

Around Town

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By Billy Ray McKelvy

De Queen Mayor

The De Queen Parks and Recreation Department will be holding the city's first instructional youth soccer league this spring.

Soccer is still a new sport in this area and many have expressed a desire to have a field where it can be played. Until then, the league is being organized to teach the sport to young players.

The first season will be played on five consecutive Saturday mornings from March 10 through April 7. Age groups will be five and six-years, seven and eight years and nine and 10 years. A player's age will be determined as of Nov. 30, 2007.

The soccer season will conclude before baseball and softball begins, so players can also play other sports if they wish. There is a \$35 fee for the league, which includes a player's jersey, shorts, socks and shin guards. Registration forms are available at the Parks and Recreation office. Deadline to sign up is Saturday, Feb. 17.

Games will be played on two mini-fields that will be marked off on the lower softball diamond at Herman Dierks Park. Two games can be played at a time to minimize waiting. Soccer coaches are being lined up now, as well as some high school volunteers who are bilingual.

Although soccer is popular around the world, the game is new to many people in this area. An article in *National Geographic* magazine last year attributed soccer's appeal to simplicity, the fact that the game can be played anywhere with anything.

De Queen's first soccer league will be an attempt to organize the sport locally and teach the game to young players.