



Monthly Director's Report, August 11, 2010

Parks and Recreation Director, AmandaGrace H. Green

Past Events

Summer Concert Series once again ran every Thursday evenings in the months of June and July. This year's nine week season is filled with a continuous mix of music such as folk, bluegrass, country, rock, polka, celtic, and much more. The 2010 season showed us a handful of Thursdays with threatening rain clouds, but only actually resulted in the cancellation of one concert. Unfortunately the other questionable days did have a hand in reducing our attendance rates below normal levels. On sunny, pleasant evening, however, attendance soared to new records for bands.

Ballroom Dancing and Line Dancing Lessons wa a new program being held Tuesday evenings at the Shamrock Park large pavilion for ages 10 years old to seniors. Dance instructors were able to work with variable age and skill levels to ensure an enjoyable and rewarding session. Participants are encouraged to attend the whole program to get the most out of their dancing experience, but participants are also welcome to drop in on class for specific dates if that meets their schedules better. Overall attendance for this new program was lower than anticipated, but plans are underway to consider a possible second session at a time of year that might be more appealing to participants.

The annual **Car and Bike Show** was held on July 17, 2010 with extremely hot temperatures, but still fairly good attendance for the event. A few new committee members were on hand to provide a tremendous amount of assistance prior to the event and on the day of the show, resulting in another successful event. In conjunction with the show was the kids area in City Park which allowed kids to participate in the **Kids Cardboard Car Show**, where they were able to construct a car from cardboard, paint, and tape, and then compete for prizes.

Current Events

Fall Youth Soccer Season, unquestionably one of the largest programs run by Clare Parks and Recreation will be starting soon! Early **Soccer Registration** began in mid-May and just finished up. Last year's soccer season brought in a total of 349 participants, the largest group ever for this youth program. 2010 has once again broken our previous record with 373 participants for this coming season. While it may not seem like a tremendous increase in number, it has pushed the number of participants for the teams over the desired levels, resulting in the addition of 8 new teams this year. With these additional teams comes the increased demand for fields for practice

and game times beyond our current levels. Currently, quotes are being gathered for the goals for these additional fields being needed.

Summer Parks Program is in its third and final phase for the 2010 summer season, and is offering youth ages 5-12 a variety of activities from sport, arts and crafts, group activities, and a variety of other programs to fill the summer months. This program is a ten week program running now through August 27th, with two intermittent weeks off for soccer camp and the county fair. This year's attendance is unfortunately down from last year, so additional marketing methods are being looked into to increase participant rates and continue a successful program. Teens in the community can apply for the **Counselor in Training (CIT)** program in conjunction with the Summer Parks Program, as a way of gaining leadership skills.

Moms on the Move is a ladies walking group being held each Tuesday June 1st to August 17th. Participation has generally been low on this program for the past few years, with usually only 2-5 ladies attending on any given week. Therefore, a rebranding campaign is being looked at for future years to hopefully rejuvenate participation in this free program.

The **Pettit Park Campground Shower Addition** project has officially gotten under way. The contractor did an initial construction visit on Saturday-Monday, August 9, 2010, with the official construction beginning on Tuesday, August 10th. Unfortunately the project did not get off to as easy of a start as desired, with the excavation contractor quickly finding that our soils were not what were expected. As a result, our engineer from Lapham's Associates came out on site, assessed the situation, and made the determination that a wider, spread foot would be needed. This change from the original plan resulted in an increased amount of excavation and more concrete work than the project was originally planned on and bid for. Therefore, there could be a slight increase in those billing that would be passed on to the City for this project.

As of August 11, 2010, the foundation was being constructed up to grade level, with the soil density tests being scheduled by the City's independent contractor on Monday, August 16th. Once the soils pass their testing compaction levels, the plumbing work is anticipated to begin the following day on Tuesday.

Seniors **Cards and Coffee** is still going strong, with an average attendance of 11 people, with those attending commenting that they are going to be telling their friends about the group! Cards and Coffee is being held each Wednesday at the Pere Marquette District Library from 10:00 am-12:00 pm. This event is a free and fun way for seniors and older adults to get together with peers in the community to socialize and enjoy playing games such as euchre, cribbage, and other favorites.

Future Events

Many programs are still on the line up for the summer season, with something to hopefully energize everyone in the community. Community **Kickball Day** in conjunction with MMI has been rescheduled to August 19th, and the **Old 27 Motor Tour** on August 26th.

Other Projects

The City of Clare Parks and Recreation Department has enjoyed a tremendous working relationship with faculty, staff, and students in the recreation program at CMU. The facility design class being held this spring has eagerly offered to assist the City of Clare with layout proposals for an additional **Softball Field at Brookwood**. While the project in its entirety would likely be done in various phases across multiple fiscal years, the project proposal would include the addition of a new field on the recently purchased property north of the existing Brookwood Field, necessary parking to accommodate both fields, and a permanent bathroom facility. CMU students presented three initial options to Director Amanda Green, of which will momentarily be shared with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and School Board for review and discussion. Additionally, Green has been in touch with the Saginaw Bay Region's DNRE office to obtain information on the properties of proposed softball diamond site and to get a determination whether or not the property is officially classified as "wetlands" and the resulting implications of that potential status. This review will be further looked into in late summer once the early summer rains have a chance to dry up from the ground.

A committee has recently been formed to focus on the **Restoration of the Clare Depot**. Currently the committee is in the stage of initial discussions on what the goals for the restored depot would be. These preliminary goals include the depot serving as a permanent trail head for the Pere Marquette Rail Trail in Clare, offer public bathrooms, be a hub for the Chamber of Commerce to operate their office out of, have meeting rooms, be a potential location for the Clare Arts Council and Main Street, and have potential incorporation of future snowmobile staging areas, passenger trail loading and off loading, and farmers market facilities.

The final components of the **rail-trail** are being put into place this year, including plantings and signage. A new "message center" with brochure rack has been ordered and has been placed at the current trail head outside the library with a City map to assist trail users and visitors in Clare. The map has also been produced in a smaller brochure size that highlights the trail, other Clare parks, and camping at Pettit Park.