

RiverFront group announces summer lineup

By HILLARY GAVAN Senior staff writer | Posted: Monday, April 11, 2016 4:00 pm

BELOIT — Although there was a dusting of snow on the ground Saturday, Beloiters were dreaming of all the 2016 summer season activities such as the movie "Rio" played along the riverfront, music, dancing and more.

The summer event lineup was announced at the Rotary River Center during the Friends of RiverFront Rise and Shine on the Riverfront 21st annual meeting.

After coffee and cookies Kathleen Storm, former executive director of the Downtown Beloit Association, gave the Patricia M. Jones Silver Trowel Award to Jeff and Judy Adams. Storm called Jeff Adams "the man behind the curtain, the 'Wizard of Oz' of Beloit."

"Look around you and you will see his hand, along with Judy's, with everything you enjoy along this riverfront," she said.

The couple, she said, dedicated themselves to the betterment of Beloit for decades and helped to transform the riverfront and city center while elevating the quality of life and joy in general.

Adding flowers and green space and a calendar of events each year have not only animated the riverfront, but also has nurtured everyone in the city, she said.

"When we play together, we talk to one another. When we talk to one another, we understand and care more. We look beyond our differences and find common ground," Storm said.

Thanks to Jeff's razor sharp intellect and sharp intuition, Beloit's economic health has blossomed with an ever diversifying the business sector.

"Friends of RiverFront is grateful for the vision and hard work of Jeff and Judy Adams over the past 21 years. Without Jeff and Judy and the people that have worked and continue to work alongside of them, our organization would not be all that it is today," said Jennifer Kodl, executive director of Friends of Riverfront in an interview before the meeting.

After the award was given, Therese Oldenburg gave a presentation on Nature at the Confluence, the area centered on the confluence of the Rock River and Turtle Creek in South Beloit which is slated for development. Nature at the Confluence is hoped to be nature-based destination, bustling with activities.

This summer Oldenburg said

Nature at the Confluence is partnering with South Beloit Public Library to do a story walk along the

river. Nature at the Confluence will also launch a champion tree contest for kids to get people outdoors and active in public lands. Other potential ideas of events and activities up for discussion include: forest therapy guided walks, yoga at the confluence, community organic learning garden and more. Programming starts in June. For more information people can visit www.NatureAtTheConfluence.com or visit its Facebook page.

On Saturday the Movie on the Big Lawn was announced: “Rio” to be shown on Aug. 19.

The following are dates for Music at Harry’s Place: June 17, Harlan Jefferson; June 24, Lil Vito & the Torpedoes; July 1, The Bel-Airs; July 8, Dave Potter Trio; July 15, Mr. Big Stuff; July 22, Cash Box Kings; July 29, Gary McAdams Band; Aug. 12, The Jimmys; and Aug. 26, Copper Box.

Dancing at Harry’s Place will be held: June 13 and 27; July 11 and 25; and Aug. 8 and 22.

At Saturday’s meeting Debbie McKearn also introduced fellow 2016-2017 board members Deidre Bennett, Monica Krysztopa, Tim Oswald, Tim Weeden, Theresa Wendhausen and Spencer Waite. New board member Sara Fillbach is also joining.

Friends of RiverFront is a group of volunteers who are committed to animating and sustaining spaces along the Rock River. Friends of RiverFront activities include Music at Harry’s Place, Dancing at Harry’s Place and the Movie on the Big Lawn.