

February 15, 2011

News Release

For Immediate Release

50+ Significant Sporting Events Coming to Area

A number of significant sports-related announcements were made today for Springfield and Greene County, including the addition of the NCAA Division I Missouri Valley Softball Championship, recognition of area organizations by the Missouri State High School Activities Association, the release of a lineup of more than 50 district, state, regional, national and professional/international sports tournaments and events in 2011 and an update on facility developments to the Springfield-Greene County Park Board.

Sports Development and Improvements

The Rotary Club of Springfield North continues its capital campaign to raise funds for a "Miracle Field," which will be built in Dan Kinney Park, offering an accessible ball field to players who have a variety of disabilities.

Dan Kinney Park Family Center development is expected to begin in late summer 2011 and will include many of the same amenities as the existing Chesterfield Family Center. A master plan for the park includes a planned development of a future aquatics center.

Plans for a 2011 groundbreaking on phase-three development of Doling Family Center include an indoor recreational aquatics element. A future addition of a 50-meter competitive pool at the facility was also described.

Missouri State High School Activities Association Awards & Championships

MSHSAA Executive Director Dr. Kerwin Urhahn today presented Distinguished Service Awards to the Springfield-Greene County Park Board, Springfield Convention & Visitors Bureau, Springfield Sports Commission and Director of Parks Jodie Adams. The MSHSAA Distinguished Service Awards program was established in 1988 to recognize individuals and organizations that have made lifelong contributions to the ideals of interscholastic activities.

"The Park Board, the CVB and Sports Commission, in addition to Jodie herself, have been committed to providing top-notch facilities and amenities when hosting MSHSAA Championship events. Because of their significant service that goes above and beyond the ordinary, the Association wanted to honor these individuals for their hard work and dedication in making our championship events memorable experiences for all who attend," said Urhahn.

Dr. Urhahn also announced the return of state championships for Boys & Girls Golf, Boys & Girls Tennis, Softball and Baseball in 2011.

Upcoming Tournaments and Events

A list of 52 events, ranging from district to professional-level play was announced. A full list is attached, entitled "2011 Sports Championship Event List." Some highlights include the following areas:

National Level Highlights

The National Christian Homeschool Association Championships in basketball, soccer and golf return to Springfield. This is the third year the Association will return to Springfield with its Championship games, bringing with it hundreds of teams and thousands of participants and guests.

Killian Sports Complex will host the Amateur Softball Association (ASA) Slow Pitch Men's "E" Recreational Northern National Championship Sept. 1 – 4. This will be Springfield's 31st national ASA tournament.

World Team Tennis makes its return to Springfield during the month of July with the Springfield Lasers professional tennis team competing at Mediacom Tennis Stadium at Cooper Tennis Complex. In 2010, the team secured the Western Conference Regular Season Champion title, along with team members honored as WTT Most Valuable Player and Coach of the Year.

Significant Collegiate Tournaments

NCAA Division I Missouri Valley Conference Softball Championships return to Springfield after 17 years (Missouri State University last hosted in 1994), which will be played at the new Killian Softball Stadium at Killian Sports Complex May 12 – 14.

Evangel University will host the Heart of America Athletic Conference Intercollegiate Tennis Association Regional Team Tournament April 29 – 30 at Cooper Tennis Complex.

The Park Board also will work with Southwest Baptist University this year to host two new tournaments. The Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletics Association (MIAA) Softball Crossover Tournament March 18 – 20 will be held at Cooper Sports Complex and the MIAA Tennis Regional Tournament will be held Sept. 30 – Oct. 2 at Cooper Tennis Complex.

Regional Level Highlights

The United States Tennis Association/Missouri Valley Section 10's Team Event format will consist of teams of four boys and four girls age 10 and under from a five state area. The tournament will be held May 14 at Gillenwaters Tennis Complex.

The Founders Cup Youth Soccer Tournament will highlight competitive teams from Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas and be held Aug. 27 & 28 at Lake Country Soccer Complex.

The Park Board will again work with district, state, regional and national level organizations and governing bodies to host the events, including the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Springfield Sports Commission.

"The activities coming into Springfield and Greene County continue to have significant economic and quality of life impacts," said Director of Parks Jodie Adams. In 2009, 20 major athletic events were calculated by the Park Board to have had a direct economic impact of more than \$4 million. "These are families and tournament participants who are eating, lodging, shopping and recreating while in the area. Sporting events provide a big boost to the area's businesses, along with tax dollars that come directly back to our local governments to fund essential services. We've also seen a direct return on investment with repeat or new tournaments when we invest in the maintenance and updates of our sports facilities."

Adams points to collaborative efforts for the successes experienced with major sporting events over the past decade. "Without the support of the Springfield Sports Commission, the Springfield Convention and Visitors Bureau, the local universities, local hotels, area businesses and more than 230 volunteer groups and organizations we work with annually, we wouldn't see this level of sports-related activity coming into the area. It takes commitment and cooperation to successfully secure these events, which ultimately have shown tremendous economic gain for the community."

For more information, media contact: Bob Nelson, Public Information Administrator, 417-874-2176.

Download the [list of announced sports events](#).