

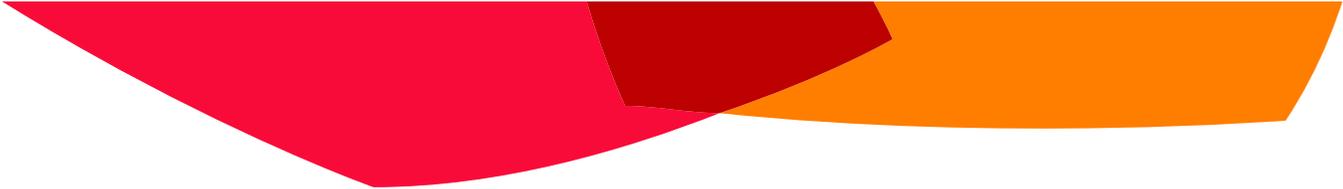
Fiscal Year 2009 Annual Report (July 1, 2008 thru June 30, 2009)

# Wyoming Parks & Recreation

# 2009 Annual Report

CREATING COMMUNITY THROUGH  
PEOPLE, PARKS AND PROGRAMS





## WYOMING CITY COUNCIL

Jack A. Poll, Mayor  
Sam Bolt, Mayor Pro-Tem  
Dan Burrill, At-Large Councilmember  
Kent Vanderwood, At-Large Councilmember  
Bill VerHulst, 1st Ward Councilmember  
Richard Pastoor, 2nd Ward Councilmember  
Joanne Voorhees, 3rd Ward Councilmember

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James Austin  
Rhonda Buck  
Robert Cook  
Megan Harley  
Eric Hartfield  
Gerald Hopkins  
David Skinner  
Rod Van Oeveren  
Doug Wustman  
Rich Pastoor, Council Liaison

## WYOMING PARKS & RECREATION STAFF

Curtis Holt, City Manager  
Rebecca Rynbrandt, Director of Community Services  
Dave Coates, Parks Supervisor  
Eric Tomkins, Recreation Supervisor  
Nancy Parent, Administrative Secretary  
Megan Sall, Community Services Coordinator

Nikki Batcke, Secretary  
Pat Blake, Maintenance Helper  
Scott Bloem, Recreation Programmer II  
Valarie Brochu, Recreation Programmer  
Ken Cizauskas, Maintenance Helper  
Jesus Cravioto, Maintenance Helper  
Paul Gibbs, Maintenance II  
Gary Groeneveld, Crew Leader  
Jessica Hughes, Recreation Programmer II  
Kristine Kading, CTRS

Gloria Pelton, Secretary  
Ron Pike, Park Technician III  
Harold Post, Maintenance II  
Molly Remenap, Recreation Programmer II  
Christine Roelofs, Secretary  
Dale Rynbrandt, Park Technician I  
Melissa Specht, Receptionist  
Chad VanHaitsma, Park Technician III  
Kenny Westrate, Recreation Programmer



*The job of providing high quality, safe after-school, recreation, leisure programs and park facilities is a challenge we work hard to fulfill with a goal to exceed expectations.*

*Through continued support and participation, the City of Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department is able to make a difference in citizen quality of life and work toward building a sustainable community.*



# A CITY OF VISION & PROGRESS



## Mayor's Message

Over the last 50 years, the City of Wyoming has proven itself to be a City of Vision and Progress. This has been evident in several areas, such as its infrastructure, water facilities, public safety and planning efforts. In addition, the City has shown tremendous vision in the area of parks and recreation, a Department whose commitment to the community we celebrate in this 2009 Annual Report.

Amidst these challenging times, it is no longer enough for us to sit idly and expect change to happen on its own. Now is the time be involved, and be informed. Now is the time to re-invest in our community and renew our commitment to making Wyoming a City of Vision and Progress. The Parks and Recreation Department is a leader in this endeavor as we invest in parks, programming and people. These investments lead to the preservation of our environment, the health and well-being of our residents, and the future achievement of our children.

Join with me in applauding the Parks and Recreation Department for their outstanding efforts in 2009. Together we will continue to be a City of Vision and Progress.

# COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT: A CALL TO ACTION WE CAN SHARE & SUPPORT



## Director's Message

**MISSION & VISION** The mission of the City of Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department is to provide services that positively impact the social, economic, health and environmental quality of our community. Our vision is to offer services that allow community members to experience physical, mental, and social benefits through their leisure time participation, providing opportunities for young people, adults, and senior citizens to live, grow, and develop into healthy, contributing members of our community.

**A CALL TO ACTION** At this time, our community is facing unprecedented challenges. While it is easy to grow discouraged, our Parks and Recreation Department has many of the tools that will assist in returning us all to a path of prosperity. Now, more than ever, we must continue to invest in our community and maintain the exceptional quality of life we have enjoyed for so many years. Through innovative partnerships and heartfelt collaborations, we shall find the solutions that are needed in our Wyoming community.

## BENEFITS OF PARKS & RECREATION

*The benefits of parks and recreation are numerous, including:*

- *Increased property values*
- *Improved community health and wellness*
- *Reductions in juvenile crime*
- *Nature preservation*
- *Economic development*



# INVESTING IN OUR QUALITY OF LIFE



## PARK FACILITIES CONTINUE TO GROW

The City of Wyoming is blessed with **692** acres of park land. Our facilities include **2** lodges, **12** picnic shelters, **23** softball and baseball diamonds, **12** basketball courts, **29** tennis courts, **6** sand volleyball courts, **2** new pickleball courts, **19** playgrounds, **1** skateboard park, **1** in-line hockey court, and **2** splashpads. Annually, we operate and maintain **16** restrooms for the convenience of our patrons.

## CITIZEN SATISFACTION REMAINS HIGH

During the past year **1,223** reservations were accepted for lodge, shelter, and section rentals at Pinery, Lamar, and Ideal parks. As self-reported by user groups, **39,586** people enjoyed the park system through these reservations for a total of **5,141.7** hours of fun. Our annual reservation survey affirmed:

- 99% of patrons were very satisfied/satisfied with the cost of facility rental
- 100% of patrons were very satisfied/satisfied with the overall condition of the facilities
- 98% of patrons were very satisfied/satisfied with park safety
- 100% of patrons were very satisfied/satisfied with service by office personnel
- 98% of patrons were very satisfied/satisfied with service by park attendants/personnel

*"We moved to Wyoming three years ago. Since then, the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department has been an integral part of our experience as a family. We've loved the addition of the Splash Pad at Lamar Park, the picnic area at Frog Hollow and the seasonal activities. My favorite holiday celebrations are the Pumpkin Path, Candy Cane Hunt and Lunch with Santa and Snowflake Family Bingo."*

*~ Participant evaluation comment*

## 2009 PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION

During the past year, **31,350** people took part in recreation programs, from art classes to soccer leagues to belly dancing. **214** programs were offered throughout the year, not including grant funded programs such as T.E.A.M. 21, our after-school program, Stepping Stones, our therapeutic recreation program for homebound older adults, and our Transportation Assistance for disabled older adults.

Number of programs by funding source:		2009 Program Distribution by Age Category:	
Millage	170	Youth	20%
Fellowship Club	44	Adult	36%
Grants	3	Older Adult	41%
Total	217	Family	3%

# FY 2009 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

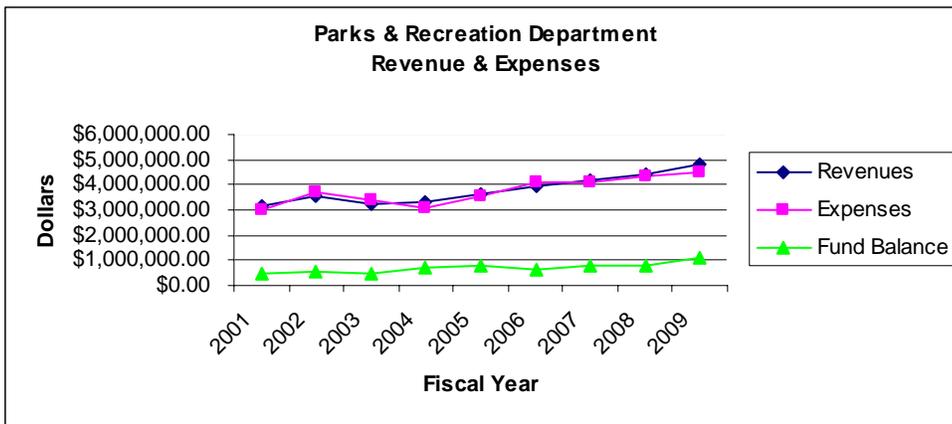
## REVENUE

Dedicated Millage	71%	\$3,394,123
Grants/Intergovernmental	21%	\$1,039,485
Fees/Donations	6%	\$291,068
Interest/Rental Income	2%	\$76,270
Miscellaneous	>1%	\$12,130
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>\$4,813,077</b>

## EXPENSES

Administration	19%	\$848,988
Park Facilities	39%	\$1,756,320
Wyoming Senior Center	8%	\$380,846
Recreation (Youth, Family, Adult)	9%	\$390,189
Stepping Stones (Therapeutic Recreation)	3%	\$156,375
T.E.A.M. 21 (After-school Program)	19%	\$878,760
<b>Sub-total</b>		<b>\$4,525,785</b>
<b>TOTAL*</b>		<b>\$287,292</b>

\*Positive balance reverted to reserve fund balance for grant matching and future capital needs.



In 2009, as in years past, the Parks and Recreation Department has been an excellent steward of its funds, matching revenues with expenses while saving a fund balance for future repair, maintenance, and capital development needs.

## OUR MILLAGE STORY

In 1994 the City made the difficult decision of closing its Parks and Recreation Department in order to offset deficits in its General Fund. At that time a citizens group successfully obtained over 8,000 signatures in a petition drive to ask voters to approve a dedicated millage to continue operations of the Parks and Recreation Department.

In 1995, a five year, 1.5 mil levy was approved by voters. And in 2000, voters were asked to extend the millage on a permanent basis. Their overwhelming approval allows for the operation of the Parks and Recreation Department both today, and for future generations.

# INVESTING IN OUR ENVIRONMENT

## THIS ONE'S FOR THE DOGS

*"There are over 13,000 dog-owning families in Wyoming, and many of them would love to have a place where they can play off-leash with their pets in a safe, controlled area...through our partnership with the City on this project, we have worked hard to create a park that will provide the very best experience for our community's dogs and their owners "*

*~ Jim Elmer, Citizens for Dog Park Committee member*

The Citizens for Dog Park Committee had another busy year as they continued to raise funds for Wyoming's first Dog Park. The park is behind Kimble Field at Marquette Park on the City's north side. Dogs and owners of all ages were invited to support the park through a number of fun events such as the Spring Carnival, Dog Day at Marge's Donut Den, and Bow Wow Bowling at Park Center Lanes. And of course, no dog would be happy without another Pooch Party which was held in June.



As a result of its hard work and the support of the community, the Committee raised the \$32,000 needed to construct the park in 2009. The Dog Park continues to be an exemplary project for the City as it reflects the power of citizen-lead involvement and the effectiveness of public-private collaborations. These are exactly the types of efforts that need to continue as the community seeks to thrive amidst these difficult times. The Parks and Recreation Department is grateful to all those who help make these partnerships a success.

## IMPROVING PARKS & PARTNERSHIPS

Thanks to the continued support of the community, the Parks and Recreation Department continues to expand and improve upon the City's 692 acres of parkland. In 2009, additional land was acquired and water and sewer improvements were completed for Ideal Park. Security camera systems were installed at both Battjes and Prairie Parks, and Prairie Park also received a new irrigation system. A new shade structure was installed at Lamar Park, as well as updated parking lot lighting to ensure the safety of our visitors.

In addition to improving our parks, the Parks and Recreation Department continues to improve our relationships within the community. Over the past year, the Department collaborated with local organizations to host 58 athletic and special events. One of the more notable events is the annual Relay for Life event in Lamar Park which raises thousands of dollars for the American Cancer Society. According to Relay organizers, the Wyoming event is one of the most successful in the region.



## LEAVE-A-MARK, ADOPT-A-PARK!



Wyoming parks continue to benefit from the Adopt-a-Park program which allows citizens, area business and organizations to assist in the enhancement and preservation of local parks, nature preserves and green spaces. In 2009, 8 parks were adopted by 9 different groups of volunteers. These groups included the

Godfrey-Lee Public Schools 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Global Safari, Grand Rapids First, Hope Network, Kent Optimist Club, Knights of Columbus, Mars Hill Bible Church, Morning Thunder Family, T.E.A.M.21-Parkview, and Wedgwood Christian Services. All Adopt-a-Park groups receive a Certificate of Appreciation, as well as signage if the group is willing to make a one-year commitment to a park. Volunteering to help improve and maintain our green spaces is a sound investment we can all be proud of!



### PARKS & PROPERTY VALUE: DID YOU KNOW?

*Properties immediately adjacent to a well maintained park see an increased proximate property value affect of 20%. Those properties one block off see a 10% increase, and those two blocks off of experience an increase of 5%.*

~ Dr. John L. Crompton, Professor, Texas A&M University, in his report *Community Benefits and Repositioning: The Keys to Park and Recreation's Future Viability* (2007)

## JACKSON PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE



In 2009, Jackson Park, a neighborhood favorite located at 1331 33rd St., underwent a process to create and design a new Master plan for the park. With the help of staff and

professional planners, local residents and park patrons were able to give their suggestions and see their ideas come to life in the final design. The plan has since been approved by the City Council, as they recognize the need to continually maximize the use and value of our park facilities. The first phase of construction will begin as funds are made available.

*"Out for the afternoon with Cachin' Kidlets. I grew up in Wyoming, but never knew this area was back here – thank for showing it to me!"*

~ Log post from a geocacher who visited Jackson Park

# INVESTING IN HEALTH & WELLNESS

*"I feel I learned the basics and a little bit of history behind the art of Tai Chi – I would like to further my knowledge and skills in this art."*

*~ Participant evaluation comment from Tai Chi*

## ADULT PROGRAMS DIVERSIFY & EXPAND



The Parks and Recreation Department continues to meet the wellness needs of the community through the offering of adult fitness programs. In 2009, three new classes were added to the fitness offerings for adults: Cardio Tennis, Tai Chi and a Fitness Sampler that allowed participants to sample Kickboxing, Yoga, Boot Camp, Pilates and Belly Dancing in an eight week session before registering for one of those individual offerings. A total of **9,419** individuals participated in our adult fitness programs this year, with yoga, tap and jazz, and zumba being the most popular.



## LEAGUE SPORTS GROW IN POPULARITY, LEAD TO ADDITIONAL OFFERINGS

Growing numbers of local residents continue to participate in our annual summer and fall sports leagues. Kickball, a new option in 2008, was so popular in its inaugural year that a fall league was added in 2009 to accommodate for the many interested teams. Compared to 2008, in 2009 kickball grew from 24 games played to 60 games played, over a **100%** increase.

Always a community favorite, softball also saw record numbers in 2009:

	FY09 # of Teams	% Growth from FY08	% Growth last 5 Years	Games Played
Spring/Summer League	99	16.5%	54.7%	614
Fall League	75	5.6%	108.3%	289

*"Great total body workout. It was fun and time flew by! Hope you continue to offer this class!"*

*~ Participant evaluation comment from Boot Camp*

Sponsorships from local businesses play a tremendous role in the success and popularity of these leagues, and both the Parks and Recreation Department and the players are grateful for their support. In addition to investing in the health and wellness of the community, sponsoring businesses also receive the added bonus of getting their name out into the community.



## INVESTING IN OUR FAMILIES

### PUMPKIN PATH CONNECTS 78 LOCAL BUSINESSES WITH 6,000 RESIDENTS

Always a crowd pleaser, this year's 5th Annual Pumpkin Path was no exception as it brought together **78** local businesses with over **3,000** children and their families, for an estimated total of over **6,000** participants!

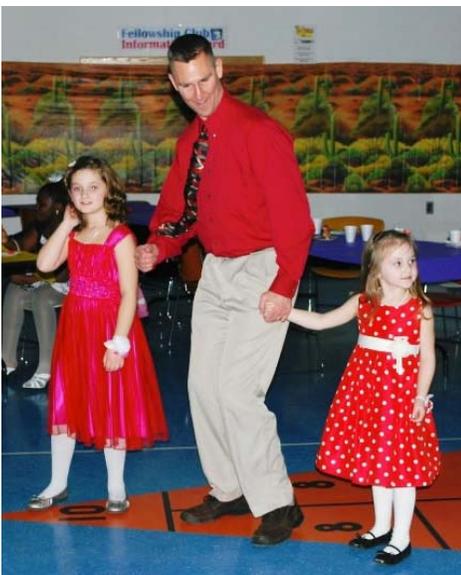
While imaginative costumes and fun activities were abundant, this year's event was truly highlighted by the number of volunteers who invested their time in this great community event. Vanguard Charter Academy was this year's lead financial sponsor; however, their involvement did not stop there. The Vanguard National Junior Honor Society played an integral role in the event, hosting the activity area that included temporary tattoos and face painting for participating children.



*"We had brought children to the event in the past years and thought it would be good exposure for our business. We also think its great considering the economic problems we all have today and its safe for the kids."*

*~ Comment from a Pumpkin Path business participant*

### SPECIAL TIME FOR DADS & DAUGHTERS



The Daddy-Daughter Dance is a very popular event that provides a special evening just for daddy's and daughters. **49** couples (**108** participants in total) attended this year's event which was held at the Wyoming Senior Center. The Dance was fun and affordable, thanks in part, to a partnership with Applebee's that provided dinner coupons for the girls.

Investing in families makes a difference in our community, and the Parks and Recreation Department is committed to providing events that bring children and parents together.

*"Don't stop this wonderful tradition! My daughters love it, time well spent, I will remember this event for the rest of my life, and so will my girls!"*

*"The girls and my husband had a great time and the dinner coupons were a great add on."*

*~ Comments from 2009 Daddy Daughter Dance Evaluations*

# INVESTING IN YOUTH SUCCESS



## T.E.A.M. 21 CONNECTS WITH COMMUNITY, SPURS COLLABORATION, GARNERS PRAISE

*Cultural diversity is one of the many assets of the City of Wyoming, and it is reflected beautifully in our students.*



*In FY 2009, the racial composition of T.E.A.M. 21 participants was the following:*

- White: 37%
- Hispanic, Latino: 35%
- Black, African American: 16%
- Multi-racial, unknown: 8%
- Asian: 3%
- American Indian, Native Alaskan: 1%

In January 2009, the T.E.A.M. 21 After School Program received the first annual WOOD-TV 8 Connecting With Community Award. The award was designed to recognize an organization or program that successfully utilizes



collaboration to improve the community. T.E.A.M. 21 embodies this award beautifully, as it is based on partnerships between the Parks and Recreation Department, Wyoming Public Schools, Godwin Heights Public Schools, Godfrey-Lee Public Schools, Kelloggsville Public Schools, and numerous non-profit and faith-based organizations. Higher education institutions such as Grand Valley State University also have a role, and volunteers play a key part in program delivery.



In addition to the WOOD-TV 8 award, T.E.A.M. 21 was also honored this past year by receiving the Region 3 Community Excellence Award from the Michigan Municipal League. This award, one of seven regional honors given in the state, recognized the community involvement, impact and effectiveness of T.E.A.M. 21 in the City of Wyoming.

As a part of both of these awards, T.E.A.M. 21 received opportunities for additional marketing and publicity, showing the community how their investment in after-school programming is transforming the lives of our local youth!

## T.E.A.M. 21 DOUBLES NUMBER OF SITES

With the addition of a third 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant, provided by the Michigan Department of Education, the T.E.A.M. 21 After-School Program doubled in size from five to ten sites in fiscal year 2009. The five previous T.E.A.M. 21 locations were all a part of Wyoming Public Schools. The five new sites included additional locations in Wyoming Public Schools, as well as Godwin Heights Public Schools, Godfrey-Lee Public Schools and Kelloggsville Public Schools, which also serve students in the City of Wyoming. Of the ten sites, three are middle schools and seven are elementary schools.

The expansion allowed T.E.A.M. 21 to serve **1,466** unique students during 2009, a **51%** increase over 2008. The expansion allows T.E.A.M. 21 to now serve an average of over **500** students per day during the academic school year and approximately **1,000** students per day during the summer portion of the program.

## COMMUNITY GRANT DOLLARS PROVIDE SHADE & SUN FOR LOCAL STUDENTS



This past year, the T.E.A.M. 21 After-School Program received three Lowe's Toolbox for Education Grants totaling \$15,000 (\$5,000 each) to focus on outdoor activity. The grants, made possible by the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Fund, funded two outdoor shade structures and a portable greenhouse. The shade structures will provide students, as well as local community

members, with a place to escape the sun for outdoor activities or hold community gatherings. A portable greenhouse will provide students with a place to grow plants and flowers, as well as store items for their outdoor garden projects. Understanding that finances are limited, the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department is continually seeking ways to leverage resources from within the community to enhance learning and provide diverse educational opportunities for our children.



*"...T.E.A.M. 21 is very exciting and fun. If there wasn't any T.E.A.M. 21, kids would be lying on the couch watching tv, but luckily there is T.E.A.M. 21, with games and activities from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. T.E.A.M. 21 is fun because it has games like 4-square, T.E.A.M. Tennis, wall ball and hallway sports. It also has activities like arts and crafts, board games, computer lab and science experiments. It is also a great time to finish homework. So, sign up now! Don't be a couch potato!"*

*~ Excerpt from the winning letter entry at Godfrey-Lee Middle School for a contest held by Dr. Carol Lautenbach*

## INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

*"(Instructor) did an excellent job engaging the kids, allowing the parents to 'parent', and progressively building in basic soccer skills."*

*~ Participation evaluation comment received from Start Smart Soccer*

*"My child was able to have fun and interact with kids his own age. No pressure in trying to 'win' but just to have fun."*

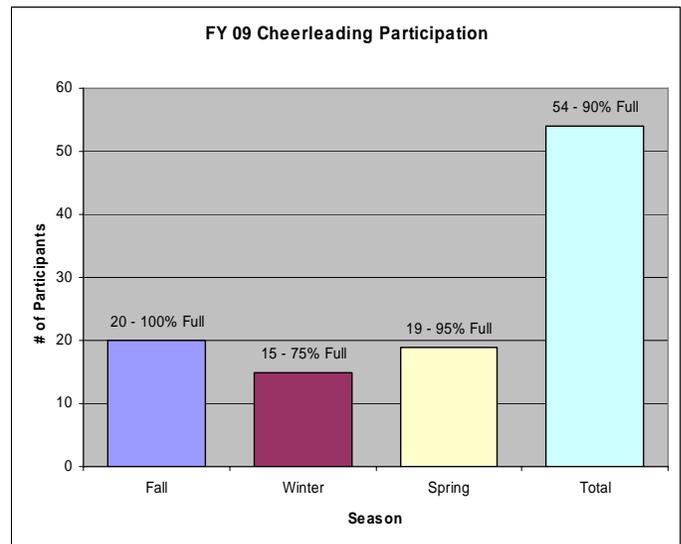
*~ Participant evaluation comment received from Youth Bowling*

*The Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department endeavors to keep up with changing technological trends that offer convenience and facilitate efficient communication with participants.*

## CHEERLEADING CLASSES ADDED TO PROGRAMMING MIX FOR YOUTH

In a continuing effort to provide programming that meets the need of our community, the Parks and Recreation Department introduced youth cheerleading classes in 2009. This was in direct response to participant evaluations over the past two years from existing programs asking for this offering. Three sessions were offered (fall, winter and spring) with **54** total

participants, equating to **90%** capacity for the program for fiscal year 2009. Classes were offered to children ages 4-6 and 7-12.



## ONLINE YOUTH SOCCER REGISTRATION SCORES WELL WITH PARTICIPANTS



Youth soccer became much easier to sign up for in 2009, thanks to a new online registration form. The Parks and Recreation Department partnered with the Information Technology Department to create the form which offered a more convenient registration option, just in time for the 2009 spring season. **80** participants took advantage of the opportunity, accounting for **30%** of the total program participants. In addition, Spring 2009 participant evaluations indicated that **100%** of

the respondents rated the addition of the online registration option as either excellent or good. Using technology to stay connected with residents is a high priority, and the Department will continue to explore further opportunities as they arise.

## PARKS & RECREATION CREATES ITS OWN FILM INCENTIVES IN 2009

One of the goals for Recreation Services set forth in the current Parks and Recreation Department 5-Year Master Plan is to expand family programming and develop community special events. To address this goal, the “Movie In the Park” series was



developed. The first movie shown was Pixar’s “A Bug’s Life”. This free event for families attracted nearly 300 people to Lamar Park’s Grandstand in August 2008. Programming plans are to show 1-2 movies per year and to explore other possible venues such as Pinery Park to continue to showcase our park facilities along with offering programs that provide family entertainment opportunities for the community.



In addition to Movie in the Park, more film-related programs were introduced to the community in 2009. A \$2,000 grant from the Wyoming Community Foundation’s Youth Advisory Committee allowed a unique programming idea to take shape for the Parks and Recreation Department. The funding went towards the purchase of video cameras that Wyoming area students used to create documentaries related to their lives, and what is important to them. Students worked with a college professor from Kendall College of Art and Design to storyboard, film and edit video footage that they compiled. The videos were finished during the fall of 2008 and have been aired periodically on WKTV. The inspiration behind this programming venture was “American High,” a Public Broadcasting System (PBS) television series.

The program, “Independent Voices”, was a collaborative effort between the Parks and Recreation Department and the Wyoming-Kentwood public access television station, WKTV.

### MOVIES & MICHIGAN: DID YOU KNOW?

*According to the Michigan Film Office, 82 projects have been filmed in Michigan since April of 2008 when the film incentives began. These projects total \$216 million in investment — a great boost for the Michigan economy!*

*The Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department works diligently to successfully seek out and utilize grants to supplement and enhance its existing funding. This additional income allows the department to offer programs and amenities that might otherwise be unavailable for the community to enjoy.*

# INVESTING IN OUR VITALITY

## SENIOR CENTER PROGRAMMING EVOLVES TO EMBRACE BABY BOOMERS

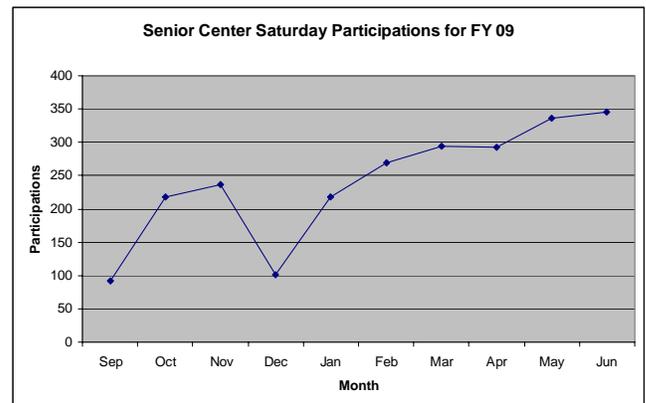
*According to the US Census, Michigan can anticipate residents aged 65+ to grow 71% by 2030.*



As the needs of the community continue to change, the Wyoming Senior Center has been working diligently to stay ahead of the trends and respond accordingly. Most recently, the Department's work has focused on the baby boomer generation. Seventy-six million American babies were born between 1946 – 1964. Demographers, sociologists and the media define these individuals as the Baby Boomers. In 2009, these individuals would be between 45 — 63 years old. They currently represent almost 29% of the U.S. population.

*The Senior Center relies on many volunteers to keep it running smoothly, and they're really all kids at heart! The annual appreciation dinner certainly proved that to be true.*

To address this generation, the Parks and Recreation Department entered into a Senior Visioning Initiative (SVI) beginning in 2005 with the intent of looking ahead to what facility and programming needs Baby Boomers would be looking for. After performing extensive research over the past few years, ten specific items were identified to guide the Wyoming Senior Center as it began envisioning its future facility and programming changes.



Two specific items from that list were accomplished in fiscal year 2009. First, non-traditional program hours were added as the Senior Center began opening its doors on Saturdays. In the 2009 fiscal year, Saturdays saw **2,400+** participations, an average of just over **70** participations per each Saturday that the Center was open. Programming offered on Saturdays includes Tap & Jazz, Art Classes, Fitness Classes, Euchre and Billiards.



In addition, the Wyoming Senior Fellowship Club, a non-profit organization that supports and enhances the facility and programming at the Senior Center, voted to lower its age minimum from 55 to 50 years of age. This allowed those individuals 50 years of age and older to not only become members of the Fellowship Club, but also to participate in Fellowship Club sponsored programs which account for approximately **40%** of the programs offered at the Senior Center.

## PROGRAM RE-DESIGN LEADS TO LARGE INCREASE IN PARTICIPATION

For many years, the Wyoming Senior Center has offered a special event called the Senior Prom, an opportunity for older adults to re-live the experiences of their high school days. As participation had been quite static, averaging slightly over 60 participants over the past five fiscal years, a decision was made to change the name of the event to Spring Fling and to offer live music instead of CD's. Improvements were also made with regard to event decorations. All of these changes were a direct response to the research available relating to the emerging baby boomer population and their avoidance of being solely labeled as seniors.



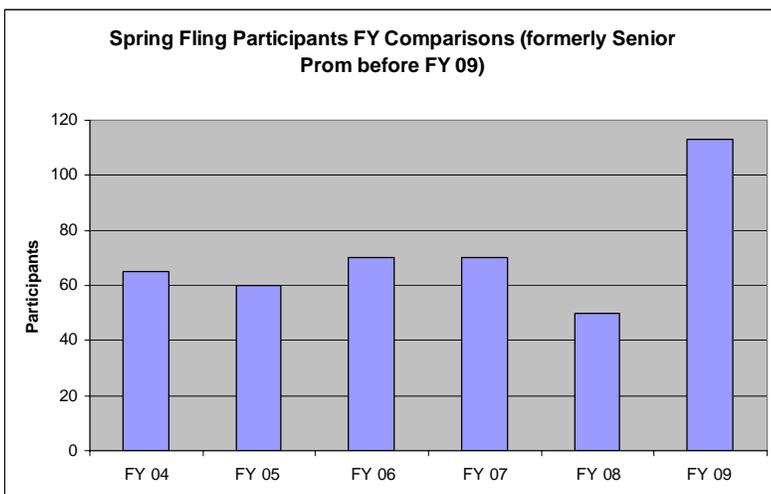
*"I want you to know that today will be the last day that I use my handicap sticker for my car. I decided if I can get up and dance like I did last night, then I don't need to use the accessible spots anymore."*

*~ Written comment received from a participant in the Fall Fling dance held at the Wyoming Senior Center*

Event marketing was then focused on these changes leading to a total of **113** participants in fiscal year 2009, an almost **100%** increase in participation over the past five year average!

This program continues to be a partnership between the Wyoming Senior Center and Wyoming Park High School's student council. The students utilize decorations from their own prom, attend the event as volunteers (including dancing with participants), and pay some of the event expenses. This partnership allows the

program to meet the goal of focused inter-generational programming set forth in the current Parks and Recreation Department five-year master plan.

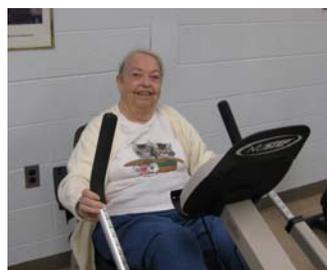


## INVESTING IN ACTIVE LIVING

### OLDER ADULTS CONTINUE MOVING FORWARD WITH RECREATIONAL THERAPY FROM STEPPING STONES

*“Stepping Stones has been a great help to strengthen me both physically and spiritually. It has motivated me to get going and gave me the encouragement to try things even when I thought I would not be able to do them.”*

*~ Virgie Young, former Stepping Stones Client*



Over the past year, the grant-funded, Stepping Stones program continued in its 11 year history of providing older adults throughout Kent County and the surrounding region with the opportunity to regain control of their lives through in-home therapeutic recreation. Therapeutic recreation helps those who are disabled or in need of special assistance to participate in meaningful recreation activities and experiences that are intended to

maintain or improve health status, daily activity, and quality of life. The services provided through therapeutic recreation include treatment (recreational therapy), education (including leisure education), and many other recreation opportunities. Therapeutic recreation experts are specially trained and certified to provide these services.

### THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES...

In 2009, Stepping Stones served **109** clients. The top diagnosis served was orthopedic, the average age was 75, and the average length of stay in the program was 3 months. **81%** of those clients were successfully integrated back into the community or met their personal goals, and continuing one month after discharge **93%** of them reported that Stepping Stones had helped to improve their overall quality of life. One unique aspect of the program is the availability of aquatic therapy, and **49%** of those enrolled in Stepping Stones engaged in this special offering.

*“I enjoyed myself every time I went to the pool. I can walk really fast and get in and out of bed on my own. I have come a long way.”*

*~ Albert Marcinowski, Stepping Stones Client*

### TOP 5 REFERRAL AGENCIES:

1. Area Agency on Aging
2. Porter Hills Home Health
3. Gerontology Network
4. HHS, Inc.
5. Sunset Home Services





## SERVES 700TH CLIENT IN FY 2009

The Stepping Stones program began fiscal year 2009 with an outstanding achievement of serving **700** clients in the Kent County area. Stepping Stones 700th Client was Rosalind Wallace. Wallace participated in the Stepping Stones program and met her therapist at the Greater Grand Rapids YMCA for aquatic therapy once a week. Over the course of her treatment, programmers were delighted with her progress, noting that Wallace's initial fear of the water soon gave way to full independence as she began to trust herself. After only eight sessions, Rosalind was able to walk independently in the pool.

Over the past 11 years, hundreds of success stories like Wallace's have come from serving the older adult population in Kent County through Recreation Therapy. Programmers say Stepping Stones has been fortunate to receive the necessary funding provided by the Kent County Senior Millage along with support from the City of Wyoming's Parks and Recreation Department. Additional partnerships with businesses and organizations in the community will be crucial to its ongoing success.

## TRANSPORTATION KEY TO ACTIVE LIVING

Transportation is a critical element for keeping residents actively engaged in the community. This is especially true for older adults, and despite funding cuts, the Wyoming Senior Center provided **376** clients with transportation through its grant-funded Go! Bus service. A total of **7,514** tickets were issued to these riders, who utilized the service for a variety of reasons, including:

- Access medical appointments
- Access leisure & social activities, including attending the Wyoming Senior Center
- Obtain food from local grocers and restaurants
- Attend work, volunteer, and perform miscellaneous errands



### THE BENEFITS OF RECREATIONAL THERAPY:

- *Reconnecting with family and friends.*
- *Sharpening self-awareness and maintaining peak mental skills.*
- *Boosting emotional well being and developing trust.*
- *Improving abilities*

Program Funded In Part  
by the Following:

**Kent County  
Senior Millage**



*The Source for Seniors*

# INVESTING TOGETHER

## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CRITICAL FOR ENSURING FUTURE SUSTAINABILITY

Much of the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department's success in 2009 can be attributed directly to the hundreds of residents, businesses, and organizations who partnered with us to support people, parks and programs. Whether through volunteer hours, in-kind donations, monetary donations or program participation, these supporters helped us leverage our resources amidst the current economy. These supporters also affirmed the value we place on our community's quality of life, environment, and health and wellness, and they helped to ensure that we invested in the future success of our youngest residents while encouraging active living at any age.

The Parks and Recreation Department could not do what it does without the help of the community, and these partnerships will be critical as the Department continues to invest in the community through people, parks, and programs. Your involvement is both desired and welcomed, and we look forward to working with you in the year to come.



## 2009 SPONSORS & PARTNERS

AARP

ACTION Wyoming

Altrusa

American Cancer Society-Relay For Life

American Red Cross

Applebee's

Aquinas College

Area Agency on Aging of West Michigan

Community Care Givers

Contractors Steel

East Kelloggsville Elementary PTA/PTO

Edward Jones

First Assembly Church

Gerontology Network

Gladiola Elementary PTA/PTO

Godfrey Lee Public Schools

Godwin Heights Public Schools

Grand Rapids First

Grand Rapids Towing

Grand Valley State University

Hearing Association of Grand Rapids

Hearing Consultants

Hearthstone Assisted Living

HHS, Inc.

Home Repair Services

Hope Network Foundation

KDL – Wyoming Library Branch

Kelloggsville Public Schools

Kendall College of Art & Design

Kent County Health Department

Kent County Humane Society

Kent Intermediate School District

Kent Optimist Club

Klingman's Furniture

Knights of Columbus

Lee ECC PTA/PTO

Mars Hill Bible Church

Mental Health Foundation/Network 180

Merl's Towing Service

Metro Health Hospital

Michigan Amateur Softball Association

Morning Thunder Family

National Heritage Academies

Papa Murphy's Pizza

Park Center Lanes

Parkview Elementary PTA/PTO

Parkwood Pharmacy

Pines Golf Course

Porter Hills Home Health

Rogers Heights Christian Reformed Church

Roman Manufacturing

Senior Meals Program

South Godwin Elementary PTA/PTO

South Godwin Neighborhood Association

St. John Vianney Catholic Church

Sunset Home Services

Swanson Wrecker Service

Taft Elementary PTA/PTO

TenderCare Health and Rehabilitation Center

Vanguard Charter Academy

Walgreen's

Wedgwood Christian Services

Wesley Park United Methodist Church

WKTV

Wyoming Clean Water Plant

Wyoming Fire Department

Wyoming Park United Methodist Church

Wyoming Police Department

Wyoming Public Schools

Wyoming Senior Fellowship Club

YMCA Camp Manitou-lin



*"The way you get meaning into your life is to devote yourself to loving others, devote yourself to your community around you, and devote yourself to creating something that gives you purpose and meaning."*

*~Mitch Albom*

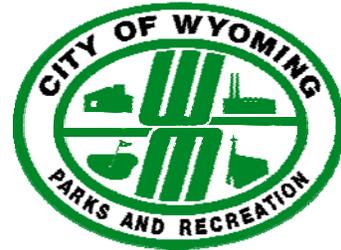


Our supporters work directly with the Parks & Recreation Department to bring quality recreation programs and park facilities to the citizens of Wyoming. We sincerely apologize if we have inadvertently left an organization or business from this listing.

## CITY OF WYOMING PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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*Creating community through people, parks, and programs!*