



East Goshen Township, Department of Parks and Recreation

End of Year Report

2021

The East Goshen Township Department of Parks and Recreation (EGPR)

Vision Statement: *In the Business of Making Memories*

The department Vision Statement is two-fold. We see our role as providing the parks, facilities, programs and events that create opportunities for the community to make worthwhile memories close to home. Staff also recognizes that resources can be finite, and employs an entrepreneurial spirit to foster community engagement, partnership development and funding cultivation.

Mission Statement: *The EGPR's mission is to provide enriching recreational activities, maintain beautiful parks and preserve the environment for the well-being of our community.*

EGPR provides a fully developed parks and recreation experience for its residents and the greater West Chester area. Department staff utilizes the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) three pillars of **Conservation, Social Equity and Health & Wellness** to guide programming development.

Number of Parks: Four; East Goshen, Applebrook, Milltown, Mill Creek

Developed Park Acreage: 175.0

Township owned open space: 322.0

Annual Program Hours: 579.0 (an increase of 478% since 2014)

Volunteer Hours: 325.0



About the EGT Park and Recreation Commission

The Department Director Jason Lang benefits tremendously from a highly functioning volunteer Park and Recreation Commission. This nine-person ABC includes members that are highly dedicated, care about the quality of life of fellow residents, and are unafraid to roll up their sleeves and help make it happen! The Park and Recreation Commission has members serving for over twenty years and some joining in 2021, but all with the interests of residents in mind. The Park Commission benefits from members stepping in and out of leadership roles linearly, allowing for the Township to retain institutional knowledge while also bringing new ideas to the forefront.

Park Commission Success Story

In 2015, newly appointed Park Commission member Debbie Snyder approached Jason about starting a Senior Card Club in the Township Building, noting the Township's sizable senior population and lack of similar programming nearby. The Senior Card Club started slowly, with just five people showing up to its first meeting and held once per month. But word spread quickly, and coupled with Debbie's charismatic personality and organizational skills, has become a second home for many Township seniors. Senior Cards is now played twice per week and averages 25-40 players per day. Throughout the early stages of the pandemic, Debbie kept the group together with weekly emails and online card games, before playing again in person, spring 2021. Here she is presented with a thank you cake from a fellow card club member for her efforts.



Department Accomplishments

- Hosted all EGTPR traditional programs with pandemic safety measures in place.
- Bees by the Blacksmith Shop opened in partnership with Bellingham Senior Living, Carmen B's Honey and received \$2,500 Keep PA Beautiful for youth/adult bee education.
- Partnered with WCU to host Carnival of Ruin, a theatrical production where all costuming and staging were made from post-consumer waste.
- Partnered with Chesco Art Assoc to host the inaugural Chester County Art Walk, a combination celebration of the arts and health and wellness.
- The 2021 SE PA Teen Filmmakers Showcase had 2500 global submissions and hosted 19 local teen filmmakers and family at the Movie Tavern Exton in August.
- The summer camp program was filled with laughter, friendship and memories ~ all 400 slots sold out in two days
- Strengthened relationship with Friends of East Goshen ~ the Reindeer Meet and Greet was a smash success!
- Introduced ABCs to Township residents via pop up Toddler Trick or Treat.
- Named NRPA Gold Medal Finalist community for a 3rd consecutive year.



Programs, special events and activities

Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, the department was able to offer a tremendous amount of programming for Township residents in 2021.

Yoga

Zumba

Young Rembrandt Art classes

Egg Hunt

East HS Environmental Discussion

Poet Laureate Toddler Story times

Chester County Concert Band performance

Two days a week of various senior cards games

Spring Yard Sale

Nature Warriors

5 week traditional summer camp

3 weeks of robotic lego camps

Rocketry camp

3 x Applebrook Golf Outings

SE PA Teen Filmmakers Showcase

Community Day

Food Truck Festival

Toddler Trick or Treat

Preschool Entertainment Series

Pumpkin Festival

Neighbor to Neighbor Day

Chester County Art Walk

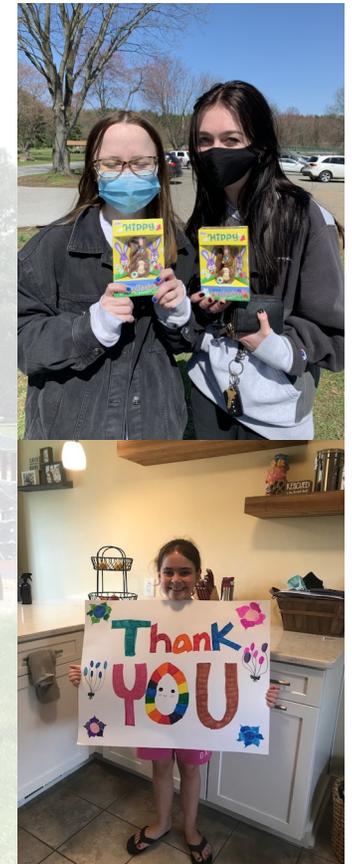
Reindeer Meet and Greet

Monthly Pat King Pollinator Garden Clean Ups

Holiday Celebration and Christmas Tree Lighting

CIT Junior Counselor program

Eccentrics



The department is mindful of budgetary considerations and annually seeks to provide programming that is revenue neutral with a goal of 107% cost recovery. This is achieved through program fees, expense offsetting partnerships, grants and relationship cultivation with organizations like the Friends of East Goshen. In 2021, revenues (\$145,109) were 120% of expenses (\$120,498).

Out and about: People in the parks by the numbers

400,000 Park users on the trail system and EGT Park playground*

*Derived from 2018 SOPARC collected 304,000 users, multiplied by pandemic national park use increase of 25%

15,000 Park users during facility rental events

Park permits jumped from a historical average of 185 per year to over 300 in 2021. The largest segment growth was in daytime/weeknight community group usage such as scout groups and various health-focused organizations.

8,000 Came out to the “Big Four” department sponsored events (Egg Hunt, Comm. Day, Food Truck, Tree Lighting)

1,800 Kids played sports in EGT Park

Every time slot was booked April—October for all playing fields; **3600 total hours**

1,650 Adults played cards, tennis, pickleball and other organized activities

1,000 Enjoyed large, 3rd party events (5K runs, Scout Movie Night, Art events)

Still down from 4,000 average pre-pandemic

500 Kids had an awesome time during Township youth summer activities (camps)

400 Realized health and wellness goals utilizing Township fitness programs

The East Goshen park system had over 428,000 visitors in 2021!!!

Empowering young leaders

The department believes it plays a vital role in providing compelling, noteworthy and character building opportunities for young residents to develop and display leadership skills. Some of these opportunities include:

Partnering with West Chester University business and marketing classes to provide real-world business writing applications. In 2021, student teams created marketing graphics for the Food Truck Festival.



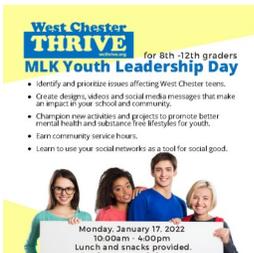
Photo Credit John Kowalski

Conrad Kowalski, Troop 93, monitored the bald eagle nest at Milltown Dam Park during December. He reported on the bald eagle nest, beaver dam and spotted blue herons and various raptors. Once the Milltown Dam Park is complete, the department will educate residents about the improved stream quality and positive effects on co-located wildlife.

Jaiden Slifer is currently finishing a tennis hit wall as his Eagle Scout project. Tennis hit walls are used by single players to warm up and practice individually and will be a welcome addition to our courts. Look for installation and a dedication spring 2022!



Various volunteer opportunities such as our Camp Counselor in Training (CIT) program and volunteering at our special events like the Egg Hunt, Community Day and Neighbor to Neighbor Day.



In January 2022, EGTPR will host a MLK Day Youth Leadership Development Day in partnership with West Chester Communities That Care (WCCTC), a teenage-focused organization with a mission to promote positive lifestyle choices.

Partnership Spotlight—Bees by the Blacksmith Shop

The Department of Parks and Recreation formed an exciting public-private partnership in 2022 to create the Bees by the Blacksmith Shop initiative. The Watermark at Bellingham Senior Living, located across E. Boot Rd across from the Blacksmith Shop was interesting in bringing beekeeping activities to its residents. Carmen B's Honey was brought on board as the initiative's beekeeper. Watermark purchased honeybee hives that sit on Township open space, managed and maintained by Carmen B's Honey. The Township was fortunate to receive a \$2,500 Keep PA Beautiful grant, funded by Giant Food Stores, to purchase youth/adult beekeeping outfits to begin apiary education classes in 2022. We kicked things off with a ribbon cutting in August and hosted East Goshen Elementary School's 3rd grade in October for apiary education to support classroom lecture. Look for 2022 programming announcements in early spring.



Ribbon cutting with bee hives sponsor
The Watermark at Bellingham, Carmen B's Honey
and Township Supervisors.



EGE 3rd grade visiting in October,
Carmen Battavio describing a bee hive frame.



EGT's Youth Beekeeping Ambassador Sophia
modeling our new beekeeping outfits with mom.

Community Impact—Santa’s Toy Drive & Snow the Reindeer Meet and Greet



Township staff with Santa to kickoff the Toy Drive



Over 200 toys donated!



Local kids being silly during “elf” training



Jason dropping off the toys at WCASD the next week!



FOEG and Park/Historical Commissions with Snow the Reindeer



At the event—stockings hung by nearly 300 kids!



Our Senior Card Club volunteered to wrap!

EGTPR partnered with the Friends of East Goshen to provide a magical holiday experience in 2021 with big community impact. Over 200 toys were donated by local EGT families, far surpassing our expectation, that were donated to WCASD families. One-hundred and fifty families came to the “Snow” the Reindeer Meet and Greet experience, complete with Santa and Mrs. Claus, Township kids as elves and former/current Historical Commission members dressed for the occasion! FOEG has already booked Snow again for 2022, she’ll be coming to the Blacksmith Shop on December 3rd, 2022, just in time to be included on holiday cards!

2022 Department Goals

- Stay flexible and connected to the community through pandemic proof programming.
- On board the new Recreation Program Coordinator successfully
This new position will support current programs and identify targets of opportunity (senior, toddler, weekend programming). Look for opportunities to engage with the RPC to identify these programming opportunities, late spring 2022.
- Continue to strengthen the relationship with Friends of East Goshen (501c3) that financially support park special events.
- Explore the idea of bringing the farmers market back in some capacity.
- Add wind screens to the tennis/pickleball fence and center divider to the pickle ball court area.
- Implement plan for 2022 Full Day summer camp program at East Goshen Elementary (PROS).
- Offer nature focused programming—EGT Young Beekeepers and Nature Warriors programs (PROS).
- Create a Stones league (PROS). The Stones course was developed by Philly Stones (501c3) in 2016 and is one of a handful of courses in the area. Stones is a unique, emerging sport that is akin to bocce, but played in the woods with a course similar to golf.

PROS—2015 Park, Recreation and Open Space Plan; these 2022 department goals support PROS priorities.



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