While these may not seem like “fun times” in the current days of social distancing and limited gatherings, we are reminded that we have many opportunities to stay active and be productive in our community.

You can always check our website for updates, and contact our office if you have questions on programs or events. We want to do our part to flatten the curve, but also prepare for when the pandemic ends. Our programs will be adapting as needed. Remember, fun hasn’t been canceled. Stay active, stay connected, do your part to flatten the curve, and get ready for programs to start up again when they can.

**Important Parks & Rec News**

**Responding to COVID-19**

The Maryville-Alcoa-Blount County Parks and Recreation Commission values the health and safety of our community and staff, especially at this time when Coronavirus (COVID-19) is of great concern. It is important to keep our community informed on current procedures to address this concern, especially in regard to public facilities and gathering areas.

In accordance with CDC recommendations, and to follow guidelines shared by the joint governments of Blount County, here is what we are doing to take extra precautions in an effort to help reduce the spread of the virus in our area:

- Effective immediately, all recreation centers and the Everett Senior Center will be closed until further notice. Staff will continually monitor the situation and recommended guidelines to determine a possible reopening schedule. (This applies to the Martin Luther King Jr. Center, Springbrook Recreation Center, Everett Recreation Center, and Everett Senior Center)

- Pavilion rentals will be handled on a case by case basis. If you have a rental scheduled prior to May 15, please call our office (865-983-9244) for possible rescheduling.

- For a minimum of four (4) weeks, programs and events will be postponed, rescheduled, or canceled, and those already registered will be notified.

- Information on athletic activities is updated on our website (www.parksrec.com), and communicated through our staff and coaches.

- Upcoming events for the next four (4) weeks, including festivals and road races, will be postponed or canceled. Please check the Parks & Rec website or call our office for details on specific event schedules.

- During this time, we will be cleaning all facilities and continuing park upkeep, especially in high use areas.

- Our parks are open, and we encourage you to get outside to enjoy fresh air— even as you practice good social distancing. Please be vigilant in protecting yourself and others. We have a fun spring & summer planned, and we want to help you stay healthy so you can enjoy it!

The joint governments of Blount County have created an extremely useful information page regarding updated CDC recommendations, as well as links from trusted sources and precautionary information. Please check this site often, as conditions will continually change: https://www.maryvillegov.com/covid-19-blount-information.html

We will monitor situations carefully, re-evaluate our scheduled programs often, and communicate any changes as necessary. Please check our website (www.parksrec.com) for program or event information, or call us at 865-983-9244 if you have specific questions regarding other Parks & Rec facilities or activities.

Thank you for your patience, and we look forward to getting our community back together soon!

**Facility & Pavilion Reservations**

With changes in recommendations on group gatherings, reservations policies will change accordingly. Please contact our office with questions on any existing or upcoming reservations.

**Events and Programs**

Many of our events and programs have been postponed or canceled in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will update information as well as send direct emails to anyone already registered. Please check our website (www.parksrec.com) or call our office (983-9244) if you have questions about specific activities.

**Lifeguard Update**

In keeping with the CDC Guidelines in the prevention of transmission of the Covid-19 virus, all Lifeguard Certification Courses scheduled in April have been cancelled by the Red Cross. The recommended social distancing cannot be provided for this course due to the nature of the skill training required. The May 1-3, 2020 course is still scheduled, however, registration for this course is temporarily suspended until further notice.

Anyone who is interested in becoming a Parks & Rec Lifeguard is encouraged to go ahead and submit the Lifeguard employment application so they will already be in the Parks & Rec system and will receive updated information on changes as they develop. Submitting the application also assures a place will be held for you when registration for the course reopens. You will find the application here:

FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION ON EVENTS & PROGRAMS, GO TO WWW.PARKSREC.COM