

Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department 2016 Annual Report

The Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department had an historic year in 2016. The year brought new facilities online and featured multiple park and trail improvements. Our programs and special events saw steady growth throughout the year. On behalf of the dedicated staff of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department, I am pleased to present the following year-end report.

Northside Hospital Cherokee Amphitheater

Construction of the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater was completed in November 2016. The facility is the “Flagship” of the Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department. The City hosted a Grand Opening Concert on November 12 featuring local country music artist Mark Will with opening act Thomas fountain. The estimated attendance at the inaugural concert was in excess of 6,000. The Northside Hospital- Cherokee Amphitheater will help the City provide entertainment for residents and visitors for many years.

Special Events

The Special Events Division had a very successful event season in 2016. On Friday, February 19th to celebrate Arbor Day, The City of Woodstock gave away 800 tree seedlings for resident to plant at their homes. Each seedling came with a tree care guide.

The City’s annual *Greenstock Day* was held on Saturday April 23, 2016. The annual event features a Community Garage sale and recycling event. The community Garage Sale had 76 registered garage sales throughout Woodstock. The annual recycling event collected over 15,000 lbs. of electronics, 560 lbs. of batteries, 9,000 lbs. of paper was shredded, and over 3 tons of other recyclables were collected.

The 2016 Movies in the Park, Sponsored by Northside Hospital-Cherokee, included Jurassic Park on May 6, Disney’s Zootopia on June 10, and Star Wars The Force Awakens on July 22. An estimated 500 people were in attendance at each show.

The City of Woodstock Memorial Day Ceremony was held on Monday May 30. Over 500 attendees came to the Park at The City Center to pay their respects to those that have given the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

The City’s Annual Fourth of July Festival and Fireworks were very successful. An estimated 5,000 people came in to Downtown Woodstock to watch the annual Fourth of July Parade and Freedom Fest in The Park at City Center. The annual 5K Freedom Run had over 500 runners in this year’s event. Our annual Fireworks display brought an estimated 30,000 to the highway 92 and 575 corridor to watch the display.

On August 13, 2016 the City hosted the *Tracks on Main Music Festival*. The event featured 14 music acts on three different stages in Downtown Woodstock. Stages were located at the Parks at City Center, the Local Stage at Wheeler Street and on the Elm Street Green.

The 2016 September Brown Bag Concert Series featured a free concert on each Thursday at The Park at City Center. This year's concert featured, John Amorosso on September 1, Bob Geresti on September 8, Chris Corso on September 15, Jason Koornick on September 22, and Craig Gleason on September 29. We had great weather for each concert and had more than 200 attendees at each performance.

On Sunday September 11, 2016 the City hosted its annual 9/11 Day of Remembrance. This year was the 15th anniversary of the attack on our Nation. This year's ceremony featured the unveiling of the Woodstock 9/11 Memorial at The Park at City Center. The memorial features two subway tracks that were recovered from beneath The World Trade Center.

Our annual *Kids Fest* was held on Monday, October 31. The annual event featured Halloween trick or treat activities for our younger ghouls and goblins, including moonwalks, DJ Ronnie, Tim the Magician, Adam the Juggler, games, the ever popular stringed apple and pumpkin bowling games, face painting, costume contest, candy give-away and the always popular costume contest.

On Friday November 11, the City hosted its annual Veteran's Day Ceremony in The Park at City Center. This annual celebration honors America's veterans for their patriotism, love of country, willingness to serve, and sacrifice for the common good. The Marine Corps League Detachment #1311 in Woodstock, the American Legion Post 316, and the Warriors' Watch Riders, helped us celebrate our veterans who have given us our liberty and freedom. The event featured a Candlelight ceremony and music.

The Grand Opening Concert of the Northside Hospital-Cherokee Amphitheater was held on Saturday November 12. City officials and Northside Hospital-Cherokee representatives held a brief ribbon Cutting ceremony followed by the first concert at Georgia's newest outdoor Music Venue. The concert was a Salute to our Veterans and featured Woodstock's own, country music artist, Mark Wills with opener, the Thomas Fountain Band. The estimated crowd was in excess of 6,000.

The Christmas Jubilee Parade and Festival of Lights were held on Saturday December 3. This year's event was very well attended even though we had rain and temperatures in the 40's. The event brought an estimated 10,000 people into Downtown Woodstock to kick off the holiday season. The 3rd Annual Egg Nog Jog was held prior to the start of the parade and had 76 participants.

Santa's Mailbox was available from December 1 – 18, 2016 for parents and children to drop off their letters to Santa. This year more than 400 children mailed letters to Santa.

Attendance at Woodstock Parks and Recreation Department special events during 2016 topped 100,000 visitors. Staff is currently planning and preparing the 2017 Special Event Calendar and expects another banner year from the department.

The Park at City Center Renovations

There were several improvements made at The Park at City Center in 2016. New park benches and trash receptacles were installed in the fall and the Woodstock 9/11 Memorial was constructed and dedicated on September 11. Plans for 2017 include the renovation of the gazebo and improvements to the irrigation and electrical systems in the park.

The William G. Long Senior Center

The William G. Long Senior Center had a productive and exciting year. There are currently 670 registered members at the Senior Center with 116 new members joining in 2016. The Center had an average of 48 daily participants utilizing the Center with just over 12,000 annual visits.

Senior Center members enjoyed multiple trips and tours during the year including: hiking trips, Atlanta Braves games, white water rafting, zip lining, the Atlanta Botanical Gardens, the Rock Ranch, WSB Studio Tour, the Bigfoot Museum, Fernbank Museum, and a Tennessee River Catamaran Tour. The Center had 96 members take two extended day trips in 2016. Trips included an Alaskan Cruise and a trip to Lancaster PA.

The Center offered 27 special events hosted on-site in addition to our regularly scheduled daily programming. Event highlights included: a Valentine's Day party, our annual senior picnic, Mothers and Father's Day luncheons, billiards and Wii bowling events for the annual Cherokee County Senior Olympics, and multiple movie and ice cream socials.

Multiple special interest classes were offered at the Center in 2016. Classes included many informational topics featuring: wills and probates, foot care, hearing screening, flex and stretch classes, Active Shooter Class and Medicare 101.

In March of 2016 the City took delivery of its new handicap accessible bus. The vehicle has a 26 person capacity and wheelchair lift. The bus was an exciting addition to the Center and provides a much more comfortable ride for trip participants.

Our continued growth has warranted an expansion of our facilities. Plans for the long awaited facility expansion are now complete. Construction will commence in the Spring of 2017 with a completion date in early Summer.

Magnolia Hall

Magnolia Hall had an estimated 5,101 visitors this past year. The facility was utilized 101 times for rentals, meetings, parties and special events. Rental revenues for the year were \$20,790.

Rubes Creek Trail

The construction of the Rubes Creek trail was completed this past year. Plans for an extension of the trail to connect to Arnold Mill Road were completed and construction will commence in the spring of 2017

Rope Mill Park

Rope Mill Park continued to be one of our most utilized parks in 2016. Due to the growing popularity of the Rope Mill Park Trails, the City expanded the overflow parking lot. The project added an additional 40 parking spaces and solar lighting was installed to illuminate the parking lot. The City completed the restroom facility during the summer of 2016.

Towne Lake Pass Trail

Plans for the Towne Lake Pass Trail were completed in 2016. The City of Woodstock and Cherokee County issued a joint resolution dedicating the Towne Lake Pass Trail in Loving Memory of Council Member Mary Tessa Basford. The Joint City/County Resolutions states “Council Member Basford was very instrumental in the support and implementation of the Greenprints Plan. Her leadership, love for family, community and those she so graciously served in a legacy too inspirational not to be immortalized”.

The two mile long trail will provide a connection from Downtown Woodstock to just north of Woodstock High School on Town Lake Hills South Road. Construction will commence in spring 2017 and will be completed in early to mid-2018 depending on weather.

As we close out 2016, we would like to thank all of our volunteers and program sponsors. The investment of your time and financial contributions helped us provide special events, recreational opportunities and entertainment to over 100,000 event attendees last year. We truly appreciate your support and look forward to a momentous 2017.

Preston Pooser, CPRE
Parks and Recreation Director