

2009 Annual Report of the Recreation Department

2009 proved to be another exciting year for our department! Associate member Todd Jewett became a voting member with the departure of member Heidi Cadavieco after 2 ½ years of service. In general, program offerings and participation numbers continued to climb during the year. Demand for time on ball fields, basketball and tennis courts, gymnasiums, playgrounds and other amenities increased as well. This has become a recurring challenge for us each year.

Changes to existing facilities during 2009 included:

- A new t-ball field was built at the Haskell Fields by Park Supervisor Earl Storey. The project was funded by Westboro Little League and the DPW at no cost to the Town.
- Old wooden timbers surrounding the perimeter of the Rogers Playground were removed and replaced with new plastic timbers. In addition, a recurring drainage problem was addressed.
- The Upton Road Storage Building was reconfigured to allow more room for Little League's supplies. The electrical system was updated as well. This was funded by Little League.
- The Recreation Commission is moving forward with renaming the Upton ball fields in honor of local resident Greg Montalbano who passed away this year. Greg was a phenomenal baseball player through High School, College and the Minor Leagues. He got his start with Westboro Little League at the Upton fields.
- Some of the safety pads in the Forbes Gym have been re-covered and new padding added to both doorways, in and out of the gym.

- A handicapped-accessible port-o-john was purchased for the Haskell fields. Much prep work was required including paving and fencing.

All of these items were completed by utilizing monies either from donations or monies in the Recreation Revolving Account and other recreation gift accounts. There was no expense to the taxpayer. The Department of Public Works, as always, has done a great job assisting us in completing these projects. Park Supervisor Earl Storey, who oversees all the maintenance, management and future development of all recreation facilities in town, is responsible for the completion of these projects. We are extremely pleased with all Earl's hard work and the way all projects have turned out.

During 2009, the department continued to offer year-round recreational programs for both children and adults. An effort was made to present a diversified line-up of programs, complimented by the addition of a few new and unique offerings. More and more, the department is seeing an increase in the number of families needing financial assistance. We have always made accommodations for those who are unable to pay and will continue to do so in the future. We were most fortunate again this year to receive donations from the Westboro men's and women's softball leagues, as well as the Boston Sports Club, wishing to help fund scholarships for families in need. Generous donations were also received from the Westboro Youth Soccer League, Adult Soccer and Westborough Athletic Social Association to assist with field maintenance & improvements.

We have also attempted to meet requests to involve all children with special needs and considerations in our program by providing one-on-one aides, interpreters, etc. Unified Sports, a Massachusetts Special Olympic program, has continued to experience success here in Westboro. The program currently has athletes in the 8-18 age groups participating in soccer, basketball and aquatics. The duties of running this program are shared by our

department and the parents in the organization.

During the winter months, some 750+ children, grades 2-12, participated in the youth recreation basketball league with nearly 130 volunteers assisted. Training sessions for these volunteers has become a full-time job in itself. Our biggest concern during the winter months is finding available gym space for our 70 teams. Much time is allocated to scheduling practices and games. Our ski and snowboarding program for grades 7-12 at Wachusett Mountain was very popular again this year. New preschool programs were offered at Munchkinland, a new indoor play facility for children of all ages. Also offered, for children, was our year-round pottery classes, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice skating, tennis, jazzercise, and karate. Adult programs included coed volleyball, men's basketball, jazzercise, tennis, kickboxing, tai chi and morning total fitness.

During the spring months, soccer, baseball, softball and lacrosse for children and softball for adults are the prominent activities on the Town's fields. These independently run organizations and school teams are vying for use of the town's limited field space. Scheduling is nothing short of a nightmare during this time, as the fields experience peak use. Little League has nearly 850+ participants, soccer has over 900 and lacrosse almost 200. Our department's spring programs included karate, juniper golf, jazzercise, ice-skating, horseback riding, tennis and gymnastics. A new TV Production class was offered through Westborough TV. Adult classes included new sessions of tennis, jazzercise, tai chi, karate, kickboxing, golf, badminton, and AM total fitness. Adult volleyball and basketball continued as well. This is also the time of year when the extensive summer program is planned and some 100+ prospective employees are interviewed for summer jobs. Training sessions were again offered for all summer employees.

This summer, we were able to offer a full array of programs. All programs proved to be extremely successful and attempts were made to increase the number of classes offered. Over 2,500

registrations were taken during the summer alone. New programs included TV Production, Glass Fusing and a week-long Horse Academy program. Other programs included suncatchers, ice skating, fishing, robotics, beading, mosaics, create-a-critter, tennis, crafts, pottery painting, mommy & me pottery, karate, horseback riding, starlab, kitemaking and gymnastics.

Nearly all programs, including our summer playground programs and our swim program at Lake Chauncy Beach, were filled to capacity. The many sports clinics offered remained popular as record attendances were experienced. Clinics included junior soccer, junior allsports, boys lacrosse, juniper hill golf, archery, basketball, baseball, soccer, cheerleading, track, volleyball, sailing, kayaking, all-sports and field hockey. In addition, the department scheduled and supervised 32 swim classes, 15 playground sessions, and a 2-week Nature Discovery program at the Bowman Street Conservation Area.

The July 4th Committee's Annual Celebration remains a success. Traditional events included a block dance with food vendors, hay and pony rides, band concert and a magician. The Committee remains grateful for the assistance received by many social and civic organizations in town as well as the many donations of money and/or services received from area businesses.

The fall season is dominated by soccer which is run by the Westboro Youth Soccer Association. According to the WYSA, approximately 925 children ages 5-16 participate. Lack of field space is a major problem this time of year, as in the spring. Westboro's Youth Football league is in full swing as well with approximately 150 players looking for field space.

Our department also runs a Fall Field Hockey Program. In total, we had 40+ girls split between two different teams in Grades 7-8. The department would like to thank Steve Toomey for donating part of his time to lining the fields each week for the girls. We also ran a 4-team Flag Football league for boys in grades 6-8. New fall

programs included Kids Club, Paint-Me t-shirts and Archery. Other programs offered included karate, gymnastics, jazzercise, tennis, juniper golf, ice-skating and horseback riding. Adult fall programs offered included co-ed volleyball, men's basketball, tennis, jazzercise, kickboxing, tai chi, juniper golf, AM morning fitness, karate and badminton.

This year marked our 32nd Annual Children's Halloween Party for grades K-4. All who attended were treated to games and prizes, a show and refreshments. Barbara & Ginnie Barnes, Marge Dion assisted with serving refreshments. Members of the WHS Girls Cross Country Team ran the games and gave out prizes. No fee was charged to participants. Instead, donations to the Westboro Food Pantry were collected.

As always, the Recreation Department is attempting to do everything possible to provide for the needs of the community. We are always willing to listen to the thoughts and suggestions of the residents. Again, we would like to express a special thanks to the Department of Public Works and the School Department for their year-round support, as well as to the hundreds of volunteers who help make our programs '**GO**'. Through their continued support and with hard work and thoughtful planning, we hope to succeed in meeting all present and future challenges.

Respectfully submitted,

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