



DEER★PARK

*Birthplace of Texas*

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Charlie Sandberg, Parks &  
Recreation Director



# THE 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

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**An Extraordinary Year in  
Deer Park, Texas**

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## Director, Charlie Sandberg, Retires

Time has flown remarkably fast, with thirty-one years passing more quickly than I could have ever imagined. I want to express my deep gratitude to every member of our staff—whether full-time, part-time, or temporary—for their exceptional contributions to our community. Your work in providing quality buildings, parks, events, and customer service has been invaluable to Deer Park, and its importance cannot be overstated.

I am equally thankful to the City Council, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and our administration for their unwavering support and guidance,

which has been the lubricant keeping our department's machinery smoothly in motion.

The year 2023 has been an extraordinary journey, marked by destruction, deconstruction, and plentiful opportunities. It began with the tumultuous 2023 tornado, instilling fear, yet our community and staff stood resilient and hopeful, tackling every challenge head-on. Our teams, particularly in parks, performed miraculous feats from clearing debris to tree donations, helping our community to regain its footing. Your tireless efforts have been the backbone of our recovery, and for that, I am immensely grateful.



The planning for the new community center has been a thrilling experience for me. Despite the sadness of saying goodbye to the old, the anticipation of the spectacular new facility promises a future of enhanced success and programming for our department. I eagerly look forward to its completion in the summer of 2025, when we can celebrate together with the community.

A highlight of 2023 was the introduction of the Día de Los Muertos event, marking Deer Park Parks and Recreation's first cultural festival. The significance of this program to our community was immediately apparent, and I am incredibly proud of the team that made it happen.

Reflecting on the past, several moments stand out, such as the inaugural Reindeer Park at Dow Park, where the attendance exceeded all expectations. Witnessing the evolution since then has been gratifying,

especially the joy of seeing families and visitors relishing Dow Park, affirming the impact of our collective efforts. Another poignant memory is from Tropical Storm Allison, when we embarked on a mission to evacuate a special needs resident to safety, a testament to our commitment to the community.

It fills me with warmth to have served in various capacities, and I feel blessed to have worked with such an outstanding team over the years. As I approach retirement, I am excited for the future of Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department and am confident of the remarkable achievements that lie ahead. I will continue to cheer for you and thank God for the blessings experienced here in Deer Park.

*Charlie Sanberg*

## CITY OF DEER PARK LEADERSHIP

"Leadership is not about being in charge. It's about taking care of those in your charge." – Simon Sinek

To access more information on the Deer Park Community Development Corporation and Parks and Recreation Commission including meeting dates and times, visit the City of Deer Park website – [deerparktx.gov](http://deerparktx.gov) – scroll over the "Government" tab, and click on "Agendas & Minutes" in the "Mayor & Council" column.



### City Leadership

Jay Stokes, City Manager

Sara Robinson, Assistant City Manager



### Parks & Recreation Commission

Alan Cliburn, Chairman

Eric Ripley, Vice Chairman

Glenda Jo Kiefer

Sherry Redwine

Jamie Cox



### City Council

Mayor Jerry Lee Mouton, Jr.

Council Member Position 1: Sherry Garrison

Council Member Position 2: TJ Haight

Council Member Position 3: Tommy Ginn

Council Member Position 4: Bill Patterson

Council Member Position 5: Ron Martin

Council Member Position 6: Georgette Ford



### Community Development Corporation

Laura Hicks, President

Eric Ripley, Vice President

Justin League, Secretary

Jeff Lawther, Treasurer

Faylene DeFrancis

Les Ellard

Doug Burgess

## FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Deer Park, Texas has a council-manager form of government. The city also has five boards and commissions, including the Board of Health, Library Board of Trustees, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning and Zoning Commission, and Senior Citizens Commission.



Charlie Sandberg, Director

# CITY OF DEER PARK PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENTAL LEADERSHIP



Jacob Zuniga, Assistant Director



Jazmin Hernandez,  
Administrative Supervisor



Nicole Garvis,  
Marketing/Technical Coordinator



Tiffany McGallian,  
Park Operations Supervisor



Debra Culp,  
Athletics/Aquatics Supervisor



Kristen Villalovos,  
Senior Services Supervisor



Rene McBride,  
Recreation Supervisor

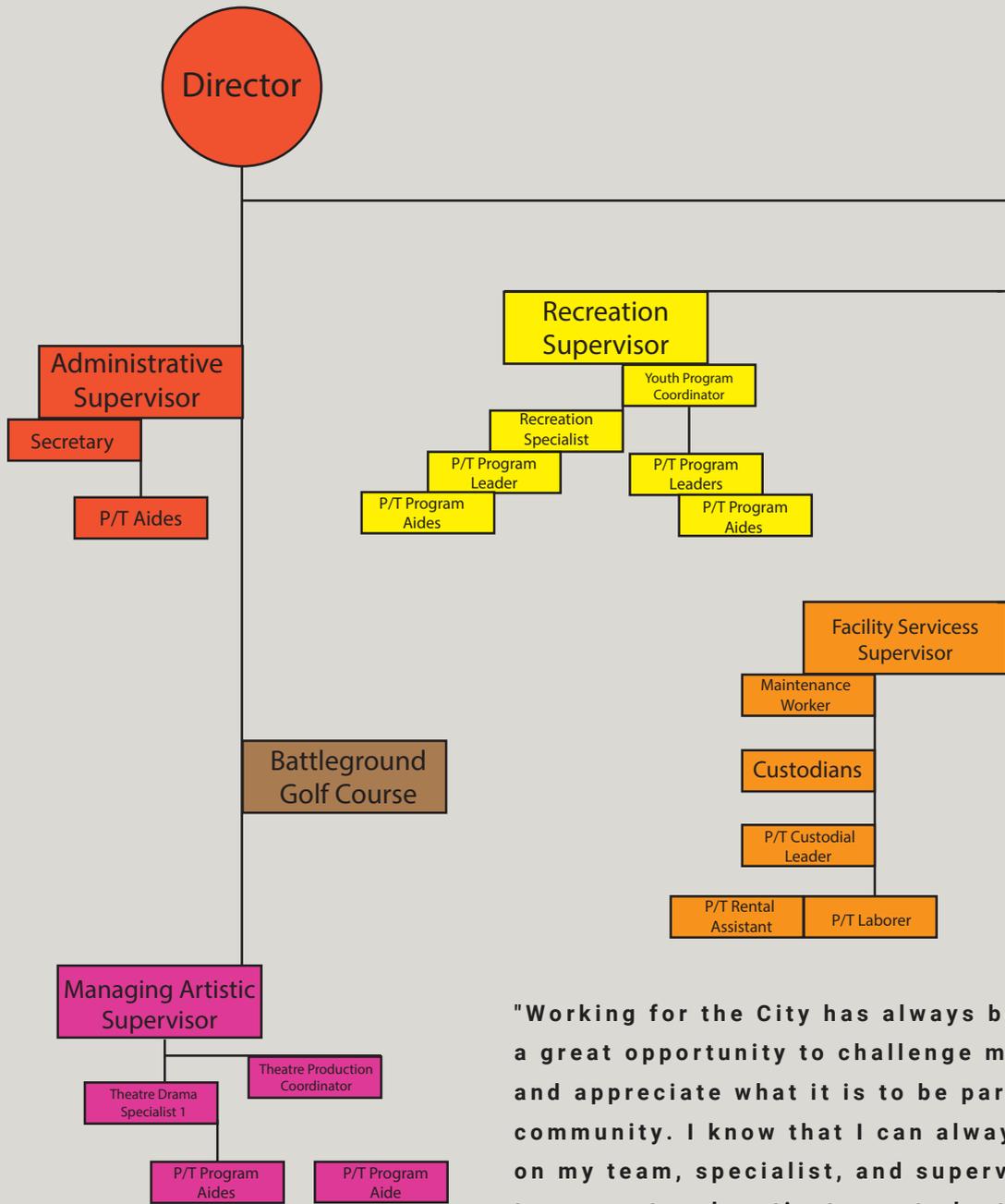


Susan Mele,  
Artistic Managing Supervisor



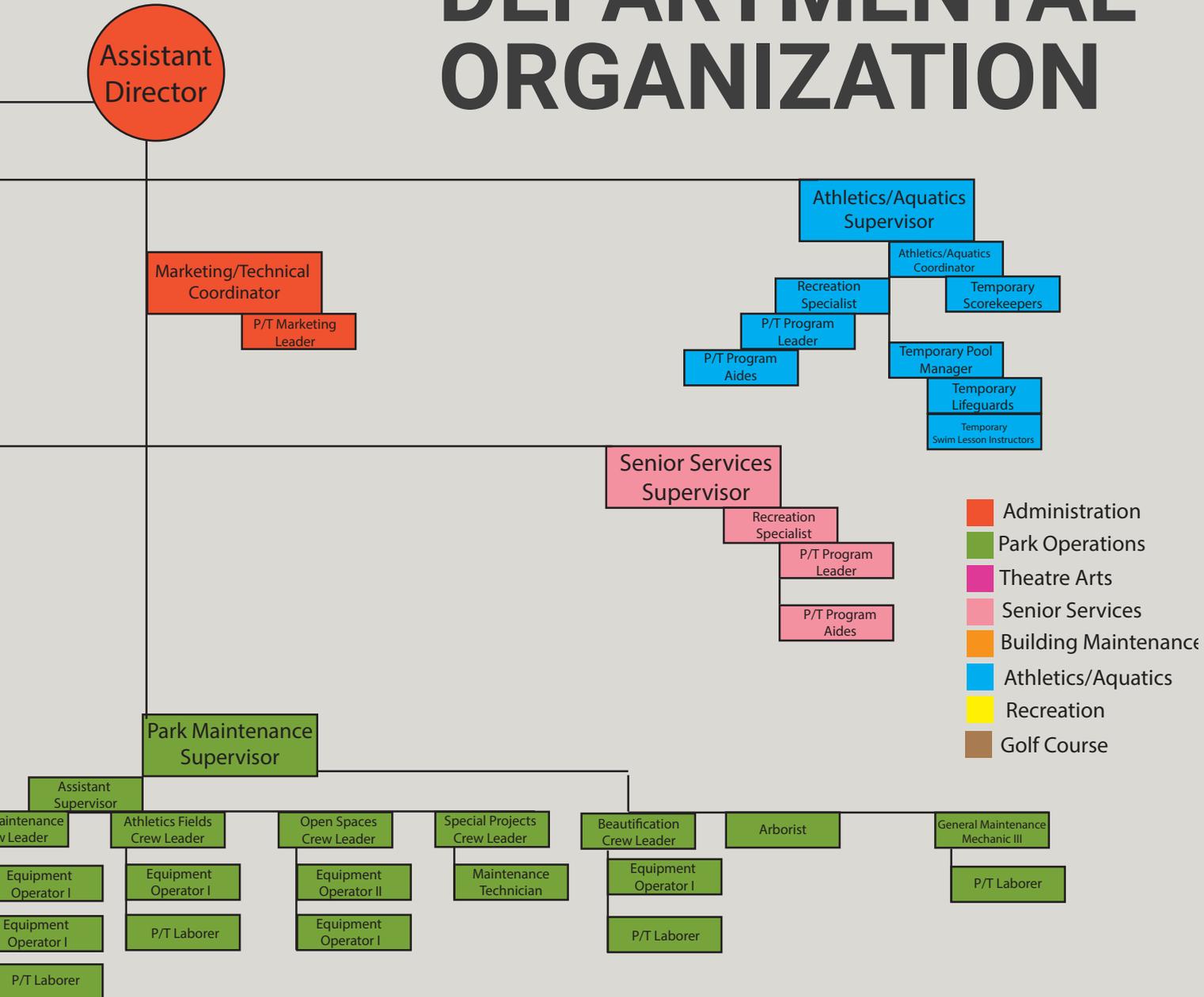
Dawn Crenshaw,  
Facility Services Supervisor

W H O W E A R E



**"Working for the City has always been a great opportunity to challenge myself and appreciate what it is to be part of a community. I know that I can always rely on my team, specialist, and supervisors to support and motivate me to be the best person that I know I can be." - Mercedes Martinez, Program Leader**

# DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION



- Administration
- Park Operations
- Theatre Arts
- Senior Services
- Building Maintenance
- Athletics/Aquatics
- Recreation
- Golf Course

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Department is dedicated to providing the community with exemplary quality-of-life services and experiences consistent with our history, culture, and unique character.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Parks and Recreation Department's vision is to provide innovative and inclusive parks and recreation experiences that foster community growth, promote healthy living, and conserve our natural and historical resources for all residents.

## CORE VALUES



### Community

We embrace the uniqueness of the City of Deer Park and incorporate that in advancing the health and well-being of our customers and residents through parks and recreation opportunities.



### Equity & Inclusion

We endeavor to increase accessibility and inclusivity of parks, facilities, programs, and services for all citizens.



### Healthy Lifestyle

We inspire our citizens to pursue healthier lifestyles, which will create a more livable community.



### Safety

We strive to provide well-maintained and safe parks and facilities to all citizens.



### Stewardship

We develop and empower our employees to serve the community to increase the relevancy and value of department facilities, programs, and services.



# Deer Park PARKS BY THE #

## Deer Park Sports Complexes

9 Softball Fields

14 Baseball Fields

9 Soccer Fields

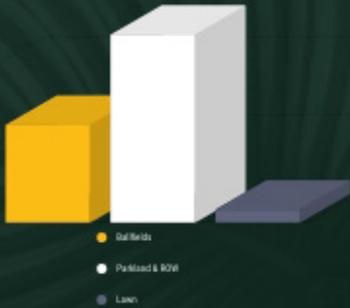
OVER THE PAST YEAR,

# 7,800 hrs.

Were spent on sports field maintenance

### Acreage

under the direction of the parks division



# Playgrounds



18 Pavilions



12 Basketball Courts



4 Outdoor Fitness Areas



2 Bocce Ball Courts



156 Trash Cans



26 Swing Sets



4 Tennis Courts



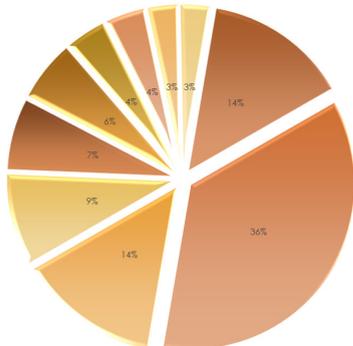
4 Sand Volleyball Courts



111 Picnic Tables



45 Playground Structures



- Chinese Tallow
- Live Oak
- Crepe Myrtle
- Oak Species
- Pine Species
- Elm Species
- Hackberry
- Cypress Species
- Arizona Ash
- Miscellaneous



# PARKS

## 2023 Improvements

In 2023, the Deer Park Parks division achieved significant improvements across city facilities. Key projects included structural pruning of Oak trees, hiring an additional ISA Certified Arborist, and enhancing the Adult Sports Complex with larger dugouts, new backstops, and improved fencing. Renovations were also made to the baby pool and new UV systems installed at various water facilities. Environmentally focused efforts saw the relocation of a Saucer Magnolia and Chinese Fringe tree to Dow Park. Further enhancements included new parking at the Soccer Complex, a Maintenance barn, and extensive tree planting. Other upgrades included fence replacements, invasive species control at the Nature Preserve, and refurbishments of benches, trails, and the Deer Meadows Volleyball court. Routine maintenance continued with replacements of benches, tables, and trash cans to uphold public space quality.

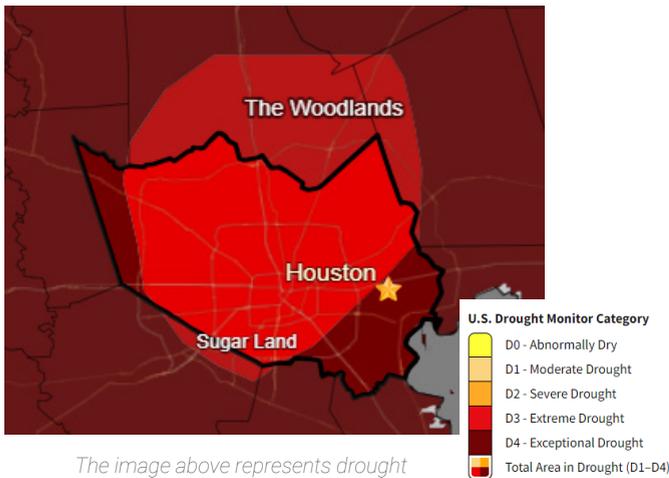
PARKS & OPEN SPACES



## Deer Park residents left to rebuild after an EF3 tornado tore through their community

On January 24, 2023, a devastating EF3 tornado hit Pasadena and Deer Park, Texas, with winds reaching 140 miles per hour. Rated as the most severe since 1992, this tornado caused significant damage, particularly as it crossed into Deer Park where it downgraded slightly to EF2. Landmarks such as Walgreens, Deer Park Public Library, and St. Hyacinth Catholic Church sustained heavy damage, while numerous homes were affected, with one losing its roof and walls. In response, the Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department swiftly cleared debris, assisted damaged facilities, and hosted the Texas A&M Forest Service for recovery efforts. This tornado was notably recognized by KTRK-TV as the year's most impactful weather event.

The Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department faced extensive recovery challenges after a tornado struck, necessitating major repairs and replacements across their facilities. Significant work included replacing fences at the tennis courts and Pony/Colt/Brown fields, and installing new MUSCO lights at Dow Soccer and Pony/Colt fields. The Colt field bleachers and the roof on the Brown Field storage building were also replaced. At the Soccer complex, damaged shade structures and soccer goals were replaced. In addition to structural repairs, the department removed 100 damaged trees and processed 985 cubic yards of tree debris from city properties. To aid recovery, damaged Oaks underwent deep root fertilization and aeration, ensuring their health and stability post-tornado. These efforts were crucial in restoring the parks and recreational facilities to their pre-tornado condition.



The image above represents drought conditions on September 12, 2023.

## Extreme Heat Intensifies Drought across Harris County August - November 2023

In 2023, Deer Park experienced a severe drought that began with extreme conditions on August 15, escalating to exceptional levels from September 9 to 18. Prior to the peak drought, the City of Deer Park had already initiated Stage 1 Drought Conditions on August 7. Due to these restrictions, the Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department was unable to water trees and other vegetation in parks and greenspaces until late October. The prolonged lack of water and harsh conditions led to the loss of 61 trees, significantly impacting the local environment and greenery across the community's parks and recreational spaces.

## Theatre Network Of Texas Adult Textfest Award Winners

Debra Culp - Backstage Award - Statewide Award for Theatre Network of Texas – February 2023

Faylene Defrancis – Friends of the Art Park Players President - Front of House Award – Statewide Award for Theatre Network of Texas – February 2023

Rusty and Betty Gross – Art Park Players Volunteers – Spotlight Award – Statewide Award for Theatre Network of Texas – February 2023

Fred White – Ovation Award - Statewide Award for Theatre Network of Texas – February 2023

Susan Mele – Linda Lee Leadership Award – Theatre Network of Texas Statewide Award – June 2023

## 2023 Broadway World Regional Awards

The Art Park Players were nominated for Broadway World Regional Awards for several performances. Performers were nominated for Best Performance and the APP Spotlight.

## Programmers of the Year

Ruben Martinez & Sherry Rodriguez have clinched the prestigious Programmer of the Year award! Their exceptional skills and innovative contributions to the tech world have set them apart as leading stars in programming.

## ASAP Achievements

In 2023, the ASAP team celebrated key achievements: two leads obtained their CDLs, two staff members received CPR/AED and First Aid Instructor Certifications, and the program earned a 95% satisfaction rate from parents on the Fall evaluation forms.

## Competitive Dance team

12 Dancers, 15 Routines, 3 Competitions, & 55 Awards

Dance Program recognized at City Council - May 2, 2023

## Parks Divisions Achievements

In 2023, Deer Park's Parks Division achieved notable recognition. Taylor Sandoval and Matthew Hicks were named Team of the 4th Quarter for their outstanding contributions, while the Parks Division itself was honored as Group of the Year, celebrating their collective efforts in enhancing the city's recreational spaces.

## TRAPS East Region Maintenance Rodeo Champions

Overall Team-1st Place

Brandon Naranjo-1st Place Backpack Blower Competition

Cody Barker and Matt Hicks-1st Place in Truck and Trailer Competition

Jason Bergman and Taylor Sandoval-2nd Place in Irrigation Assembly Competition

## Theatre Network Of Texas Youth Theatre Festival Awards

### 2 All-Star Cast Awards

CharLee Brandon  
Serena Gossett

### 3 Honorable Mention Monologue Competition

CharLee Brandon  
Michael Cox  
Phoebe McLaughlin

### Musical Theatre Ensemble finalist

*"Welcome to the Rock" from Come From Away*

Katie Coughran  
Radiance Crowder  
Allison Goetz  
Katie Hebert  
Star Henderson  
Phoebe McLaughlin  
Kennedy Meade  
Abigail Reeves  
Cameron Walsh

### 2 Todd Hart Teacher's Pet Awards

CharLee Brandon  
Emma Trevino

### Theatre Trivia Finalists

CharLee Brandon  
Katie Hebert  
Phoebe McLaughlin  
Abigail Reeves

### Young Leaders Council

Katie Hebert  
Star Henderson

# Deer Park Parks & Recreation

# Revenues

## 2023 By Division

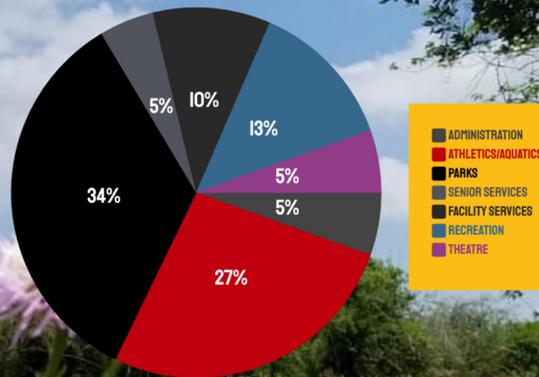
Total Revenues for 2023: \$407,588



Parks and Recreation

Staff Breakdown  
Per Division

**SUPERHEROES?**



"The best part of my job is by far the people I work with. Their passion that they have for what they do is awe-inspiring and it motivates me to keep growing in my position." - Ruben Martinez, Recreation Specialist



The Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department proudly holds CAPRA Accreditation, signifying our steadfast dedication to excellence in community service. By adhering to the rigorous standards set by the National Recreation and Park Association's Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), we continuously improve our operations to exceed industry benchmarks.

CAPRA accreditation is more than just a recognition; it's a testament to our dedication to continuous improvement and accountability. By implementing

CAPRA's operational management system, we have strengthened our infrastructure, increased efficiency in all our activities, and fostered a culture of excellence within our department.

One of the key benefits of CAPRA accreditation is the enhancement of teamwork among our staff. Through the implementation of CAPRA standards, we have established clear roles and responsibilities, streamlined communication channels, and fostered collaboration across all levels of our organization. This collaborative approach ensures that we leverage the diverse skills and expertise of our team members to deliver exceptional services to our community.

CAPRA accreditation has become ingrained in our department's internal culture. It serves as a guiding framework for decision-making, planning, and resource allocation, ensuring that we consistently uphold the highest standards of quality and service delivery. Every member of our team is committed to embracing the principles of CAPRA and integrating them into their daily practices.

As we look towards the future, we are dedicated to maintaining our CAPRA accreditation and furthering our commitment to excellence. In 2025, we will undergo the reaccreditation process, reaffirming our adherence to the highest standards of operation, management, and service provision. This reaccreditation process is a testament to our ongoing commitment to continuous improvement and our desire to ensure that we always provide our community with the highest level of service.

# Growing together

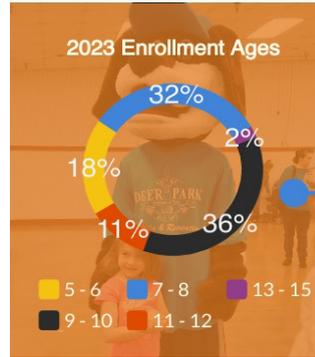
COMMUNITY OUTREACH



## aiming for tomorrow

"Working at the Maxwell Center brings me so much joy because I have the opportunity to connect with the incredible senior citizens who frequent our center. Each one of them holds a wealth of wisdom and stories that never fail to touch my heart. I feel privileged to be able to welcome them with open arms and create engaging activities that promote a healthy and fulfilling lifestyle." - Camryn Cardenas, Recreation Specialist - Senior Services

# 2023 RECREATION

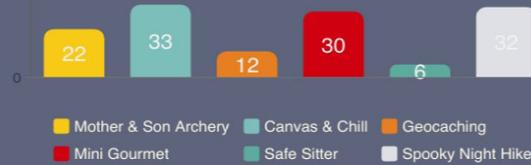


## All Star Activity Program

**8%** Increase in enrollment from 2022



## 2023 Recreation Program Attendance



Call from the North Pole  
**158** calls

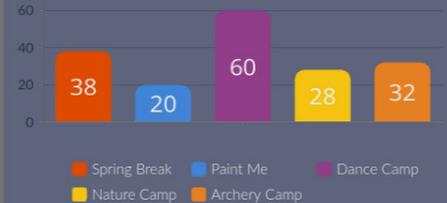


## 2023 Camp Registrations

Spring Break Camp & Archery Camp had a 46% registration increase.

Dance Camp had a 44% registration increase.

Overall Camps had an 18% increase



Camp Crabgrass - 467 registrations.

## Art Park Dancers

910 recital tickets sold

105 dancers performed in the Year-end Recital

16 dancers performed in the Holiday Gala

Christmas Class Performance featured 17 performances.  
Dance Camp Mini Recital featured 4 performances.

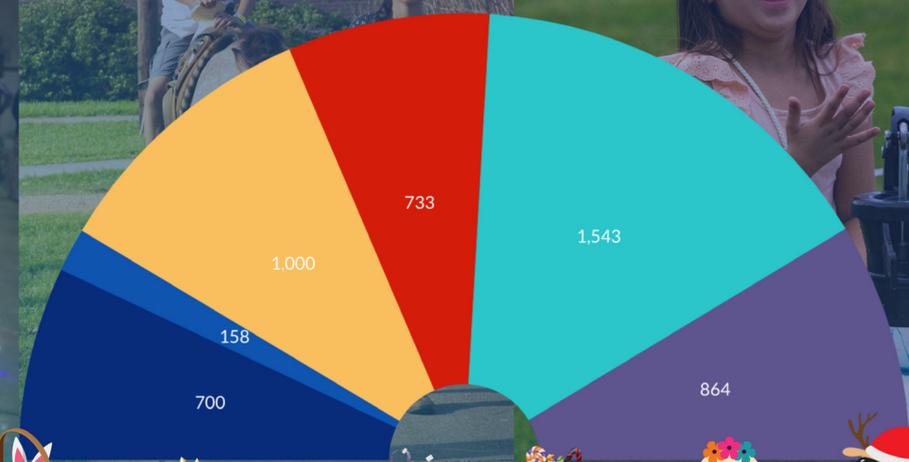
## Princess & Prince

New camp added June 2023 for ages 3-5 brought 9 new students for Fall dance classes



# 2023 Special Event Attendance

DEER PARK PARKS & RECREATION



**Easter Egg-stravaganza**



**Daddy Daughter Dance**



**Fourth Fest**



**Halloween Carnival**



**Dia de Los Muertos**



**Reindeer Park**

Performance in comparison to 2022

decreased by 100

increased by 75

decreased by 200

decreased by 267

(new program)

decreased by 51

# MAXWELL ADULT CENTER



Partnered with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension to provide health and wellness classes to the seniors. 81 seniors participated in 2023.





# DOW PARK POOL RESCUES

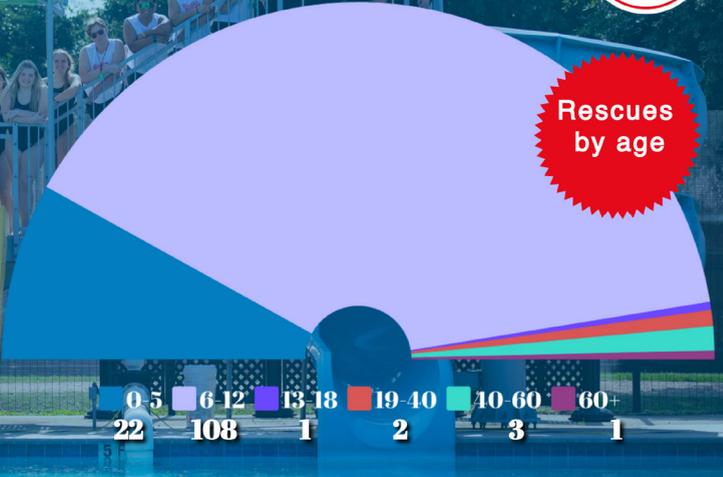
Total  
2023  
rescues  
**137**

**64** Females rescued  
**72** Males rescued

Rescues in water depth of 0-3 Feet **2**

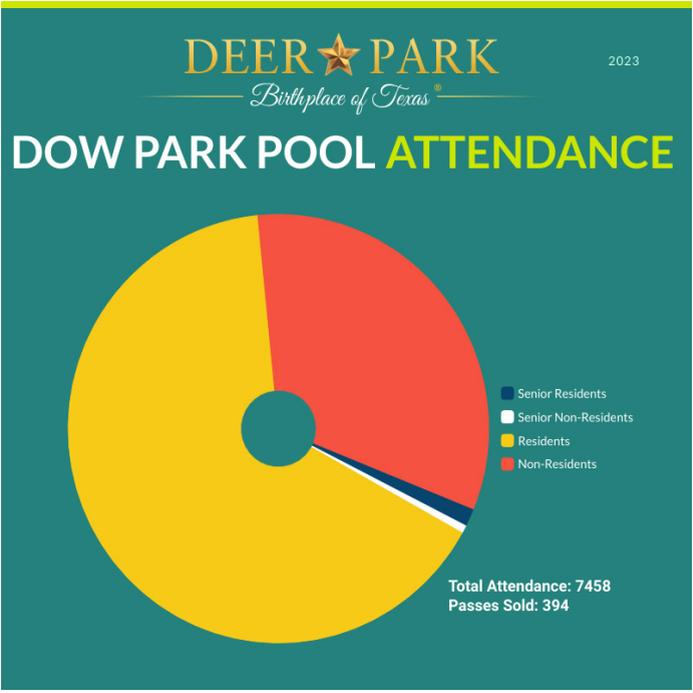
Rescues in water depth of 3-5 Feet **135**

**77%** of rescues were due to weak swimmers



*Debra Culp*  
ATHLETICS/AQUATICS SUPERVISOR

Lifeguard Training & Swim Lesson  
Program Coordinator  
Instructed **99** Classes  
From 2014 – 2023  
**417** Participants  
**99.6%** Success rate



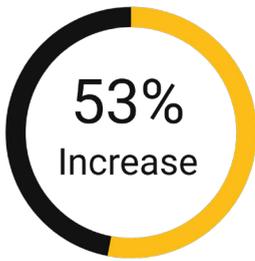


"The City of Deer Park has always been home. It such a blessing that the staff welcomed me back here once I finished college! I get to continue doing what I love with the city that I love."

- Luke Ward, Pool Manager

# Athletics Programming





**Class Enrollment**

Art Park Players Class Enrollment Increased by 53%



**Ticket Sales**

Art Park Players Ticket Sales Increased by 15%



The theatre division hosted the Theatre Network of Texas Youth Festival, which approximately 500 students and chaperones from theatres all over Texas attended in June of 2023. The City of Deer Park partnered with San Jacinto College and produced one of TNT's highest-rated youth conferences.

MARKETING



Total Sends



Emails Sent



Email Marketing

Links Clicked

- Sponsorship & Donation Program raised \$27,000 in funding
- Created a new SMS Marketing program to be implemented in 2023
- Digital campaigns increased web traffic by 92%



Reach



New Followers



Total Posts



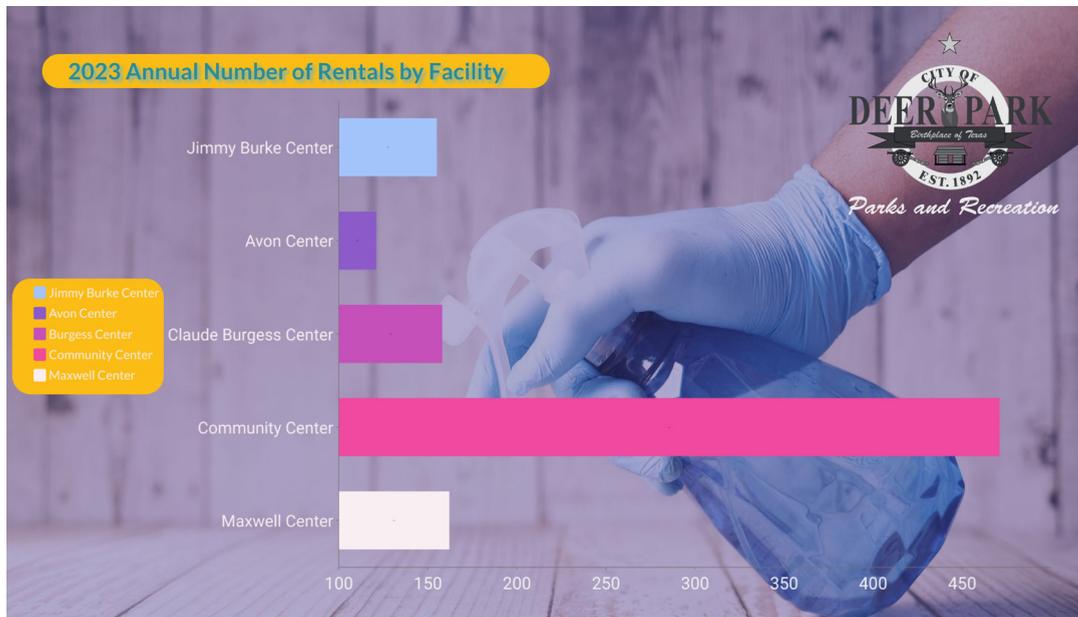
Reach



New Followers



Page Visits



### Employees

- 1 Supervisor
- 1 Maintenance Worker
- 6 Full time employees
- 9 Part-time employees

### Facilities

- 12 Facilities
- 9 Park restrooms  
(50 hours a week cleaning park restrooms)

### Special Events

- July 4th
- Halloween Carnival
- Tree lighting
- Reindeer Park
- Annual Credit Union meeting

"I admire the collaborate spirit. I believe I can make a positive impact here."

- Rosalia Rodriguez, Facility Services Crew Leader

## CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

The Customer Service Committee Revamped the program during 2023 and awarded three Part-Time Employee of the Quarter awards. They also offered a quarterly employee appreciation projects and quarterly All-Staff Meetings to increase cross-divisional communication.





## Tornado

In January 2023, a devastating tornado swept through Deer Park, wreaking havoc on many of the City's facilities, including the destruction of the Community Center roof and significant damage to the Pool House roof. The Deer Park Parks and Recreation Department dedicated extensive efforts to damage control and repairs in the months following the disaster. After rigorous work, the department has successfully returned all affected facilities to full functionality, completing all necessary replacements and repairs to restore services to the community.



## Soccer Building

Due to the construction of the new Community Center, the Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) of Deer Park had to relocate its administrative, recreation, and athletic/aquatic services. After careful consideration, the Soccer Building in Dow Park was chosen as the most suitable location for temporary operations. This move required transferring equipment, files, and various other items. However, the relocation process was complicated by damage from a recent tornado, which necessitated significant structural repairs. Following these repairs, the department thoroughly cleaned the facility, installed new carpet and office equipment, and improved storage solutions. Temporary offices were established for several divisions, accommodating approximately 9-10 employees who now use this space as the operational hub for PARD. The department will continue to function from this location until the completion of the new Community Center.



## Soccer Parking Lot

The City of Deer Park completed a parking lot construction project in collaboration with Texas Wall LLC, which was selected through a competitive Request for Proposal process. The contract was awarded to Texas Wall LLC, and the Public Works Department's Engineering Division handled the project design. The completion of this project was marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the summer of 2023. In October 2023, the City Council officially closed out the project, confirming the successful completion of the new infrastructure.

## Community Center

The City is happy to announce its continued collaboration with BRINKLEY SARGENT WIGINTON ARCHITECTS and Durotech, our Construction Manager at Risk, on the Community Center project. The project rises daily from the ground, with every element taking on a tangible form. Recent meetings have unveiled a projected completion date of March 10, 2025, along with discussions covering submittal reviews, design enhancements, RFI reviews, and beyond.



## Girls Softball Parking

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) of Deer Park, utilizing interest from Type B Funding, prioritized the addition of parking at the Girls Softball Complex. The engineered design for this project, completed by the Public Works Department, set the stage for the next steps. In late fall, the department initiated the procurement process to seek bids for the construction. Bids are scheduled to be opened in January 2024, followed by the start of the construction contract process. Additionally, the project includes contracting with Musco Lighting to provide lighting for the new parking lot of the new Community Center.



## Spencerview Bridge

The City of Deer Park has partnered with Cobb Fendley to prepare presentation documents and abutments for the new Spencerview Bridge. In collaboration with Harris County Flood Control and Cenikor, city staff has been actively involved in securing easements to ensure maintenance access to the bridge. Essential preparatory work, including the geotechnical report and the easement documents, has been completed, alongside purchasing a portion of the Cenikor property. With these preliminary steps concluded, the City is nearing the stage to solicit bids for the bridge's construction.



## Hike & Bike Trails

The Parks and Recreation Department is advancing the next phase of the Hike and Bike Trails Program, maintaining its commitment to expanding the trail system. In May 2023, the City of Deer Park entered into a partnership with Harris County Precinct 2, which involved a matching grant wherein Precinct 2 contributed \$400,000 and the City matched with \$450,000. An architect was hired by Harris County Precinct 2 to design the trail. Recent discussions have indicated that the projected costs will exceed the initial \$850,000 budget, reaching up to \$1,100,000. To cover this increase, in 2024, the Parks and Recreation Department plans to apply for an additional matching grant of \$100,000. This application will be submitted to Harris County Precinct 2 in February 2024, ensuring continued funding for this vital community project.



## Jimmy Burke Activity Center

The Jimmy Burke Activity Center Project, funded by an approved voter General Obligation Fund, has completed the Schematic Design Phase. The City of Deer Park has contracted with Brown, Reynolds & Watford Architects for the design development and construction documents. To ensure the project's success, the City has opted for the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) method for building the 55,780-square-foot facility. This new center is set to feature a Historical Museum, a large dog park, an outdoor seating area, convention-like rooms, and meeting breakout classrooms. To oversee the construction, City staff has appointed Rogers-O'Brien Construction as the CMAR for the project, ensuring expert management and execution.



## Dow Park Children's Pool

The Dow Park Children's Pool has recently significantly improved its appeal and functionality. These updates, carried out by Kraftsman Commercial Playgrounds and Water Parks through a BuyBoard Contract, included re-plastering the pool and adding new features such as a mushroom maze, over and under nozzles, and a log slide. The total investment for this project amounted to \$86,974.43, ensuring that the pool continues to be a delightful and safe recreational spot for children.

# Deer Park Parks & Recreation

## Rooted in Community, Growing Towards Tomorrow



*Parks and Recreation*

