



## ***Recreation & Parks Department Report July 2012***

- Five (5) groups used the Hughes Center during June for a total of 139 hours. Events included 15<sup>th</sup> birthday parties for the Hernandez and Salazar families, belly dancing practice sessions and the testing for Arkansas driver license. The building has been very busy on testing days.
- The Parks Commission did not meet in June.
- The department had 8 incidents of vandalism in the month of June. Incidents included minor damage to the bike rack at Sequoyah Park and major damage to the gate Orbit Lane. Three picnic tables at City Park were vandalized and a board on the bridge at the water ski area of Pleasant View Park was broken. The two portable buildings at Hickey Park Field 6 were broken into and equipment was stolen or destroyed. Both doors were heavily damaged and required a lot of repair work. Artist in the area painted the restroom building at Washburn Park. The maintenance staff cleaned and painted the graffiti the same week it was discovered. Vandalism has picked up in June and we ask the public to use our parks, as people won't vandalize if there are people around. We also ask that you report any unusual behavior to the police.
- There were three softball tournaments held at Pleasant View Park and Shiloh Park. The first was the ASA Youth District Tournament for ages 6 and under to 12 and under. The tournament is one of the largest held in Russellville with 56 teams participating. The tournament began on Friday, June 15 and the girls played all the way through Sunday afternoon. The tournament filled many hotel rooms on that weekend. The second tournament was the B.J. Burton Memorial Tournament and the proceeds are used to fund a scholarship in memory of B.J. Burton. The ASA Youth Softball State Tournament was held on June 29 and June 30. The tournament drew 26 teams from across the state. Many team members were spotted at restaurants and stores that weekend.
- The Arkansas 12AA State Baseball hosted by the Russellville Youth Baseball Association was held on June 22, 23 & 24 at M.J. Hickey Park. Twenty eight teams from all over the state competed over the weekend. Large crowds gathered for each game at the park to root for their teams. The Arkansas Wildcats of Van Buren were crowned the state champions.
- The pool is open and is packed every day. The addition of a lap swim time (6:00am to 7:00am, Monday – Friday) has proven to be popular. People seemed pleased that the pool is opened all seven days a week this year.
- The first session of the Learn to Swim program concluded and the second session began in June. The water instructors taught 53 kids the art of swimming in the first session and 52 in the second session. The July session already has 51 registered and spaces are still available if anyone would like to take lessons.
- Rentals for the month of June included 19 pavilion rentals, 13 pool party rentals, 2 smoker grill reservations, 3 large room and 2 gym rentals for large birthday parties.
- The department's annual children's fishing derby was held on June 9 at Pleasant View Park. Congratulations to the following winners: Age Group 4 to 6, Garrett Wilson – heaviest fish and stringer, Age Group 7 to 9, Zoe Henson – heaviest fish and stringer and age group, Age Group 10 to 12, Dylan Richardson – heaviest fish and stringer and heaviest fish overall. The crowd was the largest we have had and most participants managed to catch fish.

- All of the department's 41 fire extinguishers were inspected and all passed. They are visually inspected on a monthly basis by the department and annually by a professional company.
- A safety meeting and staff meeting were held on June 27 at the Hughes Center. The safety topic was unsafe acts. Following the department's safety guidelines and vehicle maintenance were also discussed.
- Bicycle racks were installed at the Hughes Center, Sequoyah Park, Veterans Park, James Park and Hickey Pool. The racks were all placed on concrete pads that were poured by Leadership Russellville volunteers. The racks look great and add a good place in the parks for patron's to secure their bicycles. All of this was made possible by this year's Leadership Russellville group.
- Work on the Illinois Bayou Park Trail continued in June. The culverts for the drainage ditches were purchased from the county and several were installed. Clearing of underbrush and low limbs continues with help from the 309s. We hope to have it ready for asphalt by mid fall.
- Lowes of Russellville donated a pallet of Bermuda grass sod to our department. It was placed at the Hughes Center between our new parking lot and Knoxville Avenue. It will add to the beauty of the new parking lot and street.
- The slalom glider, part of the composite play unit at Veterans Park, was replaced with a pod balance beam. The slalom glider was recalled by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and as part of our park safety program we removed it as soon as we received the o.k. from the manufacturer.
- We have placed five gallon buckets beside several of our newly planted trees in our parks, to slowly release water to keep the trees alive during the extreme heat and drought.