

June 28, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Olympic Day Celebrates Sportsmanship, Olympic Games

The Springfield-Greene County Park Board celebrates Olympic Day and the upcoming opening of the 2012 Olympic Games Friday, June 29, with a kids' march and games and a visit with a local Olympian.

More than 700 children enrolled in the Park Board's SPARC day camps will take part in the march, starting at 9:15 a.m. at Chesterfield Park and Family Center, 2511 W. Republic Road. Sandra Pratt, School-Park Administrator, compares the march to the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games, where athletes represent their countries while marching with their home flag.

"They've been learning about the Olympics all week," said Pratt. "During the march, they will represent their day camp sites, many of them at our School-Parks, as their 'home country.' They've designed their own flags and uniforms, and after the march, they'll compete against other day camp sites."

Olympian and Willard, Mo. native Lori Endicott-Vandersnick will speak to the kids at 9:30 a.m. about the importance of good sportsmanship and her experiences competing in the 1992 Summer Olympics with the USA National Women's Volleyball Team, which earned a Bronze Medal. Endicott-Vandersnick is now head coach of the Park Board's Community Olympic Development Program for Volleyball, the only such program in the country.

Afterwards, the kids will compete in three events: a swimming pool relay, a Slip 'n Slide relay and a shot put, using a water-filled sponge ball. The event concludes at noon.

Olympic Day, celebrated around the world, promotes Olympic values and participation in sports regardless of age, gender or athletic ability. Olympic Day is not only a celebration, but an international effort to promote fitness and wellbeing, in addition to Olympic ideals of fair play, perseverance, respect and sportsmanship.

The Park Board operates Community Olympic Development Programs for Archery, Ice Hockey, Tennis and Volleyball, providing young athletes in our region access to some of the best facilities, programs, coaches, and competition available, enhancing their ability to compete in Olympic sports.

For more information, contact: Sandra Pratt, School-Parks Administrator, 417-837-5737; or Jenny Fillmer Edwards, Public Information Administrator for the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, 417-874-2176 or 417-224-5510.