

Rotary Clubs of Fort Collins – Making a Difference

By PDG Bill Emslie, President Rotary Club of Fort Collins, After Work

On Saturday, October 19, 2019, several Rotary Clubs in Fort Collins came together to help start a community project, Renovation of the Eastside Community Park.

The Eastside Community Park needs revitalization to transform the area into a safe and meaningful community space. The adjacent Laurel Elementary school went into 'lock-out' mode five times during the past school year because of unsafe and threatening behavior in the park. In the past, the park has seen sexual assaults, drug use and other negative behavior causing both elementary students and neighbors to feel unsafe. To address the issue, the oldest and first church in Fort Collins (First United Methodist Church - 1869) is spearheading a partnership with the City of Fort Collins and the local community to re-design and upgrade the park. The four Rotary Clubs of Fort Collins have joined with 17 other local businesses and organizations to help the church and city bring this project to fruition.

The four Fort Collins Rotary Clubs will support of the project both with hands on service and financially. On October 19 approximately 15 Rotarians from several Fort Collins clubs started the official park renovation by assisting in the removal of an old T-Ball backstop and benches. This was done in just a few hours. The photos below show this work.

Rotary also supports the project financially. Past District Governor Bill Emslie led the four clubs in receiving approval for a District Governors Grant totaling \$6,000. Proceeds of this grant will fund specific improvements such as new park benches, game tables and bicycle racks in the park. The Rotary contribution is part of the \$245,000 budget for park renovation which is funded by individuals, businesses and community organizations.

Leadership and a champion for the Eastside Community Park renovation is Rotarian Stacy Plemmons, who has coordinated fundraising for the project city wide. Stacy is member of the Rotary Club of Fort Collins. Thank you, Stacy and the Rotarians of Fort Collins, for your support of this worthwhile community effort.



Rotarians from Fort Collins and other community volunteers gather around the backstop to be removed as part of the renovation of the Eastside Community Park.



Rotarian Ralph Smith from the Rotary Club of Fort Collins; 1918, removing backstop fence.



All eyes on one man!



Rotarian Stacy Plemmons (on ladder), who organized the Rotary workday, readies backstop fence for removal.



Rotarians and volunteers in action!



Rotary coordinator Stacy Plemmons celebrates with Pastor Melanie Rosa from First United Methodist Church and Fort Collins Mayor Wade Troxell.



Mission accomplished. Backstop removed.