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Club has approached Larimer County, Fort Collins to propose ideas

By Pamela Dickman
The Reporter-Herald

On any given day, disc golfers flock to Edora Park in Fort Collins — the only public 18-hole course in Larimer County — to play a game that mixes golf and Frisbee.

“It’s incredibly popular,” said Rich Knowles, member of the Northern Colorado Disc Golf Club. “People do not stop playing because of winter.”

The sport is so popular, he said, that members of his club are hankering for a second 18-hole course in Larimer County to join several nine-hole courses.

But it looks like they have a few years to wait before the possibility will arise in Fort Collins or Loveland.

And Larimer County parks staff members believe disc golf just doesn’t fit in the unincorporated parks and open lands.

“We couldn’t find any location that would be advantageous for disc golf,” said Gary Buffington, director of the Larimer County Natural Resources Department.

“Most of ours are resource-based, for more passive use. ... City parks are more suitable for that kind of recreation.”

The county staff sent written notification of that opinion to members of the disc golf club and will share it with the Larimer County Parks Advisory Board at its meeting Tuesday, according to Buffington.

While disc golfers would love another city course, a rural course would be better, said Bill Wright, a Fort Collins resident who designs disc golf courses around the state.

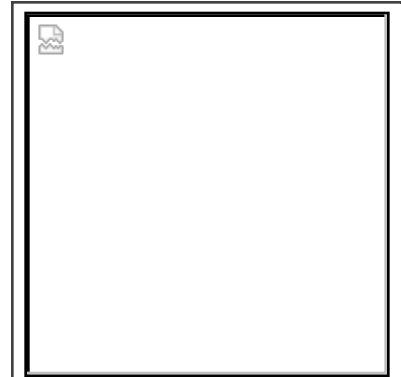
“It’s kind of an unlimited obstacle situation where you have tons of trees and, with the trees, there are little narrow alleyways to throw down,” Wright said.

“You want obstacles. You want things in the way.”

The Northern Colorado Disc Golf Club approached both the Larimer County and Fort Collins parks staffs with numbers to back up the need for a second 18-hole course.

Last summer, club members counted 669 people using the golf course on a summer weekend, Thursday through Sunday.

The weekend they chose was after most Colorado State University students had left for the summer, during Brewfest in



Reporter-Herald file photo

Sandy Hodges of Loveland practices putting at the disc golf course at Thompson Valley High School in this file photo. Disc golf was invented in 1975 and has spread from the first course in California to more than 2,100 courses across the United States and 2,514 worldwide. Participants toss a flying disc around obstacles with the goal of landing them in set baskets, the equivalent of holes on a golf course.

downtown Fort Collins and when temperatures ranged from 93 to 100 degrees.

The youngest disc golfer they met was 5, while the oldest was 72, Knowles said.

His club members have not yet approached the city of Loveland, but he said they might.

Others already have, said Janet Meisel-Burns, the city's senior park planner.

"We've heard that's a desire," she said.

Her office looked into whether a disc golf course would fit into Fairgrounds Park, which is under construction, but decided it did not fit with the layout and multiuse areas of the park.

The next possibility, she said, is Mehaffey Park, a 60-acre site that is at least a few years away.

The planned park is large enough to include a course situated away from other public areas, preventing problems from errant flying discs.

"If they're off on their own and wrapped around trees, they're great," Meisel-Burns said. "It's a fun sport. It's very independent. It's a pickup sport where groups of people can get together and have a good time."

The challenge, she said, is finding a site that fits.

Such courses fit better in community parks than in high-use city parks, which makes a new course in Fort Collins "quite a few years out," said Craig Foreman, manager of park planning and development.

"We're keeping it on our plate," Foreman said. "They have a good group there and a lot of demand, and we're trying to meet that."

Comments

ITS ABOUT TIME LOVELAND GETS ITS OWN DISC GOLF COURSE . ITS HAS BECOME SO POPULAR ALL OVER.I LIVE IN BOISE , ID AN EMPLOYED BY THE CITY OF BOISE PARKS & REC. ABOUT TEN YEARS .WE INSTALLED A COURSE IN ONE OF BIGGEST PARK IN THE CITY.18 HOLES OF COURSE !Ive WATCH IT GROW FROM A FEW PLAYERS TO SOMETIME TO MANY. ONE GOOD THING WE WHERE ABLE TO DO WAS HAVE A SUMMER COURSE AN A WINTER COURSE .THE COURSE SURE CAN TAKE A BEATING OVER TIME. SO ITS NICE TO MOVE IT AN GIVE THE COURSE TIME TO HEAL.

GOOD LUCK TO ALL OF YOU . I HOPE WHEN I RETURN HOME THIS SUMMER IT'LL BE COMPLETE & READY TO PLAY!
MICHAEL .D KRENNING BOISE,ID

MICHAEL D. KRENNING, BOISE , IDAHO 2/16/2008 6:52:43 AM

Thank you for a well written article on a wonderful game. A new, modern disc golf course would be great to have nearby. I know I wouldn't hesitate to drive to Loveland from Fort Collins to play, if that's where it became a reality. And I know I'm not the only one!

KC, Fort Collins, CO 2/10/2008 9:08:48 PM

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