

WAUKEGAN PARK DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

Waukegan Park District Celebrates Gold Medal & Thanks Volunteers and Patrons

Waukegan, IL (March 3, 2014)...The Waukegan Park District held its Gold Medal and Volunteer and Patron Celebration Thursday, February 28, at Bonnie Brook Golf Course Clubhouse. Greg Petry gave an overview of the District's accomplishments during 2013 and thanked many who made receiving the Gold Medal possible. Special recognition was extended to State Senator Terry Link, State Representative JoAnn Osmond and retired State Senator Susan Garrett for their support and assistance with legislation that restored the District's bonding authority. Petry also recognized the 1997 referendum committee upon which he served, chaired by John Della Valle with Robert Morrison, Mary Ellen Vanderventer, and Chris Hensley. The successful referendum provided revenue for capital projects.

State Senator Terry Link attended the celebration and offered his congratulations and U.S. Representative Brad Schneider sent a congratulatory video. A new video celebrating the Waukegan Park District's winning of the National Recreation and Park Association Gold Medal for Excellence in Field of Park and Recreation Management and thanking volunteers and patrons was well received by guests. Both videos are available to be viewed by visiting the District's website: www.waukeganparks.org

The Waukegan School District was the recipient of the Jack Benny Award for the Arts and Humanities, which recognizes support for the arts in Waukegan. Patricia Foley, Waukegan Park District Commissioner and former School Board Member, stated that the school district has been a leader in making arts accessible to the community since it was established in 1870. The School District was recognized for its many achievements and state honors for band, orchestra and chorus. When the community based Waukegan Symphony Orchestra was organized, the school district pledged its support by providing a rehearsal and performance home, a practice that continues today.

Volunteer of the Year was awarded to Waukegan BMX for the outstanding Bicycle Motocross Racing Program they have built and their volunteer efforts to maintain and upgrade the Waukegan BMX track. The Club made many improvements to the track this past year and committed more than \$20,000 to do so. Annually, they organize and host races throughout the season. In 2010, the Waukegan BMX Track was named Illinois Track of the Year.

Bob Hamilton of Gewalt Hamilton was presented the Patron of the Year Award for his far reaching support of the Waukegan Park District. Not only has he supported many Waukegan Park District special events, but he also planned corporate and fundraising outings at Bonnie Brook Golf Course. Janet Kilkelly, Board President stated, "Bob increased the visibility and enhanced the reputation of the Waukegan Park District by

submitting nominations and winning prestigious awards for Waukegan Park District projects.” Greg Petry praised Mr. Hamilton for extremely attractive pricing on projects with tight budgets, noting that he never turned down a request for assistance. Finally, Mr. Hamilton was thanked for his aerial photographic history of the Waukegan SportsPark’s development and use. He took the photos while flying his personal plane.

Twenty-three other volunteers and patrons received Community Service Awards for their exceptional efforts and commitment to the Waukegan Park District during 2013.

They were: Josh Bill, First United Methodist Church, Nina Nicole Geater, Jacqueline Harris, Maria Calderon, Dennis Moisio, Yvonne Sylvester, Caryn Harris, Janalle Roth, Rich Roth, Myron Phelps, Ricky Stewart, Amina Mayfield, Waukegan Citizens’ Police Academy, Annie’s Hair Design, Jan Keller, Thrivent Financial, Elks Club Lodge 702, Buffalo Wild Wings, Great Lakes Credit Union, Sandy Llewellyn, (Posthumous accepted by Steve Llewellyn, Nancy Inskeep, and Peter Gordon.

Bonnie Brook Golf League organizers were thanked and they included Dean Wooster, Joe Bentivegna, Kevin Wermerling, Bob Walter, Pat McDonald, Ina Campbell, Craig Schaper, Tom Deram, Steve Whitson, Don Stateler, Ken Miller, Mark Metzger, Robert Taylor, Bob Ruwitch, Scott Latza, Bonnie Arion, Dan Dieck, Donna Parkhurst, Dale Beaver, and Avel Bustamante.



About the Waukegan Park District

Established on December 26, 1916, the district has 47 properties and 720 acres of land, including the 18-hole Bonnie Brook and 9-hole Greenshire Golf Courses. Properties are managed to the highest environmental and conservation standards. Facilities operated by the district include the Field House Sports and Fitness Center, the Jack Benny Center for the Arts, the Waukegan SportsPark, the Waukegan Skate Park, the Waukegan BMX Track, recreational centers, an outdoor swimming pool, disc golf course, dog exercise area, outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, playgrounds, and sports courts including basketball and tennis. A full range of programs and services are offered year round for all ages, from infants to seniors as well as special needs populations. Healthy lifestyles, wellness initiatives, and a connection with the outdoors and nature are integrated throughout programs, services, and special events. Cultural events are provided by the Waukegan Symphony Orchestra and Concert Chorus, the Bowen Park Theatre Company, and the Waukegan History Museum. There is something for everyone! The award-winning District employs 57 full-time and over 250 part-time, year round, seasonal, and temporary employees. The District is a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD), and Illinois Park and

Recreation Association (IPRA). The district maintains national accreditation from the NRPA Commission for Accreditation of Park and Recreation Agencies (CAPRA), the Illinois Association of Park Districts' (IAPD) Distinguished Agency accreditation and the Park District Risk Management Agency (PDRMA) accreditation and sustains a Level A Loss Control Program. The district was a NRPA Gold Medal Finalist in 2012 and 2013, and awarded the NRPA National Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in 2013.

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