



Chief Gene Shepherd Park's grand opening pushed back to spring

BY SARAH WOJCIK
swojcik@candgnews.com

SHELBY TOWNSHIP — While officials hoped to host a big grand opening for Shelby's newest park this fall, the cooling temperatures beat out construction and put a hold on the official celebration until the spring.

Treasurer Michael Flynn said that Chief Gene Shepherd Park essentially is done, but

the township just needs to wait until spring to resurface and stripe the parking lot and adhere a large fire truck decal on the clubhouse's garage door. This week, he said the township will be painting the clubhouse fire-engine red.

"It's coming along. Last week, we put in the asphalt for the (walking) path," he said. "We really (wanted to finish it this fall). It's kind of a bummer, but anytime you're build-

See PARK on page 23A

Township officials said Chief Gene Shepherd Park will have its grand opening celebration in the spring.

Photo by Sarah Wojcik

Park

from page 3A

ing something, sometimes these delays happen.”

Flynn said that the construction of the park is coming in about \$5,000 under budget at \$445,000, which will be subsidized by private donations and cable TV income, and that he is excited to formally open the park. However, he added that people are already utilizing the park, from both Shelby Township and from the surrounding communities, and that they are more than welcome to do so.

Developing the park was on the list of Shelby Township's top 10 priorities of 2013. The park is situated on property that formerly housed the short-lived indoor soccer arena, Soccer City. Wetland damage and resident disapproval of the large soccer dome nixed the project, and litigation cost the township roughly \$1.3 million.

The park is named after the township's late fire chief who passed away in 2012 after a battle with cancer. Supervisor Rick Stathakis said that what was once a problem for the township has turned into a huge opportunity for the community to

pay a special tribute to Gene Shepherd.

The park includes fire-engine play equipment, a red-and-black playscape, a red-and-black pavilion, a new clubhouse with public restrooms, sand volleyball courts, a soccer field, tennis courts, bocce ball courts, horseshoe pits, benches, a walking path that will connect the park with Yates Cider Mill and a 128-spot parking lot.

Flynn said the grand opening would feature appearances from the Shelby Township Fire Department and provide the public an opportunity to see what the park has to offer the community.

Chief Gene Shepherd Park is located on 23 Mile Road, east of Dequindre Road.

For questions, call the Treasurer's Office at (586) 731-5145.

