



FRIENDS
of
WESTCHESTER COUNTY PARKS, INC.
2012 YEAR-END REPORT





SERVING AS AN IMPORTANT ECONOMIC ENGINE IN WESTCHESTER COUNTY, FRIENDS OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY PARKS TOOK THE ORGANIZATION TO ANOTHER LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE IN 2012. AS WESTCHESTER'S LEADING ADVOCATES OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY PARKS SYSTEM, FRIENDS OF WESTCHESTER COUNTY PARKS CONTINUED TO FUND PROGRAMS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

It's been a year of transitions for Friends of Westchester County Parks. We moved our offices and the Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation (PRC) to Ardsley and new initiatives were launched. As we approach our tenth anniversary, Friends of Westchester County Parks continues to provide world class park services and fund important and popular programs, as well as activities that would otherwise be discontinued. 2012 was one of the busiest years yet and a record year for new "Friends" enrollment and contributions.

Nearly one million dollars was spent on activities, equipment, training and supplies for the betterment of the department, and most of that money went directly into the Westchester economy.

Friends of Westchester County Parks welcomed 2 new board members in 2012. As the year came to an end, Friends hosted an excellent reception at 42 the Restaurant thanking our existing Board of Trustees and welcoming the new members.

ADVOCACY

Friends of Westchester County Parks are advocates for the parks system. In 2012, we did many things to spread the importance of parks among elected officials. Some examples include that we held more than 10 meetings with BOL and \$2,500 in education efforts, sent 150 letters to influential community leaders, developed and sent an e-blast to business leaders, and raised more than \$7,500 on "Support our Parks" advertising campaign.

As the largest and most active organization advocating for the county park system, it is the duty of Friends of Westchester County Parks to encourage continued investment and support for what is clearly a good use of public, private and not-for-profit resources.

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“BEST FRIENDS GALA”

Our eighth annual “Best Friends” awards reception was conducted on April 11, 2012 at the Harbour Club in Glen Island Park. We also honored the 50th anniversary of our Westchester County Department of Parks Recreation and Conservation. The honoree was David Swope and we saluted our Westchester County Park commissioners; Charlie Pound (1962-74); Joseph Caverly (1975-85); Sal DeSantis (1994-2000); Joe Stout (2002-2010); and Kathy O’Connor (2010 – pres); and our County Executives, Alfred Delbello (1974-1982), Andrew Spano (1998-2009); and Robert P. Astorino. The “Gala,” as we call it, raised a net of \$100,000 and a record-setting event in terms of actual attendees (350+).

PROGRAM SPONSORSHIPS

Part of the mission of Friends of Westchester County Parks is to sponsor important programs that enhance Westchester’s position as one of the most likeable counties in the country. Nearly \$350,000 was raised and spent on PRC programs, services and facilities other than camp.

Here’s what Friends of Parks sponsored in 2012:

- Bike Sunday – Bronx River Parkway Reservation – The program was held on nine Sundays throughout May, June, September and October with approximately 5,000 bikers per day
- Music Fest at Kensico Dam Plaza on July 3 – Over 15,000 attended
- Summer Movie Program at County Pools – Saxon Woods, Willson’s Woods and Tibbetts Brook – Each had close to 1,000 in attendance throughout July and August
- Fitmobile – Appearing all over the county, the Fitmobile was present at Special Events, local day camps and other venues. Over 70 visits to more than 50 venues and attendance was over 7,500 throughout June, July and August
- Staff Picnic Subsidy (September) – Held at V.E. Macy Park in Ardsley; 300 people attended
- Staff Pool Party Refreshments (August) – Tibbetts Brook Pool; 300 people attended
- Eaglefest at Croton Point Park (February) – 10,000 attended
- Farmers Market at the Westchester County Center (November – March) – 5,000 people
- Slam Dunk at the Westchester County Center (October) – 4,500 people
- Cheerleading Festival at the Westchester County Center (October) – 4,500 people
- Veterans Appreciation Day at Rye Playland Park (Memorial Day) – 3,000 people
- Pitch In For Parks at various parks throughout Westchester County (April) – 1,000 people
- Art in Parks at Ward Pound Ridge Reservation (all-year-round) – Over 750 people
- Co-Ed Volleyball at the Westchester County Center (March and October) – 300 people
- Senior Bowling Tournament at White Plains Bowl (September) -100 people



WESTCHESTER CONCESSIONS

Managing the two driving range concessions at Dunwoodie Park and Mohansic State Park has been one of the best investments for Friends of Westchester County Parks. It allows residents to give back to the community and improve the parks they use. In 2012 Mohansic received a new building, new netting, new patio and credit cards were made applicable. Both locations were installed with new mats and driving areas as well.

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CONTRIBUTIONS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

At the end of 2012, Friends of Westchester County Parks hired Lisa Romano Licht, an independent writer/consultant, as the organization’s grant writer. In her position, Licht will provide grant proposal writing, offer general development counsel and implement effective strategies to maximize funding partnerships. Friends of Westchester County Parks have obtained numerous grants and donations this past year. Significant contributions include FujiFilm, Green Mountain Energy, Con Edison, Entergy and Hudson Valley Bank.

In 2012 through the Con Edison e-bill program, Con Edison will donate \$1 to Friends of Westchester County Parks. Whenever Con Edison customers sign up to use e-bill, Con Edison’s donation will help Friends fund important programs.

Friends of Westchester County Parks participated with the Business Council of Westchester: Coalition for Business Development and Young Professional “flight.”

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

In 2012, we elected two esteemed business leaders to its Board of Directors, David Swope and Mark S. Tulis. Friends of Westchester County Parks welcomed these two influential county residents to the board in full hope that their expertise and business acumen will surely help the organization in our efforts to keep the county’s parks beautiful and growing.



PARK IMPROVEMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

In addition to sponsoring programs, Friends of Westchester County Parks provides equipment and improvements to county parks that would not have been possible without the funding we provide to keep parks green and growing.

In 2012, Friends provided many improvements and equipment including:

- Goosinator - Sprain Lake Golf Course
- 9 distance markers at Kensico Dam Plaza and a kiosk for the 3 different walking loops
- 2 Saxon Woods Trail Kiosks and maps
- Kensico railing allowing access to eastern staircase to top of the dam
- 3D Archery Range - Blue Mountain Sportsman Center
- Trees and Benches throughout the parks
- Mt. Lakes Ropes Course Inspection
- New building/patio at Mohansic Driving Range
- Additional Netting at Dunwoodie Driving Range

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Internal to PRC, Friends was once again integral to the Professional Development training program that allows its staff to be the best that they can be and to deliver award-winning services despite the budgetary and staffing reductions.

The program included:

- Master Gardener Certification
- Accreditation payment and training
- Pest Management Certification
- PRC Academy
- PRC Staff Conference
- PRC Management Staff Conference
- Electrician Licensing
- Notary Public Certification
- DEC Certifications
- Pool Operator Certification
- NYSRPS Annual Conference
- Downstate Conference
- Pesticide Applicators
- Pool and Spa
- I.A.A.P.A Conference
- RV Campsite Management School

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CAMP MORTY

Friends of Westchester County Parks once again operated the “Camp Morty” sleep-away camp at Sal J. Prezioso Mountain Lakes Park in North Salem. Over \$400,000 was expended to operate and improve Camp Morty, where nearly 300 underprivileged children, who are wards of the county, participated in the six-week program. These are kids from homeless shelters, in the foster care system or on public assistance. Friends of Westchester County Parks have provided an experience that has given these kids a dramatically different outlook on life.

In 2012 the preliminary plan was developed for the proposed rehabilitation of the Merriwood unit at Camp Morty. This planned improvement will expand the number of older children able to attend the camp, as well as for more extensive community use on the shoulder seasons.

MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

In 2012 we continued to be very active in marketing and public relations through ads, press conferences, press releases and photo opportunities. As a result, we saw an increase in media coverage and interest from the community. Friends made over 100 new “Friends,” the most ever in one year.

Although marketing and PR services, website maintenance and advertising add costs to our operating budget, we have achieved very prominent visibility and effective reach through social media, e-blasts and advertisements. We have implemented banners year-round at Kensico Dam Plaza and the Westchester County Center.

Friends of Westchester County Parks has continued to implement a Facebook page, an Executive Director’s blog and a quarterly newsletter. We leverage content created by our organization, as well as media coverage, simply by posting links to this content on the various platforms. Our website was also revamped to make it more user-friendly.



OUTLOOK

Friends of Westchester County Parks accomplished a great deal in 2012 and the organization positioned itself well for both challenges and opportunities that will undoubtedly present themselves in 2013 and beyond. We've continued to grow excellent relationships with both businesses and individuals that will be important as the parks system continues to face economic pressures. We have increased our visibility in the Westchester community and beyond, and we will look to build on that as we move forward.

FINANCIAL DATA

REVENUE: \$958,947

ENDOWMENTS, SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS: 76%

FUNDRAISING: 16%

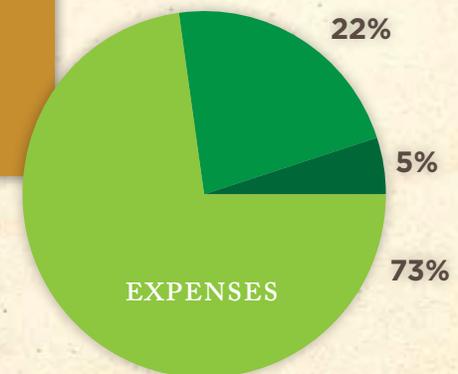
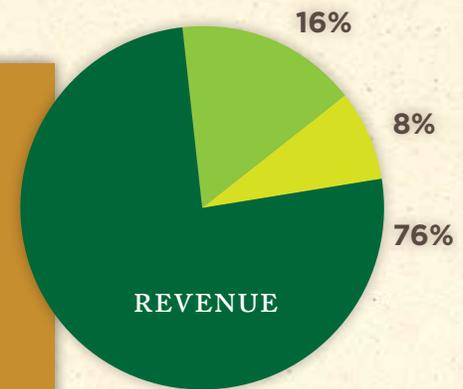
ADMINISTRATION: 8%

EXPENSES: \$953,694

PROGRAM AND FACILITY SUPPORT: 73%

ADMINISTRATION: 22%

FUNDRAISING: 5%



* Expenses exceeded revenues due to the drawdown of restricted endowed funds that had prior positive balances.



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