



MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Reading Clubs Win Young Fans Thanks to Community Center Partnership

There are many safe and healthy activities for kids to engage in after school, but none will prepare them for the future and expand their knowledge more than my favorite activity: reading.

Most parents know about the wonderful opportunities available for children at one of the City's neighborhood libraries, but they may not be aware of the steps the City is taking to bring new reading opportunities to our Community Recreation Centers to ensure reading is an option during those critical after school hours when many parents are still working.

I recently attended the annual "Lights On Afterschool" event at the Whitney Community Center and was honored to

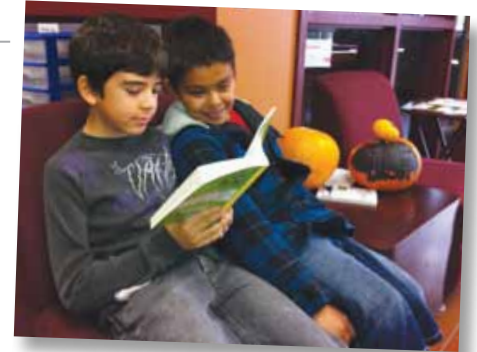
receive a \$1,000 grant from the Boise Southwest Rotary Club to purchase books and other materials for reading clubs that have been established at the center. In recent years the Whitney center has partnered with the Hillcrest Library, Flying Pie Pizza and Pie Hole Pizza to set up challenges and provide incentives for reading, including the "Steelheads Winter Hat Trick Reading Challenge" that awarded good readers with a hockey game and free pizza. This collaborative relationship with community partners is reaping great benefits for the children in the Whitney neighborhood by providing many high interest reading opportunities.

Additionally, the City is working with the Boise School District and community

partners to launch a pilot project that includes a reading proficiency component in association with the national Campaign for Grade-Level Reading program. This innovative effort aims to close the reading proficiency gap to ensure more low-income students succeed in school and graduate prepared for college and a career.

Because of city initiatives like this and others, Boise was recently recognized in a research publication by the National League of Cities and the Wallace Foundation focusing on the emergence of city-led efforts to build comprehensive afterschool systems to meet the needs of children and youth in local communities.

Together these programs continue



to expand opportunities for young people and help them grow to become productive adults. The writing on the wall is clear: Boise is a great place to raise children. And thanks to the Whitney Community Recreation Center, more of our children can read what it says.

Until next time...

David H. Bieter
Mayor

WHAT'S NEW AT BOISE PARKS & RECREATION

► Thank You To Our Parks & Rec Volunteers!

Boise Parks Recreation had another fantastic year of volunteer service in FY2010. Volunteers dedicated a total of 62,506 hours to Boise Parks & Recreation programs and committees. This is equivalent to approximately 30 additional full time employees on staff – a savings of \$921,431 in labor costs.

Volunteers work on a myriad of projects. They help to maintain parks, mentor youth, clean up the Boise River, repair trails, rake leaves and serve on committees year round. The service provided by volunteers enables the department to provide the high-quality facilities and services Boise citizens have grown to expect from our department.

For a list of volunteer opportunities, see our website at www.cityofboise.org/parks. Or contact Jerry Pugh, Volunteer Coordinator, at jpugh@cityofboise.org or (208) 608-7617.



► Boise River Greenbelt Honored As Top Conservation Project

The Boise River Greenbelt has received national recognition as one of 101 top conservation projects in a federal report issued for the America's Great Outdoors Initiative.

"It's gratifying to see our local treasure receive the national recognition it deserves," said Mayor David



H. Bieter. "So many of us enjoy the Greenbelt every day, it's easy to overlook what a rare and precious asset it is."

The America's Great Outdoors Initiative was established by President Obama with the goal of developing a 21st century conservation and recreation agenda and to reconnect Americans with the great outdoors. To learn more, see americasgreatoutdoors.gov.

► Hey Kids! Mountain View Park Has New Play Equipment

Youngsters will find saddle spinners, a swing set and other cool features at a new playground completed at Mountain View Park, 7006 W. Ustick on the Bench.

The \$73,759 project included construction of a large play pod area and installation of new play equipment suitable for kids age 2-5.

For photos and more information, see www.cityofboise.org/parks or contact Project Manager Kelly Burrows at kburrows@cityofboise.org or (208) 608-7634.

