

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Village of Mahomet President Sean Widener Presents Community Service Awards for Parks and Recreation**

(MAHOMET, Illinois – February 28, 2024) On Tuesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>, Village President Sean Widener presented Community Service Awards to Mark Follis and the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy. Community Service Awards can be awarded for recognition of ongoing support, outstanding contributions of time, money, services, volunteer work or the advancement of parks and recreation.

Mahomet Parks and Recreation relies on many volunteers and community support to continue to meet our mission of improving the quality of life through the provision of safe, excellent recreation activities. In 2023 alone, over 200 individuals served our youth sport program by dedicating their time and talents as youth sports coaches. Several community organizations supported our special events with volunteerism and financial support.

Furthermore, our business community continues to amaze us with their support. Last year alone, there were more than 50 businesses that financially support our programs and donated over \$40,000. They fund our youth scholarship fund, offset program costs, and sponsor events like our Summer Concert and Touch a Truck programs so that we can offer those type of events free to our community. We are so thankful for all of them for making Mahomet a better place to live and play!

Each year, MPRD wishes to acknowledge a person and/or organization to recognize their contribution to the advancement of parks and recreation in our community. This year the department recognized Mark Follis and the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy.

Mark Follis has spent the last 3 years volunteering his time for the MPRD Pickleball League. Whether we were at Sangamon on Main Gym, Bridle Leash courts, the MSHS Fieldhouse, Lincoln Trail Gym, or Middletown Park, Mark was ready and willing to adjust to the needs & help make it happen.

# Village of Mahomet Parks and Recreation

218 S. Lake of the Woods Rd - P.O. Box 259 - Mahomet, IL 61853  
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“He has taught many the game of pickleball, maintained standings & records throughout every season, arrived early to ensure the courts were safe & ready to play on, stayed late to take care of the spaces we use, and helped to manage the league in always maintaining a positive & fun culture to play in. Many friendships have been built & memories made because of the MPRD Pickleball League. Mark has played a key role in this success, and we want to thank him for his commitment to it”, stated Denise Heiser, Recreation Manager.

The Upper Sangamon River Conservancy has played an active role in supporting Mahomet Parks and Recreation Department for over 10 years. Their purpose is to preserve, maintain, monitor and promote public use awareness of the Sangamon River. Over the last decade, the USRC actively partnered with MPRD to create their annual Duck Race fundraiser, have conducted numerous invasive removal workdays in the Sangamon River Greenway and have been loyal supporters of the Sangamon River Canoe and Kayak launch project.

“USRC is one of the hardest working community organizations, they actively clean up our rivers and highways and proudly promote, protect and study the Sangamon River for the betterment of the community, said Dan Waldinger, Parks and Recreation Director.

Therefore, in recognition and appreciation of outstanding contributions and unselfish devotion for the advancement of parks, recreation and leisure in the community and the state of Illinois, the Village of Mahomet Parks and Recreation in conjunction with Illinois Parks and Recreation Association and Illinois Association of Park Districts present the 2023 Community Service Award to the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy.

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Left to Right: Mark Follis, Village President Sean Widener

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## Members of the Upper Sangamon River Conservancy

Bottom Row (Left to Right): Scott Hays, Mike Daab, Village President Sean Widener, Joey,  
Anthony, Mary Stech

Top Row (Left to Right): Bruce Colrav, Bart Duesdieker, Joe Niernberger

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