

Department Director
Barry Russell

2008 Park Board members
Gary Lawton, President
Bob Apple, City Council Liaison
Randy Cameron
Ross Kelley
Steve McNutt
Kimberly Morse
Jim Quigley
Ron Rector
James Santorsola
Elizabeth Schoedel
Steve Silkworth
Larry Stanley
Martha Lou Wheatley-Billeter

Staff
All facilities and programs are managed by a talented and energetic staff of approximately 80 full-time employees, augmented with several hundred dedicated seasonal workers.

Administrative Headquarters
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What a Year!

Snowiest 24-hour Period
Dec. 17, 2008 – 12.5”

Snowiest 2-day Period
Dec. 17-18, 2008 – 23.6”

Snowiest 3-day Period
Dec. 17-19, 2008 – 25.1”

Snowiest Week
Dec. 17-23, 2008 – 35.8”

Snowiest Month
Dec. 1-31, 2008 – 61.5”

Snowiest December
Dec. 1-31, 2008 – 61.5”

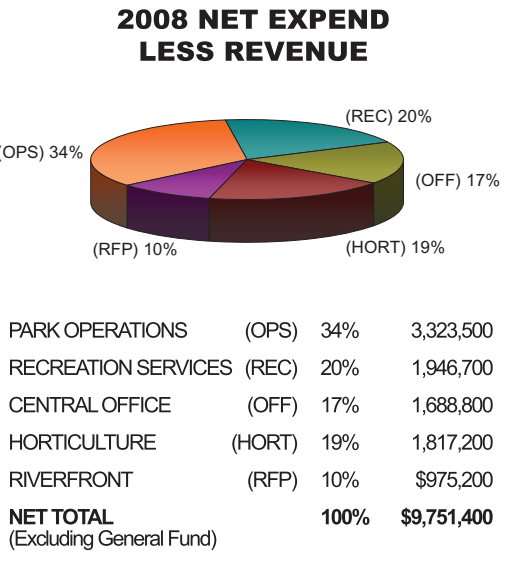
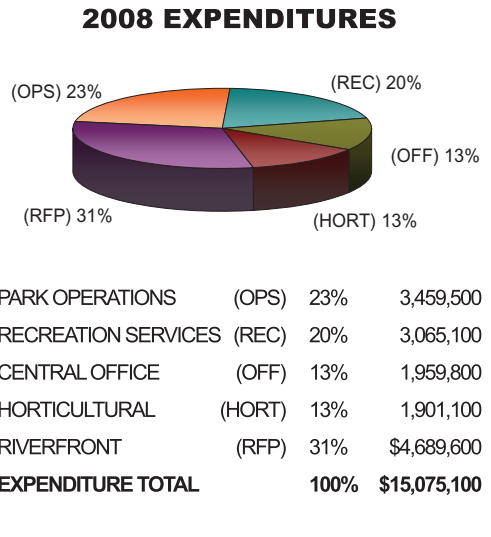
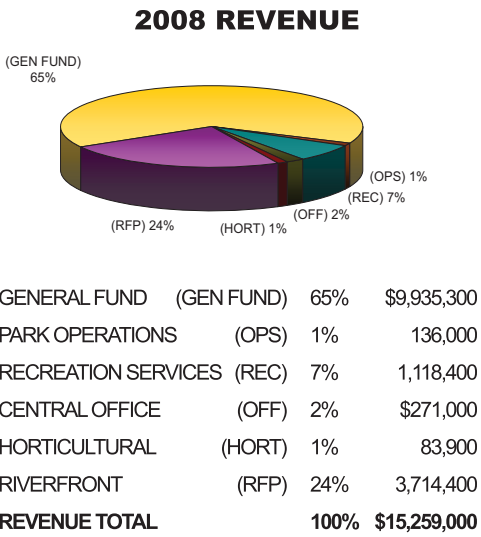
Snowiest Calendar Year
2008 – 132.7”

The First 100 Years Living the Olmsted Legacy



Photo by Steve Dawson

2008 Financial Report



2008 Marks the 100th Anniversary of the Olmsted-Designed Spokane Parks Plan



John C. Olmsted

Nearly all of Spokane’s many beautiful parks and parkways were first conceived by a legendary firm in park design and urban planning: the Olmsted Brothers, Landscape Architects, of Brookline, Massachusetts, of New York’s Central Park fame.

In 1907, the first president of the City of Spokane Park Board, Aubrey L. White (1868-1948), was determined to make Spokane into a model of modern park planning. White discovered that John Charles Olmsted (1852-1920) was making trips out west to oversee other projects in the Northwest, so he convinced Olmsted to make stopovers in Spokane.



On these trips Olmsted and his associates roamed the city’s bluffs, river gorge, and forests. His firm issued a report in 1908 proposing an ambitious plan that called for four massive new parks, five smaller local parks, 11 playfields, numerous parkways, and major improvements to 10 existing parks. Many of these recommendations were put into effect following the passage of a \$1 million bond issue in 1910. By 1913, the city had multiplied its park acreage tenfold.



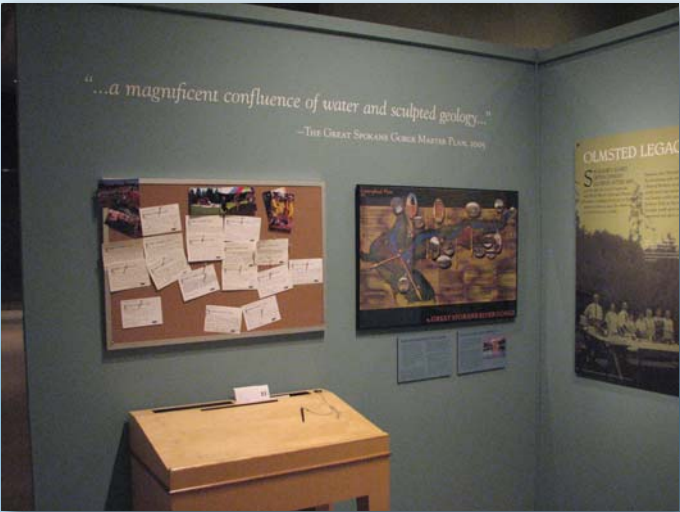
Today, many of Spokane’s best-known public spaces, including the Finch Arboretum, High Bridge Park, and Downriver Park, owe their existence to the Olmsted report. Even pre-existing parks, including Manito Park, owe much of their aesthetic appeal to Olmsted’s suggestions. Olmsted even foresaw that the city would one day reclaim the downtown riverfront, which became Riverfront Park in 1974. A century after the report was drafted, Spokane park planners and civic activists still look to the Olmsted Report for guidance.

Used with permission of HistoryLink.org



To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Olmsted Brother’s Report to Spokane, the exhibit, “Olmsted Brothers: Designing Spokane Landscapes” was created and exhibited at the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture (MAC).

Visitors were asked to fill out comment cards asking, “Do you have a Spokane Parks story to share?” Throughout this annual report you will find some of those comments, courtesy of Marsha Rooney, Curator of History for the MAC.

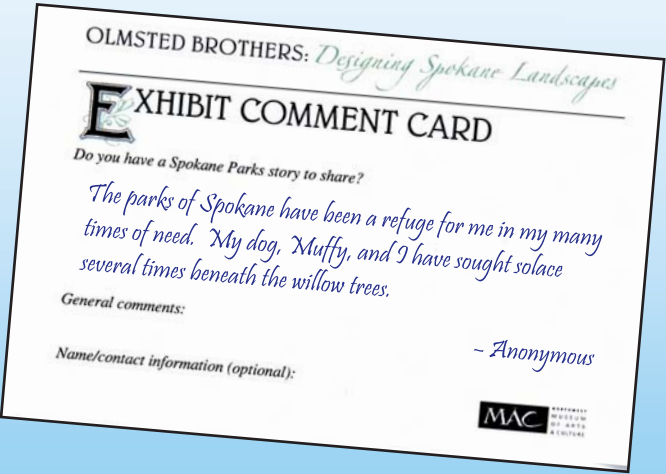


Department Goals for 2009

1. Participate in Ongoing City Planning Efforts and Proceed with Internal Planning Efforts.
 - a. City Charter revisions to Article 5.
 - b. Updating of the City’s Comprehensive Plan related to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space.
 - c. Participate in the North Bank Planning process.
 - d. Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan process.
 - e. Finalize the Aquatics Master Plan for approval.
2. Continue to Advance Stature and Value of Parks and Recreation Services and Programs.
 - a. In collaboration with the new Advertising and Marketing partner develop creative and innovative marketing programs.
 - b. In collaboration with the new Web Site design team create an innovative and creative online presence for the department.
 - c. Work with City Cable Channel 5 to create the new “Walk in the Park” TV program.
3. Improve Outreach to neighborhoods and friends groups who are stakeholders, patrons, and supporters.
 - a. Meet with the organizations and assist in the development of collaborative programs and fundraising efforts.
 - b. Include these groups as linkages on the department’s web site.
 - c. Provide opportunities on Channel 5 through the “Walk in the Park” program to promote their organizations.



4. Improve Riverfront Park including the North Bank, Howard Street Pedestrian Corridor, the Carrousel Building, and Decentralize Park Property.
 - a. Through the Master Plan process develop a prioritized improvement plan to upgrade Riverfront Park facilities and amenities.
 - b. Utilize capital funding to implement plan.
5. Optimize staff organization and promote personnel development.
 - a. Develop an in-house training program utilizing the NRPA online library resources.
 - b. Analyze the professional programs and identify the appropriate fit for staff and participate in them.



2008 Awards & Recognition

The Spokane Park Board, management team, and department staff are proud stewards of the Olmsted 100-year legacy and work hard, day in and day out, to provide and support this community's wonderful parks and activities system. We are dedicated to continuing to maintain high standards of care for the public assets assigned to our safe keeping.

The following recognitions are proud reminders of this legacy:

Spokane's Japanese Garden was renamed in honor of the Garden's founder, Ed Tsutakawa. The Nishinomiya Tsutakawa Japanese Garden moved up in rankings to number 16 out of 300 in North America according to a 2008 Public Garden Survey done by 45 Japanese garden specialists for the publication, Journal of Japanese Gardening.

Rose Hill Garden in Manito Park was named #1 in the nation by All-America Rose Selections (AARS), a nonprofit association dedicated to the introduction and promotion of exceptional roses.



Jordan Longinotti, one of Peaceful Valley Community Center's homework club youth received the 2008 President's Education Award for Outstanding Academic Achievement from President Bush. Council President Joe Shogan presented the award to Jordan at the Town Hall meeting January 26, 2009.

Pictured left to right: Peaceful Valley Community Center Director, Mark Reilly, Jordan Longinotti and City Council President, Joe Shogan.



The Friends of Manito and the Spokane Park Board Commemorated the 50th Anniversary Of Cancer Patient Care with the dedication of **"The Walk of Hope"** in Manito Park.

Expo '74 President, King Cole, was honored as a visionary leader with the dedication of "King Cole Way" in Riverfront Park.

The **30th Anniversary of Riverfront Park** was commemorated with a day-long celebration on August 25 featuring 1978 rolled back prices on rides, a former Riverfront Park Team member "no host" reunion for 10,000 former Park employees, Clocktower stage entertainment, and, what else, Anniversary Cake served at the Pavilion.

For the 5th year in a row Spokane has been awarded the designation, **Tree City USA**, given by The National Arbor Day Foundation in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters.

The **Sinto Senior Activity Center** celebrated its **50th Anniversary** in 2008. It opened in 1958 as the first senior center in Spokane and only the second in the state, right behind Seattle.



The **Northeast Youth Center** was selected to host the first **"Kids Café" Program** in the state of Washington by Second Harvest. There are over 1700 Kids Café's across the United States and it is an honor to host this program in the lowest income area per capita in the state into 2010.

The **Moore-Turner Heritage Gardens** received three awards:

- The 2008 Valerie Sivinski Award for outstanding achievement in historic preservation by the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.
- The Washington Chapter of the American Public Works Association Project of the Year in Historic Preservation.
- The Association of Washington Cities Municipal Excellence Award

The **Creek at Qualchan** head professional, **Mark Gardner**, qualified to compete in the 42nd PGA Professional National Championship.



Golf Digest magazine in its **"Best Places to Play"** feature gives high marks to all four City of Spokane championship golf courses:

Indian Canyon and Qualchan Rated "Outstanding"
Downriver and Esmeralda Rated "Very Good"

The **Pacific Northwest Inlander's "Best of..." Readers Poll for 2008** recognized the following:

#1 Place to Skateboard Hillyard Skate Park
#2 Place to Skateboard Downtown Spokane Skate Park

#1 Golf Course Indian Canyon
#2 Golf Course Downriver



Parks Improvement Bond Update

Approved by voters with an overwhelming 68.1228% "yes" vote, this \$42.9 million bond issue is funding the construction and development of a variety of aquatics and youth sports projects throughout the City of Spokane.

Phase I Splash Pads completed in 2008:

Audubon Park
Chief Garry Park
Thornton Murphy Park
Friendship Park
Coeur d'Alene Park



Kids in Coeur d'Alene Park try out their new splash pad.

Phase II Splash Pads to be constructed in neighborhood parks in 2009 include:

Underhill Park
Pacific Park
Manito Park
Glass Park
Franklin Park
Albi-Merkel Sports Complex

Six new outdoor swimming pools are well under construction at these locations with an intent to open all in the 2009 swim season:

A.M. Cannon
Comstock
Hillyard
Liberty
Shadle
Witter

A message from a Roosevelt Elementary third-grader thanking voters for passing the Park Bond:

*Dear Spokane Voters:
Thank you for voting for kids. You are our favorite. I am proud of you. After you read this letter, I hope you will be so proud of yourself too.*

— Samrin



City Council and Parks Board members launch the first completed splash pad, September 6, 2008.



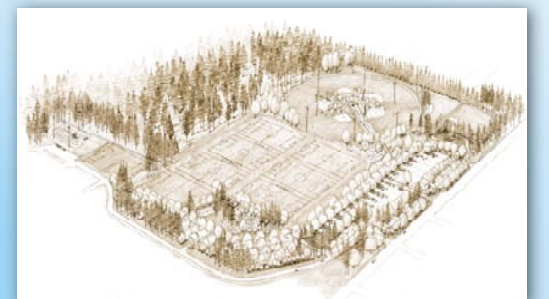
Crews pour cement for the new pool bottom at Shadle.



Albi-Merkel Sports Complex

The bond is funding Phase I development of the new Albi-Merkel Sports Complex located north and slightly west of the Stadium. Phase 1 will include softball and soccer fields, a skateboard park, a BMX bike course, play equipment, trails, and improved parking.

In addition to funding from the bond, improvements at the Albi-Merkel Complex will also be funded by \$4 million from the sale of park property that was approved by City voters in 1999 and subsequently held in reserve.



Architect's rendering of the new Albi-Merkel Sports Complex.

Spokane Parks and Recreation manages a vast system of parks, trails, street islands, and conservation land, with more than 4,100 acres dedicated to open space and recreational opportunities.

2008 Accomplishments by Division

Park Operations and Urban Forestry

Manager, Tony Madunich

Park Operations

- Completed automating irrigation at Minnehaha Park; purchased and installed centralized computer monitored irrigation controllers for six parks with a \$30,000 water conservation grant; contracted for design services to automate a large portion of Comstock Park irrigation.
- Resurfaced concrete floor, replaced heat systems, and replaced all roll up doors on Equipment Repair Shop.
- Installed additional metal roofing over equipment storage area and applied seal coat and new striping to all asphalt at Park Operations Complex.
- Finalized agreement with Spokane Public Schools for maintenance of Park property used by Shadle High School.
- Replaced several hundred feet of damaged sidewalks on park property.
- Modified and filled a vacant position to become a Playground Specialist who is now a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.



- Scheduled and coordinated over 850 park and park facility reservations and events.
- Researched and purchased over 20 large pieces of park maintenance equipment and trucks to replace worn out units.

Manito Park

- Initiated public education on detrimental effects of feeding ducks which has been very successful in reducing the duck population to more sustainable numbers.
- Rehabilitated several natural areas to reduce invasive non-native vegetation.
- Rehabilitated and restocked the koi pond in the Japanese Garden in response to a viral outbreak in the fish.
- Initiated a process for selecting a consultant to develop plans for the pond renovation.
- Replaced three blocks of sidewalk along Grand Boulevard which was dedicated as the "Walk of Hope" in cooperation with the Cancer Patient Care organization.



Planting a new tree on Sky View Drive.

Urban Forestry

- Mayor Verner issued a proclamation declaring 2008 The Year of Spokane's Urban Forest.
- Received Tree City USA award for fifth consecutive year at annual Arbor Day Celebration.
- Reactivated the Citizens Advisory Committee and Park Board Urban Forestry Committee.
- Evaluated and inventoried all trees in the downtown Central Business District.
- Planted over 100 trees on public property including 14 trees added through "The Susie Forest" fund.
- Reviewed and processed 169 permits for planting, pruning, or removal and worked with City Engineering on tree issues related to 6 street improvement projects.



Northeast Youth Center (NEYC)

- The Kids Café is now open to feed 150+ children a day. Children throughout the community can now ride their bikes or walk to NEYC for food, as well as participate in recreational programs and activities.
- Received New Partnership Funding totaling \$20,696 from:
 - Two awards for Youth Athletic Scholarships totaling \$12,100.
 - Summer Camp Program support from four different partnerships totaling \$2,750.
 - The annual staff "Send-a-Kid-to-Camp" fundraiser with Intermountain Bank matching the funds resulted in \$5,846.



This Recreational Trailer was purchased by the Spokane Parks Foundation as a mobile recreation unit. During the Spring and Summer, the Northeast Youth Center has multiple camp locations throughout Spokane providing recreational activities for all youth.



- Consolidated facility leases to better serve participants which included relocation of the office, storage, and vehicle parking to the Hillyard Baptist Church from the Northeast Community Center for a net savings of \$19,554.



Executive Director, Toni Nersesian

As an independent, non-partisan advocate, the Spokane Parks Foundation "fills the gaps" between what parks need to thrive and what annual budgets can provide. Through the Foundation's endowment and the generous support from donors, the Foundation helps preserve valuable community green spaces – and enhance them for future generations. The Foundation provides the dollars to ensure that everyone can enjoy the programs and places that make Spokane a city of parks.

For more information, please visit spokaneparksfoundation.org

Hillyard Senior Center

- Facilitated over 100,000 hours of senior activity & service programming for the year 2008.
- Raised over \$18,000 at the annual Dinner Auction held March 28.
- Successfully organized and conducted the center's 10th Senior Summer Croquet League. Teams from Hillyard, Sinto, and Corbin Senior Centers play on Tuesday mornings at Clark Park from the middle of June until the 2nd week of August.
- Implemented new Fall & Winter Wii Virtual Bowling Leagues for Seniors .
- Secured \$10,000 funding from Community Development for operational expenses.
- Participated in future center planning for all senior & youth centers.



Clark Park with Hillyard Senior Summer Croquet League

Sinto Senior Activity Center

- Celebrated its 50th Anniversary of service to Spokane senior citizens.
- Over 64 seniors participated in a Walking Challenge, presented by Prevention and Early Detection organization. The group walked over 9,500 miles during the 3 month challenge.
- Over 150 new members joined Sinto in 2008.
- Increased fundraising efforts at the center by 20%.
- Completed a very successful day and overnight tour program that resulted in 85% of the trips completed versus 15% being canceled.
- Completed a very successful Christmas Cash Raffle netting close to \$3,000 to the center.
- Implemented new web site: www.sintocenter.com



Sinto Senior Center Walking Challenge Award Winners

Peaceful Valley Community Center

- Conducted youth rewards outings to Chuck E. Cheese, Laser Quest and Riverfront Park for skating.



Kids from Peaceful Valley Community Center visit Green Bluff.

- Visited Green Bluff and picked out pumpkins to decorate.
- Local artist, Sebastian, led the group on river walk outings where they learned about rock art.
- With great regularity on Fridays, the "Jump Rope Lady" works with kids on skipping rope and other games.
- Staff and participants observed a moose that spent several days in Peaceful Valley.

Southside Senior Activity Center

- 200-400 visitors of all ages come to the center each day.
- 12,000 volunteer hours were donated in 2008.
- 75 different classes and activities are held each week.
- The center is open 4 evenings until 9:00 p.m.
- Currently there are 1,600 members.



Parks Administration/Golf Program

Manager, Pamela McKinzie



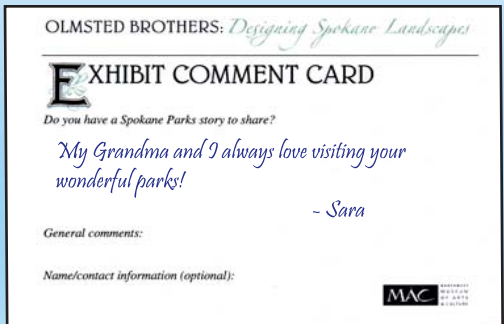
- Completed new green re-construction at Qualchan Golf Course (Hole # 10 & Hole # 15) which will tentatively open in June 2009.
- Completed new tee construction at Qualchan Golf Course (Hole # 16).
- Completed repair to entrance bridge at Qualchan.
- Completed sand trap reconstruction at Indian Canyon Golf Course.
- Completed driving range drainage project at Indian Canyon Golf Course.
- Record year for Junior Lessons and Tournament Series in addressing "Growth of the Game" goals.
- City Championship continues to grow with over 140 players.



Planning & Project Management

Manager, Taylor Bressler

- Coordinated Aquatic Facilities Master Plan with project architects, ALSC.
- Set ground work for scope of the 2008 Parks Improvement Bond Issue.
- Coordinated base information for splash pads, Merkel Sports Complex facilities, and swimming pools.
- Developed preliminary contracts for new splash pads and pools.
- Community Development Projects completed:
 - Emerson Garfield – Picnic Table installed
 - Fairview Park – Play Equipment installed
 - Harmon Park – Upgrades on the Park electrical system
 - Coeur d'Alene Park - Upgrade on the Park electrical system
- Developed Fish Lake Trail to bidding documents.
- Developed Whitewater Park to permitting process.



Budget & Finance

Manager, Rebecca Madany

- Processed 27 additional contracts, related invoices, and other accounting tasks pertaining to the 2008 Park Bond and were still able to keep current on regular workload.
- Held Spring payroll refresher session, updated and standardized forms, and made them available electronically. This enabled Parks to be timelier with payroll paperwork.
- Filled 13 permanent positions, 3 permanent employees left and hired 696 temporary/seasonal employees.
- Finished 2008 with a positive budget variance of over \$400,000 or 2%, despite a challenging year.
- Survived up to four different office moves.

Recreation & Entertainment Services

Manager, Craig Butz

Riverfront Park



Riverfront Park Celebrates 30 Years In The Heart Of Spokane

One of Spokane's most beloved public assets celebrated its 30 year anniversary in 2008 with the following noteworthy highlights:

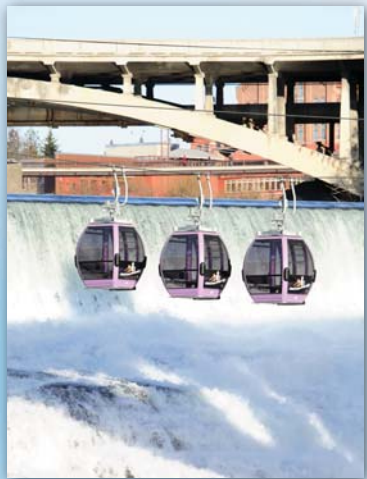
For a third consecutive year Riverfront Park has broken its previous record for annual gross revenues, earning \$3,714,400 for 2008.

Increases were seen in the following Park attractions:

- Pavilion Amusement Rides
- Parking Lot Operations
- Food Service
- Special Events
- Group Sales

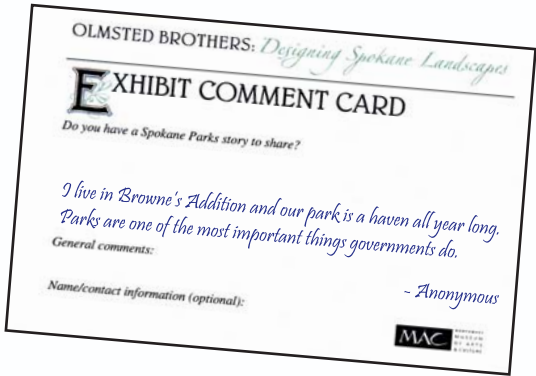
The Riverfront Park team successfully, planned, coordinated and produced the following events:

- 2008 4th of July Celebration
- Riverfront Park 30th Anniversary Celebration
- IMAX Premiere of the 'The Alps'
- Capital and Other Park Improvements in 2008 include:
 - Boulevard Bistro (next to the Carrousel) and Sugar Shack were remodeled.
 - Added Lot #7 (former Bosch Parking Lot) to Riverfront's Parking Operations.



Riverfront Park – continued from page 5

- Parking Lots # 2, 5, and 7 were re-graded and additional lighting installed for improved safety and security.
- Completed refurbishment to restrooms at the Forestry, North Bank & SkyRide facilities.
- New 16-camera Security System installed.
- Installed new automated pay station in Lot # 2.
- Bumper Cars shelter and Pavilion Roof repair projects begun with completion set for early 2009.



Personal Interest Recreation

- Initiated a new Pre-School program of Parent-Child Activities.
- Started the Active Lifestyles program for Adults 50+ which is operated by the Senior Centers, Outdoor Program, and Corbin Art Center.
- Created email newsletters for the following target audiences: Adults/Families, Aquatics, Fitness and Exercise, Active Lifestyles, Outdoor, Riverfront, and Youth Programs.
- Promoted a new Youth Camp section in the activity guide.
- Conducted the community planning group for Camp Sekani and Beacon Hill.
- Established a community advisory group for the Albi-Merkel Sports Complex BMX track.
- With the help of the Fat Tire Trail Club built 10 new bicycle skill elements at Camp Sekani.



Parks Food Service

- Net Revenue for Food Service operations is 15% higher than 2007.
- Improvements at Riverfront Park 'Sugar Shack' with remodeling led to a 60% increase in net revenue compared to 2007.
- Manito Park Bench Cafe continues to improve. Net revenue of 2008 is 13% higher than 2007.
- Group catering has improved resulting in increased revenue and positive customer feedback.



Sugar Shack

Aquatics, Sports and Facilities

- Added 6 Youth Tennis classes.
- Added 16 soccer tots (soccer for 18 month to 4 year olds).
- Added 4 Little Sluggers baseball classes (18 month to 4 year olds).
- Near max participation in spring flag football season (2 teams short).
- Near max participation in volleyball sessions.
- Coordinated new facilities development.



Corbin Art Center & Moore-Turner Heritage Gardens

- Corbin Art Center revenue increased 17% over budget in 2008 with 485 classes held for children and adults.



- Received a \$5,000 grant from the Spokane Parks Foundation to refurbish the wheelchair ramp and hardwood flooring.
- The Moore-Turner Heritage Gardens opened for its first season on Saturday, May 17, with an average of 50 visitors a day before closing for the year on Sunday, September 28.

- Spring bulbs were planted in the Heritage Gardens this fall with funding from The Associated Garden Clubs of Spokane.
- The Friends of the Moore-Turner Heritage Gardens organized their first fundraiser, the Sumner Avenue Historic Home and Garden Tour, on Saturday, September 13, 2008, raising \$13,000.

Outdoor Recreation



- Implemented a text message service to promote classes and activities, which allows us to reach more people in more ways. It also lets us promote classes at the last minute that are not full and that could benefit from extra participants.
- The program was highlighted as an excellent resource for outdoor recreation opportunities for locals and the regional drive market through the Spokane Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- Saw increased registration for biking and wine trips.
- Additional Youth Camps such as fly fishing and snowshoeing in our local areas were added to the program.
- Conducted first-ever Manito Park snowshoeing, introducing locals to the great sport of snowshoeing close to home.



Therapeutic Recreation Services (TRS)

- Supported seven people in applying for the International Special Olympics Games in Boise scheduled for February 2009. Three were chosen: Kevin Vandeventer in cross-country skiing; Aaron Evans in snowboarding; and Sarah Fullen in figure skating.
- Developed a new partnership with Gold's Gym to conduct the TRS Powerlifting Program.
- Established three new programs: Color Me Mine Ceramics, Girls Night Out and Horseshoe Pitching.



Senior & Community Centers

Corbin Senior Activity Center

- The Corbin Senior Activity Center celebrated its 40th Anniversary.
- Conducted successful 4th Annual Movin' and Groovin Health Fair.
- All of the following came from the generous donations and grants from the Friends of Corbin:
 - New commercial refrigerator for the kitchen
 - New commercial freezer for the kitchen
 - Re-carpeted the ballroom stage
 - Purchased 160 new upholstered chairs
 - Resurfaced the parking lot



East Central Community Center

- Provided 14 speakers and 14 cultural performances.
- 19 Special Events were held throughout the year.
- Exercise class participation increased by 25% from 2007.
- East Central was featured on the Sunday edition Front Page for the Fitness and Fall Prevention program.