

WAYS TO PLAY

Independence Day Celebration

2026 Yankee Doodle Dash 5K

Start the Independence Day Celebration with our annual tradition, and dash the streets of Wilmette in our dandy 5K!

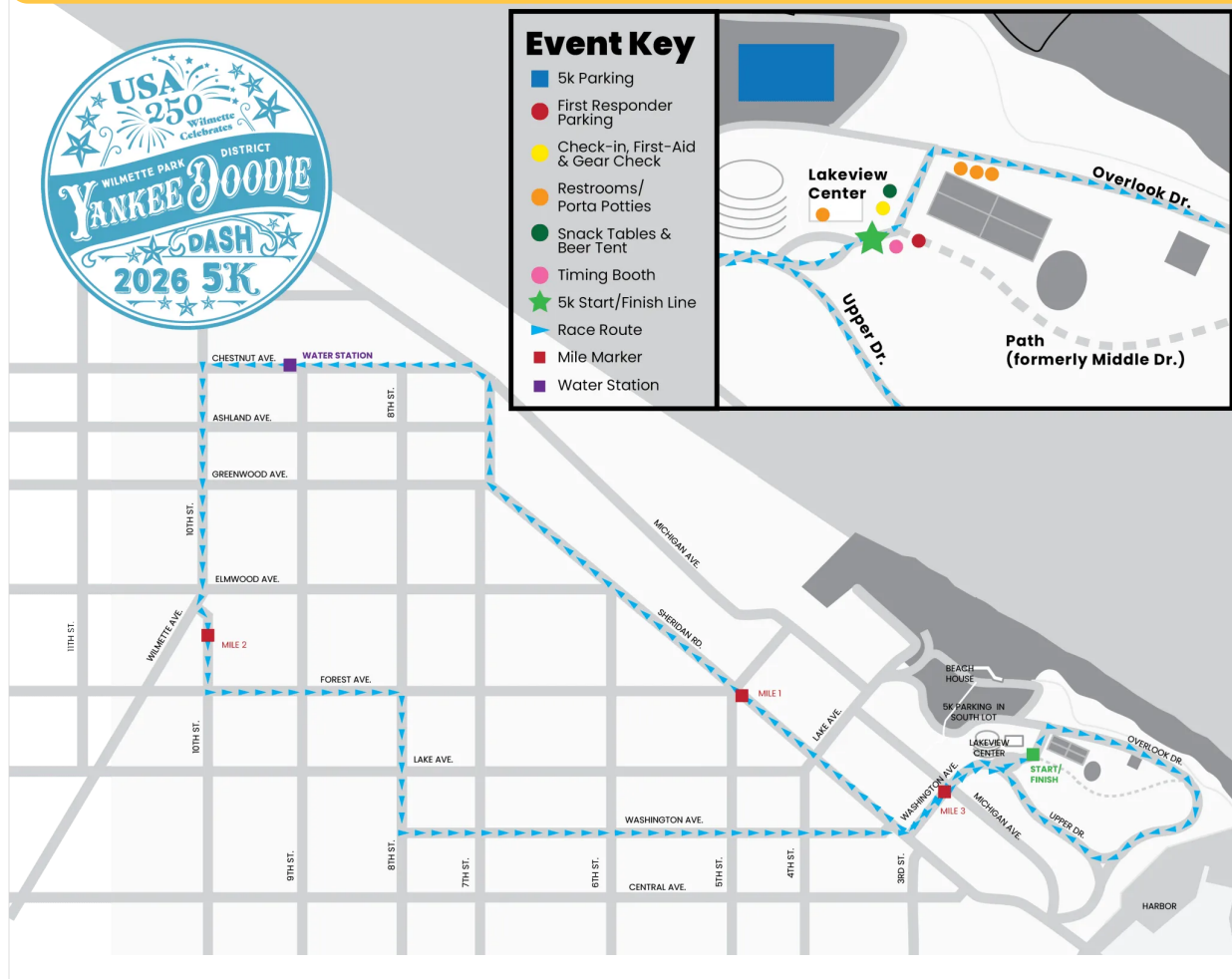
Event Details:

- **Date:** Friday, July 3
- **Race Start:** 8 am
- **Start/Finish:** Gillson Park
- **\$40 per participant**
- **REGISTER HERE!**

*Registration CLOSSES at 11:59 pm on 6/30! **Space is LIMITED!** Register ahead of time, we anticipate this event to sell out and there is NO ON-SITE REGISTRATION.

**NO REFUNDS – all sales are final.

Route Map



Special Appreciation

- We'd like to thank our Stars & Stripes Sponsor **de Giulio Kitchen Design** for sponsoring our *dashing* event shirts!
- Shoutout to our Spangled Sponsor **State Farm Agent Nathan Sulack** for sponsoring our *dandy* participant medals!
- Get excited for our swag sunglasses, sponsored by **J. Blanton Plumbing!**
- Special thanks to our 250th Presenting Sponsor **North Shore Community Bank!**
- Cheers to our NEW Dandy Beverage Partner **Mullarkey Distributing** for providing Yuenling beer for our adult runners (age 21 & up)!





Summer Camp Guide

Spring+Summer Program Guide

Registration

Event Details:

- **Date:** Friday, July 3
- **Time:** 1-3 pm
- **Location:** Centennial Park
- **Fee:** FREE family activities in the park
- **Public Swim:** 2-6 pm, FREE for residents / daily fee applies for non-residents

FREE Activities Include:

- Confetti "Fireworks" Show
- Face Painting
- Bucket Bonanza
- Milk Pail Toss
- Big Mouth Toss
- Baseball Toss
- Inflatable Moonwalk Castle
- Inflatable Water Slide
- & More!

Fun & Fireworks

Enjoy an evening packed with Independence Day Celebration at Gillson Park! We'll have food vendors, live music, performers and a **fireworks show** to kick off your 4th a day early. In honor of America's 250th Anniversary, the Wilmette Park District and presenting sponsor **North Shore Community Bank** have enhanced the fireworks program to light up your celebration even brighter!

- **Date:** Friday, July 3
- **Time:** 5-10 pm
- **Location:** Gillson Park

Event Map



Main Stage Entertainment



- Central High at 4:45 pm
- Men on the Moon at 6:00 pm
- Antler Chandelier at 7:30 pm

Wallace Bowl Showcase



- Superhero Training at 5:00 pm
- Miss Jamie's Farm at 5:30 pm
- Jesse White Tumblers at 6:30 pm
- Footloose Preview Performance at 7:00 pm
- Barefoot Hawaiian Dance Troupe at 7:15 pm





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- Hecky's Barbecue
- & more!

Activity & Entertainment Vendors

- Total T Magic
- Airbrush Tattoos
- Face Painting
- Superhero Photobooth

PACE Shuttle & Transportation

To help improve access and reduce traffic congestion, the Park District is expanding its partnership with PACE this year by offering **two shuttle routes** serving Gillson Park during Fun & Fireworks.

- **Route 1** will operate from **Loyola Academy**, with buses beginning service at **4:00 pm**.
 - Riders may park at **Loyola Academy** and travel directly to Gillson Park.
 - Buses on this route will also stop at **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2727 Lake Avenue**, where additional parking will be available.
- **Route 2** will provide shuttle service from the **Wilmette Metra Station at 12th Street**.

Both routes will drop passengers on Sheridan Road adjacent to Gillson Park. At the conclusion of the event, designated shuttle pick-up zones will be located along Sheridan Road, with separate boarding areas for each route to ensure riders return to their original parking locations. PACE representatives, Park District staff, additional lighting, and directional signage will be available to assist guests throughout the evening.

Additional Details:

- Shuttle service begins at 4:00 pm on July 3.
- Round-trip fare is \$4.50 per rider.
- Cash, credit cards and electronic payments will be accepted.
- Return transportation requires proof of purchase from the outbound trip.
- Return-only fares will not be available.
- All PACE buses are fully accessible.
- Shuttle service will continue throughout the evening and after the fireworks until all ticketed riders have been transported or until shuttle service stops at 11:00 pm.
- Capacity is limited, attendees are encouraged to arrive early and plan accordingly.

Event Reminders

- Bags are subject to search.
- No sparklers allowed.
- No alcohol allowed.
- Parking at Gillson Main Beach is reserved for Season Parking Pass holders only.
- **Daily parking passes will not be sold** on July 3 and July 4.
- The **Dog Beach will be closed on July 3 and July 4**.
- Gillson Main Beach will require a season or daily pass all day & evening on July 3.
- South Beach will open to general public starting at 8 pm for visitors to enjoy the Fireworks show.

Special Appreciation

- Special thanks to our Fun & Fireworks Sponsor **North Shore Community Bank** for supporting this fabulous celebration!

Our Independence Day Celebration is extra-special this year! Celebrate the United States Semiquincentennial a day early with Wilmette Park District and keep an eye out for our special 250 decal to mark the occasion!

