

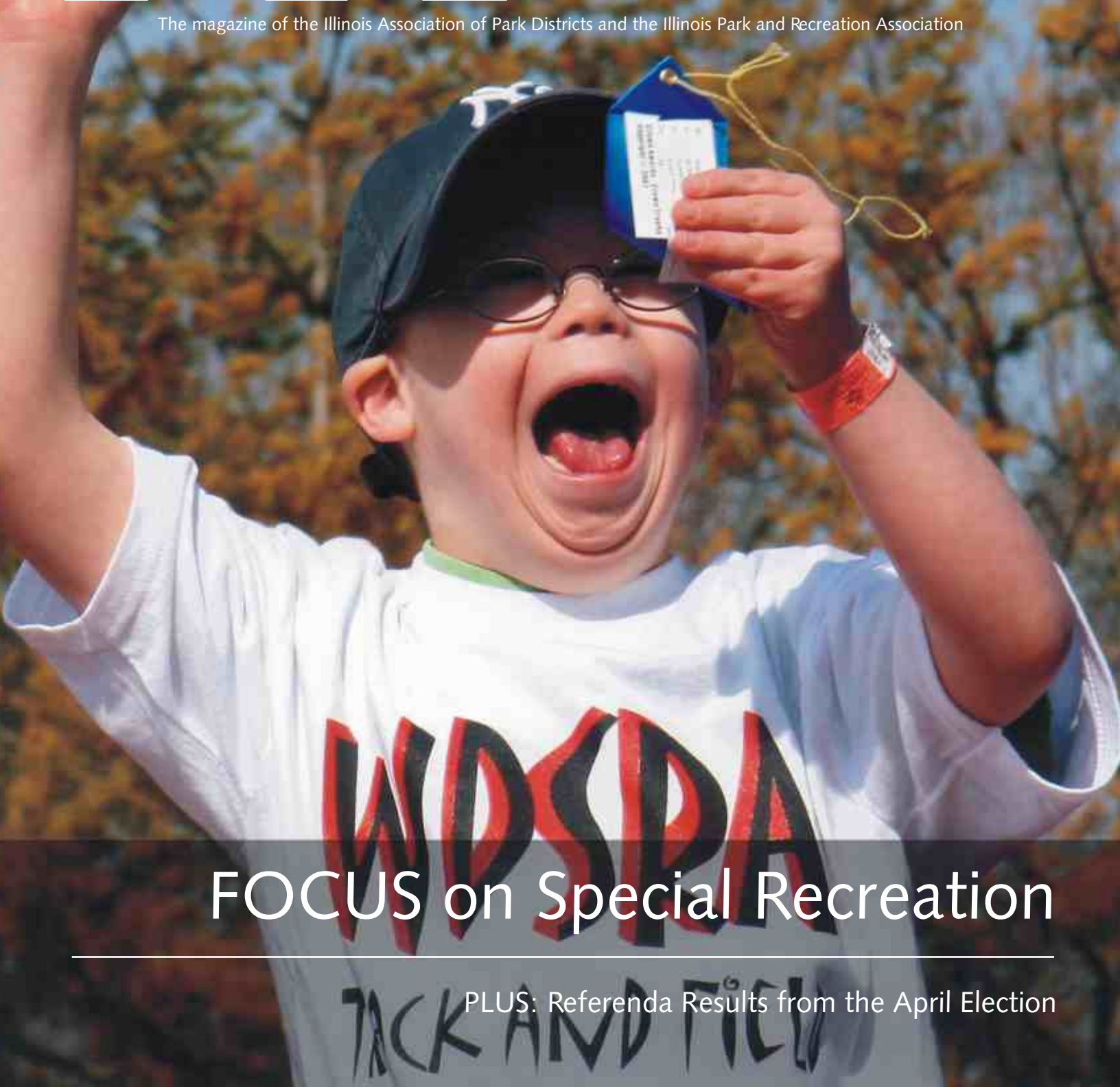
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P&R

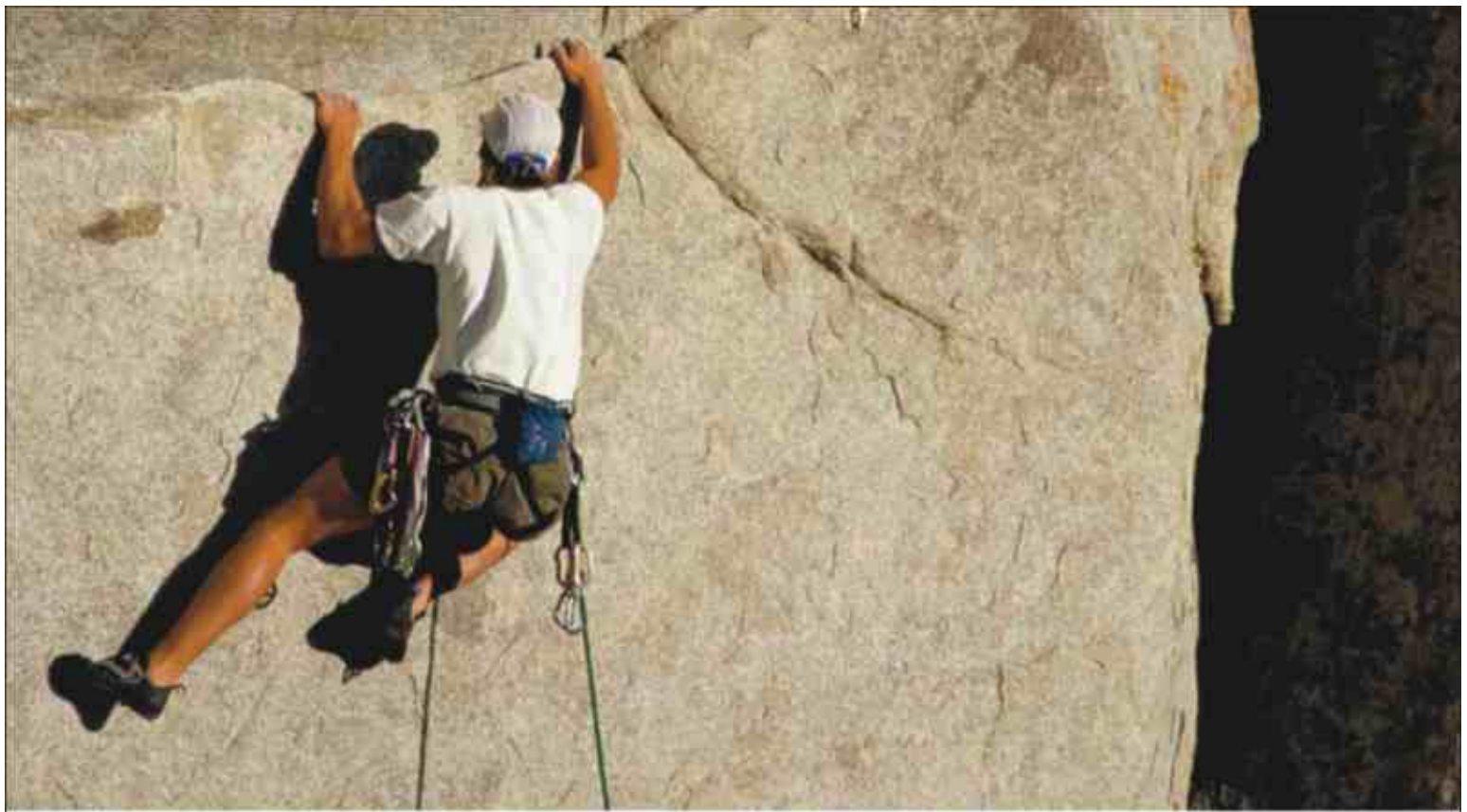
PARKS AND RECREATION

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



FOCUS on Special Recreation

PLUS: Referenda Results from the April Election



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ON THE COVER:

Sherry Manschot of the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association captured this moment of sheer delight. The photo earned 2nd place in the sports category of our annual "Give it Your Best Shot" photo contest and an even higher place in the heart of the *IP&R* editor.

FROM THE EDITOR

Some editors will tell you that producing a magazine is complicated. Likely what they mean is that the business of producing a magazine is complicated. At bottom, any worthwhile magazine relies on only two essential ingredients: good pictures and good stories.



IP&R is among the lucky few publications whose readers contribute to its success by providing a quality supply of those two ingredients. Our annual photo contest generates most of the images we use in *IP&R* and in many other IAPD and IPRA publications. And your stories pop up like welcome spring crocuses in my e-mail in box.

This issue contains a typical embarrassment of riches. In addition to Sherry Manschot and Tammy Kerrins' article on inclusion on page 18, two WebXtras support the May/June *IP&R*. Don't miss Barbara DiGuido and Jan Hodgkinson's piece relating how Illinoisans were instrumental in the Special Olympics movement and John Liuzzi's article on how special recreation associations have taken up the challenge and responsibility of going green. See page 17 for instructions on how to access these pieces.

On page 14, I'm pleased to honor the 2008 winners of the Give Us Your Best Shot photo contest and the annual magazine writing awards. And, as always, I thank the judges who made the tough decisions. There were far too many great ingredients – fine pictures and well wrought stories – for me to have done so.

— RODD WHELPLEY
Editor

Give Us Your Best Shot!

Enter by October 1, 2009.

Show off your agency and its visual images with "Give Us Your Best Shot," a photo contest sponsored by the Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association. Photos submitted may be used in future editions of *Illinois Parks & Recreation* magazine, on the cover of the *IAPD/IPRA Membership Directory and Buyers' Guide*, or in other IAPD/IPRA projects.

Enter as many times as you like in four categories: **recreation, sports, wildlife and nature/landscapes**. All entries must feature Illinois scenes. For complete guidelines and an entry form, go to www.ILparks.org and highlight "Publications" on the navigation bar on the left, then choose "Illinois Parks and Recreation Magazine." Scroll down the page.

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Dr. Ted Flickinger
IAPD President and Chief
Executive Officer

Choosing the Best Board President

Not every board member has the skills or the right personality for the position of board president. That's why the best board member is sometimes not the best board president (and vice versa). I have seen otherwise capable board members who, during controversial situations, could not meet the demands and pressures of being the president, and the result was a dysfunctional agency. Boards need to clearly understand the president's responsibilities and the personality traits that allow a person to execute those responsibilities effectively. This will allow them to choose carefully and well when they elect a board president.

Who Should Hold the Position of Board President?

Not everyone can, or should, be president of the board. It's not some honorary title to take turns with. Dr. Bruce Larson served effectively as board president for the Urbana Park District for 33 consecutive years. This might be a record.

The president is a leadership role and should be someone who can lead the board and represent the board with the public, governmental agencies and the business community. The president should be a motivator and create an atmosphere conducive to positive, productive deliberations. He or she also needs to be a good spokesperson, organizer and a great facilitator. The president needs interpersonal communication skills because he or she will need to diplomatically talk to fellow board members who might be abdicating their responsibilities. And the president can be a counselor for board members if they forget their obligations. The board president should lead by example. He or she should work at building relationships with board members and the executive director, and encourage meeting participation by all members.

What Are the Responsibilities of the Board President?

The Park District Code basically states that the board defines the president's powers and duties (70 ILCS 1205/4-8). The president presides at all meetings of the board and can call special meetings at the request of two or more board members. The code also indicates that, except in cases in which the president is elected by the voters, the board annually elects a president from its members and the office is held for one year or until a successor is elected. Some boards may choose to set a policy of two-year terms. Nevertheless, the board must vote every year for the president's position even if the board has agreed to a two-year term for its president.

But solely using the code to define the president's powers and duties can be limiting. Instead, think in terms of a job description for the board president. The board president's responsibilities typically include the following:

- Preside at all board and executive committee meetings. The president keeps the business flowing and leads the board to effective decisions.
- Work in partnership with the executive to make sure that board policies are carried out.
- Chair board meetings and special meetings, such as executive sessions.
- Call special meetings.
- Assist the executive in preparing the board meeting agenda. The executive typically develops the agenda, but the president may provide input and review it before the meeting.

You have to decide what has to be dealt with and find the best way to handle each issue. It's not a 'my way or the highway' kind of thing. A good president never does that. You never work from a power standpoint. You just can't. Each issue requires compromise.

-Dennis Flanagan,
Commissioner of the Lan-Oak Park District



- Assist the executive in conducting new board member orientation and training.
- Oversee the search for a new executive for the agency.
- Sign authorized contracts.
- Coordinate the executive's annual performance evaluation.

The Board President as Spokesperson

Additionally, the president may serve as a spokesperson and should know how to deal with the public. Some boards prefer an executive to be the lead agency spokesperson, and the president serves as an alternate spokesperson. At other agencies, this is a shared responsibility. If the president is comfortable with the media and experienced in public relations, boards are more likely to use the president as the spokesperson for the board, while the executive remains the spokesperson for the agency or for matters that are not related to board policy, but everyday operations.

Not everyone can, or should, be president of the board. It's not some honorary title to take turns with.

The Board President as Presiding Officer

The board president should provide direction for the meeting; keep the board on course and on time; and deal with priorities. He or she should not allow non-agenda items to be discussed, as board members are given an opportunity to add to the agenda when the meeting is called to order. (Agenda items added can only be discussed, but no action can take place by Illinois law.)

Discussion should proceed in order of: (1) facts, (2) opinions, (3) decisions and (4) action.

During discussions, the board president prevents any one person from monopolizing the discussion. Instead, he or she encourages all members to speak and allows equal opportunity for discussion on subject areas. He or she builds a consensus among board members when disagreements arise and makes assignments when board work needs to be completed.

In general, the president should spend time listening, moving the discussion on, summarizing and being firm, but sensitive. A good president will encourage all participants to take equal responsibility for the meeting proceeding smoothly, rather than encouraging dependency solely on the president.

The president should point out and immediately remedy any confusion during discussions. He or she should summarize periodically, especially if an item under discussion is complex. If the president offers his or her own opinion, it must be made clear that this is a personal view, rather than a summary of the group's position.

Managing Board Conflicts

The board president takes the lead in resolving conflicts within the board. The president should possess conflict management skills, be well regarded by all the parties, be viewed as impartial toward the parties and be objective about the issues. A discussion that begins as a difference in members' views on a business issue can quickly become intense and personal. Some board members may make personal attacks or embarrass others as they argue their points. The negative feelings created by public embarrassment perpetuate the dispute, even when the conflict can be settled easily. The president must make sure that meetings deal with the issues, not personalities.

When the exchanges get personal, it becomes difficult for the opposing board members to communicate constructively, and uninvolved board members grow uncomfortable as they observe the bitter exchanges. A skilled president encourages the parties to resolve their issues away from the boardroom. Small conflicts left unresolved tend to simmer into a stew of resentment. Early intervention by the board president can help prevent this.

One of the most frequently used strategies is to set up a private meeting. This is not done to keep the conflict a secret, but to preserve a comfort level for the disputing parties and the uninvolved board members. To conduct a private meeting, the board president can use shuttle diplomacy, speaking privately with individual board members. The president must operate within the Illinois Open

Meetings Act, however. To clarify, the president on a five-member board can only meet with one board member at a time to discuss an issue.

When a conflict erupts in a board meeting and is then resolved privately, be sure that the non-involved members who witnessed the confrontation know that personal (not the policy) issue has been resolved. Otherwise, they may be confused or believe that important decisions are being made behind their backs. The board president can simply state that the problems between the disagreeing members have been cleared-up.

When a significant conflict develops between the executive and the board, rapid action and professional help are called for. Clearly, an executive cannot manage a significant conflict in which he or she is a part. Neither can the board president. In this case, an external resource is the best option. Choices might include a mediator or an organizational consultant with conflict management skills. I also recommend looking into the IAPD Board Development Program that assists board members in assessing communication problems, board/executive relationships and a variety of other subjects. Thirty-three park districts and forest preserve districts have used this program. Please contact the IAPD office for more information and a list of references.

Decisions a President Can Make

Boards make decisions together on issues that impact the agency. The decisions are the result of careful study, discussion, sharing of perspectives, planning and personal opinions. Each board member has equal say in the collective decision-making process. Every board member has only one vote and that applies to the president, although the president usually gets the last vote and can decide whether to vote to break a tie or to abstain from voting.

The president does not have the power to refuse to let the board consider a motion. If a president takes this action, the board should, after a successful motion to appeal the decision of the president, proceed with its business. If the president fails to follow the appropriate rules or procedures, the board may be able to act in spite of the rulings of the president.

The president of a park board also does not have the authority to veto any action of that governing body. While it is a general rule in deliberative assemblies that the presiding officer shall not participate in the debate or other proceedings in any other capacity, the president of a park district board most likely may participate in discussions of matters, similar to the rights of other commissioners. Unless the rules of procedure adopted by the board forbid such an active role, there is nothing improper in this practice.

Remember, a park board is a team or group of individuals who meet to discuss, debate (if necessary) and recommend actions and policies. Work together and leave your ego at the door of the boardroom.

IAPD Calendar

June 16
IAPD Golf Tour – Event 2
Oak Grove Golf Course
Harvard

June 22
IAPD Commissioners Boot Camp
Schaumburg Park District

June 29
IAPD Commissioners Boot Camp
Decatur Park District

July 23
Legislative Golf Outing
White Pines Golf Club
Bensenville Park District

August 10
IAPD Golf Tour – Event 3
Nettle Creek Golf Course
Morris

August 22
Park District Conservation Day
State Fairgrounds, Springfield

September 11
IAPD Awards Gala
Chevy Chase Country Club
Wheeling Park District

September 22
IAPD Golf Tour – Event 4
Aldeen Golf Course
Rockford Park District

October 13-16
NRPA Congress
Salt Lake City, Utah

November 5
Legal Symposium
Hamburger University
Oak Brook

January 28-30, 2010
Soaring to New Heights Conference
Hilton, Chicago

EYE ON THE PROFESSION

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



Mike Selep, CPRP
IPRA Professional Services
Director and Iterim CEO

Challenges Become Opportunities

Is the glass half empty or half full? Comedian Steven Wright says as a realist he believes that the glass is simply two times too big. Our world, nation, agencies, communities, associations and families are all re-evaluating their mode of operations as current economic conditions have caused us to examine our glasses. Are these times providing challenges or opportunities?

New Opportunities Demand New Skills

Park and recreation professionals are uniquely positioned to tackle today's challenges by changing service delivery models to meet increased demand. More park and recreation professionals are taking advantage of this time to develop and improve their skills to better meet the needs of their communities. Finding time to use the resources available as a member of a professional association becomes increasingly challenging, yet vitally important. Professionals are asked to take on additional responsibilities and need more information to learn new skills. At IPRA we've noticed that attendance at meetings and educational seminars is up more than 25 percent from 2008. Our members are aware that networking with fellow professionals and discussing matters is a logical step in helping find creative solutions to the challenges they face.

Matt Barber, West Suburban Special Recreation Association Human Resources Coordinator, and I have led Certified Park and Recreation Professional (CPRP) Preparation Courses throughout the state for 71 students and professionals in April and May. There has been a full range of attendees, from college students in their final semester to professionals with more than 20 years of experience in the field. They're all finding it important to use the core knowledge of the profession to better themselves, their agency and the profession.

Challenge, Change and Opportunity Everywhere

Perhaps not unlike your agency, IPRA has experienced some changes over the past several months. We have reduced our overhead to ensure that we'll continue to offer a variety of professional development and recognition opportunities for our

members at affordable prices. We have been creative in our partnerships, and members have humbled us with their dedication to the association and profession by taking on additional responsibilities.

Thanks to Rick Missing of the Buffalo Grove Park District and the Awards Committee for simplifying the award process this year. Simply nominate an individual for his or her outstanding work, and that individual can complete the application demonstrating the depth of his or her experience and passion for the profession. Start recognizing individuals today (www.ilipra.org/awards).

Thank you to Rich Quattrocki from the Lincolnwood Parks and Recreation Department for finding sponsorships for hotel rooms and meals for the College and University Relations Summit. Thank you to Anita Escalante from the Bloomingdale Park District for devoting time

More park and recreation professionals are taking advantage of this time to develop and improve their skills to better meet the needs of their communities.



and energy toward developing the new *IPRA Today* quarterly newsletter and to the members of the Communications and Marketing Section who have volunteered to assist us with upcoming issues of the newsletter.

In fact, these are just a few of the many IPRA members that have stepped forward during this time of change. If this article could be 900 pages, I might have room to thank all of you for your support. Please know that we appreciate all that you have done for the association. As a result of this surge in participation, we have discovered a multitude of opportunities for change, growth and renewal.

We can work together to turn these challenging times into the opportunity to grow and serve.

Finding More Efficiencies for Ourselves and Our Public

The IPRA Board of Directors has entrusted Rich Grodsky, executive director of the Elmhurst Park District, to head up a task force of talented professionals that will research, review and evaluate how we can become more efficient with IAPD. This May, each IPRA member will be asked to complete a small survey concerning their personal and professional needs and executive directors will be asked to do the same, regarding their agency needs. Rich Grodsky and his fellow task force members will use the information gathered to start the dialogue with IAPD members. Please share your thoughts, concerns and vision for the future. This is our opportunity to make a difference in how our association moves forward to better serve you.

As Park and Recreation professionals and commissioners, this is also a time to examine how we are meeting the needs of those in our communities. The focus of this issue is special recreation. We have a dedicated group of professionals who work at a network of Special Recreation Associations throughout the state. These professionals partner with their member agencies to assist with the integration of individuals with disabilities into the fabric of our communities through recreational opportunities. Park and recreation professionals throughout the country look to Illinois for leadership in this area.

Volunteer for the BMW Championship

I would like to leave you with one final fun opportunity to serve by inviting each of you to share your spirit of volunteerism with an event that has been an integral part of IPRA for 15 years, the BMW Championship, formerly called the Western Open. IPRA has partnered with the Western Golf Association (WGA) in the Midwest's largest professional golf tournament. The top 70 golfers in the world will be in attendance. The BMW Championship was in St. Louis last year but is back this year, Sept. 7-13 at the Cog Hill Golf and Country Club in Lemont.

Spend some time as one of the 600 volunteers that IPRA will coordinate at this year's tournament. The proceeds go to the Evans Scholar Foundation, the largest privately funded college scholarship program for caddies in the county that has provided more than 8,000 scholarships to young men and women. You may be assigned to work the hospitality areas, clubhouse, media relations, player shuttle, gate and ticket operations, on-course refreshments or childcare. Those who have worked the event before will tell you the experiences were gratifying and they would do it again in a heartbeat. Sign up today (www.ilipra.org/bmw).

The glass may be two times too big, but as professionals and commissioners, we can work together to turn these challenging times into the opportunity to grow and serve all who wish to partake.



Today's IPRA Staff – At Your Service

Mike Selep, CPRP, MPS (top row, right) has been named IPRA Interim CEO until the end of the calendar year. His current focus is on the day-to-day operations while maintaining his responsibilities as professional services director. He has been at IPRA the last

four years and has served in the field of parks and recreation for 17 years. His previous experiences include being the program coordinator with West Suburban Special Recreation; special projects assistant, accountant and information technology coordinator with the Schaumburg Park District; and the superintendent of recreation with Fox Valley Special Recreation Association. His areas of responsibility include:

- Professional, advocate and student membership
- Section, committee, affiliate & Board of Directors liaison
- BMW Championship
- CEU processing
- Salary survey
- Information technology
- Risk management
- Human resources

Dina Kartch (bottom row right) is the association's education and conference director. Her assignments include those pertaining to:

- Education
- All IPRA, NPRA and section opportunities
- The annual conference
- All programming and logistics
- Affiliate and section functions
- The BMW Championship childcare program

Heather Weishaar, (bottom row, left) is the association's development and project director. She oversees the following functions:

- Cooperative purchase and ticket programs
- Foundation silent auction and student scholarship program
- Commercial membership recruitment
- Membership mailing lists
- Partnership and sponsorship development
- Coordination with the Health and Wellness Task Force, including the Go! Program and No Employee Left Behind (NELB)
- Coordination with the College and University Relations Committee
- The BMW Championship childcare program

Barry Franks, (top row, left) is IPRA's financial services director, responsible for:

- The budget and audit processes
- Accounts receivable and payable
- Control systems and accounting records
- Cash receipts and financial reporting
- Payroll



Peter M. Murphy
IAPD General Counsel

Parks Agenda Advances in the Legislature

This year the Illinois Association of Park Districts' Legislative Platform moved quickly through the Illinois General Assembly with the majority of the bills being initiated in the Illinois House.

Agency Debt Service Extension and Bond Maturity

One of the association's highest priority bills is **House Bill 242**, which amends the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) to provide that the debt service extension base must be increased each year by the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the previous calendar year. This legislation – sponsored in the House by Representative Elaine Nekritz and in the Senate by Senator Don Harmon – addresses a long-standing problem, which has eroded the debt service base of units of local government by more than 41 percent since the tax cap affected debt service in 1995.

The bill received a roll call vote of 69 to 46 in the Illinois House of Representatives and, at press time, was scheduled for debate and voting in the Senate. This is an important piece of legislation for Illinois park districts, forest preserves and conservation districts.

Another issue involving debt service is **House Bill 4151**, sponsored by Representative Bob Biggins and Senator Carole Pankau, which provides that the principle on bonds issued by a park district may be payable no later than 25 years from their respective date of issue rather than from 20 years, as currently stated in the Park District Code. This gives additional flexibility to Illinois Park Districts in order to fund their ongoing capital needs. The bill passed the House in March and, on May 15, passed the Senate 52 to 0.

Park Board Eligibility

This year, steps were taken to address a concern with the type of qualifications that an individual must have prior to serving on a park district board. **House Bill 2295**, sponsored by Representative Kay Hatcher in the House and by Senator Maggie Crotty in the Senate, prohibits an individual convicted of any infamous crime, bribery, perjury or other felony from being eligible for election to a park

district board. This legislation received widespread support throughout the Illinois General Assembly. It passed the House in March, and, at press time, was scheduled to be debated and voted on by the Senate.

AEDs at Municipalities

Senate Bill 1254, sponsored by Senator Pamela Althoff, which provides municipalities (and therefore municipal recreation departments) an exemption under the Physical Fitness Medical Preparedness Act as it pertains to their outdoor facilities, passed the Illinois Senate, but was subsequently amended in the Illinois House to remove these provisions.

Your presence in Springfield sends a clear and undeniable message to the Illinois General Assembly that there is a strong constituency that believes in the values of parks, recreation and open space.



Among other things, the Physical Fitness Medical Preparedness Act requires certain physical fitness facilities to have at least one Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) on the premises and ensure that there is a trained AED user on staff and present during all physical fitness activities.

Negotiations are currently under way to craft legislation that will amend the Physical Fitness Facility Medical Emergency Preparedness Act to make it workable for all units of local government seeking to comply.

As part of the capital plan, advocates from Partners for Parks and Wildlife, including the IAPD, have requested that one to two percent of the overall \$26 billion plan be set aside for open space acquisition.

Open Meetings Act

House Bill 4165, sponsored by Representative Barbara Flynn Currie, is a substantive rewrite of the Illinois Open Meetings Act and gives the position of public access counselor in the attorney general's office broad powers relating to the interpretation and enforcement of the Act.

Under the legislation, a person who believes that a violation of the act has occurred may file a request for review with the public access counselor not less than sixty days after the alleged violation. Upon receipt of a request for review, a public access counselor determines whether further action is warranted. If the public access counselor determines from the request for review that the alleged violation is unfounded, he or she will so advise the requestor and the public body that no further action shall be undertaken. In all other cases, the public access counselor shall forward a copy of the request for review to the public body within seven working days.

Subsequently, within seven working days after receipt of the request for review, the public body must provide copies of the records requested and fully cooperate with the public access counselor. If the public body fails to furnish specified records, then the attorney general may issue a subpoena. The act then uses 13 pages to describe the role and responsibility of the public access counselor.

Also under the measure, every public body is requested to designate one or more officers or employees to act as its freedom of information officer or officers. Upon receiving a request for a public record, a freedom of information officer shall:

- Note the date of receipt on the written request.
- Compute the day on which the period for response will expire and make a notation of that date on the written request.
- Maintain an electronic or paper copy of a written request, including all documents submitted with the request until the request has been complied with or denied.
- Create a file for the retention of the original request, a copy of the response, a record of written communications with the requester and copies of other communications.

At press time, this bill was the subject of negotiations along with the massive rewrite of the Freedom of Information Act contained in **House Bill 1370**.

Follow the Action on the Web

You can follow the progress of any of the measures that affect park, recreation, conservation and special recreation agencies in Illinois by going to the IAPD Web site at www.ilparks.org. At the home page, scroll over the Public Policy button on the left hand side of the page. From the flyout box that appears when you do this, choose from among the "2009 Priority Bills – House," "2009 Priority Bills – Senate," or "Complete Bill Review" options.

OSLAD

The Illinois Association of Park Districts worked very hard this year on the issues involving the Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) fund.

Legislation diverting money from this fund took place throughout the previous governor's term of office and subsequently added up to more than \$54 million in swept or diverted funds from the OSLAD program. Advocates from across the state have rallied to rectify this situation and have pushed to make sure that no additional OSLAD monies will be diverted. In addition, they have also worked to make sure that the full appropriation for OSLAD be requested by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Open Space Funding in a Capital Plan

This year there has been much discussion about a major capital plan for Illinois to help rebuild the aging infrastructure of the state. As part of the capital plan, advocates from Partners for Parks and Wildlife, including the IAPD, have requested that one to two percent of the overall \$26 billion plan be set aside for open space acquisition.

In support of that request, the Nature Conservancy has funded an Illinois Statewide Conservation Survey. This public opinion poll, initiated on the week of May 11, will form a foundation for voter interest in the subject of open space funding. The survey also tests voter willingness to pay in support of natural resources funding. A full report of the statistical findings will be forthcoming.

Legislative Conference

The Legislative Conference held in Springfield on May 6 was a smashing success with more than 350 park, forest preserve and conservation district elected officials and professional staff attending. In addition, Illinois Parks Day at the Capitol on May 5 was so well represented that it was without question the best Capitol Day that I have seen in Springfield this year. Many thanks to all of you who took the time from your busy schedules to attend. Your presence here in Springfield is a demonstration of the commitment that you have to parks and recreation in your own community and sends a clear and undeniable message to the Illinois General Assembly that there is a strong constituency that believes in the values of parks, recreation and open space. More information and pictures are available on the IAPD Web site at www.ilparks.org. (On the left side of the page scroll to "Resources" and then choose "Photo Gallery" from the flyout menu.)

ILLINOIS PARK DISTRICTS
Local Government Meeting People's Needs

Illinois park districts:

- Offer affordable recreational opportunities to their communities
- Protect open space
- Actively promote wellness in their communities
- Partner effectively with businesses and other local governments
- Increase property values
- Serve people with disabilities

Source: Illinois Park Districts: Citizen Perspectives, a report of the University of Illinois Office of Recreation and Park Resources, Department of Recreation, Sport and Tourism, March 2007.

IAPD
Illinois Association of Park Districts
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Referenda Results – April 7, 2009

At the polls in April, Illinois citizens may have reflected the economic uncertainty of the times, as voters were largely unwilling to levy new taxes or to approve bonds to improve their local park and recreation agencies. Statewide, three of four tax referenda went down to defeat and voters turned down two of three bond referenda. The Grayslake, Lan-Oak and Western Springs Park Districts missed the mark on their efforts to adjust their limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law. Good news came from downstate, where voters from the Urbana Park District chose a slight increase in their property tax bills in order to maintain the level of services they receive from that agency. Voters in Monticello approved the sale of bonds to finance a new pool, and, in Effingham County, voters approved the formation of the Mason Township Park District.

The following table summarizes the types of initiatives, the amounts requested and vote totals. Data for this report were obtained from county election authorities and local news outlets after all precincts were counted but before votes were made official. If you are aware of an initiative that is not included, please contact me at pmurphy@ILparks.org.

Park and Forest Preserve Referenda Results

DISTRICT	JURISDICTION	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PASS/FAIL	VOTES YES/NO
City of Eureka	Woodford County	Bond	Shall bonds in an amount not to exceed \$4,000,000.00 be issued by the City of Eureka, Illinois, for the purpose of paying the cost of constructing an outdoor swimming pool in the City of Eureka, bearing interest at the rate of not to exceed the greater of 9% per annum or 125% of the rate for the most recent date shown in 20-year G. O. Bonds Index of average municipal bond yields as published in the most recent edition of <i>The Bond Buyer</i> , published in New York, New York, at the time the contract is made for the sale of said bonds?	Failed	Yes = 294 No = 965
Grayslake Community Park District	Lake County	Tax	Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for the Grayslake Community Park District, Lake County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to .089% above the limiting rate for levy year 2007 and be equal to .325% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2009?	Failed	Yes = 1,772 No = 2,012
City of Monticello	Piatt County	Bond	Shall the City of Monticello acquire, construct, install and equip a replacement outdoor swimming pool and children's pool, parking, bathhouse and related facilities, improvements and costs, and issue general obligation bonds, bearing interest at a rate not to exceed the limitations of applicable law, to the amount of \$2,000,000 for such purpose?	Pass	Yes = 1,052 No = 853
Kenilworth Park District	Cook County	Advisory	Do you support the renovation of Townley Field, through potentially raising property taxes, which would include a majority utilization of a natural grass surface?	Failed	Yes = 312 No = 387
Kenilworth Park District	Cook County	Advisory	Do you support the renovation of Townley Field, through the 100% commitment of a privately funded Kenilworth citizen group, which would include a majority utilization of an artificial grass surface?	Failed	Yes = 128 No = 562

DISTRICT	JURISDICTION	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	PASS/FAIL	VOTES YES/NO
Lan-Oak Park District	Cook County	Tax	Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for the Lan-Oak Park District, Cook County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to .100% above the limiting rate for levy year 2007 and be equal to .292% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2009? (1) The approximate amount of taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$902,335, and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is \$1,327,302. (2) For the 2009 levy year the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000 is estimated to be \$10. (3) If the proposition is approved, the aggregate extension for 2009 will be determined by the limiting rate set forth in the proposition, rather than the otherwise applicable limiting rate calculated under the provisions of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (commonly known as the Property Tax Cap Law).	Failed	Yes = 1,757 No = 2,737
Mason Township Park District	Effingham	Misc.	Question to establish Mason Township Park District.	Pass	Yes = 165 No = 155
Midlothian Park District	Cook County	Bond	Shall bonds or notes of the Midlothian Park District to the amount of Eight Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$8,500,000.00) be issued for the purpose of building, maintaining, improving and protecting the parks in the Midlothian Park District?	Failed	Yes = 1,502 No = 1,750
Urbana Park District	Champaign County	Tax	Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for the Urbana Park District, Champaign County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.15% above the limiting rate for levy year 2007 and be equal to 0.6778% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2009?	Pass	Yes = 2,868 No = 1,995
Western Springs Park District	Cook County	Tax	Shall the limiting rate under the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law for Western Springs Park District, Cook County, Illinois, be increased by an additional amount equal to 0.048% above the limiting rate for levy year 2007 and be equal to 0.131% of the equalized assessed value of the taxable property therein for levy year 2009? (1) The approximate amount of taxes extendable at the most recently extended limiting rate is \$515,935.00, and the approximate amount of taxes extendable if the proposition is approved is \$815,935.00. (2) For the 2009 levy year, the approximate amount of the additional tax extendable against property containing a single-family residence and having a fair market value at the time of the referendum of \$100,000.00 is estimated to be \$21.84. (3) If the proposition is approved, the aggregate extension for levy year 2009 will be determined by the limiting rate set forth in the proposition, rather than the otherwise applicable limiting rate calculated under the provisions of the Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (commonly known as the Property Tax Cap Law).	Failed	Yes = 633 No = 727



The 2008 IP&R Writing and Photo Contest Awards

“Give Us Your Best Shot” Photo Contest Winners



Nature and Landscapes Category

1st Place
Stan Sunleaf,
Friendship Park Conservatory,
Mt. Prospect Park District
“The Flower”

2nd Place
John Clayton,
Sugar Grove Park District
“Prairie”

Recreation Category

1st Place
Leon Gray,
Rockford Park District
"Dock Dogs Competition"

2nd Place
Michael Terson,
Buffalo Grove Park District
"Stacked Sled"



Sports Category

1st Place
David Kindler,
Park District of Oak Park
"Paul Hruby Ice Arena"

2nd Place
Sherry Manschot,
WDSRA
"Winning the Blue Ribbon"

Wildlife Category

1st Place
Peter Kiger,
Forest Preserve District
of DuPage County
"At Water's Edge"

2nd Place
Erin Romano,
Park Ridge Park District
"Seeking Higher Ground"



magazine writing awards



Best Programming Article

"Sowing the Seeds of Community Involvement – Literally"
by **Dave Margolis**, natural areas manager, Oswegoland Park District
Illinois Parks & Recreation, September/October 2008

Best Administration or Facilities Article

"TopGolf Wood Dale"

by **Greg Kuhs**, executive director of the Wood Dale Park District
and
Tony Perry, general manager of the Salt Creek Golf Club
Illinois Parks & Recreation, March/April 2008



Best Environment Article

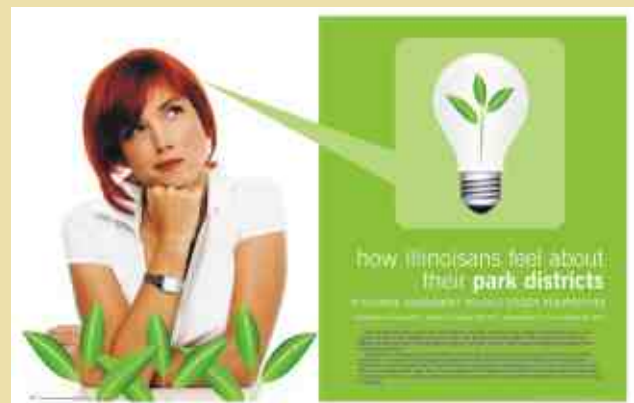
"Where Have all the Children Gone? Indoors."

by **LeeAnn Fisk**, recreation supervisor, Homewood-Flossmoor Park District
and
Sydney L. Sklar, PhD, CTRS, University of St. Francis
Illinois Parks & Recreation, January/February 2008

Best Research Article

"How Illinoisans Feel About Their Park Districts"

by **Michael A. Mulvaney**, Ph.D., Eastern Illinois University
William R. McKinney, CPRP, Ph.D., University of Illinois
Gary McDonald, Ph.D., University of Illinois
and
Robin Hall, CPRP, University of Illinois
Illinois Parks & Recreation, July/August 2008



Writing Award Judges

Dr. Nick DiGrino, Western Illinois University
Dr. Regina Glover, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale
Dr. Cynthia J. Wachter, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Photo Contest Judge

Chris Young, outdoors section editor,
State Journal-Register, Springfield



The Seed that became Special Olympics was Planted in Illinois by a Recreation Pioneer

by Barbara DiGuido and Jane Hodgkinson

This past year, Special Olympics celebrated its 40th anniversary. The event is particularly meaningful for us in Illinois, the site of the first Special Olympics games.

One of those who had big dreams for people with intellectual disabilities was a native son of Illinois who helped plant all the right seeds that blossomed into the Special Olympics movement. William H. Freeberg of Southern Illinois University was a man who got things done – especially for people with intellectual disabilities at a time when few people were paying attention to them. Raised in an orphanage, “Freebie” was an advocate for those who were left behind by society. His lifelong advocacy would benefit people with disabilities in a way that would bring about attitudinal changes over the next sixty years and help his students develop the special recreation movement in Illinois.

This article records the history of the games in Illinois and how the Special Olympics movement has spread to 180 countries around the world. You’ll also learn how athletes’ roles are expanding in the organization, about the new program for children ages two to seven and how to start a Special Olympics program in your area.

Barbara DiGuido has been director of communications and media relations for Special Olympics Illinois since 1995 and can be reached at bdiguido@soill.org.

Jane Hodgkinson has been the executive director of the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association since 1981 and can be reached at janeh@wdsra.com. She was a founding board member of the Illinois Special Olympics and a teaching assistant for Dr. Freeberg.



SRAs Gone Green

by John Liuzzi

The push to go green is a force that has now driven its way into the fabric of our culture. What used to be a passion for only the most environmentally savvy is now commonplace.

Parks have been seeking to preserve their green spaces for as long as they have had them. But now with the whole world paying attention, the people you serve may want to know what your agency doing to help the environment. And what’s true for park agencies is true for SRAs. Which begs the question, where do SRAs fit in this new green landscape? The answer is: right in the middle of it. SRAs, like all other park and recreation agencies, are interested and motivated to make a difference.

From changing light bulbs to changing attitudes, SRAs are making a green difference. Go online to find out how.

John Liuzzi is a recreation specialist at Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association and a member of the IPRA environmental committee.

Read these Full Stories on the Web

At the IAPD Web Site (www.ILparks.org) ...

Roll to the “Publications” tab on the left side of the home page. Click on the “Illinois Parks and Recreation Magazine” option to take you to the magazine pages. You’ll find links to all Web Xtras on the bottom of the page.

At the IPRA Web Site...

www.IPRAonline.com/resources/publications



fun

equal **fun** for everyone
through **inclusion**

by Sherry Manschot and Tammy Kerrins, CTRS

inclusion

Building Positive Inclusion Experiences for Lifelong Recreation Customers

Meeting a room full of new people can be intimidating. Learning how to play baseball, when everyone else is already so good at it, can be daunting. Trying to fit in with peers who may not understand can be overwhelming. Bringing recreational opportunities to residents with special needs is not any of these things.

Individuals with special needs approach recreation in a slightly different manner. And sometimes it can be overwhelming. But with a solid inclusion program supported by both a park and recreation agency and the local special recreation association (SRA), the experience can be rewarding for everyone and can push the doors to recreation wide open.

What is Inclusion?

With the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, individuals who have special needs have the right to choose whether they wish to: a) participate in programs specifically designed for those with special needs; b) participate in programs with their peers in their home park and recreation agency; or, c) a combination of both. If participation in a park agency program is the choice, inclusion services designed to meet an individual's specific need within a program provide every opportunity for the participant to perform at the highest level of his or her ability.

We, as recreation providers, need to encourage and facilitate the inclusion process by learning how best to accommodate and meet an individual's needs so that we are providing equal fun for everyone. With the partnership of your SRA, park agencies can meet the ADA requirements, the needs of residents and encourage lifelong recreation customers.

Communication Determines Success

The key to success is working together as a cohesive team: park agency staff, parents and SRA staff must all work cooperatively for the inclusion process to succeed. Good communication among all the partners will assure a positive inclusion experience.

The process begins at the point of registration. A specific request for services has to be made by the family to the park agency. "Parents are key to identifying needs and making special requests," says Megan Raitt, preschool and camps supervisor at the Wheaton Park District. "The more information they can communicate to us, the sooner we can coordinate services with our SRA. Additionally, it is important for the family to keep in contact with us if anything changes or there is a need to drop or switch a program."

The request is then sent to the SRA where an open assessment of the particular needs of the individual begins. What type of disability does the child have and at what level can he or she function? Is the child participating to develop a new skill, looking for social interaction or trying to elevate his or her level of independence? SRAs work closely with the family to determine the goal of the inclusion support, and then the SRA and the family continue to work together to determine the level of support deemed necessary.

A Brief Introduction to Inclusion Services

Identifying the ideal assistance and/or modifications for an individual with special needs can be tricky. There is no guidebook or magic matrix to refer to. A person's disability is as unique to that individual as is his or her personality. So there is no 'one size fits all' inclusion. In fact, building an inclusion strategy starts with a professional trained in therapeutic recreation listening to the family's goals and wishes for their child. It takes a park agency professional with a strong desire to include every resident in the agency's programs. It takes good communication between the parties working closely together to provide the appropriate modifications or assistance to create a healthy, open environment for the participant to feel comfortable and enjoy every recreational experience.

The form that the actual modifications or assistance take varies. Inclusion services can be as simple as slight modifications to the materials or equipment used. Perhaps golf clubs can be shortened so that a child using a wheelchair can take lessons. Maybe inclusion takes the form of modifying the goals or the level of difficulty in an art class. Inclusion services can also include the assistance of a one-on-one buddy. A buddy can be someone who is dedicated to working with the child to keep his or her focus and to guide him or her throughout the program.

Additionally, inclusion services are far from static. As a child grows and develops, his or her needs change. So too must the type of services used. A child who required an inclusion buddy early on may find that only slight material modifications are needed years later.

Once again, communication between all parties involved becomes a crucial element. Building that relationship between the family, the SRA staff and park agency staff will allow for a positive inclusion experience today and in the future.

Support may come in the form of training for park agency staff, providing adaptive class materials, providing a one-on-one support staff, or anywhere in between. Once the necessary accommodations are determined, it is up to the SRA and the park agency to facilitate the process.

Creating the Positive Inclusion Experience

By the time an individual has registered for a park agency program, he or she has made a conscious decision to participate with peers in an environment that is comprised of mostly people without disabilities. Remember that each situation is unique, as each person is an individual, so each inclusion situation is going to be different. However, the consistent expectation is that each individual will be fully included in the entire program. He or she is to be treated as a fully involved member of the group. Becoming separate within the group is not a positive inclusion situation.

True inclusion is most successful with a combination of activities, ideas and communication with everyone involved. SRAs can provide the training necessary with insight into the specifics of the disability, suggestions particular to the program and guidance on how to connect with the park agency instructor. For instance, a child with a cochlear implant may have some, but limited, hearing. Among other things, the SRA staff could alert the instructor of the need to have eye-to-eye contact with the child when giving directions. This assures that the child is aware of every communication made and gives the instructor the necessary tools to keep the program running smoothly.

In situations in which a participant needs an inclusion staff member constantly by his or her side, the SRA or the park and

activities. When both staff member and participant are fully immersed in the program, a positive experience can be achieved.

It is important to note here that, at times, if a staff member must work one-on-one with the participant with disabilities, the family may request that the participant not be made aware of that staff member's role. The hope may be for the child to build his or her independence and social skills without assistance, while also having assistance always (and perhaps necessarily) available. Whether or not the child is aware of the additional staff, one of the goals of inclusion is to create a seamless environment. That is, an atmosphere where it is not visible to either the child with disabilities or anyone else within the program that a staff member is assigned to one particular child. An SRA inclusion specialist can provide guidance to the park agency on exactly how this can be accomplished.

Summer sports and camp seasons seem to bring a surge of inclusion requests. It is not uncommon for those requests to require an inclusion buddy. Creating a seamless environment is easy to achieve with a little forethought. For instance, be sure that the inclusion staff member is treated as part of the coaching or camp staff from the very beginning. Include that staff member in the planning process, be sure he or she receives the same staff or team shirts that the rest of the staff wear, assign him or her a group of children to work with, not just the child with special needs. Remember that the inclusion buddy is there to make sure that the child is fully involved within the group and not singled out.

From the front desk staff, who may initiate a conversation about the potential need for services, on up to the executive-levels of a park agency and an SRA, all involved must have clear expectations and an understanding of the goals of inclusion. There must be comprehensive training of park agency staff, and qualified SRA support must be in place as all are essential ingredients for positive inclusion experiences.

The Future of Inclusion

Inclusion services continue to grow at a steady rate. At the IAPD/IPRA conference held this January, several trends were identified. Overall, SRAs are reporting an increase in the number of requests for services, as well as an increase in the number of participants with 'invisible' disabilities (those with less visible disabilities), significant challenges and autism. Many SRAs are finding it necessary to increase inclusion staff to adequately manage the increasing requests. In 1992, Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA), covering the western suburbs of DuPage County, hired a single half-time coordinator to oversee the inclusion requests. Now, in 2009, WDSRA has three busy full-time staff members to facilitate all the requests.

In fiscal year 2006-2007, WDSRA facilitated inclusion services in more than 1,250 situations – more than double from five years before and nearly quadruple from ten years before. In fiscal year 2007-2008, the number of inclusion situations rose another 18 percent to 1,478 and is expected to continue to rise in the current fiscal year.

Requests for adults and seniors seem to be increasing slightly. The majority of requests are for children between the ages of three and thirteen years old. This age group is registering for a variety of programs, including swimming, day camps, before- and after-school programs, gymnastics, soccer and baseball. Working closely with families and park agencies are without a doubt the keys to smoothly managing the volume of requests.

WDSRA, like most SRAs, invests in its support staff. The SRA offers training sessions regarding the inclusion process, empathy training, behavior management, various special needs, activity adaptation,



Making inclusion staff part of the overall summer camp staff can go a long way in creating a seamless inclusion environment. Here, James takes a well-deserved break during summer camp with inclusion staff Cassie and Mandy.

recreation agency can provide a trained person to 'buddy up' with the participant. It is essential for the park agency instructors to be trained to manage the program so that the inclusion staff is treated as part of the overall team, and is not noticeably singled out to work only with the participant to which he or she is assigned. This allows the inclusion staff to blend into the program more completely. Separating the participant and inclusion staff member from the group defeats the goal of inclusion as group interactions and dynamics disappear. So do the benefits of social interaction and social growth through recreational



Steven and his inclusion buddy enjoy a quick break during summer camp.



Enjoying summer camp with inclusion buddy.

structuring for success and best practices in working with individuals with special needs. Trained and knowledgeable support staff is not a luxury but definitely a necessity.

Communication with park agency staff is more important than ever now. Reaching out to staff and building relationships are keys to managing registrations and staffing especially as requests are on the rise. It is important for all involved to understand the value of a positive inclusion experience for a person with special needs and the overall importance it can have in personal development.

Working with the Naperville Park District, WDSRA began attending coaches meetings to explain first-hand the importance of inclusion services and the overall goal. According to Program Manager Brock Atwell, "It became a win-win situation for all of us. WDSRA came in and explained to the coaches how to make the inclusion buddy part of the team. We all understand how inclusion should work, but in 10 to 15 minutes they were able to give specific suggestions that made the whole process go smoothly for the entire team." He adds, "It made a huge difference. After all, the entire team wins when there is a successful experience for every player and coach".

WDSRA regularly offers training and disability awareness for park agency staff, keeps staff in the loop on the needs of the individual and provides the appropriate type of inclusion services for all requests.

Creating Lifelong Recreation Customers

Living in a culture with an abundance of recreation opportunities affords us with many positive recreation experiences. As recreation professionals, we need to strive to make sure that we afford those same positive experiences to all of our customers. Providing successful inclusion situations for each individual with special needs can be achieved with a clear understanding of the goals of inclusion, the appropriate training for all staff and solid communication between all parties.

After all, great experiences are the key to retaining current and future park agency customers. Creating positive inclusion experiences and providing equal fun for those with special needs goes a long way in creating lifelong recreation customers. And, creating lifelong recreation customers is important to all of us.

Sherry Manschot

is the marketing/PR manager for the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association.

Tammy Kerrins, CTRS,

is the inclusion manager for the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association.

Resources for More Information

To learn more about inclusion and special recreation in general:

Visit the **Special Recreation Association Network of Illinois (SRANI)** website at www.specialrecreation.org. Be sure to view the videos on inclusion and special recreation.

Attend the **National Institute on Recreation**

Inclusion (NIRI), which will be held September 9-13, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX. Attendees will learn valuable techniques necessary to design, implement and evaluate recreation programs for customers with and without disabilities; explore new ways to enhance current programs; learn how best to use staff resources while building partnerships within the community for greater impact; and receive updates on the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. The 2010 conference will be held in the Chicagoland area.

Join the **Inclusion Committee of the Participant**

Services Division of ITRS, which is committed to providing positive recreation experiences to individuals with special needs in an inclusive setting. Through advocacy, education, networking and training professionals, the group promotes independence and fosters choices for healthy leisure lifestyles. For more information, contact Gretchen Dennis, committee chair at West Suburban Special Recreation Association (WSSRA), (847) 455-2100 or www.wssra.net.

Contact **Tammy Kerrins**, CTRS, manager of

inclusion, Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA) at (630) 681-0962 ext 116 or tammyk@wdsra.com or your local SRA inclusion professional.

PEOPLE & PLACES



IAPD Chairman Mike Krost with Skokie Park District Executive Director Mark Schneiderman and Board President Michael Reid.



IAPD Chairman Mike Krost with Fox Valley Park District Director Steve Messerli and Trustee Linda Cole.



IAPD Chairman Mike Krost with Oregon Park District Director Jim Coumts and Board President Steven Pennock.

Three Agencies Earn Distinguished Status in 2008

The Illinois Association of Park Districts and the Illinois Park and Recreation Association recognized the achievements of the **Skokie Park District**, the **Fox Valley Park District** and the **Oregon Park District** at the IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference in January. These three agencies earned distinguished agency status in 2008 through the associations' joint distinguished park and recreation accreditation program.

Currently, 39 Illinois park and recreation agencies have earned distinguished agency status. Attaining distinguished agency status demonstrates that an agency is among the leaders in the state of Illinois in bringing top-quality services to residents.

The program was formed in 1993 by a task force of park and recreation professionals and board members and commissioners. It measures agencies by a set of prescribed standards for general management, finance and recreation services.

Information about the distinguished agency accreditation program can be found by clicking the "Programs" button on the left hand side of the IAPD home page at www.ilparks.org.



Illinois Parks Advocates Seek Positive Changes in Washington

With a new administration and a new Congress promising to address everything from energy and climate change to the surface transportation reauthorization and healthcare reform, this large delegation of park professionals and commissioners from Illinois attended the National Park and Recreation Association's National Legislative Forum on Parks and Recreation held in March in conjunction with NRPA's Mid-Year meeting in Washington, D.C. to promote a public parks agenda. Shown here with U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (back row, far left) and Roland Burris (center row, wearing a blue shirt and matching kerchief), the Illinois delegation was on hand to advocate for the advancement of national policies that promote health through physical activity, that reconnect children with nature and that protect open space for recreation.



Rockford Park District Kicks Off Centennial Year

On March 27, 2009, 100 years to the date of formation, approximately 600 friends of the Rockford Park District gathered to celebrate the 100 year history of the District with an official kick-off to the centennial year with an original theatrical and musical production on stage at Rockford College's Maddox Theatre, a brief partner recognition program and a reception with cake and recreation games.

The all-volunteer production was called "Building a Dream, A Century of the Rockford Park District," written by two members of the local arts community, Jessica MacDonald and Rufus Cadigan.

Retired former Executive Director **Webbs Norman** (above right) was featured in a comic relief role paired with local actor, Rod MacDonald, reading some of the humorous highlights of the District's history from local newspapers.

The production kicked off the anniversary celebration year, with many special events and extra activities, including flower plantings, 100 year graphics and a history book written by Webbs Norman. Details can be found by visiting <http://www.rockfordparkdistrict.org/100years>.

Gurnee Welcomes New Community Relations Manager

Kristi Chirempes is the new cultural arts, special events and community relations manager at the Gurnee Park District. Chirempes majored in recreation and park administration at Illinois State University. She began her career at the Hoffman Estates Park District and later worked at the Round Lake Area Park District. Chirempes has extensive experience developing processes for including children with special needs into general recreation programs. In her role at the Gurnee Park District, she is responsible for special events, dance programming, theatre and drama programs, senior programming and teen programming.



William and Alice Howenstine with the 2009 George and Barbara Fell Award.

Founder of McHenry County Conservation District Selected for Land Conservation Award

William Howenstine of McHenry was selected by the Natural Land Institute to receive the 2009 George and Barbara Fell Award for his distinguished achievements in land conservation. The award recognizes individuals who have significantly advanced natural area preservation, management and restoration in northern Illinois in the tradition of the founders of the Natural Land Institute.

Howenstine was professor of geography and environmental studies at Northeastern Illinois University for 35 years. He helped form The Land Conservancy of McHenry County and the Illinois Association of Conservation Districts. In addition, Howenstine was one of the original founders of the McHenry County Conservation District in 1971, serving on its board for twelve years from 1971 to 1979 and again from 1996 to 2001. The district has protected more than 23,200 acres of open space in McHenry County.

"During the early years at the McHenry County Conservation District, Bill Howenstine's efforts saved important geological features located within Glacial Park Conservation Area in Ringwood from a highway expansion project," said Judith Barnard, president of the Natural Land Institute. "As a result of Bill's testimony at that time, all highway public works projects must now go through the environmental assessment process."

Howenstine also worked with Attorney Richard Babcock of Woodstock in the 1970s to create the language for conservation agreements that restrict future use of properties to protect natural land or farmland that has wildlife, agricultural, historic or scenic resources. The first such agreement in Illinois was given by Richard Babcock to the Natural Land Institute.

"In addition to the thousands of acres protected through these agreements by individual landowners throughout Illinois, Howenstine has protected 102 acres of his own land, including a donation of 20 acres of fen wetlands to the McHenry County Conservation District," Barnard said.

Founded in 1958, the Natural Land Institute is celebrating 50 years of conserving forests, prairies and wetlands in northern Illinois. The George and Barbara Fell Award was presented at the group's annual meeting on March 24.



Kevin Goss



Andrea Hampton



Darlene Marek



Brian McDermott



Matt Poole



Anne Scheppele

New Employees Join Elmhurst Park District

Kevin Goss has accepted the position of golf course superintendent at the Elmhurst Park District. He oversees the maintenance of Sugar Creek Golf Course, as well as personnel management. Goss was previously employed as a chemical technician and maintenance worker for Sugar Creek Golf Course. He is currently pursuing a certification in turf and landscape management at the College of DuPage.

Andrea Hampton is the district's new financial operations supervisor at Courts Plus fitness center. She oversees the daily balancing and deposits, as well as the monthly and annual membership billing for the facility. She also works with management to coordinate budget preparation for enterprise services. She has been employed at the National University of Health Sciences as a continuing education coordinator and is scheduled to graduate from Elmhurst College this month with a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in accounting.

Darlene Marek is now the administrative assistant at Wilder Administrative Building. She previously served as a registration clerk at Wagner Community Center. She has also been employed as an office manager at Total Décor, Inc. and served as a flight attendant for United Airlines. Marek graduated from Triton College with an associate's degree in accounting and business administration.

Brian McDermott is the division manager of enterprise services at Courts Plus. He oversees Courts Plus, concessions and hospitality management. McDermott has worked as marketing coordinator and manager of fitness programs at Advocate Fitness at Lutheran General Hospital. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a master's degree in sports management.

Matt Poole joined the Elmhurst Park District as a park ambassador. Poole graduated from Ohio University and recently completed his master's degree in recreational administration from George Williams College. As a park ambassador, Poole is the 'face of parks in the park district.' His position entails issuing permits, scheduling athletic fields, talking to people in the community about their questions or concerns and enforcing the park district's rules.

Anne Scheppele, CPRP, was recently hired as the district's facilities maintenance supervisor. Her previous experience includes center supervisor, facilities manager, recreation supervisor and after school program supervisor at various Illinois park districts. Scheppele is a certified American Red Cross instructor for Standard First Aid, Community First Aid and Safety CPR/AED.



Schaumburg Hires Farm Operations Manager

Evan Zimmerman is the new farm operations coordinator at Volkening Heritage Farm at Spring Valley. Spring Valley is Schaumburg Park District's refuge of 135 acres of fields, forests, marshes and streams that also contains a natural history museum, visitor center and 1880s living history farm.

Zimmerman is responsible for the care and maintenance of the farm's livestock, period and reproduction tools and equipment, buildings and grounds, as well as the supervision of other staff and volunteers who assist with these duties. The position also entails working with the Heritage Farm program coordinator to effectively interpret the site's agricultural history for daily visitors, program attendees, visiting school groups and the general public.

Zimmerman previously worked at a living history farm in Urbandale, Iowa, and interned at Carriage Hill Metro Park and Farm in Dayton, Ohio. He graduated from Northern Kentucky University with a bachelor's degree in history and a minor in geography.



Collinsville hires supervisor for Splash City Family Waterpark

In March, **Stephanie Whittington** joined the staff of the Collinsville Area Recreation District (CARD) as the aquatic supervisor for Splash City Family Waterpark. As the aquatic supervisor, Whittington is responsible for the waterpark's management, including

hiring, training and evaluating staff; enforcing policies; overseeing maintenance; responding to emergencies; and working with other staff to promote Splash City.

Before coming to CARD, Whittington worked for three years as the aquatic program coordinator for the Bolingbrook Park District.

Rockford Park District's City of Gardens Awarded Grants

The **Rockford Park District's City of Gardens** program recently received three grants totaling \$4,650 from the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois. City of Gardens Program Director **Ruth Miller** said that City of Gardens planned on using \$3,000 to work with neighborhood groups on a reforestation effort and a seedling giveaway event this spring. In addition to receiving grants to assist in reforestation efforts, City of Gardens also was awarded a \$1,650 "Growing Strong – Community Gardening" grant, which will be used to develop a neighborhood garden.



Nancy Haring

Chris Pollack

Woodridge Park District Hires Senior Coordinator and Landscape Specialist

Nancy Haring is the new senior coordinator for the Woodridge Park District. She has a recreation and park administration degree from Illinois State University. Prior to joining the Woodridge Park District, Haring worked at the Oswegoland Park District as a leisure services supervisor and at the Bolingbrook Park District as the program manager for seniors and special events.

In January, **Chris Pollack** joined the district as a landscape specialist. He received a B.A. in biology and anthropology from North Central College in Naperville and has completed graduate coursework in natural resources and environmental sciences. Pollack came from Darien Park District, where he worked as a horticulturist for almost three years. Prior to that, he worked in both the public and private sectors with a focus on natural area management, erosion control and landscaping.

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Denise Delanty



Lamont Jones

Rockford Hires Marketing and Communications Manager and Youth Sports Coordinator

Denise Delanty is Rockford Park District's new marketing and communications manager. Delanty, who has more than 15 years marketing and public relations experience, was previously employed as the marketing, communications and public relations manager for the Chicago Rockford International Airport. Delanty is responsible for the overall marketing, communication and public relations activities for the Rockford Park District. She was hired to assume the responsibilities of **Karen Weis**, who moved to the executive director's team center in January.

Lamont Jones is the district's new youth sports coordinator. For the past six years, Jones has introduced thousands of Rockford kids to flag football as the program coordinator for NFL Flag. While coordinator of that program, Jones said that several hundred of the league's participants took part in the NFL Flag Regional Tournaments hosted by the Chicago Bears, Indianapolis Colts and the St. Louis Rams. As the park district's new youth sports coordinator, Jones is responsible for supervising tennis, youth basketball, FIRE track and field, NFL Flag/Cheer. He will also create several new youth sports programs for the district.

Entertainers Wanted for Park District Conservation Day at the Illinois State Fair



Summer is just around the corner, and registrations for entertainment groups to perform on Park District Conservation Day at the Illinois State Fair on Saturday August 22nd are now being accepted.

This is an opportunity for your agency's dancers, singers, tumblers, bands, orchestras, zoos and theater groups (or other unique talent) to perform or exhibit in front of thousands of fairgoers. The goal of Park District Conservation Day is to emphasize the benefits park, recreation, special recreation and conservation agencies bring to the citizens of Illinois. Performers receive free parking and free admission to the state fair.

To register on-line, go to www.ilparks.org, click on "Calendar of Events," scroll down to August and click on "Park District Conservation Day." Call IAPD at (217) 523-4554 for more information.

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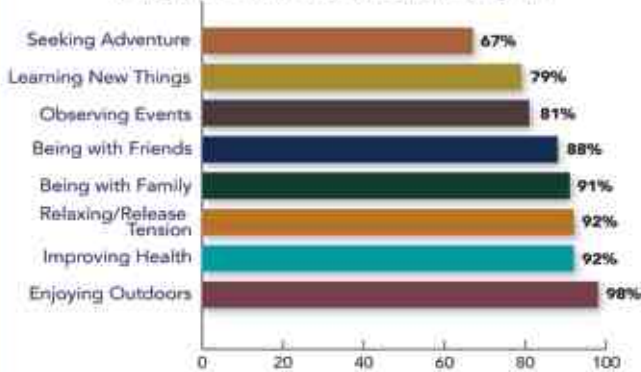
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The Seed that became Special Olympics Was Planted in Illinois by a Recreation Pioneer

by Barbara DiGuido and Jane Hodgkinson

This past year, Special Olympics celebrated its 40th anniversary. The event is particularly meaningful for us in Illinois, the site of the first Special Olympics games. Special Olympics Illinois' chosen theme for the year was: "Dream it. Dare it. Do it." to honor those who have dared to reach beyond expectations and achieve their personal bests in sports and in life.

One of those who had big dreams for people with intellectual disabilities was a native son of Illinois who helped plant all the right seeds that blossomed into the Special Olympics movement. William H. Freeberg of Southern Illinois University was a man who got things done - especially for people with intellectual disabilities (who were called "the mentally retarded" in those days) - at a time when few people were paying attention to them. Raised in an orphanage, "Freebie" was an advocate for those who were left behind by society. His lifelong advocacy would benefit people with disabilities in a way that would bring about attitudinal changes over the next sixty years and help his students develop the special recreation movement in Illinois.

Peers recognized Freebie as a visionary, even in his twenties. While working on his doctorate in recreation at Indiana University in 1947, he wrote his dissertation about the insurance crisis that would strike the public recreation industry. This crisis did



William H. Freeberg of Southern Illinois University was a mentor to many of those who developed the Special Olympics.

not come about until the mid-eighties. His degree was the first known doctorate in recreation in the country.

In 1950, Dr. Freeberg headed the SIU Recreation Department and persuaded University President

Delyte Morris to acquire a nearby piece of land in the Shawnee National Forest, which became the Camp at Little Grassy Lake (now known as Camp Little Giant at Touch of Nature Environmental Center). He established the first residential summer camping program for people with physical and intellectual disabilities affiliated with a university in 1951. This camp was one of the first accessible camps in the United States. He wanted to demonstrate how sports and recreation could give people with disabilities confidence and improve their quality of life.

In 1952, Freebie established one of the first college-level curricula in the nation that centered on recreation and outdoor education. Ultimately, students from more than twenty-five different disciplines would use the Camp at Little Grassy Lake for practical hands-on learning experiences.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, sister of President John F. Kennedy, also had a summer camp for people with intellectual disabilities - in her backyard. She traveled to Carbondale to see Dr. Freeberg's camp in 1961 and was very impressed. She would later ask him to join a select group, including Dr. Frank Hayden of Canada, to help develop a program of

recreation for people with intellectual disabilities.

On October 21, 1964, a telegram sent to Southern Illinois University President Delyte Morris from Mrs. Shriver's husband stated:

Respectfully request SIU
lend services of Dr. William Freeberg full-time to Kennedy Foundation for three months for purpose of coordinating Foundation's nationwide recreation program for the mentally retarded. Foundation will reimburse Dr. Freeberg's salary and expenses. Recreation program involves expanding university community and institutional recreation services for retarded and training of professionals. Dr. Freeberg only man in country with sufficient grasp and knowledge of problem to carry out this most important and vital program.

- Sargent Shriver,
Executive Director,
Kennedy Foundation



Over the years, students such as these in the 1960s, came from more than twenty-five different disciplines to the Camp at Little Grassy Lake for practical hands-on learning experiences that benefited people with disabilities. William H. Freeberg established the camp in the Shawnee National Forest in 1951.

Dr. Freeberg started conducting workshops for recreation professionals from around the country, teaching them techniques in working with people with disabilities. The Chicago Park District sent ten representatives in 1965, including a young woman named Anne McGlone who, within a few years, worked with Dr. Freeberg in outlining the basics for a "Special Olympics Games that would grow into a worldwide movement beyond anyone's dreams. Soon after Dr. Freeberg began the workshops, more than 600 camps were started around the country.

Dr. Freeberg continued to touch lives and to dream big dreams for those with intellectual disabilities until his retirement in 1978 and beyond. He almost single-handedly organized the Friends of Touch of Nature to secure funding to keep the facility going so it could continue to provide strength, hope and his vision of helping those with disabilities lead constructive, productive and normal lives through sports and recreation.

His students went into park districts and special recreation associations carrying Freebie's philosophy of participation in life by all. He often told his students that he could teach a person with a disability almost anything in a recreation setting. Special students could learn math, for example, through bowling by counting the pins knocked down. Moreover, they would enjoy it and want to learn more.

Dr. Freeberg died in 1987. Touch of Nature Environmental Center now operates year-round in a number of capacities serving as a conference center, research site and provider of therapeutic recreation programs and services to the Southern Illinois University and the larger community. Each year, the inspiration of Dr. Freeberg is especially felt at the annual Special Olympics Illinois Southern/Area 15 Spring Games.

The First Special Olympics Games at Soldier Field Emphasize Abilities

In the summer of 1968, a young physical education teacher at the Chicago Park District was busy organizing an event that would change the way the world looks at people with intellectual disabilities forever.

Anne McGlone Burke was an instructor at West Pullman Park in Chicago and a consultant to the commissioners of the Chicago Park District for a big event she conceived for July 20, 1968: The first International Special Olympics Games, also known as The Chicago Special Olympics. Today, Burke is a justice on the Illinois Supreme Court.

"The world was a very different place back in 1968 for individuals with disabilities," she says. "It is shocking today to think back to how primitive the popular understanding was concerning how best to



In 1968, Anne McGlone (now Illinois Supreme Court Justice Anne M. Burke), seen here at the Special Olympics Illinois' 40th Anniversary Gala, worked with Dr. William Freeberg in outlining the basics for a "Special" Olympics Games.

work with and educate individuals with mental disabilities. Most things we take for granted today, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and a generally positive cultural sensitivity to people with disabilities, just did not exist [in 1968]."

Anne McGlone had been one of ten recreation teachers from Chicago who took Dr. William Freeberg's workshop in 1965 at Southern Illinois University. She learned techniques for working at the park program with children with intellectual disabilities. Chicago became a municipal pioneer in the creation of these programs.

McGlone's great success in developing the abilities of the children at West Pullman Park made her a natural for a special committee appointed by Chicago Park District President William McFetridge to help raise awareness of the special programs that were now at 19 locations, with 900 children participating.

It was her brilliant concept to model a citywide track meet after the Olympic Games that ignited the enthusiasm and support of Mayor Richard J. Daley, the city of Chicago, the Chicago Park District and ultimately Eunice Kennedy Shriver. Dr. Freeberg helped Burke mold the proposal for the Joseph P.



Eunice Kennedy Shriver (shown here at the Special Olympics World Games in 2007), through the Kennedy Foundation, encouraged the expansion of the 1968 Chicago Special Olympics to include children from across the U.S. and Canada.

Kennedy, Jr. Foundation who, not only agreed to provide a grant, but asked that it be expanded to include children from around the U.S. and Canada.

The Chicago Park District and its recreation professionals took the lead for the first Special Olympics competition. The athletes competed in the baseball throw, 50-yard dash, 100-yard dash, relay race, high jump, standing broad jump and swimming.

In the *Chicago Tribune* on July 2, 1968 reporter David Condon quotes Anne McGlone: "The Olympic touch will be everywhere, we'll have the Great Lakes Band, parade of contestants and the Star Spangled Banner. We'll have our own Olympic flame above the south scoreboard. In fact, the Soldier Field set-up may be superior to any regular Olympic arena ever seen because in the same area as the track events, we'll have a swimming pool and a plastic rink for ice hockey."

For the first time, children with intellectual disabilities would have the focus on their abilities, not their disabilities. And, just like Olympic athletes, they would go home with medals for their efforts.

Everyone knows what a big success those first games were at Soldier Field: A thousand athletes from the U.S. and Canada competed in track and field and aquatics. What happened afterward was a movement that could not be stopped.

Reflecting on the movement's success Anne McGlone Burke said: "After the first games, people did open their eyes to what people with disabilities

could do - the dream for them became a reality. The future for Special Olympics is to keep prodding society to remember there are special populations in the world that we need to have empathy for and make sure they have a good quality of life."

Growing the Special Olympics Program in Illinois over 40 Years

Special Olympics, at its core, is a grassroots program, relying on the support and involvement of volunteers and agencies to help implement the year-round program here in Illinois. Special Olympics Illinois' partnerships with the parks and recreation industry, special recreation associations, schools, residential and workshop facilities and agencies that serve people with developmental disabilities have resulted in a better quality of life for each person served.

Each of these partners has played a critical role in providing the training and opportunities for competition that the athletes so richly deserve. Each of these partners can rightly take great pride in how they have integrated the joy and achievements of sports



A medal ceremony from the 1968 Special Olympic Games in Chicago.

into the overall human development of their participants.

Special Olympics Illinois' headquarters is in Normal and affiliated with Illinois State University, where the annual state basketball tournament and Summer Games were held. Additional state tournaments are held in various cities around the state, including the state winter games in Galena. The state is divided in 17 local area programs, each headed by an area director, who organizes local competitions and fundraisers. Regional training directors hold training sessions for coaches throughout the year.

Every two years, Illinois athletes compete as part of Team U.S.A. in world winter or summer games. In 2009, the Special Olympics World Winter Games are in Boise, Idaho. The 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games were in Shanghai, China and the 2011 summer games will be in Athens, Greece.

For the first time ever, a USA National Games was held in 2006 at Iowa State University, giving even more Illinois athletes a chance to travel and experience the thrill of a multi-day Olympics event out of state. The next national games are in 2010 in Nebraska.

In the past decade, the emergence of the Athlete Leadership Program has provided even more opportunities for Special Olympics athletes. They may become global messengers, speaking on behalf of the program to groups large and small; sports officials, coaches or members of the Special Olympics Illinois Board of Directors, representing their peers. Two athletes from Illinois - Sophia Wesolowsky of Chicago and Tony Hill of Belleville - have served as international global messengers, traveling the world on behalf of Special Olympics.

Since its inception, Special Olympics has provided training and competition for children eight years and older, as well as for adults with intellectual disabilities. But a dynamic program has taken shape in the last few years that is changing the face of Special Olympics. The new Special Olympics Young Athletes Program for children ages two to seven has been launched around the state in homes, schools and recreational facilities to critical acclaim. It develops important coordination and motor skills in children with developmental disabilities and their



Marc Janovics of Elk Grove Gymnastics School and Northwest Special Recreation Association practices before competing at the 2007 World Games in Shanghai.

peers, enabling them to later successfully train and compete in the formal Special Olympics program.

The Benefits of Special Olympics for the Athletes

The benefits of Special Olympics participation has been measured in multiple studies released by Special Olympics, Inc. based in Washington, D.C. One of the most important ones is the 2005 report: "Changing Lives through Sport - A Report Card on the Impact of Special Olympics."

The research shows that there is an overwhelming consensus among Special Olympics athletes, coaches and family members that there is significant improvement in athletes' sense of self, social skills and social interactions due to their participation in Special Olympics. The evidence from these studies clearly illustrates that Special Olympics enables people with intellectual disabilities to demonstrate

and experience sports competence and suggests that gains in self-confidence, self-esteem, employment and socialization can carry beyond Special Olympics

These conclusions can be verified at any Special Olympics event by talking to the parents and siblings of the men and women, boys and girls involved in Special Olympics.

Celebrating the Athletes

According to the Doug Snyder, President and CEO of Special Olympics Illinois, "The courage and passion of Special Olympics athletes have introduced the world to individuals with intellectual disabilities as people first. By interacting with volunteers, by proudly wearing their medals and ribbons, by doing interviews and even speeches, they have done what no government policy or event could have done on its own. And that is worth celebrating. During our 40th anniversary and beyond, we are celebrating how much the athletes have changed society and how much the movement is changing the world."

Now there are active Special Olympics programs in more than 180 countries. More than 2.8 million participate. And Illinois was central to the development of this program. It's worth remembering that this state's parks and recreation professionals played a starring role in the development of the program.

Says Snyder: "We should take pride in the Special Olympic seeds that were planted here and celebrate the dreams of the next generation of athletes, their families, and a new generation of volunteers. And now, on to the next 40 years."

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Starting a Special Olympics Program

A park and recreation agency does not have to be a member of an SRA to start a Special Olympics program. Currently, Special Olympics Illinois offers training and competition in 19 summer and winter sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, from ages eight to 80 and beyond. The Special Olympics Illinois Young Athletes program is for children ages two to seven and can include children with disabilities and their peers.

Anne Carroll of Special Olympics Illinois is happy to discuss how Special Olympics can enhance your current recreation program. Contact Anne at 630-942-5610 or at acarroll@soill.org. To find out more about Special Olympics, visit the Illinois website at www.soill.org and the international website at www.specialolympics.org.

SRAs Gone Green

by John Iuzzi

The push to go green is a force that has now driven its way into the fabric of our culture. What used to be a passion for only the most environmentally savvy is now commonplace. Just take a look around and notice the plethora of reusable water bottle options that can be purchased from mom-and-pop shops and mega-marts alike. Commercial breaks are filled with advertisements for green tech and gadgets to give you more MPG's for your car. It seems the whole world is just now jumping on the green train, but for those of us in and around parks and park agencies, this sudden shift in thought is nothing new.

Parks have been seeking to preserve their green spaces for as long as they have had them. But now with the whole world paying attention, the people you serve may want to know what your agency doing to help the environment. And what's true for park agencies is true for SRAs. Which begs the question, where do SRAs fit in this new green landscape? The answer is: right in the middle of it. SRAs, like all other park and recreation agencies, are interested and motivated to make a difference.

SRAs Making a Green Difference

With agencies spread over the entire state, any one agency can feel like an island standing alone in its efforts. The fact of the matter is that you are not alone. Agencies across Illinois are already making strides to improve their environmental habits. When



asked, some agencies offered to share examples of what they are doing to help the environment.

Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA) is taking steps to assess and implement green practices in the maintenance and operation of its building. As of January 2009, NISRA has been publishing an internal e-newsletter that details news, tips and tricks for going green and staying green both at the office and at home. The agency has also extended its recycling program beyond the standard paper, plastic, and glass to materials such as batteries, aerosols, and electronics.

Every staff member at the South West Special Recreation Association now has a recycle bin in his or her office, which makes it easy for the staff to separate their waste from their recyclables right away. Also, staff members make a concerted effort to e-mail whenever possible, saving paper by not writing notes when possible, and routing a single copy when necessary. They are also getting a water cooler to cut down on plastic bottle waste.

Likewise, the Northwest Special Recreation

Association has made great strides to reduce plastic bottle usage. NWSRA has even gone so far as to convene a committee to promote Earth Day activities.

Agencies from across the state report that they have started to cut back on their paper waste by handling internal documents electronically. This is a big deal when you think about the number of program change memos, facility requests and other forms exchanged daily.

The Easy Way is the Right Way to Go Green

Surprised that none of the examples listed here involved agencies installing their own windmills, or running their coffee pots off of solar power? Don't be! That's the beauty of going green, and truly the only way it works. The main idea is that being green is, well, simple. Think about it. If you had to strain yourself every time you had to think about recycling a memo or turning off extra light, would you do it? I would venture to say that you wouldn't. So then, going green is really all about making changes that are simple, that are intuitive, and that have the most impact for the effort you put into them.

If any one agency - any association of agencies for that matter - expects to have a measurable impact on reducing its environmental footprint, it needs simple, easy, common ideas to get going.

- **Find yourself a champion.** No, not an Olympic swimmer with more gold than Fort Knox, just a passionate person at your agency who cares enough to care for everyone. Find that person, give him or her a chance to make a difference, support that person's efforts and watch what happens.
- **E-mail** Everyone uses it. Use it more. Memos are great, but an e-memo is just as easy to use, and, best of all, it won't get lost in that pile of papers next to your phone when you need it most.
- **Turn off your lights** I'm not saying that we should all start walking around with mining hats on, but if you know that you're leaving and you won't be back for five minutes, flip the switch on your way out. And no, you

don't waste more energy turning lights on and off.

- **Recycle** We take it for granted, but this is really the cornerstone to any environmental policy. Specifically, check out what materials your waste-haulers handle and recycle them early and often.
- **Buy cans** Plastic bottles are great, and convenient, and, yes, they can be recycled, but aluminum cans can be 100% reclaimed for new cans. Bottles, not so much.
- **Streamline your PC** Every computer has built into it power saving options that help it suck less power. Monitors do, too. This may take a little tech savvy, but if you don't know how to, either ask your agency's IT professional, or ask an eager younger co-worker, chances are they'll know how to help.

Of course these are only a handful of suggestions among the hundreds of things an agency can do to be greener, but not everything is as user friendly to implement. Not to mention that there are decided difficulties in changing the habits of anyone, about anything. Therein lies the challenge in this process.

Changing Attitudes is the Game Changer

Changing the attitudes of your co-workers or the culture of your agency is no small task, and there will likely be some resistance. Even in this time of heightened environmental awareness, change does not generally come easily. There are a few things to keep in mind when you start talking about these changes at your next staff meeting.

- **They resist not that into it** There have been, and will likely always be, people who would prefer to just not adapt their habits. When this happens remember that it's OK. It's not your job to forcibly shape the minds of those who have no desire to change their ways. You are better served to lead by example and put your energy into your recycling program.
- **Show me the money** I'm sure this has been on your mind since the beginning of the article, and, yes, it's a concern. So here are some

numbers for you: Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs) may be the single biggest money saving green change you can make. On average CFLs use 75 percent less energy than standard bulbs and last up to 10 times longer. So not only will your agency be spending less money to replace bulbs, you'll be spending less money on electricity. Visit the Energy Star Web site (www.energystar.gov/) and use the search button to find a CFL calculator that will show you how much your agency can save. If you replaced 100 fixtures with CFLs you could save thousands over the life of the bulb and that's a lot of money - very important these days.

- **Don't forget it's a habit** Just like remembering to take out the trash or walk the dog, you need to work at being green. For some people, that means going all out right from the beginning. For others, it may mean changing one thing and then adding to the effort as time goes by. Remember, it's all about doing what

is going to be easiest for you and your agency.

All Good Efforts Help

SRAs across Illinois have already started down the path to helping preserve our planet. All efforts, big or small have an impact on the world around us. No one agency has to save the world, but each agency doing its part will help us all to have an impact. Just remember that you're not alone in this. People realize that now, more than ever, is the time to venture down the path to environmental stewardship. It is so important to realize that with all the SRAs doing their part to conserve resources, we will find that there is power in numbers - the power to change our world for the better.

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Further Resources

There are a number of great resources available to help aid your efforts to go green. Some helpful websites include:

- www.thegreenguide.com
- www.energystar.com
- www.earth911.com

If you're interested in print materials, there is no shortage of options. I like *It's Easy Being Green* by Crissy Trask. But there are a number of other books out there, including some printed on recycled materials. A nice touch, if you ask me.