

MOVING FORWARD

to strengthen our community



2023
ANNUAL
HIGHLIGHTS

WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR



**JOHN GRIPP,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

MOVING FORWARD TO STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY

“2023 was a year of several accomplishments, new programs and services, expanded community partnerships, and exciting facility and park developments. Our staff, led by the vision of the Park Board and City Council, are dedicated to building community through Rock Island Parks & Recreation programs, events, facilities, and services.

The National Parks & Recreation Association puts it this way, “Parks and Recreation is everywhere, uniting people and strengthening communities!”

We are committed to expanding our programming to include all members of our community. Our financial assistance fund made it possible for over 300 individuals to participate in youth sports, day camps, swimming lessons, First Tee golf lessons, and more! Our community partners build deep community bonds and are vital in ensuring that our services have a broad and diverse reach. Several projects were completed in 2023 that will improve parks and facilities and provide a source of pride for our residents, attract new visitors, and add sustainability for the future.

We embrace our mission to enrich the quality of life for our community by providing exceptional recreational and park experiences. Our community continuously demonstrates their support for park and recreation services. Across the country parks and recreation is widely supported and nearly 90% of U.S. adults agree that it is critical for local governments to fund these services sufficiently (NRPA).

Our 2023 highlights showcase the investments made in new and improved parks and facilities, creative and diverse programs and events, and expanded community partnerships.

The benefits Parks & Recreation provides for our community are endless. We will continuously seek to improve our services, create new experiences, and move our community forward!”



“ Parks and Recreation is everywhere, uniting people and strengthening communities! ”



7 PROJECTS

Several projects were completed or started in 2023 utilizing federal funds from the American Relief Plan Act.

These funds were leveraged with local support from grants and donations to expand the scope of each project.



NEW & IMPROVED PARKS & FACILITIES

1

DOUGLAS PARK

- Completed lighting of the youth and multi-use fields
- Funded through the American Relief Plan Act, \$50,000 T-Mobile Hometown Grant, and over \$70,000 from Friends of Douglas Park fundraising.
- Fields will be used for Department sponsored youth baseball, softball, soccer and flag football as well as community events, rentals and tournaments.



2

DENKMANN PARK

- ADA Accessible sidewalks, pathways, and drinking fountain. New concrete basketball court and hoops, rehab of picnic shelter and playground. ADA transition from street to sidewalk, ADA interior and exterior pathways.
- Funded through the American Relief Plan Act and Housing & Urban Development Community Development Block Grants.
- Hosted a Party in the Park ribbon cutting event to introduce the improvements with several community and neighborhood vendors and supporters.



3

HAUBERG CARRIAGE HOUSE

- Renovations of the Carriage House at the Hauberg Estate included new ADA restrooms, all new windows, doors, glass storefront/breezeway, and bar/event space.
- Funded through the American Relief Plan Act and Friends of Hauberg.



4

HIGHLAND SPRINGS CLUBHOUSE

- New 3000 square foot clubhouse and First Tee classroom with outdoor patio and ADA parking and pathways.
- Funded through the American Relief Plan Act, First Tee of the Quad Cities, and community donations.
- Home to the First Tee Quad Cities and an attractive beginning and ending point for all golfers.



NEW & IMPROVED PARKS & FACILITIES

5

LINCOLN PARK TENNIS COURTS

- 6 new tennis courts at Lincoln Park that will serve as the home of Augustana College tennis, Alleman High School tennis and community play.
- Pickleball lines painted on half of the courts
- Funded by Augustana College



6

MEL MCKAY PICKLEBALL COURTS

- Replaced deteriorating existing facility with 6 new courts, fencing, seating, and parking areas.
- Funded by the American Relief Plan Act and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources OSLAD grant.
- The fastest growing sport in America has a new home in Rock Island!



7

RIFAC REMODEL PROJECT

- Complete remodel of men's and women's locker rooms including new lockers, new flooring and a new steam room and sauna.
- Installation of windows in the pool area to match the whirlpool area and weight room facade.
- Funded by the American Relief Plan Act.



OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Our community is strengthened through effective partnerships. Our partners are critical in ensuring that the community is provided with a diverse range of recreational opportunities that are accessible and attractive for all residents and visitors.



First Tee Quad Cities

Over 400 youth participated in First Tee golf programs at Highland Springs including participants from partner agencies such as the Martin Luther King Center, Spring Forward, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Boys & Girls Club.



AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

Longview Park planning study, new tennis courts at Lincoln Park, golf and cross country.

YOUTH HOPE MINISTRIES

Swim Lessons



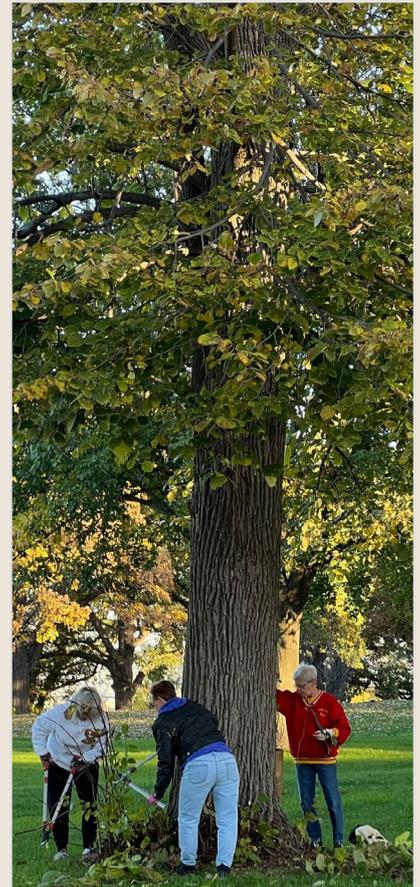
Spring Forward and the Rock Island/Milan School District

Summer sports camps, swim lessons, LEAD programming, and more were provided to participants in the Spring Forward afterschool and summer programs as well as students at several elementary schools.

The Rock Island High School varsity baseball team utilized Douglas Park for their home games after their field as damaged due to a strong wind storm.

BLACKHAWK COLLEGE

Highway Construction Career Training Program-Saukie Golf Course patio project



FRIENDS OF LONG VIEW PARK

PARK CLEAN UP, FUNDRAISING FOR THE RENOVATION OF THE GREENHOUSE AND PLANNING STUDY FOR THE RENOVATION OF THE LAGOON.

FRIENDS OF DOUGLAS PARK

FRIENDS OF HAUBERG

ROCK ISLAND PARKS &

RECREATION FOUNDATION



SEVERAL COMMUNITY, CORPORATE, EAGLE SCOUTS, AND OTHER VOLUNTEER GROUPS.

NEW PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Our creative staff continually evaluates the needs of our community to ensure participants of all ages and abilities have recreational opportunities.

1

ADULT SWIM NIGHT & YOUTH MERMAID CAMPS at Whitewater Junction



2

ADAPTIVE AND SPECIAL RECREATION PROGRAMMING: Sensory Safe Swim Time All Play Adaptive Baseball Special Olympics Basketball



3

LADIES' SWING & SIP GOLF EVENTS



4

REVIVE ROCK ISLAND MARKET FEST



5

PARTY IN THE PARK EVENTS AND LANTERN PARADE

Held at Denkmann Park and Lincoln Park



TESTIMONIALS ABOUT OUR SERVICES



My granddaughters got to swim with mermaids this morning! Best pool experience ever!! ~Debra

Wonderful pool & waterslides for all ages!! My family greatly enjoyed this place & we will be back! It was a wonderful, clean and inexpensive way to spend a hot summer day. ~Gabrielle

The Tball coach was excellent and made it known up front that help was needed from the parents. During practices, the kids were split into 3-4 groups to keep them engaged. It went really well and our 4 yr old boy who had never played loved it! ~Tball parent

I think you have a great variety! I never thought that I would have a kid taking cheer but she loved it and I hope it is offered again and more than one time a year b/c she really enjoyed it. ~Cheer parent

Saukie is one of the oldest golf courses in Illinois. Par is 66 and there is only one par 5. The greens are small and relatively flat. The condition of the course is impeccable. You will enjoy. ~Dave

We had a great round at Highland. The morning crew has always been helpful in getting the golfers their carts, they're appropriate tee times, and being able to practice putting before we even tee off gives us a good read on how the regular greens are rolling. It goes without saying, but should, that the grounds crew work their hardest to maintain one of best courses in the Quad Cities. ~Ernie

RIFAC is in a very convenient location. Never too crowded. Nice pool with lanes for laps, deep end, do your own thing area. Nice very large hot tub area with relaxing view. Simple track for walking. Plenty more things I don't use. ~Brian

