

PARKS AND RECREATION BOARD DIRECTOR'S REPORT

DATE: August 2023

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS:

Request for Applications: PARD Office of Special Events will release a public Request for Applications to fill Event Day vacancies under our administrative authority for Annual Special Events at the following two parks with Council Adopted Event Day Limits. The Department will work to engage members of the public and qualified event organizers regarding this exciting opportunity and accept applications for diverse family friendly events. Engagement will include social media, City PARD Events website, and a list of Austin Center for Events applicants from the previous years along with direct contacts made to the department.

- Fiesta Gardens – Festival Beach at Edward Rendon Sr. Metro Park. Up to five days under City Code requirements. **District 3**
- Vic Mathias Shores – Auditorium Shores at Town Lake Metro Park. Up to one day available under City Code requirements. **District 9**

Background: The amount of Event Days for Special Events are limited at the following three downtown area metropolitan parks: Zilker Park, Auditorium Shores, and Fiesta Gardens/Festival Beach. When Event Day vacancies become available, a PARD administrative process is utilized to fill the vacancy with a new event through a competitive public Request for Applications. **Districts 3, 5 and 9**

- [Limits on Special Events Ordinance 8-1-15](#)
- [Parkland Events Task Force](#)

Brush Square Phase I Implementation and O. Henry Museum: A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on September 17th, at 1 p.m., 409 E. 5th Street, in conjunction with Museum Day. The Brush Square Plan was adopted by City Council in 2019. The Phase I scope included improvements to sightlines and circulation through improved grading and drainage, new walkways, an expansive event lawn that allows for the O. Henry Pun-Off to continue with room to grow, low walls and raised decking for seating, new lighting, new benches, and fresh landscaping. Funding was provided primarily through the Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT). **District 9**

<https://www.austintexas.gov/departments/brush-square-plan-implementation>



Brush Square Improvements and the O. Henry Museum

Oakwood Cemetery Archeological Project Community Update: The Parks and Recreation Department (Department) will hold a virtual community meeting on Tuesday, September 19th, from 6-7 p.m. as part of ongoing programming and engagement related to the Oakwood Cemetery archeological project. Members of the project team from the University of Connecticut (UConn) and the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) will update the community about the work completed to date and share the next steps in the process. The Department notified City Council in a June 18, 2020 [memorandum](#) about a partnership with UConn and UT Austin to undertake DNA and isotopic analysis at no cost to the City of Austin to better understand the lives of the men, women, and children who were discovered at Oakwood Cemetery during the chapel renovation in 2016. DNA analysis offers a unique opportunity to learn more about identities, familial connections, and life experiences. Additionally, the UConn team is conducting isotopic analysis, which may provide additional insights into the individuals' diets and regions of origin. **District 1** <https://www.austintexas.gov/OakwoodProject>

PLANNING UPDATES:

Brodie Oaks PUD: The Brodie Oaks shopping center redevelopment is a proposed Planned Unit Development (PUD) located at Loop 360 and South Lamar, at the site of the former Brodie Oaks shopping center. Council approved the zoning on first reading on December 8, 2022 ([Item 96](#)). A second hearing was approved on May 18, 2022 ([Item 55](#)). A third reading was rescheduled from July 20th to August 31st. The proposal currently includes dedicating new parkland to expand the Barton Creek Greenbelt. The Parks and Recreation Board voted unanimously to recommend the original PUD proposal as superior at the September 26, 2022 meeting. **District 5**

Zilker Metropolitan Park Vision Plan: The draft vision plan was presented to and received recommendations from the Bicycle Advisory Council and the Pedestrian Advisory Council, Urban Transportation Commission, Environmental Commission, Design Commission, and Parks and Recreation Board. Further consideration of the plan has been placed indefinitely on hold. **Districts 5 and 8** <https://www.austintexas.gov/ZilkerVision>

Texas Legislature Parkland Dedication Bills SB 558 and HB 1526: HB 1526 has passed as part of the 88th Texas legislative session and is now in effect. The state law reduces the amount of parkland that can be required from new developments, among other changes. Department staff is working with the City Law Department to draft a new ordinance, fee schedule, and geographic area maps to comply with the state law. Associated public hearings requests are scheduled to be set at the September 14th Council meeting. The City will be required to apply HB 1526 to all new applications beginning January 1, 2024. A briefing related to the bill impacts will be provided to the Parks and Recreation Board in the near future. **All Districts**

AISD Modernization with School Parks: The Austin Independent School District (AISD) is advancing its 2022 bond modernization program, which will affect nine joint-use sites. Also known as School Parks, joint-use sites are parks where the Department has shared property interests with AISD to provide public recreation. As in past similar situations, the Department staff has advised that AISD must use condemnation should any joint-use area become alienated from public use because of these projects, and that any condemnation be replaced by new joint-use areas following the modernization. The City is working with AISD to codify development protocols for the 2022 modernization program in an effort to help expedite project completion. **Multiple Districts**

Project Connect Update: The Department will resume coordination with Austin Transit Partnership (ATP) on the environmental process for the Austin Light Rail Implementation Plan in October. Meanwhile, the Department continues to coordinate with ATP and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on the 6F process for identifying a replacement property for the impacts to Waller Beach. Scoping has been finalized for the Youth Hostel Feasibility Study, and the Department intends to use the City of Austin's Architecture Rotation List to identify a qualified consultant. The project timeline will be announced in early 2024. **All Districts**
<https://www.projectconnect.com/>

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES:

Shade Structure at Hancock Golf Course: Ground has been broken on the construction of a shade structure at Hancock Golf Course. The pavilion will be 16 x 24 feet, covered with a soft sail and will have picnic tables for guest of the golf course to relax while they wait to play. This is one of the improvements to the facility golf in recognition of 125 Years of Golf in Austin. Hancock Golf Course was originally opened in 1899 after Lewis Hancock visited Scotland. Mr. Hancock decided that Austin, Texas needed a golf course in which the property became the home of the original Austin Country Club. Hancock Golf Course is cited as the oldest golf course West of the Mississippi River in America. **District 9**

George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center Theater and Accessibility Renovation: Renovation construction is scheduled to begin in August 2023. The scope of work will address various accessibility issues throughout the facility, replace the theater house and stage lighting with energy-efficient LED fixtures, update the audio and visual systems for current theatre performance needs, improve the stage rigging and fly cabling system, provide new backstage storage solutions, provide a new dance room and theater stage flooring, replace the HVAC control and building heating system,

replace restroom plumbing fixtures, and improve lighting in the administrative, conference, and classroom areas. Completion is anticipated in Spring 2024. **District 1**
<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/carver-expansion-phase1>

Earl J. Pomerleau Pocket Park: The concept plan for Earl J. Pomerleau Pocket Park was developed in partnership with the Department, the Austin Parks Foundation, and the Windsor Park neighborhood. It was adopted in 2019. The first phase of construction began in Fall 2022 and was completed in July 2023. The park is now open to the public. Amenities include playgrounds, swing set, picnic areas and loop trail. **District 4** <https://www.austintexas.gov/department/earl-j-pomerleau-pocket-park-concept-plan>



New swings at Earl J. Pomerleau Pocket Park

Barton Springs Bathhouse Rehabilitation: The public hearing for a site-specific Save Our Springs (SOS) Amendment to complete the Barton Springs Bathhouse Rehabilitation project has been set for September 14th. The proposed site-specific amendments to the SOS Ordinance would allow the rehabilitation of the existing building on the south side of William Barton Drive, new underground water and wastewater service to support the bathhouse structure with adequate fire flow, construction of a fire lane on the west side of the bathhouse for adequate emergency access around the structure, and landscaping around the restroom building and on the south side of William Barton Drive to improve the quality of existing vegetation.

The Competitive Sealed Proposal solicitation for construction posted on June 26th and proposals are due on August 31st. Construction is anticipated to start in early 2024. Funding for the rehabilitation project is provided through 2012 GO Bond funds, the Historic Preservation Fund, and contributions from the Barton Springs Conservancy. Additional exhibit contributions are provided by the city's Watershed Protection Department and Austin Water Department.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/barton-springs-bathhouse-rehabilitation>

In preparation for the project commencement, the Beverly S. Sheffield Education Center will close September 5th and the Splash! Into the Edwards Aquifer Exhibit closed on August 22nd. The Beverly S.

Sheffield Education Center team is disassembling the exhibit and moving out before construction begins. The mission of Sheffield Education Center and Splash! into the Edwards Aquifer Exhibit is to foster stewardship of Barton Springs and the Edwards Aquifer through education and the renovations.

District 8

MAINTENANCE UPDATES:

Aquatic Maintenance:

- New Diving Board installed at Barton Springs Pool. **District 5**
- Water line break at Canyon Vista Pool repaired. **District 6**
- New Motor seal installed on Shipe Pool. **District 9**
- Gillis Pool - Lead and Asbestos abatement complete. **District 3**
- Deep Eddy Pool new drain installed. **District 10**

Barton Springs Pool:

- Irrigation lines have been repaired and timers have been set.
- Lawn revival plan is in affect with the cooperation of Zilker Maintenance.
- Tree trimming continues via PARD Forestry every Thursday.
- Staff has begun the process of clearing out unused items in preparation for the bathhouse project.
- Graffiti tagging to be removed from the concrete near the downstream dam.
- August 12th celebrated Barton Springs Fest; fees were waived until 2 p.m. (RESOLUTION NO. 20150806-046) **District 5**

Givens Recreation Center: The Givens Recreation Center continues to make progress on their community initiative highlighting areas of park improvement and services for the Givens District Park. Most recently the Community Recreation Division partnered with Water Shed Protection and supporting agencies such as the Hungry Hills Foundation to create a community project to clear debris from the creek Grow Zone and trimming back vegetation in the waterway. **District 1**



Community Agency Hungry Hills Foundation Partners with The Parks and

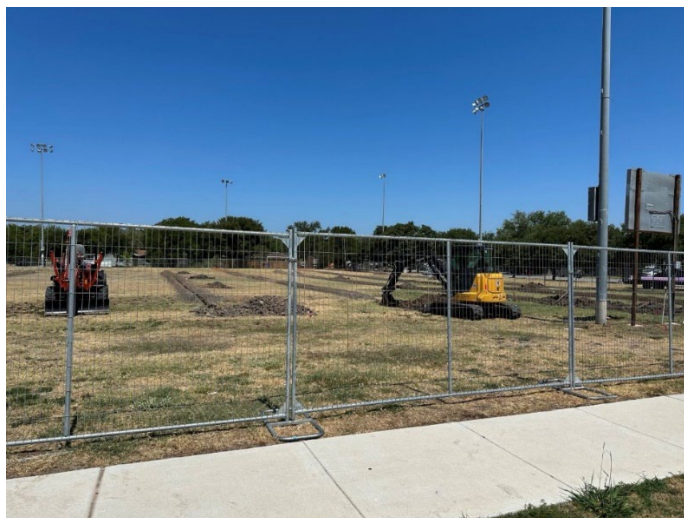
*Recreation Department to Clean the Grow Zone and Creeks While Watershed
Protection Clears Out the Overgrowth Vegetation in the Waterway*

Mendez Recreation Center: The first week in July marked the completion of the field project for the multi-purpose behind Martin Middle School at Edward Rendon Sr. Park. The project, funded by the Community Recreation Division (CRD), included the installation of a satellite irrigation system, extension of the field fencing, new backstop netting and new dugout fencing. Field improvements were also made to include aerating the grass field, top-dressing it with 144 tons of sand that was worked into the turfgrass, in addition to spreading 200 lbs. of Bermuda Triangle seed and 18 bags of Green Keeper fertilizer. The project was completed by three separate Department contractors. The improvements to the field will allow for the CRD central area sites to return programming this space for youth soccer and the return of adult programs by Mendez Recreation center. **District 3**



*Contractor conducts Field Renovations for the Multipurpose
Fields Behind Martin Middel School at Festival Beach Park*

Irrigation Installation: Montopolis Recreation and Community Center began construction to install irrigation on its multipurpose field. Construction is slated to take 3 months. **District 3**



Irrigation Being Installed on the Multipurpose Field

South Austin Senior Activity Center: During the week of July 10-14, a parking renovation project was completed in compliance with the Americans with Disability Act. The curb was lowered, the front walk was widened, and new speed bumps were installed throughout the park. **District 5**

Zilker Botanical Garden Greene Room Renovation: In response to deteriorating conditions of several structural components in the Greene Room, the building will be undergoing renovation beginning in August 2023. Construction will be limited to the Greene Room wing of the building and will include replacement of the roof, structural components, and windows. Construction is anticipated to be completed in Spring 2024. **District 8**

Commons Ford Ranch Metropolitan Park Road Repairs: The Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the Transportation and Public Works Department (TPWD) to complete much-needed repairs at Commons Ford Ranch Metro Park. The work began on August 10th and was completed on August 13th. Work included repaving the access road and major parking lot improvements. Twenty-five parking spaces were striped with added tire stops, up from 10 original marked spaces. **District 10**



Freshly paved access road and parking lot improvements at Common Ford Ranch Metro Park

PROGRAM UPDATES:

District 1:

Dottie Jordan Recreation Center Movie Night Event: On July 27th Dottie Jordan Recreation Center hosted its first community event since reopening in June. The movie night event was a great success with around 115 community members in attendance. The movie shown was “A Bug’s Life” and there were bug themed activities and decorations. The overall feedback from the event has been very positive and we are looking forward to future community events in the Dottie Jordan Neighborhood Park.



Dottie Jordan Movie Night on July 27th

Close Out of Summer Camp Junior Ranger Program: Turner-Roberts celebrated the closeout of their summer camp Junior Ranger program with a trip to Zilker Park. The field trip activities included recognition and swearing in of Junior Rangers for their services summer service. The nature-based

curriculum, provided by the department's Natural Resource Division was a success as it provided 24 youth participants ages 9-12 years old a variety of exposure and educational curriculum based around plants, animals, and nature activities.



Turner-Roberts Boredom Busters Campers Participating in the Junior Rangers Club

Merv Griffin Basketball Camp: The Turner-Roberts Recreation center recently hosted the Merv Griffin Basketball Camp in the facility gymnasium. The week-long camp was attended by summer camp program participants throughout the Community Recreation Division. Over 90 youths, ages 5-12, participated in a week of basketball drills and games, and finished the camp with a certificate of completion, water bottle and camp shirt. The annual event, which was postponed due to COVID, returned to honor the late Parks and Recreation Supervisor Merv Griffin.



Merv Griffin Basketball Clinics Attendees Pose for a Camp Photo

Annual Back to School Event: On Saturday, August 12th, Givens Recreation Center hosted its annual Back to School event in partnership with Dream out Loud. The community event was held from 10 a.m.-2

p.m. in the facility gymnasium and was free to the public. The event included community vendors providing resources for the community, free haircuts, back to school supplies, and food for everyone. The supporting agency distributed over 500 backpacks to community families. Over 1,000 attendees participated in the event.



Givens Recreation Center Back to School Event

“Cuban Carnival” Summer Celebration: The Conley Guerrero Senior Activity Center, in partnership with the Centralized Programs Division, hosted a “Cuban Carnival” Summer Celebration on July 21st from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. It was an interactive intergenerational event that included performances by The All-Rhythms Band, Youth Ensemble, and Sofrito y Su Melao. There were over 215 youth and senior participants.



Participants Watching Performances

Senior Center Activities: The Conley Guerrero Senior Activity Center is offered the Mending and Mingling event on Wednesday, August 23rd, from 1-3 p.m. During this event participants brought tired, torn clothing in need of fixing or embellishing. Participants and staff mended the clothing while chatting with friends. The Conley-Guerrero Senior Activity Center offered the Going Bananas Friday Event on Friday, August 25th from 10-11 a.m. Bingo and banana splits will be offered to all participants.

Tones Fest: The culminating event of the Tones music series, Tones Fest, was held on August 26th at the Asian American Resource Center, featuring 3 bands and 9 makers. The second annual Tones Fest created a space for Austin-based Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) creatives to congregate under one roof for an afternoon of sights and sounds. Festival attendees had the opportunity to receive free event-exclusive swag designed by local artists ALFREN and Manik Raj Nakra, as well as complimentary henna art by Neeti Patel. An instrument activity room was setup in the library by Artly World to educate and encourage kids, children, and adults to pick up instruments and make sounds. The event had performances by local Asian American musicians Promqueen, James Tabata, and Assorted Potions. 100 people attended the event.



Tones Fest 2023 Promotional Graphic

Back to School Drive – George Washinton Carver Cultural Center: The Black Women In Business’ 13th Annual R.O.S.E.S. (Reaching Out Supporting Every Sister) back to school drive had no shortage of beaming faces from the youth of the Carver community on Saturday, August 5th, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m., hosted in partnership with Black Women in Business. Families were greeted by the Carver’s community partners and volunteers at the entrance then guided to check-in and pick-up! Students received backpacks filled with school supplies, free ice cream vouchers, and giveaways from local vendors. Services like embroidery and photo I.D. Safety Card lamination, along with do it yourself activities like bracelet-making provided an opportunity for students to socialize with each other and facilitators, and there was no shortage of snacks for attendees. The event was a huge success with over 500 students served.



Families Gather in the Carver Lobby for the 13th Annual R.O.S.E.S. Back to School Drive

The Fat Gator: The Fat Gator Cultural Event occurred on August 5th from 4-10 p.m. at Lake Walter Long Metropolitan Park. Approximately 5,000 attended the event.

[The Fat Gator](#)

District 2:

Back to School Bash: The George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center hosted its annual “Back to School Bash” on Saturday, July 29th from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. The George Morales Dove Springs staff, advisory board and over 30 volunteers prepared 5,400 backpacks stuffed with school supplies. 5,100 backpacks were distributed to over 4,500 visitors the day of the event.



5,400 Prepared Backpacks Ready for Distribution



Guest Eagerly Receive their Backpacks

Dove Park Madness: The George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center hosted its “Dove Park Madness” event on Saturday, July 29th from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. The family friendly event featured inflatable obstacle courses, carnival games and prizes for park guests to enjoy. Over 1,200 visitors participated in this event.



Youth Participants Engage in Carnival Games at the Event



Participants Engage in Inflatable Obstacle Courses

Boredom Buster Program: The George Morales Dove Springs Recreation Center Boredom Buster program concluded its final week of camp with a special field trip to Barton Springs on Thursday, August 2nd. The Dove Springs staff and Park Rangers collaborated to expose participants to a fun day of outdoor adventure that included nature play and kayaking. 18 participants attended this field trip.



Boredom Buster Participants Kayaking at Barton Springs



Boredom Buster Participants Cool Down at Barton Springs

District 3:

Backpack Giveaway: The Montopolis Recreation and Community Center collaborated with the Travis County Posse and the Travis County Constables Precinct 4 to host its annual Backpack Giveaway. The backpack giveaway was on Saturday, August 5th, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. 900 community members attended and about 700 backpacks full of supplies were given out. Community members were also able to play games, do crafts, and enjoy fresh popcorn.



Council Member Jose Velasquez and Travis County Constables Handing Out Backpacks

Pan Am Hillside Concert Series: July 25th concluded the Pan Am Hillside Concert series for Pan Am Neighborhood Park. The annual event held three Tuesdays in July (11th, 18th and 25th) from 6-10 p.m. celebrated its 65th year as one of the Austin's longest running free concert series and a much-loved East Side tradition. This year's partnership included the Mexican American Cultural Center and Pan Am Recreation putting on an amazing three nights of new and returning artist. Also included were color guard performances, free children's activities, and vendors, two food trucks, that included Kona Ice and free bottles of water for the public. Over 2,500 spectators were in attendance for all three nights total, with over eight hundred fifty attendees for the last nights headlining artist The Tiarras and Ruben Ramos.



Musical Performers for Pan Am Hillside Concert Series

Hack Your Clothes Program: The Montopolis Recreation and Community Center concluded its first ever "Hack your Clothes" program. Hack your Clothes is a program that teaches teens ways to upcycle old clothes. Teens took their old clothes and redesigned them for new use. The program ran from July 17th-August 3rd and participants met twice per week. There were seven teens registered for the program.



Two Teens Upcycling Their Old Clothes.

Brighter Bites Program: Teen campers at Mendez Recreation Center have been busy this summer! Along with college campus visits for the month of August, activities also included a teen challenge, as well as an opportunity for the teens to work with Brighter Bites filling bags with fresh fruits and veggies for the community and Brighter Bites Program. The camp had 60 participants.



Mendez Recreation Center Teen Camp Participants Take a tour of Austin Community College While Also Assisting with Packing Bags of Fresh Produce for the Brighter Bites Program

Summer Camp at Mendez Recreation Center: Mendez Summer campers were fortunate to be within walking distance of Lady Bird Lake. For this reason, campers' fish every other week! 60 children have caught quite a few fish throughout the summer. Worms are used for bait and children learn how to bait and cast their lines.



Mendez Summer Camp Participants Fishing at Lady Bird Lake

District 4:

Youth Summer Camp: Gus Garcia Recreation Center Youth Summer Camp concluded its 10-week program on Friday August 11th. Throughout the summer, 48 youth participants, 5-12 years of age, 67 Youth Boredom Busters participants and 13 teen participants enjoyed a fun filled summer of crafts, swimming, field trips, enrichment, active play, and outside time. Parents have been very appreciative of the affordable, safe, and positive environment.



*9–11 Year Olds Posing for a Photo
After a Color Run Activity*

“Field Day Size Up” Event: On Friday, July 22nd Gus Garcia Recreation Center hosted its annual Field Day Size Up event for the community from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Over 250 participants from five different recreation centers and teen sites attended the event to take part in a variety of outdoor games and skills challenges.



Participants Play a Game utilizing Inflatable Bumper During Field Day Size Up

Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center Youth Summer Basketball: Summer Basketball at Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center and ended on August 19th.



Virginia L. Brown's 6U Team After a Successful Game at Turner Roberts Recreation Center

Virginia L. Brown Recreation Center 2023 Boredom Busters Camp: Boredom Busters is a FREE drop-in summer program offering youth a variety of activities such as crafts, cooking, games, nature programming, sports and more for youth ages 5-12 years! This Camp starts May 15th and ends August 4th. Virginia L. Brown provided activities to 12 participants each week this summer.



Virginia L. Brown's Boredom Busters Participants on the Junior Ranger Club Field Trip

District 2/5:

Teen Color Fun Challenge: On Friday August 4th Dittmar Recreation Center hosted its Teen Color Fun Challenge from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Over 100 teens were in attendance to take part in fun color-based challenges.



Dittmar Recreation Center Teen Color Fun Challenge 2023

Dittmar Pre-k Program: Dittmar's Pre-k program came to an end July 20th. Participants enjoyed a splash pad day and a luau party to end their summer session. The program had a max enrollment of 12 participants.



Dittmar Recreation Center Pre-k Splash Pad Day 2023

District 5:

“Healthy Living / Managing Diabetes: The South Austin Senior Activity Center partnered with Austin Public Health to host a six-week course titled “Healthy Living / Managing Diabetes” which gives participants the tools needed to both avoid and live with the condition. The course began on July 20th and ran through August 17th. The course has averaged 20 participants per session.

District 8:

Austin Nature and Science Center Summer Camp: The Austin Nature and Science Center (ASNC) concluded its summer camp program on August 11th with 616 total participants. Activities included science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) activities, learning about Austin’s native wildlife, and unlocking clues from past geologic time scales.



ANSC Explorers Camp, Ages 11 to 12, Inside Whirlpool Cave Where

They Learned About Central Texas Cave Systems and Saw Many Karst Invertebrates that Call it Their Home



ANSC Frog Campers, Ages 5 to 6, are Led by the Department's Urban Forestry Team and ANSC Staff as They Safely Ascend New Heights in the Treetops During a Climbing Session

Annual Dog Days Program: The Zilker Botanical Garden hosted its annual Dog Days Program on Saturday, August 26th from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. The event offered cooling pools for dogs, treats, dog-related vendors, information on how to foster healthy dogs, and other resources to enhance outdoor adventures in Austin for dogs and their owners/humans.

District 9:

Special Olympics Swim Practice: Big Stacy Pool hosts McBeth Special Olympics swim practice on Saturdays 10 a.m.-12 p.m., July 15th through October 14th.

Hancock Recreation Center's Community Guessing Contest: Each month, the Hancock team hosts a guessing contest for visitors to the center so they can get to know staff members at the recreation center. The winner each month receives a small reward for being the closest to the correct answer. For this month, visitors made a guess of how many small summer ice cream shaped erasers filled the jar. Third place guessed 89, 2nd place guessed 91 and winner, Mr. Keller, guessed the exact number of 90 erasers in the jar! Congratulations to our recent winner Mr. Keller!



Mr. Keller with his Two Sons who Attended a Week of Summer Camp

Ice Cream Social at Lamar Senior Activity Center: The Lamar Seniors had a hip hoppin bee boppin good time at the annual Ice Cream Social! More than 60 Varsity Generation Participants came out to enjoy a wide variety of ice cream in waffle bowls, cones, and root beer floats! There was also trivia, dance performances, and a human bingo game to encourage lots of social interaction. The event took place Thursday, August 11th from 1-3 p.m.



Participants Eating Ice Cream at the Annual Ice Cream Social

Lonestar Limericks: On August 1st, the Austin Parks and Recreation Department's Brush Square Museums Lonestar Limericks Writing Contest came to an end with the winners announced! Sophia Foster, Michaela Thomas and Anoma Foster took 1st-3rd place with honorable mentions for Bob Turvey and Galia Farber. Victoria Foster won the youth category. Contestants paid tribute to the City of Austin and the State of Texas in this Texas themed limerick writing competition. 43 people were in attendance.



*Winners of the Limericks Writing Contest, Anoma and Victoria Foster
Sitting on the O. Henry Museum Porch.*

Biannual Drawing Salons: The Elisabet Ney Museum Drawing Salons continued their biannual Drawing Salons every Saturday morning in August from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Viewers sketched Elisabet's realistic sculptures in her own Formosa studio and each session is hosted by the Museum's Educators. Participants ranged in age and level of experience. There were 30 attendees.



*Community Members on August Drawing
from the Sculptures of Elisabet Ney*

Aztech Kidz Code Bilingual Camp: Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center in partnership with Academia Cuauhtli held their graduation ceremony on August 6th at Sanchez Elementary. This summer, seven teachers and 150 participants learned coding and Aztec dance across three sessions. The students learned about Artificial Intelligence prompts, video game design, and traditional danza and mask-making traditions from central Mexico in both English and Spanish. They concluded the program

with field trips to the Aquarena Springs Meadow Center and Epic Fun. Guests at the graduation ceremony at Sanchez witnessed their accomplishments, including a live hackathon and a special dance performance by the kids. 150 people attended the event. For more information about Aztec Kidz Code or Academia Cuauhtli please visit www.academiacuauhtli.com.



Students in Academia Cuauhtli's Aztech KidzCode Summer Camp Learn Coding and Aztec Dance

Dual exhibition by Anne Bobroff-Hajal and Craig Campbell – Empire's Echo: A closing reception was held at the Old Bakery & Emporium on Saturday, August 12th featuring accordion player Amanda Kitchens. The exhibition drew interested historian enthusiasts to three panel discussions to learn about the history of Siberia and Russia. The musician was sponsored by the Music and Entertainment Division's new music program. There were 55 people in attendance.



Artist Anne Bobroff-Hajal, Accordion Player Amanda Kitchens, and Artist Craig Campbell

Zilker Relays – September 8, 2023: Annual relay style run at Zilker Park Lou Neff Road. September 8th. Attendance expected at around 1,500. [Zilker Relays](#)

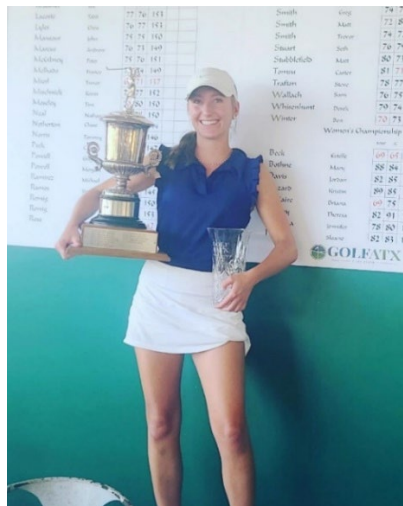
Multiple Districts:

After School Program: Recreation Centers throughout the Department began the After School Program August 14th. This program will continue through the entire school year for youth ages 5-14 years. Participants will enjoy active play and enrichment activities each day along with homework and snack time.

Annual City Golf Championship: The Golf Division conducted the Annual Austin City Golf Championships August 3-5. The Championships were played at Morris Williams, Jimmy Clay and Roy Kizer Golf Courses in that order. 156 total competitors registered for this year's Championship in which eight were women and 148 men. Congratulations to Nick Schafer on the Men's side and Estelle Beck for the ladies. **Districts 1 and 2.**



2023 Men's City Champion Nick Schafer



2023 Women's City Champion Estelle Beck

Summer Camp Talent Show: The Annual South Austin Recreation Center Summer Camp Talent Show was held Thursday, July 27th at 11 a.m. Four centers, George Morales Dove Springs, Montopolis, Dittmar, Mendez and South Austin Recreation Center had their most talented campers perform, songs, skits, choreographed dances, and karate demonstrations. Over 110 campers attended the event!

Campers Perform a Musical Skit at the Talent Show



Totally Cool, Totally Art (TCTA): Roll That Dice: A Knight's Quest!, was the culmination of three weeks of hard work by 12 workforce development students. TCTA, in partnership with the Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC), teamed up to host a new kind of theatre program this summer in which young adults were paid to create, write, direct, and perform a traveling play. Performances were held the first week of August at the Carver Museum, Garrison Park, Walnut Creek Park and Delores Duffie Recreation Center for youth summer camp participants. Audiences loved the play and reviews were great. Many thanks to both ACCC and the Carver Museum for making this program possible. **Districts 1, 5 and 7.**



Kelley Hasandras Signs Autographs at a Performance at the George Washington Carver Museum

Link to video performance

<https://youtu.be/nYnhULb6ntI>

Boredom Busters Summer Program: This summer the Junior Nature Ranger Club brought a nature-based program to the Boredom Busters summer program held at six recreation centers for over 124 participants. The Austin Nature and Science Center partnered with the Community Recreation Division, Park Rangers, and Watershed Protection Department to develop a program that visited Montopolis, Virginia L. Brown, Delores Duffie, Dove Springs, Gus Garcia, and Turner-Roberts Recreation Centers to provide activities that connected children to nature. The Junior Nature Ranger Club visited each site three times, and the final fourth meeting was a field trip to Barton Springs where participants had an opportunity to go kayaking or practice slacklining, learn about the Barton Springs salamander, and enjoy a hands-on animal presentation.



Junior Nature Ranger Participants Cool Off from the Summer Heat While Enjoying Lunch

Austin Civilian Conservation Corps (ACCC): ACCC employees gained experience in working with teenagers to better understand how their environment and habits are connected. From June 5th-August 11th, ACCC supported the Roving Leaders Program which positively impacted seven employees. The outcomes of this summer's program were building positive relationships with students which allowed each Roving Leader to better understand interests for each student. The goal for the upcoming Fall is to build on that relationship by targeting and developing the characteristics of the teenagers through workshops and experiences that grabs the interest of the teenagers.



Roving Leaders Ryan and Ellis Leading a Hike Through the Greenbelt

Zilker Park Weekend Shuttle: The Zilker Park Weekend Shuttle will stop running after Labor Day Weekend, with the last day of service on September 4th. It has served over 2,000 riders and counting. The shuttle kicked off on Saturday, May 27th, and runs from One Texas Center Parking Garage (South 1st Street and Barton Springs Road) from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. Parking at One Texas Center is free with validation for all shuttle riders.

<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/zilker-metropolitan-park>

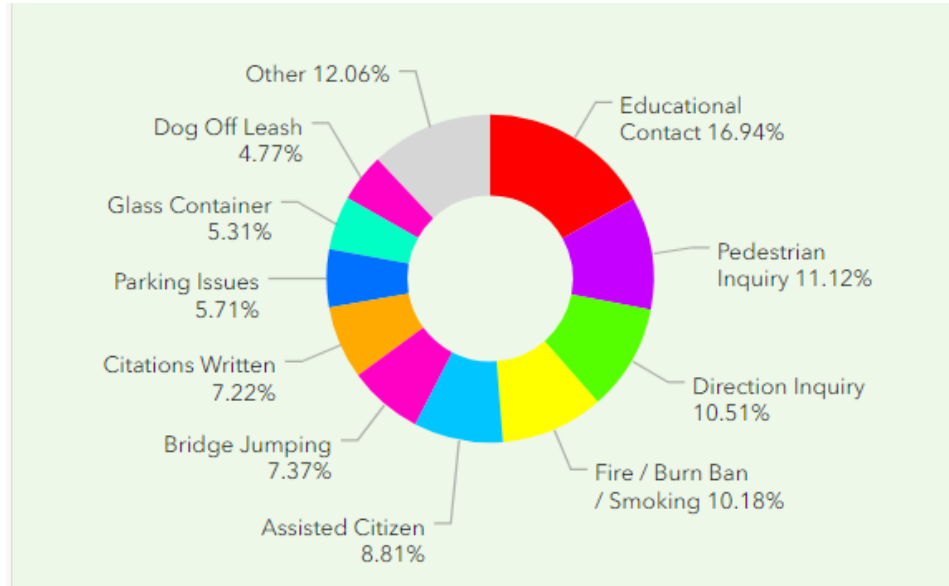
Pools Extend Operation: In consideration of the ongoing excessive heat six seasonal pools will remain open through October 1st. They include Garrison, Govalle, Mabel Davis, Northwest, Shipe, and Walnut Creek. These pools will be open in addition to the five year-round pools: Deep Eddy, Barton Springs, Bartholomew, Big Stacy, and Springwoods. PARD has also waved admission fees to City pools starting August 9th through October 1st with the exception of Barton Springs. Pool schedules are available on the Department webpage.

Press release: <https://www.austintexas.gov/news/six-seasonal-pools-extend-operations-fall>

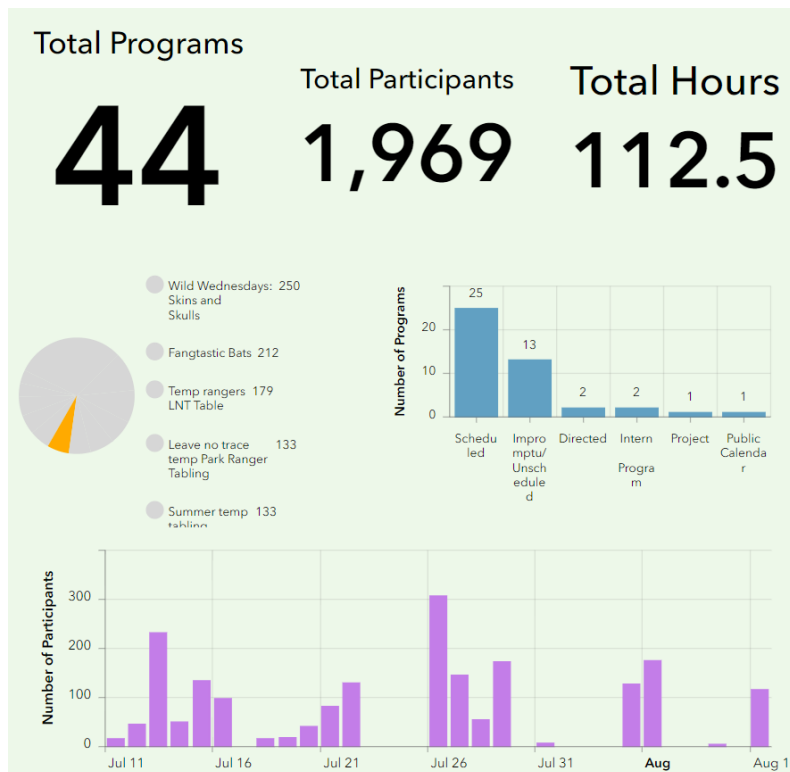
Press release: <https://www.austintexas.gov/news/pool-fees-waived-through-october-1>



Park Rangers Contacts and Program Updates: The Austin Parks and Recreation Park Rangers reported 4,738 contacts with park visitors for the reporting period of July 10th through August 10th, totaling 31,806 contacts for the entire fiscal year. From July 10 to August 10, Park Rangers offered information, assistance, programs, and conservation services within parks maintained by the Department. Park Rangers handled daily operations including 2,769 contacts regarding laws, safety, service, and education. 132 contacts were logged for off-leash dogs during this timeframe, totaling 2,236 contacts with park visitors about off-leash dogs since October 2022. Park Rangers also conducted 44 programs totaling 112.5 hours with 1,969 participants. Programs focused on Leave No Trace recreational practices and responsible recreation.



Pie Chart of Total Percentages of Park Visitor Contact Categories with Park Rangers from July 10th to August 10th



A graph of Total Programs, Participants, and Hours of Park Ranger Programming from July 10th to August 10th.

ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES:

Zilker Train: After facing some challenges and setbacks, the Austin Parks Foundation has reported that their plans to restore the Zilker Train are officially back on track. Since their last social media post, they have partnered with a local group of engineers who have the experience and expertise to deliver a safe, functioning train, and the work is already underway. The train coaches were recently transported to an off-site facility to be retrofitted with airbrakes to ensure they're safe for passengers. They'll also receive new electrical wiring for lights and a PA system. Later this month, APF will start working on making track adjustments. If all goes well, the new and improved Zilker Eagle will enter the testing phase in late fall, with the train opening to the public shortly thereafter. APF is planning to share monthly updates on their progress on their social channels.

Recreation Management System: The Department, with the assistance of the Communications and Technology Management Department (CTM), published a Request for Information (RFI) to survey current technology solutions in the Recreation Management Industry. PARD/CTM received three responses and conducted vendor question and answer sessions and vendor system demonstrations, along with meetings with current user organizations, between September and October 2021. Based on the information gathered, the Department worked with CTM to establish a scope of work (SOW) and conduct a formal solicitation for a Recreation Management System. As CTM is the principal information technology department that focuses on the delivery and operations of vital IT infrastructure network and telecommunications services for the City, they facilitated the competitive process, which included establishing a CTM project manager and creating a timeline for the solicitation process. In October 2022, the Department began working with a CTM project manager to establish timeline and deliverables for the solicitation scope of work. The solicitation was published on June 5, 2023, and was extended and closed on July 20, 2023. Six proposals were received, and all proposals were deemed responsive. The evaluation process, led by Central Procurement, is in process. The Department will continue to utilize RecTrac services throughout the solicitation process until a recommended vendor is established.

Watercraft Concession at 2418 Stratford Drive: A Scope of Work (SOW) was developed and presented at the September Parks Board Contracts and Concessions Committee meeting. The solicitation was published on November 9, 2022, and closed January 3, 2023, with four proposals submitted. On March 13, 2023, a recommendation for award to Texas Canoes and Kayaks was posted. The recommendation for the award to the selected vendor was under protest. On May 5th, 2023, Central Procurement cancelled the solicitation on behalf of the City and will re-solicit. The contract with the current vendor, Rowing Dock, was extended through October 31, 2023. In July 2023, PARD staff requested that the Contracts and Concession Committee and Parks Board recommend City Council authorize a one-year contract extension with the Rowing Dock. The extension request is scheduled to be presented to the Austin City Council on August 31, 2023. The extension will assist the Department in providing quality recreation while giving the City time to resolicit a concessionaire for the Stratford Drive location.

Management and Operation of the Pharr Tennis Center: This agreement is for the management and operation of the renovated Burnett "Blondie" Pharr Tennis Center (Pharr). The facility is anticipated to be completed in September 2023. The Contracts and Concessions Committee was briefed at the October 21, 2022, meeting regarding the solicitation. The solicitation was published on June 12, 2023, and closed July 11, 2023. Four proposals were received. The evaluation process is complete, and a recommended vendor has been posted on Austin Finance Online [Austin Finance Online \(austintexas.gov\)](https://austintexas.gov/finance). Due to the

expenditures not exceeding the City Manager’s authority, Council approval is not required. The contract start date will coincide with the completion of the ongoing renovation.

Zilker Café: The agreement with the previous vendor has been terminated. A new solicitation was developed to operate and maintain the food and beverage concession on the north side of Barton Springs Pool in Zilker Park. The scope of work for the solicitation was presented to the Contracts and Concession Committee on May 19th, 2023, and published on May 30, 2023. Central Procurement held a pre-proposal meeting on June 8, 2023, and proposals for this solicitation were due by July 25, 2023, following a two-week extension for responses. One proposal was received, and Central Procurement is currently evaluating it for responsiveness.

End-of-Year Deadlines for Financial Services: The FY2023 Year End Close process is underway. The Financial Services Division is in constant communication with PARD staff, addressing purchasing and accounting-related activities and their corresponding deadlines for the remainder of the current fiscal year. The deadlines, within the end-of-year schedule, are important to ensure any needed procurements are completed in time to utilize the current fiscal year funds, as well as ensuring the department’s ability to manage the budget and fund balances.