

illinois

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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



fitness
for any age or season



YOUR RECREATION PARTNER / BOOTH 600



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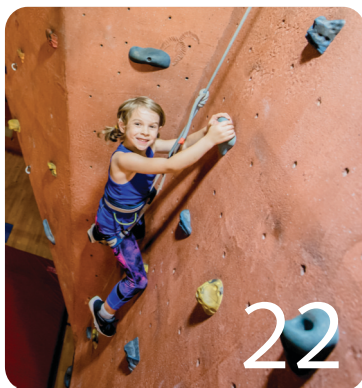
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FROM THE EDITOR

Like many people, I have a love-hate relationship with exercise and fitness. I love the feeling and results of exercise; I hate leaving my cozy home to do it.



Nevertheless, I do make an effort to stay active. The way I've done so has changed a lot over the years. In college, fitness was a bit of a social activity. I would often go ride a bike or jog on a treadmill with friends, and my roommate and I adored our weekly Zumba classes.

After college, I spent almost a year as a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in a small town in the south of Moldova, where I worked out in a Soviet-style gym, standing out like a sore thumb. It was also my first introduction to the difficulty of getting to the gym in the winter, something I would become quite familiar with after moving to Illinois.

Years later, after getting my graduate degree and getting married, my fitness routine changed again when I was expecting my first child. Suddenly, it was less about appearance and more about keeping my body healthy enough to deliver my son into the world. Regaining my strength post-delivery brought about new challenges, and now I am once again trying to stay fit to benefit the baby I'm carrying, this time with the added challenge of a Midwestern winter.

Fitness means something different to everyone, and it looks different at various ages and even at different times of year.

Illinois' park districts and special recreation associations provide a vast array of options for people of any age to stay fit during any season.

In *Teaching Fitness from a Young Age* on page 22, Kassandra Collins from the Elmhurst Park District describes the unique fitness options the park district has for kids and teenagers, including a gym just for them. *Choosing How You Live As You Age* on page 18 details the outdoor senior fitness park AARP opened in the Springfield Park District, one of only seven across the country so far. And Stephanie FitzSimons from the Bartlett Park District and Erika Young from the St. Charles Park District share fun ways to stay fit during the winter months in *Don't Let the Cold Get You Down* on page 26.

It can be hard to get motivated to stay fit, but with the options available in parks around Illinois, people of any age in any season can find something that works for them.

— Liz Mitchell, Editor



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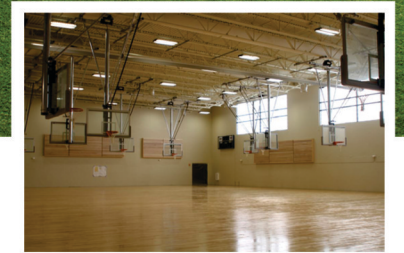


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Peter M. Murphy, Esq., CAE, IOM
IAPD President and CEO

2019 The Capstone of a Decade

The Illinois Association of Park Districts is committed to providing our members with the highest level of service and support through education, research and advocacy. Looking back at 2019, I am proud of our accomplishments and grateful for your continued loyalty.

I wanted to share some of our many successes throughout the last year. Our annual report, which can be seen online at ilparks.org, contains the full Year In Review. Here are some of the highlights. In 2019 IAPD:

- Spearheaded advocacy efforts that resulted in \$29 million for new OSLAD grants to be awarded in 2020.
- Partnered with the Trust for Public Land and the Nature Conservancy to obtain funding for a new Statewide Capital Needs Assessment that demonstrated \$3 billion in capital construction and land acquisition needs.
- Testified in the House and Senate committees about the \$3 billion capital construction and open space needs. Our advocacy resulted in significant funding, in addition to OSLAD, for local park, recreation and conservation projects in the capital plan, including **\$50 million** for PARC grants, **\$50 million** for the Public Museum Grant Program, **\$50 million annually** for the ITEP grants and **tens of millions of dollars** for member-initiative grants specific to park and recreation.
- Published research finding titled, *Parks Provide Excellent Value to Illinois Residents*, which conveyed the findings of IAPD's statewide program participation and facility usage survey, including nearly 29 million visits to recreational facilities per year, 71,000 programs offered and nearly 2 million participants registered.
- Posted five 20' x 60' vinyl billboards on the high-traffic interstate system leading into and out of Chicago to promote the *Park District Youth License Plate* in support of fitness and nutrition for children. These billboards received 35,910,853 impressions.
- Positioned a total of 28 banners on light poles around the Illinois State Capitol in conjunction with *Parks Day at the Capitol*, the *Legislative Reception* and *Legislative Conference*. These banners featured photos from our member agencies and encouraged people to *Discover the Power of Parks*.
- IAPD's inaugural *Park Cast* hit the airwaves this year. *Park Cast* is a podcast that shines the spotlight on the accomplishments of IAPD and our members. Six episodes were presented this year, including interviews with park district executives and representatives from partnering organizations.
- IAPD had an all-time high of **4,522 combined followers** on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram – a 34.26% increase from 2018.
- IAPD's *Boot Camps* educated 232 new and seasoned board members and staff on the fundamentals of legislative advocacy, finance, ethics, board/staff relationships and the Open Meetings Act.
- Nearly 150 people participated in IAPD's complimentary webinars *The One Leadership Practice You Can't Afford to Overlook* and *How Intergovernmental Agreements Can Benefit Your Agency and Help You Do More*.
- IAPD provided more than 40 educational programs for park commissioners and executives in 2019.
- IAPD published a history book titled *Illinois Association of Park Districts, 1928 – 2018: A Legacy of Innovation and Excellence*, which was sent to each IAPD member agency. The 119-page publication outlines milestones of the association's 90 years of service and pays tribute to the leaders who have shaped IAPD into the leading statewide association for park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation and special recreation agencies.
- Published an updated edition of *The Park District Code* and a new edition of the *Illinois Park District Financial Procedures* guide. For the first time, these publications were also offered in convenient digital formats.
- Provided IAPD member agencies with **\$31,000** in *PowerPlay!* grants this year, thanks in large part to the money raised by the **1,100 Park District Youth License Plates** on Illinois vehicles.
- The *Friends of Illinois Parks' 18th Annual Summer Golf Tour* brought 268 commissioners and businesses together to exchange ideas, learn about other agencies' golf operations and raise money for *Friends* programs and research.
- 80% of IAPD's member agencies are saving money by using services provided by at least one of our affinity programs.

- Our highly acclaimed *Director Search* program remained popular among agencies seeking to hire an executive. IAPD has placed 132 executive directors/CEOs to date.
- IAPD published the *2019 Buyers' Guide*, a 46-page listing of businesses that provide essential goods and services to Illinois park, recreation and conservation agencies.
- IAPD staff remained readily available to the membership, providing prompt responses to thousands of member phone calls, e-mails, text messages, social media posts and letters regarding grant applications, board matters, design/build and employment issues, legal questions, issues impacting organizing a park district and more.

The new year ushers in many resolutions for self-improvement, lifelong learning and the commitment to continue to be a more knowledgeable and effective board member.

The wonderful thing about January in Illinois is that the IAPD/IPRA Conference takes place over a three-day period with nearly 200 education sessions geared toward increasing the knowledge and effectiveness of both board members and professional staff.

It is the greatest opportunity of the year to network with like-minded, publicly elected officials from across the state of Illinois, see an exhibit hall brimming with the latest park and recreation equipment, and take some ideas on best practices to be shared with your communities.

The following is a brief sample of these outstanding opportunities.

Friday, January 24, 2020

Legal/Legislative, Part I 8:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Legal experts will discuss new laws and recent court decisions that affect park districts, conservation districts, forest preserves and recreation agencies.

Commissioners' Use of Social Media: Navigating a Treacherous Path 8:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

This session will provide up-to-date information and advice concerning the risks commissioners face when they use their personal social media accounts to discuss "the people's business."

Time's Up: Managing a Harassment-Free Workplace 8:15 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Join employment lawyer Scott Stewart and government lawyer Christine Walczak as they discuss defending harassment claims in the #MeToo era.

Legal/Legislative, Part II 9:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Review important changes to OMA/FOIA, employment law, the property tax code, election law, and public investment and finance, among many others.

The Culture Code: Creating a Healthy Relationship Between Executive Directors and Elected Officials 9:45 a.m. - 11 a.m.

This session will outline the best practices for fostering a healthy relationship between the board of commissioners and the executive director.

Engaging Community Donors Through Sponsorship/ Naming Rights Programs 1 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Offering sponsorship and naming rights for recreational amenities is a great way to raise dollars, but there are often legal and administrative considerations to know before launching a program.

Avoiding Ethical Landmines: What Local Government Leadership Must Know About Ethics Requirements 3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

This session will provide elected officials, officers and employees with critical information on the Gift Ban Act, prohibited political activities, conflicts of interest, official misconduct and executive session confidentiality.

Bond Financing of Public/Private Partnerships 3:30 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

A discussion of the methods for issuing municipal bonds, the financing tools available to park districts and recent regulatory changes.

Saturday, January 25, 2020

Sexual Harassment: Prevention and Tips 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

This session is for participants to learn about how to prevent sexual harassment in the #MeToo era and engage in a discussion about the various forms of sexual harassment and recent Illinois cases.

Better Board Meetings With Robert's Rules 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

This session will cover the basics of what you need to know to make your meetings efficient and effective.

Navigating the Public Bidding and Contract Process 10:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

This session will provide up-to-date information on bidding rules, bid awards, handling bid problems and effective contracting.

Boardmanship, Part I: Essential Board Practice and New Considerations of the Social and Electronic Variety 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

This session will cover the Open Meetings Act and parliamentary essentials, typical board meeting practices, electronic participation, voting rules, officer powers and more.

Complying With the Illinois Open Meetings Act 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

We will cover everything from determining when a meeting exists to dealing with compliance in the digital age.

Park District Finance 101 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

This session will provide an overview of park district financial laws with a minimum of math – we promise!

Boardmanship, Part II: Overcoming Challenges on the Way to Board Greatness 2 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

This session will discuss using the law and practical strategies to resolve common board and commissioner problems without losing public credibility.

I wish you a happy and prosperous new year filled with exciting opportunities for leadership development and teamwork.

EYE ON THE PROFESSION

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



By Debbie Trueblood, CAE
IPRA Executive Director

Looking Ahead to a Great Conference

On behalf of the IPRA Board of Directors and staff team, we are looking forward to seeing many of you at this year's "IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference!" For many of our members, the conference is the highlight of the year and the top-rated member benefit. It is the culmination of many volunteers coming together as one community, bound together in our passion for parks and recreation. I can't wait!

My thanks to the volunteers on the Joint Conference Committee. This committee, which includes professionals from IPRA's membership and commissioners from IAPD's membership, are a passionate group of volunteers who work tirelessly on the conference planning every detail to ensure the best conference experience. My thanks to IPRA Chair Kevin Romejko and IAPD Chair Mike Vogl and the committee: IPRA Program Chair Andrew Dallner, IAPD Program Chair Lori Palmer, IPRA Events Chair Carlo Capalbo, IAPD Events Chair Adriane Johnson, IPRA Operations Chair Tim Reinbold, IAPD Operations Chair Jerri-Lynn Kleina, IPRA Operations Co-Chair Lacy Velasquez, IAPD Operations Chair Ted Schulz, IPRA Exhibits Chair John Wilson, IAPD Exhibits Chair Bob Schmidt, IPRA Exhibits Co-Chair John Curran, IAPD Exhibits Co-Chair Jeff Rigoni, along with Conference Directors Leesa Kuo Johnson from IPRA and Sue Triphahn from IAPD.

My thanks to the dedicated IPRA Program Committee. This committee works to ensure that you have the best educational experience at conference. My thanks to IPRA Program Chair Andrew Dallner and IAPD Program Chair Lori Palmer and the committee: Jonelle Bailey, Laura Cavazos, Erin Chapa, John Chase, Liz Cox, Caitlin Deptula, Mat Emken, Theresa Esposito, Nikki Ginger, Lonette Hall, Kim Hansen, Carol Heafey, Kolbe Kasper, Jennifer Knitter, Dawn Krawiec, Ken McEwen, Mike McNicholas, Gina Petkus, Marlon Rodas, Karyn Roth, John Short, Rob Sperl, and Erika Strojinc, along with Conference Directors Leesa Kuo Johnson from IPRA and Sue Triphahn from IAPD.

Plus, conference would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of many onsite volunteers. We rely on their assistance in daily logistics, registration, and

Conference Headquarters. If you wish to volunteer and have an hour or two to spare during conference, please send an email to the following people and include the day(s)/time(s) you are available: Conference Headquarters: Kim Laper (kim@ilipra.org), Conference Registration: Alan Howard (ahoward@iliparks.org), and the IPRA Booth: Jean Kane (jean@ilipra.org).

This year's conference will be January 23-25, 2020, at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. As usual, we have exciting entertainment planned to enhance your networking opportunities. On Thursday night, January 23, enjoy the Welcome Social featuring the band, Hello Weekend who performs today's biggest hits, doing covers of artists like Rihanna, Lady Gaga, and many more. No tickets needed, all conference attendees are welcome!

Don't miss the Keynote General Session on Saturday, January 25, 8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m. The speaker this year will be Jarrett Payton, presenting "Lessons From My Father". Jarret is the son of the late NFL Hall of Famer Walter Payton. He is also a radio host, businessman, philanthropist, motivational speaker, former NFL and CFL running back, and family man. He will share the story of growing up with "the most famous football player in the world" as his dad. He will talk about how he chose to honor his father's legacy through service in the community. He will share about importance of finding your passion in all that you do. You won't want to miss this great session!

On Saturday night, January 25, enjoy the annual Closing Social at the Dave & Buster's. You'll need a ticket to this exciting event. Ticket includes: roundtrip shuttle service from the Hyatt Regency Chicago, admission to Dave & Buster's and a Power Game Card, dinner buffet, and unlimited beer, wine, and soft drinks. You won't want to miss this memorable celebration. Additional tickets may be purchased on-site from Conference Registration. Adult tickets are \$99; Child tickets (12 and under) are \$35. Tickets will not be sold at the social.

We also have some other exciting events planned. We will have our annual Silent Auction and Sports Raffle. Proceeds go to the Illinois Park and Recreation Foundation (IPRF) to provide scholarships to professionals and college students. The winners of the sports raffle will be announced at the Closing Social Saturday night of conference.

Be sure to visit the NEW Unplug and Play Space in Regency Ballroom D, West Tower/Gold Level. Since play is such an important part of parks and recreation, IPRA is excited to host the Unplug & Play Space – a BRAND NEW way for attendees to relax, unwind, and catch up with friends (or meet new ones)! Come visit and have fun playing games such as Jenga, Bags, Connect4, Scrabble, Putterball, and more! Open 9:00 am – 11:00 pm on Thursday and 8:00 am – 9:00 pm on Friday.

We are proud of our Sponsor a Student program. Held at the Awards Luncheon on Friday, January 24 at 12:15 p.m. – 2:15 p.m., this program, allows students to opt in when they register to attend the lunch for free and be matched with an organization who will share their table with you, giving you a chance to network with professionals in the field.

On Friday night, January 24 at 5:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. will be IPRA's Annual Business Meeting. All are welcome to attend this event where we will present a variety of awards for both agencies and individuals, share IPRA's Annual Report for 2019, and inaugurate all new board and section board members.

I'd like to thank the 2019 IPRA Board for their time and commitment to IPRA this year: Chair Jeff Fougousse, Past Chair Matthew Corso, Chair Elect Erin Folk, Secretary/Membership Council Rep Conor Cahill, Chicago Metro Region Rep Margaret Resnick, Northwest Region Rep Andy Thurman, Central Region Rep Doug Damery, Southern Region Rep Andrew Dallner, and At Large Rep Trisha Breitlow.

Additionally, I want to thank the members of the Illinois Park and Recreation Foundation (IPRF) Board: Chair Mike Clark, Cam Bettin, Carlo Capalbo, Tracey Crawford, John Curran, Mike Kies, Ray Ochrowicz, Jarrod Scheunemann, Liz Serruto, Chuck Szoke, John Wilson, and Dave Dillon with IPRA Board Liaison Trisha Breitlow and Membership Council Rep Conor Cahill, along with members of the Events Committee: Bill McAdam, Cathy Splett, Tim Reinbold, Gayle Mountcastle, and Lindsey Nicholson.

IPRA is thriving today because of the continued dedication and commitment of our volunteers. Again, my thanks and congratulations to the Joint Conference Committee and Program Committee on a successful conference. All your work is going to culminate in a successful and memorable conference that we will all remember. I look forward to seeing you there.

Upcoming Events

February 12 & 20, 2020

Webinar: Constructing the Innovation Equation (No Math Required!)

In the park and recreation field, we empower others to play, participate, and enjoy their leisure time. By creating environments conducive to innovative thinking, we empower others to rise above the status quo. As staff, how do we power up our own creativity to produce fresh and new ideas, especially when dealing with old, repetitive problems? In this session, you'll jumpstart creativity for yourself and those around you by choosing tools to construct an 'Innovation Equation'.

March 11 & 19, 2020

Webinar: Social Media Strategies and Fixes - Contagious Content

From aesthetics to zeal, there are countless ways to improve social media engagement. Learn how to use personas, analytics, scheduling, and storytelling to

increase both effectiveness and efficiency. You'll learn how to stop wasting time and energy with ineffective posts while adding content which attracts true fans and followers. Finally, we'll critique actual social media posts exploring content, timing, and consistency.

March 24 – 26, 2020

Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course

Rob Roy Golf Course, Prospect Heights

Designed by the National Recreation and Park Association and co-hosted by the Illinois Park and Recreation Association, the CPSI certification program provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date training on playground safety issues, including hazard identification, equipment specifications, surfacing requirements and risk management methods. CPSI course participants will gain practical, hands-on training on how to apply the ASTM standards and the CPSC guidelines to playground environments.

For details and registration, please visit the IPRA event calendar at ILipra.org



Skills Development Webinar Series

REGISTRATION IS OPEN - VISIT ILIPRA.ORG

One time registration includes monthly login (group participation is encouraged) & access to all 2020 recorded webinars.

Earn up to 1.1 CEUs!





Jason Anselment
Legal/Legislative Counsel

Connecting Dots is a Key Part of Advocacy

The nightly ritual of reviewing the papers my daughters bring home from school has been a highlight for more than a decade. Although I am often disheartened by how much I have forgotten through the years, it is rewarding to follow their learning progress. With my youngest daughter now in first grade, the days of seeing them literally connect numerical dots have passed. These days, all four are instead figuratively connecting the dots between one lesson and the next.

The analogy of connecting dots came to mind here at IAPD recently when a conversation with a member caused me to look back at the NRPA-commissioned Local Government Officials' Perceptions of Parks and Recreation research report from a few years ago.¹ That study focused on the perceptions of parks and recreation by elected municipal officials from general purpose local governments across the country like cities and villages. The findings suggested widespread support for parks and recreation among these elected officials with 99% agreeing that their communities benefit from local park areas and six in seven agreeing that parks and recreation are well worth the tax dollars spent. Unfortunately, those same municipal officials also indicated that they were likely to make the largest cuts to parks and recreation funding when facing budget pressures despite viewing parks and recreation as a valuable contributor to some of the top issues facing their community like youth crime prevention and community health.

These troubling findings are substantiated by the actual shortsighted budget cuts these municipal officials made during the recent recession. This disconnection between their recognition of the long-term contributions that parks and recreation make towards top community issues on one hand, and their failure to prioritize funding for parks and recreation on the other, serves as a stark reminder of the need for park advocates to persistently connect these dots.

NRPA's national study was primarily focused on the battle that municipal recreation departments face when competing for budget dollars against other departments within their agency. So, the task for these park advocates is to connect the dots for the locally elected officials who are the actual budget decisionmakers for their agency.

Of course, one of the greatest advantages of the park district model is that the locally elected park commissioners who approve budgets and set priorities for their community more readily make these connections. So, while park districts certainly confront many of the same budgetary pressures as general purpose local governments, elected park board members typically make the connection between sustainable investments in parks and recreation as demanded by the community and the long-term solutions that relieve budget pressures for other state and local governments in vital areas such as health, public safety, education, child care and environmental impacts. Moreover, in contrast to the general purpose local government officials in the NRPA national study who acknowledged they were most likely to target park and recreation services with the largest cuts during economic downturns, park district commissioners also more aptly recognize that communities have an even greater need for their services during tough times.

While the capacity of locally elected park commissioners to implement long-term solutions and protect community investments in local park systems is a tremendous advantage of the park district model, it does not obviate the need for park districts to make connections between their agency's investments and the long-term benefits to their community. In fact, connecting these dots for state legislators, other local leaders, and residents is an essential component of our collective advocacy efforts.

For example, the issue of property taxes continues to garner much attention. While park districts represent only 3.6% of all property taxes that are collected statewide, the dollars provide critical support for park district services because, unlike other units of government, park districts have very limited alternative sources of revenue. Therefore, when discussing this issue with legislators and residents, it is important to advocate against a one-size-fits-all solution by highlighting the special way in which the issue impacts park districts.

However, it is also important to draw the connection between a community's tax investment and what taxpayers receive in return. For instance, these dollars help support 67,000 jobs statewide. Because nearly half of these are held by persons under age 26, many of whom are teens in their very first jobs, the dollars also provide valuable training and experience for tomorrow's workforce. Most park district employees live within the community where they work, which means that much of a park district's property tax dollars are being reinvested right back within the community.

The connection should also be made between the property tax investment and the resulting savings to taxpayers in other areas. After school and summer programs help reduce crime and juvenile detention facility costs. Lower program registration fees for safe, instructive afterschool and summer programs during times when school is not in session provide savings for working families while convenient and affordable access to recreational facilities helps reduce healthcare expenses for all of society in the long run.

Property taxes are just one example where connections are critical to our advocacy. Last year, we successfully worked with IAPD members to help make many of these same connections for legislators as we advocated for funding in the new capital bill. In addition to the positive impacts described above, connecting park and recreation capital projects to our state's overall infrastructure helped make the case for additional funding for OSLAD, PARC, public museum and other member-initiative capital projects.

A growing area of concern among many park and recreation agencies is the impact that unfunded mandates such as minimum wage increases will have on their operations. Hosting major community events such as festivals and sports tournaments requires a significant

upfront investment that is often borne mostly by the park district. Many other organizations reap the rewards of this investment including local businesses like hotels, restaurants, convenience stores and gas stations through increased spending and a boost in tourism. Other units of government like cities, villages and counties benefit tremendously through a windfall in their sales tax receipts as do host affiliate organizations who often profit from registration fees and other revenue sources. With the rising costs to build, maintain and staff the parks and facilities where these events take place, these other organizations may need help making the connection between the future availability of these services and their willingness to provide financial support including revenue sharing.

There are obviously many other examples where your agency may need to connect the dots between investments and benefits. Stormwater mitigation, particularly in urban areas, has been a focal point in communities looking to address outdated or inadequate systems. While it may seem obvious, the connection between open space and stormwater mitigation is lost in some communities. Rather than assessing these fees on park districts, municipal and county leaders should calculate the benefits of the parks and open space maintained by park districts and forest preserves and work together to acquire and maintain more open space. Certainly, some communities have made this connection and serve as models for maximizing taxpayer resources through intergovernmental cooperation.

Park commissioners and professionals are often so busy serving their communities that it could be easy to assume that all benefactors make all these connections. However, that is not always the case. As you meet with legislators, local leaders and residents during the upcoming year, make connecting these dots a part of your advocacy efforts.

<https://tinyurl.com/yxp4kr2r>

**For a list of Legislative
Awareness Events in 2020, visit
the IAPD website at
ILparks.org/2020advocacy**

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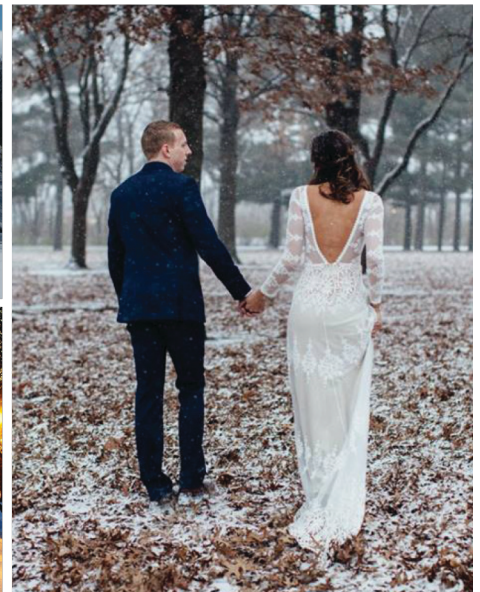


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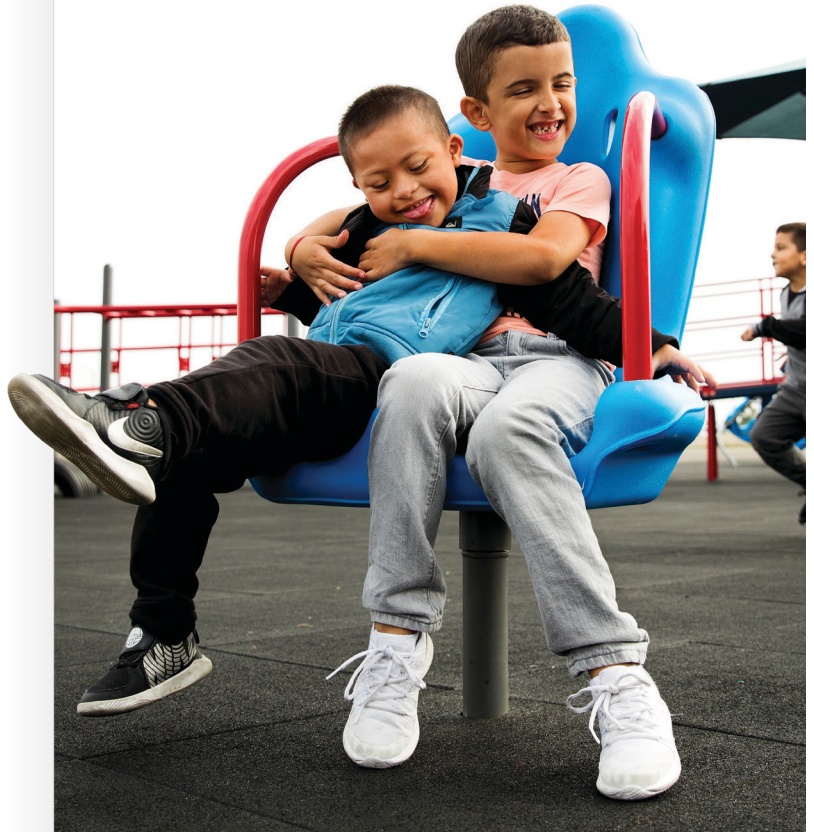


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Urbana Park District / Stevie Jay Broadcasting
Waukegan Park District / Goolpe Newspaper and Rogelio Fajardo

Best Friend of Illinois Parks – Business

Decatur Park District / Refreshment Services Pepsi,
Forest Preserve District of Kane County / Laura Ross Stewart,
Charles Schrader & Associates
Hoffman Estates Park District / National Fitness Campaign,
Sycamore Park District / ENCAP Inc.

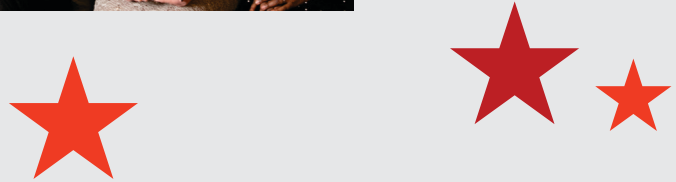
Intergovernmental Cooperation

Decatur Park District with the City of Decatur
 Forest Preserve of Cook County with the Housing
 Authority of Cook County
 McHenry County Conservation District with the
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 Schaumburg Park District with School District 54



Partnership

Bloomington Park District with
 Bloomington Church
 Buffalo Grove Park District with the
 College of Lake County TRiO
 Educational Talent Search Program
 St. Charles Park District with For Scout
 Foundation Sensory Cove Swim
 Program



Best Green Practices

Forest Preserves of Cook County
 Park District of Oak Park
 Plainfield Park District
 Waukegan Park District





Outstanding Citizen Volunteer of the Year

Downers Grove Park District for Dr. Gordon Goodman,
Forest Preserves of Cook County for John Navin,
Geneva Park District and Forest Preserve District of Kane County for Jay Womack,
Mundelein Park & Recreation District for Tori Trauscht,
Westmont Park District for Suzanne and AJ Andersen



Arts in the Park

Fox Valley Park District, North Berwyn Park District, Palatine Park District, Urbana Park District

Board Member Service Anniversaries

10 Years

Greg Lapin
Deerfield Park District

Eric Entler
Park District of Forest Park

Kathleen Repass
Geneseo Park District

John Frankenthal
Geneva Park District

Angie Katsamak
Glenview Park District

Karen Morrison
Golf Maine Park District

Sharon Knitter
Oak Brook Park District

Mary Kay Ludemann
Plainfield Park District

Tyler Smith
Rockford Park District

Richard Rosen
Wheeling Park District

Susan Stein
Wheeling Park District

15 Years

Michael Kenyon
Forest Preserve District of Kane County

20 Years

Tom Barz
Frankfort Park District

Susan Vanderveen
Geneva Park District

Jim Long
Lan-Oak Park District

Thomas Truedson
Oak Brook Park District

Jacqueline Petty
Peoria Park District

Bob Thomson
St. Charles Park District

Agency Anniversaries

50 Years

Buffalo Grove Park District
New Lenox Community Park District
Woodridge Park District

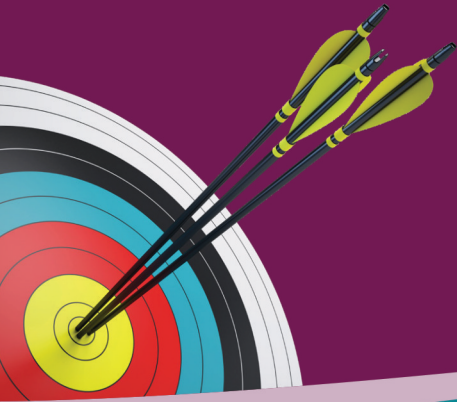
100 Years

Kewanee Park District

125 Years

Peoria Park District





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Who Reads *IP&R* Magazine?

Our readers are elected officials and recreation professionals who run the daily operations of the state's park districts, forest preserves, conservation areas, recreation associations and parks. A regular advertising plan, combined with cross-promotion at tradeshow and special events, **keeps your company top-of-mind when it comes to ordering products or services.**

2020 *IP&R* Editorial & Deadlines

2020 Buyer's Guide <i>Deadline: Jan 30</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feature Your Products & Services NEW EXPOSURE OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE!
March/April 2020 <i>Deadline: Jan 30</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park & Facility Construction • Photo Contest Winners
May/June 2020 <i>Deadline: March 13</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a Splash Through Aquatics <i>The essential resource for aquatics products</i>
July/Aug 2020 <i>Deadline: May 15</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trends in Conservation, Outdoor Recreation & Nature Centers • Legislative Advocacy
Sept/Oct 2020 <i>Deadline: July 10</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soaring to New Heights Pre-Conference Program • Good Governance & Leadership
Nov/Dec 2020 <i>Deadline: Sept 11</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Your Agency for Results • 2020 <i>Best of the Best</i> Gala Award Winners

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- *IP&R* Magazine: Three full-page ads in 2020
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- *IP&R* Magazine: Six 1/2 page ads in 2020
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The official magazine of Illinois Association of Park Districts and Illinois Park and Recreation Association

Questions? Contact Todd Pernsteiner for details at info@pernsteiner.com or (952) 841-1111.

By **Dina Anderson**, *AARP Illinois Associate State Director of Communications*

Choosing How You Live As You Get Older

How **AARP** and the **Springfield Park District**
are Providing Fitness Options for Seniors



Geared for people 50 and older but free to people of all ages, the park features 12 strength-building and aerobic exercise stations.

A year ago, Jack Handy, a 67-year-old Springfield resident, underwent double bypass surgery to repair an artery that was 98 percent blocked. Afterward, Handy needed intensive rehabilitation to rebuild his strength and endurance.

But outside of his regular pickleball matches, Handy had few places in Springfield to turn.

Fortunately for Jack, in September, AARP Illinois was proud to work with the Springfield Park District to open a new state-of-the-art outdoor fitness park at Lincoln Park in the state capital.

The Fitness Park at Lincoln Park – located within view of the historic tomb of Abraham Lincoln – encourages people of all ages to get out of the house, meet neighbors, become active and stay fit.

Geared for people 50 and older but free to people of all ages, the park features 12 strength-building and aerobic exercise stations. The stations are built on a solid, springy and waterproof surface made from recycled rubber tires. The fitness park also features stationary equipment such as steppers, climbers and chin-up bars that can be adapted to meet a range of fitness levels and abilities.

Additional exercise equipment includes bars for pull-ups and dips, rust-proof ellipticals and stair-stepper machines. Each station features a QR code that can be scanned for instructional videos on its use.



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AARP is working with FitLot, a 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping communities find the resources they need to plan, build and program outdoor fitness parks. Each park will include FitLot exercise equipment that can be adapted to meet a wide range of fitness levels and abilities.

To date the outdoor fitness area has attracted users from across the community who are delighted to be able to exercise outdoors.

Sgro added that the park district is now offering classes to enhance the use of the FitLot.

Springfield's outdoor fitness park is AARP's seventh such site to launch in the United States and the only one in Illinois.

Springfield was chosen because it is already a "community of presence" for AARP Illinois, meaning that it is a city of focus for the non-profit, non-partisan organization. AARP Illinois hosts more than 100 events in Springfield each year, according to Ryan Gruenenfelder, AARP Director of Advocacy and Outreach.

The Springfield FitLot was unveiled in conjunction with the 2019 Illinois Senior Olympics, an ideal time as 1,400 male and female athletes participated in more than 20 events and three team sports. Springfield is the only qualifying site in Illinois for athletes who would like to participate in the National Senior Games.

Over the next several years, AARP plans to sponsor a fitness park in every state. AARP will also underwrite parks in the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands as part of its ongoing mission of helping people to take control of their health as they age.

The move to bring fitness parks to every state in the U.S. is consistent with findings of an AARP survey, which outlined that when a neighborhood has parks and public spaces for people of all ages, residents benefit from improved physical and mental health, enhanced community connections, and added economic value and cost saving benefits.

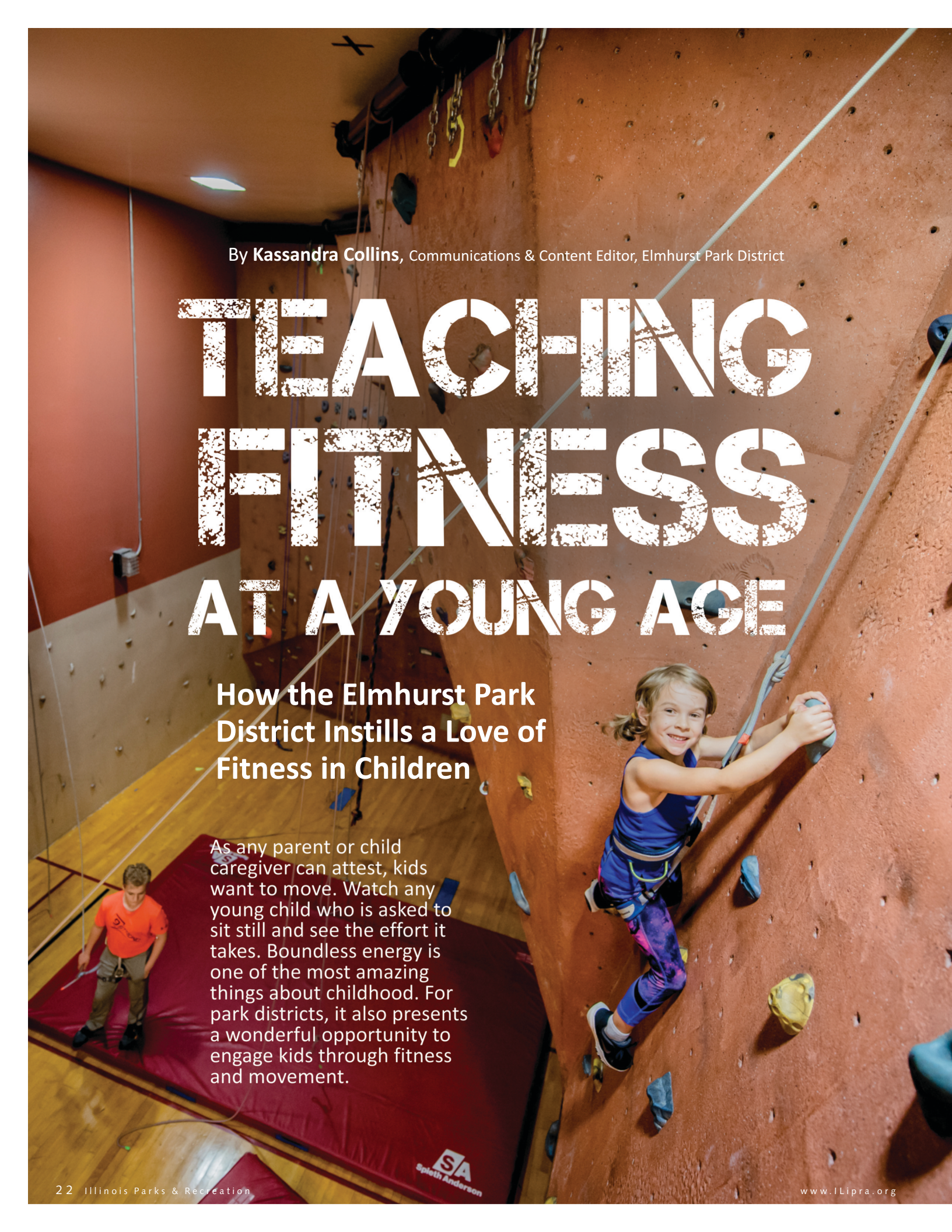
AARP Illinois knows that as people age, there is a tendency to isolate themselves from others. There can be a mental barrier to going to a gym. Just get out and take that first step. Be intentional. Go for a walk. It doesn't have to be organized. Just commit to moving a little bit each day.



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- Prescription Drug Programs

A young child with blonde hair, wearing a blue tank top and purple leggings, is climbing an indoor rock wall. The wall is reddish-brown with various colored handholds. The child is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, another person in an orange shirt is standing on a red mat. The scene is indoors with wooden flooring and ropes hanging from the ceiling.

By **Kassandra Collins**, Communications & Content Editor, Elmhurst Park District

TEACHING FITNESS AT A YOUNG AGE

How the Elmhurst Park District Instills a Love of Fitness in Children

As any parent or child caregiver can attest, kids want to move. Watch any young child who is asked to sit still and see the effort it takes. Boundless energy is one of the most amazing things about childhood. For park districts, it also presents a wonderful opportunity to engage kids through fitness and movement.



Courts Plus, located in Elmhurst, Illinois, is a fitness facility operated by the Elmhurst Park District. It serves the community by being a robust fitness destination, with tennis, aquatics and group exercise, plus services including massage and personal training.

An often-used motto of the facility conveys the approach Courts Plus takes with its members: we're here to support your success, your family and your community! Creating a family friendly and community focused environment is a big part of what the facility sees as its mission.

This approach has helped Courts Plus find success in its kids' fitness initiatives. These begin in early childhood programming and continue into the facility's youth gym, Fit 4 Life, and its climbing wall programming.

Anthony Larocco, Program Supervisor for Fit 4 Life Youth Gym and the climbing wall, said he has spoken with adult members who have grown children who still talk about their experience with Fit 4 Life.

Courts Plus began ramping up its kids' fitness opportunities approximately 15 years ago. Early childhood programming at the facility had always taught movement through play, but as the kids aged out of the program, the parents were looking for the next step.

At the time, the facility initially began offering classes to children in the fitness floor area. Staff found that members embraced the idea of promoting healthy living to kids as well as an option for activity during the winter months.

In 2006, Courts Plus opened the Fit 4 Life Youth Gym. The gym is for ages 6-15 and features strength and cardiovascular equipment built for children and teenagers. Using programs and open gym sessions, fitness instructors help kids use the equipment, set goals and begin to think about maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The gym, in conjunction with early childhood movement programs and the climbing wall, built in 1999, gives kids ample exposure to a variety of ways to keep active.

The focus for the programs goes well beyond fitness. Social opportunities and confidence building are also key objectives.

Friday Fun Climbs at the climbing wall, for example, can be a family outing or a meet-up with friends. The early childhood programs also build social skills; teaching kids fairness and kindness through team and individual activities.

The supportive setting also helps build the confidence of participants. Fit 4 Life gym brings together children at all levels of fitness skill, so instructors focus on group challenges, allowing everyone to celebrate successes. They also encourage the kids to set individual goals, rather than compare themselves to others.

The facility itself offers a great jumping off point to explore a number of fitness options, reinforcing that a healthy lifestyle can come in many forms.

Even programs that aren't entirely fitness-based take advantage of the features the fitness center has. Summer and winter break camps and Kids Day Off Club, a program that takes place during days off from school, often include time for playing tennis, trying the climbing wall or visiting Fit 4 Life.

Carolyn Kelley, Program Supervisor for Early Childhood, said the facilities offer a unique opportunity for parents whose children are not involved in sports or are not currently in school to make sure their kids get exercise.

As the kids spend more time in the facility, their appreciation for healthy living and fitness tends to grow. It makes it easier for them to see exercise and healthy living as a normal part of life.

There's no sign that the enthusiasm for kids' fitness will slow down in the future. The increase in screen time means that parents will continue to look for activities that embrace movement and interaction.

Childhood obesity continues to be an issue, and Courts Plus looks to be a leader in the community when it comes to working with families. The culture of the facility, of welcoming all fitness levels and celebrating personal goals, makes it an ideal place to come and have positive experiences that will carry on into adulthood.

With a track record of success in kids' fitness, Courts Plus strives to build a culture that welcomes the whole community, from kids and teens to adults and seniors. The facility brings the message of health and wellness to multiple generations.



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A photograph of two people standing on a snowy slope under a clear blue sky. The person on the left is wearing a red jacket, a black hood, and ski goggles. The person on the right is wearing a red jacket, a grey hood, and sunglasses. They are both holding snowboards. The text 'DON'T LET THE COLD GET YOU DOWN' is overlaid in large, white, outlined letters.

DON'T LET THE COLD GET YOU DOWN

STAY ACTIVE WITH WINTER FITNESS OPPORTUNITIES IN ILLINOIS PARKS

Even the most avid runner might find it difficult to keep up an outdoor fitness routine when they peek out the window and see snow swirling about. But with a variety of winter activities, Illinois parks make it fun to get moving outside, no matter what the thermostat reads.



Getting outside lifts the spirit,
invigorates the mind and
challenges your body.

When It Snows, St. Charles Parks Are the Place to Go

By Erika Young, PR & Marketing Manager

Winter: 'Tis the season to cheer up and chill out!

Hibernation isn't healthy for humans. To avoid catching a case of the wintertime blahs, participate in a variety of outdoor activities that help release the "happy hormones" of adrenaline and norepinephrine. Even just 15 minutes of exposure to sunlight can help supply the vitamin D necessary to build strong bones.

Though one's inclination may be to hunker down and wait it out until spring, experts advise getting outdoors in the winter as the best way to shake off the blues and burn up some calories. In St. Charles, there's a whole world brimming with winter wonders that can help those seasonal blues slip-slide away.

In fact, slip-sliding is pretty much the name of the game when it comes to winter fun. From sledding down a few snow-covered hills to skating across an ice rink and exploring a park's frosted landscape, or even cross-country skiing along miles of open space and scenic trails, there's sure to be a winter activity to get you out and about.

While the general St. Charles area may not be the first location that comes to mind when the word "skiing" is mentioned (lagging considerably behind such towns as Vail, Aspen and Gstaad), it does offer perfect conditions for the cross-country version of the sport. Once the white stuff falls, the park district's 20+ miles of walking and biking trails are magically transformed into ideal cross-country ski trails, offering you a way to get your heart rate up and take in some scenic views.

And what would winter be without some good, old-fashioned sledding? There are great hills at Timber Trails Park and Langum Park; both unsupervised and unlit parks are open until 9 p.m. and free to use. Guests can bring their own sled (or plastic tray, snowboard, etc.).

Mike Kies, Superintendent of Recreation and the park district's safety coordinator, stressed that families need to be mindful of the hours and weather conditions when planning a sledding adventure and noted that not all parks are safe for this fun winter activity.

Safety is the park district's number one priority. The website is updated regularly with current sled hill and ice conditions.

Another way to make winter slip-slide away is to swap out the sneakers for a pair of skates and head over to any one of four free ice rinks. Ice skating is available at Davis, Lincoln and Timber Trails Parks. Langum Park is set up for ice hockey action. Skaters should bring their own equipment, as no rentals are available. Rinks are open daily and lit until 9 p.m. for nighttime skating.

If skating's not your thing, then snowshoeing might be a good alternative. Once considered the *de rigueur* footwear for trappers and fur traders, snowshoes have gone high tech and are now great resources for runners and distance walkers who aren't going to let a little thing like a snowfall keep them indoors. Trekking through the snow-covered woods and trails shows familiar landscape in a new perspective. There are a limited number of pairs of aluminum framed adult-sized snowshoes and plastic child-size snowshoes available for rent to individuals, families or groups at Hickory Knolls Discovery Center. They can be rented for as little as \$2 on weekdays or \$5 on weekends. For more details, visit stcnature.org.

So as the days shorten and the temperature lowers, bundle up and head outside to enjoy free St. Charles Park District winter recreation. Even if you're just walking a trail, being outside can refresh your mind by reducing stress, improving concentration and increasing creativity.

With all these outdoor opportunities, this might be the year you turn from a weather wimp to a winter warrior. Let it snow!

For more information about winter activities, visit stcparks.org.

Winter Fitness in the Burbs

By Stephanie FitzSimons, Marketing Manager, Bartlett Park District

When the temperature drops and the snow starts to fly, how do you continue to enjoy the outdoor fitness arena? At the Bartlett Park District our mission is, "We Create Fun," and part of the way we deliver this is through a wide array of winter sports and events.

Villa Olivia, a facility of the Bartlett Park District, is our premier winter sports facility. In the winter, Villa Olivia is transformed into a winter wonderland with a focus on skiing and snowboarding on six runs, as well as snow tubing down our multi-lane run.

With winter weather coming earlier each year to the Midwest, we want to encourage an active lifestyle year-round.

Skiing and snowboarding provide an amazing workout for core strength, coordination and challenging the lower body. The back and forth movement that is required to navigate down hills tightens your entire body.

At Villa Olivia, skiing and snowboarding lessons are offered for ages 3 through adult and include group, semi-private, private and walk on. Lesson packages



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include equipment. Learn to ski/snowboard on the beginner runs, then work your way to the intermediate runs and finally enjoy our advanced terrain park. Imagine yourself shushing down the hill like a pro!

After a day on the slopes, you can spend some time lounging outside at the fire pit or playing board and card games in the lodge. If you don't see snow in your front yard, don't worry – Villa Olivia has 100 percent snow-making capabilities.

Looking for something less challenging and requiring no experience? Picture yourself racing down the hill on a snow tube against your friends or family members. Snow tubing is less intense but still requires core strength. The laughter alone will burn up the calories and work your abs. Tubing at Villa Olivia takes place in two-hour sessions and can be done starting at age 4.

If you're looking for fun for the entire family, come celebrate Winterfest 2020, held at the Bartlett Nature Center. This free event showcases some of the unique opportunities that the winter season brings. Dog sled mushing, snow painting, winter hikes and snowshoeing round out the activities available to try or watch. Borrow a pair of our snowshoes and navigate the trails throughout the state park. Snow shoeing can be done at any age, is family friendly and offers the opportunity to discover animal

tracks and a changing landscape. This activity does not require any experience and is as easy as walking. To increase the activity level, bring your own walking sticks or ski poles.

Feel like a kid again and grab your sled, toboggan or cafeteria tray and take a ride down one of the sledding hills around you. Most sled hills in park districts are free and unmanned by staff, so sled at your own risk. Or you can bundle up and get some fresh air and sunshine while walking with family and friends or with your dog through the state park, forest preserve or park district.

With any winter outdoor activity, the key to being comfortable is layering your clothes. You want to protect your skin from the wind, keep your muscles warm and wick away the sweat that might build up. Stay away from cotton for the inner layer, as it holds in the sweat. Keep your clothing well-fitted, and eliminate scarves that could become entangled during your activities.

Getting outside lifts the spirit, invigorates the mind and challenges your body. Make sure that your fitness program allows for time outdoors this winter.

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Jeffrey Janda – Streamwood Park District

Jeffrey S. Janda became the new executive director for the Streamwood Park District on October 21, 2019.

Jeff joins the Streamwood Park District after serving the Berwyn Park District for over 35 years, with 23 of those as executive director.

Because of Jeff's passion and commitment to parks and recreation, the city of Berwyn celebrated his long career by dubbing October 18, 2019 as "Jeff Janda Day", and renamed the corner of 30th Street and Wisconsin Avenue as "Janda's Junction."

The Streamwood Park District is excited to have Jeff on board, as he ushers in a new era for the park district. Jeff's experience, knowledge and vision will take the Streamwood Park District into a new decade, where they hope to achieve heights not before seen in the community.



In Memoriam: Illinois Parks & Recreation extends our condolences to the family of Fred Hohnke, who passed away in December 2019.

Fred was elected to the Board of Commissioners in 1989 and selflessly served the Woodridge Community for 30 years.

Fred was a loyal supporter to enrich the overall quality of life for all Woodridge residents through parks and recreation, which was evident by his commitment to continually develop and improve all parks, facilities, programs and services.

Fred was previously recognized by his peers, receiving the National Recreation & Park Association's Citizen Board Member Branch National Service Award; Illinois Association of Park District's (IAPD) Allan A. Weissburg Commissioner of the Year Award; IAPD's Mike Cassidy Commissioner Community Service Award; and most recently on December 3, 2019 receiving from Mayor Gina Cunningham-Picek the Village of Woodridge's highest honor - the "Building on Our Dream Award."

Fred will be missed by his family, friends and the entire Woodridge community.

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