



## ***Recreation & Parks Department Report May 2011***

- Seventeen (17) groups used the Hughes Center during April for a total of 233 hours. AARP tax assistance ended their use of the Center on April 13. They had another banner year assisting area residents with income tax preparation. Events included Home Expo on April 9, pARTy in the Park on April 23, a Clean & Green Russellville meeting and a public hearing on drainage.
- The Parks Commission held their monthly meeting on April 12 at the Hughes Center. Commissioners Lieblong and Olsen were unable to attend; all other commission members were present. Guest included Amy Tarpley representing Junior Auxiliary of Russellville, Theresa Herrick our trails committee chairman, Drew Brent of the River Valley Leader and our liaison Mark Tripp. The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm with the passing of last month's minutes. Junior Auxiliary of Russellville has equipment for a slash pad they would like to donate to the City of Russellville. After discussion on cost and locations for the pad, it was decided to bring the item back for the next commission meeting. A request to build a bicycle polo court at Circle Drive Park was discussed and it was decided to let the requesting group submit a list of people interested in the project, project drawings, and projected cost and where they are receiving funds for construction. There was a recommendation to check with area residents to see if they have any reservations. The Commission also voted to ask the City to extend their lease with the Corps of Engineers for Shiloh Park. General updates included the Fourth of July Festival at the Pope County fairgrounds, the ATU graphic design class showcase on May 6 from 3pm to 5pm at the Hughes Center and the Wildlife Observation Trail Grant application information.
- The department had three incidents of vandalism for the month. Several tires and bags of trash were dumped on Orbit Lane across the road from the gate leading to the radio control flying field and property at James School Park was destroyed along with graffiti painted on the rest room walls.
- The City's summer softball program began play on April 5 with thirty-six teams participating this year. The league will play their games on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at Pleasant View and Shiloh Parks.
- Rick Latham Painting received the contract to paint the Hughes Center which included all the metal and stucco areas. The Hughes Center painting was completed including the fence around the dumpster. The building and the general area around the Hughes Center looks good. This project is in conjunction with our commitment to Clean & Green Russellville.
- The department held a safety meeting on mower safety on April 11. Quarterly safety inspections were conducted on all park buildings and a fire drill was conducted at the Hughes Center.
- The trees at Veterans Park were pruned, the gazebo was painted and we added a picnic table to the area. Use of the park has increased in the last couple of months with the nicer weather. These improvements are part of our commitment to a Clean & Green Russellville.
- Needed repairs were made on the exterior of the maintenance shop and a fresh coat of paint was added. This was also in conjunction with the City's commitment to Clean & Green Russellville.
- pARTy in the Park was held the weekend of April 23 at City Park, the Arts Center and the Hughes Center. This is a joint event with the arts center and the parks department. This event has grown every year and is always well attended. The Arts Center does a great job at organizing the day.

- An eight foot water oak tree was donated and planted at Pleasant View Park by the Clean & Green Russellville committee. Hopefully, this will encourage others to donate trees to be planted in city parks.
- There were Easter egg hunts at Veterans Park, Washburn Park and City Park over the Easter weekend.
- The trees at City Park were pruned providing us a better view of the park. We are trying to make sure all parks are well lit and cleared of underbrush to increase visibility which should help us control vandalism and unsavory behavior in our parks.
- There were two softball tournaments held at Pleasant View and Shiloh Parks. The first was our annual season opening tournament Battle on the Bayou on April 2. The second tournament was Rumble on the River, a youth fast pitch tournament which has grown to 63 teams and utilizes all six of our fields plus fields in Pottsville to complete their tournament.
- The department hosted the local Hershey Track and Field meet on April 16 at the Russellville High School track. This year there were 46 participants. Special thanks to Coach Jones, Coach Thompson, Tracey Cline-Pew and all of our volunteers for their help.
- Bids for the Hughes Center heating and air conditioning and a new tractor were opened on April 19. Beavers Electric received the contract for the heating and air and Fiser Kubota had the low bid for the tractor.
- Mother Nature was rough on the parks in April. We lost four trees during the storm on April 19. A large oak tree at Harmon Park was blown over and approximately 120 feet of fence was destroyed. The other trees included a large pine tree at Washburn Park and two cedar trees at Pleasant View Park. There were several trailer loads of limbs that were blown down in numerous parks. The roofs at the soccer complex and Pleasant View concession stands were damaged. The roofs were repaired by parks maintenance personnel the next day to prevent leaks and further damage to the buildings. During the rain and storms on April 24 the center field fence at Hickey Park Field 1 was blown down. Part of the trail and culvert installed at Pleasant View Park for access to the park during the Christmas lights display was washed out. Repairs will be forth coming.
- All summer sports leagues began play in the month of April at Shiloh, Pleasant View and Hickey Parks. All of the parks are experiencing full use and are very busy every night. Park usage in our non-sports parks is also up this year, especially City Park.
- Work began on M. J. Hickey Pool to get it prepared for the summer. Hopefully, it will be an easy clean up and fix up this year. The pool will open for the season on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend.
- A new covered group grill was installed at City Park next to the group picnic table near the large oak tree. Several people are using this area for birthday parties when the pavilion is reserved.
- The Arts Center installed a new wrought iron fence around the garden area at the Arts Center. It enhances the park and is a great addition to the area.
- Asphalt was installed at the walking trail and overflow parking lot at Illinois Bayou Park.
- We have applied for a Wildlife Observation Trail Grant in the amount of \$100,000.00 for development of a trail at Illinois Bayou Park. The presentation for the grant committee was held on April 26 in Little Rock and went well. We should find out if we were awarded the grant in the coming months.