

RICHFIELD PARKS AND RECREATION 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

Richfield Woods
Babb's Orchard

Eastwood Preserve

Town Hall



Laura Toth, Interim Director
Elisabeth Kelly, P&R Coordinator

Parks and Recreation during COVID

The 2021 year started out slow due to COVID and the special restrictions from the Governor's Office. During this time we looked at restructure, and how to implement changes to safely continue activities for the community.

The first four months of the year all park facilities were closed, playgrounds, halls and pavilions. A rental log was kept with rental requests and each person was contacted in the order calls were received once facilities opened. May 1st parks, playgrounds and pavilions reopened.

June 1st the building rentals reopened with regards to social distancing. ALL OPEN! Fellowship Hall and Masonic Hall were thoroughly cleaned and handwashing stations were added to the parks.

During this unusual time we saw an increased usage of our Parks and Trails. It was wonderful to see many families and individuals rediscovering our park system.



Recreation Center

Since the Recreation Center located at 3333 Brecksville Road has been closed and shut down the department continued clearing and cleaning out the building. The items were organized and determined to be: continue using, future use, auction items, and donation items.

The kiln and pottery items have been stored for future use, a number of counters, tables, and cabinets were moved to the Johnson Barn for summer camp use, all office supplies were brought to Village Hall, a couple tables, and cabinets were brought to Village Hall for Admin use, a couple file cabinets and small tables were relocated to the Dispatch/Police Departments, majority of the workout equipment went to the Fire and Service Departments and service items were transferred to the Service Department. The auction items brought in approx. \$10,000. The bid package was created and sealed bids were accepted through September 7, 2021 at 1:00 pm with the bid opening at 1:01pm. A bid was accepted and the Recreation Center sold.



Feasibility Study

The Park and Recreation Department and Park Board thought it was necessary to conduct an up to date feasibility study for a community center and we contracted PROS Consulting, Inc. to complete the study.

The study consisted of:

- Project Coordination/Management
- Community Profile and Input
- Visioning and Core Program Analysis
- Organizational, Operational & Proforma Assessments
- Completed Project Documentation

The final study was released to the public March 18, 2021 and a link to access the study has been posted on the website. 31% out of the 1,468 households completed the community center feasibility study.

VILLAGE OF RICHFIELD, OHIO
**COMMUNITY CENTER
FEASIBILITY STUDY**



Feasibility Study

Some of the highlights

- Population: 3,808 live in Richfield, the Village is expected to grow to 4,020 by 2035
- Median age: 51.3 - by 2035 the 55+ age will encompass 56% of the population
- Race: 93% is White Alone and will slowly diversify over the next 15 years
- Income: median household income \$116,676, median household income is significantly higher than state and national averages.
- What Recreation Programs should be offered: team and individual sports programs, personal training, group exercise and fitness programs. Include youth and adult sports, wellness and fitness classes. Pickleball was expressed as a needed program.
- What program spaces are needed: Multi-functional rooms for meetings, parties, small concerts, some aquatics and convertible spaces. Basketball courts were a predominant interest, as well as indoor programming for all seasons.
- Frequency of Visits: 54% of respondents indicated they would visit the community center a few times per week and 17% would never visit.
- Maximum amount willing to pay: 25% indicated they would be willing to pay < \$65/month for a family pass, 35% are not willing to pay, 15% did not know, and 14% would pay \$65-79 per month for a monthly family pass.
- How strongly would you support the construction of a community center if it required increasing taxes: 38% are not supportive with 8% somewhat unsupportive, 26% are very supportive and 18% somewhat supportive.
- Top 3 reasons why not supportive or somewhat unsupportive: 59% not willing to pay more taxes, 55% no need for a community center, 37% don't believe a community center is an roll for government/don't use tax dollars.
- 69% thought a community center should generate revenue from user fees.
- Conclusion: The Village residents are relatively split on the value of having a community center (54% are Very Supportive/Somewhat Supportive and 44% are Somewhat Unsupportive/Not Supportive , and 10% are neutral based on the citizen survey and public engagement used in this study.

It's Spring Time

With COVID and restrictions the team really looked into alternative options to continue annual events.

The Village's Easter Egg Hunt this year took place in residents own front yards. The Easter Bunny's helpers stopped by approximately 75 front yards the night of Saturday, April 3rd with candy and prize stuffed easter eggs and one special egg per child. The Easter Bunny's helpers had fun hiding the eggs as well as the children hunting for eggs and finding their special egg.



Clean-up the Earth

Project Pride and Arbor Day was a huge success. The event was held Saturday, April 24 from 9:00 – noon. Bath and Richfield once again joined forces for the annual roadside litter clean-up event. The event included: free paper shredding, electronic recycling, tree sapling give-a-way, medication disposal and roadside clean-up.

This year all items were conducted with social distancing in mind. The event was a one-way drive thru system, all vehicles entered the Richfield Administration offices by using the east entrance and exited by the Fire station. Trees were bundled and residents drove thru the line and we put the trees in their car.

Chief Swanson collected 4 boxes of medication for disposal. An estimated total of shredded paper collected was 1781 pounds or .8905 tons. We filled 8 pallets of electronics to be recycling. Many treated this event as a family event, it was nice to hear families working together to make a difference.



Clean-up the Earth

Many treated this event as a family event, it was nice to hear families working together to make a difference.



Our Community Garden

Beautiful flowers and healthy vegetables were plentiful at the Village Community Gardens in Eastwood Preserve this year. Everyone enjoyed the great outdoors and it showed in the gardens, residents were hiking the trails, fishing in the pond and enjoying the gardens. We had four new gardeners this year.



Summer Time

Everyone was ready to get outside and enjoy the music, we had 4 concerts on the green. The Masonic Hall was used for rain days and we had 2 concerts that were held inside this year. All the concerts had snacks and ice cream courtesy of the Park Department.

- June 25, 2021 Swizzle Stick Band
- July 9, 2021 Big 5 Show
- July 16, 2021 The Rebeats
- July 30, 2021 The Pop Tarts



Summer Camp 2021

Summer Camp started a week later this year since schools were in session later due to COVID. Summer Camp continued to be held 7 weeks starting Monday June 21st. There was before and after care available, ½ hour before and 1 hour after. There were 2 field trips a week with busing by Peterman this year.

Field Trips: Akron Zoo, Fairlawn Regal Cinema, Hinkley Spillway (2), Rinky Dink, Riviera Lanes, Portage Lakes (3), Harry London Chocolate Factory, Cleveland Zoo, Natural History Museum, Virginia Kendall, and Macedonia Cinemark

Each week there was a different theme, red white and blue, luau, dig for dinos and a special treat, ice cream, chocolate milk day, gummy worm day followed by a pizza party on last day of season.



Summer Camp 2021

Summer Camp usually has a maximum of 50 children, since camp was so popular the last 2 weeks we opened camp up to 60 children per week. We were able to increase to 60 since we had 7 counselors for those 2 weeks. In the 2021 camp season we have a 96% overall capacity.



Summer Camp 2021

Our Counselors!



Events in 2021

12th Annual Butterfly Camp took place Saturday, July 24th at Eastwood Preserve. There were 8 families with over 20 people in attendance, children, parents and grandparents. Why is this so important? Monarchs are pollinators, in the last 20 years we have lost 90% of the Monarch butterfly species.



Beekeepers Meeting on July 8th, Robert Najjar, President of the Summit County Beekeepers Association and a Richfield Community Gardener, held a session for local beekeepers at Eastwood Preserve drawing over 40 participants from all over Summit County. The 90 minute program featured advice and techniques on basic beekeeping and observation of Robert's hives.



Events in 2021

Fall Fest was held at the Eastwood Preserve on Saturday, Sept. 18th. The weather was great and the attendance was up. Mary Ann Roth and Hip to That bands played while everyone enjoyed pierogies, brats, hot dogs and more. Kids participated in story time, children's crafts, photography show, butterfly class, scavenger hunt and hay ride.



Community Day- The children had a great time exploring the insect work this year by using different types of microscopes. The kids views chrysalis, butterflies, crickets, beta fish, feathers, rocks, seeds and trays of slides. They really liked the hands on event, I saw a parent walking thru the midway with his son's bug keeper and crickets over his neck. Full for all!



Events in 2021

Halloween Creepy Crawley Time with the Akron ZooMobile- Saturday, October 23rd the Akron ZooMobile visited Johnson Barn for a creepy visit. Deb from the zoo brought a Chilean Rose Tarantula, Rainbow Boa and A Screech Owl, the kids were listening and interacting. After the animals the kids made a Frankenstein pudding cup and painted a witches hat ornament. Complete with skeletons driving the Cushman.



Game: I Spy Bingo- Created a game to urge adults and children to get outside and enjoy the parks. Bingo board could be downloaded from website and then you could hunt for the park items like, frog, butterfly, trees, leaves, squirrel, park bench or bike.

Halloween Trick-or-Treat Parade: Park staff had a table and was on hand to pass out bags with little treats and candy.

Music is in the air again at Fellowship Hall- Monday nights from 7-9pm residents could join fellow musicians and rock out for a jam session. The first Tuesday of the month 7-9pm it is Folk night, bring your instruments and join in the fun.

Events in 2021

Christmas Tree Lighting- Parks and Recreation staff decorated the Masonic Hall for the arrival of Santa and Mrs. Claus, this year we included a fireplace on wheels with faux fire complete with stockings hung. Thank you Randy Shero! There was an addition of a standing Christmas village tucked in between Christmas trees

Holly Days- Holly Days took place over four Saturdays in November and December this year. The house was decorated for Christmas, Mary Ann Roth was on hand playing Christmas music while shoppers enjoyed spiced cider, hot chocolate or a cookie while strolling through the house. Local vendors sold their wares including: pottery, calligraphy photos, wood working cutting boards and pens, jewelry, scarves, zipper bags, sea glass jewelry, honey and many more items. New this year there was a crafting area for the children, they made ornaments and picked out little toys. New-this was the first time using the Parks department Credit card swipe option. So many people stopped by and they commented it brought back a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.



Eastwood Barn

There has been a grant in place from ODNR to restore the barn on the Eastwood Preserve property. During the COVID epidemic all vendor communication was halted. In June Tim Robinson with ODNR extended the date of the restoration grant to December 31, 2021 without any additional penalty on future Village application. Since it had been some time that the first contractors looked at the barn the costs were too high for the restoration or quotes were pulled. It was made at that time that the barn would have to be destroyed to ensure the safety of gardeners and resident. The Parks Department saved what items it could, old ladders, bottles and window frames and some bricks. In December the crews took down the barn. The Village thought it was important to preserve what it could and decided to replace the roof of the small milking building to make sure some of the history is kept on site.



Recreation in 2021

JumpStart Sports- At the start of 2021 the winter sports programs were cancelled due to availability of school site since the COVID shut down. Spring, Summer and Fall sporting programs were in session. T-Birds T-ball, Rookie Ball and Hummingbird Soccer were some of the programs offered.

Baseball Fields- The Town Hall baseball field was resurfaced at the end of summer and beginning of fall ball. Ready for the start of the 2022 season.



Recreation Center Partnership- In November of 2021 the Village of Richfield and Broadview Heights formed a partnership where Village of Richfield residents could join the Broadview Heights recreation center and the Village would subsidize a portion of the payment. Village of Richfield residents pay the Broadview Heights resident rate and the Village would subsidize the difference between non-resident and resident. The Village subsidy only applied to new annual memberships and at when current renewal occurred. Village residents needed to pick up a voucher from the mayor's office and then apply at the recreation center. Program started mid-November, at year end there were 37 vouchers requested.



Parks and Recreation 2021

Additional items:

- The Park Board worked on short and long-term goals
- Rental fees were updated to include hourly rates for the halls and pavilions.
- Implemented use of RecDesk software for internal rental scheduling.
- Implemented the Parks department credit card swipe application.
- Enjoyed meeting and working with everyone over the 2021 year.

A special thank you to Gary Domanick for his last year as Council Representative to the Park and Recreation Board. Thanks for the many hours, of time spent and his dedication to the parks.



Mission Statement:
Provide recreation and leisure activities, facilities and public spaces that create opportunities for health, fitness, relaxation, enjoyment, learning and community interaction.