



Recreation & Parks Department Report March 2015

- Ten (10) groups used the Hughes Center during February for a total of 263 hours. Events included the Progressive Men's Club Valentines Dance, an AVSA meeting and practice for Friendship's Special Olympic teams.
- The Parks Commission met on February 10. The next scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, March 10 at noon at the Hughes Center. (Minutes Attached)
- Ten bluebird nestboxes were built by members of the Wildlife Federation and delivered by Wayne Shewmake to the Parks Department. The boxes will be placed in various Russellville parks to offset the reduction in natural nesting cavities for bluebirds that have been greatly reduced by modernization. Even though bluebird populations have decreased, their future can still be promising. The most important step we can take to help bring back the bluebird is to provide nesting sites by setting out a bluebird nestbox.
- Staff attended a safety meeting conducted by Rickey Burroughs, Safety & Health Specialist for the Arkansas Department of Labor, on February 4 at City Hall. The topic was personal protective equipment and Rickey did a wonderful job conveying to us that we need to always wear our PPE.
- The AARP began offering free tax assistance to everyone on February 2. Operating hours from March 2 to April 15 are Monday through Wednesday from 8:30am to 4:00pm. This a much needed service that helps many people each year.
- The Department welcomed new employees Ronnie Garner Jr., Bert Harris and Jacob Waters to our dedicated staff. The new employees bring experience and much needed manpower to our department.
- Matt Gray, RRPD Athletic Director, passed the Arkansas State Plant Board pest control examination on February 9. He should receive his spraying license the first of March. This is part of the Department's turf program.
- The Department received \$7,000 from City Council and \$21,000 from the Advertising and Promotion Commission to begin the turf program. The Department also ordered a 110 gallon skid sprayer with a 12' boom to help with the program.
- The Advertising and Promotion Commission granted a \$1,999 mini grant for Pleasant View Park. The grant will be used to pay the March electric bill generated by the four softball tournaments to be held that month.
- Work continues on Field 1 and Field 6 at M.J. Hickey Park. The dugouts are nearing completion and general cleanup is being done. The scoreboards have been installed and the fence work is completed. The first home baseball game is March 3 with the first home softball game following on March 5.
- Arkansas Valley Soccer Association held registration in February for their spring season. League play begins on March 14 with games being played on Saturdays.
- Registration for the Russellville Youth Baseball Association is currently underway for the upcoming season. Information on registering may be found at www.rybabaseball.org or at Mullen Team Sports, Felters or Sportscene. The last day to register is March 10.