

2023

annual report



Plainfield
PARK DISTRICT



Letter from the Executive Director

Our Mission

The Plainfield Park District seeks to enhance lives through equitable, accessible, and exceptional recreation opportunities for all.

Our Vision

We aspire to be innovative, diverse, and inclusive in administration, recreation and preservation.

Our Values

Our values center on Community, Fiscal Responsibility, Stewardship of Natural Resources, Health & Wellness, and Diversity, Equitability and Inclusiveness.

Board of Commissioners

Bill Thoman	2025	President
Syed Abedi	2025	Vice President
Colette Safford	2027	Commissioner
Heath Wright	2027	Commissioner
Debra Narducci	2029	Commissioner
Tracee Steele	2029	Commissioner
Nuhie Faheem	2029	Commissioner

Leadership Team from left to right:
 Ken McEwen, Director of Parks,
 Josh Hendricks, Director of Marketing
 and Community Outreach,
 Bob Collins, Director of Planning,
 Carlo Capalbo, Executive Director,
 Maureen Nugent, Deputy Director,
 Andrea Juricic, Director of Recreation
 and Facilities

Dear Plainfield Park District Friends and Families:

Michael Jordan was quoted as saying, "Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen." There is not a better quote that summarizes the Plainfield Park District Team Members than that! They are the individuals that made it happen, and in 2023 a lot of things happened! The time, effort, determination, creativity and dedication are just some of the attributes that our team puts forward day in and day out for all 365 days of the year to bring our community exceptional and equitable recreational programming and amenities.

The Park District team continued to excel in programming through our array of special events, instructional programs, and leagues that were offered. We have seen record-high attendance and satisfaction in our widely-popular special events such as Daddy Daughter Dance, Flashlight Egg Hunt, Egg-citing Activities, Party in the PARC, Autumn Family Fun Fest, Haunted Hayrides, Grinchmas on the Green, Breakfast with Santa, and Journey to the North Pole. A new/revamped version of our Patriotic Picnic & Fireworks (now Food Truck Festival & Fireworks) saw thousands of event-goers come out to Bott Park in its inaugural year. We are excited to see what 2024 will bring!

The District continued its collaboration with the Village of Romeoville Parks and Recreation Department for yet another successful Community Day of Play at Rotary Park (a collaborative park and playground between the two entities). We are excited to set up a similar event this year for National Day of Play, so be on the look-out! The continued growth in youth athletic league programming continued with impactful increases

to our youth T-Ball League, Flag Football League, Basketball League, and two other new offerings (Indoor Flag Football and Soccer) through a partnership with the GoPro Dome that started in 2024.

The District continued its aggressive capital development plan, making great strides improving amenities and open spaces. In 2023 we saw development of our Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) project at Van Horn Woods (East side) with the installation of improvements to the dog park, an autism-friendly playground, revamp to the bike track, and a fitness pod. We are looking forward to the park's grand re-opening this spring.

Neighborhood park replacements continued with Cumberland, Champion Creek and The Ponds. A major sports complex, Four Seasons, got another round of quality improvement with LED field lights, increased paved pathways for access and a CXT Pit-Toilet. Finally, the Plainfield Park District was awarded a \$377,500 OSLAD grant for the \$755,000 Wheatland Park renovation, a nine-acre community park that was recently acquired from Wheatland Township. This project, starting in the summer of 2024, will bring a larger-developed walking trail, dog park, and play pods as well as a redeveloped playground and basketball court.

The District continues routine maintenance in pathways and natural areas. We continue maintaining natural areas with scheduled burns and quadrant tree trimming and stump grinding. The Riverside Parkway and Farmstone Ridge paths were repaved and/or resurfaced in 2023, bringing quality connectivity for those active outdoor users of the District.

2024 is full of shining skies and rainbows when you look at what's in store. Every year we strive to make it better than the previous year. Team members work tirelessly to continue our dedication to our residents. Our focal point is centered around our mission and our values as we strive to serve all of our residents at exceptional high levels in Community, Fiscal Responsibility, Stewardship and Natural Resources, Health and Wellness, and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Plainfield Park District is here for you now and forever. We Welcome Everyone.

Dedicated to serving our Community,

Carlo J. Capalbo

Executive Director Carlo Capalbo, MPA, CPRE



Financial Profile

Excellence in Financial Reporting

For the 17th straight year, the Plainfield Park District Finance Department's comprehensive annual financial report was awarded the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). The District first won the award in 2006.

The Park District's comprehensive annual financial report was judged by an impartial panel to "meet the high standards of the program, which includes demonstrating a constructive 'spirit of full disclosure' to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users and user groups to read the report."

A press release issued by the GFOA stated, "the Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management."

These are great honors for the Park District, as it confirms the responsible and accountable reporting of our finances," said Plainfield Park District Executive Director Carlo Capalbo. "Congratulations are in order for Deputy Director Maureen Nugent and her team, as well as our auditors, Lauterbach & Amen, LLP, who worked together on the comprehensive annual financial report and achieved these prestigious awards."

Distinguished Budget Presentation Award

In addition to earning the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the Plainfield Park District was honored with the GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for the seventh straight year (first award was in 2017).

To earn recognition, budget documents must meet program criteria and excel as a policy document, financial plan, operations guide, and communication tool.

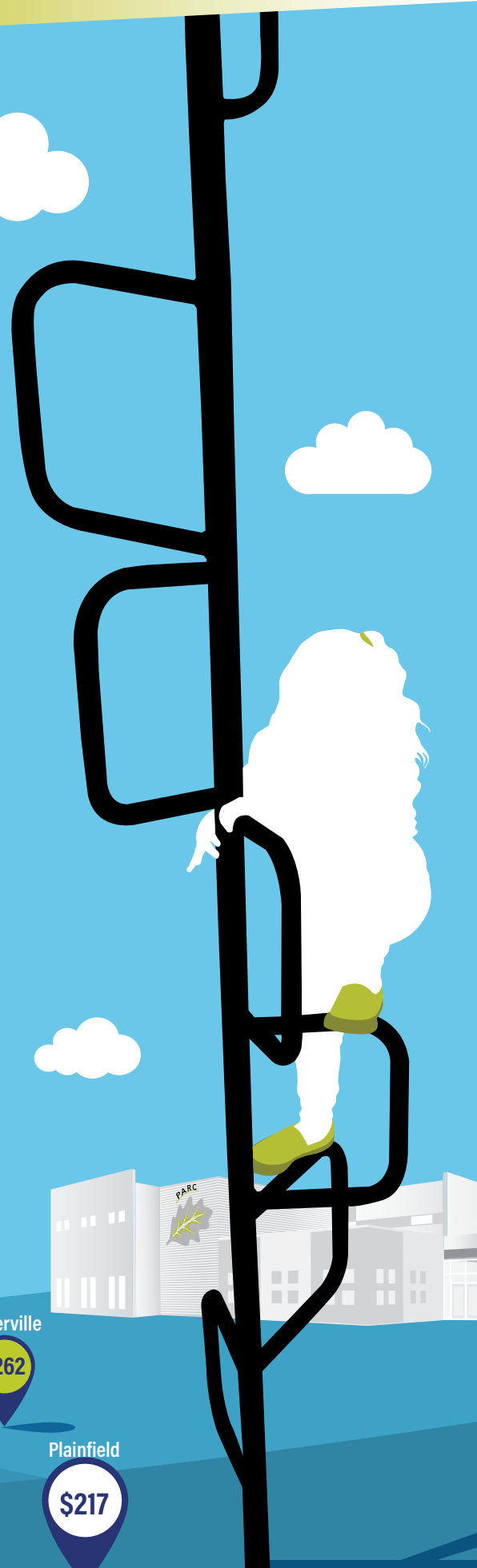
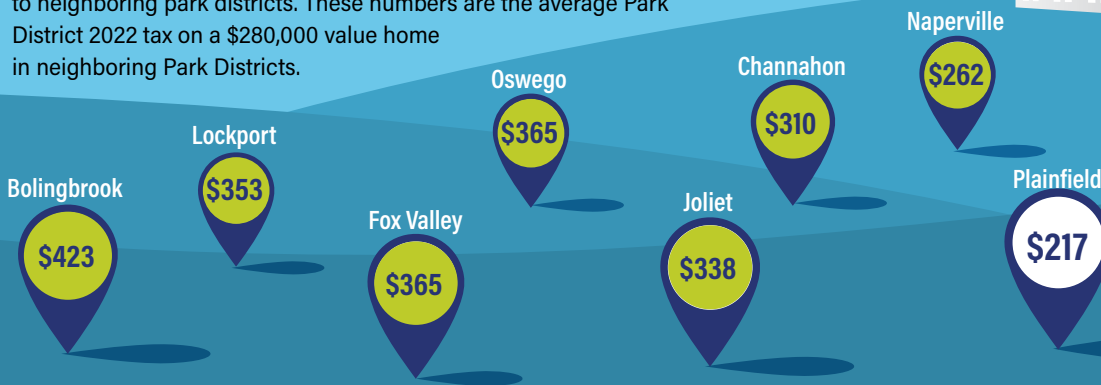
Congratulations to the Finance Team, who oversees the finance department, as well as human resources and information technology.

Property Taxes and the Park District

For every \$1 paid in property tax, just 3 cents goes to the Plainfield Park District, which we use to maintain park space and facilities, fund recreation programs, and put on special events throughout the year.

How Do We Measure Up?

The Plainfield Park District staff works hard to provide the most recreation opportunities and park space at the lowest cost possible for our residents through advanced planning, stringent budgeting, and an ongoing eye toward process improvements. Take a look to see how far your tax dollars go compared to neighboring park districts. These numbers are the average Park District 2022 tax on a \$280,000 value home in neighboring Park Districts.



Parks & Planning

A number of projects were completed in 2023 regarding playground renovation, trail connections and development that provide lasting value and unique recreational opportunities.

Wheatland Park Acquisition

Through an intergovernmental transfer, the Plainfield Park District acquired Wheatland Community Park, which was previously owned by Wheatland Township. Wheatland Community Park and the Springs at 127th (an adjacent Park District property) combined to become Wheatland Park. The Park District was awarded an Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) grant administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources in the amount of \$377,500 for the development of Springs at 127th in March of 2023.

Located on 127th Street, approximately 1/2 mile east of Route 59 in Plainfield, the 9-acre park is set for a renovation in 2024 that will include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Existing Park</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Playground Renovation ▶ Access improvements ▶ Shelter improvements ▶ Site improvements | <p>OSLAD Park Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Nature Play Tot Lot ▶ Trail Loop ▶ Fitness Pods ▶ Dog Park ▶ Rain Garden |
|---|---|

Van Horn Woods

The District was awarded an OSLAD grant in 2022 in the amount of \$400,000 for the redevelopment of Van Horn Woods which began in earnest in 2023 with:

- ▶ Replacement of the playground at Van Horn Woods East. The new playground is designed for those on the Autism spectrum.
- ▶ Fitness pod with three new permanent workout stations installed along the path
- ▶ New dog play equipment and fencing at the dog park
- ▶ Permanent ramps at the bike park along with site restoration, new signs and new fencing

To be completed in 2024:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Fishing pier improvements ▶ Shoreline restoration ▶ Bridge improvements across Lily Cache Creek | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Disc golf course ▶ Pollinator garden ▶ Expanded trails throughout |
|---|---|

Restoration at Mather Woods

Mather Woods underwent invasive species removal, hazardous tree felling and brush pile burns in an effort to restore the woodland to its native state. This helps make the woods safer while also providing a better habitat for wildlife and native species to thrive. Additionally, new welcome and interpretive signage is on the way for 2024.

Recreation/Administration Building Remodel

The Recreation/Administration Building remodel began in 2023. This project is funded by an American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant coordinated through Will County. The renovation will improve the building by renovating the lower level into usable dedicated office space, and renovating the upper level to more functional office space for staff. The lower level work started in 2023, and the upper level work will be completed in early 2024.

ADA Transition Plan Update

The District was working from a transition plan completed in 2017 with consistent progress. However, when beginning its Distinguished Agency Accreditation (DAA) re-certification in 2022, it was discovered that a new requirement for DAA status is to update the ADA Transition Plan every 10 years. Therefore, the District embarked on a complete ADA Transition Plan update in 2023, including every park site, trail, and facility. This process was substantially completed and adopted by the Board of Commissioners in 2023.

Parks and Playgrounds

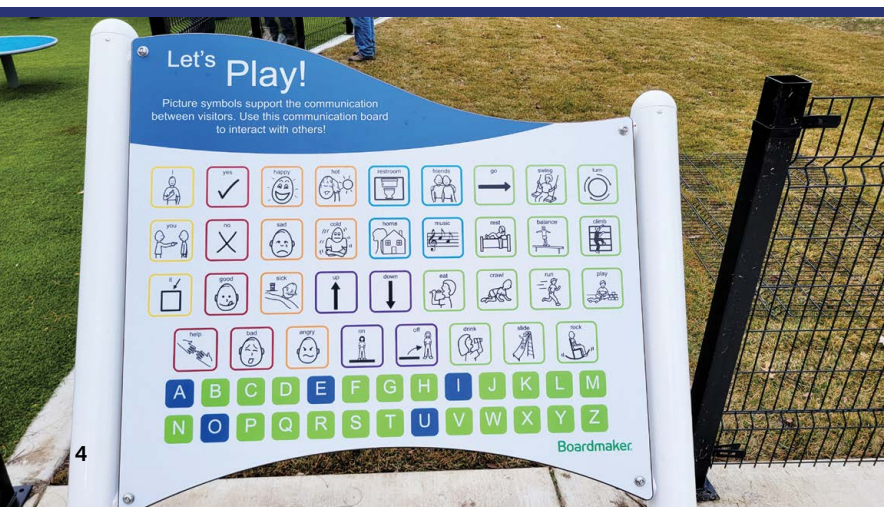
Playgrounds at The Ponds, Champion Creek and Cumberland Park were renovated.

Trails

Sealcoating and/or paving projects were performed throughout the District, including parking lots at Bott/PARC, Ottawa Street Pool, Tamarack Settlement main lot & Eaton Preserve; and trails at Four Seasons, Norman Greenway (south trails), Clearwater Springs, Farmstone Ridge, Riverside Parkway, Mather Woods and other sites.

Looking Ahead

The Plainfield Park District has a lot of plans for 2024. Scan the QR code to read what's up and coming.



2023 Recreation Programming Rundown

Program Enrollment Increases

The 2023 fiscal year was another banner year for the Recreation Department as enrollment continued to surge across the board. Special events continued to be a hit, with just under 4,000 participants registering in 2023.

Spring programs such as T-ball and Flag Football excelled, as did the new Adult Pickleball League. Registration for pool passes and summer camp offerings were made available earlier in 2023 to allow participants more time to view offerings, register and save money. Camp numbers soared with a 34% increase in enrollment.

Ottawa Street Pool

Ottawa Street Pool (OSP) enjoyed a successful season, increasing memberships by 42% and daily admissions by 18%. OSP also hosted an abundance of special events for passholders and the public including \$1 Friday Night Swims, Father's Day Swim, Tiki Bash and several frozen treat days. Tiki Bash, a Welcoming Everyone (WE) event, was a hit in its second year, as Polynesian entertainers delighted a packed pool of participants.

Youth Athletics & Leagues

Youth athletics continued to grow, increasing participation by 9%. The inaugural youth summer basketball league had 158 participants, while indoor futsal had 12 teams and 104 participants. The winter youth basketball league saw record numbers with 14% growth, and new indoor soccer and flag football leagues were added at the Go Pro Sports Dome.

Active Adults

The Active Adult program, which mostly operates out of the Plainfield Township Community Center, more than doubled its number of participants in 2023, increasing participation by 107% thanks to a wide variety of trips, lunch and learns, and addition of art classes and mat making.

Normantown Equestrian Center

Normantown Equestrian Center had over 500 participants in group lessons and pony rides, and private lessons increased 7% with 3,647 participants.

Spring Events

The always popular Daddy-Daughter Dance sold out as usual in February with 243 couples. Egg-citing Activities, which includes the Doggy Egg Hunt, Flashlight Egg Hunt, regular Egg Hunts, Bunny Breakfast, Bunny Hop Fun Run and Adult Egg Hunt, kept Bott Park and the Prairie Activity & Recreation Center (PARC) busy nearly every weekend in March/April.

Summer Events

The official summer special event kick-off was Party at PARC (another WE event), which expanded to include free use of the facility, a tot open gym, a magic show, Touch-A-Truck, and a capital projects presentation. The Inaugural Food Truck Festival debuted on the Fourth of July followed by fireworks at Bott Park, Plainfield Central and other viewing locations. Other summer special events included Traveling StoryWalks (a partnership with the Plainfield Area Public Library), Cruises to Village Green and Unplug Illinois Day.

Fall Events

Autumn Family Fun Fest kicked off the fall season and added new attractions such as pony rides, food trucks and a beer garden. Other fall events which were a big hit included Enchanted Ball, Haunted Hayrides, the Spooky Sprint Fun Run, and Frankenstein's Kiddie Carnival.

Holiday Events

Starting the Holiday season off right, Grinchmas on the Green and the Third Annual You Can't Catch Me Fun Run were well attended and offered participants (whether naughty or nice) an opportunity to visit with Santa and the Grinch. This WE event highlighted diversity and inclusion while bringing awareness of different holiday traditions around the world. Other holiday events such as Breakfast with Santa, Journey to the North Pole, and Noon Year's Eve had sold out crowds.



Best of 2023

Gold Medal for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management

In April of 2023, the Plainfield Park District was named a finalist for the 2023 National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management as selected by the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in partnership with the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA).

The Park District was one of four finalists in the Class III Category (population of 75,001-150,000) for the Grand Plaque. Grand Plaque recipients were announced at the 2023 NRPA Annual Conference in Dallas, October 10-12.

Although Plainfield was not the ultimate recipient, the achievement, "is something we all can be proud of," said Plainfield Park District Executive Director Carlo Capalbo. "This demonstrates our excellence in long-range planning, resource management and innovative approaches to delivering superb park and recreation services with fiscally-sound business practices."



D'Arcy Buick GMC honored at Best of Best Awards Gala

In October, longtime corporate partner D'Arcy Buick GMC was honored as a Best Friend of Illinois Parks - Mid-sized Business by the Illinois Association of Park Districts. Park District and D'Arcy Buick GMC representatives officially received the award at the IAPD's Best of the Best Awards Gala held October 20 at Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling.

Plainfield Park District has been a beneficiary of D'Arcy's generosity since the mid-2010s. After consistently advertising via the District's banner program as well as in the seasonal program catalog, D'Arcy Buick GMC increased its involvement with the Park District in 2022 and 2023 by sponsoring various seasonal kick-off events including Egg-citing Activities, Party at PARC and Grinchmas on the Green.

Pictured are (from left) D'Arcy Buick GMC Marketing Manager Maggie Sillar, Executive Manager Nick D'Arcy, Executive Assistant Amanda Yelnick and Plainfield Park District Director of Marketing & Community Outreach Josh Hendricks

Best of Will County

In November, the Plainfield Park District was chosen the BEST park district in the 2023 Herald-News Best of Will County Readers' Choice Awards. The District was also chosen as one of the best in family recreation. The District was honored at the Best of Will County Readers' Choice Winners Celebration held November 28 at the Jacob Henry Mansion in Joliet.



New faces in new places

A number of new staff joined the team in 2023 including:

Andrea Juricic

was named the new Director of Recreation & Facilities after previously serving as the superintendent of recreation for the DeKalb Park District for the past two-plus years. Prior to DeKalb, Juricic was the facilities supervisor at Elmhurst Park District (2018-2021) and the variety and athletics supervisor at Glenview Park District (2012-2018).

Robert Asiamah

came aboard as the new Information Technology (IT) Manager after serving as the IT manager at Tmax America the past 11+ years.

Brad Keene

joined the Recreation Department as the new Recreation Manager of Athletics after working in similar roles at Bartlett, Wheaton and Woodridge park districts over the past 18 years.

Kevin Miller

was hired as the new Planning Manager after graduating from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture (BLA).



IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference

The Plainfield Park District had a banner weekend at the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference held January 25-27, 2024 at the Chicago Hyatt Regency.

As a whole, the District was recognized as an Illinois Distinguished Accredited Agency. The accreditation is a rigorous evaluation process by a joint committee of park and recreation professionals and elected officials and includes having to meet various standards and criteria in providing exceptional park and recreation services to the community. Plainfield Park District achieved a score of 503.4, exceeding the total possible of 500 points (bonus points awarded for certain accomplishments).

Plainfield Park District Marketing Manager Angela Williams shined in the Agency Showcase Competition bringing home a first-place award for paid advertisement, a second for integrated photography, and a third for print communication – informational. Agency Showcase spotlights communications and marketing work exhibited by park, recreation, and conservation agencies throughout Illinois.

Plainfield Park District Executive Director Carlo Capalbo was honored with a Chairman's Award at the Annual IPRA Business Meeting for his extraordinary contributions to the association and the field of parks and recreation. It is the third such time he has been honored with the award.

Deputy Director Maureen Nugent was recognized with an outgoing Finance Chair Award at the IPRA Annual Business Meeting. For the past five years, Nugent served on a five-member committee that worked with the IPRA Finance Staff to provide oversight of the Association's finances.

Director of Planning Bob Collins accepted the 2023 IPRA Promotes Play Initiative award in recognition of promoting best practices in parks and recreation with the renovation of Van Horn Woods East. The District received a \$30,783.62 grant from Playcore and GameTime to assist in the renovation.

Board Updates

Four Park Board Commissioners were sworn into new terms at the regular Park Board meeting held May 10, 2023 at the Prairie Activity & Recreation Center.

Bill Thoman was first elected to the Board of Commissioners in 2017 and reelected in 2019 and 2023. He is the Chairperson of the Governance & Accountability Committee.

Debra Narducci was appointed to the Board of Commissioners in 2022 and then elected in 2023. She is the Chairperson of the Finance & Liability Committee and Co-Chair of the Capital & Development Committee.

Nuhie Faheem was appointed to the Board of Commissioners in 2022 and then elected in 2023. Nuhie is Chairperson of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Committee and Co-Chair of the Recreation & Marketing Committee.

Tracee Steele was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 2023 and is the Co-Chair of the DEI and Personnel & Policy committees.



Bill Thoman
President



Debra Narducci
Commissioner



Nuhie Faheem
Commissioner



Tracee Steele
Commissioner

Float & Fundraise for the Friends of the Plainfield Park District Foundation

Plainfield River Tubing donated proceeds from all trips taken July 3 to the Friends of the Plainfield Park District Foundation. The incredible generosity amounted to a \$4,300 donation.

"We are so thankful to Scott and Kris Most and the Plainfield River Tubing Company for their incredible generosity," said Emily Brooks, president of the Friends of the Plainfield Park District Foundation. "They are committed to providing fun, recreational opportunities on the river, and we completely support that."

The Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life in the Plainfield area by assisting in the preservation of open space and enhancing recreation facilities and programs in the Plainfield Park District for people of all ages to enjoy.





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