

Roaming Around Reidsville

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This year's Independence Day celebration will have the same spectacular fireworks, but the annual pyrotechnics display will be at a new location.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc on schedules and plans for families, organizations, businesses and yes, even municipal governments like the City of Reidsville. While North Carolina has entered Phase 2 of its re-opening plan, the City, like our residents, continues to exercise caution as we return to our normal activities.

A popular activity around this time of year is the Independence Day celebration at Lake Reidsville. Traditionally the entertainment, rides and fireworks have drawn nearly 4,000 people to the lake on Water Works Road. While July 4th is still a month away, the City's Parks & Recreation staff had to start making some tough decisions about the upcoming event. We are all uncertain of what our new "normal" looks like, and Parks & Rec staff knew many visitors would probably be unsure about going to the lake this year for the festivities.

At an event this large, it can be very hard to maintain social distancing of six feet, even if you don't factor in what Governor Cooper may determine to be an appropriate size for mass gatherings. Many still remain afraid, and rightly so, of getting out at all, much less going into crowds the size of Reidsville's annual Independence Day celebration. So, Parks & Recreation staff thought outside the box and instead of cancelling the event, made plans to modify the celebration.



LET'S LIGHT UP THE SKY
in REIDSVILLE for
Independence Day 2020!

Friday, July 3 • 9:30 p.m.

Fireworks launched at Jaycee Park
this year (*gates will be closed*).

Watch the show from your home,
or from a vehicle near the park.

TEAM REIDSVILLE

This year the Independence Day festivities will be a fireworks-only event coming to Reidsville residents from Jaycee Ballpark on Friday, July 3, 2020.

“Even though it was a tough decision, we decided out of an abundance of caution, both for public safety and fiscal responsibility, to change this year’s celebration,” said Haywood Cloud Jr., the City’s Assistant City Manager of Community Services. “Planning such a large event involves the commitment of City funds and the management of thousands of people. COVID-19 has made such decisions even harder than those made in the past, especially in light of the Governor’s Executive Order on mass gatherings.”

But Parks & Recreation staff wanted to give our residents something to celebrate after months of isolation and solitary confinement for many.

“In an effort to have some sort of celebration for our residents, we worked with the Reidsville Fire Department and created a safe plan to still have the fireworks display in a location that will allow our citizens to view the lights display from home or public locations,” Cloud said. “We felt like Jaycee Ballpark was a good central location in the City that is spacious, safe and will allow for the fireworks to be visible from many places in Reidsville.”

Assistant Reidsville Fire Chief J.E. Harris said Jaycee Ballpark appeared to be the best option when Parks & Rec staff asked them to help come up with an alternative location to the lake. He noted that depending on the fireworks shell size, different safety buffers are needed when launching the pyrotechnics.

“We needed to maintain a 500-foot radius from the launch site for safety reasons,” Assistant Fire Chief Harris explained. “The only feasible location I could think of was the parking area of Jaycee Ballpark where we could control the safety area, still stay on City property for liability reasons and yet still be visible for our residents and visitors.”

Jaycee Ballpark itself will **NOT** be open to visitors. Residents will be able to watch the fireworks from the safety of their cars within a large area of the City. They can go to a nearby public location, sit in lawn chairs and take in the show, which will start around 9:30 a.m. on Friday, July 3.

Yes, some will miss the annual games and rides. Some will miss the musical entertainment. Some will miss the comradery found at the event of Lake Reidsville. Yet the beautiful fireworks display will bring out our patriotism and our love for country like it always does. It will remind us of what makes America great and why we wouldn’t want to live anywhere else. And,

hopefully, it will help remind us what we've been saying all along: Team Reidsville (and the USA) will get through this together!

And don't forget

Lakes & Trails are Open!

Lake Reidsville and Lake Hunt remain open for fishing, boating and walking the trails. (Sorry, playground areas are still closed!) While there is a small charge for fishing and boating, it costs you nothing to take your family for a picnic or hike at our lakes. Get some great exercise while maintaining social distancing from others.

Downtown Farmer's Market Open is open for Business.

The Downtown Farmers Market at Market Square has been open since the beginning of May. Outdoor Farmers Markets were exempted from Governor Cooper's Executive Order 131, but the Reidsville market is adhering to new COVID-19 guidelines. You can still get your fresh fruits and vegetables, but realize that entry into the market, etc. will be a little different as visitors must practice social distancing rules. The hours are still 7 a.m. until 1 p.m. Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays starting May 2.

But while you are staying at home

Fill out the 2020 Census! The City of Reidsville was at nearly 57% participation when this column went to press. Why is an accurate reporting of how many residents live in Reidsville so important? The Federal Government distributes approximately \$675 billion annually to local and state governments and exactly how much a municipality or State gets is based on population. The more people you have, the more money you get. Receiving such grants can also free up monies that cities can then put toward events such as the Independence Day celebration. It also affects economic development because census data is used by business owners and developers to decide where they will open new stores or expand their operations. And a final reason is that population counts help decide our electoral districts, which affects who represents you on the State and National level. If you've done it already, encourage your neighbors and family to **FILL IT OUT! Go TEAM REIDSVILLE!**