

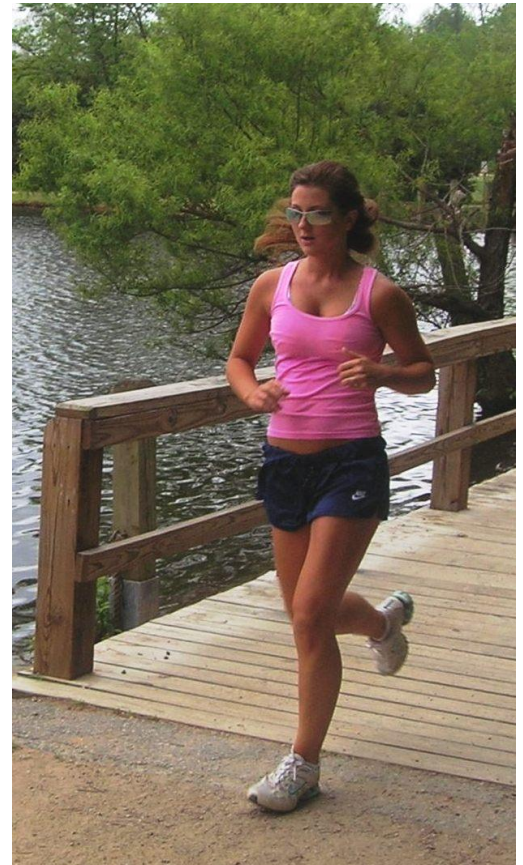


**Mecklenburg County
Park and Recreation**

*The Natural Place
To Be...*

www.parkandrec.com

ANNUAL REPORT 2008



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Great Year Behind, Challenging Year Ahead for Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation

What another great year for Park and Recreation in Mecklenburg County! The completion of the 10 Year Master Plan and passage of the \$250 million bond issue were two of the high points for all of us. Our citizen commissioners, advisory board members and volunteers, along with our staff, worked very hard to accomplish these major goals.

As the year drew to a close, the reality of the economic condition of the country and its impact on Mecklenburg County became clear. We will all be facing challenges to provide services during a time when parks, recreation programs and preservation of our natural resources are essential to our citizens. We have the professionals, citizen volunteers and partners in place to meet the financial challenges and continue outstanding services to our citizens.

Please continue to let us know how we are doing while you enjoy our parks, natural areas and award winning programs!



James R. Garges, Director
Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation

Board of County Commissioners



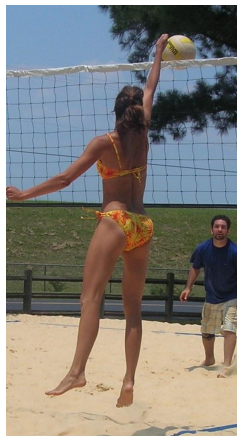
Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners:
(bottom row, L to R) Vilma Leake, Harold Cogdell, Jennifer Roberts, Dan Murrey, Karen Bentley, (top row, L to R) George Dunlap, Dumont Clarke, Bill James, Neil Cooksey

Park and Recreation Commission



Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Commission in February 2009: (front row L-R) Kirk Otey, Owen Furuseth, Chairman Brad Pearce, John Barry, Jeff Tarte, (Back row) Scott McClure, Beverly Lawston, Tim Morgan, Rob Brisley, Brenda McMoore

Park and Recreation is for people!



REPORT ON OPERATIONS AND FACILITIES

Growing Park and Recreation System Serves Mecklenburg Youth and Adults

Parks operated by Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department hosted an estimated 4.2 million visitors in FY2008. Our youth athletic programs, including basketball, baseball, track and field, soccer, flag football and tennis, served 4,800 youngsters. Adult sports programs served 2,800 adults. Our nature preserves hosted more than half a million visits, and 283,000 people came to our swimming pools. We provided swim lessons to more than 3,000 youngsters. Our recreation centers served 753,000 patrons through programs, rentals and open play.



Groundbreaking for baseball fields, Winget Park

Our department grew to meet growing demands for recreation facilities and programs. We completed dozens of capital bond projects and drew master plans for new or expanded parks, recreation centers and greenways. To save money for taxpayers, we expanded our commitment to “joint use” projects, to cooperate and “co-locate” facilities with agencies such as Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and Charlotte Housing Authority.

Mecklenburg commissioners approved a comprehensive 10 Year Master Plan for Mecklenburg County parks and recreation. It makes ambitious recommendations to expand and improve our system in the next decade. The Master Plan sets high priorities for walking and biking trails (including greenways), more neighborhood parks, nature centers and trails, community and regional parks, more playgrounds, more indoor swimming facilities, etc. The plan and various summaries are available at www.parkandrec.com.

In a strong show of support, Mecklenburg voters approved at referendum \$250 million in bonds in 2008 to continue building parks and recreation facilities across Mecklenburg County, in Charlotte and in the County’s towns. The bond package included more than 60 projects, many of which had to be placed on hold in early 2009 because of difficulties in the local economy.

Major projects completed during 2008 included:

- Mallard Creek Park Soccer Complex expansion
- Reedy Creek Nature Center Herbarium
- Ninth Street Park Playground
- Frazier Dog Park
- R. L. Smith Park
- Clanton Park Soccer Complex and Pavilion
- Druid Hills Neighborhood Park
- Elon Park Sports Complex
- Nevin Park Accessible Playground, “Race Playce”
- Midwood Park Amphitheatre
- 3.8 miles of new greenway at Stewart Creek, Irwin Creek and Four Mile Creek



Volunteers at Race Playce “Build,” Nevin Park



Ribbon cutting, Four Mile Creek Greenway

Projects under construction at the end of 2008 included:

- Revolution Sports & Learning Academy
- Eastway Park
- Shuffletown Park
- Robert Caldwell Bradford Park
- Thomas McAllister Winget Park
- Berewick Recreation Center
- Park Road Park Lake Environs
- Harrisburg Sports Complex
- Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Belmont St. to Alexander St. Park: 0.2 miles

- Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Baxter St. to Morehead St: 0.2 miles
- Little Sugar Creek Greenway – Charlottetowne Ave. to Baxter St. (Midtown): 0.2 miles
- Little Sugar Creek Greenway – 7th St to Elizabeth Ave. (includes CPCC section): 0.2 miles
- McDowell Creek Greenway – Westmoreland Rd (Cornelius) to Sam Furr Rd. at Birkdale Village (Huntersville): 1.5 miles
- Fabrication of sign package for Mallard Creek/Clark’s Creek, prototype for all greenways

SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS IN 2008

Organized or Hosted by Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation

- Race Playce Accessible Playground “Build,” Nevin Park
- 2008 USA Youth National Track & Field Championship, Belk Complex at JCSU
- Festival in the Park, Freedom Park
- Harris Teeter/Purina Bark® in the Park dog festival, William R. Davie Park
- Rodney’s Great Kids Triathlon, Mecklenburg County Aquatic Center
- Ned Pollak/Queen City Invitational Boxing Tourney, Sugaw Creek Recreation Center
- Great Outdoors Festival, Latta Plantation Nature Center
- Ray Bowl football, Memorial Stadium
- Howl-O-Ween, Ramsey Creek Park
- NC Golden Glove Boxing Tournament, Sugaw Creek Recreation Center
- Junior Golf Summer Camp (with The First Tee of Charlotte), several golf courses
- Great American Campout, McDowell Nature Preserve Campground
- Hummingbird Festival, Reedy Creek Nature Center
- Teen Summits on Youth Violence and Gangs, various recreation centers
- Veterans & Reservists Golf Classic, Renaissance Public Golf Course



2008 Bark in the Park, Davie Park

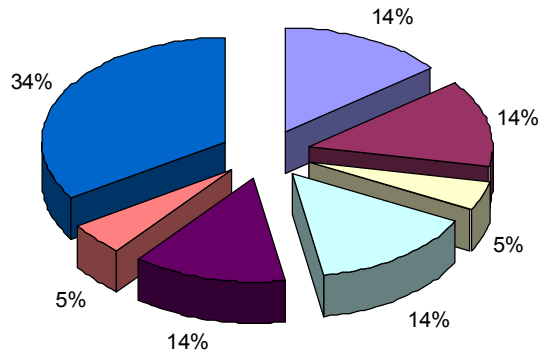


Jr. Golf Camp (with The First Tee), Sunset Hills

- Ray’s Black History Quiz Bowl, ImaginOn
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Senior Games, many venues
- Forest L. Woods Fishing Tourney, Blythe Landing
- Asian Festival/Dragon Boat Race, Ramsey Creek Park
- NSA Girls Fast Pitch Softball Tournament, several venues
- Marine Buddy Challenge, Col. Beatty Park
- Red, White & Boom 4th of July celebration hosted at Memorial Stadium
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Youth Basketball Tournament, various venues
- Sajai Wise Kids for nutrition, fitness and health, five recreation centers
- Therapeutic Recreation (TR) programs including: SEALS After School for children with visual impairments; Imagination Station, summer camp program for youngsters ages 2–6 with disabilities, and Fuel For Life, social learning for young adult males who have developmental disabilities
- Park and Recreation Apprentice Program for youth athletic skills, various centers
- 4-H Clubs, administered through Extension Program, many venues

BUDGET

Total Expenses = \$58,916,884 (Operating and Capital)

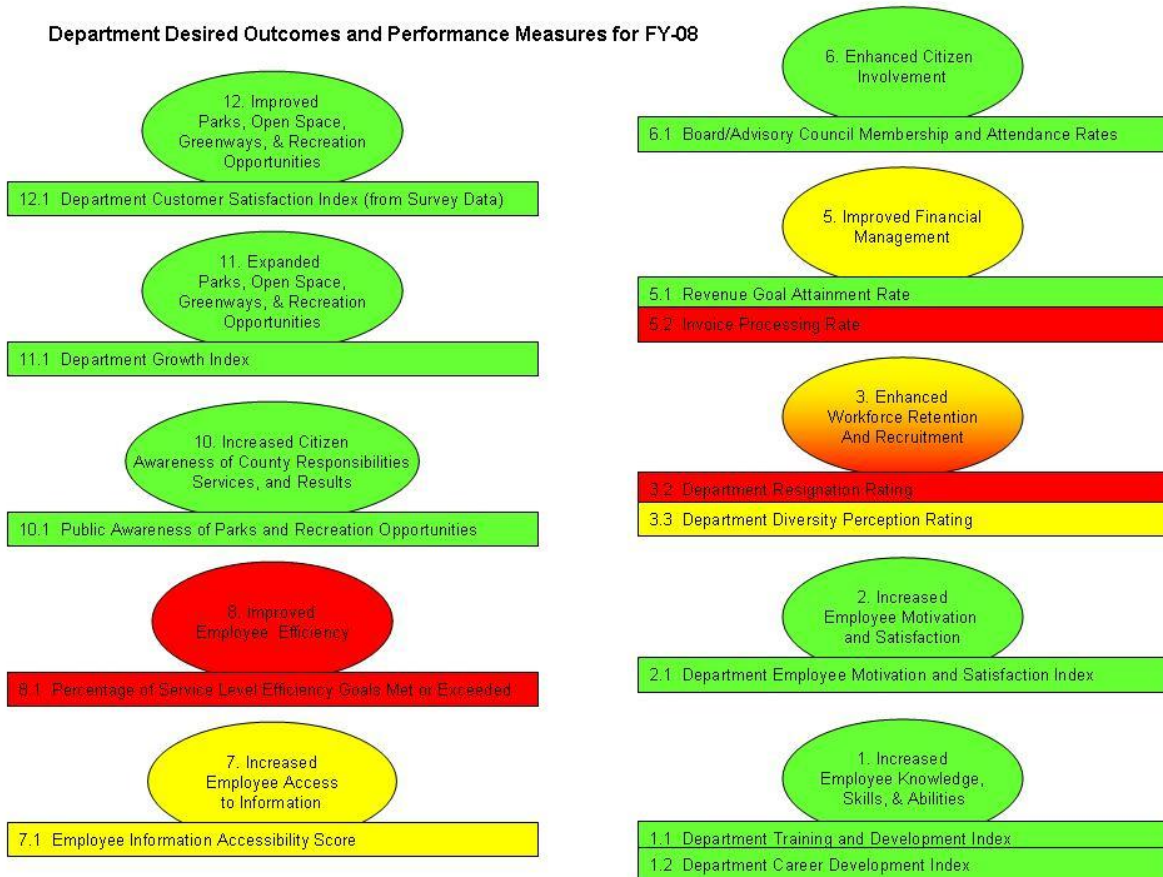


■ Administrative & Business Services Branch	■ Community & Recreation Center Services Branch
■ Enterprise Services Branch	■ Park Operations & Athletic Services Branch
■ Specialized Park Services Branch	■ Stewardship Services Branch
■ Capital Improvements	

BALANCED SCORECARD RESULTS

Green = Positive Performance
Yellow = Mixed Results
Red = Reason for Concern

Department Desired Outcomes and Performance Measures for FY-08



2008 AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department is proud of its staff for winning seven of Mecklenburg County's 13 NACo Achievement Awards for 2008. The awards, presented by the National Association of Counties, recognize outstanding and innovative programs that can serve as models for other counties. Our winners were for:

- **VIP Travel Club** which provides opportunities for adults and seniors with visual impairments to travel throughout their community. Entered by Kerri Good and Karen Howard.
- **With These Hands Mix**, a two-week DJ Academy summer camp for teenagers. Entered by Terri Stowers.
- **TR Spirit Squad**, a community cheerleading group for girls, ages 8 and older, with developmental disabilities. Entered by Monica Best.
- **U.S. Kayak Polo Nationals**, a national tournament for the exciting sport of kayak polo. Entered by H.C. Woody Woodward.
- **Canada Geese Program**, a multifaceted, humane approach to reduce the serious problem of geese overpopulation in Freedom Park. Entered by Gary Marshall.
- **Battle Slam Jam** which brought different urban cultures together for a day of peace and an opportunity to demonstrate skills in wholesome competition. Entered by Carla Hoover.
- **Imagination Station**, a summer day camp for children, ages 2-6, with disabilities. Entered by Angela Conti.

Other Awards:

- **NC Wildlife Society's Wildlife Conservation Award**, presented to Don Seriff, Natural Resources Manager, in recognition of outstanding leadership and achievement to benefit wildlife and natural resources.
- **Carolina Public Sector STAR Award**, given by the NC Department of Labor's Occupational Safety & Health Division for outstanding safety training and health management in the workplace.
- **Children's Memorial Garden Plaque**, presented to Specialized Park Services staff for efforts developing the garden area at Frazier Park.



PARK AND RECREATION PARTNERS

Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation Department partners with many groups, organizations, businesses, schools and agencies to present recreation programs and facilities.



We especially want to acknowledge the assistance and support of Partners for Parks, the nonprofit group of contributors who seek to promote and enhance parks, greenways, open space and recreation in neighborhoods throughout Mecklenburg County and the surrounding region.

Other partners that have provided assistance in recent years include:

4H	Gang of One	Police Athletic League
A Child's Place	Get it Done Organization	Pop Warner Football
Asian Chamber of Commerce	Girl Scouts	Premier Resources
American Youth Soccer Association	Goodwill Industries	PriceWaterhouseCoopers
Arbor Education and Training	Grant Thornton	Providence United Methodist Church
Aveda Institute of Charlotte	Hands on Charlotte	Public Library of Charlotte Mecklenburg County
Bank of America	Heartwood	Q Foundation
Belk Department Stores	Home Depot	Queens University
Blue Cross Blue Shield	Hornet's Nest Girl Scouts	Ramblewood Soccer Association
Boy Scouts of America	I.R.I. Golf Group	Ratliff Golf Services
Brookstone Business College	Johnston and Wales University	REI
Carolina Raptor Center	Johnson C. Smith University	Retired Seniors Volunteer Program
Carolina Thread Trail	Judicial Services	Sharon Baptist Church
Catawba Lands Conservancy	Lawyers League	Sierra Club
Central Piedmont Community College	Lending Tree	South Charlotte Soccer Association
Charlotte Boxing Academy	LUESA	South Park Youth Association
Charlotte County Day School	Mallard Creek Optimist Club	Starbucks
Charlotte Department of Transportation	Matthews Athletic and Recreation Association	Steele Creek Athletic Association
Charlotte Disc Golf Club	Matthews Soccer Club	Steele Creek Youth Network
Charlotte Flights Track & Field Club	Mayor's Youth Employment Program	Tarheel Trailblazers
Charlotte Gator Club	Mecklenburg Audubon Society	Tata Consultancy Services
Charlotte Institute of Rehabilitation	Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services	Temple Beth El
Charlotte Junior Soccer	Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office	The Charlotteens
Charlotte Juniors	Mecklenburg County Veterans Affairs Office	The First Tee of Charlotte
Charlotte Latin	Mecklenburg South Rotary	The Great American Frame Up Company
Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools	Mennonites	The Red Cross
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Center	Midwood Neighborhood Association	The Wildlife Society
Charlotte Table Tennis Club	Myers Park Presbyterian Church	TIAA Creff
Charlotte Badminton Club	Myers Park Trinity Little League	Town of Cornelius
Charlotte Tennis Association	Nature Museum	Town of Huntersville
Charlotte United Futbol	NC Department of Transportation	Town of Matthews
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Games	NC Wildlife Federation	Trust for Public Lands
Chemical Dependency Center	NC Wildlife Resources Commission	UNC Charlotte
Communities in Schools	Nevins Center	United Family Services
Coul'Oak Athletic Association	North Carolina Community Sailing	United Pentecostal Church International
Coulwood Athletic Association	North Carolina Department of Correction	United Way
Crisis Assistance Ministries	Olde Providence Recreation Association	Urban League of Central Carolinas
Davidson United Methodist Church	Optimist Athletic Association	US National Whitewater Center
Davison University	Our Children's Memorial Garden	Vance Key Club
Dilworth Little League	Pappas Properties	Vanguard Group
Discovery Place	Parrot Head Club of Charlotte	Wachovia
Duke Energy	People 2 People	World Changers
East Mecklenburg ROTC	Performance Learning Center	YMCA of Greater Charlotte
Enterprise Rent A Car	Philip Morris	Youth Employment Program
Foundation for the Carolinas		

In the past year 14,756 volunteers worked 115,336 hours with Park and Recreation for a dollar value of \$2,250,208.