

RECREATION DEPARTMENT & COMMISSION

2014 Annual Report

Recreation Department Vision Statement

To provide opportunity for each and every citizen to enrich their quality of life by offering a full spectrum of community-driven recreation activities for all ages through the provision of recreation and parks services.

Recreation Department Mission Statement

The Milford Recreation Department is committed to enriching and enhancing the quality of life for all community residents by:

- Offering diversified programming, activities and events.
- Assessing and responding to parks and amenities needs.
- Collaborating with community groups that share an interest in recreational goals.

Recreation Commission Mission Statement

To serve as advocates on behalf of the Milford community in promoting recreation and leisure activities for all ages and interests by:

- Assisting the Board of Selectmen and Recreation Department with recommendations for implementing appropriate recreation programs.
- Assisting the Board of Selectmen and Recreation Department with recommendations for best utilization of existing park and recreation facilities.
- Providing a forum for communication and coordination of recreation programs and issues.
- Providing recommendations and project management for long-range community recreation capital improvements.

New for 2014

The 18th year of the Milford Recreation Department began with a change in staffing as Arene Berry was hired as the new Director. Things quickly fell into place though and the year was soon underway. We had the introduction of our Mother Son event with a trip to the Fisher Cats game that began with our group giving the players high fives as they entered the field. We are looking forward to this being an annual recurring event. We added three new locations for our day trips with outings to the Robert Frost Farm, Hobo Railroad, and Calef's Country Store. In September, we had a well-attended Fall Family Festival at Adams Field with the evening ending with a Zombie Orienteering activity that our older kids greatly enjoyed.

Facilities Update

2014 was a year of completing projects that were “in the works”. The largest of those projects was the Warming Hut that accompanies the skating rink at Shepard Park. This facility provides both an area to change skates and escape the wind complete with benches and cubbies as well as a separate storage area for the equipment needed to maintain the ice and keep it optimal for skating. This was made possible through the generosity of the Shepard Park Improvement Trust and the tireless efforts of many volunteers. A huge thank you also goes out to the MICE (Milford Ice) Team, a group of volunteers who set-up and maintain the ice throughout the winter season.



Also brought to completion was the Pergola at Keyes Park which enhances and enlarges the existing pavilion. Working together with the Public Works Department, the students in Brian Carter’s building trades program at MHS, and Jerry Guthrie this project was made possible with volunteer labor and fundraised monies. The Recreation Commission had undertaken a



brick fundraising project. This allows local residents and business to show their support with an engraved brick that will become part of the flooring of this new amenity. Bricks are still available to purchase for a limited time. Contact the Recreation Department for more information.



It was an honor to mark the completion of the Robert (Bubba) Carson Jr. Memorial Field with a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 27, 2014. The day then continued with Rob’s teams playing the first game on the field in our annual Wooden Bat Tournament. Rob dedicated many hours over a ten year span to make the Co-ed Softball Program a successful one. He is deeply missed by many.

Program Highlights



2014 was a busy year for the Milford Recreation Department. We now offer over 70 programs annually, including all the favorites, such as Toddler Tumbling, Archery Lessons, Youth Drama Workshop, Co-ed Pickup Basketball, Co-ed Softball League, swimming lessons and swim team. We had approximately 2,000 unique participants signing up for at least one program and there was an increase of over 5% in registrations from 2013 to 2014. It was great to see the Milford Community utilize our department and take advantage of the high quality and affordable programming we have to offer, as well as attending many of our free events.

Some new events and programs were offered in 2014 that created a lot of interest and were a success! We had our first ever mother and son outing to a Fisher Cats game where we were able to have a mother and son throw the first pitch and we made a high-five tunnel for the Fisher Cat players to run through. It was a very fun evening! A new variety of bands performed for the free Sounds on the Souhegan Summer Concert Series and drew quite the crowds to the beautiful Emerson Park. Our first ever Fall Family Festival took place at the end of September and will now be an annual event. People could get their face painted, grill sausages, roast marshmallows, enjoy scary stories and music and take part in Zombie Orienteering which the MRD partnered with the Conservation Commission. Thank you to Kokko Fields for the use of their property for this fun event! Youth Ultimate Frisbee began this fall at Kaley Park and MRD looks forward to offering it again in 2015. Mother Nature was on our side this year and we were able to host the annual Easter Egg Hunt outside at Keyes Park. It was beautiful weather and many attended to take part in the festivities! The 2014 Daddy Daughter Dance sold out and was a wonderful evening which fathers and daughters enjoyed.



This year we also created an email newsletter called *The Milford Moves: All Things Recreation*. It will be sent out on the first day of every other month to keep you informed of upcoming program sessions, town events, community events and recreation news. This newsletter is in addition to our spring, summer and fall/winter recreation guide. If you would like to join our email list, contact us at recreation@milford.nh.gov and we will add you!

MRD is committed to offering something for all age groups. The Senior Coffee Connection schedule for 2015 will run from March through December. Contact the rec. department for a schedule. Senior Coffee Connection takes place on the 2nd Wednesday each month from 10-11:30 am, or you can feel free to join us for our Senior Brunch Bingo the 4th Wednesday each month from 12-2 pm. Both of these programs

are held in the Town Hall Banquet Hall. A great effort is made to offer affordable monthly trips during the week day for seniors to attend and enjoy!

Here at the Milford Recreation Department we are actively brainstorming, researching and planning new programs, trips and events to offer to the community. Here are some things to keep an eye out for in 2015: Home Alone Safety Course, Movin' & Groovin' Music Class, our first overnight in some time now to Washington D.C. and a new summer day trip to Martha's Vineyard. MRD is very excited for the upcoming year!

To find out more about your town recreation department, or to stay informed about all our offerings, please visit us at town hall, online at www.milfordrec.com or "LIKE" us on Facebook for continuous updates on fun activities going on right here in town.

Looking Forward

It is certainly looking like 2015 will be another active and exciting year for Milford Recreation. All of the popular programs are returning and some new activities are in the works, one of which is an overnight trip to Washington D.C. Of course, the biggest news is the voter's approval to purchase the land next to Keyes Memorial Park. With preparation work starting on the Fletcher clean-up site, this purchase seems to be right in the nick of time to keep the park open. The summer of 2015 will be the 50th anniversary of the Keyes pool and everything seems to be falling into place nicely.

Special Thanks

When things do seem to run smoothly, it is rarely a coincidence. Usually it is because there are many hard working people behind the scenes planning, troubleshooting and executing what needs to be done. Last year we saw a number of projects and park improvements that only happened because there was a long list of volunteers, contractors and suppliers working together to bring you a warming hut for the ice rink and a pergola at the pavilion. There were also those who braved the cold and wind and snow to clear and resurface the ice rink. These awesome people also performed the monumental task of setting it up and taking it down.

Thanks also go out to everyone that donates their time for the ongoing recreation programs throughout the year. Just about every event from dances to egg hunts to festivals and tournaments relies on a short list of volunteers to make it not only possible, but affordable (or free) as well.

But the best part of being a Milford resident is that when something needs to get done, just about everyone steps up and makes it happen. With the Fletcher site clean-up looming overhead, and the writing on the wall indicating it would happen sooner rather than later, the opportunity came up in the spring to purchase the property at 127 Elm St. The Recreation Commission was tasked with raising as much money as possible before the special town meeting in the fall. Understanding the great opportunity and the importance of keeping Keyes Park open, we went to work. The support we received was incredible. Everyone from elected officials, town employees, fund trustees, civic groups, businesses, and high school students did whatever they could to help.

In just 3 months we raised more than \$190,000 to purchase the property. One of the most satisfying aspects in being a volunteer is having a direct impact on the town's quality of life. Thanks to everyone who donated goods, services, time and money. Because of them, Milford's quality of life will only be improving in the foreseeable future.

Our most heartfelt thanks to everyone who made 2014 a fantastic year for Recreation and the Town of Milford. And thank you in advance to everyone who will make 2015 even better.

Respectfully submitted,

Arene Berry,
Recreation Director

Walter Smith,
Chairman Recreation Commission