

Spring brings new activities, more pool usage, new recreation centers

Spring is here! We have closed the doors on our Florida version of winter and moved right into our spring/summer season of activities and events.

When you factor in the additional daylight hours, there are even more opportunities to take advantage of the outside areas, courts, pools and parks.

If you are new to our hometown, let me explain that the Recreation Department plans, organizes and implements our programming according to the change of seasons.

Spring is now synonymous with Senior Games, which has become a staple in our community. More than 1,600 athletes will compete in two weeks of sports and recreation activities. This event is a natural fit for our active residents and lifestyle.

If you are participating, enjoy the moments competing with your fellow residents. If you never have seen the Senior Games, make a pit stop during your travels and watch the action as these athletes go for the bronze, silver and gold in their sports and age divisions.

Easter is this weekend, which means we have wrapped up a week of Camp Villages activities. The creation of this program was in response to residents who participated in our summer Camp Villages and requested a condensed version during Easter week.

The popularity of the program resulted in us purchasing two Easter Bunny outfits so he can be in multiple locations at once. If you see him, feel free to stop and take a picture!

This is one of our most rewarding programs because of the energy and connection we witness among residents and



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their grandchildren. Anytime we can use recreation to facilitate memories for others makes our jobs worthwhile.

The third and final Running of the Squares will conclude this Saturday at Spanish Springs Town Square. Close to 400 runners and walkers will take to the roadways starting at 8 a.m. We will have volunteers, law enforcement and barricades all along the route.

If you are traveling in the areas of Avenida Central, Rio Grande, Chula Vista or Del Mar, expect changes in traffic patterns and lots of slowdowns. Please use caution and patience as participants enjoy the wonderful course and the scenery in our hometown.

Spring also will see the opening of the new Tierra Del Sol Village Recreation Center. The anticipated opening will be in early May. It will be yet another new center for the use and enjoyment of our residents. If you are interested in starting a club or would like to request use of the space, call us at 674-1800.

The date of the official ribbon cutting and grand opening will appear on districtgov.org and other media outlets. Please come and help us celebrate this opening!

El Santiago Village Recreation Center (previously El Santiago Restaurant) will be the next large capital project undertaking. For the next several months, District Property

Management, along with contractors and workers, will oversee this major project. For the safety of residents and guests, we request that you stay clear of this area until the grand opening.

Spring also is the beginning of the increased use of our pools, especially the family pools. The family pools are all about grandchildren and families swimming together and having fun. It is staff's responsibility to make sure they do so in a safe environment.

As our friendly recreation assistants regularly check IDs and restroom facilities, please keep in mind the pool guidelines (posted at every pool) to ensure the activities and facilities remain safe for all of our families.

Here are a few helpful reminders that I still remember were common at my grandmother's pool – shower before entering; no running, screaming or throwing objects; and encourage younger guests to take frequent bathroom breaks. We want everyone to enjoy their experience at our pools!

The additional daylight hours mean more people are participating in outdoor exercise activities. Whether it is cycling, walking or jogging on our multimodal paths and roadways, there are a lot of users out there morning, noon and night.

Add in golf carts, cars and other modes of transportation, and it becomes quite challenging to navigate through the area at times. Our department receives many inquiries about safety in these areas. As a user of these paths and roadways, I know we all can do a better

job with courtesy, speed and awareness.

It is so easy to focus on

who's right and who's wrong when situations do arise.

The reality is the consequences can be detrimental to all involved, regardless of whether you right or wrong. We have to expect the

unexpected.

We are here to coexist and enjoy the wonderful multi-modal paths and roadway system in our master-planned community. All these activities define the makeup of

our community and why we live here. We all need to help make sure we keep it safe, active and enjoyable for one another.

That's all for this week. See you back here at Our Place

next week.

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