildlife. You feel like you’re down at the Smoky Mountains.”

Mayor Rogero says there were many years when people ignored the river, but in recent times they have come to realize how fortunate they are to have a river running through the city.

“It’s a great blend – a thriving city that’s preserving natural assets. We can have both.”

The City of Knoxville’s Parks and Recreation Department has received a huge boost from the Legacy Parks Foundation, a nonprofit group committed to creating and preserving outdoor spaces for residents and visitors alike to enjoy.

“We have incredible natural resources here,” said Carol Evans, executive director of Legacy Parks Foundation. “The role we’ve played is helping connect them, provide access to them and then provide ways for people to get out and play. We have much to do and much to enjoy right in the heart of the city.”

Legacy Parks is an incredible resource, according to Mayor Rogero.

“As a nonprofit they’ve been able to successfully raise money to purchase land that will be forever preserved in our community for outdoor active and passive recreation. They’ve been a leader in promoting the idea of getting outdoors and engaging in a healthy lifestyle. They’ve also been visionaries for the Urban Wilderness.”

The most talked-about aspect of Legacy Parks Foundation’s work is the Urban Wilderness, an area of South Knoxville that incorporates more than 1,100 forested acres reaching inward from the downtown waterfront. It encompasses 10 City parks, four Civil War sites, two quarries and 42 miles of walking, hiking and biking trails. The Aslan Foundation has been another key player in acquiring and improving lands for the Urban Wilderness.

The trails themselves were largely created by the Appalachian Mountain Bike Club.

“The Appalachian Mountain Bike Club is an example of how individuals can get out and make something happen,” said Rogero. “They used their own blood, sweat and tears and their own resources and got out in the wilderness to build the trails.”

Both the City and Knox County have invested in the Urban Wilderness while most of the development has come through volunteer labor and money by Legacy Parks. The project is often touted as a great example of how the government and the public can work together.

“It’s all about collaboration,” said Joe Walsh, Parks and Recreation Department director.
“We were one of the original partners in the development of the Urban Wilderness trail. It goes through several City parks – Marie Myers, William Hastie, Ijams. One of our greenways, the Will Skelton Greenway, is a part of that extensive series of trails and greenways.”

The donation of 100 acres this summer by the family of the late Pat Wood is going to increase the enjoyment and opportunities of the Urban Wilderness.

“It will add four or five more miles of trail, but more importantly it will connect several new neighborhoods and connect South-Doyle Middle School,” said Evans. “What we hope will come out of that is having the first middle-school mountain bike club in this area.”

Rogero calls the Urban Wilderness Knoxville’s “crown jewel.” She is thrilled about the Wood family donation.

“That’s a major addition to the Urban Wilderness,” Rogero said. “It also will offer some introductory courses for the slow-biking crowd and the slow-walking crowd.”

Two balds (as opposed to forested hilltops) in the area will make any type of ascent worth the effort, she says.

“I went up to Pappy’s Point the day we had the donation announcement, and it’s just a beautiful location with a 360-degree view of our area.”

Walsh emphasizes that the Urban Wilderness is for all Knoxvillians, not just those who live south of the river or people who work downtown.

“It serves many roles,” said Walsh. “We’re trying to attract tourists to come into Knoxville, those people who are focused on outdoor activities – whether they’re into kayaking or mountain climbing or mountain biking. We’re offering something that’s going to be an attraction for visitors.

“But also it’s there for those of us who live in Knoxville who don’t like to walk on asphalt trails, who prefer to have soft-surface or natural trails. You don’t have to go to the Smokies to hike. You can go to the wilderness trail to hike or jog or take your mountain bike. And you can take your kids.”

Legacy Parks Foundation is based in the Outdoor Knoxville Adventure Center at Volunteer Landing. The opening of the Adventure Center in February 2012 was one of Rogero’s first acts as mayor.

The Legacy Parks Foundation also runs the building, which currently is home to paddleboard and canoe rentals through Billy Lush Brand. Evans hopes to lure more tenants.

“We’d like to have a bike kiosk,” she said. “Some folks are wanting to teach classes, such as fly-fishing classes, out of here. We encourage like-minded businesses or groups to operate out of here. We might have a boot camp or a yoga class. We have the Adventure Race and other big events out of here. We’re working to bring in more partners that do outdoor adventures.”

While outdoor adventures are a key part, the facility is very flexible. It has a theater and has hosted film nights.

“We have non-profit community groups that come in here and use the space for free. It really lends itself to what we do.”

The Adventure Center has an outdoor plaza with an impressive water feature, capable of hosting between 200-300 people. There’s also a meeting room with glass doors that open up to the outdoor event space.

“It’s turned out to be a great gathering place for people who want to learn more about the outdoors or want to get outdoors or meet other people doing things. We hope it becomes more and more of a community building, a gathering place where you can learn how to do things and meet other people doing outdoor things,” Evans says.

“The Legacy Parks Foundation has helped us to create a destination for those of us who live here, an opportunity to get out and enjoy a variety of sports and outdoor activities,” said Rogero. “They also have opened up a tourist and adventure-sports destination in our city. I consider the Urban Wilderness Corridor a quality-of-life enhancement for us and an economic strategy for our region.”

For more information, please visit www.OutdoorKnoxville.com.
Before driving out to the parks, greenways and other recreation facilities, you can explore them on the city's Web site at www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation. The site includes driving directions, individual amenity maps of parks and greenways, schedules for athletic leagues, descriptions of programs and more. You can even type in how many laps you've walked on a greenway and the recreation site will calculate the mileage for you. Just point, click and explore your recreation opportunities.

Facebook
The City's Parks and Recreation Department has joined Facebook. Becoming a fan will get you updated of the latest leagues and programs, new facilities and park improvements and other recreation news. Simply search "Knoxville Parks and Recreation" on Facebook and become a fan today!

Free Maps
Call 311 to receive a free map of your 85 miles of city greenways and trails, featuring greenway mileage, Knoxville Area Transit stops on the greenways, and much more.
You can also call 311 to get a free parks map. One side displays every city park and facility along with their amenities. The other side provides the same for all county parks.

City Athletic Game Cancellations
Call 865-215-INFO (This info line is updated daily by 9 p.m.)
With more than 40 greenways and trails totaling 85 miles of walking, jogging and biking opportunities, Knoxville offers the pathway to fitness and fresh air throughout the city. But there's always room to grow.

“Through the different mayoral administrations, there has been an ongoing commitment toward greenways, and we are continuing that as well,” said Mayor Madeline Rogero, noting that the greenway program kicked into gear during the administration of Mayor Victor Ashe (1987-2003).

“We have a great network now, and the focus is on extending and connecting. The greenways are a huge asset to have for a city like Knoxville.”

Parks and Recreation Director Joe Walsh knows greenways are popular.

“Day in and day out, people just love the greenways, especially as we head into the fall,” said Walsh. “You go to any park, any day, and you’ll see someone out there on foot or on a bike – whether it’s early in the morning or late in the afternoon – in the cold, the rain, the heat, whatever.”

The heavy use of Knoxville's greenways caught the attention of Police Chief David Rausch, who realized that a major transit system within the city had no regular police supervision and no way for police cars to access it.

In 2012, Rausch proactively established the Park and Greenways Patrol Unit to survey the greenways and trails. Walsh is grateful for the effort.

“We want people to feel safe,” Walsh said. “Statistically, according to the police department, greenways are safer than most places that you go to, based on crime analysis. But with that said, we need to have some official eyes in the park.”

Officers patrol the parks and greenways seven days a week at all hours. If they notice maintenance issues, they report them to Parks and Recreation.

To make sure that the greenways continue to meet the needs of the public, the City is working on a Greenway Feasibility Plan that looks at possible projects and lays the groundwork for them.

The Parks and Recreation Department received a $250,000 grant from the state to finance the planning portion.

“We’ve identified a dozen different possible connectors of existing greenways, whether you’re connecting a greenway with another greenway, a greenway with a park, a park with a school,” said Walsh. “The purpose of the study is to start making key connections to the existing City greenways.”

The City already has some decent connected greenway segments. The downtown greenway connection runs approximately 14 miles from the Alex Haley statue in Morningside Park through World’s Fair Park, Tyson Park, Sequoyah Park and then ends at Bearden Elementary School.
There is also a 4.5-mile connection in West Knoxville that connects West Hills Elementary to the Carmike Wynnsong Theater in Cedar Bluff.

To the north, the greenway along Pleasant Ridge Road connects to the greenways that run through Victor Ashe Park, Badgett Fields Ballpark and Northwest Middle School Park for another 4.5-mile connection.

Probably the trail connection with the most energy resides in the Urban Wilderness Corridor of South Knoxville, known as the 42-mile South Loop system.

Gov. Bill Haslam recently announced awarding a $200,000 grant for two miles to be added to this connected trail system.

“We have a very well-established greenways and trails system here in Knoxville,” said Parks and Greenways Coordinator Lori Goerlich, “and now we’re working to build off of that, expanding the system while connecting neighborhoods.”

Ross/Fowler EC is the company hired to do the Greenway Feasibility study and will evaluate 12 future connectors throughout Knoxville. The firm will develop cost estimates for the greenway connection recommendations. They will also have to determine what kinds of engineering design work will be needed for the various projects, whether environmental assessments are in order, if permits will have to be obtained, and whether property has to be purchased or easements acquired to make the connections.

The City anticipates the plan to be completed in 2014.

“What I hear from everybody, citywide, is that people want to see more greenways. They love them. They’re used,” said Walsh.

The City’s newest greenway is a collaboration with Knox County.

“The most recent project we completed was Loves Creek Greenway from Spring Place Park, which is a county park, north to near Buffat Mill Road,” said Goerlich.

“It’s about a half mile, and it runs between the creek and the railroad track.”

The City installed the greenway that is located within city limits, but the property is county-owned land.

A new greenway project is under way along First Creek in North Knoxville. The City will be pursuing construction bids for the 0.6-mile section connecting Fulton High School to Edgewood Park in 2014.

In South Knoxville, the City soon will begin making improvements to the entrance to Fort Dickerson Park, aligning it with Woodlawn Avenue. The park already has seen improvements to its quarry area. A gravel parking lot off Augusta Avenue is connected by a trail to the quarry and offers the only legal access to the scenic body of water.

Through Outdoor Knoxville, former Olympic athlete and health enthusiast Missy Kane leads hikes for beginners to show off the area’s greenways and trails. The Appalachian Mountain Bike Club also holds beginner mountain bike rides. Schedules for the hikes and rides can be found at www.OutdoorKnoxville.com.

Earlier this year, the Harvey Broome Chapter of the Sierra Club began leading walks on City greenways, “doing narratives on what the parks have to offer,” said Goerlich. The hope is that eventually those observations will be gathered into a greenways guidebook.

“We’re always pleased when local groups start their own programming on the greenways,” said Walsh. “It helps to drum up awareness at the grass roots level, which could reach many people out there who might not know about our greenways.”

For more information on Knoxville’s greenways, visit www.cityofknoxville.org/greenways.

Mayor Madeline Rogero announced the Knoxville Police Department Parks and Greenways Patrol Unit earlier this year. The officers patrol all 85 miles of greenways and trails throughout the City.
It’s impossible to be all things to all people, but the Parks and Recreation Department doesn’t let that cloud its vision. The City’s parks are valuable assets that improve the quality of life in the community, so the department constantly evaluates the parks to determine what can be done to improve them.

One of the hottest items on the agenda for this year – and probably many to come – is Lakeshore Park, which draws visitors from all over town.

Now that the State of Tennessee has released the property formerly used for Lakeshore Mental Health Institute to the City, the City is working with Lakeshore Park Inc., a nonprofit group involved with the development and management of the park, to develop a new Lakeshore Master Plan.

At a public meeting in June, comments were collected, and those are being reviewed by the City administration and Lakeshore Park Inc.

“What we wanted to know is, have we been on the right track? What other amenities are people looking for? What amenities are the most popular?” said Mayor Madeline Rogero. “At this point, we’ve heard a broad range of ideas about what we can do. We’re weighing suggestions about what will be best for the park.”

City residents have been able to add comments on an online survey. Another public meeting will be held this fall.

“We’re going in the direction of refining the park and making it more attractive to the whole city,” said Joe Walsh, Parks and Recreation Department director.

Suggestions have included adding an amphitheater and a farmers’ market and creating access to Fort Loudoun Lake, which borders the park. One of the buildings on the site is an old chapel.

“We’re hoping to renovate the chapel and maybe making it available for weddings and other rental opportunities,” said Walsh. The administration building, built in 1884, will also face renovation, but many of the other buildings will be demolished.

“There are substantial buildings that have been abandoned for an extended time and need to be brought down for safety reasons,” he said. “Our first phase is to go in there and remove all the hazardous materials and then tear those down.”

Lakeshore Park Inc. is a key partner in the planning stages.

“Lakeshore Park Inc. was formed in the early ’90s to raise funds and to coordinate the construction of the original Lakeshore Park amenities, primarily the baseball complex and the greenway,” said Walsh.

The Lakeshore Park Inc. board has an agreement with the City to manage the property, and it is vitally interested in the future of the park.

“They developed a master plan in the late ’90s for the property, assuming that at some point in the future the State would in fact deed the property to the City,” said Walsh. “That’s what we will be updating this year.”

Another agenda item on the horizon is Suttree Landing Park. South Knoxville can
look to Suttree Landing Park construction starting in the near future.

Named for a novel by native son Cormac McCarthy, the five-acre park has been in the works for many years. It stalled when the economy plummeted in 2007.

“It will be one of the first major components of the South Waterfront development,” said Walsh. “It’s going to be a great attraction for the public as well as a stimulus of sorts to try and continue to see more private development along the south-side waterfront.

“It’s going to be a nice area for access to the water.”

It’s a major project of the Rogero administration.

“Construction bids for the park are slated to be released this winter,” said Rogero. “The first phase will be construction of a new Waterfront Drive. The second phase will include construction of the park, boat house and pavilion. It’s another park that will link up with the Urban Wilderness. It’s a key part of the South Waterfront Master Plan.”

Also in South Knoxville, improvements are scheduled for the entrance to Fort Dickerson Park.

“It’s a jewel of a park that’s difficult to get into,” said Rogero. “We’ll be lining up the entrance road with Woodlawn Pike.

An upgraded traffic light and crosswalk will make it much safer for cars and pedestrians.”

Local tennis players have been taking advantage of improvements at the West Hills Tennis Center at West Hills Park. Walsh calls the Greater Knoxville Tennis Association another great partner.

“They’ve been the people pushing the development and the improvements to that facility,” he said. “With their assistance, we’ve been able to totally renovate the upper eight tennis courts.”

In 2012, the City opened a new clubhouse with showers and an outdoor viewing area.

“We have open play, organized leagues, tournaments for youth and adults and senior citizens, and private lessons that are given at West Hills,” said Walsh. “It’s a heavily used area.”

Dogs love to chase tennis balls, but since that’s not an option for them at West Hills. Parks and Recreation has concentrated on giving canines their own spaces. Three off-leash dog parks have been added to the City’s recreation facilities in the last couple of years.

The PetSafe Downtown Dog Park is at the corner of Central Street and Summit Hill Drive; the Holston River PetSafe Dog Park is on Holston Hills Road in East Knoxville; and Charter Doyle PetSafe Dog Park is on Martin Mill Pike in South Knoxville.

“Dog parks have been a big push,” said Walsh. “We’ve partnered with PetSafe and Randy Boyd to add those new facilities.”

The City, along with PetSafe and others, is committed to making Knoxville the “Most Pet Friendly Community” in the nation. In fact, Knoxville has received one accolade in that area. It was named the most dog friendly city in the Southeast by Dog Fancy Magazine in 2011.

Other recent accomplishments include improvements to the playgrounds at Sam Duff Park in South Knoxville and Cumberland Estates Recreation Center in Northwest Knoxville. And AmeriCorps workers are building a junior disc-golf course at Inskip Park.

“It’s geared to young people, and the holes are not as long,” said Walsh. “It gives beginners a chance to get outside and experience the sport. We’ve got disc golf, skateboarding, mountain biking. We still strive to accommodate the traditional sports like basketball, football, baseball and swimming, but we’ve got the expectations of the younger population who want to see some of the new recreation trends come to life in Knoxville.”

Fort Dickerson Park will soon have a new entrance on Chapman Highway. The new park entrance will align with the Woodlawn Pike traffic light. An eye-catching entrance will be part of the project in an effort to draw more users to one of Knoxville’s hidden jewels.
Knoxville Arts and Fine Crafts Center

By Kara Garland
Parks and Recreation Department

Is the arrival of fall enticing enough to recreate a scene from Riverdance? Does the anticipation of upcoming holiday festivities bring out an inner Rachael Ray? Looking for a Girls Night Out that involves movement, creativity and fun?

Then visit the Knoxville Arts and Fine Crafts Center through City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation. The center, located at 1127 Broadway Ave., offers a variety of visual and performing arts programs throughout the year.

All classes are hosted in a non-competitive learning environment, furnished with professional equipment and taught by expert instructors.

Classes are available for preschoolers through senior adults and engage a wide array of interests. Despite providing area residents with more than 40 years of service, the Craft Center remains “one of Knoxville’s best-kept secrets,” says its director, Cathy Maples.

The programs offered concentrate on art, cooking, crafts, dance, languages, music and photography.

Among the adult classes offered this fall are several eight-week dance and fitness programs such as belly dance, Irish dance and yoga at both beginner and intermediate levels.

Children and youth can also enjoy beginner courses in ballet, Irish dance and yoga-creative movement.

For food lovers, two food-preparation workshops, Pasta 201 and Healthy Holiday Spreads, will be offered in the upcoming months. Instructor Susan Arbital will share her knowledge and popular recipes in these two-hour classes designed to encourage students to confidently recreate these healthy and delicious meals at home.

The first wave of fall programs has already begun, but now is the ideal time to register for upcoming classes starting in mid-October.

To register for a class, book a private party, or inquire about upcoming events, call the center at 865-522-1401. Browse the Knoxville Parks and Recreation Facebook page and the center’s twitter account (@kafcc) for updates.

Additional information about classes, pricing, hours and events can be found at www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/arts.

Instructor Caroline McLeod, right, and assistant Kelsey Tanner teach Beginning Irish Dance to a class of 4- to 6-year-olds at the Knoxville Arts and Fine Crafts Center on Broadway Avenue

Kathleen Gibi photos

Knoxville Community Band

he Knoxville Community Band is comprised of musicians who volunteer their time and talents and have varying experience from professional to high school levels. Traditionally, the band performs in a Christmas Concert, at the Rossini Festival, and in its own Summer Concert series in various parks. This year’s Christmas Concert will be held on Sunday, Dec. 8.

The band is always open to new members. To join the Knoxville Community Band, please call 311 or 865-215-4311.

The Knoxville Community Band performed its annual Christmas Concert at the Bijou Theater in 2012

Kathleen Gibi photos
Staying active is important for physical health, no doubt. For seniors, there’s yet another benefit to taking part in activities that encourage fitness.

“With seniors, there’s a social aspect to it as well,” said Kristin Manuel, recreation superintendent over City community centers. “As they get into a group and develop friends, they become more social and eventually become more active.”

The City’s senior centers are meccas for social and exercise programs – and the melding of the two. Walking, hiking, aerobics (chair aerobics optional), senior-friendly “boot camps,” water exercises and dance are geared toward seniors’ fitness levels and interests.

The three facilities offering the bulk of programming for seniors are the Larry Cox Senior Center, John T. O’Connor Senior Center and the South Knoxville Community Center. Activities vary by location.

“The South Knoxville Community Center has a senior center, and downstairs we have one of our indoor pools,” said Manuel. “It’s not necessarily tied to the senior center, but it is under the same roof, and we offer some exercise or aerobic classes in the water.”

For seniors, the biggest hurdle to establishing an active lifestyle is one that affects people of all ages.

“It’s always hard to start,” Manuel said. “When you haven’t been active or you’ve had an injury, it’s always hard to start becoming active.”

The Larry Cox Senior Center, adjacent to Edgewood Park, offers a Happy Hikers program. The center was renovated last year, and a 960-square-foot addition allowed for a new entrance and bathrooms.

“It’s essentially a brand-new building,” said Manuel. “That right now is pretty much our prize possession as far as senior centers go.”

The renovation of the gym area into a meeting room brought about new opportunities for usage and is an important part of the center’s ambiance, allowing for the most programs possible in a feel-at-home atmosphere.

Manuel says one of the most popular activities among all three senior centers is the senior dances. Dances are held weekly at all senior centers.

For more information on senior programs, please visit www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/centers.
A group of participants in the After School Program at Lonsdale Recreation Center ride Third Creek Greenway in the Kids Can Bike! program.

The program has grown steadily since it was initiated several years ago.

“One thing I always preach is, these are City parks but really they belong to the community, and we want the community to have ownership of them,” said Walsh. “If they see something questionable going on, they’ll call 911 and report somebody vandalizing a restroom, for example, or if they see trash, they’ll bend over and pick it up and put it in the trashcan.”

Walsh says he and his staff are going out into the community to talk with neighborhood associations and churches, and other groups about adopting parks.

“We’re trying to identify different parks that we feel need an Adopt-a-Park partner and go in there and try to be proactive and make contacts with neighborhood associations and churches,” he said. “We would love for every one of our parks to have a strong Adopt-a-Park partner.”

Partnerships are also valuable when it comes to getting kids interested in fitness. The Parks and Recreation Department works with the Coalition on Childhood Obesity, Children’s Hospital and the University of Tennessee on the Kids Can Bike! program. A Ronald McDonald Foundation grant helped fund the program, which takes third- through fifth-graders to greenways to have fun bicycling.

“We’re trying to introduce something different to kids, just to spur their interest,” Walsh said of the bike program. “The competition’s gotten stiffer with X-box and Wiis and all the videogames. Getting kids up and moving is not as easy as it used to be when we were kids. We didn’t have air conditioning, and there were only three TV channels, and daytime TV stunk, so there was every incentive to go outside and play. We’re just having to be more creative with our efforts now.”

The Kids Can Bike! project coordinator, Roger Fernandez, kicks off the program by holding a “bike rodeo” to determine if kids have the skills to participate. Working with the Knoxville
Police Department, Fernandez sets up the rodeo at Safety City on Concord Street and evaluates the cyclists.

Safety City is a great location for the rodeo, Walsh said. “Before you put them out there on the trails, you want to make sure that they all have a good understanding of what the safety concerns are for biking, because safety is our No. 1 concern.”

With the help of department staff members, kids learn what they need to know before setting out on bicycles.

“We hone their skills and abilities regarding best practices of riding bikes,” said Walsh.

“We start taking them out there and reminding them how much fun bike riding is. Plus, they get a chance to see our greenways, to get out in nature. There are so many different reasons to have this program.”

Best of all: “They have a blast,” said Kristin Manuel, recreation superintendent over the centers.

The Ronald McDonald Foundation grant allowed Parks and Recreation to purchase bicycles and a trailer to haul them for the program.

Parks and Recreation has another partner for its Learn to Swim program – the Emerald Youth Foundation.

“We’re working with them this fall,” said Walsh. “Swimming is one of their initiatives.

“They don’t have a pool, and we have pools. We partnered with them in the summer at our outdoor pools, and we’ll work with them this fall and winter in our indoor pools to give them a chance to learn to swim.”

Walsh says the number of children who don’t learn how to swim these days is alarming.

“One of our initiatives is to try to teach as many kids as possible to feel comfortable in the water and be able to swim,” he said. “Because over the course of their lifetime, there will be opportunities to get into a pool and exercise and have a good time – not to mention, we are in a city with a river running through it, and if you can’t swim, it’s essential to cross that off your list.”

The American Red Cross used to run City swim classes, but that’s no longer the case, so Parks and Recreation looked for ways to fill the void.

“We just felt like it’s one of those things, we just need to step up and work with especially inner-city kids and make them feel comfortable in the water, so we’re teaching hundreds of kids a year to do that,” said Walsh.

For more information on City programs, please call 311.
2013/14 PARKS AND RECREATION CALENDAR

Aug. 12-May 21 – After School Program
Programs at all City recreation centers (FREE)
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/centers

Oct. 27 – Pilot CrossKnox 15k Race
Point-to-Point race
Morningside Park to Bearden Elementary
www.ktc.org

December – Christmas Arts and Crafts Workshops
Knoxville Arts and Fine Crafts Center
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/arts

December-February – Youth Basketball league
City Recreation centers
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Dec. 2 –February – Adult Basketball league
City recreation centers
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Dec. 8-February – Adult Volleyball Winter season
Cumberland Estates Recreation Center
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Dec. 8 – Free Christmas Concert
Knoxville Community Band
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation

March-June – Youth Baseball/Softball League
City ballfields
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

March 1 – Teen Step Show
Entertaining competition of synchronized stepping
Civic Auditorium
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/

April 7-June – Adult Softball Spring season
Caswell Park
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

April 14-June – Adult Kickball spring season
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

March 2-May – Adult Volleyball spring season
Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill Recreation Centers
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

May 1-31 – Older Americans Month Events
Crafts, field trips, hikes, and more
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/centers

May 3 – Let’s Move! Event
Kids explore a greenway of activities (FREE)
Victor Ashe Park
www.letsmoveknoxville.com

May 24 – Indoor Pools summer schedule begins,
Outdoor Pools open
Inskip Pool and Ed Cothren Pool
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/swimming.asp

May 27-August – Adult Baseball spring season
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

May 27-Aug. 8 – Summer Art Camp Weekly Sessions
Knoxville Arts and Fine Crafts Center
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/arts

June 1-August – Adult Volleyball Summer season
Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill Recreation Centers
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

June 2-27 – Summer Playground Program Session I
$20 summer camp (fee covers both sessions)
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/

June 14 – Father’s Day Fishing Event
Families make memories fishing in a two-acre lake
Victor Ashe Park
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation

July-November – Youth Football season
John Tarleton & Tommy Schumpert Parks
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

July 7-25 – Summer Playground Program Session II
$20 summer camp (fee covers both sessions)
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/

August-November – Girls 14U Softball Fall season
Caswell Park
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Aug. 4-October – Adult Softball Fall season
Caswell Park
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Aug. 4-October – Adult Kickball Fall season
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Aug. 10 – Ed Cothren Pool closes
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/swimming.asp

Aug. 23 – Paddle for Clean Water
Paddle from Ned McWherter Park to Sequoyah Park
www.fllake.org

Sept. 1 – Inskip Pool closes
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation/swimming.asp

Sept. 3-November – Adult Volleyball Fall season
Cumberland Estates & Deane Hill Recreation Centers
www.eteamz.com/cokathletics

Sept. 7 – Doggie Dip
City pool opens to dogs for a day after closed to humans
Inskip Pool
www.cityofknoxville.org/recreation

Protected
by his
lifejacket,
Trouble the
Yorkiepoo
runs off the
diving board
to chase a
toy during a
Doggie Dip
Saturday at
Inskip Pool.

Michael Patrick/News Sentinel

MISSION STATEMENT:
The City of Knoxville Parks and Recreation Department provides a safe and fun environment so all citizens may enjoy their leisure time. Our dedicated staff works to promote healthy lifestyles and character building activities by providing affordable quality programs, parks, and recreation venues.