

Roaming Around Reidsville

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“Team Reidsville” is getting ready to hit the baseball and softball diamond. The Reidsville Parks & Recreation Department is gearing up to begin its spring recreational leagues, and a special emphasis is being placed on increasing the rejuvenated baseball and girls softball programs. Last year the spring leagues saw a resurgence that rec officials are looking to expand upon in 2020.

Similar to the football skills camps held last year, the Reidsville Luckies volunteered to host a successful baseball and softball skills camp and player evaluation last month at Jaycee Ballpark. Registration has been ongoing for the North Carolina Dixie Youth Spring Leagues here in Reidsville. At the time this article went to print, plans were to hold team drafts on March 9 at Jaycee Park with a tentative season start date of March 23.



Girls Softball and Baseball Camps were held last year as part of Reidsville Parks & Recreation Department’s efforts to encourage more participation and continue to grow the spring recreational leagues.

As I have mentioned in a previous column, Reidsville is building on its relationships within the sporting community to help in this effort. Rec staff has reached out to their contacts to beef up the leagues this year, drawing on the knowledge and skills of local volunteers to find ways to attract more youth into the recreational leagues. They want area youth to get unplugged from their electronic gadgets and discover the joys of physical activity and team sports.

Instead of competing against travel ball, the City has found a way to work with such organizations to help grow its recreational baseball and girls softball leagues. A prime example of this was working with Scott Strader, co-owner of the Reidsville Luckies



Batting Academy, which sponsors several travel teams, who encouraged his players to sign up for the rec league. Last season the Recreation Department worked its game schedules so that players could play league ball during the week and travel ball on the weekend. The end result was that players in the spring rec baseball leagues, many of whom were associated with the Luckies Batting Academy, tried out and competed as part of the Reidsville Recreation All-Star team. That All-Star team was a runner-up at the North Carolina Dixie Youth Baseball Tournament and qualified to compete in the Dixie Youth Coach-Pitch World Series held last year in Ruston, Louisiana.

Another successful component of this relationship has been recruiting more volunteers to help with the rec program. Several of these volunteers have come through this unique relationship between the City and the Luckies.

“It is an honor to partner with the City of Reidsville employees as they make the difference in the lives of these young people, said Scott Strader, who is serving as a Volunteer Baseball Coordinator. “I played in the Reidsville recreation league as a kid and I have fond memories of those times. I’m enjoying taking this journey with a different generation of kids, and I just want to help make their experiences as wonderful as the ones I had.”

Like Strader, the women assisting with the girls softball leagues have the needed experience to help the next generation of young girls enjoy the comradery of team sports. Unfortunately, the City’s girls softball leagues have seen their ups and downs, having been nonexistent for several years. But these new Volunteer Coordinators are bringing a lot of excitement and enthusiasm to these newly activated leagues.

Evie French Scott said “As one of three volunteer Co-Coordiators of girls softball, I am so excited to work the girls and help them grow as athletes and young women.”

“Having played for the Reidsville recreation softball leagues years ago, I am so excited that it will make a comeback, and I look forward to being a part of it,” noted another Co-Coordinator Kassidy Jacob. “Having experienced it, I believe that when you give a girl a pair of softball cleats, you are giving her more than just a pair of shoes. You’re giving her new friends, challenges, life lessons and so many great memories.”

“I am extremely excited to be part of an organization that is putting our kids first and really trying to bring the love of sports to our community,” said Girls Softball Co-Coordinator Emma Crabtree. “People think you have to go to our surrounding bigger cities for sports, but we have great coaches and teams in Reidsville. I’m thrilled to see what this year brings for our community and eager to see these kids learn new skills.”

The City's Parks and Recreation Department expects to continue to build these leagues year after year. It is a goal that Reidsville Assistant City Manager Haywood Cloud Jr. has been working towards since being hired nearly two years ago.

"I am so thrilled to work for a City that invests in all segments of the community," Cloud said. "In my role working with Parks and Recreation, I am proud to be a part of a team that contributes to the growth and development of young people through sports. This is an amazing experience and I look forward to seeing the seeds that we are sowing grow and blossom."

Registration ends soon so don't wait! Registration by March 2nd can be done one of two ways: stop by the Reidsville Parks & Recreation Department at 201 N. Washington Avenue or log in to <http://activenet.active.com/reidsvillerec>. You can sign up your child for Girls Softball (ages 4-15), Boys Baseball (ages 4-15) and Co-Ed T-Ball (ages 4-6). Cost is \$15 for City residents and \$20 for non-City residents.

Other Upcoming Events in March

- **Saturday, March 7: Casino Night** will be held at the Reidsville Elks Lodge in downtown Reidsville. The event benefits the Reidsville Downtown Corporation and the Reidsville Chamber of Commerce. The doors open at 6 p.m. with the Casino starting at 7 p.m. and ending at 10 p.m., at which time attendees can bid on prizes with their "casino play money" winnings. Tickets are \$25 in advance either online at Eventbrite, through Facebook or at the Chamber of Commerce, 140 South Scales Street.
- **Saturday, March 14: A Crappie Fishing Tournament** will be held at Lake Reidsville. Cost is \$5 per person. Find out more details by calling the lake store at 336-349-4738.
- **Friday, March 20: Deadline to register for the 2020 Rockingham County Senior Games & Silver Arts.** The games start April 14. Call RCARE at 336-349-1088 for more details!
- **Tuesday, March 24: First session of the 2020 Team Reidsville Training Camp!** Seven weeks of learning about your City ends on the 8th week with recognition at the Reidsville City Council meeting. Sessions are held each Tuesday from March 24-May 5 between 5:30-8 p.m. at various locations. You must live within the corporate/city limits of Reidsville to qualify! Applications are available online at reidsvillenc.gov. Go to Quick Links and click on "How do I become a Team Reidsville MVP?" All applications are due by March 16, 2020. Call me at 336-349-1040 with questions.
- **Saturday, March 28: A Team Bass Tournament** is planned at Lake Reidsville. There is a five-fish limit and the cost is \$50 per team. Call the lake at 336-349-4738 for more details.
- **Sunday, March 29: "Buster's Cup" Charity Tournament** is scheduled on the Lake's Edge disc golf course at Lake Reidsville. Registration starts at 8:30 a.m. but find out more details at the lake office, 336-349-4738. Cost is \$25 for Amateurs and \$30 for Pros.