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STAR Gazer

Enriching the Lives of People with Disabilities

Spotlight from the Executive Director



ISSUE NO. 6
FALL
2010

The Fox Valley Special Recreation Foundation (FVSRF) is now a reality! The Foundation was incorporated on March 4, followed by the adoption of by-laws and the election of officers later in March. The purpose of the FVSRF is to further the goals of the Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, assist in providing funding for special operations and to help support capital needs of FVSRA.

The Foundation officers are: Mr. Jim Reuter, Chairman; Mrs. Jodie Hurckes, Vice-Chairman; Mr. Robert Vaughan, Treasurer; Mr. Denis Haggerty, Assistant Treasurer; Mrs. Carolyn Nagle, Secretary; and Mr. Ralph Voris, Assistant Secretary.

The first official event for the new Foundation will be the 2011 Annual Pork Chop and Chicken Barbeque Dinner and Basket Raffle on Wednesday, April 13, 2011. Please watch for more details to be released soon.

In September, FVSRA celebrated the five year anniversary of condominium ownership of our office and program space located within the Vaughan Athletic Center in Aurora. We are so appreciative of our seven Member Agencies who were instrumental in establishing a permanent home for FVSRA. Thank you to each of our agencies and to the Fox Valley Park District for including the FVSRA home within the Vaughan Athletic Center.

As part of our celebration, participants, their families and our member agencies were invited to a reception to show our appreciation. In addition, the FVSRA Staff issued a challenge to our Member Agency staff members to participate in a game of wheelchair basketball. The Oswegoland Park District entered two teams, and St. Charles and Fox Valley Park Districts each sent a team, to compete in a round robin tournament. While they played against some very tough competition, the FVSRA Team came away with the championship title. FVSRA staff looks to expand our wheelchair competition to Softball and hopes to have a team representing each of the seven Member Agencies in our summer, 2011 challenge.

The FVSRA Aktion Club, sponsored by the Aurora Kiwanis Club, is the Kiwanis affiliate for individuals with developmental disabilities. The Club meets twice monthly for service projects, educational sessions and dinner meetings. For their September service project, the Aktion Club participated in a special tribute to Mr. Bill Moore, a World War II veteran and a long time member of the Aurora Kiwanis. Mr. Moore participated in the Honor Flight Chicago which pays special tribute to World War Veterans by flying them to Washington DC to visit the three War Memorials (World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War) and other sites in DC. A Guardian was assigned to each of the 92 Veterans on Mr. Moore's flight. After their day-long visit to DC, the veterans were flown back to Midway Airport where they were greeted by the LEGACY GIRLS, who sang World War II songs made famous by the Andrews Sisters. In addition, "Mail Call" (a very special part of the soldier's day during war time) was scheduled as they arrived to distribute letters and cards sent by their families and friends. The Aktion Club members made over 35 special, patriotic cards and wrote their appreciation to Mr. Moore for serving our country in World War II. Mr. Moore sent the club a special thank you and appreciation for all of their kind words and decorated cards.

Carolyn J. Nagle
Executive Director

Park District Patrons with Physical Limitations Increase Mobility

In an effort to accommodate patrons of all abilities, including individuals with physical limitations, the Fox Valley Park District (FVPD) purchased a MOTomed ServoCycling machine for its recreational facility, the Vaughan Athletic Center (VAC). FVPD patrons and Fox Valley Special Recreation Association (FVSRA) participants are making ready use of the cycling device and seeing results.

“I cannot even begin to describe the immediate improvement in my father’s mental, physical and even emotional capabilities,” says Marian Adly, a Fox Valley Park District patron, whose father suffered from a traumatic brain injury in 2009. According to Adly, the MOTomed cycling machine allows individuals with mobility challenges to “re-engage in an activity that empowers them [...], feel part of the community again and to gain a sense of accomplishment through exercise.”

FVSRA participant, Rochelle Byrd, says that the MOTomed cycling machine makes her feel less isolated from others at the gym.



FVSRA participant, Byrd, cycles alongside FVPD patrons at the VAC.

“It is great to have a machine to work out on that accommodates me in my wheelchair,” says Byrd. “With ease, I was able to pedal nearly a mile. Since then I have increased my overall distance and I have seen significant improvement in my ability to transfer out of my wheelchair at home. My legs appear much stronger.”

MOTomed therapy machines, which can be found in many rehabilitation centers, provide active and passive training for people of all ability levels.

“The MOTomed is unique in the fact that it has a computerized motor which can engage a person’s muscles even if they do not have the ability to do it themselves,” says Alexandra Redenius, Support Staff Coordinator and personal fitness trainer at FVSRA. “The MOTomed has so much potential for many individuals,” said Redenius. “People who are recovering from surgery, have physical limitations or need a little extra assistance can exercise more independently.”

On the Move

Fall Season FVSRA Trips

Each summer, FVSRA participants have the opportunity to go on several trips, one being the Colorado Rafting Adventure Trip. The location for the vacation trip varies each year. In the past, trips have been to Mackinaw Island, Michigan, San Diego, California, and Riviera Maya, Mexico. This year participants went on a 5 day, 4 night cruise to the Caribbean!

Each trip provides different experiences. Participants on the Rafting Adventure Trip test their communication and team-building skills, as well as their daily living skills, in a whole new environment while participants on the vacation trip learn about different cultures and communities.

Adventure Rafting Trip

Every August participants spend four days canoeing and rafting through Ruby Horsethief and Westwater Canyon in Colorado. This year, the majority of participants were new to the trip. The Adventure Rafting Trip introduces participants to a new way of living, while enjoying the outdoors.

Cooking is done either over an open fire, while camping for the night, or on the raft while floating down river. Bathing is a creative process. Many use baby wipes. Participants also learn the concept, “leave no trace.” They go above and beyond by picking up any litter that they may see along the way; truly becoming a servant to the land.

Teamwork is crucial on this trip. Participants must set up camp each night by pitching tents and building a fire. Everyone works as part of a team and, simultaneously, learn about their own individual abilities.



Participant Jenna Blucker soaks up rays on the ship deck.

Cruise Vacation Trip

Participants of the Cruise Vacation trip flew to Miami, Florida, for a 5-day, 4-night cruise on the “Carnival Destiny” cruise ship. Cruise members first traveled to Key West for a Conch Train tour of the historic downtown where they shopped for souvenirs for friends and family.

The second destination was Cozumel, Mexico. The day was spent at the Playa Mia Beach Resort under a warm sun. The majority of participants had never visited the ocean before and enjoyed their first dip in the clear blue waters. After relaxing on the beach, participants traversed through a flea market, finishing the day with a sunset dinner overlooking the ocean.

The last day aboard the ship offered a variety of diversions and activities: multiple pools and a water slide, a casino, karaoke, DJ and simply relaxing on the ship deck and watching the water rush by.

Scouting for Girls and Boys Interested in Joining Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts!

FVSRA is proud to announce the first year mark of its Cub Scout Pack 2121! The pack, which meets the third Wednesday of every month, is always looking for more boys to join. Pack 2121 is also in need of a Cub Scout Master and Committee Chair. Positions should be filled by parents of scouts in Pack 2121. Please contact Gretchen Anonick at gretchena@fvsra.org for more information.



Is your daughter looking to join a local Girl Scout Troop? Then look no further! FVSRA has been working in conjunction with Jane Gregory, Membership and Community Development Specialist for the Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois, to create an inclusive troop. This troop will consist of girls of all abilities! If you are interested in getting involved, please contact Jane Gregory at jgregory@girlscoutsni.org or (630) 897-1565 x 7196.

New Faces at FVSRA



Elizabeth Finch
Public Information
Coordinator

Beth joins FVSRA as the Public Information Coordinator and is responsible for the public relations, marketing and advertising activities at the agency. Beth received a dual-degree, in Advertising and Spanish, from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign in 2009. Prior to working at FVSRA, Beth worked as a Special Events Assistant at the Spurlock Museum in Urbana, IL and as the Project Coordinator for the DeForest Group in Elmhurst, IL.

Annie Craig holds a degree in Exercise Physiology. She has been in the fitness field since 1983 and has been studying yoga and pilates since 1995. Annie is particularly excited about the positive effect these two disciplines hold for adults and children with special needs. Annie brings a unique approach to her classes, without straying from traditional methods. She realizes the importance of mindfulness and enjoying movement!



Annie Craig
Program Instructor
Youth & Teen Yoga

Kevin has been studying the art of Aikido since 1983. He is the head instructor and founder of the Fox Valley Yoshinkai Aikido Club/Meishinkan Dojo. The word Meishinkan loosely translates to the "House of Sharing Spirit" and the Dojo originally began as a club to teach children with disabilities Aikido and self-defense. Kevin holds a spirit of openness and inclusion, and is eager to pass on his knowledge of Aikido to FVSRA participants!



Kevin Bradley
Program Instructor
Aikido



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things to look for at FVSRA

Winter/Spring Programs

Winter/Spring Program Brochures will be available in December. Registration Deadline is January 7. Register early to reserve your spot!

Wrap Up the Holidays

Wednesday, December 15
12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
FVSRA Multi-Purpose Rooms
Find all your last-minute holiday gifts at FVSRA!

Exercise Connection

New program offering for youth & teens!
Developed by David S. Geslak, Autism Fitness Specialist.

PAC Meetings

Program Advisory Committee
Wednesday, December 15th
10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
FVSRA Offices

Swim Meet

Saturday, December 11th
10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
East Aurora High School



2121 W. Indian Trail
Aurora, IL 60506

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Fax: 630.907.1116
www.fvsra.org

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New Partnership with Exercise Connection

Developed by David S. Geslak for children and adults on the autism spectrum, the Exercise Connection Program is now offered at FVSRA. The program begins with a Health and Motor Assessment to assess each child's body composition and gross motor strengths and weaknesses. Children work in a group setting, participating in lifetime activities and sports, while enhancing social skills, improving body awareness and building self-esteem. This program uniquely integrates visual, tactile and sensory supports. Parents will receive assessment results, a Parent Manual and exercises to practice at home with their child.

The Exercise Connection Program has been recognized by autism organizations throughout the U.S. and internationally, including the Autism Society of Illinois. David has been working with children with special needs for the past 6 years. "This program has been designed by seeing the children for their capabilities...not their disabilities," says David.

Look for Exercise Connection in
the FVSRA Winter/Spring
brochure!

inside
next
issue:

FVSRA News/Updates

PAC Meeting Dates


Pork Chop & Chicken BBQ &

Basket Raffle Preparations

Staff Recognition

Meghan O'Keefe, CTRS, was recognized for five years of full time service with FVSRA at the 17th Annual Recognition Banquet. Meg first worked for FVSRA as a day camp counselor during the summers while attending Central Michigan University. After completing internships at the Chicago Rehabilitation Institute and the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association, Meg joined the FVSRA staff in 2005. Her primary area of focus is Adaptive Sports, but Meg coaches a variety of Special Olympics sports and is responsible for developing the FVSRA/Kickers Soccer program with the Kickers Soccer Club. Meg is always willing to go far beyond the call of duty by developing new adaptive sports and volunteering to help co-workers with extra responsibilities. Meg is also a key component in helping to solicit contributions for FVSRA fundraisers. In addition, she brings her family and their volunteer spirit, to help out with many FVSRA activities. Congratulations to Meghan on her five year anniversary; FVSRA is fortunate to have her!





Wrap up the Holidays with FVSRA

Struggling to find the perfect gifts?
Wrap up those last minute items at FVSRA!

Wednesday, December 15, 2010
12:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

- * New FVSRA gear (T-shirts, polos, sweatshirts) from \$5.00 - \$30.00
- * Aktion club cookbooks with Bonus Recipe cards from the FVSRA staff (1 for \$8 and 3 for \$20)
- * FVSRA gift certificates

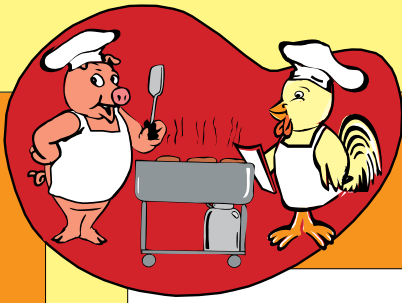
Receive the 2011 Winter Spring Brochure HOT off the press!

See a showcase of the Winter/Spring Programs
and a tour of the agency website by the FVSRA staff
(presented at 2:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.)

Tasty treats will be served along with lots of festive cheer!

Get your holiday shopping done while helping to raise
funds for FVSRA programs and services!

Fox Valley Special Recreation Association
2121 W. Indian Trail, Aurora, IL 60506
Phone: 630.907.1114
Fax: 630.907.1116
www.fvsra.org



SPONSORSHIPS & DONATIONS

18TH ANNUAL FVSRA PORK CHOP & CHICKEN BBQ & BASKET RAFFLE

PLEASE SELECT SPONSORSHIP PACKAGE BELOW:

\$500

- (1) 3" x 3" placemat ad (1,500 placemats printed)
 - (3) Slides in event slideshow (played on a jumbo screen during the entire event)
 - (1) Full-page (5.5" x 8.5") ad in event program booklet (1,500 booklets printed and distributed)
 - Company logo and website link displayed on the event page of the official FVSRA website
 - Company logo on official event posters (displayed at member agency facilities)
 - Company logo to appear in quarterly FVSRA Star Gazer newsletter (distributed to approximately 6,500 households)
 - 17.3" x 11.5" mobile advertisement (displayed on official FVSRA transit vehicles, which travel through 9 Chicagoland localities daily)
 - Distribution of company products and/or literature at event (including an optional Promotional Booth at event).
- Promotional Booth reservation (please check).

\$200

- (1) 3" x 3" placemat ad (1,500 placemats printed)
- (1) Slide in event slideshow (played on a jumbo screen during the entire event)
- (1) Full-page (5.5" x 8.5") ad in event program booklet (1,500 booklets printed and distributed)
- Company logo and website link displayed on the event page of the official FVSRA website

\$50

- 2" x 2" Ad/Logo
- 1,500 Placemats printed and utilized at event

\$75

- 3" x 3" Ad/Logo

PLEASE SELECT TYPE OF DONATION(S) BELOW:

- Please accept my In-Kind donation for _____
description of services (i.e. printing, perforating and stapling raffle/meal tickets; printing posters/banners/signage; etc.)
valued at \$ _____.
- Please accept my donation of \$ _____ towards FVSRA fundraising efforts.
- Please accept my donation of \$ _____ to be used for the purchase of meal tickets for FVSRA participants in financial need and event volunteers (\$9/meal).
- Please accept _____
description of item(s)
valued at \$ _____ for the Basket Raffle (Basket Raffle donations must be received by **January 31, 2011**).

Note: Donated item(s) not featured in the Basket Raffle will be used within the 2011 calendar year for other FVSRA fundraising efforts.

PLEASE INDICATE LEVEL OF SPONSORSHIP AND/OR DONATION(S) ABOVE AND COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING:

Company/Organization _____
 Contact Name(s) _____
 Street Address _____ Suite/Apt/PO Box _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (____) _____ E-mail _____

SPONSORS ONLY:

- Ad/Logo enclosed
- Ad/Logo must be submitted via disc or e-mail (ATTN: Elizabeth Finch at ewfinch@fvsra.org).
 - Ad/Logo must be high resolution. Accepted formats include PNG, GIF, JPEG and Adobe Creative Suite files.

Please return completed form with payment, by check or credit card (fax or mail), before **March 31, 2011**.
Basket Raffle donations must be received no later than **January 31, 2011**.

Make checks payable to FVSRA and send to:
Fox Valley Special Recreation Association, 2121 W. Indian Trail, Aurora, IL 60506

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SECTION BELOW IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD

Name (as it appears on credit card) _____ VISA MASTERCARD
 Credit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____
 Zip Code of Billing Address _____ Amount \$ _____ Phone(____) _____

For additional information and general inquiries, please contact
Public Information Coordinator, Elizabeth Finch, at (630) 907-1114 x 1207 or ewfinch@fvsra.org

SPONSORSHIP PACKAGES

GOLD

SILVER

PLACEMAT
AD

DONATIONS

PAYMENT INFORMATION