

FALL 2018

THANK YOU FOR HELPING CREATE
PLAY FOR ALL!



Why Build a Sensory Garden and Playground?

By Sandy Gbur, Play for All Foundation Board Member and Executive Director of WDSRA



We believe inclusive play matters. Programs need to meet the diverse needs of all community members with or without disabilities. In this world of high tech and low touch, we really need to encourage families to get outside and play. While neighborhood parks can provide that opportunity, the Play for All Playground & Garden Foundation wanted to create a magical play space hidden away and surrounded by nature.



It starts the moment you pull up and see amazing interactive sculptures made out of recycled materials. Children love to point out the household items that were used to create the sculpture before walking down the path and being welcomed by a colorful archway. Again children delight in the familiar items they can identify in the horseshoe shape and see the mouthpiece just waiting for them to yell into to someone waiting at the other end.

Now you walk across the bridge, and what do you find? A play space hidden away in the trees. Being in the presence of natural landscapes tends to reduce stress and promote relaxation. You can feel the difference in your surroundings as you breathe in the sunshine and the smell of the forest. This playground is built and continues to be built to awaken all the senses.

There is a sound garden where the children can play the xylophone or drums and hear and feel the vibrations. There is a sensory garden with plants that feel, smell and look different. The rocking horses are a great playground piece for children to get out extra energy and pretend they are out in a pasture riding freely. The play panels engage them as they learn cause and effect by playing together. The cozy dome is a place where they can get away if overstimulated and calm themselves.

Each piece of the playground was selected specifically to help kids develop and have fun; learn to take turns and play alongside a new friend. The Sensory Garden Playground was built to offer a multisensory smorgasbord of seeing, hearing, touching and smelling which immerses children in a much grander world than they can get indoors. As part of the Play for All Playground & Garden Foundation, we strive to build a healthier community where all children have a place to play regardless of ability. Families can come and gather and support each other, and children of all abilities can come together to enjoy nature in a new way.



- continued on page 2

Tree House Update

Since our ground breaking ceremony this past summer, we've been working on the required permitting and preparing our construction bid documents per the plan from our consultant Hitchcock Design Group.

Unfortunately our bid opening; which took place August 30, 2018, did not yield the bid results that we anticipated.

With Hitchcock's guidance, we estimated the first phase of the tree house at approximately \$450,000. To our sincere disappointment, the two bids that we received were more than \$1 million. As a result, we have delayed construction and are working with Hitchcock to identify the reason(s) for the vast difference. We are confident that we will be building the first phase of our accessible tree house in summer of 2019 which will still provide an elevated boardwalk; tree top views, and interactive elements.

We appreciate your patience and continued support for the project. If you have any questions, please let us know. Contact Margie Wilhelmi at mwilhelmi@wheatonparks.org



Photos courtesy of Kmiecik Imagery

Thank you to all of our partners and donors who made the tree house project possible.

 First Trust



Kim Ulfig



Photos courtesy of Kmiecik Imagery

- continued from page 1

Next time you visit the Sensory Garden Playground, remember the seven principles of inclusive playground design, created by Play Core and Utah State University:

1. Fair - allowing everyone to participate equitably with siblings, caregivers and friends
2. Inclusive - supporting participation of individuals of diverse abilities and ages
3. Easy to understand - allowing kids to be successful and gain confidence through play
4. Promoting independence - supporting play at each developmental level and in multiple sensory modes
5. Safe - following current safety standards yet allowing kids to take appropriate risks
6. Active - supporting active participation in physical and social play
7. Comfortable - usable for individuals with diverse sensory needs, body size, posture, mobility and motor control

The park is free and open year round from dawn to dusk.

For more information or to make a tax-deductible donation visit playforalldupage.org.

What Have We Been Up To?



Photo: Kmiecik Imagery



Photo: Kmiecik Imagery

Play Days hosted fun activities and play for more than 700 this summer! Thank you to DuPage Medical Group, Lincoln Marsh, Cosley Zoo, and the Wheaton Public Library for providing Teddy Bear Clinic, Nature Story Telling, Animal Presentations, and Sensory Story Time.

NEW – Art Along the Way Sculpture Installed in July!
Artist Joseph Gagnepain completed the third of four sculptures for the Sensory Garden Playground. This sculpture follows the equestrian theme. All of the sculptures that Joseph has designed and produced include interactive elements and features for kids to enjoy. The fourth sculpture is in the works and may look more like something that will be visible from the top of the tree house. Stay tuned for more information.



NEW – Permanent sign now installed at the corner of Naperville Road & Navistar Drive!

Drink Wine & Do Good



Host a wine party by the end of the year and receive a free bottle of wine courtesy of the PFA Foundation! To date, more than \$1,500 has been raised through our partnership with Aspen Lane Winery.

If you would like to host your own wine party at Aspen Lane in Aurora, please let us know. It's easy to be a host! Simply pick a party date, invite your friends and sit back, relax and let Aspen do the rest.

To schedule your party, contact Carey Moreland at cmoreland@wheatonparks.org.



Young Professional Mixer

In August, we hosted young professionals for an evening of networking fun at the Sensory Garden Playground.

Aspen Lane Wine rolled up with their popular Sangria truck and Arrowhead Golf Club served delicious appetizers. If you have a group or organization interested in learning more about the playground, let us know. We would be happy to discuss a future mixer or event with you.



Visitors Continue to Grow

The playground has become a popular destination for families. The chart below represents the towns that have visited and enjoyed the playground in 2018.

It is estimated that 10,000 visitors have visited since the playground opened in 2015.



ADDITIONAL TOWNS REPRESENTED
 Bartlett, Batavia, Bolingbrook, Burr Ridge, Chicago, Darien, Elgin, Elmhurst, Geneva, Glenview, Itasca, LaGrange, Norwood, Schaumburg, St. Charles, Villa Park, West Chicago, Westmont, Winfield, and Yorkville