



ANNUAL REPORT - FISCAL YEAR 2013



FORWARD



Dear Friends,

In 1997, the Wicomico County Council consolidated three agencies, bringing the Tourism Bureau, Wicomico Youth & Civic Center (WY&CC) and the department of Recreation and Parks together into one department. United, these three divisions strive to provide high quality events and programs, to preserve unique natural resources, to acquire, develop and maintain park land and recreation facilities, and to market our community for the purpose of attracting visitors.

To enhance our citizens' quality of life and contribute to the local economy this past fiscal year, ending June 30, 2013, the department:

- Hosted 880 events at the WY&CC including Disney on Ice, the annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Banquet and four high school graduations. Record use of the venue was seen in the sports, corporate, education and religious market sectors. Events held drew over 280,000+ people.
- Over 250 different recreation activities were offered, attracting 14,600+ registrants and resulting in a total visitation of 332,000.
- Thirty events were delivered by the tourism staff, attracting 287,000+ visitors into our community. These events ranged from the Autumn Wine Festival to the USSSA Girls Softball World Series, required over 31,000 hotel room nights, meals & other services to infuse over \$17.6 million into our local economy.
- State Program Open Space funding was utilized to continue efforts to restore aged or damaged facilities:
 - Sealed and striped basketball and/or tennis courts at Mardela Springs, San Domingo, Hebron, Centennial Village, WinterPlace and Crooked Oak.
 - Secured federal FEMA funds to repair damage to Tyaskin & Bivalve Wharfs as well as Pemberton Park trails caused by Hurricane Sandy.
 - Replaced a playground module at Crooked Oak Park.
 - Secured funding to begin replacement of an aging vehicle fleet.

The average Maryland Eastern Shore County subsidizes just its recreation and parks department at a cost of \$17.88 per citizen. Wicomico County operates its entire Recreation, Parks & Tourism Department (including the WY&CC) for only \$15.65 per citizen, making it the lowest on the shore! The \$15.65 per citizen includes \$11.35 for the recreation and parks division and \$4.30 for the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center. The tourism division requires no County tax appropriation as it is solely funded through the hotel room tax.

The County is able to offer these services at a lower cost by following a pay to play model for its activities, which charges users fees for the programs and events in which they participate (need-based scholarships are available through the Tomorrow Fund to assist families unable to afford program fees). Cost-avoidance practices are also implemented when possible. In fiscal year 2013, cost-avoidance measures resulted in a tax-payer savings of \$3.6+ million.

Looking forward, progress will be made to:

FORWARD *cont.*

- Expand the County's strong presence in the amateur sports tournament industry. Facility expansion, coupled with newly formed partnerships with the Maryland Stadium Authority, Maryland Office of Sports Marketing, Ocean City and event organizers for youth sports, is projected to grow the economic impact for the County by 48% from \$17.5 million to \$26 million by 2018.
- Modernize and expand the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center, allowing the venue to maintain and grow its position in the marketplace and perpetuate its brand as the place to hold events on Delmarva.
- Expand the Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex in an effort to enhance our citizen's quality of life and retain and attract additional amateur sports tournaments to grow our local economy. The expansion will allow the County to continue recruitment efforts to obtain and retain events that positively impact our economy.
- Make recreation programs more affordable by phasing out absorption of full time salary costs in fees.
- Modernize parks by completing the restoration of Nanticoke Harbor; secure funding to replace failed lighting systems at Sharptown and Hebron Parks; commence with the restoration of Schumaker, Leonards Mill, Indian Village and Billy Gene Jackson, Sr. Parks.

It has been our long-standing practice to ensure Wicomico County citizens receive the best return on their tax-dollar investment, and we plan to continue this practice.

The following report was prepared in order to be transparent and accountable to all of our community stakeholders and to share with you the success of our work in fulfilling the mission of the Department of Recreation, Parks & Tourism. As always, we welcome your comments, questions and suggestions.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Pollitt

County Executive

CIVIC CENTER



Mission

The Wicomico Youth and Civic Center (WY&CC) represents the County government's commitment to enhance the quality of life for its citizens with specific emphasis on youth and families by providing a venue for entertainment, cultural, civic, convention and recreational activities. This mission is dedicated to all veterans of Wicomico County.

The WY&CC is also leveraged to attract events that infuse money into the local economy. This is accomplished by:

- showcasing a diverse mix of cultural entertainment.
- providing a place for meetings, receptions, trade shows and sporting events.
- attracting visitors who patronize local businesses.
- maintaining the Center as a living war memorial.
- accommodating the public recreation activities when it is not rented.
- serving as an emergency shelter.

Use

The WY&CC serves the region within a one-hour drive radius with a population of 650,000. It holds a brand for being the place to hold or attend concerts, family shows, trade shows, sporting events, meetings and receptions.

- In FY13, 881 events were held, boosting the annual total attendance to over 281,000 people.
- Encore Catering, the in-house catering enterprise, serviced 176 events.
- The recreation and parks division held 385 activities when the facility was not commercially occupied, drawing an attendance of 38,990. The division reimburses the WY&CC \$99,000 annually for this and administrative office space. These activities engage youth, club, senior, adult, sports and recreation activities.
- Thirty-eight (38) meetings, training and public hearings were conducted by other County agencies at no charge. More than 6,600 people attended these meetings.

FY 2013 Participation Summary

Activity Category	Event Sessions	Total Attendees
Entertainment	66	94,436
Trade Shows	12	7,355
Sporting Events	62	49,996
Corporate Meetings	92	20,167
Educational Functions	33	33,275
Social Receptions	30	3,201
Fraternal Receptions	6	1,475
Religious Meetings	79	11,325
Government Meetings	29	9,205
Other Rentals	49	5,329
Public Recreation	385	38,990
County Government Meetings	38	6,600
Grand Total	881	281,354

CIVIC CENTER *cont.*

2012-2013 Civic Center Accomplishments

Venue Maintenance, Improvements & Safety

- Continued the modernization and expansion efforts to maintain and grow the WY&CC's position in the marketplace by:
 - executing the capital restoration plan.
 - executing the 'market & economic' analysis recommended by the Maryland Stadium Authority Study's plan.
 - determining the feasibility for expansion and modernization by performing a lead qualification study and developing a pro forma for return on investment.
- Purchased items to both enhance events and increase venue sales including white drapery for colored LED up-lighting accents, unique tables such as sweetheart and other accent table pieces.
- Continued current primary life safety equipment practices by ensuring equipment is maintained to top safety standards.
- Purchased and enhanced equipment to assure safety and efficiency.

Events

- Working in partnership with the tourism division, booked over \$140,000 net revenue in sports marketing related events. Fourteen events were held including AAU basketball, wrestling, cheer events, basketball and dog shows. These events equate to 25% of the venue's revenue stream and infused over \$5.1 million into the local economy.
- Exceeded or met the sales goals for corporate, cultural entertainment, education, social, religious, sports marketing and government events, with multiple categories reaching all-time records for sales.
- Continued to work with promoters and agents to seek potential shows that fit our market and availability, booking:
 - family-style shows including Disney on Ice, Sesame Street Live, Monster Trucks, Lone Star Rodeo, Globetrotters, Ringling Brothers & Barnum and Bailey Circus.
 - concerts including Bob Dylan, Third Day, Stars of the Temptations, Platters, and Coasters.
 - Broadway shows including Dreamgirls, The Price is Right, Cirque Dreams, Beauty and the Beast and Elvis Live.
 - boxing/wrestling events including World Wrestling Entertainment and TNA Wrestling.
- Built on the WY&CC's reputation for providing uncompromised customer service by expanding the box office hours of operation to 6 p.m. during the week.
- Created a group sales database consisting of contact information for schools, day cares and other groups. Databases were used to contact potential customers and provide them with information on upcoming shows. Box office associates called during down time. This effort resulted in over 3,700 tickets sold for a gross of \$55,500.

Encore Catering & Concessions

- Expanded concession's profitability, resulting in gross record sales of \$447,000.
- Both catering and concessions grew by 1% and 23% for the year, respectively.
- Employed efficiency and cost avoidance measures throughout the year, allowing the WY&CC to generate and continue to avoid an over \$1.2 million dollar tax appropriation.

Sponsorship & Advertising Sales

- Business advertising salesperson sold over \$50,000 value of static and video advertising and event sponsorships.
- Concerted trending reports into a sales tool enhance brand perception by potential sponsors and event coordinators.
- Identified and developed relationships with advertising agencies that represent local businesses and worked with prospective clients to build customized sponsorship packages that maximize desired exposure for that client.

Staffing

- Established a part-time clerical position to allow additional time for the Event Sales Manager to make out of office sales calls.
- Created a "pool" of box office employees to staff offsite signature events.
- Added a part-time banquet chef to relieve the pressure of a growing workload stemming from increased sales.
- Addressed growing demand to 'changeover' events by deploying tactics to expand staff and inmate support.

CIVIC CENTER *cont.*

2013-14 Civic Center Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Improve the public's understanding of the WY&CC's value to the community.
- Obtain the best available cultural entertainment while serving as 'the place to be' for meetings, receptions, conferences and amateur sports tournaments.
- Commence with the expansion and modernization of the lobby, box office, corridors and DaNang meeting rooms.
- Obtain State funding to undertake arena seating replacement, construction of a food court and traffic circle.
- Cultivate interest to develop vacant adjacent (mall) property to offer amenities which will attract meetings, conferences and additional amateur sports tournaments.
- Expand marketing practices to retain and obtain events and grow attendance and business investment.
- Grow business advertising and sponsorship sales.
- Purchase technical support items to enhance service standards for meetings and receptions held in the venue by January 30.
- Expand reports generated by Ungerboeck administrative software.
- Enhance box office customer experience and continue development of box office part-time staff's capabilities.
- Prepare continuity plan to operate the box office during the lobby/box office expansion project and develop an operation plan for the new box office.
- Evaluate the food service division's construct to address growth. Implement recommendations.
- Enhance food service operations and customer experience.
- Develop merchandizing and seating plan for the proposed food court.
- Ensure the reliability and evaluate the life cycles of the WY&CC's primary mechanical systems.
- Evaluate the construct of the maintenance division and implement recommendations.
- Perpetuate safe-work maintenance practices.
- Utilize new software options to schedule, assign and account for completed tasks.
- Update the annual deep cleaning task schedule.
- Continue to develop stagehands' capabilities.
- Continue practices to retain a capable event staff.

TOURISM



DISCOVER DELMARVA'S
HIDDEN TREASURES
IN WICOMICO COUNTY

Mission

The tourism division strives to promote Wicomico County as a destination for meetings, conventions, events and all other tourism related activities for the Lower Eastern Shore of Maryland. Its mission is to create memories worth repeating through heritage and eco-tourism, conferences, trade shows, sports tournaments and special events driven by creative marketing and sales efforts and maximizing use of its tourism assets in order to enhance the quality of life and economy in Wicomico County.

Tourism efforts enhance and contribute to the overall identity and economic well-being of the county and region. In FY13, 30 events were held infusing an estimated \$17,569,732 into the local economy. These efforts rely on the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center as well as the recreation and parks divisions by leveraging their assets to attract business to the County. The impact of leveraging these assets is as follows:

Wicomico Youth & Civic Center:	14 events	\$5.1 million Economic Impact
Recreation & Parks Divisions:	16 events	\$12.5 million Economic Impact

The tourism division maintains a working relationship with many agencies on the local, state and national level in order to promote the tourism industry in our area. Some of these organizations include the Greater Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce, Wicomico County Hotel-Motel Association (HMA), Locally Owned Restaurant Association (LORA), Maryland Office of Tourism Development, Maryland Tourism Council, Maryland Association of Destination Marketing Organizations, Maryland Office of Sports Marketing, National Tour Association, International Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus and the American Bus Association.

The funds required to sustain the division are generated through a 6% local hotel room tax, a State grant and miscellaneous sources including advertising and vending sales. These sources generate \$936,484 to offset all costs. There is no County tax subsidy required to operate the tourism division.

In addition to being an economic engine for the County, the tourism division operates the Tourist Information Center. The facility provides travelers with information relating to area lodging, dining, shopping, recreation, attractions and events. The center is the busiest in the state, as visits totaled 28,689 in FY13.

TOURISM

Tourism Highlights

Though economic conditions have limited tourism activity for many across the country, there are positive signs of recovery in the County. The chart to the right represents some highlights.

	FY 12	FY 13	Comparison
Room Tax Collections	\$778,580	\$818,198	+5.1%
Annual Sales	\$17,690,754	\$17,569,732	-0.7%
Total Sales	\$33,292,854	\$37,468,205	+12.5%
Occupancy	47.1%	47.8%	+1.5%
ADR	\$86.55	\$88.42	+2.2%
REV PAR	\$40.90	\$42.26	+3.3%
Events Booked by CVB	40	30	-25%
Walk-InVisitors	31,072	28,869	-7.1%
Website Hits	88,397	110,123	+24.6%

2012-2013 Accomplishments

- Delivered 30 events to Wicomico County, attracting 287,804 visitors. Event attendees required 31,000 hotel room nights as well as meals and other services to infuse an estimated \$17.6 million into the local economy. Over 60% of these events were sports marketing related and eight were of a national/regional caliber.
- Established relationships with the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce to increase business engagement with tourism events and activities in the community.
- Established a full-time administrator position to manage a new hotel reservation service whose salary and benefits are completely sustained through user fees.

Sports Marketing

- Developed regional sports marketing tactics with Ocean City, Worcester County and the State Office of Sports Marketing to attract large-scale sporting events to the region.
- Expanded the USSSA World Series event to include 400 teams over three weeks of competition which infused an estimated \$9 million economic impact into the community.
- Invested over \$25,000 to modernize and improve athletic playing fields for tourism-related events.
- Increased participation in the Salisbury Shootout LAX tournament by 26% in FY13.

Festivals & Signature Events

- Utilized ‘packaged’ weekend offerings including tickets, hotel stay, dining, etc. to draw in audiences that surround signature events and highlight the ‘Hidden Treasures’ concept including 75 sold packages for the 2013 Pork in the Park event.
- Staged three signature events and celebrated two, 10 year anniversaries for marquee festivals.
 - Attendance at the 10th Annual Autumn Wine Festival exceeded 4,000.
 - The 10th Annual Pork in the Park BBQ Festival, sanctioned by Kansas City BBQ Society, attracted 108 competitors and attendance exceeded 15,000. The event is recognized as the largest KCBS-sanctioned BBQ event on the East Coast and second largest in the country.
- Attendee surveys from signature events show demographic information as follows:
 - 46% are local residents
 - 18% from the Lower Shore
 - 4% from the Upper Shore
 - 15% from the Western Shore
 - 14% from neighboring states with a total of 21 different states represented

TOURISM

2013-2014 Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Continue tactics to aggressively retain, obtain and develop amateur sports tournaments.
- Establish the Mid-Atlantic Amateur Sports Alliance (MAASA) brand which includes developing marketing tactics with Ocean City and the State Office of Sports Marketing to attract large-scale sporting events to the region.
- Perpetuate a self-sustaining ‘housing service’ to offer reservation services to event participants and ensure room rebates, room blocks and comp rooms for event organizers.
- Assist the State in establishing a state-funded “seed money” grant program to complement the County’s ability to obtain events.
- Modernize and expand facilities to retain, obtain and develop amateur sports and group business markets.
- Embellish existing signature special events which are multi-day and attract attendees from a 150 mile radius.
- Accelerate group business sales.
- Modernize the Tourist Information Center and expand local presence to visitors.
- Develop a partnership with the Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce to enhance visitors’ social experiences by embellishing events, retail/value packages and uncompromised hospitality.
- Create packages to be used for sports events, transient markets and group events for the purpose of enhancing and/or extending stays.
- Engage the Maryland Office of Tourism to promote and assist with County initiatives.
- Enhance tactics to market Wicomico County’s events and attractions to increase the number of overnight visitors and day trippers.
- Continue to collect and analyze consumer data to effectively market events and measure trends.
- Expand event sponsorships and advertising sales to increase stakeholder participation and maximizing revenue.
- Continue the recruitment of motivated and qualified part-time staff, interns and volunteers in order to grow events.

PUBLIC RECREATION



Mission

The recreation division operates under the mission to enhance the quality of life for Wicomico County residents by providing life-long benefits through a wide variety of educational, social and recreational activities in safe and healthy environments. The focus shall be on providing youth mentoring, lifetime pursuits, crime prevention, lifetime fitness and social connectivity through a dynamic and diverse programming base. Activities include:

- Sports Leagues
- Instructional Activities
- Environmental Education
- Recreation Services
- Senior Citizens Programs (Happy Timers)
- Child Care Programs
- Summer Playgrounds
- Special Events & Bus Trips
- Special Interest Facilities:
 - The Westside Community Center
 - Wicomico Equestrian Center
 - Pemberton Historical Park
 - Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex
 - Nanticoke Marina
 - Cedar Hill Marina
- Recreation Councils

Through a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of program content with a focus on product development and staff recruitment, we strive to strengthen the department's brand, program quality and perpetuate participant growth beyond the playing field. Investments in program leadership, coaching and calculated program enhancements, combined with uncompromised customer service and civic engagement with volunteers and stakeholders, will perpetuate our mission to provide affordable programs and meet the quality of life needs for citizens of Wicomico County.

Over 14,600 people registered to participate in 250 recreation activities. Overall attendance accounted for more than 332,500 visits. Utilizing a pay-to-play model, self-sustaining recreation activities resulted in a tax-payer cost avoidance of \$1,157,264.

PUBLIC RECREATION *cont.*

2012-2013 Accomplishments

Special Interest Facilities

- Restructured the Westside Community Center's budget by re-establishing a County tax subsidy to make programs and services affordable, leading to a 40% increase in youth membership and a 101% increase in summer camp participation.
- Addressed equipment needs and enhanced curriculum for environmental education programs leading to a 35% increase in Pemberton Nature Camp participation.

Community Partnerships

- The Friends of Recreation and Parks organized two fundraising events that generated over \$8,800 for scholarships.
 - Partnering with Tall Tales Brewery, the Mudapalooza & Mud Run hosted 92 teams with over 360 participants raising over \$5,000.
 - Mid-Atlantic Charity Poker Classic hosted 109 players and generated over \$3,300.
- This year the Friends awarded over \$9,000 in scholarships to assist families in need so that they may participate in recreation programs.
- Developed community partnerships and secured \$13,600 in grant funding to increase wrap around services for at risk youth and their families.

Program Highlights

- Increased participation in several programs including Adult Coed Soccer (100%), Fastbreak Basketball Camp (180%), and Halloween Havoc Youth Softball Tournament (45%).

Economics & Staff Retention

- Addressed under market salaries of program staff to ensure retention.
- A Community Yard Sale, held at the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center, hosted over 1,400 attendees and generated over \$3,500 for the recreation division.

2013-2014 Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Evaluate programs and services. Redistribute program director responsibilities to administer recreation programs, events and services.
- Work with community agencies and organizations to establish a comprehensive service including recreation for underserved youth and families.
- Address staffing challenges associated with growth in program participation at the Westside Community Center.
- Reevaluate the Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex's business model to address current demand and execute tactics for a proposed expansion, a tourism initiative to develop new regional amateur sports tournaments.
- Establish brand recognition for youth soccer to grow market share.
- Expand environmental education opportunities and community events at Pemberton Historical Park. Evaluate and recalibrate priorities to enhance environmental and historical interpretation.
- Develop adventure education programs at the Westside Community Center and offer them to the department's child care participants, community service providers and the community at large.
- Develop adult class offerings, workshops and programs that appeal to the 'baby boomer' and young professional demographics.
- Continue to utilize special events to increase revenue used to subsidize fees for activities administered from the department's enterprise fund and grow the Tomorrow Fund scholarship fund.
- Develop curriculum based summer camp programs, supervised by well-trained staff and hosted in Wicomico County schools.
- Engage stakeholder groups that have become apathetic and strengthen recreation councils.
- Develop standard guidelines to streamline program operations, development and execution.
- Improve marketing of programs and events to retain and grow program participation and attendance.

PARKS



Mission

The mission of the parks division is to preserve Wicomico County’s unique natural resources by maintaining our parks and facilities in a safe, functional and attractive condition. We strive to fulfill our core responsibilities through daily and long term planning. The division’s staff provides vital support to public recreation and tourism activities as well as signature events.

Core Responsibilities

- Safety
- Functionality
- Cleanliness & Attractiveness
- Program Support
- Capital Improvements
- Event Support

Specific Duties

- The maintenance of County parks, including safety inspections of playgrounds, buildings, electric, plumbing, landscaping, vehicles and equipment.
- Logistic support for recreation programs, special events, sporting events and emergency services.
- Facility construction and improvements including development of plans, estimates, specifications and bid documents and special inspections.
- Conservation of natural resources.
- Administration of special facilities, including marinas, boat ramps, athletic complex and equestrian center.
- Staff is on call 24/7 for weather-related emergencies throughout the County.

The parks system is distributed to provide recreational opportunities to every geographical area of Wicomico County. Facilities include boat ramps, marinas, neighborhood parks, playgrounds, sports venues, historic and nature parks, an equestrian center and picnic pavilions.

The parks division is responsible for the maintenance of 39 sites, which encompass the following:

Type	Number
Total Acres	1,423
Turf Acres	374
Buildings	23
Parking Lots	18
Ball Fields	32 (10 Lighted)
Tennis Courts	21 (8 Lighted)
Basketball Courts	21 (2 Lighted)
Multi-Purpose Fields	28 (4 Lighted)
Spectator Seats	12,650
Playgrounds	20
Picnic Facilities	24
Pavilions	17
Miles of Beaches	3
Miles of Trails	10.6 (6 Sites)
Food Concessions	5
Restrooms	18
Boat Ramps	8
Boat Slips	209 (2 Sites)

PARKS *cont.*

Cost Avoidance

The parks division is committed to reduce and avoid cost wherever possible. These practices saved taxpayers \$719,355 in FY13. Retaining capable employees who possess a variety of skills and the utilization of other practices resulted in the savings represented in the chart to the right.

Maintenance Task	Savings Per Year
Turf Maintenance	\$173,646
Trash Collection	\$9,102
Landscape Services	\$155,075
Special Events Logistics & Support	\$54,040
Vehicle Maintenance & Repair	\$122,700
Facilities Maintenance	\$95,089
Welding / Fabrication Services	\$14,203
Tennis / Basketball Court Maintenance	\$21,000
Project Inspection Services	\$50,000
Tourism Center Annual Maintenance	\$9,500
Vehicle Purchasing	\$15,000
Total Yearly Savings	\$719,355

2012-2013 Accomplishments

Facility Repairs and Enhancements

- Completed projects, paid for by the tourism division, to enhance the County's sports fields at WinterPlace Park, Fruitland Recreational Park, Fruitland Little League, East Wicomico Little League, Eastside Youth Sports Center and the Henry S. Parker Athletic Complex. Projects included seeding, fertilizing, painting, irrigating and sodding.
- Coordinated Program Open Space projects, including the:
 - installation of a new roof on the white barn at the Wicomico Equestrian Center
 - replacement of the tennis courts in Centennial Village and Crooked Oak
 - installation a new play module at Crooked Oak Playground (replacing the unit destroyed by vandals in 2008).
- Repaired facilities damaged by Hurricane Sandy.
 - Rebuilt the Tyaskin Park Pier and Bivalve Wharf Pier. Both projects were funded 75% by FEMA and built to specifications to improve the chance of withstanding strong storms.
 - Rebuilt a boardwalk at Pemberton Historical Park.
- Completely remodeled the rental house at Adkins Mill Park.
- Replaced the roof on the pavilion at Schumaker Park.
- Applied pond treatments for hydrilla control in Leonards Mill and Schumaker Ponds. A second application was added to control surface weeds. This project was carried out in partnership with community homeowners' associations and the City of Salisbury.
- Worked with DP&L to install two security lights in Emerson Hollaway Park.

Planning for Longevity

- Performed a complete audit of all facilities and developed a progress schedule to undertake repairs and upgrades as needed to keep facilities safe and attractive.
- Sealed and striped five tennis/ basketball courts, increasing the life of the courts from 18 to 30 years by avoiding premature failure and resulting in a taxpayer savings of \$630,000. The work was performed in-house and with the assistance of Poplar Hill inmates, costing \$13,000. The project would have cost \$34,000 if it were contracted out. Courts sealed and striped were Mardela Springs basketball court, San Domingo basketball court, WinterPlace tennis courts and Hebron basketball court.
- Developed a comprehensive rehabilitation plan for Pemberton Historic Park, focusing on the trails, bridge and overlooks which are showing wear and tear from high volume usage and age.
- Began purchasing seven new vehicles for recreation, parks and tourism and implemented plan to continue revitalization of currently aging fleet of vehicles.

PARKS *cont.*

Special Events & Sports Marketing

- Planned the expansion of the Henry S. Parker Athletic complex that will allow for the growth of tourism's sports marketing program.
- Provided logistical support for nine special events, four national sports tournaments and more than thirty local and regional sports tournaments. Events included the Pork in the Park BBQ Festival, USSSA Softball World Series, Delmarva Bike Week, Wicomico Farm and Home Show, Good Beer Festival, Autumn Wine Festival and the Geocache Dash.
- The USSSA Softball World Series grew to host 400 teams over a three week period. The tournament utilized five facilities and 20 softball fields in Wicomico County, requiring over 2,500 man hours from the parks' staff.
- Rebuilt the tourism stage to ensure longevity for use at special events.

2013-2014 Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Perpetuate practices to ensure facilities are safe, functional and attractive.
- Continue vehicle and equipment replacement.
- Develop capital project plan, secure funding and execute projects.
- Restore State dedicated funds for Program Open Space and Waterway Improvement projects.
- Restore the Harbormaster and Park Ranger Supervisor part-time positions.
- Continue to support department signature events and sports tournaments while prioritizing core responsibilities.
- Engage citizens to become stewards in neighborhood parks and County bike routes.
- Convert park records, files and resources to digital format.
- Market harbors and pavilions to increase user volume and frequency.
- Create a campaign to increase the public's awareness of the value of parks.

MARKETING & PR



Mission

The marketing & public relations division's mission is to promote Wicomico County's Recreation, Parks & Tourism Department, including the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center in an effort to expand reach, grow audience base and strengthen brand.

2012-13 Accomplishments

- Unified and improved the department's brand (image perception) by developing six salient points to convey message, updating/re-implementing the Customer Service Pledge and working to instill a sense of 'we are one' with the department's staff by striving to eliminate divisional barriers and opening lines of communication.
- Retain and grew attendance for the department's events/programs by:
 - Strengthening demographic collection and trending analysis.
 - Developed a park use survey to gather customer feedback on facilities.
 - Effectively launched new Mudapalooza event held in April 2013.
 - Recalibrated harbor advertising based on demographic analysis.
 - Adjusted marketing offerings to WY&CC show promoters to better promote upcoming events, generate revenue and utilize marketing division's staff time.
 - Developed proactive public relations and advertising initiatives for holiday promotions including Holiday Jubilee, Breakfast with Santa and general holiday party bookings.
 - Developed advertising budget for the tourism division promoting County and signature events regionally and in surrounding metro markets.
 - Utilized 'packaged' weekend offerings including tickets, hotel stays, dining, etc. to draw in audience from drive market for tourism events.
 - Assisted in development and expansion of home grown sports marketing events and group sales efforts by creating consistent, brand appropriate collateral and advertising/pr tactics.
- Developed and implemented pro-active planning strategies, including the establishment of monthly sales and marketing meeting with division heads.
- Assisted in growing the department's external sponsorship opportunities, advertising sales and group bookings by creating all-encompassing sponsorship package for sales which utilizes trending information collected through demographics and audience analysis.
- Grew online audience for divisions by ensuring web sites, social media and email communications were kept on par with current technology with fresh content, utilizing contests to grow fan base.
- Streamlined marketing division's purchasing procedures to eliminate multi-step process while abiding by County financial policies.
- Retained competent staff and implemented steps to increase work load manageability.

MARKETING & PR *cont.*

2013-14 Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Continue to unify and improve the Department's brand (image perception) both internally and externally so that it is perceived in a positive, modern and relevant light.
- Evaluate current advertising practices through trending and demographics and continue to monitor industry trends for developing tactics.
- Retain and grow attendance for department events/programs, while continuing to grow appeal.
- Assist in growing department's external sponsorship opportunities, advertising sales and group bookings.
- Grow online audience/following for all Divisions through utilization of technology.

Web Site Traffic: FY12-FY 13 Comparison

Web Site / Blog	Unique Visits	Increase / Decrease
AutumnWineFestival.org	13,397	55%
CedarHillMarina.org	1,840	-2%
DockDaze.org	517	-87%
GoodBeerFestival.org	15,378	35%
PembertonPark.org	9,328	19%
PorkinthePark.org	42,995	42%
SalisburyChampionships.org	23,640	47%
WicomicoCivicCenter.org	135,647	42%
WicomicoRecandParks.org	42,972	77%
WicomicoTourism.org	28,771	3%
Annual Average Growth	314,485	30%

Email Subscribers: FY12-FY 13 Comparison

Email List	Recipients	Increase / Decrease
Recreation	11,058	24%
Tourism	12,912	33%
Wicomico Youth & Civic Center	11,716	3%
Annual Average Growth	35,686	26%

*Subscriber crossover may exist between lists.

Online Visitor's Guide Requests: FY12-FY 13 Comparison

Unique Requests	Increase / Decrease
204	-10%

Facebook Fans: FY12-FY 13 Comparison

Facebook Page	Unique Fans	Increase / Decrease
Autumn Wine Festival	569	147%
Good Beer Festival	1,775	76%
Pork in the Park	3,771	110%
Recreation & Parks	433	107%
Westside Community Center	666	3%
Wicomico Civic Center	5,727	108%
Wicomico Kids Klub	96	81%
Wicomico Tourism	1615	11%
Annual Average Growth	14,652	77%

Twitter Followers

Twitter Handle	Unique Followers	Increase / Decrease
FunWicomico	189	N/A
GoodBeerMe	40	N/A
GovChallenge	58	N/A
PorkinthePark	76	N/A
USSSASalisbury	22	N/A
Annual Average Growth	385	N/A

*Twitter tracking implemented in FY13.

SALES



Mission

The sales division works under the mission to sell advertising and sponsorships so customers can advertise within the Wicomico Youth & Civic Center as well as at facilities and special events sponsored by the department. Profit generated through these sales shall be used to offset the department's cost of doing business.

2012-2013 Accomplishments

In 2013, the advertising & sponsorship division supported multiple efforts of the Wicomico County Recreation, Parks & Tourism and Wicomico Youth & Civic Center by helping to offset the cost of doing business in the following ways:

- Developed and created consistent sales collateral to strengthen brand awareness for the department and included them all in a 'look book.'
- Refined communication and targeting of sales through a stronger collaboration with the division managers through a combined monthly sales meeting.
- Sold hospitality tents at the Autumn Wine Festival.
- Initiated outreach to regional advertising firms and secured appointments with potential clients within a reasonable driving distance.

Tourism Sales Total: \$49,202

USSSA Fastpitch World Series

- Increased sales by 31%, bringing on eight new advertisers and breaking into the Worcester County/Ocean City market.
- Introduced an expo area for local vendors to be involved in the team check-in and opening ceremonies.

Autumn Wine Festival

- Increased sales by 89%.
- Brought on three new festival sponsors including presenting sponsor.
- Brought on two new program advertisers.
- Introduced VIP / corporate tents to the collateral.

Visitors Guide

- Sales decreased by 12%.
- Brought on eight new advertisers.

Pork in the Park

- Increased festival sales by 33%.
- Secured two new festival sponsors.
- Secured sponsor for Eastern Shore Wing War.
- Created new packages for potential sponsors.

SALES *cont.*

Wicomico Youth & Civic Center Sales Total: \$61,275

- Sponsorships increased overall by 22%.
- Increased building sponsorships by 14% by renewing six clients and bringing on one additional.
- Increased individual show sponsorships by 371% .
- Brought on seven new show sponsors, including one presenting sponsor.

Recreation Sales Total: \$21,565

Good Beer Festival

- Sales increased by 29%.
- Secured four new sponsors.

Henry Parker Sports Complex

- Sales decreased by 33%.
- Brought on five new banner sponsors.

2013-2014 Objectives

(Please see Fiscal Year 2014 Strategic Plan for tactics planned to execute the below objectives.)

- Evaluate, refresh and ensure that collateral is prepared for timely use to highlight all WY&CC, tourism and recreation sponsorship/advertising opportunities.
- Refine communication and targeting of sales through continued collaborative sales and marketing meetings with the managers of the Civic Center, tourism and recreation divisions.
- Become engaged in the Salisbury Area and Georgetown, Delaware Chambers of Commerce.
- Engage Ocean City and Worcester County businesses through the Mid-Atlantic Amateur Sports Association efforts.
- Increase the Henry Parker Athletic Complex sales by 30%, from \$15,380 to \$20,000.
- Increase the Good Beer Festival sales by 43%, from \$7,650.00 to \$11,000.
- Increase the Visitors Guide sales by 24%, from \$13,283.00 to \$16,500.
- Increase USSSA World Series sales 30%, from \$14,600 to \$19,000.
- Increase Pork in The Park sales 29%, from \$15,500 to \$20,000.
- Increase Autumn Wine Festival sales 34%, from \$7,450 to \$10,000.
- Secure sponsorship advertising for the two available boards available on the tourism marquee worth \$13,000.
- Increase WY&CC building sponsorship sales 84% from \$43,305 to \$82,000 (not including \$18,000 in trade).
- Create a new collateral piece for department web advertising.