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Monthly Insight into the Elizabeth Park & Rec District

# *EPR* connections

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## *Program and Event Updates*

Presently, all District programs and special events are either cancelled or suspended indefinitely. The Spring Youth Soccer Season has been cancelled and refunds will be provided as account credits for all registrants. You can use these credits to register for future programs / events. If your situation requires a refund of the actual fees rather than an account credit, please contact us at 303.646.3599 and we can assist you. Youth baseball and softball programs as well as adult sports are suspended for now, and additional updates will be provided as available. Canine Capers Dog Training classes are also suspended indefinitely at this time. The Easter Eggstravaganza event for this year has been cancelled. The Elizabeth Stampede has also been cancelled for 2020. We hope that we can all play again soon as a community, and will provide additional updates as conditions change.

## *Message from the Director*

### *Recreating During a Pandemic*

My life is generally centered around play, both professionally and personally, so this whole shutdown is really challenging for me. I consider myself incredibly fortunate that my family and I are healthy right now, and know that play may be an extremely trivial subject during these extremely challenging times, though it is what I know best and it is the manner in which I serve this community. As opportunities to go ski, play basketball on Thursday nights, go see some live music, go to the gym, observe soccer games on Saturday mornings, or hit up drop-in pickleball sessions on Fridays are gone for at least awhile, I've had to come up with some other options. Not being able to play with others or head to the mountains, I have found simple pleasure in walking through our local natural areas and connecting with my wild side. I am able to do this without coming into contact with others and I am able to avoid touching surfaces that others may have recently touched. Within our parks over the last week, I have found animal bones to identify, discovered a natural spring bubbling from the ground, unearthed a piece of petrified wood, climbed high into a mighty and well-branched Ponderosa Pine, and observed a variety of wildlife from turkeys to trout. Just sitting in the grass or leaning against a tree and opening my senses to the natural environment has been truly therapeutic. My sense of time disappears for awhile and the clutter of questions and concerns swirling constantly through my mind take a pause. I have never in my life experienced anything like the times we are now trying to manage, and have no idea when we will return to a sense of our comfortable normalcy, though I do know that we all must find ways to keep our sanity and continue to make the best of the situation. While a walk in the woods is not for everyone, do find your own source of play and stay safe.

# Use of Parks During Coronavirus Shutdown

Though continued efforts to contain the spread of the virus are critical to our community, state, and nation's success in managing this extremely challenging crisis, parks are open for activities that adhere to social distancing directives. Casey Jones Park and Evans Park offer opportunities for you to spend a little time in the outdoors if you need a short escape. If you do come to one of these parks to walk the dog, ride your horse, play catch with your daughter, skateboard, fish, or pursue any other activity, we ask that you follow some basic guidelines. Park away from other vehicles, avoid coming within 6 feet of any other individuals you may encounter, avoid touching surfaces such as playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, door handles, and although restrooms are open and being regularly cleaned, use the bathroom before you come to the park and only use the park restrooms if it is an emergency, one at a time please. Playground structures have been taped-off, and we ask that everyone respect the closures. The rodeo arena is open for use as long as social distancing guidelines are followed. Prickly Pines Disc-Golf Course is also open, though it is critical that individuals and small groups avoid gathering at the first tee. Please wait until the group ahead of you has teed off and left the tee area before proceeding toward it. The sport courts and ballfields within Casey Jones, Wild Pointe, and Evans Parks also remain open for families to use. Please remember that ballfields and athletic fields are not dog parks, and in fact, dogs are prohibited from these areas as indicated on park signage. If everyone picked up their dog's waste, this would not be an issue, but unfortunately, we find some dog owners seem unconcerned with a child potentially falling in a pile of their dog's waste while chasing a fly ball. As a result of increased dog waste being noticed, park staff have been directed to now observe dog owners within the park and address the matter with individuals leaving dog waste on the ground. Persistent violators may be banned from visiting the park for a period of time. Stay safe out there and know that the parks are here if you need them.

**COVID-19: PHYSICAL DISTANCING IN PUBLIC PARKS AND TRAILS**

- Do not use parks or trails if you are exhibiting symptoms.** (Illustrated with a person's head and virus particles)
- Share the trail and warn other trail users of your presence and as you pass.** (Illustrated with a bell icon)
- Be prepared for limited access to public restrooms or water fountains.** (Illustrated with a 'WC' sign)
- Observe CDC's minimum recommended physical distancing of 6' from other persons at all times.**
- Follow CDC's guidance on personal hygiene prior to visiting parks or trails.**

**NRPA** National Recreation and Park Association  
Because everyone deserves a great park

The infographic features a blue background with a city skyline and a park scene at the bottom. The park scene includes a person riding a bicycle, a trash can, a wooden bench, a street lamp, a woman walking a dog, and a body of water. Dashed white lines connect the five guidelines to their respective icons.