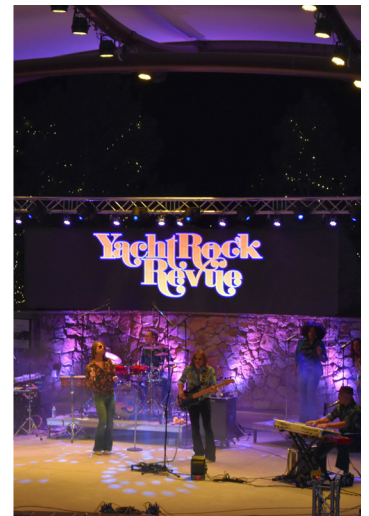




Castle Rock
**PARKS &
RECREATION**
Monthly Report:
September 2020



LEARN MORE



CRgov.com/ParksandRec



parks@CRgov.com



Upcoming Events

In response to COVID-19, many Town events have been modified, postponed or canceled to ensure the safety of community members. View up-to-date information and register for events at CRgov.com/Events.

OCTOBER

24

SPOOKTACULAR
1 - 4 p.m.
The Amphitheater and Millhouse
at Philip S. Miller Park

NOVEMBER

7

PIE BAKE-OFF
11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
The Millhouse at Philip S. Miller Park

OCTOBER

25

**FALL FESTIVAL FEATURING
CREEPY CRAWLIES AROUND THE ROCK**
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Festival Park

NOVEMBER

21

CASTLE ROCK STARLIGHTING
2 - 7 p.m.
Downtown Castle Rock



Parks, Open Space and Trails

STUDY UNDERWAY TO PLAN FEASIBILITY OF NEXT RECREATION FACILITY

A services agreement was approved in September to hire Barker Rinker Seacat, an award-winning architectural design firm, to complete an indoor recreation center feasibility study by spring 2021. The purpose of the study is to determine the capital costs, operational needs and programming potential for a future indoor recreation facility.

The study will include a community engagement process through online meetings and surveys, and will also assess different levels of cost recovery and phasing options to allow for future incremental expansion. A kick-off meeting was held with Town staff from various divisions and Barker Rinker Seacat to initiate planning efforts.

Funding for new indoor recreation facilities comes from impact fees paid through building permits on new, single and multi-family residential units. A portion of these impact fees are applied to new park development and a separate portion is dedicated for the development of indoor recreation facilities. When funding for development allows, the future facility could offer the community additional indoor space for competitive swimming, fitness spaces and more.

DESIGN PLANS FOR THE NEXT NEIGHBORHOOD PARK NEARLY COMPLETE

Throughout 2019, the Park Planning and Construction Division engaged the public to design the Cobblestone Ranch Park Master Plan. This 168-acre property is situated on the eastern edge of Castle Rock and was acquired to serve as a regional destination, much like Philip S. Miller Park. Although developing the entire regional park is not included in the Town's 2020 budget, a master plan was required to set the vision for the overall property and phase one development, which will soon provide a local park to rapidly growing neighborhood.

After the completion of the master plan, Town Council approved a contract with Norris Design to design the regional park's first phase. The funding available for this project typically provides park amenities such as pavilions, an athletic field and playgrounds. Throughout the first half of 2020, the Parks and Recreation Department sought additional public feedback on the design elements of phase one. Norris Design has since been incorporating public feedback into a final plan and construction documents.

Department staff recently received 75 percent construction documents and reviewed and provided comments. This formality allows the department to ensure that the design is being prepared in accordance with the survey results and allows for changes to be made without large cost impacts. Staff will send the final 100 percent construction documents to the Town's Development Services Department for code compliance prior to seeking bids from contractors for project development. Construction will commence in early 2021.



NATIONAL PUBLIC LANDS DAY

On Saturday, Sept. 26, the Parks and Recreation Department hosted an event at Gateway Mesa Open Space to celebrate National Public Lands Day. Always held on the fourth Saturday in September, this day was established to promote the enjoyment and volunteer conservation of America's public lands.

In Castle Rock, volunteers were recruited to assist with the maintenance and repair of specific sections of the first mile of Castle Rock's newest and very popular unpaved trail, the Legacy Trail. This first mile was built by volunteers at Gateway Mesa Open Space in partnership with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado throughout 2019. This year's National Public Lands Day event was still very successful despite being scaled back to follow current safety precautions for staff and volunteers.

$$\begin{matrix} 22 \\ \text{volunteers} \end{matrix} + \begin{matrix} 4 \\ \text{staff} \end{matrix} = \begin{matrix} 104 \\ \text{hours of service} \end{matrix}$$


KNAPWEED MANAGEMENT

As part of the Town's National Public Lands Day event in 2016, Hike and Help Day, volunteers removed Diffuse Knapweed crowding along Madge Trail at Quarry Mesa Open Space. The volunteers pulled hundreds of these invasive noxious weeds that year. The department's Natural Resource Specialist recently conducted the annual monitoring of a conservation easement at Quarry Mesa and was extremely pleased at how well the efforts of these volunteers continues to pay off. Their work, along with occasional hand pulling of knapweed plants, has greatly reduced its spread, allowing native plants to thrive and improve the habitat of this protected grassland area.





Recreation Facilities

RECREATION DIVISION CONTINUES ITS RETURN TO WELLNESS

The Miller Activity Complex has reopened by reservation only. Since its closure due to the COVID-19 public health pandemic in March, the facility has hosted summer camps and a variety of special programs while remaining closed. Reservations to use the facility are now available online at CRgov.com/Registration for the trampolines, the athletic fields, the Functional Fitness area and lap and open swim timeslots. On-deck companions joining swimmers must also preregister to enter the facility. Reservations are available 48 hours in advance and masks must be worn throughout the Miller Activity Complex, except while in the pool. Lockers and showers are also available on a limited basis, and Learn to Swim programming has returned to the MAC for select daytime and Saturday sessions.

Additional amenities also reopened at the Recreation Center. Racquetball courts are now available for singles-only play and basketball courts are open for family shoot around and limited pickup games. All courts are available by reservation only. Court schedules and reservations are available online at CRgov.com/Registration 48 hours in advance.

Burgess and Butterfield outdoor pools closed on Sept. 30 and winterization is now underway. In past years, the Aquatics staff has had up to a month to complete winterization, but due to the extended pool season in 2020, the process will be completed within approximately two weeks. This effort to complete essential tasks within a shortened timeframe has required successful collaboration between the Aquatics and Facilities divisions and outside vendors.

After weeks of planning, hosting trainings and prepping for the new school year, Adventure Club Preschool opened on Monday, Aug. 31 with lower than average numbers due to COVID-19. At the beginning of June, 153 children were registered for fall out of 160 total spots. The school year started, however, with just 103 children in the Junior Preschool, Preschool and Pre-K programs combined as many families chose to keep their children home.

Adventure Club Preschool has remained diligent in keeping children and staff safe during the 2020-2021 school year. The preschool has implemented new policies and procedures regarding group size, social distancing, screening for signs of illness, handwashing, respiratory etiquette and frequent disinfecting, all of which function as essential public health safeguards and were written following the guidance of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the Colorado Department of Human Services and Tri-County Health.

Examples of implemented policies and procedures include:

- Curbside pick-up and drop-off
- Mandatory employee face covering/mask wearing
- Having and utilizing a clear protocol for the isolation of staff and children exhibiting symptoms
- Disinfecting all high-touch surfaces at start and end of the day, and whenever possible throughout the day
- Limiting the toys in use to those that are non-porous, with smooth surfaces for effective sanitization and eliminating soft, fabric toys, dress-up clothing, sensory tables and water play
- Implementing daily health screenings for all children and staff
- Restricting all non-essential visitors
- Posting signs to remind patrons to cover coughs, minimize non-essential activities, promote frequent handwashing, etc.
- Reviewing and updating all Emergency Operation Plans with COVID-specific processes



Community Events

SUMMER EVENTS

Throughout September, many community-cherished special events wrapped up for the 2020 season.

The Fooz Fighters paid tribute to Dave Grohl's popular 90s rock band at First Fridays at Festival Park, and Yacht Rock Revue - the finest tribute to 70s and 80s light rock - delivered an exceptional performance on Saturday, Sept. 12, successfully closing out the Summer Concert Series. Internationally acclaimed, all-vocal rock band FACE followed suit, officially ending the Tunes for Trails free concert series on Thursday, Sept. 17 at the Amphitheater at Philip S. Miller Park. Due to COVID-19, each concert had capacity restrictions, and attendees wore face coverings during the check-in process and while walking around the events.

Hosted with the First Fridays After 5 concert series, the 5k After 5 Run/Walk Series ended on Friday, Sept. 4 with a Castle Rocker-themed race. The best dressed participants won prizes and all enjoyed the free music after their run/walk on the East Plum Creek trail, along with food truck fare and beverages. Additional race themes included a Patriot Run on July 3 and the Running of the Bulls on Aug. 7. Participants were grateful for the opportunity to race in-person, but registration was limited due to the public health pandemic. Start times were also staggered to allow for proper social distancing on the course.

The Farmers Market at Festival Park also ended its season in September after running every Sunday at Festival Park beginning on June 14. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, almost all returning vendors reported revenue increases over 2019 - produce and fruit vendor sales were just as successful as last year, if not slightly higher, the candle vendor doubled revenue over last season and returning bakers reported an average increase of 50 percent. Social distancing requirements were in place to ensure a safe shopping experience. Booths were spread out to a minimum of six feet, touchless payments were encouraged and a sanitation schedule was strictly enforced. The market also offered a virtual experience. For the first time, customers were able to shop online and pick-up their orders on the day of the market at Festival Park.



TRI THE ROCK

After being rescheduled from its typical weekend in May, the annual youth triathlon, Tri the Rock, was finally held on Sunday, Sept. 13. This event inspires kids to get active, train in multiple sports and to simply “try” their best. Nearly 200 children from the ages of five through 18 swam, ran and biked around Butterfield Crossing Park and Pool. To keep racers, spectators and staff safe, start times were staggered. Additionally, participants over 10 years of age were asked to wear face coverings during the check-in process.

A free first-timer clinic was held for youth new to the sport on Saturday, Sept. 6, also at Butterfield Crossing Park. Participants were invited to attend a one-hour time slot to review the racecourse and additional information.

Once again, the department received great feedback from parents, spectators and racers. Everyone was very appreciative of the event and the opportunity to safely remain active outdoors. Staff will continue to fine tune the race to make the event even better in future years.



“A HUGE THANK YOU to all who put this together. We all recognize the difficulty of doing this in a Covid environment, in addition to the ‘normal’ frenzied pace. We were very impressed by how well thought out it was as well as how smoothly everything flowed. Our best to all involved!
- The M. family”

“My husband and I just wanted to say thank you and let you know how much we appreciate that Tri the Rock was held this year. In a crazy time, my child really needed a sense of normalcy. This provided it for her!!! The staff was so helpful and encouraging to all of the athletes. We appreciate all of you! Have a great day! - Jenni D.”



Education

BATTY ABOUT CASTLE ROCK

Offered through a partnership with Douglas Land Conservancy, the Town of Castle Rock offers free, family-friendly environmental educational programs. The Animals Around the Rock series dives into the characteristics that define Castle Rock's local wildlife, and in September, Kate Hogan of the Denver Audubon offered a virtual presentation of Batty About Castle Rock. The 62 virtual participants learned interesting facts and viewing tips about nighttime and daytime insect eaters, bats and swallows, both of which have their own ecological niche in controlling mosquito and moth populations. This virtual presentation was posted to CRgov.com/RockAnimals for all to enjoy.

One additional Animals Around the Rock program will be offered in 2020 at the Fall Festival on Sunday, Oct. 25 from 1-3 p.m. Creepy Crawlies at the Rock will feature a Halloween-themed animal booth at Festival Park, including creatures like snakes, spiders, toads, owls and roaches, provided by Nature's Educators.



Arts and Enrichment

ARTS AND ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS RETURN

Arts and Enrichment programming launched in August and continued throughout September. KidzArt hosted 24 art students who learned new techniques in acrylic painting, all while enjoying pizza with friends on Fridays. In Canvas and Croissants, 20 students completed 12-by-16 inch paintings on canvas, each ready to take home to display. These unique art classes will continue to be held once a month throughout the year at the Miller Activity Complex and the Recreation Center. The very popular Bob Ross Oil Painting Class and Adult Pottery classes will also return to the Recreation Center's program schedule in October.

Dance Exploration also returned to offering classes in September and hosted 14 students as they learned the basic skills of ballet, tap, cheerleading and creative dance. Youth and adult fencing classes are also in full swing again, teaching fencing techniques to eight, socially-distanced students at a time. Dungeons & Dragons programming will soon return, promoting social skill growth and leadership development through active role play. Youth can also soon look forward to the new Kidstage Drama Workshop, which will explore the many facets of theater through fun, thought-provoking and stimulating theater-based games and activities.

All of the above programs and classes will abide by the public health practices to ensure the safety of participants and instructors and will be limited in capacity. Registration for future programs is available at CRgov.com/Registration.





Athletics and Adventure

PROGRAMMING UPDATE

The 16-week summer session of Adult Pickleball concluded in early October. Program Coordinators Jim Johnson and Robert Blalock kept the mostly senior-aged participants challenged and happy in this ever popular sport, which combines elements of badminton, ping-pong and tennis. Courts at both Founders and Deputy Zack S. Parrish III Memorial parks were utilized in the mornings on weekdays, but league schedules also allowed for open use at these facilities several times per week. As the weather begins to change, participants can look forward to the game transitioning to indoors. Held at the Recreation Center, the Fall/Winter Pickleball Leagues will begin in November and registration will open on Oct. 15.

Many fall sports are underway with safety protocols and social distancing procedures in place. The Athletics Division horse mascot has made several guest appearances this season to encourage the youth athletes and families and keep spirits high. Staff also remains busy preparing for winter sports, especially Youth Basketball as it typically serves nearly 1,000 players throughout the season. School facilities have been reserved through the Town's intergovernmental agreement with the Douglas County School District to allot teams enough practice time, which is essential due to COVID-19 capacity limitations.

Guided local and Front Range hikes continued weekly throughout September. Every Wednesday, hikers geared up to discover the spirit of outdoor adventure and explore trails near Castle Rock. Hikes typically ranged from three-and-a-half to seven miles in distance, and each hike was led by the Town's experienced Outdoor Specialist. More proficient hikers were encouraged to participate in the Advanced Hike program held on Saturdays. These guided hikes were longer in length with elevation gains of up to 2,500 feet. The September schedule featured hikes at a variety of locations such as Staunton State Park and Dawson Butte.

FALL YOUTH ATHLETICS PARTICIPATION

