

Summer
2023

Cushing Community News

A message from President & CEO: Michelle Markowitz



Hello and Welcome Back to those who were off for the Summer months. I hope you all enjoyed a summer filled with fun, sun and new experiences.

As the new school year begins, this newsletter will touch on some of the many exciting events and updates that took place this Summer, and a few of the many gifts we are thankful for as we head toward Fall.

First off, a heartfelt thank you to the incredible women who are retiring ahead of the upcoming school year. Each of these four women have been at Cushing for over 30 years, and their kindness, compassion, and zest for helping our wonderful individuals will be sorely missed. Congratulations to Lezlie Hodges, Linda Santacroce, Debby McGeoghegan and Nancy Gentile, on your much-deserved retirement!

Second, I am thankful for those people and organizations that helped to fund the repaving of the Hanover neighborhood parking lots and outdoor track early this Summer, and who funded the ongoing renovations to the Auditorium. So far, the seats have been removed, the floor has been replaced, the new stage has been built and the new windows are in. We are so excited to see what the staff and participants (from all of our Cushing locations), as well as the outside community, will achieve in this new space once it's complete.

Again, Welcome Back to School for those who we've missed this Summer. I look forward to a rewarding year full of learning and triumphs.

With much excitement,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Markowitz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michelle Markowitz
President & CEO

Serve Home, Local Community Service Project For Adult Services

Several of Cushing’s adult participants had the opportunity to give back to the Community this Summer, working hand in hand with a local organization called “Serve Home.” Serve Home is a local, faith-based non-profit, that brings together people looking to help, with neighbors who need help. They accept helpers of all faiths, ages and abilities – and were thrilled to put Susan Giusti, Bob MacKinnon, and a rotating group of Cushing adults to work.

Their assigned project was to help a Holbrook woman whose husband had recently died, and whose home was in disrepair. Working with a team of 15-20 volunteers, ranging in age from 5 to senior citizens, the group spent one week demolishing a rotting deck, painting the

inside and outside of the home, removing a large pile of bricks, and performing several landscaping tasks.

“This was a great opportunity to see what our individuals were capable of, because we don’t have opportunities to perform duties like this very often,” noted Giusti. “The homeowner was so grateful, and brought out watermelon as treats for the workers.”

Cushing plans to keep a connection not just with the “Serve Home” organization, but also with the Holbrook woman who could use help again in the future. Great work Alex Heap, Ryan Savage, Greg Stevens, Matt Dane, Ian Feddersen, Eion Coyne, and Tim Rochon!



Summer Fun In The Sun

For Cushing students (from both Hanover and Braintree) and adults who remained local over the Summer, Cushing was alive with exciting events. There were plenty of off-campus field trips (Codzilla and Canobie Lake, just to name a few), but the events planned locally were what really brought the Cushing community together.

To start, there was the “Summer Kick Off” party with a taco truck and jumpy house, plus special guests Olaf and Anna from Frozen and Jasmine from Aladdin. Next came the 9th Annual “Water Day” – when students and adults enjoyed a cookout, inflatable water slide, DJ, and lots of pool fun. The St. Coletta team also celebrated the water - with a day of pool and sun fun for students and staff.



In July, the Hanover neighborhood hosted a “Wonders of the World Field Day,” in honor of Paul Sullivan of Sullivan Tire. He was celebrated because of his dedication to Cushing, and the contributions that led to the resurfacing of the basketball court and track. The track was finished in time for the 2nd Annual “Bike Day” Celebration, where many joyfully rode their bikes and adaptive bikes around the track. Lukas, a Cushing student, was a focus of the festivities, showing off the new adaptive bike he received via Friendship Circle Organization’s annual “Great Bike Giveaway” program.

“Getting the students outdoors throughout the Summer is important,” notes Tom McElman. “We will continue to create fun and engaging events to keep up enthusiasm while the weather cooperates, and of course we have the fabulous pool as well.”

CushStock, going on its 10th year, was another successful



Summer event. Mirrored loosely after Woodstock, the event featured instruments, dancing, tie-dye’ing, temporary tattoos, bubble making and more. Staff and Cushing participants hit the microphone to belt out renditions of popular songs, to finish out the event. Peace and love were felt by all.

Finally, the “End of Summer” celebration brought students, staff and adult participants together one last time, to say a fond farewell to the glorious season. Montilio’s pizza truck, live music, inflatable obstacle courses and lots of pool games were enjoyed by students, adults and staff alike.

MarketPlace Spotlight

The MarketPlace has been very busy over the Summer. Take Two, thanks to an ongoing relationship with TJX Companies, worked with the Mercy Sews organization to donate 900 dresses to the Children in Haiti Organization and Interfaith Ministries in Quincy. Unique Boutique was busy selling its more Summer-themed items, including handcrafted ice cream bowls and birdhouses, and is now gearing up for the upcoming Fall and Winter seasons with Cushing Collectibles pottery - offering new glazes and styles - and custom cornhole sets featuring favorite sports teams. The perfect Holiday gift! The Café began accepting orders online – a great success - and saw an uptick in iced tea and coffee sales on the hot days, and warm soups on the rainy days. “But the Cushing Club remains the best seller, regardless of the season,” added the Café staff. The Greenhouse spent the Summer tending to its vegetable harvest and flowers, and many of the Café’s savory meals included the greenhouse’s bounty of fresh veggies - which were also sold at the Café register. Thanks to a wonderful group of volunteers from BC High and other community members, the gardens stayed weed-free, and a new “Pick Your Own” flower program was also introduced over the Summer. The Greenhouse will now transition into the cooler weather varieties, including pumpkins, mums, and decorative kale.

