



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FAYETTE COUNTY PARKS 'PLACE' TO BE THIS SUMMER

Uniontown, PA – There is no doubt that Fayette County has quite a bit to offer during the summer months, from fairs and festivals to any number of nature activities, like hiking at Bear Run or whitewater rafting at Ohiopyle. But even for those who prefer to keep their outdoor adventures a little closer to home, the county features an abundance of activities at its parks.

For their many outdoor options and close-to-home locations, Fayette County's parks earn the "Faces and Places" designation this month.

Parks and Recreation Manager Thomas Petrus is fairly new to the job of overseeing Fayette County's parks, having stepped into his role in July. Petrus said he was "super stoked" to take on the task, though it came in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Petrus said despite pandemic-related shutdowns in many other aspects of daily life, "we actually never shut the parks down. Two of them have lakes, so there were always people fishing. They put up social distancing signs."

Petrus noted that the county has three parks – Jacobs Creek Park, Dunlap Creek Lake Park, and German-Masontown Park. Less than a year into his new post, he already has secured funding for improvements at two of them.

"We got a grant for a playground out at Jacobs Creek Park, and we're going to put a new roadway in," he said. "We're going through the process now with the DCNR. We're hoping to break ground at some point this summer into the fall."

Dunlap Creek Lake Park also has received funding for an upgrade.

"We were awarded (a grant) by the fish commission," Petrus said. "It's a boating facility grant for a new dock at Dunlap on the launch side."

A new pavilion roof is slated for Dunlap Creek Lake Park, and Petrus said German-Masontown Park received a new pavilion roof, as well.

Among Petrus's other goals in the near future is to update the Parks and Recreation page on the Fayette County website. He said he wants to make information on the parks more accessible for the many people who use them during the summer and throughout the year.

Fayette County's parks are open from dawn to dusk, though Jacobs Creek and Dunlap Creek Lake parks also are open for night fishing.

You shouldn't be in the park after dark unless you're fishing," Petrus said.

In addition to its boating and fishing facilities, Dunlap Creek Lake Park offers the usual picnic areas and pavilions.

German-Masontown Park features a baseball and softball diamond that Petrus said is often in use by church leagues, Fayette American Legion Baseball, or teams from the Albert Gallatin School District. You'll also find an amphitheater, bocce court, horseshoe pits, soccer field and tennis court.

Petrus said the parks always have been busy, but since the COVID-19 pandemic slowed, it seems that more people than ever are getting outdoors. He wants to remind residents of the concept of "leave no trace," meaning to leave the county's parks as clean as possible after a visit.

"It's a park. If you want to go to enjoy a place, why trash it?" he said.

Aside from the littering aspect, Petrus said it's been wonderful to see everyone out at the county's parks as the weather turns warmer and the school year winds down.

"It's been pretty awesome seeing how many people are out there, especially kids, older folks, people of all ethnicities," he said. "Our parks are a great, local recreation destination for everyone to enjoy this summer."

For more information on Fayette County's parks, visit the county website at www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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