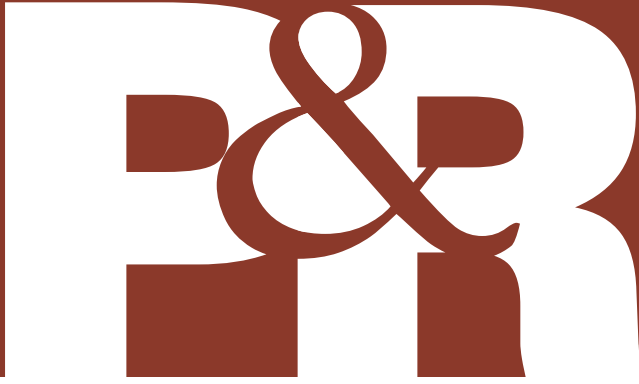


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PARKS AND RECREATION

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



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# FROM THE EDITOR

## Finding Our Way on the Trail



Nothing says adventure like going on a trail for the first time. Every journey can include iconic views, incredible wildlife, and a true sense of peace of mind.

Illinois has no shortage of incredible trails to walk or bike. Time and time again, we have seen park districts, forest preserves and conservation districts delivery high quality outdoor experiences for residents and visitors alike.

Personally, no family vacation is complete without seeing what kind of trails are around wherever we are staying. There is something special about stepping out into the woods to explore somewhere you've never been alongside your children. It is an experience like no other that creates memories that last a lifetime, while also instilling a deep appreciation for nature to the next generation.

This issue is all about trails. On page 14, the Champaign County Forest Preserve District details the partnerships that created the Kickapoo Rail Trail. Terrabilt covers the best practices for trail signage on page 20 in "Informing Trail Signage Design." Finally, we have a few pieces on some of the unique features some of our Illinois agencies have along their trails, ranging from sculptures to historical landmarks starting on page 26.

Start making your plans to get outside this spring and summer, because it's looking like another amazing year to get reacquainted with nature.

— Wayne Utterback, Editor

**Photo credit:** Cover photo by Karen Kaplan of the Geneva Park District, which was submitted for the 2019 Give Us Your Best Shot Photo Contest.



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## Mission - Vision - Culture

The key to success for governance is the commitment and single-minded focus by a board and its chief executive on the mission, vision, and board culture of the agency. As new board members join in service to the community, this shared focus is critical to having the park district, forest preserve, and conservation district maintain their success and direction forward.

Recently, I responded to a board member who wrote, “Can one bad board member really influence a good board, and how do you deal with it?” In fact, it does matter who is elected or appointed to serve on a board. In most cases, a dysfunctional agency is the result of a dysfunctional board. One bad board member can, if left unchecked, change the chemistry of the board, and can chase good members off the board. I have seen it happen a number of times.

Board members need to know what is expected of them. If they don't, they might create their own expectations and role, and the rest of the board might not like the direction that takes them.

There is no room for the board member who has tunnel vision, an axe to grind, an overriding special interest or a self-serving interest, the board member who does not want to be a team player, or the board member who does not leave his or her ego at the door when they enter a board meeting.

So, who are these board members?

They are **Board Members that Nobody Wants:** (You need to practice the opposite of what I list here.)

For instance:

- They arrive late to board meetings and leave early.
- They frequently check their cell phone or text during meetings
- They have no interest in board training.

- They criticize to the press, and the public, board decisions that were voted on and passed by the majority of the board but which they did not support.
- They think they have all the answers for every issue.
- They refuse to change their mind on any issue, regardless of the facts that are presented.
- They fail to read board packets and prepare for board meetings.
- They divulge information from an executive board session.
- They try to give directions to the chief executive in their individual capacity as a board member.
- They hold grudges against fellow board members when they do not agree with them.
- They try to dominate conversations at every board meeting.
- They appear at the office or at facilities and parks and try to give orders to employees.
- They want the agency to be a haven for hiring friends.
- They constantly criticize and question board policies and the executive's decisions and compulsively differ on almost every issue.
- They don't try to understand the perspectives of other people who serve on the board.
- They believe the executive and staff work for them.
- They love to play the game of stump the executive in public meetings.
- They ignore the #1 rule of boardmanship is never surprise your fellow board members or the executive.

**So, what is the role of the board member?** It is the responsibility of a board member, with his or her fellow board members, to see that the agency is properly run; not to run the agency. It is important to work with the executive

director, not over or around him or her. There is nothing more devastating to staff morale than to have board members engaged in trying to micromanage the day-to-day operations of the agency.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of working with thousands of park district, forest preserve and conservation district board members and I have found that the most successful and effective board members have had some of the following characteristics and attributes.

- They are sensitive to the obligations and relationships they have accepted. They have an attitude of cooperative open-mindedness and objectivity (team group dynamics).
- They recognize the value and necessity of mutual understanding and teamwork between the board and the executive.
- They realize and respect that while the function of the board and executive are different, the mission and goals are the same.
- They are committed to lifelong learning about boardmanship and good governance.

**Demonstrate:**

- A belief and strong interest in the mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the agency.
- A willingness to make personal sacrifices, such as time away from family and work.
- A willingness to support board decisions, even when the decision conflicts with their personal views.
- A desire to participate in discussions with demonstrated reasoning, good judgment, and the courage of personal convictions.
- Support and respect for the executive in his or her role as manager of the agency.
- A commitment to and demonstration of high ethical standards.

**Develop:**

- The ability to work well with others, a talent that involves a rare blend of tact, respect for varied opinions and points-of-view, and complete open-mindedness.
- An ability to inspire the community's confidence, respect, and support.
- The ability to handle media and public criticism of board decisions.

On the back of every IAPD membership card is the following:

## BOARD MEMBER CODE OF ETHICS

**As a member of the board, I will:**

- Represent the interests of all people in my community. I will not favor any particular special interests.
- Not use my service on this board for my own personal advantage or for the advantage of my friends or supporters.
- Keep privileged information confidential.
- Approach all board issues with an open mind, prepared to make the best decisions for everyone involved.
- Do nothing to violate the trust of those who elected or appointed me to the board or of those we serve.
- Focus my efforts on the mission of the agency and not on my personal goals.
- Never exercise authority as a board member except when acting in a meeting with the full board or as I am delegated by the board.

I hope this article provided food for thought, and I look forward to seeing you at an IAPD commissioner Boot Camp or event in the near future.

I want to thank you as well for your commitment to good governance. It is what makes Illinois parks and recreation the envy of the nation.

**IAPD BOOT CAMPS**

- Monday, May 22, 2023  
IAPD Boot Camp #1  
Naperville Park District
- Tuesday, May 23, 2023  
IAPD Boot Camp #2  
Gurnee Park District
- Wednesday, May 31, 2023  
IAPD Boot Camp #3  
Hoffman Estates Park District
- Thursday, June 1, 2023  
IAPD Boot Camp #4  
New Lenox Community Park District
- Thursday, June 8, 2023  
IAPD Boot Camp #5  
Peoria Park District
- Tuesday, June 13, 2023  
Virtual Boot Camp Via Zoom



Jason Anselment  
General Counsel

## Spring Session Underway at the Capitol

The 103<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly is well underway with nearly 6,500 new pieces of legislation introduced as of the bill filing deadline. Meanwhile, having recently announced nearly \$60 million in OSLAD grant awards to 118 park and recreation agencies, the Governor's new budget proposal contains another \$56 million for new OSLAD grants in the next fiscal year that begins on July 1, 2023. While the additional \$56 million is only a proposal at this point, it is very welcome news given the record \$104 million in applications for the recently announced grants.

In addition to advocating for OSLAD and other grant funding, IAPD has introduced eight different legislative initiatives as part of the 2023-24 IAPD Legislative Platform. The entire platform, including bill numbers and descriptions, can be found on the brochure that is available digitally on IAPD's website.

With so many critical issues affecting park, recreation, and conservation agencies, your grassroots advocacy is as important as ever. Please make legislative advocacy a priority by joining us in Springfield on May 2-3 for the return of Parks Day at the Capitol, the Legislative Reception, and the Legislative Conference.

### Bills Impacting IAPD Member Agencies

As this issue goes to press, we are tracking 825 bills due to their potential impact on the IAPD membership, but this number will undoubtedly grow as amendments are filed. While it is still too early in the legislative process to know which proposals will have the necessary support to move forward this spring, below are just a few examples of those we will be closely tracking.

**HB 1066 (Didech, D.)** would amend the Open Meetings Act to add childcare obligations to the list of reasons that a public body member may attend a meeting remotely if a quorum of the members of the public body is physically present and the public body has met the other requirements, including the adoption of a remote attendance policy.

**HB 1354 (Ugaste, D.)** would prohibit a taxing district from holding more than 150% of its prior property tax levy collections in cash or cash-equivalent assets. Excess amounts would have to be refunded to taxpayers pro rata based on each taxpayer's percentage of the total levy for the previous year.

**Public Act 102-0265**, which was signed into law during the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, currently requires any taxing district that has an aggregate property tax levy of more than \$5,000,000 for the applicable levy year to make a good faith effort to collect and electronically publish data from all vendors and subcontractors doing business with the taxing district as to whether the vendor or subcontractor is a minority-owned, women-owned, or veteran-owned business.

**HB 2457 (Davis, W.)** would expand that existing mandate by requiring those taxing districts to compile that data into a report and submit that report to the Comptroller's Local Government Division for publication on the Comptroller's website.

**HB 2936 (Reick, S.)** would prohibit alternate bonds that are issued under the Local Government Debt Reform from being secured by the proceeds of general obligation bonds that are issued without referendum approval.

**HB 3852 (Nichols, C.)** would amend the minimum wage law to provide that an employer must pay employees working as lifeguards at least \$22.50 an hour, regardless of the age of the employee.

**HB 3879 (Rashid, A.)** would require all local election authorities to post the requirements and qualifications for running for local offices and petition filing deadlines on the local election authority's website.

**HB 3904 (Costa Howard, T.)** would require a local government to post every elected official vacancy on its website if the website is maintained by the local government's full-time staff. The bill would also require the county clerk to post the vacancy on its website. The unit of local government could not fill the vacancy until the vacancy posting has been on the applicable website(s) for at least 15 days.

**SB 47 (Holmes, L.)** would amend the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act to provide that neither a public entity nor a public employee is liable for an injury caused by any unauthorized access to government records, data, or electronic information systems by any person or entity.



**SB 249 (Halpin, M.) / HB 2881 (Johnson, G.)** are a reintroduction of **HB 5538 (Halpin, M. / Koehler, D.)** from the 102<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, which passed the House but not the Senate. The bills would require employees of a public body be paid the prevailing wage rate when they are performing the construction or demolition of public works on behalf of another public body. The prevailing wage would still not be required when a public body's employees are performing work for their own public body, however, this legislation may discourage intergovernmental cooperation by eliminating the efficiencies that often result when governments work together to perform construction or demolition of "public works".

**SB 1634 (Plummer, J.)** would require a unit of local government to compile lists of: (i) the pay and benefits of every employee, consultant, contractor, and other personnel of the unit of local government whose accumulated payments or compensation are at least \$1,000 during each fiscal year, and (ii) each entity, address of each entity, product or service supplied by each entity, and amount paid to each entity for any expenditure of government funds greater than \$3,000 during a fiscal year. These lists would need to be published on the local government's website and updated throughout the year. If the local government does not have a website, the lists must be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which the unit of local government is located.

Several proposals would adjust the existing Open Meetings Act rules, which allow for public meetings to be conducted by audio or video conference without the physical presence of a quorum of the members. One bill, **HB 3514 (Caulkins, D.)**, would amend the Open Meetings Act to prohibit a public body from ever conducting a closed meeting by audio or video conference and instead require closed meetings to be conducted with the physical presence of a quorum of the members of the public body.

More than 80 bills have been introduced to amend the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Here are a few examples.

**HB 1551 (Tarver, C., II)** would define "prevail" to mean to "achieve the desired outcome of the plaintiff through a court order or the production of all requested documents" for purposes of the award of attorney's fees.

**HB 2440 (Stava-Murray, A.)** would specifically require a public body to take all reasonable steps to provide records in a format that is "readable" by the requester if the format is available to the public body and requested by the requester.

**HB 2620 (Costa Howard, T.) / SB 2178 (Glowiak Hilton, S.)** would change the definition of "recurrent requester" to mean a person who, in the 12 months immediately preceding the request, has submitted to the same public body: (i) a minimum of 40 (currently 50) requests for records, (ii) a minimum of 10 (currently 15) requests for records within a 30-day period, or (iii) a minimum of 5 (currently 7) requests for records within a 7-day period. A public body would also have 15 (currently 5) business days after its receipt of a request to either comply with

or deny a request for public records, or to invoke its right to an extension of the deadline to produce the records. It would also extend the deadline to respond to a request made for a commercial purpose from 21 to 30 days.

**HB 3364 (Kifowit, S.)** would permit a public body to require that FOIA requests be submitted on a standard form and require the requester to specify the purpose for the request. The bill would also prohibit one person from making a FOIA request for another individual. A person could still submit a FOIA request for an organization but only if the person discloses the organization for whom the request is being made.

**HB 3833 (Halbrook, B.)** would provide an elected or appointed official of a public body with a right to all non-exempt records of that public body and each of its subsidiary public bodies without requiring the official to submit a FOIA request.

**SB 146 (Martwick, R.)** would exempt any studies, drafts, notes, recommendations, memoranda, and other records in which opinions are expressed, or policies or actions are formulated, from disclosure except that a specific record or relevant portion of a record would not be exempt if the record has remained in draft form for more than a 12-month period and public dollars were spent by a unit of local government to conduct such a study.

**SB 325 (Cunningham, B.) / HB 2444 (Didech, D.)** would provide that the Public Access Counselor (PAC) may not disclose to the public, including the requester, records or documents obtained by the PAC from a public body for the purpose of addressing a request for review. Current law prohibits such disclosure only to the extent that the records or documents produced by the public body contain information that is claimed to be exempt from disclosure.

**SB 2046 / SB 2332 (Wilcox, C.)** would require a public body's FOIA officer to be an elected or appointed officeholder or employee and would prevent private attorneys or law firms appointed to represent the public body from serving in that capacity.

**SB 2087 (DeWitte, D.)** would require a public body to include in its list of available records the identification and a plain-text description of each of the types or categories of information of each field of each database of the public body. A public body would also be required to provide a sufficient description of the structures of all databases under the control of the public body to allow a requester to request the public body to perform specific database queries.

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As always, you can count on IAPD to keep you updated through timely Legislative Updates and Alerts, and you can visit the Advocacy webpage at [ILparks.org](http://ILparks.org) to check the status of these and all the other bills we are tracking.



By Barbara Arango, CAE  
IPRA Executive Director

## IPRA 2022 Annual Report

On behalf of the IPRA Board of Directors and the IPRA staff team, I want to share our excitement about the fantastic year we had in 2022! Membership is growing as more park, recreation and conservation practitioners see the value of connecting with their colleagues and continuing their professional development. Registration for both IPRA-wide and section specific events has been robust, and we've hosted more people in our programs than ever before!

My crash course in Illinois parks and recreation was made up of many tours, events, and ribbon cuttings. I want to thank those of you that invited me to see your agencies; I certainly saw some gems during my visits. Being introduced to new parks and being able to do things like petting penguins made me realize that I was experiencing the joy that you all bring to your communities every day.

As staff members, we also participated in various events for Unplug Illinois Day last year. This fantastic initiative of encouraging residents across Illinois to unplug and enjoy their local park districts continues to grow every year. This year we celebrate our 5<sup>th</sup> annual event on Saturday, July 15, and our team can help you plan an event for your community.

In November I was blown away by my experience at IPRA's Professional Development School. The education was stellar and the connections our participants made were meaningful. PDS encompasses our tagline perfectly – Learn, Connect, Inspire. There really is nothing like this program and I encourage you to enroll if you haven't been and to come back as a graduate if you have. You will not regret taking this time to step away to focus on your professional development and to develop friendships that will stay with you throughout your career.

2023 has started out with an extremely successful conference. We were thrilled to see so many professionals at the event learning, connecting, and inspiring each other! Congratulations go out to all the well-deserved award winners and thanks go to all our speakers that provided the stellar content you have come to expect from this meeting. We hope it left you energized and motivated!

Beyond our events and education, IPRA has made a concerted effort to connect with Affiliate organizations like CIRCLE, SIPRA, SPRA, SSSPRPA, NWIAPR, and MIPE. We're setting up a new Affiliate Council so we can support each other and all work together to serve you collaboratively. We have also established new agreements with some of our corporate partners. As such, we are happy to announce another round of funding for 2023 in conjunction with Playcore/Gametime and Cunningham Recreation. Additional educational opportunities from our partners will be offered throughout the year with our new Lunch & Learn series. We hope you will take advantage of learning from the experts on a variety of topics curated especially for our members.

Offering these types of learning opportunities is one of the reasons we exist as an association. We are here to ensure you have the tools, skills and knowledge to meet the challenges you face as you support your communities. We are also here to connect you with others. It's through our sections and committees that you can find your tribe, the ones that understand you and can bond with you over crazy residents or bizarre equipment malfunctions. These are the people that can help you find your next position, or help you fill an open one. They will give you advice, listen to your troubles, take you out after a long day, or celebrate you when you succeed. Relationships do take work and effort on your part, though. We have the community, we have the structure, we have the openings – we just need you to take

the next step. Most of you are already part of a section. Did you know that you can be part of more than one? And being part of the section is just the beginning. There are myriad options for committees of special interest to join. Or help plan one of our signature events. It's a fantastic way to bond with your colleagues and have fun while you're doing it.

As I think about this coming year, I did want to touch on one change we have in store for you. Our team is already working on a complete upgrade to our member database and website. We're eager to show you the opportunities that this new platform will bring to our association. First, you will notice a completely modernized and reorganized web presence. This should ease the process of finding the information you need quickly. You will also notice a new member profile where you can keep track of all your continuing education credits even if they are not issued by IPRA. We're hoping this meets a need for our members who would like to have one place to store their history. Also coming later in 2023 is enhanced integration between our sections, committees, and events with IPRA Connect. We're focusing on providing tools to enhance your member experience and meet your evolving needs.

One last plug for 2023 – thanks go out to Naperville for stepping up to host our 2023 Park Pursuit “Down by the Riverfront”. For the youngsters reading this that don't know the reference, just look up the Chris Farley Saturday Night Live skit. The funniest part is watching David Spade trying not to laugh.

We continually strive to anticipate and rise to the challenge of making you the best you can be. Our programs, special interest groups, and resources are all there for you, our members. IPRA is your place to come together, elevate your knowledge, strengthen your voice, and find your community. And we can be even more successful if we hear from you and have your input in all that we do. So, I thank you for your participation and I ask that you continue to engage and communicate your ideas so we can continue to grow as an association and a valued member of this community.

## Skills Development Webinar Series

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By Duane Smith, CPRP  
IPRA Education Director

## Fortune Favors the Prepared

On a warm summer morning a few years ago, my wife and I were feeling adventurous and decided to bike the Centennial Trail, a popular bike trail that runs parallel to the Des Plaines River between Romeoville in Will County and Willow Springs in Cook County. In typical “roadie” fashion, my wife prepared her prized Specialized Ruby road bike, put on her performance gear, and packed provisions such as sunscreen, snacks, and water. She studied the map, understood the length and terrain of the trail, and identified exactly where she wanted to start and finish. She had the foresight to plan for the path ahead and position herself for a fun and successful adventure. Unfortunately for me, I half-heartedly prepared for the ride by merely focusing on tire pressure, and as a result, I had a miserable experience that taught me a valuable lesson.

Our trail journey began on the I&M Canal Trail through the Joliet Iron Works Historic District. This is mainly a crushed limestone trail that requires a low gear for novice riders such as me. I surprisingly exhausted a lot of energy on the early part of the ride, but I was optimistic that we'd soon be cruising on a paved trail with the wind at our backs. A few challenging miles of more limestone and approximately 45 minutes later, we ultimately arrived at Schneider's Passage, the start of Centennial Trail in Romeoville. We finally reached our starting point, and to my dismay, we'd already traveled more miles in one direction than I thought we were biking the entire day.

We took a short break so I could catch my breath and consume some of my wife's provisions, then we continued our voyage northeast from Schneider's Passage towards Lemont. At this point the trail is paved, so we shift into high gear and pick up speed. The breeze felt cool, sunlight was flickering through the trees, and I could hear the road whizzing underneath us because we were going so fast. It was liberating, at least momentarily, until the little optimism I had left began to fade because I started to tire quickly, and I saw my wife effortlessly push ahead with experienced riders and put a sizable void between us. It wasn't until we were thirteen miles from our car back in Joliet and sitting under Interstate 355 in Lemont when I finally caught up to her and waived the rhetorical white flag. I was miserable, exhausted, and completely overwhelmed with this biking experience, and I had no one to blame but me.

Benjamin Franklin once said, “By failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail.” Too many times in our lives we fail to prepare for the trail that lies ahead, and as a result, we miss out on opportunity and squander the moment. In the case of my biking experience, I missed a chance to fully appreciate the unique Joliet history, the scenic waterways and woodlands, historic downtown Lockport, and most importantly, companionship. I realized that some simple preparations could have changed the course of that entire day and resulted in a more memorable experience.

As we look ahead, I want to ensure you do not fail to prepare for your time with IPRA this year and beyond. Included here is **The IPRA Experience**, a unique trail map designed to show you the wonderful opportunities that can assist in your professional development at any point in your career. Decide on a starting point that works best for you, and if you're already on the trail, continue referencing the map for more features of interest to you. If at any point you need assistance, call the IPRA team because we are here to ensure your journey is a memorable one. Always remember, fortune favors the prepared, so do more than simply check the tire pressure.

### THE IPRA EXPERIENCE TRAIL MAP



The IPRA experience offers an array of opportunities for all levels of experience and needs within a broad range of roles in the field of parks, recreation, and conservation. The goal is to support the on-going process of improving performance by building competency and strengthening the support system to help raise achievement for professionals.

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**CLEARING A PATH FOR AN INCREDIBLE**

# TRAIL SYSTEM

By **Bridgette Moen**, RLA, Planning Director, Champaign County Forest Preserve District

The Kickapoo Rail Trail (KRT) is a 24.5 mile trail along a former CSX rail line in East-Central Illinois; once completed, it will connect Urbana in Champaign County to Kickapoo State Park in Vermilion County.



## CONSTRUCTION WAS COMPLETED IN STRATEGIC SEGMENTS TO MAXIMIZE USER OPPORTUNITIES GIVEN THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE AREA.

Non-profits, local government districts, municipalities, state legislators, and community leaders have worked together to transform this abandoned rail line into an amenity. Two non-profit groups, Heartland Pathways and the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation (CCDC) were crucial in identifying the corridor as a potential resource and initially acquiring the abandoned rail line for both outdoor recreation opportunities and natural areas preservation. These community groups made it possible for local government agencies to acquire the land in order to make it available to the public in perpetuity. Since then, local agencies and their partners have worked hard to bring that dream to a reality.

There has been significant progress in construction of the trail in recent years. Construction was completed in strategic segments to maximize user opportunities given the geography of the area. Champaign and Vermillion Counties are typical Midwestern landscapes with towns occurring every five to 10 miles along local highways, with agricultural areas dominating the interstitial space. Because of this, the trail construction thus far has focused in areas of potential high use rather than building consecutive extensions of existing trail. This is also partially due to funding restrictions. If a prospective grant award maximum is only enough funding to build a few miles of trail at a time, building segments where the trail will be



**IN 2017 AFTER MANY YEARS OF RAISING FUNDS AND PREPARING FOR CONSTRUCTION, THE FIRST 6.7 MILES OF TRAIL, CONNECTING URBANA TO ST. JOSEPH IN CHAMPAIGN COUNTY, WAS OPENED TO THE PUBLIC.**

highly used is a more immediate benefit than extending an existing section which doesn't quite reach the next community or major feature. This strategy is sometimes hard to present to trail users eager to bike long distances, but from observed trail usage, creating small sections in populated areas has led to increased outdoor activities for those communities.

In 2017 after many years of raising funds and preparing for construction, the first 6.7 miles of trail, connecting Urbana to St. Joseph in Champaign County, was opened to the public. The trail starts at the eastern edge of Urbana and quickly transitions into a scenic agricultural landscape passing by towering grain elevators, early cemeteries, and remnant prairie pockets. Recently, interpretive signs have been developed to highlight the local and natural history

and small rest nodes with benches and bike repair stations have been installed for trail users. This section has been popular among those who utilize the entire 6.7 miles for biking or jogging as well as more casual users in downtown St. Joseph, walking to school or taking the dogs for an evening stroll.

Since then, two additional sections of trail have been completed. The first is in Vermilion County, with a 1.8 mile section in Oakwood opening in 2019 and an additional 1.3 mile extension to the Kickapoo State Park west of Danville in 2021. In Oakwood, the trail has been incredibly popular with the community, inspiring tree plantings, story walks for kids, and environmental education opportunities. The more recent 1.3 mile section includes an impressive rail trestle bridge restoration across





the Middle Fork of the Vermilion River, providing views of the valley from the tree tops (which is especially remarkable in the relatively flat landscape of east-central Illinois.) The ¼ mile long trestle has become an iconic sight and made the KRT a regional destination. In order to encourage visitors and improve the trail experience, a trailhead with restrooms and parking was constructed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Very recently in 2022, a 1.5 mile section opened in the Village of Ogden, a small community east of St. Joseph. To date, this is not contiguous with existing sections of the KRT, but it does offer safe pedestrian transportation options in a town lacking in comprehensive sidewalk infrastructure. Commonly found in the more rural sections of the trail corridor, many downtowns were left with blighted landscapes once dominated by the CSX rail line stops connecting their local business to the larger economy. The KRT has brought new energy into these spaces via physical infrastructure improvements and activity from trail users. In Ogden, the KRT has kick-started a group of residents looking to build on the positive impact the trail has had in the core of their town by developing plans for park-lets, art along the trail, and interpretive rail history.

Building a 24.5 mile trail across several governmental jurisdictions is both a test of persistence and a chance to create new opportunities for outdoor recreation for the region. Coordination with numerous rail companies, receiving a little hesitation from some neighbors, and securing funding for construction and maintenance have

been challenges for local agencies with tight resources. Luckily, the dedicated non-profits Heartland Pathways and the Champaign County Design and Conservation Foundation had the foresight to entrust local agencies to preserve this corridor for future public use.

## Catch Some Savings With New Ballfield Lighting Incentives



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ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAM



The KRT Steering Committee, made up of the current land-owners, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Vermilion County Conservation District, Urbana Park District, and Champaign County Forest Preserve District, along with support agencies such as the local municipalities, the regional planning commission, and non-profits work together to pool resources to make the KRT a reality. Through this cooperation, significant state and federal funds were secured for construction of the existing sections and the group is working to finalize the funding source for the remaining trail. Recently, a non-profit, the Friends of the KRT, has formed to support the efforts of the government groups, increase use of the trail, and encourage volunteer stewardship of the resource. Several of the municipalities have embraced the trail as a destination and asset in their communities.

Support from state and federal funding agencies have made the trail possible through grant programs such as the Recreational Trails Program and the Transportation Enhancement Program. To date, 75% of the funding for construction, acquisition, and engineering services has been sourced from federal pass-through funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation. The remaining 25% has been sourced from the state and private donations. Because of the limited budgets of these local districts, the KRT would not have been possible without generous private donations and large capital grants.

The KRT has the potential to link urban and rural communities, provide access to unique remnant natural areas, and give people opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation. In total, 8.2 miles have been completed in Champaign County and 3.1 miles in Vermilion County. During a coordination meeting, a seasoned local planner once gave the advice of “add an agency, add a year to any project.” While local trail users have had their patience tested waiting for the trail in its full planned state, recent construction progress has shined a light on the positive effects of the trail and this has been a catalyst to complete the final phases. By the next KRT update, the steering committee is hopeful that we will have not only completed the original 24.5 mile trail, but also constructed a trailhead in Weaver Park, identified connections into adjacent communities, developed a masterplan for a regional network of trails, and inspired other groups to pursue ambitious projects in their communities.

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# Informing Trail Signage Design

## How to enhance the visitor experience

By Donald T. Meeker

For many parks, trails provide the dominant attraction, but too often the signage placed there to inform visitors about a trail—providing maps, info about length and difficulty, guides to the flora and fauna—often leaves them a bit bewildered. We miss a critical opportunity if trail signage planning and design does not enhance the trail experience for visitors. Consistency, continuity, clarity, readability, and good design all assist in providing visitors with a sense of confidence and security, which leads to a better trail experience and repeat visits. This overview highlights approaches to building information into trail signage design.

From the trailhead to intersections and locations where trail conditions change, this process reveals how sign functions can be related to one another for design continuity. It identifies applications for trail signing and then refines and integrates that kit-of-parts in the most effective way to inform a user for the type of trail being signed.

While the examples shown have been designed for front-country recreation trails, they can also be used in back county or “primitive” trails as well. Of the many sign types described and illustrated here, the integration of information and panel design reduces the number of signs needed in most instances.

Unfortunately, there is no single method for park signage because trail features such as length, complexity, accessibility, and utilization (hikers, walkers / cyclists, those on assistive devices) determine design. With the application of an overall signage system, these deviations from

standard signs can effectively be worked into the overall plan so that the visitor experiences visual consistency.

Three primary components form the basis of good trail signage design:

- The park trail map
- Application of the Architectural Barriers Act that fits the trail
- Design standards that visually unite signage

### THE PARK MAP

The park map, a picture of the overall trail system, is in our view, a critical part of the plan. Optimized for ease of view when standing before the map at the trail entrance, the map should employ a scale that depends on the size of the park and the complexity of the trail system. A clearly noted “you are here” locates the user within the map. We recommend using the skills of a cartographer.

A comprehensive map should identify boundaries, land conditions, structures, roads, trails, points of interest, scale, direction, a legend, and other necessary points of information. It is also important that the map reflects what the visitor sees on the ground, e.g. defining the connection of trails that merge.

Our approach to mapping typically names each trail segment and shows each trail using a color that pops from the neutral background. We distinguish the spine trail, or dominant route from loops, connectors, or intersections. The trail section color and name make the overall system easier to read and learn. Using dotted lines is discouraged because they confuse trail intersections. Forested land masses are drawn lightly; small details—from buildings to water features—are noted by symbols. A clear map needs little explanation and, as a result, has a modest legend.



Regional recreation trail organized with spine trail, loops, and connectors. Entire length of trail is level and with hard packed surface. Trail intersections identified for all directions of approach. Waypoints are set at tenth mile throughout.



Trailhead panel with accessibility information and trail rules.



## INTERPRETATION OF THE ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT (ABA)

The authors of the current regulation (ABA 1968 42 U.S. Code 4151, Chapter 10) 1071.2 – 1017.9) used common sense. The regulation language “to the extent practical” implies that a park manager is not required to remove a large boulder or provide other domestication. However, there is an obligation to inform visitors of such trail conditions as slope, grade, cross slope, surface, and width.

The referenced method to identify conditions is extremely detailed and better a guide for a fully accessible trail. This rule informs a hiker of features or conditions so that the user—with or without physical issues—won’t walk down a grade they cannot climb back out.

The common federal method to describe a condition identifies the percent that does not meet the ABA standard (e.g., 14 % of the trail is narrower than 60” wide). That message posted on a panel is ambiguous. Alternatively, the trail map, trailhead sign or waypoint markers can describe the conditions. A clear diagram marking the location of a challenging feature and/or a sign at a trail bifurcation can identify the best accessible route. In addition, noting the information in advance of the condition is respectful of the user and enhances their safety

## INCLUSION OF DESIGN STANDARDS.

Design standards are the guts of a signage system and include the selected type face(s), color(s) and

formats that create a consistent communications standard. While sign types vary by function, design standards maintain consistency. Basic rules include fonts of medium stroke width that are sized for a particular proposed viewing distance and with clear contrast against the background.

### Typeface Selection

**Campfire**  
**Campfire**

Palatino Bold/Regular

**Campfire**  
**Campfire**

Avenir Next Bold/Regular

Shown are two typical typefaces in medium and bold weight; a modern roman and san-serif. Both are adaptable for signing.

### Color Palette

Forest/Trees	Information/Trail
Base/Background	Danger/Trail
Symbols/Trail	Trail
Warning/Trail	Instruction/Trail

### Graphic Elements



The National Recreation Symbols are handy for posting information on maps, rule panels and site specific safety signs.

## Signage by function

Good design and planning can enhance the function of various types of signs and can communicate information in an understated way. Here are some of the many functions trail signage needs to do:

### Trail Identification

Traditionally employing the flag style—single or double face signs—are generally smaller than panels mounted close to the ground. Sizing of the flag signs depends on sightlines and scale of the area.



### Trail Guide Signs:

Every intersection on a trail directs the hiker to stay on the route or turn on to an alternative route. The guide sign displays the trail names, destination of each, and arrow in each designated trail color (distance optional). In most cases, the reverse side of the panel presents similar guidance back to the trailhead.

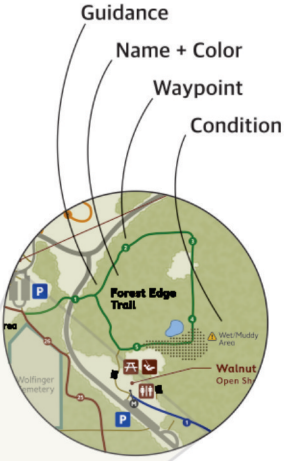
### Safety:

Although precautions may have been addressed in the orientation panels, a site-specific panel is advisable using a trail marker at the location where the warning applies. The legend includes bold-lettered instructions, as specific a description as necessary, and panels that further describe conditions and consequences if they are not obvious.



### Waypoints:

Usually created as small profile, double-sided posts, these markers are most often placed at 1/10 mile increments on the trail. The graphic panel incorporates the abbreviation of the trail name, trail color, and distance back to the trailhead. Long trails may use 1/4 or 1/2 mile increments. Runners use these to plan and time a route and seniors as a security marker. The location is also referenced on the map.



### Trail Map:

Trail plotting may include 1/10 mile waypoint markers to measure distances for runners and as location reference points for seniors and others to direct emergency service providers. Unimproved trails also need to include ABA compliance information.

## Conclusion

Good trail signage supports the visitor experience of your park. Along with good planning, it can help turn an ordinary hike or a routine run into wonderful memory. Here are a few takeaways:

- Information should be planned from the trailhead to the end point.
- Consistency is critical.
- The map is styled to clearly show trails and attributes.
- Information for physically challenged is informative for all trail users.

### Orientation Kiosk:

Usually a covered structure, the trail orientation structure may be upright without roof (for front country vs back country). The primary content is the trail map. Trail rules, emergency call numbers, description of trail conditions— surface, slope, width, and cross slope—may be described and/or displayed. On a larger panel, we include signage using a modular panel display so that information and orientation are easy to read and displayed without clutter.

### Trailhead Panel:

The trailhead panel consists of a single panel that includes title, description of the trail with summary of trail surface and slope, width, and cross slope, and related safety warnings. Generally, the trailhead includes a trail map (small scale) with conditions noted. At this location, primary rules are featured, using description, related symbols, and trail conditions.



### Rules and Regulations:

This panel delineating etiquette and expectations is ideally limited to no less than five or more than eight primary rules with succinct descriptions and symbols to aid readability. This information may also be placed as a module in the orientation kiosk.

### Welcome Panel:

Possible panel content includes credits (agency/grants/sponsor), with emergency access information (911) and information about waypoints on the map. This panel is generally a module in the orientation kiosk.



### Protection:

These resource education panels are best used to capitalize on teachable opportunities along a trail. Ideally a system of panels describing conditions that are being protected, these illustrated panels cover the environment, wildlife, and safety precautions.

Donald T. Meeker is president of Terrabit: Wayfinding Solutions, a provider of signage and structures, design systems and strategic planning for parks and natural preserves, located in Westchester County, New York, and working with park and trail managers throughout the U.S.

# Grow Your Passion for Communication

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Environmental professionals face increasingly complex problems, including climate change, land and energy development, recreation pressure, biodiversity loss, natural disasters, and human health impacts. Tackling these issues requires a wide range of skill sets. Social science and communications knowledge is a noticeable gap for many conservation practitioners. As the various avenues for communication continue to evolve, environmental professionals require more tools and tactics to convey information and change constituents' behaviors to better our planet. Considerations for equity, inclusion, and environmental justice are also essential skill sets so that all people can participate in stewarding our natural resources.

Colorado State University's online graduate degree in Communications for Conservation is an accelerated learning platform that offers budding conservation communicators the tools, information, and skills to engage with diverse constituents through various media outlets. The program pairs the context and language of conservation with communications best practices. From interpretation to policy influence



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and social media strategy, students gain experience analyzing and mastering communications tactics applied to real-world problems. Interactive discussions with university faculty and peers foster a robust learning environment where students gain exposure to different professional backgrounds.

Many of our students are working in natural resources but seeking additional tools in social science and communications or looking to make a career shift toward conservation. This flexible asynchronous program allows individuals to balance work and education while gaining conservation communication skills. Our alumni have found positions in state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, private firms, educational institutions, and some have started their own communication firms.

As Dean Smith, the Wildlife Liaison for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, shared, current conservation efforts "require people that can communicate with their peers, and to ...public stakeholders and all the people that are involved in the broad set of responsibilities in managing our natural resources."

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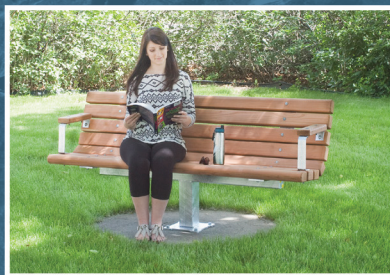
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FILLING A HOTEL VACANCY

# With a Park

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

Once the site of the swanky Hotel-Moraine-on-the-Lake, Moraine Park is one of the Park District of Highland Park's four lakefront parks.



The 13-acre park serves the community as a passive recreation park and features walking paths, picnicking areas, an outdoor art sculpture garden, a non-swimming beach, and Highland Park's only dog beach. Moraine's sculpture garden was installed in 2005 and includes granite, marble, carved concrete/wood, limestone, and steel sculptures. The garden pieces were donated by Highland Park resident Perry Snyderman, who was a well-known local civic leader, businessman, and philanthropist.

Moraine Park's history dates back to 1898 when the Hotel Moraine-on-the-Lake opened on the property serving vacationing Chicagoans, many from the city's exclusive Gold Coast. Hotel Moraine was designed by Highland Park architect Ernst Mayo for F.W. Cushing and named for the nearby granite rock shelf.

Nestled on the Lake Michigan bluff along North Sheridan Road, a five-star hotel played host to the rich and famous. William Edens dined there during the opening of his expressway, and George Gershwin practiced piano in the hotel's main lounge before playing on stage. The breathtaking Hotel-Moraine-on-the-Lake served as a luxurious get-away for more than six decades for wealthy guests.

Initially open solely for the summer months, the Moraine Hotel operated at maximum capacity for its first 35 years but was negatively affected by the stock market crash and subsequent Great Depression. During World War 2, the Hotel served as a barracks for Army and Navy officers.

For 25 years following the war, the hotel changed hands several times. By 1968, the hotel was empty again. Illinois Bell rented and redesigned the hotel's garage to serve as a school for telephone operators.

In 1969, Bert Schwarz purchased the land to tear down the hotel and build a lakeshore high-rise. Moraine Citizens Committee, a group of Highland Park residents and politicians, mobilized to block the high-rise development through a city-wide referendum that granted the City of Highland Park the funds to purchase the Hotel Moraine property for a future park and nature preserve.

The original Hotel Moraine-on-the-Lake was demolished in 1972. In 1999, the Highland Park City Council deeded the property to the Park District of Highland Park. Today, Moraine Park is one of Highland Park's most cherished lakefront parks.



SCULPTING A WORK OF ART

# Through Trails

By Erin Folk, Executive Director, Oregon Park District

Outdoor recreational trail activities are increasing at a high frequency and often include activities such as jogging, hiking, walking, or biking. Many of these activities rely on trails and are contiguous with the habitat. The community of Oregon has embraced this idea and created its own spin on trail development to include an unusual form of historical habitat for trail users to enjoy.



The Oregon Sculpture Trail began in 1911 with the creation of Lorado Taft's sculpture, "the Eternal Indian," commonly referred to as the Black Hawk Statue. The statue was erected at Lowden State Park and serves as a tourist attraction each year.

The Community Art Legacy (CAL) was formed in 2004 and had a goal of installing ten additional sculptures in ten years. Each sculpture was selected from an annual competition in which sculptors submit maquettes of work. The sculpture trail now includes 14 sculptures. Ownership, installation, and maintenance responsibilities are assumed by the entity where the sculpture is placed. Five of the 14 sculptures are located on Oregon Park District property.

To add a recreation component to the trail, the Oregon Park District and City of Oregon added a 7-mile bike route which traverses through Oregon Park West, Fairground Park and uses shared roadways through residential areas. The route is marked with signage and allows residents and

visitors an opportunity to see each of the sculptures and other historic points throughout the community.

Oregon is surrounded by four state parks and is considered to be a trailhead to a wide variety of rides and includes some of the most scenic views in northern Illinois. To continue this rich tradition, the Oregon Park District plans to expand the trail system and construct a paved trail from the community center to Lowden State Park, home of the Black Hawk statue. The trail is approximately 1.7 miles long and will provide access from Lowden State Park to the community for more than 250,000 visitors annually. Construction is expected to begin in 2024.

Oregon Park District was formed in 1966 and is governed by a five-member board. The district service area covers approximately 102 square miles, and serves more than 7,000 residents. The district manages a recreation facility, indoor pool, fitness facility and gymnasium. In addition, the district owns 11 park sites totaling 160 acres. For more information visit [www.oregonpark.org](http://www.oregonpark.org).



ART IN THE PARK:  
Students Create Vibrant  
**Mural**

ALONG THE PATH TO POPULAR  
ROLLING MEADOWS PARK

By **Geneva Slupski**, Communications & Marketing Manager, Rolling Meadows Park District

The path leading to Kimball Hill Park in Rolling Meadows became more colorful last summer through a partnership with Rolling Meadows Park District and the Rolling Meadows High School Art Club.

The inspiration began one early evening in September 2021, when Rolling Meadows Park District Recreation Supervisor Kailey Schwartzhoff was walking through the Kirchoff Road underpass. She noticed the dark, discolored wall and wanted to transform it into something the community could enjoy. Knowing thousands of cyclists, walkers, runners and in-line skaters frequent the underpass each year, she decided the path connecting them to the beauty of the district's premier park should be equally inviting.



Schwartzhoff contacted Rolling Meadows High School art instructors Martha Nava and Cathy Pach to see if the school's Art Club wanted to be involved. Students were eager to help and began designing a mural in March 2022 that embodied Rolling Meadows Park District's vision and tagline—Play, Learn and Grow.

Schwartzhoff sees the Kirchoff Road underpass as an asset to their community—allowing people to stay active and access Kimball Hill Park without having to cross Kirchoff Road. As a resident and park district employee, she uses the path all the time, and while she loves that it easily connected to Kimball Hill Park, she wished we could brighten up the space. Schwartzhoff thought how awesome it would be to get the local high school involved so students could showcase their talents in the community.

Parks staff power washed and block-filled the wall, creating a clean surface for the students to work. The final design featured a series of circles over colorful geometric shapes, with different activities in each circle. These included fishing, swimming, hockey, ice skating, outdoor play and youth athletics, with images celebrating the diversity and inclusiveness of Rolling Meadows Park District.

Paint and supplies were generously donated by the Rolling Meadows J.C. Licht store. The students, along with Nava and Pach, spent their Saturday mornings and afternoons at the underpass, adding Wednesdays to their schedules when summer break started. Following completion in July 2022, park district staff and leadership, officials from High School District 214 and the City of Rolling Meadows, gathered to watch the students cut the ribbon and debut the mural to the public.

In October 2022, the park district received a Best of the Best Arts in the Park Award from the Illinois Association of Park Districts for its work with the Rolling Meadows High School Art Club to beautify this community space.

District Executive Director Kevin Romejko said the extensive trail and walking path system connects the community to more than 150 acres of parks and green space and that having this work of art exist along the path to Kimball Hill Park is phenomenal and just one example of the power of strong partnerships park districts can build to make communities better places to live.



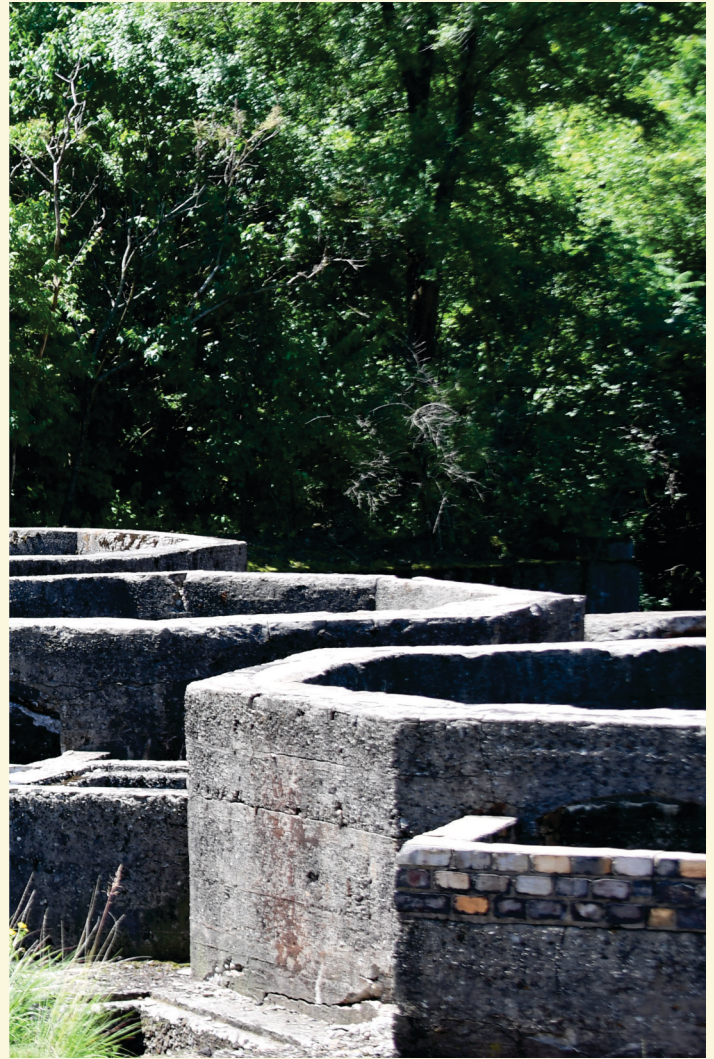
COMBINING TRAILS WITH

# industrial roots

**By Cindy Cain,** Public Information Officer, Forest Preserve District of Will County

The Forest Preserve District of Will County's extensive 135-mile trail system includes many opportunities to engage with natural landscapes but also offer glimpses to special architectural and historical features that entice path users to learn more about the area's industrial roots.





Three of the paths have ties to the past industries that once flourished in Will County. Two forest preserve trails feature steel truss bridges from bygone eras. And another path passes by the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site, which preserves the relics of the City of Joliet's once booming steel industry.

The historic swing bridge along the Centennial Trail in Romeoville was constructed in 1899. For more than 90 years, the bridge carried traffic over the nearby Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal. The structure is the only example of this type of bridge left in Illinois. The swing bridge closed to traffic in 1990 due to its deteriorating condition and it was replaced with a high-level bridge, allowing ships to pass beneath it. Because it was the last of its type, the swing bridge was saved and moved a few hundred feet away to the Centennial Trail in 1996.

The Wauponsee Glacial Trail bridge in Custer Park is a relic from the early 1900s when trains chugged along the rail line that is now a 22-mile forest preserve path. The forest preserve acquired the truss bridge and the railroad right-of-way in the 1990s after Norfolk Southern donated the

former rail line to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The Wauponsee Glacial Trail was built in stages along the rail line from 1999 to 2007.

The section of the I&M Canal Trail owned by the forest preserve passes by the Joliet Iron Works Historic Site in downtown Joliet. When the forest preserve district acquired the land, the relics of the iron and steel factory, which once produced 67 percent of all steel made in the United States, were hidden by a jungle of vegetation. The forest preserve cleared the vegetation, stabilized the industrial ruins and created a 0.59-mile interpretive trail. This preserve now serves as an anchor for the forest preserve's section of the I&M Canal Trail, which stretches from Joliet to Romeoville.

The forest preserve district's Public Information Officer Cindy Cain said these are just a few examples of how the forest preserve district has incorporated elements of the past into the preserves and trails that wind their way throughout Will County. Working together with partners, the district has created a trail network that provides recreational opportunities but also preserves the county's interesting heritage.



2022  
IAPD/IPRA  
**SOARING to  
NEW HEIGHTS**

# CONFERENCE AWARDS

## IAPD

The Illinois Association of Park Districts recognized the inspiring leaders of Illinois parks, recreation, and conservation at the 2023 Soaring to New Heights Conference. Congratulations to all of our individual and agency winners, and thank you for continuing to show the rest of the nation how incredible our park districts, forest preserves, conservation, recreation, and special recreation agencies are in Illinois!

### COMMISSIONER OF THE YEAR



**Ken Collin**, Freeport Park District

### MIKE CASSIDY COMMISSIONER COMMUNITY SERVICE



**Bill Wright**, Streamwood Park District

### RISING STAR



**Laura Reilly**, Hanover Park Park District

### HONORED PROFESSIONAL



**Dan Jones**, Executive Director, Cary Park District

## IAPD OUTSTANDING LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

Senator Robert F. Martwick

Senator Jil Tracy

Representative Maurice A. West, II

## ILLINOIS DISTINGUISHED PARK AND RECREATION ACCREDITED AGENCY AWARD

Bartlett Park District

Freeport Park District

Hoffman Estates Park District

Lemont Park District

Oak Brook Park District

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Diane Main, Westmont Park District

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# IPRA

Congratulations to the following individuals & agencies that were recognized for their outstanding achievements at the 2023 IAPD/IPRA Soaring to New Heights Conference.



## COMMUNITY IMPACT



**Sandy Vangundy** - Bloomingdale Park District

## All Conference Awards Luncheon Winners

### YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



**Lacy Marinenko** - Vernon Hills Park District

### ROBERT ARTZ LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



**Tracey Crawford** - NWSRA

### PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR



**Molly Hamer** - Northbrook Park District

### CHAMPIONS FOR CHANGE



**Glenview Park District**

## ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING AWARD WINNERS

**Outstanding Park & Facility Overall Winner**  
Elmhurst Park District, Centennial Park

**Outstanding Facility Division I**  
Morton Grove Park District, Harrer Pool Replacement

**Outstanding Park Division II**  
Hoffman Estates Park District, Poplar Park

**Outstanding Facility Division II**  
Elk Grove Park District, Fox Run Golf Clubhouse & Maintenance Facility

**Outstanding Program & Special Event Overall Winner**  
Warrenville Park District, Multicultural Festival

**Outstanding Program Division II**  
Hoffman Estates Park District, M.O.R.E (Mobile Outreach Recreation and Education)

**Outstanding Special Event Division II**  
Park District of Highland Park, Dia De Los Muertos

**Exceptional Workplace Award**  
Elk Grove Park District  
Oregon Park District  
Warrenville Park District  
West Chicago Park District

**Agency Showcase**  
**1st Place:** Downers Grove Park District  
**2nd Place:** Northbrook Park District  
**3rd Place:** Wheeling Park District

**People's Choice Award:**  
Northbrook Park District

**Administration & Finance Section Distinguished Member of the Year**  
Darleen Negrillo, NWSRA

**Communications & Marketing Section Distinguished Member of the Year**  
Katie Garrett, Fox Valley Park District

**Forest Preserve & Conservation Section Distinguished Member of the Year**  
Jenny Heider, McHenry County Conservation District

**Facility Management Section Distinguished Member of the Year**  
Jenn Foreman, Buffalo Grove Park District

**Recreation Section Distinguished Member of the Year**  
Mark Dolphin, Palatine Park District



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## SILVER





# The 2022 IP&R Magazine Photo Contest Awards

**Congratulations to all our 2022 Give Us Your Best Shot Photo Contest Winners!**

The *Give Us Your Best Shot* photo contest winners were announced at the Soaring to New Heights Conference.



1

## SPORTS

**1st Place**  
**Justin Sienkiewicz**  
Schaumburg Park District  
"Barracuda"

**2nd Place**  
**Peter Hernandez**  
Park District of Highland Park  
"Safe!"

**3rd Place**  
**Josue Pasillas**  
Waukegan Park District  
"Learning to Hoop"



2



3

## WILDLIFE

### 1st Place

**Jeff Cohen**

Park District of Highland Park  
"Fall Water Colors"

### 2nd Place

**Mike Terson**

Buffalo Grove Park District  
"Flight B1 Clear For  
Landing"

### 3rd Place

**Suzy Lyttle**

Forest Preserve District of Will County  
"Greater Fritillary on  
Coneflower"







## RECREATION/ PEOPLE AT PLAY

**1st Place**  
**Shelby Mephram**  
Park District of Highland Park  
“Awesome!”

**2nd Place**  
**Peter Hernandez**  
Park District of Highland Park  
“Fall Fest Pumpkin Patch”

**3rd Place -**  
**Casey Smith**  
Pekin Park District  
“Ice Hockey on the Lagoon”





1

## NATURE/ LANDSCAPES

**1st Place**  
**Jennifer Rogers**  
Arlington Heights Park District  
“Good Morning”

**2nd Place**  
**Nicholas McCarney**  
Sycamore Park District  
“Ring the Bells”

**3rd Place -**  
**Chad Merda**  
Forest Preserve District of Will County  
“Macro View of a Blazing  
Star”



2



3

*A heartfelt thanks to everyone who submitted a photo in 2022.*



## PEOPLE & PLACES



### **LaFrenera named 2022 Illinois PGA Golf Executive of the Year**

The Illinois PGA Section announced in January that Schaumburg Park District Executive Director **Tony LaFrenera** has been named the 2022 Illinois PGA Golf Executive of the Year.

The Illinois PGA Golf Executive of the Year Award bestows special recognition on a PGA Golf Professional who has performed outstanding services for multiple facilities/course management/ownership operation, Allied Association or golf industry executive management position. As one of the highest honors the Illinois PGA can bestow, candidates must possess outstanding qualities of leadership, vision, courage, strong moral character, and a substantial record of service to the Association and the game of golf. Individuals honored with the PGA Golf Executive of the Year award are held as a model PGA Professional.

LaFrenera has served as the executive director of Schaumburg Park District since 2012. In his role, he oversees a diverse portfolio of recreation facilities and programs including the 27-hole Schaumburg Golf Club. He leads and manages over 80 full-time staff as well as more than 600 part-time staff in peak season. Schaumburg Park District facilities host over one million guests each year at weekly recreation classes, large athletic tournaments, cultural arts performances, preschool and much more.



### **Jorie Meyer Named WDSRA Superintendent of Recreation**

**Jorie Meyer** has been named as the new superintendent of recreation at the Western DuPage Special Recreation Association (WDSRA). After 17 years with the WDSRA, Jorie is

well known by WDSRA families and partners. She brings a wealth of experience to her new role encompassing general programming, special events, day programs, and her most recent work as part of the development team.

Passionate about volunteering and professional growth, she has served on the Illinois Park and Recreation Association (IPRA) therapeutic recreation section in a range of capacities including board director. Jorie has been recognized as a leader in the field for many years, garnering numerous professional awards and recognitions.

Jorie is a graduate of Indiana Wesleyan University with a Bachelor's in recreation administration and an emphasis on therapeutic recreation and a minor in psychology.

# PARK IAPD CAST



IAPD's Director of Communications & Digital Content and Park Cast host **Wayne Utterback** speaks with **Forest Preserve District of Will County's Deputy Chief David Barrios Jr.** and **Naperville Park District Officer Tom Wronski** about Operation Disrupt, a program to help tackle the topic of suicide prevention by using more officer awareness and signage to reach out to those struggling with mental health.

**Watch by checking out the digital edition or go to [www.youtube.com/@IAPDYT](http://www.youtube.com/@IAPDYT).**

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# IPARKS

Illinois Parks Association Risk Services



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Owned, operated and governed in collaboration with fellow members



Working with members who have adopted the proactive risk management culture of our membership



Members have a dedicated Risk Control Specialist, Member Services Partner and Member Representatives working as an extension of their team

Let us know how we can help by contacting an IPARKS representative at 800.748.0554

IPARKS IS THE RISK MANAGEMENT AFFINITY PARTNER OF THE IAPD

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