



Wheaton Park District  
Leisure Center  
*Commitment to  
Excellence*  
2012 Annual  
Report

September 1, 2013  
Linda Dolan



# 2012 Leisure Center Annual Report

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## Commitment to Excellence



Leisure Center entrance.



From left: Mary Ann Stetler, Mary Lou Winthers, Aaron Ianno, Linda Dolan and Ann King.

Senior Centers were born in the late 1960's after the Older Americans Act was signed in 1965. The Wheaton Park District Leisure Center (formerly the Senior Center) has been a leading provider of innovative recreation programming since 1971. The commitment of the community and the strength and vision of the Board of Commissioners and park district leaders have ensured its success. The center is conveniently located downtown in picturesque Memorial Park. The 125-year-old former coach house is warm and inviting, with a casual atmosphere. From the very beginning, our philosophy has been that people will come to where they have been invited and will return to where they have been made to feel welcome. There is always a friendly and caring staff person ready to welcome everyone entering the building. An important key to our success and financial sustainability lies in our ability to create high quality new events, trips, and programs that attract new members and keep current members happy. New program development and recruitment of new instructors kept staff busy in 2012. The following pages present you with an opportunity to view a snapshot of the Leisure Center Happenings in 2012 and a glimpse of what challenges the future brings.

# Monthly Highlights

## January

Twenty AARP/IRS volunteers worked in excess of 3,100 hours for the Wheaton – Glen Ellyn Tax-Aide Program. They prepared 795 returns (an increase of 13% over 2011) over the 26 days of appointments within their ten week filing season.

Wheaton resident Robin Zeldin became the director for the program in 2012.

## February

Valentines Day, Dancing, and Arrowhead continue to be a popular combination!

This years' Valentines Day Dance at Arrowhead participation went up 38%, from 53 in 2011 to 85 in 2012. Some creative marketing helped bring back previous participants, who were sent personalized invitations to the dance. Popular adult education dance instructors Dean and Laurie Francis helped us promote the event.



## March

A new focus on cultural activities was implemented in 2012. Staff offered their first trip to the Lyric Opera House in March to see *AIDA*. The trip was a huge success, with a sold out bus of 50 who were thrilled to have an opportunity to enjoy opera.

## April

The Leisure Center is dedicated to helping their members stay active, get fit, and have fun through sports and fitness. In the spring and summer members can bike with the Pedal Pushers, join a golf or bowling league, and play tennis or Petanque. All of these programs host Spring Coffees in April to greet new members and discuss the upcoming season. In all, two hundred and twenty five people attended one of the coffees. Ongoing programs such as: Volleyball, Table Tennis, Bowling, Tai Chi, Senior Yoga, and Fit for Life meet year round so do not have spring coffees.



# Monthly Highlights

## May

Leisure Center members love educational programs, and a new class about memory was helpful and fun. A free class called Building Mental Muscle taught people about brain fitness, and a follow up three week workshop titled Brain Games Workshop introduced them to fun and interactive games and activities designed to improve memory. Instructor, Patricia Terkovich, from Arden Courts of Glen Ellyn volunteered her time to design and teach this class.



## June

Over one hundred and sixty eight participants took a Rules of the Road Class or Defensive Driving Program at the Leisure Center in 2012. The Rules class is taught by a professional from the Secretary of State and is helpful for people getting ready to take their driving test. In Illinois, seniors take the road and vision test at age 75, 79, 83, and yearly at age 87. Defensive Driving is taught by an AARP volunteer and is an 8 hour class, offered four times a year at the Leisure Center. Participants often are eligible for reduced insurance rates.

## July

July kicked off the revamped Classical Quest Series with thirty five people registering for the 3 week class. The class sessions were shortened after the group was surveyed. In addition, a one week drop-in fee was implemented for those who could not attend all three classes. Instructor Jan Krischer brought in thirty new members to the Leisure Center, many of which began doing trips and other programs along with Jan’s classes.

## August

The Step’N Time Dance Troop performed for a crowd of 180 at the “Best of Broadway” Ice Cream Social on Monday August 20. Tickets were reasonably priced at \$5. Three retirement groups and one park district senior center brought seniors on buses. This volunteer troop was formed when several Snappy Tapper participants asked if they could perform for local retirement facilities in 2009. Since that time have performed over 50 shows. Bookings are coordinated by Leisure Center Manager, Linda Dolan.



## Monthly Highlights

### September

Beyond Glee, a new adult chorus auditioned singers and started rehearsals in September. Forty singers auditioned and twenty-five were chosen. Members pay a \$99 year fee, and perform both community concerts and are hired by smaller venues. This program was developed after staff were approached to start a new adult chorus by two singers, Brian Birnbaum and Grant Vankerck. Enjoy an article about the group in the appendix.



### October

Thirty-four people enjoyed a two night, three day trip to the Shawnee National Forest. This trip was beautifully planned, and included train transportation to Carbondale, caves, museums, delicious food, and entertainment.

### November

Party programs continue to be popular at the Leisure Center. In November two were offered. For the last fourteen years Windsor Park Manor in Carol Stream has hosted the popular annual Thanksgiving Gathering party. This year staff also offered a new party at Arrowhead called Salute to the Troops.

### December

'Tis The Season Holiday Concerts helped Wheaton residents usher in the Holidays. Tickets were specially priced at just \$6 and allowed ticket holders to attend both concerts. The Silvertones performed *Ring In The Holidays* on Saturday, December 15 and Beyond Glee performed *Beyond Christmas* on Sunday, December 16. 250 people attended Saturday's concert and 320 attended Sunday's.



## New Instructor Highlights

**Maria Kretchmer** began supervising Friday evening Table Tennis in January 2012 after the group was surveyed in the Fall of 2011. Maria is a top rated US player and is a popular instructor and coach. Wheaton participants can schedule a private or semiprivate lesson with Maria on Friday evenings.



**Jan Krischer** earned her Masters of Music Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Northern Illinois University and has been a popular instructor at College of DuPage's Older Adult Institute since 1996. Following her passion of Music and History, she developed and taught a variety of classes that explored the Great Composers, The Great Performers, 'Maestro' Great Conductors, Opera, Music History, Art History, led cultural trips both domestically and abroad, and much more.

*I have known Jan for five years now and consider myself a "Jan Krischer groupie"! Jan is an accomplished pianist and a wonderful educator. We first met about 5+years ago when I took one of her classes, See and Symphony, at the College of DuPage. The class involved lectures, guest appearances, field trips, video presentations etc. in the field of humanities. Jan prepared us before each class and field trip, often using her piano to demonstrate the nuances and language of her musical world. I have come to understand the joys of classical music and, more importantly, have a deeper understanding of the composers behind the music. She has a casual yet elegant style of teaching that makes her class a holistic and enjoyable learning experience. I cannot imagine anyone not enjoying and benefiting from any class she teaches.*

-Deming L. Payne MD (retired)

# Staff News

## Leisure Center Staff Celebrates Summer



Linda Dolan manages the Leisure Center. Her first granddaughter, Finley Anne, turned one in June.



Phyllis Ade plans all the travel programs at the Leisure Center. Her family celebrated at daughter Kristen's wedding in Raleigh, North Carolina this summer.



Ann King works on Monday and Tuesday. She also sings with the Silvertones, and is their music librarian. She and her husband John enjoyed some short trips this summer.



As the Administrative Support person at the Leisure Center, Patty Walkowicz wears many hats! Her two daughters graduated from college last spring. This photo was taken at their graduation party in August. Left to right: Sister-in-law Diana, Megan, Catie, Patty, and Mom, Joan.



Aaron Ianno works on Thursdays, and many people comment on his incredibly friendly phone voice. Aaron is a terrific photographer and enjoyed a trip to Pasadena this summer and a visit to the Huntington Gardens.



Mary Lou Winthers has worked at the Wheaton Park District since 1975 and works on Friday. The Winthers have enjoyed summer vacations in the Ozarks for more than 40 years.



Mary Ann Stetler works on Wednesdays. She had a wonderful summer spending time with her five grandchildren, including Lily and David (above) and Joe, Matthew and Hope.



## Program Highlights: *Travel*

People love to travel with the Wheaton Park District. Trips are planned with the goal of attracting new members and keeping current members happy, busy, and coming back. Our travel program creates a win/win situation for our patrons and us. These programs are our best gateway to young, new members, allow our customers to travel within the safety net of our agency, and are the most efficient way to generate additional revenue. In 2012 travelers enjoyed Broadway plays, The Chicago Symphony, The Rockettes, and Cubs Games. They also explored Chicago neighborhoods, museums, and gardens. Day trips ranged in price from \$49 - \$149, and most included lunch or dinner and deluxe motor coach transportation from the Community Center. Extended travel saw an increase in participation and profit this year, but is not as popular as it was prior to 2009. The short two or three night bus trips that the Leisure Center staff plan themselves are the most successful and popular.

### Day Trips

*"There are no strangers on our trips, only friends we haven't met yet"*

#### Theatre

*Always Patsy Cline*  
*Aida*  
*Doyle and Debbie Show*  
*Pirates of Penzance*  
*Millennium Concert*  
*Man of LaMancha*  
*Grease*  
*42<sup>nd</sup> Street*  
*Sunday In The Park With George*  
*Simon Boccanegra*  
*Rockettes*  
*Chicago Symphony*  
*Annie*  
*Gypsy*  
*Hairspray*  
*Some Enchanted Evening*  
*Singing In The Rain*

#### Sporting Events

Cubs at Wrigley  
Cubs in Milwaukee

#### Educational/Adventure

Cleopatra  
Bucktown  
Bit of Blarney  
Greektown Opa!  
Anderson Gardens  
Chicago Riverwalk  
Lake Geneva Cruise  
Milwaukee Art Museum  
North Shore Adventure  
Chicago Deutschland  
Pabst Mansion  
Holiday Lights Tour



#### Extended Travel

Shawnee  
Emerald Coast  
Canadian Rockies  
Alaska Discovery  
Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta

## Program Review: *Variety Is Key*

Leisure Center programs span a wide variety of interests, abilities and prices. Members can play cards for free, attend a downtown theatre event, or take an extended trip. Activity levels range from taking a Seated Yoga class to biking with the Pedal Pushers. Parties, sports leagues, fitness classes, travel and performing art programs remain strong.

### Free Events

Monthly Movies at the Wheaton Public Library

### Fun and Games

Social Bridge  
Duplicate Bridge  
Practice Bridge  
Bolivia  
Canasta  
Dominoes  
Mah-jongg  
Pinochle  
Billiards  
Quilting

### Performing Arts

Beyond Glee  
Silvertones  
Snappy Tappers  
Step'N Time Dancers

### Fitness

Tai Chi - 4 class options  
Fit for Life  
Senior Yoga

### Service Partnerships

Income Tax Assistance  
Defensive Driving  
Rules of the Road  
SHIP

### Sport Leagues

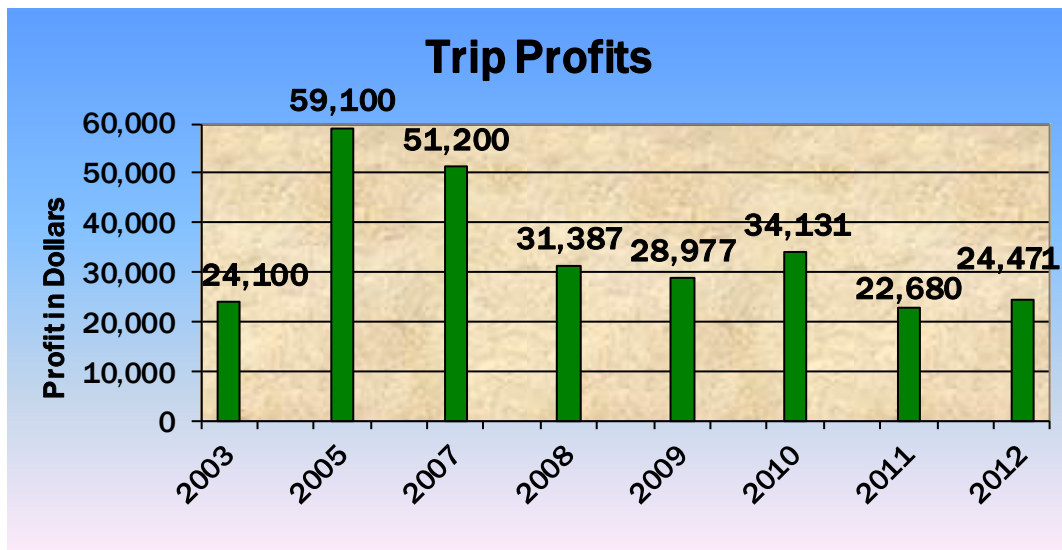
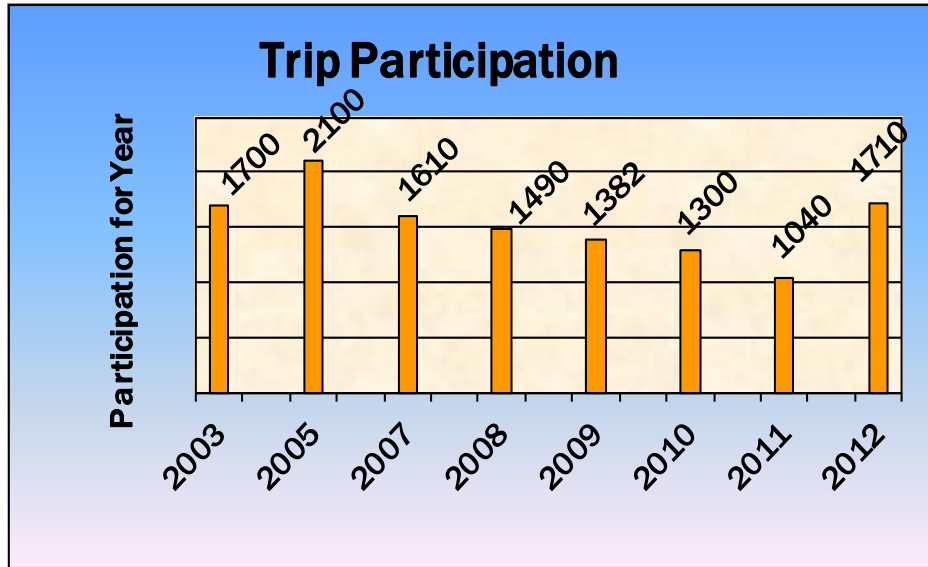
Bowling  
Golf  
Pedal Pushers  
Petanque  
Senior Olympics  
Table Tennis  
Tennis  
Walking  
Volleyball

### Parties and Specials

Chinese New Years  
Sunshine Luncheon  
Valentine's Dance  
New Member Coffee  
For Art Lovers Only  
Awesome August  
Taste of the Tropics  
Picnic in the Park  
Brunch Bingo  
Thanksgiving Gathering  
Holiday Gala  
Moments to Remember  
Silvertones Concert  
Christmas Tea  
Live A Little  
Art and Architecture of China  
Cool Jazz Cocktail Party  
Salute to the Troops  
Best of Broadway Ice Cream Social  
Christmas Carols  
Ringing In The Holidays  
Beyond Christmas



# Travel Stats



## Marketing Update

Marketing efforts in 2012 were motivated by the concept of working smarter not harder. Emphasis was placed on creating and utilizing target email blasts to previous participants, cross marketing, creating fresh flyers, and designing interesting display cases. The *Time Of Your Life* Brochure continues to be the most important marketing tool, generating over 80% of our registrations. The second most effective marketing tool is simple and free - promoting new programs to existing participants. The personal touch works well at the Leisure Center. Staff routinely suggest programs to members and they appreciate an invitation to try something new. Promoting upcoming travel on all the day trips is another very effective way of increasing registration on future trips.

### Monthly

- Community Center Display Case updated
- Flyers on display at Leisure Center
- Upcoming programs offered at each in-house event
- Email upcoming program information to current participants

### Bi-Monthly

- Target mailings sent to previous program participants
- Flyers distributed to Wheaton Public Library, Community Center, Parks Plus Fitness Center and both downtown and Danada businesses

### Quarterly

- Newsletters mailed to member households
- Newsletters distributed to Wheaton Public Library, Community Center and Parks Plus Fitness Center
- New member coffee held
- Travel preview parties held



## 2012 Partnership Update

The Leisure Center Staff are extremely grateful for all of the community agencies that support their mission. The goal is to develop and nurture long lasting and mutually beneficial partnerships. The following is a list of 2012 organization partners. They donated money, goods, services, and time. A short summary of their commitment follows. These relationships are vital to the Leisure Center success; they could not do all that they do without the support of these generous and loyal partners.

### **Meadows of Glen Ellyn:**

Cookie Sponsor For 'Tis The Season (Value \$200)  
Sunshine Luncheon (Value \$150)  
Entertainment Sponsor for the All American USO Party (Value \$600)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

### **Saratoga Grove Retirement & Assisted Living Community:**

Sponsor bingo at the Leisure Center once or twice a year (Value \$100)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

### **Naperville North Sunrise:**

Cool Jazz Party Host (Value \$300)

### **Brighton Gardens:**

Entertainment Sponsor for Live A Little Luncheon (Value \$300)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

### **Belmont Village:**

Entertainment Sponsor for Chinese New Year Party (Value \$150)  
Awesome August Host (Value \$300)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)  
Cookie sponsor for Ringing In The Holidays Silvertones Show (Value \$100)

### **About Tours:**

Entertainment Sponsor for Art Lovers Only Program (Value \$200)

### **Symmetry Solutions:**

Entertainment sponsor for annual picnic (Value \$150)

### **Community Bank:**

Holiday Gala Entertainment Sponsor (Value \$600)

### **Wyndemere:**

High Tea Host (Value \$800)

### **Lexington of Lombard:**

Luncheon Host (Value \$300)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

### **Arden Court of Glen Ellyn:**

Provided a free seminar and a series called Brain Games Workshop (Value \$300)

### **Windsor Park Manor:**

Thanksgiving Party Host (Value \$400)  
Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

### **BrightStar**

Holiday Gala Raffle Sponsor (Value \$50)

## Financial Report: *Things Are Looking Up!*

Revenue dipped in 2009 due to the economy, but 2012 brought a rise in participation numbers and profit. Travel, special event, education, and party programs were popular. Staff worked diligently to add new successful programs to help generate revenue, including the Classical Quest Series, Building Mental Muscle Classes, and Beyond Glee Chorus. Day travel drew more participation than we have had since 2007. The combination of the popularity of these programs, plus building rental revenue resulted in a positive ending balance.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Ending Budget</b>
<b>2001</b>	<b>\$1,300</b>
<b>2002</b>	<b>\$7,500</b>
<b>2003</b>	<b>\$10,600</b>
<b>2004</b>	<b>\$20,500</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>\$18,900</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>\$29,500</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>\$12,500</b>
<b>2008*</b>	<b>\$11,900</b>
<b>2009</b>	<b>-\$18,721</b>
<b>2010</b>	<b>\$3,310</b>
<b>2011</b>	<b>-\$878**</b>
<b>2012</b>	<b>\$6,756†</b>

\*2008 Budget year was from April 1 through December 31, 2008.

\*\*Program budget 304 (-\$4,970), Building Rental Revenue + \$4,092= -\$878.

† includes \$3,940 building rental revenue.

## 2013 Directions: *Looking Towards the Future*

Like any successful business, it is essential that the Leisure Center be adaptable and make changes as trends evolve. By being aware of trends in education, travel, and recreation, the Leisure Center staff will create new programs, expand successful programs, and implement necessary adjustments. Attracting new members is vital to their success. Lack of parking and building space limitations continue to be key challenges.



## *A Final Word*

Lou and Norma Steck enjoyed themselves on one of the extended trips to Switzerland, sponsored by the Leisure Center. They are the second couple in the picture below, taken at the Salzburg Salt Mine. Lou and Norma frequent the many programs offered at the Leisure Center, and they often join the group for day and extended trips.



***“We moved to Wheaton in 1971, and over the years have enjoyed many park district programs. We are very grateful for the many programs we have done with the Leisure Center. How much do we value the Leisure Center? Let us count the ways! We have enjoyed countless luncheons, live and learn classes, fitness classes, day trips, extended trips, the golf, bowling and tennis leagues, petanque, bocci, walking and biking club, Silvertones performances, games, and much more. We are fans! There’s something for everyone every day. Many seniors fill their day there. It’s a God send for those who are left alone too. Wheaton would be a very boring town without the Leisure Center. Thank you Linda and your hard working staff who do so much to make life so much better for so many people.”***

***- Norma and Lou Steck***



# Appendix

## Appendix

### Introducing *Beyond Glee*

The Beyond Glee Chorus was featured in the Wheaton Leader on Thursday, October 18, 2012. The complete article is included here.



“Beyond Glee” singers (left) Troy Ossey of Woodridge, Grant Vanker of Downers Grove, Brian Birnbaum of Glen Ellyn and Bruce Havel of Naperville work on their vocals during rehearsal Oct. 4 at the Wheaton park District Leisure Center. “Beyond Glee” is a performance-based chorus. Staff photo by Erica Benson.

Taken from the Thursday, October 18, 2012, edition of the *Wheaton Leader*.

CHIT-CHAT



# FORECAST CALLS FOR GLEE

"Beyond Glee" director Paul Sirvatka works with the chorus during rehearsal Oct. 4 at the Wheaton Park District Leisure Center. Staff photo by Erica Benson | Buy this photo at snapshots.mysuburbanlife.com/1545429

## Meteorology teacher challenges creative side as director of new chorus group

Many people connect the word "Glee" with the popular musical TV show on Fox. But these days, Paul Sirvatka is helping bring a new meaning to it. A meteorology teacher at College of DuPage by day, the lifelong Glen Ellyn resident is currently directing "Beyond Glee," a newly developed Wheaton Park District choral group. Although auditions were already held, Sirvatka is still looking for some tenors to complement the group which rehearses from 7 to 9:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

**How would you describe the group?**

It's a new park district adult choir that is made up of people of many, many ages. It's a chance for people to sing and do some really challenging music. We're pushing the limits to jazz, pop, and more traditional choir. We're trying to run the gamut of all the things we're trying to do.

**What was it like to start your own group?**

I was scared because I really had no idea the level of people that would be in the group, and to see what they could and couldn't do. The people are really open, so it's been really fun, but tough sometimes. They've come a long way but it's exciting. They have a lot of talent and we can go places. I'm very optimistic about this year and the years to come.

**What's your favorite part about the group?**

That's easy. My favorite thing about the choir is their openness to try

new things musically and to really push themselves. It's so great for me. They're really open to expanding their abilities.

**What are some of the pieces you're working on with the chorus?**

Well we're working on a great arrangement of "O Magnum Mysterium," and we go all the way to "the First Noel," a Hanukkah piece, a fun version of "Jingle Bells," and "Apple Tree Wassail," which is an Appalachian carol. We're all about the diversity.

**Being a meteorology teacher and a choir director are two very different things. How do you balance both?**

It's a different part of my brain being accessed for choir. I need the artistic outlet or I wouldn't do very well.

— Allison Horne

### FIND THE GLEE

WHAT Beyond Glee, a chorus group through the Wheaton Park District  
UPCOMING SHOWS "Ringin' in the Holidays 2": 3 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15; "Beyond Christmas": 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 16  
COST \$6 per concert until Dec. 13; \$7 at the door  
LOCATION Community Center, 1777 S. Blanchard Road, Wheaton  
MORE INFO wheatonparkdistrict.com; call Linda Dolan at the at (630) 665-1415