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GDH Gives Scouts a Chance to Explore New Central Park

CARMEL, Ind. – Donning hard hats to protect their curious minds, nine Cub Scouts from Carmel Pack 134 recently moved one step closer to earning their Webelo Engineering award. Onsite Senior Project Manager Kent Forman of GDH (construction manager for

Central Park) led the group of kids on a sneak-peak tour of the 161-acre Central Park and 146,000-square-foot Monon Center. The tour was coordinated by Scout leader and Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation board member Dan Dutcher.

As they packed a temporary meeting room (future storage closet) in the new Monon Center, the Scouts hovered over a table covered with blueprints, attempting to find their location on the architect's page of engineering lines and circles. Forman welcomed the

Scouts, leaders and parents by sharing a few unique facts about the community recreation center – 300 doors in the center, five miles of pipes for the outdoor aqua park and over 1,000 windows in the building. As Forman flipped through the 100-page plan from Williams Architects, the Scouts learned how to read the architect's documents. S is for structural steel, A for architectural and E for electrical. To show just how involved a project of this scope is, Forman pulled the construction documents for

the hall door the Scouts had entered through. Matching the numbers on the plan with the correct door, the Scouts leafed through the pages of drawings, schedules, materials, hardware, colors and installation directions, hoping to discover their point of entry.

“Every component of this building has a construction document just like this,” Forman explained as he held up the papers for the door. “Every light, window, locker, desk and floor tile has pages of information.”



Continuing the engineering lesson, the Scouts set out to explore the interior of The Monon Center. Starting on the east side of the building, the Scouts walked through the catering kitchen, banquet rooms and classrooms on the first floor. They then made their way upstairs and through the “Monon Oasis”, an enclosed walkway linking the east and west sides of the building, and bridging over the Monon Trail. From there the Scouts could see the landscape of the park, including trails, the 10,000-square-foot skate park and landscaped decking surrounding the building.

Once in the west building, the group journeyed around the elevated walking/running track, three-court gymnasium, dance studio, fitness center, group fitness studios, locker rooms, café, childcare area and indoor aquatics center. The building, nearly 85% complete, was starting to take shape as the gym floor was being sanded, terrazzo laid in the lobby and pumps tested in the aquatics center.

All agreed that their favorite part was the outdoor aqua park and 10 acres of pools, sand play area and water slides. Still navigating the engineering aspect of the park, the Scouts were curious about the pipes, filters, layout and construction behind the aqua park and the large, winding hill that leads swimmers to the top of the water slides.

“The engineering lesson was perfect,” said Dutcher. “The great reaction of the kids reinforced not only the wisdom of the original vision, but also the value of what we all have been working so hard on to make a reality.”

Dutcher’s son, Michael, observed that, “It takes a long time to build stuff like this and you need to be patient.”

Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation anticipates that the east building will be ready for occupancy by February 1, 2007. The opening of the skate park and re-opening of the Monon Trail will follow in early March, and all additional areas, with exception to the outdoor aqua park, will be open to the public by mid-April. A community-wide grand opening event for the park, center and outdoor aqua park will take place Memorial Day weekend, 2007.



“We really have something to be proud of and have established an amazing legacy for the future of our community,” commented Dutcher.

As the Scouts learned from the architect’s plans, the community recreation center is the first of its kind in Indiana, and is a state-of-the-art model for parks and recreation facilities nationwide.

About Carmel Clay Parks and Recreation

The Carmel/Clay Board of Parks and Recreation, jointly created by the City of Carmel and Clay Township, was formed in 1991 to provide quality recreation programs, as well as acquire, preserve and

maintain open lands and parks. Through Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation, the Board carries out its responsibilities to the Carmel/Clay community by providing enriching, enjoyable escapes through recreation, fitness and nature. The 161-acre Central Park, featuring the 146,000-square-foot Monon Center and outdoor aqua park, is currently under construction and is scheduled to open in the spring of 2007. Central Park is made possible through bonds issued by Clay Township to serve the residents of Carmel and Clay Township.

Photo Captions

Photo 1: Outdoor Aqua Park

Cub Scout Pack 134 stops for a group photo on the spray center in the outdoor aqua park. (from left, bottom row) Anna Dutcher and Omkar Tamhankar (top row) Aiden Washer, Michael Dutcher, Drew Okenfuss, Jack Hustel, Michael Toner, Pablo Paliza-Carre and Ari Brown. The Webelo Patrols represented are the Bat and Shark Patrols. *Photo by Lindsay Dudeck.*

Photo 2: Inside the Fitness Center

Jack Hustel, Anna Dutcher, Dan Dutcher and Drew Okenfuss hear more about the features in The Monon Center from Carmel Clay Parks & Recreation Assistant Director Michael Klitzing. *Photo by Lindsay Dudeck.*

Photo 3: Architectural Plans

Looking over plans for The Monon Center are (clockwise from left) Michael Dutcher, Anna Dutcher, Drew Okenfuss, Michael Toner, Pablo Paliza-Carre, Omkar Tamhankar and Aiden Washer. *Photo by Lindsay Dudeck.*

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