

Grinnell Herald Register
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Ahrens Foundation supports expanded recreational campus with gift of \$100K

The Claude W. & Dolly Ahrens Foundation has pledged \$100,000 in support of playground equipment for Lion's Park in Grinnell. The park adjoins the site where a new family aquatic is planned as a key component of an expanded recreational campus.

The recreational campus will include the Grinnell Area Recreation Trail and a revamped Lion's Park. It will eventually enhance linkages with the bike trail, Bailey Park, Grinnell High School, and Iowa Valley Community College - Grinnell.

"We recognize that the new family aquatic center will be part of a new recreational campus that will include many other surrounding parks and recreational activities. Providing new playground equipment for this campus is very near and dear to our hearts," says Julie Gosselink, president of the Claude W. & Dolly Ahrens Foundation.

"The Ahrens Foundation is thrilled to be able to do this for our community, and we believe the foundation's founder, Claude W. Ahrens, would want this as well. Because there is a need for new playground equipment in Lion's Park, we wanted to be the ones to provide it," Gosselink says.

Established in 1993, the Ahrens Foundation supports community improvement projects in central Iowa. The foundation's motto, "Leave It Better Than You Found It," is reflected in the millions of dollars in philanthropic support the foundation has granted to organizations and projects within Iowa, especially to Claude's native city of Grinnell.

"One of the aquatic center's exciting aspects will be its shared space with Lion's Park. With this contribution of play equipment, the Ahrens Foundation is creating an appealing diversion for the youngest of patrons. We are very appreciative of the gift, a wonderful contribution that will round out the recreational opportunities at the aquatic center," says Wendy Ramsey, who co-chairs the committee with Delphina Baumann.

Baumann points out that the aquatic center and its surrounding recreational facilities are intended for the enjoyment of all area residents. Water features such as a "lazy river" will be complemented by a new bath house, concession building, and modern restrooms.

"This generous gift from Ahrens Foundation certainly complements what we are working on for everyone in Poweshiek County," Baumann said.

Like the new public library, the aquatic center will be jointly funded by private donors and the City of Grinnell. The project's total cost is currently estimated at \$6 million. The city of Grinnell has allocated \$3 million in local sales option sales tax proceeds to fund construction of the pool while the "Splash" campaign committee has pledged to raise the balance through contributions from other government entities, private fundraising will help fund the special equipment and amenities needed to convert this facility into a family aquatic center.

To learn more about the project interested individuals are invited to visit the campaign web site at www.grinnelliowa.gov/splash. They may also contact Ramsey at 641-821-9681 or by email at wramsey@gmrc.com or Baumann at 641- 821-0303 or by email at dvbaumann@iowatelecom.net

Donors to the new family aquatic center should make their gifts payable to the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation, indicating “Aquatic Center Fund” on the memo line. Contributions and pledges to be fulfilled over time are tax deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. Checks or pledges can be mailed to the Greater Poweshiek Community Foundation, PO Box 344, Grinnell, IA, 50112