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Monthly Insight into the Elizabeth Park & Rec District

***EPR* connections**

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Park Maintenance Spring Project Updates

The EPR maintenance crew is busy coordinating a number of tasks and projects and looking forward to more wonderful weather and parks full of people. Work will soon begin on the expansion of the playground area in Evans Park, as swings and other play elements will be added. This may require temporary closures of the existing playground features, and the area will be unsightly for a bit, though we hope the added swings and other features will provide more fun for all. The crew will also be closing Prickly Pines Disc-Golf Course in Evans Park in coming weeks for annual seeding / revegetation efforts, and we will post closure and re-opening dates on our website as scheduling is confirmed. We do apologize for the temporary closure, though preserving that natural area of the park is a priority. The crew will also be busy starting up irrigation systems, aerating and fertilizing turf areas, replacing ragged windscreens, and cleaning up warning tracks on the Evans ballfields. These guys work really hard to try and care for our parks, and they take a lot of pride in what they do. If you happen to see Charles, Roger, or Ryan out there, be sure to tell 'em "thanks". They certainly do not expect it, but I know it would definitely put a smile on their face and warm their heart.

Ballot Issue 6 Informational Open House Events

As you have likely heard, the District has recently completed a master plan for Casey Jones Park and a schematic design for a recreation center. The Board will be asking voters if they want to fund the construction of the recreation center and potentially other aspects of the master plan this May. All registered voters within the District will receive a ballot in the mail prior to the election, and will have the opportunity to vote on Ballot Issue 6 to help decide if funding should be made available for this project. The Board and staff have worked hard over the last couple years to try and understand resident desires, develop designs, and coordinate planning efforts, and are now proud to present the Elizabeth Community with the opportunity to decide.

Mike Barney, Director of the District, will be providing a presentation on the Casey Jones Park Master Plan and the proposed recreation center for residents at three upcoming open house events. The same presentation will be provided at all three events. In addition to seeking public feedback and comments, he will also share information about the ballot issue, the Board's plan for allocating resources and pursuing improvements should the ballot initiative pass, and he will address any questions that residents may have about the project. The goal of these open house events is to provide residents with as much information and detail about the proposals as desired and to clarify any misconceptions that may exist.

The open house events are being held at the Casey Jones Pavilion at 7pm on the following days: March 11th, March 17th, and March 29th.

Hope to see you there

Program Registrations – NOW OPEN

Adult Softball

Registration is now open for our adult softball leagues. Co-ed and Men's leagues are being offered. Co-ed league games will be played on Fridays at Evans Park, and Men's league will play on Thursday evenings. Season begins June 10th / 11th. Fee is \$650 per team and includes season-ending tournament. Register at www.elizabethpr.com or call the park office at 303.646.3599. Space may be limited, so register early.

Spring Break Art Camp

EPR is offering three days of opportunities for fun and creative expression for youth this spring break. Camps will be held in the Casey Jones Pavilion, meeting on 3/21, 3/22, & 3/23. Both a morning session (10am-1pm) and an afternoon session (1:30pm-4:30pm) will be offered. The morning and afternoon sessions have different themes, so youth can register for both if they desire. All supplies and materials provided. Cost is \$75.

Youth Baseball / Softball

T-Ball / Rookies (Co-Ed)

Ages: 4-6 / 7-9 Fee: \$50 / \$60 Start Dates: 5/7
All games played in Elizabeth on Saturdays – **REG ENDS 4/4**

Minors / Majors (Co-Ed)

Ages: 9-12 Fee: \$115 Dates: Mid-April through June
Player Assessments Used to Determine Division: TBA
Games played in and outside of Elizabeth – **REG ENDS 3/14**

Parker League Baseball (Co-Ed)

Ages: 10-12 Fee: \$96 Dates: Mid-May through July
All games played in Parker, all practices in Elizabeth

Parker League Girl's Softball

Ages: 10-12 Fee: \$94 Dates: Mid-May through July
All games are played in Parker, all practices in Elizabeth

Yoga in the Pavilion

Drop in and join us for a session of Yoga on Monday evenings from 7pm-8pm! No registration required, just pay \$10 at the door. Bring your own mat.
3/7 through 4/18 – (no class 3/21)

Message from the Director

Civil Discourse and Public Decision Making

I have been so fortunate lately to have the opportunity to meet and dialogue with community residents at a number of public meetings, and I look forward to additional opportunities in coming weeks. As our community develops and new projects, initiatives, and service models are proposed, we all have thoughts and at times strong opinions on the issues. We also have the opportunity to influence the approach to managing the issues. Most often, we have the opportunity to share our thoughts with elected officials and / or their agency representatives and ask questions to help us understand how critical decisions are being made. Though final decisions on these public matters are ultimately made by our neighbors whom we have elected to office to represent us, the discourse with residents is critical to the democratic process of decision making and allows decisions to be made based on what they believe to be the public sentiment. In my 20+ years of public service with several municipalities, I can confidently state that I have never encountered an elected official intentionally trying to damage or ruin their community. All of them that I have known were committed to achieving what they thought was best for their community. When we have disagreement with the stated plans and goals of our elected officials, expressing ourselves in a civil manner that respects the individual but challenges the idea is always the best way to go. They do listen and review feedback when appropriately provided. Is shouting and name calling really ever an effective strategy to accomplish anything? I have broad enough shoulders and enough experience to not allow personal insults and unsolicited shouts from those wanting to be disruptive to bother me or stop the public discourse, but it sure would be better for everyone if we all just committed to being civil in all our interactions, and treat each other as neighbors, not adversaries. We may not always get what we personally want, but I take great comfort in knowing that as a democracy, we have elections to hold our elected officials accountable if enough residents believe their interests are no longer represented. Unfortunately, I do suspect that I will still encounter some hostility and disrespect over the next few months as I facilitate additional open house events and public meetings on behalf of the District, though the civil discourse with neighbors, whom support as well as those who oppose the project, is something that I truly appreciate and look forward to. I have already learned much and look forward to learning more about your thoughts on our proposed plans.