

# PARK RANGER ANNUAL REPORT

2023



**MADISON  
PARKS**

# 2023 RANGER STAFF

- Jason Vroman - Ranger Supervisor
- Steve Dray - Lead Ranger
- John Ringwood - Central District
- John Gibbons - East District
- Rah Filla - West District
- **Michaela Daly - West District (Former)**
- Will Goss - Disc Golf
- Michelle Breimon - Hourly
- Tessa Grywalsky - Hourly (Former)
- Annie Youngwood - Hourly
- Matt Norton - Hourly
- Louie Brien - Hourly
- Nick Hellrood - Hourly
- Sean Wenkman - Hourly
- Dawson Tysver (Former Intern)



Ranger Louie Brien receives a Life Safety Award from Madison Fire Department

## Annual Highlights

- Hired and trained one new District Ranger, Rah Filla and four new hourly rangers.
- Ranger Brien received Life Safety Award from Madison Fire Department (MFD) for response to overdosing park visitor.
- Collaborated with #TeamCity to relocate individuals living at Starkweather Park and rehab area.
- Implemented new Disc Golf Lending program #CheckOutDiscGolf with Madison Public Libraries.
- Worked with several community groups to improve local park safety.
- **79** Disc Golf kits checked out
- **12,809** visits to parks by Ranger staff
- **117** unhoused individuals referred to services; **8** of which secured housing by the end of the year.
- **508** enforcement contacts made by Rangers in Parks
- **869** Parking tickets issued.
- **3,191** permits checked at dog parks, disc golf courses, lake access sites and cross country ski sites. **92%** compliance rate.
- **8** Parks Alive events attended and staffed by Rangers.
- **4** Krav Maga self defense training sessions attended by Ranger staff
- **1** new EBike purchased for patrols
- Countless hours of snow removal put in at 9 off leash dog park areas.

2023 Annual Report

City of Madison Park Rangers

**MADISON  
PARKS**





# 2023 RANGER RECAP

2023 was another productive year for the Park Ranger staff. While continuing to patrol the City's robust park system, Ranger staff continued to provide quality management of our disc golf courses and dog parks in collaboration with our stellar park staff colleagues. In addition to enforcement and patrol duties, Rangers have been very active in collaboration with Parks staff and other stake holders like Dane County Parks, Madison Public Libraries, Madison Police Department (MPD), Madison Fire Department (MFD) and Street Outreach Teams. These collaborative efforts have allowed for more outreach opportunities, joint public safety response, and better overall service to the community.



Conservation Resources Supervisor, Paul Quinlan, researches Ranger staff on local flora.

City of Madison Park Rangers have always been very active in Parks and regularly enforce park permit requirements along with rules and regulations but are also branching out into new spaces. While enforcement is important, so too is community engagement and proactive response to issues that arise in the parks. In 2023, Rangers expanded efforts into interacting with the community by assisting with and attending Parks Alive events, National Night Out, Trucks & Treasures and other community events. At Parks Alive locations, Ranger staff set up temporary disc golf baskets to introduce community members to the sport. In addition, staff collaborated with Dane County Parks and Madison Public Libraries to set up #CheckOutDiscGolf by donating a set of discs to each of Madison's 9 libraries that included discs, educational materials, and a disc golf pass that was valid for 7 days at all courses in the City and County. This allowed residents to try the sport free of charge.

On top of these efforts, Rangers have increased collaboration with local unhoused street outreach teams such as Catalyst for Change (CFC). Ranger staff regularly encounter individuals sleeping outside in parks and have been proactive in offering these individuals resources and contacts. CFC has played a vital role in contacting those referred and has worked to help folks through various complex situations. Rangers referred over 100 individuals to CFC who were looking for assistance and at least 8 of those have been verified to secure housing with more than 30 actively working in that direction.

## EAST DISTRICT RANGER RECAP



Several parks in the East District started 2023 with community stakeholders frustrated with the type of behavior that had been seen in some parks. Reports of violent behavior, drug use, illegal fireworks, vehicles on trails and more, were reported. Rangers increased patrol and enforcement efforts at Demetral, Reindahl, Hiestand, Warner Beach and others. The increased presence resulted in increased enforcement contacts, enhancing recreational experiences by all park visitors and community stakeholders.

In addition, Rangers attended several community events such as Coffee with a Cop, Warner Park Family Fun Night, Trucks & Treasures and more in effort to increase community engagement.

## CENTRAL DISTRICT RANGER RECAP

Traditionally, the Central District is where most issues in parks are reported. Use is high in and the proximity to downtown facilitates visitation at all times of day. Like the East District, there were many parks that contained uses that frustrated community stakeholders and park visitors. Parks like Brittingham, Reynolds, Penn Park, and others saw frequent incidents occur. Largely with the efforts of Central District Ranger Ringwood, consistent patrol and enforcement efforts made a huge impact.



MPD sent gratitude for Ranger efforts and stated that many of the residents feel safe returning to these areas and more positive use is returning.

## WEST DISTRICT RANGER RECAP

The West District saw some staffing changes in 2023. Ranger Daly moved on to other opportunities mid year and Ranger Filla was hired near the end of the year. In that time, West Parks saw improvements to Elver Disc Golf Course with the redesign of holes 2 through 4 and the corresponding brush and tree removal that needed to take place. In addition, several coordination meetings with MPD and other stakeholders were held to enhance public service and respond collaboratively to common issues that happen in Parks.







## LEAD RANGER HIGHLIGHTS

### TRAINING:

Being well-trained is very important to our mission as Park Rangers. We believe the better we are trained the better we can serve the community. Park Rangers run a Training Academy each spring to prepare our new Rangers for the vast array of situations we encounter in the parks. Academy includes approximately 100 hours of classroom training. Topics of study include, but are not limited to:

- Discretion/Decision-making
- CPR/AED/First Aid
- Legal Context
- L.E.A.D.S. (Law Enforcement Active De-escalation Strategies)
- Professional Communication
- Report Writing

After completion of the classroom training, new Rangers are then paired with an experienced field trainer for 120 hours of field training before working solo.

We also participate in training for Rangers throughout the year, such as:

- Krav Maga defensive tactics
- Crisis Intervention Team training
- C.R.A.S.E. Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events



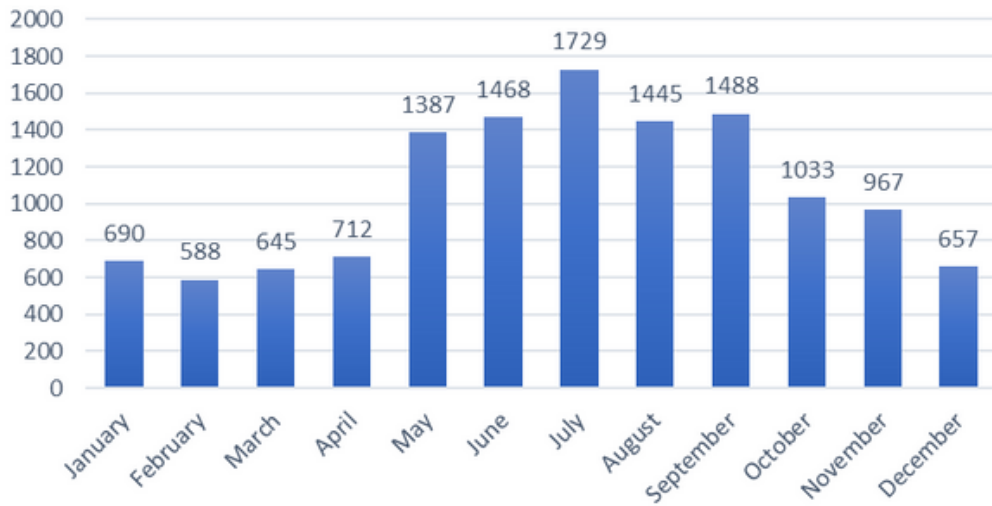
### BADGER TRACS:

In April 2023, Rangers started using a computer software program called Badger TraCs. This program enhances Rangers' ability to document warnings, citations and contacts with citizens. TraCs organizes data efficiently and streamlines our follow-up on the administrative end of our process. It has saved a lot of time for our office staff, centralized and streamlined our citation process, and eliminated human error in reading forms and writing them by hand.

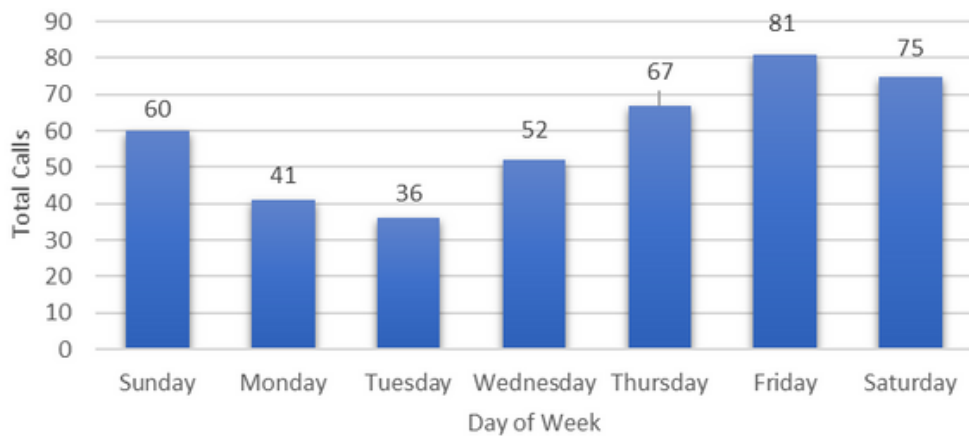


# 2023 RANGER STATISTICS

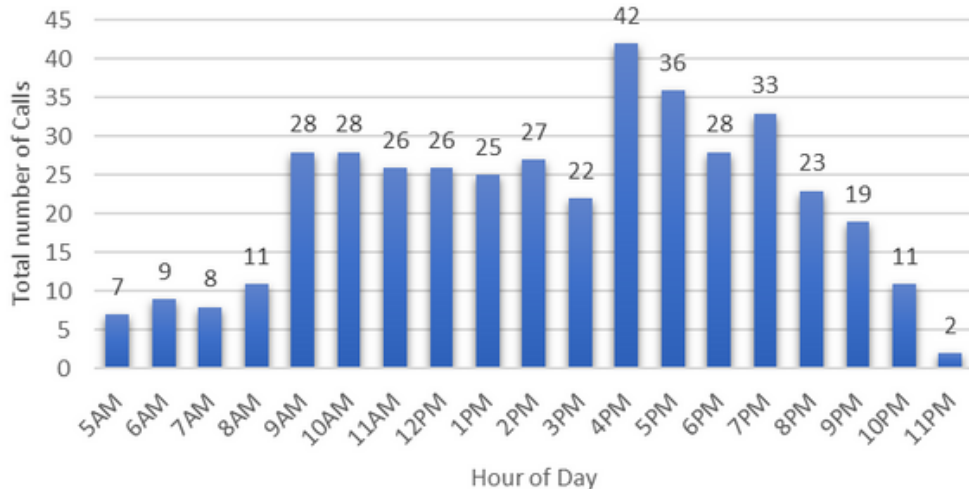
## 2023 Total Calls Per Month



## 2023 Ranger Calls for Service from Dispatch

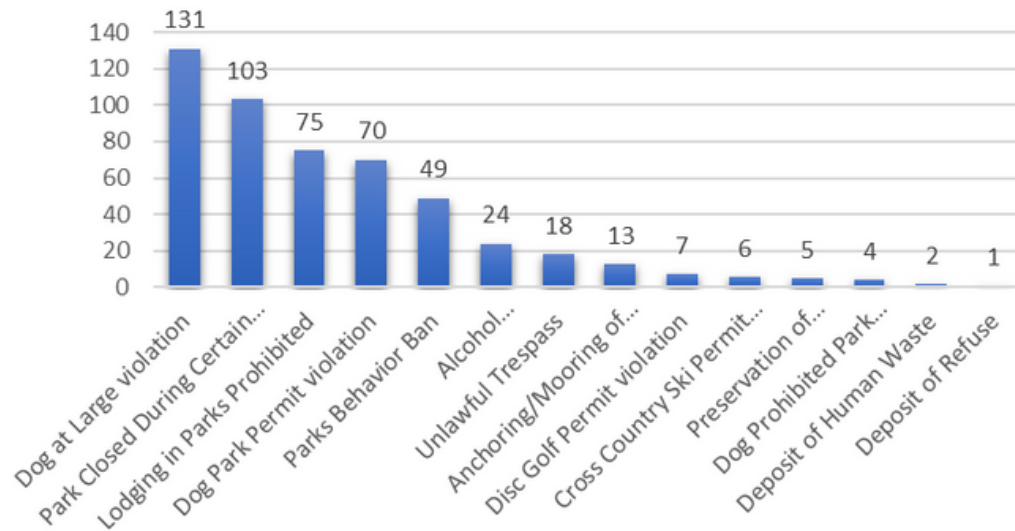


## 2023 Total Dispatched Calls Per Hour

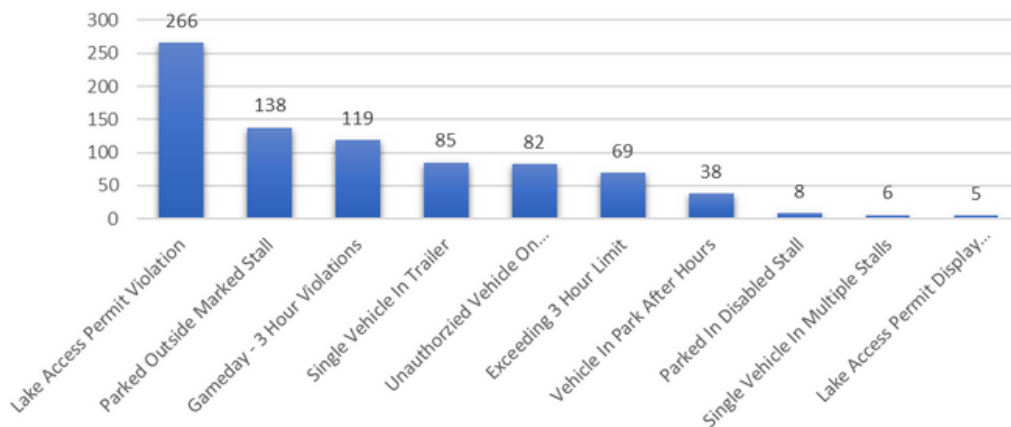


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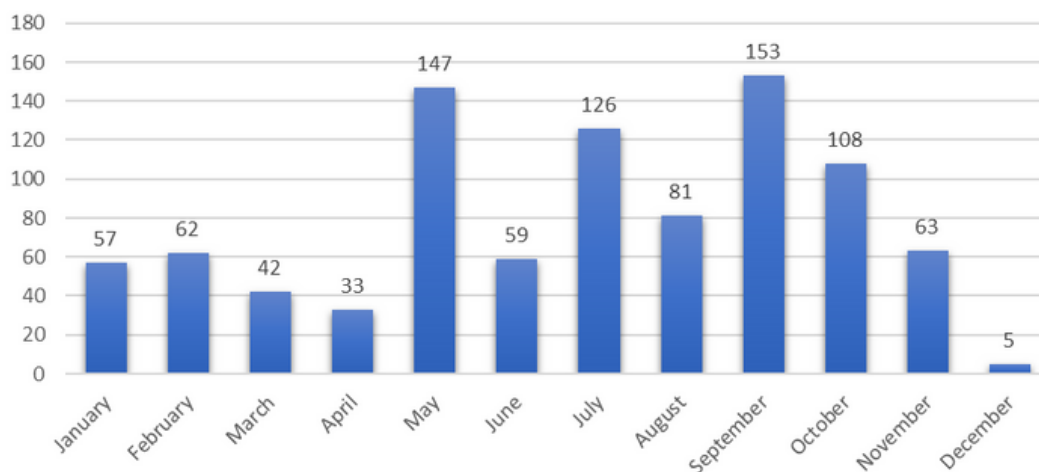
## 2023 Enforcement Contacts



## Top 10 Parking Ticket Issued



## Total Citations By Month





**Disc Golf Clean Up Volunteer Day at Hiestand**

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## DISC GOLF UPDATES

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### ELVER

Ranger staff collaborated with other Park staff and local disc golf designer, Pat Blake, to begin initial redesign efforts at Elver Park. Elver Park Disc Golf Course has been listed by outside apps like UDisc, as the most used Disc Golf Course in the State of Wisconsin and has been a popular Madison Course for a long time.

While the course is enjoyed by many, it is clear that there needs to be some improvements made to enhance the course and allow for better play. Three new holes have been planned and initial clearing work was completed to move holes 2-4 from their current location to a more desirable wooded location in the immediate vicinity.

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### HIESTAND

Hiestand is has also seen its fair share of improvements to the disc golf course in 2023. Most notably Hiestand saw the construction of the first Disc Golf Driving Range in the City Park system. This was largely due to the efforts of a generous donor in recognition of the passing of Tasha Cheney through the Madison Parks Foundation.

Additionally, new kiosk and directional signage were placed at the park. Disc Golf Ranger, Will Goss, has improved the course grounds while maintaining all the course infrastructure. The addition of 18 new trash cans also added to the aesthetic of the course and provided players with proper receptacles.





**Dog Park Clean Up Day - Warner Park**

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## **DOG PARK UPDATES**

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Off leash dog parks welcomed many dogs as always this year! The City's 9 off leash dog parks provided opportunities for exercising pets. A special thanks to all that cleaned up their dog parks on our annual dog park cleanup day held in April. It was a cold and snowy day but many die hard volunteers completed clean up of dog waste. Some groups ran their own events when the weather got a little warmer the following weekend.

In addition to the volunteer days, several improvements were made to many of the area dog parks. Quann Park received a new kiosk and two new gates to mitigate eroded pathways and improve overall safety. Additionally, fencing repairs occurred all over the city, with the most significant being at Warner Park where a large portion of the fence was replaced. Rangers continued to monitor and enforce permitting requirements as well as stock local dog waste bag containers.

During the winter months, Rangers and Parks Operations staff spent countless hours removing snow from paths and gate areas to facilitate safe passage during snowy times. Ranger Gibbons revamped our salt use policy to reflect responsible salting procedures by taking account temperatures and surface areas.

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# City of Madison Park Ranger Annual Report



**FOR A COPY OF THIS REPORT, CONTACT:**

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