

NEWSRELEASE **ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT** MAKING MEMORIES FOR A LIFETIME

From: Rockford Park District
For Immediate Release: March 23, 2010
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Residents Involved in Parks and Recreation

ROCKFORD IL – The Rockford Park District Board of Commissioners received an annual report on participation at the District's parks, programs, facilities, partners, and museums during 2009.

According to Executive Director, Tim Dimke, "Even with weather challenges and economic issues affecting some areas, citizens participated in and enjoyed many diverse recreational activities and passive pursuits throughout the year."

Highlights of the report included some new citizen-driven programs, such as Pickleball and Indoor Softball, new programs offered for adults ages 55+, played at the Indoor Sports Center with 626 participants. A new NFL Cheerleading program attracted 62 girls ages 5-14. The new Junior IceHogs off-ice training center opened in September with 6,010 user visits recorded.

Participation increases were noted for golf, with a 4% increase in golf rounds played on District courses during 2009 (176,732 rounds, compared to 174,427 rounds in 2008). Golf instruction and lessons increased 28% for youth ages 5-19 and adults, the result of creating a year round schedule and promoting this in advance so people could sign up for multiple sessions.

The return of Trolley Car 36 doubled in ridership, from a previous average of 2,000 to 4,000 riders. Lockwood Park's Animal Mania event also doubled participation compared with prior years, with 3,000 more participants coming to the annual spring event. Music in the Park summer concert series experienced a 48% increase, primarily due to more people seeking free and affordable family activities.

The report also highlighted safety and security measures that quantified a crime index decrease of 16%, 146 compared with 175 in 2008. Reports of criminal damage to property were reduced by 21%, criminal arrests were down 20%, and traffic arrests were down 12%. However, police calls were up 30% over 2008, with 4,252 calls responded to.

Finally, performance statistical data was provided for park district programs, facilities, parks, recreation paths, and recreation partners including youth baseball programs, museums, BMX, Ski Broncs, and many other partners.

Tim concluded, "The residents of the Rockford Park District are involved in diverse and well-supported recreational activities for their health, well-being, and entertainment. All totaled, an impact of over 8 million user visits occurred at Park District parks, programs and facilities during 2009."

The entire 22 page report is available on the District's web site, <http://www.rockfordparkdistrict.org/reports>

For more information, please contact: Tim Dimke, Executive Director, 987-8800

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ROCKFORD PARK DISTRICT

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superior park and recreation services