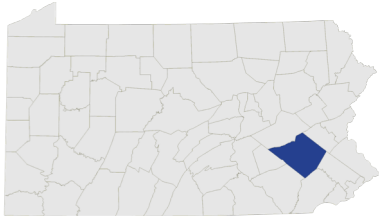


# My Story



## For Years to Come

### Jim Dietrich Park

By Karen Schreiber & Jim Bobeck, Muhlenberg Township Parks Department

*"The Keystone Fund has helped the township purchase the property, create the master plan for the park, and make improvements in the first phase of construction."*



Muhlenberg Township acquired the rights to Jim Dietrich Park in December of 1997. The land sat idle for many years before development started. Since 2009, Muhlenberg Township has developed the land into the hidden jewel of our parks system, 110 acres sitting along the Schuylkill River. The township took the farm and developed the land with three ballfields, four basketball courts, two soccer fields, three pavilions, a dog park, and two half-mile walking tracks. There is more land available, and a master plan has been developed and implemented to guide future development.

The park is used every day and is home to all of the Parks Department's big community events. Some of those events include: hosting the Vietnam Veterans Memorial moving wall, which drew over 22,000 people in five days;



**Keystone Fund Investment:** \$300,000

**Total Public/Private Investment:** \$500,000

River Fest, Muhlenberg's food and music festival which drew 15,000 people in two days in its inaugural year; and Haunted Hollow and the Spring Fiesta, which see between 3,000 and 6,000 people. The park is also host to many other charity events, tournaments, family picnics, and so much

more, including the Schuylkill River Sojourn and 5K races.

The Keystone Fund has helped the township fund the purchase of the property, create the master plan for the park, and make improvements in the first phase of construction. These improvements included the aforementioned soccer fields, two pavilions, and one of the walking trails, as well as electric

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service, public water service, and irrigation lines for the fields.

Numerous volunteer service projects have been completed at the park including bird and bat boxes, park bench installations, tree planting projects, and a pair of baseball dugouts for one of the baseball fields. Because Jim Dietrich Park was a blank slate, we are able to provide these service opportunities to our local civic clubs, filling yet another void in the community.

The off-leash dog park was developed with funds from the township's Parks Development Account, which is funded by mandatory fee-in-lieu of land dedications anytime there are land development projects in the township; there were no tax dollars used to develop the improvements. The dog park started with a simple plan to fence in a portion of the park and divide the area into separate compounds for large and small dogs. Another area was designed as a rest area to allow the turf to reestablish itself without the wear and tear associated with dogs running. Special entry gates were constructed that allow owners to leash or unleash their dog in an enclosed space where they have control of the pet, and the parking lot utilized recycled asphalt millings from township roads improvement projects.

Jim Dietrich Park will be a destination for years to come because of the ability of the Keystone Fund to support new opportunities that were possible in the park and the commitment of the township to improve upon the outdoor recreation possibilities.



**[Learn more at KeystoneFund.org.](https://www.KeystoneFund.org)**