



RecNet—Networking Leisure Professionals

Our Mission ...
“To support the advancement of park, recreation and environmental conservation opportunities through education, resource tools and advocacy.”

www.iowaparkandrecreation.org

Inside This Issue:

The Urbandale Pool Has Gone to the Dogs
Page 2

Musco Lighting Award
Page 3

Placekick, Punt and Throw
Page 5

Cast a Ballot for Newsletter Name Change
Page 5

Iowans Lose 69 Tons!
Page 6

Foundation Golf Outing
Page 7

National Program for Playground Safety
Page 8

URBANDALE MENTORING PROGRAM

“Makes a Difference”

**By: Jan Herke, Director, Urbandale
Parks and Recreation**

The Urbandale Parks and Recreation Department works collaboratively with the Urbandale School District and Community Education to provide a successful youth mentoring program called the “Make-a-Difference” program.

“Make-A-Difference” is a mentoring program similar to a ‘Big Brother – Big Sister’ program. It matches elementary age students with high school students who will be a positive role model.

The elementary participants are identified by school staff as students who could benefit from this kind of experience. The youth are not necessarily “at-risk” children, but rather are those who could benefit from spending some quality time with a positive role model, and have an opportunity to develop a positive relationship with them.

Once the school staff has identified the elementary youth they feel could benefit from this program, their parents are contacted, sent a detailed description of the program, and asked if they would welcome the opportunity for their child to be in the program.

A staff person from the High School, who helps facilitate this program, disseminates information to all the high school students, and they are asked to sign up to be mentor. Once the high school students have applied, been interviewed, and approved to be a mentor, they go through a series of training and role-playing sessions to better prepare them to deal with situations they

may experience throughout the program. The importance of role modeling is stressed, and program guidelines and expectations are reviewed.

Some of the many benefits of the program for the high school youth are that they experience situations that will help develop leadership skills, decision-making skills and a better understanding of how to deal with peer pressure. These skills will be developed through a role modeling and mentoring relationship throughout the school year.

There are expectations that the high school mentors are required to follow throughout the program. These expectations include:

- ✿ **To be a mature role model.**
- ✿ **To make a school year commitment to their elementary companion.**
- ✿ **To attend the “Make-A-Difference” training meetings.**
- ✿ **To communicate with parents, teachers, and other staff who are interested in the welfare of the younger student.**
- ✿ **To have contact two or three times a month with their elementary companion.**
- ✿ **To attend the monthly planned group activities.**
- ✿ **To develop a caring, fun, and nonjudgmental relationship with their elementary companion.**
- ✿ **To attend monthly meetings with staff and hand in progress reports.**
- ✿ **To become involved in the end of the year evaluations.**

(Continued on Page 3)



Midwest Sales Co.

Skateparks



Water Play



Playgrounds



We Offer:

- Free On-Site Consultation • Free Design and Planning Services
- Turnkey Installations • Community Build Projects • Complete Line of Sports Goals and Equipment • Site Amenities for All Environments
- Modular Concrete Skate Ramps (15 year warranty) • CAD Services
- Financing Available • Customer Support Line 800-346-2371

2212 E. 12th St. Suite 326
 Davenport, IA 52803
 800-346-2371 f: 563-336-4017
 www.midwestplaygrounds.com

The Urbandale Pool Has Gone to the Dogs!

By Lori Reams Parrish, Aquatics Supervisor,
 Urbandale Parks and Recreation

Eighty-five dogs strutted their stuff at the Urbandale Pool for our annual “Dog Paddle” fundraiser. Thursday, March 16 marked the end of our swimming year and we celebrated by inviting canines and their two legged friends for an hour of water fun to benefit the Animal Rescue League of Iowa.

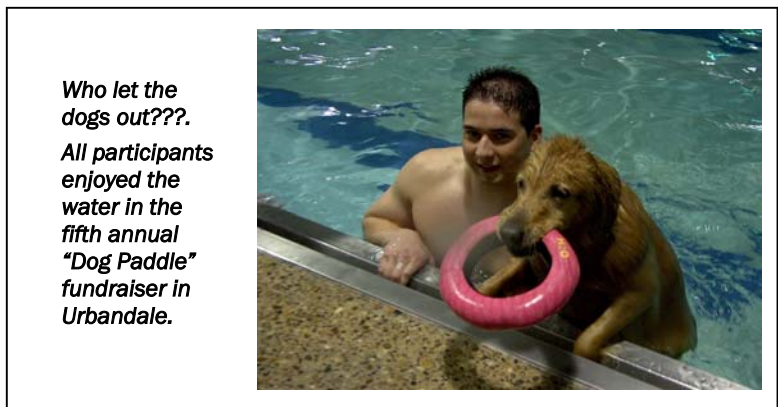
This is the fifth year for the event and the third year as a fundraiser for the Animal Rescue League. The first year we offered the event, in conjunction with the Animal Rescue League, we were very surprised by 370 dogs showing up for the two-hour event. The next year we asked owners to contact the pool and reserve a one-hour time slot. This helped to make the event more controllable with only 85 reservations.

To prepare for the “Dog Paddle”, the pool is divided into two sections with smaller dogs in the shallow water. Larger dogs can dog paddle in the deeper water and the diving well. Three lifeguards are stationed around the pool deck and are equipped with gloves, bleach water, paper towels, and poop scoopers. Guarding the pool for this event is not for the faint of heart. A strong “wet dog smell” is quite noticeable, and a few dogs require staff to use the poop scoop.

All dogs behaved well this year, except for the pouch that decided to lift his leg on a pile of clothes much to the owners' horror. We've only had one canine rescue in the five years we have offered this program. The victim was the size of a small horse and sank in the deep end. It took three people to get him out of the water. After the rescue, he no longer had any interest in returning to the water. Thank goodness!

All in all this is a great event that raised over \$900 for the Animal Rescue League. In case you were wondering, we do drain the pool after the “Dog Paddle” and acid wash all surfaces!

For questions or more information regarding n our “Dog Paddle”, feel free to contact Lori Reams Parrish, Urbandale Aquatic Supervisor, at 515-331-6793 or lparrish@urbandale.org.



Make a Difference

(Continued from Page 1)

The Make a Difference program runs throughout the school year. In September and early October of each year, the elementary age children are identified and are matched up with their high school mentors. Each month the high school students are expected to contact their elementary companion at least two to three times, which may include a phone call, e-mails, going out to a ball game, playing at the park, etc. These contacts are intended to be at little or no cost to the high school student. We have found that a mere phone call or e-mail to a young companion has made a significant impact on their self-esteem, attitude and performance in school.

Just knowing that someone cares about them and thinks that they are special literally "Makes a Difference" in their life!

Once a month there are planned group activities that all the high school mentors and their elementary companions participate in together. These activities are planned by the Parks and Recreation and School District program staff, and include such things as: Valentines Day "Bake and Take", swimming at the pool, roller-skating, sledding, visit to the Science Center, craft and game day, and open gym.

Urbandale Parks and Recreation Director, Jan Herke, brought the "Make-a-Difference" program idea with her from a similar program she helped run in Mahtomedi, Minnesota, where she worked for seven years before she moved to Iowa. She states, "The Make-a-Difference program is such a positive and successful program for everyone involved. The elementary children just thrive on the attention and "buddy" they have in their high school mentor, and the high school mentors really learn what a difference they can make in a young person's life, just by being a friend and a positive role model."

Mollie Wilhite (mwilhite@urbandale.org) and Lori Reams Parrish (lparrish@urbandale.org), Program Supervisors for Urbandale Parks and Recreation, help run the Urbandale Make a Difference Program. Please feel free to contact the Urbandale Parks and Recreation department if you have any questions or comments regarding this program.

IPRA PUBLIC PARKS YOUTH TENNIS TOURNAMENT

- ◆ Monday, August 14, 2006
- ◆ Note the enclosed flyer for information and registration details.

◆ Information available on IPRA web site: www.iowaparkandrecreation.org



Musco Lighting Lends Support to Excellence in Youth Sports Awards

Musco Lighting, a world-class leader in sports lighting, is lending its valuable support as a sponsor of this year's Excellence in Youth Sports Awards.

The Excellence Awards honor programs that are doing superior jobs of conducting diverse activities with a focus on providing safe and positive experiences for all participants - including children, parents and coaches.

The awards are presented annually by the National Alliance For Youth Sports and Athletic Business magazine. Iowa-based Musco Lighting has specialized in the design and manufacture of systems for lighting recreation and athletic fields since 1976.

It also played an instrumental role in the creation of the Alliance's first-ever Game On! Youth Sports facility in Dominica, a poverty-ravaged country in the Eastern Caribbean. Musco Lighting donated a complete lighting system for the facility, which allows youngsters to play basketball, netball, volleyball and tennis.

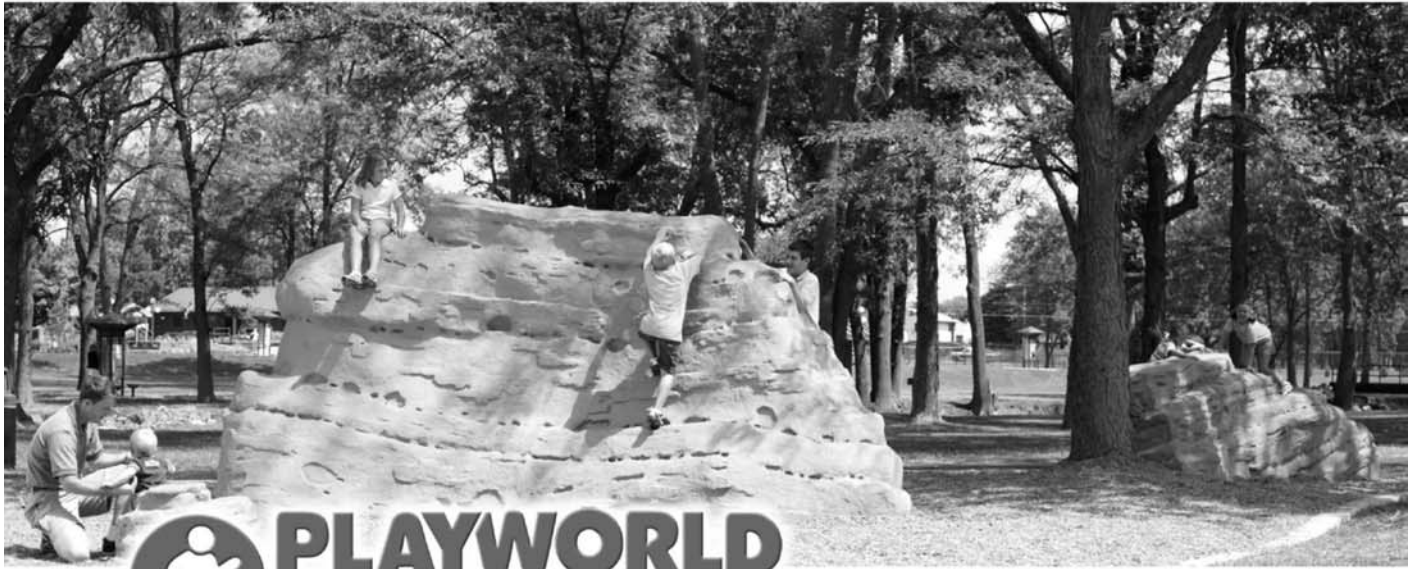
This year's Excellence Awards will be presented at the annual Athletic Business Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, on November 15-17.

For more information visit www.musco.com.

Musco Lighting is recognized as a commercial member of the IPRA.



Congratulations to **Jessica Rochford**, Community Recreation/Wellness Facilitator at the Williams Wellness Center for the Oelwein Park and Recreation Department, and **Mike Burkhart**, who were married June 10, 2006, at Sacred Heart Church in Oelwein. Mike works for Blessing Industries in Fayette as the Quality Assurance Manager. Parents are Charlie and Lynnette Rochford and Ronnie and Marilyn Burkhart.



Climbing Boulders™ – The ultimate climbing experience.

The natural look and feel of Climbing Boulders™ not only add appeal to your park, but also provides climbers of all ages with a challenging experience, time after time. Boulders are available in a variety of sizes, and the larger you select, the greater the climbing challenge you provide. Plus, you can place individual boulders on your grounds, or use multiple ones in clusters to create a more social experience for climbers.



Part of the Playworld Systems®, Inc. Family of Brands – Recreation For Life.

www.playworldsystems.com
1.800.233.8404

To learn more about Climbing Boulders™ and the Playworld Systems® family of brands, please contact:

Fry & Associates, Inc.
(800) 444-9787
sales@fryinc.com



Covering Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa,
and Illinois with local
professional representation



Cast your vote for a new name for the IPRA monthly newsletter. Details are available on the IPRA web site:

www.iowaparkandrecreation.org

IPRA Membership Renewal

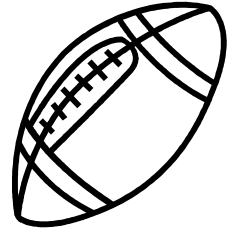
Memberships MUST be renewed no later than August 15 for inclusion in the 2006-2007 IPRA Membership Directory and Buyer's Guide.

Please contact the Iowa Park and Recreation Office if you need a membership renewal form mailed or faxed to you—641.236-3917 or download a form from the IPRA web site.



Municipal directors are reminded to submit updated information sheets to the IPRA office by August 15, if they have not already done so.

PLACEKICK, PUNT AND THROW



The IPRA Programs Committee is excited to once again offer this annual competition to boys and girls ages 8 to 13. Last year, approximately 800 youth participated at the local level. The state finals will be held in the Bergstrom Football Indoor Practice facility on the campus of Iowa State University in Ames, Saturday, October 28.

Informational packets were mailed to each department in early July. Local competitions can be held anytime between now and October 8. The entry fee for each competitor is \$4. Once a local competition date has been established for your department, please call the IPRA state office, and we will forward ribbons for participants in this event.

District competitions will be held as follows:

- SE District—Saturday, October 14, at Coralville
- SW District—Saturday, October 14, at Ankeny
- NE District—Saturday, October 21, at New Hampton
- NW District—Saturday, October 14, at Sioux City

Please contact the IPRA state office at 641-236-3917 if you should have any questions or concerns.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

IPRA FALL WORKSHOP

The 2006 IPRA Fall Workshop will be held at the Best Western Starlite Village in Fort Dodge Tuesday, September 19, through Thursday, September 21. Tuesday will feature a golf tournament. Educational sessions will be offered Wednesday and Thursday,

Registration materials will be mailed via U.S. Postal Service within the next couple of weeks, and information will also be made available on the IPRA web site: www.iowaparkandrecreation.org.

Contact the Best Western Starlite Village by calling 515.573.7177 for room reservations.

The IPRA Fall Workshop offers members a great



TWO POSITIONS AVAILABLE IN CITY OF MISSION, KANSAS

- **Community Center Director**—Selected candidate will plan and direct all recreation, aquatic and athletic programs and special events in the Sylvester Powell Community Center.
- **Event Coordinator (Special Events/Rentals)** - Seeking an experienced Special Event-Facility Coordinator to plan, implement and market recreation facilities and City-sponsored special events at the Sylvester Powell Community Center.

Interested candidates should send resume, cover letter and salary requirements to Danielle Rodenbough, Human Resources Consultant, at drozenbough@kc.rr.com, or fax to 913.345.0274 by August 14, 2006. No phone calls please EOE

Further information regarding both positions is available on the IPRA web site: www.iowaparkandrecreation.org.

Together, Iowans lose 69 Tons In Lighten Up Iowa

By: Deborah Martinez, Lighten Up Iowa Coordinator

Lighten Up Iowa, a five month, team based competition is a healthy living campaign that encourages Iowans to make healthier nutrition choices and to be more active. In 2006 a record number of 33,183 participants on 4,644 teams lost a total of **138,872.87 pounds (69 TONS)** and accumulated **5,122,833.988 miles** of activity. Iowa Sports Foundation's Executive Director Jim Hallihan commented, "LUI 2006 has exceeded our expectations for this year's program, but we are excited and think that we have just scratched the surface. We hope that LUI 2007 numbers and success of the program will continue to grow. We are proud of the communities and corporations that have adopted and committed to the LUI program. Without their commitment and support, LUI would not be where it is today."

Lighten Up Iowa 2006 began on January 18. Teams of two to ten people competed in one or both of the weight loss (healthy, appropriate diet) or accumulated activity division. In addition to incentives available during the program, teams receive weekly tips that include health, activity, and recipe ideas and free entry into Iowa Games fitness walk and Volks-walk.

Lighten Up Iowa participant, Jamie Cord had this to say about the LUI 2006 program. "The Lighten Up Iowa program is an excellent way for anyone wanting to lose weight or get into better shape to succeed. It provides the added motivation, discipline, monitoring, and goals for people to stay actively involved. LUI has helped me to lose 91 pounds, 33 inches, and 22.5% body fat in five months. I would recommend it to anyone and everyone no matter what their physical status; it has changed my life at home and at the workplace. It's a fantastically driven and managed program – great work LUI !!!"

Go The Distance, a 4-month program running from January to May, encourages kids on teams of 5-30 members to keep track of minutes of activity. Their goal was to reach 2,250 minutes by May 3. Those teams that reached the ending goal were qualified to be entered in a drawing for one \$1000 or one of four \$500 prizes. 554 teams registered for Go The Distance with a total of 10,023 kids. This is an increase of 5,950 kids on 321 teams from 2005. These teams accumulated a total of 30,437,206 minutes (507,287 hours) of physical activity during the four-month time period.

Go The Distance Day, an annual event that promotes the message that physical education programs are needed in our schools, took place on Wednesday, May 10 in schools throughout Iowa. The program challenged schools statewide

to sustain at least 30 minutes of continuous activity on that day. Schools that achieved 100 percent participation from their school and reported their activity to the Iowa Sports Foundation office were entered into a drawing for one \$1,000 and one of four \$500 cash prizes. 121 schools reported participation in Go The Distance Day, and a total of 35,427 kids were walking, doing aerobics and many other forms of physical activity continuously for 30 minutes. That is an increase of 24,574 students from 2005.

The American Obesity Association reports, "Obesity in children and adolescents is a serious issue with many health and social consequences that often continue into adulthood. Implementing prevention programs and getting a better understanding of treatment for youngsters is important to controlling the obesity epidemic."

What a wonderful opportunity for all companies, cities and people in the great state of Iowa to become involved in the LUI program and to reap the benefits. Ric Jurgens, CEO of Hy-Vee had the following to say "Because of the efforts of the Lighten Up Iowa event, we were able, as a company, to document over 30,000 pounds in weight loss during last year's program. I was personally involved on a team and it not only helped people get more involved in exercise and weight loss, but it also was a very positive teamwork experience. More importantly, in the face of huge medical insurance premiums for most companies, we were able to move through 2005 with zero increase in premiums and, in fact, actually were able to give our employees four free weeks of insurance."

The following park and recreation departments participated in LUI 2006: Ankeny, Dubuque and Iowa City. Janna Beau, Program Supervisor for the City of Dubuque, was on the task force for Lighten Up Dubuque and their participation level went from 193 participants in 2005 to 2,711 participants in 2006. To schedule a presentation or for more information on how your park and recreation department or city can be involved in LUI 2007 call Deborah Martinez at 888-777-8881 ext. 4 or e-mail her at deborah@lighteniowa.org.

Lighten Up Iowa is a joint program of the Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Sports Foundation (dba Iowa Games) and Iowa State University Extension.

Iowa Sports Foundation (ISF) is a nonprofit sports management organization that helps develop sports tourism in Iowa and promotes positive lifestyle and physical fitness through amateur athletic events and health education programs. ISF owns the Summer Iowa Games, Winter Iowa Games, Lighten Up Iowa, Go The Distance, Go The Distance Day, Hoopin at the Dome, Netfest and the Iowa Games Golf Classic.



IPRA STATE FAIR DAY

Thursday, August 17

- Bubble gum blowing contest
- Pie eating contest
- Big wheel races
- Much, much more



Contact Doug Bylund,
dbylund@cityofindianola.com
 to volunteer your services for
 a day of fun at the Iowa State
 Fair!!!

Iowa Foundation for Parks and Recreation Golf Outing



Friday, August 11, 2006
 (first tee time: 12:00 noon)
Bunker Hill Golf Course
 (2200 Bunker Hill Road,
 Dubuque)
Ryder Cup Format
 (two person team; 6 holes best shot;
 6 holes alternate shot; 6 holes best
 ball)
Entry fee: \$50 per person
 (includes golf, cart, steak dinner and
 prizes)
Entry deadline: August 1
 (Contact Gil Spence, 563-589-4263,
 to enter)

Participants in
 the Urbandale
 "Make a Differ-
 ence" program
 enjoy roller
 skating.



DUNBAR/JONES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE — PLANNING — URBAN DESIGN
 HISTORIC LANDSCAPES — SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPES



Western Gateway Park
 Des Moines, Iowa

PLANNING

TALENTED PROFESSIONALS

Creative and Visionary
 We can help you plan for the future.

Master Planning

Land Use Planning

**Community Parks and
 Recreation Planning**

**Public Participation and Workshop
 Facilitation**

Landscape Architecture

Sustainable Design

Urban Design

**CONTACT TOM DUNBAR FOR ASSISTANCE WITH YOUR PARK
 AND RECREATION PLANNING AND DESIGN NEEDS.**

526 East Grand Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50309-1922
 515-280-8026 (T)
 866-564-5240 (Toll-Free)
 515-280-3559 (F)
tdunbar@dunbarjones.com
www.dunbarjones.com



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #269

1534 Penrose Street
Grinnell, IA 50112

Phone: 641.236.3917
Fax: 641.236.6779
www.iowaparkand recreation.org

“RecNet” is produced by the I.P.R.A.
Publications Committee Chair, Deborah
Martinez, deborah@lightenupiowa.org

Layout design by Cathy
Shutts,
cshutts@pcpartner.net

IPRA Calendar of Events

August

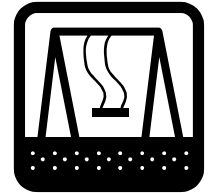
- 7 CEU/Aquatic Update—Des Moines
- 8-9 CPO Course—Des Moines
- 11 Iowa Park and Recreation Foundation Golf Outing
- 14 IPRA Public Parks Youth Tennis Tournament
- 15 REAP Grant Application deadline
- 17 IPRA State Fair Day

September

- (PPT Local Competitions)
- 4 Office Closed—Labor Day
 - 19-21 IPRA Fall Workshop—Fort Dodge



National Program for Playground Safety



- Wednesday, October 4, 2006, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Quality Inn & Suites, Ames, 515.232.9260
- \$115 fee which includes snacks, lunch and handouts
- 5 hours of educational programs plus local playground on-site evaluation
- One-day workshop which will focus on making playgrounds more safe
- No certification received; however IPRA CEU's will be offered

REGISTRATION MATERIALS WILL BE MAILED AND POSTED TO THE IPRA WEB SITE: www.iowaparkandrecreation.org.