



Annual Report 2014

Presented April 27, 2015

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Willard Opens New Pre-Kindergarten Program

Fall 2014

When school started in August we proudly opened a Pre-Kindergarten program for four to five year olds in the Lakeview School Area at 1030 West "Q" Street. The Lincoln Vital Signs Report emphasized the importance of early childhood education before the age of five; Willard decided it was time to expand our preschool program. Children's programs were revised to accommodate learning abilities for each age group.

The existing program at Willard is now designated for three to four year olds and the new site is designated for four to five year olds that will start school the following year. The teaching curriculum has been adapted to the learning styles and age appropriateness of each group. The results are amazing. By dividing the groups by age, the children are having an incredible learning experience. Evidence has found that children receiving quality educational enrichment, attaining physical and mental health, and achieving development milestones are more ready for kindergarten than their peers.

Thank you, to Lincoln Public Schools, for allowing us to use their house for our program. They updated the space with new flooring, paint and plumbing fixtures and continue to do all the maintenance.

Thank you to the Next Gen Grant Group for granting us \$2000.00 to help with the start up costs of this program.

**Pre- K Science Project—
mixing colors and making
"potions"**



Contact Us

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Visit us on the web at www.willardcommunitycenter.org

We help area residents grow, connect, and contribute to our community.



Teens celebrate the success of the 10th Annual Kenny Gardner Golf Tournament.

Ten Year Anniversary of Memorial Golf Tournament

The 10th Annual Kenny Gardner "It Was Fun" Memorial Golf Tournament was another huge success! Inspro Insurance and Lincoln Auto Auction sponsored the tournament which was at full capacity with a waiting list of golfers who wanted to participate. The tournament brought in \$19,235 bringing our ten year total to \$105,310. Each year Aaron, Kim, and Pam Gardner, along with their family and friends, continue to hold this tournament in October for the teen program. We want to thank all who are involved. We would not be able to offer as many scholarships without such support.

Willard's Licensed Child Care Makes an Impact

Willard's licensed child care programs include: Preschool, Pre-K, Roper Elementary before and after school program, Lakeview Community Learning Center before and after school program, Teen before and after school program and summer programs.

- ◆ 315 unduplicated children in our programs, ages 3-13.
- ◆ 110 or 35% received free/reduced meals at school.
- ◆ 45 or 14% received Title XX assistance.
- ◆ 80 or 25% are ethnically diverse.
- ◆ 48 additional children were on a waiting list for the services throughout the year.
- ◆ 66 or 21% lived with a single parent on a single parent income.
- ◆ 74,214 snacks served throughout 2014.



United Way Day of Caring volunteers from Lincoln Industries helped out at the Pre-k house. They led a reading activity with the children and even had time for a baseball game!

Connecting to the Community

Willard Community Center is a vibrant hub of activities serving the southwestern quadrant of Lincoln, Nebraska. Anchored in the West "A" neighborhood, Willard has evolved into a valued neighborhood asset for everyone in its diverse, multigenerational community. Willard is a place where families, teens, and seniors feel welcome, comfortable, and encouraged to grow. This thriving neighborhood is home to fine schools and many businesses. Willard serves this neighborhood in a multitude of ways.

34 years of providing resources that have met the needs of the growing and diverse neighborhoods we serve. Willard continues to be one of the few human service resources in the southwest quadrant of Lincoln.

82 volunteers worked a total of 1108 hours in the child care programs and did building and grounds improvement projects. The value of volunteer time in Nebraska is \$20.62 per hour which in turn saved Willard \$22,847.00.

403 building uses were provided to the community for different groups that met at Willard. Over 1000 unduplicated people utilized the Center on a monthly basis.

1160 people engaged in family activities provided in the Willard and Lakeview School neighborhoods. Some of the activities were the CLC Family nights, health fair and child care special events.

Program Highlights from 2013-14 School Year

Preschool

- * 18 of our 29 preschoolers advanced on to kindergarten, 11 moved over to our new program for 4-5 year olds .

Elementary Before and After School Programs

- * A Roper parent survey results showed that our program is beneficial for their children. The staff are professional. Children are getting help with homework and completing assignments. Children are happy.
- * 73% of Roper children returned the following school year while 11% advanced to middle school.
- * According to the CLC Snapshot, the Lakeview CLC students scored higher on the NeSA (Nebraska State Accountability) test than the rest of the school.
- * Lakeview CLC started the first year of L2 (Learning together). Two struggling readers were paired together. Fifth graders were mentors to third graders. Both improved reading skills.

Teen Program

- * Willard is able to give one -on-one attention to the Park Middle School students during structured homework time. The students maintain a group grade point average of 86.9 or a B+ average.
- * With a guaranteed ride to and from school, the students attend every day and participate in after school sports and clubs.



Preschoolers always enjoy a good book.

Program Information

Preschool for 3-4 year olds held at the Center focuses on letter and number recognition, shapes, colors, cognitive and fine motor skills, and language skills. Activities include math, science, library, dramatic play, and many educational learning activities.

Pre-K for 4-5 years olds held at 1030 West "Q" Street has a curriculum that focuses on developing skills that prepare them for kindergarten. Daily activities and weekly themes encourage multi-cultural awareness and parent involvement. Learning centers include math, science, language, literacy, blocks, and dramatic play. We started this program with full enrollment of 20 children.

Roper Elementary Before and After School Program held at 2323 S. Coddington Street opens from 6:30 am to the start of the school day and resumes after school until 6:00 pm. This program offers a snack after school and a wide variety of activities, ranging from daily scheduled events to large group games and homework time. This program includes child care when school is not in session. Unduplicated count for this program was 169 with 29 children on a waiting list.



Children learn all about pumpkins during a fall break at Willard.

Lakeview Community Learning Center Before and After School Program held at 300 Capitol Beach Blvd. opens from 6:30 am to the start of the school day and resumes after school until 6:00 pm. Willard is the lead agency for this CLC and receives additional funding from the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Grant Program to support academic enrichment opportunities as well as additional activities designed to compliment the school's academic program. After school clubs are offered to all students in the school at no charge. Unduplicated number of children in this program attending 30 days or more was 84.



Teens learning to make May Day baskets during art club.

Teen Before and After School Program for Park Middle School Students

held at the Center provides a structured, supervised and safe environment for middle school youth opens from 6:30 am to the start of the school day and resumes after school until 6:00 pm. This program provides transportation to and from Park Middle School. Our neighborhood based program is deeply committed to improving the teens academic performance while also building key leadership skills through various activities, community improvement projects and positive relationships. This program receives funding support from United Way and the "It Was Fun" Kenny Gardner Memorial Golf Tournament.

Summer Program held at the Center is open from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. The children are placed in age appropriate groups (Preschool, K-1st, 2nd-3rd and 4th-8th grades) and participate in weekly fun themed and educationally based activities. The children get to go swimming and on a field trip every week.

Adult Programs held at the Center includes low impact aerobics, licensed bingo, monthly pot luck lunches, and a variety of hobby and club groups.

Groups that make up the Willard Family:

Boy Scouts

Girl Scouts

Ukrainain School

Lincoln Area Soaring Society

Nebraska Sword Fighters Guild

Stampin' Up Club

Third Rail Content Video Company

Zumba

Voting Site

Church Groups

Bingo

Bunco

Sudanese Association

Neighborhood Associations

Family Gatherings and Celebrations

Looking Back at 2014

- ◆ Carol Yoakum, former executive director of Willard Community Center from 1983 to 1992, passed away on February 9th. Memorials totaling \$1,780.00 were used to purchase supplies for the new pre-k house we opened at 1030 West "Q" Street in August.
- ◆ Over fifty Senior Citizens came to Willard to meet with friends, play licensed Bingo, exercise, enjoy monthly pot-luck lunches and stay active in their neighborhood.
- ◆ Willard continues to be the Chartering Organization for five Cub Scout Packs and One Boy Scout Troop that all meet in the building. The scouts contribute community service for Willard by doing outside landscape cleaning and painting.
- ◆ An average of 47 staff members are needed to staff our programs. Six of the 47 staff members have grown up in the neighborhood or in Willard's programs. The staff members that worked all or part of 2014 and have worked a minimum of 2 years had a combined total of 142 years of experience at Willard.

Willard Embarks on a Capital Campaign to Fund Building Renovations

2014 saw the launch of a major fundraising campaign to renovate and enlarge the Willard Community Center. With a goal of \$1.8 million we will be able to significantly upgrade the building, built in 1918, and it will remain as an icon in the neighborhood. A Capital Campaign Committee will be responsible for the fundraising efforts.

The Capital Campaign members are: Kathy LeBaron—Chair, Katie Haszard, Candy Henning, Kassy Knudson, Natalie Olson, Lisa Smith, Irene Williams, Joyce Person, Steve Bauer, Janet Clark, and Janelle Soderling.

Willard Sponsors First West "A" Neighborhood Health Fair

The West "A" Neighborhood Health Fair was held at Roper Elementary School on April 13th from 2-4 pm. The purpose of the Health Fair was to help West "A" residents meet the new health care professionals that have moved to this area including the Coddington Family Medical, Complete Children's Health, and Coddington Dental. Businesses like Russ's Market also added to the health theme by showing families how to make healthy food choices. With a \$2000.00 grant from Community Health Endowment we were able to do the advertising, flyers, hire Homer the Saltdog mascot and the Balloon Lady, invite 23 vendors, and give away prizes. It was a great event. With over 100 people attending we hope this event continues to grow.



Families learn from Russ's Market how to make healthy food choices at the Health Fair in April.