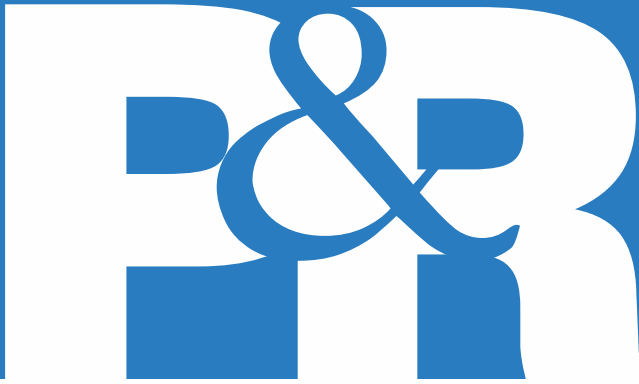


illinois

Volume 49, Number 3 | May/June 2018



PARKS AND RECREATION

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



# aquatics

INCLUDING creative programming and a history of aquatic innovation



# PARK TOUR 2018

**Highlighting  
Greenfields' projects  
across the nation**

See the video!



**Miami, FL**





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## FROM THE EDITOR

*Inflatable pool, full of dad's hot air. I was three years old, splashin' everywhere, and so began, my love affair ... with water.* – Brad Paisley – *Water*

If a country music star writes a song about it, it must be good! Brad Paisley's hit song *Water* summarizes the endless recreational opportunities that it provides, from splashing around in a kiddie pool to hanging out with friends on the riverbank.



I grew up in Beardstown – a quaint town on the Illinois River. Its inhabitants are referred to as 'River Rats' because of the countless hours they spend boating, skiing, fishing, tubing and swimming in the towboat and barge-laden waters. As a young adult, I was fortunate to have friends with boats, but in my younger years, the river wasn't an option.

Fortunately, the Beardstown Community Park District maintained an outstanding swimming pool. Every day of summer vacation, my sisters and I would hop on our bicycles and pedal a mile up the road to the public pool. The facility housed a baby pool and a larger pool with a deep-end that featured several diving boards. We would spend the next five hours under the watchful eyes of the lifeguards, performing diving board stunts and playing endless games of 'shark,' which was our made-up version of water tag. The pool closed long enough for us to go home for dinner, and then we were back an hour later for the night swim. It was the perfect way for three energetic girls to spend their summer. We got plenty of exercise, we slept well, and our parents knew we were safe.

This summer, the Beardstown Community Park District replaced their old pool with a new water park complete with a zero-depth entry pool, splash pads, water slides, basketball hoops and more. The transformation of many park and recreation agency 'swimming pools' to 'aquatic centers' is outlined in WT Group's article on page 26 - *Codebooks to Splash Pads: A Recent History of Aquatic Innovation*. Park districts and recreation agencies throughout the state are raising the bar for water fun, and their residents are reaping the benefits of state-of-the-art facilities within a stone's throw of their homes.

Imagine the programming opportunities at these facilities! 75 *Aquatics Ideas in 75 Minutes* on page 14 provides an array of tips for everything related to aquatics including programming, special events, rentals and suggestions for hiring – and retaining – lifeguards. Urbana Park District and the Park District of Highland Park share some of their successful programs on pages 19 & 20.

*How a Second Grade Field Trip in Waukegan is Changing - and Likely Saving - Lives* on page 22 provides a unique twist on swimming lessons, a critical service provided by Illinois park districts.

My young summer days are long gone, and now I am a parent of three energetic boys. My heartfelt thanks to each of you who works to provide safe places for them to get plenty of exercise, enjoy themselves in a safe environment, and most of all, to sleep well!

— Bobbie Jo Hill, Interim Editor



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- **On-Site Training** by an IPARKS Loss Control Specialist.
- **Aquatics Training** — to assist with fees associated with lifeguard training, aquatics risk management, and pool operation education and training.
- **eLibrary** — offers helpful resources in a variety of convenient formats such as webinars, online courses, DVDs and more.

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Peter M. Murphy, Esq., CAE, IOM  
IAPD President and CEO

## Harnessing the Power of Leadership

In the last issue of IP&R magazine, I wrote about the special educational offering that IAPD is presenting this year, The IAPD Leadership Institute. It kicked off at the Hoffman Estates Park District with “The Foundations of Leadership” presented by Gail Lowney Alofsin, who is a fantastic leader in her own right. The institute is a five-part series so it's not too late to sign up at [llparks.org](http://llparks.org).

One of the more poignant leadership quotes Gail used was by Fred Rogers (Mr. Rogers), for those of you who remember him. He once said, “If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet; how important you can be to the people you never dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person.”

To me this encapsulates the impact that each of you have on the communities you serve. That impact may not be apparent sometimes, but it could be life changing. This very thing was brought front and center to my attention by a random meeting with a mom whose son I had coached in baseball over twenty years ago. He is now a successful adult, but she shared with me what a difference being on that baseball team had meant to him at that point in his life. She told me that it literally was a game changer for him, which led not only to athletic success but also social and academic achievements. For me it was gratifying to hear about an impact I made in a young person's life that I never realized I was having at that time. I must say that the period in my life when I was coaching created some of my best memories. The special moments I have seen in youth baseball games can rival that of any World Series in both excitement and enthusiasm. So fellow coaches, board members, park and recreation professionals, keep up the great work. Your dedication is making all the difference in somebody's life today.

I highly recommend the members only resource center on the IAPD website. [llparks.org](http://llparks.org) has a wealth of information on boardmanship, governance, and leadership. I'd also like to bring to your attention the array of networking opportunities that IAPD provides to its members on a monthly basis.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our events in the near future.

### LEADERSHIP CORNER

The Leadership Corner is a new feature I started last issue to give you a fast read on tips for good governance for use at your local board meetings. This issue we are focusing on what not to do. These behaviors are easy to recognize in others but much harder to see in ourselves and as a result, a good idea to reflect on.

#### HOW **NOT** TO BE AN EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBER

- Talk too much and listen too little.
- Criticize a board decision that was voted on and passed by the majority of the board, but that you did not specifically support.
- Demonstrate to fellow board members that you have all the answers for every issue.
- Refuse to change your mind on any issue regardless of the evidence that is presented.
- Fail to read board packets and prepare for board meetings.
- Divulge information from an executive board meeting.
- Refuse to compromise when decisions have stalemated.
- Ridicule past board members and the decisions made by the board before you became a member.
- Try to give instructions to the executive as an individual board member.
- Hold grudges against fellow board members who don't agree with you.
- Try to dominate the conversation at every board meeting.
- Resent the salary of the executive.
- Arrive late at board meetings and leave early.
- Remind fellow board members, “It's always been done this way in the past.”

## 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, June 21, 2018  
**Leadership Institute  
 YOUR 'Someday' is  
 NOW – The Power of  
 Positivity!**  
 Webinar  
 11:00 a.m. – Noon

Thursday, July 12, 2018  
**Leadership Classic**  
 Bensenville Park District  
 White Pines Golf Club  
 11:30 a.m. Shotgun Start

Thursday, July 19, 2018  
**Leadership Institute  
 You Inc. The Power of  
 Your Personal Brand  
 Webinar**  
 11:00 a.m. - Noon

Thursday, August 2, 2018  
**Leadership Institute  
 Core Leadership Skills  
 that Lead to Respect  
 and Harmony Webinar**  
 11am – 12Noon

Saturday, August 18, 2018  
**Park District  
 Conservation Day**  
 IL State Fairgrounds,  
 Springfield

Monday, August 27, 2018  
**IAPD Summer Golf  
 Tour Outing #3**  
 GolfVisions  
 Management, Inc.  
 Oak Grove Golf Course  
 Harvard, IL

Monday, September 17,  
 2018  
**IAPD Summer Golf Tour  
 Outing #4**  
 Zion Park District  
 Shepherd's Crook  
 Zion, IL

September 25-27, 2018  
**NRPA Congress**  
 Indiana Convention Center  
 Indianapolis, IN

Thursday, October 4, 2018  
**Launching Successful  
 Leaders: "Can I Hear  
 YOU?" Recharging YOUR  
 Communication Skills  
 Workshop**  
 Hoffman Estates Park  
 District's Bridges of Poplar  
 Creek Country Club  
 6pm – 9pm

Friday, October 12, 2018  
**IAPD Best of the Best  
 Awards Gala**  
 Wheeling Park District's  
 Chevy Chase Country  
 Club

Thursday, November 8,  
 2018  
**Legal Symposium**  
 McDonald's University /  
 Hyatt Lodge

January 24-26, 2019  
**IAPD/IPRA Soaring to  
 New Heights  
 Conference**  
 Hyatt Regency Chicago

**IAPD**  
 Illinois Association of Park Districts

**“When the iPhone was invented in 2007, the Illinois Association of Park Districts had already been serving its membership for 79 years.”**



The creation of the iPhone began when Apple CEO Steve Jobs requested that his engineers investigate touchscreen devices and tablet computers. Jobs believed cell phones would become important devices for portable information access, and mobile phones needed to have excellent synchronization software. Today, it is estimated that more than 90 million people own this high-tech tool that has transformed communication and information access.

The Illinois Association of Park Districts has also made great transformations throughout its 90 years. IAPD has worked to secure many pieces of state legislation to benefit park agencies including the Park Law Codification Bill in 1951, which combined all laws relating to park districts in one section of state law; and, the Open Space Lands Acquisition Act or OSLA in 1986, which secured funding from the Build Illinois program to support grants to park districts and forest preserves. The program was renamed OSLAD in 1989, when IAPD secured a permanent dedicated funding source from a portion of the Real Estate Transfer Tax.

IAPD works diligently to ensure that our member agencies can continue to transform lives every day through the valuable programs, services and natural areas that they provide for the residents of Illinois.

IAPD celebrates 90 years in 2018 ... *a Legacy of Innovation and Excellence!*



*Peter M. Murphy*  
 PETER M. MURPHY  
 IAPD PRESIDENT





By Debbie Trueblood, CAE  
IPRA Executive Director

## Recreation for Everyone

The theme of this issue is “Aquatic Recreation for Everyone”. As I reflect on that, I think of the many different ways that water can be soothing, healing, and freeing for a wide variety of people. For athletic swimmers, the pool is the scene of strength and competition. For some with arthritis or other types of joint pain, the Arthritis Foundation notes on their website, “Swimming is a wonderful zero-impact sport for people with arthritis. ...Water can have a gentle, soothing effect on the body...The support of the water and the lack of joint impact make swimming a good choice for people who are unable to undertake high-impact activities, such as running.” I remember talking to a friend of a friend who is physically disabled from surviving polio as a child-while she can't walk on her own, she swims at her local Texas pool nearly every day because she feels so much more free in the water to move her body. For others, water is just fun! It is a great recreational activity that people of all ages can enjoy together as a family or on their own.

Water can be healing, but like other kinds of recreation, it must be treated with appropriate caution to keep it safe for all involved. Towards that end, the World Waterpark Association is hosting the 9<sup>th</sup> annual “World's Largest Swim Lesson” on Thursday, June 21. The idea behind this big event is to spread awareness about the importance of swim lessons to reduce drowning and save lives. According to their website, “Research shows risk of drowning can be reduced by 88 percent if children participate in formal swimming lessons between the ages of 1-4.” World's Largest Swim Lesson events will “take place at hundreds of locations in more than 20 countries on five continents over the course of 24 hours.” According to their website, “Last year, 41,068 kids and adults participated in WLSL events in 26 countries.” For more information or to register your facility to participate in this event go to <https://www.wsls.org>.

Speaking of pools, for those of you who work directly with aquatic programs, we encourage you to share information about our upcoming Lifeguard Games with your lifeguard staff. Sponsored by IPRA's Aquatics Committee located within the Facility Management Section, the 25th Annual Lifeguard Games is an exciting opportunity for lifeguards and junior lifeguards to compete and showcase their skills to their peers. Teams consist of 4 lifeguards, and they compete against each other in a series of events that include fitness challenges, teamwork, in-pool scenarios, and different tests of general life-guarding skills. This is a friendly competition that encourages each guard to rise to

“On June 21, World's Largest Swim Lesson events will take place at hundreds of locations in more than 20 countries on five continents over the course of 24 hours.”



the challenges, practice their craft, learn from others, and have FUN! Participants must be an active lifeguard with at least 40 hours of work prior to the competition. Registration includes a t-shirt and meal for each member of the team. Grab your team(s) and come celebrate 25 years of Lifeguard Games at IPRA with a fun afternoon of friendly competition at the beautiful Hunt Club Aquatic Park in Gurnee! Register you or your team at [www.ilipra.org](http://www.ilipra.org) on the Education Calendar. Early bird (until July 3) is \$70 for members and \$105 for nonmembers. After July 3 through July 8, the fee is \$85 and \$120 respectively. Teams must register by July 5th to be guaranteed t-shirts and a goodie bag for each participant. Lots of detailed information is available on the website or if you have further questions,



contact IPRA Aquatics Committee Co-Chair Kara Moss at [kmoss@gurneeparkdistrict.com](mailto:kmoss@gurneeparkdistrict.com). The event will be held July 11, 2:30-9:00 p.m. at the Gurnee Park District.

Another fun opportunity for your summer programs is the Teen Camp Challenge. Sponsored by IPRA's Teen Committee, located within the Recreation Section, the 7th Annual Teen Camp Challenge is an exciting and rewarding competition that brings together 5th - 8th graders from the Chicago Metropolitan area. Teen groups from different park districts will compete in 6 team-building events that include a mix of strategy skills, relays, and trivia knowledge. Teams earn points at each event, and the team with the most cumulative points will be awarded a trophy and crowned 2018 Teen Camp Challenge Champions. Additionally, a Spirit Stick will be awarded to the team with the best attitude and team spirit. Pack a lunch and bring your park district team(s) to the beautiful Ty Warner Park in Westmont for a day full of teen skill-building, exercise, and fun! To register or for more information, go to [www.ilpra.org](http://www.ilpra.org) and register through the Education Calendar. Fee is (per participant), \$6 for IPRA members, and \$9 for nonmembers. The event will be July 18, 10:00 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. at Ty Warner Park with the Westmont Park District. Check out the website for more details or contact IPRA Teen Committee Co-Chair Allison Christophoulos at [achristopoulos@bgparks.org](mailto:achristopoulos@bgparks.org).

This summer, as you fill your ranks with seasonal and part-time summer staff at your pools and other locations, take some time to talk to them about parks and recreation as a career choice. Show them the videos IPRA made about parks and recreation as a career, and all the "day in the life of" videos of different aspects of the profession (e.g. marketing, finance, safety, etc.). They are all available on our website or on YouTube, just google, "Illinois Park and Recreation Association Day in the Life" or go to [www.youtube.com/user/IPRAAssoc1815](http://www.youtube.com/user/IPRAAssoc1815) and you'll find them all.

The work you do matters. It brings together families and gives them a place to be together. As you enjoy your summer, I hope you make time for recreation in your personal life to spend time with your friends and families, and maybe even enjoy a local pool or water park, so that like your community members, you too can have summer pool memories that last a lifetime.

## Upcoming Events

**Senior Games 2018 – July 6-25**  
Join us for ten great days of friendly competition and excellence!

**Webinar: Why We Buy - Understanding Consumer Behavior – July 11 & July 19**  
Presented by André Pichly, Parks & Recreation Director at St. Helena (CA), and he will help participants learn how to make subtle changes to the registration process to help improve customer experience.

**Lifeguard Games – July 11**  
Sponsored by IPRA's Aquatics Committee located within the Facility Management Section, the 25th Annual Lifeguard Games is an exciting opportunity for lifeguards and junior lifeguards to compete and showcase their skills to their peers.

**Teen Camp Challenge – July 18**  
Sponsored by IPRA's Teen Committee located within the Recreation Section, the 7th Annual Teen Camp Challenge is an exciting and rewarding competition that brings together 5th - 8th graders from the Chicago Metropolitan area.

**Kayaking & Paddleboard River Outing – July 26**  
Sponsored by IPRA's Facility Management Section, and co-hosted by SPRA's Student Relations Committee, the Kayak and Paddleboard River Outing gives professionals the opportunity to step out of the office and into nature to enjoy the beautiful and scenic waterways of Illinois.

**Webinar: Together We're Better - Community Collaborations – August 8 & August 16**  
Presented by Darren Schwartz, Jewish Federation of San Diego, and he will teach participants how to increase reach and value with partnerships and collaborations.

**CPRP Exam Prep Series B**  
HR and Communications – August 15  
Finance – August 22  
Programming – August 29



For details and registration, please visit the IPRA event calendar at [ILipra.org](http://ILipra.org)



GROWING CAREERS ONE INTRODUCTION AT A TIME



Illinois Park and Recreation Foundation (IPRF) mission is to support scholarships for students and professionals in the field of parks and recreation in the state of Illinois and is the sponsor of ProConnect.



Visit [ILipra.org](http://ILipra.org) for details







Jason Anselment  
Legal/Legislative Counsel

## Remember New Cost Saving Option When Completing Annual Prevailing Wage Requirements

The months of June and July contain important deadlines for local governments under the Prevailing Wage Act (Act). As your agency completes its requirements this year, it is important to remember that there have been several changes to the Act in recent years. Among these is **HB 3120 / Public Act 100-154 (Demmer, T. / Bivins, T.)**, an IAPD Platform initiative signed into law in August 2017, which allows agencies to save hundreds of dollars each year by eliminating the annual newspaper publication discussed below.

This article summarizes the basic responsibilities of a public body under the Act. Numerous resources including sample forms are also available under the Legal section of the IAPD website at ILparks.org. However, as with any matter requiring legal advice it is important to consult local counsel when specific questions arise.

### Applicability of Act

In general, the purpose of the Act is to set minimum wages and benefits that must be paid to specific categories of workers who are employed under a contract for “public works” based upon the normal wage rate paid to that trade in the county where the work is performed.<sup>1</sup>

“Public works” include all fixed works constructed or demolished by a public body. Although some private construction projects can constitute public works if they are financed in whole or in part by public funds, the requirements discussed below assume the work is performed for a public body that is using public funds to pay for it.

Additionally, it is important to remember that while the Act covers all laborers, workers and mechanics who are directly employed by contractors or subcontractors in actual construction work on the building or construction job site, other workers such as those involved in the transportation of materials and equipment or who are involved in maintenance or repair of certain equipment may also be covered under the Act.<sup>2</sup>

Whether a project is covered by the Act should be determined in the early planning stages of any project. In many cases, the determination is obvious. A capital project for the construction of a new recreational center for a park district is clearly a “public works” project that is subject to the Act while an agreement for legal services is not.

Other contracts may not be as straightforward. If guidance is required, the district should consult its local counsel or seek a determination from the Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL).

### No Exception for Small Projects

Because public works projects often involve large dollar amounts that are subject to competitive bidding, there is sometimes a misperception that the Act only applies to contracts that are bid and does not apply to small projects that are under the bid limit threshold. This is incorrect. If the project involves public works, the Act applies regardless of the amount of the contract. For example, even if a project is under \$25,000 and is not required to be let to the lowest responsible bidder under the Park District Code,<sup>3</sup> prevailing wages still must be paid if the project or contract involves public works.

### Annual Prevailing Wage Determination Requirements

The Act requires public bodies to annually investigate and ascertain the prevailing rate of wages for work on public works projects before June 30.<sup>4</sup> To help satisfy this requirement, public bodies typically use IDOL's prevailing wage schedules, but the public body still needs to adopt an ordinance or resolution making the determination.<sup>5</sup> Additionally, before June 30 each year, the public body is required to publicly post this determination or keep it available for inspection in its main office.<sup>6</sup> The district must then promptly file a certified copy of the determination with IDOL by July 15.<sup>7</sup> The requirement to file these documents with the Illinois Secretary of State was eliminated several years ago.<sup>8</sup>



A copy of the determination must also be promptly mailed to any employer, association of employers, or any person who has filed their name and address requesting copies of any determination stating the particular rates and the particular class of workers whose wages will be affected by such rates.<sup>9</sup>

Until recently, public bodies were also required to publish their determination notice in a newspaper within 30 days of filing it with IDOL. However, as a result of IAPD's advocacy efforts in passing Public Act 100-154, this newspaper publication is no longer required if the agency provides electronic access to the notice on its website with a hyperlink to the uniform prevailing wage schedule for the locality that is posted on the IDOL's website.<sup>10</sup>

### **Additional Obligations with Respect to Specific Projects**

Although it is ultimately the responsibility of the government contractor to pay the prevailing wage to its workers, the public body also has responsibilities in connection with its public works contracts and projects in addition to the annual requirements discussed above. The public body must insert specific information such as a stipulation into every resolution or ordinance, call for bids, project specifications and contract to the effect that not less than the prevailing wage must be paid.<sup>11</sup> All bid specifications must also list the specified rates to all laborers, workers and mechanics in the locality for each craft or type of worker or mechanic needed to execute the contract.<sup>12</sup> If IDOL revises the prevailing rate to be paid by the public body, then the revised rates apply to a contract and the public body must notify the contractor and each subcontractor of the revised rate.<sup>13</sup>

Note that if a public body awards a public works contract without a public bid, the public body must provide the contractor with written notice on the purchase order or on a separate document indicating that not less than the prevailing wage must be paid.<sup>14</sup> Taking the previous example where the total cost of a park district's public works project is below \$25,000 and the district elects not to bid the work, the district must ensure that the requisite language is incorporated into the contract or that it otherwise provides the contractor with written notice that the prevailing wage must be paid.

Failure to provide proper written notice to the contractor can have consequences. IDOL can order the public body to pay any interest, penalties or fines that would have been owed by the contractor if proper written notice had been provided.<sup>15</sup>

The public body must also require that all contractor's and subcontractor's bonds include a provision guaranteeing the faithful performance of the prevailing wage clause in the contract or other written instruments.<sup>16</sup>

### **Contractor Payroll Records**

Contractors and subcontractors must submit certified payroll records to the public body in charge of the project each month. These records must consist of a complete copy of each worker's name, address, telephone number when available, social security number, classification or classifications, the hourly wages paid in each pay period, and the number of hours worked each day along with a statement signed by the contractor or subcontractor which affirms that the records are true and accurate; the hourly rate paid to each worker is not less than the general prevailing rate of hourly wages required by the Act; and that he or she is aware that filing a certified payroll that he or she knows to be false is a Class A misdemeanor.<sup>17</sup>

The public body must maintain these records for at least 5 years but can now do so in either paper or electronic format.<sup>18</sup> The records are considered "public records" subject to the Freedom of Information Act, except that the contractors' employees' addresses, telephone numbers, and social security numbers must be redacted prior to disclosure.<sup>19</sup>

### **Penalties under the Act**

Any officer, agent or representative of a public body who willfully violates the Act or fails to comply with any of its provisions is presently guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.<sup>20</sup> To avoid such criminal penalties and other consequences associated with violations of the Act, it is important for those involved in contract bidding, execution, and administration to understand their agency's obligations and to know where to find additional information when questions arise. When in doubt, you should consult your local counsel or the IDOL for specific advice on the district's projects. Of course, in addition to numerous resources that are available under the Legal section of the IAPD website at ILparks.org, IAPD is just a phone call away.

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<sup>1</sup> 820 ILCS 130/1; 130/2

<sup>2</sup> 820 ILCS 130/2; 130/3

<sup>3</sup> 70 ILCS 1205/8-1(c)

<sup>4</sup> 820 ILCS 130/9

<sup>5</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4; 130/9

<sup>6</sup> 820 ILCS 130/9

<sup>7</sup> To submit electronically, go to labor.Illinois.gov

<sup>8</sup> Public Act 98-173

<sup>9</sup> 820 ILCS 130/9

<sup>10</sup> <https://www2.illinois.gov/idol/Laws-Rules/CONMED/Pages/Rates.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(a), 130/4(a-1)

<sup>12</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(c)

<sup>13</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(d)

<sup>14</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(a-2)

<sup>15</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(a-3)

<sup>16</sup> 820 ILCS 130/4(c)

<sup>17</sup> 820 ILCS 130/5

<sup>18</sup> Public Act 98-0328

<sup>19</sup> *Id.*; 5 ILCS 140/2.10

<sup>20</sup> 820 ILCS 130/6



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# IAPD

Illinois Association of Park Districts

## LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE, RECEPTION & PARKS DAY AT THE CAPITOL

April 24 and 25 were exciting days in Springfield with IAPD's popular legislative awareness programs including *Parks Day at the Capitol*, the *Legislative Reception* and *Legislative Conference*.

More than 300 representatives of Illinois park, recreation and conservation agencies attended these valuable events, met with their legislators and learned from an array of timely topics including the 2018 Election Impact on Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Maximizing Efficiency through Cost Saving Programs; IAPD's Latest Research on Facility Usage and Program Participation and Effectively Communicating Your Agency's Benefits to Legislators and other Policymakers.

IAPD's *Legislative Conference* was an Illinois Bicentennial-Endorsed Event. A member of the Illinois Bicentennial Commission discussed how park, recreation and conservation agencies can host Bicentennial-Endorsed events in celebration of Illinois' 200-year history.



L to R: Senator Tom Rooney; Senator Elgie R. Sims, Jr.; Representative Michelle Mussman; Representative Robert Martwick







# AQUATICS IDEAS IN 75 MINUTES



By Erika Rubo, Recreation Supervisor, Itasca Park District

When it comes to making a splash with your agency's aquatics programs and facilities, collaboration with colleagues in the park and recreation field is a necessity to keep up with the latest trends and obtain solutions to common challenges. January's IAPD/IPRA *Soaring to New Heights Conference* provided an excellent opportunity for aquatics professionals throughout the state to discuss all things aquatic with the session *75 Aquatics Ideas in 75 Minutes*.



**Young professionals and seasoned professionals alike were inspired with new ideas for their agencies.**

At one point or another, every aquatics supervisor finds themselves needing innovative ideas, support from other professionals or references for reputable vendors to provide goods and services for their facilities. Aquatics supervisors throughout the state share many of the same challenges, whether they are supervising year-round indoor facilities or coordinating the variety of aspects related to seasonal outdoor pools. There are staffing issues to contend with - making sure the young adult and teenage staff stay motivated, concerns about generating enough revenue *and* keeping up with a mountain of administrative duties.

*75 Aquatics Ideas in 75 Minutes* provided aquatics professionals from agencies of all sizes the opportunity to dive into common ground issues and learn to stay afloat. The session included four categories:

- lifeguards - including incentives, morale, hiring and recruiting;
- special events - both indoor and outdoor;
- programming - including swim lessons, swim team, open swim, fitness and membership appreciation; and
- birthday parties and rentals.

The presentation included four to six examples for each category. These were summarized in an eight-page

handout which included nearly 100 ideas from myself along with Kara Moss, Aquatic Facility Manager for the Gurnee Park District; and Alli Siamis, Aquatic Program Supervisor for the Arlington Heights Park District. We gleaned ideas from our own agencies and from other aquatics professionals at agencies throughout the nation.

Aside from the goal of presenting aquatics professionals with innovative ideas, another goal was to include a wide variety of ideas so that professionals supervising facilities of all sizes, types and budgets would be able to return to their agencies and either easily implement a new program with little-to-no budget, modify an existing program, or have the references and guidelines to take on bigger events or projects.

### **Lifeguards/Aquatic Staff**

In the lifeguard category, one of the ideas presented was to create a social committee for aquatics staff. A social committee allows lifeguards and other staff to plan events for staff bonding, rather than having a supervisor take time out of their schedule to do the planning. This improves staff morale, increases comradery and helps to establish a team that works well together. It also provides leadership opportunities for staff.





A hot topic in the aquatics field is the hiring of summer staff. This task becomes more difficult each year. Teenagers used to flock to park districts, knocking down doors for summer jobs. Today, agencies need to place more money in their marketing budgets to actively seek teens and young adults for summer employment. Positions are posted on multiple job boards (which often come with a cost), promoted through social media and relayed through job fairs at schools and libraries.

One great idea to generate interest among this group is for park districts to host their own agency-wide job fairs. Another idea is to utilize referral programs to combine hiring and incentives for employees. This can be done a few ways. The most popular example is if a current employee refers a new employee who ends up working for the agency - either for a certain amount of days or for a season - the current employee receives a monetary incentive. While highly effective, this program requires budgeting ahead of time, but the promise of having an adequate number of skilled lifeguards on staff, so that your agency's aquatics programs can operate at full capacity, makes it worthwhile.

### Special Events

Another hot topic for aquatics involves creating special events that provide unique, fun and year-round options. Ideas shared during this conference session included aquatics staples such as water egg hunts, tween/teen nights, Christmas in July, late night movies at the pool and duck races. Some of the more unique events that were discussed during this session included *Ya Gotta Regatta*, *Penny Plunge* and *Father's Day Cannon Ball Brunch*.

*Ya Gotta Regatta* is an event where teams race pre-made cardboard and duct tape boats in the pool. Prizes and awards are presented to the winners, as well as some of those who did not win, with award titles like, "The Titanic Award." Some agencies have even done this as a team-building event for swim teams or as a summer camp activity.

*Penny Plunge* is a great way for agencies to partner with a local bank or a sponsoring organization. The sponsor provides \$200 worth of pennies that are spread out in the pool, along with a designated amount of gold coins that are turned in for prizes. Participants are divided into age groups, and after a countdown, they jump in to collect the treasure at the bottom of the pool. Pennies are placed into cups that have a hole in the bottom to let the water drain.

Participants keep the pennies and turn in the gold coins to exchange for prizes. It is an easy, inexpensive event that can also enhance relationships and open doors with local businesses.

The next event's name alone provides a clear visual of what it entails! The *Father's Day Cannon Ball Brunch* treats dads to a day of food and fun at the pool. Participants enjoy brunch and compete in a rowdy cannon ball contest that guarantees to leave everyone soaked and smiling!

## Programming

Aquatics programming can be just about anything. Almost any general program that you have in your park district can be taken to the pool or held pool side. As in any type of program or event, great consideration needs to be given to the safety aspect, which is why aquatics programs require more planning and attention to detail than other programs.

Fitness-related programming is becoming increasingly popular. These programs range from those that only include the cost of lifeguards to those that require high-end equipment that must be purchased to run the class.

*Water Walkers Club* is a program that has little-to-no cost to run. This is an uninstructed class where participants either walk or run against the current of a lazy river. Some agencies provide noodles and water weights to participants. The only expense is for lifeguards. Revenue can be collected as a drop-in fee, punch pass or registration class.

On the flip side are programs like *Float & Fit*. This requires buying inflatable mats that can sometimes cost hundreds of dollars per mat, in addition to the instructor's certification. This is a trendier program that might bring in the younger adult audience, which can be harder to target.

Other highlights of aquatic programming include *Swim Team Clinics* to improve technique; *Mermaid Swim School*, which includes learning to swim like a mermaid with a mermaid tail as well as themed crafts; and easy and inexpensive events like *Sundae Sunday*, *Bingo by the Pool*, *What's in your Beach Bag Contest*, *Deck Chalk Art* and *Water Basketball Nights*.

Another aspect of programming is remembering to take care of your loyal members. Cost-effective, easy ideas for membership appreciation include: \$5 Fridays, coupons for pool safety, free open swim coupon with swim lesson registration and giveaway days with promotional items or treats from the concession stand.

## Birthday Parties and Rentals

The conference presentation wrapped up with ideas for rentals and birthday parties. Depending on an agency's facilities, it can be easy to offer a combo package like a gym and swim (a part-pool, part-gymnastics birthday party). Easy ideas to bring in more revenue include add-ons like ice cream sundaes, extra time, goody bags, a t-shirt for the birthday boy/girl that guests can sign and coupons for party guests.

These are only a fraction of the wide array of outstanding ideas highlighted in *75 Aquatics Ideas in 75 Minutes*. The session concluded with participants breaking into groups to discuss their unique ideas and creative twists to aquatics challenges. For example, some participants shared that their agencies had higher registrations for programs when they took the word 'teen' out of the title of programs geared toward young adults. Sometimes, it is all about how certain programs are marketed.

Overall, this session had something for everyone. Young professionals and seasoned professionals alike were inspired with new ideas for their agencies. Hopefully, by reading this article, you were too!

Check out all the great tips and suggestions presented in *75 Aquatics Ideas in 75 Minutes* by scanning this QR Code!







*Creative*

**PROGRAMMING**

**KEEPS THESE AGENCIES'  
POOLS AFLOAT YEAR-ROUND!**





The program will consist of specific swim and safety benchmarks, and there will be plenty of time for students to show off their mermaid skills!

## Swim Like a Mermaid at the Park District of Highland Park

By **Elizabeth Gogola**, Director of Communications & Marketing - Park District of Highland Park

The legends of Merfolk (mermaids and mermen), mysterious beings that are half-human, half-fish, have captured the imagination for thousands of years.

They may be known as ancient magical creatures, but mermaids are alive and well at the Park District of Highland Park with their *Swim Like a Mermaid* program!

The program was introduced earlier this spring as a special event titled *Sails and Tails* for children ages 6-12. Children donned mermaid tails and shark fins supplied by the park district, swam alongside a real mermaid (portrayed by a swim instructor) and played water games. Staff incorporated swimming lessons and safety benchmarks during the fun. After the mermaid swim, participants dried off and enjoyed a snack and an under-the-sea-related craft in an adjoining room.

“The intent of the event was to re-energize our aquatics programming while providing a safe environment for students to learn critical life-saving water skills in a fun

atmosphere,” said Jon Pratscher, Manager of Aquatics and Fitness for the Park District of Highland Park.

The event was such a success, the aquatics staff is capitalizing on the momentum this summer with an encore *Mermaid Swim Club* program at the district's outdoor Hidden Creek AquaPark.

This fall, the *Mermaid Swim Club* concept will be integrated into the district's Learn-to-Swim curriculum as *Swim Like a Mermaid*. The program will begin with a safety orientation video and demonstration, along with a swim test prior to entry into the water. Students can select a mermaid tail or shark fin to be used for each class. The program will consist of specific swim and safety benchmarks, and there will be plenty of time for students to show off their mermaid skills!

“We are excited to add this option to our swim lessons,” said Pratscher. “Our goal is to provide a safe environment where students can have a great time in a unique class.”





## Egg Hunts, Beach Parties and Sensory-Friendly Swimming at the Urbana Park District

By **Mark Schultz**, Public Information and Marketing Manager - Urbana Park District

The Urbana Park District's motto, *You Belong Here*, displays their commitment to providing year-round aquatic programming for everyone. The Urbana Indoor Aquatic Center and the outdoor Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center provide endless opportunities for creative programming. Both feature lap lanes, zero-depth pools, a diving board and water slides. The outdoor pool also features a vortex ride and a streambed where water flows over a rock structure. "This is a popular play area for toddlers," said Leslie Radice, Manager of Urbana Park District Aquatics.

While opportunities for free play and exercise at Urbana's pools abound, the park district also offers several unique programs. "We love coming up with fun events for all age groups," said Radice.

The park district shows three movies each summer at the Crystal Lake Park Family Aquatic Center. The pool is open late, and the park district shows a family-friendly movie. Families can choose to watch from the deck or the water. "It is one of our most popular events," said Radice. New this year are adult swim nights, when the pool will be open late for adults to enjoy a night of swimming and a movie. "This provides a unique twist to your typical date night," said Radice.

The *Teeny Tiny Beach Party* is one of the cutest activities of the summer. Children up to age five can enjoy all aspects of the pool and interact with special guests dressed in costumes.

The cooler months are just as busy. "Our indoor aquatic center is a great place for the public to enjoy water fun even on the coldest day," said Corky Emberson, Superintendent of Recreation.

One of these programs includes *Sensory-Friendly Swimming Fridays*. "We turn off the rushing water so people with sensory issues can enjoy swimming in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere," said Radice.

Every March, the park district partners with community groups to present *Community Palooza*. This event provides an opportunity for those with special needs to work with aquatic center staff to plan a day of fun for children. "I always love watching people enjoy the pool but seeing those with special needs take ownership in planning *Community Palooza* and interacting with families holds a special place in my heart," said Radice.

Easter egg hunts aren't typically equated with swimming pools, but in Urbana they are! "This year, we placed plastic eggs in our indoor pool. Some of the eggs floated while others were weighted down, giving older children an extra challenge of diving for the sunken eggs," said Radice. "All participants received a goodie bag, and those who found eggs with gold coins could exchange them for prizes."

"We provide ample opportunities for everyone to get what they need from our aquatic facilities – whether they are Olympic-level swimmers or doggie paddlers," concluded Radice.





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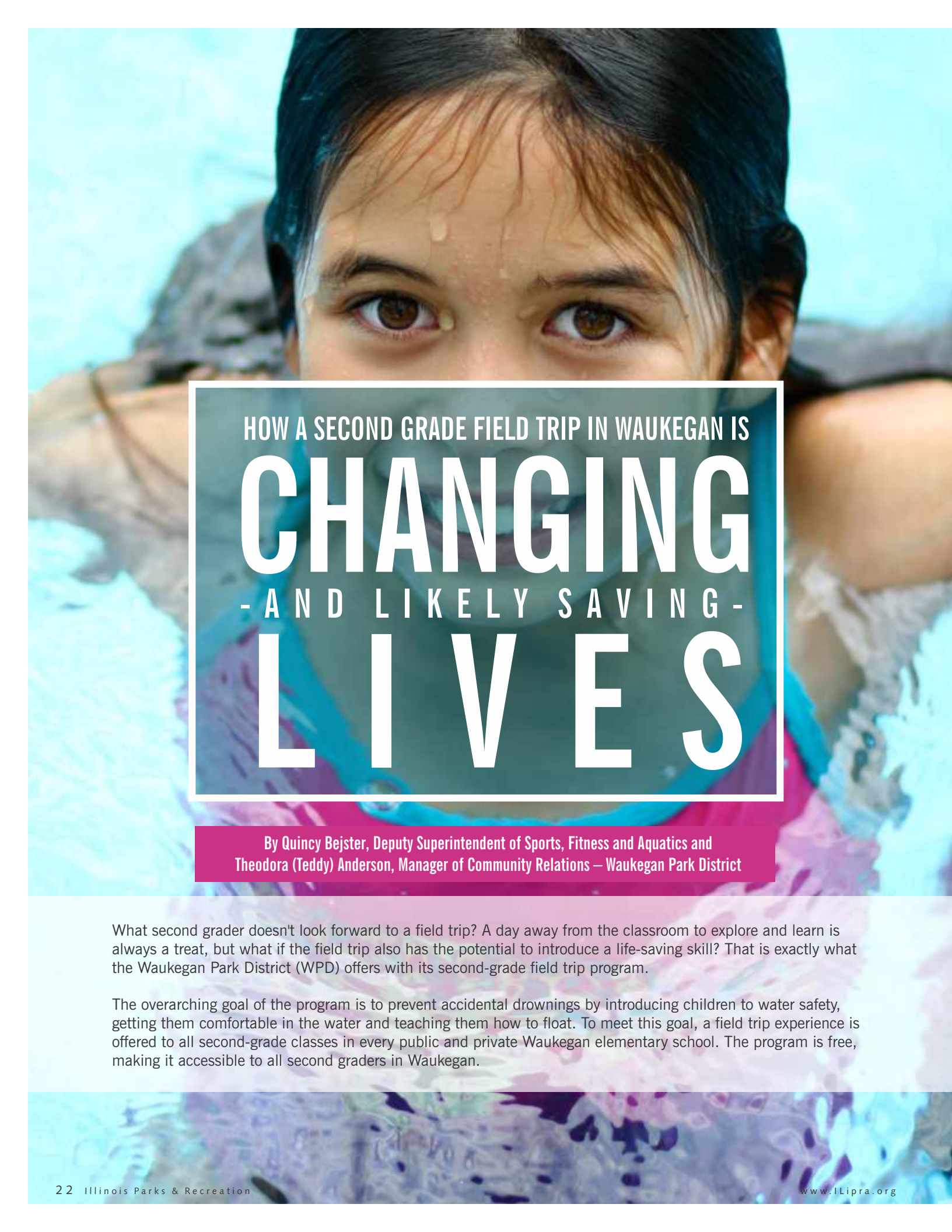
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HOW A SECOND GRADE FIELD TRIP IN WAUKEGAN IS  
**CHANGING**  
- AND LIKELY SAVING -  
**LIVES**

By Quincy Bejster, Deputy Superintendent of Sports, Fitness and Aquatics and  
Theodora (Teddy) Anderson, Manager of Community Relations – Waukegan Park District

What second grader doesn't look forward to a field trip? A day away from the classroom to explore and learn is always a treat, but what if the field trip also has the potential to introduce a life-saving skill? That is exactly what the Waukegan Park District (WPD) offers with its second-grade field trip program.

The overarching goal of the program is to prevent accidental drownings by introducing children to water safety, getting them comfortable in the water and teaching them how to float. To meet this goal, a field trip experience is offered to all second-grade classes in every public and private Waukegan elementary school. The program is free, making it accessible to all second graders in Waukegan.



### LEARN CHARTER SCHOOL

“THANK YOU! We had the most amazing day at the Waukegan Field House!! Everything about the day was so much fun and so well organized. Our scholars participated in every session, and were pretty much wiped out at the end of the day! But it was such a good day! Thank you for reaching out to us, coordinating with us and presenting such an extraordinary day! Your staff was professional and helpful and kind! Jordan did a great job of leading the day, and all of your coaches, were wonderful. Thank you to Chad, John, Melissa, Devante, Angela and Israel. I do not know the names of all the staff that were at the pool, but they were wonderful also!

In deep appreciation,  
Kathy Hart, Aimee Freyer & Anna Badovinac”

The field trip program takes place at the indoor aquatics facility at WPD's premier health facility, the Field House Sports, Fitness and Aquatics Center (Field House). The WPD organizes each field trip experience and provides bilingual recreation professionals to run the activities. Students are divided into groups and rotated through three stations:

1. water safety and swimming,
2. fitness, and
3. sports.

A typical field trip lasts nearly five hours and includes four classrooms, each class having approximately 28 students. Teachers, aides and parent chaperones accompany their classes throughout the day and can actively participate.

In addition to learning about swim safety, students get to participate in fun sports and fitness activities. Many children have never visited the Field House prior to the field trip. Each participant is given a one-day family pass to the indoor aquatics center, providing a future opportunity for their entire family to experience this premier recreation center. This unique field trip combined with the distribution of free family passes increases the likelihood that families will learn more about the lifesaving skills provided through swim lessons. Introducing children and their families to opportunities for swim lessons is one way to help more children in the community learn how to swim.

### BACKGROUND

WPD created the Waukegan Parks Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization in late 2015. In Fiscal Year 2016-2017, an external consultant vetted by WPD led the strategic plan that identified opportunities to support the new indoor aquatic center and grow awareness about swim safety in Waukegan. The Waukegan Parks Foundation's goal was to bring every Waukegan second grade student to the Field House for a day long field trip that included a water safety and swim lesson. This initiative was based on several factors:

- A drowning in the Waukegan Harbor during the summer of 2016, and the desire to prevent future accidental drownings,
- Hispanic and African Americans have significantly higher rates of drowning than their Caucasian counterparts and are not as likely to participate in learn to swim programs, which is noteworthy because 79% of students in Waukegan Public Schools are Hispanic, and 14% are African American,
- Research indicates that the best time to learn to swim is between ages 6 and 8 years old, and
- Many Waukegan children and families have never visited the Field House and are unaware of the park district's swim safety programs.

In the summer of 2016, WPD staff and Waukegan Parks Foundation representatives met with the Waukegan School District superintendent to determine her interest in the program. She acknowledged the importance of the proposed program and gave her unconditional support.





## **PARTNERSHIPS**

Planning the second grade field trip program was a collaboration between the WPD, the Waukegan Parks Foundation and the Waukegan School District. All three organizations agreed that it was important to remove potential barriers, so that all Waukegan second graders could participate in the program. Materials such as permission forms, waivers and introductory letters were created, approved, and provided in both English and Spanish. The program was designed and adapted through conversations with and presentations to the Waukegan Park District Board, the Waukegan School Board and the Latino Coalition. It was also discussed at the school district wellness council and faith council, and the City of Waukegan leadership also got involved.

Logistically, the Field House contracted with its aquatics management firm, Jeff Ellis, to provide lifeguards and swim instructors for the program. The Field House also provided fitness and athletics staff to lead other field trip activities including basketball, soccer and fitness activities. The Waukegan School District provided student lunches. Kiefer Swim Products joined in by donating swimwear at no cost for children who do not have or could not afford a swimsuit.

Communication with the various schools was facilitated by the appointment of a school district staff member to act as a liaison. The park district was able to direct all of its requests and communications through that person. The liaison worked with school staff and parents at each school, fielding questions about the program. Collaborating with individual teachers was essential, as they work with the students on a daily basis and were able to communicate any special needs to program staff.

Private schools were contacted and assigned a date to attend their own second grade field trip. Each private school was responsible for coordinating transportation to and from the Field House, as well as providing lunch for their students.

## **OVERCOMING PERCEIVED BARRIERS**

A concern expressed by all partners regarding the second grade field trip program was the need for appropriate swimwear. No one wanted this challenge to present a barrier to student participation. WPD had been working with Kiefer Swim Products to outfit the new aquatic center. WPD staff and a Waukegan Parks Foundation representative met with Kiefer's president and marketing representative to discuss the proposed program. Adolph Kiefer, the company's founder was a former Olympic gold medalist, World War II hero and avid champion of learn to swim programs. The proposed program matched the founder's legacy, and Kiefer Swim Products agreed to donate swimsuits for boys and girls to help kick start the program. Thanks to their support and generosity, Kiefer Swim Products was recognized as WPD's 2018 Patron of the Year.

Another barrier to overcome was the cost of transportation to and from the Field House for each of the 15 public elementary schools. The Waukegan School District agreed to take on the responsibility and cost by using two of its large school buses to transport students to and from the field trip experience, eliminating transportation costs related to the field trip.

Program sustainability was a concern for all involved community partners. Part of the sustainability concerns included the availability and cost of staff and swim

instructors for each field trip day. To address this potential barrier, the Waukegan Parks Foundation implemented an annual fundraiser, the *Big Splash*, to help financially support the program. The inaugural *Big Splash* benefit took place the day before the grand opening of the new indoor aquatic center, and it raised more than \$9,000 dollars.

### PROGRAM IMPACT AND SUMMARY

In the first year, all 15 public schools participated in the program along with five private schools. The number of students who participated during 2017-2018 academic year was 1,235.

The excitement and pleasure on the faces of the children have motivated and reinforced the community partners' long term-commitment to the program. The pool portion of the field trip is the highlight for students, and a child's transformation from fear to fun in the water is most rewarding for program staff and school personnel. The program has received overwhelming positive feedback from second grade students, teachers and parents. There have been thank you letters from individual classes as well as from teachers and school administrators. Through these letters, students have shared many memorable experiences from their field trip.

Program staff consider it a big win when a terrified child gets into the water after sitting out for a portion of the session, moving to the pool wall with assistance. By overcoming this fear and getting into the water with program staff, children are taking a small step toward eventually swimming safely and independently.

WPD has also seen an increase in swim lesson enrollment since the field trip program began. By introducing more children and families to the Field House and related programs such as swim lessons, more children in Waukegan are learning about swim safety and the importance of being active. Eighty-five of the free family swim passes have been redeemed, with more expected.

Thanks to the overwhelming support of the community partners, the second-grade field trip program will continue to be a success for many years to come. As the program continues each school year, eventually every student in Waukegan schools will have had the second grade field trip experience. This will ensure that every child in our community is introduced to basic swim safety skills and activities that instill healthy lifestyles, which could positively impact the students' health and safety for years to come.



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# Codebooks to Splash pads: A Recent History of Aquatic Innovation

By **Troy N. Triphahn**, LEED AP, Vice President & COO, WT Group

We have survived another prolonged Illinois winter, and we have dried out from the April showers. Now, the dog days of summer are upon us!

Children are out of school, the sun is blazing and everyone has seen the summer blockbusters. In Illinois, where Mother Nature is most fickle, everyone knows to make the most out of those precious, lazy summer days. There's no better place for Illinois residents to do this than at the pools maintained by their local park districts and recreation agencies!

Gone are the days of the cold, overcrowded, concrete, rectangular pool - with the primary feature being a diving well, lined with shivering children waiting to perfect their cannonballs. Just twenty years ago, a small slide and a high dive were about as exciting as it got, unless a candy bar dropped into the pool causing mass panic and a temporary closure! (#caddyshackproblems)







**At some point, everyone has the urge to run through a fountain on a hot summer day. Now, even an adult can enjoy dodging a simple ground spray feature, and children can fill an afternoon on a themed play structure.**

The nostalgic days are gone, and a lazy day at the 'concrete bathtub' has evolved into a much different experience. Today, the whole family can enjoy their local "aquatic centers," no longer just "pools." Zero-depth entries are the norm, not the exception, and diving wells have been replaced with climbing walls, rope courses, basketball hoops and zip lines. For the land lovers, there are picnic areas, sand volleyball and food courts.

Audio visuals have progressed from scratchy PA systems emitting audio akin to Charlie Brown's teacher, to high-tech equipment capable of producing party-like environments with trendy music and even summer movie nights at some districts!

For the little ones, zero depth has been a parent's dream come true, enabling a more independent experience for the youngest swimmers that wasn't an option thirty years ago.

The now popular splash pads are not only safer for young children, but they actually extend the swim season. Pools rely primarily on seasonally-staffed students as lifeguards, but splash pads do not. This allows splash pads to operate longer than just throughout summer break.

And, with splash pads, there are options galore! At some point, everyone has the urge to run through a fountain on a hot summer day. Now, even an adult can enjoy dodging a simple ground spray feature, and children can fill an afternoon on a themed play structure.

What about the slides? Drop slides, racing slides, jet slides, bowls, loops and boomerangs . . . if you can dream it, it is probably out there somewhere!

The truth is, the aquatic industry did not get to this point with a perfect record. Being around water is potentially dangerous. Significant advancements in safety regulations, oversight, technology and inclusivity have been important factors in what we are able to experience today. Let's look at this evolution and some of the major milestones in public pools throughout the last few decades.

### **CODES AND REGULATIONS**

It is likely that Illinois is the home of public pool regulation. According to *Pool and Spa News* in 1935, Chauncey Hyatt of the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) wrote what is believed to be the very first pool regulations, impacting 600 already existing pools in Illinois.

Codes have been the driving force behind improvements in safety and sanitation at all public facilities. The applicable code as we know it was adopted on October 22, 1974, and it has been amended many times since.

### **IDPH SWIMMING FACILITY CODE**

Most recently, effective October 4, 2013, the IDPH recognized that it is in the best interest of the public's safety and welfare to require that pool architects, engineers and contractors become pre-qualified by the department to be allowed to submit plans and permit applications.





Ultimately, this recognizes that the standard of care and knowledge necessary to properly design a pool is beyond that of other local and national codes and licenses. Therefore, the public pools in the state of Illinois should inherently be safer by limiting the professionals who are qualified to perform the work. The IDPH maintains a publicly available list of those individuals on their website at [www.dph.illinois.gov](http://www.dph.illinois.gov).

### VGBA

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA) should not be news to anyone in the pool industry, but believe it or not, there are still many out there who have not complied. VGBA took effect on December 19, 2008, with the goal to enhance the safety of public pools and spas. VGBA was driven by the tragic drowning of Graeme Baker, former Secretary of State James Baker III's granddaughter.

To oversimplify, the VGBA requires that all pool/spa drain covers be retrofitted to meet the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8-2007 standard. Pool operators should be aware that pool drains typically have a limited useful life and must be replaced every 5-15 years. If an agency is not able to change their drain like-for-like, they may be required to obtain a new permit from the IDPH.

### THE MODEL AQUATIC HEALTH CODE

A relatively new best practice is The Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) published by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on August 29, 2014. The MAHC emphasizes science-based resources, and is focused on

reducing drowning, chemical injuries, waterborne illness outbreaks and pool closings.

Currently, there is not a federal or international standard for aquatic design. Illinois and other states rely on their public health codes; however, designers and operators can also rely on MAHC as a best practice as it addresses design, construction, operation, maintenance, policies and management.

While the MAHC is not federally mandated, local government agencies can choose to adopt all or some of the code, which may or may not include adding local amendments. Other agencies may use the code as they see fit. It is always recommended that park agencies rely on their design professional to understand applicable codes, especially if conflicting codes arise.

### ADA

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) is responsible for regulating the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In January 2012, the DOJ issued new regulations for public pools titled, "ADA 2010 Revised Requirements: Accessible Pools – Accessible Means of Entry and Exit."

This provided guidance for Title III of the ADA. The compliance date was initially extended due to public comments and eventually became effective January 31, 2013. The 2010 Standards require that *newly constructed or altered* swimming pools, wading pools and spas have an accessible way for people with disabilities to enter and

exit the pool. It provides technical requirements to meet this definition, as well as the requirements for existing pools and tests to determine if accessibility is readily achievable or not.

Inclusiveness is not only the law, but it is the right thing to do. Examples of the guidance includes specific requirements for points of entry, slopes and railing requirements. This ensures that people with all levels of physical ability can experience equal levels of enjoyment.

These are codes that have impacted the aquatic industry primarily throughout the past 10 years. With the population growing and aging, along with the rise of swim schools, swimming – one of the nation's most popular leisure activities - will continue to gain popularity. Keeping the public safe is the topmost priority, and codes and regulations must evolve in order to keep up with this innovative industry.

### SPA OPTIONS

We have entered an era where therapy and rehabilitation are the preferred remedy for an array of physical issues. Water fitness provides countless benefits such as strengthening muscles, correcting body posture and lowering blood pressure - just to name a few.

Historically, only sports teams and exclusive hospitals had therapy pools, but more often, park and recreation agencies are providing additional options for their residents and guests. In some cases, agencies can lower their costs by partnering with local hospitals or rehabilitation centers to install spa and therapy features that may otherwise not be affordable.

Health options today include more than simply water aerobics. Residents can find hot, warm and cold plunge pools; treadmill pools and swim-in place pools. These are

extremely beneficial for rehabilitation, athletic training and recovery from surgery - and they are also great alternatives to simply mix up a workout from time to time!

### CHEMICALS

Chlorine has been and still is the primary chemical used in most public and private pools, but is this trend turning?

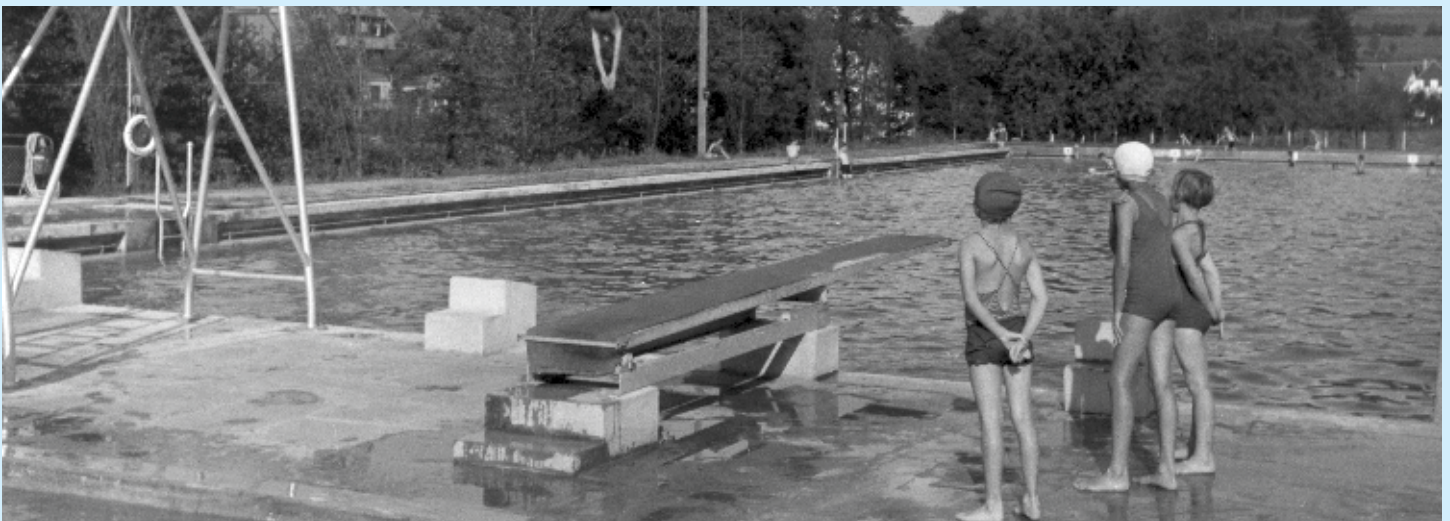
Chlorine equipment is historically more cost effective to install; proves very successful as a sanitizer and is easy on pool decks, equipment and around the general pool area.

Although chlorine is practical and readily available, it has its disadvantages. Chlorine turns into chloramine, giving off that 'pool smell' everyone knows so well. It can also irritate the skin and eyes of swimmers. Additionally, chlorine is not necessarily environmentally friendly.

The newer technology is “salt water pools,” which aren't technically saltwater as we know it as in ocean water. It is technically salt-water chlorination, or a salt chlorine generator.

“Salt water” pools involve adding salt to the pool water, so the major benefit is that it creates softer water. Frequent swimmers will appreciate the softer water on their skin and eyes, as there is a lower risk of irritation. Additionally, there is significantly less maintenance with the chemicals as the salt systems produce the necessary chlorine.

The cons of salt water technology include a larger initial investment, as it is typically more expensive than traditional chlorine systems. A major consideration is the corrosiveness of salt, which may damage equipment, furniture and fixtures around the pool if not properly maintained and regularly cleaned. Steady maintenance must be a consideration when deciding on a salt water system.





## FILTRATION

Today, there are more options for filtration media than ever. Traditional filters require significant backwashing and flushing of the wastewater, which results in thousands of gallons of wastewater sewage.

With new regenerative media filters, operators will typically realize a higher initial cost, but in time, will potentially save millions of gallons of water throughout the filter's life. Obviously, this can be extremely valuable in areas with water shortages and can prove to be more economical in the long run - especially for larger facilities and indoor facilities, which are used year-round.

Additionally, regenerative media filters tend to use less electricity and take up less space than traditional filters.

## MORE ADVANCES

When park agencies are looking at existing or planned facilities, it is imperative to rely on experienced engineers, contractors and designers. In addition to codes, chemicals, and filtration, there are many more advancements to be considered. For example, glass filtration is beginning to be

discussed as a superior filtration media due to its weak negative charge, however it may not be the most cost effective. UV treatment is recommended in many applications and has made significant advances in recent years.

There are many decisions to make that impact an agency's short-term budget and long-term maintenance and operations. Each unique situation will weigh them differently, but safety should always be the top priority.

## IN SUMMARY

Pools and splash pads will always be part of summer fun, and the thought of enjoying a crystal blue refreshing pool on a hot summer day is what gets many Illinoisans through those long winters.

Collectively, these advancements provide the public with a safer, more sanitary, innovative experience each time they choose their local park district or recreation agency's aquatic facility to spend their perfect, lazy summer days!



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## Manhattan Park District Names Jay Kelly as Executive Director

The Manhattan Park District is pleased to announce that **Jay Kelly** has been hired as the new executive director.

Kelly comes to Manhattan from the Downers Grove Park District where he served as director of recreation for five years. In this position, he managed more than 3,000 programs annually, developed operating and capital budgets and oversaw the park district's marketing initiatives. He has more than 20 years of experience in the park and recreation field including positions at the Geneva Park District and the Homewood-Flossmoor Park District.

Kelly earned a Bachelor of Arts in Recreation Administration from the College of St. Francis in Joliet. He is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional and served on the Downers Grove Rotary, Kane County Fit For Kids Coalition and other community affiliate organizations.



## Hoffman Estates Park District Selects Craig Talsma as New Executive Director

The board of commissioners for the Hoffman Estates Park District has hired **Craig Talsma** as its new executive director. Talsma has 27 years of experience in the

park and recreation field. He began with the Hoffman Estates Park District in 1997 as the director of finance and administration and had been serving as the park district's deputy director since 2012.

Talsma holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from the University of Illinois, Urbana Business School. He is a Certified Public Accountant and a graduate of the National Recreation and Parks Association's Director School. He is certified as a parks and recreation professional executive (CPRE).

## In Memoriam



**Mark Badasch** passed away on April 29 at home.

Badasch was a true friend of the Illinois park district family, and his heartfelt work inspired greatness among park districts throughout the state, particularly in the southern Illinois region. He served as executive director of the Collinsville Area Recreation District (CARD) from 1994 until his retirement in 2011. He was instrumental in the development of SplashCity, Willoughby Heritage Farm and Arlington Greens Golf Course.

Badasch began his park and recreation career as the assistant superintendent of recreation for the Pekin Park District. He was also the youth program director/camp manager for Neighborhood House in Peoria. He was hired as executive director of the first county park district in the state, Clark County, in 1977, where his hard work and dedication helped to create Mill Creek Park. He served as director of parks and recreation in Roxana for 15 years.

He logged countless hours to building relationships and improving communities through memberships in the Southern Illinois Parks and Recreation Association (SIPRA), Illinois Parks and Recreation Association (IPRA President, 1998-1999), and the Illinois Association of Park Districts (IAPD). In retirement, Mark was an avid volunteer and Director at Greater St. Louis Air and Space Museum in Cahokia and served on the board of the Cahokia Mounds Society.

His contagious enthusiasm will be missed.



## IN MEMORIAM



**Jim Duffy** passed away on March 24.

Duffy was elected to the Woodridge Park District's board of commissioners in 1987. Prior to joining the park district, he actively served the Woodridge Soccer Association for several years.

Duffy was a staunch advocate for enriching the overall quality of life for Woodridge residents through parks and recreation, which was evident by his commitment to continually develop and improve all parks, facilities, programs and services. His dedicated service resulted in the development of several neighborhood parks, Cypress Cove Family Aquatic Park, Orchard Hill Park Sports Field Complex, Janes Avenue Park renovations and Skateboard Facility addition, Hobson Corner Park Aquatic Splash Pad, Community Center Administrative Office and Program Space addition, the Athletic Recreation Center (ARC) and much more.

Duffy left an indelible impression on the Woodridge community, leaving it a significantly better place than when he found it. His contributions will live on for generations to come.



**Joseph "Joe" Bruntmyer**, passed away on April 4.

Bruntmyer worked for 13 years as the recreation supervisor for the Vernon Hills Park District. He most recently served as recreation superintendent for the

Morton Grove Park District.

During his decade-plus career with the Vernon Hills Park District, Bruntmyer was known for his big heart and tremendous passion for sports. He assisted with youth basketball leagues on a part-time basis, and his heartfelt belief was that every child should have an opportunity to learn and play any sport at their own pace. His overwhelming commitment to fairness in community league sports programs was inspiring, and his energy, enthusiasm and positive spirit touched the lives of hundreds of coaches, parents and players of youth and adult sports.

The entire Illinois park district family mourns this great loss.



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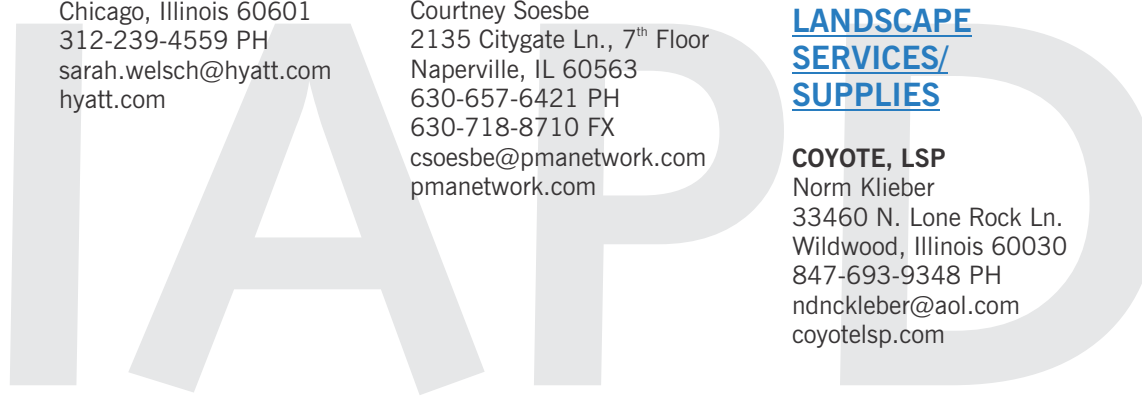
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