

Thanks to all who attended our celebration at Raccoon River Park last night. The final count is not in, but we estimate that over 1,000 people took part in the activities. The purpose of this note is to thank the many people who made the re-construction of Raccoon River Soccer Complex and the all Club celebration possible.

Event Organizing Committee

First, I'd like to recognize the organizing committee for this grand opening celebration. These people put an immense amount of time into pulling this all together and making it a day to remember. Dawn Connett, Michelle Stanley, Michelle Campos and board member Judi Eilertson.

WDM City, Parks, Schools

When we decided we wanted to upgrade Raccoon River, the first thing we had to do was get the city's approval and figure out where to play while the facility was being reconstructed. Our Club has had a great working relationship with the City of West Des Moines, the Parks and Recreation Department and West Des Moines School System for many years and they have been instrumental in helping us make the upgrades to Raccoon River.

Maybe the most important way in which they helped us was by allowing us to relocate part of our fields to space that they own near Valley Stadium and City Hall for the past year to allow the new turf to get started right at Raccoon River.

They also help us maintain Raccoon River Soccer Complex. Many thanks to our city leaders, Park Board members, the Parks and Recreation Department staff and West Des Moines Community School District for their support.

Contractors

The contractors who completed the work at Raccoon River did a fantastic job of managing time and our budget. Working on a big project like this with a volunteer-run, not-for-profit organization like the WDMSC is not the easiest thing in the world. We'd like to thank our contractors for their assistance and support: Towers Excavating, Thorpe Water Development, Midwest Landscaping and Rick Crall.

WDMSC Staff

We are fortunate to have a great staff at WDMSC. None of the programming we offer here would be possible without their support.

- Mike Nemmers – Executive Director
- Tavé Porto – Club Administrator
- Frank Gurnick – Director of Coaching
- Billy Scott -- Director of Recreational Coaching
- Stacy Renteria – Bookkeeper

I'd also like to thank all of our professional coaches, who along with Frank Gurnick are responsible for training our competitive soccer teams and for the fact that the WDMSC is the top rated competitive club in the state of Iowa and ranked 77th in the US.

WDMSC Board

Our board of directors consists of nine volunteers who put in an immense amount of time to ensure that when you show up to train or play at our facilities everything is as it is supposed to be – coaches are there, referees are there, the fields are in good shape.

We are a small business -- \$600,000 annual budget, over twenty full and part time employees, and a variety of great programs. The effort that these people put forth on behalf of the Club is substantial.

It is due to the leadership of the current and previous board members that the decision was made to proceed with the improvements at Raccoon River and at Hidden Valley.

I'd like to recognize our current board members:

- John Hunter –Secretary
- Jon Hoffmann -- Director of Referees
- Mike Hopson -- Director of Recreational Soccer
- Grant Friesth -- Director of Competitive soccer
- Mark Kilian -- Treasurer
- Chris Schuchmann -- Director of Membership
- Judi Eilertson – Director of Fundraising
- Andy Pappas – Director of Property

I want to especially thank Andy Pappas for his contribution. Andy was the person who did most of the heavy lifting to plan for and implement the improvements at the Raccoon River Soccer Complex and was essentially our general contractor for the project. This improved facility would not have been possible without his efforts.

Facilities Improvements

Obviously, the improvements that we have made to Raccoon River were not free. The total cost of the project was over \$200,000, all of which has been paid for by West Des Moines Soccer Club. Some of those funds came from Club reserves, the remainder from a long term loan by our bank, First American State Bank. First American has been excellent partners in helping us accomplish our goals.

As Club members, you may have heard that we initiated a fundraising campaign during the last 12 months. The purpose of this drive is to provide capital for facilities improvements both at Raccoon River and at our Hidden Valley Soccer Complex. Most of the U11 & above recreational and competitive games are played at Hidden Valley.

The first use of that money will be to finish permanent restrooms at Hidden Valley and to pay off the remaining debt from the Raccoon River project.

To date we have raised just under \$100,000 in donations and pledges. We would like thank all of you who have contributed so far – an initial list of contributors was included in the August issue of the KICK newsletter that you have just received.

Our major donors are also recognized by signage at both the Raccoon River and Hidden Valley Soccer Complexes. I would especially like to thank our premier donors:

- Iowa Vein Center/ Dr. Jose Olivencia family
- Des Moines Pediatric & Adolescent Clinic / Dr. Ken Talcott and Dr. Brian Waggoner and their families.

The campaign is far from over. You will be receiving information in the mail or via your team coordinator in the next few weeks asking you to participate in the Facilities Improvement campaign. Please help us continue to improve the facilities where your kids play.

Again, thank you for taking time to celebrate with us, and thanks for your support of the West Des Moines Soccer Club.

David Soorholtz
WDMSC President