

What's Goin' On Around Town



NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

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HISTORY IS MADE!

A miracle is often considered an extraordinary event in human affairs; a league is an association of persons brought together by a common interest, goal or cause. So, by definition, the Miracle League is an association of people brought together to take part in extraordinary events in human affairs. This rationale rings true when speaking of the Miracle League.



Photo by Bill Benz

The Miracle League, a national organization, which started in Rockdale, Georgia in 1998, is a nonprofit organization that provides individuals with special needs the opportunity to play sports, regardless of ability and age. The first field opened in April of 2000 and in April of 2012 the Miracle League Field built in Northampton Township, Pennsylvania became the latest added to the growing number of athletic fields for special athletes around the world.

The Miracle League of Northampton Township PA joined the national organization in 2007 and on September 13, 2008



Photo by Tom Sofield

the Township Board of Supervisors authorized the construction of the Miracle League fields to be built at the Northampton Township Municipal Park on Hatboro and Bristol Roads in Churchville. The site was chosen due to its close proximity to fields that were already used by the township's youth sports leagues. It was determined that the existing park infrastructure would support the additional activity and allow

the Board of Directors to focus their fundraising efforts solely on the construction of the fields. These fields, uniquely designed with special surfaces, allow athletes with special needs the opportunity to participate



Photo by Tom Sofield

in sports without barriers. The project was met with overwhelming support not only by the Township Supervisors but by the community as a whole.

The first event held in December 2008, an ice cream social, was organized to inform the special athletes and their parents of the project. The first 'official' fundraiser, a beef-n-beer was held in January of 2009 followed by numerous fundraising events such as golf outings, an art auction, headline performances and the Invincible Dinner to name a few. Many dropped their "change" into cans



Photo by Dinn Mann

placed throughout the business community, scout troops held bake sales and concerts, and brides and grooms made donations in lieu of giving wedding favors to their guests. In school year 2010-11 Council Rock School District named the Miracle League their charity of choice and many students contributed by playing dime bingo, selling used books and hand-made bracelets, washing cars and many other creative ideas which became successful fundraising activities. Corporations, foundations, small businesses and individuals made generous contributions powering the efforts of the organization to build a baseball and a multi-purpose field.

After only two and a half years of fundraising, ground breaking ceremonies took place on July 28, 2011. The Miracle League Board of Directors had succeeded in raising close to \$1 million, enough money to build both fields complete with dugouts and scoreboards! An unseasonably warm winter followed, allowing the asphalt subsurface to be poured in January 2012, and construction quickly progressed under the watchful eyes of the entire community.

On Sunday April 29, 2012 with sunny skies and smiling faces a little bit of history was made. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people celebrated the grand opening of the fields; an extraordinary event, truly a miracle!



Photo by: Dinn Mann