

## **PARAN RECREATIONS**

Lake Paran, a local, not-for-profit organization, is one of the hidden jewels in the Bennington area. Developed in the late 1960's, Paran is a beautiful, unspoiled, swimming and recreation area that provides our community with a place to enjoy the wonders of nature close to home. Paran Recreations is a locally run, not-for-profit dedicated to keeping our lake a simple, fun, safe, and affordable pleasure. In addition to the day-to-day program of swimming and boating, Paran Recreations runs a summer entertainment series, hosts children's camps, and is part of a local effort to preserve environmentally sensitive wetlands.

Despite the rain, this summer we had 152 memberships with over 3000 day visitors during its 10-week summer season. Our visitors came from Bennington (37%), North Bennington (23%), Shaftsbury (19%), and outlying areas (21%). The lake also offers group memberships to several local camps and schools. In July, Lake Paran was the site for an art camp that ran two separate week-long sessions. The pavilion hosted a dozen birthday parties/family events.

We made a number of improvements to the buildings and land occupied by Paran Recreations using a youth job corps, funded by the Vermont Summer Jobs for Youth program. Two of these youth were from Shaftsbury.

In addition, with a grant last year from the Fund for North Bennington, we were able to offer over 35 families and 50 seniors free membership at Paran Recreations. The initiative was a huge success and we will request funding from the Fund again for this summer.

Respectfully submitted

Alisa Del Tufo, President