**2022 Beach Report**

**Introduction**

Gilford Beach was open for a total of sixty three (63) days during the 2022 beach season that began on Saturday, June 18th and ending on Sunday August 21st. Opening weekend was a cold one and not many people passed through other than for swim lesson sign-ups and one of the anchor chains on the raft broke from the intense winds. Stayed on beach patrol the first week open until all lifeguard staff were out of school, then was in towers the rest of the summer.

**Entry to Beach**

A total of twelve thousand four hundred and thirty five (12,435) cars entered the beach during staffed hours. Of those, one thousand two hundred and sixty four (1,264) were non-resident accompanied by a resident with a valid sticker, or the other new temporary pass options by name or plate number and that might be why it is was a higher number compared to 2021.

**First Aid and Rescues**

Eleven (11) patrons required first-aid. The primary causes were cuts on feet, toes, and/or thumbs from sticks, rocks, or scraping them somehow. They were cared with clean water, ointment, and Band-Aids. We had responded to five (5) patrons involving distressed swimmers. All, but one of them happened close or swimming to/out to the raft. We had one (1) injury that occurred on the raft with a girl that bruised her whole ankle and was swelling up from hitting it on the raft. A lifeguard paddled her in on a rescue board to then tell her mom to encourage them to go to urgent care to get it further looked at. None of these events required EMS to be called.

**Camps at the Beach**

The Gilford Summer Program came to the beach every Friday from July 1, 2022 till August 12, 2022. They had an average of fifty-five (55) kid’s ages ranging from 5-10 years old. The Youth Center came a total of eleven (11) times, most days being Tuesdays and Thursdays with an average of twenty-five (25) kids between the ages 9-14 years old. They did change days a couple of times to Wednesdays or Fridays depending on the weather. The lifeguards experienced many issues with the kids not behaving and the counselors were not disciplining even after I had talked to them myself. Once Herb talked to Scott about the frustrations we were having, for every so many kids they were to have a counselor at the raft. Also when they had wristbands it made it extremely helpful to know that they were camp kids when not behaving so then we could talk with the counselors to take further actions.

**Swim Lessons**

Had a total of five (5) Water Safety Instructors (WSI’s), but started out session 1 with only having three (3). Session 1 ran from June 27th –July 15th. We offered levels 1-3 and after evaluating the kids we ended up running three (3) level 1 classes and one (1) level 3. Had a total of thirty two (32) participants as each class had eight (8) participants. Session 2 ran from July 18th to August 5th. We offered levels 1-6, but after evaluating ended up with no level 5 class. There were thirty (30) participants and on average every class had six (6) or seven (7) children. Water Carnival was held on August 5th which was Pirate themed. Many kids came to join in the fun since it was the last day of second session swim lessons as well! The Gilford Summer Program was there also on one hot day!

**Other Incidents or Concerns**

* There were many service dogs on the beach this summer and staff had a difficult time identifying them. We received complaints about why certain dogs are allowed and others are not because of certain behaviors.
* Had to call Marine Patrol once because a boat broke down and came into lines directly next to the raft.
* Boats coming too close to lines and also entering/exiting of kayaks and/or paddleboards were a huge problem.
* One incident of a patron calling the police because teenagers were not behaving and harassing staff.
* Many incidents with unhappy patrons with moving to unguarded area with puddle jumpers and lifejackets.
* Lots of patrons upset that they could not have hammocks. Is there any way that we can allow them next year?
* Many dead fish washed up on shore early in the season
* Swimmers itch did appear during session one of swim lessons (Never got shut down from cyano bacteria and e-coli bacteria)

**Lifeguard Staff**

The start of the summer was a giant change with having a beyond young staff of two (2) returners, six (6) new guards, and myself the fresh beach manager. Having nine (9) of us and only three (3) being over the age of 18 (including myself) made scheduling difficult with the labor laws and being short staffed already. With a lot of new faces the first couple weeks between beach patrol, on-tower and certain incidents occurring we finally got into a groove of working great as a team. With the incident of one of the patrons on the beach calling the police I was concerned with how young the staff was. Because of that reason for one of our in-service trainings Herb allowed us to hold a self-defense training that was put on by Dave Flynn. The staff loved it with confidence boosts and being very insightful.

On the other hand, we did have an accident when one of the guards shot off a firework to scare the geese away and was holding it in his hand and started shooting in the wrong direction. No one was hurt, but a big learning lesson for everyone and went over it in in-service training the following week. Is there a different solution as an alternative to the fireworks that is safer to scare the geese away?

The day after the beach closed some of the lifeguards worked for a couple hours to deep clean and organize the guard shack and the back storage closet so we can be all ready for next season!

**List of Needs for Beach**

* BACKBOARD (when practicing spinal rescues the backboard that we have is not secure enough with how slippery it is in the water. Would hurt them more than help)
* RESCUEBOARD (The lifeguards got cuts on them a lot during the summer from one of the boards being splintery.)
* UMBRELLAS (all broke this season)
* 2 more RESCUE TUBES (tossed others because eaten by mice)
* FEMININE PRODUCT DISPENSER IN THE WOMENS BATHROOM (many women came up asking us if we had any as well as lifeguard staff)
* GATEBUILDING WINDOW (needs attention)

**Conclusion**

Overall, this summer was a success other than some nasty patrons and few major incidents. Had many patrons give positives and thank yous to our lifeguards on the last day being staffed.

Jenny Hancock

Recreation Specialist