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Media contact: Susan Walsh, 941-861-0951; cell 941-650-4791; swalsh@scgov.net

Project contact: Anthony Bell, 941-650-0874; abell@scgov.net

County to dedicate Skip Stasko Park at Jan. 9 ceremony

On Friday, Jan. 9, Sarasota County will hold a dedication ceremony for Skip Stasko Park, named after one of the county's longtime Parks and Recreation employees. The 3 p.m. event will be held at the new South Venice park, 2101 Scenic Drive.

Stanley "Skip" Stasko was a 30-year county employee who died in April 2005. Known by his co-workers as a "go-to-guy," he served in several capacities and juggled many projects, always taking on greater responsibilities. For instance, he organized the beach cleaning procedure and the selection of equipment that is now used to clean the beaches countywide. He also was the liaison between Parks and Recreation and the Sheriff's Office, and was an honorary deputy. A resident of South Venice, he took an active role in the care of South Venice neighborhood parks.

"This new park provides a tranquil setting for folks to enjoy in the midst of a vital neighborhood. It's a neighborhood park, a trail head park and a waterfront park," said Parks and Recreation General Manager John F. McCarthy. "Skip's career in Parks and Recreation touched on all of these elements and Skip Stasko Park will serve as a lasting legacy for the community."

The approximately 1-acre Skip Stasko Park serves as a trail head and provides access to the Venetian Waterway Park, and includes a gazebo, rock garden, landscaping, park benches and a bicycle rack. The cost of constructing the park on county-owned land was about \$244,000.

Frederick Derr & Company, Inc. of Sarasota was the contractor. Phil Graham Studio of St. Petersburg provided landscape architecture services, and AM Engineering, Inc. of Sarasota was the civil engineer for the project. The Venice Area Garden Club created the rock garden.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask about the Skip Stasko Park dedication.

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