

# Parks and Recreation FY14 Annual Report



## By The Numbers

Direct Financial Recovery Rate  
56%

#Households Receiving  
Discount Assistance  
190

Volunteers/Hours  
3,056 Volunteers  
83,049 Hours

Official Partners  
26

Parks & Recreation  
Attendance  
2,955,450

Programs: 127,846  
Parks: 2,428,984  
Centers: 375,285  
Legacy Hall: 23,335

Programs Offered  
1,506

Parks  
22

Miles of Trails  
47.5

#Acres/Parks & Facilities  
1,622

Civic Engagement  
75 events attended  
(neighborhood meetings,  
public presentations &  
community outreach)

[jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation](http://jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation)

The mission of James City County Parks and Recreation is to work in partnership with citizens to ensure responsive programs, facilities and open space which promote personal growth, social development and healthy lifestyles. Our mission is accomplished through James City County's values and those our citizens have set for us in serving all constituents, each and every day.

In this Annual Report to our residents and partners, our challenges, accomplishments and successes are defined by the County's vision that continually strives to make James City County the best community in which to live, work and visit. Please spend a few minutes reading this annual report which summarizes our work between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014.

Our staff is grateful for the opportunity to use their professional experience and passion to serve the citizens and visitors of the County. For their continued leadership and guidance, thank you to the James City County Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission. Through our partnerships with individuals, groups, organizations and businesses, we can take pride in all our community has to offer and all that we've achieved together.

*John Carnifax, CPRE, Director  
James City County Parks and Recreation*

## We Are An Historic Place

- To expand environmental and preservation educational offerings, the County was awarded a \$3,000 **Chesapeake Bay Grant** which allowed more than 275 youth to participate in the program.
- To learn the importance of **conservation and preservation**, the County collaborated with Jamestown Discovery Boat Tours, WormWatcher and the James River Association to offer 275 youth interactive environmental educational activities and Eco Boat Tours as part of an experiential learning model.



- More than 700 citizens and visitors enjoyed watching history come to life through historical programs at **Freedom Park**. Park festivities included Black Settlement presentations, Freedom Stories as well as the annual commemoration of the Battle of Spencer's Ordinary which occurred at the park in 1781.

## We Value Healthy Minds And Bodies

- To offer citizens more diverse neighborhood outreach, special event, special interests, sports and outdoor programming, 30 new program offerings and eight new **programming partnerships** and contractual agreements were created.
- Conducted an expanded **Neighborhood Learn to Swim Program** designed for youth from lower-income neighborhoods with little swimming ability and limited access to pools, resulting in 18 participants learning water safety and swimming skills.

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# James City County Values

## Integrity

Earning confidence and respect by aligning our values, words and actions

## Collaboration

Making better decisions by building partnerships and sharing knowledge and resources

## Excellence

Providing outstanding customer service by striving to be the best in everything we do

## Stewardship

Improving our quality of life by safeguarding and enhancing the resources entrusted to us

# Parks & Recreation Advisory Commission 2014

- Michael C. Hand.....345-6950
- Kenneth Jenkins.....565-1677
- Linda Knight.....221-3312
- Julian H. Lipscomb Jr. .... 566-3152
- Larry Walk.....565-0699
- Linda Wallace-Cody.....229-9332
- Scott Van Voorhees..... 565-3231

*The Commission serves as a liaison between the Director of Parks and Recreation and the Board of Supervisors, the County Administrator and the community on recreation and park matters. For more information including the Commission meeting schedule, email joan.etchberger@jamescitycountyva.gov or call 757-259-5410.*



- Increased participation in the **Days of Discovery Camp**, for young adults aged 22-25 with disabilities, by 32% over last year. Modified the service delivery design to include an extended day fee option and new programming opportunities.
- Implemented the final phase of **Williamsburg-James City County School Physical Education Program (PEP)** grant to over 500 youth in the REC Connect program who participated in the FAB 5 fit and fun curriculum.

- Building on the importance of character traits and making positive choices, a **Character Counts** curriculum was implemented in the REC Connect program with over 500 youth taking part in the program.
- To support 40 home-schooled and Montessori students, collaborated with **One on One Basketball** to coordinate a sports and fitness program to serve as a physical education credit.



- More than 840 citizens took advantage of County health, wellness and fitness programs offered at the **Abram Frink Jr. Community Center** including a RAD self-defense class, Zumba and strength training.

- **Expanded programming** at the James City County Recreation Center

included ten indoor cycling classes, Tai Chi for Arthritis classes and the creation of a new spin room with 12 Keiser spin bikes offering patrons challenging new workouts in their fitness routines.



- The first annual **Instructor Open House** was held in January with over 50 attending the free event where class instructors staffed tables to discuss their classes with patrons in a non class setting. Sentara provided a variety of free health screenings demonstrations.



- To comply with the approved Master Plan for **Mid County Park**, phase 1 improvements were completed including a new Park Office with improved restrooms and meeting space, a new, fully accessible Kidsburg playground structure and improvements to picnic shelters and parking. These enhancements resulted in a 124% increase in park revenue and a 120% rise in attendance over the previous fiscal year.

- New **contractual agreements** with Aqua Flight Adventures and Black Dog Paddle increased opportunities for water adventure programming at two parks while providing a new revenue stream for the County.

## Stay Informed! Destination Recreation



Parks and Recreation produces two annual activity brochures—a Fall/Winter edition in September and a Spring/Summer issue in February. The brochures highlight all department events, activities, programs and services. Look for copies of the latest edition at all public County and Parks and Recreation facilities, at the James City County and Williamsburg Libraries or download from the department homepage at [jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation](http://jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation).

Check out all of our regular publications... All publications can be picked up at the facilities or downloaded from [jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation](http://jamescitycountyva.gov/recreation) at their respective homepages.

P & R Times  
our quarterly department newsletter highlighting events, services and accomplishments

Rec Center Times  
a bi-monthly newsletter for Recreation Center patrons

Freedom Now!  
a monthly newsletter detailing Freedom Park activities

REC Connection  
the bi-monthly newsletter for REC Connect patrons

**For More Information:**  
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- In partnership with **Sports Williamsburg** and other special events and tournaments, County Parks hosted more than 20 special events and over 55 sports tournaments including several triathlons, cycling events, Bike Virginia and the National Softball Association Girls Fastpitch Finals.

- Collaborated with local skate providers to offer a new and improved week-end long **Skate Jam**, inclusive of both of skateboarding and BMX riders, resulting in over 200 in total event attendance.



- Increased interest in **Youth Lacrosse** resulted in a new Middle School Lacrosse program and a new Girls Travel Lacrosse program with more than 130 additional youth joining the 5,825 already participating as partner affiliates.

### We Have Special Character

- Over 190 volunteers, 30 of whom were children, helped establish and grow the **community garden** at the Abram Frink Jr. Community Center. The team planted and watched over their crops of corn, eggplant, okra, tomatoes, watermelons, snap peas, various herbs, strawberries, radishes and an assortment of flowers.

- Awarded an additional \$195,000 **Recreation Trails Grant** to help fund the completion of a new ADA paved multiuse trail at Freedom Park; the trail builds community by providing a connection to two school sites and numerous neighborhoods.



- Through a partnership with the **James River Association**, recycle bins for monofilament fishing line were installed in three parks, reducing the environmental damage caused by discarded fishing line which entangles wildlife, is mistakenly eaten by sea life and is hazardous to boaters and swimmers.

### We Are A Community of Choice

- Over 3,056 **volunteers** donated more than 83,049 hours of time and expertise to parks and recreation to support special events, maintain parks and trails, coach and instruct our youth, teach environmental programs, develop teen leadership skills and help those with special needs participate in department programs, a gift valued at \$2 million in FY14.



- Nearly 8,900 citizens participated in parks and recreation **special events**, a participation increase of 11% over FY13.

- Expanded special event programming through **new partnerships** with Williamsburg Families to offer a Summer Camps Fair, with the Virginia Black Storytellers to offer Freedom Stories at Freedom Park, and with the New Town Business Association to offer an outdoor Summer Fest.

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- In response to popular demand and to attract more visitors to Freedom Park, in partnership with Go Ape, **Go Ape Treetop Junior** opened, the company's first adventure in the United States designed especially for children ages 5- 12. The new course allows more visitors to participate as families on the zip lines and other treetop adventure obstacles.



- Breaking down financial, transportation and cultural barriers, 25 youth from lower-income neighborhoods participated



in the **RECN' It Out** Summer Camp pilot program in Lafayette Square/Village neighborhood. The summer camp pilot program offered weekly themed games, sports, fitness, nutrition, community speakers, team projects, music, environmental education, outdoor adventure, learn to swim and recreational and cultural enrichment field trips. To off-set the cost of this neighborhood outreach program, ten program partners supported the initiative by offering \$11,820 through partnerships, grants and donations.

- Worked in partnership with the **Virginia Department of Health: Medical Reserve Corps** to implement health, nutrition and fitness programming in lower-income neighborhoods; 25 youth and their families in Lafayette Square/Village Apartments participated.

- In response to growing citizen need and user participation at the **Warhill Sports Complex**, the Service Road was improved and opened to the public during peak hours, providing users direct access from one end of the park to the other, resulting in decreased traffic congestion and increased ability to schedule multiple events simultaneously.

## We Have First Class Government

- To showcase James City County as a world class learning and tourism destination, Parks and Recreation hosted the four-day **Virginia Recreation and Park Society Annual Conference**, attracting more than 700 delegates to the County to participate in educational and tourism opportunities.



- Three James City County initiatives received top honors from the Virginia Recreation and Park Society, awarded in the population category of 50,000-100,000. The **Williamsburg Botanical Garden** in Freedom Park received the Distinguished Private Sector Award; the **Powhatan Creek Trail** was named Best New Facility-Parks, Playgrounds, Blueways, Greenways or Trails; and **Holiday Skating in New Town** was awarded Best New Program.



- To educate families on program activities and to keep them informed, implemented the REC Connect Program bi-monthly newsletter **REC Connection** with a first year base of more than 1,000 subscribers.

- **Responded to citizen needs and enhanced customer services:**

- payment of boat storage fees at Chickahominy Riverfront Park were made available online.
- a new online Google Calendar was created to keep local business and sports organizations informed of County events which might impact their businesses as well as allow inclusion in those events.
- completed ADA improvements at the James City County Recreation Center including the installation of a new ADA aquatic wheelchair lift to offer users an alternative method of pool entry.

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