

= Park Safety =

" Park Safety " is the 19th episode of the second season of the American comedy television series Parks and Recreation , and the 25th overall episode of the series . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on March 18 , 2010 . In the episode , Jerry is apparently mugged , which forces his co @-@ workers to be nicer to him , and prompts Leslie to seek stronger safety measures for the city 's parks .

The episode was written by Aisha Muharrar and directed by Michael Trim . The writers sought to establish in " Park Safety " that the other characters liked Jerry , even though they often make jokes at his expense . It featured a guest appearance by comedian Andy Samberg , who previously worked with Parks star Amy Poehler on the sketch comedy series Saturday Night Live , as a parks ranger named Carl . It also featured Mo Collins in her recurring guest role as Joan Callamezzo , host of the morning news program Pawnee Today .

According to Nielsen Media Research , " Park Safety " was seen by 4 @. @ 7 million household viewers . Among audiences between ages 18 and 49 , it experienced a slightly lower rating than the previous week 's episode , " The Possum " , in part due to competition from the 2010 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament . " Park Safety " received generally positive reviews , with several reviewers praising the comedic scene in which Jerry gives an embarrassing presentation to his co @-@ workers . Samberg 's performance , however , received mostly negative reviews .

= = Plot = =

Leslie (Amy Poehler) holds a drawing to determine who will fill the park 's hummingbird feeders , a job reviled by the parks and recreation department . Jerry (Jim O 'Heir) , who is often mocked by his co @-@ workers , is chosen because everybody writes down Jerry 's name instead of their own . Later , Leslie receives a call from Ann (Rashida Jones) that Jerry is in the hospital with a dislocated shoulder . Jerry claims to have been mugged in the park , and Leslie decides nobody should tease Jerry anymore . When Jerry returns , he acts particularly buffoonish during a slideshow presentation , and ends up farting and splitting his pants , but everyone holds back laughter at Leslie 's request . Leslie meets with Carl Lorthner (Andy Samberg) , a park security ranger who is incredibly loud but oblivious to the fact . Leslie suggests Carl get more help for the park to be safe . Meanwhile , Ron (Nick Offerman) teaches a self @-@ defense course to the rest of the department so they don 't end up like Jerry .

Leslie , Tom (Aziz Ansari) , and Jerry join Carl to take a tour of the park where Jerry was mugged . Carl says the area is largely unprotected due to budget cuts , so Leslie vows to get more funding . She appears on Pawnee Today , the local news show , saying the Pawnee government failed the parks and that security is poor . Paul (Phil Reeves) , the city manager , is angry over the television appearance , but informs Leslie the stunt worked and the mayor is offering \$ 2 @, @ 500 to help fix the park . While at a press conference about the money , Jerry confesses to Leslie that he wasn 't mugged : he dropped a breakfast burrito in a creek , then fell while trying to grab it and dislocated his shoulder . He fabricated the mugger story because he was embarrassed and didn 't want everyone to make fun of him . Leslie angrily relates Jerry 's story to Mark , but he stops her short when he says that Jerry was too scared of his co @-@ workers to be honest with them . Leslie soon discovers Carl was offended by Leslie 's statements about park security and plans to show footage of Jerry falling into the creek on Pawnee Today . Leslie negotiates with Carl to not show the event , and instead they talk during the show about how much they enjoyed the film Avatar , much to the anger of host Joan Callamezzo (Mo Collins) . As part of their deal to not show the tape , Leslie buys Carl a brand new security car . Carl hands over the tape , which she agrees to throw away after she watches it one last time . The office goes back to mocking Jerry , but with less venom than before , while Jerry confides that he doesn 't really care because he 's just two years away from retiring on a full pension and enjoying a peaceful retirement .

In a side plot , a love triangle develops between Andy (Chris Pratt) , April (Aubrey Plaza) and Ann . In an interview , Ann says Andy is a fun person but was a terrible boyfriend because he is

completely reliant on others . When learning self @-@ defense from Ron , Ann takes down Andy with a wrist grab , impressing Andy but making April jealous . After Andy is accidentally knocked out by Ron , Ann later approaches Andy at his shoe shine stand and brings him gifts to help him feel better . April arrives and Andy gives her a vegetarian muffin . Surprised Andy got something for someone other than himself , Ann believes Andy has changed .

= = Production = =

" Park Safety " was written by Aisha Muharrar and directed by Michael Trim . It featured a guest appearance by comedian Andy Samberg as Carl , the park ranger . Samberg and Parks and Recreation star Amy Poehler previously appeared together as regular cast members in the NBC sketch comedy series , Saturday Night Live . The role of Carl was written with Samberg in mind because the writing staff knew they could get him as a guest appearance as long as filming corresponded with his Saturday Night Live schedule , although the character was tweaked slightly when it was confirmed Samberg would definitely play him . Samberg also knew most of the supporting cast , writers and staff when the episode was filmed . During an interview about his performance in the episode , Samberg jokingly responded :

" Well , I don 't want to jinx it , but I 'm pretty sure it 's the best episode , and maybe not just of this show but of any show on television ever , any theater show , any staged show , movie , or any , like , campfire ritual performed by cavemen . Take it all the way back . I think this is going to be the thing everyone talks about for the rest of their lives , and it will live on in infamy and history . If aliens came down and wanted one artifact to learn about human life , I think it would be this episode of Parks and Recreation . And you can take that to the bank . "

The idea of a Jerry @-@ centered episode arose when the writers decided one of the characters would get mugged . Muharrar said , " Once we thought about it , it was obvious it had to be Jerry . He 's the Parks Department punching bag , and it seemed like it was time for Jerry 's revenge . " Muharrar said the script tried to convey that although his co @-@ workers mock him , they do not hate him , and that Jerry does not take the jokes against him personally . Series co @-@ creator Michael Schur said once it was established in the episode " Practice Date " that Jerry was the co @-@ worker everyone else picked on , he felt it was important to write an episode that established the other characters actually liked Jerry , despite their jokes at his expense .

For the scenes involving self @-@ defense courses , the supporting cast underwent stunt training with the help of stunt coordinator Sean Graham . Ron wears a back support belt during the course , which was actor Nick Offerman 's idea . Offerman has many fight choreography skills from his past work in the Chicago theater , and he combined those skills with his training in Kabuki dance and theater . Offerman said , " I threw in a couple of Kabuki moves that we all had a hard time keeping a straight face through . " It was a reference to the episode " The Stakeout " , in which Ron suffered a hernia , and Muharrar said , " The idea [is] that Ron has the belt in his car trunk and is ready to go at a moment 's notice . "

" Park Safety " also featured Mo Collins as Pawnee Today host Joan Callamezzo , who previously appeared in the episodes " Pawnee Zoo " and " Christmas Scandal " . Poehler was pregnant when " Park Safety " was filmed , and some commentators said it was visibly clear in certain scenes . A newspaper clipping with a story and photo of Andy is taped to the wall of his shoeshine stand . This is a reference to the Pawnee Journal article written about him in the previous episode , " The Possum " . A stand selling Sweetums nutrition bars is visible during one of the park scenes . This is a reference to the previous episode " Sweetums " , where the company lobbies to sell its unhealthy snacks at the parks . A downloadable version of the " Safe Parks Now ! " poster Leslie made in the episode , which featured a photo of Jerry with a black eye , was also featured on the website .

= = Cultural references = =

When Leslie and Carl agree not to discuss Jerry on Pawnee Today , they instead discuss the quality of the film Avatar , the 2009 James Cameron epic science fiction film released a few months

before the episode first aired . Ann explains her proficiency during Ron 's self @-@ defense training courses results from her strong interest in female @-@ centric original movies on the women 's television network Lifetime . While describing how Tom would react to the news that Jerry dislocated his shoulder reaching for a breakfast burrito , Leslie said , " What would you do for a Klondike bar ? Kill your wife ? " This is a reference to the commercial jingle for the ice cream snack : " What would you do for a Klondike bar ? "

= = Reception = =

In its original American broadcast on March 18 , 2010 , " Park Safety " was seen by 4 @.@ 7 million household viewers , according to Nielsen Media Research . Although an increase in viewership over the 4 @.@ 6 million household viewers of the previous episode , " The Possum " , " Park Safety " marked a five percent drop in the Nielsen rating itself . It drew a 2 @.@ 0 rating / 6 share among viewers between ages 18 and 49 , compared to 2 @.@ 1 rating / 6 share the previous week . " Park Safety " suffered from competition from CBS footage of the first round of the 2010 NCAA Men 's Division I Basketball Tournament , which drew 10 @.@ 32 million household viewers during the 8 : 30 p.m. timeslot it shared with Parks and Recreation . " Park Safety " also drew less viewers (although a higher Nielsen rating) than the ABC drama series FlashForward , which drew 6 @.@ 3 million households , and a repeat of the Fox crime drama Bones , which drew 6 @.@ 6 million household viewers . Parks and Recreation outperformed a repeat of the CW supernatural ? fantasy horror series The Vampire Diaries , which drew 1 @.@ 49 million household viewers .

" Park Safety " received generally positive reviews , with several reviewers particularly praising the scene in which Jerry gives an embarrassing presentation to his co @-@ workers . Andy Samberg 's performance , however , received mostly negative reviews . Entertainment Weekly writer Sandra Gonzalez called " Park Safety " a great episode , and complimented the scenes involving Jerry and the growing romance between Andy and April . Gonzalez said the only negative aspect was Samberg , of whom she said , " the scream @-@ talking gag got old fast " . Alan Sepinwall , television columnist with The Star @-@ Ledger , also enjoyed the scene with Jerry 's presentation , and praised the show for fleshing out its minor characters , comparing it to The Office and its similar treatment of supporting characters during its second season . Sepinwall said Samberg 's character was " a little too broad for the show 's buttoned @-@ down style " but led to some funny moments .

Steve Heisler of The A.V. Club called Jerry 's presentation " one of the most amazing scenes in Parks & Rec history " . Heisler also praised Pratt 's performance and felt Ann was unusually sympathetic in " Park Safety " , but felt Samberg was poorly used and his loud talking quickly grew tiresome . New York magazine writer Steve Kandell said " Park Safety " continued an ongoing development of the mythology of the Pawnee community , comparing it to " a live @-@ action Springfield " , the setting of the animated comedy series The Simpsons . Kandell said Samberg 's character " could have been irritating but somehow wasn 't " . Matt Fowler of IGN called Jerry 's presentation " one of the best , most pointed moments of crude humor that we 've ever seen on the show " . Fowler also said Swanson 's expertise in self @-@ defense " fits perfectly " to his character . Kona Gallagher of TV Squad said the constant mocking of Jerry made him feel uncomfortable , and that Samberg " just seemed like the personification of an SNL skit instead of a real character " . But Gallagher praised Ron Swanson 's role in the episode , as well as the apparent rekindling of Ann 's feelings for Andy .

= = DVD release = =

" Park Safety " , along with the other 23 second season episodes of Parks and Recreation , was released on a four @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on November 30 , 2010 . The DVD included deleted scenes for each episode .