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Monthly Insight into the Elizabeth Park & Rec District

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Community Vote on Rec Center Quickly Approaches

After years of planning and effort, the Elizabeth Park and Recreation District will be asking residents to decide whether the construction of a recreation center should be funded on May 3rd. Registered voters that live within the District will begin receiving ballots in the mail the week of April 11, and can either return the ballot by mail, or drop it off at one of the drop-off locations listed on the notice of election. The ballot initiative, titled, ***Ballot Issue 6A***, asks for the District mill levy to be increased from 2.466 to 4.932 to enable the District to finance the construction costs for the facility.

The proposed recreation center, designed by BRS Architecture, is 42,000 sq ft at full build-out and includes over 7500 sq feet of aquatics space with leisure and lap pools, a lazy river, and a hot tub, a high-school sized gymnasium, a fitness area, locker rooms, a childwatch room, a party / program room, and needed admin / storage / mechanical spaces.

District Transparency and Public Engagement

While the District does not have the resources to ensure each resident receives every District communication, we sure wish we did. We actively strive to communicate all we can about what we are doing through our newsletter, our website, and social media platforms. The District does not employ a marketing or public relations professional, and all staff share the responsibility of public communication and outreach amongst our other duties. We always wish we could reach more people with our messaging, and will continue those efforts. Just because a resident may not have been aware of something the District was discussing, planning, or doing, it does not mean the District was working in secret behind closed doors. Part of the responsibility of public transparency also falls on the resident, as we can put out all the information we are able, but if a resident is not tuned in to receive it, our efforts to engage only go so far. Any suggestion that the District is not transparent or is not committed to hearing from and working with residents, is just not true.

As a public agency, the District holds Board Meetings at least once per month to discuss District matters, review monthly expenditures and finances, coordinate strategic and operational plans, and decide how best to manage public tax dollars to improve the quality of life for residents. All meeting agendas are posted prior to the meeting, all meetings are open to the public, and the minutes of all meetings are posted on the District website after being approved by the Board. Any interested individual can access these resources. Prior to each of the planning processes for Casey Jones Park and the proposed recreation center, the District put out several calls for volunteers who may be interested in helping to create the vision for what each plan should entail. In doing so, the Board intentionally presented residents the opportunity to actively lead the planning process, not simply sign on afterwards to a plan the Board created behind closed doors. We want to engage, be transparent as to how and why tax dollars are being spent, and truly serve the community in the ways it desires to be served. If you have some questions or thoughts, and the time to share them, always feel free to give us a call and let us know.

Upcoming Programs and Special Events

T-Ball

REGISTRATION ENDS April 4th

This introductory league stresses individual skill development for youth 4-6 that are new to baseball or need additional skill development before playing coach pitch baseball. All games are held in Elizabeth on Saturdays, with practice held during the week.

Cost is \$50/player. Volunteer coaches needed.

Register at www.elizabethpr.com

Girls Softball

REGISTRATION ENDS MAY 9

Girls between the ages of 8-10 and 10-12 will practice in Elizabeth and play games in Parker on Saturdays. Registration fee is \$94. Register at www.elizabethpr.com

Adult Paint and Sip Social April 15 / 6:30-9pm

Join local artist Courtney Tice for a fun evening of guided acrylic canvas painting. The theme for the evening will be floral scenes and images.

Participants are welcome to bring snacks and adult drinks to share pot-luck style with other participants if desired.

Program is held in the Casey Jones Pavilion and all art supplies and materials are provided. Registration fee is \$35. Space is limited and these classes fill quickly, so register today at www.elizabethpr.com

Adult Co-Ed Softball

Registration is now open for the Elizabeth adult co-ed softball league. Games are played on Friday evenings at Evans Park and the season begins June 10th. There will be a season ending tournament on July 23. Space is limited, so register today at www.elizabethpr.com.

\$650 / team.

Rookies Baseball

REGISTRATION ENDS APRIL 4th

This coach/machine pitch league is for all youth ages 7-9. All games are played on Saturdays in Elizabeth and practices are held during the week.

Cost is \$60/player. Volunteer coaches are needed. Register at www.elizabethpr.com

Missoula Children's Theatre Camp July 25-30

The District is excited to bring back the MCT Summer Camp for 2022 and offer local youth a unique theatre experience. Youth between the ages of 6-18 are invited to register and be a part of a local production this summer. Participants will work with professional actors from MCT throughout the week and rehearse their roles before giving two live performances of *The Frog Prince* on Saturday July 30 for the Elizabeth Community. Register today at www.elizabethpr.com

Message from the Director April 22nd is Earth Day

As we approach Earth Day, I felt it was appropriate to reflect on what we all can do to help conserve natural resources and preserve this incredible planet we all share. While talk about preparing for the possibility of humans living on Mars is interesting, it sure seems more reasonable to focus on ensuring the planet we currently live on remains sustainable. Though the challenges often seem so daunting, there really are so many things that each of us can do individually that make a real difference. When each of us commit to reducing our global footprint by just a little, the collective results can be significant. Imagine the total water savings that would result if everyone reduced shower time by a couple minutes.

Imagine how much we could reduce the production and use of plastic if we all brought our own reusable bags to the grocery store, or stopped buying water in single-use plastic bottles. What kind of positive global impact could we create if each of us committed to planting a tree in 2022, or consumed a little less meat in our diets? There are so many small actions we can each take to help make our planet more sustainable, and though we can't all do everything, we can all do something. It's easy to shrug things off and minimize the impact we believe our individual actions can have on something as large as Planet Earth, though I encourage you to trust that so many others do share your concerns about our home, and are also taking small steps to do their part in ensuring it is here for future generations to love and enjoy as we all have the opportunity to do.



Join the Easter Fun on 4/16

Words to Play By

The environment is where we all meet; where we all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share.

- Lady Bird Johnson -