



## **2016: Recreation in Review**

2016 was a year of transition and growth for the Recreation Department. The hiring of a new Recreation Director gave the department a new strategic direction that was implemented throughout the year. The department developed new programs and events, while also enhancing its pre-existing offerings. This was a step towards the ultimate goal of offering the residents of Richmond Heights a comprehensive slate of programs and events.

In March, the City of Richmond Heights was again awarded the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District Community Recycling Awareness Grant. The Recreation Department was able to use this grant for hosting two Shred Day events on June 18 and October 8. People came from Richmond Heights and surrounding communities to shred their personal documents securely. Each car was restricted to five boxes. The grant was also used to purchase 7 recycling cans that were distributed throughout the city's parks.

March 19. The Recreation Department hosted an Egg Hunt at Greenwood Farm. A large crowd of approximately 100 people enjoyed the fun activities, and the children that participated loved gathering eggs at the Egg Hunt.

May 30. The city hosted its annual Memorial Day Ceremony at the Veteran's Memorial in the Richmond Heights Community Park. Colonel Carl Carter was the guest speaker at this solemn event. Refreshments were served afterward in the Kiwanis Lodge.

June 6. The Richmond Heights Municipal Pool opened. The Hillcrest YMCA once again provided management of the facility. In 2016 the pool showed a 50% increase in usage compared with 2015. The sale of pool passes generated over \$7,000 in revenue.

In 2016, the Recreation Department coordinated the Hillcrest Summer Concert Series with the surrounding communities of Lyndhurst, Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Richmond Heights and South Euclid. The concert series was comprised of 21 events.

June 20. The inaugural Pickleball Richmond Heights summer season began. The program continued through the summer and culminated with a tournament that was held on September 1. Pickleball Richmond Heights continued in the winter months with a weekly Tuesday evening program that was held at Christian Assembly Church. The outdoor courts were placed onto the Community Park Tennis Courts.

July 9. The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Junk in the Trunk community garage sale was hosted for the first time by the Recreation Department. There 35 vendors present to sell their goods. Bill's Food Truck and Smoothies was present to provide concessions for the event. Over \$1,000 was raised for Greenwood Farm at the event.

August 2. The city hosted its first National Night Out event to promote community relations between the police department and residents. The event was hosted at City Hall and included the SWAT vehicle, demonstrations, La Taqueria food truck, children's activities, music, giveaways, and free child identification cards.

September 17. Fall Family Fun Fest at the Farm was another Greenwood Farm event that was run for the first time by the city in 2016. Journey Church partnered with the city to sponsor the Kids' Zone with inflatables and volunteer staffing. Other highlights of the event included live music, a tractor hay ride, food trucks, an extensive raffle, and booths featuring local organizations/groups.

November 5. The Volunteer/Sponsor Appreciation Dinner is an annual event to recognize the individuals, organizations, and businesses that supported programs and events throughout the year. This year featured dinner, a magic show, live music, a blackjack table, and a number of giveaways and raffles.

December 3. This was our twentieth year for Breakfast with Santa. The attendance was fantastic, with 81 adults and 57 children at the Kiwanis Lodge for all of the festivities. The committee of Nancy Benander, Kenneth Stray, Anthony Gimellia, Jerry Hoover, Judy Karla, Kyla Presto and Linda Staccho did a wonderful job coordinating this very popular event. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Vince Benander and Lynda James), we had "Elsa and Anna" posing with the younger children giving out candy canes. Santa and Mrs. Claus gave out personalized gift tags to the children that came to visit the famous Santa sleigh. The children also enjoyed balloon twisting, crafting, a hot chocolate bar and a special gift. Volunteers from Richmond

Heights Kiwanis Club, the Richmond Heights Garden Club, students from the Richmond Heights Key Club, St. Paschal Baylon School assisted at various activities, and Pastor Schrader from Christian Assembly Church played holiday music on the piano. Once again, a true community effort!

The Richmond Heights Youth Basketball League continues to be a very popular activity for children to participate in. The league was comprised of 98 children at different grade levels from Kindergarten – Grade 8. The league holds evaluations at the beginning of the season to create teams based on skill level to make the league competitive. There are six weeks of regular season games and two weeks of playoff games. The inaugural Shootout and Skills Competition was held on Championship Saturday this season, and was a huge success. Special thanks to the volunteer coaches who led their teams through the season.

The Recreation Department sponsored the following programs in 2016: Youth Basketball, Pickleball, Lunch Bunch (12 participants), Line Dancing with Tina, Senior Exercise Classes and Zumba at the Lodge.