



GSP News



Fall 2014

WHERE YOUTH IN THE COMMUNITY PROSPER

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Progress at the Park

By Tom Deaver, Executive Director

Labor Day 2014 marked the 7th year anniversary for the Georgia Soccer Park, aka Georgia Sports Park. While we have made some visible progress in our mission to provide a safe, enjoyable, and high-quality field facility, much more than most people realize has been happening behind the scenes.

Visualize More Soccer Fields... and a Building with Bathrooms

Opening in the middle of the real estate meltdown had an effect on the park's ability to finish construction as planned. But our supporters have done a tremendous job to keep the park alive through a tough time, so we can continue to provide the best natural grass fields in the state and host a large variety of community events, leagues, and tournaments.

We have "paid down" a construction loan from about \$2.5 million to about \$250,000, but we had to give a valuable piece of non-flood plain land to the bank in the deal. That land was supposed to have been developed and sold to provide funds to pay off the loan, build a building, and do more development at the park. Due to the economic crash it didn't work out like we had hoped in 2006.

The good news our non-profit still owns 100 acres at the park which is enough land to finish the 16 field facility as planned.

As funds allow, we will continue with development. Next on the list is a building with bathrooms, a classroom, and possibly a multi-use indoor sports court too.

Ways to Support the Park

All of our partners, tenants and customers are valued and highly appreciated, and the field rental and parking fees help to cover the park's operational expenses. However, we still operate at a loss every year. In order to do more development at the facility, additional financial support is needed.

Sponsors are essential to these fundraising efforts, so please donate and spread the word about all the good things the 501c3 non-profit facility does for the community. Visualize the potential of the park, and help us realize that vision. There are also advertising opportunities at the park, where we can put your business's name next to the beautiful fields. Please contact us for more information on sponsorships and advertising. Call us! We are flexible and open to your ideas.



Backstop Netting Installed

All the fields now have big nets behind the goals, making the 11-a-side soccer games at park much more enjoyable. Teams, coaches, and parents can focus more on play now, and worry less about fetching stray balls in the creek and woods.



Compost Tea Improves Soil/Grass

We are brewing and applying our own actively aerated compost tea, made specifically for GSP's soil. Compost tea adds beneficial life to the soil and cuts down on the need for chemicals.

2014 PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Backstop Netting Installed Behind All 12 Goals

In February 2014, we installed backstop netting with metal poles behind all twelve of the big goals on the six fields at the park. Each net is about 25 feet high and 100 feet wide and is able to be raised up and fastened so that when not in use, people and wildlife can pass underneath it. These backstops make the park safer and do a lot to improve the quality of the 11-a-side soccer games at the park.



Feel free to take a shot in the game! No more fear of losing your expensive ball in the creek or woods...unless you miss the goal and the whole backstop too. If that happens please be careful when fetching the ball... and maybe practice more on your shooting accuracy...just joking!



We designed and installed backstop netting with metal poles and 4 inch mesh net behind all 12 of the big goals.

Tree Benches Built in Memory of GSP Family

Special thanks to Mark Swanson of the AFDC for his donation of time and master carpentry skills, we were able to build some benches around the trees near the parking lot. These benches are a great place to relax while watching your friends and family on the fields. The first two are dedicated to two of the park's friends and family who passed away recently. Corporal Crystal Parker of the East Point Police Department was a wonderful friend on the park and helped keep us safe and even mentored kids at the park. Miss Reina As-Salaam was a big part of the original park family and always brightened everyone's day at the park. These incredible people will be terribly missed and never forgotten.



Please use the benches to relax and reflect on your relationships and time with family and friends at GSP.

Beverage Cart Now Here for YOU!

With service brought right to the sidelines, fans can enjoy a selection of hot K-Cup coffees, hot coco, and teas, as well as cold drinks of course, like Gatorade, Powerade, bottled water and soft drinks. Hungry? We have some snacks as well. The cart will be at the park on most weekends and by request for your event. Feel free to suggest items for us to stock. No...no beer, sorry!



The "Bev Cart" provides refreshments on the sidelines.

2014 FIELD IMPROVEMENTS

Organic Compost Tea Improves Soil and Grass

After experimenting with actively aerated organic compost teas for several years and seeing positive results, this year we began brewing and applying our own customized blend of tea on all the fields. We now have the equipment to brew large enough amounts of tea so that we can apply it on all the fields when needed. This amazing product improves the fields by adding beneficial microorganisms to the soil. These microbes add good life to the sand-amended soil and make the fields stronger by their mutualistic relationships with the roots of the grass.



By adding helpful bacteria, mycorrhizae (good fungi), and other microorganisms that have a symbiotic relationship with the soil and grass, we have seen wonderful results in many ways including less thatch, deeper roots, and healthier grass. We have also been able to cut down on the amount of fertilizers and chemicals we use to feed the grass and control diseases.



Used Aerators Purchased, Refurbished and Put to Work on the Fields

GSP purchased two used PTO powered aerators from an equipment auction and had them refurbished to excellent condition in 2014. These aerators are key components in the fields' maintenance schedule and will be used regularly throughout the summers. They do a fantastic job to relieve compaction, break up the thatch layer, and even top-dress the fields with sand by bringing root zone sand to the surface. Aeration improves drainage and allows for water, air, and nutrients to cycle through the soil.



Daisy (Duke and Lady too, not pictured) keeps GSP's equipment safe. Daisy even helped purchase the aerators at the auction (the auctioneer liked her).



Master Mechanic Augustine "Augie" Garcia (above center) rebuilt the aerators and keeps GSP's equipment running all year long. The park's "Señor Dollar"s, Ramon and Salvador Arriola, not only watch the gate on the weekends, but operate equipment and help to maintain the fields and facility.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, OR TO MAKE A DONATION TO THE PARK PLEASE CONTACT:

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