

IPRA Today

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Our Mission ...
"To support the advancement of park, recreation and environmental conservation opportunities through education, resource tools and advocacy."

www.iowaparkandrecreation.org

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2007 Spring Conference Luncheon and Opening Session

This year's IPRA Spring Conference opening general session and luncheon will be Monday, April 2, 12:00-1:30 pm, in Waterloo!

Our keynote speaker will be Mr. Gary Kroeger presenting "Live from the Cedar Valley! It's Monday Afternoon!"

Gary Kroeger was born in Cedar Falls, Iowa and attended Northwestern University where he studied theatre, radio, television and film. It was here where he and fellow alumni Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Brad Hall created the Practical Theatre Company. These sketches caught the eye of *Saturday*



Night Live producers and the three of them became regulars on the venerable late night comedy show.

After three years in New York on SNL, Gary moved to Los Angeles and landed a short-lived series on CBS, called *Spies*, with George Hamilton. Gary later produced his daytime chat show, *The George and Alana Show*. Television appearances on *Columbo*, *Murder She Wrote*, *Night Court* and *LA Law* led to starring roles in the forgettable films, *A Man Called Sarge*, *The Return of the Shaggy Dog* and *Archie to Riverdale and Back*. There are a few good films sprinkled in there, but Gary went on to host revamped versions of the *Newlywed Game* and the classic *Beat the Clock*.

Gary moved back to his hometown of Cedar Falls three years ago in order to raise his children in a better environment. There Gary works as the Creative Director for the Mudd Group, a nationwide advertising and marketing agency. In the last year, Gary starred in *Man of LaMancha* and *i Do, I Do* at the Cedar Falls Playhouse.

Gary will talk about his successful acting career and share some fun insights of his experiences. He will also discuss the importance of the quality of life in Iowa and why he returned home to raise his family.

Gary Kroeger, IPRA Spring Conference Keynote Speaker.

SPRING PARKS FORUM 2007

The IPRA Special Training and Seminars Committee is bringing the membership another exciting and informative forum this spring, tailored towards parks professionals and their staff. Join us for Spring Parks Forum 2007 at Marion's Lowe Park Arts and Environmental Center on Thursday, March 8, at 9 a.m. We will cover three different topics that are important as we enter the spring and summer.

Ballfield Maintenance will be presented by Dave Smith, Parks Superintendent for the Cedar Rapids Parks and Recreation Department. Dave will discuss many issues that everyone deals with when it comes to their ballfields. What are the best grooming techniques? How do I keep the grass healthy all season? What's the best infield mix? We will even cover strategies for developing partnerships and soliciting donations.



Hole digging—a ritual of Spring. Plan to attend the Spring Parks Forum at Marion to learn from specialists how to make your parks the place to be!

Plants for Problem areas will help you tackle those problem areas in your landscape. Matt Pieper, Master Gardener, will provide solutions for clay, sand, too wet, too dry and light conditions. Linn County Master Gardener Jerry Schmidt leads our last topic: Weed Control Programs. Advice will be given on how to turn your grass into a lawn. Find out the best ways to rid your green space of creeping Charlie, mushrooms, bare spots, weeds, and all those digging critters. Lunch will be provided at noon, and after lunch we will take a walking tour around Lowe Park. The tour includes a plant demonstration area created by the Master Gardeners Association.

Spring Parks Forum 2007 is \$15 per person, and lunch and snacks are included. To register, please fill out the flyer included in the newsletter and return to the IPRA office. Forms are also available online at www.iowaparkandrecreation.org. If you would like more information, you can contact Matt Beatty, Special Training and Seminars Committee Chair at 515-275-4800.

Results of IPRA Elections

Congratulations to the following individuals who were recently elected to various positions on the IPRA Board of Directors:

VICE PRESIDENT:

Ben Page—Manchester

DIRECTORS AT LARGE:

Troy Anderson—Coralville

Duane Randall—Vinton

Mark Ripplinger—Cedar Falls



N.R.P.A. GREAT LAKES REGIONAL

COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE:

Terry Hoffman—Sioux City

Here is a breakdown of the voting: 508 ballots distributed with 149 responses (29 percent). Of the 149 ballots cast for Vice President and Directors-at-Large, 114 (79 percent) ballots were received by mail; 23 (15 percent) were cast on-line; 12 (8 percent) were faxed and no ballots were e-mailed.

Voting for the NRPA Great Lakes Regional Council Representative was completed as follows: mail—79 ballots (73 percent); on-line—20 (18 percent); 10 (9 percent) and no e-mailed ballots.

Officers will be sworn in during the Awards Banquet at the 2007 Spring Conference in Waterloo April 3. We wish to share our appreciation to all those who ran as candidates. A special thank you to all those who took the time to cast an election ballot!



LOCAL SPOT SHOT COMPETITIONS

Please contact the IPRA State Office at 641.236.3917 to let them know the date of your local Spot Shot competition. Ribbons will be mailed to you for distribution to the winners.



The State IPRA Spot Shot Competition will be held Saturday, April 14 in Grinnell.

Thanks for your support by hosting a local competition!



Get into the action today!

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- **The finest umpiring organization in softball.**
- **Providing the sport with proper safeguards in accordance with the spirit of true sportsmanship and establishing principles for ethical behavior.**
- **Opportunity for member teams and individually registered players to purchase accident insurance at low group rates.**
- **Comprehensive general liability coverage in the amount of \$2 million for league officers and organizations if 100% of the teams are registered with ASA.**
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- **Education and Instruction of the proper skills and rules of the game by promoting and developing clinics, seminars and training materials.**

For more information on the Iowa Amateur Softball Association and its programs, contact us at 641.236.5766 or visit our website at

www.softball.org/iowa

IPRA Public Parks Youth Tennis Tournament

By: John Terpkosh, Tennis Coordinator, Des Moines Parks and Recreation

The IPRA is happy to offer another annual state-wide sports opportunity for your youth to participate in – the IPRA Public Parks Youth Tennis Tournament. For eight decades the NRPA has hosted the National Public Parks Tournament (July 28-August 3, in Ft. Lauderdale this year) for youth and adults as a showcase for recreational tennis. The IPRA has been able to emulate one element of this national tournament and host a state-wide association youth tennis tournament, partly in partnership with the Des Moines Parks & Recreation department and the USTA Missouri Valley Section.

Official tournament entry forms and tournament posters will be sent out to every park & recreation department later this spring by the IPRA for you to help us promote this new youth offering. The same materials will be posted on our website for convenience of sending parents and participants to get the information they will seek. Finally, we will be offering a session at the IPRA Spring Conference in Waterloo (April 4, 10:30-noon) about this new tournament with the help of the USTA Missouri Valley Section staff that can educate you about the particulars, type of play and participant expectations.

If you cannot attend this session give John Terpkosh a call at Des Moines Park & Recreation with your questions. An overview of this novel tournament:

- Tournament play on August 7th (rain date is August 8th) at McPherson (Birdland) Courts
- Non-sanctioned tournament and designed for novice or recreational youth players
- Boys and Girls singles, age divisions: 10, 12, 14, 16 & Under, cost \$18
- Match play will be 2 out of 3 short sets (4 games make a set)
- No advantage scoring
- Double elimination
- Each participant receives a free IPRA tournament t-shirt

About 70 percent of all tennis instruction begins in public parks similar to your summer tennis programs.

As you begin your youth tennis programs, consider encouraging your players to participate in the IPRA Public Parks Youth Tennis Tournament as a way to culminate the season, practice the skills they're just learned and make new friends.

Community Center Plans for Urbandale

By: Jan Herke, Director, Urbandale Parks and Recreation

On February 20, 2007 a bond referendum vote will decide if Urbandale will construct a new 72,935 square foot, \$21 million Community Center.

The Community Center would be located at 128th Street and Aurora Avenue, on a site occupied by the new Webster Elementary School. The facility would be attached to the new school and share program spaces, yet be able to function independently.

If the community center is built, the plans are to close the existing swimming pool, which is 31 years old. In order to ensure that an aquatics presence is maintained in the 72nd Street and Aurora Avenue area, a new outdoor wading and splash pool will be constructed in Lions Park (across the street from the current pool) as part of the community center referendum, as well.

The Community Center project has been discussed in Urbandale for over 11 years, and the community has been actively involved.

In 1998, the Urbandale Vision Steering Committee held several public forums and ultimately issued the "Imagine Urbandale: A Vision Plan for the Community" report. Among the four priority projects that were described in the Vision Plan was the development of a community center. A Community Center Project Team, which worked independently of the City for a number of years, was established and helped to develop the community center concept.

In 2002, Ankeny Kell Architects (AKA) completed a feasibility study for a community center in Urbandale. This St. Paul, MN

firm also developed an initial community center design concept, which included features proposed by the Community Center Project Team.

In 2005, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended that Hanser and Associates be hired to conduct a community-wide Recreation Needs Assessment. This survey was completed in October 2005 and revealed that 78.4 percent of those surveyed were supportive of an indoor recreation center in Urbandale.

With this input, the Parks and Recreation Commission and the City Council approved the community center concept, and recommended a February 20, 2007 bond referendum. A 60 percent voter approval rate is required for the referendum to pass.

The proposed community center would include the following features, which reflect the results from the Recreation Needs Assessment::

- Three basketball courts (junior high sized – 50' x 74')
- Natatorium (a leisure pool with a zero depth entry and aquatics play elements for young children, including a wave pool component, two water slides, 6-lane, 25-yard competitive pool and outdoor sundeck)
- Fitness area (cardio, weights, aerobics)
- Indoor walking track
- Community Room (seats up to 300), including catering kitchen
- Child care area



2007 HIGHER EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Iowa Park and Recreation Association encourages young leisure and parks professionals to enter our field by offering education scholarships. Five scholarships totaling \$4,250 are available to current student members if IPRA in the field of park and recreation. The award recipients will be recognized at the IPRA Awards Banquet to be held at the Five Sullivan Brothers Convention Center in Waterloo, Iowa on April 3.

Two scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each and three \$750 scholarships are offered. Application forms and a detailed summary of the individual scholarships are available on the IPRA web site: www.iowaparkandrecreation.org. Scholarships can be granted for use at any community college or private or public four-year school. Recipients must be enrolled in a course of study which has an emphasis on parks and recreation or leisure services. If you are not currently a member of the IPRA, membership forms are also available on the IPRA web site.

Application deadline is March 1, 2007. Materials should be mailed to: Todd Seaman, Scholarship Chairman, West Des Moines Parks and Recreation, P. O. Box 65320, West Des Moines, IA, 50265. If you have any questions, please call Todd at 515.222.3448 or email todd.seaman@wdm-ia.com.

ORANGE CITY'S COMMUNITY BETTERMENT PROJECTS

By: Todd R. Larson, Orange City's Park and
Recreation Director

(This is the first of a two-part article. The remainder will appear in the February issue of "IPRA Today".)

Orange City is located in Northwest Iowa's Sioux County. Sioux County is one of the few rural counties in the state that has realized population growth over the past decade and Orange City has been a part of that success. Currently, Orange City has a population of 6,650. Not only does Orange City have a strong economic development staff that is constantly searching for businesses that want to start-up in, expand in, or relocate to the community, it also has a City Council that is very dedicated to improving the community's attractiveness to potential employers and employees. This dedication begins with placing the Park and Recreation Department at the top of the list of economic development tools.

In the fall of 2004, two plans came together to improve Orange City's livability. The first component was the Park and Recreation Department's Master Plan which included the following: replacing the play structures in the downtown's Windmill Square Park (\$56,780); replacing the wading pool at the outdoor aquatic facility with a 2,500 square-foot splash pad (\$195,000); developing the new Puddle Jumper View Park in the southeast area of town (\$67,800); building a 6,400 square-foot skate board park with modular jumps in Veteran's Park (\$71,800); re-surfacing the four outdoor tennis courts located in Jaycee Park (\$80,000); and forming a 28E partnership with the local school district to build a 6,000 square-foot community fitness center located at the local high school.

The second component of the improvements involved the donation of six molens (windmills) to the community by a couple living in Wisconsin. The molens are replicas of those found in the Netherlands over the past two centuries. Since the Wisconsin couple has family ties in the area, and Orange City has and markets its Dutch heritage as a unique community asset, it was decided the molens would be a perfect fit as another attraction for the community not only at the annual Tulip Festival, but year-round as well. The donated molens range in size from ten feet tall to twenty-seven feet tall. The big question that needed to be answered was where would the city locate the molens?

As the two plans were combined into one, the focus turned to the question of where would the city locate the donated molens? When a task force was formed to find a location to display the molens, the idea to renovate Windmill Square Park was a brainstorm that grabbed everybody's attention. In Orange City, the downtown buildings have "Dutch fronts," and there is a thirty foot tall windmill building already located in Windmill Square Park. Like other small communities there is an effort to keep area citizens shopping and socializing downtown, and the focus

of activities during the annual Tulip Festival is downtown. Therefore, it only made sense to build on the "Dutch village" concept and add the molens to Windmill Square Park.

As the brainstorming sessions continued, the idea of having the park become a destination throughout the year became the theme. Not only would the six new molens be displayed in a landscaped area (\$30,000) which would include perennial flowers/shrubs, and of course TULIPS, but the area would need to have a CANAL installed (\$18,000) to further promote Dutch heritage. Decorative street lamps (\$25,000) would be added throughout the park to replace the old street lights. The old open-air shelter found in the park, which houses the community's farmer's market, would also be replaced with a shelter (\$149,000) which consists of Dutch architecture to compliment the downtown buildings. Two large patios with tables and benches (\$20,000) would be added to the new Dutch Farmer's Market Shelter to promote park users to congregate and socialize. The band shell in the park could not be ignored and so it would be renovated including adding ten feet of stage space and a Dutch themed façade (\$101,000). The larger stage would allow for expanded performance programming in the park during the Tulip Festival and throughout the spring, summer, and fall. Last, but not least, were the two old wooden play structures (with pea gravel as fall material) which would be replaced with two modern play structures from Miracle Equipment Company featuring swings, merry-go-round, and slide. The new play area would be twice as big as the old play area and include handicap accessible play fiber as the fall material.

Join the Member-Get-A- Member Challenge Today!

Don't miss this opportunity to introduce a colleague or friend to NRPA . Join the Member-Get-A-Member Challenge today and give the gift of knowledge, passion for parks and recreation, and resources that advance the park and recreation movement.

Recruiting new members is easy—visit www.nrpa.org/membership today to access the tools and resources you need. And, take advantage of great prizes along the way!

TRAIL GRANTS AWARDED



More than \$2.2 million in state grants for recreational trail projects has been awarded by the Iowa Transportation Commission, including more than \$1 million for two trails in the Des Moines area.

The Polk County Conservation Board, along with the City of Ankeny, received \$690,000 to help pay some of the cost to develop the Four Mile Creek Greenway Trail. When it is completed, hikers and bikers will have a 35-mile route linking Ankeny, Des Moines, Pleasant Hill, Altoona, Bondurant and Berwick. It will also be part of a 110-mile, five-county trail loop that will include the Chichaqua Valley Trail, the Heart of Iowa Trail and the Neal Smith Trail.

"This is good news," said Todd Redenius, Ankeny's Parks and Recreation Director. "We would like to think that Ankeny is really at the hub of all of these major trails." Redenius said he didn't have a target date for when construction would be completed on the trail project. He said he expects work will progress as money is received.

The state commission also awarded \$203,405 for work on the Alice's Road Greenbelt Trail in the northwest part of Clive. The project calls for the installation of asphalt along an existing gravel trail route that now follows Little Walnut Creek for about two-thirds of a mile. A box culvert will be installed under Alice's Road to connect to a future park.

In addition, a bridge over Little Walnut Creek will connect the trail to existing neighborhoods. At the eastern limits of the project, the Clive trail will connect to the Urbandale trail system, said Kelly Canfield, Clive's Parks and Recreation Director. "Folks are going to be able to go through both Clive and Urbandale to ride bicycles and to walk and get exercise. This is going to be good for everybody all around," Canfield said. He said he expects work on the Alice's Road Greenbelt Trail to begin next summer and for the public to use the completed route in 2008.

Other grants were awarded as well. Cedar Rapids received \$150,000 for the construction for the second phase of the Cemar Trail, extending 0.6 miles along a former railroad right-of-way in the central and northeast sections of the city.

\$106,875 was awarded to Coon Rapids for a recreational trail that will connect the Town Loop Trail with the Whiterock Conservancy.

Des Moines County will be the recipient of \$360,000 for the first segment of the planned Des Moines County Recreational Trail, extending slightly more than three miles.

In Johnson County, \$39,315 was awarded to upgrade Lakeview OHV Park, which is north of Iowa City. This will include improving the parking lot and restroom work.

Trail projects in Wapello County will receive \$200,000 from the Iowa Transportation Commission.

\$252,187 was granted to Waterloo for the development of a trail extending about four-fifths of a mile along the south side of the Cedar River. The alignment will run from 18th Street along the flood levee to Mitchell Avenue and the Riverview Recreation Area.

This article was taken from the December 13, 2006 issue of the "Des Moines Register".

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IPRA Calendar of Events

February:

Local Spot Shot Competitions offered

- 12 CEU/Aquatic Update—Sioux City
- 13-14 Certified Pool Operator's Course—Sioux City
- 14-17 NRPA Mid-Year Forum—Washington DC
- 19 IPRA State Office closed—Presidents' Day
- 21 REAP Day at the Iowa Satehouse

March:

- 1 Awards Nominations & Scholarship Applications Due
- 6 UNI Career Awareness Day
- 8 Parks Community Forum—Marian
- 12 CEU/Aquatic Update—Ames
- 13-14 Certified Pool Operator's Course—Ames
- 24 Co-ed Volleyball Tournament—Grinnell

Disc Golf Course in Belle Plaine

By Jed Eichhorn, Director, Belle
Plaine Parks & Recreation

During the month of December, Garling Construction and Manatt's Concrete donated all of the labor and half of the concrete to make cement t-pads for the disc golf course in Franklin Park. Garling Construction donated nearly \$1,000 worth of labor and Manatt's, Inc. donated nearly \$400 worth of concrete. Future improvements for the course include a message board with a course map and placing permanent trash receptacles.

The First Annual Franklin Freeze will take place Sunday, February 11, 2007 at Franklin Park. The Franklin Freeze is taking place in cooperation with the National Ice Bowl tournaments taking place all across the United States. Proceeds from the event will be donated to the Belle Plaine Food Pantry and the Belle Plaine Little League program.

Open, Advanced, Intermediate, Recreational and Junior divisions of play will be offered. Entry fees are monetary in addition to donations of canned food items.