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Parker Parks and Recreation offers many ways to stay fit

Column by Wendi Epps



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By Wendi Epps, Recreation and Marketing Coordinator for the Town of Parker

Parker is a full-service community with a hometown feel and Parker Parks and Recreation is no exception, providing the community with facilities, services and programs that are high-quality, diverse, sustainable, accessible and customer-oriented. The Parks and Recreation Department has something for everyone. Whether patrons are looking for a place to picnic, an enrichment class to take or an athletic league to join, Parker Recreation has it.

The commitment and support of the staff, programs and community is reflected not only in the satisfaction of patrons, but also through peer recognition. Parker's Parks and Recreation Department has twice been selected (in 2000 and 2011) as the Gold Award Winner as the nation's top department for its population size. The Gold Medal award is given to departments displaying the highest degree of excellence in parks and recreation administration.

Parker Recreation has two main fitness facilities. The Parker Recreation Center (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=384>) is a state-of-the-art facility featuring an indoor pool with a water slide and sauna, triple gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms, cardiovascular and circuit equipment, free weights, aerobics and cycling studios and locker facilities. Many of the group fitness classes take place in the aerobics studio and most are free with daily admission or membership.

The Parker Fieldhouse (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=348>) offers an amazing 100,000 square feet of action and excitement! This is the place where the majority of indoor team sports take place. An indoor sports turf, batting cages, gymnasiums, an inline rink with Sport Court flooring, the Pinnacle Climbing Wall, an elevated track, a fitness loft and an indoor playground make this building a popular place for sports enthusiasts of every age and ability level.

Of course, Parker Parks and Recreation is much more than facilities. Parker Recreation strives to target patrons of all ages, interests, abilities and stages of life. A full range of adult and youth programming (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?NID=226>) is available, including year-round swimming lessons, special interest classes for children and adults, fitness and wellness programs as well as community events. Recreational sport leagues (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?NID=322>) are available year-round for kids as young as three through ages 50 and up.

Parker Recreation aspires to offer new programs as the population grows and diversifies. In addition to more than 70 popular group classes per week (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=307>) like yoga, spin, Pilates and Zumba, a wide variety of strength training and cardiovascular group fitness classes are offered to help patrons meet their fitness and wellness goals. These classes provide energetic and active workouts that help participants lose weight, increase muscle strength, gain lean muscle mass and increase endurance. New facilities, experienced instructors and a supportive group atmosphere all help keep participants motivated!

The Cancerfit (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=784>) program helps adult cancer survivors stay active during and after treatment, and Parker's Therapeutic Recreation Program (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=892>) is designed to enhance the quality of life for individuals

with disabilities. Pre-Natal Weight Training and Pre-Natal Yoga help the expecting mom stay fit during pregnancy, as well as working on stretching, breathing and relaxation techniques to relieve the common discomforts of pregnancy. Buggy Fitness allows the new mom to bring babies and toddlers for an interactive workout and helps women lose the weight they gained during pregnancy.

Parker Recreation encourages its patrons to get out of the gym and enjoy a wide variety of league and drop-in sports (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?NID=322>) for youth and adults. Try joining a volleyball, basketball, baseball, kickball, tennis, softball, kickball, inline hockey or soccer league! In addition to leagues, there are also short camps, clinics and special events that run year-round focusing on a specific sport. If you aren't the competitive type, we also have a variety of drop-in games available for people of all skill levels.

When it comes to fitness, convenience plays a big part. Parker Recreation offers fitness classes seven days a week and almost any time of day. Fees are minimal and drop-in's or monthly registrations are welcome! Gym hours allow kids to attend Kids Zone activities while Mom works out and sports programs are offered seven days a week to fit into busy schedules.

The 5K Run Series features races that have helped thousands of runners get off of the couch and onto the trails. Parker Parks and Recreation takes pride in the organization, participation and experience of race participants. The Valentine's Day 5K, So Long to Summer 5K and the Turkey Day 5K are planned for either walkers or runners, going solo or with the family. In some cases, even the family dog is welcome!

The Town of Parker currently maintains about 250 acres of develop parkland and more than 900 acres of open space. Parker's parks cater to the interests of area residents, including the O'Brien Park, the Stroh Ranch Soccer Fields, the Salisbury Equestrian Park and a number of community parks and trailheads. The newest addition, Railbender Skate and Tennis Park, features six lighted tennis courts, a 36,000 square foot lighted skate park with a street, plaza, bowl and transition features, a children's playground and picnic shelters.

In addition to first-rate facilities, parks, trails and programs, reasonably priced memberships and discounts (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?NID=419>) and fitness specials (<http://www.parkeronline.org/index.aspx?nid=217>) are offered periodically throughout the year. Passes are available for purchase and allow patrons to take advantage of the amenities at both the Recreation Center and the Fieldhouse. Ten and 20-visit passes are available in addition to one, three, six month and annual passes for individuals, seniors and families.

With variety and flexibility, Parker Parks and Recreation has something for even the busiest of people. Visit <http://www.parkerrec.com/> (<http://www.parkerrec.com/>) to read more about fees, passes and schedules for these classes, sports and activities. Parker Recreation makes it easy and fun to work physical activities in your busy schedule. Get online or visit a facility today!

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