



For Immediate Release
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Carnival-like Party for Children Marks Major Anniversaries of Winning Home and the James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club of Woburn

A massive celebration with carousel rides, music, face-painting rock-climbing, games, balloon toys, life-size cartoon characters, cotton candy, a petting zoo, pony rides and lots of sandwiches and snacks—all free of charge

Woburn MA, September 16, 2024— Hundreds children and their families gathered on Saturday, September 14, for a Family Fall Fun Fair to honor the 125th anniversary of Winning Home and the 60th anniversary of the James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club of Woburn. The spacious grounds of the McKeown Boys & Girls Club on Charles Gardner Lane in Woburn overflowed with fun activities for the occasion.

It was a party on a grand scale, open to all at no cost. Children climbed a two-story rock wall, wandered through a Lucky Lizzie funhouse, rode brightly colored wooden horses on a carousel, slid down a gigantic slide, and sat on the grass to pet fuzzy animals including chickens, guinea pigs, lion-bunnies, and ferrets. They had their faces painted with bright images and decorative designs and their choice of (temporary) tattoos. From an on-the-spot designer they ordered up balloons in the shape of dogs, swords, flowers, butterflies, and wearable baseball caps. They posed for pictures with life-sized Minnie and Mickey Mouse characters, and got to meet an equally big cartoon figure named Bluey.

“We are having so much fun,” said Lita Chestnut, a Woburn resident attending with her granddaughter. She added, “This is a wonderful thing to do for the community.”

DJ Dan Maguire provided music for the extravaganza of fun activities. Children waited eagerly to be helped into the saddles of ponies for a ride across the lawn, or played with hula hoops, created images on the pavements with colored chalk, tossed bean bags onto

Cornhole boards, lobbed basketballs into nets, and bowled with big balls and two-foot-tall inflatable ten pins.

Sandwiches and treats were plentiful as Woburn Host Lions Club volunteers cooked dozens of hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages over smoking grills. The Intrepid Keystone Club served bright blue cotton candy. A food truck provided shaved ice treats with flavors from Tiger's Blood to Monster Mango. The Woburn Kiwanis Club produced big servings of fried dough sprinkled with powdered sugar. Hundreds of bottles of cold water sat within easy reach in a large vat of ice. All sandwiches and snacks were provided free of charge.

Even the weather cooperated. A perfect fall day, warm and sunny, complemented the celebration for a memorable experience for families.

Event organizer Joe Gaiero, of the McKeown Boys & Girls Club, looked pleased with the results of several months of work, as he checked operations at one location after another. "It was a big effort," he said. "But the children here today are having a wonderful time, and that's what Winning Home and the Boys & Girls Club are all about."

Also involved in the planning was Julie Gage, executive director of the McKeown Boys & Girls Club, who echoed Joe's sentiments. "It was a great day for our organization and for the families of our community. It couldn't have gone better," she said. Liaison with Winning Home Bob Maguire smiled in agreement: "It was just the best," he said.

"We are thrilled with the contributions of so many organizations and individuals," said Albert F. (Chip) Curran, treasurer of Winning Home. "So many Boys & Girls Club board and staff members and teens volunteered to help along with our own board members at Winning Home, and the Woburn Host Lions Club, Woburn Kiwanis, the Intrepid Keystone Club all pitched in. We are deeply grateful for everyone's help."

Boys & Girls Club board member Joanne Fishlin, whose father was the Club's original Boy of the Year, said "Bringing the community together like this—with all of these children—is just unbelievable. The organizers have made a lot of people very happy today!"

The hosts of the event, Winning Home and the James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club have a long history together. The Club, established in 1964, sponsored a day camp at Winning Farm back in the 1970s and was its first grantee in 1998 when Winning Home became a grant-making organization. Winning Home's history goes back to 1899, when

a Woburn farmer named William Henry Winning left his 140-acre farm as a summer camp for children. Today Winning Home provides grants to 20 or more organizations every year to help children and their families in dozens of ways from daycare to arts training, food pantries, education, equestrian therapy and more. Winning Home's ongoing partnership with the James L. McKeown Boys & Girls Club demonstrates the effectiveness of organizations working together for the good of children and their families. Future fun events are in the planning.