

## **Parks Report for September 9, 2024, Penn Township Board Meeting**

I am pleased to provide an update on the activities and events held in our parks over the past few months.

### **Brunch Tournament - July 20, 2024**

On July 20th, we hosted a unique and exciting brunch tournament that combined the "Up and Down the River" format with a poker twist. Participants played multiple rounds of games, earning cards based on their performance. At the end of the tournament, players used their collected cards to form the best possible poker hand, and the winners were determined by the best poker hands.

The event was a tremendous success, bringing together community members for a day filled with great food, friendly competition, and lots of fun. We received positive feedback from many participants who enjoyed the combination of strategy and luck involved in the games, as well as the camaraderie that developed throughout the event.

### **Helping Hands Benefit Tournament - July 27, 2024**

On July 27th, we hosted a tournament to benefit Helping Hands of Cass County, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to serving economically disadvantaged residents of Cass County and helping them bridge the gap. The tournament entry fees, along with generous additional donations from area farms and the Penn Township Pickleball community, raised over \$8,000 for this worthy cause. Numerous packages of new socks and underwear were also donated, providing essential items for those in need.

The event was a fantastic evening of great food, friendly competition, and community spirit. Players, Helping Hands board members, and community members all came together to support families in Cass County, showcasing the strong sense of community and compassion that defines Penn Township. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our sponsors: Dussel's Farm Market and Greenhouses, Bob and Vickie File, the Penn Township Pickleball Club, and all of the area farmers who contributed to the Helping Hands fundraiser. Your generosity made this event possible and ensured its success.

### **Hydro of Cassopolis Company Picnic - August 2, 2024**

On August 2nd, we were delighted to host Hydro of Cassopolis for their company picnic at the park. They provided a food truck, an ice cream cart, games, and prizes for their employees, creating a fun and festive atmosphere. We are thrilled to offer this kind of venue for our local businesses to enjoy and look forward to welcoming more corporate events in the future.

### **Ladder League Wrap-Up - August 1, 2024**

We concluded our ladder league on August 1st, marking the end of another fun community event filled with spirited competition and fellowship. The ladder league has been a wonderful

opportunity for players of all skill levels to come together, enjoy the game, and build lasting friendships.

### **Teen Tournament - August 25, 2024**

On August 25th, we hosted a teen tournament, highlighting the talents of our younger players. The tournament featured some exceptional matches, with the final tie-breaker being a particularly memorable game between two brothers, each paired with another player. Watching the intensity and skill of these young athletes felt like watching professionals on television.

The final standings for the tournament were:

1. Pierce Gardner
2. Quade Gardner
3. Will Eby
4. Kamryn Fizer

It was incredibly rewarding to see these teens not only showcase their skills but also form new friendships and enjoy the spirit of competition.

### **Labor Day Weekend Open Play**

Finally, over Labor Day weekend, we saw a wonderful turnout for open play. Families, neighbors, friends, and newcomers all came together, with three generations playing side by side on the courts. It was a true testament to the role our parks play in bringing the community together and providing a space for recreation and connection. The courts are indeed a blessing to our community, offering a place for people of all ages to engage in healthy activities and build community ties.

Thank you to everyone who participated in these events, and a special thanks to our dedicated volunteers who make these gatherings possible. We look forward to continuing to provide a vibrant and welcoming park environment for all.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lisa Fitzsimons  
Parks Director, Penn Township