

## 2015 Annual Report

### BLUFFTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Presented by: Pam Vanderkolk, Superintendent

#### January

<i>Weekday Walkers - 175</i>	<i>Homemade Card Class - 15</i>
<i>Knitting Lessons - 4</i>	<i>Crochet Lessons - 12</i>
<i>Theater Thursday - 30</i>	<i>Racquetball Tournament – 7</i>
<i>Women’s DIY Class – 10 (max)</i>	<i>New Year’s Day Run - 11</i>
<i>Pine Cone Bird Feeder activity - 24</i>	<i>Theater Thursday - 31</i>
	<i>Princess Elsa Party - 207</i>

*We added a Princess Tea Party to this month mainly because the “Frozen” movie and its characters were so popular. We figured January was a good time to celebrate “Frozen”! And as you can see from the turnout, we were correct!*

#### February

<i>Stuff &amp; Fluff – 55</i>	<i>Knitting Class – 6</i>
<i>Tot Block Party - 17</i>	<i>Chilly Chili Run – 170</i>
<i>Crochet Lessons – 8</i>	<i>Mother/Son Dance – 107</i>
<i>Daddy/Daughter Dance – 305</i>	<i>Theater Thursday – 24</i>
<i>RAW Celebration - 20</i>	<i>Yoga - 6</i>
<i>Homemade Card Class - 5</i>	

*The Tot Block Party is an event led by Molly Hoag from the Purdue Extension office. Toddlers and their caregivers are given the opportunity to be creative using different types of blocks. We thank the Oubache State Park and their staff and House of Hope for their assistance with the Chilly Chili Run as well as the Bluffton Regional Medical Center and the Wells County Library for their partnership with the Theater Thursdays. We are also grateful for the continued cooperation of the Wells County 4-H Park for the use of their facility for the Daddy/Daughter and the Mother/Son dances. RAW is a series of races (Race Around Wells) that participants receive points for participation and placement for added awards. This program is an incentive to encourage their participation in several races throughout the year, including some that are not park events, such as the Parlor City Trot and the Bison Bash by the Oubache State Park.*

#### March

<i>Spring Coloring Contest – 81</i>	<i>SLR Camera Workshop - 5</i>
<i>Tot Gold Hunt/Bank Tour – 15</i>	<i>Girls on the Run - 10</i>
<i>Pasta Cooking Class – 12 (max)</i>	<i>Crochet – 5</i>
<i>Theater Thursday – 22</i>	<i>Card Class – 5</i>

*Special thanks to the Wells Fargo Bank for the Tot Bank Tour and Karen Reed and Bluffton-Harrison MSD for partnering with us to offer a variety of cooking classes throughout the year.*

#### April

<i>SLR Camera Workshop – 8</i>	<i>Underwater Egg Hunt - 186</i>
<i>Pee Wee Soccer – 80</i>	<i>Rapunzel Princess Tea Party - 203</i>
<i>Theater Thursday – 31</i>	<i>Senior Exploration – 54</i>
<i>Easter Egg Hunt – 400</i>	<i>Dog Egg Hunt – 20</i>
<i>MLB Pitch, Hit &amp; Run – 40</i>	<i>Special Olympics – 160</i>
<i>Sr. Exploration Carry – in – 50</i>	<i>Homemade Card Class - 7</i>

Thanks to WZBD and Walgreens for sponsoring our Easter events and to the BHMSD, Bluffton HS athletes and Athletic Boosters as well as the Wells County Y for the exciting and heart-warming Special Olympics event. This is a great program that we look forward to hosting each year. We enjoyed another successful Princess Tea Party! We thank Cindy Lambert from Sentimental Journey for hosting free carriage rides as a part of this event.

## **May**

Summer Striders – 15	Swim Lessons – 175
Pee Wee Swim Lessons - 23	Pickleball - 28
Theater Thursday – 28	Homemade Card Class – 8
Women Self Defense Class – 26	Spring Bike Tour of Parks – 70
Rock Steady Boxing - 4	

The Spring Bike Tour of the Parks continues to grow as does the Women's Self Defense Class. Det. Lt. Jim Paxton does an amazing job teaching the women of our community how to protect themselves. We'd also like to thank Ron Bowman for leading our Pickleball League/Lessons and helping to grow that program as well. Ron volunteered numerous hours for this during 2015.

## **June**

Chicks Run – 342	KoolAid Hair Dye – 11
Art in the Park – 55, 65, 67	Grandpa & Me – 28
Tot Music Time – 10	Loom Hot Pad - 8
Swim Lessons – 65	Tennis Lessons – 382 for summer
Tennis for Tots - 11	Tennis for Elementary - 67
Discover France - 7	Bead Happy Jewelry - 25
Egg Drop Challenge – 45	Baton Twirling - 41
Friendship Bracelets – 5	Piano Play/Discovery – 12
Tot Parachute Day – 34	Robotics Encounter - 13
Meet the Piano – 15	Duct Tape Crafts - 7
Hair Braiding – 6	Rock Painting – 71
Loom Bracelets – 7	Water Aerobics – 4
Bowling – 24	Tot Swim Lessons – 44
Tot Chalk it Up – 46	3D Coloring – 46 (2 classes)
Designer Shirts – 7	Wood Kit Crafts - 42
Tech Take a Part Day – 36	Finger Nail Art – 23
Touch-A-Truck – 831	Kids Garage Sale – 4 families
Pee Wee Painters - 30	Geodesic Dome – 26
Tot Bubble Day – 26	Paper Sculpting - 35
Tot Nature Hunt - 9	Culinary Kids (Mexican) - 17
Fuse Bead Magnets – 26	Balloon Animals – 13
Card Making Class – 7	Tot Balloon Day – 27
Theater Thursday – 28	Culinary Kids (Cookies) - 25
Jr. Police Day – 31	Funky Flip Flops – 63
Design Ribbon Hair Tie – 45	Shadow Puppets - 20
Build a Catapult – 17	Nature's Bounty Class – 7
Dance Classes - 36	Wet Wacky Wednesdays - 6 (cold), 23, canceled

Star Gazing and Animal Pet Day both canceled due to weather

Special thanks to Brandy's Dance Studio and Studio 88 for partnering with us and offering free dance and piano lessons again this summer. We also thank Nick Hale from All Things Power for his assistance with the Tech Take-a-Part Day as well as our maintenance staff. That was a really fun activity! Also, to the Bluffton Police Dept. for their cooperation in the Junior Police Day. Special thanks also to LA Brown for his continued assistance with the Touch-a-Truck every year.

## July

Tot Fire Dept. visit – 34  
Swim Lessons – 115  
Drawing Camp – 17  
Dinosaur Dig - 17  
Summer Striders II – 10  
Squish & Sculpt – 14  
Boys Wrestling Camp - 18  
Mini Cheer Camp – 20  
Origami – 8  
Worry Dolls - 28  
Homemade Cards – 10  
Homemade Volcano - 37  
Jump Rope - 26  
Into the Woods movie - 26\*  
Kehoe Concert - 60 (Little Big Band)\*  
Kehoe Concert - 100 (Claghorn Bros. Band)\*  
Hungry Human Game - 25  
Paddington movie - 20\*

Mosaic Sticker Art - 21  
Kehoe Concert - 75 (Atlanta Music Hall)\*  
Tot Lego Day – 26  
Tot Water Blob Day - 28  
Tot Play Dough Day – 20  
Finger Nail Art – 14  
Yarn Animal Sculpture – 4  
Archery - 17  
Bubble Dash - 34  
Iron Kid Triathlon – 103  
Tot Ice Excavation – 26  
Styrofoam Printing - 10  
Alex Bad Day movie – 26 \*  
Art in the Park - 32, 34, 15  
Big Hero 6 Movie - 26\*  
Foam Party - 450  
Planes Fire & Rescue Movie– 11\*  
Wet Wacky Wednesday – (canceled 3x), 56, 46

*Our thanks to the Bluffton Fire Dept, Bluffton Police Dept., Bluffton HS wrestling staff and cheerleading staff and the Bluffton News Banner for their help with camps and programs during this month.*

*\*Movies & Concerts inside due to rain and/or flooding at Kehoe Park which is always a factor in our attendance. We appreciate the BHMSD for their cooperation and assistance in moving the concerts indoors at their location.*

## August

Kehoe Concert – 89 (Daddy O's)\*  
Volunteer of the Year celebration – 29  
Women's Self Defense Class – 19  
Theater Thursday – 33  
NFL Pass, Punt & Kick – 38  
Soggy Jog - 105  
Squirt Gun Fight - 125

Wet Wacky Wednesday – 65  
Adult Triathlon – 80  
Kehoe Concert – 115 (Old Crown Brass Band)\*  
Homemade Card Class – 8  
Kehoe Concert – 150 (North of Hope & Anvil)\*  
Rough & Muddy - 185  
Giant Slip & Slide - 171 (& 125 spectators)

*A shout out of thanks to the Wells County Foundation for their generous grant that funds our summer movies and to all those who served on the Kehoe Concert Committee for another great season. Special thanks also for all those who sponsored and donated for the concert series. Our Volunteer of the Year was Connie Brubaker. Connie has taught Wells County History and/or genealogy for every session of our Senior Exploration program since we began.*

*We'd also like to thank the BHS Football staff for another successful NFL Pass, Punt & Kick event. We had two (2) girls compete in the state finals with one placing 4<sup>th</sup> in her age group (Riley Tappy) and then Hailey Williamson won 1<sup>st</sup> place in her age bracket! This was Riley's fourth year of making it to the state.*

*The Rough & Muddy, was truly rough & muddy for us this year! It was rescheduled 3 times due to the inclement weather and the flooding. That most certainly affected our attendance, but we were still happy to have a great turnout. Thanks to the Water Filtration Plant and the Fire Department for their assistance in this huge event!*

## **September**

*Fall Coloring contest – 77  
Harvest Hustle 5K – 104  
Art Bazaar – 13 vendors/519 visitors  
Theater Thursday – 25*

*Star Gazing – 17  
Homemade Card Class - 4  
Fall Senior Exploration – 62*

*We enjoyed a larger number of visitors and vendors in the Art Bazaar the Saturday of Street Fair this year. Our enrollment also continues to grow at our Senior Exploration classes.*

## **October**

*Tot Fire Dept. visit – 24  
Senior Carry-in Lunch – 52  
Great Pumpkin Hunt – 425  
Pumpkin Dunkin – 170  
Sock Hop Block Party – 165  
Autumn Adventure – 1,802*

*Outdoor Soccer – 51  
Card making class – 6  
Theater Thursday – 26  
Crochet Class - 6  
Go Greenway Glow 5K – 140  
Adult Volleyball League – 4 teams*

*The Sock Hop was our 3rd block party. While the attendance was about way down compare to the other ones we had hosted in 2014, this one had to be moved inside to the Bluffton High School due to the inclement weather. We felt it was still a great event. The Great Pumpkin Hunt and the Autumn Adventure events just continue to increase in attendance! This year at the Autumn Adventure, we were able to feature the free hot dog meal that we used to have. The Bluffton FD grilled 1,400 hot dogs and served them to our visitors. To go along with that, Inventure Group gave away bags of chips, Subway donated cookies and the Optimist Club served lemonade. It was a great free full-meal deal!*

## **November**

*Tot Post Office tour – 12  
Theater Thursday – 28  
Crochet Class - 8*

*Entertaining Cooking Class – 14  
Homemade Card Class - 4  
Weekday Walkers - 169 (Sept 30 - Nov 16)*

*We thank Karen Reed and BHMSD for her continued cooperation for the cooking classes, as well as the Post Office. Both of these are wonderful partners and supporters for our department and community.*

## **December**

*Tot Candy Cane Hunt - 35  
Winter Wonderland – 412  
December Dash 5K - 115  
Special Needs Winter Wonderland - 24*

*Paws & Claus – 67 humans, 39 dogs  
Winter Coloring contest – 76  
Santa's Mailbox – 341*

*It was a much kinder December for us in 2015 compared to 2014! The Winter Wonderland attendance was up again this year as were the number of Santa letters.*

***Pam was honored as the co-winner of the “Outstanding Professional” Award for 2015 by the Indiana Parks & Recreation Association.***

**Grants received:** \$25,395.00

**Donations received:** \$24,351.00

Volunteers: 361      Total hours: 1,257 (approximate figures)

Improvements made: \$125,629.00

Vandalism/repairs: \$2,409.16

**Income:**

Roush #1 Concessions - \$10,796.85

Roush # 2 Concessions - \$7,257.10

Jefferson Concessions - \$8,664.70

Pool Concessions - \$12,860.56

Pool Admissions - \$20,800.80

Pavilion Rentals - \$4,445.00

Washington Park (inside) - 25 rentals, (outside) 14 rentals

Kehoe gazebo - 2 rentals

Gym & K-9 Kommons - \$19,167.00

Pool rentals - 22

Pool visitors - 10,310 / 63 days

**Gym memberships:**

City employees:	38	Single Non-WC:	2
Single WC residents:	45	Family Non-WC:	0
Family WC residents:	42	Total:	127

**K-9 Kommons Members**

City residents: 44

WC residents: 5

Non WC residents: 1

Total: 50

## **COMPLIMENTS**

Stacey Payne Worth: Took some kids to the Lancaster sledding hill and they spent over three hours sledding. They had a blast! Thanks for making the hill for everyone to enjoy.

Lisa Cahoon: Congratulations. We love our parks department.

Marilyn Bradford: Congratulations to the Bluffton Parks Dept for all of the awards you won. It was a fun year, keep up all the good work. I'm looking forward to 2015 events.

Melinda Grover Holloway: Thanks for such a wonderful time. It was a great day with my own little Elsa!

Jinny Van Steenis Broderick: Lilly and Abby love this event "stuff and fluff"

Erin Butcher: I will be up later today to get our tickets. My son is SO looking forward to it! He asks me every day if today is "dance day with Mommy!"

Jennifer Krinn: Alyssa had a blast with her daddy last night!! (Daddy daughter dance 80's theme)

Mark Clark reviewed Bluffton Parks — 5 star (after the 80's dance)

Jerry Battiste: Thanks Bluffton Parks for an awesome night!

Patricia Troxel: This is a wonderful program and we are so thankful to all involved in bringing it to Bluffton! (referring to Rock Steady Boxing)

Rachel Quillen — 5 star: So many activities offered for all ages!!! Our family greatly appreciates this in a small town April 9, 2015 · 1 Review

Lauren Smith — 5 star This town has the best parks department I have ever come across!! Great people too.

Abigail Hardin Schoeff: This is a HUGE savings! We ordered 2 buckets last year and we are just getting to the end of the last one. We saved \$170 in laundry soap just by making this change. You can also feel good about helping the Parks Dept, as they are raising funds for our community.

Lisa McCormick: just wanted to let you know that your entire mowing crew is very courteous to walkers on the greenway. I have been on there many times when they are mowing or trimming and they stop and wait for everyone to pass. Please tell them "job well done" they are doing a great job!

Angie Sheets: Special Education Bluffton Harrison Elementary School just wanted to thank you so much for the jobs that you do!

This morning I took my kids to the Splash Pad. This is the first summer that Owen has been able to really enjoy the Splash Pad - tolerate the temperature and walk independently without braces on the wet surface! The local Parks Department has provided many firsts for Owen this summer. In addition to enjoying the Splash Pad, Owen has also learned to climb the steps on the slide at Washington Park, and he rode his bike for a mile on the Greenway!

I cannot begin to thank you enough for providing facilities that are safe, socially engaging, motivating and challenging for my kids. By using the fixtures at the parks, Owen has increased his balance, strength, endurance and motor planning skills while having fun in an age-appropriate way. We are grateful to live in a community with such an extraordinary parks system. Thanks for giving us tools to help battle Cerebral Palsy and increase Owen's independence and quality of life!

Shirley Duncan: Oh so much fun!!!! Glad they are doing this for the kids!!!! Squirr Gun Fight 8/29/15

Cindy Schlichter: Great squirr gun fight!

Joann Dillon Payne: It was big fun for the kids. Giant Slip & Slide

Cassandra Smith Priester: thx lol too funny! Giant Slip and slide

Linda Smith: Thank you for another great event! I really appreciate having these races right in our hometown! (Harvest Hustle)

Michele Dalrymple: reviewed Bluffton Parks — 5 star12 hrs · Every event we have been to has been well organized and fun!

Pumpkin Kingdom: Glad to participate in such a wonderful award winning park system! (about pumpkin dunkin)

Christina Crabtree: My son is 6 and this was the first time we attended this event and I'd have to say we will be back next year. Thank you so much Bluffton Parks Department! - Autumn Adventure

Jamie Maller Johnson: Come check out the City gym. Our parks department has put on quite the event..- Autumn Adventure

Sara Betts: Well done!! - Autumn Adventure

Ella Smith: 5star review - Great family fun at low or no cost! Thanks so much to those involved for all the hard work that's put into the events! Dec 1, 2015

Kevin Curry: Our family walked on it last weekend. It is very nice!! Great job everyone who was involved. (about the repaved Greenway )

Tonya Isch: Just wanted to say thanks! You guys do such a great job of having soooo many activities throughout the summer and your communication is great too! Appreciate you guys taking time to keep us updated :)

Becky Haynes: My kids had a blast. Thanks again Bluffton parks and recreation (bubble dash)

Jen Simpson, MSW, LSW Family Centered Services: Thanks for your hard work in bringing amazing events to our community. My Mentor Mom group recently attended the foam party. The kiddos had a blast!

House of Hope Northeast Indiana: Thanks to the Bluffton Parks Department for the awesome Chick Run event yesterday. The House of Hope ladies had a great time! — with Megan Schueler, Alicia Hill, Brenda Coe and Rachel Batdorff.

Irene Poling: I enjoy seeing what the Parks Dept. is doing! Good Job!

Totally stole this from our Parks Departments' photos from a few days ago. It's not very often I'm in the photo like this. Love these kids of mine and love the awesome opportunities our Parks Dept. gives us. Grateful for a small town. (touch a truck)