

## 2010 Recreation in Review

Recreation was again challenged to offer our same quality programs and events while working through this economic downturn.

Lodge operations were further scrutinized for cost savings and a number of new changes were fully implemented in 2010 to save on expenses:

- A key to open and close the Lodge was made available to not only the Kiwanis but also the Seniors, Garden Club, Knights of Columbus, Alcoholics Anonymous and exercise instructor through a sign-out system with the Police Department. This has saved us the expense of paying an employee to open/close for each of these organizations.
- A \$100 rental fee was added for use of the kitchen.
- It is now possible for more than one group to book the Kiwanis Lodge for a function if one group or both groups do not need the kitchen.

Casino bus trips continued to be a popular form of entertainment for many of our residents. In 2010, the participants traveled three times to Seneca Allegany Casino, once to the Mountaineer Casino, twice to the new Rivers Casino, once to Meadows Casino and once to Presque Isle. This totaled eight excursions which is one more than 2009.

In an effort to save additional money, the pool manager was let go and I was asked to take over that position in addition to my Recreation Director duties.

- Exer-swim was moved from noon to 12:45pm. The participants were using the shallow end during a time that the swim team was also using the deeper end.
- Learn to swim had been set up as 3 sessions of 3 weeks for \$20 for passholders and \$40 for non-passholders. This was changed to 4 sessions of 2 weeks for \$15 for passholders and \$30 for non-passholders. While we took in the same amount, we ran lessons for one week less. This saved us over \$1,000 in salaries.
- No increases were given to managerial staff.

- Minimal raises were given to “full time” staff. Part time lifeguards made the same pay regardless of the number of years with the City.
- The pool was closed once school opened. The sprayground only was kept open if the weather was over 75 degrees until Labor Day.
- The pool closed if the temperature was 65 degrees or colder.
- We increased our advertising for pool and sprayground parties. The increase in use was particularly noted in the month of August with 8 parties booked. Just a few years ago, we would host 3 pool parties a season.

An event to highlight our excellent local lifeguards was initiated by Richmond Heights Recreation in 2005. It is entitled “Lifeguard Challenge”. In 2010, we again hosted the event. Five teams competed: Richmond Heights, Bexley Pool from South Euclid, Highland Heights, and Lyndhurst. New this year – Wickliffe! The event began with a serious free style relay. The other races provided much amusement to the onlookers. These included an obstacle course, cannon, dive or twist competition and the always anticipated “synchronized” swimming demonstration. Richmond Heights won the “synchronized” swimming portion, but the overall crown went to Lyndhurst. This year featured “Women in Music” as the overall theme. \$400 in donations was given to the Domestic Violence Center in Cleveland.

Family Day 2011 was held on Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>. Our Family Day shirts were again designed, gratis, by my daughter Allison. Once again, we set up staff to sell tickets and wristbands to Family Day patrons to reimburse the City for the cost of the entertainment. We were able to continue to offer the rides at very low ticket prices. Fortunately, the civic organizations stepped up to the challenge as well and we had a wonderful turnout of groups selling a wide variety of foods, desserts, beverages etc. The inflatables for the park this year included the Spider Zone, Gotta Go Racers, Giant Slide, a kiddies’ inflatable dinosaur, a preschool inflatable oasis (donated by Dave’s Supermarket) and the Extreme Trampoline. We also had tattoo artistry and Family Time Entertainment. Dina Greisl, Sgt. Denise DiBiase and Chief Rowe did an excellent job with the tremendous task of choosing a Teen Citizen for the year! After individually interviewing the teen candidates and reviewing the recommendations from their schools, Annie Matz was selected as the runner-up and Gabrielle Kisner as the Teen Citizen of the Year. The candidates this year also included: Alexandra Arlesic, Jordan Green, Rachel Rielinger and Joshua Dingus. The Citizen of the Year was

also celebrated this year and the superior candidates included Edward Crouse, Roy Schlachter, Evelyn Kaden, Dan Saltzman and winner - Jerry Hoover. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Don Lazar and his incredible service team for their excellence in wiring and preparing our park. Also, Service sets up the tents that we have purchased over the years.

Recreation was also awarded the Cuyahoga County Solid Waste District Grant. This enabled us to purchase recycling trash receptacles for the Fire Department, Police Department, City Hall, DeSan Park, the Kiwanis Lodge and the Community Park and Pool. Included in the grant were monies for signage for the receptacles. We have receptacles for both metal and plastic recycling. Thank you to the Service Department for readying the receptacles, affixing the signs and placing them around the City as well as emptying them. These receptacles were first displayed at Family Day.

The City Halloween Party was held on Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. With the perfect fall evening, 108 participants enjoyed hayrides through the Richmond Heights Community Park, a bean bag toss into a ghost for a prize, ghost bowling, wrap your own caramel apple, popcorn and refreshments. The Kiwanis Hall was decorated in orange twinkle lights, spider webs and flying ghosts. Special thanks to Service Director Don Lazar for driving the hayride and the Benander family for giving out candy and entertaining the hayride participants when they arrived at the scorekeeper booths by the ball fields.

Recreation had its twelfth annual Richmond Heights Craft Show on Saturday, November 6th. It was a perfect fall day for our show. We had 55 tables dedicated to our crafters – another full house! Thanks again to Nancy Benander and Anthony Gimellia for all their hard work in coordinating this event. Once again, the crafters expressed their desire to return to our show next year!

This was our fourteenth year for our Breakfast with Santa! This is always a ‘sold out’ event. Besides Mr. and Mrs. Claus (Terry and Kathy Yerkic), we had “Mickey and Minnie Mouse” posing with the younger children giving out bendable elves and reindeer. Santa and Mrs. Claus gave out small boxes of breakfast cereal. The children also enjoyed face painting, making sticker snow globes and decorate-your-own reindeer cupcakes. We were also entertained by the Northeast Ohio Youth Orchestra quartet. The children and their parents dug into fresh hot pancakes and sausages made by our Service Department volunteers on griddles provided by our American Legion Post. Recreation Board members, volunteers from our Garden Club and students from Richmond Heights, St. Paschal Baylon PSR, Benedictine High, Laurel

High, John Carroll University, Ursuline and Notre Dame College assisted at various activities. Once again, a true community effort!

Recreation sponsored the following programs in 2010:

Spring Training Camp	Girls Softball	Golf Camp
Indoor Soccer	Spring & Fall Soccer	Preschool Soccer
Swim Team	Exer- Swim	Basketball Camp
Basketball Leagues	Volleyball	Cheerleading
Swim Lessons	Safety Town	Tennis Camp
Track	Coed Softball League	Football Camp
Exercise Classes		

New, in 2010, was the Pooches at the Pool event! Owners and their dogs were invited to the pool on Saturday, September 11. \$1 admission was charged per person and profits were donated to the South Euclid Dog Park. Also on hand were representatives from Camp Bow Wow, a doggy masseuse, South Euclid Dog Park, a few trainers etc. Over 75 dogs enjoyed their time in the pool and the sprayground.

Park volunteers, Sondra Malevan and Howie Briggs volunteered their time in the spring and fall (when the pool is not open) to unlock the pool restrooms for patrons of the park. Our thanks to them for providing this valuable, and for many, timely service!

Recreation Coordinator, Anthony Gimellia was able to persuade University Health System/ Richmond Heights Hospital to donate \$7,500 towards our Recreation program! This figure helped us to meet our budget without cutting salaries or programming any further. Anthony also worked hard in 2010 on baseball field rentals. He was able to bring in \$16,395 in rentals alone and he feels confident that that figure will increase in 2011. This number is a \$4,100 increase over 2009 rentals. Anthony continues to be a top-notch editor and publisher of the Richmond Heights City Edition. I know that many of our residents use this publication faithfully for current

information on a wide range of topics encompassing all services offered by the City.

The Recreation Department functions well because of the flexibility and caring attitude of the people who work in here. We truly appreciate the many people who make us 'look good'! Our thanks to:

- The Mayor and Council for their ongoing support of our department and our programs.
- The Recreation Board for their help at all of our special events and their guidance in regulating our programs.
- Dina Greisl, Joyce Kandrach and Chris Znidarsic who assist us with customers, Information Board, City Edition, copying, faxing and too much more to mention.
- Our Finance Director, Lynda Rossiter, for her sound financial advice and assistance.
- Judy Karla for her patience in dealing with our 'last minute' requests and her speed in processing them.
- Our Police, Auxiliary Police and Fire Departments for their professionalism and their assistance whenever we have a need.
- And special thanks to the Service Department without whom we would not have a pool to swim in or fields to play on. Also, Service has our overflowing gratitude for all of their work on Family Day.

It is my privilege to be the Richmond Heights Recreation Director.

Teri Drda  
Recreation Director