

WELLSVILLE JOINT RECREATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2025

The Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission proudly commemorated its 50th anniversary in 2025. We extend our sincere gratitude to all who contributed to this milestone celebration and eagerly anticipate the accomplishments of the next five decades. As 2025 draws to a close, it is appropriate to reflect on a year characterized by significant growth, widespread participation, and meaningful community engagement. This past year has indeed presented new opportunities for the WJRC.

The mission of the Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission is to enrich our community by providing safe and welcoming parks and sports facilities, while offering affordable and diverse programs for individuals of all ages. Integral to this mission is our ongoing commitment to fostering an environment of health and wellness throughout the entire community.

Every success achieved at WJRC is a testament to the dedication of a remarkable team, to whom special appreciation is due. From our Board of Directors and office staff to our maintenance personnel, volunteers, and community partners, who all work tirelessly to ensure the successful execution of our programs and events. I would also like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of past board members as we celebrate our 50th anniversary. Their foresight and impact have been instrumental in positioning WJRC for continued growth. Their passion, vision, and diligent efforts have left a lasting positive impression on our community, and I am profoundly grateful for their work.

As we transition into the new year, we are enthusiastic about our continued expansion. Understanding with expansion and growth there will be growing pains along the way. I believe with the help and support of our outstanding community WJRC will transition through this time of growth admirably. I will commence the process of updating our strategic plan and implementing feedback gathered from community stakeholders to help ensure we represent our community needs as we move forward.

I express my gratitude to each of you for the opportunity to serve as recreation director. We look forward to a successful new year and many more enriching experiences for our participants and our community.

Bernie Smith

Bernie Smith
Director

MEET OUR TEAM



Bernie Smith
Director



Shane Pruitt
Assistant Director



Debbie McCullough
Office Manager

In the past few years we have been lucky enough to add to our WJRC team! Debbie McCullough came to us a couple of years ago and runs our office and heads up our community programs. Shane Pruitt moved from the President of our Board to become the newly hired Assistant Director focusing on activity supervision, park maintenance, tournament planning, and scheduling officials.

OUR BOARD



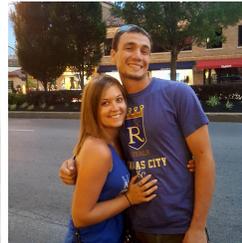
Dustin Gardner



Zach Devorss



Mindi Nelson



Noah Breen

YEARLY PARTICIPATION NUMBER COMPARISON

| PROGRAM | 2024 NUMBERS | 2025 NUMBERS |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| YOUTH VOLLEYBALL | 29 | 21 - added girls flag football |
| GIRLS FLAG FOOTBALL | NA | 27 |
| FALL SOCCER | 38 | 29 |
| SPRING SOCCER | NA | 38 |
| MICRO SOCCER | 28 | FALL =42 SPRING =44 |
| SENIOR TOURS | *NA | 90 FOR 2 TOURS |
| SUMMER T BALL | *NA | 95 |
| SUMMER BASEBALL | *NA | 94 |
| SUMMER SOFTBALL | *NA | 61 |
| FLAG FOOTBALL | 89 | 86 |

| | | |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|
| YOUTH BASKETBALL | *NA | 119 |
| CHEER CAMP | SPRING 25 = 10 | FALL 25 = 33 |

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| AFTER SCHOOL | JAN-MAY '25 = 174 | AUG-SEPT '25 = 70 |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|

*Some numbers are not available due to switching registration programs.

Youth sports boost kids' physical and mental health, teaching teamwork, leadership, and resilience. They also foster social skills, improve academics, and promote lifelong healthy habits.

Physical Benefits:

- **Improved Health:** Strengthens bones, muscles, and heart; helps maintain a healthy weight.
- **Healthy Habits:** Encourages regular exercise, proper nutrition, and hydration, reducing future health risks.
- **Motor Skills:** Develops balance and hand-eye coordination.

Mental & Psychological Benefits:

- **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** Physical activity and team belonging lower stress and alleviate anxiety/depression symptoms.
- **Increased Confidence:** Achieving goals and overcoming challenges builds self-esteem.
- **Grit and Resilience:** Teaches perseverance and the ability to recover from setbacks.

Social & Life Skills:

- **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Improves communication and cooperative goal-setting.
- **Leadership and Communication:** Develops leadership and communication skills with peers and coaches.
- **Positive Relationships:** Creates friendships and a sense of community.

Academic & Cognitive Benefits:

- **Improved Performance:** Linked to better academic outcomes, including higher test scores and concentration.
- **Time Management:** Teaches balancing sports, school, and other commitments.
- **Cognitive Development:** Enhances cognitive fitness and connects effort to positive results.

Senior programs enhance seniors' physical health through exercise, improve mental well-being by preventing cognitive decline and reducing isolation, and foster social connections. They also offer opportunities for lifelong learning, creative expression, and access to preventative healthcare, leading to a better quality of life and increased independence.

Physical Benefits:

- **Improved physical health & overall fitness:** Activities like group exercises, strength training, and balance classes boost energy, strength, flexibility, manage chronic conditions, reduce falls, and improve sleep.

Mental and Emotional Well-being:

- **Cognitive stimulation:** Puzzles, reading clubs, and workshops keep minds sharp, improve memory, and can delay cognitive decline.
- **Reduced isolation and depression:** Programs foster community, combating loneliness and improving mental well-being.
- **Increased self-esteem:** New tasks, skills, and creative outlets build self-worth.

Social and Community Engagement:

- **Building social connections:** Group activities provide a sense of belonging and foster friendships.
- **Fostering a sense of purpose:** Meaningful programs and community contributions provide fulfillment.
- **Intergenerational connections:** Some programs connect seniors with younger generations, enabling wisdom sharing and new skill acquisition.

Preventative Care and Lifelong Learning:

- **Promoting preventative healthcare:** Educational workshops and health screenings empower informed health decisions.
- **Opportunities for lifelong learning:** Lectures, workshops, and creative arts stimulate curiosity and promote personal growth.

PARTICIPATION SUMMARY

| SUMMARY | NUMBER | PARTICIPANTS |
|----------------------|--------|---|
| Youth Sports | 31 | 664 |
| Baseball Tournaments | 1 | 264-players 528-spectators |
| Community Programs | 4 | 538 |
| Special Events | 2 | 1400 Easter & 4th & Pumpkins in the Park |
| Totals | 36 | 3094 |

Baseball Tournaments - adding 3 to our calendar for 2026

Special Events - adding in '26 - Walk to Remember, Holidays in Wellsville at Saddle Club

Youth Services

ASAP - After School Activities Program

The **Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission's After School Activities Program (A.S.A.P.)** provides a safe, structured, and engaging environment for elementary students after school hours. The program operates **at Wellsville Elementary School** and is designed to support working families by offering consistent supervision, enrichment, and fun.

Key Features

- **Location:** Wellsville Elementary School
- **Program Duration:** Runs throughout the school year (August–May)
- **Registration:** Open annually with a set registration window
- **Cost:** Typically ranges from **\$65–\$130**, depending on enrollment options
- **Staffing:** Led by an adult supervisor with support from high school student workers
- **Activities:** A mix of recreation, crafts, games, and seasonal programming designed to keep kids active and engaged.

Who It Serves

- Primarily **elementary-aged students** needing after-school care and enrichment.

Program Purpose

The A.S.A.P. aims to:

- Provide a **safe, supervised space** after school
- Offer **enrichment activities** that support social and physical development
- Help families maintain consistent work schedules
- Strengthen community engagement through youth programming

Summer Day Camp

Summer of Exploring Day Camp

Presented by the Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission

Give your child a summer filled with discovery, friendship, and unforgettable adventures. The **WJRC Summer of Exploring Day Camp** offers a safe, structured, and joy-filled environment where children can learn, play, and grow all summer long.

Designed for children **ages 5 and older**, our program blends classic camp fun with hands-on enrichment, weekly field trips, and plenty of outdoor time. Whether your child loves swimming, crafting, exploring nature, or making new friends, they'll find something to spark their imagination every day.

What Families Can Expect

- **Full-day care** from 7:00 AM to 5:30 PM
- **Weekly themes** that inspire creativity and curiosity
- **Field Trip Thursdays** to exciting destinations
- **Pool days three times a week** at the Wellsville City Pool
- **Daily activities** including crafts, games, STEM challenges, and team-building
- **Guest presenters** from local organizations
- A welcoming, supervised environment led by trained WJRC staff

Location

All drop-off and pick-up take place at **Wellsville Elementary School**, with camp activities based inside the school gym and surrounding outdoor spaces.

Flexible Registration Options

We offer full-time, part-time, and Thursday-only options to fit your family's schedule. Sibling discounts and early-pay incentives are available.

Field Trips

WJRC Field Trips

Adventure-Filled Days for Kids Ages 5+

When school is out but families still need full-day care, WJRC Field Trips offer a safe, exciting solution. Each trip provides a full day of supervised fun, hands-on activities, and memorable experiences designed to keep kids active, engaged, and smiling.

Our field trips are perfect for children **ages 5 and older** and run from **7:30 AM to 5:30 PM**, giving families reliable coverage on non-school days. With destinations that change throughout the year, every trip brings something new to explore.

What Families Can Expect

- **Full-day programming** led by trained WJRC staff
- **Travel to fun, age-appropriate destinations**
- **Games, crafts, and themed activities** built around each trip
- A structured, welcoming environment that prioritizes safety and enjoyment
- **Affordable pricing**, typically **\$45 per trip**

When Trips Occur

WJRC offers field trips throughout the year, including:

- School breaks
- Seasonal holidays
- Special programming days

Each trip requires advance registration and a minimum number of participants to run.

Seniors on the Go

WJRC Seniors on the Go — Summary

The **Seniors on the Go Program** is WJRC's year-round initiative designed to support, engage, and enrich the lives of older adults in the Wellsville community. The program offers a welcoming social environment, a wide variety of activities, and regular opportunities for recreation, wellness, and travel.

Program Purpose

The program is created to **serve senior adults through diverse activities**, social opportunities, and special events. Participants are encouraged to share ideas for new programs or experiences they'd like to see offered.

Where Activities Happen

Each month, the **Wellsville Community Senior Center** becomes a lively gathering place for games, classes, and social events.

Regular Activities

Monthly calendars and flyers highlight a rotating schedule that may include:

- Dominoes
- Pitch
- Hand & Foot
- Pinochle
- Chair Hatha Yoga
- Low-impact workouts
- Special events
- Day trips and excursions

Trips & Travel

The program also partners with **Diamond Tours** and other travel providers to offer chartered bus trips and group travel experiences for seniors looking for adventure and connection.

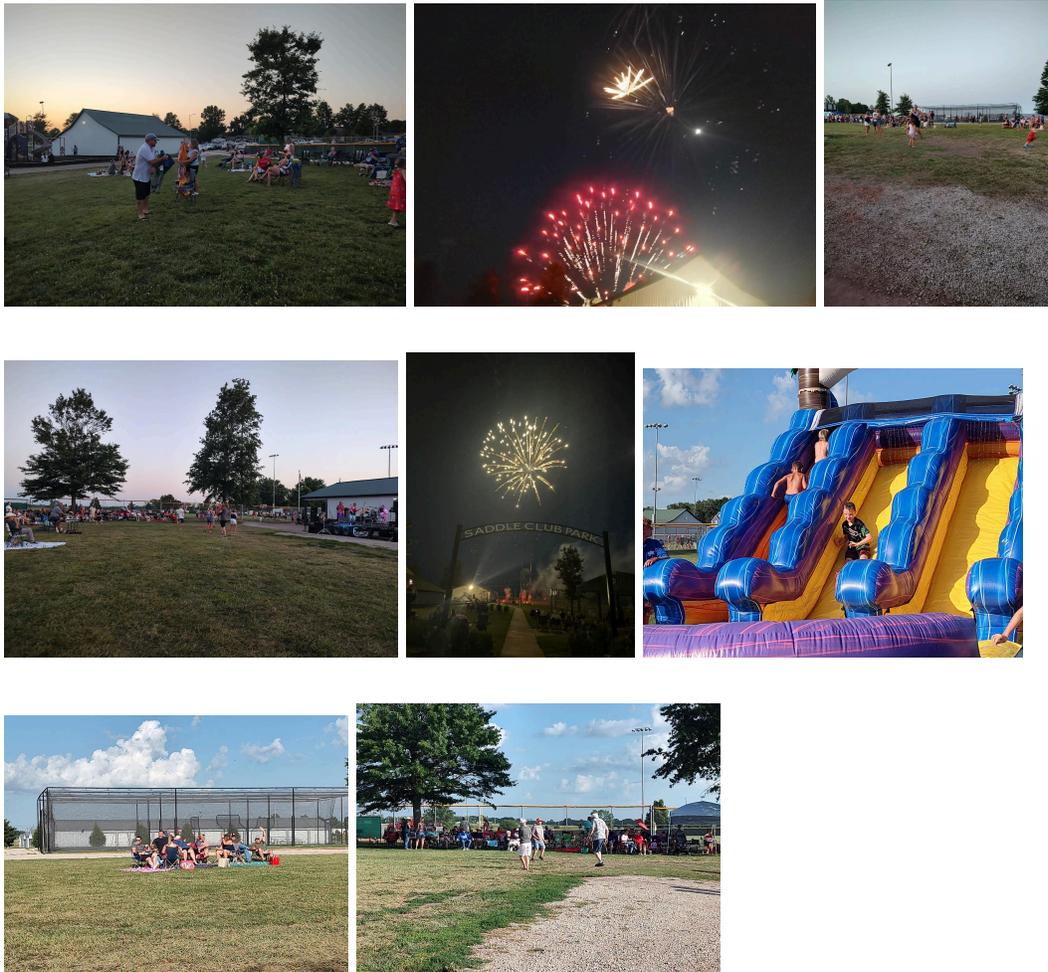
How to Stay Updated

A **monthly flyer and calendar** outline all events, trips, and daily activities. Seniors can follow along through WJRC's website or the Seniors on the Go Facebook page

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Wellsville Joint Recreation organization has initiated the inclusion of a special events schedule. For the first time in WJRC history, a 4th of July Celebration was hosted at Saddle Club Park, with an estimated attendance of 700-800 individuals. The WJRC received numerous positive feedback comments from the community. Our objective is to continue expanding the special events calendar.

The support garnered from participants, sponsors, and the community underscores the significance of community events. The WJRC will prioritize and begin adding special events in the immediate future.



COMMUNITY RECREATION CENTER

The Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission is pleased to announce an exciting new endeavor: the development of the Wellsville Joint Recreation Commission Recreation Center. This initiative represents a significant new objective for WJRC, currently in its initial planning and information-gathering phases.

The proposed Recreation Center will feature a comprehensive array of amenities, including four basketball/volleyball courts, dedicated pickleball courts, a batting cage with indoor turf suitable for soccer, a conference room, community/sensory rooms, and a concession stand. Additionally, the facility will incorporate a two-lane indoor walking/running track and house the WJRC administrative offices. While the Recreation Center's facilities will be available for a rental fee, WJRC remains committed to offering a wide range of programs free of charge to the public.

STRATEGIC GOALS FOR WELLSVILLE JOINT RECREATION COMMISSION

Introduction

This document outlines the short-term and long-range goals for the Recreation Department, tailored to current operational priorities and aligned with the community's vision for the new Recreation Center targeted for Spring 2027. These goals support high-quality programming, community engagement, staff development, and long-term facility planning.

Short-Term Goals (3–12 Months)

Program and Participation Improvements

- Increase participation in youth sports, senior programs, after-school activities, and special events through targeted outreach and refreshed programming.
- Update program materials quarterly to ensure accuracy, clarity, and alignment with best practices.
- Monitor and analyze program data to identify trends and areas for improvement.

Community Engagement and Customer Experience

- Strengthen social media presence to promote events and programs, increasing engagement and attendance.
- Enhance the welcoming and inclusive atmosphere across all facilities through staff training and participant feedback.
- Expand public information and involvement in recreation offerings.

Staff and Volunteer Development

- Improve internal communication and streamline workflows to reduce operational friction.
- Provide professional development opportunities to strengthen staff skills and team cohesion.
- Expand volunteer recruitment and recognition efforts.

Facility and Event Readiness

- Improve safety, cleanliness, and accessibility of all recreation facilities.
 - Pilot new or seasonal programs to test community interest and prepare for expanded offerings in the future Recreation Center.
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Long-Range Goals (1–5 Years)

Facility Planning and Capital Development

- Support planning and development of the new Recreation Center targeted for Spring 2027.
- Renew aging infrastructure and plan for expanded facilities that meet future community needs.
- Leverage partnerships to develop forward-thinking, world-class recreation spaces.

Community Health and Quality of Life

- Build a healthier community through innovative, diversified recreation, arts, and wellness opportunities.
- Expand programs that support active living and social connection for seniors.
- Strengthen community identity and sense of place through signature events and cultural initiatives.

Organizational Leadership and Sustainability

- Maximize financial efficiency and ensure equitable access to programs regardless of income or ability.
- Expand volunteerism and community partnerships to support long-term sustainability.
- Position the department as a recognized leader in recreation management at the city, state, or national level.

Family and Youth Development

- Create positive childhood experiences that foster lifelong engagement with recreation and wellness.
 - Anticipate changing community needs and adapt programs accordingly.
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Alignment with the 2027 Recreation Center Vision

- Develop programming models that will transition seamlessly into the new Recreation Center.
 - Prepare staffing structures, operational plans, and community partnerships that support expanded facility use.
 - Engage the community in the planning process to ensure the new center reflects local needs and aspirations.
 - Establish long-term goals for increased participation, revenue generation, and community impact once the center opens.
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Conclusion

These goals provide a clear roadmap for strengthening current operations while preparing for the transformative opportunities the new Recreation Center will bring. They support a balanced approach to community engagement, program excellence, staff development, and long-term facility planning.

TESTIMONIALS/THANK YOU'S

Thank You
Very Much!!



Bernie,

I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciate everything you do. You are an amazing person and it shows by how much the kids here love you. Thank you for your dedication to our kids and to W.J.R.C.. You're the best!

-♥-
Jamie Jewel

July 3, 2025
Rec. Department
Wellsville, Ks

My wife and I just attended
the Rec. Department
Fine works display.

It was absolutely wonderful
and beautiful. What a
great job you people did.
Makes us proud to live
in Wellsville, Ks.

Thank you for a wonderful
evening.

Yours truly.

Arlen & Jeanie Frank
820 Chilton Ave
Wellsville, Ks.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Tia McGivern** <tiamcgivern@gmail.com>
Date: Sun, Jan 28, 2024, 3:03 PM
Subject: Youth sports
To: <Wellsville.wjrc@gmail.com>

Please send this to your youth sports director.

My team played a basketball game this weekend at 10am. Excellent!

The young refs were learning but listening to their supervisor, is my guess. Nice lady who was wearing a hat. Table helpers were great, the opponents and Coach were great! It was funny because the tip ball toss was SO high! We all laughed, but your adult leader corrected them and taught them beautifully!!!!

Two solid years of excellence at your school!
Thanks parks and rec.
Enjoy the toss!

 TM

De Soto Green Giants

 **IMG_3918.MOV**
5481K

Bernie Smith <bernie.wjrc@gmail.com>
To: Bernie Smith <fbsmith44@gmail.com>

Sun, Jan 28, 2024 at 8:34 P

[Quoted text hidden]

 **IMG_3918.MOV**
5481K

Bernie Smith <bernie.wjrc@gmail.com> Tue, Jan 30, 2024 at 9:09 A
To: shane pruit <shanenichole09@gmail.com>, Dustin Donovan <dddonovan326@gmail.com>, "Gardner, Dustin" <Dgardner@vankeppel.com>, "Nelson, Mindi, JCD" <Mindi.Nelson@jocogov.org>, hdwellservices@look.com

Thanks for letting me do what I do!! This is your compliment as well.

Bernie



Photos from Klutch Softball's post in Mobile Uploads

Like This Page · October 11, 2017

"Kindness is free to Give, but Priceless to receive. Bernie Smith is a true testimony of kindness; she has gone above and beyond to ensure our 14s team to ensure their fields are in tip-top for practice and/or scrimmages. Wednesday presented her with a small gift to say thank you. Thank you Bernie from the entire Klutch Family! #klutchstrongtogether!"

Eddie Sanchez, Hjrj Rolling, Bryce Hartman and like this.

It was appreciated
more than you know.

Bernie -

Thank you so much
for taking good care of
us this Fall. You work
hard and we appreciate
you.

- Klutch -

Bernie-
Thank you for always
taking care of us & keeping
our field in such good shape!
Have a great summer!
✂ Tamaki

Good morning, Brad. Just a note to compliment the person(s) who prepared the field for last night's games. They did a great job. The infield was the best I've seen and the markings were straight and true.

Bob Sailler
Co-director
The Writing Conference, Inc.
1328 Fir Street
Eudora, KS 66025
(785)-393-5917

TOURNAMENT COMPLIMENTS

- Many compliments on the fields, food, and the trees/shade
- One Coach wrote...Thanks to the Wellsville Community for hosting an old school, first class tournament. The fields are in great shape, all the trees are so wonderful. Umpires were great. The food was great, fun weekend!