

August 26, 2020

Rich - O - Gram
Optimist Club of Richfield, Minnesota
Dakotas-Manitoba-Minnesota District
Club Number 35125
www.richfieldoptimists.org

Hello fellow Richfield Optimists,

WED August 26 - Zoom meeting at 8:00 AM

**Our guest speaker will be : Todd Barduson - RBCU
Vice Pres. Marketing & Business Development**

**Last week we heard from Gail Kiltie, Art Director at
Simply Janes Art Studio at 5411 Nicollet Ave.**

They provide a calming atmosphere for special needs clients. In addition they do outreach to senior centers, hospitals, etc. to do painting on-site.

One of their features for youth is a summer camp, where upwards of 350 families do acrylic painting, with some diversification to clay, wood & other materials.

They serve over 1,500 people with special needs each year.

She indicated they may relocate later this year.

Happy Birthday to new member Joey Bailey.

From Richfield Sun-Current August 20,2020 - Page 15

Optimist Club donates \$2,500 to playground project

The Richfield Optimist Club has donated \$2,500 to the Recreation Services Department's universally inclusive playground project.

"As an organization, we are always looking for ways to support the community we live and work in, especially when it comes to projects and initiatives that help Richfield's youth," said Optimist Club President David Criesel-Koll. "We saw this donation as an opportuni-

ty for us to make a legacy gift to the community."

Richfield's playground features are all Americans with Disabilities Act compliant, but for many of the city's youth, the ADA does not go far enough to meet their needs when it comes to accessibility. Currently, ADA standards focus on accessibility for those with mobility impairments. However, youth with other impairments, such as autism, vision or auditory needs are

argely unaddressed.

With an aim to expand accessibility to recreation amenities, the Richfield Recreation Services Department is bringing the universally inclusive playground to Augsburg Park. The department plans to break ground on the project in September 2020.

"A universally inclusive playground is not just for kids with disabilities, it is developmentally appropriate for all ability levels," explained Recreation

Services Director Amy Markle. "These playgrounds also encourage more parent-child interaction and include more sensory-rich equipment."

Playground features do not come cheap. Most medium-sized universal-inclusive playground features cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. The feature planned for Augsburg Park will cost approximately \$720,000 when completed.

Besides the generous

donation from the Optimist Club, other organizations such as Hennepin County, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Metro Sales Inc., Center Point Energy and the Rotary Club have also contributed funds to the project.

Richfield Liquor store patrons also contributed to the universally inclusive playground project through the store's round-up program. In all, over the course of three months,

liquor store patrons rounded up to the tune of \$19,389 to support the initiative.

As for the Optimist Club's donation, it aligns with the organization's motto, "Friend of Youth."

To learn more about the plans for the universally inclusive playground or to donate to the project, contact Recreation Services Director Amy Markle by calling 612-861-9394 or emailing AMarkle@richfieldmn.gov.