

## Recreation Committee Annual Report

July 30, 2017

By Mark LeMire, Chairman, Tabernacle Recreation Committee

TAA information compiled by Lynn Hedden

The following report has been prepared to communicate the state of the programs in Tabernacle currently overseen by the Tabernacle Recreation Committee for the reporting period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016..

### **The Committee Structure:**

With the resignation of Betsy Piner, the committee currently consists of Mark LeMire, Lynn Hedden, Jenn Noor and Delores Rubin. Betsy did a wonderful job of managing the various recreational activities in Tabernacle, and was the Chair though the first six months covered by this report. It is my intention to add additional volunteers to the committee to assist in existing activities, and potentially additional events.

Also of note are the significant efforts of Doug Cramer, Township Administrator, Colonel Lowe, Director of Tabernacle CERT, Natalie Lewis, Deputy Township Clerk and of course the support of Mayor Lee and the entire Township Committee and Staff.

In addition, there are numerous volunteers and volunteer organizations that support all these efforts as well. All work tirelessly to make all the recreation activities in the township the best they can be, and further the objective of making Tabernacle a desirable place to live.

### **Current Events and Activities:**

The activities and events currently being overseen by the committee include:

- Tabernacle Athletic Association - Field Coordination Only
- Tabernacle Memorial Day Parade
- Tabernacle Senior Dinner
- Tabernacle Senior Bus Trip(s)
- Tabernacle Holiday Tree Lighting -Potentially, TBD

### **The Goal of the Recreation Committee:**

The goal of the Recreation Committee is to promote and coordinate Activities and Events within the township to foster the spirit of community, and add to the fabric that makes Tabernacle a desirable community in which to live. Within the limits of our resources and volunteers, we will

look to provide ALL residents with the opportunity to participate in these activities. The committee seeks to be as inclusive as possible, and all residents are encouraged to participate.

Quantifying the success of any program or activity designed to promote community can be difficult. Enjoyment, Fulfillment, Community Spirit, Pride, Trust, Togetherness, Neighborliness, and Character are also difficult to quantify. (Interestingly enough, measuring failure is usually much easier, in that it usually is defined by an unwelcome event or outcome).

One measure of success is how the residents feel about living in Tabernacle. Again, not easily quantified, except in the desire of people to continue to want to live here. The housing market gives us some measure, as property values and home prices somewhat reflect the desirableness of the community, with the recreation opportunities having only a small bearing on that. A better measure is having our children see this as a community that they appreciate and one that someday they might want to return to raise their family. We must acknowledge that true success of our efforts may well need to be determined by those that follow, but as long as we only have the success of our community in mind, we should have a positive impact.

### **How are we doing?**

Being new to the Chairman's position I have had an opportunity to reflect on the current list of activities, and try to look at them objectively. I know that some have been in place for decades, and some, like the Tree Lighting (which was started by the Tabernacle Women's Association and the Tabernacle Historical Society) are essentially new to the list. I hope to visit each of the activities, with the individuals who have championed them, to determine how they are meeting the goal of enhancing life in our community, and how we can make them more successful. It was very encouraging to see the number of attendees at the Tree Lighting. This should be an indication that residents do see value in Township-sponsored events.

Again, given the need to be good stewards of Township resources, we must look at trying to maximize the number of individuals who are positively affected by these programs. We would not envision wholesale change, just a better understanding of how we might improve on our mission and modify or make recommendations to redirect as the committee may see fit. One area that appears to be working, without qualification, is the TAA. The Recreation Association provides no money to this organization, yet the number of participants, the community involvement, and the benefits to our township youth is quite high.

### **The Tabernacle Athletic Association:**

The Tabernacle Athletic Association (TAA) is managed by President Lynn Heddon and operates as an independent non-profit organization. The relationship between the Township and TAA is long standing and their Charter is to promote Athletics in the Township. Providing this service,

has, by any measure, been a great success. Under Lynn's guidance (and unlimited passion), the athletics in Tabernacle have developed into a structure with a level participation that is impressive for a community of our size. The athletic opportunities TAA provides to our town, using volunteers, and a minimal amount of Township resources, is quite impressive, and they are even looking to expand this list to include Track and Field events to enhance participation by township youth. One can only envision what it would cost to manage this program as a township-controlled enterprise. The Township's primary expense is that of basic field maintenance and insurance coverage for the sports complexes. I say basic field maintenance, because the TAA uses Volunteers, and monies collected from participation fees and snack stand revenue to augment the township efforts. They do this in order to bring the fields up to the highest standard of safety and playability that they can.

**Sports Complex Field Use:**

The following table logs the field use in the Tabernacle facilities known as Patty Bowker and Pricketts Mill Sport Complexes. Of course, this is only the log of users, including TAA, that have made specific application to use the fields. The fields are, by ordinance, open to ALL tabernacle residents to use when they have not been specifically reserved. Therefore, it is important to recognize that the sport complexes need to be maintained for the general public use and not only for TAA. The fact that the TAA puts in countless volunteer hours to maintain the safe conditions of the fields, should be considered a net benefit to the township. Aside from Safety, I believe all would agree that even those that only use the jogging trails, playgrounds and courts all benefit from the hard work the TAA volunteers put into the maintenance and aesthetics of the fields. In a township as widely dispersed as Tabernacle, these few public spaces can and should be points of community unity and pride, and we should all be grateful for their efforts.

Also, non-Tabernacle applicants need to provide proof of their own insurance in order to reserve any fields in the Sports Complexes.

TAA	3/1/16-6/30/16	5pm-Dusk & Weekends as sched	Patty Bowker & Pricketts Mill	Rodney Haines & Lynne Hedden	Baseball Snack Stand Softball
Urban Promise	5/14/16	7am-4pm	Pricketts Mill	Jim Cummings	Bike Rest Stop
South Jersey Mystics	6/4/16-6/5/16	6am-Dusk	Patty Bowker Field 2,3,4,5	Tom DiBernardo	Blue Chip College Showcase Tournament
Tabernacle Women's Softball	6/27/16-8/30/16	5:30-8:45	Patty Bowker Point	Samantha Newman	Women's Slow Pitch

League			Pricketts Mill 2 & 3		
Tabernacle Board of Education	3/6/16- 5/30/16			Noreen Boston	Practice and Games
TAA	8/15/16-11/20/16	5-8pm 8am-1pm Sat 9am-12pm Sun		David Curtis	Recreational Soccer
TAA/South Jersey Mystics	7/8,9,10/16	6am-Dusk	Patty Bowker 2,3,4,5	Tom DiBernardo	Blue Chip College Showcase Tournament, Women's Fast Pitch
Rancocas Valley League	6/20/16-7/25/16 (6/20,21,23,27 7/5,6,7,12,13,14,17,18,20,24)	7:30-10pm		Gerard Lamola	Baseball
Tabernacle Women's Softball	7/1/15-9/1/15	5:30-8:45	Patty Bowker Point, #3 Pricketts Mill #2,3	Samantha Newman	Women's Slow Pitch Softball League
TAA	3/20/15-6/30/15	5-8pm	Pricketts Mill All	Dave Curtis	Spring Recreational Soccer
TAA	8/1/15-11/30/15		Pricketts Mill All	Dave Curtis	Fall Recreational Soccer
TAA	8/15/15-11/15/15	5pm-9pm Weekends as sched.	Patty Bowker & Pricketts Mill	Rodney Haines & Lynne Hedden	Baseball Fields Snackstand and Softball Fields
Seneca Soccer	5/13/15-6/30/15		Pricketts Mill All	Wayne Heins	Training
TAA	Last Tuesday of each month except July and December		Town Hall Meeting Rm	Lynne Hedden	
Tabernacle Women's Softball	7/1/15-9/1/15	5:30-8:45	Patty Bowker Point #2,3 Pricketts Mill #2,3	Samantha Newman	Women's Slow Pitch Softball League

Blue Chip Softball	10/17/15-10/10/15	6am-Dusk	Patty Bowker #2,3,4,5	Tom DiBernardo	Blue Chip College Softball Showcase
Nightmare 18U Softball	10/24/15-10/25/15		Patty Bowker #2,3,4,5	Dave Wheeler	Softball College Showcase Nightmare
Rancocas Valley League	6/27,25,28,29 7/1,6,7,8,9,12,13,16,19,20,27	7:30-10:30	Patty Bowker	Gerard Lamola	Baseball

The following lists the counts for participants in the six (6) sports programs and clinics associated with TAA. Totals include only league play, not participation in clinics to prepare for league play:

<u>TAA PROGRAM</u>	<u>#TEAMS</u>	<u>#Coaches</u>	<u>#Players</u>	<u>Total Kids</u>
<u>SOCCER - 15 and Under:</u>				
Fall Season 8/1/2015 to 11/21/15 235	23	31		235
<u>VOLLEYBALL - 12 and Under:</u>				
Fall 2015 – League Play 80		10		80
Spring 2015 – 4 - 90 minute clinics		2		27
<u>WRESTLING - 14 and Under:</u>				
Winter Season 11/1/15 to 4/1/16 80	1	19		80
<u>BASKETBALL - 18 and Under:</u>				
Winter Season 11/1/15 to 5/1/16 189	19	20		189
<u>SOFTBALL -18 and Under:</u>				
Fall Season 8/15/15 to 11/15/15 87	1	4		12
Spring Season 3/15/16 to 6/26/16	7	20		75

Winter Clinic 1/1/2016 to 3/12/16		8	30
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**BASEBALL - 15 and Under:**

Fall Season 8/15/15 to 11/1/15	2	5	25
157			

Spring Season 3/15/16 to 6/30/16	11	33	132
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**New for Fall 2016/Spring 2017:**

**TRACK and FIELD 12 and Under:**

Fall Clinic 8/15/16 – 11/15/16		5	25
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Spring Season 3/15/17-6/15/17	1	8	40
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**Non-Resident Participation in TAA Programs Fall 2015/Spring 2016**

Soccer (Fall 2015) – 9

Volleyball (Fall 2015) – 15

Baseball (Fall 2015) – 18

Softball (Fall 2015) - 10

Basketball (Winter 2016) – 2

Wrestling (Winter 2016) – 59

Baseball (Spring 2016) – 7

Softball (Spring 2016) – 15

**Total non-resident participation from Fall 2015-Spring 2016 = 135**

The TAA has given a check (number 1740) dated 7-21-2016 to the Township in the amount of \$1,350 to cover the insurance for these 135 participants.

**Summary:**

The Tabernacle Recreation Committee intends to continue to develop and evaluate the activities within the township with the goal of improving the quality of life in Tabernacle. We would welcome any thoughts or questions from the Township Committee and the residents, as well as any additional volunteer participation.

Sincerely,

Mark LeMire