

## Parks Department Updates

December 2019

The New Year is always a significant time for the Parks Department. Aside from being the time we begin our financial planning for the upcoming fiscal year, it is also the unofficial midway point of our basketball season and a time to check in on the state of the season. The competitive levels (grades 5-8) are doing well, with most teams just getting into their own and gearing up for the second half and playoffs, where we see the best quality games. The skills and drills levels (grades 1-4) are making great progress, much of which is due to the exceptional coaching from volunteers. We are also fortunate to have quite a few junior coaches, mostly older players within our program that help give our younger players a different perspective. The Kindergarten/Pre-K levels are also doing well, showing lots of enthusiasm that you would hope to see from your future stars! The Unlimited program is booming, with an especially large number of players at our older level (teens/young adults). We have about 15 regular volunteers who help with this program, as well as a "guest team" (usually one of the local high school teams) that comes to pitch in as well. This year we expect to see teams from ASRHS, Parker Charter, LHS and St. Bernard's.

The new garage/office building continues to take shape and is currently on schedule for its completion in mid/late spring. This will create a number of benefits for our department, most importantly finally getting some storage space back for the many items that have been in limbo since the closure of the old firehouse. It will also relocate the parks office to Pirone, which will be much more efficient and open up an office in the currently overcrowded Town Hall.

There are a number of Eagle Scout candidates who have inquired about doing projects for our department. We have offered a number of ideas to them, including building a bocce court at the beach, erecting a gaga ball court, renovating the playground area, and making a little free library. We have benefited from over a dozen Eagle Scout projects over the last 15 years, each unique and a signature of the person doing it as a gift to their community. We hope the scouting spirit continues!

Jeff Thomas

Ayer Parks Director