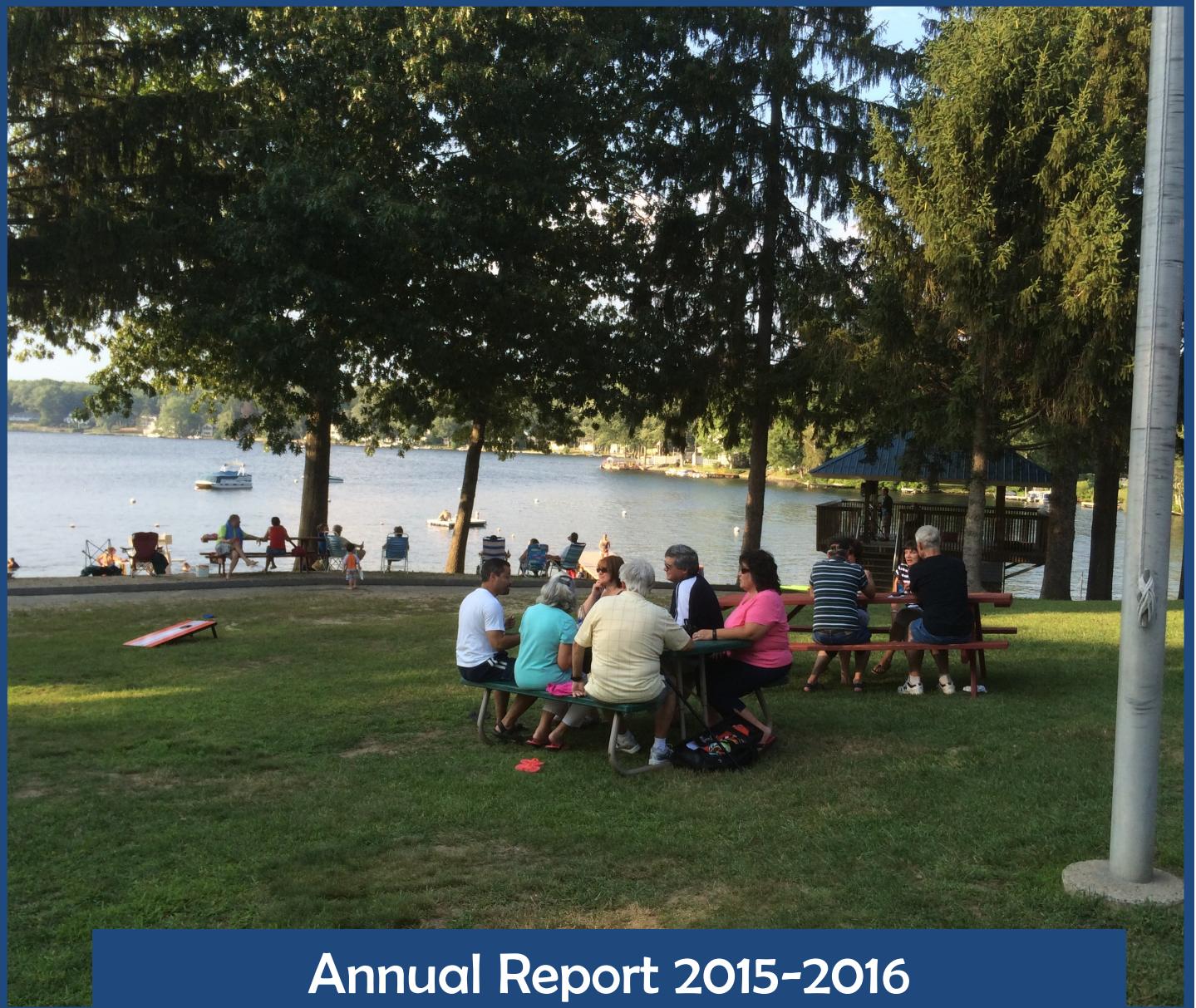


COLUMBIA



PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT



## Annual Report 2015-2016

Marc Volza—Director

Columbia Parks and Recreation

323 Route 87, Columbia, CT, 06237

P: 860-228-8513 E: [recreation@columbiact.org](mailto:recreation@columbiact.org)

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# Executive Summary

*“Our Mission is to positively impact the quality of life for all members of the community by offering a diverse range of activities and leisure services.”*

**Our Department:** The Columbia Parks and Recreation Department consists of a full-time Director and a 10 hour per week assistant. The director is in charge of creating new and exciting opportunities for the community, overseeing the departmental budget, scheduling and coordination of various facilities and fields, and oversight of Recreation Parks and Columbia Lake Beach.

**Recreation Commission:** The commission is made up of 6 residents from the town. They serve as an advisory board to the Board of Selectmen and are the representatives for the public in the recreation world.



## Year in Review '15/16'

The past year was a very exciting year for the Parks and Rec Department! It came with the beginning of many new projects and changes. Director of Parks and Recreation became a full-time position allowing for an increase in office hours and increase in the variety of programs offered. We continue to look for ways to improve existing programs as well as create new programs for the future. This report shows every exciting event that happened in the fiscal year '15/16' (July 1, 2015—June 30, 2016). Enjoy!!

*Agreement was reached and work began on replacing the 5-12 year old play scape at Porter School and Recreation park.*

*Contract was signed with Weston and Sampson to Design a Master Plan for Recreation Park and Brand Property.*

*Increased attendance at 2 of our major fundraising programs: Chili-Cook-Off -8 contestants, 75 attendees, Cupcake Challenge 12 contestants, 100 attendees*

*Extended Beach Season and Hours at Columbia Lake Beach*

*First Concert on the Green was held in over 3 years, Bruce John played for a crowd of over 80 people, attendance was free costs were covered by sponsor money.*

*Implemented 2 new successful programs: Hot Shots basketball contest, 3 Summer Fun Runs.*

*The Columbia Lions donated a tandem kayak to the Parks and Recreation Department in honor of Craig Gingras.*

*Re-implementation of sponsor banners at Rec. Park. All proceeds go to future renovations/repairs at the park.*

The Parks and Recreation Department plays a major role in building a strong community environment within the Town. We play a large role in community engagement and collaboration. Below are some of the organizations, boards, and commissions we work very closely with on various tasks.

- *EastConn*
- *Columbia Leo's Club*
- *Windham Recreation Department*
- *Columbia Classic Road Race*
- *Bolton Recreation Department*
- *Columbia Public Works*
- *Discovery Zone Learning Center*
- *Camp Care*
- *Lucky Strike Lanes*
- *Eastern Highland Health District*

- *Columbia Windham Soccer Association*
- *Holowaty Baseball Camp*
- *Columbia Little Columbia*
- *Softball Camp*
- *Horace W. Porter School*
- *Columbia Field Hockey Camp*
- *Beckish Senior Center*
- *For Love of the Game Camp*
- *Columbia Lions Club*

# Future Projects

**Play Scapes** The old playscape at Horace W. Porter school has been removed and the new one will be opened before the start of the school year. The project was funded partially through the Capital Budget and with money from the David N. Bell fund donated to the town. The playground will be named the David Bell Memorial Playground in honor of Mr. Bell, as this project would not have been possible without his contribution.

The money is in the budget and the contract has been signed to replace the wooden playscape at Rec. Park sometime in the fall of 2016. The 24 year old playground will be replaced with a Mega structure. Both playgrounds will be much more ADA accessible and contain poured in place rubber surfacing in certain areas to enhance the ADA accessibility.



**Master Plan** Weston and Sampson and the Town signed a contract for the company to develop a master plan for Recreation Park as well as the Brand Property. They will be able to tell the town, using data and national standards what different fields we need where they should be placed, etc. In addition they will be looking at our trails, additional trails, and all other structures currently in place and what can possibly be constructed in the future.



**Columbia Lake Beach** The town has been working with Nathan L. Jacobson to development a plan that would allow the beach to be re-graded while keeping all of the esthetically pleasing aspects that residents love. The plan will lessen the steep grade that currently exists, allowing it to become more ADA accessible to all who use it.

# Adult Programs

## Classes

- Zumba

Offered on Mon and Weds all year long at 7PM in Yeoman's Hall.

The routines integrate some of the basic principals of aerobic, interval, and resistance training to maximize caloric output, cardiovascular benefits, and total body toning. Add some Latin flavor and international zest into the mix and you've got Zumba!

- Fit-Fusion

Offered on Mon and Weds at 4:30PM in Yeoman's Hall (moves to Beckish Center June-September).

A fusion of all disciplines: cardio, muscle, core and balance to round out a complete workout. Come enjoy a FUN fitness class designed to get your heart pumping and your muscles toned.

- Yoga

Offered Thurs nights at 7PM in Yeoman's Hall.

Also offered for 8 week session during the summer at Columbia Lake 9am.

- Paint and Sip

Our local instructor Ann Marie Drury leads 2-3 classes each year, where residents can come together and paint a picture led by Ann, and are allowed to bring their own beverages. In Feb, we offer a Couples themed class where the two canvases form the picture.

## Sports

- Co-ed Softball

A CO-ED softball league plays once a week on Sundays at Rec. Park. The league runs from June-August.

- Men's Open Gym Basketball

We have two nights of open gym Mon. and Thurs. Nights. The season runs from September until June and the open gyms are held at Porter School.

- Summer Fun Runs

We were able to successfully implement 3 XC Summer Fun Runs this summer. A 1.5 mile and 3 mile timed course was offered to participants that allowed them the choice to run/walk on the various trails at Recreation Park.

# Youth Programs

## Sports

- Basketball

Columbia is apart of the ECL, a league made up of Columbia, Marlborough, Windham, Hampton/Chaplin, Lebanon, and Andover. We have just under 200 kids who play in our youth basketball league which ranges from grade K-High school.

- Little League

Parks and Recreation works with the local Little League chapter to make sure the correct fields are scheduled, lined, and groomed for each game. Due to the great job Columbia Department of Public Works does we have received many compliments on the upkeep of our fields.

- CWSA (Columbia Windham Soccer Alliance)

Parks and Recreation works with the CWSA in the same manner making sure the fields are scheduled, lined, and groomed for all soccer games. This includes the Columbus Day Tournament, a weekend of some of the best youth soccer around.

## Special Events

- Paint Night

A few times a year during the winter Ann Marie Drury offers paint classes to the towns youth. She takes them step by step through the process of painting the portrait she has come up with. We offer different classes for different age groups 3-6, 7-12, 13-18.

- Hot Shots Competition

This was the first year Columbia hosted a local Hot Shots competition sponsored by the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association. This is a basketball skills competition that involves taking shots from different marked spots on the court. One of our winners Jordan Narotsky placed second in the State Competition held in Old Saybrook, CT.



## Community Events

*Cupcake Challenge*— In January we sponsored our third straight Cupcake Challenge, the theme was Outer Space. Thirteen teams competed for the title of best Cupcake. Over 100 people came out to taste the wonderful treats the children made. One of our judges was Cheryl from A Cupcake for Later, she generously provided each child with a gift certificate for a free cupcake.



*Dinner and Dip*— Food, Fun, and music, at the 2nd annual Dinner and Dip November Love played live music in the pavilion, residents were able to enjoy a wonderful meal at the beach, and there were contest and games for all ages.

*Columbia Market*— This year marked the revival of the Columbia Market, where a great collection of vendors, food, and music came together to provide a fun filled day for Columbia Residents. We had over 30 vendors and food for purchase by the Recreation Department . We hope to continue this great event and be able to increase the number of vendors in the future.



*Chili Cook-off*—This year at our annual Chili Cook-Off we had 8 contestants cook up their best Chili. There were over 75 people that came out to the event to taste all the different Chili's and vote on their favorites.

*Summer Kick-off Concerts*— For the first time in 3 years we held a concert on the green. Thanks to our two sponsors, Discovery Zone Learning Center and Lucky Strike Lanes, we were able to provide this event for free to everyone who came. Local musician Bruce John played for a crowd of over 85 people on the Town Green, and kids were able to enjoy the lawn games set-up.

## Town Beach



*Swim Lessons*— We had 77 children participate in our swim lessons this year between 2 sessions offered over the summer, the levels varied from 1-6, and classes were offered morning and evening. Our lifeguards did a great job working with the children, getting to know them and teaching them the various techniques needed to pass the class.

*Kayak Rentals*— Added to the inventory available for rentals was a tandem kayak along with 3 more life jackets. This was a donation made by the Lions Club to honor Craig Gingras.



*Pavilion Rentals*— Looking for a spot to host a gathering or birthday party? Why not have it at the Pavilion at the Beach! Look in our Beach Birthday package, which includes lifeguards, pavilion, and roped off swimming area. Reserve in advance, spots are limited.