

PARKS AND RECREATION

The Park and Recreation Department has completed another banner year providing the community with a variety of offerings. The board actively meets two times per month with minutes now being posted electronically. It is always a priority to keep the community well informed of any activity and/or event through school newsletters and postings on the community bulletin board.

Jay Fenlason joined by Susan Gorman, in their third year of running the Park and Rec Department, strive to offer various events such as bus trips to shows and shopping, a ski program and a trip to the Boston Red Sox throughout the year to best satisfy the needs of the community.

The sports programs have been continually growing with various improvements and adjustments made to better accommodate the needs of all those that participate. The Summer Activities Program experienced another fun filled five weeks providing children with many exciting adventures and teens with a rewarding employment experience. Movie nights are periodically held, both indoors and out, and are well attended and enjoyed by many families.

The Fall Festival 2003 was held once again at TWB, chaired by Tina Albano. This event was well attended by thousands of local residents who enjoyed terrific food, purchased wonderful crafts, participated in various activities or just simply joined the camaraderie of the day. The fifth annual Fun Run also drew a record-breaking number of participants. A special "Thank you" goes to TWB for the use of the facility, Monson Savings Bank for their generous donation of the Climbing Rock Wall, and all of the businesses, civic organizations and restaurants that participated. Additionally, a heartfelt "Thank you" goes out to all of the many volunteers who gave so unselfishly of their time to make the event successful.

The Commissioners would, as always, like to thank the wonderful staff from last year's summer camp program. The dedication, enthusiasm, and hard work shown by our town's young people ensured that the summer program was a continued success. We look forward to working with many of them again.

An additional "Thank you" goes to Dana Pixley and his Highway Department Staff for all their help. The highly efficient and tremendously well-organized staff at the Town Hall also deserves our thanks and appreciation.

All of our town sports programs are run in conjunction with the Recreation Association of Hampden (RAH). RAH's group of committed volunteers help to organize and monitor all of our sports programs. Their contributions are integral to the growth of youth sports in Hampden. We are grateful for their involvement.

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Michael D'Agostino, Larry Forrest, and Tina Albano joined the Parks and Recreation Commission filling the seats vacated by Jim Morris, Kathleen Duquette, and Tom Crogan. We would like to thank Jim, Kathleen, and Tom for their years of meritorious service to the town. We will miss their positive and active involvement.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris McDonald, Chairman
Tina Albano
Michael D'Agostino
Glennice Flynn
Larry Forrest