

Norfolk Insider

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“Summer Recreational Activities”

There’s no shortage of activities for kids to be involved in this summer. The City of Norfolk Recreation Division offers a number of safe and affordable activities throughout the summer months.

“Our philosophy is that all kids who want to participate in a program can do so at whatever skill level they’re at. They don’t need to be an all star or have won artistic awards. This may be the first time kids have played softball or taken an art class. We offer these programs to help them try some of these activities and maybe find what their interests are,” said Sheila Schukei, human resources director for the City of Norfolk.



One of the most popular summer youth activities the city provides is swimming lessons.

“We teach well over 650 swimming lessons during the course of the summer. The classes are small so they get good one-on-one instruction,” said Pat von Glan, recreation coordinator for the City of Norfolk.

There will be four sessions of lessons held this summer. During the first two week session June 6-16, the classes are held at 4:45 pm, 5:20 pm and 6:00 pm. During the session June 20-30, morning sessions at 11:00 am, 11:40 am are added along with the afternoon sessions. From July 11-21

there are morning and afternoon sessions and from July 25-August 4 there are only afternoon sessions. Classes are held Monday through Thursday with Fridays reserved for make up days in case of inclement weather during the week.

Parents interested in signing their child up for lessons need to get in line early at the Norfolk City Auditorium at 127 North First Street. Registration begins May 19 at 5:30 pm and lines start forming at least an hour beforehand.

“It’s a very popular program. Our lifeguards are hired because they have a love for kids and enjoy teaching them. Kids can take the lessons in the morning and then practice at the pool later in the afternoon. The late afternoon lessons also make it convenient for parents to be able to bring their kids to the pool,” Schukei said.

The first three sessions will be held at Memorial Pool on First Street this summer. As work progresses on the Veteran's Memorial Park renovation, the session scheduled from July 25 to August 4 will be held at Liberty Pool located on Georgia Avenue.

The cost for the lessons is \$25 per student. After May 27, students can be registered for lessons at Memorial Pool. Ask a lifeguard or the pool manager for more information about class openings.

Both Memorial Park pool and Liberty Bell pool are open May 28 through mid-August from 12:30 pm to 4:30 pm and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday. On Saturdays the pools are open from 12:30 pm to 6:00 pm. On Sundays they are open from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

It costs \$2 for a daily admission but family passes and single passes are also available for a reduced rate. Children five and under are free but must be accompanied by someone over 18 years of age.

For smaller children, the wading pools in Central Park are open June 1 through mid-August from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. Children have to be 54 inches tall or shorter and be accompanied by an adult to enter the wading pools. There's no fee to get in.

Every Thursday night, it's Family Night Swim at Memorial Pool. From 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm, no one under the age of 18 can enter without a parent or guardian.

"This gives families a chance to get in the pool, interact with their kids, and maybe see how they're progressing with their swimming skills," von Glan said.

For serious swimmers, lap swimming is available each week day night at Memorial Pool from 6:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

For those who want to have a summer birthday party, family reunion or church activity, private pool parties from 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm at Liberty Bell Pool can be arranged. The fee is \$40 and a lifeguard is provided.

There are other activities in Norfolk this summer that don't involve getting wet. A City Recreation Girls' Softball program is held during the summer with games and practices held at the Ta-Ha-Zouka Park on Wednesday mornings and Monday evenings. Girls ages 7-14 get to try out all the positions on the field while coaches focus on teaching and improving basic skills. The cost of the program is \$10 with registration held on May 19 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the Norfolk City Auditorium.

The City of Norfolk Recreation Division used to offer a boys' baseball program. In 2010, they joined forces with several other local baseball teams to form Norfolk Little League Baseball. This is a nationally sanctioned program. The Norfolk program currently has over 500 boys involved.

The Recreation Division and the Norfolk Arts Center partner together to offer art lessons in the summer for kids. The Kreative Kids art program will be held this summer from July 5 to July 29. Kids who are seven to nine years old meet Wednesdays and Fridays from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. Kids ages 10 to 14 meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm. The cost is \$15 per child with each class limited to 30 students.

Some of the activities in the past have included making paper and learning about and practicing famous artists' techniques. "The advantage of this program is that it allows children at a very affordable rate a chance to learn to express themselves and explore their creativity and they have fun doing so. It's a great program," said Kara Weander-Gaster, executive director of the Norfolk Arts Center.

Registration for the Kreative Kids art program will be held May 19 from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm at the Norfolk City Auditorium.

For girls who want to do some fun summer dancing, the "Twisting" class is held for young girls from June 6 to July 19 every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at Johnson Park on First Street. The girls will learn fun dance moves from high school dancers and present a recital for their friends and family after the last session. Up to sixty girls

have been known to come to the “Twisting” classes. Although there is no charge to participate, registration is held June 6 at the City Auditorium from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm to assign girls a specific class time.

Another fun and free program held at Johnson Park is the “Morning Tot Lot.” This popular program is for kids ages three through six and is held Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Activities include arts and crafts projects and playground games.

If there are any questions about any of the Norfolk Recreation Division summer activity programs, call 402.844.2014 or access the division’s website at http://www.ci.norfolk.ne.us/parks/recreation_programs.htm.