

## Parks Department Updates

November 2019

November is a transition month for youth recreation. We finish out our fall sports and activities, then start up our winter programs. The AYS and ASYS soccer programs concluded, and many players were able to participate in levels ranging from under 4 to high school age. The fall soccer season had its usual challenges, particularly involving unpredictable weather. For the most part, this was not too bad this season, with very few sessions interrupted by rain or snow. The basketball season is already rolling along, and there are over 400 participants in the AYB, ASYB and Unlimited programs. The challenge for these programs continues to be finding enough gym space, but fortunately we have a very good relationship with the ASRSD and are able to secure a good amount of space to make the program manageable. The Parks Commission is hoping to eventually build a recreation facility that can allow greater growth for all the needs of the community.

The new storage and office facility at Pirone Park had its groundbreaking this month. The foundation has been poured and it is hoped that framing and infrastructure work can be done through the winter, weather permitting. The optimal schedule call for the building to be complete by the end of May, but more likely will be in June.

The Parks Department is currently working with the Planning and Economic Development offices to see if funding can be obtained for remediating the Kiddie Junction playground area. This facility has been a big part of the Ayer community since 1989, but has reached a point where it will need to be replaced. This includes the soil, which has elevated levels of arsenic from the pressure treated wood of the structures, and though testing has shown the level of contamination is within state levels of safety, it is prudent that we eventually remediate the area in a reasonable time frame. The Commission is committed to finding a solution within the next few years, with the hopes that financial assistance can be found to lessen the burden on our taxpayers.

Jeff Thomas

Ayer Parks Director