

100 Years of Recreation

**Games, Photos & Stories from
Milwaukee Recreation's Archives**

www.MilwaukeeRecreation.net



**MILWAUKEE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

100
MILWAUKEE RECREATION
Experience Life.
SINCE 1911

We're Celebrating 100 Years of Service in 2011



The Milwaukee Public Schools Division of Recreation and Community Services was established in 1911 to enrich the lives of Milwaukee's youth, teens, adults, and seniors through recreational and educational opportunities. To celebrate our century of service, we are pleased to share this collection of stories, games, and photos from Milwaukee Recreation's archives. Throughout 2011, we will post additional materials on our website (MilwaukeeRecreation.net), including historic film footage. Thank you for your continued support as we look forward to the next 100 years!

Sincerely,

Gregory E. Thornton, Superintendent

Molly E. Barrett, Director



Gregory E. Thornton



Molly E. Barrett

Milwaukee Board of School Directors

Mark Sain, 1st District Larry Miller, 5th District

Jeff Spence, 2nd District Peter Blewett, 6th District

Michael Bonds, 3rd District David Voeltner, 7th District

Annie Woodward, 4th District Meagan Holman, 8th District

Terry Falk, At Large

In the Beginning...



From the 1910s through the 1940s, Citizenship and English classes were a major part of Milwaukee Recreation's programming. Full- and part-time workers helped thousands of new immigrants become US citizens. When a class ended, a US naturalization agent would visit the social center to administer a citizenship exam, relying on recreation staff to vouch for each student's character and commitment to American ideals.

4th St. Social Center, circa 1924



Practice for marble tournament, 4th St. Playground, 1925.

Recreation is timeless, but...

You can follow Milwaukee Recreation's timeline at the bottom of every page.



1911

Milwaukee Recreation established by mandate of the Wisconsin State Legislature



1916

Naturalization classes offered for new citizens

1919

Men's municipal athletic leagues introduced



1920

Dorothy Enderis appointed Director of Recreation; establishes 17 social centers by mid-1920s



1925

Children take to the water with the first citywide youth swim classes



1927

Playground leaders earn 40¢ per hour



Dorothy Enderis: Recreation Pioneer

It's difficult to imagine what Milwaukee Recreation would be without the visionary leadership and unforgettable legacy of Dorothy C. Enderis. Enderis joined our department with its creation in 1911, setting the standards and shaping the philosophies that still guide us today. When Enderis was appointed Director of Recreation in 1920, she had high expectations for her staff and led them through a series of major expansions. Under her guidance, Milwaukee became a model for the finest playground and social center programs in the nation. According to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* (10/2/34), "Miss Enderis is one of those pleasant and comfortable people, who, though being alert, never gives the impression of being hurried. She has a way of accomplishing everyday detail and revolutionary things with the same matter-of-fact ease." When she retired on December 8, 1948, Enderis was honored by a crowd of 1,000+ residents who gathered at the Milwaukee Vocational School Auditorium. That evening, a bright electric sign was installed at City Hall to commemorate her monumental contributions to not only the city of Milwaukee, but the entire recreation profession. From that point forward, Enderis would forever be remembered as the "Lady of the Lighted Schoolhouse."



Milwaukee: The City of the Lighted Schoolhouse

The Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) Division of Recreation and Community Services was established in 1911 to enrich the lives of Milwaukee's youth, teens, adults, and seniors through recreational and educational opportunities. Chapter 509 of the Wisconsin Laws of 1911 was reportedly the first of its kind to assign a local public school system the responsibility for organizing and conducting recreation programs for both children and adults. The law recognized that recreation is an educational process and that both recreation and education are strong forces in total human development and the formation of a city's culture. Shortly thereafter, Milwaukee gained national recognition as the "City of the Lighted Schoolhouse" for its use of public school facilities for evening recreation programming. While other recreation departments in a majority of U.S. cities conduct their programming in stand-alone recreation centers, our access to school facilities allows us to direct our resources into programming versus bricks and mortar, thereby providing our community with the best possible value in recreation programming.



The Beulah Brinton House

In the 1870s, Beulah Brinton's house at 2590 S. Superior Street was a community gathering place for new immigrants in Bay View. For several decades, Mrs. Brinton provided recreation programs, enrichment classes, and even some basic medical care for her visitors. The Brinton House was a model for the social centers that Milwaukee Recreation would later open in the 1910s. In 1924, we opened our twelfth social center and named it after the woman who inspired the first eleven.



PRACTICAL AIDS IN CONDUCTING A NEIGHBORHOOD RECREATION CENTER (1918 - 1919)

- *****
- * EACH CENTER MUST HAVE ITS OWN YELL AND SONG.
 - * THE SWIMMING TANK IS TO BE DRAINED EVERY WEDNESDAY EVENING.
 - * PLAY THE PHONOGRAPH IN THE EVENINGS. USE METAL NEEDLES AND KEEP THE SPEED SET AT 78.
 - * INSTRUCT YOUNG MEN TO REMOVE HATS UPON ENTERING BUILDINGS.
 - * GOOD PIANO PLAYING ADDS TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MOVING PICTURES.



"The best feature of the social centers is that they are not only providing pleasure, but increasing the capacity of their patrons for joy."
Milwaukee City Club Bulletin, 1914



Forest Home Ave. Social Center, circa 1925

1931

Milwaukee Rec. entertains the city by forming the Milw. Players drama group



1933

By popular demand, the Milwaukee Women's Municipal Athletic League is developed



1934

All-city Weaving Studio opens



1941

Milwaukee Rec. makes the right move with the first all-city chess tournament



1945

Outdoor Education programs introduced



1949

Introduction of Golden Age Clubs, expanding services to seniors



Centennial Snapshots



Academic Support

Over time, Milwaukee Recreation has expanded its services to provide academic support and child care services through before/after-school and summer enrichment programs. In 1992, we introduced our day-long Summer Recreation Enrichment Camps for school-aged children. The camps enable working families to have an affordable alternative to daycare during the summer months. In 1998, we opened eleven Community Learning Centers to provide homework help and recreation for students in Milwaukee Public Schools. Today, these programs are stronger than ever. By partnering with community agencies, we now oversee academic support programs at over 100 MPS schools!



Outdoor Education

Milwaukee Recreation introduced its first outdoor education programs in 1945 to complement the traditional playground and social center offerings. In the 1960s, the department recognized a national trend and responded to the demand for more outdoor experiences. This led to week-long day camps, gardening programs, astronomy clubs, resident camping referrals, conservation clubs, 4-H, and safety clinics for hunting & boating. As the programs grew, Milwaukee residents enjoyed fishing excursions, hiking clubs, cross-country ski lessons and programs conducted at Milwaukee County Parks (Grant & Whitnall) and the Zoo. The department also began providing environmental education programs at Palmyra Camp in Kettle Moraine State Forest, Oak Ridge Farm in Dousman, and Hawthorn Glen in Milwaukee. Today, our outdoor education programs continue to serve over 30,000 children and adults each year.

Music, Theatre, & Visual Arts

Milwaukee Recreation has a rich history of supporting the arts, beginning with art classes and workshops for painting and weaving in the 1930s. The department fostered the development of groups like the Milwaukee Players in 1931, the Milwaukee Civic Light Opera Company in 1939, the Summer Puppet Theater in 1951, and the After-school and Summer Youth Orchestras in 1965. We continue to offer a variety of arts and crafts classes for all ages, art internships for high school students and a visual and performing artist-in-residence program at our summer camps. In addition, our award-winning Partnership for the Arts program enables local agencies to provide after-school and summer arts programming in schools and citywide locations. Today, our music, theatre, and visual arts programs engage and inspire over 25,000 participants every year.



Mobile Fun & Education

Milwaukee Recreation has always embraced the philosophy of accessibility. In other words, if you are unable to travel outside of your neighborhood for recreation programs, we just might have a solution! Over the years, this concept has led to a number of fun and creative mobile recreation units. For example, we've created a Summer Trailer Theatre, a Museumobile, the Traveling Star Wagon (a mobile planetarium), two Survive Alive trailers for fire safety lessons, the Barnyard Friends Van, the Super Snake Show Van, circus trains with live zoo animals, the Rec. 'N' Roll Mobile, and the Wacky Wheels Skate Van. And let's not forget Crunchy, the Talking Garbage Truck!



Active Older Adults

Milwaukee Recreation was an early pioneer when it came to serving our city's older adults. By 1965, we had 40 Golden Age clubs for persons over 60. Each club had a leader who was employed by our department. The Golden Age clubs attracted thousands of Milwaukeeans, mostly women. We then introduced "Extra Years of Zest" (XYZ) clubs for men, which centered around card playing, dartball, and, of course, refreshments. Today, these programs continue to thrive under a different name: Milwaukee Recreation's Organization for Active Seniors in Society (OASIS).



Therapeutic Recreation

Milwaukee Recreation has a long history of serving individuals with disabilities. The department began providing recreation for physically and mentally handicapped children in 1961, expanding to include deaf and emotionally disturbed children in 1968. In 1979, we received a grant to start a school-based leisure education program called Lifetime Recreation Skill Schools for Special Populations. Services were expanded to provide a community-based program outside of the school day called Program for Exceptional Students and Disabled Adults. In 1988, the program was presented with the National Recreation and Park Association Gold Medal Award for the Outstanding Program in the Nation. In 2002, the program was renamed Therapeutic Recreation Programs for Individuals with Disabilities, but its mission remains the same: to improve the quality of life for children, youth, and adults with disabilities, and their families, through providing quality recreational and educational experiences.



1950

The Summer Trailer Theatre makes its first visits to Milwaukee playgrounds



1953

Parent/Child health classes begin



1957

Residents enjoy the great outdoors when the Family Camping Association is established



1961

Programs begin for physically and mentally handicapped children



1965

Milwaukee Rec. hits the right note by forming the Children's After-school Orchestra



1967

Families look to the stars with a new Planetarium Program



The Recreation Pin: A Timeless Classic



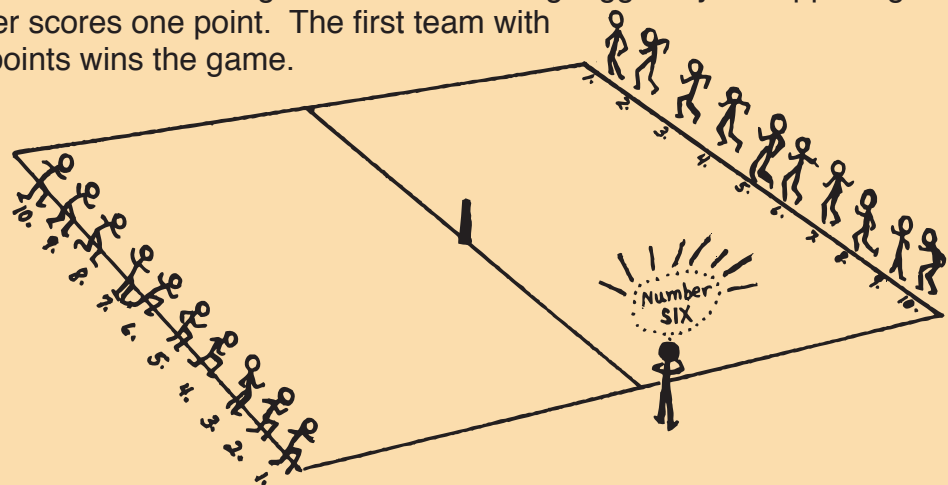
Clarke Street School Bombardment Champions, 1915



The wooden pin is an iconic symbol of recreation in Milwaukee. Since the very beginning, we've used it for countless games and activities — from capture the flag to champ bowling. Most remarkably, the pin has never changed with the passage of time. Whereas today's baseball gloves and tennis shoes look dramatically different from their 1911 counterparts, the wooden pin looks exactly the same. Long live the pin!

Learn to Play Team Pin Snatch

- Divide players into equal teams and have them line up on either side of the playing area with a wooden pin in the center (as shown below).
- Assign a consecutive number to each player. Each team member should have the same number as a player on the opposing team.
- When the leader calls out any number, the players with that number should run to retrieve the pin. The first player to snatch the pin and return it to his/her own goal line before being tagged by the opposing player scores one point. The first team with ten points wins the game.



Center Street Playground circa 1911

MILWAUKEE PLAYGROUNDS

100 YRS



When Milwaukee Recreation opened its first playgrounds, the play areas were covered with dirt, cinder, or gravel. In the 1920s, the department began paving the playgrounds with asphalt, making it easier for playleaders to mark the ground for various games. By the 1930s, the department was using so much chalk that it began making (and selling) its own supply of sturdy, "non-squeaky" multi-colored chalk.

*"During working hours,
we make a living.
During leisure hours,
we make a life."
Dorothy Enderis*

1971

Programs begin at Oakridge Farm, a working dairy farm in Dousman, WI



1973

Kids flip over the new Youth Gymnastics Program



1974

Milwaukee Rec. receives Gold Medal Award from the National Rec. & Park Association



1981

New Beulah Brinton Community Center is built in Bay View



1987

Computers purchased to assist in registration process



1988

The Mayor's Hot Weather "Splash" program, later known as Cool Spots, begins on playgrounds





Learn to Play Poison Snake

- Players should hold hands and form a circle around 6 to 12 wooden pins which are spaced at least twelve inches apart.
- Set a timer for three or four minutes.
- When the game begins, players must push or pull, trying to make the other players knock the pins down.



- Each time a player knocks a pin down, he/she receives a penalty point.

- When the time is up, the player with the fewest points wins. In a variation on these rules, the players who knock the pins down are "poisoned" and must leave.

Trivia Challenge

Using the information in this booklet, can you answer these questions? Return this answer form to the address below by December 1, 2011, and you'll be entered into a drawing for a Rec. Centennial prize pack!

- *****
- 1.) Milwaukee is known nationally as the City of the Lighted _____.
 - 2.) A new Beulah Brinton Community Center was built in this year: _____.
 - 3.) If you worked for Milwaukee Rec. in 1918, you were expected to drain the swimming tank every _____.
 - 4.) True/False: Milwaukee Recreation runs a farm in Dousman. T F
 - 5.) True/False: The wooden pin is a timeless recreation classic. T F
 - 6.) What game would you place in an emergency game kit? _____

Your Name: _____

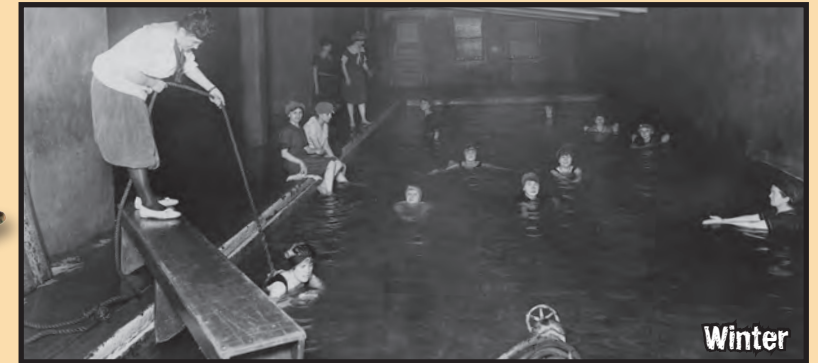
Your Address: _____

Your Phone #: _____

Send this answer form to:
 Rec. Centennial Trivia Challenge
 c/o Milwaukee Recreation
 5225 W. Vliet Street, Room 162
 Milwaukee, WI 53208

Win \$100 in our Photo Caption Contest!

With 100 years of history, we have thousands of interesting photos in our archives. Can you think of some creative captions for the photos below? If so, check the inside back cover of each activity guide this year to enter our photo caption contest. You could win a \$100 gift certificate for future Milwaukee Recreation programs! Here's a preview of the contest photos:



Visit our website for historic films!



If you enjoyed looking at the photos in this booklet, you may be interested in our historic film collection. We recently discovered 10 hours of 8mm and 16mm films in our archives. Some of the footage dates back to the 1920s! After we converted the films to digital files, we donated them to the Milwaukee County Historical Society for proper storage and preservation. Throughout the year, we'll be posting highlights at MilwaukeeRecreation.net.

1992

Survive Alive House is built for the fire safety program, jointly managed with MFD



1993

Milwaukee Rec. introduces a nighttime teen program called Summer Stars



1998

MPS Community Learning Centers open, providing homework help and recreation



2006

Milwaukee Rec.'s first wheelchair basketball team, The Heat, takes to the court



2007

Funding approved for MPS Partnership for the Arts



2008

Milwaukee Rec. coordinates the inaugural MPS Run Back to School



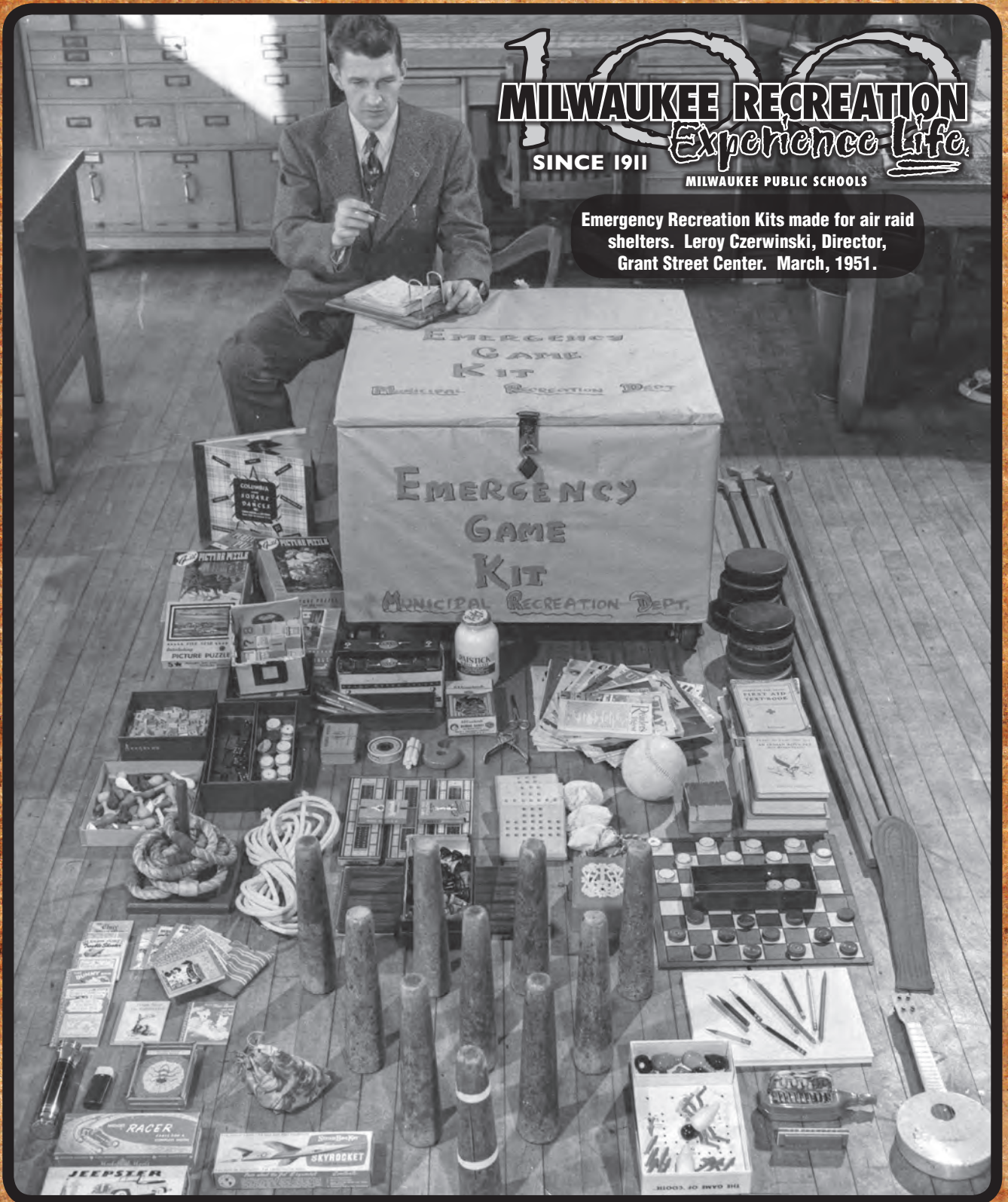
MILWAUKEE RECREATION

Experience Life.

SINCE 1911

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Emergency Recreation Kits made for air raid shelters. Leroy Czerwinski, Director, Grant Street Center. March, 1951.



To celebrate a century of service in 2011, Milwaukee Recreation opened its vaults and compiled this booklet of games, photos, and stories. For additional content, including historic film footage, visit MilwaukeeRecreation.net.

Nondiscrimination Notice: It is the policy of Milwaukee Public Schools that, as required by section 118.13, Wisconsin Statutes, no person will be denied admission to any public school or be denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against in any curricular, extracurricular, pupil services, recreational or other program or activity because of the person's sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital or parental status, sexual orientation or physical, mental, emotional or learning disability. This policy also prohibits discrimination under related federal statutes, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (race, color, and national origin), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (sex), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (disability), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (disability).