

Contact: Ryan Yearous
Recreation Specialist
552-6266
721-PARK
ryearous@ci.missoula.mt.us

600 Clegg Lane
Missoula, MT 59801
www.missoulaparks.org



PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE THROUGH OCTOBER 3, 2015

Parks and Recreation hosts free pickleball event this Saturday

Join Missoula Parks and Recreation for the 4th Annual Pickleball Palooza on Saturday, October 3 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Fort Missoula tennis courts. The free event introduces the sport to beginners and includes a fun open play with experienced players. All equipment will be provided by Missoula Parks and Recreation and all ages are welcome. Participants can learn the basics, try the game, and get information about winter indoor play.

This year's Palooza celebrates three years of organized pickleball play in Missoula, says Recreation Specialist Ryan Yearous. "It's great to see how pickleball has caught on in Missoula and how the program has grown in just a few short years," Yearous said. About 75-100 players actively participate in Parks and Recreation leagues and events. Local players formed the Zoo Town Pickleball club and have partnered with Parks and Recreation to host open, league and tournament play and paint pickleball lines on area tennis courts.

Pickleball, one of the country's fastest-growing sports, is easy for the whole family to learn and play. It's an exciting game that's a cross between tennis, badminton and ping-pong. The game is played on badminton-sized courts with the net lowered to 34 inches in the center. Players use a perforated plastic "whiffle" ball and wooden or composite paddles. According to the USA Pickleball Association, the sport has about 100,000 participants nationwide and it has become extremely popular in retirement communities across the U.S.

For a look at how the game is played, visit www.missoulaparks.org for video links and information, or phone 721-PARK. No pre-registration is necessary for the October 3 event. Parking may be limited, due to Diva Day event at Community Medical Center, participants may want to arrive early.

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