

Team-Times

Newsletter

Bi-monthly Employee Newsletter of the Richland County Recreation Commission -- April 2014



Focusing on Ability, Not Disability

Andrew Scott, Adaptive Recreation Manager

IN THIS ISSUE:

FOCUSING ON ABILITY, NOT DISABILITY 1-2

COTTONTAIL EGGSTRAVAGANZA 2

AND THE AWARD GOES TO... 3

PLAYGROUND SAFETY 4-5

FIGHT STRESS WITH HEALTH HABITS 5

WOTSIT PHRASES 6

RCRC + NAMI = SOCIAL EQUITY 7

MAY-JUNE CALENDAR 7

MISSION STATEMENT

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

Many of our activities and events in the Adaptive Recreation Department depend strongly upon our volunteers. Our volunteers have a wide range of involvement with our patrons and their families. One volunteer that stands out from the others is Coach Devin.

Coach Devin is a highly motivated young man who is always willing to lend a helping hand wherever needed. Come to Bluff Road Park on Saturday morning and you will find Coach Devin, demonstrating basketball skills to the Rising High Basketball Players.



Continued on page 2

Continued from page 1



Rising High is an adaptive basketball league designed for the special needs population. What is so unique about this high energy young man is that he is confined to a wheelchair himself. However, his skills and ability to relate with all the players has been nothing short of outstanding.

Coach Devin has been in a wheelchair from the age of 10. He has overcome many physical obstacles yet he continues to live life to its fullest and takes advantage of opportunities as they come available. Coach Devin not only coaches basketball, but he also works with the Challenger Flag Football League.

Coach Devin, we salute you and thank you for all you do to assist others as we strive to offer meaningful recreational opportunities for the Special Needs Population.

Cottontail Eggstravaganza

Felicia Venable, Special Events Manager

Some traditions are just too difficult to break. Employees, volunteers, vendors, and staff gathered on the rainy, wet, muddy Saturday morning of March 29, for our 45th Annual Cottontail Festival. The show must go on! Families slowly arrived, aware of the forecast, 80-90 percent chance of rain for the day!



And then it was off to the main event...the Easter Egg Hunts! We awarded 9 Golden Egg winners Easter Baskets made by Michael's. We also had 3 extra special 45th Anniversary Egg winners of 3 scooters from Toys R Us. Fun was had by all in attendance; smiles of the children melted the hearts of the wonderful employees that weathered the storm.



a Bunny Bucket Ride and Bounce Houses all awaiting the awesome miracle that is Cottontail...the rain went away!

Columbia Marionette Theatre provided a wonderful puppet show titled 'Rockin through the ages'. Our Executive Director and Assistant Director lead the children in singing "Happy Birthday" to Peter Cottontail.



With Peter Cottontail in place, arts and crafts tables awaiting, Power Grip Gaming Truck, Food On The Move, Kona Ice, Palmetto Health, Richland County Recreation Foundation, Southern Pride Rabbit and Cavy Club, Pickles Da Clown, Earth Fare, Richland County Sheriff's Department and Richland County EMS and Air Fun Rental providing



And the Award Goes To...

Julian Shabazz, Recreation Program Manager

The RCRC Staff Development and Evaluation program was developed to increase the knowledge of its employees and improve performance. This program is an effort by the agency to assist employees in developing an understanding of the standards and expectations RCRC has set forth for success. Upon completion of ten (10) hours of staff development workshops covering customer service and recreation programming, each group is charged with creating and implementing a capstone project demonstrating acquisition of learning outcomes as a result of the program.

Group Two consisted of Chantelle Lorick and Jonathan Cunningham, Arthur Bookert and Lee Davis, Alex Wright and Kenny Hunter, and Chris Strother. The group chose to create the *Golden Park Awards* as its project, which was the idea proposed by Arthur Bookert. The focus of the event was to recognize, support and praise RCRC park staff and community volunteers for their excellence and quality of service to the mission of the agency (RCRC Customer Service Policy – “Be a Team Player”). Additionally, each group has a task to implement a new recreational program that was not in existence at the agency (RCRC Recreational Program Plan).

Taking lead on the group project was Chantelle Lorick and Arthur Bookert. They were instrumental in organizing the group and being involved in all aspects of the entire operation. On the day of the program, Chantelle served as the director of operations as well as Mistress of Ceremony. Arthur was the chief of staff who conducted all the behind the scenes activities and served as award presenter on the program. The event was held at the Adult Activity Center and a major objective was to create a social event that presented an atmosphere of professionalism. The event was well

attended by many park managers, assistant managers, community volunteers and RCRC staff members from throughout the agency. The group raised a total of \$1200 to finance the event. Donations were received from each RCRC park, the SC State Credit Union and the Town of Eastover.



In addition to the awards given to deserving park staff members, a major component of the event was the recognition of community volunteers from each park district. The “Community Champion Award” was given to individuals who give freely of their time and resources to help our parks provide quality services to the public. Below are the recipients of the Golden Park Awards:

Community Champion Award (District One)

Mr. Lee Edens

Community Champion Award (District Two)

Mrs. Mary Jo Price

Community Champion Award (District Three)

The Benedict College Women’s Basketball Team
(Accepting on their behalf was Ms. Loraine Dunbar)

Community Champion Award (District Four)

The Town of Eastover
(Accepting on their behalf was Mayor Geraldene Robinson & Councilwoman Rhudine Robinson)

Most Valuable Professional Award

Sean Middleton
(Forest Lake Park)

Best Mentor Award

James Darby
(Assistant Director of Parks)

Innovative Programming Award

Shaunta Cleveland
(Bluff Road Park)

Miss RCRC Award

Kar’Nesha Davis
(Blythewood Park)

Mr. RCRC Award

Sigmund Tucker
(Caughman Road Park)

Incognito Award

Chris Strother
(Denny Terrace Gym)

Young Professional Award

Matthew Parker
(Blythewood Park)

Special gift presentations were made to former Park District Supervisors Andy Hastings, Ira Thomas, James Darby and Stephon Scott. The final gift was presented to Connie Reaves, Director of Parks.

Numerous attendees expressed how pleased they were with the quality of the program and its execution. Group Two of the Staff Development and Evaluation Program presented an excellent capstone project.

Playground Safety

Chris Santino, Safety Manager

The week of April 22-26 is National Playground Safety Week. Do you know how many playgrounds are in the RCRC family, the answer is 29. Did you know each year more than 200,000 children visit hospital emergency rooms because of playground injuries in the United States? Many playground injuries can be prevented. Use this guide to examine your children's playground so that they can run, jump, swing and slide to their heart's content—safely and properly.

Soft surface

Because nearly 79 percent of playground injuries are caused by falls to the ground, improper surfacing and is the first thing parents should watch for when they inspect a playground. Wood chips, bark mulch, wood fibers, sand, pea gravel, shredded tires and rubber mats cushion falls well. Avoid concrete, grass and dirt, they're too hard. A minimum depth of 9 inches of material surrounding each piece of equipment in a 6-foot fall zone is recommended. And regular maintenance is also crucial; if not weekly, then at least monthly.

Swings

Swings are the pieces of moving equipment that are most likely to cause injuries to children. Animal swings have caused several deaths and should be removed from playgrounds. Metal or wooden seats should be replaced with soft seats. The play zone for swings must be set far enough away from other equipment so that children won't be hit by a moving swing. Only two swings should be in each supporting framework, and they should be at least 24 inches apart. Full-bucket seats are recommended for younger children age 2 – 5 years old. Half-bucket seats are dangerous because babies and toddlers can slide out of them; they are designed for ages 5-12. Lastly, understand that swings are not designed to be stood on or jumped off of.

Smooth sliding

Slides should be well-anchored, have firm handrails and good traction on the steps. There should be no gaps between the slide itself and the

platform. There should also be some barrier at the top of the slide to force children to go from a standing position to a seated position before they go down.

One of the greatest dangers with slides occurs when drawstrings on children's clothes get caught at the top of the slide. Although most children's clothing manufacturers have quit making drawstrings, some children have older clothes with these drawstrings, be mindful. Slides are not designed to go up on or slide head first and tunnel slides are not designed to be climbed on top of.

Safe seesaws and merry-go-rounds

Spring-loaded seesaws are best for young children. Avoid adjustable seesaws with chains because children can crush their hands under the chains. A traditional type seesaw should have a tire or some other object under the seat to keep it from hitting the ground. Merry-go-rounds, or "whirls" or "roundabouts", are best for school-age children. They should have good hand grips, and the rotating platform should be level, free of sharp edges and have adequate clearance to prevent crushing or severing limbs.

Climb carefully

Forty percent of all playground injuries are related to climbing equipment. More children are injured falling off climbing equipment or horizontal ladders than anything else on the playground. Children under 5 shouldn't play on this equipment. However, climbers are great for encouraging upper body strength. Watch older children when they're climbing, check that steps and handrails are in good condition, and make sure a guardrail or barrier surrounds raised platforms. Any climbing ropes or chains should be secured at the top and bottom. The number of injuries caused by monkey bars is so significant that many experts



recommend that they be removed from all playgrounds.

Playgrounds for all children

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that new playgrounds make appropriate accommodations for disabled children. The most important issue is how the children get into the space. The ADA requires a 60-inch pathway that is firm, stable and slip-resistant. Rubber tiles and matting are good for accessibility, while loose-fill material like sand and wood chips are not. An easy fix for a playground is to add an adaptive swing, but ideally much more can be done. It's important to provide diverse and stimulating play experiences for children of all abilities.

Improve your playground

If you find a playground that is unsafe, report the problem to the owner/operator. Understand, there are no national mandatory standards for public playground equipment, but Texas, California, New Jersey, Michigan and North Carolina have laws that require playgrounds to follow standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (this is the standard that I apply when inspecting RCRC playgrounds). Some states require playgrounds to follow the standards set in the National Playground Safety Institute, the Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) *Handbook for Public Playground Safety*.

Continued on page 5

10 Checklist for Playground Safety:

1. Surfaces around playground equipment should be filled with at least 9 inches of loose fill, such as engineered wood fiber, sand or pea gravel. There should be at least 6 inches of loose fill, such as rubber.
2. Most stationary equipment should have at least a 6 foot use zone in all directions.
3. Any openings that can trap children (in guardrails or between ladder rungs) should be less than 3.5 inches apart or more than 9 inches. Never allow your child to wear a bicycle helmet on a playground.
4. Guardrails should surround all elevated platforms and should be at least 29 inches high for preschool-age children and 38 inches high for school-age children.
5. Look for broken glass, exposed concrete footings, ant hills, bee's nests, tree roots or rocks that could harm or be a hazard to children.
6. Check for sharp edges and dangerous hardware, like open "S" hooks or protruding bolts. Additionally, check for hot surfaces.
7. Make certain your child plays on age-appropriate equipment. Public playgrounds are designed in 3 different age categories, age 6-24 months, 2-5 years old and 5-12 years old. RCRC playgrounds are designed for children 5-12.
8. Playgrounds should be maintained regularly. Report any problems.
9. Remove hoods or drawstrings that can get caught on equipment. Be certain your child has proper footwear and their shoe strings are tied. Flip flops should not be worn while playing on a playground.
10. One of the most important things parents can do when at a playground is **SUPERVISE THERE CHILDREN WHILE THEY PLAY. Furthermore, parents must be certain their child is utilizing the playground equipment the way it was constructed and designed to be played upon.**

In concluding, as a certified playground safety inspector it is my obligation and responsibility to make our playgrounds safe for the children of Richland County. Moreover, it is my responsibility to identify and eliminate any playground hazards to reduce life threatening and debilitating injuries. Bottom line is children will be children; I cannot eliminate the risk they take on public playgrounds, but I can eliminate the hazards and that is the key to having a fun safe playground.

More information can be found at:

www.playgroundsafety.org

www.astm.com

Fight Stress with Healthy Habits

Healthy habits can protect you from the harmful effects of stress. Here are 10 positive healthy habits you may want to develop.

1. Talk with family and friends

A daily dose of friendship is great medicine. Call or write your friends and family to share your feelings, hopes and joys.

2. Engage in daily physical activity

Regular physical activity relieves mental and physical tension. Physically active adults have lower risk of depression and loss of mental functioning. Physical activity can be a great source of pleasure, too. Try walking, swimming, biking or dancing every day.

3. Accept the things you cannot change

Don't say, "I'm too old." You can still learn new things, work toward a goal, love and help others.

4. Remember to laugh

Laughter makes you feel good. Don't be afraid to laugh out loud at a joke, a funny movie or a comic strip, even when you're alone.

5. Give up the bad habits

Too much alcohol, cigarettes or caffeine can increase stress. If you smoke, decide to quit now.

6. Slow down

Try to "pace" instead of "race." Plan ahead and allow enough time to get the most important things done.



7. Get enough sleep

Try to get six to eight hours of sleep each night. If you can't sleep, take steps to help reduce stress and depression. Physical activity also may improve the quality of sleep.

8. Get organized

Use "to do" lists to help you focus on your most important tasks. Approach big tasks one step at a time. For example, start by organizing just one part of your life — your car, desk, kitchen, closet, cupboard or drawer.

9. Practice giving back

Volunteer your time or return a favor to a friend. Helping others helps you.

10. Try not to worry

The world won't end if your grass isn't mowed or your kitchen isn't cleaned. You may need to do these things, but today might not be the right time.

For more information on heart health, visit <http://www.heart.org>.

WOTSIT PHRASES

 <p>01</p>	<p>the people</p> <p>02</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em;">1</p> <p>03</p>	<p>SIC TED</p> <p>04</p>
 <p>05</p>	<p>NIGHT</p> <p>06</p>	<p>RIDING HORSE</p> <p>07</p>	<p>BURNS</p> <p>08</p>
<p>MO TH ER</p> <p>09</p>	<p>prison prison prison prison prison.</p> <p>10</p>	<p>PAID I'M WORKED</p> <p>11</p>	<p>RADIO RADIO</p> <p>12</p>
<p>↑ ■ S</p> <p>13</p>	<p>DDDD days DDDD nights</p> <p>14</p>	<p>J K 10 Q A</p> <p>15</p>	<p>2XBAA SHEEP</p> <p>16</p>
<p>golf</p> <p>17</p>	<p>00 00 UUUU</p> <p>18</p>	<p>Talking 5280' 60 SECONDS</p> <p>19</p>	<p>BUS INESS BUS INESS BUS INESS BUS INESS</p> <p>20</p>
<p>ypiq RIDE</p> <p>21</p>	<p>DAY DAY</p> <p>22</p>	<p>STEP <hr/>FART</p> <p>23</p>	<p>SSSSSSSSSS MATCH</p> <p>24</p>

WOTSITS PHRASES' ANSWERS

1) season tickets 2) we the people 3) hole in one 4) half sister 5) excuse me 6) night shift 7) horseback riding 8) sideburns 9) stepmother
 10) prison sentence 11) I'm over worked and under paid 12) two way radio 13) back to square one 14) 40 days and 40 nights 15) highjacking 16) baa baa black sheep
 17) miniature golf 18) no time for you 19) talking a mile a minute 20) open for business 21) piggyback ride 22) daybreak 23) step on the gas 24) tennis match

RCRC + NAMI = Social Equity

Comilla Sampson, Compliance Manager

Richland County Recreation Commission (RCRC) mission is dedicated to enriching lives and connecting communities through diverse recreational opportunities.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.

There is a natural marriage between RCRC and NAMI and following one of the pillars of NRPA, Social Equity, it's a perfect match. On April 5, 2014 RCRC participated in the NAMIwalk to help raise awareness and funds to support programs for the mentally ill and their families.



NRPA states that public parks and recreation is the idea that all people—no matter the color of their skin, age, income level or ability – has access to programs, facilities, places and spaces that make their lives and communities great.

Our partnering with NAMI fits into the philosophy of public parks and recreation.



KEEP AMERICA BEAUTIFUL GREAT AMERICAN CLEANUP

Friday, May 16 • 9:00-11:00 am
Killian Park • 1424 Marthan Road

Get your green on and keep the Midlands beautiful by joining our litter pick-up! Meet outside of Killian Park to pick up around the park and close intersecting roads. Water and supplies will be provided. For more information call Tavares Hanks at (803) 741-7272 ext. 142

May



- 2 Payday
- 9 Confederate Memorial Day (All RCRC facilities closed)
- 10 Spring Fling, 11:00 am-2:00 pm, Trenholm Park
- 11 Mother's Day
- 16 Payday
- 16 Great American Cleanup, 9:00-11:00 am, Killian Park
- 19 Commission Board Meeting, 6:00 pm, AAC
- 24 Skills on Wheels Exhibition Basketball Game, 11:00 am, Crane Creek Gymnasium
- 26 Memorial Day (All RCRC facilities closed)
- 30 Payday



June

- 11 Quarterly Staff Meeting, 10:00 am, AAC
- 13 Payday
- 15 Father's Day
- 16 Commission Board Meeting, 6:00 pm, AAC
- 18 Showtime Carousel: The Magical Talents of Sarah Dippity, 10:00-11:00 am, Denny Terrace Community Center
- 25 Showtime Carousel: Cold Blooded Encounters presents "The Reptile Show", 10:00-11:00 am, Denny Terrace Community Center
- 27 Payday

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