FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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2nd ANNUAL SCHEELS CAPITAL CITY PICKLEBALL CLASSIC TO BE HELD AT SPRINGFIELD PARK DISTRICT, ILES PARK PICKLEBALL COURTS

[Springfield, IL] – The Springfield Park District is pleased to announce that the Springfield Pickleball Club will be hosting their Annual Pickleball Tournament at Iles Park Pickleball Courts this weekend, July 11th, 12th & 13th. This is their second year to host this tournament and it draws players from all over the country, from as far away as Arizona, Florida and Michigan.

They will play Men’s and Women’s Singles Skill Groups starting at 3:00 pm on Friday, July 11th. They will have Men’s Doubles Skills Group at 8:30 am on Saturday, July 12th and Women’s Doubles Skills Group at 1:30 pm on Saturday, July 12th. They will play Mixed Doubles Skills Groups starting at 8:00 am on Sunday, July 13th. There will be viewing stands and concessions all weekend long and it’s sure to be a great time!

Pickleball first came to the Springfield Park District in April of 2010. When local enthusiast, Mr. Jack Handy, now the President of the Springfield Pickleball Club, approached the District about converting some unused Tennis courts at the Iles Park location into Pickleball courts. Over a period of about a year of planning, the District was able to convert two unused Tennis courts into 8 active Pickleball courts.

Since we cut the ribbon in 2012, this has become an active recreation area, which can support up to 32 players at any given time. Typical matches are 13-15 minutes long and the sport combines exercise, fun, and competition. Pickleball has become one of the fastest growing sports in our community. Never heard of Pickleball before? The Springfield Pickleball Club hosts Beginners Nights each Wednesday at 5:00 pm during the summer at Iles Park.

While Pickleball attracts players of all ages, it is particularly popular with people over the age of 50, which is the segment of the population that is growing quickly. Many retirees tend to give up playing tennis because of joint/pain issues, and Pickleball is a sport that gives them flexibility to still be active but less taxing on the body.

The conversion of these aging tennis courts has been a tremendous addition to the recreational opportunities available to members of Springfield and the surrounding area. These courts have prompted the formation of the Springfield Pickleball Club, which currently hosts over 100 players. It has increased activity overall at Iles Park in a favorable manner with play on these repurposed courts 7 days per week.

“The Springfield Park District has embraced this growing sport and through partnerships, have helped make it successful in our community.” states Executive Director Derek Harms. We encourage you to come out this weekend and check out the sport for yourselves at the 2nd Annual Scheels Capital City Pickleball Classic. Meet the members of the Springfield Pickleball Club and watch some phenomenal athletes from all over the country.

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