

Media Release

From: Friends of Beyer Stadium

For Immediate Release: Wednesday, March 31, 2010

For Additional Information Contact:

Greg Schwanke | 815-979-2899 | blasterpainter3@hotmail.com or

Andrew Wright | 815-670-6022 | atwright73@yahoo.com

Dedication Event to be Held for Beyer Field; Friends of Beyer Stadium Kick Off Fundraising Campaign

ROCKFORD, IL – The Friends of Beyer Stadium and the Rockford Park District will be hosting a **Beyer Field Dedication Event** on **Saturday, June 5, 2010 at 1 pm at Beyer Field**, 333 15th Ave. in Rockford. The event is being held to celebrate the recently refurbished Beyer Field ball diamond. Enhancements will include the installation of a new baseball diamond, historically-accurate backstop, and scoreboard. Invitations have been sent to over 400 former All American Girl Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL) players to attend the dedication event.

Built in 1925, the stadium was used for high school football games and other events. Between 1943 and 1954, Beyer Stadium was home to the Rockford Peaches and was featured in the 1992 movie "A League of Their Own." In 1992, the stadium was demolished to create more athletic fields for Beyer school.

Income from the Charles A. Beyer/Rockford Jaycees endowment fund of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois was established in 1997 and provides an average of \$5,000 a year for the Park District to maintain and enhance Beyer Park. Since its first distribution in 2000, the fund has given approximately \$50,000 in distributions.

One of the Friends founding members, Andrew Wright, said that in addition to the endowment fund set up by the Jaycees over 13 years ago, their group also established a capital fund with the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois specifically earmarked for capital improvement projects for Beyer Park. "The original endowment fund was set up to generate an income stream to grow revenue. While this helps cover some of the bare minimum costs of maintaining the park, our goal is now to generate additional funding that will be specifically used on capital projects at the park. Our dream is to implement some of the projects identified in the original concept site plan," said Wright.

In addition to the new ball diamond, backstop, and scoreboard, the Friends of Beyer Stadium are spearheading a fundraising campaign to raise funds to install a flag pole and memorial plaque at the park.

"We would like to raise additional funds to install a flag pole and plaque to commemorate the Rockford Peaches unique and special history. The Rockford Peaches are known world-wide and we owe it to the 'girls' to commemorate the park that at one time brought over 90,000 people to the stadium in a given year," said Friends of Beyer Stadium Member Greg Schwanke. "It will be wonderful to be able to proudly hang the American flag and the Rockford Peaches flag at that park," he continued.

(more)



FRIENDS of BEYER STADIUM

Rockford

HOME OF THE ROCKFORD PEACHES

Greg Schwanke • 815-979-2899

blasterpainter3@hotmail.com

About the “Friends of Beyer Stadium” Group

1997 - The Rockford area Jaycees created an \$79,264 endowment through the Rockford Community Foundation. As per the endowment, funds earned from interest on the principal would help maintain and enhance Beyer Field.

1998 - The “Friends of Beyer Stadium” group was formed with a goal of restoring the baseball field at Beyer Park.

2000 – 2009 – Interest from the endowment funded various maintenance projects at the park, including: fence repairs, re-grading seeding, ticket booth restoration, and the completion of a site plan based on input given by the Friends Group.

Active Members/Supporters:

- Greg Schwanke – Blackhawk Sandblasting & Painting
- Andrew Wright – Rockford IceHogs
- Steve McIntosh - MACK Paper Company
- Peter Kink - RAC Investigative Services
- Tim Downs – Rockford Silk Screen
- Al Dahlmer – Player’s Pizza Pub

Purpose:

To provide resources to support the long-term and continuing use of Beyer Park as a park for the neighborhood and Beyer School, where children and adults can use the area for sports activities. Likewise, people interested in the history of baseball and those looking for inspiration for their children to participate in sports will seek out Beyer Park from around the country.

Mission:

To restore Beyer Park field to Rockford’s own field of dreams.

Beyer Stadium Background

1925 - Beyer Stadium was a fundraising effort undertaken by the Kiwanis organization. The stadium and site on 15th Avenue was accepted by the Rockford School District and included concrete stands with wooden bleacher seating, and a football field surrounded by an all-weather track. Because this was the first lighted football field in the area, the stadium became Rockford’s premiere sports venue.

1948 - The stadium was named after Charles A. Beyer, Rockford High School’s football, track, and basketball coach.

1943 – 1954 – Home stadium for the “Rockford Peaches” AAGPBL team

1960s – Field was home to four high school teams and numerous junior high teams; over 40 football games were played each fall.

1992 – The stadium was demolished to create more athletic fields for Beyer School.

Friends of Beyer Stadium Donations

Donations are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law; make checks payable to:

CFNIL (Community Foundation of Northern Illinois) In memo field: “Beyer Field Restoration Fund”

Mail checks to: Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

946 N. Second St.

Rockford, IL 61107

For more information, contact Greg Schwanke at **815-979-2899** or blasterpainter3@hotmail.com.

