

DECATUR PARK DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT



2014 Highlights

Scovill Zoo Welcomes Humboldt Penguins

Scovill Zoo's new penguin exhibit was officially unveiled during a ribbon cutting ceremony on March 24. Over 100 people were on hand to watch Decatur Park Board members, Parks Foundation members, and the Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce cut the ceremonial ribbon, culminating four years of planning and fundraising. Penguins and great weather contributed to record-breaking zoo attendance and Friend of the Zoo membership sales in 2014.

Overlook Adventure Mini Golf Course Opens in Nelson Park

Watch out for the snapping alligator, the mischievous red pandas, and the crazy goat that keeps eating the turf! July 12 marked the opening of Overlook Adventure Mini Golf in Nelson Park, featuring two accessible, 18-hole courses that highlight animals that have escaped from Scovill Zoo. Visitors can play a round, then grab a bite to eat at CherryBerry and Ted's Taters. The family-friendly facility proved very popular, with 27,125 rounds played from July to the end of October.

FootGolf at Hickory Point Golf Course

In August, the community's first FootGolf course opened on the junior course at Hickory Point, featuring nine par-3 holes, varying in distance from 28 - 60 yards. This amazing new sport merges golf and soccer into one. Soccer ball rental is available in the pro shop, or players can bring their own. A course map, rules, and score cards can be found online at decatour-parks.org.

Nelson Park Pavilion #2 Restoration Complete

Since 1934, Nelson Park pavilion #2 has been the site of family picnics and community gatherings. Thanks to a 2013 Department of Natural Resources OSLAD grant, the pavilion was fully restored last summer, ensuring its beauty and longevity for generations to come.

Park District Marks 90th Anniversary with Park Reforestation Radiothon

On September 9, the Park District partnered with WSOY and Team Soy Capital for a Park Reforestation Radiothon in recognition of the Park District's 90th anniversary. The Decatur Park District owns over 4,000 acres of green space, and in recent years, ice storms, drought, and insects have damaged or destroyed hundreds of trees in our parks. Gifts from individual and corporate donors far exceeded the goal of 90 donors pledging \$90 for 90 trees. Over \$22,000 was raised for trees in Fairview and Nelson parks.

Did You Know?

In 2014, the Decatur Park District maintained a PDRMA excellent Level A membership status. This rating represents our continued commitment to the prevention of unforeseen injury and the ongoing safety of employees and patrons.

Despite a challenging economic climate, the Park District has maintained a Standard & Poors stable AA- bond rating for 6 consecutive years.

The Decatur Park District spends an average of \$30,000 each year to repair damage caused by vandalism. The Park Watch program offers rewards for information leading to the arrest of individuals responsible for these crimes. If you witness suspicious activity or have a tip, call 422-5911. You will remain anonymous.

In 2014, 575 volunteers donated 19,420 hours to Scovill Zoo, parks, recreation programs, arts performances, Special Recreation events, soccer tournaments, and golf tournaments. We are grateful for their service!

In partnership with the Illinois State Board of Education, the Park District provided 46,442 meals and snacks at 24 Summer Lunch Program sites, including Old King's Orchard and the Boys & Girls Club.

The Park District hosted major soccer, tennis, softball, and golf tournaments, as well as the IHSA Class A and AA girls' golf championships and cross country sectionals, contributing to 3,509 room nights and over \$1.15 million in community tourism benefits.

The Decatur Park District was proud recipient of the following Herald & Review Readers' Choice Awards. #1 Best Central IL Golf Course - Red Tail Run Golf Club by Raymond Floyd; #2 Best Central IL Golf Course - Hickory Point; #2 Best Place for Kids' Parties - Scovill Zoo; #3 Best Place for Kids' Parties - DISC; #2 Best Fitness Center - DISC. Thank you for your support!

Howard Buffett Joins Governor Quinn in Support of Lakeshore Landing

At a press conference on September 23, the Lakeshore Landing project received a multi-million dollar boost for the amphitheater in Nelson Park.

Thanks to the commitment of the State and a generous gift from Mr. Howard Buffett, we will soon begin building an amazing new venue that will help strengthen our community's economic development, tourism, and the arts.



Park Board Bids Fond Farewell to Commissioner Deadrick-Wolfer

At a reception on December 15, the Park District bid a fond farewell to Commissioner Cindy Deadrick-Wolfer, who moved out of the district, retiring after 11^{1/2} years on the Park Board. Cindy served as president from 2008 - 2010 and was involved in the construction of Project Playground II; success of the Decatur-Forsyth Classic presented by Tate & Lyle and the Decatur Park District; development of Fido Fields and Nelson Park Dog Parks; construction of the Anne & Al Swartz Pavilion at Hickory Point; creation, coordination and success of Zoo-rific Evening at Scovill Zoo; and initiation of the Lakeshore Landing project in Nelson Park.



Parks Foundation Earns State Award for Outstanding Event

The Decatur Parks Foundation was proud winner of the 2014 IL Park & Recreation Association (IPRA) Outstanding Event Award for Zoo-rific Evening at Scovill Zoo! While parties and events have been held in the zoo's education center, no other group has incorporated the entire facility, zoo staff, volunteers, and amazing animals. Since its inception in 2009, Zoo-rific Evening has generated over \$250,000 for the Splash Cove project that will eventually include penguins, otters, and alligators in the center of the zoo. Special thanks to Cindy Deadrick-Wolfer who founded and chaired the event for five years.

Fairview Tennis Center and Red Tail Run Golf Club Host Playoff Events

Thanks to high-quality facilities, attractive amenities, and expert staff, the Fairview Tennis Center was selected to host the Midwest Region U.S. Open National Playoffs, and Red Tail Run Golf Club by Raymond Floyd hosted a USGA Mid-Amateur Qualifier.

Community Partners & Awards

Thanks to our valued community partners, the Decatur Park District is able to enhance the health, fitness, education, and quality of life for all in the greater Decatur area.

- At the IAPD "Best of the Best" Awards Gala on October 24 in Wheeling, IL, the Decatur Park District's partnership with Millikin University and the outstanding leadership of Staley Striders Coach Mike Landacre contributed to the receipt of two prestigious awards: the "2014 Partnership" and "2014 Good Sportsmanship" awards. Nearly 15 years ago, when the Park District sought a partner to share in the construction and operation of a new 87,000 square foot indoor sports center, it found a perfect match in Millikin University. The DISC, located on the university's campus, now benefits hundreds of students and staff, as well as the community at large. The Park District and Millikin also share facilities and professionals in golf, sports and the arts. Good Sportsmanship Award winner Mike Landacre has been involved with the Staley Striders program for over 26 years as parent guide, assistant coach, and finally head coach. In cross country and track & field, Mike leads athletes to the highest levels of the sport, but his hallmark is caring just as much about youth who run for the joy of running as the decorated athlete.
- The educational component of our summer park programming is made possible by ADM; DMH is our valued golf partner; athletic programs and Staley Striders are made possible thanks to the financial support of Tate & Lyle; junior golf programming and the arts benefit from contributions from Ameren; and Scovill Zoo is supported by the generosity of Team Soy Capital. Neuhoff Media and WAND-17 are valued media partners. Midwest Fiber is presenting sponsor of MidState Soccer Club.

Looking Forward

For 91 years, the Park District has worked to fulfill our community's needs for physical well-being, productive leisure activities, and outdoor parks and recreation spaces. 2015 will bring exciting new opportunities as we continue expansion of the Stevens Creek bike trail and collaborate with the City of Decatur in creating family-friendly activities, venues and events at Lakeshore Landing at Nelson Park.



Decatur
PARK DISTRICT

217-422-5911

www.decatour-parks.org

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