

Memorial Park's Development

In the early 1980's, Lebanon Township acquired 14.754 acres from Pauline and Bob Smith. This land was part of their farm. It adjoined 4.61 acres that had been purchased from the Mt. Lebanon Grange in the 1970's. The L-shaped parcel includes land on the westerly side of Bunnvale Road in front of Woodglen School to the land south of the Municipal Building on West Hill Road.

The land sat idle until 1996 when a citizens group was appointed by then-mayor **Patricia Schriver** to research and recommend a plan for the township-owned property. The citizens group created a plan which members felt met current and future needs of the community. That plan called for a basketball area that could be flooded for ice skating; fields for softball, baseball, soccer and football; an amphitheater on the hillside, where there could be sledding in winter; a "tot lot"; a pavilion; a Little League baseball field at the rear of the land; tennis courts; a picnic grove; and 1.5 to 2 miles of hiking trails. There would even be room for a Township Garage. The plan called for extensive fund-raising and volunteer efforts to complete the project. The plan was presented to the Township Committee in December of 1996 by **Adam M. Ambielli**, Co-chairman with Paul Spatz of the citizens group.

After consideration, discussion and public hearings, the Township Committee approved the plan and the official ground-breaking ceremonies were held on Saturday, April 4, 1998. The park received a substantial boost when Co-chairman **Paul Spatz** offered to do all the excavating and site-work as a donation in memory of his father and brother. His generous offer was accepted and he, his operators, and his major earth moving equipment "blazed the trail" to the development of Memorial Park.

Though the original plans have been modified somewhat, development of Memorial Park is well underway. Through consistent fundraising efforts and a great deal of hard work on the part of the Memorial Park Committee members and volunteers, a lot has been accomplished at the Park since the ground-breaking ceremonies. Current facilities include a pavilion, sledding hill, playground, three horseshoe pits, two volleyball courts, softball field, two basketball courts and a soccer/lacrosse/football field. Some notable events in the development of the park follow.

Softball Field Dedication

The new softball field, **Woodglen AA Memorial Field**, was dedicated on Saturday, **July 19, 2003**. The field was a gift to the township from **Josh and Karen Rich** and includes a regulation softball field, backstop, players' benches, spectator bleachers and an electronic scoreboard. The dedication was followed by an exciting game between some of the original Woodglen Athletic Association (AA) players and their offspring, and some other township residents. The AA's won the game with a score of 17-15.

Playground Dedication

Caterpillar Cove, the Diana Laul Memorial Playground, was dedicated to the memory of **Diana Laul** on Saturday, **August 2, 2003**. Diana was a teacher at Valley View School for many years and was a dedicated park volunteer. The playground is a result of an enormous effort on the part of many volunteers and the Park Committee. It includes swings, a huge sandbox (fully stocked with lots of sand toys), a space net (suitable for all ages!), two seesaw-like pieces of equipment, a climbing structure, a frog, toadstools, benches and a metallaphone. **Collette Evanko** did a superb job coordinating the effort.

Memorial Park Remembrance

Family and friends of former township resident **Richard Cudina** gathered on Saturday, **September 11, 2004** at 2:00 PM in Memorial Park for a memorial event. Mr. Cudina was at work in the North Tower of the World Trade Center on the morning of September 11, 2001 and perished in the attack. The memorial event included speakers and light refreshments. Many area residents attended. A monument, the centerpiece of a "Quiet Area" in the park, has been constructed featuring a large piece of the steel girders taken from the Trade Center rubble. It includes a commemorative plaque and lighted flagpole. Continued development of the area is anticipated to preserve the memory of Mr. Cudina and other victims of the

September 11 attacks. Please visit the [Richard Cudina 9/11 Memorial Website](#) to view photographs of the development of the Richard Cudina Memorial at Memorial Park.

Concession Stand and Restrooms

Work on the concession stand and restrooms was completed in **September of 2006** and the building was opened in time for the annual A Day in The Park. The building includes two restrooms, a concession area, storage rooms and a covered pavilion for seating. A paved area is lined with pavers engraved with the names of donors. The project required years of planning and fundraising as well as countless hours of work by many volunteers. **Wayne Maurer** offered his time and talents to manage this project and bring it to completion. His hard work and dedication, as well as that of all the volunteers, is greatly appreciated.