



## Official Press Release

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### **The Castle in the Trees Playground: A Community Build Success**

The Castle in the Trees Playground of Littleton is pleased to announce the success of their Community Build Week, in which an innovative new playground was built by 100% volunteer labor. This event, which took place from September 20-26th, was one of the largest-scale community service projects to have ever occurred in Littleton, attracting 850+ volunteers from across the region. Workers of all skill levels supported a wide variety of tasks, including construction, painting, sanding, volunteer registration, and food service. Free childcare was offered to volunteers, with more than 75 children cared for during the week. The schedule of work spanned three shifts each day, with many enthusiastic volunteers returning for multiple days of service. Dedicated volunteers willingly stayed as late as 11pm during the last days to help ensure that the project would be completed on time.

The initiative was a second generation project, as the original playground was constructed as a community build in 1991. New York-based Leathers & Associates, the original playground designer, served again as the consultant for the new playground, after it was determined that the old playground was in need of replacement, and no longer compliant with current safety and accessibility codes. During a Design Day last year, the firm brainstormed with students in Littleton's elementary schools to incorporate fresh ideas for the new playground. The new structure remains true to its "Castle" namesake, with delightful new features and whimsical elements including a dungeon, a faerie house, and flower steps.

Littleton residents represented the majority of volunteers, with several participants from the original build 25 years ago returning again to help. Teachers, librarians, as well as town employees from highway, utility, and fire departments, were among the volunteers. Other helpers came from neighboring towns such as Westford and Acton; some even came from as far as New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island. Local companies which sent employee teams included Bristol Myers Squibb, Cisco, Clearbridge Technology, DCU Bank, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, IBM, Juniper Networks, Keller Williams Realty, MJ Cataldo Landscape and Construction, Keurig, Littleton Lumber, and Red Hat. Schools such as Concord Area Special Education (CASE) Collaborative, Saint Anselm College, and Worcester Polytechnic Institute were also represented.

The Castle in the Trees Committee gratefully acknowledges the generosity of our sponsors, which made completing this project possible: Diamond Level (\$25,000+) - MJ Cataldo Landscape and Construction, State of Massachusetts (with special thanks to Rep. James Arciero and Sen. Jamie Eldridge for obtaining state funding), Town of Littleton (with special thanks to the Board of Selectmen: Charles DeCoste, Paul Glavey, Melissa Hebert, James Karr, and Joe Knox; Town Administrator Keith Bergman, Asst. Town Administrator Bonnie Holston, and PMBC Members Bill Cole and Bob Romilly); Platinum Level (\$10,000+) – John C. and Eunice B. Morrison Charitable Foundation, Gold Level (\$5,000+) – Acton Toyota of Littleton, Henry Vincent Couper Foundation, Littleton Lumber, Marquis Tree Service; Silver Level (\$2,500+) – Shaker Hills Country Club; Bronze Level Sponsors (\$1,000+) – Allied Fuel, Inc., Aggregate Industries, Archer Mobil, Bamboo Fine Asian Cuisine, Baystate Water Works Supply, Inc., Circle Health Westford, Eloquence Dance Centre, Especially For Pets, Inc.,

First Church Unitarian, Littleton Electric Light and Water Departments, Littleton Family Dentistry – Dr. Craig Gruskowski, Littleton Storage Solutions, Littleton Sub Shoppe, Lombardo Loam and Gravel Co., Inc., J. Melone & Sons, Inc., Omni Properties, LLC, Pro Tool and Supply, RM Ratta Corp, Rotary Club of Littleton, Triumph Modular, Westford Regency Inn and Conference Center, Workers Credit Union. Component Sponsors – Wendy, Shawn, Brendon, and Damon Abetz, Ancom Custom Cabinets, The Bischoff Family, Tasha and Josh Clark and Family, The Goddard School, HearSmart Audiology, Jessie Clicks Photography, The Kingsley Family, Andrew and Zach Milner, The Mizzoni-Proulx-Rauker Families, Northern Bank & Trust Co., The Reinherz Family, The Seitter Family, Sew Be Crafty, Andrew & Sheila Struth, The Webb Family, Jim and Ruth Wilson.

The Committee wishes to thank many additional parties, including our food and drink donors: Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza, Bamboo Fine Asian Cuisine, Dippin Donuts, Donelan's, Dunkin Donuts, Idylwilde Farm, Lazy Mary's, Littleton Country Gardeners, Menchie's Frozen Yogurt, Nagog Hill Orchards, Olive Garden, Panera Bread, Papa Gino's, Rivercourt Assisted Living, Starbucks, Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and Yangtze River. We thank the countless number of individuals, families, and other organizations who loaned over 600 tools to be used during the build week, as well as those who helped by dropping off water, ice, Gatorade, and other refreshments for the workers. The committee also greatly appreciated the help of Harland Electric, Hunter Disposal, Littleton Congregational Church, the Littleton Police Department, the Littleton Fire Department, Tahattawan Masonic Lodge, the Girl Scouts of Littleton (Troops #65221, #63104 & #65012), and the Boy Scouts of Littleton (Troops #1 and #20).

Lastly, many thanks to the Castle in the Trees Rebuild Committee and Team for all their hardwork and dedication to this cause. General Coordinators: Kristi Bates and Sarah Donovan, Construction Captain/Materials Coordinator/Jack of all Trades: Kirby Dolak, Landscaper Extraordinaire: Joe Cataldo, Committee Chairs: Marketing and Public Relations: Catherine and Brian Wong, Volunteers: Jessica Cameron and Tasha Clark, Childcare: Kate Bottego, Design and Special Features: Sol Marini, Food: Sue Cummings and Cassondra Kingsley, Tools: Trina Miller, Special Needs: Jennifer Pletcher, Fundraising: Dave McManus. Construction Captains: Phil Asselin, Eric Bergeron, Jarrett Cameron, Matt Carpentier, Barry Coutermarsh, Jason Coutermarsh, Kirby Dolak, Tyler Dolak, Chase Gerbig, Meryl Hoffman, and Pete Sabettini.