

20 Year In Review



21

Administration

New Logos Introduced in October

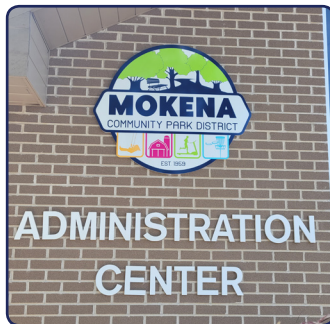
It was time for an update. The new logos have a more contemporary style with bright colors. Once our new logos were finalized we immediately started branding with the new logo on buildings and signage. Watch for these new MCPD logos popping up around our parks and facilities.



Old logo



New logo



New Board Meeting Format—More Efficient and Green

Commissioners now receive their Board Meeting Packets digitally. Switching from paper-filled binders to an all-digital format has reduced countless staff hours and eliminated nearly 1000 paper copies per month.

Welcome to our New Staff Members

Aaron Confer – Recreation Supervisor
 Brenna Bowers – Recreation Supervisor
 Kara Jelderks, CPRP – Superintendent of Recreation
 Karen LaPointe – Accounting/Payroll Coordinator
 Luke Davis – Maintenance Staff



Aaron



Brenna



Kara



Karen



Luke

Welcome to the New Commissioners



From left to right: Kathryn O'Connor, Dan Gilbert, Mary Louise Knoerzer, Bob Lindbloom and Jeff Apel.

New Commissioners, Kathryn O'Connor and Dan Gilbert were sworn in along with current commissioners taking their oath for the new term of the Board of Commissioners.

- Bob Lindbloom, President
- Steve Jacobson, Vice President
- Mary Louise Knoerzer, Secretary
- Mike Gandy, Treasurer
- Jeff Apel, Commissioner
- Dan Gilbert, Commissioner
- Kathryn O'Connor, Commissioner

IAPD Best of the Best — Power of the Parks Award



The *Best of the Best, Power of the Parks Award* recognized IAPD member Park District, Forest Preserve, Conservation, Recreation or Special Recreation agencies that displayed innovative and insightful ways to pivot their programs, events and services for their residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

In mid-March 2020, when the Covid-19 pandemic forced a shutdown of park districts across the state, the Mokena Park District switched gears and created the “*Home But Not Alone*” initiative. This effort consisted of web pages, Covid-19 resources, facebook pages, virtual programming, virtual events, a YouTube channel, contests, drive-in movies and community outreach.

Full-time and part-time staff members were grouped into four teams (Kids, Family Challenges, Special Events and

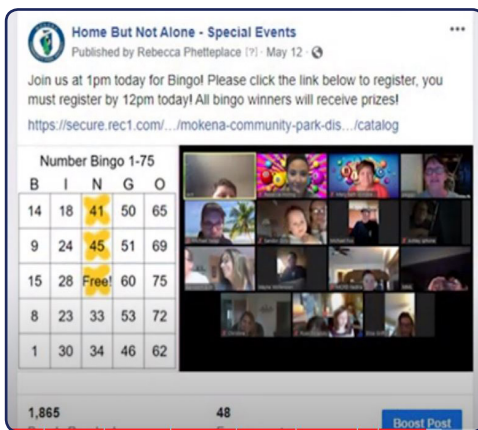
Fitness and Wellness). Teams would meet via Zoom to organize their activities and all-staff Zoom meetings with everyone were held once a week.

The Youth page provided links to free camps, classes, and webcams. Teens could participate in virtual courses and games. Seniors could access links to store hours, virtual museum tours, brain games, and fitness classes. The Family page had virtual museum, zoo, and aquarium experiences; virtual getaways; and exercise videos.



[Click here to see the Award Presentation](#)

Or type this URL link in your browser: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/zH2xkE1jbul?start=3912&end=4082>



Virtual Bingo Game



Sidewalk Chalk Drawing Contest

Mary Beth Windberg, Superintendent of Recreation Retires



Mary Beth retired at the end of January after serving in her position of Superintendent of Recreation for 12 years. She is currently a Board member of the MCPD Foundation and past member of the MCPD Board of Commissioners. We are grateful for

her dedication and many contributions to the park district and the community.

New Phone System Improves Customer Service

By swapping out the obsolete office phones and adding the VOIP (Voice Over IP) phone service has improved customer service by allowing staff to answer/respond to phone calls more efficiently.

Coronavirus Relief Funds

Mokena Park District received a grant in the amount of approx. \$68,000 from the Will County Cares Act and the Corona-virus Relief Fund to offset unbudgeted Covid-19 expenses.

Administration

New Financial and Payroll Software

The financial and payroll software of the Park District became obsolete and no longer supported. It was the original accounting software of the Park District (when the District moved from paper to computer). The new software allows the District to operate more efficiently than ever before.

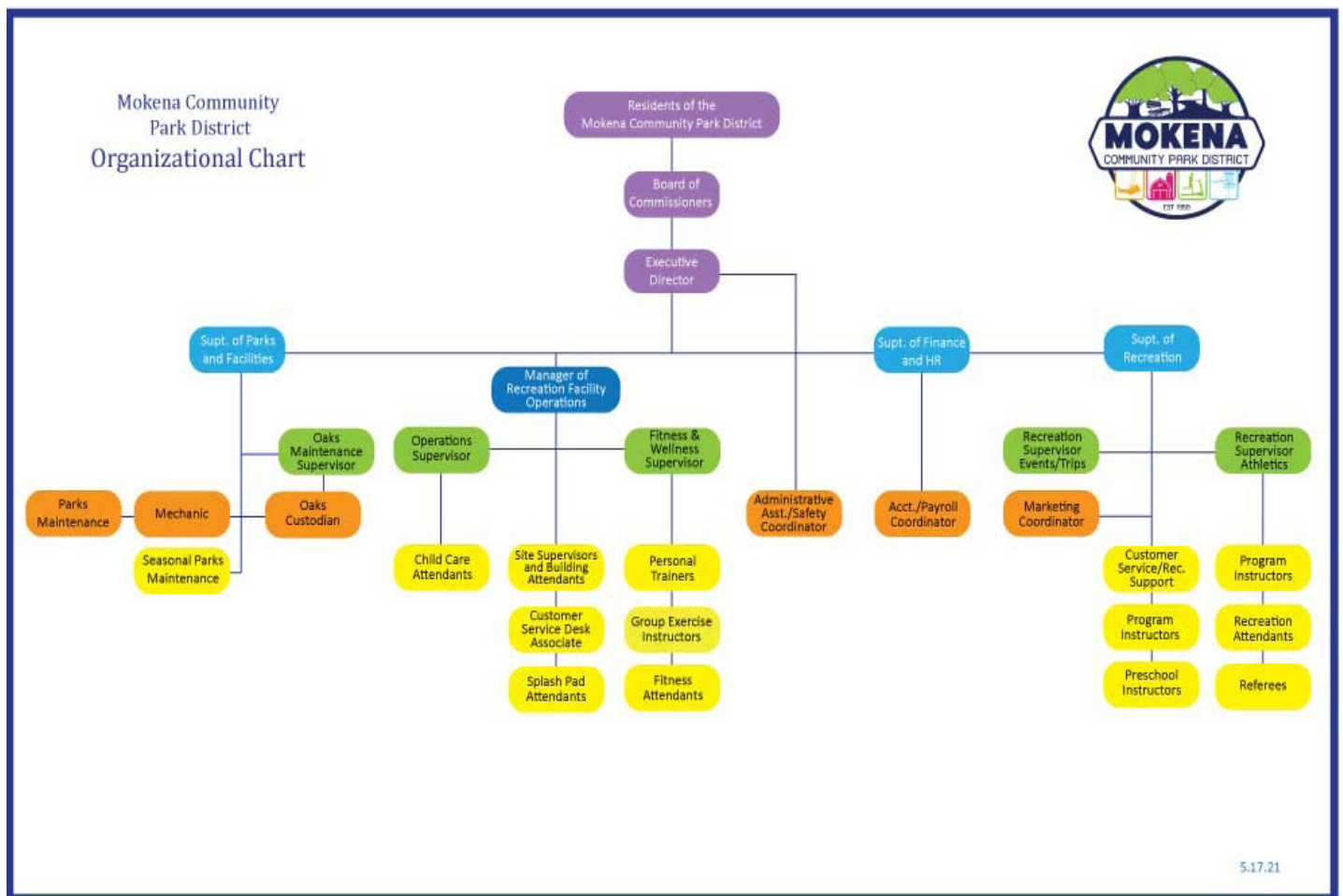
Updated Organizational Chart

The Organizational Chart and several job titles were updated to be more consistent with the hierarchy of the staff positions. Residents of the park district were also put at the top of the chart.

[Click here to see the chart on the website.](#)

New Employee Health Insurance is a Win-Win for MCPD and Staff

The Park District's employee health insurance benefits have not changed since the District started offering health insurance to its employees in 1997. The purpose of the change in the employee benefit was to find equal or better health insurance plans, offer a Health Savings account (HSA) PPO plan, save the District money, and to be able to subsidize the cost of premiums for the employee family members. The Park District changed health insurance providers which realized a savings of approximately \$9,000 per year, implemented a Cafeteria plan, and HSA accounts.



Buske Park Resurfacing Projects for Tennis and Basketball Courts



Main Park Maintenance Building Expansion

Construction started on the Main Park Maintenance Building Expansion project in September 2021. The maintenance building houses all of the parks maintenance staff and equipment and has remained unchanged since the 1970's when the park district only operated four parks.



Whisper Creek Park Ground Breaking

The Whisper Creek Park Ground Breaking Ceremony on September 14. Approximately 50 people were in attendance that included many residents from the area, representatives from the Village of Mokena, Mokena Chamber of Commerce, and MCPD Commissioners, staff and Foundation members.

- Whisper Creek Park is approximately 6.5 acres and will include many different amenities such as outdoor fitness equipment that will be situated along the walking path, Drop Shot, painted asphalt games, two half basketball courts, and a shaded playground.
- A Gazebo that is funded in part by the *Our Fallen Hero Foundation* in memory of Pfc Aaron Toppen.
- Whisper Creek Park is funded in part by a **\$380,000 matching State of Illinois OSLAD grant** (*Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development*) and is expected to be completed by late fall 2021.



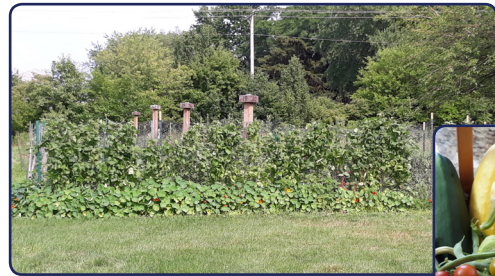
Parks & Facilities

Yunker Farm Improvements

The 100 year-old cupolas on the barn roof were in disrepair. They were replaced and upgraded to new copper ones. The McGovney-Yunker Farmstead sign and “Historic Landmark” sign were installed along with improved landscaping around the homestead.



Community Gardens on Yunker Farm



33 Garden Plots were sold for a total of **\$825**.

Improvements were Completed at Several Parks and Facilities

- New landscaping was completed at the Dog Park to compliment the new shade canopies and picnic tables that were installed last year.
- Added Ultraviolet Sterilizers to all facility HVAC systems to disinfect and improve the air quality.
- Main Park Parking Lot was resurfaced.
- New Deck on The Oaks Disc Golf Course Bridge.
- Gazebos at Grasmere Park and Hecht Park were painted.
- **18** Disc Golf baskets were replaced on the Course. The remaining baskets will be replaced in 2022.



Grasmere Park Gazebo



New Disc Golf Baskets



New Deck on the Oaks Disc Golf Course Bridge



New Landscaping at the Park 'n Bark Dog Park



Main Park Parking Lot Resurfacing

The Oaks Recreation & Fitness Center

Fitness & Wellness Supervisor

- Kristin Ehler attended the SCW Mania (Rosemont IL) in October for further education and research of new Indoor Cycle bikes for the Oaks.
- Kristin created an Employee Wellness Program for all full and part-time employees. The program started in November.
- Kristin also wrote an article that was featured in the Mokena Chamber of Commerce fall newsletter entitled *"The Journey to Enhanced Wellness"*. [Click here to read the article, pg.12-13.](#)



Specialty Programs at the Oaks

- Offered our first Virtual Wellness Workshops with more being planned for 2022.
- Maxed out registrations for Gentle Yoga Mix and Zumba Gold sessions.
- Received highest registration for Tai Chi Qigong since before March 2020.
- Offered our first hybrid in-person and virtual Fitness Bingo Blitz Member Retention program in 2021.
- Continued revenue success for our Group Training Programs K.B.S. and Ultimate Athletic Training.

Oaks Personal Training Department

Personal Training revenue in Fiscal Year 2020–2021 surpassed Fiscal Year 2019–2020 by \$9,217.63.



New Paint and Carpet at The Oaks

The Fitness Center, Lobby, 2nd floor Hallway, Mezzanine, Walnut Room and Cypress Room were all painted with a blue, green, gold and gray color scheme for an undated look. New carpet was also installed.

Oaks Group Exercise Department

- Anna Bodenhagen was hired as a Yoga Instructor.
- Continued success of virtual group exercise classes that brought in additional revenue.



Fitness Center – Before



Fitness Center – New paint and carpet.



Fitness Center Hallway – Before



Fitness Center Hallway – New paint and carpet.

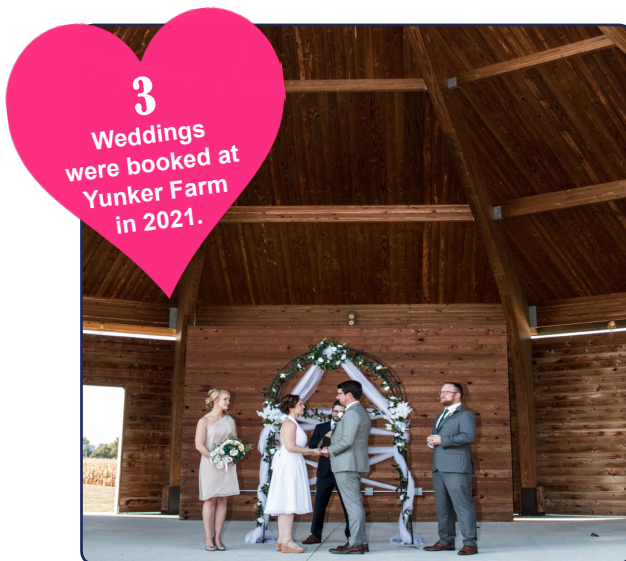
The Oaks Recreation & Fitness Center

Oaks Facility Manager serving on Committees

Rachel Bauer, Manager of Recreation Facility Operations was selected to serve on the Board of Regents for IPRA (Illinois Parks and Recreation Association) Facility Management Workshop which is a 3 year term. She will serve as Chair for the 2022 event. Rachel also continues to be the Chair for the South Suburban Park and Recreation Professional Association Awards Committee and co-chair for the Facility Management Committee.

Silver Sneakers and Prime Memberships

The Oaks Recreation & Fitness Center began to offer the Tivity Health Programs of Silver Sneakers and Prime. We have 266 participants in the program. From January to September 2021 we have received \$10,937 in reimbursements for visits to the facility by participants.



3
Weddings
were booked at
Yunker Farm
in 2021.

New Paid in Full Discount for Memberships

Discounted Paid in Full memberships were implemented at the end of 2020. These memberships require a commitment of six months or one year, however, there is no enrollment fee and you pay less than you would if you paid monthly for the same time frames. Current members are also able to switch to this option at any time.

From January 1– November 3, 2021, 220 members have taken advantage resulting in \$69,236 in membership dues.



Splish Splash at Yunker Park!



The Splash pad served **5,477** people and had **41** parties.



Dance Instructor, Jenny Diamond was a Mokena School Dist. 159 Galaxy Award Winner

The School District received over 30 nominations and awarded five people in the community in recognition to celebrate the accomplishments and contributions.

[Click here to read more about the Galaxy Awards and why Miss Jenny's students nominated her.](#)



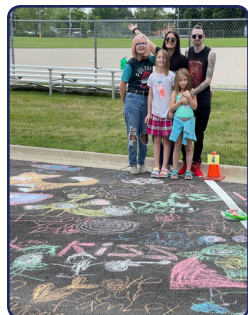
Exciting Changes for Day Camp this Summer

Day Camp added an extended camp option this year. The Extended Camp program included more games, crafts and some science experiments. 25 participants registered for the camp extended option.



New Event – Unplug and Chalk it Up

Unplug and Chalk it Up was on Saturday, July 10, from 11am–1pm at Main Park. Three groups participated to show their sidewalk chalk drawing talent. The families had fun working together on their drawings and they all liked their prizes.



Dance Recital

The Mokena Community Park District Diamond Dancers performed in their dance recitals at the end of May. This was the first time that we had the recital outside at the Band Shell.



Recreation

New Mokena May Monster Madness

This fun pop-up event was created in hopes of bringing more people out of the house and into our parks. Brightly colored monsters were laminated and placed around 10 parks in the area. Participants would go to those parks, take a selfie with a monster, send in that picture and be entered into a drawing.

Great Job Finding Those Monsters!



Pop-Up Programs

Sometimes we think of programs on the fly and want to implement them to fit the district's needs or wants. There were two Pop-Up programs that were created: Kids Winter Break Camp and Cookie Decorating Fun.



New Programs Brought to the Community

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Extended Summer Camp | Boho Necklace Art |
| Bricks 4 Kids | Babysitter Training |
| Ninja Zone | Cooking–Hot Chocolate Bombs |
| Introduction to Team Handball | Adult Co-Ed Basketball League |
| Outdoor Tai Chi Qigong | Women's Adult Basketball League |
| Youth Movement | Adult 50+ Volleyball League |
| Adventure Days–Kid's Days off of School | Adult chess Scholars |
| Spanish, Italian and French Language Classes | Tik Tok Cooking Trends |
| Rock Painting | Swing Dance |
| Magic Classes | Rock Designing |
| Youth Yoga/Kids Yoga and Music | Senior Lunch Bunch |

New Preschool Teachers



The Preschool program started this year with new teachers and a new lesson plan that includes: themed weekly activities, letters, shapes, colors and numbers. Along with phonemic awareness, handwriting pages, syllable counting techniques, identifying rhyming pairs and beginning sounds, center mats, alphabet centers, hands-on tasks, and so much more.



Dad's Night



Fire Dept. Visit for Fire Safety Week



Fall and Spring Youth Soccer Leagues

629

Participants



Volunteer

38

Coaches



Mother and Son Valentine's Bowling

40 Participants enjoyed unlimited bowling, pizza, pop, dessert and gifts for moms and goody bags for the boys.



Recreation



Flashlight Egg Hunt

31 kids ages 8–12 participated in the search for the Golden Egg. Pizza and pop were served after the egg hunt.



You've Been Egged

The Easter Bunny had a few special helpers that hid two dozen eggs in the front yard, and leaves a fun-filled Easter basket and a “You’ve Been Egged” sign on the door.

Over the course of four days, about **43** houses were visited.



Daddy Daughter Ball

A special night for Dads and their daughters with dancing, music, games and light refreshments. This “Frozen” ball was so popular that we added a third session.

Approx. **176** dads and daughters attended.



WooFStock

Sunday, September 12, at Yunker Farm



FARM & BARN FEST

Saturday, August 7, at Yunker Farm

The Annual Farm & Barn Fest is held in at historic Yunker Farm to celebrate the significance of farming, agriculture and country music. The event included a delicious spread of food from local restaurants, a Country music concert, dancing, old fashioned contests, petting zoo, horse rides and a flea market. New this year was the live carving of the Black Maple tree.



Recreation



HALLOWEEN HOLLOW

Friday–Sunday, Oct. 8–10 at Yunker Farm
and the carnival at The Oaks parking lot.

This year's Halloween Hollow was one of our biggest attended events. The weather was beautiful all three days. The event was "re-imagined" last year due to the pandemic, and the community seemed very happy to have the traditional Halloween Hollow back with all their favorite activities: the scarecrow laboratory, pumpkin painting, kids games and activities, carnival and entertainment on Friday and Saturday evenings.





*Mokena Community Park District
Foundation*

The Mokena Community Park Foundation is a 501(c)3 charitable foundation. Its mission is to raise funds to provide:

- Scholarships for Park District or Community Affiliate organizations to underprivileged children of the community.
- Capital projects.
- Landscape and beautification projects.
- Scholarships for local residents attending an accredited college or university to obtain a degree in the Parks and Recreation field.

MCPD Foundation Golf Outing
Wednesday, June 23, 2021
Sanctuary Golf Course, New Lenox
The Annual Golf Outing is the main fundraiser for the Foundation.

2021 Event:
55 Golfers
Over 50 Sponsors
Amount raised: \$7,180





 **MOKENA**
COMMUNITY PARK DISTRICT

