

Teen creates disc golf course as Scout project



By Sara Daehn / TPD

Alex Holmstrom, 14, stands next to a disc golf target in East Park. Alex constructed the disc golf course this August as his Eagle Scout project.

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Cresco, Iowa -

For those looking for a free outdoor pastime to take part in close to home, they need look no further than Cresco's East Park. A nine-target disc golf course was added to the park this August.

Alex Holmstrom, 14, made completing the nine-hole course his Eagle Scout project. A ninth grade student at Crestwood High School and the son of Jeff and Sandy Holmstrom, Alex spent over 100 hours planning, coordinating and constructing the project over the course of a year.

"It's a rather long, drawn out process for an Eagle Scout project," said Jeff Holmstrom. "It's not something you can do in a few hours or a few days."

Disc golf, also called frisbee golf, is a game in which individual players throw a frisbee-like disc into a basket or at a target. The object of the game is to be the player who travels through a course from beginning to end with the fewest number of throws of the disc.

The rules of the game are similar to regular golf's rules, with discs replacing balls

and targets replacing holes.

Alex approached Cresco Parks and Recreation Director Bill Caffrey about a year ago to talk to him about completing the disc golf course as his Eagle Scout project.

"I wanted to do it because every place around us has one and we didn't," Alex said.

Alex, a member of Boy Scout Troop 63, worked with Caffrey to design the course, which follows nine targets in a counterclockwise loop around East Park. The project was funded mostly with a \$2,500 Howard County Community Foundation grant. The City of Cresco also paid for a portion of the course.

The Scout broke ground at the park on Aug. 9, digging holes with a tractor on loan for the project, then later pouring cement.

"For an Eagle Scout project, they coordinate it, plan it and make it all happen," Jeff Holmstrom said.

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Although Alex was the main force behind the project, he received help from other Boy Scouts, several area businesses who donated time money and materials and his family, in addition to the Parks and Recreation Department. “It was a lot of people involved in it that helped,” Jeff Holmstrom said.

The course is now open to the public, but the Scout still has a few things to finish before the project is complete.

Alex is waiting for signs he designed to be completed, which will be placed on each target. The signs will tell the disc golfer the par and where the next hole is. Alex is also waiting to receive a large sign that will outline the official rules of the game and will feature a map of the park. The sign will greet golfers as they approach the starting point on the course. He also plans to make scorecards available on the main sign.

The soon-to-be Eagle Scout also plans to place concrete bumpers upside down under the grass to mark the tee-off spot for the next target.

Although he has only played disc golf a handful of times, Alex is looking forward to having the opportunity to hit the green more often when his project is complete. Working on the project has taught him leadership skills and given Alex experience working with others to accomplish a goal.

Using the course is free and open during normal park hours, but players must bring their own discs. The Holmstroms plan to start selling discs at their downtown business, Computer Professionals Unlimited, sometime this week.

A disc golf contest, open to the public, will be held during Norman Borlaug Harvest Fest.

