



Wee Play Community Project

www.weeplayproject.org

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Gearing up for Ree Play 2007

At the Ree Play 2006 Post Mortem meeting back in May 2006, the committee decided to make Ree Play a new Beacon tradition and go for a third year. We will be announcing an organizational meeting soon, to take place sometime in late January, during the evening hours. For those of you not familiar with Ree Play, it is a huge one-day tag sale of gently used children's items to benefit the Wee Play Community Project, held in late April or early May. We receive donations from generous folks all over the area, and with good weather and the help of many volunteers and our friends at the American Legion, we have had great success in providing a valuable service to young families in Beacon who need these kinds of items at bargain prices, not to mention raising a little bit of money for the playground. Proceeds will go towards the Wee Play Children's Garden, and costs for a shade structure above and beyond any grants we may receive.

"To teach real peace in this world, we shall have to begin with children." -- Mahatma Gandhi

"Come & Play" with us at the Library Thursdays from 10:30 am – 12 noon.

"Come & Play," a joint effort between the Howland Public Library and the Wee Play Community Project, has been a great success! During the winter months join us in the Community Room from 10:30 to noon as it transforms into a large playroom where moms and kids can meet to play and socialize. The purpose is to provide a fun destination during cold weather for active play. Come & Play is open to all babies, toddlers, and young children accompanied by an adult. There is no cost, although a donation of \$1.00 is suggested. All donations received will be shared 50/50 with the library and used to purchase playthings for "Come & Play." There is no registration required--come and go as you please. "Come & Play" is intended to be an open play date and doesn't have activities planned. As the group evolves, more structured play dates may be in the future--or maybe it will just be fun to have a place to run around like a three-year old! Having a place to go and meet friends is a great place to start.

Phase II Update

The Plan: The reconfiguration of the sandbox made it necessary to literally go back to the drawing board, with the guidance of landscape architect and Wee Play volunteer, **Meg Rasmussen**. All of the original components are still there, with the addition of two trees and a better plan for the stepping stones. The final plan will continue to be refined throughout the winter, and will be presented in our next newsletter.

Children's Garden: To facilitate grading and preparing the site in late November, **Zep Thomaselli and the Highway Department crew** removed a portion of the fence. This was also done to allow access for planting trees, shrubs and flowers, installing stepping stones, "climbing" rocks and for moving the benches – all tasks that will now occur in the spring. We are now in the process of soliciting donations of straw and hay bales to create a cozy wall approximately 3 feet high that should last throughout the winter and spring, and keep our kids safely within the perimeter of the playground. Thanks to **Adam's Fairacre Farms** and **Katy Bell** at **Mountaintops** in Beacon for their generous donations of 10 bales each.

Shade A temporary awning was erected over the sandbox in October; it actually worked and looked quite nice – until the winds of November came early. We'll try it again in the spring. We will also be planting four trees in the garden, and applying for a grant toward a permanent shade structure..

Sandbox: Isn't it great? The plan going forward is to install two benches around the perimeter. It is the most popular spot in the playground, after all! One caveat – it would be nice if we could keep the sand in the sandbox. A nearly impossible task, but the sand doesn't mix well with the PlayBounce surface. Just something to think about next time you see your or someone else's three year old piling sand in the middle of the play surface. Our grateful thanks to **Mark Pessoni** for donating his time and energy shop-vacuuming wet sand on that last warm day.

The Last Word:

O Come All Ye Playful!

However you celebrate the season, the warmest of wishes to you and your families. We are looking forward to 2007 and to all of the possibilities we have to connect with each other and make a difference in our community.

Peace



Thank-you to everyone who donated their gently used toys for the playground and to those who participated in our impromptu fall clean-up!