



East Goshen Township, Department of Parks and Recreation

End of Year Report

2018

The East Goshen Township Department of Parks and Recreation (EGPR)



Vision Statement: *In the Business of Making Memories*

The department Vision Statement is two-fold. We see our role as providing the parks, facilities, programs and events that create opportunities for the community to make worthwhile memories close to home. Staff also recognizes that resources can be finite, and employs an entrepreneurial spirit to foster community engagement, partnership development and funding cultivation.

Mission Statement: *The EGPR's mission is to provide enriching recreational activities, maintain beautiful parks and preserve the environment for the well-being of our community.*

EGPR provides a fully developed parks and recreation experience for its residents and the greater West Chester area. Department staff utilizes the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) three pillars of **Conservation, Social Equity and Health & Wellness** to guide programming development.

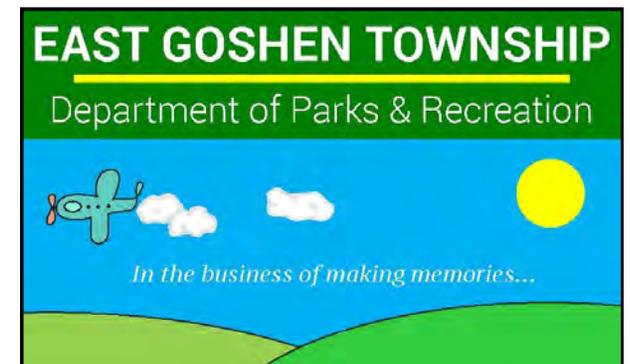
Number of Parks: Four; East Goshen, Applebrook, Milltown, Mill Creek

Developed Park Acreage: 175.0

Township owned open space: 322.0

Annual Program Hours: 711.0 (an increase of 583% since 2014)

Volunteer Hours: 400.0



Department Accomplishments

East Goshen Township Park playground renovation completed June 30th, 2018, becoming the first state funded **nature play area** in Pennsylvania.

Secured \$980,000 in grants from PA DCNR, DCED and DEP to develop Milltown Dam and Hershey's Mill Parks. This brings the department's three year total to **\$5.6M in grant funding** for the Paoli Pike Trail, EGT Park destination playground and Milltown Dam Park capital projects.

East Goshen Township was designated a **Gold level** sustainable community by the Pennsylvania Sustainable Community Certified Program, the first in Chester County.



Township Poet Laureate Nancy Daversa created the widely successful “Escape the Blacksmith Shop” activity

EGPR's Mid-Atlantic Camp Dance became the template for NRPA's National Summer Camp Dance. In total, **over 50,000** campers across the country took part, dancing to EGPR moves!



The East Goshen Township Park Playground Renovation

East Goshen Township Park Playground Renovation

Funding assistance has been provided by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau of Recreation and Conservation Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund as well as the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Commonwealth Financing Authority.



2017

On June 30th, 2018, East Goshen Township was joined by elected officials, project partners, and local residents to open the new Township destination playground. A first of its kind in Pennsylvania, this kid-engineered play space encourages an immersive, fun and exciting play experience. As shown below, a great deal of planning, time and collaboration took place to bring this project to life.



Project Timeline

Need for new playground identified	Spring 2014
623 kid engineers design playground concept	Fall 2015
Park Master Plan/Playground adopted	March 1, 2016
Grant Funding secured	\$250,000 DCNR-C2P2; Winter 2016 \$225,000 DCED-GTRP; Winter 2016
Design finalized/Project partners selected	June 2017
Construction begins	September 1, 2017
Construction certified	June 28th, 2018
Playground opens	June 30, 2018



The East Goshen Township Park Playground Renovation

As one can see from the project timeline, many hands made this project a success! We would like to thank the following project partners.

Township Board of Supervisors

Senator Tom Killion

Representative Carolyn Comitta

PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

PA Department of Community and Economic Development

Township Park Commission

Department of Public Works

Thomas Comitta Associates

Recreation Resource USA

Pennoni Engineering Inc.

Eagle Scout Dylan Golden

The Radcliffe Family

The Friends of East Goshen

The kids of East Goshen Township!

Fun Facts!!

Play is up 418% since the new playground opened!

Saturday, August 24th was the playground's busiest day...with a whopping 1311 kids!



Out and about: People in the parks

304,220 Park users on the trail system and EGT Park playground (*using SOPARC data, see Park Usage Report)

21,500 Park users during facility rental events

8,000 Came out to the “Big Four” department sponsored events

4,500 Enjoyed amphitheater events

2,500 Visited the Farmers Market this season

1,500 Kids had an awesome time during youth activities

1,650 Attended senior programming, trips and other events

400 Realized health and wellness goals utilizing Township fitness programs

Note: Park use was negatively affected by 2018’s record setting frequency and intensity of rain. For example, permitted use of the sports fields was down 20% due to field closures.

The East Goshen park system had over 344,000 visitors in 2018!!!

*Walking on our trails saved residents \$4.87M in public health care costs!**

Empowering young leaders

The department believes it plays a vital role in providing compelling, noteworthy and character building opportunities for young residents to develop and display leadership skills. Some of these opportunities include:



Partnering with West Chester University's ENG 368 class to provide real-world business writing applications.

Engaging West Chester area school students with exciting discussions that augment classroom learning modules. EGPR is partnering with East Goshen Elementary School in the spring of 2019 to offer a STEM-based across grade playground design project.



The "Why is Play Important" Poetry Contest culminating with winner Hannah Diem's recitation as Keynote Speaker at the June 30th playground dedication.

Creating the "Playground 101" video with local children leading the filming, helping to create scripts and choosing various cinematic shots.



Providing impactful park projects for Eagle Scouts, such as the Autism-focused walking labyrinth at the new playground.



Staff and CIT programs offer opportunities for professional and personal development.

2018 Camp Staff MVP Kiri Burgos

EGPR brings history to life!



The Township's Blacksmith Shop was the backdrop for the first department Escape Room. The event sold out within an hour, and brought a multi-generational group of participants, eager to dive into a 1700s style historical event! The Escape Room culminated as participants successfully finished the adventure, and were met by the Township Blacksmith plying his trade on site! The Escape the Blacksmith Shop event will be featured in the March edition of the national *Parks and Recreation Business* magazine.

Promoting Social Equity

East Goshen Township parks also celebrates events, activities and programs that help build communities to serve all populations. In keeping with this goal, we partner with numerous community organizations in a variety of capacities. Some of these organizations include:

YMCA of the Greater Brandywine, West Chester branch

Bob Kelly BK5K for Nemours Hospital

PRO-ACT Ambassadors for Recovery

Youth Mentoring Partnership

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Brain Injury Association of America

Walk MS

American Cancer Society

National Eating Disorder Association

Stages Arts Initiatives

SEWA International

Memorial Walk for Bianca Robertson

Saturday, August 5th, 2018

On June 28, 2017, Bianca Roberston, recent graduate of Rustin High School, was murdered during a road rage incident. Bianca's family and friends came to East Goshen Township Park on August 5th, 2018, to celebrate Bianca's life and advocate against gun violence with a well attended walk in her honor. The 2019 Memoria Walk for Bianca is set for Sunday, August 4th, 2019.

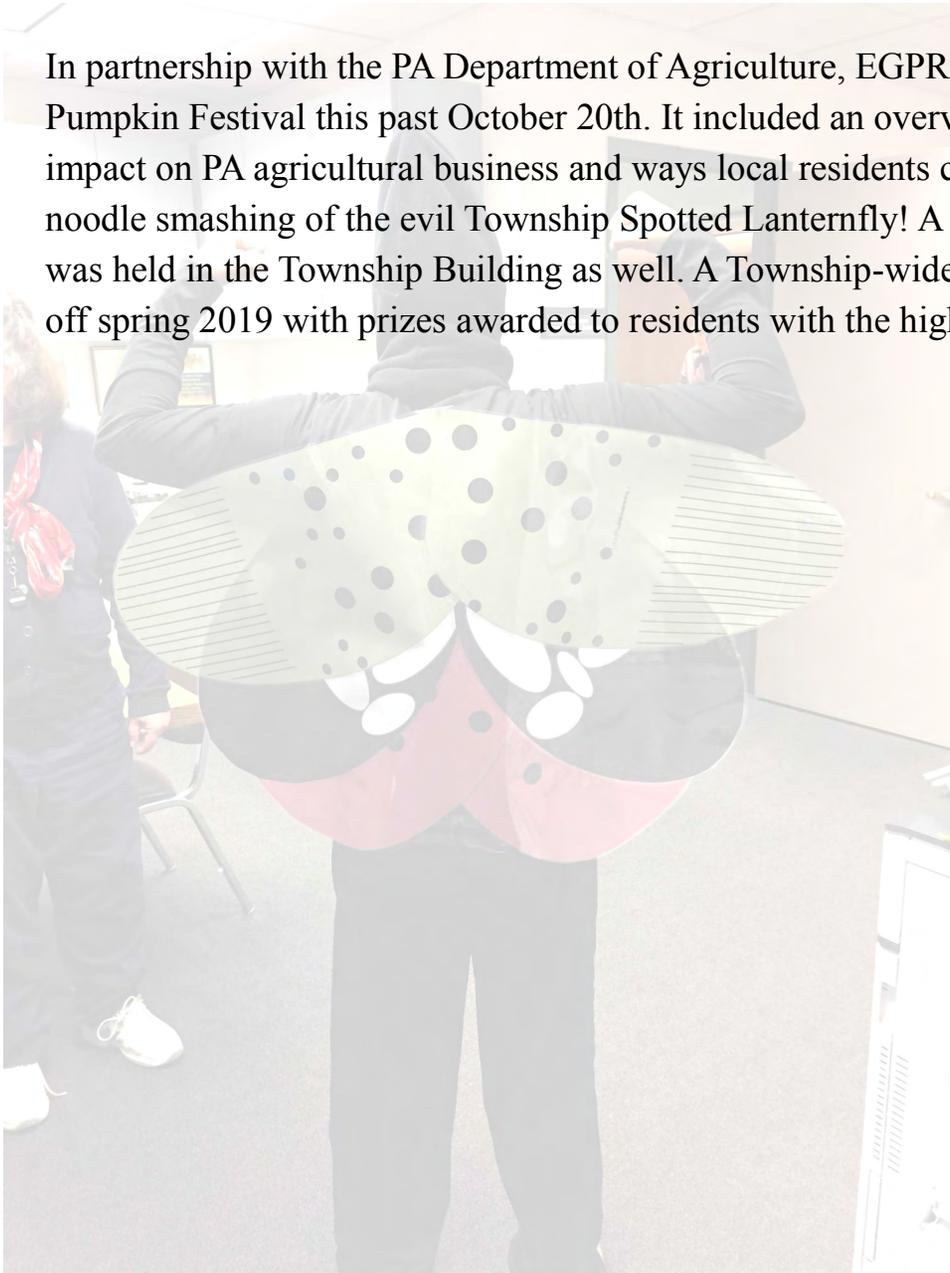


“The memorial walk for Bianca was a great way keep her name alive and a chance to shout from the mountain top about the prevention of gun violence!”

~Michelle Robertson, Bianca's Mother

Making conservation efforts fun!

In partnership with the PA Department of Agriculture, EGPR held a spotted lanternfly “smashathon” at its annual Pumpkin Festival this past October 20th. It included an overview of the spotted lanternfly’s potential \$17B negative impact on PA agricultural business and ways local residents can get involved. It concluded with a hilarious pool noodle smashing of the evil Township Spotted Lanternfly! A more formal presentation by Forester Michael Panuschka was held in the Township Building as well. A Township-wide smash campaign kicks off spring 2019 with prizes awarded to residents with the highest smash totals!



Program Spotlight—Teen Awesome FEST

The 2018 Teen Awesome FEST was a first of its kind event in Chester County. Twelve community partners collaborated to bring Awesome FEST to life, with the goal of providing a positive, drug free event where teens could celebrate their uniqueness in a supportive and collaborative environment. A Teen Advisory Committee was formed that guided event planning and managed all aspects of event operations. The night included an Open Mic, teen comedians, yoga, kickball, Rhythm of Life drumming and bhangra dance and was enjoyed by over 150 area teenagers. The 2019 Teen Awesome FEST is set for Saturday, August 16th, 2019. The 2019 event will also include the inaugural Chesco Teen Filmmakers Showcase, offering area teen filmmakers the opportunity to see their films on the big screen and their name in lights, courtesy of the Movie Tavern Exton.



Advisory Committee Members (L-R):

Chet, Aarushi, Katie

EGPR impacts felt across the state

The Department Director is the Chair of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society's Opioid Task Force (OTF). In the past year, the OTF successfully finalizing partnerships with the PA Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the Penn State Consortium to Combat Substance Abuse with the intent to roll out a Sports Coaches Opioid Education Program. Locally, EGPR has partnered with the Chester County Department of Drugs and Alcohol Services, PRO-ACT and other community organizations in various capacities.

The Department Director also recently served on the 2018 DCNR/PRPS Leadership Summit Planning Committee. This once per decade summit brings leaders together to identify and address emerging issues in the parks and recreation field. He was the Lead Writer for the Health and Wellness paper, leading problem-solving discussions concerning obesity, community walkability, opioids and health care system partnerships.



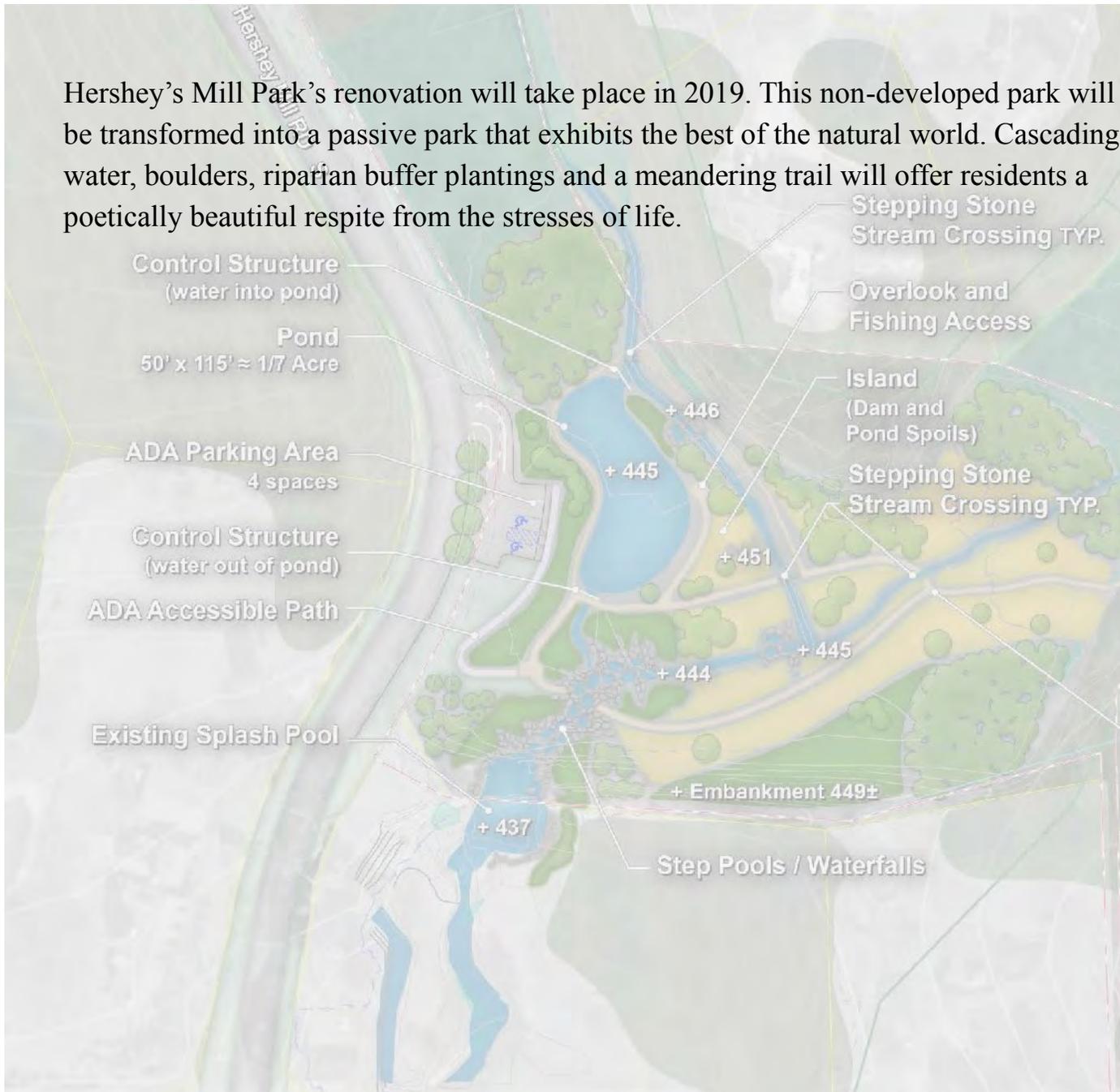
Naloxone training at the Township Building, March 2018



Department Director Jason Lang discussing quantitative reporting with a colleague at the 2018 Leadership Summit

Looking towards the future

Hershey's Mill Park's renovation will take place in 2019. This non-developed park will be transformed into a passive park that exhibits the best of the natural world. Cascading water, boulders, riparian buffer plantings and a meandering trail will offer residents a poetically beautiful respite from the stresses of life.



Water Edge Access



Example Constructed Waterfall / Step Pools



Low Meadow Plantings – sedges and milkweed





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