



**News Release**  
City Hall  
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## **ELOISE WERLIN PARK PLAYGROUND GRAND OPENING SCHEDULED FOR FEB. 27**

Sarasota, FL: A grand opening celebration for the new children’s playground at Eloise Werlin Park will be held **Friday, February 27 at 11 a.m.** at the playground, adjacent to Hart’s Landing and Tony Saprito Fishing Pier.

The area features play equipment for children ages 2-7 along scenic Sarasota Bay. The centerpiece is a climbing net made of blue web rope, designed to boost children’s dexterity, eye-hand coordination, and imagination – all while being safe and fun.

The playground came into existence thanks to a generous donation from Ernest “Doc” Werlin through the Gulf Coast Community Foundation in memory of his wife Eloise. In addition to construction costs, the gift also included funding for future maintenance of the playground.

“I saw people fishing with young children and the children had nothing to do,” explained Mr. Werlin, who has been a full time Sarasota resident since 2010. “I thought we needed to do something to reach out to the children, since there wasn’t anything available there.”

The playground will be formally dedicated by Mr. Werlin, Mayor Willie Shaw and City Commissioners, City Manager Tom Barwin, City staff, and dignitaries.

Collaborating with the City parks staff, Mr. Werlin’s goal was to create a recreation area which could entertain children while being adult friendly. Five inviting shade structures with benches are located throughout the area where adults can sit, read, take in the beautiful surroundings, and even fish. The play surface is comprised of a spongy material, which adults could use for yoga and stretching exercises.

“The surface is quite soft,” said Mr. Werlin. “It’s very comfortable to stretch on. So, I envision people who run and walk over the Ringling Bridge stopping at the playground to stretch.”

Mr. Werlin is in discussions with City staff about possibly adding stretching and exercise equipment for adults at the park sometime in the future.

“We appreciate Doc Werlin’s extremely generous gift,” said City Manager Tom Barwin. “The City currently is developing a formal naming policy for public spaces such as this park. The philanthropy in Sarasota is tremendous and we foresee more of this occurring, thanks to Doc’s leadership.”

In December 2014, the City Commission approved renaming the eastern portion of John Ringling Causeway Park to Eloise Werlin Park.

For more information contact [Jan Thornburg](#), Sr. Communications Manager: 941-954-2613.

**About the City of Sarasota:** Distinguished by Google as a Digital Capital in the U.S., the City of Sarasota is a diverse community located on Florida’s Suncoast with 53,000 year round residents, several internationally recognized cultural arts venues, stunning sunsets along Lido Beach, a 45-hole municipal golf course at the historic Bobby Jones Golf Club, and Major League spring training baseball with the Baltimore Orioles. Learn more about us at [www.SarasotaGov.com](http://www.SarasotaGov.com)

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