



THE OLD STONE HOUSE

**TOWN OF GUILFORD**  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS, RECREATION AND SENIORS  
32 CHURCH STREET  
GUILFORD, CONNECTICUT 06437  
SETTLED IN 1639

TELEPHONE: 203-453-8068  
FAX: 203-453-8456

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**GUILFORD PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016**

The Parks and Recreation Department enhances the quality of life in Guilford by providing attractive, well-maintained areas and facilities for active and passive leisure pursuits. We offer affordable structured activities that are recreational, social, cultural, physical and creative for all age groups and we provide various social and health services.

Our services benefit **INDIVIDUALS** with better health, fitness, self-esteem and creative expression; the **COMMUNITY** through connected families, community pride, support for youth, and a lifeline for the elderly; the **ENVIRONMENT** with open space, wildlife habitats and oxygen producing green areas; the **ECONOMY** through enhanced land values, reduced healthcare costs, and reduced crime and vandalism.

The Parks and Recreation Department provided positive experiences for thousands of Guilford residents from pre-school aged children through senior citizens. Nearly 625 classes and special events were offered last year and the total number of participants exceeded 20,000.

Pre-school children learned socialization skills in a variety of our classes with quality instructors. They also learned new skills and sportsmanship in sports programs and creative expression through music, crafts and tumbling.

Classes for youth in guitar, dance, drama, and cooking provided creative outlets. Sports and fitness programs, such as tennis lessons, gymnastics, basketball clinics, Tae Kwon Do and sports camps offered young people skill development and improved self-esteem through accomplishments and encouragement from caring instructors.

We met the desire for residents to improve their fitness level by providing over 20 fitness classes and 12 yoga classes per season. There were approximately 2,500 registrations throughout the year.

Adult sports leagues were offered. The men's summer basketball league had 11 teams in a competitive schedule. There were 6 co-ed softball teams in summer.

Our two beaches offered a refreshing break from the summer heat. We sold 1,771 seasonal passes. The boat docks at Lake Quonnipaug and the kayaks and paddleboats were very popular at the lake. There were 30 different swim lessons and programs at Lake Quonnipaug and Guilford Yacht Club.

At Jacobs Beach, the picnic shelters were reserved by over 100 groups from June – October. The picnic shelter at Lake Quonnipaug had 16 reservations, including several scout group camp outs.

Summer camps, including Camp Menunkatuck and after care for children ages 6 – 12 and Get Out Way Out for grades 6 – 9 enrolled 1,200 campers throughout the summer. Camp Menunkatuck campers had terrific special events, exciting trips, and fun activities, including kayaking, crafts, sports, drama, archery, nature study, games and swimming. Counselors served as big brothers, big sisters, teachers, coaches and mentors for their campers. The Get Out Way Out program featured educational and exciting trips each week and special events. The highlight of the summer was the end of camp celebration at Baldwin Middle School, featuring a 150 foot waterslide.

We scheduled 25 summer sports camps with over 500 children participating.

The Annual Community Picnic, featuring the 100 piece Community Band and various inflatable activities for kids, attracted nearly 1,000 people.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Fireworks display attracted nearly 6,000 people. This annual event is one the highlights of the summer.

Our summer concert series featured the tribute bands of Beach Boys, Mamas and Papas, Rod Stewart, Journey and Tom Petty.

The Fall Festival and Eggstravaganza were fun family events with 400 participants each. Winterfest attracted over 300 people for indoor and outdoor events, during February Vacation. The Halloween Spooktacular on the Green featured Trunk or Treat with over 20 cars decorated and handing out candy. There was also entertainment, face painting and a costume contest. This event, co-sponsored with Developmental Assets for Youth, attracted over 500 participants.

Our 5th annual Guilford's Got Talent co-sponsored with Youth and Family Services and Developmental Assets for Youth (DAY) featured 20 young acts. Over 500 people attended.

We enriched the lives of over 2,200 senior citizens who participated in activities that were recreational, social and educational. An interest in improved health and fitness was evident with participants in Senior Aerobics, Body Wise, Line Dance and Tai Chi. Creative potential was tapped in Sewing, Knitting, and Santa's Elves. Their minds were challenged with classes in French, Spanish, Italian, Senior Cinema, Spirituality, Men's Discussion Club, and ROLE (Reflections on Life Experiences) and AARP Safe Driving.

The Bocce League had 42 participants in spring and fall. Pickleball, with over 110 participants, exploded in popularity. Pickleball court lines were painted on the Guilford Lakes School tennis court, Bittner Skate Park and at the Adams School tennis courts.

The Community Center was a place for seniors to gather during the day, enroll in a multitude of activities and play cards, read and socialize in various special events. Over 90 older adults participated in the Annual Harvest Fair that featured quality crafts, Christmas ornaments, baked goods and knitted clothing.

For many older adults, the lunches served four days per week at the Community Center were their only hot meals for the day. Our kitchen staff also prepared delicious and nutritious meals for Meals on Wheels. There were 24,851 meals delivered by Meals on Wheels volunteers and 7,509 meals were served at the Center.

Transportation on four mini-buses brought seniors to the Community Center, doctor and dental appointments, shopping trips and errands. Our senior buses carried 11,381 passengers on 7,031 trips. This was an increase of 14% passengers and 18% in trips over the previous year. In addition, we offered an overnight trip to Canada and numerous special day trips to shows, concerts and museums.

Along with the Madison Seniors and sponsorship from the Guilford Foundation and Madison Foundation, we conducted the Schiller Shoreline Institute of Lifelong Learning (SSILL). Meaningful and intellectual classes for retired and semi-retired seniors of Guilford and Madison attracted 400 seniors with 33 classes offered in fall and 38 in spring.

The older adults were entertained throughout the year with various special events, including movie nights, Senior's Prom, and lunch time concerts.

The Nathanael B. Greene Community Center continued to be a magnet of activity. The Center was active throughout the day with preschool children through senior citizens and it was used for Parks and Recreation programs and by community groups evenings and weekends. The Center was open an average of 95 hours per week. There were small group activities, town meetings, banquets, concerts, Parks and Recreation programs and meetings of various organizations. There was an average of 200 – 220 reservations per week.

Providing and preserving parks and open space enhances the desirability of a community as well as contributes to the safety and health of its residents. Green areas offer stress reduction opportunities to our citizens.

The Parks Maintenance Division maintained eight parks, three beaches, the Town Green and school grounds including athletic fields and Town building areas. Responsibilities included turf management, mowing 100 acres, preparing 40 athletic fields for middle school, high school, youth and adult sports. The Parks Maintenance Crew continued the comprehensive turf management program that included mowing, aerating, topdressing, seeding and fertilizing athletic fields to maintain them in top playing condition. Our aggressive management of all fields resulted in better playing conditions for over 3,000 young athletes. Our crew renovated the Baldwin lower Little League field with financial assistance from Little League. We also planted 15,000 SF of sod at Jacob Beach picnic area.

The synthetic turf field at Guilford High School, opened in the fall 2007, continued to be used for hundreds of High School and youth sports events, even during winter months. The field was scheduled jointly by the Athletic Director and the Parks and Recreation Director to avoid scheduling conflicts for many groups wanting to use the field. There were hundreds of events scheduled on the field by recreational leagues, GHS school sports, and physical education classes.

The winter of 2016 produced many snow storms that kept our parks crew busy clearing snow from town parking lots and over 2 miles of sidewalks.

Jacobs Beach continued to be an attraction due to the recent improvements and the weekly grooming of the beach. There were over 100 reservations of the picnic shelters at the beach and 235 kayaks and canoes on the boat racks.

With a grant from DEEP, funding from the town and donations from the Guilford Foundation and Choate, we began a project to control invasive weeds in Lake Quonnipaug. Benthic barriers were purchased and installed in the swim area, and a total of 18 areas at the north end and the center “shoal” area received chemical applications. We plan to continue treatments in successive years to keep this wonderful resource for swimmers, boaters and fishermen.

Under the leadership of Catherine Kiernan and Joanne Basile, the Guilford Dog Park was constructed and opened in May. The committee of volunteers raised all the funds and cleared the area at Nut Plains Park selected by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The park has been very popular.

There have been many Boy Scout Eagle projects that have benefited the Parks and Recreation Department and the town over the years. In 2015 – 2016, John Markowski, from Troop 471, raised funds to make major repairs to the iconic Grass Island Shack. He developed plans to straighten the leaning structure and replace the roof and decking.

Kyle Dwyer, from Troop 474, built and installed three wooden benches with concrete forms at Mill Pond.

Volunteer efforts from the Boy Scouts and Dog Park Committee have certainly helped enhance our parks and town facilities, and we are grateful for their efforts.

2015 – 2016 Statistics

Classes offered	625
Total participation	20,000
Seasonal beach passes sold	1,771
Boat racks	237
Summer camps enrollment	1,200
Swim lessons enrollment	150
Sports camps enrollment	500
Jacobs Picnic shelter reservations	100
Fitness classes enrollment	2,500
Meals prepared	32,360
Senior transportation	11,381 passengers on 7,031 trips
Senior citizens enrollment	2,200
Community center reservations	over 200 a week, including programs
Acres mowed	100
Fields maintained	40

Thanks are extended to the thousands of residents who have supported our programs. I also thank the Parks and Recreation Commission, staff and volunteers for helping advance the quality of life for the folks of Guilford. We are all thankful for the support of the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance that gave us a budget to meet the recreation needs of our community.

Sincerely,

Rick Maynard  
Director, Guilford Parks and Recreation