The Volunteer turnout for Earth Day 2022 was tremendous!

On Earth Day (April 22) alone: 80 Volunteers worked at 4 different locations, collecting 103 bags of litter (approx. 2000 pounds!) and a wide variety of debris. There were also Volunteer events at Sugaw Creek Recreation Center and Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center, attracting another 62 Volunteers who completed garden and beautification projects. THANK YOU to our friends at Keep Charlotte Beautiful, Harvesting Humanity, Habitat CLT, our Recreation Center and Park Maintenance staff, and to our amazing Volunteers - you ALL help make the Earth a better place to live!

DID YOU KNOW...???

- As of May 2022 - for the Fiscal Year of July 2021-June 2022:
  - 4,418 VOLUNTEERS have served for 27,000 HOURS - as Youth Sport Coaches, Program Assistants, Nature Center Docents, Project Volunteers and MUCH MORE!
  - Volunteer time has added $770,565.75 in value to YOUR Park & Recreation Department!
  - OUR VOLUNTEERS ARE AMAZING! THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

FOR MORE OPPORTUNITIES CLICK HERE:

Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation
(mecklenburgcountync.gov)

@MeckParkRec

PARKANDREC.COM
**End-of-School APPRECIATION CELEBRATION for High School Students!**

On May 11, 100 students (along with teachers/assistants) from 10 Charlotte-Mecklenburg high schools gathered at Camp Greene Park and enjoyed: music by DJ Richard McNeill; a 3-on-3 mini basketball tournament; table and lawn games; arts & crafts, pizza, goodie bags and more! CMS students have been accumulating community service hours all year, for graduation from the Occupational Course of Study. THANK YOU to all of these Students for Volunteering with us - and THANK YOU to our Park & Recreation Youth Sports staff, and a few GREAT Volunteers, who came out to help with the event!

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**THE "TRASH TRACKERS are taking a summer break...**

Watch for new Friday dates coming soon! Explore a different location each month while you connect with people and nature, all the while making a positive difference in our community by removing trash from our Nature Preserves and Parks!

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**WEED WARRIORS at McDowell & Stevens Creek Nature Preserves**

WANTED: Invasive plant Elaeagnus sp. – A.K.A. Silverberry!

REWARD: Protection of our Nature Preserves’ native species and natural communities!

The Weed Warriors take a break during the summer months...WATCH FOR THEIR RETURN IN SEPTEMBER!
"WAKE UP" Walk In The Park Litter Cleanups

Sign up today to help keep your favorite Park or Greenway clean and healthy by picking up litter! During the summer months, we beat the heat by shifting to early morning times! A great way to spend an hour TO START YOUR DAY on Tuesdays, 8:00-9:00am, getting outdoors and helping in your community.

REGISTER AT THIS LINK: Park and Recreation VOLUNTEER CONNECT > Opportunities
- Registration is limited to 25 Volunteers per date – EVERY VOLUNTEER MUST PRE-REGISTER!
- Volunteers should plan to bring their own work gloves, face coverings (optional) and water supply
  - Masks are not required when working outdoors; we respectfully request caution when close to others.
- An email will be sent to all Volunteers the day before the cleanup date, with details about parking, what to bring, what to wear, etc. *Cleanup/Parking locations subject to change!
- Volunteers should be at least 10 years old; anyone under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult who is at least 21 years old.

If you have questions, or if you have a group who would like to help on a different day/time, please contact the Park & Recreation Volunteer Coordinator at Karen.Howard@MeckNC.gov.

UPCOMING DATES AND LOCATIONS:
- June 21 - Mason Wallace Park, 7301 Monroe Road, 28212
- June 28 - William R. Davie Park, 4635 Pineville-Matthews Road, 28226
- July 5 - Eastover Park/Briar Creek Greenway, 2730 Randolph Road, 28207
- July 12 - Eva B. Barber Park, 3801 Gossett Avenue, 28208
- July 19 - Cedarwood Park, 6624 Reddman Road, 28212
- July 26 - Little Sugar Creek Greenway/Metropolitan
  *Parking at Wendy’s, 715 Charlottetowne Ave, 28212

We are seeking Volunteers NOW...
...to assist on an ongoing basis at the NEW Northern Regional Recreation Center, located at 18121 Old Statesville Road, Cornelius, 28031!
>>> We are looking for cheerful, helpful and energetic Volunteers to greet visitors to the facility, direct patrons to locations and programs at NRRC, and generally assist customers when they visit the Center.
WATCH THIS SPACE for more information, or CONTACT VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov

For more information about Volunteer opportunities, visit our user-friendly registration site: Park & Recreation VOLUNTEER CONNECT

QUESTIONS? Contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov
Public Opportunities

The PARK PICKERS Program is BACK!

Do you carry a plastic grocery bag with you everywhere? Do you collect the papers, bottles, cans, and Styrofoam that storms and people leave behind? Do you LOVE your Parks and want to help care for the environment? If you answered YES, YES, YES, then you are a PARK PICKER, and we’d like to THANK YOU! CLICK on the “I’m a PARK PICKER” link below and answer a few quick questions, so that we can see WHERE you helped out, WHEN you were there, and HOW MANY bags of litter you picked up! Post a photo and you may see yourself on our Instagram account (@meckparkrec).

P.S. – PLEASE stay safe in the Parks while you’re “picking” – ALWAYS wear gloves, and NEVER handle anything sharp or hazardous! THANK YOU for being a PARK PICKER!

I’m a PARK PICKER!

Four Mile Creek Greenway Clean Up Projects

"Project Captain" Brian McCready gathers energetic Volunteers on the 2nd Saturday each month at 9616 Radner Lane, Charlotte, 28277, to trim trees and weeds; pick up trash; and clear branches and debris from the Four Mile Creek Greenway path.

Register HERE: PARK & RECREATION Volunteer CONNECT

- Saturday, July 9 - 8:30am-10:30am
- Saturday, August 13 - 8:30am-10:30am
- Saturday, September 10 - 9:00am-11:00am

- Volunteers must be at least 12 years old
- Anyone under 16 years old must be accompanied by a parent/adult
- Wear long pants and sturdy, closed-toe shoes for safety
- Maintain physical distance of at least 6 feet (2 arms-length) from other people
- Bring and wear a face covering when in the vicinity of other people (optional)
- Must provide your own WORK gloves and pruners/clippers
- Bring a refillable water bottle, sunscreen, bug spray and a hat

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROUPS

Bring YOUR group out to help keep our Parks, Greenways and Nature Preserves looking their best! We welcome any group: businesses, churches, Scouts, neighborhoods, fraternities/sororities, students, civic groups, groups of friends, etc.

- Visit www.parkandrec.com to find a Park, Greenway or Nature Preserve location that will be convenient for your Volunteers.
- We prefer to schedule Volunteer projects during the morning on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, if possible. We can work with you if you need a different day or time!
- Park & Recreation staff will meet your group, to review safety guidelines and get you started.
- Contact us with a preferred date for your project – at least 2 weeks out, please! – and an estimated number of Volunteers, including how many adults and youth, if applicable.
- Volunteers should plan to bring their own work gloves, water supply and face coverings (optional).
- Volunteers are expected to follow any current distancing and safety directives!
- For Youth Volunteers: There must be at least 1 adult per 10 youth/teens; Volunteers should be at least 10 years old.

Contact Karen.Howard@MeckNC.gov for more information and to schedule a date
Public Opportunities

NEW! VOLUNTEER with programs at the Northern Regional Recreation & Senior Center!

Programs for Seniors are now being offered at the BRAND-NEW Northern Regional Recreation & Senior Center...and we could use some Volunteer help! Volunteers should be at least 16 years old - please dress in comfortable clothing (no tank tops, please) and wear closed-toe shoes.

- **REGISTER HERE** to help with LET’S CELEBRATE - Friday, July 8th, 11:00am-1:30pm - decorating, serving refreshments, assist with activities, clean-up.
- **REGISTER HERE** to help with BINGO - Thursdays, July 14, 21 and 28 - 1:00-3:00pm - calling numbers and/or checking winning cards.
- **REGISTER HERE** to help with ICE CREAM SOCIAL - Friday, July 22 - 11:00am-2:00pm - decorating, serving ice cream, assist with activities, clean-up.

**QUESTIONS?** Contact Stacey.Ulaszek@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov or call 980-314-1479

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**SCOUT PROJECTS**

Park & Recreation accepts limited Scout project proposals, on a case-by-case basis.

Contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov to get started!

*NO new project proposals will be accepted until August!

Project information is posted on [www.parkandrec.com](http://www.parkandrec.com) > Volunteer

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**STAY COOL THIS SUMMER!**

As summer heats up, it’s important to stay cool to keep yourself safe and healthy. Below are a few easy ways to keep you on your feet and active without suffering from the heat...

1. Drink water – Hydration is critical to prevent heat related illnesses. Remember, keep drinking throughout the day; do not wait until you are sweating or thirsty to drink. Also, keep in mind that caffeinated beverages and alcohol have the opposite effect and tend to dehydrate you.
2. Stay in the shade – Staying out of direct sunlight helps prevent sunburns and heat exhaustion. So feel free to enjoy yourself outside, but when you start getting hot, find a place to rest in the shade.
3. Schedule around the heat – Avoid going outside during the hottest hours of the day. Instead, when you can, go out in the early morning or late evening when it is cooler.
4. Wear white – White and light colored clothing keep you cool by reflecting sunlight. Dark colors absorb the sunlight, making you hotter in the process.
5. Squirt yourself – Kids have the right idea when they play with water guns. Use a spray bottle to help apply direct relief.

During these summer months, have fun and enjoy the nice weather, but be careful. If you do not feel well, make sure to cool down and drink water.  

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Adapted from AARP.org
CALLING ALL COACHES!

Summer is HERE...and Fall Sports will be here in no time! We depend on hundreds of Volunteer coaches every year to help make our Youth Sports AMAZING - Thank you!

>>> FLAG FOOTBALL AND SOCCER will register during July!

- Go to www.parkandrec.com > Recreation Centers to find contact information for a Center that will be convenient for you.
- Check with your preferred Recreation Center for available coach positions.
- All Youth Sport Coaches MUST have a current Volunteer application/background check on file.

CONTACT VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov to check your status, or for the Volunteer application link
- Please have a Recreation Center in mind where you would like to Coach (or we can help you with that!)

>>>SIGN UP TODAY TO COACH YOUR FAVORITE SPORT, OR TRY SOMETHING NEW!

ARE YOU A NATURE LOVER? VOLUNTEER AT A NATURE CENTER!

We are always looking for dedicated Volunteers to help in our Nature Centers, including the NEW Nature Room at Eastway Regional Recreation Center! There are a variety of opportunities to Volunteer – contact Volunteer Services or your favorite Nature Center to see if YOU can help!

>>>>>> FOR NATURE CENTER CONTACT INFORMATION, GO TO: WWW.PARKANDREC.COM > NATURE CENTERS

Note that many of these roles require an ongoing time commitment and additional training:
- Animal Care Assistant – Basic or Advanced
- Visitor Services – Greet visitors; help maintain exhibits, etc.
- Docent – Trained in animal handling; assist with Nature Center programs and events; etc.
- Grounds Volunteer – Various tasks in outdoor areas around Nature Center
Here are some of the AMAZING Volunteers who have come out to help in the last few months!

EARTH DAY Festivities at Sugaw Creek Recreation Center and Park - Volunteers from Kimco Realty, Bank of America, Habitat CLT, Harvesting Humanity, UNCC students and others helped prepare and mulch garden beds, spruced up the Park grounds, and built a LOT of birdhouses!

MORE Earth Day...at Albemarle Road Park, Bette Rae Thomas Recreation Center and Marion Diehl Park

Work day at Winterfield Gardens, getting ready for the "Dozen Years of Digging" Festival!
THE LAST WORD...
Park & Recreation has FINALLY been welcoming many corporate groups back to Volunteering! For some groups, their project is the first time they have been together as a group since the shutdown 2 years ago. We are HAPPY to provide these opportunities for co-workers to gather...to get reacquainted, help out in the community, and have some outdoor FUN in the Parks!

VOLUNTEER ENROLLMENT TIPS
We LOVE our Volunteers, and we want to make it EASY for you to come and help your community! Here are a few tips for you...THANK YOU for taking the time to support YOUR Park & Recreation Department!

Contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov to receive the application link, if needed.

YOU DO NOT NEED TO ENROLL/SUBMIT A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION:
- For one-day events or projects
- For helping with a program ONE time (Example: chaperoning ONE field trip for an after-school program)

YOU MUST ENROLL/SUBMIT A VOLUNTEER APPLICATION:
- To be a Coach for any sport
- To assist with an ongoing program on a regular basis (Example: tutoring once a week; teaching ESL)

Please contact VolunteerServices@MeckNC.gov if you are not sure whether you need to enroll for a volunteer project, event, or program. We are happy to assist you!

Volunteer Services Program Mission Statement
1. To assist Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department staff in providing services needed to offer quality recreation and leisure services to the community by:
   · Supporting direct services provided to the public by salaried department staff.
   · Supplementing internal support service functions, including maintenance, clerical, administrative and similar tasks.
2. To provide the residents of Mecklenburg County opportunities for community involvement and to increase their awareness of the Department’s responsibilities, facilities, and services.

PLEASE NOTE:
Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent/adult who is at least 21 years old.

*Volunteers working with Therapeutic & Inclusive Recreation Services (TIRS) must be at least 18 years old.

To request a modification based on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), please contact staff at (980) 314-1192 or email TRInfo@MeckNC.gov