



Friends of Clare County Parks and Recreation
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hamilton Twp. and Friends of Clare Parks Team Up to Revitalize Local Park

Grant Helps Township Complete Work on Dodge City Park

Harrison, Michigan (January 27, 2012)...Courtney Park in Dodge City now sits quietly under a blanket of snow but come summer, the park will play host to vehicles with boat trailers and someday even to picnickers, thanks to a grant from Friends of Clare Parks and Recreation to Hamilton Township. The \$995 grant allowed the township to complete phase one of its three-phase park project.

Rumsey Swallow offered the property to Hamilton Township and Dave Cooper, township supervisor, said they were happy to accept the property because they saw the potential to improve parking and recreational opportunities on Courtney Drive. Cooper said cars with trailers often parked on nearby roads after launching their boats. Those vehicles interfered with traffic flow and posed a safety hazard for residents. Others used the Swallow property and often got stuck. "That created huge mud holes – a real mess," he said.

The township had budgeted funds to improve the park, it was not enough. "Jim Keysor (Keysor Excavating) gave us a great price on the trucking and excavation, and Township Trustee Dave Wright donated nearly all of the gravel," Cooper said, but more work remained.

That's where Friends of Clare County Parks and Recreation came in. Gerry Schmiedicke, President of the 'Friends' group had notified public entities in the county of the availability of funding for the development of recreational opportunities. Cooper saw a grant from Friends as a potential solution to their funding shortfall and the township submitted a proposal. "Friends really came through for us, and we are thrilled to have this park available for off-site parking next summer," Cooper added.

"We were happy to have been able to fund this project to benefit Hamilton Township residents," Schmiedicke observed, adding that the group is interested in assisting in the development of other recreational activities in Clare County.

"There seems to be few resources available to fund public recreation in Clare County. Having parks and recreational opportunities are important for the health and welfare of our residents and tends to

improve our quality of life, as well. Grants like this are one way our organization can help. Thanks to the many individuals and organizations that support our fund-raising initiatives, we have funding available to qualified applicants,” Schmiedicke said.

Friends of Clare County Parks and Recreation is a qualified 501(c)3 under the IRS code and supports the improvement of recreational opportunities throughout Clare County. To learn more about Friends, its goals and grant program, go to clarecountyrecreation.org/

Photo: Hamilton Township Supervisor Dave Cooper (left) accepts a grant from Friends of Clare County Parks and Recreation President Gerry Schmiedicke. The grant helped the township complete the first phase of its project at Courtney Park.

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