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PRESS RELEASE  
**MUSCATINE PARKS & RECREATION**  
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
JULY 10, 2020**

**GARDENS IN WEEK PARK OFFER AN OASIS FOR EVERYONE**

*Visitors to gardens are urged to assist in honoring history, upholding beauty*

**MUSCATINE, Iowa** – The longstanding history of scenic beauty and plant cultivation in Weed Park fortifies the natural beauty of the park that serves as a source of pride for Muscatine. For over 120 years this 64-acre plot of land has served as a residents' respite to enjoy ballads from the bandstand, swim away from the summer heat, dote over Dolly the Elephant, and stroll through the cherished gardens.



The park's notoriety took root when Dr. James Weed and his wife, Mary, both avid agriculture and horticulture enthusiasts, donated the land to the City of Muscatine in 1899. Dr. Weed was a self-taught arborist and cultivated thousands of trees in his nursery and orchard operations on the land in the present day Weed Park neighborhood.

The scenic beauty of the park would inspire many community members to gather, recreate, and contribute to horticulture for generations.

In the 1940s, local dentist Dr. J. Donald McPike began a new legacy by establishing the Weed Park Memorial Rose Garden. The sheer variety of rose species and colors found in bloom is evidence of why the Weed Park Rose Garden is one of only 11 American Rose Society accredited gardens found in Iowa. Weddings under the gazebo and family photos amongst the flowers allow Muscatine memories to endure.

The Zoo Garden is another nod to Weed Park history and celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. Flowers and plants sharing the names of animals surround sculptures where real-life renditions were once admired. The Zoo Garden also features majestic views of the Mississippi River Valley that are accompanied by the fragrance of thousands of blooms. Lifelong residents may enjoy the winding paths of the garden while reminiscing visits to the bears, reptiles, and monkeys as children.

Citizens can continue to assist in upholding the legacy of park beautification in Muscatine by refraining from picking flowers or removing plants, abstain from digging holes on public property, and leaving parks free of trash and debris. By preserving the beauty of the park, patrons can ensure that all visitors are able to reap the benefits of Muscatine's green spaces and gardens.

If gardeners are interested in continuing to preserve Weed Park's historical gardens, volunteer opportunities may be available through the Master Gardeners of Muscatine County. Citizens may also lend a hand during the various Muskie Day of Caring events organized by the United Way of Muscatine.

The Parks and Recreation Department's Adopt-A-Park program also has ongoing opportunities for volunteerism in one of the city's 21 parks and green spaces including the Greenwood Cemetery and the Running River Trail System.

Contact the Muscatine Parks and Recreation Department for additional information by calling (563) 263-0241. You can also email Parks and Recreation Department staff at [parksoffice@muscatineiowa.gov](mailto:parksoffice@muscatineiowa.gov).



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Interested residents and visitors can also visit the [Parks & Recreation](#) page on the City of Muscatine website for additional information and much more.

Be sure to “like” our [Facebook](#) page and “follow” us on [Twitter](#) for park information, program and special event updates, closure notifications, and much more.