

Well-Informed

Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation | Community Benefit Report | Summer 2012



Memorial Park Connecting the Community

Chances are, you've been to Memorial Park for some kind of event. Maybe it was to attend a picnic, take a casual stroll with a friend, watch a baseball game in one of the Park's three fields, run with your dog, or enjoy the 4th of July festivities. But, chances are, you didn't realize that its sprawling 78 acres was home to an impressive array of activities that span from volleyball to BMX biking—and the list keeps growing!

"There is something for everyone here. There is year-round activity on all levels," comments Eileen Schlegel, Director of Parks and Recreation for the Borough of Pottstown. "You can rent the pavilion (and the grill) for a cookout, you can cool off on a hot summer day at the spray park, you can play baseball or volleyball and you can even get married in our gazebo!"

The "Parks"

There are actually four "Parks" within the Park—Trilogy Park, Spray Park, Skateboard Park and the Bark Park.

Trilogy Park, started and maintained by a group of volunteer parents, is home to a national BMX Biking race this August 4 and 5. The event is free and open to anyone to watch. "It really is a statement of how nice the track is," states Schlegel. "We always get a great reception and positive feedback from the racers." Trilogy Park is open all year to the public, weather permitting, with the exception of December and January. There is a small fee to practice on the course, which goes directly toward its maintenance.

The **Spray Park** opens the Friday before Memorial Day and as long as the

weather remains warm, closes the end of September. It features water cannons, buckets of water, upward shooting fountains and flat walls with water squirting out. Schlegel comments, "It is immensely popular and crowded all summer—people love it. It is free and open to anyone to come and have some fun."

The **Bark Park** is a safe, secure outdoor facility where dog owners can take their dogs to run and play. All dogs must have their shots, and owners pay a flat \$10 fee for a key to the gated area.

The **Skateboard Park** is the newest member of the "Park" family and is slated to be completed by July 10. It will be free and open to the community.

Volleyball Rumble

"If it weren't for the flood in 2009, the Rumble would be in its 22nd year, but we don't count that year," says Schlegel. The Volleyball Rumble was the brainchild of enthusiast Kenny Kaas who started it in 1991. It's the largest two-man grass volleyball tournament in the country, and anyone can go and watch or play. It draws all kinds of players, from semi-pro to professionals to the weekend warriors. "It's quite a sight to see," comments Schlegel. "If you've never attended its worth seeing all the colorful nets set up and feeling the energy of the crowd. There's music and food and lots of vendors." The Rumble is free to watch and takes place June 23 and 24.

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a message from our director



Dear Community,

Summer is here and I hope you've begun to take advantage of the outdoors and all it has to offer in the tri-county area—particularly when it comes to FOOD. I bet you thought I was going to talk about getting outside and exercising and taking advantage of all the wonderful outdoor spaces, but I am confident you are already doing that!

Food is a subject everyone loves to talk about, and at the Foundation, we love to talk about eating healthy food. With summertime comes grilling time, but that doesn't mean you should abandon your good eating habits. Choose lean meats, not processed meats. Vegetables and fruit, yes fruit, are delicious on the grill. Get creative, try new recipes—www.missionhealthyliving.org and www.eatingwell.com have some great ones.

By the way, when you are looking for those fruits and vegetables to put on your grill, don't forget about the abundance of local roadside produce stands and local farmer's markets in the area—the [Boyertown Farmer's Market](#) and the [Phoenixville Farmers Market](#) come to mind, but you can find many others under the Link section on www.missionhealthyliving.org.

My final food thought is about all those summer picnics you know you will be attending or having. Take a look at your recipes and rework them using lower fat ingredients, or better yet, choose healthy snacks and salads to take along.

Bon Appetit!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David W. Kraybill".

David W. Kraybill, Executive Director

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July 4th

Every July 4, Memorial Park becomes the epicenter of the celebration activities for Pottstown and the surrounding areas including being the end for the community's grand parade. You will also find a giant party including concession stands, rides and the Little League All-Star games. But, July 4th is only the spectacular ending (fireworks start at 10:00 p.m.); there are many things going on the entire week. July 2 features the "Battle of the Bands" from 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.—anyone can sign up to compete by calling the Parks and Recreation Department at 610-970-6608. On July 3 you can see an amazing sight of 15 hot air balloons launching off at about 6:30 p.m.

Gateway Project

The newest endeavor for Memorial Park is the expanded trail from Riverfront Park that will weave its way to connect to Memorial Park. It is an open-space project that is intended to be extremely family friendly. Amenities will include a miniature golf course and a carousel. There will also be an area to show movies outdoors. The Gateway project will include the square park between Memorial Park and the Montgomery County Community College.

For more information about the events and rental opportunities, call 610-970-6608 or [click here](#).

www.pottstownfoundation.org



profile

Rose Crews, Office Manager & Communications Associate

When you work for a nonprofit organization, you wear many hats. Rose Crews not only wears many hats, but she also wears many shoes, gloves and coats! And, if you have any contact with the Foundation, chances are you have met "one or more" of the Rose Crewses running about.

Rose has the distinctive honor of being the very first Foundation employee, starting July 1, 2003. She was the sole liaison between the Foundation and the new board for six months before Dave Kraybill was hired. She was a hospital employee working in the development office and was happy to be part of the newly formed Foundation, a job she clearly enjoys almost nine years later.

When Rose has her Office Manager hat on, she is working hard behind the scenes taking care of board communications; scheduling all Foundation meetings, including coordinating agendas and all other details (ordering meals, putting together board packets, etc.); administering payroll; handling HR and benefits, accounts payable, PMMC pension administration and coordination; working with vendors and their contracts (phone, web, IT, office supplies, etc.); supporting the



grants team and the Controller; and being the liaison between the Foundation and the East Auxiliary.

[insert deep breath]

When she has her Communications Associate hat on, Rose handles all

website updates and maintenance; writes articles for Mission Healthy Living and the Community Benefit Report; coordinates content for the Community Benefit Report; works directly with the Foundation's marketing and PR firm, The Anderson Group; writes press releases; and communicates with the grantees as needed. She also sits on the Healthy Woman Board, is a member of the YWCA Woman's Excel Group and is on the YWCA's PR and Marketing Committee.

One would think Rose does not have time for a personal life—but she does! If she's not exercising, golfing, gardening or reading, she's attending RACC to complete her associate degree in business management or visiting one of her three grown children who reside in Austin, TX, Fort Walton Beach, FL and Royersford, PA.



Camp Wanna Be Fit!

Full of Fun

The YWCA Camp Wanna Be Fit! is a full-day outdoor summer child care program that is held in a real camp setting with lots of traditional camp activities focused on keeping active and eating healthfully.

Campers between the ages of 6 and 12 learn the importance of physical activity in their daily lives by running, jumping, hiking and other outdoor games. Nutritional activities are included and focus on the importance of making healthy choices. Gardening, fishing, science projects and crafts add to the fun-filled days for these young campers.

In addition to the traditional camp activities, collaboration with area organizations provides opportunities for storytelling, cooking classes and live animal, reptile and bird displays.

"Our young campers love the fresh air and are so active during these fun-filled days that they often fall asleep

on the ride back to the YWCA at the end of the day," says Sue Krall, Director of Programming at the YWCA Tri-County Area. "We love the new opportunities the children receive by learning about nature first hand, being able to walk or run a mile or more each day, and learn how to make healthy food choices. These are experiences that will last a lifetime."

The camp is part of the YWCA State Licensed Child Care program and is held at the beautiful [Fernbrook Access Coventry Woods in North Coventry Township](#). Access to a huge pavilion, craft building, hiking trails and wading stream make this the perfect destination for summer camp close to home.

Transportation is provided to and from the camp from the [YWCA Tri-County Area](#) located at 315 King St., Pottstown. For information about Camp Wanna Be Fit!, call 610-323-1888. Camp starts June 18 and class size is limited, so call today!

www.pottstownfoundation.org



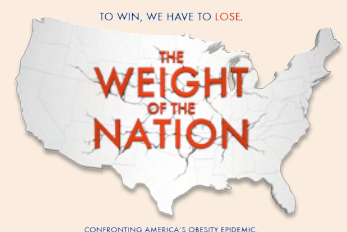
The Weight of the Nation

Obesity is an epidemic and one of the most pressing health issues the country faces today. For the first time in our history, children will live shorter lives than their parents if the obesity trend is not reversed.

HBO has partnered with the Institute of Medicine, in association with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health to produce a four-part documentary series called "The Weight of the Nation." The series identifies the severity of the obesity crisis with an effort to draw attention to this issue. The entire documentary is available, streaming FREE, by logging onto www.theweightofthenation.hbo.com.

In an ongoing effort to encourage discussion and involvement on a local level, the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation has a screening kit and discussion guide available for loan to groups to view the films and facilitate discussion. Participation from local organizations and businesses will be instrumental in kick-starting a local initiative to slow, stop and eventually reverse the occurrence of obesity and bring the nation to a healthier weight.

If you are interested in being part of the local movement and would like to organize and host a screening event for The Weight of the Nation, contact Rose Crews at rosecrews@pottstownfoundation.org or call 610-323-2006 x21.



[click here to watch the trailer.](#)



Manderach Park Planning to be ADA Compliant

Manderach Memorial Playground will be expanding with new ADA equipment scheduled to be installed by mid-September.

Located in the Limerick Township Community Park along Swamp Pike and Ziegler Road, Manderach is used by residents and non-residents alike. "Between family picnics, groups renting the park to use the playground, resident and non-resident families visiting the playground, we could see up to 500 people using the playground in one day, especially when the weather is favorable," stated Angela M. Russell, Limerick Township Recreation Superintendent.

In an effort to provide ADA upgrades to the playground to meet new guidelines imposed by the Department of Justice, plans are underway for the Township to

install three pieces of ADA- acceptable equipment. "This equipment will promote physical activity in a safe environment and provide a high play value for multiple users at once," says Russell.

Manderach Memorial Playground happened as the result of 2,000 volunteers that wanted to memorialize the tragic death of Lisa and Devon Manderach, a Limerick mother and her daughter. The original playground equipment was totally funded by community contributions and donations. A yearly 5K race is held to benefit playground renovations.

The playground and park have become a popular regional destination for all members of the community to enjoy physical activity opportunities. Other amenities of the 70-acre park include: pavilions, softball fields, little league fields,

a baseball field, sand volleyball courts, basketball courts, a 1.1 mile paved walking/running track with 12 fitness stations, and restroom facilities. Monthly inspections of the playground are a priority for the township to ensure a safe environment for those who visit the play area.

For more information on the status of the new ADA equipment and availability of other recreation areas, log onto the [township's website](#).



L.L. Bean mini grant

Students Enjoy the Great Outdoors

Area students have taken to the great outdoors and are learning about the environment in a variety of ways. Grants funding provided by a recent L.L. Bean Mini Grant provided educational opportunities for students from kindergarten through middle school in local public schools. The program was developed to encourage outdoor experiences through field trips and programs that are specifically related to physical activity and environmental education.

Upper Providence Elementary School's fourth grade class led by Mr. David Pence, and Evans Elementary School's second grade class led by Mr. Michael Gruber enjoyed a day at Warwick County Park. Both classes participated in a year-long "Trout in the Classroom" project and raised brook trout from eggs to fingerlings in a 55-gallon aquarium. The brook trout were released into French Creek as part of their field trip. After the release, the



students learned about the environment by embarking on a nature hike and were able to identify native wildflowers and birds. They were also able to recognize macro-invertebrates while wading in the stream, and learned about Pennsylvania's animals through an animal pelt collection. Students stated that this "was the best field trip they have ever been on."

"This was the best field trip they have ever been on!"



The "Fuel Up To Play 60" team at Pottsgrove Middle School enjoyed a day of backpacking and outdoor education on a field trip to French Creek State Park. Led by Mrs. Marilyn Eaton, 38 students participated in planning, shopping for and preparing a well-balanced, nutritious meal for the students to enjoy on their field trip. The park provided special backpacks filled with educational information about various outdoor topics that assisted the students in their wildlife observation during their self-guided tours. Learning how to read trail markers was a useful tool as the students participated in two different hikes throughout the day. According to Mrs. Eaton, "My students loved this experience and having the opportunity to commune with nature."



Pottstown Middle School students led by teacher Mr. Kevin Downes participated in the installation of hand-made birdhouses on the grounds of the Montgomery County SPCA. The school's Science Club constructed 24 hand-made bird houses throughout the school year and then hiked through the 75 acres of the SPCA property in Perkiomenville to personally install each of the bird houses. "The children love hard-core environmental action; they know it's the right thing to do," according to Downes.

Another group from the Pottstown Middle School enjoyed the beauty of the Schuylkill River Trail by taking part in "Bike Day," a field trip organized by teacher Mr. Perry Augustine. The day consisted of a wildlife presentation, bike safety, and trail riding etiquette. The students were able to observe and identify various forms of wildlife learned in science class as they pedaled along the scenic trail.

Funds through the L.L. Bean Mini Grant program are still available. There is no deadline for submission, and grants up to \$300 will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area is available to assist educators in planning and coordinating trips or activities funded by the mini-grant funds. Contact Tim Fenchel at 484-945-0200 for information.

For questions, application and a list of local outdoor experience resources, contact Anna Brendle, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation at ABrendle@pottstownfoundation.org or Lynn Pike Hartman, Phoenixville Community Healthy Foundation at LPHartman@pchf1.org.



Spring 2012 Grant Round: The following list includes 29 grants, totaling \$970,625 awarded to non-profit organizations, schools, and municipalities. These programs play a major role in supporting the Foundation's mission of promoting healthy lifestyles within the community.

PRIORITY #1: Funding programs and solutions for long-term improvement in healthy behaviors.

PRIORITY #1A: Promoting healthy living through nutrition, activities and programs in public and private schools to reduce obesity and encourage healthy living. (\$532,475)

Boyertown Area School District – Brain Body Connection

Daniel Boone Area School District – Healthy for a Lifetime Program

Montgomery County Head Start – Summer Extended Year Program

Olivet Boys & Girls Club – Health & Fitness Programs for Youth, Adults & Families at Pottstown Ricketts Center

Owen J. Roberts School District – Fit for Life

Pope John Paul II High School – Panther Pride in Motion

Pottsgrove School District – DRYVEfit

Pottstown School District – PEAK Healthy Kids

Pottstown School District – Healthy School Communities Initiative

Spring-Ford Area School District – Healthy Choices Program

The Wyndcroft School – Health for Life

PRIORITY #1B: Improving parks, programming and the built environment to increase access to physical activity. (\$83,750)

Boyertown Rotary Foundation – Wellness Trail & Exercise Equipment

Coventry Little League, Inc. – Field Remediation Project

Township of Upper Pottsgrove – Enhancement of Sprongels Run Pedestrian Trail

Washington Township – Barto Park Field & Playground Project

PRIORITY #1C: Creating and promoting social networks involving healthy living. (\$132,000)

Amity Township Athletic Club – Tennis Program

Boyertown Area Community Wellness Council – Fall Programming for Elementary & Junior High Students

Green Valleys Association – Pilot Environmental Education Programs for Pottstown School District Elementary School

Tennis Farm, Inc. – Learn Lifetime Sport of Tennis - Pottstown School District Elementary Students

TriCounty Community Network, Inc. – Community Collaborative to Improve Health, Social & Environmental Conditions

Triskeles Foundation – Food for Thought/ Green Interns Program

PRIORITY #2: Funding programs for physical health and emotional well-being. (\$140,900)

ACLAMO – Conexiones por Salud – Community Health Projects

Royersford Outreach, Inc. – Funding Programs for Physical Health & Emotional Well-being

YWCA Tri-County Area – Healthy Pathways

PRIORITY #3: Funding learning opportunities and strategic planning to strengthen non-profits. (\$81,500)

Berks County Conservancy – Health & the Environment

The Growing Center – Horticulture Therapy

Pottstown Karate Club – Crossfit, Guardian Angels & Junior Guardian Angels

United Way of Boyertown – Matching Grant for Annual Campaign

United Way of Greater Philadelphia & Southern New Jersey – Matching Grant for Annual Campaign

Smaller Donations Make a Difference, Too!

The Foundation's mission is to enhance the health and wellness of area residents, and provide education, funding and programs that motivate people to adopt healthy lifestyles. In addition to awarding annual grant money to fulfill our mission, the Foundation also supports local events on a smaller scale. Sponsorships and in-kind donations of bottled water provide opportunities to support local school districts and organizations in a joint effort to promote physical activity.

Events such as 5K races, unity walks, walk-a-thons, and biking events are available to local residents to participate in a physical activity and support a worthwhile cause at the same time.

[The Pottstown Rumble](#), [July 4th Patriotic Run](#), [Relay for Life](#), [Schuylkill River Sojourn](#),

and [Schuylkill River Festival](#) are annual events that offer a variety of opportunities to participate in outdoor physical activity. Informational opportunities are available through health fairs and the PMMC Healthy Woman program.

Local collaboration is instrumental in providing these types of events to local residents. Over the past seven years, more than \$170,000 has been donated by the Foundation to assist the community in promoting these worthwhile events.

To find a current listing of these events, log on to www.MissionHealthyLiving.org today!



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www.missionhealthyliving.org