



Monthly Director's Report, April 2022
City of Clare Parks and Recreation
Prepared by Joy Simmer

Past Programs/Events

(Accidentally left off of March report)

The Pere Marquette District Library collaborated once again with Clare Parks and Recreation for the **Stuffed Animal Slumber Party**. The event was held on February 25, 2022. At the event children were able to bring in a doll or stuffed animal and make a fleece sleep mask or cape for their friend. We then showed movie shorts and had popcorn. Before they left, they were read a story and had a small teddy bear snack sent home with them. At the end of the event, the children left their stuffed animal overnight. When they picked up their friend, the children were sent home with a keepsake letter and pictures from the slumber party at the library. There were 36 kids and 19 adults who attended the event.

The **Irish Pet Photo Contest** kicked off at the end of January. People were able to submit their "Irish themed" pet photo until March 16, 2022 at 3 p.m. Proceeds from the contest went towards the Spay-Neuter Animal Project and their 2022 projects. This is Clare Parks and Recreation's eighth year running the contest. The library joined on as a collaborator back in 2014 and it has been a great partnership. Entries were submitted in person and online. The registrants paid \$5 per entry and then were entered to potentially win one of three top prizes; 1st Place: \$75 in Clare Cash, 2nd Place: \$50 in Clare Cash, 3rd Place: \$25 in Clare Cash. Winners were announced on The Irish Pet Photo Contest Facebook Page on Saturday, March 19th at 6 p.m. There were 54 entries received. It was a great variety of pictures and it was fun to see all the great submissions and we hoping to have an even better turnout next year!

The **Step into Spring** Story Walk along the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail was a community partnership between Clare Parks and Recreation and the Pere Marquette District Library. This is our second year running the event, with our first year taking place in 2021 after having to cancel the egg drop event at the airport and wanting to be able to still do something in the community for Easter/Spring. The trail combined the benefits of physical activity, literacy, time outdoors in nature, and family time! Participants were able to participate between March 18 – March 25, 2022 by picking up a clipboard and a participation sheet at the library. They were able to read the featured book along the Rail-Trail and once they completed the walk, participants turned their clipboards/sheets to the library and received a goodie bag and were entered into a prize drawing. They were also able to receive an extra entry by taking a selfie while participating and posting it #clarestepintospring. Ponderosa and the PMDL/Clare Parks and Recreation each made two baskets for the prize drawing and there were two additional prizes as well.

The **Great EGGstravaganza** (collaboration with the Clare Municipal Airport) took place on April 9, 2022. The date was moved up a week due to a conflict with Little League picture day on April 20th. The event was complete with crafts, games, a deejay, face painting by Skittles the Clown, and three timed egg drops. Over 1,800 plastic eggs were dropped from an airplane! There were eggs that were able to be recycled in for candy and there were some specially marked prize eggs that the kids recycled in for their prize that was donated by local businesses and organizations. Jay's Sporting Goods had their staff assist with bagging the candy and Rucker's Cany Company donated additional candy for the kids in addition to the normal scheduled festivities, the Easter Bunny flew in for a visit and Smokey the Bear showed up with his Clare Fire Department and Clare Police Department friends!

Upcoming Programs/Events

The **Senior Cards and Coffee** is being held at the Pere Marquette District Library. The group is supplied with coffee and card decks. The program takes place on Wednesdays from 10-12 p.m.

An **Earth Day Celebration Story Walk** event will be taking place from April 18 – April 25, 2022. This story walk will feature an Earth Day themed book and we will have some Earth Day make and take crafts for the kids to pick up. They will also be entered in to win some drawing prizes if they turn in their activity sheet after the walk.

Clare Pride Day is resuming after three years of not being able to run due to weather and/or the pandemic. CPD will take place on April 22, 2022 this year and Simmer has coordinated between the school and submitted requests for the departments that could use some assistance at their locations.

Howards Friend Bike Ride – The Friends of Clare County Parks and Recreation board (Simmer is board secretary) have been assisting with getting things organized for the ride that will take place on April 30, 2022 where the riders will be making their annual stopover for lunch at the Clare Union Railroad Depot.

Art in Sculpture – Parks and Recreation has been working with Middle Michigan Development Corporation, the Clare County Arts Council, and local artist Jeff Best for this May 2022 art event. The installation pieces have been chosen from the submissions. Simmer submitted information to Pure Michigan for advertisement and has ordered and obtained the ballot lockbox and brochure holder that will be placed outside the Clare Union Railroad Depot for people to vote. The sculptures will be at their locations from May 10, 2022 to April 30, 2023. Voting will be held from May until October of 2022.

Emerald Isle Recreation Complex

Playground Area – We are still awaiting a grant funding notification on if the Clare-Gladwin RESD Parent Coalition will be awarded the grant for sensory play signs that would be placed within the playground area at the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex. The grant was submitted at the end of 2021 to purchase these signs and Simmer has agreed that it will be a great addition. The signage would be relevant to what playground equipment already exists and would be a nature-based theme. Simmer, the youth services librarian at the Pere Marquette District Library

and the Clare-Gladwin RESD parents services coordinator will meet if the grant funding is awarded.

Starting process to get the Pour-in-Place (PIP) surfacing completed hopefully by later this summer for the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex playground. This is from a MDNR Recreation Passport Grant with the 10% match coming from the previously approved Hammerberg Funds.

The voter approved 3/4 **parks millage** is up for renewal this year, and the City Commission has approved wording for a five-year renewal to be added to the May ballot. Simmer completed a flyer for Clare Parks and Recreations upcoming millage renewal and a flyer for the street millage renewal. Simmer also completed a special flyer/newsletter that was sent out with the water bills.

Additional Information

- Simmer has been working on the Capital Improvement Schedule and budget for the 2022/2023 fiscal year.
- Simmer drafted up an agreement between Clare Little League and the City of Clare for the space that the league utilizes through town. This agreement will be reevaluated every 2 league seasons for any changes, etc. The document has been approved and signed by the City and Clare Little League and will start on April 15, 2022.
- The donation recognition plates for the DPW/cemetery and for the Emerald Isle Recreation Complex projects have finally been finished and will be mounted.
- Simmer has been assisting with an Eagle Project for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail section down by the Moose Lodge in areas that are currently missing or are in need of benching.
- Simmer has ordered an updated Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Trust Fund sign that will replace the old sign now that the State of Michigan has designed new signs for the funded projects.
- We are looking at getting sign holders that would be placed along the PMR-T to have story walks monthly with a different theme on a more permanent basis (between Clare Parks and Rec, Friends of Clare County Parks and Rec, and the Pere Marquette District Library). Simmer has approached CTE to see if that is something they could construct if we found funding for them. Waiting on their response at this time.
- A new pedestrian sign was ordered for the south Industrial Park where the trail goes through because the previous one was stolen.

- A new campground sign was designed and ordered to replace the old sign at Pettit Park.
- Signage has been ordered for McIreland Trail to show users that no-golf carts are allowed on the non-motorized trail.
- Simmer has been working with L. Walton on getting information out and organized for the Brain Aneurysm 5K that is held annual in Clare. It will take place on May 14, 2022.
- Currently finalizing the Clare Summer Concert Series lineup.