

**CONTACTS:**

Matt Vorwald

dubuquejaycees@gmail.com, 563.583.5555

Cori Burbach, City of Dubuque

cburbach@cityofdubuque.org, 563.589.4110**April 5, 2010 – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Dubuque Jaycees Partner with City to Launch Community Garden at Veterans Memorial Park

Responding to an increasing demand from community members for access to community gardening space, the City of Dubuque has partnered with the Dubuque Jaycees to create a community garden at Veterans Memorial Park. Garden plots will be available for an annual fee to all area residents.

The Dubuque Jaycees Community Gardens will be a series of individual plots available for an annual rental fee through the Jaycees. The gardens will be located at Veterans Memorial Park, where access to water and fencing surrounding the site will be provided. Both raised and in-ground plots are available for rent.

Community gardens have been a growing trend across the United States as more individuals and families become interested in producing their own food. They are an excellent opportunity for residents who may not have the ability to establish gardens at their home, such as renters or those who live in the downtown area and do not have adequate yard space. In addition to providing this opportunity, community gardens have been shown to provide a catalyst for neighborhood development, create opportunities for recreation and education, stimulate social interactions, and beautify neighborhoods. The community atmosphere created by the gardens is also beneficial to those who may be new to gardening and looking for advice and assistance.

“The City is happy to partner with the Jaycees to provide this opportunity to increase families’ self-sufficiency and provide access to gardening to everyone in Dubuque,” said Sustainable Community Coordinator Cori Burbach.

While the City has provided the land for the garden plots, the Jaycees will be responsible for all aspects of managing the garden. Plots will be available for an annual rental fee of \$30 for in-ground beds and \$40 for raised beds, plus a \$25 deposit which will be returned after harvest if the plot is cleared. Income-based fee waivers are available. Individuals interested in renting a plot should contact Theresa Reuter at 563.583.5555 or dubuquejaycees@gmail.com. Sign up will also be available at the Dubuque Winter Farmers Market on Saturday, April 9, from 9 a.m. to noon at the Colts Center, 1101 Central Avenue. The Jaycees hope to raise funds and partner with other organizations to make improvements to the site and grow the gardening program in the future.

“People are demanding healthier, sustainable alternatives for their lifestyle,” says Dustin Baker, president of the Dubuque Jaycees. “A community garden is a great way to promote sustainability and save money in the process. As a volunteer community service organization, the Dubuque Jaycees strives to create opportunities that are unfeasible through business or city initiatives alone. We are proud to partner with the City of Dubuque to bring this opportunity to residents at a price everyone can afford.”

This project helps to achieve the Sustainable Dubuque principle of Healthy Local Foods. Additional information about the Dubuque Jaycees Community Gardens, as well as other gardening opportunities located throughout the city, can be found at www.cityofdubuque.org/communitygardens.