



THINKING REC CENTER? THINK DENNIS CLARK

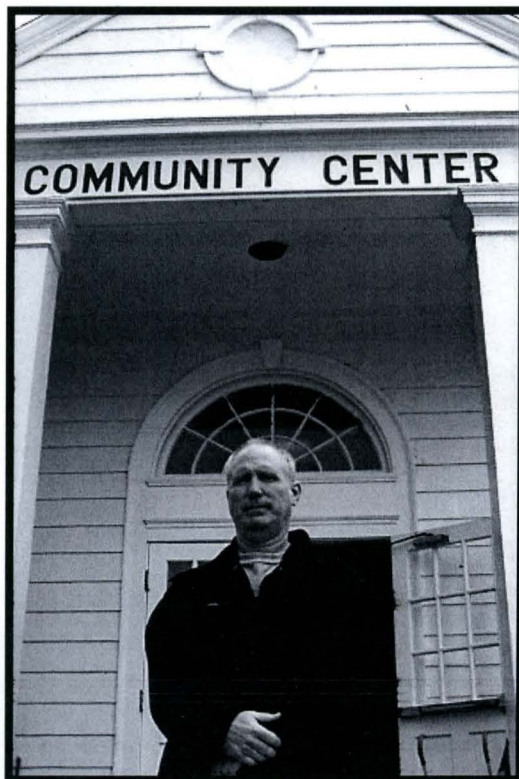
At some point during the year, almost every citizen visits the **Community Center** on Bradford St. The activities, varied and constant, run six days a week all year round. That gravitation to this center becomes a part of the course for most people. The intense and varied coordination is the work of Dennis Clark, Director of the Provincetown Recreation Department. I call him the "Young Spenser Tracy." Check the resemblance, facially but also in that so masculine yet easy-going manner.

Dennis has manned this post for 14 years and is well suited for the job, so he does it well and enjoys his work. Before becoming director, Dennis worked in construction and fishing trades. "You know, the usual P'town medley..." Through those years he raised two children along with his wife Madeleine who serves as Director of Administration at the Provincetown AIDS Support Group.

Casey Clark, his son and a graduate of the University of Vermont, has been involved in theater and acting since childhood. His film, *Off Season*, was shown as part of the Provincetown International Film Festival. He will be here in town until October when he and his girlfriend Mailn Johannson, will go to Sweden for intensive acting studies. They will visit Malin's home village, also the hometown of boxer Ingmar Johannson.

Daughter Morgan Casey continues her studies at the Scripps Institute in Clermont, CA majoring in Asian Studies. She will be traveling to Singapore in September to study Mandarin Chinese.

Between pounding nails, fishing and family life Dennis found time to volunteer as coach at the Community Center and the High School. He helped Marty Menangas with ele-



mentary grade baseball teams and coached basketball at the high school as well as volunteered at the **Center**. Dennis was on the Recreation Commission and the Town Planning Board when the position of Recreation Director became available.

The change in his life was big—hands-on sports and coaching, yes, but lots of meetings, paperwork and varied activities to track. From participating in the Health Advisory Board to the Comprehensive Town Planning Board, from Toddlers to octogenarians, from cooking to karate, he was very busy. Dennis has adjusted well, loves his work and is ever available with answers.

"The Community Center started in the fifties. Munroe Moore was the first director. The Center's

inception coincides with the Veterans' Memorial Elementary School. The Center building was then the Bradford Street School. The students here at the time picked up their books one day and moved up to V.M.E.S in the middle of the year. Then this building became the Community Center and, as a service to the community, developed a Recreation Commission to work on programs and activities to be held here. Dave Perry was in that weight room when it first opened and he's still in that weight room." That was the fifties. Today the building still serves the community and a town board develops and decides year round activities. We serve toddlers to senior citizens. Today we have 18 kids here. Linda Schecter leads the Library Program, 'Born To Read'. They're going to have a musical parade now if you want to get some pictures.

"From July 1st through August—for two months—we have over 100 kids here. The noise factor is so high...you get used to it, you acclimate. The Monday after the program

Kelly's Corner

Maria Pace teaches year round. She creates the choreography for the plays and she also teaches ballet after school. The classes are open to children of any age. 'Little girls in their tutus.'

"Brian Cowing teaches karate two evenings a week at all levels and at no charge. We hold cooking classes and provide space for the 'P'town Hookers." Mary P. Roderick, about 96 years old, nailed me in the street yesterday. 'I have some new people,' she said, 'and we want to start in October.' She's amazing. They have been getting together one night a week for over 20 years now and they gossip and hook rugs.

"We have teen activities from October to May on Friday evenings between 6 to 10 pm. That event has gotten so big that it has created issues of monitoring. We have some 40-50 kids hanging out. They play board games, pool, ping-pong.

"....if people see a long line of children walking through the streets, it's most likely Recreation, off to the Monument, the Cee Jay or to tour the wharf fish-packing plant."

They listen to music and play with their hand-held video games. Doug Mason, my assistant, handles the teen activities. He's great with teenagers. We share the rest of the activities.

"Social dancing in the summer was a big hit. Last year we had a swing night and a salsa night. All are invited and the place was packed.

"Another summer activity for older kids is a trip to Six Flags New England Theme Park. It's expensive for them at \$40, so some get a season pass for \$65 and we go more than once. We rent a van. The day is long: from 7:30 am to midnight. A dozen or so youngsters go regularly. The opportunity is great for those who wouldn't get to go on their own.

"It's great working with so many various age groups. Yoga starts the day—a great way to start a day! I wish I had time to jump in. Everybody who gets involved in the programs falls into categories of interesting people, individuals, lots of artists, talented people. These are people with busy schedules who find the time to help out.

"Working with the public sector can be frustrating, but the activities vary and change. We organize the Fourth of July Parade. We participated the international workers celebration—parade, music and food at Town Hall. It's great to be hectic."

To get in touch with Dennis Clark or Doug Mason, call 508-487-7097 at the Community Center. You'll receive whatever information you need in a friendly and professional manner. Also check "FYI" —For Your Information—printed in the Banner under RECREATION Department..

Thank you, Dennis and Doug for a much needed job, well done.



Preschoolers at the Center

ends can be depressing...the silence...you can almost feel the noise and laughter in the building. It's like a movie with flashbacks. The group includes a high count of town children—80%—then add kids from Truro and Wellfleet and visitors. The older children pick and choose their activities from the sheets. They're involved with the West End Racing Club too. We are funded through the Town. We have a weekly schedule: Olympic Games at Motta Field, trips to many different local beaches, fishing on the Cee Jay, bowling in Orleans, ice skating at the Charles Moore Arena, live theater in Wellfleet, tennis lessons, a breakwater hike, a walk through the salt marsh, the Cape Playhouse in Dennis. And if we're home and it's raining, we have crafts and maybe a video. We also make our own plans too.

"The staff consists of high schoolers and college students who also started here. Then they went on to library plays and onto Brizzi at the High School. There's continuity. So if people see a long line of children walking through the streets, it's most likely Recreation, off to the Monument, the Cee Jay or to tour the wharf fish-packing plant.

"The summer is more intense, but the winter is busier. We have seasonal sports. Every night at Motta Field we have baseball games. They play both here and away. We have six teams at three levels. In the fall it's soccer. We have three grades each, divided by gender. In the winter it's basketball then back to baseball. Besides sports we have scouting and arts and crafts after school.

"Right now we have 24 pre-schoolers here because of the renovations at the elementary school. In November they moved in 'for a couple of weeks.' Well, they're finishing the school year here. They're delightful to have around, to hear them. They energize the place. I don't often interact with this age group, so I'm enjoying it. The teachers are great. It's a pleasure to have them although we are cramped for space. Sandy Bostwick and Mike Coelho are doing a great job. We lost wonderful Florence Bent on April 20th.

"We have yoga five days a week all year round. Jamia and Marek teach that class at 8:30 am. We have a weight room. We have dance classes. Maria Pace and June Finch teach in summer and present a performance at the end of the season.