

## TWC of the Month: Homewood-Flossmoor Racquet and Fitness Club

The Homewood-Flossmoor Racquet and Fitness Club, have a lot to be proud of as they celebrate their 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Over the past three decades this ten court indoor Park District Facility which also features a fitness center, lap pool, wellness center, and conference room has won numerous awards including: A Top 50 Tennis Welcome Center for the past two years, a two-time National Park & Recreation Association Gold Medal, USTA Facility of the Year, and USTA Member Organization of the Year.

Homewood-Flossmoor, located 30 miles outside of Chicago, has been a Tennis Welcome Center since the program started in 2004. They have seen many benefits from being a part of the program but the most important part is that it pushes them to be a better facility.

“We’ve always been a facility that has looked for something new to keep peoples’ interest or stimulate interest in the sport. Having the TWC attached to our name makes us feel we have to go that extra mile,” says Sylvia Gothard, Racquet Sports Manager at Homewood-Flossmoor. “We want to stay one of the Top TWC’s and we want to be a role model for the program.”

Homewood-Flossmoor has done just that. With what seems like an endless amount of programs and events that get people excited and involved in the sport, it’s no wonder the facility has more than 3,800 family memberships. Their biggest event is a 10 day tennis festival called Tennisfest which includes free lessons, free clinics, free picnics, a 53 event non-sanctioned tournament, a favorite athlete pet contest, and much more. More than 2,500 people attended the event this year with many of the players coming out to play tennis for the first time.

One of the most entertaining events is the pet contest where participants dress up their pet like a famous tennis player. This year the winner was a Doberman dog wearing a white tennis skirt and shirt, big hoop earrings, and had braids hanging off the side of its head. The winner was submitted as Venus Williams and won a \$25 gift certificate to a local pet store.

Other activities that Homewood-Flossmoor run are: A trip to Wimbledon every summer, free USTA membership to all players signed up for the USTA 1-2-3 program, Cardio Tennis, Quickstart Tennis, USTA Junior Team Tennis, USTA Adult Leagues, and a new program called Fab Restart Tennis League for players Ages 50+. This program, which was just started in the spring, uses a 60’ court and low compression balls.

“Fab Restart Tennis is designed to for older people that used to be players but because of physical injury or health problems, they have not been able to play,” says Gothard. “We recently submitted the program to the USTA/Midwest for consideration as a pilot adult recreation program.”

Along with all of these fantastic programs Homewood-Flossmoor prides themselves in being an all around friendly and welcoming club. Gothard says they frequently get new players that walk into the club and want to know more information about the programs. Because of this, they call their front desk a welcome desk instead of a typical front desk.

“Immediately persons entering the facility encounter a Welcome Center, as opposed to a front desk,” says Gothard. “The first function of the Welcome Center Staff is to meet and greet. They are friendly and send off a very positive vibe.”

To learn more about Homewood-Flossmoor Racquet and Fitness Club visit <http://www.hfracquetandfitness.com/>

If you would like to be highlighted as a Tennis Welcome Center of the Month in the next newsletter please contact [Amanda@tennisindustry.org](mailto:Amanda@tennisindustry.org) and tell us how your club is leading the charge in the growth of the sport.