

REPORT OF THE RECREATION COMMISSION – CALENDAR YEAR 2005

2005 was a year of transition for the Town of Upton's Recreation Commission. Two-thirds of the members are new to the Commission this year, one elected by annual election and the other appointed through joint election of the Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen in September of 2005.

We would like to thank former members Joe Poirier and Mike Rooney for their many years of volunteer service as members of the Recreation Commission. We wish them well in their future endeavors.

The Upton Town Beach and Athletic Facility had a very successful beach program in the summer of 2005. This would not have been possible without all of the good work done by the Swim Instructor, Swim Aides, Lifeguards, Gatekeepers, and the Groundskeepers. The beach program's success also would not have been possible without the supervision and support from Parks Supervisor John Johnson, Jr. and DPW Administrative Assistant Carol Peterson. We would like to thank them all for their efforts in 2005.

As usual, the Town Beach Softball field saw plenty of use from the Upton Youth Club's various softball teams and the Upton Men's and Women's Softball Leagues in 2005. The Town Beach Soccer field was off-line for all of 2005 for re-grading and installation of an irrigation system. This work was completed in the Fall of 2005 and we hope to resume play on this field in the Fall of 2006 if possible.

The West River Street Soccer field came on-line in the Spring of 2005 as nearly 80 second grade boys and girls took to this field for practices during the week and a full slate of Under-8 games every Saturday morning. In the Fall, this field was used sparingly for practices only in an effort to allow the grass to take better root. Due to its location in the Flood Plain, this field is limited to an organic fertilization program that is often much more slow-acting than a more conventional 4-step program. We plan to look into the possibility of getting irrigation to this field to help with grass growth going forward.

The Howard Leland Memorial Field behind the Memorial Elementary School was opened to recess play in 2005, and very limited soccer practices were allowed in the Fall. Problems with the irrigation system shutting off shortly after turning on resulted in poor grass growth this past year. Lack of communication between the Town and the Mendon-Upton School District resulted in delays in getting the system fixed in a timely manner, the system has now been fixed and we expect better results.

The Recreation Commission would like to thank the Upton Men's Club for their generous donation from their 50/50 raffle proceeds to go towards a piece of playground equipment. We are working closely with the Parks Supervisor to identify a piece that will fit in the VFW Playground and hope to have this new piece in place as soon as possible.

Much work was done in 2005 on the Recreation Master Plan for Upton. Many citizens contributed time and knowledge to assist our consultant from Recreation Facilities Consulting as he worked his way through drafting the plan. We expect this plan to be finalized in mid-2006 and the Recreation Commission will make it generally available at that point. Among other things, this plan provides data that supports the general consensus in town that we have a shortage of athletic facilities when compared against our population and the user community size and the future growth estimated in Upton.

The present Recreation Commission is very interested in offering additional recreation opportunities to the citizens of Upton. Part of the work involved in creating the Recreation Master Plan included a survey of Upton residents. It was clear in the responses that there is much desire for additional recreation programs for all ages. Examples of programs that the Recreation Commission is looking into include: Summer Program for kids(at the Town Beach and Athletic Facility), tennis lessons, golf lessons, outdoor ice skating rink, etc. With the exception of some seed money to get these programs started, we would expect these programs to pay for themselves via participation fees. We are also open to suggestions on future programs, you can drop us a note at: Rec-Com, PO Box 808, Upton – we would like to hear from you.

We look forward to working with and for the citizens of Upton to drive more recreation opportunities in town.

David R. Adams, Chairman
Jacqueline Pilot
Timothy Alibozek