

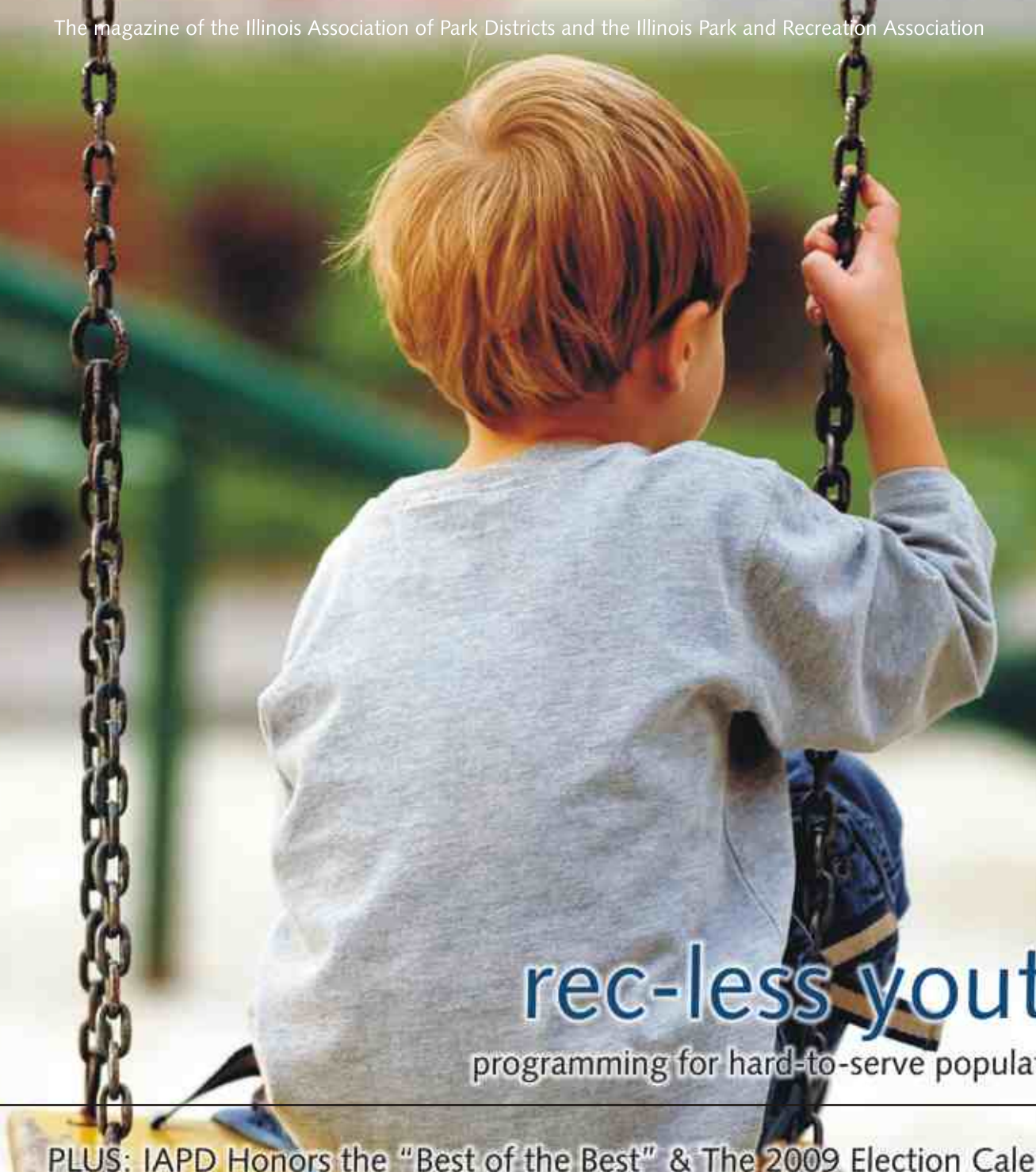
illinois

Volume 39, Number 6 | November/December 2008



PARKS AND RECREATION

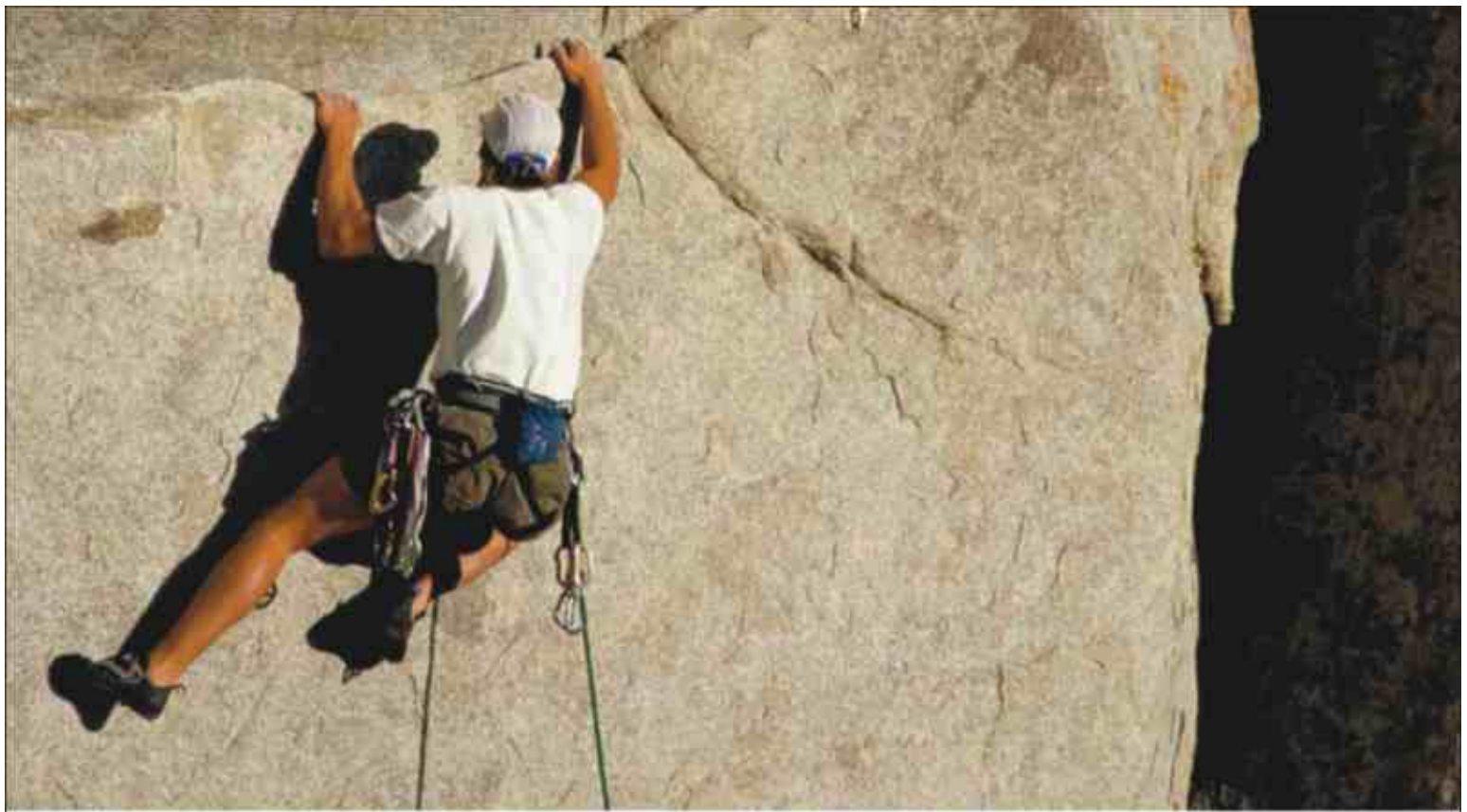
The magazine of the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association



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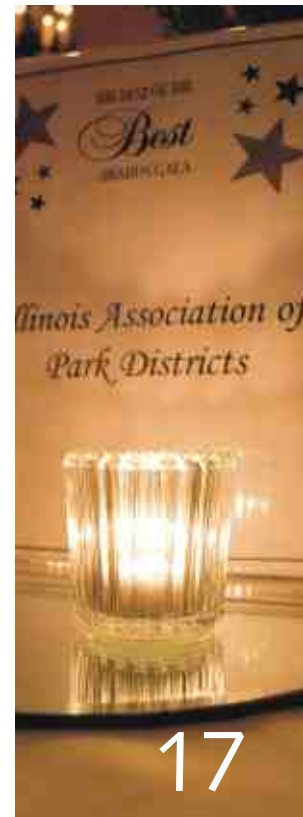
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FROM THE EDITOR



My seven-year-old son Ethan flipped through a set of commemorative cards printed up as give-aways to young Baseball Hall of Fame visitors.

He held one up to me. "What team did he play for?"

It was Cool Papa Bell, and there was no team he played for that Ethan knew. I tried to explain. I launched into a spiel on Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey, and I may have even mentioned Larry Doby.

My son sat blank faced.

Then he blinked and held up the card again and said, "You mean they wouldn't let him play because he had brown skin?"

"Yep," I said.

"That's silly," he said.

I nodded, convinced that I'd made a fundamental point that I remember my father had made for me. The awful, crazy injustice of the segregation of the Negro League was that it violated our closely held principle that superior skill should overcome all else. My father, who grew up in a small town slow to recover from the depression, has always been especially tuned to this. He punched a factory clock for more than 35 years, but had tennis and golf games that routinely had him rubbing elbows with doctors and lawyers and bankers, sometimes as a guest at their private clubs. (What they found to talk to each other about, I'll never know.)

Yeah, I was feeling pretty good about myself, until a few days later when I was sorting through Ethan's cards and I realized that not once had I mentioned Cool Papa's lights out speed or Robinson's .311 lifetime average. As far as Ethan knew, Cool Papa Bell wasn't any more talented than the kids on his T-ball squad.

Ethan wasn't offended by the suppression of Cool Papa's *achievement*. He was offended by the suppression of Cool Papa's *opportunity*.

Many of you are in the opportunity business, as Jeena Greenwalt and Amy Starin's article on recreation for children with mental illness (page 26) reminds me. With all the first-rate facilities, the acres of green space and gold medals that Illinois agencies build and save and win, I forget that.

Of all the great achievements, the greatest, I'm reminded, is that a person with a disability or in dire financial circumstances or with achy 80-year-old joints or without friends can walk into the doors of your agencies and get what we all really ought to have – an even chance.

— RODD WHELPLEY
Editor

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GET THE PLATE THAT KEEPS KIDS FIT

Visit IAPD's home page at www.ilparks.org to download a registration form.

Each set of park district plates generates \$25 to a grant program for after school programming at park and recreation agencies throughout the state.



Dr. Ted Flickinger
IAPD President and Chief
Executive Officer

Executive Evaluation and Communication

I have spent a lot of time meeting with many of the more than 2,100 park agency board members in this state. Over the course of the 92 director searches and 94 board self-evaluations I've conducted in recent years, the most common questions board members have concern how to evaluate the executive director.

Observations on Board/Executive Relations

Most questions involving the evaluation of the executive director germinate from the nature of the relationship between a particular agency's board and its executive director. Here are some of my observations:

1. The era when the director could run a district with no questions asked is over. There are very few "rubber stamp" boards.
2. Directors have a strong need to please the board. Their careers and livelihoods depend on trying to find the right approach to developing positive relationships with their board members.
3. Some board members have a difficult time knowing whether or not they have a good director. They don't know the criteria to use in hiring and evaluating their executive director. Some ask me, "Is my director as good as another one from an agency with similar revenues and population served?"
4. Directors are often fired for the wrong reasons, and directors are retained for the wrong reasons. Some are not doing a good job. Some have no evaluations at all. In some agencies, the director's performance is not formally evaluated except in dire circumstances or times of crisis. By then, the evaluation is too late to be of any constructive use and only results in the selection of a new director who inherits the same problems.

Communication is the Key

I think the number one reason executives are fired is for failing to communicate with board members.

The two words information and communication are often used interchangeably, but they signify a different interpretation. Information is "giving out." Communication is "getting through."

The Evaluation as a Form of Communication

Clearly, a good board/executive relationship is predicated on good communication. The director needs the board to understand what is happening at the agency. The board needs the director to understand what is expected and how his or her performance measures up to those expectations.

A useful and formal way to begin to achieve this level of communication is by having the board evaluate the executive.

Information is
"giving out."
Communication is
"getting through."



I recommend that the board conduct, at least annually, a formal appraisal of the director's performance and effectiveness.

Performance measures and goals on which the director is to be measured should be agreed upon and should emanate from the agency's strategic plan.

While a formal, annual evaluation might be the start of developing useful communication habits between the board and the executive, evaluation and communication should be ongoing. Don't wait six months or a year to tell the director where he or she should improve or what he or she is doing well.

In some agencies, the director's performance is not formally evaluated except in dire circumstances or times of crisis. By then, the evaluation is too late to be of any constructive use.

Guidelines for the Executive Evaluation

I am often asked, "Should the executive be evaluated just like any other employee?" Definitely not. First, your executive is the only employee of the agency the board supervises and evaluates. Second, the executive is the most visible employee of the agency. He or she is also the one staff member whose performance has an institutional impact. The board evaluates the director. The director evaluates staff. Board members should not use the same form that the executive or other supervisors use to evaluate staff. Your executive performs dozens of specialized tasks that demand a uniquely designed evaluation form. (A sample evaluation form may be found in the book *Get on Board*, available at the "IAPD Store" section of the IAPD Web site at www.ILparks.org)

The job performance evaluation should include the following information:

- Mission, goals and objectives of the agency, and how these translate into duties, authority, responsibilities and performance;
- The executive's status regarding continued employment;
- How the executive will be rewarded (salary schedule, fringe benefits, etc.), or not rewarded.

The executive must show that the following is being accomplished:

- The agency is in sound financial shape and citizens are getting the best services for their investment;
- He or she is addressing the mission and goals of the agency;
- She or he has hired a competent staff that is producing excellent results;
- He or she is consistently prepared for board meetings;
- She or he follows up on all tasks and prepares board members with good information to make intelligent decisions.

Once the evaluation is completed, place a summary report in the executive's personnel file. Then the board should sit down with the executive and talk about the goals of the agency, areas needing improvement and the next year's priorities.

The Benefits of Proper Evaluation

When the director is properly evaluated, the outcome usually results in:

- Improved communication between the board and the director.
- A sense of common purpose and teamwork.
- A greater awareness by the director of his or her strengths and weaknesses and opportunities for developing improvements.

Remember, evaluating the director is a necessity – not a luxury.

COMING SOON

Online Training for Commissioners

Commissioners and executives, watch this magazine and your e-mail boxes for notices of the unveiling of the nation's first-ever online training for park board members.

Work on phase one of the curriculum developed by IAPD is nearly finished.

Board members who complete this cost-effective and convenient online training curriculum will run effective, efficient meetings that follow parliamentary procedure and comply with state laws pertaining to meetings of public boards. They will understand agency finances. They will know how to hire qualified and competent executives. They will regularly evaluate their agencies and prepare their agencies to be recognized for such honors as the National Gold Medal. When appropriate, they will take leadership roles in working to pass referenda that benefit their agencies and their communities. They will become informed and energized advocates for their agencies with legislators and with the public at large.

Agency board members can complete each online course at their own pace whenever they choose without incurring travel expenses or buying costly printed materials. They may choose to take the entire curriculum or pick topics of interest. Illinois park commissioners and trustees who successfully complete the entire curriculum will be recognized by the IAPD as distinguished board members.

Why not make 2009 the year you commit to online board training courses with IAPD?

Recruiting Future Board Members

Executive directors and commissioners are often approached with questions from potential board members about the qualifications required for board membership and process of being elected or appointed to the board.

In December, IAPD will send to the executive directors of all IAPD member agencies a pamphlet called "So, You Want to Serve on the Park Board" that succinctly describes board members' roles and responsibilities, the characteristics of good board members and the steps a citizen must take to be elected to the park board.

Executive directors and board secretaries should find this to be a useful handout to give to potential candidates.

If you'd like this information sooner, the IAPD would be glad to e-mail you the pamphlet as a PDF file. (And you can also find it on the publications section of our Web site.) Contact IAPD Publications Director Rodd Whelpley at rwhelpley@ILparks.org.

EYE ON THE PROFESSION

A CLOSER LOOK AT TRENDS AND ISSUES IN THE PARK AND RECREATION PROFESSION



William J. M. Wald
IPRA Chief Executive Officer,

Including ALL in Recreation

I have a lot of respect for those who work with individuals with disabilities. Why? Because it takes professionals with patience, dedication and passion to provide necessary services for the disabled community. Through our system of Special Recreation Associations (SRAs), we have changed not only the participants' lives, but also the lives of their families.

The ADA: Required Reading for More Than Just Those in the Therapeutic Recreation Section

The key is: who is responsible for the inclusion of those with disabilities into park and recreation programs? All professionals are responsible. We cannot think that only therapeutic recreation professionals are responsible for understanding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the importance of how inclusion into park and recreation actually enhances the lives of the disabled participants.

Too many times, we look only towards our SRA professionals to handle the issue of inclusion. All park and recreation professionals need to understand the ADA and the basics of inclusion. This body of knowledge will not only enhance your career, it will also assist the inclusion coordinator from an SRA to make the transition for the participant seamless.

Inclusion Means Opportunities for Participants and Providers

When park and recreation professionals are approached to develop an inclusion plan for a participant, it is an opportunity, not a burden. It is an opportunity to further a professional's knowledge base by:

- Learning how to facilitate a positive inclusion experience.
- Learning how best to partner with the SRA to ease the transition.
- Gaining the opportunity to show support to the participant and his or her family.

All professionals can successfully include people with disabilities in community recreation programs. The ultimate goal is that general recreation and therapeutic recreation professionals work together, instead of debating who has the responsibility for facilitating inclusion. Too many times professionals spend time debating the issue instead of solving and implementing a solution for the benefit of the participant. The participant is who we should be focusing on, not the process. With thoughtful cooperation and a true partnership, the outcome can be successful.

All park and recreation professionals need to understand the ADA and the basics of inclusion.



All professionals need to be reminded that those with disabilities strategically placed through an inclusion plan into general recreation programs are there to enjoy the benefits of parks and recreation. These individuals have the same rights to do so as general participants.

A truly positive working relationship between park and recreation colleagues is the least that can be provided for a participant going through the inclusion process. It may be challenging and take additional time and effort, but think about the participants. Put yourself in their shoes for just a moment and consider how this new experience can be quite stressful and unfamiliar for them.

The participant is who we should be focusing on, not the process. With thoughtful cooperation and a true partnership, the outcome can be successful.

COMING TO CONFERENCE

Get Educated About Therapeutic Recreation Issues

All professionals working together, from elected officials to directors to supervisors, should take the opportunity and further their education by attending therapeutic recreation continuing education programs. (This January, check your conference program for 500-level numbered sessions that are followed by the suffix "(TR).") These sessions and programs provide a greater sense of knowledge and networking and will ultimately build a stronger relationship between professionals, which, in turn, will benefit the participant.

In the end, isn't that who park and recreation is about – the participant?

There is a greater demand by families with individuals with disabilities to be included in general recreation programs now more than ever. This should be perceived by professionals as a great new opportunity; a new opportunity to enhance social networking and interaction of all those within a community. This new opportunity will require new directors, superintendents and supervisors to take the important step of furthering their education on the topic of inclusion. This is a professional responsibility. Why? Because recreation is truly for all and it is the professional's responsibility to be trained to include all within the community.

The inclusion process and its responsibilities don't rest squarely on the shoulders of just one professional. A collaborative partnership amongst all professionals is essential to ensure a genuinely inclusive profession and community service that embraces ALL.



Don't Miss the Opening General Session with Sam Glenn

Friday, January 30, 2009
11:15 AM - 12:00 PM
Location: Grand Ballroom

Meet Sam Glenn, The Authority on Attitude™!

It was a little more than a decade ago, when Sam Glenn found himself riddled with a series of failures, broke, depressed and getting by working nights as a janitor. For almost two years, he didn't have a home, so he slept on the borrowed floor space of friends and family.

In 1995, Sam took ownership of a successful company that his grandfather had run for more than 30 years. It seemed like a lucky break, until the warehouse that stored and assembled his products burned to the ground. Just about everything Sam owned went up in flames. No longer able to pay his bills, he took a night job delivering newspapers and eventually as a janitor. Depression seemed to grab the best of Sam, until he made an amazing discovery... a discovery of purpose and passion that has established him as the leading **Authority on Attitude™**.

"One lesson I learned early on is that when you doubt yourself, you defeat yourself. I had failed big and lost everything. When you fail big, you experience fear, indecision and doubt. I was down and out in my attitude. But, one day a friend invited me to a cup of coffee and said to me these unforgettable words, "Sam, you don't have a hard knock life problem, you have an attitude problem."

"He was right. I needed to change my outlook. His words put a huge **Kick in my Attitude!** It got me back on track with my life. We should never underestimate the power and role our attitude plays in our personal and professional life."

Things are much different for Sam today, as you will learn. He is the author of 16 books, has the largest Attitude Networking Group in the world on FaceBook, is the founder of Everything Attitude.com and a national magazine, *Attitude Digest*, which helps keep our attitude strong and effective in work, relationships and life.

You can expect to gain some valuable insights into your attitude and a rekindled enthusiasm for life. Sam will take the subject of "Attitude" and make it slightly more interesting and A.D.D. friendly.

Sam's message, **A Kick in the Attitude**, is based on his best-selling book. It will recharge your batteries, outlook and enthusiasm. This session will offer valuable insights that will get you the results you want personally and professionally. Plus, it also just happens to be down right hilarious!



Peter M. Murphy
IAPD General Counsel

State Parks in Jeopardy

This summer during the month of August, the Illinois General Assembly convened to restore items vetoed by Governor Blagojevich from the fiscal year 2009 budget.

In order to do so, they passed a funding sweeps bill (**Senate Bill 790**). The sweeps remove a total more than \$230 million from dedicated funds and make that money available for other uses. The Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development program (OSLAD) and the Natural Areas Acquisition Fund (NAAF) were not among those funds swept, as members of the Illinois General Assembly understood the critical role these funds play in supporting the protection of open space and the development of recreational opportunities for citizens throughout Illinois.

The fund sweeps legislation supported a restoration of \$2.1 million in funding to ensure that the eleven state park closures threatened by the governor and Illinois Department of Natural Resources would not take place.

The governor signed the sweeps bill on October 7, 2008. But, as of press time, the governor had not acted on an appropriations bill that would place the \$2.1 million into the proper accounts to continue to fund staffing at state parks in order to avoid park closures.

The Organized Drive to Save Our State Parks

Many around the state have stepped up to speak loudly to urge the governor to appropriate the state park funding as the legislature intended. Among them is Lt. Governor Patrick Quinn, who started a petition drive. You can sign the petition and follow the action on this issue by accessing a Web site created by the Lt. governor's staff at: www.saveourstateparks.org.

In addition, concerned citizens throughout the state have stepped forward to create their own petition drives and hold events at state parks bringing attention to this important issue. One such event, called Pack Our Parks, took place on Saturday, November 2. This grass roots effort has garnered support from the citizens across state as well as the attention of media.

It is clear that the Illinois General Assembly understands the importance of funding parks and recreation. What is not clear is the administration's commitment to do the same.

I encourage all of you to join the petition drive, to participate at important events such as Pack Our Parks and to let the governor know how important funding for state parks is for your constituents.

Veto Session

Since the Illinois General Assembly addressed most of the pending veto session business in the summer, it has cancelled the first week of the fall veto session and will now meet only on November 19, 20 and 21.

Election Calendar

You'll notice that this issue of *Illinois Parks & Recreation* magazine contains a full Election Calendar for both the Consolidated Primary Election to take place on February 24, 2009 and the Consolidated Election to take place on April 7, 2009 (see pages 12-19). The January issue will feature an analysis of all referenda proposed by park districts, forest preserves and local communities in support of funding parks and recreation and the creation of new park

The Illinois General Assembly understands the critical role OSLAD and NAAF funds play in supporting the protection of open space and the development of recreational opportunities for citizens throughout Illinois.



districts and forest preserves to serve Illinois' citizens. These issues appeared on the November 4 ballot.

Follow the Action and Find Out More

For more information on legislative issues, please do not hesitate to contact me at 217/523-4554 or go to the IAPD Web site at www.ILparks.org to view the latest action under the Public Policy section.

I encourage all of you to let the governor know how important funding for state parks is for your constituents.

Types of Actions Governor Can Take on Bills

The Illinois Constitution allows the governor to make any of four kinds of vetoes: total, amendatory, item or reduction. The following describes each kind of veto and legislative responses to it.

Total Veto

The governor may reject an entire bill and return it to its house of origin.

Overriding a total veto requires the affirmative votes of at least three-fifths of the members elected to each house (71 in the House, 36 in the Senate).

Unless a total veto is overridden, the bill dies.

Amendatory Veto

The governor can return a bill "with specific recommendations for change" to its house of origin.

Such an amendatorily vetoed bill is considered like a vetoed bill, except that each house can accept the governor's recommendations by vote of a mere constitutional majority (60 in the House and 30 in the Senate). Thus, if a bill is amendatorily vetoed, the General Assembly can do any of three things to it: (1) Override the veto by three-fifths vote in each house, enacting the bill as it originally passed the General Assembly; (2) Accept the governor's recommendations and return the bill to the governor for his certification that the acceptance conforms to his recommendations; (3) Do neither, in which case, the bill dies.

Item and Reduction Vetoes

The governor can cut line items and/or reduce the amount of any line item in an appropriation bill without vetoing the entire bill. The amounts not eliminated or reduced become law immediately when the governor transmits his veto message.

But the majorities needed to restore those amounts differ. If a line item is vetoed, then a three-fifths majority in each house is needed to restore it. If the item is merely reduced, then it can be restored to its original amount by a simple constitutional majority in each house

IAPD Thanks Symposium Sponsor



IAPD thanks **Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.** for sponsoring the IAPD Legal Symposium on November 6 at McDonald's Hamburger University in Oak Brook. The company has four offices in Illinois, in Rosemont, St. Charles, New Lenox and Peoria.

Topics on the symposium's agenda included a recap of recent court decisions affecting park and recreation agencies, financing for SRAs, post issuance procedures associated with tax-exempt bonds, a review of recent relevant tort liability cases and briefings on new legislation affecting agencies.

Sign up on line at www.Ilparks.org





2009 election calendar

Prepared by Peter M. Murphy, IAPD General Counsel

For purposes of this calendar, “election authority” means the County Clerk, the Municipal Board of Election Commissioners or the County Board of Election Commissioners. “Local election official” means the clerk or secretary of a unit of local government or a school district. “Business day” means any day in which the office of an election authority, local election official or the State Board of Elections is open to the public for a minimum of seven hours. (10 ILCS 5/1-3)

All citations contained herein are “Illinois Compiled Statutes, 2007,” as amended.

FILING AND REGISTRATION DATES

(a) If the first or last day fixed by law to do any act required or allowed by the Election Code falls on a state holiday or a Saturday or a Sunday, the period shall extend through the first business day next following the day otherwise fixed as the last day for filing or the close of registration, irrespective of whether any election authority or local election official conducts business on the state holiday, Saturday, or Sunday.

(b) For the section of the Election Code upon which this calendar is based, “state holiday” means New Year’s Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s Birthday, Lincoln’s Birthday, President’s Day, Casimer Pulaski’s Birthday, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans’ Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and any other day from time to time declared by the President of the United States or the Governor of Illinois to be a day during which the agencies of the State of Illinois that are ordinarily open to do business with the public shall be closed for business (10 ILCS 5/1-6; Public Act 90-672).

2009

**Key dates associated with the
CONSOLIDATED PRIMARY
ELECTION
Tuesday, February 24, 2009**

2008

Thursday, OCTOBER 9

First day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision whose officers are to be elected, rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or, if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g)).

Monday, NOVEMBER 10

Last day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision whose officers are to be elected, rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or, if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g)).

Monday, NOVEMBER 10

Last day to file petition (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) to create a political subdivision with the appropriate circuit court clerk (10 ILCS 5/28-2(b)).

NOTE: Objections can be filed on or before the date of the hearing with the appropriate circuit court clerk (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

NOTE: If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nomination papers 78-71 days before such election (December 8-15, 2008) (10 ILCS 5/10-6).

NOTE: The circuit court clerk shall publish the hearing date for a public policy petition filed in his/her office not later than 14 days after the petition is actually filed, but at least 5 days before actual hearing (final orders within 7 days of hearing) (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 18

Last day to file objections to petitions to create a political subdivision in the office of the circuit court or other appropriate office where the petitions were originally filed (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

Monday, DECEMBER 8

Last day for filing of petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local). [EXCEPTION: proposition to create a political subdivision or referenda initiated under the Liquor Control Act (10 ILCS 5/28-2, 28-6, 28-7)]

NOTE: Petitions to initiate backdoor referenda must be filed under the deadline specified in the specific statute authorizing the referenda, but in no case later than 78 days prior to the ensuing election.

Monday, DECEMBER 15

Last day to file objections to petitions for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local). [EXCEPTION: proposition to create a political subdivision (10 ILCS 5/10-8,28-4)]

Monday, DECEMBER 22

Last day for local governing boards to adopt a resolution or ordinance to allow a binding public question to appear on the ballot. [EXCEPTION: County, municipal, township and park district boards may place advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c); 60 ILCS 1/80-80)]

Monday, DECEMBER 22

Last day for County, Municipal, Township and Park Boards to authorize the placement of advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution. (55 ILCS 5/5-1105.5; 60 ILCS 1/80-80; 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-60; 70 ILCS 1205/8-30)

Friday, DECEMBER 26

Last day for the circuit court clerk and the local election official to certify any binding question or advisory referenda to the election authority having jurisdiction over the political subdivision (10 ILCS 5/28-5).

2009

Friday, JANUARY 2

First day for citizens of the United States temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States who are not registered but otherwise qualified to vote and who expect to be absent from their county of residence on election day to make simultaneous application to the election authority having jurisdiction over their precinct of residence for absentee registrations and absentee ballots (10 ILCS 5/20-2.1/20-3).

Thursday, JANUARY 15

First day for any registered voter presently within the confines of the United States who expects to be absent from his/her county of residence on election day to make application by mail or in person to the election authority for an official ballot. (10 ILCS 5/19-2)

NOTE: Certain situations other than absence from county of residence also permit voters to apply for an absentee ballot (10 ILCS 5/19-3).

**Thursday,
JANUARY 15**

Last day for organizations of citizens that have as a stated purpose the investigation or prosecution of election fraud and proposition proponents or opponents to register their names and addresses of their principal officers with the proper election authority if the organization wants to qualify to have poll watchers at the consolidated primary election. (10 ILCS 5/7-34).

**Monday,
JANUARY 26**

First day for the election authority to publish notice of a question of public policy appearing on the ballot at the Consolidated Primary. Such notice shall be published once in a local community newspaper having general circulation in the political or governmental subdivision. The notice shall also be given at least ten (10) days before the date of the election by posting a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political or governmental subdivision, or if there is no principal office at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referendum is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

**Monday,
JANUARY 26**

Last day for citizens of the United States temporarily residing outside the United States who are not registered but otherwise qualified to vote and who expect to be absent from their county of residence on election day to make simultaneous application to the election authority having jurisdiction over their precinct of residence for absentee registrations and absentee ballots and the last day for the election authority to mail such ballots (10 ILCS 5/20-2.1,20-3).

**Wednesday,
JANUARY 28**

The election authority shall post a schedule for early voting at each location where early voting will be conducted. Such posting shall remain at each site until the last day of the early voting period (February 19, 2009) If the election authority has a website, they shall make the schedule available on the website. (10 ILCS 5/19A-25).

**Sunday,
FEBRUARY 1**

First day for election authority to supply absentee materials to local election officials (qualified municipal, township and road district clerks) who conduct in-person absentee voting (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

First day for local election officials (qualified municipal, township and road district clerks) to conduct in-person absentee voting (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

First day for early voting at the office of the election authority and locations designated by the election authority (10 ILCS 5/19A-15).

**Wednesday,
FEBRUARY 4**

Last day for employee to give employer written notice that he or she will be absent from the place of employment on election day because he or she has been appointed as an election judge under the provisions of 10 ILCS 5/13-1 or 13-2 (10 ILCS 5/13-2.5, 14-4.5).

**Tuesday,
FEBRUARY 17**

Last day for the election authority to publish notice of a question of public policy appearing on the ballot at the primary. Such notice shall be published once in a local

community newspaper having general circulation in the political or governmental subdivision. The notice shall also be given at least ten (10) days before the date of the election by posting a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political or governmental subdivision, or if there is no principal office at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referendum is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

**Tuesday,
FEBRUARY 17**

Last day for any voter who is a member of the United States Service and for his/her spouse and dependents of voting age who expect to be absent from the county of residence on election day to make application for an official ballot (may make application via facsimile machine or other method of electronic transmission) to the election authority having jurisdiction over their precinct residence; and the last day for the election authority to mail such ballot (10 ILCS 5/20-2, 20-2.3, 20-3).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 19**

Last day for election authority to receive application by mail from any registered voter presently within the confines of the United States who expects to be absent from his county of residence on election day; and the last day for the election authority to mail such ballot (10 ILCS 5/19-2).

NOTE: Certain situations other than absence from county of residence also permit voters to apply for an absentee ballot (10 ILCS 5/19-2).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 19**

Last day for local election officials to publish specimen ballot (10 ILCS 5/7-21).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 23**

Last day for any registered voter presently within the United States, who expects to be absent from his county of residence on election day, to make application in person to the election authority, or municipal, township or road district clerk who is authorized to conduct absentee voting (10 ILCS 5/19-2).

**TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 24, 2009
CONSOLIDATED PRIMARY
ELECTION**

**Tuesday,
FEBRUARY 24**

Date when authorized local election officials who have not delivered in-person absentee ballots to the election authority shall deliver in-person absentee ballots to the election authority's central ballot counting location before the polls close. All unused in-person absentee voting supplies are to be returned to the office of the election authority (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Tuesday,
MARCH 10**

Deadline for the county clerk or board of election commissioners to complete the validation and counting of provisional ballots [10 ILCS 5/ 18A-15(a)].

**Tuesday,
MARCH 10**

Deadline for the county clerk or board of election commissioners to complete the tabulation of absentee ballots that were (1) postmarked by the midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, and (2) received after the close of the polls on election day but not later than 14 days after the election (10 ILCS 5/19-8).

**Tuesday,
MARCH 17**

Last day for canvassing election results by local canvassing board (10 ILCS 5/7-56(8), 22-1 7(c)).

NOTE: The county clerk and board of election commissioners have the responsibility of canvassing the returns of the Consolidated Primary Election under their jurisdiction (10 ILCS 5/1 -8, 7-56, 22-1 7).

NOTE: Within 48 hours of conducting the canvass as required by the Election Code, the election authority shall deliver an original certificate of results to each local election official (10 ILCS 5/7-56).

NOTE: If the election authority canvasses the results of a public question submitted to referendum pursuant to a court order, the election authority shall immediately transmit a signed copy or an original duplicate of its completed abstract of the votes to the court which ordered the referendum (10 ILCS 5/22-18).

**Tuesday,
MARCH 17**

The last day the election authority shall transmit to the State Board of Elections the following: (1) The number, by precinct, of absentee ballots requested, provided and counted; (2) The number of rejected absentee ballots, and; (3) The number of voters seeking review of rejected absentee ballots (10 ILCS 5/ 19-20,20-20).

**Key dates associated with the
CONSOLIDATED ELECTION
Tuesday, April 7, 2009**

2008

**Tuesday,
OCTOBER 28**

First day to circulate nomination papers (must be original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for nonpartisan candidates for township and municipal library boards, library district boards, park district boards, school boards and forest preserve district boards who file January 19-26, 2009 (10 ILCS 5/10-4, 10-6).

**Thursday,
NOVEMBER 20**

First day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision whose officers are to be elected, rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or, if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g)).

**Monday,
DECEMBER 22**

Last day notice of intention to file a petition to create a political subdivision whose officers are to be elected, rather than appointed, may be published in a newspaper within the proposed political subdivision, or, if none, in a newspaper of general circulation within the proposed territory (10 ILCS 5/28-2(g)).

**Monday,
DECEMBER 22**

Last day to file petition (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) to create a political subdivision with the appropriate circuit court clerk (10 ILCS 5/28-2(b)).

NOTE: Objections can be filed on or before the date of the hearing with the appropriate circuit court clerk (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

NOTE: If initial officers are to be elected at the election for creation of a new unit of government, candidates for such offices shall file nominating papers 78-71 days before such election (January 19-26, 2009) [10 ILCS 5/10-6].

NOTE: The circuit court clerk shall publish the hearing date for a public policy petition filed in his/her office not later than 14 days after the petition is actually filed, but at least 5 days before actual hearing (final orders within 7 days of hearing).

NOTE: See the specific statute governing the unit of local government to be established for filing procedures (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

**Tuesday,
DECEMBER 30**

Last day to file objection to petition to create a political subdivision with the appropriate officer or board where the petitions were originally filed (10 ILCS 5/28-4).

2009

**Friday,
JANUARY 2**

First day for citizens of the United States temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States who are not registered but otherwise qualified to vote and who expect to be absent from their county of residence on election day to make simultaneous application to the election authority having jurisdiction over their precinct of residence for absentee registrations and absentee ballots (10 ILCS 5/20-2.3, 20-3).

**Monday,
JANUARY 19**

First day for filing in office of the local election official or board of election commissioners original nominating petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for nonpartisan candidates in park districts and forest preserves. (10 ILCS 5/10-6(2); 10-6(6)).

NOTE: Filing is between 78-71 days prior to the Consolidated Election. January 19, 2009 is the 78th day prior to that election and is the first day of filing in those offices which are open. Those offices that are closed in observance of Martin Luther King's birthday will begin accepting nominating petitions on January 20, 2009. Regardless of whether the office is open on January 19, the last day to file is January 26, 2009.

**Tuesday,
JANUARY 20**

Last day for filing petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy (local). [EXCEPTION: proposition to create a political subdivision. (10 ILCS 5/28-2, 28-6, 28-7)]

NOTE: Petitions to initiate backdoor referenda must be filed under the deadline specified in the specific statute authorizing the referenda, but in no case later than 78 days prior to the ensuing election.

**Monday,
JANUARY 26**

Last day for filing in the office of the local election official or board of election commissioners original nominating petitions (must contain original sheets signed by voters and circulators) for nonpartisan candidates for township and municipal library boards, road district boards, library district boards, park district boards, school

boards, community college boards, regional boards of school trustees, fire protection district boards and forest preserve district boards (10 ILCS 5/10-6(2), 10-6(6)).

**Monday,
JANUARY 26**

Last day for filing a Statement of Economic Interests with the county clerk as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. The receipt must be filed with the local election official or election authority that received the nomination papers (5 ILCS 420/4A-105; 10 ILCS 5/10-5).

**Tuesday,
JANUARY 27**

Last day to file objections to petitions for referenda for the submission of questions of public policy. [EXCEPTION: proposition to create a political subdivision and referenda initiated under the Liquor Control Act (10 ILCS 5/10-8, 28-4)]

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

Last day for local governing boards to adopt a resolution or ordinance to allow a binding public question to appear on the ballot (10 ILCS 5/28-2(c); 60 ILCS 1/80-80).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

Last day for county, municipal, township and park boards to place advisory referenda on the ballot by resolution {55 ILCS 5/5-1005.5; 60 ILCS 1/80-80; 65 ILCS 5/3.1-40-60; 70 ILCS 1205/8-30}.

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

Last day for an individual who has filed for two or more incompatible offices to withdraw from all but one of the offices with the local election official or election authority (10 ILCS 5/10-7).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 2**

Last day for filing objections to nomination petitions of new political party, nonpartisan and independent candidates and certificates of nomination for established party caucus candidates in the office of the local election official or election authority (10 ILCS 5/1 0-8).

**Wednesday,
FEBRUARY 4**

Last day lottery shall be conducted by the State Board of Elections, the election authority, local election official or board of election commissioners when two or more petitions are received simultaneously for the same office by more than one independent candidate or more than one new political party candidate or by more than one nonpartisan candidate as of the opening hour of the filing period (10 ILCS 5/10-6.2).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 5**

Last day candidate may file Withdrawal of Candidacy in the office of the local election official or election authority (excluding aldermanic candidates for the City of Chicago) (10 ILCS 5/10-7, 65 ILCS 20/21-29).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 5**

Last day for the circuit court clerk and the local election official to certify any binding public question or advisory referenda to the election authority having jurisdiction over the political subdivision (10 ILCS 5/28-5).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 5**

Last day for local election official to certify offices and the names of candidates to appear on the consolidated election ballot to the election authority (10 ILCS 5/10-15).

**Monday,
FEBRUARY 23**

Last day for the election authority to have a sufficient number of ballots printed and available at the authority's office for mailing to persons in the United States Service or their spouses and dependents and to citizens temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States (10 ILCS 5/16-5.01).

**Thursday,
FEBRUARY 26**

Last day for organizations of citizens (which have as a stated purpose the investigation and prosecution of election fraud) and proposition proponents and opponents to register their names and addresses and the names and addresses of their principal officers with the proper election authority if the organization wants to qualify to have poll watchers at the consolidated election (10 ILCS 5/1 7-23, 18-6).

**Monday,
MARCH 9**

First day for election authority to publish notice of the Consolidated Election. The notice must include the polling hours, and the offices for which candidates will be elected to. Such notice must also include a list precinct polling addresses unless published separately at least ten (10) days prior to the Consolidated Election. Such notice of the Consolidated Election shall be published once in one or more newspapers published in each political subdivision, and if there is no such newspaper, then published once in a local community newspaper having general circulation in the subdivision, and also once in a newspaper published in the county wherein the political subdivisions, or portions thereof, having such elections are situated. (10 ILCS 5/12-4, 2-5).

**Monday,
MARCH 9**

First day for the election authority to publish notice of a question of public policy appearing on the ballot at the Consolidated Election. Such notice shall be published once in a local community newspaper having general circulation in the political or governmental subdivision. The notice shall also be given at least ten (10) days before the date of election by posting a copy of the notice at the principal office of the election authority. The local election official shall also post a copy of the notice at the principal office of the political or governmental subdivision, or if there is no principal office at the building in which the governing body of the political or governmental subdivision held its first meeting of the calendar year in which the referendum is being held. (10 ILCS 5/12-5)

**Monday,
MARCH 9**

Last day for citizens of the United States temporarily residing outside the United States who are not registered but otherwise qualified to vote and who expect to be absent from their county of residence on election day to make simultaneous application to the election authority having jurisdiction over their precinct of residence for absentee registrations and absentee ballots; and the last day for the election authority to mail such ballots (10 ILCS 5/20-2.1,20-3).

**Wednesday,
MARCH 11**

First day for election authority to post a schedule for early voting at each location where early voting will be conducted. Posting shall remain at each site until the last day of the early voting period (April 2, 2009) (10 ILCS 5/19A-25).

**Sunday,
MARCH 15**

First day for election authority to supply absentee materials to local election officials (qualified municipal, township and road district clerks) who conduct in-person absentee voting (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Monday,
MARCH 16**

First day for early voting at the office of the election authority and locations designated by the election authority (10 ILCS 5/1 9A-15).

**Monday,
MARCH 16**

First day for local election officials (qualified municipal, township and road district clerks) to conduct in-person absentee voting (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Monday,
MARCH 30**

Last day for election authority to publish notice of the Consolidated Election. The notice must include the polling hours and the offices for which candidates will be elected to. Such notice must also include a list precinct polling addresses unless published separately at least ten (10) days prior to the Consolidated Election. Such notice of the Consolidated Election shall be published once in one or more newspapers published in each political subdivision, and if there is no such newspaper, then published once in a local community newspaper having general circulation in the subdivision, and also once in a newspaper published in the county wherein the political subdivisions, or portions thereof, having such elections are situated. (10 ILCS 5/12-4, 2-5).

**Thursday,
APRIL 2**

Last day for election authority to receive application by mail from any registered voter presently within the

confines of the United States who expects to be absent from his/her county of residence on election day; and the last day for the election authority to mail such ballot (10 ILCS 5/1 9-2, 19-4).

NOTE: Certain situations other than absence from county of residence also permit voters to apply for an absentee ballot (10 ILCS 5/1 9-3).

**Thursday,
APRIL 2**

Last day for early voting at the office of the election authority and locations designated by the election authority (10 ILCS 5/19A-15, 19A-20).

**Friday,
APRIL 3**

Last day for election authority to have official ballots available for inspection by candidates or their agents (10 ILCS 5/1 6-5).

**Monday,
APRIL 6**

Last day for election authority in counties having a population under 500,000 to publish a list of all the nominations that are to be voted for at the consolidated election (10 ILCS 5/16-10).

**TUESDAY
APRIL 7, 2009
CONSOLIDATED ELECTION**

**Tuesday,
APRIL 7**

Last day for authorized local election officials to deliver in person absentee ballots to the election authority's central ballot counting location before the polls close. All unused in-person absentee voting supplies are to be returned to the office of the election authority (10 ILCS 5/19-2.1).

**Tuesday,
APRIL 21**

Deadline for the county clerk or board of election commissioners to complete the validation and counting of provisional ballots [10 ILCS 5/1 8A-15(a)].

**Tuesday,
APRIL 21**

Deadline for the county clerk or board of election commissioners to complete the tabulation of absentee ballots that were (1) postmarked by the midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, and (2) received after the close of the polls on election day but no later than 14 days after the election (10 ILCS 5/19-8).

**Tuesday,
APRIL 28**

Last day for canvassing of election results by the county clerk or board of election commissioners (10 ILCS 5/22-17).

**Tuesday,
APRIL 28**

The last day the election authority shall transmit to the State Board of Elections the following: (1) the number, by precinct, of absentee ballots requested, provided and counted, (2) the number of rejected absentee ballots, and (3) the number of voters seeking review of rejected absentee ballots (10 ILCS 5/ 19-20).

Before Proclamation by the Election Authority

In those jurisdictions where in-precinct counting equipment is used, the election authority shall re-tabulate the total number of votes cast in 5 percent of the precincts within the election jurisdiction prior to the canvass. In jurisdictions that employ direct recording devices, 5 percent of the precincts must be tabulated prior to the canvass (10 ILCS 5/24A-15, 24B-15, 24C-15).

Abstract of Votes

The county clerk and board of election commissioners have the responsibility of canvassing the returns of the Consolidated Election under their jurisdiction (10 ILCS 5/22-18).

If the election authority canvasses the results of a public question submitted to referendum pursuant to a court order, the election authority shall immediately transmit a signed copy or an original duplicate of its completed abstract of the votes to the court which ordered the referendum (10 ILCS 5/22-18).

After Proclamation Certificate of Election

The election authority shall issue a certificate of election to each person declared elected to an office by such local canvassing board (10 ILCS 5/22-18). For political subdivisions that are multi-county, the election authority of the county where the principal office of the political subdivision is located shall make the certificate of election (10 ILCS 5/22-18).

Discovery Recount

Within five (5) days after the last day for the proclamation of the results of the canvass, petitions for discovery recount may be filed by any candidate who came within 5% of the winning candidate. Such petition is filed with the appropriate election authority. (10 ILCS 5/22-9.1)



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g. Copies not Distributed (See instructions to Publishers at page 60)		208	216
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 If the publication is general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the Nov/Dec 2008 issue of this publication. Publication not required.
 15. Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner: _____ Date: 8/15/2008
 I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions.
 PS Form 3826, September 2007 (Page 2 of 4)

I A P D O N C E A G A I N H O N O R S

Best

the best of the



IAPD Chairman Mike Krost of the Chillicothe Park District (right) and IAPD President and CEO Dr. Ted Flickinger (left) served as masters of ceremonies for the IAPD 2008 Best of the Best Awards Gala at Wheeling Park District's Traditions at Chevy Chase Country Club on September 12.



Wheeling Park District Board President Tom Webber officially welcomes the evening's 300 guests to Traditions at Chevy Chase.

On September 12, IAPD President and CEO Ted Flickinger and IAPD Chairman Mike Krost passed out more than 40 awards to honor the best volunteers, businesses, partners and media outlets in the state for their special contributions to, and coverage of, park districts, forest preserves, recreation and special recreation agencies.

The occasion was the second annual IAPD Best of the Best Awards Gala, held this year at the Wheeling Park District's Traditions at Chevy Chase Country Club. The black tie optional banquet, awards ceremony, dance and silent auction drew more than 300 attendees. The event was also a celebration of the Illinois Association of Park Districts' 80th anniversary.

On the evening, IAPD bestowed awards honoring such achievements as longtime board service; agency anniversaries; outstanding media coverage; exemplary service to park, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies; effective partnerships and intergovernmental agreements; volunteerism; and good sportsmanship.

The Best of the Best 2008

Board Member Service Anniversary Awards

10 Years of Service

Rhonda Browne, Hazel Crest Park District
Mark Kiel, Dolton Park District
Donna King, Foss Park District
Barbara Wojnicki, Forest Preserve District of Kane County

15 Years of Service

Kathleen Hogan, Lombard Park District
Jack Kenny, Decatur Park District
Cheri Klumpp, Wheeling Park District
Penelope J. Randel, Northbrook Park District
Joseph A. Welkomer, Addison Park District

20 Years of Service

James Shook, Round Lake Area Park District
Martha B. Weiss, Buffalo Grove Park District

25 Years of Service

Sandra Smith, Westmont Park District

30 Years of Service

Diane Main, Westmont Park District

35 Years of Service

Robert Bernas, Westmont Park District
David A. Johnson, Schaumburg Park District



Schaumburg Park District Commissioner David Johnson celebrates 35 years in office.

Agency Anniversary Awards

40 Years

Addison Park District

50 Years

Lake County Forest Preserve District
Rolling Meadows Park District

80 Years

Skokie Park District

100 Years

Foss Park District
Wilmette Park District

Lifetime Appreciation Award

Robert Stuart, Jr.,
National Recreation Foundation

Lifetime Appreciation Award – Business

Ancel, Glink, Diamond, Bush, DiCianni & Krafthefer, P.C., Park District Attorneys



Robert Stuart, Jr., of the National Recreation Foundation accepts recognition for his lifetime of support for the field of parks and recreation.



Rob Bush accepts a Lifetime Appreciation – Business award on behalf of Ancel, Glink, Diamond, Bush, DiCianni & Krafthefer, P.C. The law firm represents more than 25 park districts in Illinois and has contributed to the legal education of commissioners across the state by offering seminars and publishing books on park district law.



Illinois Parks Top Journalist Awards

Mark Tupper, executive sports editor for the *Decatur Herald & Review*, nominated by the **Decatur Park District**

Clare Howard, Peoria journalist, nominated by the Peoria Park District and the Forest Park Nature Center



W-T Engineering President and Hoffman Estates Commissioner Scott Triphahn accepts the 2008 Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Business award. W-T has donated in-kind engineering and land surveying services in excess of \$50,000 to the Hoffman Estates Park District for facility renovations, athletic field lighting and new park developments. Company employees serve on the park district's building and grounds committee, and they volunteer at park outings and special events.



Clare Howard was named an Illinois Top Journalist for 2008.

Best Friend of Illinois Parks - Business

1st Place

W-T Engineering, Inc., nominated by the **Hoffman Estates Park District**

2nd Place

Kids Around the World, nominated by the **Rockford Park District**

3rd Place

Abbey Paving of Aurora, nominated by the **Lemont Park District**

Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Corporation

1st Place

Archer Daniels Midland Company, nominated by the **Decatur Park District**



ADM employee and Decatur Park District Commissioner Chris Riley accepts the Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Corporation award. ADM has supported Decatur arts programming for more than 25 years. The company and the district recently entered into a cooperative land exchange agreement that helped finance district-wide renovations and provided land and capital for a new golf course.





2008 Good Sportsmanship Award Winner Charlie Essig (center) with his wife and twin sons accept congratulations from Ted Flickinger (far left) and Mike Krost (far right). Essig has not missed a game as coach and secretary for the Aurora Boys Baseball League in 32 years.



Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Governmental

1st Place

Naomi Jakobsson, nominated by the **Urbana Park District**

2nd Place

Valerie Blaine, nominated by the **Forest Preserve District of Kane County**

Intergovernmental Cooperation Award

1st Place

Oswegoland Park District with the **Oswego Community Unit School District 308**

2nd Place

Barrington Park District with the **Lake County Forest Preserve District**

3rd Place (tie)

Forest Preserve District of Will County with the **City of Joliet**

and

Wheeling Park District with the **Community Consolidated School District #21**

Partnership Award

1st Place

Naperville Park District with the **Millennium Carillon Foundation**

2nd Place

Oak Lawn Park District with the **Oak Lawn Parks Foundation**

3rd Place

Rockford Park District with the **Rockford Park District Foundation**

IAPD Good Sportsmanship Award

1st Place

Charlie Essig, nominated by the **Fox Valley Park District**

2nd Place

Robert Biehl, nominated by the **Urbana Park District**

3rd Place

Scott Radke, nominated by the **Geneva Park District**

Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year

1st Place

Butch Elzea, nominated by the **Springfield Park District**

2nd Place

Dennis Garkey, nominated by the **Freeport Park District**

3rd Place

Mark Rivecco, nominated by the **Forest Preserve District of Kane County**



Butch Elzea has spearheaded the effort to build a fully accessible park in Springfield, raising more than \$1.5 million.



THE BEST OF THE

Best

AWARDS GALA



Remember the Evening, or See What you Missed: Best of the Best DVDs Available

More than 300 people attended the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Best of the Best Awards Gala for an evening of inspiration and celebration.

DVDs of the entire awards show, including the short films "Simply the Best" and the "IAPD 80th Anniversary" that were shown at the gala are available at \$25 each.

E-mail IAPD Public Relations Director Bobbie Jo Hill at bjhill@ILparks.org to order your copy.

Save the Date – Friday, September 11

The third Best of the Best Awards Gala is tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 11, 2009 at the Wheeling Park District's Traditions at Chevy Chase Country Club. Please watch *Illinois Parks & Recreation* and other IAPD communications for details on nominating and reserving tables for this event.

It's never too early to start thinking about your nominations for next year's Best of the Best Awards Gala.

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What's next for this group of adolescents who are "Rec-Less?"

rec-less

addressing the lack of appropriate and meaningful
recreation opportunities for children with mental illness

by Jeena Greenwalt, CPRP, and Amy Starin, Ph.D., LCSW

Where can children with a mental illness play, make friends and feel like they belong? Is it in a residential treatment center, a mental health day program, a park district or village recreation program, or is it in special recreation programs?

This pocket of youths with mental health issues is a growing and challenging population living among us, but their quality of life is being diminished due to lack of appropriate community recreation opportunities. In a sense, they are “rec-less” because limited programs are available to this underserved group, and the children are not able to access community resources independently.

The President’s New Freedom Commission estimates that at any point in time, one in five youths has a diagnosable mental health problem. Often these problems interfere with these young peoples’ abilities to participate successfully in regular community recreation programs due to the lack of necessary skills to develop friendships with peers, to pay attention to instruction, to control impulses as they wait their turn to talk or play, to manage their anxiety about trying something new, to acclimate to new experiences, or to speak up about their needs.

The Disappointment of Exclusion

In spite of these limitations, these children have the same desires to interact with peers and enjoy recreation activities that all human beings experience. Many youths with more severe difficulties have attempted to participate in typical recreation programs and have been expelled. This devastating emotional experience makes them reluctant to try additional activities. One parent from Chicago tells her daughter’s story from a mother’s perspective:

Katie was in a residential treatment facility for three years to help her through the anxiety and challenges relating to bipolar disorder. She was home on weekends and holiday breaks, but had a difficult time finding friends. She wanted to learn how to ice skate a few years ago, and I signed her up at the park district. I remember Katie coming out of class telling me how much fun she had. Then the instructor and head of the program stopped me and told me that Katie’s behavior was terrible and that she may be kicked out of the program. Katie was devastated and cried all the way home. Why couldn’t there be a special needs class where the instructors are trained in working with kids like Katie? I want activities where my daughter can make friends and have fun.

Creating Programming for Children with Mental Illnesses

Although there are more than 10,000 children similar to Katie living with a mental illness in Illinois, it was the voice of one parent who spoke loudly and clearly about the need for recreation programs that initiated an effort to accommodate this population.

Ray Connor of Barrington is the father of two teenagers with bipolar disorder. He approached Shelley Zuniga and Brian Shahinian of Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA), who, in turn, relayed the message to the Youth at Risk Committee of the Illinois Therapeutic Recreation Section of IPRA. The committee worked diligently to create Adventure, ETC (Empowerment Through Challenge). This program provides a much needed service to what was a “rec-less” group of adolescents.

The Illinois Division of Mental Health has a program for youths with the most severe forms of mental illness, called the Individual Care Grant (ICG) program. There are approximately 500 children in Illinois with ICG grants. Parents of these youths make the decision regarding placing them in residential treatment or using resources available through the ICG program to provide additional community supports to help them continue to reside at home.

Parents of some of the ICG recipients formed a support group and began meeting bimonthly at the Oak Park Library. This became the initial target group for the Adventure, ETC. program. Twelve special recreation associations in northern Illinois joined forces with the parent support group, the Illinois Division of Mental Health and 24 local Screening Assessment and Support Service (SASS) agencies to provide a community-based recreation program for children who receive ICGs through the Illinois Department of Human Services. The participants are referred from local SASS agencies, and funds from the ICG pay for the program as part of their treatment.

When the Adventure, ETC program was developed, the Chicago Park District was not one of the participating agencies; however, Chicago residents were allowed to attend the program. Due to liability and philosophical issues, the future of the program was being threatened due to the lack of involvement with the Chicago Park District and some other non-participating SRAs. However, the issues were discussed, resolved and the program stands strong on a foundation of 13 SRAs and the Chicago Park District.



Katie (left) works with one of her new friends to overcome group and individual challenges at Sunrise Outdoor Education Center in Bartlett, during a program hosted by Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association (NEDSRA).



Stephanie from SSSRA enjoys an afternoon of kayaking hosted by NEDSRA.

To date, more than 30 adolescents have had the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities including kayaking, rock climbing, hiking and camping. Some of the diagnoses include bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, oppositional defiant disorder, intermittent explosive disorder, reactive attachment disorder and psychosis. These clinical terms do not accurately convey the emotional and behavioral issues that these children and their families live with on a daily basis. They suffer from low self-esteem, depression, panic attacks, paranoia and much more.

How Adventure ETC Works

In order to accommodate the diverse needs of this population, the program format, staffing and referral information are critical components. The program is coordinated by the ITRS Youth at Risk Committee chair, who serves a two-year term. Due to the cooperative nature of the program, a “host” schedule was developed, giving each participating agency the responsibility of planning and implementing a series of three activities over a six-month time period. These activities are adventure-based and are determined with input from the Youth at Risk Committee; Adventure, ETC staff; participants; and parents. The program takes place at various community locations in the Chicagoland area on the first Saturday of even-numbered months in conjunction with an ICG parent meeting at the Oak Park Library. During the five hour program, the parents meet to discuss various topics and transition plans, and then have a few hours of respite before their children return from the recreation activity.

Participants are referred to this program through their local Screening, Assessment and Support Services (SASS). Referral packets are distributed to 24 local SASS agencies every six months. The caseworkers determine which children would be appropriate and work closely with the families to complete the necessary paperwork. During the referral process, each ICG coordinator completes a detailed assessment form outlining clinical and behavioral treatment history, and the parents complete the registration forms and a Leisure Participation Assessment for their child. All of this information is distributed to the host agency and program staff so they have an accurate profile on paper and can be as prepared as possible for any concerning behaviors that may surface during the program.

The Adventure, ETC program is staffed by two consistent staff who have supportive experience and education in therapeutic recreation. The “host” special recreation association provides a lead staff person who is responsible for planning the three assigned activities. If additional staff is needed to maintain a 1:3 staff to participant ratio, the host agency will secure additional qualified staff. The staff for this program have an educational background in therapeutic recreation, as well as hands-on experience working with children who have disabilities. The ITRS Youth at Risk Committee has sponsored various workshops and training sessions to better equip the program staff on behavior management, identifying triggers and de-escalation techniques. If a child is referred to a program who has a therapeutic stabilization specialist, this representative from the SASS agency is asked to attend and assist as well.

The program related expenses are covered by a \$100 program fee for each participant. They register for a six-month membership, and the fees are covered by their Individual Care Grant or SASS flex funds. Participants can choose one or all of the activities depending on their schedules or current state of mental health, and the SASS agencies are billed accordingly for reimbursement from state funding.

Recreation Programming to Promote Recovery

Mental health services historically have focused on identifying and ameliorating problems. The treatments and therapies attempt to reduce depression, anxiety, aggression and impulsivity. Most treatments are successful in meeting these goals and have made significant contributions to a youth’s general ability to function in the world.

But mental health care currently is going beyond this focus on problem reduction, and providers and practitioners are recognizing that there is a need to focus on the recovery and development of resiliency for these children. The President’s New Freedom Commission defines the concept of recovery, as related to mental health, as “the process in which people are able to live, work, learn, and participate fully in their communities.”

This certainly includes the ability to participate in meaningful recreation. Remember Katie? This is what her mother had to say about the Adventure, ETC program as a meaningful recreation opportunity for her daughter:

Katie loves the Adventure, ETC program. She has made several friends and has learned that if she tries a new activity, she might realize that she is good at something. Katie has never been able to entertain herself, and the structured activities with the special recreation agencies have helped her learn to be more independent in her choices and participation. All Katie wants is to have some friends and something to do.

As a parent, is that asking too much for a child?

Bringing the Program Closer to Home

Originally, the overall goal of the Adventure, ETC program was to provide recreation opportunities to children with mental illness who were not participating in park district or special recreation programs. This goal was accomplished, and the new goal is to continue with the commitment to this underserved population and create more programs closer to home.

In October of this year, a parent brought her son to the Chicagoland area from Peoria to attend the Adventure, ETC. Is it realistic or fair for a parent to travel three hours to experience meaningful and appropriate recreation? Smaller cooperative programs need to be developed based on the demographics of the participants that will provide more frequent activities closer to their own communities. Here are some tips on how you can make this happen:

- Create a network of local social service agencies and develop an advocacy relationship.
- Establish an effective discharge and referral process with adolescent hospitals.
- Identify local parent groups to develop a target market.
- Conduct a needs assessment of the identified pocket of children and create a service plan.
- Establish a cooperative agreement with other community recreation providers for collaboration and service delivery.
- Plan, promote, implement and evaluate every component of the program to ensure short- and long-term success.

Our Responsibility

Children with mental illness may not speak loudly and with confidence, but they have a voice, and we need to listen. As recreation providers, we cannot be “reckless” anymore in assessing the need for programs available to this underserved group. One wonders whether some future tragedies similar to the recent violent occurrences at high schools and universities could be prevented if students with mental illnesses have access to meaningful recreation opportunities and the ability to make friends.

The partnerships that have been developed between a few special recreation agencies and local mental health providers are just the first step. There is still a lot of work to do. Parks and recreation agencies should be at the forefront of the intervention movement to improve the quality of life and build a brighter future for everyone.

Recognizing Mental Illness

An estimated 20 percent of the children walking and playing among us in mainstream USA experience and exhibit the characteristics associated with having a mental illness. These young people are in our local neighborhood parks, schools, youth groups and park district or village recreation programs. Here are some of the characteristics you may observe in a child who is having a difficult time being “included”:

- Poor social skills and difficulty making friends.
- Inability to pay attention, concentrate or focus on various tasks or instructions.
- Impulsivity during unstructured time.
- Anxiety and fear in new or unfamiliar situations.
- Lack of confidence and low self-esteem.
- Depression or frequent mood swings.

If you suspect that a child may have some type of special need and the characteristics are consistent with those listed above, contact your local special recreation association or therapeutic recreation department immediately. We do not want these children to suffer another failure. Rule number one is to respond and not react to the behavior or situation.

Here are some other Do's and Don'ts when dealing with a child in your programs who you believe may be living with a disability.

DO	DON'T
Pull the child aside for a one-on-one conversation.	Ostracize the child in front of other kids.
Have a healthy conversation with a parent.	Over-react and kick the child out of the program or class.
Provide positive feedback and encouragement.	Assume the child is a trouble maker.
Ask questions to get more information.	

Recreation and mental health providers can work together to determine what additional supports are available and necessary to help the children be successful. Success may come through inclusion at a municipal recreation agency or through specialized programs at a special recreation association.

Regardless of what playing field we find success for these children, we, as professionals in our field, need to make sure we are equipped to offer these children games to play. The partnership between special recreation services and children's mental health providers offers a vast opportunity for youth with emotional and behavioral problems to experience success in recreation where they have only experienced failure in the past. The interventions are wonderfully complementary.

As we move forward, we must be guided by evidence-informed practice. This is defined as “a collaborative effort by children, families and practitioners to identify and implement practices that are appropriate to the needs of the child and family, reflective of available research, and measured to ensure the selected practices lead to improved meaningful outcomes.” The desired outcome here is plain and simple—Fun!

The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health

Federal, state and local governments need to address mental health with the same urgency as physical health. That's one of 19 recommendations put forth by the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health.

President George W. Bush established the commission in 2002 and directed it to identify policies “to maximize the utility of existing resources, improve coordination of treatments and services, and promote successful community integration for adults with a serious mental illness and children with a serious emotional disturbance.”

From June 2002 to April 2003, 22 commissioners met monthly to analyze the public and private mental health systems, visit innovative model programs across the country and hear testimony from the systems' many stakeholders. The Commission received feedback, comments and suggestions from nearly 2,500 people from all 50 states.

The Commission submitted its final report to the president in May 2003. You can access the report on the committee's Web site at www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.

The People and Agencies Behind Adventure, ETC

A special thank you goes to Matt Corso from South East Association for Special Parks & Recreation (SEASPAR) and Lisa Drzewiecki from South Suburban Special Recreation Association (SSSRA) for their commitment to this population. Adventure, ETC would not be successful without their leadership on the Youth at Risk Committee and coordination on behalf of all of the participating agencies:

Chicago Park District
Fox Valley Special Recreation Association
Lincolnway Special Recreation Association
Maine-Niles Association of Special Recreation
Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association
Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association
Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association
South East Association for Special Parks & Recreation
South Suburban Special Recreation Association
South West Special Recreation Association
Tri County Special Recreation Association
Warren Special Recreation Association
Western DuPage Special Recreation Association
West Suburban Special Recreation Association

Jeena Greenwalt, CPRP, is the Senior Manager at Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association (NEDSRA) and has more than 17 years experience working with youth at risk.

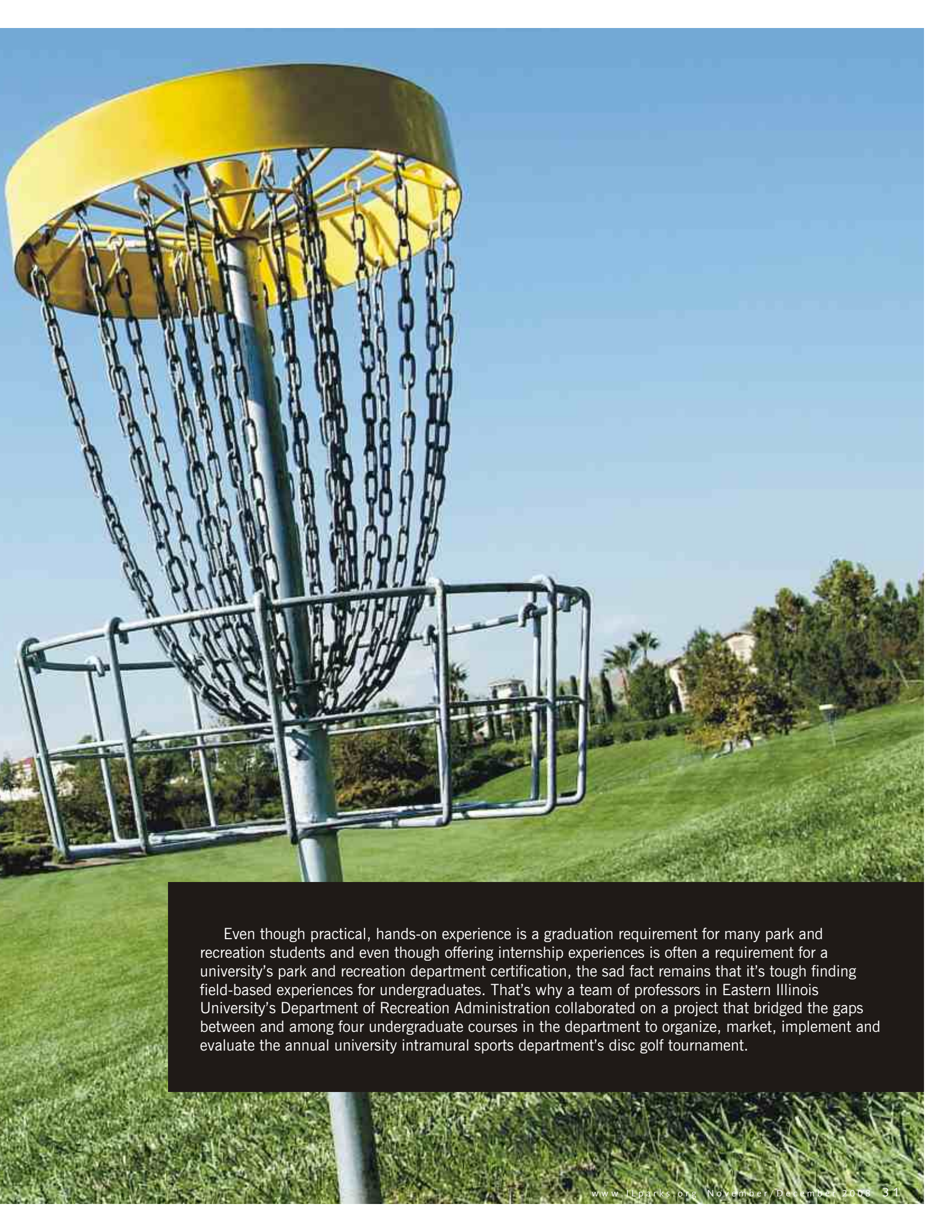
Amy Starin, Ph.D., LCSW, is a licensed clinical social worker with 25 years experience working in the children's mental health field in clinical, supervisory, administrative and policy development capacities.



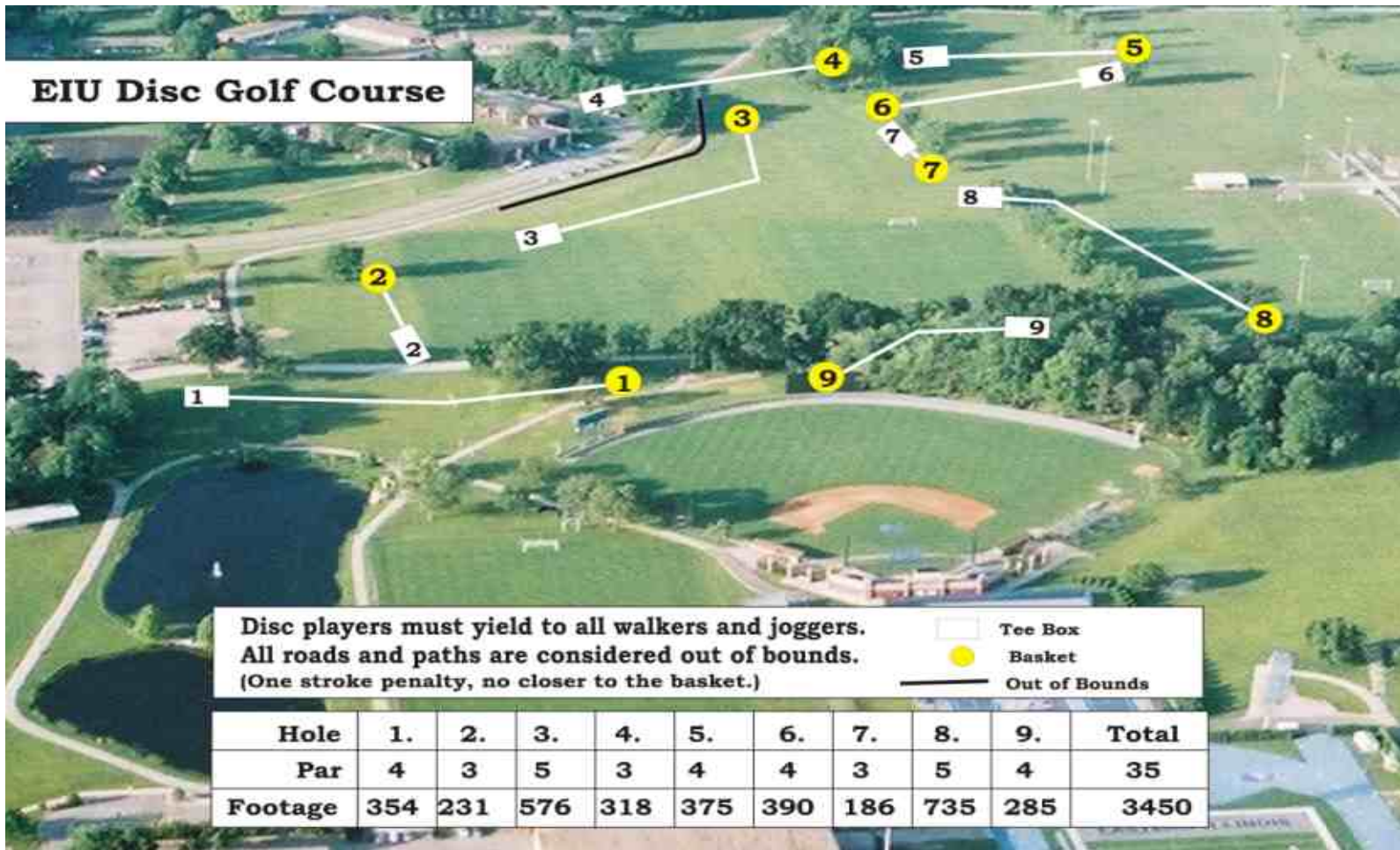
hands-on programming

to prepare future professionals

by **Michael A. Mulvaney, PhD., CPRP, Marian H. Wooten, PhD.,
and William F. Higelmire, Ed.D., CTRS**



Even though practical, hands-on experience is a graduation requirement for many park and recreation students and even though offering internship experiences is often a requirement for a university's park and recreation department certification, the sad fact remains that it's tough finding field-based experiences for undergraduates. That's why a team of professors in Eastern Illinois University's Department of Recreation Administration collaborated on a project that bridged the gaps between and among four undergraduate courses in the department to organize, market, implement and evaluate the annual university intramural sports department's disc golf tournament.



An aerial image of Eastern Illinois University's disc golf course.

While this project was primarily conceived as an “across the curriculum” practical experience that might be replicated by park and recreation administration departments at other universities, it may be possible for park and recreation agencies outside of academe to partner with a nearby university's park and recreation department in order to:

- a) Get a well-schooled (though experienced starved) group of volunteers to help organize and execute a major agency event, and
- b) Provide a ‘real world’ opportunity, aside from the individual internship, to a group of students who are the professional park and recreation programming professionals of tomorrow.

An agency or campus recreation department that wishes to avail itself of the assistance that entire classrooms of undergraduate park and recreation administration students can bring to a program or special event needs to recognize that students are far from being just a ready source of free labor. The experience, if it is to be of the highest value to all concerned, must re-enforce the classroom curriculum.

With that caveat in mind, this article describes how Eastern Illinois University's Department of Recreation designed a way for students to take lessons from the classroom into the real world (and vice versa). We hope this case study description will inspire agencies and university departments to undertake similar collaborations.

An Event Overview and the Division of Labor

Prior to the beginning of the semester, one of the instructors involved in the event met with the university's intramural sports director to discuss a possible collaboration among the Department of Recreation Administration and the Department of Campus Recreation. Following this meeting, the three instructors teaching the four classes to be involved in the project assigned the duties to be undertaken by each class. The idea was to mirror the division of labor that might

occur at a well-staffed park and recreation agency, but instead of individuals taking responsibility for a few of the various aspects of planning and producing a special event, entire classes would assume those duties.

The tournament was held on March 29, 2008 on Eastern Illinois University's nine-hole disc golf course. What follows is an explanation of the course materials covered and the tasks undertaken by students in preparation for the event.

Contributions Made by the Festivals and Special Events Class

The class sought information from the intramural sports director in order to understand the scope of the tournament and its importance within the line-up of intramural events that Eastern Illinois University offers. In January, the class developed a list of questions to ask about the event's potential participants, factors affecting demand for the event, marketing for the event, the role of the event on campus and feedback from the event the previous year. The course instructor interviewed the intramural sports director and reported answers to these questions to the class, who then developed a second, more detailed list of questions, which were answered in person by the intramural sports director and an undergraduate intramural special events coordinator, both of whom agreed to attend a class meeting in late February.

Also in February, the class developed a timeline with important dates for duties to be accomplished by all four of the classes involved in the tournament. All dates involving other classes were scheduled only after consultation with the instructors of those classes. Using this information, students were split into groups and asked to complete a blank production schedule. The instructors of the other courses involved were asked to do the same thing. Then the instructor of the festivals and special events class compiled all production schedules into one, and the class looked it over for errors and duplications.

Disc Golf Tournament Timeline

Time	Task
4 months prior to semester	The festivals and special events class instructor met with the intramural sports director to discuss a collaboration between departments.
3 1/2 months prior to semester	The instructors from four courses met to discuss the logistics of the event collaboration and assign duties for each class.
Week 1	Course instructors introduced students to the project, including a tentative timeline and a schedule of activities associated with the project.
Week 2	Festivals and special events students developed questions for the intramural sports director about the tournament (including participants, marketing, competitive advantage and the previous year's event).
Week 6	The research and evaluation students submitted the initial draft of the evaluation instrument to the instructor for review. Festivals and special events students developed a timeline listing all the tasks to be accomplished (by all classes) prior to the tournament.
Week 7	Microcomputer class students submitted flyers to the instructor for review. Based on the research and evaluation class instructor's feedback, students developed a revised evaluation instrument.
Week 8	Flyers developed by students in the microcomputer class were reviewed by the intramural sports director and a final flyer was selected for the tournament. Students from the festivals and special events class met with the intramural sports director and his assistant to ask questions related to the event timeline.
Week 9	The festivals and special events students created and reviewed an event production schedule.
Week 10	Research and evaluation students and their instructor visited the disc golf site and discussed a data collection plan (e.g., scheduling of student data collectors throughout the tournament, set up/take down procedures, coordination of questionnaire materials, consistent presentation of questionnaires to participants, and confidentiality issues).
Week 11	Invitations to attend student presentations of an evaluation of the Disc Golf Tournament were sent to the campus recreation staff. Administration students created policies and procedures for the Disc Golf Tournament. Policies covered were registration, equipment, sportsmanship, awards, rules of play and event management. The policies and procedures were reviewed by the festivals and special events class and a final draft was developed.
Week 12	The Disc Golf Tournament was held.
Week 13	Research and evaluation students compiled and analyzed data. The festivals and special events class reviewed the production schedule and created a list of suggestions for improvement for the future.
Week 15	A final report and presentation of the evaluation of the Disc Golf Tournament was completed for the campus recreation staff.
Week 16	Instructors debriefed students on the project.

In March, this class ran the tournament with assistance from students in the administration class. Students handled the check-in table, kept score for participants, answered questions about rules, distributed door prizes and developed and updated a leader board for the event. Following the event, the class reviewed the production schedule and developed a list of suggestions for improving future tournaments.

Post-Event Suggestions Generated from the Festivals and Special Events Class

1. While participation did increase dramatically from 2007, more participants could be reached in the future by marketing more strategically. One way to do this would be to market directly to avid disc golfers by placing flyers at the first hole of the disc golf course (where players regularly obtain scorecards).
2. Participation would increase by increasing the appeal of the event to the residence halls and the Greek community by including the event in the yearlong contest to be intramural points champion.
3. The practice of using designated scorers, rather than letting participants score themselves based on the honor system, should be continued. This also helps to resolve rule questions on the course.
4. The event should not start so early in the morning if the target market is college students who typically sleep late on Saturdays.



A participant competes in the disc golf tournament.

Contributions Made by the Microcomputers in Leisure Agencies Class

Students in this course developed flyers that were displayed at the Student Recreation Center and distributed throughout the campus community. The process of arriving at the final design took several steps. First, the instructor presented a lecture explaining the necessary components of an effective flyer. Then students were provided with the details of the intramural disc golf tournament and asked to develop a promotional piece. The instructor chose the top five flyers, which he submitted to the special events class and the intramural sports director for review. Based on those reviews, the top flyer was selected and used to promote the event.



From the five best designed flyers, the best was chosen to promote the event.

Contributions by the Administration of Leisure Services Class

With the input of their instructor, this class divided into groups and developed policies and procedures for the disc golf tournament. Lecture material indicated:

1. That policies, handbooks and procedures provide guidance for fair and consistent staff treatment,
2. That procedures should be developed with the customer/user in mind, and
3. That the overall goal for any policy or procedure document is for the design to be simple, consistent and easy to use.

Policies were to cover registration, equipment, sportsmanship, awards, rules of play and event management. The policies and procedures manuals were evaluated by the course instructor and then

were submitted to the special events class and the intramural sports director for review. Based on these reviews, the best manual was selected and used for the event and placed in the Eastern Illinois University Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Fair.

Contributions Made by the Research and Evaluation in Leisure Studies Class

Students in this class conducted user-focused evaluations of the disc golf tournament. A combination of hands-on activities and lecture material was implemented to educate the students on the evaluation process (e.g., research and evaluation foundations, research designs, review of related literature, data collection methods, data analysis techniques, the report writing and presentation process, etc.), and the class researched and discussed issues of reliability, validity and usability.

First, the class held several meetings with all parties involved with the tournament to determine which service components were to be evaluated. Based on these discussions, the class and the intramural sports director determined that general information regarding the characteristics of the disc golf tournament and participant attitudes and satisfaction data would be collected. In addition, students would analyze how well the disc golf tournament performed on a predetermined set of attributes (e.g., cleanliness of facility site, equipment quality, organization of event, etc.).

Once the desired evaluation criteria were decided, students were divided into groups of three and developed questionnaires that examined the items of interest. The instructor reviewed all drafts of the questionnaires and returned them to the students with suggestions for improvement. Then the instructor facilitated a discussion with the entire class (of approximately 25 students) that led to the creation of a final questionnaire, which was used to evaluate the disc golf tournament.

The questionnaires were administered on site by the students during the disc golf tournament. Ongoing communication between the research class instructor and special events class instructor was employed to identify the most appropriate physical location for the self-administered questionnaires to be completed by the participants. Next, students in the research course were informed of the specific location and asked to create an action plan for completing the data collection phase of the project. The plan included scheduling of student data collectors throughout the tournament, event evaluation table set-up and take down procedures, coordination of questionnaire materials (e.g., copies, pencils, etc.), the consistent presentation of the questionnaire to participants and confidentiality issues (e.g., creating a secure and confidential location for completed questionnaires to be filed).

With the guidance of the instructor, students entered the questionnaire data into a statistical software program (SPSS) where it was analyzed. Then, students developed a report and oral presentation that discussed the background of the disc golf tournament and the evaluation study's purpose, methods, results and conclusions. The intramural sports director and his staff were invited to attend the student presentations. Following the presentations, a question and answer session was held among the students and the intramural sports staff to allow students the opportunity to network with professionals and obtain feedback.

Tournament Administration

Students from the special events, administration and research classes took active roles at the tournament on March 29, 2008. While the tournament was run entirely by students, instructors were on hand to offer support if needed. One student, Darin Doughty, explained: "I thought that the overall concept of the disc golf tournament was



These participants are completing the special event evaluation instrument at the disc golf tournament.

unique in that we were allowed to run an event from start to finish. While the professors helped to guide us and weren't going to let us have a massive failure, I felt like it was 'our' event to make or break."

The high level of professionalism students exhibited throughout the day was also demonstrated by an encounter between Gwen Barrett, one of the students in charge of event registration, and the intramural sports director, a participant in the event. As he signed in for the event and asked for a score card to score himself, Gwen called over a designated scorer for his group and informed him that each group was followed by a scorer with a copy of the policies and procedures manual prepared for the event.

Participation in the tournament increased 450 percent from the previous year, which pleased students, including Adam Kessler, a student in the special events class. Kessler said: "I have been to many sporting events and intramural events, and this one seems to have been conducted quite well in comparison to others I have been to. I was surprised with how smoothly everything went."

Outcomes

This collaborative project enabled a variety of tasks that are regularly performed by the park and recreation professional to be completed. In particular, outcomes of the disc golf tournament included gaining experience in the following areas:

- **Event planning and implementation.** Students gained experience in all phases of event planning and implementation, including the development of an event timeline and a production schedule. This process enabled students to experience first hand the day-to-day tasks associated with organizing and conducting a special event. As one student, Chelsea Greene, explained: "Creating the golf tournament was great for getting hands-on experience. I learned that it requires hard

work to generate the attendance needed for a successful event. It was challenging to promote, schedule and motivate students to attend the event, but nonetheless helped in the process of learning for the class."

- **Marketing and promotion.** Students assisted with the marketing and promotion of the disc golf tournament by developing flyers that were distributed throughout the campus community.

- **Writing policies and procedures.** Students were allowed to create a policy and procedures manual that was used to resolve disputes during the tournament.

- **Event evaluations.** Students conducted evaluations of the disc golf tournament. The students developed and tested an event evaluation instrument to assess participation rates and participant attitudes toward the event. Students also learned how to critique an event and make a list of suggestions for improvement for the next year's event.

The campus recreation department benefited from the provided feedback the students were able to gather about the event. Due to the hectic schedule of events hosted by the intramural office, the amount of feedback was greater in volume and more specific than that usually obtained by the department because students had ample time to devote to the evaluation process. The event evaluations also assisted the department of campus recreation in providing a much more comprehensive evaluation of the disc golf tournament than previously conducted due to the resource and time constraints facing the department.

The event enabled the university's Department of Recreation Administration to apply a learning outcome based model that was consistent with the National Recreation and Park Association's changing accreditation standards. The course instructors were able to

collect evidence and measure student success for each of the learning outcomes (e.g., marketing of a program, implementation of a program, evaluation of a program, development of policies and procedures and application of appropriate research methodology). Learning outcomes were assessed in a variety of ways, including a formal evaluation by students' peers, faculty evaluation of relevant components of student projects, student display of finished work and evaluation by the intramural sports director.

Recommendations for Similar College/Agency Collaborations

In this time of tightening budgets, agencies must increasingly rely on partnerships to keep pace with the public's needs. In addition to serving as a valuable learning experience for future professionals, this project addressed this issue by assisting a leisure service agency in conducting a quality event in a cost effective manner. To achieve this mutually beneficial relationship, the following issues should be addressed:

- **The event timeline should match the course timeline.** The event should coincide with the course objectives and syllabus schedule. For example, the disc golf tournament was held during the 12th week of the semester, which allowed the instructors adequate time to convey important concepts and strategies prior to the actual event, as well as conduct the desired post-event evaluations.
- **Ongoing communication is vital.** For the event to be a success, ongoing communication (before, during and after the event) among the course instructors and leisure service agency is needed. Months prior to the event, an agreement should be established among all parties to ensure everyone's needs are met.
- **Select a popular event that draws a diverse population.** In addition to selecting an event based on its timeline, attention should be given to selecting a popular event. For this particular project, a disc golf tournament was selected because research suggested that the sport's popularity is growing. Furthermore, disc golf is appealing for players of all ages and is an activity that can be performed by anyone, regardless of age, gender, athletic ability, or those with weight, time or financial restrictions.
- **Project outcomes should match course objectives.** For the event to be applicable to the student, the project or event outcomes should have a direct connection to the course(s)' learning objectives. For example, the disc golf tournament enabled students to meet a course objective involving the design, development, implementation and analysis of a project within a leisure setting.
- **Student Interactions.** Finally, the event should provide students the opportunity to interact with a variety of individuals, including professionals, participants and spectators. As most leisure services require the professional to possess skill sets in internal and external relations, the project should be conducive to student development in these areas. Students should also be exposed to issues requiring problem solving, decision making processes and written and verbal communication development. Within this event, students were required to review and enforce the policies and procedures developed for the event. This experience led to a few situations in which a student was required to communicate and address disputes relating to these policies to the participant, spectators and other staff.

Learning by Lecture and Learning by Doing

The disc golf tournament provided students with a practical, hands-on experience that allowed them opportunities to gain outcomes to be applied to their professional careers. Students learned and practiced skills obtained in the four courses involved and in other recreation administration courses. Thus, not only did classroom lectures come alive, students enacted the roles of park and recreation professionals and had the opportunity to demonstrate their newly acquired knowledge, skills and abilities. As one student, Candice Holbrook, stated: "Planning and organizing the disc golf tournament gave me great experience toward my education by exposing me to what the real world will throw at me. Weather will not always cooperate. Individuals will have differing ideas. And participants will not always show up. It's the attitude we as professionals will bring to our events that will make everyone have the best experience that is available."

Need Assistance with an Event? A Collegiate Corps Could Help.

- **Where to start.** Contact the department chair from an area university to discuss the possible partnership. Discussions should begin several months prior to the event to ensure all needs are addressed and the appropriate courses (and instructors) have been identified to assist with the event.
- **Size and scope of the event.** Careful attention should be given to the size and scope of the event and the number of students within the course(s). Key questions to consider might be: How many students will be needed within each phase of the event planning and implementation? Are the agency's staffing needs closely aligned with the student enrollment within the university course(s)? Does the event require semester-long involvement from all students? Will the event provide a quality learning experience for students?
- **Student-staff dynamic.** Consideration should also be given to the working environment. Specifically, how will the students be treated in comparison to event staff and volunteers?
- **Outcome(s).** Discussions among the course instructors and agency supervisors should occur to identify the types of outcomes that will be produced by the students. A list of the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs) required to plan and organize the event should be generated by the agency supervisors. The KSAs list should be reviewed by the instructors to identify courses with similar objectives.

Michael A. Mulvaney, PhD., CPRP, is an assistant professor in the Department of Recreation Administration at Eastern Illinois University.

Marian H. Wooten, PhD., is the recreation program coordinator and an assistant professor in the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation at the University of North Carolina at Pembroke.

William F. Higelmire, Ed.D., CTRS, is a professor and the chair of the Department of Recreation Administration at Eastern Illinois University.

PEOPLE & PLACES



Naperville Taps Police Chief as New Executive Director

Ray McGury joined the Naperville Park District in September as executive director. He brings to the post more than 27 years of community leadership, education and law enforcement experience. As executive director, McGury oversees a budget of more than \$34 million and is responsible for the overall management of staff, parks, facilities and programs for all ages.

Prior to his employment at the park district, McGury was a leading law enforcement professional with the Naperville and Bolingbrook police

departments, and he served as the Bolingbrook Chief of Police.

He has been active in the Illinois Special Olympics, the St. Baldrick's Cure for Pediatric Cancer, Naperville Ribfest and has been a volunteer coach for the Naperville and Bolingbrook park districts. He also serves as an adjunct professor and instructor, sharing his expertise with students at several local universities and institutions.

McGury holds a B.A. in criminal justice from St. Xavier University and a master of public administration degree from Northern Illinois University. He also is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command and the Rocky Mountain Executive Management Program.

Carbondale Park Board Selects New Executive Director

In September, the Carbondale Park District Board of Commissioners announced the selection of **Kathy Renfro** as executive director. Renfro, who had served as the interim executive director for four months, succeeds **Brian Ramsey**, who resigned last spring to accept a position in Beloit, Wisconsin.

Renfro had been the district's superintendent of recreation since September 2006. She began her career in parks and recreation nearly three decades ago, serving communities from Illinois to Texas. Prior to coming to Carbondale, Renfro was director of the West Frankfort Aquatics Center.

Renfro noted that her commitment to the field stems from a love of the outdoors and an appreciation for the inherent value that public recreation and open space adds to a community.



Carol Stream Brings the Gold Home to Illinois

IAPD and IPRA congratulate the **Carol Stream Park District** on its selection as the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration (AAPRA) and the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)'s National Gold Medal winner in Class IV.

The award was announced in October at the NRPA National Congress in Baltimore.

As usual, Illinois paced the nation, with nine of 20 Gold Medal finalists coming from the Land of Lincoln.

The Gold Medal award – and even the nominations – honor communities throughout the United States that demonstrate excellence in

long-range planning, resource management, volunteerism, environmental stewardship, program development, professional development and agency recognition.

Five medals are awarded to local agencies each year. The finalists are categorized by population served. The Illinois nominees fell into four categories.

Class II

The Pleasure Driveway and Park District of Peoria

Class III

**Hoffman Estates Park District
Arlington Heights Park District**

Class IV

**Carol Stream Park District
Elmhurst Park District
St. Charles Park District**

Class V

**Batavia Park District
Vernon Hills Park District
Sterling Park District**



Mary Pellico



Kari Miller



Michael Rolnicki



Gail Zwaska

Batavia Park District Hires New Staff

Mary Pellico is the Batavia Park District's new human resources manager. She is responsible for employment, benefits administration and staff training. She comes to Batavia from the corporate sector, where she worked for Motorola and Ernst & Young. Pellico has a B.S. in business administration and risk management from Roosevelt University and an M.S. in human resources from Loyola University.

Kari Miller has been the marketing and public relations manager since January 2008. In this newly created position, she is responsible for distributing press releases to the media, writing articles for several publications, developing marketing tools to promote programs and designing marketing materials when necessary. Miller comes to Batavia from the Bolingbrook Park District, where she served as public relations specialist since March 2006. She graduated from Bradley University in 2004 with a B.S. in public relations.

As recreation supervisor, **Michael Rolnicki** is responsible for youth and adult athletics, leagues and sports programs. His previous experience includes an internship with the Elk Grove Village Park District, where he served as an interim athletic supervisor in charge of leagues, standings and schedules. He graduated from Illinois State University with a B.S. in recreation and park administration.

Gail Zwaska began working for the district in February 2008 as a recreation supervisor in charge of the New Horizons Preschool, early childhood programs and special events. She holds a bachelor's degree in early childhood education from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College in Terre Haute, Indiana. Prior to working for the park district, Zwaska was director of events for the St. Charles Chamber of Commerce. She has more than five years of teaching experience in the early childhood sector.



Roselle Park District Names New Director

Heidi Lapin, CPRP, was recently appointed as the new director of parks and recreation for the Roselle Park District. Lapin has worked for the park district since 2004 as the superintendent of recreation. In June, she was named acting director and was selected by the board as director in September.

Lapin holds a bachelor's degree in leisure studies from the University of Illinois with a concentration in recreation management. She also holds a graduate certificate from North Park University in non-profit management.

Lapin is a National Recreation and Park Association Aquatics Facilities Management School graduate and a Certified Pool Operator. She is an active member with the Illinois Park and Recreation Association.

Lapin has served as an early childhood and special events supervisor for the Glenview Park District. Prior to her stay in Glenview, she was an instructor at Margate Park of the Chicago Park District. She also has experience working with Norwegian Cruise Line and the Illinois Rural Recreation Development Project.



Glencoe Park District Hires and Promotes Staff Members

Cheryl DeClerck, a 19-year veteran of the Glencoe Park District, was recently promoted to the position of director of recreation. She has a degree in parks and recreation administration from Illinois State University. With her new responsibilities, DeClerck oversees all recreation services, as well as the direction and development of a new comprehensive program plan for the community center. In the coming months, she will steer the park district's introduction of new classes and programs.



Rob Ward was appointed director of facilities in January, overseeing the district's major facilities, including Glencoe Beach, Watts Ice Center and the Community Center. Ward earned a master's degree in recreation from Western Illinois University and previously directed athletic programs for the Arlington Heights Park District and managed facilities for the Des Plaines Park District.



Lynne Kurdziel recently joined the district as manager of marketing communications. She has a degree in business management and marketing from Purdue University and a background in product brand management and marketing.



Alsip Park District Welcomes New Staff

Mike DeVito recently joined the Alsip Park District as the athletic supervisor. He completed his internship at the Des Plaines Park District and worked at the St. Charles Park District as the teen supervisor. He holds a B.S. in recreation administration from Eastern Illinois University. DeVito is responsible for all youth and adult athletic programs, leagues and special events.

Ashley Adsit is the district's new recreation supervisor. Adsit completed her internship in Arizona. She holds a B.S. in recreation management from the University of Wisconsin- La Crosse. Adsit is responsible for youth and teen day camps; all teen, adult and senior trips and programs; and community special events.



Roselle Park District Hires New Rec Supervisor

Cristin Handlon recently joined the Roselle Park District as a recreation supervisor. Her responsibilities include overseeing the preschool and early childhood programs, the after school programs, school's out trips and special events.

Handlon previously worked for the Glencoe Park District as a program manager for three years. At Glencoe she was responsible for the before- and after school programs, pre-k and kindergarten enrichment classes, youth enrichment classes and several special events.

Handlon did her internship with the Wheaton Park District, where she assisted with various programs, special events and aquatics.

Handlon is a graduate of Illinois State University with a B.S. in parks and recreation administration with a concentration in recreation management.



Oswegoland Hires One, Promotes Two

Nancy Woods recently joined the Oswegoland Park District as the director of finance. She has 18 years of experience in fields of administration and accountancy in the government and private sectors. Woods worked with the Village of Oswego for the past seven years. She received her bachelor's degree in finance from Aurora University and is a Certified Treasurer. Her responsibilities include supervision of staff and all the financial and accounting functions of the district.



Tom Betsinger recently accepted the new superintendent of recreation position for the district. His duties include overseeing all of the functions of the Recreation Department, including sports, fitness, dance, gymnastic, theatre and special interest programs. Betsinger has a bachelor's degree in communication from Illinois College. Prior to his new position, he served the district for 11 years as athletic supervisor.



Cheryl Keilson has accepted the new superintendent of early childhood position. Keilson received a bachelor's degree in education from Concordia University and has coordinated the Oswegoland Park District's before- and after school program for the past 13 years. Her new job responsibilities include overseeing the before- and after school program, summer camps, preschool and a variety of early childhood and youth programs.

Partnership Raises Barn, Restores Historic Structure



In mid October, the **Collinsville Area Recreation District** held a dedication ceremony for the Gindler Barn, which is now a landmark on the district's Willoughby Heritage Farm. The event capped the efforts of the district and local preservationists to dismantle the pre-Civil War era structure, move it to the park district site and then reassemble it.

The barn, which originally sat on property owned by the Fern Gindler Trust, was slated to be burned when the trust recently sold the land to a new owner. When brother and sister trustees Glenn and Eileen Gindler learned of the new landowners' plans for the barn, they arranged for it to be donated to the district.

The barn was disassembled with assistance from Trillium Dell Timberworks in Knoxville, Illinois and its pieces were moved about five miles to the district's Willoughby Farm property, a facility that has been designed to create an accurate representation of life on a Midwestern family farm during the early 1900s.

From July 7 through 19, crew members with Trillium Dell, members of a Massachusetts-based group called the Timber Framers Guild and local volunteers used new and original timbers, old-fashioned techniques and new technology to reassemble the barn.

"The barn gives us the opportunity to involve people, especially young people, in farm activities so that they can experience the farm at a level they otherwise wouldn't be able to," said Collinsville Area Recreation District Executive Director **Mark Badasch**.



Margaret Gazdacka



Dawn Hartman



Kevin Jenkins



Jolene Kremer



Jordan Real



Matt Saviello



Brad Schmidt

Fox Valley Hires New Staff Members

The Fox Valley Park District recently welcomed the addition of five new employees, and the district promoted two others.

Margaret Gazdacka is the full-time naturalist at Red Oak Nature Center, where she worked on a part-time basis five years ago and now returns. She comes to Red Oak from Spring Brook Nature Center in Itasca, where she was the naturalist and volunteer coordinator. She has related work and volunteer experience with Fermi Lab, Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, the DuPage County Department of Development and Environmental Concerns, the DuPage County Forest Preserve, the Brookfield Zoo, Willowbrook Wildlife Center and the Douglas Hart Nature Center. She has a master's degree in environmental biology from Governor's State University and a B.S. in zoology from Eastern Illinois University.

Dawn Hartman is the marketing design coordinator. She worked previously as a graphic designer with Quintessence Publishing Co. Inc. She earned a bachelor's degree in art and graphic design with a minor in marketing from Western Illinois University. Her volunteer work with various museums, outdoor recreation facilities and non-profits led her to pursue a marketing position with the district.

Recreation Supervisor **Kevin Jenkins'** primary focus is developing athletic programs. He previously worked for the district in a part-time capacity. Other positions he has held include: systems analyst for a children's museum, project manager for SBC Communications and camp coordinator for West Aurora Athletics. He has a bachelor's degree from Illinois State University in information systems.

Jolene Kremer is the district's superintendent of marketing and communications. She brings a variety of skills to the park district after

having worked for more than 17 years as an editor and reporter with the *Beacon News* in Aurora. She has earned statewide and regional awards for her writing, photography and special sections. Jolene also has taught news writing classes at North Central College in Naperville. She earned a bachelor's degree in journalism from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. Kremer is responsible for all of the district's messaging and marketing programs.

Jordan Real has been promoted to the position of recreation supervisor at the district's Vaughan Athletic Center. Previously, she worked in a part-time capacity for the district, supervising athletic programs at the Vaughan Athletic Center and at the Eola Community Center. She graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in sports and fitness management.

Matt Saviello is the facility manager at the district's Prisco Community Center. He comes from the Plainfield Park District, where was a recreation supervisor in charge of teen programming, adult athletic leagues, community center rentals and birthday parties. While at Plainfield, he developed an adult sports e-newsletter and coordinated community volunteers. Prior to Plainfield, he worked as an assistant facility manager at the Pleasant Dale Park District and as a fitness center coordinator at the Geneva Park District. He has a degree in sport management from Flagler College in St. Augustine, Florida.

The new athletic program manager at the Vaughan Athletic Center is **Brad Schmidt**. In addition to running the center's tennis program, he oversees district-wide athletic program management. He brings nearly 10 years of experience to the job. His most recent position was as assistant manager of the Heritage Tennis Club at the Arlington Heights Park District. He has a bachelor's degree in sports management from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa.



Cathi Klaver



Bob Bentz



Debra Molitor

New Hires at Northbrook

Cathi Klaver is the new manager of the Northbrook Park District Leisure Center, supervising daily operations, programming and a staff of eight full-time and more than 150 part-time employees. Klaver is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional with a bachelor's and master's degree in recreation administration/sports management from Wayne State College in Wayne, Nebraska. She recently spent seven years with the Village of Pleasant Prairie, Wisconsin, where she managed the recreation division and its staff of 36 full-time employees. She also served as director of the LakeView RecPlex, one of the largest municipally-owned recreation and fitness facilities in the country. In Northbrook, Klaver is responsible for a variety of recreation programs, including: preschool, school-age child care, summer camps, visual arts, environmental activities, special events and senior recreation. She also oversees registration and customer service at the Leisure Center.

After 20 years as a firefighter, paramedic and trainer, **Bob Bentz** has joined the park district as a training supervisor. In his new position, he conducts staff training in CPR, first aid and equipment use. He has a degree in recreation management from Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin and spent the past 14 years with the Gurnee Fire Department.

Debra Molitor has been hired to fill an administrative support position. She is responsible for payroll and accounts receivable for the parks department, deliveries, posting of correspondence to the staff and logging of assistance requests. Previously, she worked at State Farm Insurance and Allstate in information technology, sales and customer service.



Oak Brook Hires New Manager for Aquatic Center

Karen Spandikow has joined the Oak Brook Park District as the full-time Family Aquatic Center Manager. Her responsibilities include overseeing the program and facility operations. She also hires, schedules and supervises lifeguards and swim instructors.

Spandikow comes to the district with more than seven years of experience in the recreation field. Previously, she has been the aquatic manager at the Bartlett Park District. She graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in leisure studies.

Spandikow is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional, as well as a certified Aquatic Facility Operator. She is also an Ellis & Associates Lifeguard Instructor. Spandikow received the 2007 IPRA Facility Management Section Aquatic Manager of the Year award and the Ellis and Associates Platinum Safety Award in 2002 and 2003.



Lincolnwood Has New Rec Coordinator

Julie Barnhill has joined the Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation Department as the new recreation coordinator. Her primary responsibilities include preschool, special event and senior programming. Barnhill is a graduate of the University of Illinois with a degree in recreation, sport and tourism. She

comes to the Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation Department from the Arlington Heights Park District, where she managed the Recreation Park Community Center and its park and pool.



New Fitness Manager Joins Mundelein Park District

The Mundelein Park and Recreation District recently hired **Rose Nudo-Semsak** as fitness manager for the district's Park View Health and Fitness Center.

Nudo-Semsak brings a broad depth of experience, including 20 years in fitness training. She holds a B.S. in organizational leadership from the School of Business at Dominican University and

a materials logistics management certification from Harper Junior College. She is a Certified Personal Trainer with the National Academy of Sports Medicine and is certified in all levels of CPR. Prior to joining the district, she owned her own fitness center.

Nudo-Semsak looks forward to designing personal training programs for Park View's clients and creating unique programs for the district, including the new Junior Iron Chef program, which teaches kids how to cook and eat healthy with basic recipes.



Normal Hires New Rec Supervisor

The Normal Parks and Recreation Department recently hired **Kristal Thomas** as the recreation supervisor for the before- and after school program. Her duties include staff hiring and supervision, site coordination and budgeting, as well as implementing new policies and procedures for the programs she oversees.

Thomas graduated from Eastern Illinois University with a B.A. in sociology and

later earned a master's degree in family services. She comes to Normal Parks and Recreation from Chesterbrook Academy in Bloomington, Illinois, where she was the principal of the academy.

Get Your People and Places in PEOPLE & PLACES

Please submit items of interest from your agency to Rodd Whelpley at rwhelpley@ILparks.org for possible inclusion in PEOPLE & PLACES.

Stories should be no longer than 300 words. Also send color Jpegs that are 300 dpi when reduced to about 1 1/2 inches tall.



Freeport Takes On New Recreation Supervisor

Rebecca Minkwitz recently joined the Freeport Park District as the recreation supervisor. Her main responsibilities lie with planning and coordinating the park district's special events. She is also responsible for contractual programs, youth programs, developing promotional materials and organizing bus trips.

Minkwitz recently received her B.S. in recreation administration from Eastern Illinois University. Before coming to Freeport, she completed an internship with the Belvidere Park District and also taught environmental education with the Rockford Park District.

Villa Park Names New Program Supervisor

Mikie Rudyk has joined the Village of Villa Park Parks and Recreation Department as program supervisor. Her responsibilities include teen activities, youth non-sport programs, a dance program and camps. She also serves on the Villa Park Skate Park Committee.

Rudyk is a recent graduate of Western Illinois University, where she received a degree in recreation, park and tourism administration along with a minor in kinesiology. She completed her internship at the Glen Ellyn Park District this past summer.



Sterling Park District Hires Fitness Center Manager

The Sterling Park District recently hired **Erica Meyer-Hanlon** as the new manager for the Westwood Sports & Expo Center and Fitness Edge. She oversees the operation of the sports complex's three separate buildings, which house 18 basketball and volleyball courts; a 200-meter indoor track and field facility; four indoor and six outdoor tennis courts; four racquetball courts; batting cages; and an 8,000-square-foot fitness center.



Meyer-Hanlon was previously employed as the wellness and fitness coordinator for the Sterling-Rock Falls YMCA. She received her B.A. in exercise and sport science/business administration from Western State College of Gunnison, Colorado, and she is currently in the process of obtaining her Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist certification.

SEASPAR Hires Coordinator for New Young Adult Program

The South East Association for Special Parks and Recreation (SEASPAR) has hired **Laura Christensen**, CTRS, as the program coordinator for the agency's new Enhancing Adult Growth through Lifestyle Education and Service (EAGLES) program. The EAGLES program emphasizes independent living skills, self-advocacy skills and work experience for young adults.



Christensen graduated from Southern Illinois University with a B.S. in therapeutic recreation and a minor in outdoor recreation and psychology. After completing her field work and internship, she worked at the Northeast DuPage Special Recreation Association (NEDSRA) for more than five years. At NEDSRA, she coordinated the outdoor and adventure programs, seniors' outings and youth-at-risk activities. She also managed adult services and supervised interns.



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