

# County cuts ribbon on Korth playground

By Amy Smith Union staff writer | Posted: Monday, August 25, 2014 9:32 am

LAKE MILLS — With the snip of a ribbon Friday, Jefferson County dedicated a newly installed set of playground equipment at Korth County Park.

Among the nearly 40 attendees at the Town of Lake Mills venue were Jefferson County Parks Committee members, parks department staff, and project and community supporters.

The equipment was installed at the Jefferson County park, which overlooks Rock Lake, in mid-May, but the ceremony was postponed until the grass surrounding the play area was fully grown, according to county parks operation supervisor Kev in Wiesmann.

An increased traffic flow through the park slowed progress on grass growth, Weismann noted, citing a recent study showing that park traffic doubled after the equipment was installed.

The project was started in April, but wet, spring weather also played apart in the delayed progress, Weismann said.

The playground equipment was funded by several partners, including Fort HealthCare, Modern Woodmen Financial, the Lake Mills Area Community Foundation, W&A Distribution, Claussen Funeral Home, Crystal Farms and Seljan Co. of Lake Mills.

The playground will be named for Fort HealthCare.

The project cost approximately \$75,000, with \$26,000 in donations received via fund raising.

“A special thanks to these major funding partners and all the rest of the individuals and businesses that contributed to make this playground a reality,” said Steve Nass, Parks Committee chairman. “I look forward to seeing generations of children enjoy the equipment.”

The handicapped-accessible playground is designed for ages 5-12. The playground is nature-based, incorporating elements for swinging, sliding and climbing, enhancing the park through the physical design elements.

Korth Park is part of an initiative that links Jefferson County Parks through the Glacial Heritage Area. The Glacial Heritage Area is a network of wildlife and recreational areas throughout the Jefferson County area.

The Department of Natural Resources in 2009 proposed allocating \$125 million to \$175 million during the next 30 years toward the establishment of the Glacial Heritage Area with the possibility of further funds for land acquisitions made available through the Working Lands Initiative, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation



## KORTH PLAYGROUND

LET'S PLAY! — A ribboncutting ceremony was held Friday to celebrate a newly installed set of playground equipment at Korth County Park in the Town of Lake Mills. Nearly 40 people attended the special event, despite the sweltering heat. Pictured are members of the Jefferson County Parks Committee and major supporters of the project. For more photos, click [here](#).

and various federal agencies.

Officials have likened the network of wildlife areas as a “string of pearls.” Existing county parks — Dorothy Carnes Park in the Town of Jefferson, Korth Park in the Town of Lake Mills and the Garman Nature Preserve in Waterloo — and other sites of interest in the area make up the pearls, while the strings are the routes that link them, from the Glacial Drumlin Trail to rural roadways to bicycle routes.

Jefferson County officials envision the network to be so interlinked that visitors would seldom need to be on an actual road between parks.

Korth Park, with the help of a \$200,000 Lake Protection Grant and a \$257,000 Stewardship Grant, was purchased in 2000 to protect the water quality and fish habitat of Rock Lake. This park is also home to an eight-acre restored oak savanna and 60-plus acres of tall grass prairies.

The park has two entrances: W8282 Elm Point Road and W8930 Korth Lane. Both entrances are just off of County Highway S, on the west side of Lake Mills.

Besides the newly installed playground equipment, the park features two pavillions, a mowed trail system, as well as a gravel path along the lake that connects to the Glacial Drumlin Trail. During the winter months, the trails are groomed for classic style cross country skiing and the hill to the east of Korth Pavilion a popular place for sledding.