

## **JCCF grant, matching donations boost Muscatatuck, Eco Lake parks**

Bryce Mayer

New **playground** equipment will soon be installed at two public parks, Muscatatuck and Eco Lake, both of which are owned and managed by Jennings County, that officials say are in great need of apparatus.

The Jennings County Parks and Recreation Department received \$30,000 for the equipment when the Jennings County Community Foundation (JCCF) announced the Community Funds Discretionary (CFD) Award last week.

"This comes at a good time and is wonderful news for us," said Greg Martin, county parks department director, "We are in great need to update our **playground** equipment at Muscatatuck Park, which is Jennings County's best tourist asset. Eco Lake Park, where we currently have nearly no **playground** equipment, has the potential to bring in even more tourists."

The grant is part of the larger \$500,000 Lilly Challenge to JCCF for the benefit of Jennings County, according to JCCF director Barb Shaw. JCCF will now partner with Jennings County Parks on the details of the project and team with them to help raise the \$60,000 in new money as required by the Lilly guidelines.

"We have already raised over 10 percent of that match," Martin said, listing contributions from Decatur Mold and FPBH. "We are anxious to continue fundraising to meet the challenge. We know that the community will respond and help us."

The CFD Challenge Grant was advertised in February and the JCCF board of directors made the decision to support the county parks project in March, according to Greg Hicks, JCCF board president.

"Our board looked favorably on the project because it met the criteria established by the Foundation of supporting the Foundation's mission, making a major impact in the community, meeting an important community need and of having the potential for being successful and sustainable," Hicks said.

Jennings County Parks will be given one year to gather matching funding and complete a project.

"The addition of new **playground** equipment at Muscatatuck and Eco Lake parks will mean a lot to families in our community wanting a fun, healthy and wholesome family activity and gathering place," Shaw said. "We are pleased to be a partner with the county parks department. This project will benefit many people in Jennings County and draw other people here to see what a good community we have."

The Lilly Challenge match continues through March 2016. JCCF has raised about half of the money needed to meet its match for bringing the \$500,000 into the Foundation, which will allow JCCF to do even more good for the community, according to Shaw and Hicks.



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Rachel Cruser, center, of Decatur Mold presents \$2,500 on behalf of the firm to the Jennings County Parks Department, represented by Greg Martin. They are flanked by JCCF staff and board members. From left are Taylor Shaw, JCCF business manager; Barb Shaw, JCCF director; Bob Weeks, JCCF board member and Assets Committee chair; Cruser; Greg Hicks, JCCF board president; and Martin. At right is Brad Bender of FBBH, which also gave to the project.—Staff Photo by Bryce Mayer

## Reader Comments

*Posted: Tuesday, April 14, 2015*

Article comment by: **Greg Martin**

### Clarification

JCPR would like to thank the Jennings County Community Foundation and Lilly Endowment in awarding us the challenge grant opportunity.

It is important for our community to understand that this is a challenge grant. New playground equipment will only be on the way if we can raise the needed \$60,000, which is no small task.

If our community can raise this match money then we will be eligible for a matching grant through GameTime, Inc. If we purchase a playground complex over \$75,000 we are eligible for a 100 percent match. That equates to "buy one get one free". This is a huge opportunity and will greatly assist both our county parks. The GameTime grant is not guaranteed, but our regional representative supports our project and he thinks the chances are good. The time frame for the GameTime grant is tight (mid November).

We need your help! We are asking local corporations to step up like FPBH, Inc who donated \$4,500 to the initiative and Decatur Mold who donated \$2,000. Simply put, we will not reach our \$60,000 goal without significant help from corporations, medium to small businesses, and individual donors.

Fundraising is now underway. You can donate today at:

[www.jenningsfoundation.net/donations.php](http://www.jenningsfoundation.net/donations.php)

Jennings County Community Foundation office (111 North State Street, North Vernon, IN 47265)

JCPR office at the Muscatatuck Park (812-346-2953, 325 North State Hwy #3, North Vernon, IN 47265)

Or by mail or phone at both locations

Greg Martin  
Director, JCPR