HIGHLIGHTS OF 2017

Coralville Parks and Recreation
**By the Numbers**

Rec Center Attendance 208,346  
Total Active Net Registrations 12,975  
Summer Lunch Attendance 3,144  
Farmer’s Market Vendors 34  
Community Garden Plots 46  
EngAGE Program Participants (Began in Sept.) 76

**Programs**

Youth Sports Enrollment 2,001  
Adult Sports Teams 289  
Junior High Trips 241  
Preschool Programs 681

**Partnership Programs**

BASP Enrollment (monthly) 358  
Trail Trekkers 212  
Spark Summer Camp 1,677  
Other Partnership Programs 578

**Rentals**

Showcase Rentals 15  
Shelter Rentals 149  
North Ridge Pavilion Rentals 215  
Rec Center Room Rentals 114
Cr eekside Cr oss Opens

by Sherri Proud

An idea was hatched in March of 2017 to find a place in Coralville that a permanent cycle cross course could be built. Staff and volunteers from the cycling community walked the area west of Coralville Creekside Ballpark and ideas started flowing with each consecutive step.

Creekside Cross is a course designed to be used for cycle cross bicycling, cross country running, hiking, and cross country skiing. The project was embraced by both parks staff and local volunteers who began working together to clear areas on the plotted course. Next the course was seeded and the hillside terraces mowed twice per month to keep down shrubby plant material. A bridge was built using recycled materials and signage was ordered from Prison Industries. Most of all, the buzz grew louder in the community as people began to want to know what Coralville was building.

On August 11, Coralville Creekside Cross was opened to the public as the first permanent cycle cross course in Johnson County and only the third one in the state of Iowa. The course can be configured several different ways for events and plotted for up to 2.4 miles in length.

Iowa City Cycle Cross Club and the City formed a partnership for the care and management of the course. Goosetown Racing Club held the first cycle cross race November 4th and 5th with one hundred and twenty racers trying their skills. The ride through the barn and down the serpentine slope to hit the bridge and begin the pump up the hill proved to be challenging for racers of all abilities.

Creekside Cross is open July 1 (or sooner) to spring thaw from dawn to dusk. In 2017, riders enjoyed two “learn to” clinics in the fall and twelve to fifteen riders attended the hot laps opportunity on Tuesdays and Thursday evenings in September and October.

Putting The Cross Together - One Park, Five Months, Community Planned, Community Built

Clearing and construction - Staff and Volunteers

Expenses
Bridge - Repurposed materials, $100 in screws
Seeding $3000
Information Kiosk $1000
Signage $400
Total Expenses $4,500
Brown Deer Youth Golf program provides the foundation for area youth to pursue their love of golf. The program offers unlimited golf, free range balls, and numerous opportunities for instruction from Brown Deer PGA professionals. For those interested in more than recreational rounds, members are connected with local options for playing competitive golf at both Brown Deer and around the community.

The program has had yearly membership numbers ranging from 35-55 kids. Most of the members are 16-18 years old and play mostly recreational golf with their friends. One on one meetings with interested families help to determine if the program is a good fit for each child.

In the past seven years the program has seen nearly 150 different members, and 80% have joined for more than one year. The local high school golf teams have also been well represented with players from all seven local high schools participating at some point since the program’s inception.

In 2017, the local athletic directors and golf professionals coordinated support for four local high school golf teams. West High moved from Brown Deer to Finkbine and Brown Deer become the home to the Liberty Golf teams and the Regina Boys golf team.
A new event in August highlighted the revitalized 5th Street area. The 5th Street Social, held on August 19, brought over 1600 people to the blocks of 6th - 9th Avenue on old historic Route 6 to enjoy craft beer, food, live music, giant sized games and a kids zone. Partners 808 on 5th, Hills Bank, and University of Iowa Community Credit Union helped to bring this new twist on the popular 50's and 60's street dance to life. Funds raised after expenses went toward youth scholarships for Parks and Recreation.

Rec Center Hosts First Indoor Community Meal
By Scott Prochaska

On February 10, 2017, the staff at the Coralville Recreation Center, along with the Coralville Community Food Pantry, hosted the first indoor community meal. The event was free to the public and the entire community was invited to attend.

The meal was served in the mini gym, while games and activities for the kids were held in the big gym and meeting room. A cooking demonstration showing how to make the food that was served and use common, inexpensive ingredients was held.

The event was attended by one hundred and seventy six people and many new friends were made. People were fed a healthy meal and were able to connect and recreate with their neighbors.

Unique Ideas with Kid Input Keeps Programs Fresh and Fun

Program staff are constantly searching for new ideas to keep programming fresh. This year some of our favorite new programs included Big Dogs, programming in the Borlaug BASP for 4th - 6th graders. Giving the kids input on their activities and giving the separated time for gym games and other activities helped keep the older ages engaged. They even completed several service projects and helped program for the younger ages.

Friday Night Lights and Kids Night In continued to be popular with theme nights like Paint Party, Camp Snowed In, and Use the Force.

Magical Mail took on a life of its own when staff created a spin off from Santa's Mail. Families sign up and receive two deliveries a month with encouraging letters, stories, and a little magic. The second mailing of the month is a package of a small interactive surprise that is hand selected by a magical friend to encourage discovery and exploration. The deliveries aim to teach lessons like kindness, positive thoughts, and believing in dreams.

Junior High Students Enjoy After School Homework Help and Activities

Stop by the Rec Center after school and you may get the chance to try a slice of pie or piece of homemade pizza. Life skills, physical activities, and kitchen lessons all are part of the free Junior high programs after school. Partners from the University of Iowa Science Education program helped bring learning concepts to life with green solutions at several of the club meeting times.
Since the summer of 2017, six motion-triggered trail cameras have been collecting photographs of the abundant wildlife in some of Coralville’s parks and greenways. Hidden in some of the more remote corners of these urban greenspaces, these cameras are a sub-set of a larger investigation being conducted in Iowa City, Coralville, North Liberty, and the surrounding landscape by Brandon MacDougall, a graduate student in the Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences at the University of Iowa. As the primary source of data in MacDougall’s Ph.D. dissertation work, these cameras are providing evidence of mammalian presence or absence along a gradient of urbanization, with sites located in forest patches amongst wildland areas, crop fields, suburbia, and into residential areas of these three cities.

Yet the lack of research conducted at small urban areas within these vast monoculture matrices leaves us with little understanding of the potential for urban greenspaces as suitable and preferred habitat. MacDougall’s dissertation research seeks to begin filling this knowledge gap by examining the responses of faunal species to areas of potential habitat in cities surrounded by agriculture, such as Coralville.

To date, cameras have captured photos of wildlife during each of the four seasons, with approximately thirty days of data collection per season. Collecting data in this fashion allows for future analysis that will consider seasonal patterns in mammalian distribution at urban greenspaces. The layout of sites along transects their placement within urban forests of various size, and their distribution amongst a wide range of landscape types will allow for analysis that considers the impact of land cover on the presence of the species observed, such as the amount of impervious surface surrounding these urban forest habitats. This research can help inform conservation efforts for mammalian species within urban and agricultural areas, and provide knowledge for targeting urban greenspaces that are most beneficial to species’ retention.

There has been no shortage of interesting and informative data collected during this first year, including at many of the Coralville sites. During the month of July, a large percentage of photographs from these greenspaces contained fawns (often two or three) as well as large families of raccoons; the largest family had four young. One of the smallest and more cryptic predators - a mink - was spotted...
Bobcats, Raccoons, Minks, Deer and Others Make Coralville Home

at Dovetail Recreation Area. In October, the mammalian activity captured by trail cameras at these parks really picked up. Opossum, raccoon, deer, and Eastern Cottontail were abundant at all six sites during this month. A muskrat was seen, along with a couple photographs of mink again, at the Dovetail site, and woodchucks were spotted at a few of the other Coralville sites. This season was also a great time to capture coyote and Red Fox, even at some of the more urbanized sites such as the survey site along Clear Creek Trail.

In the final set of photographs that have been tagged to date, from January, a rare predator was spotted along the Clear Creek Greenbelt – a bobcat! The other predators, including a small population of feral house cats, continued to make their presence known at these sites; as did the wildly active rabbits. In addition, both of the squirrel species common to this area – Fox Squirrel and Grey Squirrel – were active, abundant, and ever-present at the majority of sites during all seasons.

These sites have already provided a wealth of data on species’ distributions in small urban areas of the U.S. Corn Belt. MacDougall plans to continue this project during his time at the University of Iowa, and hopes that it will continue many years into the future – allowing for long-term patterns in the behavior of these urban-adapted species to become evident. Likewise, he plans to share this data as a member of the Urban Wildlife Information Network – a network of other researchers conducting similar research in cities around the world – to allow for broad-scale patterns of mammalian response to urbanization to emerge, leading to generalizable knowledge that can be applied to conservation efforts in a wide range of urban locales.

View all the best photographs from Brandon’s research at www.flickr.com/photos/iowacitywildlife/albums
Communities across the midwest have banned together to join the effort to save the monarch butterfly and work to make sure all pollinators have access to native habitat. Pollinators are an important part of insuring our food supply and in the honey bees’ case, even produce a food supply for human consumption. Coralville was quick to say "sign us up" with the effort. By doing so, Coralville pledged to take certain actions like leave milkweed standing in most all flower garden beds, include milkweed seed in all native plantings, capture milkweed seed each fall to redistribute, and to make efforts each year to add more acres of native seedings. We also pledged to do a yearly proclamation for Pollinators Week and to keep the public informed of the importance of pollinator habitat. The Mayor's Monarch Pledge is a program of the National Wildlife Federation.

"Mixing the milkweed seed with the wet sand and dirt and making it into balls to throw was one of the best parts of BEST Day Ever", Brynne Nock, NWJH student

Coralville Joins Mayor’s Monarch Pledge

Patron Attendance for Events 32,233
Performances and Public Events 151
Total Dates Occupied 281
Artists and Students Performing on Stage 4,710
Attendance for Theater Camps 167

New in 2017 at the CCPA

The Coralville Center for the Performing Arts continues to find its way in the community through programming, producing, and presenting. City Circle celebrated its 20th season in 2017-2018 and Young Footlighters continued to have record turnouts for auditions. With so many youth interested in shows, Young Footlighters added a second Christmas show to their season to give more children opportunities to be on stage. CCPA programming was also increased thanks to grants from the Iowa Arts Council, the Johnson County Community Fund, and Hills Bank. New half day theater camps were developed and were popular with children all ready involved at the CCPA as well as newcomers.

The theater was also able to replace the sound board with a new state of the art version thanks to a grant from the Coralville Community Fund.
Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), a tree-killing pest of ash trees, was confirmed in Coralville in early 2017. The small metallic green beetle, which is native to Asia, arrived in the eastern United States around 2002 before moving to the Midwest through firewood, sawmill logs, and nursery plants. As of April 17, emerald ash borer has been confirmed in 45 counties in Iowa. Following patterns in the Midwest, Coralville can expect to lose the majority of the ash tree population. Coralville has approximately 300 City-owned ash trees in parks and streetscapes. On April 11, the City Council approved a five year EAB response plan to mitigate the spread of the emerald ash borer in public ash trees through ash tree treatments, removals, and replanting efforts to diversify Coralville’s urban forest. Beginning in May of 2017, approximately 200 City trees in City parks and streetscapes were treated with trunk injections. Information was also widely distributed in the community for property owners so they could make a decision regarding treatment or removal.

Also beginning in 2017, City staff began the removal of 100 declining or non-specimen ash trees. Trees will be removed at a rate of about 15-20 trees per year and new trees replanted. Proactive planting of more diverse species began in 2015 in parks with ash trees.

Small improvements were made in the parks and on trails with the memorial and celebration program. Staff work with the family or organization that would like to donate a bench, tree, or new this year, a bike fix it station, to place the donation at an area that means something to the donor. In 2017, benches were added to honor former Mayor Jim Fausett, Kelly Bender, and Maryellen Cazanos. Trees were donated in memory of Ivan, the Police Dog, and Tucker Slade, and four bike fix it stations were donated to celebrate the trails in Coralville. Fix it stations were donated by Scheels and Think Bicycles.

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By Alex Buhmeyer
Aquatics Programs

Coralville Community Aquatic Center 30,787
CCAC Rentals 31
Indoor Pool Attendance 12,248
Closed July 5 - August 28 for painting and deck renovation
Indoor Pool Programs 1,493

www.coralville.org/parksrec
www.facebook.com/CoralvilleParksandRecreation