



MCPB
Item # 12
December 18, 2008

MEMORANDUM:

TO: Montgomery County Planning Board

VIA: Mary R. Bradford, Director

FROM: Terry H. Brooks, Chairman
Public/Private Partnership Committee

SUBJECT: Maryland Soccer Foundation, Inc. – SoccerPlex 2008 - Annual Report

Staff Recommendation: General Discussion – No action is requested at this time.

(Please note: Confidential Maryland Soccer Foundation, Inc. financial information is contained in Attachment #1 and will not be distributed to the public at this time. An amended annual report will be available for the public in January 2008 when staff will request formal action on this report)

Background:

The Maryland Soccer Foundation, Inc. (MSF) has a forty year lease with the Commission to manage the SoccerPlex located in South Germantown Recreational Park in Germantown, Maryland. The SoccerPlex is a 162 acre soccer facility consisting of 22 soccer fields (21 outdoor fields, one championship tournament stadium field with 3,200 bleacher-type seats, which will be expanded to 5,600 seats with a temporary capacity of 1,000 additional seats by Spring of 2009), one indoor multi-purpose facility, and three (3) new, artificial turf fields with lights. The SoccerPlex is one of the Commission’s Public/Private Partnership projects and was originally developed in 2000 with a total initial project development cost of \$28,081,000 (\$17,110,000 in private funding and \$10,971,000 in public funding).

SoccerPlex Partnership Annual Reporting Requirements:

As part of the MSF’s amended lease agreement terms, and as part of the Commission’s recently adopted 2007 Public/Private Partnership policy guidelines, the MSF is required, on or before December 20 each year, to provide the Planning Board with an annual report consisting of an assessment of their: (a) programmatic benefits and services offered to the public during the year; (b) a financial statement describing their operating and capital budget expenditures, income, and reserve funding management during the year; (c) the identification of new initiatives; (d) their development of a new year business plan; (e) The Soccer Association of Montgomery County (SAM); and (f) Community Outreach and Events.

(a) Programmatic Benefits and Services Offered in 2008:

One of the most significant benefits and services offered at the SoccerPlex by the MSF was the development of three (3) synthetic turf fields. MSF built three lighted synthetic turf fields this year which provided a very positive revenue and product enhancement. MSF exceeded their projected net new revenue from these fields. These fields provided additional revenue from existing tournaments and enabled MSF to offer additional game slots for local soccer clubs to play their spring and fall league games at the SoccerPlex.

MSF discovered the fact that on a comparative analysis of usage and revenue generation on three grass fields versus three synthetic turf fields that the revenue generated from the turf fields is seven times that of the grass fields. The programmatic benefits of the synthetic turf fields can be used for more soccer game play (the primary use of the synthetic turf fields was for practice and training followed by "in-house leagues"). Although soccer was MSF's primary user group, they discovered that the synthetic turf fields attracted new patrons, including a youth flag football group, high school field hockey, and a premier national boy's lacrosse tournament.

(b) The MSF's Financial Condition:

During 2008, MSF did not experience any negative impacts from the downturn in the economy and is cautiously optimistic about 2009. Due to the confidential nature of the MSF's financial records, no detailed assessment will be made by staff in this report.

The Commission's Secretary-Treasurer will provide a report at the Board meeting and summarize the 2008 FY findings.

(c) New Initiatives:

New Indoor Field Configuration:

MSF's existing indoor turf, which they have been using since its initial installation in 2000, is now worn and peaking and in need of replacement. MSF is planning on replacing the indoor turf for the 2008/2009 winter season. Because MSF needed to change the artificial turf, they thought they would take advantage of this opportunity to also reconfigure the fields as well. The new configuration has two large fields (200' X 85') surrounded by 30' high nets. The new fields are open without out of bounds lines and will be used for soccer, lacrosse, futsal, and field hockey. The new configuration is more realistically aligned with the outdoor fields.

Marketing:

MSF will be significantly increasing their marketing expenditures in 2009 in order to move more aggressively to promote their new programs and activities such as SAM, basketball, camps and player development programs. MSF has found that direct mail

supported by some level of newspaper advertising in the Gazette and email communication is the most effective.

Washington Freedom:

The Washington Freedom of the Women's Professional Soccer League will play all of their home game matches at the SoccerPlex Stadium beginning April 2009. MSF expects Washington Freedom to play seven home matches and a few pre-season matches. The team's offices are located inside the Discovery Sports Center.

Lacrosse:

The SoccerPlex was host to two girls lacrosse tournaments that attracted between 165 and 170 teams each. Both events were first year events and they were very well received. So far each tournament has more teams registered right now than played in the tournament last year; and the tournaments are eight months away. As a direct result of this year's success, MSF has received multiple requests for additional lacrosse events. The SoccerPlex has quickly become a premier venue for lacrosse. MSF generated \$125,000 in net new revenue from the two events.

(d) Strategic Business Culture Change:

During the first five (5) years of the SoccerPlex operations, they were a facilities operations driven organization. They concentrated on field maintenance, indoor operations, cost control and staying very lean. Since 2006, MSF has tried to focus more on program development and revenue generation during the year. They brought on a Sales Manager to maximize the use of the turf sales, a Director of Programs Development to evaluate current programs such as SAM and develop strategies to increase growth, and most recently a Basketball Program Coordinator who will develop in-house basketball leagues.

(e) The Soccer Association of Montgomery County (SAM):

SAM is the MSF's in-house soccer club and has become the fourth largest youth recreation level soccer program in the State of Maryland. SAM currently has 1,400 registered players. Although SAM's 3-4 year old program is declining in numbers, the 5-6 year old and recreation league players has steadily grown.

MSF has reviewed their curriculum, evaluated instructors, and surveyed their customers base. Both the program and the instructors were viewed positively. MSF plans to work with the parents of three and four year olds who want their children to learn multiple sports. MSF is planning to develop new recreation programs and/or partner with others to offer t-ball and basketball and to try to retain those children in MSF's other or new programs.

Community Outreach & Events:

Each year MSF supports and participates in a wide variety of community involvement activities. While MSF's list is contained in their annual report (see copy attached), a few highlights of their activities are as follows:

Sponsor of the Kicks Against Breast Cancer Inter-Collegiate Women's Soccer Tournament held at the SoccerPlex annually. This event raises money for breast cancer research and treatment;

Assisted in organizing and providing field facilities for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs to host a soccer clinic for women and youth soccer groups from Jordan, the West Bank, and Morocco and provided a tour and overview of the facility for the Afghan delegation;

In partnership with the State's Attorney for Montgomery County, the Montgomery County Department of Recreation and Montgomery County Police Department hosted a soccer tournament for at-risk kids from Silver Spring, Wheaton, and Takoma Park; and

In 2008, the MSF provided scholarships and grants totaling \$73,000.

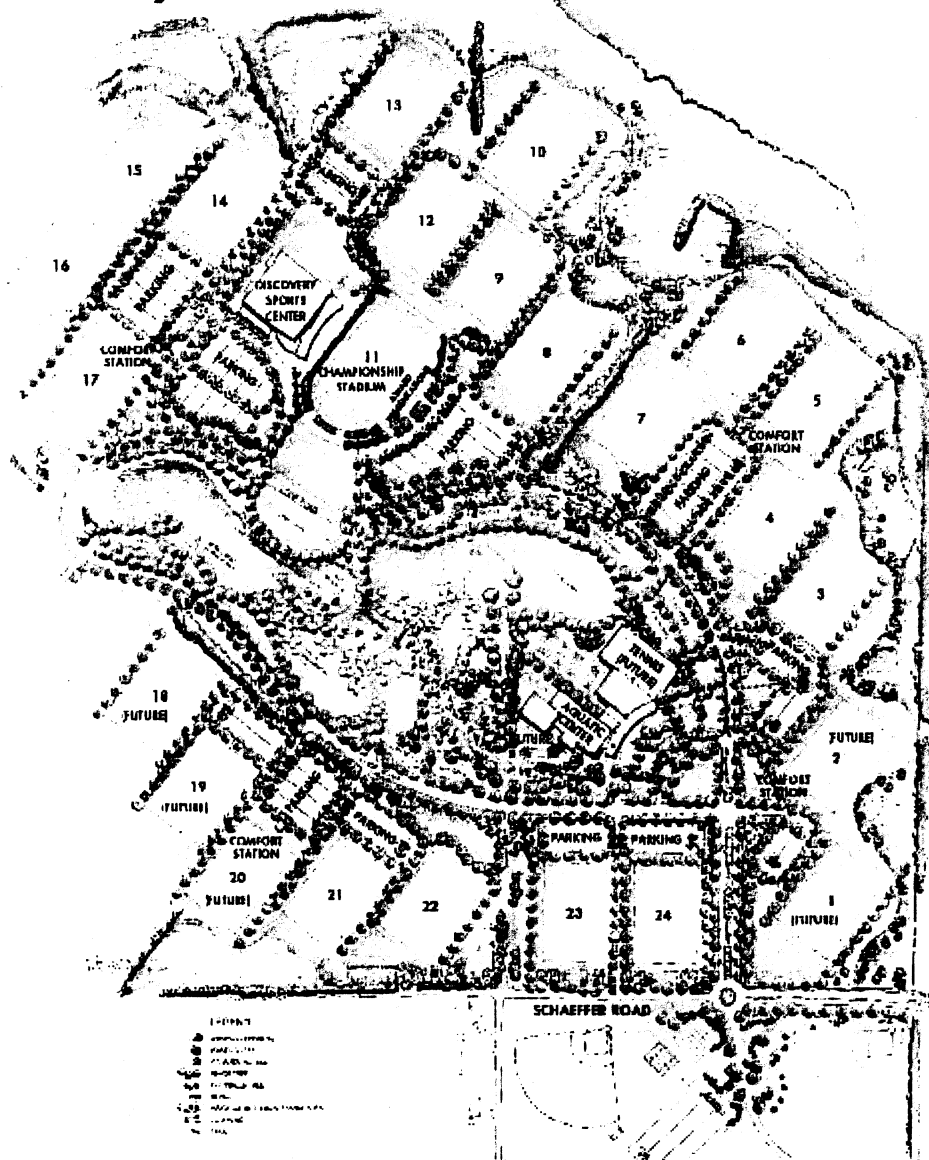
See the Maryland Soccer Foundation Year End Reports 2008 Attached for more details on their annual report.



Maryland SoccerPlex and Central Park

Expanded View

Maryland SoccerPlex and Central Park



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Executive Summary FY 2008 and 2009

2008 was a year of positive growth that included:

- **Significant utilization of the three synthetic turf fields**
- **Two new national girls lacrosse tournaments**
- **Replacement of indoor turf**
- **Washington Freedom**
- **Strategic change in culture – additional staff**
- **SAM**

Synthetic Turf Fields

The development of three synthetic turf fields proved to be a very positive revenue and product enhancement for the SoccerPlex. We exceeded our projected net new revenue from the fields and the overall response to the quality and playability of the fields was very enthusiastic. Although soccer was our primary user group, we did attract new patrons including a youth flag football group, high school field hockey, and a premier national boy's lacrosse tournament.

The primary use of the fields was for practice and training followed by "in-house" leagues. In addition the fields provided additional revenue from existing tournaments and enabled us to offer additional game slots for local soccer clubs to play their spring and fall league games at the SoccerPlex. Two of our existing affiliate clubs, Damascus and DC Stoddert, requested an increase in the number of allocated games for their spring and fall seasons.

A comparative analysis of usage and revenue generation on three grass fields vs three synthetic turf fields shows that the revenue generated from the turf fields is seven times that on the grass fields.

Utilization of the three turf fields during peak time (4:30-8:30 p.m. Monday-Friday) was highest in the months of April and May (73% and 70%, respectively). The goal in 2009 is to retain the utilization from 2008 and fill a significant portion of the unused capacity in 2009.

Lacrosse

The SoccerPlex was host to two girl's lacrosse tournaments that attracted between 165 and 170 teams each. Both events were first year events and they were very well-received. So far each tournament has more teams registered right now than played in the tournament last year. And the tournaments are eight months away. Amazing! As a result we have received multiple requests for additional lacrosse events. At this time we will only play boys lacrosse on the turf fields so that limits our options. The "SoccerPlex" has quickly become a premier venue for lacrosse. We generated \$125,000 in net new revenue from the two events.

Indoor Field Configuration

Our existing indoor turf that we had since we opened in 2000 was worn and peaking at the seams. Since we knew we would replace it for the 2008/2009 winter season we decided to explore a different configuration of the indoor space. We have used a "dasher board" system – basically two indoor hockey rinks that were costly to set up and take down and did not provide a good off season training experience but kids loved them!

The new configuration has two large fields (200' x 85") surrounded by 30' high nets. The fields are open with out of bounds lines and will be used for soccer, lacrosse, futsal and field hockey. Because this configuration more closely mirrors the outdoor soccer experience, the initial reaction is positive.

Operation and maintenance of the new system is much easier and less costly.

Funding for the turf and nets came from the capital improvement reserve fund.

Washington Freedom

The Washington Freedom of the Women's Professional Soccer league will play all of their home matches at the SoccerPlex stadium beginning in April 2009. It is expected that they will play seven (7) home matches and a few pre-season matches. The team's offices are inside the Discovery Sports Center.

Strategic Culture Change

During the first five years of the SoccerPlex we were an operations driven organization. We concentrated on field maintenance, indoor operations, cost control and staying very lean. Since 2006 we have tried to concentrate on program development and revenue generation. We recognize we can not grow by cutting costs. In the last year we have brought on a Sales Manager to maximize use of the turf fields, a Director of Program Development to evaluate current programs such as SAM and develop strategies to increase growth; and most recently a Basketball Program Coordinator who will develop in house basketball leagues, tournaments and camps.

We have been successful meeting the demand that comes through our doors now we have to create demand in order to grow to the next level.

SAM

The Soccer Association of Montgomery, SAM, our in-house soccer club in two short years has become the fourth largest youth recreation-level soccer program in the state of Maryland. SAM currently has 1,400 registered players. Although the 3-4 year old program is declining in numbers, the 5-6 year old and recreation league has steadily grown. We have reviewed the curriculum, evaluated instructors and surveyed our customer base. The program and instructors are viewed positively. It may be that parents of the 3 & 4 year olds want their children to learn multiple sports. Therefore it is our plan to develop programs or partner with others to offer t-ball and basketball to retain those children in our programs.

Marketing

We significantly increased our marketing expenditure in 2009 to more aggressively promote new programs and activities such as SAM, basketball, camps and player development programs. We have found that direct mail supported by some level of newspaper advertising in the Gazette and email communication is the most effective. Now that we have the staff in place to sell the programs we have to support them with the tools to be successful.

Competition

The Rockville SportsPlex continues to compete with us during the winter indoor season but since we continue to have waiting lists for our indoor leagues and training time we have never been concerned. The new entry into the market is the Champions Field House which is adjacent to the Rockville SportsPlex. It just opened, is brand spanking new and the owner is our partner on one of our girl's lacrosse tournaments. In other words we are friendly competitors. The good news is each facility has its attributes and each is different from the other. The benefit is to the community that now has a choice of three high quality indoor facilities.

Economy

In 2008 we didn't experience any negative impact from the downturn in the economy. I am cautiously optimistic about 2009. The conventional wisdom is that parents find a way to pay for their children's sporting activities and that sports have consistently been a welcome diversion from the daily bad news. This is something we will monitor closely during the early months of the year.

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Community Involvement Activities

Affiliations

Trish Heffelfinger, Executive Director is involved in the following community organizations and activities:

- Board Secretary, Germantown Alliance, a community organization that is comprised of citizens, businesses and organizations whose mission is to and support community based programs in Germantown.
- Member, Germantown Gaithersburg Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Task Force
- Member, Germantown Youth Initiative
- Member, Germantown Leadership Council developed by Councilman Mike Knapp.
- Member, Germantown Health Care Alliance organized by Shady Grove Adventist Health Care
- Board Member, Montgomery County Conference and Visitors Bureau
- Participant, Leadership Montgomery class of 2007/2008.
- Speaker at the Seneca Valley HS career day program and internship program.
- Steering Committee member, Sports Council of Montgomery County
- Member, Maryland State Youth Soccer Association
- Member, National Soccer Coaches Association of America (NSCAA)
- Member, US Youth Soccer Association

Activities/Events

- Sponsor of the Kicks Against Breast Cancer Inter-Collegiate Women's Soccer Tournament held at the SoccerPlex annually that raises money for breast cancer research and treatment.
- Sponsor of the Julie Nagel Memorial Field Hockey tournament to be held at the SoccerPlex annually in August. Julie was a student at Wootton High School and died in a car accident while away at college.
- Sponsor of SportsPlus soccer program for children with autism.
- The Discovery Sports Center is a registered county emergency shelter.
- Assisted in organizing and providing field facilities for the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs to host a soccer clinic for women and youth soccer groups from Jordan, the West Bank and Morocco and provide a tour and overview of the facility for the Afghan delegation.

- In partnership with the State's Attorney for Montgomery County, the Montgomery Department of Recreation and Montgomery County Police Department hosted a soccer tournament for at risk kids from Silver Spring, Wheaton and Takoma Park.
- In partnership with Montgomery County Recreation Dept. and South Germantown Park, hosted the up county July 4th Germantown Glory celebration including a free soccer clinic provided by DC United and Washington Freedom.
- Provide facility space at no fee for soccer coach continuing education and licensing classes, referee licensing classes and local community organizations.

Scholarships

In 2008, the Foundation provided scholarships and grants totaling \$73,000.

In addition to the Sports Plus programs described above, the Foundation provided grants/scholarships for registration in the Discovery Sports Center Multi-Sport Summer Camp, the Steve Blake basketball Camp, the And1 Basketball Camp, One on One basketball clinics, and in the Soccer Association of Montgomery (SAM) prekicks and recreation league.

See attached list of scholarships/donated space.

5% Allocation

The lease requires MSF to allocate 5% of games for soccer teams and organizations in Montgomery County that are unable to make long term commitments for use of SoccerPlex fields.

The following groups, teams or organizations were provided games during 2008: Maryland State Youth Soccer for State Cup finals, Jewish Day School, University of the District of Columbia, Quince Orchard High School Field Hockey team, Calverton Cosmos, Afghan Soccer Association, Sudanese Soccer Association, LAB School of Washington, Washington International School, Poolesville High School Boys Soccer Team.

Due to the absence of public transportation to the SoccerPlex, the ability to attract teams from areas such as Long Branch, Takoma Park and Wheaton continues to be challenging. We continue to support any request for field space that we receive from groups who can not make long term commitments.



United States Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20547

www.state.gov

February 26, 2008

Trish Heffelfinger
Executive Director
Maryland Soccer Plex
18031 Central Park Circle
Boys, MD 20841

Dear Ms. Heffelfinger:

On behalf of the United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), I would like to thank you for organizing the program for the King Abdullah II Awards for Physical Fitness Visitors Program at the Soccer Plex on January 26, 2008. The Jordanian students and professionals considered it the highlight of the ten-day program. It was a remarkable experience and we greatly appreciate your efforts in organizing the program.

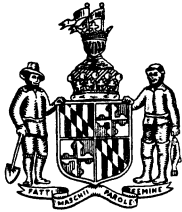
The purpose of ECA's International Sports Programming Initiative is to work at the grass roots level to aid non-elite youth and coaches in discovering how success in athletics can be translated into the development of life skills and achievement in the classroom, and to spread America's message of international understanding, cultural tolerance and mutual respect. In addition, the Initiative provides the foreign participant an opportunity to establish linkages with U.S. sports professionals and exposure to American life and culture through workshops and exchanges assisted by institutions like yours. Your assistance with our program for the Jordanian Delegation was helpful in advancing the purpose of their visit.

We are fortunate to have had the opportunity to include the program at Soccer Plex in our Sports Visitors program. Our participants appreciated your hospitality and we are happy that you could fit us into your busy schedule.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nina Bishop".

Nina Bishop
Director of International Sports Initiatives
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs



STATE'S ATTORNEY
JOHN J. MCCARTHY

State's Attorney for Montgomery County

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Rockville, Maryland 20850

(240) 777-7300

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www.communityprosecution.org

July 29, 2008

DEPUTY STATE'S ATTORNEYS

LAURA CHASE

JOHN M. MALONEY

Trish Heffelfinger
Maryland Soccerplex
18031 Central Park Circle
Boyd's, Maryland 20841

Dear Ms. Heffelfinger:

On June 12th and 13th, 60 soccer players from Silver Spring, Wheaton and Takoma Park, participated in a soccer tournament at the Soccerplex located in Germantown. The tournament was sponsored by the Office of the State's Attorney, Montgomery County Police Department, Montgomery County Recreation Department, Weed and Seed, and the CSAFE grant. These agencies (with the exception of the Recreation Department), focus on proactive crime prevention as well as law enforcement. The soccer players were targeted through these agencies and grants, and were chosen because they are from communities able to take advantage of such facilities as the Soccerplex.

The Soccerplex donated the use of two fields and two basketball courts. The normal cost of using these facilities is over \$2000.00. Due to the generosity of the Soccerplex, soccer players who had never been as far north as Germantown were given the opportunity to play on the professionally maintained fields.

The Montgomery County Department of Recreation underwrote the transportation from five different schools. The Recreation Department also provided water, tents and staff. This endeavor would not have been possible without the expertise of the Recreation Department.

Volunteers came from the police department, local high schools, and the targeted neighborhoods. They gave freely of their time for two full days. The volunteers were all either skilled soccer players or certified soccer referees. Their enthusiasm was contagious, and they organized hours of drills, and 10 soccer games. Commanders Johnson and Demme allowed their officers to come to the soccer fields in lieu of their normal duties.

Dick's Sporting Goods granted the program a steep discount allowing the soccer players to have knapsacks and treats. Westfield Mall donated water bottles, allowing the players to refill their bottles constantly in an environmentally sound manner. Subway donated food for the staff.

Trish Helffelfinger
Page Two

Since the volunteers were on the field all day supervising the soccer players, they relied on the food provided. Montgomery County Public Schools provided lunch for all the players allowing money to be diverted to other needs.

The result of this good will was an amazing two days for the soccer players to compete and learn with players they had never met and volunteers who love soccer with a passion. They came from neighborhoods specifically targeted by federal, state and local government as areas in need of support. Most importantly was the opportunity for the soccer players to see the police cruisers and the officers as a source of help, guidance and support.

If you wish to see photographs of the event, please take a moment and visit the website at <http://web.mac.com/maura62> and, you can read about the Tournament in the Wheaton Gazette, June 18th, 2008.

Thank you, on behalf of the players, for giving of your time and resources to allow this event to happen.

Sincerely,

John McCarthy
State's Attorney for
Montgomery County, Maryland

By: Maura L. Lynch
Maura L. Lynch *ML*
Assistant State's Attorney

cc: Laura Chase, Deputy State's Attorney
George Simms, Community Prosecution

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Wednesday, June 18, 2008

The goal of this program is to keep youngsters engaged

'School's Out Soccer Tournament' provides safe haven and fun for youngsters in need of summer activities
 by Jason Tomassini | Staff Writer
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With students in need of summer activities, county agencies banded together last week to provide a two-day "School's Out Soccer Tournament" for middle-schoolers in Wheaton, Silver Spring and Takoma Park.

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 - Monarchs coming to end of volatile inaugural year
 - Sykesville festival for children of all ages

The event provided about 60 boys and girls with a half-day soccer skills workshop on Thursday, after Montgomery County Public Schools were dismissed. A full-day tournament followed Friday at the Maryland SoccerPlex at South Germantown Recreational Park in Boyds.

Students came from schools including Argyle Middle School, A. Mario Loiederman Middle School, Parkland Middle School, Newport Mill Middle School and others. Teens from Broad Acres, Long Branch, Langley Park and Takoma Park also were involved.

The idea for the tournament came from Montgomery County State's Attorney John McCarthy and Assistant State's Attorney Maura Lynch, who meet regularly with the Corridor Supervision and Focused Enforcement (C-SAFE) branch of Wheaton, which serves at-risk youth in the Bel Pre Road and Hewitt Avenue area.

The tournament was also part of Excel Beyond the Bell, County Executive Isiah Leggett's youth initiative that provides after school and summer programs to at-risk youth. Lynch said the event was staffed exclusively by volunteers, and she hopes it can serve as an example for future events to be successful with a limited budget.

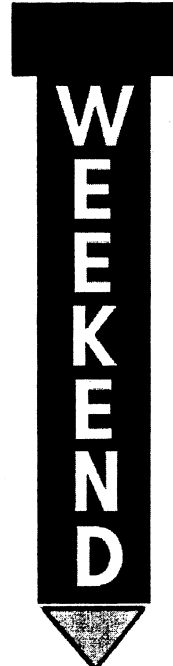
"Our goal is provide activities for days where there are no camps," she said. "We are hoping to try to use this as a pilot program and set up more events this year."

The Mid-County Regional Services Center donated T-shirts for the players and referees, Third and Fourth District Police served as volunteer referees and coaches and the county's recreation department paid for transportation. Food was provided by MCPS and Dick's Sporting Goods provided discounts on soccer gear.

"The kids had a great time," said Susan Johnson, co-leader of C-SAFE in Wheaton. "We were trying to show it's possible to do these things with a whole lot of people working together."

Lynch said Thursday served as a skills assessment and instruction period so equal teams would be set for Friday's tournament, which included 10 games on two fields and co-ed teams. Johnson said events like the soccer tournament are important for youth now that school is out and children are left unattended more often.

"For many of them, the parents are not around and especially in the area of Bel Pre Road, we do have some crime issues," she said. "We want to try to get kids involved in more positive activities."



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