

## HUMAN SERVICES

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### ADMINISTRATION

The mission of the Department of Human Services is both to provide a safety net for Arlington citizens experiencing difficulties in their lives and needing help with those difficulties and also to promote the health and well being of Arlington citizens.

To fulfill that mission, the department is comprised of six divisions, including ADA Office, Board of Health, Council on Aging, Housing Program, Recreation, Veterans' Services, and Youth Services

Each division manages several programs with their offices, as follows:

- \*The ADA Office (American with Disabilities Act) - co-located with the Housing and Weatherization Office- includes the ADA Compliance Program and the Community Education Program on Disabilities.
- \*Board of Health Division includes the Sealer of Weights and Measures, the Public Health Nurse, the Health Inspections Program.
- \*The Council on Aging Division includes the Dial-a-Ride Transportation Program and the Van Transportation Program, the Health Clinics Program, the Grandparents' Support Program, the Caregivers' Support Program, and the Nursing Student Training Program.
- \*The Housing Program includes the Affordable Housing Program, the Emergency Housing Program, and the Weatherization/Low-Interest Loan Program.
- \*The Recreation Division includes the Recreation Department, the Sports Center Memorial Rink, the Field Permit Program, the Field and Playground Improvement Program.

- \*The Veterans' Services Division includes the Veterans' Aid and Assistance Program, the Veterans' Referral and Information Program, the Flags on Graves Program, and the Veterans Parade and Memorial Programs.
- \*The Youth Services Division includes the Arlington Youth Consultation Center-a community mental health center for children, adolescents, and families-, the Clinical Training Program for graduate students, the Sand Therapy Program, the Outward Bound Program, the Domestic Violence Prevention and Support Program, the Grandparents Support Program, the Child Assault Prevention Program, and the Alcohol and Drug Education Program.

In support of these divisions in Human Services there are six boards and commissions representing the various constituencies of the community. Members of these volunteer groups are appointed by the Town Manager and approved by the Selectmen. One exception to this appointment procedure is the Human Rights Commission, which has three appointing authorities – the Town Manager, the School Committee, and the Town Moderator. The seven boards and commission in the Department of Human Services are the following:

Board of Health  
Board of Youth Services  
Council on Aging  
Disability Commission  
Human Rights Commission  
Parks & Recreation Commission

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## The Many Faces of Human Services



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### ARLINGTON YOUTH CONSULTATION CENTER

The Arlington Youth Consultation Center (AYCC) continued its therapy services, referral services, and psychopharmacological services to Arlington children, adolescents, and families in 2005. Approximately 404 people were helped in 2005.

In 2005, AYCC began an exciting new initiative with the Arlington schools. AYCC was asked to provide a significant portion of special education counseling services for all the public schools. A cadre of seven graduate interns, plus the in-house counseling staff, has been running social skills groups, expressive therapy groups, and offering individual and family counseling to eighty-one students in the schools.

In addition to these special education services provided to all schools, AYCC instituted on a pilot basis a counseling program at the Brackett Elementary School. One graduate intern was deployed at the Brackett to provide school adjustment counseling to students and families, on a case-needed basis. The graduate student has provided social pragmatic groups to students, individual counseling for students, consultation to parents, and consultation to teachers in this role. The program has worked quite well this year. The hope is to expand the program to other schools in the future.

In the fall of 2005 the Eighth annual sand tray therapy conference was held at AYCC. Approximately fifty clinicians from the New England area attended this event. Gisela DeDominico, a world-renowned trainer and clinician in sand tray therapy, was the featured speak for the event. The second day of the conference featured an all-day workshop on the techniques of expressive therapy.

AYCC trained a total of eleven graduate students in 2005. They were enrolled in graduate programs from Salem State School of Social Work, Boston University School of Social Work, Lesley College Masters in Counseling Program, Northeastern Masters in Counseling Program, and Boston College Masters in Counseling Program. They represented a total of 2376 hours of in-kind service to the Town of Arlington.

### BOARD OF YOUTH SERVICES

The Board of Youth Services continued its service to Arlington in 2005, overseeing the functions of the Arlington Youth Consultation Center and the functions of the Alcohol and Drug Education Program and extending its support to other youth-serving programs in Arlington.

The members of the Board are appointed by the Town Manager, with approval from the Selectmen.

The nine-member Board meets monthly during the academic year.

All the members of the Board do much networking within the town to enhance the services offered to youth and families. For example, two members of the Board are volunteer leaders of the support groups offered for women who are victims of domestic violence. Six members of the board volunteer as CAPP volunteers, offering the Child Assault Prevention Program to all first and third graders in the Arlington school system. One member cross-coordinates with the St. Agnes St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Arlington Food Pantry, the Arlington Employees Credit Union, and St. Agnes Church to provide monetary food support to residents and to AYCC clients in need of help. Two members coordinate with health care systems in the area, one of which has resulted in employment in those systems for AYCC clients. Four of the members represent direct cross-collaboration with the Arlington school system, furthering our close working relationship with the Arlington schools. One member coordinates with Arlington's Affordable Housing Program and with one of the churches in the area to enhance our connection to the housing programs in Arlington. And one member coordinates with Arlington's Emergency Housing Program.

These networking efforts of the Board's members were focused on a new initiative in the fall of 2005. The Board learned that there was great concern over home heating expenses for Arlington residents for the winter of 2005-2006. Hurricane Katrina devastated the oil and gas supply coming from the Gulf Coast. Heating oil and natural gas prices were expected to skyrocket and in Arlington the Fuel Assistance Program dollars were almost depleted by the end of October 2005, barely one-quarter into the new fiscal year. To address this crisis, the Board of Youth Services mounted a community fundraising effort and established the Arlington Emergency Fuel Assistance Program. At the end of the calendar year, \$55,000 had been raised! This money will be used to help people with their heating bills during this winter and early spring.

Arlington's "Community of Caring" succeeded again.

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## COUNCIL ON AGING

The Council on Aging (COA) provides advocacy and support services to help Arlington elders live dignified and independent lives. The agency's primary responsibilities are to identify the needs of the community's elder population, to design, promote, and implement services to address those needs, and to coordinate existing services in the community.

The Council on Aging was busy in 2005. The COA staff, in addition to their regularly assigned duties, absorbed the functions and responsibilities of the Information & Referral Worker through most of the year, until that position was finally filled in October. With municipal support, the Social Worker position was reinstated to full-time status. The agency's student interns (nursing students from the University of Massachusetts School of Nursing; and a social work graduate student from Salem State College Graduate School of Social Work; a pastoral counseling intern from Andover Newton Theological School) provided many hours of direct client care under the oversight of their COA supervisors. Council on Aging volunteers, their ranks growing each year, gave thousands of hours of service to the Town's seniors through the agency.

Health & Wellness programs have been much in demand. The number of elderly, as a percentage of the overall population, continues to grow. As people live longer, more are becoming frail and homebound and require more monitoring and complex services than in the past. The COA's podiatry clinic increased its service potential by adding a fourth podiatrist to the monthly clinic and now serves 80+ seniors each month. The *Sevoyan Personal Needs Pilot Program* came into being as another available resource, and the success of the *Sevoyan Dental Assistance Pilot Program* last year allowed this effort to now be converted to a permanent COA program. The Title III grant from Minuteman Senior Services supporting the *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Support Group* was awarded for another year. Closer stewardship of the *Sanborn Transportation Subsidy Fund* fostered improved utilization of this valuable resource for cancer victims and their families. The grant from Lahey Clinic to introduce seniors to the benefits of regular exercise allowed for the creation of a new, three-part program: *Aquacise*, in cooperation with the Arlington Boys & Girls Club; *T'ai Chi*, at the Fox Community Center; and *Walk the Rink*, to be started at the Veterans Memorial Rink in the spring of 2006. Information, outreach, referral, and social services remain highly sought after. Much of the demand is now being addressed since the Social Worker position was returned to full-time status and the Information & Referral position was filled.

One of the most in-demand of all COA services is that of transportation. Through the agency's lift-

equipped vans and the subsidized taxi program, approximately 10,000 one-way rides were provided to Arlington's elderly and disabled. Transport to and from the Senior Center's social, nutrition, and health & wellness programs predominated. With the closing of the doctor's offices at Symmes, and the Lahey Broadway offices months away from completion, the COA, in cooperation with the Arlington Housing Authority, developed a subsidized transportation program for seniors going to doctor's appointments at Lahey-Burlington and Lahey-Wall Street. The Dial-a-Ride client fee was raised in February. This was a reflection of increased program costs, such as fuel, maintenance and repair of the vans, salary increases, and dial-a-Ride contract costs. While the agency continues to receive funding through the Community Development Block Grant Program, such funding was reduced for this fiscal year, particularly in the area of transportation support.

The agency's cable television show, "Golden Opportunities", recruited additional volunteers and is setting plans for an expanded format. A Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was held in April for more than one hundred senior center volunteers. A four-part, eight-hour orientation was provided for COA board members during the summer.

### **Major Accomplishments For 2005**

- In February, the COA acquired a new ten-passenger lift-equipped van to replace an aging older unit.
- The critical position of Social worker was reinstated to full time in July, having experienced a reduction in hours for the past two years.
- The position of Information & Referral Worker, open for much of the year, was staffed in August.
- Saw increased expansion and delivery of client services through volunteers as the number of COA volunteers continues to grow.
- Revised participation guidelines and closer stewardship of the COA Sanborn Transportation Subsidy Fund allowed more efficient use of these grant funds in 2005.
- Increased the number of volunteers by more than twenty, exceeding last year's goal.
- A grant application to fund the purchase of books was written by a COA volunteer and presented to the Arlington Cultural Council, through the Intergenerational Book Club and in conjunction with Arlington High School. The grant application was approved.
- Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner (combined with the Senior Association): held a sit-down meal for 107 people, raised a total of \$2,060 in cash donations from various local and outside donors and businesses, as well

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as \$445 in gift certificates from Arlington businesses. The Arlington High School Interact Club provided students who served the dinner - this was an outgrowth of the Intergenerational Task Force.

- On Thanksgiving morning, delivered 120 Thanksgiving dinners to Arlington frail and homebound elders. The dinners were assembled by twenty-six volunteers at the senior center, delivered by twenty-three drivers, and paid for by the Retired Men's Club of Arlington.

### **Fy 2007 Objectives**

- Continue to expand the involvement and community impact of the agency's volunteers and graduate student interns.
- Complete a critical review of the community's needs in regard to the agency's transportation programs, and adjust such COA services to meet these needs in line with the resources available.
- Develop a broad-based public-outreach program for the agency
- Continue to investigate and secure funding for critical programs that are not municipally supported.
- The COA is to pursue coordination with the 3 other Senior Center agencies (the Seniors Association, the Minuteman Senior Services meal site, and Cooperative Elder Services, Inc.) to form a Task Force on Outreach for the Senior Center.
- Obtain a new lift-equipped van to replace an aging older unit near the end of its service life.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE**

The Affordable Housing Task Force (AHTF) was established by unanimous vote of Town Meeting on May 3, 1999. The purpose was to quantify the need for affordable housing in Arlington, and find solutions that work. An important part of the Task Force's work is to help the Town move closer to fulfilling the statewide goal that 10% of the units in all municipalities be affordable to low and moderate income households.

During this past year, two important events occurred that will add to the Town's Inventory of Affordable Housing. Four affordable condominiums were purchased by low and moderate income Arlington residents at 264 Massachusetts Avenue, a new building with twenty-seven units. These units were made affordable as a result of the Town's Affordable Housing Zoning Bylaw, which requires that 15% of all new development with more than six units be sold to low or moderate income households

(earning less than 80% of median income for the area). Among the purchasers was an Arlington Public School teacher. The Affordable Housing Task Force developed the marketing plan for these units, and oversaw the administration of the lottery to choose buyers from a pool of eighty-five low and moderate income households.

Also during the past year, the Symmes Redevelopment Project received its permits to go forward. That site will be the future home of 232 units of housing. Thirty-five units will be affordable to low and moderate income households (below 80% of median income) and an additional twelve units will be designated for purchase by middle income households (earning between 80% and 120% of median income). The Affordable Housing Task Force voted to request the Arlington Redevelopment Board to designate six of the Middle Income Units, and six of the Low and Moderate Income units for Town employees. The Task Force voted this policy in order to help those who serve the Town to be able to live in the Town. With the median house price in 2005 approaching \$500,000 in Arlington, it takes a household income of well over \$100,000 to afford to purchase a first home here.

The past year saw a number of changes to the make-up of the Affordable Housing Task Force. Leaving the Task Force this year was its former Chair and founding member Charles Lyons. Mr. Lyons was the driving force behind the creation of the Affordable Housing Task Force, and an important leader in keeping affordable housing high on the Town's agenda. The Task Force lost another important advocate when Nora Mann resigned. Ms. Mann also was a leader and strong voice in support of affordable housing in Arlington. Lastly, Brigid Kennedy-Pfister resigned from the Board after a year of service. The Task Force thanks these former members for their leadership and service, and welcomes two new members—Selectmen Jack Hurd, and David Levy, Executive Director of the Housing Corporation of Arlington.

### **ARLINGTON HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

The Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) was created by Town Meeting in 1993 to advance issues related to the fair and equal treatment of individuals and to create a mechanism for addressing complaints arising out of these issues. The mission of the AHRC is to work individually and collaboratively with other groups in our community to celebrate the ever-changing tapestry of our town and to emphasize, through educational outreach, the danger of intolerance at every level. The Town Manager, the School Committee, and the Town Moderator have

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appointing authority for thirteen members of the Commission.

The AHRC began the year by electing Bill Shea as chairperson. Nick Minton was elected to serve as vice chair.

Early in the year, a survey was distributed along with the Town Census. The AHRC is pleased with the response of so many citizens and will continue to work with the many suggestions and issues they raised. The AHRC also contributed to the town's Martin Luther King Birthday Celebration. The AHRC continued its *Arlington Dialogue* series this year by hosting three events:

In March, the Commission hosted a community dialogue on Special Education needs of our students. In April, author Janis Kearney discussed her book, "*Cotton Field of Dreams*," which chronicled her childhood as one of 19 children raised by sharecroppers in Arkansas. In October, the Commission sponsored a dialogue on "Racial Profiling in a Post 9-11 World."

Throughout the year, the Commission received comments from citizens during public participation at its meetings. Several students attended the public participation sessions, including two students who spoke about the atmosphere for minorities at Arlington High School. Two other students came to seek help on a project to take place in 2006. At another public participation session, one resident spoke to the Commission about domestic violence and asked the Commission to address this issue in an upcoming dialogue.

In an effort to increase visibility and awareness, the AHRC once again staffed a booth at Town Day in September, distributing informational brochures and answering questions.

In response to a complaint filed in 2004 regarding treatment of disabled customers by restaurant employees, the Commission finalized a sensitivity flyer entitled "*An Introduction to Public Accommodations Law for Arlington Businesses*." It will be distributed to businesses and can be used as a job training tool to help employees have a better understanding of people with disabilities.

Throughout the year, the Commission received a number of complaints about racist graffiti appearing in Arlington. In November, senior analyst Chip Berlet of Political Research Associates met with AHRC and town officials to discuss concern over a number of recent graffiti incidents in the town. Mr. Berlet presented some possible tools to deal with this problem.

The AHRC continues to maintain records of hate crimes and incidents and work in cooperation with the Police Department in order to track the frequency and severity of such events in Arlington. In 2005, nine police reports were forwarded to the Commission as relevant to the Commission's jurisdiction. In the spring, the Commission met with Police Chief Fred Ryan to discuss racial profiling in traffic stops as reported in the Boston Globe.

In 2006, the AHRC will continue to focus its efforts on keeping Arlington a safe, welcoming community where all individuals are treated with warmth, mutual respect, and acceptance.

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### COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

In its twelfth year of service, the Arlington Commission on Disability continued to provide information, referral, guidance, and technical assistance to Arlington officials, residents, public and private agencies, and others to insure that people with physical, sensory, cognitive, and other disabilities have equal access to Town facilities, services and programs. The Commission consists of nine Commissioners, all volunteers. As mandated by State Law, the majority of Commissioners have a physical, cognitive or sensory disability. This mandate brings an intimate and informed understanding of disabilities to the Commission's agenda and ultimate decisions.

Coordination and implementation of the Commission's agenda and goals continues to be handled by Jack Jones of the Arlington Office of Housing and Disability Programs. Cooperation between the Commission and this Office is effective and efficient. The Commission continues to occupy office and meeting space in the Senior Center building at 20 Academy Street.

In 2005, the Commission in its efforts to improve sidewalk and crosswalk safety and accessibility expended \$61,508 Community Development Block Grant Funds that had been approved by the Board of Selectmen to install curb ramps along Massachusetts Avenue. The Commission continued in its efforts during 2005 to convince Town Officials about the problems created by using bricks on sidewalks. The Town has become responsive to the concerns regarding brick sidewalks and has begun to use other materials when constructing sidewalks and repairing brick sidewalks. Also during 2005 the Commission with the Chief of Police inserted a warrant article that was unanimously approved at the Annual Town Meeting, to empower the police to enter onto private property on which the public has a right of access as invitees and/or licensees to enforce handicapped parking violations.

The Commission and the Massachusetts Office on Disability in 2005 worked with the Dallin Elementary School Architects and Contractors to bring the Dallin Elementary School into compliance with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Boards Rules and Regulations and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act Architectural Design Standards. Also, after extensive meetings, accessibility issues at the Peirce Elementary School were resolved.

Educating the community regarding disabilities is an ongoing agenda item of the Commission. During 2005, the seventh annual Arlington Disability Commission newsletter was published in order to provide information about the Commission's projects and Disability Laws. In addition to the annual newsletter, the Commission has a bi-monthly column in the Arlington Advocate. In 2005, the Commission

participated in Town Day to acquaint the public with its role and to disseminate information about the Americans with Disabilities Act and accessible Town programs and facilities.

Coordination and sharing of information and ideas between the Arlington Commission on Disability, and Commissions from neighboring cities and towns is ongoing. In 2005, the Arlington Commission on Disability, in conjunction with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board and the Massachusetts Office on Disability, provided training for municipal engineers at the Town Hall on state and federal regulations pertaining to sidewalk and curb cut construction and renovation work. The Arlington Disability Office, in concert with the Commission, works to resolve citizens concerns and complaints. Follow-up is done through the Disability Office using available municipal offices and information.

The 2006 agenda for the Commission will continue to revolve around the very clear parameters of the Americans with Disabilities Act, with special attention being paid to improving the accessibility of Arlington sidewalks and school facilities. The Commission will also monitor plans as developed to reconstruct sidewalks and crosswalks in East Arlington along Massachusetts Avenue. In addition, the Commission will promote the principles of universal home design. The Commission will also work for stronger enforcement of snow removal from sidewalks and curb ramps.

The Commission meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 4:00 P.M. in the conference room of the Housing and Disability Program Office located in suite #203, at 20 Academy St., Arlington (the Senior Center Building). Meetings are open to the public and citizens are invited to attend to observe or voice their concerns.

### BOARD OF HEALTH

The Board of Health Office is located at 27 Maple Street in the Arlington Multipurpose Senior Center, located behind the Town Hall.

#### ***Environmental Health Permitting and Inspections***

The Board of Health is required by state statutes and regulations to perform many important and crucial duties relative to the protection of public health and safety, the control of disease, the promotion of safe and sanitary living conditions, and the protection of the environment from damage and pollution. Staff annually permit, and regularly inspect, restaurants, tobacco retailers, massage therapy establishments, tanning establishments, pools, the ice-skating rink and the bathing beach. Inspectors from the department also follow up on numerous resident complaints related to any health issue within the community



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ranging from trash and dumpster complaints to housing code violations.

### Permits issued by the Board of Health in 2005:

<b>PERMIT ISSUED</b>	<b>Number of Permits issued:</b>
Food	156
Tobacco	29
Massage Therapist	74
Massage Establishment	21
Waste Hauler	11
Funeral Director	7
Tanning Establishment	3
Public Pool	7
Public Beach	1
Ice rink	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>310</b>

### **Food Protection**

In 2005, the department overhauled the food inspection system. A risk based inspections system was instituted whereby each food establishment in town was put into a category based on the risk associated with the type of food they serve. The categories are one through four, which correlate with the risk and the number of times inspected per year. Establishments in category one are inspected once per year and those in category four are inspected four times per year. The fee for the food establishment permit is now based on the category, and the number of required inspections. The additional funding generated from the new permit fees, was used to hire a contract food inspector to assist the department complete the over 400 required food inspections.

### **Disease Investigation**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, at the request of the Board of Health, conducted a study to investigate a suspected cluster of five cancer cases in the Reed's Brook area. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Center for Environmental Health prepared a report using cancer data from the Massachusetts Cancer Registry from 1982-2001. Based on the study findings presented, there was no link found between the cases of cancer and the prior site activities. As outlined in the report, a cluster of cancer cases is a true cluster if it involves large numbers of the same type of cancers diagnosed in a short period of time. When the cancer data from the Reed's Brook area were analyzed, although there was a slight elevation of brain and central nervous system cancer, the data showed that the number of cases were not atypical. There are a number of risk factors that increase the risk for brain and central nervous system cancer, among these risk factors are age at time of diagnosis, smoking and occupational exposure. By including hypothesized data on these

risk factors for this population, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health calculated that the cases were not a true cluster of cases.

### **Communicable Disease Surveillance**

To protect the community against the spread of contagious illnesses, a rigorous communicable disease tracking system is in place. State law requires that doctors and hospitals report certain contagious diseases including diseases such as tuberculosis, whooping cough and salmonella. When a doctor diagnoses a resident with a contagious disease, the public health nurse conducts an investigation to determine if further control measures are needed. The illness is then recorded and reviewed to identify and respond to any possible disease outbreaks.

During 2005, 125 communicable diseases were monitored. Other efforts for disease prevention during 2005 included immunization clinics such as flu vaccine clinics in the fall where over 1,300 elders were vaccinated. The Board of Health also vaccinated the town's first responders, which included the police and fire departments. The department used the annual flu vaccination clinic as a practice run for testing emergency preparedness plans where Boards of Health may need to vaccinate their entire population in a designated timeframe. At the first clinic of the 2005 season, the department vaccinated 1,000 residents in three hours using staff and volunteers from many agencies and departments in town.

Childhood vaccines are provided to pediatric health care providers free of charge through the Vaccines for Children Program that is sponsored by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Through this program all children, regardless of a family's ability to pay, will have access to necessary vaccines. The Arlington Board of Health is the local vaccine depot for the State.

The three member Board of Health meets on a regular basis. During meetings, environmental health concerns are addressed and public hearings and policy review is performed. In 2005 the Board of Health received federal bio-terrorism preparedness funding that was used to train staff as well as improve local public health infrastructure. The Department developed plans to prepare for public health emergencies such as a flu pandemic or an anthrax attack.



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### Communicable Diseases monitored by the Public Health Nurse:

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE	# of cases 2003	# of cases 2004	# of cases 2005
Campylobacter Enteritis	7	7	15
Chicken pox	1	1	16
Cryptosporidiosis	2	0	3
Cyclospora	0	0	1
Dengue Fever	0	0	1
Ehrlichia	1	0	0
Giardia	6	6	6
Haemophilus Influenzae	2	0	2
Hepatitis A	0	1	3
Hepatitis B	24	21	20
Hepatitis C	21	14	1 acute
Hepatitis E	1	0	0
Legionellosis	1	3	1
Lyme Disease	11	4	23
Listeriosis	0	0	1
Malaria	0	0	2
Meningitis	1	1	3
Pertussis	10	18	8
Salmonella	6	4	7
S.A.R.S.	1 (suspect case)	0	0
Shigatoxin	0	0	3
Shigellosis	2	3	1
Strep pneumonia invasive	4	5	5
Group A strep	1	0	2
Group B strep	2	0	1
Tuberculosis	3	6	0
West Nile Virus	1	0	0
Yersiniosis	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>125</b>

### Sealer of Weights and Measures

The Sealer of Weights and Measures conducts inspections of all scales, scanners, and dispensing equipment to ensure fairness and accuracy for both the consumer and retailer in the Town of Arlington. The Sealer inspects scanners and scales in retail stores, gas stations, oil trucks and food establishments

### Impact Report 2001-2005 for Gas Stations and Home Heating Oil Trucks

Year	Consumer Savings	Merchant Savings
2001	\$13,398.20	\$2,486.98
2002	\$7,424.05	\$1,754.35
2003	\$3,949.32	\$1,184.67
2004	\$6,634.17	\$8,495.03
2005	\$18,396.55	\$13,259.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$49,802.29</b>	<b>\$27,180.93</b>

As merchants are inspected annually, compliance with standards and accuracy of merchant measuring devices has increased steadily.

### VETERANS' SERVICES

The Department of Veterans' Services for The Town of Arlington is designed to aid and assist veterans and their families as provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (VA) and the Massachusetts Department of Veterans' Services (DVS). All eligible veterans and their dependents can seek counseling and assistance with applications for federal and state benefits, financial aid, medical care at VA Medical Centers, educational/vocational benefits and burial benefits.

In 2004 two projects were initiated to honor Arlington veterans. A memorial honoring Joseph X. Grant, Arlington's first "killed in action" in Vietnam and apparently Arlington's only recipient of the Congressional Medal of Honor, and awarding of diplomas from Arlington High School to those who dropped out of school to join the military during The Korean War. Both projects came to fruition as scheduled in 2005.

In 2005, the Arlington High School Alumni of 1966, contacted the office about their desire to memorialize the ten young men from Arlington who were "killed in action" from the Vietnam War. A memorial stone will be put in place at the Vietnam Veterans lot in Mt. Pleasant Cemetery on Memorial Day 2006 followed by a collation for over 100 family members expected to attend.

As a result of interviewing over seventy veterans and/or dependents, a total of forty-eight clients received benefits under Chapter 115. In addition, one

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Gold Star Spouse and one 100% disabled veteran were advised of their eligibility for, and are now receiving, annuities from the state. The burial expense for two indigent veterans was also covered under Chapter 115. All expenses under Chapter 115 were submitted for reimbursement by DVS.

After consulting with over eighty veterans and/or dependents, eighteen claims were submitted to the VA for both service connected and non-service connected disabilities and/or pensions. Fifty-two requests for either in-patient or out-patient care at VA Medical Centers. Thirty-two veterans' burial benefits were referred to the VA. All veterans buried in Mt. Pleasant should have received a bronze marker applied for from the VA.

Veterans' Services organized, coordinated, and participated in the Memorial Day Parade and the Veterans' Day Parade. It is the responsibility of the Veterans' Service Office to decorate the over 5,500 veterans' graves in the three cemeteries in town and assure the maintenance of veterans' lots and memorials. Services on Flag Day presented by the Lodge of Elks #1435 were assisted and attended.

Names are continuously being added to the file of veterans to be added to the Veterans' Honor Roll at Monument Square, which will be updated at the conclusion of the War on Terrorism. The office also serves as vice-chair of the Patriots' Day Parade Committee.

The office of The Department of Veterans' Services, located in The Town Hall Annex, is continuing to purge old files and improve computerization, while reaching out to advertise benefits and advocate for volunteer opportunities at the Bedford VA Medical Center.

### RECREATION DIVISION

In 2005, Arlington Recreation offered a multitude of safe, quality programs and facilities for all residents of the Town of Arlington. The Division welcomed two new staff members to Arlington Recreation: Dave Cunningham from Arlington, as Assistant Facilities Manager and Marc Linskey from Arlington, as Facilities Maintenance Craftsman.

Improvements to facilities continue to be a priority. Arlington Reservoir continued its effort to ward off Canadian Geese with a temporary fence and Border Collie program. The Sports Center received several improvements, including newly painted lobby and locker rooms, skate rentals' shelving new signage, and an expanded snack bar with fryolater to offer a variety of food for all patrons. Additionally, the marketing and advertisement plan was continued.

As the popularity of recreation activities grow, so does the demand for facilities and additional staff. Participation in a variety of youth sport programs has

increased, resulting in more offerings throughout the year.

The staff of Arlington Recreation work professionally with residents to meet their changing recreational needs. New programs in 2005 included Chess for kids, Safety Village summer program, Dodgeball, additional skating lessons for beginners, additional public skating on Saturdays, Adult Indoor Soccer drop-in program on Tuesday nights, parent and child canoe lessons on Spy Pond, kayaking for adults and youth, and new Aerobic Dance and Conditioning programs. Many traditional programs were also modified to meet the increasing demand and changing needs of program participants.

Arlington Recreation provides excellent customer service by offering several ways to register for programs. Walk-in, mail-in, and on-line registrations allow residents and non-residents to sign up for all our programs.

Arlington Recreation collaborates with other town organizations and recreation centers in Arlington to offer town-wide special events including Town Day, Memorial Day Road Race, and the Winter Carnival. This year the Recreation Division continued to offer the successful Special Needs skate program with the Arlington Catholic HS Boys' & Girls' Hockey teams and Minuteman Tech High School Hockey teams and their coaching staff.

Limited outdoor recreational facilities and playing fields continue to be an important issue facing Arlington Recreation. Arlington Recreation continues to work with both high schools and the many youth sport associations to adopt policies and procedures to assist in the scheduling and maintenance of our playing fields.

In the year 2006, the Arlington Recreation will continue to offer residents quality recreational programming. It is the goal of Arlington Recreation to increase program offerings every season. Arlington Recreation will also continue to work with users of the Arlington Sports Center and town outdoor playing fields to address the increasing needs of the community.

### PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

In 2005, the Park and Recreation Commission worked closely with the Superintendent of Recreation and various town organizations to improve recreation facilities and develop policies that address the increased demand for Arlington's field and open space use. The commission continued the task of improving the town's parks, playgrounds, and open spaces as outlined in the 10 Year Capital Improvement Plan. The Commission also developed new policies to address the increased demand and use of open space in the town.

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### **Field Permit Policy**

The Park and Recreation Commission continued to implement the Field Permit Policy to assist with the growing demands in scheduling and permitting of the Town of Arlington Fields and Outdoor Spaces. The policy was amended and approved by the Park and Recreation Commission. The Park and Recreation Commission formed a sub-committee called "Field Use Committee". This committee meets several times a year to work together with the Superintendent of Recreation and his staff to discuss usage, maintenance, and permitting of playing fields. During the upcoming year, this sub-committee will continue to encourage enforcement of the town's bylaws for use of recreational facilities.

### **Arlington Sports Center**

With the finalization of the lease agreement for the Arlington Sports Center between the town and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Arlington Sports Center Improvement sub-committee will, once again, meet several times a year to discuss improvements to the Sports Center. Two additional members from the general public as well as members from the Sports Center user groups and the Park and Recreation Commission will comprise this sub-committee.

### **Maintenance**

Maintaining the town's parks and playgrounds continues to be one of the major tasks facing the Park and Recreation Commission and the Department of Public Works. The number of organizations and teams that use the town open space facilities continues to grow and has resulted in the deterioration of fields. The DPW has contracted with an outside specialist in field maintenance to provide scheduled seeding, aeration, fertilization, and weed control. It is the hope of the Park and Recreation Commission that all combined efforts will improve maintenance and conditions for the future of playing fields.

### **Capital Improvements**

The process of identifying and implementing capital improvements to open space areas under the jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Commission involves establishing a priority of need; application for and approval of funding; coordination with open space advocates and user groups; development of plans and specifications by qualified consultants; and selection of contractors through the public bid process and construction of the projects. The time of this process varies depending on the availability of funds and complexity of the project.

The following is a summary of the sites that are currently in design, construction or have been

completed:

### **Robbins Farm**

The Park and Recreation Commission, working closely with the Friends of Robbins Farm, completed the construction of the playground, removal of the abandoned tennis courts and landscape improvements including fencing along Eastern Avenue, new handicap accessible paths, regrading, trees, ground cover, and construction of a scenic overlook at the top of the hill. Funding for the project was approved by Town Meeting in 2001 and 2002 and includes an allocation of CDBG funds for handicap access. In addition, the Friends of Robbins Farm have raised money for the purchase of play equipment, benches, and picnic tables that were not included in the capital funds. During the year 2005, it was discovered that the big slide had encountered damage from stress fractures and a piece of playground equipment was not age appropriate. These issues became safety concerns. The contractor and commission came to an agreement to repair and replace the equipment. The work was completed during the summer of 2005. During the year, several trees were planted throughout the park area. The Commission expresses their thanks to the Friends group for their continued fundraising efforts and active involvement with the park.

### **Spy Pond Park**

In 2005, Carol Johnson and Associates landscape architects and Heimlich Construction Company began and completed improvements to Spy Pond Park. The improvements included restoration of the shoreline and drainage improvements to prevent erosion, new paths, selective pedestrian access to the waters edge, emergency boat access to the pond from Pond Lane, new landscaping, and site furniture. Because of the projects' proximity to Spy Pond, permits were required from the town, state, and federal government. The Friends of Spy Pond were involved in the planning process and were participants during the construction process. The Park and Recreation Commission plans an opening of the reconstructed park in the spring of 2006.

### **Crosby Tennis Courts**

In 2005, the town allocated funds for the construction of new tennis courts at Crosby playground. Larson Associates were the landscape architects and Musto Construction Company completed the project. The new courts were opened in the summer of 2005.

## HUMAN SERVICES

### *Waldo Park*

In 2005, the town allocated funds for the construction of the renovations of Waldo Park. Larson Associates were the landscape architects and Emanouil Brothers was the construction company. The Friends of Waldo Park were involved in the planning process and were participants during the construction process. There was also a community build of the playground equipment held on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. The Commission expresses thanks to the Friends group for running a well-organized event, and for their fundraising efforts. The Park and Recreation Commission plans an opening of the renovated park in the spring of 2006.

### *Locke Playground*

In 2005, the town allocated funds for the construction of the renovations of Locke Playground. Play equipment was upgraded and the site was made handicap accessible. Larson Associates were the landscape architects and Emanouil Brothers was the construction company. The Park and Recreation Commission plans an opening of the renovated park in the spring of 2006.

With the completion of the above projects, the Commission Chairperson appreciates the individual efforts of Commissioners Don Vitters, Tom Caccavaro, Leslie Mayer, and Nancy Campbell, as well as Recreation Superintendent Jon Jalbert. Without their involvement and efforts, the successful completion of the projects would have been difficult to accomplish.

### ***Future Projects 2006***

#### *North Union Playground*

Leonard Design Associates is working with the Commission at North Union Playground regarding equipment replacement and safety surfacing in the play equipment area.

#### *Menotomy Rocks Park Renovations and Bishop School Field Renovation*

Leonard Design Associates provided the Commissioners with the budget cost estimates for the Bishop School Field Renovation and Menotomy

Rocks Park Renovations. Work at Menotomy Rocks Park included estimates for field renovations, pond area, Jason Street entry, and general site improvements. Work surrounding the Pond will require consultation with the Conservation Commission and a N.O.I. will need to be submitted. The Friends of Menotomy Rocks Park, Leonard Design Associates, and the Commission continued to work together on the design and shared their desire in looking for additional funding sources.

Based on original proposed budgets, the estimates came in high for both projects, and additional funding will be required to complete the requested work. The Commission is working with the Capital Planning Committee seeking additional funding.

#### *Buzzell Field Renovation*

With the renovation of Peirce Field at the high school, the renovation of Buzzell Field had to be delayed so that sports teams could utilize Buzzell Field during the high school field renovation. Larson Associates is the landscape architect, the two year old cost estimates on the Buzzell Field renovations are now not adequate, the Commission is working with the Capital Planning Committee to seek additional funding.

### ***10-Year Capital Plan***

The Park and Recreation Commission has developed a 10-Year Capital Plan for upgrades and improvements to the recreation and open space areas that are under the jurisdiction of the Commission. The program is more than fifty percent complete, however a number of the remaining projects are expensive and complicated. Menotomy Rocks Park, Buzzell Field, Bishop Field, and others will require significant funds to address the problems and potential of these sites. To avoid phasing of the work over many years, the commission will be seeking an increased level of funding that is greater than the amounts that have been traditionally approved by Town Meeting. Alternative sources of funding will be also be explored.

### **Library Director and the Board of Trustees**

The Robbins Library system experienced a very successful year with the expansion of its Community Read program, receipt of a public relations award, grant funding for a customer service project, recognition of the branch librarian by the New York

