

NEWS RELEASE

ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT MAKING MEMORIES FOR A LIFETIME

MetLife Foundation

From: Rockford Park District

For Immediate Release: Tuesday, March 23, 2010

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MetLife Foundation Awards Park District Grant to Replace 10th Avenue Park Playground

ROCKFORD IL – The Rockford Park District announced that they are the recipients of a grant from MetLife Foundation to replace playground equipment at the 10th Avenue Park. In conjunction with national non-profit KaBOOM!, more than 200 volunteers from MetLife and the community will build the child-designed playground in a single day on May 22. In April 2009, the City of Rockford began the project of rerouting Keith Creek, which ran through the park, as part of the master plan for the Keith Creek Plan Project. The park serves as the southern link of the greenway along the creek connecting Nelson Park to Patriots' Gateway Center and downtown Rockford. The playground is one of more than 150 KaBOOM! will lead across the country in 2010 in an effort to provide a great place to play within walking distance of every child in America.

“This is yet another example of partnering and leveraging the valuable resources our community provides to the Park District to transform a park into a focal point of that neighborhood. We are extremely thankful to MetLife Foundation and KaBOOM! for their assistance in bringing together the community to build this playground, which will serve thousands of children for years to come. This could not have come at a better time,” said Executive Director Tim Dimke.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS: DESIGN AND BUILD DAYS

Design Day: Monday, March 22 | Patriots' Gateway Center, 615 S. 5th St., Rockford

4 p.m. – 5 p.m. (children drawing portion); **5 p.m. – 7 p.m.** (planning committee meeting portion)

Volunteers from MetLife Freeport office, Rockford Park District, Patriots' Gateway Center, and organizers from KaBOOM!, hosted a Design Day for the children who play at 10th Avenue Park. Children put crayon to paper and drew their dream playgrounds, which will ultimately become a reality. Elements from the children's drawings will be incorporated into the final design for the new playground, which will be built by volunteers on Saturday, May 22. Design Day was also the first meeting of the playground planning committee that will work for the next nine weeks to plan and prepare for the construction of the new playground.

(more)



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**Build Day: Saturday, May 22 | 10th Avenue Park, 825 10th Avenue
8 a.m. to early afternoon**

Volunteers from MetLife Freeport office, Rockford Park District, Patriots' Gateway Center, organizers from KaBOOM! and local community members will work together to build the playground equipment in one day!

"MetLife Foundation shares the KaBOOM! commitment to building healthy communities, with safe, accessible places for kids of all ages," said Dennis White, president and CEO, MetLife Foundation. "We are pleased to join the Rockford Park District, Patriots' Gateway Center and KaBOOM! in building a new playground for the local community."

See the playground project at <http://projects.kaboom.org/projects/1524>; click "sign up with KaBOOM! to join this project" then check back for more details.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Judy Roby at 815-987-8695 or judyroby@rockfordparkdistrict.org.

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