



## **HUMAN SERVICES CIVIC & CULTURAL**

*Photo by Cheyenne Baskowski,  
Winner in the Summer Youth Category,  
300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Photo Contest.*



**Coventry Human Services  
Social Services/Youth Services/Elderly Services  
Annual Report 2011/2012**



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**The Coventry Human Services Department** is a multi-generational service agency. The goal of our department is to allow Coventry residents to achieve and maintain personal and social well-being and to provide positive youth development programs. The Human Services Administrator holds a MSW, is a member of the National Association of Social Workers, Municipal Human Rights Officer, Secretary of CLASS, (Connecticut Local Administrators of Social Services) and attends their monthly training meetings. The Administrative Assistant is a certified CHOICES Counselor (Connecticut's Health, Outreach, Information, Counseling & Eligibility Screening Program). The Youth Services Coordinator is the Municipal Agent for Youth and staffs the Youth Service Bureau, which is funded in part through the State Department of Education. She administers the grant from the North East Communities Against Substance Abuse. We oversee the grants to regional agencies that provide services to residents.

**Year Round Programs:**

- Advocacy
- Adult Wellness Clinics
- Budget Counseling
- Case Management
- CHOICE's Counseling - 312 clients received help with ConnPACE, Title 19, Medicare Savings Plans, as well as the Medicare D Prescription Drug Program enrollment and information.
- Civil Preparedness Emergency List
- Community Restitution Programs Adult: **2 cases**
- Counseling Services
- Crisis Intervention

- Direct Services:
  - ❖ Social Services **264 cases**
  - ❖ Elderly Services – **289 cases**
- Drug and Alcohol Information
- Emergency Call List
- Energy Assistance ACCESS Applications - **146**
- Food Bank – **149 requests**
- Fundraising
- Housing Information
- Information and Referrals
- Landlord/Tenant Rights information
- Special Needs Program

#### **ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS**

**Department of Agriculture** –72-\$15.00 vouchers for the Farmer’s Market were distributed to Coventry seniors and persons with disabilities who received Renter’s Rebate assistance.

- **Renter’s Rebate Program** – 77 applications were processed for senior and disabled renters in the form of checks by the State Office of Policy and Management for this program.
- **The Trash Bag Waiver Program** was replaced by the tipper barrel program and in yard service increased as senior and disabled residents needed more help taking the barrels to and from the street for pick up.
- **Holiday Committee:** Staff as well as volunteers from the community coordinate the distribution of donated food and gifts to residents.
  - Thanksgiving:** 108 families, single adults, elderly and disabled residents received Thanksgiving food.
  - Christmas:** 115 families, single adults, elderly and disabled received food and gifts for the holidays.

#### **Fundraising/Donations**

- Special Needs Fund -Donations received **\$14,147.00**  
**\$13,800.00** used for client needs, housing, utilities, prescriptions, etc., grocery cards
  - Salvation Army - Fundraising
    - “Bell Ringers” – \$12,800.00**
    - Mail appeal – 1,200.00**
    - FEMA – Zero this year**
  - **Expenditures for Emergency Needs**  
**Salvation Army Fund** used **\$12,817.00 for 70** households for food, utilities, housing, medical, “Gearing up to Learn Program”, camp, etc. (families may be helped with more than one need depending on circumstances)
- Fuel Assistance (Clergy Fuel Bank) \$7,716.00** was used for families who met the criteria to receive assistance.

## **THE HUMAN SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Representatives from the town, churches, schools, Police Dept., Recreation Dept., senior groups and other organizations attend the meetings. The public is always welcome.

In May Heidi Donnelly retired after over 18 years of service to the Town of Coventry and The Human Services Department. Her caring and nurturing personality will be missed by many of the residents in town.

## **SENIOR CENTER HIGHLIGHTS:**

The Senior Center had **4,794 visits** last year from senior and disabled area residents. This includes many regular visitors who participate in the weekly programs.

### **Basic weekly programming includes:**

- Monday: cribbage, lunch, movies
- Tuesday (Noon closing): exercise program
- Wednesday: Billiards, "Let's Talk", Veterans' Advocate by appointment
- Thursday: exercise program, billiards, Setback, other cards and games
- Friday: Billiards, Quilting Class, Setback, other cards and games

### **Basic monthly programming includes:**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday: Secret Chef
- The Visiting Nurse and Health Services of CT, Inc. comes three times each month to do blood pressure screening and also on the second Thursday does an **"Ask the Nurse"** program during which seniors are able to privately discuss health question with the R.N. This has become a very well used program. Once a month the VNHS presents a "Wellness Program", i.e. Home Safety, "Aging with Grace", "Anxiety in Elders" and other things of topical interest.
- The Coventry Senior Club uses the Lodge each third Wednesday for their Club meeting.
- The Fall & Winter had a monthly "Book Club" meeting on Thursdays.

### **Special Programming:**

- AARP 55 Alive Drivers Safety Program was offered in the Fall and Spring.
- Computer Training was offered on Tuesday mornings by Sharon Pacholski in the Fall and Spring.
- A special Veterans' Day observance was held on November 8<sup>th</sup> with a ceremony, speakers and a light lunch.
- Chair Massage was offered in May and June by a local licensed Massage Therapist.
- June 16<sup>th</sup> we invited other Senior Centers to join us in a Sports Day to play Ping-Pong, Billiards, Setback, Wii Bowling, Horseshoes, and more in tournament play. The day ended with a Pizza Party. It was a very hot day so the Horseshoes were not very popular but the inside games were; and very bit of Pizza was gone at the end of the day at 6:00 p.m.
- Special Holiday Parties were held for Halloween, in December, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, and several BBQ's. These were all very popular and well attended.

In March the Human Services Department welcomed Sarah Taylor West as our new Senior Center Coordinator. Numbers soared during her first quarter at the center. She has put her special touch on many of our more “seasoned” programs bringing new life to them as well as creating new programming for our seniors in town. We are delighted to have her as part of our team!

## **SENIOR VAN PROGRAM:**

# Days of Vehicle Usage: 159  
# of People Riding: 92  
# of One-Way Trips: 1284  
# Volunteer Hours: 722  
# Miles Total: 9163

Volunteers Drivers: Dave Lamore\*, Dick Frye\*, Bill Hoffman\*, Ken Stein\*, Bill Wajda\*, Kim Homans, Mary Ellen Hetrick\*, David McCrory\*, Bill Root, Tim Ackert, Brian Coss, Christine, Max Ferguson, John Thayer and Debbie Locke. Several of these people also provide private car transportation on occasion.

Christine Coss joined our team of drivers in June, while Max Ferguson retired in April. Three new drivers began training but left for other employment and personal reasons before seeing service. We continue to be in need of additional drivers.

Private car volunteers include: Carol Moriarty\*, Dick Gawitt\*, Barbara Rose\*, Claudette Polhemus, David McCrory, Bill Wajda\*, Jane Luthi, Cathy Root and Bill Root, Karen Renfro.

Volunteer drivers are asked to drive one morning a month. Drivers share the responsibility of covering the unassigned days during the month.

Private car drivers are called upon for requests to locations beyond the scope of the program. These requests are primarily for medical appointments in Hartford, Farmington, Glastonbury and elsewhere. Private car drivers also assist when all the daily requests cannot all be met by the van/bus schedule.

In February 2012, Coventry’s new 14-passenger mini-bus was introduced into service. This vehicle was purchased with a grant from the State of Connecticut and funding from the Town of Coventry. The mini-bus was delivered in the fall of 2012 but delays in driver licensing at the Department of Motor Vehicles prevented us from using the new mini-bus until February. Both the new min-bus and the old van are now used to transport passengers.

Coventry’s State Matching Grant for Elderly and Disabled Demand Responsive Transportation (MGP) from the Connecticut Department of Transportation was funded at 25% reduction rate for FY12 and is also being funded at this rate for FY13. As a result, some aspects of the program including extended Dial-A-Ride (DAR) hours, mileage reimbursement and wellness trips had scaled back to compensate for the lost funds.

Grant funds provide operating expenses for the Coventry Transportation Program’s two vehicles (fuel, repairs and maintenance, coordinator salary), extended DAR hours provided to Coventry residents before and after regular DAR hours of operation (transportation for medical

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\* Indicates five or more years of volunteer service.

appointments and employment); Senior Wellness Trips for elderly and disabled residents of Coventry (affordable handicap-accessible day trips) and the Mileage Reimbursement Program (allows reimbursement of mileage expenses to riders for transportation to medical facilities and related services beyond what is currently provided by the Coventry Transportation Program.)

The Program continues to offer transportation for senior citizens and disabled residents on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays to locations in Coventry, Manchester, Tolland, and Vernon. We cooperate with WRTD Dial-A-Ride to meet the transportation needs of Coventry residents. Transportation is provided for medical appointments, nutritional and other types of counseling, grocery and personal shopping, voting, senior workshops, Senior Center activities, town events and entertainment.

The “Coventry Rides” Transportation Program continues to be advertised on the town web page as well as in the Coventry Monthly, local newspapers and Channel 13. Handouts and mailings are provided for the residents of Orchard Hills, Senior Club members and the Coventry Senior Center/Transportation Mailing List. Brochures are available in offices and businesses throughout Coventry.

Special low-cost “Wellness” Trips continue to be offered to senior citizens and the disabled. Transportations costs associated with these trips are paid for with MGP Department of Transportation Grant funding, allowing the cost of the trips to be kept very affordable. The following trips were offered this year: Senior Outing, Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York City, Nathan Hale Birthday Celebration Trip to the State Capitol and the Slater Mill Museum in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Handicap-accessible coach transportation was used for these trips.

With the purchase of Coventry’s 14-passenger mini-bus, we are also able to offer smaller, local trips, such as to the Windham Theater Guild productions and the Hebron Fair.

The most important goal for FY13 is to recruit additional drivers to meet the increasing number of requests for transportation.

The Coventry Rides Transportation Program is supported by funding from the Town of Coventry and grants from the Department of Transportation.

## **COVENTRY SENIOR CENTER**

The Senior Center had **4,794 visits** last year from Senior and disabled area residents. This includes many regular visitors who participate in the weekly and monthly programs.

### **Basic weekly programming included:**

- Monday: Cribbage, “Let’s Talk”, Movie Matinee
- Tuesday (noon closing): Exercise Class
- Wednesday: Wii bowling, Billiards, Veterans’ Advocate (by appointment)
- Thursday: Exercise Class, Billiards, Setback, What’s Brewing?
- Friday: Billiards, Quilting, Setback & Kaluki

### **Basic monthly programming included:**

- Visiting Nurse and Health Services of CT, Inc. provided blood pressure and blood sugar screenings twice per month, as well as the “Ask the Nurse” once per month, a program during which seniors are able to privately discuss health questions with the R.N. This has become a very well-known and well utilized program.
- Once per month, several seniors “pack for the Troops” and assemble care packages for local servicemen who are deployed. This program is also supported by American Legion Post 52.
- The Coventry Senior Club meets one Wednesday per month in the Lodge.
- The Footcare Clinic provided toenail clipping on a bimonthly basis (August, October, April, June). On average, between 8-12 seniors took advantage of this program.

**Special Programming** VNHS provided seasonal wellness presentations on topics tailored to seniors, including “Tackling Life’s Transitions,” “Walking Gently in the Shadows,” a program on dealing with grief, and “10 Tips for Healthy Living.”

- VNHSC also provided a 6 week class in the fall and again in the spring called “How’s Your Balance.” The class was well attended with over 22 regular participants.
- The AARP 55 Alive Drivers Safety Program was offered in October. More than a dozen seniors participated and earned a reduction on their individual car insurance premiums. This program will continue to be offered on an Annual basis.
- The Secret Chef program was held the first Wednesday of the month during October and November. This program was popular and well attended.
- The English Lady, Ms. Haseley-Jones visited the Senior Center on October 4<sup>th</sup> and hosted a lively discussion on gardening and her own techniques. Light refreshments were served and over 50 seniors attended this exciting event.
- VNHSC hosted a Flu Clinic at the Senior Center on October 5<sup>th</sup>.
- The American Legion and the Senior Center hosted the Annual Veteran’s Day Tribute on November 9<sup>th</sup>. Over 50 seniors attended the celebration and honored Veterans with a Presentation of the Colors and a 21 Gun Salute. The American Legion also recognized the Senior Center and all of the seniors who regularly work to support Veterans’ programs throughout the year.
- On December 5<sup>th</sup>, seniors and members of the American Legion hosted a “Welcome Home Party for Returning Veterans” at the Senior Center and welcomed Coventry resident Colonel Herb Ridyard home from his tour in Iraq as a surgeon.
- The AARP Tax Aid program provided tax assistance to over 40 seniors between February and April. This program will continue to be offered on an Annual basis.
- The Coventry Police Department co-sponsored a Senior Citizens Police Academy course, an 8-week program during which seniors met weekly with Coventry Officers for discussions and demonstrations and learned general PD operations. This program was very well received and more than 10 seniors graduated with Certificates on April 27<sup>th</sup>.
- The Senior Center Fitness Room re-opened in May with monthly Fitness Room Orientation Sessions provided by local trainer and owner of Coventry Fitness Shannon Weymouth. Seniors who have completed the orientation as well as the required paperwork are free to use the Fitness Room when the Senior Center is open.

8 seniors attended the sessions in May and June, and subsequently logged 19 visits to the Fitness Room.

- Monthly Reflexology Appointments were introduced at the Senior Center in May. Reflexology has been found to offer many health benefits specific to seniors, including increased balance and joint mobility. Deb Turner, Licensed Massage Therapist and owner of Coventry's Harmony Massage offers seniors a discounted rate for a 25 minute session. Over 15 seniors took advantage of this new Health Room offering during May and June. This excellent service will continue to be offered on a monthly basis.
- Seniors enjoyed several special luncheons and holiday parties throughout the year, including an End of the Summer Chicken BBQ in July, a Grandparent's Day Ice Cream Social in September, a Holiday Celebration in December, a Mid-Winter Hoe-Down in January, a Mardi-Gras Celebration in February, a Mad Hatter's Tea in March, an April Showers Luncheon, a Mother's Day Tea and a Memorial Day Picnic.

## REGIONAL GRANTS

**CT Legal Services** (\$1000.00 grant) Legal services provided at "no charge" to low income residents, 1-800 453-3320. 1-800-296-1467.

**Dial-A-Ride:** (\$12,463.00 grant) Door-to-door transportation service for Coventry residents. Service is offered throughout the Windham Region (10 towns). A 48-hour notice is required. A fee donation of \$2.00 per ride is requested. Each year they provide more than 2,200 rides. 456-1462

**McSweeney Senior Center** (\$1,500 grant) A regional senior center offering educational, social, recreational, health and dental programs, serves daily nutritious meals and has a Senior discount program. 423-4524

**Meals On Wheels** (\$3,710.00 grant) TVCCA Senior Nutrition Program provides home-delivered meals to residents who are unable to provide their own meals. A medical referral is necessary. 1-800-953-1365

**NECASA (Northeast Communities Against Substance Abuse)**(\$300 grant). They monitor and provide technical support to the local prevention councils and oversight of the \$2,400 town grant. They distribute discount cards with prevention information to all fifth and eighth grade students. 779-9253

**Sexual Assault Crisis Center Of Eastern CT** (\$1,000 grant) Provides information, prevention education, support and advocacy for victims of sexual assault. 456-3595

**United Services** (\$2,400.00 grant) Local funding is matched by state funding to provide child abuse prevention treatment programs, Domestic Violence programs, shelters, group therapy and other services. 456-2261

**Visiting Nurse And Health Services of CT, Inc.** (Budget: \$4,000, fee for service funding) Provides skilled nursing, home health aides, homemaker-companion services, medical social work, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy adult day care and meals programs to homebound residents and elder wellness programs and the

flu vaccine program. 872-9163

## YOUTH SERVICES

- Submitted final reports and grant applications for SDE YSB Entitlement and Enhancement grant, in addition to DMHAS/NECASA grant.

### Direct Service Programs

- 17 Camperships were awarded to 10 families, allowing youth to attend summer who otherwise would not be able.
  - The second annual, "Chocolate, Cheese and Cheers" fundraising event was held at Cassidy Hill Vineyard. All proceeds went to the Campership fund. Over \$2000 was raised through ticket sales and silent auction items. The event was well received and will be likely be held again in 2013.
  - Assisted 2 families, register 2 kids for the Salvation Army Camp Connri, located in Ashford, CT. The week-long, over-night camp is free to qualifying families, funded by the Salvation Army.
  - Gearing Up to Learn, Back to School Program, assisted 22 Coventry families with backpacks, school supplies and Payless shoe cards. 39 children started the school year off on the right foot as a result of this program.
  - NOMADS held one activity every other month throughout the school year. Trips included, indoor rock climbing, skiing, and snowboarding..
  - Positive Connections Mentoring program matched 7 high school students with 7 Robertson School 3rd, 4th and 5th graders. The group met on Thursdays from March through June. In addition to their strong commitment to homework, the group was engaged in many arts and crafts, teambuilding, and cultural activities.
  - Conducted mandatory Youth Job Bank meeting/training on 6/14/12 for new members to go over program policies, procedures and job skills overview. Ice-breakers, program nuts and bolts and refreshments rounded out the event, attended by 8 youth in middle and high school.
  - Staff from the CPR-O Heart offered a Babysitters Certification Course to students 11-18 years old. 18 kids received their certification, and the program was funded by grant monies received from the State Department of Education.
  - As a result of state funding, 3 Coventry high school students participated in the Summer Youth Employment Program, administered by EASTCONN.
  - Provided drop in office hours as part of open door policy to middle and high school youth.
  - Regional Camp Staff Training – was hosted by Coventry Parks and Recreation this quarter. Cat Torcasio and Crystal Morawitz conducted a workshop for over 60 camp counselors on bullying; what it is and what is camp staff role in dealing with it.
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- Youth & Family Cases 28 cases
  - Community Service 18 cases
  - Community Restitution 0 cases
  - Youth Job Bank Matches 19 matches
  - Youth Job Bank Members 8 new members
  - Juvenile Review Board 0 cases



## Coventry Housing Authority Annual Report 2012

The Coventry Housing Authority is a non-profit public corporation that operates Orchard Hill Estates I & II Elderly Housing complex. The Authority consists of five volunteer Commissioners appointed by the Town Council. We report continued occupancy of all 80 units.

The current census is 59 female and 29 male tenants; 7 couples are included in this census. There are 58 single apartments and 22 double apartments. Of the 80 apartments, 8 are fully handicapped accessible units. All are one bedroom and all are equipped with emergency alarms as well as smoke detectors.

Current income limits are as follows:

### **HUD Project**

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| One Person  | \$18,450 |
| Two Persons | \$21,050 |

### **State Project**

|             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| One Person  | \$45,500 |
| Two Persons | \$52,000 |

Laurie Pinkston is the Executive Director. She takes care of all administrative and accounting for both projects. Julie Bradley is the Resident Service Coordinator. She assists tenants with ConnPACE applications, Title 19 applications, setting up home-making services and does tenant assessments. The office is also an Energy Assistance site working in conjunction with the Access Agency in Willimantic.

We have a monthly blood pressure and blood sugar screening clinic. This clinic is available to all Coventry residents as well. We have a bi-monthly foot care clinic that is also available to all Coventry residents. Books are available to be delivered from the Booth and Dimock Library.

The current operating budget is \$335,070 which is a Per Unit Monthly Cost of \$349. and includes property taxes of \$17,775. paid to the Town of Coventry and an annual sewer fee of \$3348 paid to the WPCA.

The Authority maintains representation on the Coventry Fair Housing Committee and on the Housing Rehabilitation Commission.



## COVENTRY PARKS & RECREATION ANNUAL REPORT: FY 2011/2012

*The mission of Coventry Parks and Recreation Department is to foster active lifestyles, social well-being, and environmental stewardship.*

### PLAYFUL CITY USA

2011 began with the news of our designation as a Playful City USA 2011, one of the 151 USA honorees in the nation! KaBOOM!, the national non-profit organization dedicated to saving play, created Playful City USA in 2007, advocating for local policies that increase play opportunities for children. We received recognition via USA Weekend Labor Day edition delivered to 22 million households, Facebook, Twitter, press releases, and *Welcome* signs at town lines. The Town received a \$750 Spruce Your Playground Grant to purchase safety mulch for Patriots Park during our Play Day event at Pumpkin Fest.



Ms. Rubin worked with Planning Department staff to develop our GIS map which shows population density in relation to parks and playscape locations within town. Our Playful City "Map of Play" helps determine where there are "Play Deserts" to best locate potential future development sites. We hosted "Hey! Let's Play!" workshop in May, in addition to a "playful" display at the Library. Ms. Rubin met with the Coventry Economic Development Commission regarding capitalizing on our designation and a donation was made to the Tolland County Chamber of Commerce fundraiser of a Playful City USA themed gift basket.

Director Rubin and DPW Superintendent Doug Reese inspected all town playgrounds. Ms. Rubin also met with School Superintendent David Petrone to plan a "Playground Supervision and Safety" series of workshops for child care providers, teachers, and parents. A Playground Maintenance component will be included to help school custodians and DPW staff.

An application was submitted to Kaboom! for re-designation as a 2012 Playful City and a Challenge construction grant application was submitted. To be eligible for the matching grant, a series of actions were required including the recruitment of volunteers; uploaded photos & milestones on our project website [www.ourdreamplayground.org](http://www.ourdreamplayground.org); hosting several meetings with volunteers; appointing team captains; developing a budget and timeline; determining the site (with help from the Town Engineer); determining site prep costs with help from the DPW Director; solicited letters of support and petitions, selecting desired equipment.



The Laidlaw Park Playscape Committee ran a coloring contest during the month of May to help determine a committee logo, and get the kids in town involved with the project. Ms. Rubin presented a session on Playful City USA at the Massachusetts Recreation & Park Association State Conference in Sturbridge, and 2 workshops at Maine Recreation & Park Association Annual State Conference.

June began with the happy announcement that Coventry has once again been named a Playful City USA for the 2012 year! Congratulations Coventry! Unfortunately, that news was somewhat diminished after getting the bad news that we did not get selected for the Challenge Construction grant. The committee decided to take time to re-group in the fall. Ms. Rubin had a teleconference meeting with staff from Kaboom! regarding grant decisions and next steps.

### PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

The Recreation Commission held its summer meetings touring our park facilities, with July's meeting at Lisicke Beach, and August at Creaser Park. Todd Penney, Town Engineer gave a detailed presentation on Miller Richardson and Laidlaw Park progress at the September meeting. We welcomed our newest Recreation Commission member Drew

Keleher, and Ms. Rubin provided him with an orientation. Kathy Zanotti, Technology Director for the Schools, provided training on use of the Smart Board so that the Rec Commission can use this tool in the future. The Commission is planning an Open Forum on Creaser Park, with Commissioners Sean Butler and Jared Luce, and Eric Thomas of the DEEP leading the way. Ms. Rubin and Eric Trott, Town Planner drafted a proposal to Yale's Internship program for Creaser Park. The Commission and staff addressed inconsistencies and vagueness of the current Parks & Recreation Town Ordinances. Meetings with the Steering Committee and the Police Chief helped develop new recommendations.

#### GENERAL ADMINISTRATION/PLANNING AND OVERVIEW

The Parks & Recreation Department operations rely closely on the seasons – as the weather changes, so do the types of programs & services offered. Throughout the year, there are many routine monthly meetings such as Department Head, Commission, Human Services Advisory Board, Worker's Safety & Wellness Committee meeting, monthly departmental review with Town Manager, and Eastern Highlands Health District ACHIEVE team.

The Director also had several meetings with the new DPW Director, David Gofstein and the new Superintendent of Operations, Doug Reese to coordinate our parks maintenance budgets, upcoming special events, punch lists for facility maintenance, etc. Staff met with the Town Manager and Finance Director to finalize the Capital, Operating, and to review and analyze Special Revenue Fund sustainability. Ms. Rubin also attended the Town Budget Hearing. Other administrative duties were handled as follows:

- Compiled, edited and submitted the annual report 2010-2011;
- Completed annual performance review & goal setting for Recreation Supervisor;
- Addressed personnel matters;
- Assisted the Human Services Department with Senior Center interview panel to hire the new Director;
- Participation in School Readiness Council meetings, STEPS Collaborative & STEPS Health Committee meetings
- Sports Council – Quarterly meetings with Youth Sport League leadership to prepare for upcoming sports schedules and maintenance needs. Follow up meetings with League reps to confirm permits, schedules;
- ACHIEVE Chart meeting and planning for the Mark Fenton visit (a consultant and well known public speaker), followed by a windshield tour with Mark Fenton;
- Provided letter of support for Safe Routes to Schools grant;
- Helped organize a Freedom Trail guided trip with CHS Chinese Exchange program;
- Library Directors re: spring program collaboration.

#### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Rubin received training from student intern Jeff Nowak on video movie making for our You Tube & Facebook sites. Recreation Supervisor Caterina Torcasio attended several Social Media webinars. Ms. Rubin participated in CRPA Webinar on Alternative Funding Sources, and the New England Sports Turf Managers Association turf workshop at Pomfret Academy with DPW Director David Gofstein and Maintainer Monica Bragdon.

Ms. Rubin and Ms. Torcasio attended the annual Connecticut Recreation & Parks Association Conference at Mohegan Sun Casino. They also networked with their peers and vendors and Ms. Rubin also received continuing education credits towards her professional certification.

At the request of a Town Managers' group, Ms. Rubin was asked to coordinate a Regional Recreation Director's meeting to begin to look at ways we can share regional services. 18 towns were invited to participate, with varying towns represented at different quarterly meetings.

Both Ms. Rubin and Ms. Torcasio attended Fire Extinguisher training and On-Line purchase order training, a Customer Service Webinar, "2012 Playful City Celebration" Webinar and the CRPA Spring Quarterly Meeting, "Seasonal Employees Wage & Employment Law," and another Ms. Rubin attended a CT Parks Association workshop regarding Landscaping

Plants and Construction of Sports Facilities. She also participated in CPM 101 Performance Measurement Training & follow-up meetings with DPW Director to finalize data collection.

Ms. Rubin continued to serve on the CRPA Legislative Committee and was active this Legislative session with meetings and conference calls, providing testimony on a Background Check bill and Landowner Liability bill. She also serves on the CRPA Bylaws Committee and attended their meetings as needed.



The Department earned a Risk Management Achievement Award from the CT Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) for our day-camp staff training program. The use of the on-line training program provided a quality, comprehensive, and cost-effective method to enhance the skills of the staff on areas such as bullying prevention, sexual harassment, and supervisory skills—all important topics for staff that are entrusted with the supervision of summer recreation programs. The Town received the award at CIRMA's annual Risk Management Achievement Awards program on May 18th, at the Rocky Hill Marriott.

### PARKS-FACILITIES-CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS-PLANNING

**Patriots Park:** “Good Clean Fun!” Playscape Spruce up prior to Pumpkin Play Day was a huge success with over 20 volunteers helping to spread the mulch and disinfect and polish the playground apparatus. Check out our You Tube video of the day: <http://youtu.be/T39gih1qnTA>



**Creaser Park:** A *United Way Day of Caring* event with over 40 people volunteering from Travelers Insurance provided landscaping work and painting the buildings inside and out. Staff also conducted research to review heating operation and assess conditions and options for improving efficiencies.

#### **Miller Richardson:**

- Staff assisted with the STEAP grant bid for construction of the football & practice fields at the landfill by helping to site two entrance signs and meeting with staff to select amenities;
- The Miller Richardson snack shack was brought up to health code for use of the grill, which required electrical work on the vent fan and re-wiring;
- Boy Scouts Community service project at Miller Richardson include general cleanup & painting of buildings.

**Laidlaw Park:** The Sports Council, staff and the Town Manager reviewed plans for the accessible parking lot project. Milone & MacBroom provided a price estimate for Laidlaw Master Plan conceptual design, to include options for the transfer station re-location and re-working the baseball field design.

In other parks-related business, Rubin had several discussions with the Town Manager regarding barn rentals, rental forms, and worked on policy & procedures manual and attended photo opportunity at the Nathan Hale Homestead for the new barn. Ms. Rubin also facilitated the use of Creaser Park for a military training event. Ms. Rubin attended a staff meeting for the New Main Street grant to consider options for Mill Brook Park, and attended Coventry Fest Planning meeting & on-site meeting.

### BEACH OPERATIONS/AQUATICS

Throughout the summer of 2011, Ms. Rubin provided daily on-site (& by telephone during weekends) support to lifeguard, gate & maintenance staffs including scheduling, while the office staff kept busy selling beach stickers and processing swim registrations. There were a few complaints about discourteous gate attendants, the ban on floaties at beaches, geese, and the issue of not having a raft. One park maintainer was terminated and replaced. To improve security for our gate attendants, Ms. Rubin met with Police Chief Palmer & the Finance Director, Beth Bauer to discuss cash handling. Lifeguard In-Service trainings were provided by Carmina Valente, our Aquatics Instructor on topics including Rotations/Scanning, Assertiveness, Patron Behavior, First Aid



review, missing bathers, and RID Factor. We ordered 2 new 50" rescue tubes to comply with Red Cross new recommendations, daily beach passes to replenish supply, and no swimming signs for the Waterski Club area & UConn boat ramp area. On Thursday 7/21/11 and Friday 7/22/11 during the heat wave that swept the State, we opened the Patriots Park Lodge as a "Cooling Center." The beach was closed for 2 days due to water quality issues.

The beach season wrapped up with Patriots Park open on weekends through Labor Day and Lisicke closing when Day Camp ended in August. Beaches closed for the season on Labor Day with a good weather weekend. Staff helped clean out the storage sheds, inventory and paperwork to close the season. Buoys & rope/floats were brought in, cleaned and stored for the winter. Overall, attendance and revenues were about the same as the previous summer and staff did an excellent job providing safe & clean beaches for our residents and visitors. Seasonal Park Maintainers kept the park clean and lifeguards had a rather uneventful season, which is always good news.



Once the swim buoys, ropes and floats are in storage, it's a sure sign that summer is over. You may ask why the lifeguard chairs are still on the beaches. The new chairs are made of recycled plastic lumber, allowing us to install them permanently with concrete footings, thus reducing the opportunity for vandals to throw the chairs in the lake, etc. 2012 Beach Operations start in mid-winter but really gear up in the spring. Routine annual preparation includes getting ready for Beach Sticker Sales, daily permits and Senior Center passes, installing ropes & buoys at both beaches, several trips to the hardware store and locksmith, and issuing permits & collecting fees for Ice Cream Truck vendor.

Ms. Rubin continued to confirm returning staff. She conducted interviews of new staff for all positions: Lifeguards, Gatekeepers & Park Maintainers, hired and confirmed employee paperwork, staff training schedules and curriculum, and ordered supplies, working closely with Carmina Valente, our Aquatics Director. Carmina set up new Red Cross changes in curriculum for swim instructors & lifeguards, reviewed materials for training & orientation, updated job descriptions and the staff manual. Training included Lifeguard, Gatekeeper and Park Maintainer Training, Lifeguard pre-season swim testing and skills review, and site orientation at both beaches. In-service training will be held throughout the summer and will include drills with Lake Patrol and the Fire Department.

It is expected that the summer of 2012 will be busy since the economy has not improved enough for prolonged vacations away from home. This year, in an attempt to reduce congestion in the parking lots at Patriots Park, Ms. Rubin met on-site with the Town Engineer and the Public Works Director to map out some off-pavement areas. The Recreation Commission approved a rate increase from \$17 per vehicle to \$20 at Patriots Park gate, to address the problem of making change on weekends as well as a means to increase revenue.

### 300<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

**PARADE:** Bi-monthly meetings were held as we got closer to the big date of Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>. Parks and Recreation staff is supporting the event by handling communications with participants, maintaining financial records, contracts and purchase orders, updating budget projections; determined insurance needs, for marching units. A special meeting on sponsorships was held, as was a meeting with UConn Club Sports Director to get student involvement. Other committee members are working on volunteers, logistics, invitations for dignitaries, marching order, reviewing stand, sponsors, etc.



**FUNDRAISING:** Preparations have included researching & contacting companies for fundraising methods, contacting State Department of Revenue regarding sales tax requirements and getting permission from the Town Council to fundraise. Parks & Recreation began selling the 300<sup>th</sup> Committee Fundraiser Beads and Nathan Hale Mountain Laurels to benefit the 300<sup>th</sup> Parade. Posters were put up around Town, and the information was added to our website, Facebook and Twitter pages. 150 beads in total were sold to raise \$1500 for the parade. Volunteers from the Parade

Committee manned booths at the Indoor Farmer's Market and at Christmas in the Village to sell the items. The Mountain Laurels were delivered in April. Over 125 were sold, profiting an additional \$1250 to the parade fund!

300<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Day of Play: As the Parks & Recreation's contribution to this year's 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, a tentative schedule was set to include a face painter, a Children's Performer, "Mister G", a Hank Keane tribute concert, and staff continued working on confirming other entertainers. We have also confirmed with the Fire Marshal who will be helping with the bonfire at the close of the event. Ms. Rubin met with NE Team Training to plan this year's Triathlon Relay event at 300<sup>th</sup> Jubilee. Our first sponsor, ECHN, has donated \$1,000 toward the event!

## PROGRAMS

In addition to current programs and special events, each season requires program planning for the upcoming season. This includes the seasonal brochures that are sent out to each Coventry household. Ms. Torcasio and Laura Stone, Assistant to the Town Manager researched and analyzed best options for the Town Newsletter and whether the recreation insert should be separate or included. The Winter/Spring 2012 brochure was the last to appear within the Town Newsletter, and the Summer 2012 issue, which was released in May, was the first to be designed and mailed out by *The Chronicle*. Parks & Recreation had to pay for postage (approx. \$800 for the first edition), but the brochure design and printing is covered by ad sales, a cost savings over \$1000 per seasonal issue.

### YOUTH AND ADULT

Year-round adult fitness programs like *Yoga*, *Zumba*<sup>®</sup>, *Tai Chi*, and *Dancin' With Hoops* continued to please, with registrations coming in constantly. Staff continued to offer new programs throughout the year, for both youth and adults, with some running successfully, and other stalling. Youth programs included: *Nature Skills Workshop* with Two Coyotes Wilderness School, *Munchkin Mornings*, *Little Explorers*, and *First Kicks*. Adult Programs included: *Holistic Sound Meditation*, and *Self Defense for Women*. *Little Explorers*, a preschool-aged playgroup for kids and their parents has taken off, forcing staff to add a second day to accommodate everyone wanting to participate! *First Kicks* was popular the first time around in the Fall, but when it was offered a second time in the Spring, we had zero interest. *Holistic Sound Meditation* was offered several times, but was held successfully only twice. *Self Defense* and *Little Explorers* are the only two new programs offered this year that staff will continue to offer.

Trips: Many trips were successfully offered this year, including: *Day One in an Alien Civilization*, *Whale Watch & Deep Sea Fishing*, *James Taylor at Tanglewood*, *A Day On Your Own in Lower Manhattan*, *Radio City Christmas Spectacular*, *A Day On Your Own in NY*, *A Day On Your Own in Boston*, and *Bronx Zoo*.

Ms. Torcasio attended a planning meeting with surrounding Towns including Mansfield, Tolland, Ashford, Willington, Ellington, and Windham in October. The Towns agreed to add new towns to the group, dividing the group into two, running the same trip on the same day with two separate uses. Coventry is now working with Tolland, Ashford, Willington and Ellington with a pick-up location in Tolland, and Mansfield and Windham are working together with a pick-up location in Mansfield. This arrangement seems to be working well for everyone with the major plus being that we can serve a great deal more people with our trips.

Canoe/Kayak Rentals: This program continued through the Summer & Fall 2011, picking up in frequency. Staff trained the Park Maintainers in pick-up and return procedures so they can support office staff in assisting renters with equipment. Unfortunately, 2 kayaks were placed out of service for repairs due to renters scraping the bottoms on the ground. Staff closed the program for the season in October, looking toward improvements for the following year. The program opened up again in May 2012, after Ms. Rubin brought 2 kayaks to Collinsville Canoe & Kayak for repair to leaking through cracks in the bottoms of the boats. While there, she discussed rental operations with the owner, which resulted in a change in policy & procedures. After much discussion, the Parks & Recreation Commission agreed to implement a nominal charge for overnight rentals of the boats (\$5 per day, per boat), due to the damage incurred last season, requiring costly repair. For same-day rentals, there is no charge. Response from renters was positive, and understanding of the need for the charge.

Community Outreach/Collaborations: Ms. Torcasio met with Senior Center/Human Services staff regarding the Center's Fitness Center operations, 300<sup>th</sup> Jubilee planning, and other Senior Center programming. Ms. Torcasio also met with Marilyn Piecuch of the Coventry Early Childhood Center and volunteer Jillian Minor regarding the *Parents as Teachers* playgroup which began in the Fall 2011 at the Patriots Park Community Center Classroom. To supplement this program, Ms. Torcasio also worked with another parent volunteer, Christina Pierce about scheduling a less formal playgroup on another day of the week, which became the *Little Explorers* Program.



Regional Recreation Group: A Regional Recreation meeting was held in December to discuss camp operations and potential collaborations, namely regarding training, trips, performers, policies and procedures. The group agreed on a collaborative regional camp training event for any town interested in participating, with workshops, and teambuilding activities being planned. Patriots Park was chosen as the ideal location for the training, thanks to its picturesque surroundings, and multiple indoor and outdoor locations for activities to be held.

The “Up, Up & Away” *Regional Camp Training Day* was held on Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at Patriots Park, with Coventry, Mansfield, Colchester, Windham, Tolland, Ellington and East Haddam camp staffs participating. In preparation for the day, session descriptions and schedule for the day were compiled by Mansfield Parks & Rec staff, and Ms. Torcasio met with Colchester Camp Staff on-site to discuss workshops, the grounds, and the staff challenge planned for the end of the day. Coventry accepted registrations from participating towns, and coordinated with Subway for lunch. Ms. Rubin prepared & presented 2 sessions, one on “Leadership” and the other called *Getting Along*. In addition, Ms. Torcasio and Crystal Morawitz, Youth Services Coordinator conducted a Bullying Workshop. The day ended with a multiple activity “challenge” for all the camps to participate in, to help build teamwork and cooperation while also engaging in a bit of competition. It was a great day, and the feedback from all of the camp staffs was extremely positive. Regional towns are looking forward to discussing how it went this year, in preparation for next year.

## **SUMMER DAY CAMP**

### Summer Day Camp 2011:

In spite of the economy, Summer Day Camp registrations steadily increased as the weeks passed, as many families signed up as they went, rather than all at once to help with finances. Summer Camp continued with weeks B-H occurring in July and August. Week G (8/8-8/12), including a trip to Ocean Beach Park, was our overall best showing this year. Staff evaluations were conducted midway and at the end the summer; with staff showing consistent improvement. Summer Day Camp ended with a bang on August 19<sup>th</sup> with Camp Carnival! Kids enjoyed treats like cotton candy, popcorn, and sno-cones while enjoying an inflatable water slide, moon bounce, games and activities, music and dancing, face painting and an awards ceremony!

Camp Clean Up was held on Monday, August 22<sup>nd</sup> at Patriots Park. Staff cleaned and organized the art hut, staff house and Youth Building in preparation for the off-season and the start of the *Recreation Daze Afterschool Program*.

### Summer Day Camp 2012:

Summer Day Camp 2012 planning began in the fall with a debriefing of the previous season. In the winter months, planning program specifics are completed in preparation for registrations in March 2012. Staff met to discuss the transfer of pre-Camp planning duties from the Recreation Supervisor to the Camp Director for this summer. The Camp theme calendar was completed, trips were booked, and then the Camp brochure was completed, printed, and sent out through the schools. Camp will be held June 25-August 17 (eight weeks). Registrations began in mid-March and start coming in slowly, with most registrations being for the CIT program.

In April, our previous year's Camp Director decided to move on, so we had to find a replacement shortly after. We thank Jackie for her service over the past year, and we are excited to explore some new opportunities. We hired our new

Camp Director, Matthew Kyer in early May and began training and meeting with him immediately following. He is a 1<sup>st</sup> grade teacher at Coventry Grammar School, and has been a Boy Scout Camp educator for many years. He lives here in Town with his family, and was excited to get started. Interviews and hiring for new Counselors and promotion positions for returning staff were held in April, with everyone hired and on payroll in May.

Pre-season trainings and meetings with Camp staff, and our new Director were held throughout May and June. Trainings included: First Aid/CPR/AED, Camp Clean Up, CIT Trainings, Med Admin/Epi Pen Trainings for Camp Directors, and various staff meetings. Human Services staff assisted Ms. Torcasio with Camp Scholarships and Care 4 Kids applications and procedures. Registrations began picking up as Camp drew nearer, with most registrations coming in June. A few marketing promotions were held, and additional advertising was also done after Mr. Kyer was officially on board as Camp Director.

2012 Day Camp began on Monday, June 25<sup>th</sup> with over 70 kids enrolled! The first week went extremely smoothly; staff worked really well together, and the positive environment set forth by the new director was very helpful. A few parents came in following the first day to register their children for more weeks because they had such a great time that first day.

### **RECREATION DAZE, AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM:**

The 2011-2012 programs began on September 6<sup>th</sup> when school started, after a week's delay due to Hurricane Irene. The program continued with an average of 16 monthly registrations, and 8 daily registrations. Activities throughout the year included a Halloween party complete with costumes and apple cider, and the Human Services' Adopt-A-Family program where kids bought gifts & a complete holiday meal for a Coventry family in need.



Then the October Nor'easter came through and we missed another week! All registrants were granted a \$60 credit for the week missed due to the October storm that was applied to future months. The program also remained open for the many early dismissals in November due to Parent Teacher Conferences. Staff began preparing for the September opening of the 2012-2013 session of "Rec Daze" in June. In response Coventry's approval of full-day kindergarten, next year's program will be open to kindergarteners.

December Vacation Program: This program was held during the school vacation, 12/26/11-12/30/11 with only 7 kids registered for the whole week, 1 half-day, and 11 signed up for a few days here and there. Staff played indoor and outdoor games with the kids, including new arts & crafts projects.

April Vacation Program: This year's April Vacation Program was held during the school vacation week, with 10 kids registered for the whole week, 17 registered on a daily basis, and 3 registered for the half-day program. Staff ran a lot of standard Summer Camp-type activities to gear up for the summer season, and kids had a great time, playing both inside and outside at Patriots Park, with Summer Day Camp staff. While both school vacation programs are much appreciated by many working parents, the attendance decline requires deeper analysis to determine their future.

### **SPECIAL EVENTS:**

Rockville Bank Foundation's Sunset Sounds 2011: This year's series ran for 4 consecutive Thursday evenings, beginning on July 14<sup>th</sup> and ending on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Performers included Latanya Farrell, Tirebiter Band, Eight to the Bar, NYC Swing Band, and sponsors including Columbia Marine, Direct Energy, Connecticut Light and Power Co, RJ Ouellette Plumbing and Heating, and Ackert Electric. Each concert showed an increase in attendance with approximately 100 people at the first, 150 at the second, and 200 at the third and fourth. Kids enjoyed activities such as dance contests, hoop dancing, a teddy bear parade, and pipe mazes, while adults enjoyed similar activities and prizes! Representatives from the Coventry Regional Farmer's Market were also on hand at our last concert to generate votes for the "Great Barn Giveaway" which they later won, and Tim Ackert from Ackert Electric was a great sport and led a stirring rendition of the "Electric Slide!"

Ms. Torcasio worked closely with the Coventry Rockville Bank staff regarding activities at each concert, and also served as emcee!

Rockville Bank Foundation's Sunset Sounds 2012: This was a major item on the planning docket this winter. Steps included booking bands and sound, and bringing in sponsorships for each of the four concerts. Eight to the Bar will be performing on July 12<sup>th</sup>, Orange Crush on July 19<sup>th</sup>, Skyline Drive on July 26<sup>th</sup> and Red Satin Band capping things off on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Sponsorships have been hard to come by this year, due to the economy and the number of other events in the area needing funding this year. Promotion for the series began in May, with large-scale signage going up on the green, in addition to series info in the summer brochure, on Channel 13, and on posters throughout town.

The Children's Performance Series continued throughout the 2011 summer with great performances and workshops including: a British Soccer Demo with the coaches from *Challenger Sports, Campardy!*, Corey's Camp Talent Spectacular, *Red Supreme Productions Break Dance* workshop, *Dancin' With Hoops* workshops, and a performance by the *Airborne Jugglers*. Performances were attended by the Summer Day Camp, and many kids and parents from the community.

Kids Triathlon: Staff continued planning the Kids Triathlon with the staff from Team Training New England. After much planning and deliberation, we decided to cancel for this year due to low registrations & potentially bad timing with school openings & summer vacation schedules. Staff are discussing offering the event on a bi-annual basis in the future.

Pumpkin Play Day: To better promote our Playful City USA designation, our traditional "Pumpkin Fest" was expanded to *Pumpkin Play Day at Patriots Park* and was held on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 12pm-3pm at Patriots Park with at least 300 people in attendance! Many community organizations were on hand with great information for people to take, including the Coventry Water Ski Club, Coventry STEPS Collaborative, the Daffodil Beautification Project, The CT Equestrian Center, the St. Joseph's School in Manchester, Coventry Soccer Inc., Parks & Recreation, and Coventry Human Services. Activities included pony rides, hay rides, pumpkin carving, inflatables, a climbing wall, and costume parade and contest, hosted by Miss Candie of the Can Dance Studio. Miss Candie and her dancers also performed for the crowd, and taught the kids in attendance the moves to "Thriller!"



Parks & Recreation also collaborated with the Coventry Senior Center to offer an *Across Town Scavenger Hunt* in conjunction with the Pumpkin Play Day in which 13 teams solved riddles leading them from place to place in Town. Each child was granted a free wristband for the inflatables and pumpkin carving courtesy of Coventry Human Services. Feedback was positive, however many teams noted that the hunt was a bit too long.

Tree Lighting: Preparations for this year's Annual Tree Lighting event continued through the months of October and November. Ms. Torcasio confirmed with Santa Claus, Capstone Photography, Coventry Food Services, our emcee Liz Woolf, the South Coventry Fire Department and the Coventry High School Band & Chorus. Ms. Rubin worked closely with David Gofstein and Doug Reese from DPW regarding the tree and the lights. The Tree Lighting was held on Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, at the Captain Nathan Hale Middle School, as scheduled. However, due to rain all events were moved indoors, to the dismay of many (who did not want to miss the lighting of the tree by being inside). However, in spite of the move and last minute shuffling, the event went off without a hitch. A few folks stayed outside to see the tree light up, but most people came inside. Overall attendance was down due to the weather. Check out our You Tube video: <http://youtu.be/vYajhPvseao>

In addition, Santa's mailboxes were built and put out at Town Hall and at the Booth & Dimock Library in November to collect letters to Santa. Letters were also accepted at the Tree Lighting, and were completed with Santa's responses (to over 125 kids!) being sent out no later than 12/15.

Ice Fishing Derby: The 2012 Derby was scheduled for Saturday, January 28<sup>th</sup>, but was cancelled due to a lack of safe ice conditions. Interested parties were referred to the CT DEEP website for other related events occurring throughout the state. DEEP staff would like to plan next year's Derby for February, hoping for better conditions.

Annual Father Daughter Dance: This event was a success, once again! Ms. Torcasio and 10 volunteers from the Eastern CT State University Service group set up before the dance, sold tickets and refreshments, chaperoned, took pictures, and then cleaned up after the dance. Using 10 volunteers versus paid staff saved the Department approximately \$432 in payroll! Over 400 fathers and daughters were in attendance, and the feedback was extremely positive. In response to feedback for an event for mothers and sons, staff planned a *Mother & Son Kickball Game* for the spring, which was later cancelled due to low enrollment.

Chocolate, Cheese & Cheers: This event served as our main summer camp scholarship fundraiser and was planned for the second year during the winter months, in conjunction with Coventry Youth Services. Silent Auction donations were brought in from the Connecticut Sun, Mystic Aquarium, Roger Williams Zoo, Quassy Amusement Park, Laura Stone Photography, and the Town Manager, among others. Ms. Torcasio and Ms. Morawitz solicited new vendors as well as last year's contributors. Music by Tony Susi was offered at the event adding the exciting live music element this year! We also worked with Highland Park Market to help us sell tickets to the event at their location. The event was held on Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup> with much lower attendance than the previous year (only 28 tickets were sold, versus 57 last year).

Town Wide Tag Sale: For the second year, the Town Wide Tag Sale was held on Saturday, May 5<sup>th</sup> at 22 locations within Town. Ms. Torcasio and a seasonal staff person went out on the day before to drop off roadside signs to each location, and ads were placed for that weekend's papers the week before. The response after the day was very positive – the only recommendation was that we have more signage on the day of, which we plan to look into next year.

Recess At Work Day: In conjunction with the Town Planner and sponsorships by the Eastern Highlands Health District, Tolland County Chamber of Commerce, Coventry Economic Development Commission, we attempted to host Recess At Work Day on Thursday, June 21<sup>st</sup>. Unfortunately, in spite of our marketing efforts and the partnerships we made, the registration was so low we had to cancel.

#### IN CLOSING

With the challenge of the obesity crisis and increased anxiety, more and more attention is being paid to the role parks and recreation plays in both mental and physical health. The more someone spends outdoors, the less likely they are to suffer from mental or physical disorders. Have you ever said "I just need to go for a walk to clear my head."? Well, it turns out your instinct was right! According to recent research, if that walk was in a park, it not only improved your cognitive skills, but it probably enhanced your mood too. Coventry Parks and Recreation encourages all of our residents (families especially) to take a walk in the park, participate in our many programs, and take advantage of the facilities and services we offer to Get Out & Play as often as possible! For constant updates of Department activities and news, please visit our webpage at [www.coventryrec.com](http://www.coventryrec.com), and our Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter pages.

| Work Measurements                   | '09/'10          | '10/'11          | '11/'12            |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Patriots Park Lodge Rentals         | 147              | 117              | 130                |
| Community Center Rentals            | 88               | 123              | 183                |
| Creaser Park Building 4 Rentals     | 15               | 11               | 3                  |
| Creaser Park Building 3 Rentals     | 3                | 6                | 15                 |
| Number of Unique Program Enrollees  | 1297             | N/A*             | N/A*               |
| Number of Registrations Processed   | 2441             | 2716             | 2605               |
| Number of Programs Offered          | 87               | 83               | 106                |
| Number of Programs with Enrollments | 65               | 67               | 58                 |
| # of Program Sessions Offered       | 245              | 253              | 298                |
| Program Revenue                     | \$226,678        | \$228,574        | \$213,985          |
| Program Expenditures                | \$206,653        | \$204,852        | \$186,907          |
| <b>Program Net</b>                  | <b>\$20,025</b>  | <b>\$23,722</b>  | <b>\$27,078</b>    |
| Facility Rental Revenue             | \$19,716         | \$28,226         | \$27,916           |
| Facility Rental Expenditures        | \$65,753         | \$51,971         | \$31,406           |
| <b>Facility Rental Net</b>          | <b>-\$46,037</b> | <b>-\$23,745</b> | <b>-\$3,490 **</b> |
| Beach Operations                    | \$69,859         | \$68,205         | \$80,855           |
| Beach Expenditures                  | \$92,988         | \$81,417         | \$63,862           |
| <b>Beach Net</b>                    | <b>-\$23,129</b> | <b>-\$13,212</b> | <b>\$16,993</b>    |
|                                     |                  |                  |                    |
| <b>Total Net</b>                    | <b>-\$49,141</b> | <b>-\$13,235</b> | <b>\$40,581</b>    |

\*New Registration Software does not allow for this work measurement, as previous software did.

\*\* Drastic reduction in Facility Rental expenses due to decreased need for facility repairs and improvements since over \$20,000 was invested in the parks last year. Revenues decreased while use increased at Community Center due to new non-profit rental rate which encouraged more use by local community groups, thus, less private function rentals at a higher rate.

The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library

# Annual Report

Providing More than Information  
for Ninety-Nine Years



2011-2012

[www.CoventryPL.org](http://www.CoventryPL.org)

**Booth & Dimock Memorial Library  
Annual Report  
July 2011-June 2012**



**MISSION**

The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library provides materials and services to help all residents of the community meet their informational, educational, and recreational needs. Fiction and nonfiction, selected quality reference sources, periodicals, non-print materials, and programming will all be used to help meet those needs. The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library will also provide access to other resources through interlibrary loan and on-line databases.

Amy Dexter, Co-Director  
Kristi Sadowski, Co-Director & Head of Teen Services  
Jennifer Needham, Head of Children's Services

1134 Main Street, Coventry, CT 06238

Phone: 860-742-7606  
E-Mail: [BDLibrary@coventryct.org](mailto:BDLibrary@coventryct.org)

Cover photo: Living History Civil War Encampment on Library lawn.

## **HIGHLIGHTS**

- ❖ Following the retirement of Director Sharon Pacholski, the Board of Trustees appointed Amy Dexter and Kristi Sadowski to the positions of Co-Directors.
- ❖ Staff members of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library, many of whom were without power themselves, opened the Library extra hours during the aftermath of Hurricane Irene and the Halloween storm thus providing Coventry residents with a cool/warm place to escape the elements. E-mail and WiFi access were provided as was a charging station for devices. Impromptu programs for children and teens—such as movie afternoons and karaoke events were held.
- ❖ Kristi Sadowski implemented the Reading 2.0 for Older Adults program funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services from a grant proposal won during the 2010-2011 fiscal year. Reading 2.0 for Older Adults allowed the library to provide eBooks and eReaders to older members of the community thus increasing their access to materials.
- ❖ Jennifer Needham wrote a proposal for and received Library Services Technology Act (LSTA) funds from the Institute of Library and Museum Services to institute the program: All Aboard! during the 2012-2013 fiscal year, which will provide programs and services to children and families with disabilities.
- ❖ A group of civic minded community members have begun the process of reforming a Friends of the Library group to supplement the fundraising responsibilities of the Board of Trustees.
- ❖ The Board of Trustees and the staff of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library would like to thank the 2011/2012 members of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library Association for their very generous contributions. With these funds the Library was able to upgrade its technological offerings—adding nine new public access computers. They also were able to guarantee access for all residents to the downloadable media database for an additional year.



Left to Right: Drumming About You; Library Luau, Bubbles in Babygarten

## IMPORTANT STATISTICS

|                             |         |
|-----------------------------|---------|
| Circulation of Materials    | 110,320 |
| Reference Transactions      | 5,314   |
| Library Visits              | 48,801  |
| Registered Borrowers        | 7,454   |
| New Registered Borrowers    | 455     |
| Public Access Computer Uses | 7,486   |
| WiFi Uses                   | 537     |

### InterLibrary Loan Statistics

|                                     |       |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| Items Borrowed from other Libraries | 2,013 |
| Items Lent to Other Libraries       | 781   |

### 2011 Summer Reading

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Adult Summer Reading Books Read        | 390   |
| Young Adult Summer Reading Registrants | 44    |
| Books Read                             | 120   |
| Children's Summer Reading Registration | 346   |
| Hours Read                             | 2,722 |

### Physical Collections

|  |        |
|--|--------|
| Total Holdings   | 54,694 |
| Adult Print Books  | 20,818 |
| Teen Print Books   | 3,246  |
| Children's Print Books   | 24,322 |
| Audio Books, Music CDs   | 3,280  |
| DVD's, VHS   | 2,635  |
| Magazines, Newspaper Subscriptions                                   | 70     |
| Video Games, Kits, Museum Passes and other Non-Traditional Materials | 323    |

## What We Did With Your Tax Dollars, 2011-2012

### REVENUE

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| \$371,350  |            |
| \$16,402   | Town funds |
| Grants from State of Connecticut, Member Donations, Fines, Printing, Contributions |            |

### EXPENSES

|           |                                   |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|
| \$267,810 |                                   |
| \$34,651  | Salaries, Benefits, Payroll Taxes |
| \$4,553   | Materials                         |
| \$30,813  | Programs                          |
| \$19,105  | Utilities                         |
| \$4,649   | Building and Grounds              |
| \$10,762  | Supplies                          |
|           | Administrative & Miscellaneous    |

Additional monies for specific projects were received from:

- The Institute for Museum and Library Services
- Coventry Lions Club
- Association Membership
- Used Book Sale

## **LIBRARY PROGRAMS**



The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library hosted or sponsored 323 programs for 5,232 members of the community during the 2011-2012 fiscal year.

54 Programs for 533 Adults

151 Programs for 997 Teens

118 Programs for 3,702 Children and Families

### **These Programs Included:**

#### Adult Programs

- Shopping Lady  
Coupons Program
- Historical and  
Industrial Archaeology  
with Dr. Bellantoni
- Civil War Living  
History Encampment
- Button Collecting
- Wednesday Night  
Book Club
- Mystery Book Club
- Gardening Events
- Art Exhibit Openings
- eBook Tutorials
- Savvy Stickers
- Adoption Workshop

#### Teen Programs

- Zombie Apocalypse  
Preparedness
- Henna Art
- Drumming About You
- Live Action Angry  
Birds
- Ninja Olympics
- Cake Pops
- Duct Tape Creations
- Mardi Gras Masks
- Candy Sushi
- Density Tubes
- Mini Archery—A  
Hunger Games Event
- National Gaming Day
- Library Luau and  
Fiesta
- Limerick Creating
- Harry Potter Marathon
- Book Club
- T.A.B. & J.A.B.
- Gaming Club
- Karaoke
- Movie Nights
- Chess Club
- Anime Club
- Scavenger Hunts

#### Children's Programs

- Babygarden
- Terrific Tuesday Story  
Time
- Story Times with Miss  
Grace
- Take Your Child to the  
Library Day
- READ Dogs
- Animal Embassy: Talk  
to the Animals
- Stuffed Animal  
Sleepover
- African Mask Making\*
- Squish Art!
- Bending Gravity
- Egyptian Mobile Craft
- Fancy Nancy Soiree
- Mexican Sombrero  
Craft
- Geronimo Stilton Party
- Around the World  
Paper People Craft
- Animal Mask Craft
- Drumming About You  
with Bob Bloom
- Movie Matinees
- Holiday Crafts

\* Pictured Above.

## **COMMUNITY INVOLVMENT & OUTREACH**

- Amy Dexter attended meetings of the STEPS Committee and several School Readiness Council Meetings.
- Youth Services and the Teen Zone co-sponsored two Library Lock-Ins, first for those in grades 9-12 and then for those in grades 6-8. The teenagers were able to play laser-tag in the parking lot, and then come inside for pizza, movies and games.
- Jennifer Needham hosted children from Coventry Early Education Center (CECC)—providing them with a library tour and activities.
- The Booth & Dimock Memorial Library was open on Sunday, December 4, 2011 for an Old Fashioned Christmas in Coventry Village. Trustees read holiday stories and provided hot cider and cookies for visitors. The Lions Club held their annual Festival of Trees in our Community Room.
- The Teen Advisory Board hosted a Bake Sale during the Annual Used Book Sale so that they can provide gifts for Human Services' Holiday Food and Gift Drive.
- The Coventry Garden Club and the Library co-sponsored an event on Water Gardens at the Library.
- Kristi Sadowski and Travis Feder attended the Open House at Captain Nathan Hale Middle School. Amy Dexter and Donna Murphy attended Open House at Coventry High School.
- Amy Dexter and Kristi Sadowski met with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Parks and Recreation Department sponsored an author visit and story time with a Playground Safety representative.
- Bulk loans of materials continued to be provided to Orchard Hill Estates.
- Staff continued to provide individual delivery of materials to homebound patrons—who were unable to visit the library.

### **Partnership with the Coventry Public Schools**

- Jennifer Needham attended Open House at Coventry Grammar School and G.H. Robertson
- Jennifer Needham was a guest reader at Coventry Grammer School's Read Across America Day.
- Kristi Sadowski brought the Library to the students at Captain Nathan Hale in the form of two visits to Mrs. Goodale's eighth grade reading class. Students were allowed to borrow books directly from the library in this program.

| <b>Booth &amp; Dimock Memorial Library Association</b>  | <b>Annual Used Book Sale</b>   | <b>Lions Club</b>   |
|---|--|---|
| Membership currently stands at 311. Their generosity during the past year allowed the library to add nine new public access computers and provide the downloadable media database for an additional year. | Income from the Book Sale allowed the library to purchase several discount museum and event passes, Library Lingo printing costs, and supplemented Children's and Young Adult programming costs. | The Lions Club of Coventry generously funded the TumbleBooks database for the sixth year. 4,145 books were read online during the year. |

## **STAFF MEMBERS AND DEVELOPMENT**

Each year members of the Booth & Dimock Memorial Library staff are encouraged to participate in the statewide library community to foster ideas and increase their knowledge and skills in order to benefit the Coventry community.

### **Amy Dexter, M.L.S.**

Co-Director

- Attended meetings of the Director's Roundtable.
- Attended a Library Performer's Showcase, Summer Reading/ Adult Services Roundtable/ New Directors information session with the State Library

### **Kristi Sadowski, M.L.S.**

Co-Director and Head of Teen Services

- Is a member of the Nutmeg Steering Committee and was Chair of the 2014 Teen Nutmeg Selection Committee.
- Was an active participant of the Eastern Connecticut Young Adult Librarian's Roundtable.
- Attended the Connecticut Library Association Annual Conference and Book Expo America—Books and Authors Conference.
- Reviews young adult literature for the Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA).
- Attended the state-wide Young Adult Librarian Meeting, Town Technology Meeting, Summer Reading/ Adult Services Roundtable, New Directors information session with the State Library.

### **Jennifer Needham**

Head of Children's Services

- Took an intensive online course called "Libraries and Autism: We're Connected" through the University of Virginia. Her visual library project—a "My Library" book is now used in their training workshops.
- Took an online course through the American Library Association called Children with Disabilities in the Library.
- Co-Chairs the North Eastern Children's Roundtable.
- Attended the Connecticut Library Association's Annual Conference.
- Attended the Every Child Ready to Read Workshop.

### **Barbara Hall**

Head of Circulation/ Library Assistant II

- Attends the InterLibrary Loan Roundtable, with **Donna Murphy**, Library Assistant I.