

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sara Lu Christian  
Amherst County Recreation & Parks Department  
434-946-9371  
Slchristian@countyofamherst.com

### **The Amherst County Recreation & Parks Department Invites Amherst County Residents to “Get Fit” With Parks and Recreation**

*Amherst County Recreation & Parks celebrates Family Health & Fitness Day, Saturday, June 8*

The Amherst County Recreation & Parks Department invites all Amherst County residents to “Get Fit” With Parks and Recreation on Saturday, June 8, as they celebrate Family Health & Fitness Day. Organized by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Family Health & Fitness Day promotes the importance of local parks and recreation in keeping communities healthy.

To celebrate, Amherst County Recreation Department encourages everyone to gather with family and friends and take a picnic or go fishing at one of the county lake parks – Mill Creek Lake, Stonehouse Lake, Thrashers Lake, Monacan Park. Or visit Coolwell Park and play ball, take a hike around the nature trail, or gather for a picnic there. There is also a playground at each of these parks for the children to play on.

Added to which, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Amherst County Batteau Day will be taking place at Riveredge Park on June 8<sup>th</sup>. This is another opportunity for the family to gather and enjoy the outdoors while celebrating Amherst County as the birthplace of the James River Batteau. There will be living history interpreters, music, games and activities for families.

- Various research studies are confirming that community parks and recreation, green space and time outdoors is critical for creating healthy, active and sustainable communities. Anyone can experience the benefits by visiting our county parks and getting involved in recreation programs any time of the year, and especially on Family Health & Fitness Day.

Residents also can participate in one of NRPA’s Top Four Ways to “Get Fit” With Parks and Recreation:

- **Take a Walk**
- **Enroll in a Fitness Program**
- **Create Your Own Exercise Routine**
- **Play Outside**

The Amherst County Recreation & Parks Department offers year-round opportunities for families and individuals to stay active and fit. To learn more about the health and wellness opportunities offered by the Recreation Department, visit [www.countyofamherst.com](http://www.countyofamherst.com).

## ***2019 Family Health & Fitness Day Fact Sheet***

- NRPA's Family Health & Fitness Day — celebrated the second Saturday in June each year — promotes the importance of parks and recreation in keeping communities healthy
- Various research studies are confirming that community parks and recreation, green space and time outdoors is critical for creating healthy, active and sustainable communities. Anyone can experience the benefits by visiting our county parks and getting involved in recreation programs any time of the year, and especially on Family Health & Fitness Day.
- In addition to visiting one of the county parks on June 8, Amherst County residents can get involved in Family Health & Fitness Day by:
  - 1. Taking a Walk**
  - 2. Enrolling in a Fitness Program**
  - 3. Creating Their Own Exercise Routine**
  - 4. Playing Outside**

### **Health and Wellness Benefits of Parks**

- Living close to parks and other recreation facilities is consistently related to higher physical activity levels for both adults and youth. Moreover, parks provide a connection to nature, which studies demonstrate relieves stress, tightens interpersonal relationships and improves mental health.
- According to a poll conducted by the National Recreation and Park Association, 36 percent of Americans use a trail for hiking, running or walking to relieve stress, while 35 percent gather with family, friends or pets at a local park.
- On average, children who live in greener environments weigh less than children who live in less green areas.
- Between 2000 and 2012, more than 85 studies have been published that link parks to better physical and mental health.