

IPRA Today

January, 2007
Volume VII, Issue 7



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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**By: Mark Ripplinger,
Park Division
Manager, Cedar Falls
Parks and Recreation
Department**

The Falls Aquatic Center in Cedar Falls, Iowa had its inaugural season in 2006. What an opening season it was by opening its doors to 117,689 patrons in the Cedar Valley area! This is quite a jump in numbers in comparison to the final 2005 season of Ray Edwards Pool and Activity Park that saw a mere 38,134 people. Planning and preparation took a few years along with a lengthy land acquiring process. The facility was eventually built on a retired drivers education course that is 12 acres which will allow for expansion possibilities.

A design was introduced by Waters' Edge Aquatic Designs and passed onto Cardinal Construction of Waterloo, Iowa for the construction process which was completed for an opening day of May 27. Two managers were hired along with 52 part time staff that included lifeguards, concession workers, lesson instructors, lesson aides and maintenance workers with constant involvement of our full time staff.



Season passes went on sale May 1 with a 1,195 total summer season passes sold; 1,001 of those were family Cedar Falls resident passes that included numerous patrons. Only 6.6 percent of the season passes sold were for patrons not living in Cedar Falls. That non-resident price was introduced at \$20 more for a family membership. This meant revenue of \$151,562.50 alone in summer season

passes. In our 2005 season at Ray Edwards Pool, the revenue was \$94,638 for pass/gate/concessions/mini golf. This year at The Falls, concession alone was \$92,096. Total income for the 2006 summer exceeded \$475,000! The daily rate offered to patrons remained the same for resident visitors and non-Cedar Falls resident visitors ranging in price of \$2.00-\$4.00 depending on age. An evaluation of the summer season has suggested a possible change in the daily rate procedure for next year and focusing on the sale of season passes.

The facility itself was impressive in planning and on paper, but to see it and all of its 168,000 square feet inside the fenced area with a total of 484,000 gallons of water is another. The lazy river takes 116,000 gallons of continuous flow. **The Falls** is divided into three major areas that included

fun for all ages. **Safari Falls** was designed with a zero depth entry. This area is home to an elephant and other floating creatures at play among the fountains, slides, sprays and a large dump bucket. With a maximum depth of 26 or 30 inches and abundant shade, this area was a family favorite.

Adventure Falls offers a 196-foot long enclosed tube slide and a 176-foot long raft slide that come off a 21-foot tall tower. You can ride both slides with or without a tube. Patrons exit the splash down area or stay on (Continued on Page 3)

Parks & Recreation Director City of Dyersville

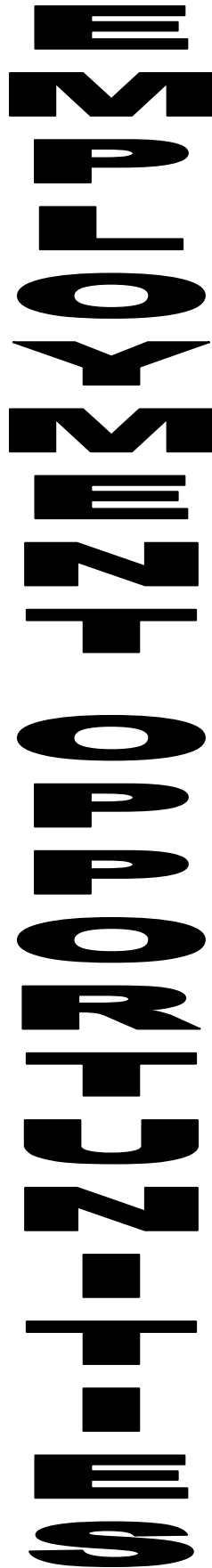
The City of Dyersville, population 4,035, is seeking applicants for the position of Parks and Recreation Director. The position requires a minimum of three years of management experience and a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation or a related field. The selected candidate will have strong oral and written communications skills and the ability to work with diverse age groups. The qualified candidate will plan, organize, prioritize, market and coordinate the activities of the Parks and Recreation Department. Competitive benefit package; salary negotiable. Write or call for an application: City Administrator, City of Dyersville, 340 1st Avenue E, Dyersville, IA, 52040; 563.875.7724. Application deadline is January 8, 2007.



Recreation Supervisor City of Cherokee

The City of Cherokee, population 5369, is seeking a knowledgeable and energetic individual to oversee their recreation programs and also manage the new outdoor Bacon Aquatic Center opening for the 2007 season. The position is responsible for planning, directing and managing youth and adult recreation activities. The aquatic center is a \$2.8 facility with 2 water slides, splashpad, zero entrance and sand play area. Responsible for operation of all aspects of an outdoor aquatic center, with seasonal assistant manager(s). Supervisor will also prepare annual budget and assist in establishing policies and procedures. Preference to those with knowledge of lifeguarding techniques and water safety practices. Two years experience in recreational programs, practices and pool up-keep and maintenance preferred. Must obtain Certified Pool Operator License. Salary DOQ. Send application and resume to: City of Cherokee, 416 W. Main, Cherokee, IA, 51012.

Applications will be taken until January 10, 2007. EOE. Please call 712-225-5749 with any questions.



Assistant Summer Recreation Director Intern

The Ida Grove Community Recreation Center is seeking applicants for a paid summer internship. The internship will run from the middle of May through the middle of August. The intern will assist in overseeing various summer recreation programs such as youth softball and baseball, junior high softball and baseball, youth and adult tennis, junior golf, 3 on 3 basketball league, etc. Outdoor pool and recreation center duties will also be assigned.

The Ida Grove Community Recreation Center is located in a town of 2,300 people one hour east of Sioux City. The Ida Grove Community Recreation Center, a department under the City of Ida Grove, opened its doors in December, 2003. The building consists of many amenities including an aerobic room, weight room, kid's play room, community room with fully equipped kitchen, card room, two racquetball courts, full size gymnasium with a walking track, golf room complete with a putting green, driving range, and a golf/hunting simulator, and an indoor pool with a hot tub, wading pool and sauna.

Interns will gain an overall experience in the areas of program development and implementation, facility management, and facility, pool and grounds maintenance. The selected candidate will have his or her own office at the recreation center with a computer and phone. Other benefits include a free recreation center membership, free pool pass and a monthly salary. Candidates for the position must have completed course work in leisure services or related area at an accredited college or university. Interested persons should send cover letter, resume, and references to Ida Grove Community Recreation Center, 311 Barnes St., Ida Grove, IA 51445 or email to igrec@netllc.net. For more information on the recreation center, visit our website at www.idagroverec.com. Call recreation director, Matt Salvatore, with any questions 712.364.3716.

Terry Hoffman and Barry Dodd enjoy the scenery in Seattle, WA, during the 2006 NRPA Congress. Mt. Ranier is in the background.





The Falls Aquatic Center

(Continued from Page 1)

the tube and float into the 482-foot long lazy river. The lazy river has fountains, sprays, rapids and falling water to keep users cool. A 20 foot tall totem pole that periodically “blows its’ top” is the centerpiece of a plaza filled with water sprays, tiered seating and all sorts of unique water fun.

Rock Falls is a traditional pool with a twist. The area currently has an 8 lane, 25 meter pool with a lap lane made available throughout the day. Floatable objects to climb on, a water basketball area, and water volleyball net may be set up during evening times. The attached diving well requires users to have a certain level of swimming skills to use the 1 meter diving board, 3 meter platform and the 99 foot long drop slide, all surrounded by a rock structure with water falls. All three pool areas are handicapped accessible and there are numerous lockers for valuables located on the deck area along with shaded structures made by Waterloo Tent & Tarp and over a 100 lounge chairs for your leisure convenience. There are locker rooms for males, females and a family changing area. Our concession stand offered a wide variety snack items with a shaded picnic area that was very popular for lunch and birthday group gatherings. The rental option was appealing to party planning people; this summer we had 13 after hour rentals.

With the season ending on August 22, we concluded the season with our annual end of the year Doggy Dip that brought in 318 dogs and 743 people. This was a fun way to say goodbye to our first season. We look forward to making 2007 an even bigger success .



Highlights from the December 6, 2006 IPRA Board of Director’s Meeting

- Departmental survey results have been compiled and mailed to respective departments. The overall survey can be viewed on the IPRA web site.
- Date of 2007 Fall Workshop changed to October 9-10-11 in Marshalltown.
- 2009 Spring Conference and Fall Workshop Bid Information will be mailed to all agencies. Bid deadline: January 16, 2007.
- Board Nominations are due to John Hagener by December 15.
- IPRA Endorsement of Smoke Free Parks—John Hagener will assist Steve in preparing an e-mail to all members asking for their in-put with regard to this matter. Members will be asked if there is any such policy within their own community..
- The National Program for Playground Safety Workshop held in Ames was deemed a huge success.
- President Ron Hopp suggested board members attend a retreat in late February and include new board members and committee chairs.

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THINK GREEN

**By: Rick Edwards,
Director, Decorah Parks and
Recreation Department**

“All the leaves are brown, and the sky is gray”. Seems the Mamas and Papas were in Iowa in the winter time when they sang those lyrics. While most of us aren’t California Dreaming, we are thinking about spring. Although we all enjoy the four seasons we experience in Iowa, spring has to be the most anticipated, and green the color we associate with spring.



Whether the green you dream of comes in the form of beautiful pasque flowers pushing their way up through the late snows, the green algae you will powerwash off the floor of your swimming pool, the acres upon acres of green grass that grows a couple inches overnight, or the green City Council you need to break in, add to the list “Come See the Green” in Waterloo.

Spring is also the time of renewal, and we invite all of you to renew yourselves at the IPRA Spring Conference April 2,3,4. The Spring Conference planning committee has been working under the excellent leadership of Steve, Tab Ray and Paul Hutting to plan an educational, inspirational, and fun time in Waterloo.

Sunday, April 1, will be a day of golf or ATV riding if you choose (no fooling)! The conference will kickoff on Monday with three tours scheduled. Aquatics, Parks, and Recreational facility tours are planned. The Waterloo, Cedar Falls area has many interesting facilities to visit.

A wide variety of educational sessions in all interest areas are planned. Many exhibitors are lined up to show you their products, help you plan for upcoming projects, and help you solve many of the problems you have. Excellent networking opportunities await at the golf and ATV social, NCAA Finals social at Doughy Joeys, the exhibit hall social, the awards banquet and dinner and the scholarship auction, as well as other non-planned opportunities.

This year’s Keynote speaker will be Gary Kroeger. Mr. Kroeger is a former **Saturday Nite Live** performer and has many acting and producing credits on both coasts. Gary will talk about quality of life issues and help us to understand why what we do, and where we do it is very important. I’m pretty sure Gary is not California dreaming.



As I write this on a winter’s day in deep and dark December, I ask you to think green, think renewal, and think Waterloo in April.



Ankeny Parks and Recreation Director, Todd Redenius, and Recreation Supervisor, Todd Schenck, prepare to greet students at the UNI Career Awareness Day.

UNI Career Awareness Day

Planning for the future as a student is a day-to-day challenge. In an effort to give interaction time with agency professionals, the University of Northern Iowa School of Health, Physical Education and Leisure Services hosted a career awareness day on November 8. It was held in the Wellness Recreation Center from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. Park and recreation professionals from Ankeny, Coralville, Fairfield, Ida Grove, Iowa City, Sioux City, West Des Moines and IPRA had booths. More than 25 recreation, health, fitness and leisure organizations participated in the whirlwind event. Internships as well as part-time staff openings were the main thrust of student – professional conversation.

Another career awareness and job fair will be conducted by UNI on March 6, 2007.

Todd Seaman, Recreation Superintendent, West Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department, visits with a UNI Career Awareness Day participant.



Where in the world did Angie Nelson go?

I'd like to tell an elaborate story about my last year traveling across the country in search of great parks by unicycle, but that's not true. I will tell you, however, about my challenging year away from parks and recreation and into academia.

I left my job as a recreation supervisor for the City of Clive, last December and took on a new role as a County Extension Director for ISU in Marshall County. My husband, Matt, is giving it a go in my family's farming operation. Matt's career was in crop research, so it was up his alley and a good opportunity. So I am officially a farmer's wife. We purchased our first farm in January, and so it goes that we'll be in debt up to our eyeballs in land for the rest of our lives!

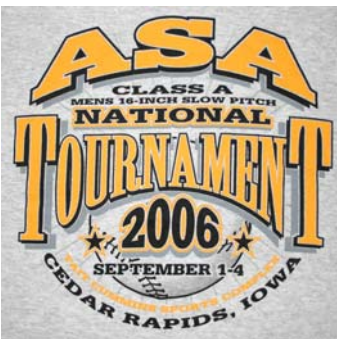
It has been an incredible year of learning in Extension. We deliver University research and developments to our local people. We help train childcare providers, provide education curricula, do food and nutrition programs, work with consumer horticulture, develop programs for county officials, provide pesticide and agriculture programs and also coordinate youth development programming and 4-H in our county. I put together programs and facilitate opportunities to partner in our county. Our office staff is small but mighty. Aside from programs, we offer assistance and answer questions from residents. Some are the most bizarre questions I've ever heard, but ironically can find the answer for. These will make for some good conversation at Spring Conference, so I won't spoil it now.

In January when I dug into the budget, I realized I walked into a financial nightmare. With increasing costs, a decreasing carryover and a tax budget that hadn't increased in 20 years, we had to make a fourth attempt at a budgetary referendum. The referendum had plagued 15 Iowa counties still to pass and in Marshall, they tried three times in the 90's. We cut office support staff hours to make ends meet. I did my homework quickly for a new job and ran the speaking circuit by day, coached swim team at the high school, ran meetings by night, and even did a little work in between. The committee put in countless hours. It was a consuming project (for me, all on non-tax time of course). We passed by a little over 1 percent which was just enough!. The additional funding will begin in October of 2007, and I am excited for additional funds to pay infrastructure, address new program areas and find new potential in what I do.

I certainly won't forget what a tough year 2006 has been. I also will not take for granted the power of personal connection. I came to a new job and a community I had long since lost touch with and was forced to attempt a lost cause project. Each personal connection made was a step for a brighter future. I wish you the best and brightest for 2007.



Angie Nelson, center, is pictured with her staff at the Marshall County Extension Office in Marshalltown.



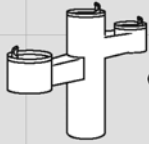
CEDAR RAPIDS RECEIVES TOP TOURNAMENT AWARD

By: Gail Baldus-Loskill, Marketing Manager, Cedar Rapids Recreation Department

The Cedar Rapids Recreation Department received the James Farrell Award for Tournament Excellence from the Amateur Softball Association in November. The award honors hosts of top ASA national tournaments that receive at least a 90 percent rating from participating teams, the National ASA tournament representative and the National ASA umpire in chief. The Department received the award for the Men's 16 Inch Class A Slow Pitch National Tournament that it hosted in Cedar Rapids in September. This year Cedar Rapids received an overall tournament rating of 95.6 percent. The awards were presented at the 2006 National Council Meeting Awards Luncheon in Colorado Springs, CO.

Jeff Kraayenbrink, Recreation Supervisor and Tournament Director of the 2006 Men's 16" Class A Slow Pitch National Tournament and Mary Lee Malmberg of the Cedar Rapids Convention and Visitors Bureau accept the James Farrell National Tournament Award for hosting one of the top National Tournaments in 2006.





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Franklin Park Borough (Pa.) Parents and Kids Learning Together with Start Smart

Thanks to Start Smart Sports Development, an instructional youth sports program for kids ages 3-5 provided by the National Alliance for Youth Sports, young children in Franklin Park Borough, Pa., are happily learning sports rules and fundamentals with their parents in a fun and safe environment.

"We wanted to do a program for the preschool level," explained Jim Watenpool, Franklin Park Borough parks and recreation director. "Start Smart took off right away and has continued to grow ever since. The program is important because of the opportunity for parents and children to learn together."

At Franklin Park Borough, it is understood that to get the kids excited about something, they must see the parents excited about it as well.

"The enthusiasm and excitement from the coach and parents spills onto the child," Watenpool said.

Since 2003, Franklin Park Borough, a growing Pittsburgh suburb, has been offering the Start Smart Baseball, Football, Soccer and general sports clinics to its youth.

Watenpool said that although all programs are popular, certain sports seem to be favored during their corresponding professional season. For example, football is most popular in the fall, during NFL play.

"Each program has something different to offer," he said. The Start Smart programs are also extremely beneficial to the local athletic organizations that are hosting them. Most children who participate in Start Smart continue to play through adolescence. "It gives them a basis for what is needed in the upper levels," Watenpool said. Watenpool said that the entire community is supportive of the Start Smart programs; even local professional sports heroes have gotten their children involved in the program. In terms of promoting the program, Franklin Park Borough does this in several ways.

"We have a newsletter that we send out twice a year that advertises the program, and we have a digital display sign at one of the biggest intersections in our community," Watenpool said. It is clear that the success of Start Smart in Franklin Park Borough is growing everyday.



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website at
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IPRA Today is produced by the I.P.R.A.
Publications Committee Chair, Deborah
Martinez, deborah@lightenupiowa.org

Layout design by
Cathy Shutts
cshutts@pcpartner.net

IPRA Calendar of Events

January:

- 1 IPRA State Office closed—New Year's Holiday
- 8 CEU/Aquatic Update—Cedar Falls
- 9-10 Certified Pool Operator's Course—Cedar Falls
- 13-14 Adult Men/Women Volleyball Tournament
- 16 2009 Conference & Workshop bids due
- 30-31 Li 4 at IPRA State Office—Grinnell

February:

- 12 CEU/Aquatic Update—
Sioux City
- 13-14 Certified Pool
Operator's Course—
Sioux City
- 19 IPRA State Office closed—
Presidents' Day



NOTE THIS CHANGE

**DATES OF THE I.P.R.A.
2007 FALL WORKSHOP
HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO
OCTOBER 9-10-11 IN
MARSHALLTOWN.**

**THIS CHANGE WAS MADE TO
ALLOW MEMBERS TO MORE
EASILY ATTEND THE N.R.P.A.
CONGRESS IN INDIANAPOLIS
SEPTEMBER 24-28.**