

# Team-Times *Newsletter*

Bi-monthly Employee Newsletter of the Richland County Recreation Commission -- January/February 2012



## IN THIS ISSUE:

A GRAND AFFAIR 1-2

BACK TO THE BASICS 2

HEART ATTACK PREVENTION 3-4

31ST ANNUAL SNOWMAN RUN 5

GRINDING OF THE GREEN 5

FIELD OF DREAMS 6

HEALTHY WEIGHT WEEK 7

FEBRUARY/MARCH CALENDAR 7

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Dedicated to enriching lives and connecting communities through diverse recreational opportunities.*



South Carolina's First and Only Nationally Accredited  
Parks & Recreation Agency

## A Grand Affair

Leigh Cheatham, Director of Communications

2012 started off pretty busy for RCRC. We had two big events within a few weeks of each other. We've had a long awaited addition to the RCRC family and a new beginning for a special community. In January, we celebrated the grand opening of the Crossroads Community Center. The Crossroads community has been without a solid meeting place for a few years and as part of the \$50 million bond construction project, a new community center was built at the park. Crossroads Park currently has a multipurpose ball field, playground, outdoor basketball and now a brand-new center to have classes, meetings and other events.

The Crossroads Community Center is approximately 5000 sq. ft. and has two classrooms and a large meeting room, complete with a full kitchen. If you weren't able to attend the grand opening, this building is a MUST SEE!! It's gorgeous! The décor is modern and sleek and the whole building feels warm and welcoming.



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*continued from page 1*

Another community is very excited to get a long awaited new addition to their community center too.

The Crane Creek Community Center will get a new gymnasium as part of the bond construction project.

For years the Crane Creek Elementary school sat vacant and abandoned. It was vandalized and broken down. RCRC took over the building and made it into a community center, complete with kids and adult programming and

brought in two rentals, the Carolina School for Inquiry and the Richland County Sheriff's Department Training Division. The only thing the community lacked was a gym.

A groundbreaking was held for the new gym in January. Many community members, Recreation Enrichment Committee members and RCRC staff celebrated the new beginning for the new place of recreation. Once the gym is completed the kids and adults in the community will have a new place to gather and get fit together.



## Back to the Basics

Sandra James, Director of Finance

On December 8, 2011, I had the opportunity to go "undercover" as an afterschool counselor at Forest Lake Park.

I played games, participated in snack time, talked and listened to the students discuss what school means to them, and helped with homework assignments. With close to two dozen children to supervise, my two hours literally flew by.



The children were like sponges; soaking up the attention and expressing their appreciation with something more valuable than money can buy – hugs and smiles. It was a rewarding afternoon and I challenge others to go "undercover" too.



Sandra James  
Afterschool/Summer Camp  
counselor

# Heart Attack Prevention

Chris Santino, Safety Manager



February is National Heart Month and each year thousands die from cardiac emergencies. Education and knowing the signs of a heart attack are important to surviving and going on to lead a normal lifestyle.

## What is a heart attack?

Your heart muscle needs oxygen to survive. A heart attack occurs when the blood flow to the heart is severely reduced or cut off completely. This happens because coronary arteries that supply the heart with blood can slowly become thicker and harder from a buildup of fat, cholesterol and other substances that together are called plaque. When plaque in a heart artery breaks, a blood clot forms around the plaque. This blood clot can block the artery and shut off blood flow to the heart.

When the heart muscle is starved for oxygen and nutrients, a heart attack can occur. **About every 34 seconds, someone in the United States has a heart attack.**

Some heart attacks are sudden and intense, where no one doubts what's happening. But most heart attacks start slowly, with mild pain or discomfort. Often people affected aren't sure what's wrong and wait too long before getting help. Here are signs that can mean a heart attack is happening:

### Chest discomfort.

Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back.

**Discomfort in other areas of the upper body.** Symptoms can include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.

**Shortness of breath** with or without chest discomfort.

**Other signs** may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

Most of the time, all of these symptoms can be common for both men and women but studies show that women have other symptoms that may not be connected with having a heart attack.

Common symptoms for women are sweating, nausea/vomiting, sleep disturbance, dizziness or fainting and discomfort in the lower back and or jaw pain. Cardiovascular disease is the number 1 killer of women, worldwide. It's so important for women to know the signs and symptoms and get help immediately.

Recognizing the symptoms of a heart attack is paramount, but moreover being certified in First Aid, CPR and AED can save a life. Performing CPR and using an AED immediately after a person goes into cardiac arrest can greatly increase their chance of survival.

Calling 9-1-1 is almost always the fastest way to get lifesaving treatment. Emergency medical services (EMS) staff can begin treatment when they arrive — up to an hour sooner than if someone gets to the hospital by car. EMS is also trained to revive someone whose heart has stopped. Patients with chest pain who arrive by ambulance usually receive faster treatment at the hospital, too. It is best to call EMS for rapid transport to the emergency room.

### Risk Factors

Besides knowing the symptoms of when you may be having a heart attack, knowing your risk factors can also help combat heart disease. Some are as simple as diet and exercise, others like gender and

family history can make things more difficult but knowing your family medical history and making other lifestyle changes can lower your risk.

### Stress

Some scientists have noted a relationship between coronary heart disease risk and stress in a person's life, their health behaviors and socio-economic status. These factors may affect established risk factors. For example, people under stress may overeat, start smoking or smoke more than they otherwise would.

### Alcohol

Drinking too much alcohol can raise blood pressure, cause heart failure and lead to stroke. It can contribute to high triglycerides, cancer and other diseases, and produce irregular heartbeats. The risk of heart disease in people who drink moderate amounts of alcohol is lower than in nondrinkers. If you drink, limit your alcohol consumption to no more than two drinks per day for men and no more than one drink per day for women.

### Diet and Nutrition

A healthy diet is one of the best weapons we have to fight cardiovascular disease. The food you eat (and the amount) can affect other controllable risk factors: cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes and obesity. Choose nutrient-rich foods that have vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients but that are lower in calories.

A diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole-grain and high fiber, fish, lean protein and fat-free or low-fat dairy products is the key.

### Tobacco Use

Smokers' risk of developing coronary heart disease is 2-4 times that of nonsmokers. People who smoke a pack of cigarettes a day have more than twice the risk of heart attack than people who've never smoked. People who smoke cigars or pipes seem to have a higher risk of death from coronary heart disease (and possibly stroke) but their risk isn't as great as cigarette smokers'.

Exposure to secondhand smoke also increases chances of heart attack.

### High cholesterol

As cholesterol rises, so does risk of coronary heart disease. When other risk factors (such as high blood pressure and tobacco smoke) are present, this risk increases even more. A person's cholesterol level is also affected by age, sex, genetics and diet. Here's the lowdown on where those numbers need to be:

**Total Cholesterol:** Less than 200 mg/dL

### LDL (bad) Cholesterol:

If you're at low risk for heart disease: Less than 160 mg/dL

If you're at intermediate risk for heart disease: Less than 130 mg/dL

If you're at high risk for heart disease (including those with existing heart disease or diabetes): Less than 100mg/dL

**HDL (good) Cholesterol:** 40 mg/dL or higher for men and 50 mg/dL or higher for women

**Triglycerides:** Less than 150 mg/dL

### High blood pressure

High blood pressure increases the heart's workload, causing the heart to thicken and become stiffer. This stiffening of the muscle is not normal, and causes the heart not to work properly. It also increases your risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure. When high blood pressure exists with obesity, smoking, high cholesterol levels or diabetes, the risk of heart attack or stroke increases several times.

### Physical inactivity

Leading an inactive lifestyle is a risk factor for coronary heart disease.

Regular, moderate-to-vigorous physical activity helps prevent heart and blood vessel disease. The more vigorous the activity, the greater your benefits. However, even moderate-intensity activities help if done regularly and long term. Physical activity can help control blood cholesterol, diabetes and obesity, as well as help lower blood pressure.

### Obesity

People who have excess body fat especially excessive belly fat are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke even if they have no other risk factors. Excess weight increases the heart's work. It can also cause high blood pressure, high cholesterol triglyceride levels, and can lower HDL ("good") cholesterol levels.

Many obese and overweight people may have difficulty losing weight but losing even as few as 10 pounds, you can lower your heart disease risk.

### Diabetes

Diabetes seriously increases your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Even when glucose levels are under control, diabetes increases the risk of heart disease and stroke, but the risks are even greater if blood sugar is not well controlled. At least 65% of people with diabetes die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease. If you have diabetes, it's extremely important to work with your healthcare provider to manage it and control any other risk factors you can.

### Increasing Age

About 82 percent of people who die of coronary heart disease are 65 or older.

### Gender

Men have a greater risk of heart attack early in life than women do.

Even after menopause, when women's death rate from heart disease increases, it's not as great as men's.

### Genetics and Race

Children of parents with heart disease are more likely to develop it themselves. African Americans have more severe high blood pressure than Caucasians and a higher risk of heart disease.

Heart disease risk is also higher among Mexican Americans, American Indians, native Hawaiians and some Asian Americans. This is partly due to higher rates of obesity and diabetes. Most people with a strong family history of heart disease have one or more other risk factors.

The time is now to reduce your risks! It is never too late to take steps to

control your risk factors.

The American Heart Association recommends that heart attack prevention begin by age 20. This means assessing your risk factors and working to keep them low.

For those over 40, or those with multiple risk factors, it's important to calculate the risk of developing cardiovascular disease in the next 10 years. Many first time heart attacks or strokes are fatal or disabling, so prevention is critical. The sooner you begin comprehensive risk reduction, the longer and stronger your heart will beat.

Preventing a heart attack is simpler than you may think. It's as easy as ABC, to reduce your risk and live a longer, stronger life. Planning healthy living may also be simpler than you think for living a longer, stronger life.

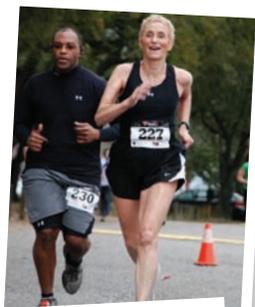
**For more info go to [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org).**

The best way to deal with a heart attack is to prevent it. There is no substitute for prevention.

# 31st Annual Snowman Run

Lisa Smarr, Adult Services Coordinator

Runners are known for their personal discipline, competitiveness, dedication and perseverance. The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Snowman Run offered 130 runners, from 10 year old Paige Trent to 82 year old, Lonnie Collins, a chance to challenge themselves against the race clock, other runners, and this year, Mother Nature. The threat of rain might keep some folks inside, but not the runners who come to Caughman Road Park every year on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in January.



nearly half of the course before heavy rain and high winds rolled in from the west, Mrs. Tolley-Beeson reluctantly accepted a ride to the finish line.

While she is no longer able to race at the level she is accustomed to, having run numerous marathons (26.2 miles), Mrs. Tolley-Beeson is not giving up. Her courageous spirit and tenacity gave everyone at Snowman an opportunity for personal reflection. As 2012 begins and we look ahead to a new year, how will we challenge ourselves? What are your fitness goals? What lifestyle choices can we

Perhaps the most impressive effort of the day came from 76 year old, E.K. Tolley-Beeson. Under full time hospice care and attending the race with her caregiver, Mrs. Tolley-Beeson lined up at the starting line, intending to walk the 8K course, no matter how long it took. Covering



make that will have a positive impact on our health?

We have access to some of the nicest facilities, equipment, and programs in the state.

In our own RCRC backyard we have tennis courts, Zumba and Line Dance classes, weight rooms, gyms, walking trails, cardio equipment and more.

Ask a friend to join you for a walk or run. Invite a neighbor to come to a dance class with you, or to play a round of golf at Linrick.

Let's get moving and make 2012 our best year yet. Who knows, maybe I'll snap *your* picture next year as you cross the finish line of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Snowman Run!

# Grinding of the Green

Marta Aldinger, Property Management Manager

This year RCRC became a drop-off location for the annual "Grinding of the Greens" held by Keep the Midlands Beautiful. Each year the public is invited to drop off their Christmas tree, after the holidays, to have it recycled by having it ground into mulch.



A special thanks to the Green Team, the parks that hosted the event, Connie Reeves, and especially the property management department for setting up, picking up, and mulching the trees!



The Property Management Department collected over 200 trees, mulched them and then used them to beautify our parks and other facilities.

Four parks were drop-off areas: Friarsgate, Meadowlake, Polo Road and Hopkins Parks.



# Field of Dreams

Robert Allen, Director of Recreation

The Athletics Department has been very busy the past year. We have seen all of our programs increase their participation to record numbers. This past year, we had record participation for youth basketball, softball, youth track, and kickball.



Our record numbers in participation were not just isolated to youth sports; we also were busy breaking records in our adult softball leagues and our newly formed kickball league. Our adult softball league had over 100 teams. We were also able to run men and co-ed leagues during the summer.

It is always important that we provide a safe and secure environment for kids and adults to play. Safety and security of our children is a top priority for our agency and our department. The department collaborated with other agency departments to review and revise the agency and community league's background check process.

We are working our hardest to ensure that everyone who has any type of access to our players are screened and certified. This has helped us control who can and cannot coach in our leagues and has provided another safety element to our programs.

During our 2011 Spring track season we saw a record number of runners take to the track. We had over 250

runners from 5 different clubs compete during our season. We saw a total of 19 state champions, which made up over 50% of the winners in the Hershey Track and Field state



finals. We also had 4 runners go on and claim national championships at the Hershey Track and Field National Finals.

In our 2011 Summer Basketball program we were able to increase our participation to over 1,000 players for the entire county. This was a record by about 200 players. The program was a huge success thanks to our title sponsor Chick-Fil-A. For the first time in many years, we were also able to include a District and county-wide championship game. Players and parents really enjoyed the competition. These tournaments really helped foster community pride within our parks.

With so much participation the Athletic department hosted a charity softball tournament to benefit Grin Kids, a charity started by syndicated morning radio show hosts, Ace & TJ. The tournament raised \$500. Grin Kids is based out of Charlotte, NC and raises money to help kids, families and caregivers of children with physical and intellectual disabilities. Grin Kids hosts a trip to Disney World every year for the families.

In addition to our existing programs for youth basketball, adult softball and track, we were able to start another new league. We kicked off our first kickball league this past season. With several teams joining the league we were able to have two successful seasons and we're already looking to grow and expand the league.

In addition to our new background checks policy, the athletics department was able to rewrite our policies dealing with our community-run

leagues. We increased our fees to the leagues to help offset the cost of operating and maintaining fields.

We have been very busy working with our community businesses in providing sponsorships for our players



and programs. We've developed great partnerships with Firehouse Subs, Chick-fil-a, Dicks Sporting Goods, Academy Sports and Absolute Total Care. These partners have made it possible for us to reach our goals and to continue to increase the size and scope of the Athletics Department.



# Healthy Weight Week

Jamaal Gray, Blythewood Park Asst. Manager

National Healthy Weight Week is held the week of January 15. During the week everyone is encouraged to celebrate healthy living habits and learn how to prevent common eating and weight problems. Blythewood Park hosted a health event for our seniors. About 60 senior adults in attendance were treated to the expertise of our special guest speaker, Dr. Tami Ashford-Carroll, Associate Professor of Health at Benedict College.



Dr. Ashford-Carroll discussed all the different ways to older adults could make healthier eating choices and the importance of being active as they got older. The event also featured eight vendors that provided important



health information. Many of the attendees told us they appreciated the specialized information and thanked the staff for hosting the event.

It was a pleasure to provide the community with a service that was needed and hearing how much they enjoyed the event, reminded me of the reason why I love my job.



I would like to give thanks to Mr. Mike Marshall, Mr. Julian Shabazz and Mr. Jeff Brown for working with me in coordinating this event. It would not have been a success without the help of everyone involved. The Healthy Weight Week event was very successful and beneficial to the community. We look forward to hosting it again next year and years to come.



# February



- 1-28 Heart Health Month
- 1 AARP Tax Aide Program, James Clyburn Technology Center
- 3 Fancy Footwork Fridays, 7:00-11:00 pm, AAC
- 10 Pay Day
- 13 7th Annual Love Yourself Health Fair, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, AAC
- 13 RCRC Town Hall Meeting, 6:00 pm, AAC
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 20 Presidents' Day (RCRC facilities are closed)
- 21 Healthworks Screening, 7:30 am-10:00 pm, AAC
- 24 Veterans Aid & Attendance Benefit Seminar, 10:00 am-12:00 pm, AAC
- 24 Pay Day
- 28 Commission Board Meeting, 6:00 pm, AAC

# March

- 2 Fancy Footwork Fridays, 7:00-11:00 pm, AAC
- 9 Pay Day
- 10 Let's Dance Salsa!, 7:00-11:00 pm, AAC
- 11 Daylight Savings Time Begins
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 18 Barbershop Basketball Tournament, 1:00 pm, Caughman Road Park
- 19 Commission Board Meeting, 6:00 pm, AAC
- 23 Pay Day
- 24 43rd Annual Cottontail Festival & Egg Hunt, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, Sesquicentennial Park



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