

CHAUTAUQUA SUMMARY REPORT

In 2007 the Urbana Park District celebrated 100 years of service to the community. There was a monthly special event concluding with a Chautauqua in October 2007. The goal for the culminating event was to provide a very high quality, free event for our community. It would have a high level of citizen involvement and would be held on the actual anniversary of the park district. A Chautauqua format was selected to celebrate a major historical activity that occurred in 1907 in Urbana's Crystal Lake Park. The event would be supported through aggressive fund development.

For a year and a half more than 40 citizens worked with UPD staff to plan and carry out the event. The activities of the Chautauqua were intended to be true to the character of the turn-of-the-century Chautauquas and included: entertainment and culture, religion and political issues, education and growth.

In celebrating 100 years of service with the Chautauqua, the following was accomplished:

- More than 40 hours of free entertainment, music, culture, education, political discourse and children's programs were provided.
 - 9 ½ hours of presentations
 - 17 ½ hours of music and culture
 - 18 ½ hours of children's activities
 - 11 hours of programs for school classes
 - 10 ½ hours of public workshops
 - 11 ½ hours of mobile science lab
 - ½ hour of fireworks
- More than 300 people volunteered nearly 1,800 hours of their time, a value of nearly \$25,000.
- An estimated 15,000 people attended throughout the week. The planning committee expected 30,000 and was prepared for attendance of 45,000. On the second day of the Chautauqua the temperature dropped from the 80's to the 30's and stayed cool until the last two days. In addition, the UI's football game was an away game and many volunteer driven local organizations also selected that weekend for their events.
- More than 30 local community organizations cooperated with the district and gave support.
- There was strong intergovernmental cooperation and support from the City of Urbana, the Champaign Park District, CUMTD, the University of Illinois and other agencies.
- At least 10 media outlets were involved. The Chautauqua program was paid for entirely with advertising.
- A value of nearly \$50,000 in-kind services was provided by local businesses.
- A 100th Year Anniversary Book and companion DVD was created and published. The cost of 1,000 copies of the book/DVD was \$16,000. The book is for sale at the Phillips Recreation Center and local book stores for \$24.99.
- More than \$149,000 was raised from sources other than local property taxes. Most of these funds were specifically to support the event and came through donations from individuals, sponsorships, state grants and event sales. This was enough to cover all of the costs of the performers and presenters which was \$103,000 as well as many other event expenses.
- The original budget for the Chautauqua did not include any local property taxes. However, expected state grants were cut by \$56,000 in the Governor's budget veto (\$7,800 Arts Council and \$48,000 in OTB 2nd year grant) and sales were less than anticipated. Approximately \$61,000 of local property tax funds were used for this once-in-100-years event. This does not include the cost of the historical publication or other 100 Anniversary year monthly events.

The citizen-based organizing committee planned for more than a year. The committee selected local, state and national performers and presenters with the ideal of having a diverse selection. The final day's presentation dedicated to environmental issues was the most challenging to arrange. The committee contacted agents for Al Gore, Jimmy Carter, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Christie Todd Whitman and Jim Edgar. Ms. Whitman is a former Director of the EPA from 2001-2003 and the former governor of New Jersey. Her office worked unsuccessfully to rearrange her schedule so that she could make a presentation.