



City of Lawrence

PARKS AND RECREATION 2014 YEAR IN REVIEW

SPORTS PAVILION LAWRENCE MAKES DEBUT

The grand opening of Sports Pavilion Lawrence at Rock Chalk Park on Sunday, Oct. 5, brought the community together to celebrate the 180,000-square-foot facility. After a short ceremony highlighting the partnership between the City of Lawrence, KU Athletics, KU Endowment, the Assists Foundation and Bliss Sports, more than 1,200 attendees filed in to get the initial look at the first-class facility.

Gyms were open for volleyball, futsal, pickleball and basketball. The City's first indoor turf area was the site of free play soccer, with Sporting Kansas City's Jon Kempin stopping by to play goalie for the kids, pose for photos and sign autographs.

A room dedicated to gymnastics was available for kids to practice their balance on beams and work the

uneven bars. The gymnastics room also features a spring floor and tumble track that kids of all ages had fun exploring.

Some visitors took laps around the eighth-mile indoor walking/jogging track and looked over the weights and cardio areas. Other sampled the healthy menu items available at Crimson Corner Market by Clinton Parkway Hy-Vee, which uses healthier nutrition standards developed by Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department earlier in the year.

There were demonstrations showcasing fitness and dance programs available through Parks and Recreation. Demonstration classes were also offered throughout the facility's first three months, providing an opportunity for the public to experience classes before enrolling. Outside the facility, people participated in tennis on the

eight lighted tennis courts or took to the five miles of outdoor nature trails to explore the new area.

Sports Pavilion Lawrence will host tournaments throughout the year, bringing many visitors to the Lawrence community. The bigger impact, however, will be on citizens, as the city continues striving to be the healthiest, most active community in Kansas.

Pictured (L to R) Jeremy Farmer, commissioner; Ernie Shaw, interim director Parks & Recreation; John Wilkins, Gould Evans; Mike Dever, commissioner; Dr. Terry Riordan, commissioner; Joe Caldwell, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board; Jana Dawson, former Parks & Recreation Advisory Board member; Kevin Loos, Parks & Recreation Advisory Board; Bob Schumm, commissioner; Bill Self, Kansas Jayhawks men's basketball coach; Mike Amyx, mayor and Mark Hecker, assistant director Parks & Recreation cut the net opening Sports Pavilion Lawrence to the public.





COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PARK DEDICATED

The dedication of the City of Lawrence’s newest park, the Sandra J. Shaw Community Health Park, honoring longtime CEO of Bert Nash Mental Health Center was held in mid-October. A short ceremony was held followed by a reception. In conjunction with the park dedication, Outside for a Better Inside held its annual Family Fun Day at the park.

The eight-acre park was donated to the City by Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center and is the former location of the Veterans of Foreign Wars post in the Pinckney neighborhood. Earlier this year, a ribbon cutting was held for the opening of the Outside for a Better Inside trail, which winds around the lake within the park.

The park’s namesake, Shaw, arrived in Lawrence, Kan., in 1962, earning a doctorate in clinical psychology in 1970. The following year she went to work as the director of child and family services at Bert Nash. In 1979, she became the center’s executive director, then CEO for the next 22 years, retiring in 2001. She passed away in 2010.

GOING GREEN WITH VEHICLES, H₂O

The City of Lawrence purchased new trucks for use by the Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department, Horticulture and Forestry Division that are state-of-the-art and environmentally responsible. The two new water trucks have EPA certified systems that use alternative fuel – bi-fuel compressed natural gas (CNG) and gasoline. The trucks have a watering system with movable arms on the front of the truck that are controlled from inside the cab to spray plants and trees, saving employees time from having to exit the truck to water by hose. The water being used is also effluent, non-potable water from the Lawrence Waste Water Treatment Plant.

The new boom truck is also green, as it uses a hybrid system and provides full electric stationary operation of the bucket truck, eliminating the use of diesel fuel to operate the bucket lift system.

All trucks are also noticeable when working around the community, as they are decal’d with park scenery on the trucks.



TINO THE SCARLET MACAW MAKES ACTING DEBUT

Prairie Park Nature Center’s resident Scarlet Macaw, Tino was featured in a Blue Cross/Blue Shield commercial in the fall. He was featured with Dara Wilson, a naturalist at the nature center.

The commercial came about from a referral from the Dennis Dinwiddie, curator of conservation at the Topeka Zoo who had been asked by an advertising firm whether or not they had a parrot and a handler that would be suitable for a commercial. Since he knew about Tino, who is a scarlet macaw, he referred them to Marty Birrell at Prairie Park. Tino is very personable and loves to get out and do programs, loving interaction.



NUTRITION STANDARDS IMPLEMENTED PROVIDING HEALTHY OPTIONS

Lawrence Parks and Recreation Department was the first community in the state of Kansas to enact department-wide nutritional standards for all of its facilities. In 2014, the department began requiring food vendors, in concessions and vending machines, to provide options for healthy food and drinks which meet nutritional standards set by LPRD. The healthy choices are just one way the city is seeking ways to improve the community's overall health.

"By instituting these nutritional standards, we hope to encourage healthier lifestyles by offering smarter food choices," said Tim Laurent,

recreation operations manager. "People are seeing choices like salads and wraps what haven't been at our concession stands before."

The nutritional standards include a requirement that at least 50 percent of all food offering meet a certain caloric value for snacks and entrees. Additionally, guidelines have been set to limit amounts of fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sugar and sodium in food choices.

The department's efforts toward building a healthier community have been recognized by state and local organizations as a model for other communities to follow. Lawrence Parks and Recreation has been

recognized with awards by Governor Brownback's Council on Fitness, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas, and KaBoom!/The Humana Foundation, for their healthy programs and initiatives. LPRD is a founding member of the community coalition LiveWell Lawrence and has developed partnerships with the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department, Lawrence Memorial Hospital, USD 497, Bert Nash Mental Health Center, K-State Research and Extension, Douglas Food Policy Council and several local businesses and organizations to promote healthy lifestyles.

2014 RECREATION FACILITY USAGE & ATTENDANCE

LOCATION	ATTENDANCE	% CHANGE VS. 2013
<i>Aquatic Facilities</i>		
Indoor Aquatic Center	121,514	-4.28%
Outdoor Aquatic Center	75,004	+11.38%
South Park Wading Pool	7,744	+5.10%
Carl Knox Natatorium	1,452	-28.05%
TOTAL	205,714	+1.00%
<i>Recreation Facilities</i>		
Sports Pavilion Lawrence [^]	178,931	----
Community Building	106,865	-9.13%
Holcom Park Recreation Center	147,563	-11.29%
East Lawrence Recreation Center	106,929	-3.23%
Carnegie Building	27,939	-7.44%
Union Pacific Depot	14,125	-3.91%
TOTAL	582,352	+32.56%
Prairie Park Nature Center	52,231	+7.65%
Eagle Bend Golf Course & Learning Center *	25,745	+14.34%
TOTAL ATTENDANCE (DEPT)	858,298	+21.46%

* rounds were used as an indicator ^ numbers represent October 5 through December 31

RECREATION DIVISION 2014 REVENUE

REVENUE 2013	\$1,950,400
REVENUE 2014	\$2,296,025
% CHANGE	+17.7%

QUICK FACTS

Designated Tree City USA City for 36th consecutive year.

971 trees planted; 511 trees removed; 1093 trees pruned.

YaYa's Butterfly Garden developed at the Lawrence Public Library.

Youth Sports Hoopsters basketball, recreation volleyball and futsal leagues expanded.

Summer Playground program at South Park became licensed through KDHE.

Adult Sports adds pickleball and futsal leagues.

Swim lesson enrollments increase by 30 percent.

Library Plaza Skate Rink developed and opened for seasonal skating.

Added lifelong recreation programmer to develop programs for adults 50 years-old and older.

A Grand OPENING





POWER UP!

The City of Lawrence Prairie Park Nature Center, 2730 Harper St., will soon be utilizing free electricity produced by the sun because of a grant funded by the Westar Energy's Solar Photovoltaic Project.

Prairie Park Nature Center was selected in this competitive grant process to highlight the benefits of solar energy and to educate the public on renewable energy technologies.

Good Energy Solutions, a Lawrence-based solar installation company, installed a 10.5 kW solar PV array on the Nature Center roof. The solar PV array will generate approximately 14,000 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, saving the City \$1,300 in avoided utility costs. The solar array will offset 20 percent of the energy used by the Nature Center.

The solar panels will be integrated into the educational mission of the Nature Center, and will include innovative community engagement components for the Center's visitors, including: a touch screen display kiosk in the Nature Center, web-based educational software to show real-time performance data for visitors, and a single solar PV module to power a water pump for the Nature Center gardens at the entrance to the facility.

The City of Lawrence's Prairie Park Nature Center was selected as one of 15 organizations across Kansas to receive funds from Westar Energy's Solar Photovoltaic Project, which is aimed at test the merits of solar energy under Kansas conditions and to educate and engage the public. The program is in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment.

GRANT RECEIVED TO EXPAND ROCK CHALK PARK TRAIL

The City of Lawrence was awarded a grant from the Recreational Trails Program administered by the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism and the Federal Highway Administration for an extension of the trail at Rock Chalk Park in late-2014. The \$320,000 grant award from the KDWPT Trails Advisory Board will assist the City in connecting the trails at Rock Chalk Park to Queens Road.

Due to property lines and portions of the trail running along the City easement, the trail will have to pass over a creek area multiple times, which will require bridges to be constructed for each of the five crossovers. The extension of the trail will further introduce trail users to the Baldwin Creek area and provide safe passage, connecting to Queens Road, as well as further developing Lawrence's recreational trail system.

The total cost of the trail extension is estimated to be \$400,000.

The Recreational Trail Program grants are funded through a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use.

HOLE FACELIFT FOR NO. 17

Hole No.17 was spruced up in early 2014. The shrubs and volunteer trees that had previously occupied the space in front of the green in the creek area for the par 3 hole were excavated and rock ledges were added.

Additional planting and landscaping further enhanced the area in front of the green, making hole #17 a truly unique golf hole that now offers spectacular views to patrons.





BUG GOURMET FEATURED ON FOX 4 MORNING SHOW

Marty Birrell, nature interpretive supervisor, appeared on two cooking segments of the Fox 4 Morning Show in Kansas City last March to prepare a couple of dishes using bugs and highlighting a program, *The Bug Gourmet*, that was being held at Prairie Park Nature Center. The menu consisted of Hot Cockroach and Cricket Thai Curry and Stick Bug Summer Rolls. Throughout the interview, Marty did a great job and the Fox 4 news team had a lot of fun with the segments, and brought some great attention to Parks and Recreation, the nature center and the innovative, creative programming offered.



EAGLE BEND HOSTS TOURNEYS

Eagle Bend hosted several Kansas Golf Association events in 2014.

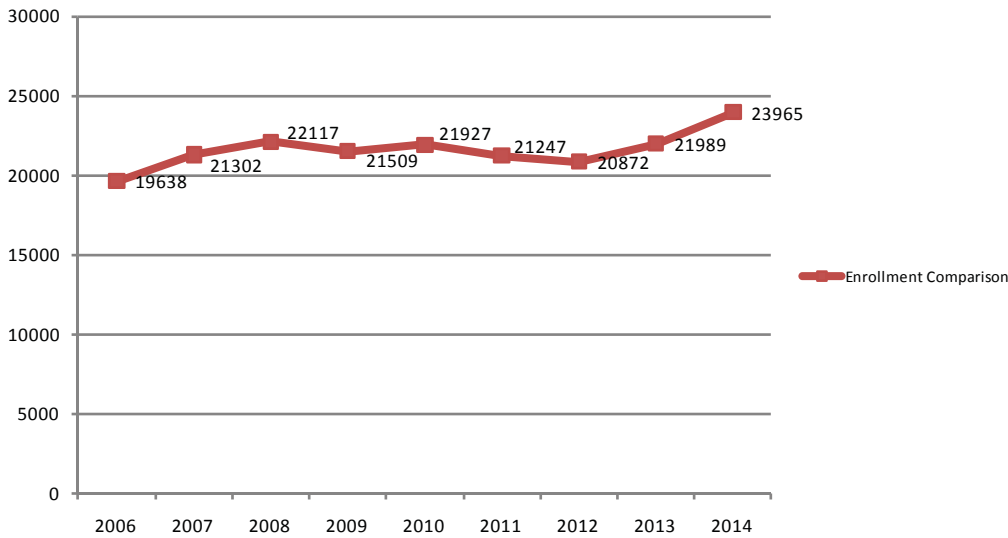
The first was the Kansas Golf Association's 26th Kansas Mid-Amateur in May. It was the first time in history the tournament was held at Eagle Bend. Ninety-Nine golfers participated in the Kansas Mid-Amateur, with Jon Troutman, from Spring Hill, Kan., winning the tournament with a total score of 135. Lawrence, Kan., was represented by 11 out of the 99 participants with the others coming from all different areas in Kansas. The tournament brought in more than \$6,000, but it also gave Eagle Bend a chance to further its image as a leader in public golf in the state of Kansas. The course was in great shape, and many complementary comments from participants were received throughout the tournament.

In June, Eagle Bend hosted the Kansas Junior Amateur. This was the second time Eagle Bend has hosted the event; the first was in 2005. Juniors from all over Kansas came to play in this prestigious KGA tournament. Lawrence was well represented in the tournament with 7 of the 98 juniors that played hailing from Lawrence.

Eagle Bend also hosted a local KGA Kansas Amateur qualifier. Seventy-five golfers participated in the tournament with 28 qualifying spots available for the Kansas Amateur. Four of the 75 golfers were from Lawrence.



Enrollment Comparison



RECORD-SETTING YEAR

A new record was set for enrollment in 2014. Enrollment in Lawrence Parks and Recreation activities, programs and classes reached an all-time high of 23,965 for the year, which was more than 1,800 enrollments over the record for enrollments set in 2008.

Enrollment for 2014 was also an increase of more than 11 percent, or nearly 2,000 enrollments, over 2013 final enrollment numbers.

PLAYFUL CITY TRIFECTA

The City of Lawrence was named a "Playful City USA" community for the third time in consecutive years by the national non-profit KaBOOM!. One of 243 cities and towns to receive the recognition, Lawrence was one of 30 communities receiving it for the third time. Lawrence was also one of six cities in Kansas to receive the award for 2014. With the award, the City was able to apply for a \$20,000 Let's Play! City Construction Matching Grant from the Dr. Pepper Snapple Group and KaBOOM!. Lawrence was one of 25 communities to receive a Let's Play! Grant. In order to receive the grant, the project had to be a community-build project, which is aimed at involving the community throughout the project. The park that received the new playground was Edgewood Park.

More than 90 volunteers from the community, including a leadership class from Lawrence High School and employees from two local businesses, assisted staff in building the playground and readying it for public use. The volunteers logged more than 375 hours of work while creating the playground.



SUNFLOWER GRANT RECEIVED

The City of Lawrence was awarded a matching grant for a trail proposed for Burcham Park that would connect it with the trail in Constant Park and to the Outside for a Better Inside Trail within the Sandra J. Shaw Community Health Park. The 3400 ft. (0.64 mile) trail will be constructed partially of concrete and asphalt millings. The grant award available is matching up to \$55,000.

