

# 2021 Annual Snapshot

*“Rebounding from a Pandemic!”*



**Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority  
and  
Centre Region Parks and Recreation**



# 2021 Chairperson's Annual Letter

*I'm sitting here just outside of Boston, Massachusetts, on a beautiful April 15th, watching the running of the 126th Boston Marathon. Two women, Ababel Yeshhaneh and Peres Jephchirchir, are battling for the win, at times shoulder-to-shoulder, chatting a bit as they forge ahead. They exchange the lead for several miles before reaching the Boyleston Street finish line.*

*It reminds me so much of the past year during our race to manage the pandemic and get to the finish line of getting back to traditional, innovative, and most importantly, reliable recreation programming. Sometimes it felt like taking and relinquishing the lead so many times, but your Centre Region Parks and Recreation Agency finished first in the long race!*

*Challenged all year with limited facility availability, changing social distancing requirements and mask mandates, coupled with staffing limits, Agency staff managed to navigate the crowded field of successful competitors to rise above the roadblocks to emerge victorious!*

*Training for this endurance race began in 2020, when no one knew just how hard this marathon would be and how long it would last. By 2021 we understood the physical and mental requirements, learned more about the course, and figured out clever ways to circumvent the hurdles, climb the hills, and coast to a much-anticipated finish line. Along the way we gathered strength from refreshing old and creating new programs and the enthusiasm of participants eager to celebrate and play in the Centre Region.*

*With cautious optimism regarding this return to a normalcy that has been absent for two years, we are facing a 2022 with nearly unprecedented excitement for renewal and rebirth as we break ground for Whitehall Road Regional Park, complete Phase II of the Spring Creek Education Building, and build the new Welcome Pavilion at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center.*

*The training and hard work have paid off, and we are poised to win the race. And, as many of the runners of the Boston Marathon know, we will return to the race next year and for years to come!*

*Kathy Matason, Chairperson  
Centre Region Parks and Recreation Authority*



2021 Authority members (L to R): Bill Keough (Ferguson), Kathy Matason (College), Tom Daubert (Borough), and Cindy Solic (Patton).  
Not pictured: Bruce Lord (Harris) and Shannon Messick (SCASD).

## Our Mission

*We inspire the Centre Region to learn, play, protect, and connect by creating diverse programs and experiences for all ages, backgrounds, and abilities in sustainable natural spaces and places.*



## Our Vision

*The Centre Region is a vibrant area that enjoys a tremendous quality of life through great parks and exceptional recreation opportunities. The parks and recreation system is part of daily life and shapes the character of the Centre Region.*

*Natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources cultivate outstanding experiences, health, enjoyment, fun, and learning for all people. Residents are proud stewards and supporters of an extraordinary, sustainable parks and recreation system.*

*As the Centre Region's population continues to grow, so does the demand for more parks, recreation programs, indoor and outdoor facilities, and interconnected bikeways and trails. To address these challenges, we work closely with our residents, streamline operations to become more efficient, maximize the use of alternative funding sources, and place an increased emphasis on partnerships and responsible stewardship of the environment.*

It is through Community Connections that our Agency has the greatest effect. During the work completed under pandemic conditions, that connection remained true. Our full- and part-time staff came to work each and every day to prepare the park spaces for increased use by walkers, fitness enthusiasts, playground users, pavilion picnics and meetings, and sports teams. They came to work each and every day to refresh programs and create new and interesting activities and special events for our community. They came to work each and every day to provide a safe and fun swimming experience at two community pools. They came to work each and every day to educate our youth and adults on environmental initiatives to help our planet and improve our lives. They came to work each and every day to improve the lives of our seniors in a time where they experienced solitude, separation, and for some, depression.

## Community Connections



Our Agency's staff and all volunteers, including the Authority members, really understand the effect that parks and recreation has on its community. Through everyone's teamwork, we provide programs and events, parks, and facilities that improve the quality of life for our community--where we all live, work, and play.

2021 wasn't an easy year as we still felt the growing pains of increased use at the parks and we were still working under COVID-19 restrictions well into the calendar year. We continued to work under internal staff protocols to keep not only our team safe, but our participants and general park users as well. However, in 2021, Agency leadership really focused on celebrating our employees, especially through one special day.

In 2019, the very first Parks and Recreation Professional's Day started in Pennsylvania, and the inaugural event kicked off here in State College. We celebrated this very special day at Orchard Park with speakers, staff recognition, a meal, all followed by games hosted by our staff and supplies from the new Rec On The Go truck. Flash forward to 2022, and instead of celebrating with our community, we celebrated internally the 3rd Annual Parks and Recreation Professional's Day. Agency leadership visited all staff in the field or at their facilities, interrupting their busy schedules to enjoy some "Sunset Slush," some cookies, to provide some recognition gifts, and to "chew the fat." It was so nice to visit everyone in person, to talk shop--what's happening within the Agency, to answer questions about project status and more--and to see each facility that they were working within, and to just laugh. Our team is one hard-working group of people who stuck through the pandemic's

changes--how we worked, what we wore, how we cleaned, reduced participation, funding restrictions, temporary furloughs, and more! We cannot say enough about our team members and all that they offer to our community through their ideas, tasks, hard-work, and sweat equity! On July 15, 2022, this year's Parks and Recreation Professional's Day, when you're in the parks and see one of our staff members, be sure to thank them for the work they do for your community!

Generally, though, our team can be very proud of the rebound we started after a difficult 2020. We mailed the Active Guide to the residents within five municipalities for the first time ever, increasing our customer base by 31%. Our waiting lists were long, but this demonstrated the demand for the recreation programming that our Agency provides and how important those swim lessons and summer camps really are! We rebounded financially by increasing the amount of revenue generated compared to the losses faced in 2020; any revenue generated by our department offsets expenses and helps to balance budgets and keeps the costs low for our member municipalities. We certainly look forward to continuing the rebound into 2022 and to remain connected to our community through our programs, facilities, and most importantly, our residents and visitors!



## Pivot Shift. Change. Repeat.

This was the mantra of 2020, which continued well into 2021. It is worthy of capturing again as we continued this very practice throughout 2021, continually evaluating programs as protocols changed throughout the year.

### Program Participation Increased!

The trend continued into 2021 where residents remained active, either in the parks or in programs and events. Agency staff created 473 program options with a total of 4,395 residents and 471 non-residents participating in programs and special events!

Programs Held	Resident Participation	Non-Resident Participation
473	4,395 (90.3%)	471 (9.7%)

### Active Adult Center Re-Opened with Limited Schedule

The Active Adult Center had very limited activity due to indoor COVID-19 protocols that kept our participants in masks and physically distanced while in the Center. This led to shortened hours and a decrease in operational days. Toward the end of the year, participation did increase slightly while the Center continued to operate with shorter hours.

Centre Region Residents	County Residents	Participants without municipality listed
248 (66.1%)	120 (32%)	7 (1.9%)

### Pool Visits Climbed Toward Typical Numbers!

The 2021 season opened with some capacity limits, but by mid-summer, there were no limits or protocols in place. Season pool pass sales were brisk and attendance was very good in July and August. The season ended on a very positive note!

Pool Passes Sold	Park Forest Pass Use	Welch Pool Pass Use
3,705	17,018 (36.5%)	29,659 (63.5%)

### Park Pavilion Rentals Remained Popular

Similar to programs and events, families, clubs, and organizations felt comfortable returning to hosting picnics, parties, and reunions in the parks! Pavilion rentals were very busy across the five municipalities. Consistently, Spring Creek Park, Tom Tudek Memorial Park, and Circleville Park remain in the top three throughout the year for paid pavilion rentals.



Municipality	Paid Pavilion Rentals
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>755</b>
College Township	143
Ferguson Township	172
Harris Township	13
Patton Township	186
State College Borough	173
Authority facilities	68

## WHO WE ARE BY THE NUMBERS

(Includes properties and equipment for which the Agency is responsible.)

-  **56 regional and municipal park sites**
-  **8 tennis courts**
-  **4 pickleball courts**
-  **10 dual-lined tennis/pickleball courts**
-  **29 rentable pavilions**
-  **46 rentable sports fields**
-  **40 playgrounds**
-  **6 formal restroom facilities**
-  **835.98 parkland acres maintained**



In 2021, the Agency provided 67 youth scholarships for a total of \$5,760.25 awarded funds. Each year, the Agency fundraises for its scholarship fund, so **THANK YOU** to our community for supporting this program and providing access to our youth residents!

## Sports Teams were strong in numbers!

Sports remained popular in 2021 with an increased number of players returning to softball, volleyball, and football teams. Softball and baseball tournaments were back in action, with the Agency hosting events at both the John Hess Softball Complex and the Oak Hall Regional Park.



• 15 teams played in two different sand volleyball seasons with 96 total players

• 25 players hit in the Summer Tennis League

• 840 softball players ran the diamond across five different softball leagues!

• 73 players learned to play Pickleball

• 60 players went for the flag in the Adult Flag Football League

• 158 youth players were participants in the Youth Flag Football League, 27.8% growth over 2020!

• 254 youth ran in three Centre Region Youth Cross Country meets, a 33.9% increase in youth runners!

• 22 people participated in our “Learn To Play Disc Golf” Clinic



*That's 1,528 youth and adults enjoying sports!*



## Millbrook Marsh Nature Center launched their “Discovery Packs!”

The Nature Center Staff worked to launch their “Discovery Packs” last year. Based on each season, the packs may have different themes. They were rentable and families could pick these up for a weekend of exploration on their own! In the winter of 2021, four rentals occurred with the average being over three days.



## More Agency Staff on Parks and Recreation Professional's Day!



Just a smattering of our programs, events, and sports throughout the year!

### Glowing Tribute

Andrew L. Angle	Zira Mikowicz
Jared Boissonneault	Mike
Rob Brooks	Osaze Osage
Ryan Brown	Patti Owens
Russell & Prueella Corl	Andrew Peffer
Norman Desmarais	Phil, Phyllis, and Dena
Agostinho Jose DeSousa	Ann Redelfs
Izzy DeSousa	Rumpley
John Fiegel	Michael Saylor
Kurt Gee	Perry Sisti
Misty Hoover	Mike Smith
Thomas Houston	Stefania
Dr. Robert Jahrdoerfer	Tyler Sykes
James K. Lauer, Sr.	Leo
Leo	Craig Taylor
Lucy	Michael Ticcino
Mr. McTavish	Toula
Phoebe Mikowicz	Lloyd & Jean Warnska
	Zaid



## Parkland in Acres

(updated 5/9/22; based on Centre County GIS Deeded Acreage listed for each park)

Owner / Leasee	State College Borough	College Township	Ferguson Township	Harris Township	Patton Township	Totals
Municipal Parkland (Self-Maintain)	.92 acres	42.46 acres	71.63 acres**	6.73 acres****	589.53 acres*****	711.27 acres
Municipal Parkland (CRPR Maintains)	120.62 acres	119.90 acres	119.64 acres***	62.47 acres	154.28 acres*****	576.91 acres
COG/Authority (owns/leases)*	3.32 acres	131.10 acres	100 acres	20.65 acres	4.0 acres	259.07 acres
Total Acreage	124.86 acres	293.46 acres	291.27 acres	89.95 acres	747.81 acres	1,547.25 acres
<b>Total Maintained by CRPR</b>	<b>123.94 acres</b>	<b>251.00 acres</b>	<b>219.64 acres</b>	<b>83.12 acres</b>	<b>158.28 acres</b>	<b>835.98 acres</b>

The Centre Region Parks System currently includes 56 regional facilities and parks with 835.98 acres maintained by Centre Region Parks and Recreation through our regional parks and cooperative recreation services agreement with the local municipalities. This number was recently updated to reflect the Agency's work and the work the municipalities conduct within their own parks; for example, the .61 acre stormwater basin within Autumnwood Park is completely managed by Ferguson Township. Additionally, the acreage managed was reduced in 2021 when the Agency stopped leasing land from the State College Area School District at Spring Creek Elementary School, Ferguson Township Elementary School, and Radio Park Elementary School.

The asterisks below also note some details about how the parkland was calculated:

\*COG/Authority owns/leases the following lands: William L. Welch L. Welch Community Pool (leases from SCASD) Park Forest Community Pool (owns), Oak Hall Regional Park (leases from COG), Millbrook Marsh Nature Center (leases from PSU), Whitehall Road Regional Park (leases from COG/Ferguson Township), and the John Hess Softball Complex (leases from COG). The Authority ended leases for SCASD Radio Park Elementary Ballfields (4 acres), SCASD Ferguson Elementary Ballfields (3 acres), and SCASD Spring Creek Elementary Ballfield (formerly Houserville Elementary, 1.5 acres) in mid-April 2021.

\*\*Includes the approximation of the undeveloped portion of Cecil Irvin Park, the meadows and pastures of Tudek Park, and the stormwater basins at Autumnwood Park and Haymarket Park, which are all managed by Ferguson Township.

\*\*\*Includes the approximation for the portion of Cecil Irvin Park and Tudek Park that the Agency maintains.

\*\*\*\*Does not include the 10.71 acres of the future Tussey Pond Park land which remains dormant at this time. A master plan was adopted by Harris Township but a construction timeline is not yet available. If this acreage were to be added to the table, it would be added to the Municipal Parkland (Self-Maintain) category.

\*\*\*\*\*Includes the approximation of the undeveloped portion of Gray's Woods Park (39.46 acres), Patton Woods Natural Recreation Area which is considered passive parkland (62.70 acres), and the Haugh Tract (465.97 acres), for which Patton Township has oversight. This figure also captures the approximated acres within Bernel Road Park that are not developed at this time (farmed).

\*\*\*\*\*Includes only the developed areas of Gray's Woods Park (4 acres) and only the approximated acres that have been developed within Bernel Road Park that the Agency maintains.

As you begin to review the 2021 data collected for Parks Operations on the next page, please review the following definitions for each category. As the Agency continues to refine its data collection, we hope to be able to get more specific by adding additional categories where there are trends in the data. The Agency is also looking for technology-related grant opportunities where we can provide in-the-field tablets for staff to conduct data collection--an easier, faster, and less cumbersome process!

### DEFINITIONS

**General Park Category:** Includes all trash and recycling, restroom and pavilion maintenance, daily park checks, trails and walkways maintenance, gravel parking lot repairs, and repairs to park equipment (trash cans, tables, fences, etc.).

**Equipment Category:** Routine service of all equipment, cleaning equipment, vehicles, tools etc.

**Turf Category:** General mowing and trimming of parks, and brushhog cutting of secondary areas.

**Athletic Fields Category:** Mowing, overseeding, and fertilization for all diamond and rectangular sports fields, ballfield grooming, lining, and base placement and repairs, safety netting installation and inspections, fence repairs, etc.

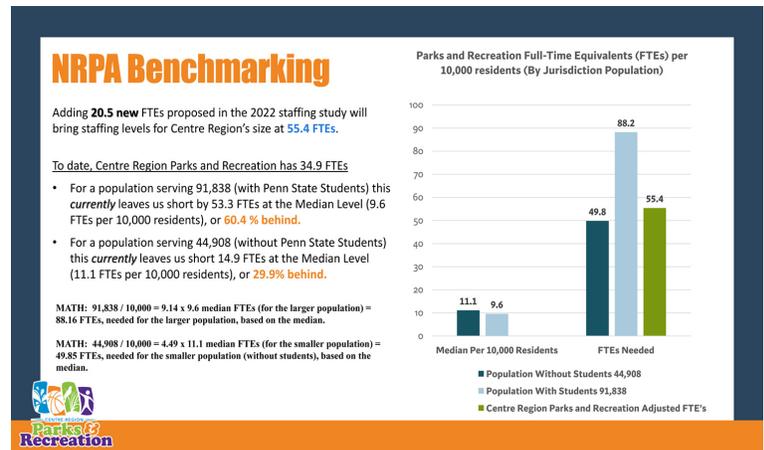
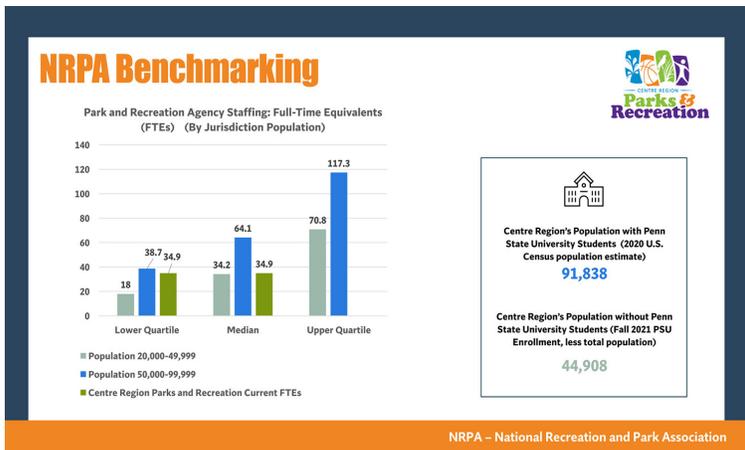
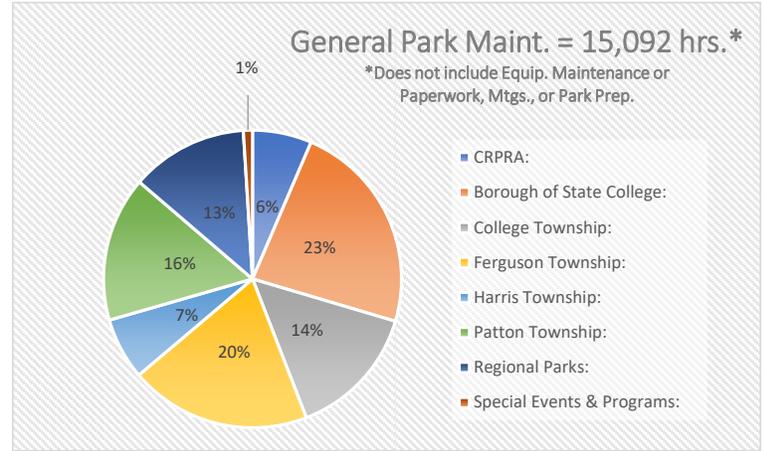
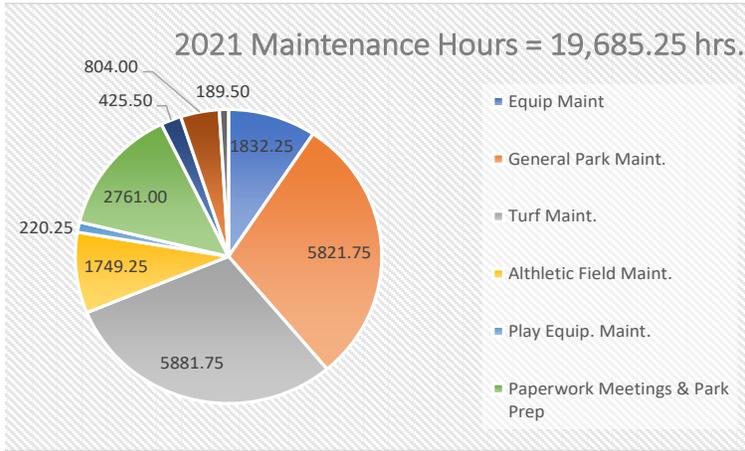
**Playgrounds Category:** Adding safety mulch, inspecting, cleaning, and repairs.

**Paperwork and Meetings Category:** Includes completing all daily documents (time sheets, work distribution sheets, spray logs, etc), loading/unloading tools and equipment, travel time to sites, required training for certifications as well as misc. training opportunities, Mechanic's time for documentation, fueling vehicles and equipment, etc.

**Line Painting Category:** This is seasonal painting for rectangular fields (hours have dropped greatly due to robotic painter). Please note, some of these hours are paid back by clubs that elect to have the Agency maintain lines for them.

**Horticulture:** Planting/flower beds maintenance, tree pruning, installation and care of Remembrance/MVMH Trees

## 2021 Agency Data as reported during the May 2022 COG Human Resources Committee Meeting



### BENCHMARKING Large University Towns - Parks and Recreation Departments

Department	University	Population	# of FTEs
Centre Region Parks and Recreation	Pennsylvania State University	91,838 (with students) *44,908 (students)	<b>34.9</b>
City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation	Indiana University	84,067 *46,695 (students)	57
Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation	University of Michigan	113,934 *46,002 (students)	47
Charlottesville Parks and Recreation	University of Virginia	45,593 *24,360 (students)	52
Iowa City Parks and Recreation	University of Iowa	67,862 *33,000 (students)	45
Blacksburg Parks and Recreation	Virginia Tech	81,144 *33,170 (students)	43
Moscow Parks and Recreation	University of Idaho	61,044 *10,474 (students)	25
Columbia Parks and Recreation	University of Missouri	121,717 *30,870 (students)	48
Champaign Park District	University of Illinois	84,004 *44,000 (students)	81
<b>AVERAGE =</b>			<b>48.1</b>

### 2021 PARTICIPATION DATA

Division of Centre Region Parks & Recreation (AAC not shown)	Programs Held (FY 2021)	Participants	Programs at Full Capacity	Wait List Totals	Potential Revenue
Aquatics	112	1,013	63%	752	\$54,327
Programs	229	2,515	20%	215	\$9,815
Millbrook Marsh	92	1,080	15%	161	\$32,698
Sports	40	555	30%	63	\$1,770
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>5,163</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>1,191</b>	<b>\$98,550</b>

\*In some cases, maximum capacity limits were not defined. There are also a few waiting lists for FREE events/programs therefore there is no money left on the table in these cases, however the demand for service and staffing still exists. The fee calculation for the "money left on the table" column is equal to a standard resident fee multiplied by the wait list total for each class with a wait list. In some cases, waiting lists were either capped or closed as we saw them growing. There may be additional participants interested in the class, but not reflected in the wait list. The Active Adult Center is not reflected in the chart above because programs are currently managed in two systems and tracking needs to be improved for accuracy.

### 2021 RETURNING CUSTOMERS

#### Survey of Participants

	Returning Participant - Same Program	Returning Participant - Different Program	NEW Customers!
Programming	28%	42%	31%
Sports	28%	41%	32%
Millbrook Marsh	29%	35%	37%
Aquatics	35%	42%	23%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>31%</b>

\*The Active Adult Center is not included at this time, but will be in the future.



NRPA's 2022 Performance Review includes averaged data submitted by agencies of all sizes across the United States using 2021 metrics to include budget info., FTEs, acreage, etc. Agency data is compared on the next page to other like-sized agencies.

## 2022 NRPA Agency Performance Review Key Findings



Residents per Basketball Court:

**7,403**

Full-Time Equivalent Employees (FTEs) per 10,000 Residents:

**8.9**

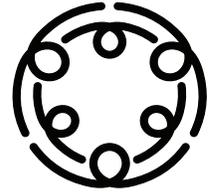


Operating Expenditures per Capita:

**\$93.01/year**

Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents: **10.4**

**80%**



Agencies with a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in their foundational documents

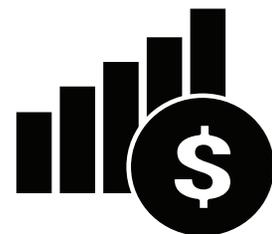
Residents per Park:

**2,323**



Revenue to Operating Expenditures:

**23.6%**



## Centre Region Parks and Recreation Agency data comparison to NRPA Key Findings for agencies considered to be an Independent District/Authority.



**Centre Region:**  
**16.85 acres per 1,000 residents**  
 ..  
**15.5 acres per 1,000 residents is the median.**



**Centre Region:**  
**1,640 residents per park**  
 ..  
**2,866 residents per park is the median.**



**Centre Region:**  
**\$950 in operating expenditures per acre of parkland**  
 ..  
**\$3,814 in operating expenditures per acre of parkland is the median.**



**Centre Region:**  
**29.74% revenue to operating expenses**  
 ..  
**23.60% revenue to operating expenses is the median.**

## 2021 Partnerships, Sponsorships, and Grants

Across the Agency, many of our divisions work with various partners, sponsors, and grants. This is a summary list for informational purposes only.

### Millbrook Marsh Nature Center's Partnerships (Programs and Land Management)

Adam Swartz Puppets  
 Bald Eagle Archaeological Society  
 Borough of State College  
 Centre County Historical Society  
 Centre County Recycles  
 Centre Region Refuse and Recycling  
 ClearWater Conservancy  
 College Township Parks and Recreation Committee  
 Contempo Jewelry Designs  
 Matt Price Drumming  
 Ollie  
 Penn State Arboretum  
 Penn State Center for Pollinator Research  
 Penn State Riparia  
 Penn State University  
 Penn State Wildland Weed Management Department  
 Remake Learning Days of Central PA  
 Shaver's Creek Environmental Center  
 State College Area School District  
 State College Bird Club  
 Tinkergarten  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife

### Millbrook Marsh Nature Center's Sponsorships / Grants

ClearWater Conservancy (Connections Grant)  
 ENGINE of Central PA  
 Hamer Foundation  
 PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)  
 PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)  
 PA Recreation Parks Society (Get Outdoors PA)  
 Walmart Foundation

### Active Adult Center Partnerships

365 Hospice  
 ARC  
 Angels On Call Home Health Services  
 Asera Care Hospice  
 Celebration Villa of Nittany Valley  
 Centre County Office of Aging  
 Centre Care (formerly Centre Crest)  
 Encompass  
 G.I.N. (Geriatric Interest Network)  
 Geisinger  
 Grane Hospice  
 Harmony of State College  
 Humana  
 Juniper Village  
 Kindred Hospice  
 Master Gardeners of Centre County  
 OMNI Home Health  
 Penn State Observers  
 Penn State RPTM Program  
 Project Share – (County Mental Health Counseling presentations)  
 Schlow Library  
 Shelly Vaughn – Silver Sneakers Instructor  
 TRIAD

### Active Adult Center Sponsorships / Grants

ACE Hardware  
 Commonwealth of PA Office of Aging  
 Tussey Mountain Motors  
 University Winery

### Aquatics Partnerships

Susquehanna Service Dogs  
 The Bicycle Shop

Partnerships and Sponsorships / Grants continued on back cover.

## 2021 Partnerships, Sponsorships, and Grants continued...

### Agency Partnerships (includes Sports, Programming, and Administration)

Centre County Youth Service Bureau (Park Partner)  
Centre Foundation  
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Park Partner)  
Cub Scout Pack 380 (Park Partner)  
Girl Scout Troop #40214 (Park Partner)  
Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc.  
Happy Valley Adventure Bureau  
MLB Pitch Hit & Run  
Moe's Southwest Grill  
Nittany Track & Field Youth Club  
OLV Cub Scout Pack 383 (Park Partner)  
PSU Master Gardners  
USTA Tennis Middle States

### Agency Sponsorships / Grants / Advertisers (includes Sports, Programming, and Administration)

AmazonSmile  
APArchitects  
Atlas Therapy  
Be Smart for Kids  
Bellefonte Family Dentistry  
Boalsburg Auto  
Cecily Zhu  
Centre Bike  
Centre County Council of Human Services  
Centre Foundation Field of Interest & Network For Good Grants  
Centre Gives Donors (2021 Event)  
Centre Life Link  
Centre Regional Planning Agency  
Centre Soccer  
Centre Squares  
Childspace  
College Township  
Culbertson's Financial Services  
E. H. Griffith, Inc.  
East Coast Health & Fitness  
Embassy at Hearthside  
Frost & Conn Insurance  
Giving Foundation  
GIV Local  
Glenn O. Hawbaker, Inc.  
GoodCo Mechanical  
Happy Valley Adventure Bureau  
Happy Valley Improv  
Harvest Fields Community Trails  
Herbert, Rowland & Grubic  
Homewatch Caregivers  
Jeff Tate Paving, Inc.  
Just Give  
Koch Funeral Home  
Matt Cox  
Memorial Bench Donors (Nine benches donated in 2021)  
My Veteran / My Hero Donors (Three trees donated in 2021)  
Nittany Beverage  
Nittany Settlement  
Penn State Extension  
Ramada Conference Center / PJ Harrington's  
RE/MAX Centre Realty  
Remembrance Tree Donors (21 trees donated in 2021)  
Ryan Leech  
Schlow Library  
Secrets by Lorie  
Sheetz  
State College Lions Foundation  
State College Spikes  
Target  
Trish Meek  
The Penn Stater Hotel  
University Winery  
W.C. Clarke's Coffee Roasters / The Cheese Shoppe  
WPSU  
Walmart



**As of April 2022,  
the Current Estimated  
Value of Each PA Volunteer  
Hour is \$27.98,  
(a 4.9% increase since 2020.)**

**Our entire Agency could not do what we do  
for our community without wonderful  
partners like these listed on these two  
pages. The next time you interact with one  
of these agencies, be sure to THANK them for  
their contributions, hard work, and  
dedication to their community!**

