

2023 Parks Dept Year End Review Info

- Installation of splash pad. Some landscaping & possible mural painting to still be added. \$250K SAM grant received for this project. Looking to hold a grand opening/ribbon cutting in June.
- Began installation of new playground at William Park. To continue spring of 2024. Awarded a \$50k Community Development grant to install poured in place surfacing at this playground.
- Approved for a second \$5K grant to plant trees as part of Emerald Ash Borer project to replace trees
- A CREST grant application was submitted to make enhancements at the CanTeen including replacing the front deck/steps, the steps and ramp at the side entrance, the back deck and steps as well as making some kitchen enhancements. Still waiting to hear what we may be approved for.
- Applied for and was approved for a \$100k grant through Onondaga County for enhancements for our senior center. The grant will cover the purchase of a new mini van, adding a pavilion and walk way to the back of the center, replacing some windows, and installing new carpeting in the community room. (A lot of this was recently completed).
- The state grant for the draft LWRP (Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan) is progressing slowly but surely and a lot of planning was done preparing for the Brewerton Streetscape Improvement Project that will begin this spring.
- The Parks Director, Town Supervisor, and head of Park Maintenance met in the Fall with each of the league presidents for soccer, little leagues, and lacrosse to create a parks' improvement wish list. The Town Board approved the Parks Director's request to allocate \$250K from ARPA funds to be used to make a number of these park improvements. Work to begin shortly.
- We were contacted by the Director of Stewardship of the Central New York Land Trust regarding rejuvenating Marie's Woods Preserve (borders the overflow parking lot at William Park). A meeting scheduled for 2/2/24 to plan this out. A few local neighbors initiated this and will be volunteer stewards.
- The Town received notification that we would be awarded a \$300K SAM grant to install Pickleball courts at Plank Road Park. DASNY is currently conducting the reviews for this grant. Work on this project has just begun and will hopefully be completed within the 2024 calendar year.
- Parks Dept. added another (5th) full-time Parks Laborer position. Kyle Ellis was hired and is a great addition to the park maintenance staff.
- Significant enhancements were done to the parking lots at Plank Road Park as well as the overflow parking lot at William Park.
- Purchase of new equipment: Ventrac to greatly improve appearance and ease of ballfields maintenance; a new Chevy dump truck; fertilizer spreader
- Partnered with 6 different leagues to provide youth sports to hundreds of local families. Leagues included:
 - Cicero Youth Soccer who used Plank Road Park and had 802 participants
 - Cicero Falcons (football & Cheer) utilized Central Park and had 144 participants
 - Cicero Little League utilized Central Park and had 444 participants
 - North Syracuse Little League utilized Skyway Park and had 215 participants

- 315 Elite Lacrosse utilized Gateway and Plank Road Parks and had 181 participants
- Salt City Snipers (Lacrosse) utilized Gateway Park and had 223 participants

Please continue reading for 2023 highlights for Programs and Special Events, our CanTeen and our Senior Center.

Recreation Program Director's 2023 Annual Report



Special Event Highlights:

William Park: Splash Pad and Playground - this has been a very long and involved project! A lot of blood, sweat and tears! On the bright side we were able to open the last few weeks of summer and the community was very happy to be able to cool off and utilize the Splash Pad! We even had a few employees get under the bucket. We look forward to the grand opening in the Spring of 2024. The playground got started in November and is almost complete. Once Spring hits we will be able to install the "poured in place" playground surfacing, and it will be open soon after it sets and is ready to be walked on! We have a tentative Grand Opening set for June 7th, 2024.

February Cicero Youth Bureau, Parks & Recreation partnered with the South Bay Fire Department to host our 2nd annual Snowmobile Rides for Kids with Special Needs. This year the Optimist Club enhanced our event by providing gift baskets filled with self-care items and gift certificates for all 34 of our families who attended this event. The lack of adequate snow for

snowmobiling did not stop us; the SB Fire Department came to the rescue with their ATV's and we were able to allow the "show to go on" regardless of the weather!

April Our Easter Egg Hunt was hosted by the MACC (Midstate Athletic Community Center); a great location to hunt for eggs and skate with the Easter Bunny! 144 youth and their families registered for this popular event and some even found themselves on the news! The Easter Egg Hunt was followed by time to visit many local vendors in the hallway at the MACC to have a child ID completed, decorate a cookie, play gaga ball, create a craft, or have faces painted. The success of this event was a highlight for the CYBPR and a testimony to the power of collaborating with local organizations to provide community events.

July & August Day Camp 2023

Cicero Day Camp 2023 continued to be held at Smith Road Elementary School for 6 weeks of the summer at 96% full capacity. Joseph Brisson was our Site Supervisor for 2023 overseeing 10 staff, navigating campers needs, staff performance, and parent expectations. We had a great day camp staff that consisted of mostly college students who are studying Elementary Education. Having a more experienced staff at Summer Camp is very beneficial. Special Guest performers at Day Camp included Joey Hoffman/Magic Show and Mark Rus/Music Performance. In 2023 we contracted with Challenge Island to provide after-camp programming for parents who needed longer hours to accommodate their work



schedules.



October Fall Festival in Bridgeport Each year the Bridgeport Fire Department invites CYBPR to participate in the Fall Festival. We provide free of charge, crafts, bowling, bean bag toss, and face painting. The Town of Sullivan joined us this year to provide more crafts and pumpkins, at no cost.

October The Monster Mash This was a great year of collaborating with the Midstate Athletic Community Center. We were invited to participate in their Halloween Festivities and had a coloring booth, face painting, and paper craft to add to the vendors at this event.

December The Cicero Tree Lighting brought crowds from the community for pizza, hot cocoa and some snacks and kids' activities! The tree lighting ceremony, our holiday singer, and a visit with Santa was fun for all ages. A shout-out to our VIPS who faithfully provide traffic safety at all of our big events as well as using this opportunity to create child ID's for youth in the community. This is another way to collaborate with local businesses and share in Holiday celebrations. We also participated as a vendor at Brewerton's Annual Tree Lighting event again this year.

Programs:

Many of our programs continue from year to year with long-time instructors such as Steve Jones, Allison Woznica, CMC Dance, Karate Johns and many others providing affordable, consistent, quality programming for the community. We also have a few new programs and instructors this year!

New to Cicero this year was instructor **Charlie Kline**, who single handedly provided outdoor archery programs for youth and adults at Gateway Park from June through September garnering an enthusiast following with talk of creating a women's archery league in 2024.

Chery Teal also joined the line-up of instructors this year allowing us to offer professional-quality paper crafts such as greeting cards for youth and adults.

Jeff Parzch and his wife (owners of Brewerton Ace Hardware) continue to offer occasional youth programming on Saturday mornings for Mother's Day, Halloween, and the Holidays by offering, free of charge, projects for youth in the community ages 6-12. These are very popular and fill quickly every time. They have been an awesome addition!

Leadership Program-David Scholl of 4-H/Cornell Cooperative Extension continues to offer FREE leadership classes to this community. The potential of this 7-week program cannot be underestimated in developing future leaders for our community and beyond. We would like to see this program continue to grow and succeed. David also has a Leadership 2 Class in the works!

BECOME A LEADER TODAY

FREE LEADERSHIP TRAINING THIS WINTER
YOUTH AGES 13-18
THURSDAYS FROM 4:30-5:30PM
JANUARY 11, 2024-FEBRUARY 29, 2024
SOUTH BAY FIRE DEPARTMENT
8817 CICERO CENTER ROAD, CICERO
https://reg.cce.cornell.edu/YouthLeadership-W-2024_231



REGISTER
BY JANUARY 10,
2024

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing ALL/EO, including veterans, and individuals with disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities.

4-H GROWS HERE | Cornell Cooperative Extension Onondaga County



Additional Summer Programs

Throughout the summer we run mini camps such as Art Camp, Tennis Camp, Golf Camp, Youth Volleyball and more!! Programming for preschoolers was something we wanted to provide but did not have an instructor; when we were approached by Torrie Gavin with the idea of providing a weekly Toddler Time at the Lake, we were all in. Torrie was an excellent leader for this program which quickly gained in popularity as a time for toddlers and caregivers to come together for crafts, games, and outdoor fun. We hope to continue this program in the summer of 2024, especially with the added Splash Pad and playground at Joseph F William Park.

Concerts

Moving our concerts to JF William Park has resulted in better parking options, higher attendance, and an overall positive experience for the community. On Thursday evenings in July and August the park transforms into an outdoor concert venue complete with music, audience, and food trucks. The following Bands performed in 2023: Mood Swing, Baby Boomers, The Joe Whiting Band, The Barndogs, Matt Chase, Jim + Friends, and Soul Mine. All the concerts were very well attended, and it was great to see community members come together to enjoy music, food and fun! I know many of us look forward to the 2024 Summer Concert series!

Challenges

An ongoing challenge for CYBPR has been and continues to be the lack of facilities to run programs. We are able to overcome this challenge to some degree by partnering with local organizations to rent space but having our own facility would enable us to provide programs more consistently. Renting the space has its challenges as well, costs are up and many organizations are all looking for the same. When we utilize the school facilities, the response time for approval is slow and often requires multiple emails and phone calls to move the process along to completion.

Success

Adding a summer preschool program, an outdoor archery program, and working with pickleball volunteers to provide instruction is just the tip of the iceberg for the success of this department. **The behind-the-scenes unity among our department, dedication to serving the public, and ability to respond to the communities needs, requests and concerns is, in my opinion, the strength and cohesion of our department manifesting in outstanding programs for seniors, teens, youth, and preschoolers. Outside of our department, the collaboration we have with the Cicero Police, Fire Departments, local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, and other non-profits cannot be measured statistically but defines our ability to create a community network that benefits our growing community.**

Looking Ahead to 2024

We are very excited that the Splash Pad will be able to open for Summer and look forward to the playground being complete as well! The community has waited long enough and we can not wait to hear childrens laughs and the sound of dumping water here at William Park!

We hope to continue offering great program options for everyone in the community! We are excited for our 2024 programming!

Cicero Senior Center 2023 Update

This year the Senior Center Program celebrated 32 years!

Membership

- *End of year membership was 533 seniors
- *Our oldest active member is 99, our youngest is 56 and average age is 77
- *433 Residents and 100 non-residents

Stats

- *272 active members
- *Average daily attendance is 42 seniors
- *Typically seeing over 130 different seniors throughout the week

Center Programs

- *Seniors enjoyed 28 day trips throughout the year utilizing the Cicero express and the Canteen Van. Our most popular being Cortland Country Music Park, cheese and wine tasting in Waterloo, Old Forge Train ride, Turning Stone Entertainment, and Theatre with Cortland Repertory, Syracuse stage, The Rev and Present Company.
- *Monthly entertainment and birthday celebrations continued with average attendance of 45
- *Our exercise programs remain steady in popularity with 30 seniors coming 2 to 3 times a week for instructed workouts.
- *We enjoyed two lunch and entertainment summer picnics at Skyway Park, both well attended with over 50 seniors at each.
- *PEACE lunch congregate meals attendance has grown over the year, average of 25 seniors in January grew to 35 by December, with a few seniors still choosing to pick up their meal for take out.
- *Our monthly lunches are our most popular with an average of 40 seniors attending each. Our most popular lunches were country cooking, soul food, hot dog cookout and "Chrismahanukwanzakah".
- *Several informative presentations were held including a genealogy seminar, Nutrition Education with PEACE, Traffic Safety with Cicero Police, and a resource talk by Onondaga County Office of Aging.
- *Seniors held donation collection drives for two nonprofits this year, Sleep in Heavenly Peace and Interfaith Works, as well as supported two Canteen Spaghetti dinners. They also participated in community events such as the Town's Easter Egg Hunt, the Fall Fest, and Holiday Parades.

Staff

- *Margaret left the center after 9 years of employment to move back to her hometown of Canandaigua in July.

*We welcomed Alice Brown in July as our new program aid, she has adjusted well and is a great addition to our team.

Center

*We received a county grant for \$100,000 dollars with which we purchased a minivan and new carpeting. The remainder of the grant will be for replacement windows and the construction of a pavilion at the center.

Cicero CanTeen 2023 Update

The CanTeen has been a hub of positivity and growth, impacting the lives of countless individuals. In the past year, we have seen a remarkable number of participants served, reaching an impressive total of 665 individuals. This is a testament to the relevance and impact of our programming within the community. The total number of check-ins for the year stands at 10,373, indicating the consistent and widespread utilization of our facilities with an average of 62 young people a day, with our highest month averaging 72 young people, and our highest day was 101 young people.

One of the ways we foster a sense of community is through **shared meals**. Our team has worked tirelessly to continue providing dinners every Tuesday and Thursday, creating opportunities for connection and camaraderie among our participants and providing a regular and reliable source of nourishment and support. Notably, our dinner nights have become even more of a staple for participants since the implementation of later bussing available, **averaging 26 young people being fed each Tuesday and Thursday last year**, which doesn't include those who ate seconds! This most recent school year we have seen an influx of those eating dinners, and on **average see 30-35, with our highest day feeding 47 young people**. We are seeing an average of 20 teens using our later busses on these nights. The Cicero United Methodist Church continues to support the CanTeen serving dinner on the first Tuesday of each month for which we are incredibly grateful. Our total number of **young people fed this year was an astounding 1,530**.

In hopes of **preparing our young people for entering the workforce** and feeling empowered to find their footing and explore career options, we had multiple guest speakers who ran workshops with interested participants. These ranged from learning how to build resumes, interview workshops, banking, and learning about careers like Parks programming, Maintenance, Welding, police officers, Firefighters, and others. We also held several cooking classes, some incorporating the Food \$en\$e program which aims to help families with food insecurity.

At the start of the 2023-2024 school year a policy change was implemented for drop-in building hours which states that 8th graders, as their first year eligible to participate in the program, are no longer allowed to leave property to walk to various businesses in the area. This decision was made to help foster trust and ensure that those coming to the program for the first time are willing and able to utilize the program correctly and for the right reasons, which has overall been a success thus far and has mitigated some of the issues we saw during the previous school year.

The CanTeen was proud to implement **summer drop-in building hours** for the first time ever, 2-3 times a week, as the teens had voiced a need for a place to spend time outside of the home; even offering pick-up and drop off transportation to those with permission slips to make this programming accessible for teens who may not have a way to get to the building otherwise. Outside of drop-in building hours, over the summer we facilitated teens going on **12 day trips and one out-of-state overnight trip**. 44 unduplicated young people attended these

field trips. These trips were to *Burnet Park zoo, Onondaga Lake park for picnicking and kayaking, Seneca Falls and Montezuma Wildlife Refuge, Corning Glass Museum, Howe Caverns, hikes at Stone Quarry Hill Art park and Chittenango Falls, as well as Robert Treman State Park in Ithaca, Seabreeze, Darien Lake Six Flags, Water Safari, Sylvan Beach, and the New York State fair.* On some of these trips we partnered with a fellow youth center, The Township, for a chance to meet new young people and have even more exposure forming bonds with those different from who they see on a regular basis. Our largest trip, a 4 day 3 night camping excursion to a historic site in Salem, MA saw 9 participants and included activities such as a Whale Watch, Hammond Castle tour, viewing a lunar event, swimming in the ocean, sight-seeing and shopping in downtown Salem, and going out to dinner.

When school was in session our programming outside of building hours consisted of taking a group of teens to the Jurassic Quest Dinosaur Exhibit at the fairgrounds, a movie night, a lock-in which is an overnight event consisting of leadership and team building activities planned by the teens, as well as Fright Nights haunted houses.

Our team building/leadership camp this year saw a change of venue from our usual Camp Hollis to Camp Talooli, but ultimately still saw a wealth of growth and bonding from our 17 participants who signed up. We witnessed the participants push the boundaries of their comfort zones with new experiences and interactions and enjoyed baking, canoeing, archery, crafting with model clay, karaoke, games, and facilitated discussions on different important issues the teens deal with regularly.

In addition to our regular programming, we have continued our partnership with Contact Community Counseling Services to address the mental health needs of our youth. Contact's Student Assistance Counselor(s) were present at the CanTeen 2-3 days per week building rapport with over 60 young people and touched base with them on a regular basis. According to their end of year report there were 108 Assessment/Counseling Sessions, 4 Teen Intervene Substance Use intervention sessions, 4 Group Counseling Sessions, 4 Family therapy/family phone consultations, 4 Suicide Assessments, including safety planning, referral to outside agency for more intensive treatment and providing 24/7 crisis resources and hotline numbers that are available to students (ie. 988 crisis chat line). Participants have accessed mental health services through our Student Assistance Counseling program, reinforcing our commitment to holistic well-being.

We are proud to report that many of the teens we give to felt compelled to give back to their community, with a total of 30 teens who actively volunteered at events and gave an incredible 531.5 hours of their time! These included 3 events assisting Gigi's Playhouse such as handing out water at a 5k fun run and helping out with their World Down Syndrome day celebration, an Earth Day clean up, selling tickets and manning the bounce houses at the North Syracuse Family Festival, face painting at Cicero fest, running activities and distributing information at a community Mental Health Fair, and so much more. Whether marching in a holiday parade or lending a hand at our various fundraisers, their unwavering dedication and enthusiasm have added a valuable dimension to our community engagement initiatives.

While on the topic of fundraisers, it has been a busy and productive year in that regard. Though we still have not quite found a replacement that parallels what was raised in past years by our Gus Macker basketball tournament, we held our first annual Community Garage Sale which was successful with plenty of positive feedback and opportunity to continue growing. We also held two raffles, one for a flat top grill and another for a smokeless fire pit, both selling out all tickets. Additionally we continued to hold our two annual Spaghetti Dinners, and BANFF Film Festival and have seen a large influx brought in by our bottle and can donations throughout the year.

This year we completed a grant from Assemblyman Al Stirpe's office which went towards arts and craft supplies as well as our partnership with Contact Community Counseling to provide Student Assistance Counselors. Our Byrne JAG grant is also currently underway to contribute

funding towards contracting with Contact Counseling as well. We partially completed our Reisman grant, with funds being utilized for field trips, our trip to Camp Talooli, and healthy food for our young people. The Reisman grant was initially set to end at the end of the year but has been given approval for a small portion of funds to roll over into the new year and be spent by June.

In regards to staff, with heartfelt gratitude for her years at the CanTeen we bid farewell to Amy Crowley, Administrative Director, who transitioned to working for the Onondaga County Youth Bureau. Wesley Sweetman and Kiera McShane each were promoted to Director and Assistant Director, respectively. Victoria Dwyer was hired as part time Administrative Assistant and has quickly acclimated and become a wonderful addition to the team, bonding with staff and teens alike. We have been approved for a second part time employee to fill the role of center monitor due to the need shown for a qualitative staff to teen ratio, but have not yet found the right person for the position.

As we look ahead, we are excited about the prospects of what the year will hold, no doubt offering our participants a unique and enriching experience. Your continued support and commitment to our mission make all these accomplishments possible. We look forward to another year of growth, collaboration, and positive impact.

Thank you for being an integral part of the CanTeen family.

Sincerely,

The CanTeen Staff