



To give local residents instant access to information about classes, athletics programs and special events, our Parks and Recreation Department has developed its own Web site (www.meridianms.org/parks&rec.htm).

A visit to the site shows the many adult classes offered at the Senior Citizens Center and Velma Young Community Center and all the children's classes, including the always-popular swimming lessons, which drew more than 500 students during the summer. Thousands of men, women and children also took advantage of sports leagues and special events.

A new event this year was the fishing rodeo at the Highland Park duck pond. Kids, parents and grandparents teamed up as the children competed in such categories as "largest fish" and "smallest fish." Helping to make the event a success were the Shipmates from NAS Meridian, some of the many volunteers who are vital for special events and youth sports leagues.

These sports leagues enjoyed an especially outstanding year. The boys' 17-18 year-old Dixie Majors All-Stars from the John Moss League won the World Series title in South Carolina, and our girls' softball teams traveled all over the country representing our community. We also welcomed teams to Meridian as we hosted the Amateur Softball Association Girls 16 and Under National Slow-Pitch Softball Tournament, our 12th national tournament in 15 years.

Children who are physically or mentally challenged have the opportunity to participate in events like Camp High Hopes—which includes arts and crafts, games, swimming and story telling—and the Challenger League softball program, modified to allow the kids to be involved in athletics.



The Highland Park pool, top, is a popular spot for swim meets. Above, a youngster shows off his catch at the First Annual Fishing Rodeo

The Rev. Bob Followell is the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, which donated flashlights, gloves and other supplies. Les Lauderdale helped count Red Cross contributions. Shanelle Chaney participated in fund-raising at Oakland Heights Elementary School. Regina Anderson is the general manager at Papa John's Pizza, which donated pizzas to blood donors and volunteers. Norman Coleman's church, St. Peter United Methodist, donated medical and non-perishable supplies.



Rev. Bob Followell



Les Lauderdale



Shanelle Chaney



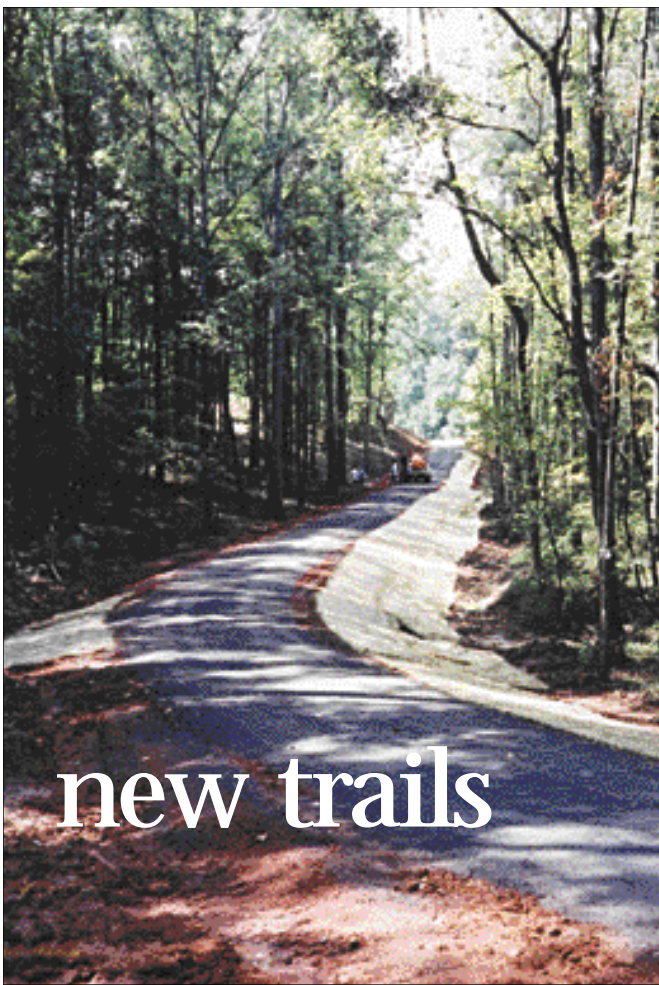
Oakland Heights Elementary



Regina Anderson



Norman Coleman



new trails

The new trail at Bonita Lakes is a perfect spot for a peaceful stroll. At right, restoration specialist Rosa Ragan puts the final touches on a Dentzel Carousel horse.



old-time fun

All children, and adults as well, treasure our National Landmark Dentzel Carousel, and keeping it lovingly restored is always a high priority. This past year, a restoration specialist repaired scratched and worn places and replaced eight horsetails, keeping the carousel in beautiful shape for the many parties, receptions and tours held in the Carousel House.

Lakeview Golf Course had a good year, despite the cold winter and heavy rains that kept revenues down. Expenses to operate a good municipal course have risen, while fees and memberships have stayed the same for several years, so we're looking at a slight increase in fees next year.

Keeping Lakeview and the department's many other ball fields and parks in top condition is the never-ending challenge for the Grounds Division. As new facilities are added and older ones need more attention, we hope to expand the division to ensure that we continue to keep our facilities well maintained and ready for use by residents and visitors.

Kindergarten student Najima Phillips helped collect money to send to children in Afghanistan. Proceeds from the sales of a t-shirt designed by Rush Foundation Hospital added up to almost \$10,000 for the Red Cross. Dr. Jack Hall donated the fees from a day of chiropractic services. Daidric Burks is an Oakland Heights student who contributed to the relief effort.



Doughboy Monument Flag



Najima Phillips



Volunteers from Rush Foundation Hospital



Dr. Jack Hall



Daidric Burks