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FAIRFIELD — Community members will get their first chance to play in Fairfield's newest – and most unique – park on Saturday.

That's when Huffman Park will officially open with dedication ceremonies set for 11 a.m.

The 22-acre John Gray Road park is adjacent to the city's South Trace Golf Course.

It was donated to Fairfield by the heirs of Anna and Harold Huffman last year.



Leonard P. Smith was installing the safety surface at the new City of Fairfield Huffman Park scheduled for a October 27th grand opening. The Huffman Park is located on John Gray Rd. and is a fully interactive park complete with play areas, picnic shelters a pond and has a paved walking trail there is even a wind mill running a compressor sending air through the pond keeping it clean and mosquito free. / The Enquirer/ Tony Jones

See the opening

What: Huffman Park dedication

When: 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday

Where: Huffman Park, John Gray Road, adjacent to the South Trace Golf Course

Activities: Brief dedication ceremony at 11 a.m. with Huffman family members who serve on the Anna and Harold W. Huffman Foundation, carriage rides through the park, raptor and bee demonstrations, children's crafts and refreshments

Earlier this year, the family gave the city another \$860,000 from the estate to develop the southern 12 acres into an interactive park. The northern 10 acres have been earmarked for a golf academy when the city has the funds.

"It's a different concept, a different type of leisure experience," said Tim Bachman, the city's development services director.

"The whole goal in developing this park was sustainability – using things from the home and the property. It allows children and youth to get engaged in ecology, in biology and still have fun. There's a lot of open space too."

The park – the city's fifth largest – includes a number of features. There is a pond with aquatic plants deliberately chosen to attract water fowl.

A nearby rotating windmill on a hill sends air into the pond through an air line buried underground. It is released into the pond in

ABOUT THE PARK

Location: 22 acres in Fairfield on John Gray Road just west of the Fairfield Greens South Trace golf course; park entrance is off golf course entrance

Donation: Total of \$910,000 to draw up plans and develop the park from the Anna and Harold Huffman Foundation and the Harold W. Huffman Trust

History: Harold Huffman grew up on a Mack Road farm, went to a one-room school until high school and bought the John Gray acreage from his grandfather when he returned from military service in 1945, when he and Anna married. The couple had no children. An engineer, Harold Huffman eventually became president of the Hamilton Tool Co. and holds 33 patents. After retiring, he began a consulting company. Anna Huffman died in 1991. Harold Huffman died in 2010.

the form of bubbles, which helps cleanse the pond and keeps mosquitoes at bay.

There is a half-mile, paved walking trail along the park perimeter. The play area includes a balance beam log, tree steppers, a ring of boulders and two mounds with slides and a tunnel. Many of those features came from trees on the property.

“A lot of parks are all man made,” said Justin Bresner, who has been working on the park’s construction for months. “This is a real natural park.”

Other features include a community garden, flower-shaped talking tubes, a butterfly climbing structure and a maze mound intertwined with landscaping. A small orchard and butterfly garden have also been planted.

“We’ve already been able to pick some of the fruit,” Bresner said.

An 8-foot-wide paved path along the perimeter provides a walking trail for visitors. Throughout the park are signs giving information about the gardens, pond, windmill and other features.

Stone from the original house on the property, built by Harold Huffman for his wife, Anna, has been incorporated into a fire pit and was used to construct restrooms, the park sign and picnic shelters.

Beginning next spring, nature programs and educational workshops created in partnership with the Fairfield district and other schools, will be offered on site.

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