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VRPA Newsletter
The VRPA Advocate is published three times a year by the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association. Contributions to the newsletter are welcome, including commentary on subjects of interest to Vermont’s recreation professionals and volunteers.

Editor: Jessica Brodie

Next issue submission deadline: December 31, 2023
Send to: Jessica@vrpa.org or by mail to: VRPA, PO Box 33, Brownsville, VT, 05037

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Mission
The mission of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is to provide training and resources to help Vermonters to “Create Community through People, Parks and Programs.”
I hope everyone enjoyed the end of 2022 and had a terrific holiday season! With 2023 in full swing, I hope you had time to reflect on your many accomplishments from last year. We work so incredibly hard in this profession and sometimes our work goes overlooked, is underappreciated or misunderstood by people who don’t understand the pressures, challenges or nuances of our profession. On behalf of the VRPA executive committee, thank you for everything you did in 2022 to make the lives of your community members better! And I hope you had some fun along the way!

I recently had the opportunity to write an article for the Agency of Natural Resources newsletter in which I made a pitch for the various Vermont State Parks seasonal employment opportunities. In that article I wrote that we were looking for applicants who shared our values: Safety, Caring, Integrity, Passion and Fun. As we look to professional and personal goals in 2023, I challenge all of you to consider your core values. Do you know what they are? How will your values guide you this year? Are your recruiting applicants who share your values? Does your community know what your core values are?

It may be the dead of winter, but things are heating up with Vermont State Parks already. We’re heavily marketing our 400 seasonal positions, reaching out to last year’s employees, reviewing new applications and setting up interviews. We’ve held three spring training planning meetings so far for our spring training event in early-May for all of our park managers, which is the equivalent of standing up a three-day conference with 20 education sessions, eight separate meals, lodging for two nights and two trips into a park setting. Additionally, we’re elbows deep into a Parks Modernization Study, an internet connectivity project, putting the final touches on our operating budget and getting ready to testify for our capital bill. Add to that entering purchase requisitions, purchase orders, writing contracts and holding public meetings for upcoming construction work, and we have a pretty busy off-season. Actually, there is no off-season anymore to be honest! But I know I’m preaching to the choir!

Here in VRPA-land, we are closing out our fiscal year in a few months. We’ll soon be drafting our next operating budget and planning our next year of operation. As we move toward the end of our current fiscal year, we have a few educational opportunities to take advantage of, including the Certified Playground Safety Instructor, Certified Pool/Spa Operator Course and Playground Maintenance Training. Additionally, planning for the Vermont Maintenance Workshop is underway. As a long-time maintenance technician in Vermont State Parks has often told me, “Things are happening!” (This is also my favorite line from the movie Almost Famous). I couldn’t agree more. Things are definitely happening!

Whatever is happening for you right now, I wish you nothing but the best as you make our way through 2023. Cheers and Happy New Year! •

Rob
Rob Peterson CPRP
VRPA President
An exciting year ahead!

Happy Spring!

I hope you all have had a great start to 2023 and are looking forward to the spring, summer, and fall seasons to come!

There are so many exciting new things happening at the VRPA this coming year, and I hope you take time to look through this newsletter as it will be the only one we issue this year. For the first time, the VRPA is just going to be organizing this, new annual newsletter. In this issue you will find highlights from a few of our past events, and information on so many other upcoming events and other interesting articles.

We know you are all stretched thin in your time and capacity, so we hope to make some changes in the coming year to make it easier to share your stories and relay information. Our annual newsletter is a start, followed by more social media presence, as well as some other technology updates at our annual conference.

Since this is the only time I will be relaying a personal newsletter article to you this year, I wanted to be sure to remind you to take a moment to admire all the summer programs, events, facilities, and activities you were able to make happen this past year and in the year ahead. Take a walk through one of your parks, write a list of new goals, talk to co-workers about their experiences, and be sure to connect with your community members to see what new programs or events they are hoping for in the future. The start of a new season is a great chance to take a breath and figure out the best path forward for you and your department in the forever changing landscape we are all living in.

The VRPA is here to support you in the ways needed — from finding new funding opportunities, advocating for your needs, and providing new trainings. Let us know what your continued challenges and needs are and we will be sure to work hard to help you with those this year and beyond. We are excited to offer a full schedule of in-person meetings and trainings again this year, and would love to hear about any new opportunities your staff may be interested in.

Our 80th annual conference on recreation is taking place September 27th & 28th at the Killington Grand hotel. We are so excited to see you all again this year at a new location and with a new conference partner — the Vermont Trails & Greenways Council, who is helping us organize a Trails Symposium as part of this year’s conference. We look forward to seeing you all for some great education sessions and networking opportunities and hope you will join us! We have over 30 speakers lined up, and two days of learning & networking. Don’t miss the fun and the 80th celebration!

The year ahead will be full of great opportunities to help you and your communities professionally. If you have never volunteered on a VRPA committee, this is your year! Serving on a committee at any capacity you are able not only helps the association, but builds your network and professional experience as well. This helps your department have insights and local connections, and supports new learning opportunities for professionals around the state. Reach out anytime to learn more!

I would like to thank all our new members that have joined VRPA, and an extra big thank you to those that have volunteered so much of their time on our various committees to help plan all these wonderful events for everyone. Thank you to all of our commercial members and vendors that joined us as new or returning members this year, to those that have sponsored and advertised with us, and to all those that have volunteered time to support our efforts. Your involvement and support is truly appreciated, thank you!

As I reflect personally on the past year and month ahead, it has been an ongoing balance like everyone else to juggle work, kids, and life in general. Everyone I talk to feels stretched thin these days, so don’t feel alone if that is how you feel as well. I am so thankful for the work you do, as I get to live it with my own kids through youth sports, summer camps, state parks, and all the other ways you as professionals make fun happen! Thank you all for helping keep our communities connected and growing!

Keep up the amazing work everyone and I look forward to seeing you all soon!

Sincerely,

Jessica Brodie
Executive Director
WHAT INFLUENCED YOUR DECISION TO CHOOSE THE CAREER YOU DID?
It was really the culmination of a lot of events, at different points in my life, that influenced me to choose a Career in Recreation. My childhood had a huge impact on choosing a career. We were given a lot of free range growing up. I spent a good amount of time playing games with my neighbors and exploring the woods behind our development. We got dirty and we used our imaginations to create stories in the World around us. I had initially looked towards University as, what profession will afford me a comfortable lifestyle? In doing so I had ignored my sense of purpose and belonging. I switched majors half way through University to dual major in Sport Management and Marketing instead. This led me to a Summer Internship at the Mardyke Arena and Leisure Center in Cork, Ireland. There I was fully immersed in Recreation, and it felt extremely fulfilling! It was after University when I began my Adirondack 46er journey, started The Upstate Experience, and fully immersed myself in the outdoors once again that I realized I needed a blend of the outdoors and recreation in my professional career.

CAREER POSITIONS HELD.
Pizza Delivery – high school/College; General Worker at a Green House – first job; Catering – events; Gaming Operations Inspector – NYSGC; Founder of The Upstate Experience – online platform promoting sustainable tourism in Upstate NY; Created a new trail system at my hometown’s Marcy Town Park.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST CAREER ACCOMPLISHMENTS?
Handing in my two week notice to leave the ‘security’ of my State job is by far one of my greatest career accomplishments. The position was having a negative impact on my mental health. Both my partner and I needed change. We wanted a new environment and jobs that gave us purpose. We invested our savings into building a Skoolie with the hopes of acquiring remote work or landing a job in Vermont or Maine. Shortly after handing in my two week notice with New York State, I interviewed for Barre Town’s newly created Recreation Director position… and the rest is history! I am now in a career that provides me with purpose and meaningful interactions in my day to day. Now that I am in this career I desired, the road ahead will be paved with even greater accomplishments!

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR BIGGEST PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGES?
My position with the NYSGC was a very toxic environment, for a number of reasons. Although difficult to manage at times, it taught me how to navigate big personalities, maintain professionalism, interact in a public facing role, deconstruct arguments, deescalate a situation, and persist with my individual work habits regardless of toxic complacency among my coworkers.

PROFESSIONAL ADVICE FROM LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED...
• Being a good listener can be a stronger trait than being a good conversationalist. People want to feel heard. Sometimes the best answer is silence.
• People will remember you more than anything by the way you make them feel. It is important to leave a good impression. The Golden Rule holds true and true; treat others the way you want to be treated. Or, my other Golden Rule: Community over Competition.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS YOU VALUE MOST AS A MEMBER OF VRPA?
As a relatively new member of VRPA I would say I value the monthly director’s calls the most. The ability to have access and open communication with other’s in my industry is unparalleled, in my opinion. I may be the only Full-Time recreation employee in Barre Town, but I feel like I have a team of reliable Director’s at my disposal should I need information, insights, or advice. I am looking forward to taking advantage of the Training offered through VRPA as well. I have already registered for this year’s CPSI Course! Next year I am budgeting for the PMT Course.

PERSONAL RECREATION INTERESTS.
My partner and I are weekend warriors. We love to plan day trips. Hiking, biking, roller skating, running… if its outside, chances are we have done it or we will try it! We enjoy chasing sunrises and sunsets, long days at the beach, exploring the history within a geographic region, and occasionally stopping for local cuisine. I feel a Sunday drive on a scenic highway just as much as climbing a mountain. I have completed half of the Adirondack 46 High Peaks, in addition to visiting nearly one hundred waterfalls in New York State. If its competitive sport, well, I’d spend a whole day playing Spikeball, Corn Hole, volleyball, ultimate frisbee, Kan Jam, futbol, baseball/football… if I’m invited, chances are I’ll play any game.

FAMILY.
I am the middle child of three boys. Our parents named us to have incredibly catchy nicknames, although, it seemed to backfire and result in our names getting confused on more than one occasion: Billy, Johnny, Joey. I have a large extended family of cousins that are primarily older than me. Growing up, I was constantly interacting with my extended family. Every Summer we would spend time at my grandparent’s house on the St. Lawrence River. I count these memories. So much so that I dream of owning property and offering my extended family a similar opportunity that I was afforded growing up.
Vermont Senior Games

We are still working to confirm other events, including spring pickleball in Barre; tennis @ the Bridges in Warren; cycling and basketball in Castleton; and racquetball in coordination with the NH Senior Games. All dates and locations should be confirmed by the end of January. Go to www.vermontseniorgames.org for updates.

The 2023 National Senior Games are being held in Pittsburgh, PA on July 6-18th. We anticipate having close to 100 Vermont athletes participating in this year’s National Senior Games. During the national games, daily performance updates will be available on the Vermont Senior Games website.

Finally, perhaps the Vermont Senior Games’ most decorated athlete, Flo Moltz of Shelburne, was honored at the end of 2022 with one of her greatest accolades. Flo was named 2022 USATF Masters Track & Field Athlete of the Year. At age 87, Flo won 18 USATF national titles in 2022, and according to her recognition, “set a slew of American and world records.” Flo will be among the Vermont athletes going to Pittsburgh for the Nationals in July.

Curious about how you can get more involved with the Vermont Senior Games? Contact the VSG Games Coordinator, George Moltz, at gwmoltz@gmail.com.

The Vermont Senior Games Events Sub-Committee is well on its way to having the 2023 event schedule set. The event dates and locations below have been confirmed.

Competitions open to anyone 50+

Details/register: vermontseniorgames.org

Swimming May 21 The Edgar May Center in Springfield
10K Road Race June 10 Montpelier in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
Track & Field June 17 Burlington High School
1500M Powerwalk June 17 Burlington High School
Triathlon July 16 Lake Dunmore in partnership with VT Sun
Golf August 7 Ralph Myhre Golf Course Middlebury
Pickleball Aug 25-27 Colchester and Burlington
5K Road Race Sept 2 Northfield in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
5K Powerwalk Sept 2 Northfield in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
Table Tennis Oct 21 Shelburne
The Mad River Valley is well known for our incredible trails, paths, and outdoor recreation opportunities, and the dozens of organizations and people who manage these resources intend to keep making them better. The beautiful settings in which hiking, skiing, biking, running, hunting, fishing, bird watching and more take place also provide essential habitats for our amazing Vermont wildlife and plants. We share these natural spaces with diverse flora and fauna, from moose to grouse to brook trout to black bear, and from yellow birch to wild ginseng. But by sharing this space, some human activities put our wild neighbors at risk. As is human nature, we have been exploring and spreading out across the Valley by building new trails and venturing deeper into backcountry terrain on foot, bike, and ski. We are setting out through untracked land at a faster pace in recent years than ever before. This expansion raises an important question: how do we set the Gold Standard for balancing state-of-the-art outdoor recreation and trails with protection of our priceless natural assets and enhancement of the health, economy, and environmental vitality of the region for the long-term future?

In recent years, the MRV Trails Collaborative provided the setting to initiate these collaborative discussions. And now, thanks to efforts by the Friends of the Mad River and several conservation, recreation, and economic focused partners, our community has begun trying to achieve this Gold Standard. With funding from the same VOREC grant that is supporting the new trail hub and welcome center in Waitsfield and related enhancements, and the administrative commitment of the MRV Recreation District, a group of Valley residents has begun to define the structure, resources, information, process, and community engagement needed to determine how we can best balance outdoor recreation and ecological integrity here in the Mad River Valley.

The initiative, entitled MRV Conservation and Recreation Visioning, or CRV for short, began this summer among representatives of 15 different organizations in the Valley. The 15-person CRV Steering Committee (listed below), which is led by a three-person Leadership Team, set the footings for the effort with unanimously adopted founding documents and the formation of two key working groups: one focused on ecological integrity and conservation values, the other focused on outdoor recreation and trails. To help support and facilitate these efforts alongside the Leadership Team and Steering Committee, a well-qualified part-time Community Project Manager has been hired who is starting this week. Over the next two years, the Steering Committee, two working groups, and the project manager will meet regularly to delve deeply into the issues at hand and orchestrate an inclusive community-wide process to figure out that big question: how do we set the Gold Standard for balancing state-of-the-art outdoor recreation and trails, protecting priceless natural assets, and enhancing the Valley’s health, economy, and environmental vitality for the long-term future?

The precise process to answer this question is still being developed, but there will definitely be a range of public participation opportunities through in-person and online forums, surveys, and more. We also expect additional technical expertise will be needed; for example, to create maps and help identify ecological priorities.

Many other communities around Vermont and the country are also wrestling with the interplay between outdoor recreation and ecological integrity, and we expect they will be eager to see what our Gold Standard looks like at the end of the next two years. What we are doing here is, in true MRV fashion, innovative and forward thinking. The task is challenging, but as a community with many skilled, motivated, and caring people who are passionate about both our incredible natural environment and outdoor recreation, we are confident that the end result of the CRV project will be meaningful.

Stay tuned for more information on this important project and opportunities to get involved. We look forward to your input! •
CPR TRAINING

Instructed by Kirsten Santor

REGISTER AT: WWW.VRPA.ORG

FIRST AID

Get Certified in First Aid & CPR

$75 per course

Two Dates to pick from:

Wednesday, May 10th
1:30 - 3:00 pm
203 Country Club Rd. (former Elks Club
Montpelier, VT 05602

Monday, June 5th
3:00 - 4:30 pm
171 Bridge Street
Hartford Parks & Recreation
White River Junction, VT 05001

This blended learning course includes online content available for completion a few weeks prior to the skills session. The online portion takes between 2-3 hours to complete.

Both the online and in-person skills are required for certification.

Space is limited, register today!

SPRING WALK & ROLL PROGRAM

Join us, as well, for our Spring Walk & Roll programming—we want to encourage active transportation in YOUR community, whether it’s to school, to a local park, or to the post office! If your program wants to work with Local Motion on a fun winter or spring campaign, contact education@localmotion.org.
A very big thank you to all our Commercial VRPA members as well as our supporting organizational members!

Go to the VRPA website and click on the “Commercial Members” tab for a direct link to each of our commercial member’s websites. Please remember to support them with your business and be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment.

The VRPA could not do half of what we do without the ongoing support of our commercial members as well as our supporting organizational members.

Thank you very much. We really appreciate you choosing to be a VRPA member!

Allen Pools and Spas
Andrew Pinard
AtborTrek Smugglers’ Notch, LLC
Atlantic Golf and Turf
AutoBeGreen, LLC
BCI Burke
Ben Shaffer Recreation
Bromley Mountain Resort
Burke Playgrounds
Clivus New England, Inc.
Cousineau Forest Products
Dubois & Ring
DuralEdge Products
Durgin and Crowell Lumber Co.
Fillion Associates, Inc.
Franklin Paint Company
Franklin Sports, Inc.
GameTime / MRC Rec
Grassland Equipment & Irrigation Corp
Kelly Brush Foundation
KOMPAN Commercial Playground and Outdoor Fitness
Kompan Playgrounds and Outdoor Fitness
Live Like Benjo Inc.
Local Motion
ME O’Brien & Sons
MTE Inc - Turf Equipment Solutions
MUSCO Sports Lighting
MyRec.com - Recreation Software
National Alliance for Youth Sports
NE Sports Turfgrass Foundation, Inc.
New England Recreation Group
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Northern Forest Center
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R.J. Thomas Mfg. Co. Inc./Pilot Rock
Read Custom Soils
S & D Landscapes, LLC
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Smugglers Notch Resort
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Sport Court MA - Maureen Killay
Tom Irwin Advisors
Upper Valley Aquatic Center
US Playground Surfacing, LLC
USA Pickleball
USTA New England
Vermont Adaptive Ski & Sports
Vermont Arts Council
Vermont Outdoor Guide Association
Vermont Systems, Inc.
VT Safe Kids
Weston & Sampson
Wicked Cool for kids

VRPA Annual Meeting

WEDNESDAY
MAY 10TH, 2023
9:45 AM - 3:00 PM
LOCATION TBD

Annual Meeting & Awards

VRPA members gather each May to celebrate our accomplishments of the previous year, prepare for the summer’s activities, and recognize some of the people who have made significant contributions to the association and to recreation across Vermont.

The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity to network with your recreation colleagues. Register to attend the meeting which includes lunch during the annual awards ceremony. We hope you will join us!

Nominate someone!

Facility of Merit Award
Young Professional Award
 Unsung Hero Award

Send completed award nominations to Ally or Jess by April 1st

Register here!

ARWIN TURNER:

CEU SESSION

10:00 - 11:15 am

The morning will feature a 70 minute CEU session with Arwin Turner from Come Alive Outside.

After the CEU session, join us for lunch, awards, and then a fun activity. More details to come!

Send completed award nominations to Ally or Jess by April 1st

Avile@essex.org & Jessica@vrpa.org

‘22-’23 VRPA Commercial & Organizational Members

A very big thank you to all our Commercial VRPA members as well as our supporting organizational members!

Go to the VRPA website and click on the “Commercial Members” tab for a direct link to each of our commercial member’s websites. Please remember to support them with your business and be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment.

The VRPA could not do half of what we do without the ongoing support of our commercial members as well as our supporting organizational members.

Thank you very much. We really appreciate you choosing to be a VRPA member!
Experience is everything.

NESTMA members advance professionalism in sports turf management and athletic field safety through education, research, and advocacy.

Be a part of NESTMA.

NESTMA.org

Your One Stop Recreation Solution!

- Play Structures
- Climbing Systems
- Sports Equipment
- Outdoor Fitness
- Dog Park Equipment
- Shade and Shelters
- Site Furnishings
- Bleachers
- Safety Surfacing
- Installation Services

Mark Gallagher | 800.861.1209 | mark@nercgroup.com
P.O. Box 1503 Westboro, MA
This September 27th & 28th the VRPA will celebrate its 80th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation. What a milestone! We hope that you will all join us in celebration this year as we are excited to announce a change in venue to the Killington Grand Hotel for the first time ever to help celebrate our 80th Conference! We also have a new partner this year, the Vermont Trails & Greenways Council (VTGC), who will be co-hosting the Trails Symposium in tandem with our conference! The combination of this central location and new partner will help maintain our historic attendance and attract new attendees to a state of the art facility. VRPA thinks these changes will make this event even better for all participants and exhibitors alike.

Registration for exhibitors is now open! We encourage exhibitors to register early to save $50 prior to May 31st. We also can only fit 35 vendors this year, so be sure to secure your space! Registration for attendees will open later this Spring. We will be updating our website regularly with more updates and information so be sure to check back often.

We have an amazing conference committee team this year that is working hard to make this year’s conference stand out. Some of your favorite highlights will still be featured, including dinner & breakfast with exhibitors, Fireworks by Northstar Fireworks, Evening Social, Silent Auction, and some amazing education sessions from speakers around the country.

We hope to see you all this September to help celebrate our 80th conference!

VRPA Conference Committee & VRPA Executive Director

Wed. & Thurs., September 27 & 28
Killington Grand Hotel, Killington, VT
The 79th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation was held on October 12th & 13th, 2022 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT. It was great to have a “back to normal” year after the effects of the pandemic the two years prior. We were thrilled to see our registration numbers start to climb again to approx. 100 attendees and 28 Exhibitors.

We are grateful that Lake Morey Resort was able to provide us with delicious meals at a reduced rate even though the cost of food sky-rocketed this past year. There staff continue to be so accommodating to our conference needs, and we were very thankful for their ongoing support.

We were also very fortunate this year to still attracted talented speakers from all over the country, including the states of Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Washington DC, Massachusetts, and several other states. Attendees also came from all over Vermont, including many small communities and rural towns. Perhaps one of the highlight of the conference was keynote Phil Gaines, a professor of practice in the Parks, Recreation & Tourism Management Department at Clemson University. Phil gave a compelling, heartfelt, and inspirational keynote titled “Why be normal”, reminding us that the field of Parks & Recreation is special and unique because of all the services we offer and people we touch.

It was so great to see all of our supporting sponsors and exhibitors again as well during the Vendor Hall sessions. All of our exhibitors provided products to sample, information for guests, and great company. They also participated in several drawings of our raffle during the exhibit hall times. Thank you to all those that donate raffle items! During the Wednesday evening exhibit hall we were able to enjoy an open bar sponsored by Northstar Fireworks, who also provided a spectacular fireworks display over Lake Morey after dinner. Thank you again to all of our amazing donors that contributed items to the Silent Auction!

To honor Theresa S. Brungardt this year we were able to hold our traditional Brungardt Awards Ceremony during Thursday’s luncheon. Three awards were handed out for: “Friend Award”, “Organization Award”, & “Professional Award”. The Friend Award was given to Dick Pecor, long time volunteer in Colchester. The Organization Award was given to Ascutney Outdoors, a non-profit formed by West Windsor residents to help revive the abandoned Ascutney ski area. The Professional Award was given to Scott Hauser from the Hartford Parks & Recreation Department.

For our annual “Vermont’s Finest Silent Auction” this year, we were able to offer it again through the online site “32 Auctions.” We were able to raise over $6,000 in proceeds from over $8,000 in silent auction donations. Thanks to the fine work of conference committee member and auction organizer Joanne Putzier of Burlington, as well committee members Betsy Terry, Sherry Winnie, & Maggie Leugers the auction was a smashing success. Thank you again to all of our amazing donors that contributed items to the Silent Auction!

The Vermont Conference on Recreation is an event that continues to grow, evolve and change, meeting the needs of contemporary recreation professionals while honoring and respecting the conference’s origins, history and roots. Planning is already well underway for the 2023 conference. In our planning efforts, we will be keeping budgets and content in mind as many factors have changed through our journey since the pandemic. If you’d like to participate in the planning process or help at the conference itself, the planning committee can always use more volunteers. Contact Jessica Brodie, VRPA Executive Director at Jessica@vrpa.org if you are interested.

Until 2023 – keep recreating, stay well, and see out there again soon!

Sincerely,
2022 Conference Committee Members
appreciate the generosity and support. Thank you all again very much! We rely on the support of these professionals to reach our goal. Their contribution is helping to educate professionals and to continue offering many other programs to all of the generous and supportive Vermonters and visitors. Your contribution is helping to educate these professionals to reach our goal. Thank you all again very much! We appreciate the generosity and support.

### Silent Auction Donors

On behalf of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association (VRPA), I want to extend our thanks to all of the generous and supportive businesses and organizations from around Vermont that supported VRPA through our Annual Silent Auction that was held at our 79th Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation.

Once again the participants of the Vermont’s Statewide Conference on Parks & Recreation were wowed by the overwhelming generosity of the Vermont businesses and non-profits that donated to our silent auction. You truly showed your care for others through your support and fit the title of one of “Vermont’s Finest”!

Over $8,000 in goods were donated to the Auction, allowing VRPA to raise just over $6,000.00. The Auction is always a true highlight of the conference, and was again this year. We held the auction on the virtual platform, “32auctions.com”, again this year to allow those not able to attend the conference in person a chance to still participate. Items were on display at the conference, but all voting was done online, which proved to be very successful.

The proceeds of the auction will be used for professional development and to continue offering many other educational opportunities for our members. As professionals in the field of parks and recreation, we hold the goal of improving the quality of life for Vermonters and visitors. Your contribution is helping to educate these professionals to reach our goal.

Thank you all again very much! We appreciate the generosity and support.

### 2022 Exhibitors & Sponsors

Thank you very much to our conference exhibitors and sponsors. Please be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment. We couldn’t do half of what we do without their ongoing support.

Atlantic Golf and Turf
BCI Burke
Clivus New England, Inc.
Cousineau Forest Products
Durgin and Crowell Lumber Company
Franklin Paint
Game Time Park & Playground Equipment
MRC
KOMPAK, Inc.
Lunenburg Skate Park
M.E. O’Brien and Sons
Musco Sports Lighting
MyRec.com Recreation Software
New England Recreation Group
Northstar Fireworks
Pettinelli & Associates, INC.
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Read Custom Soils
SE Group
SLR International Corporation
Small Business Administration
SOLitude Lake Management
UltiPlay Parks & Playgrounds, Inc
USTA New England
Vermont Display Inc
Vermont Systems
Weston & Sampson
WICKED COOL FOR KIDS
Wickham Park
2023 VT STATE PICKLEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

Finals - August 11-13 - Chittenden County

Regionals - June/July - locations in each region TBD

$60 PER TEAM
$60 PER CATEGORY

Registration - Opens 3/1/2023
Registration - Closes 5/15/2023
Cancellation deadline for refund - 6/1/2023

Register your team online at www.vrpa.org

Regions & Format:
North Region - Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden, Essex, Lamoille, Orleans, and Caledonia counties
South Region - Addison, Washington, Orange, Rutland, Windsor, Bennington, and Windham counties

Format - both Regionals and Finals to be a round robin format.

Age Groups - 18-34, 35-54, 55-69, 70+
- Age determined as of 1/1/2023
- Age group determined by the age of the younger player on each team

Playing Categories - Men’s - Women’s - Mixed

Playing Levels: Intermediate – Advanced
The playing level is determined by the highest rated player on the team.

Intermediate - 3.0 - 3.5 USAPickleball
Advanced - 3.75 - 4.0+ USAPickleball

Top 2 from each category advance to finals

Pettinelli & Associates, INC.
Playground Equipment, Inclusive Playground Equipment, Playground Surfacing, Amenities, Shades, Basketball Hoops, Playground signs, and more.

We also do installation for all of the above!

Email: Playgrdbob@aol.com
Phone: 802-862-3002

Balls to be used - Franklin X-40
USPA Playing Rules

All proceeds from the State Tournament will benefit the VRPA, a 501c3 non-profit whose mission is to provide trainings and resources to support Parks & Recreation professionals throughout the state of Vermont.

www.vrpa.org
Maintenance Workshop

The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association (VRPA), in partnership with the New England Sports Turf Managers Association (NESTMA), and the New England Park Association (NEPA) invite you to attend the 2023 VT Maintenance Workshop.

The entire morning is dedicated to hands-on educational sessions, site visits, vendors and equipment demos. After the morning sessions we will break for lunch followed by several roundtable discussions. Meet people from around the region who work in park and school settings. Attendees will walk away with specific resources and tools to apply within your organization and community.

New in 2023, we will be hosting the morning sessions and equipment demos at the Middlebury Memorial Sports Center to allow for a facility tour and ice arena/facility management discussion as part of this year’s workshop as well. At 12:00pm everyone will then meet up at the Middlebury Recreation Center for lunch and roundtable discussions.

Vendor registration is now open! If you would like to showcase your equipment to park crew staff from around the region, this is a great event to do so! There will be time for live demos and hands on interactive with your products & equipment.

Attendee registration will be open soon as well. Be sure to check the VRPA website for updates in March & April.

Cost:
- $30/person - VRPA members
- $25/person - more than 10 people

Summerama Camp Staff Training

Friday, June 16, 2023
8am–4pm
Robert Miller Community Center
Burlington, VT

For over 40 years, the Vermont Parks & Recreation Association has hosted Summerama, a camp-specific training program for new and seasoned counselors and recreation staff. The purpose of this workshop is to supplement in-house staff orientations with a robust schedule of hands-on education sessions lead by regional camp professionals. Summerama is the first step toward training your staff and initiating a strong team bond that’ll pull through the season.

Bring your training to the next level!
The Summerama schedule includes sessions covering a wide variety of camp topics. With a mix of interactive and informational, long and short time blocks, and material suited for all levels of experience. Every member of your staff can customize their training with selections that pique their interest.

A detailed brochure will be available in April with the complete schedule outlined. Attendee registration will open by that time as well.

Cost:
- $30/person - VRPA members
- $25/person - more than 10 people

Tues. June 6
Middlebury

A TRAIL MAP TO OUR FUTURE
Together toward success

MORE INFO
REGISTRATION
VENDOR INFO
The VRPA/St. Johnsbury 2023 State Meet will take place on Saturday, July 22, 2023 at St. Johnsbury Academy.

**2023 COST**
- $15 per person (VRPA Member organizations)
- $18 per person (Non-member, per registered participant)

**ATHLETES AGES**
The athlete’s age group is determined by his/her age as of December 31, 2023. Athletes aged 7-15 on December 31, 2023 are eligible to participate in the meet this year. If the athlete was a freshman in high school during the current 2022-23 school year then they are not allowed to compete.

**PAYMENT**
Invoices will be sent to each team at the conclusion of the meet once the total amount of athletes has been collected from you prior to June 16th, 2023. This commitment form helps us prepare for the amount of ribbons and shirts we need to order, and the number of athletes to expect. Please provide accurate athlete numbers to avoid extra costs associated with ribbons and t-shirts that we order. Every participant in the meet will receive a shirt and the top 6 athletes in each event will get a ribbon handed out at the conclusion of each event the day of the meet.
Please complete the commitment form by June 16th, 2023.
Invest in Your Career

Become a CPRP

www.nrpa.org/CPRP

Spectacular Fireworks Displays!

- New Year’s Eve
- Ski Races
- Winter Carnivals
- Sledding Parties
- Tree Lightings
- Torchlight Parades
- Weddings
- Fairs
- Class Reunions
- Festivals
- Graduations
- Fishing Derbies
- Concerts
- Independence Day
- Family Reunions
- Barbeques
- Sporting Events
- Drive-Ins
- Old Home Days
- Guy Fawkes Day
- Back To School
- Diwali
- Homecomings
- Corn Mazes
- And More!

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CELEBRATE ALL YEAR-LONG!

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Each year in July, Parks & Recreation month is celebrated across the country. The promotion and theme each year are led by the National Recreation & Park Association, which is comprised of thousands of parks & recreation professionals in every state.

This year we will celebrate the vital role park & recreation professionals play in bringing people together, providing essential services and fostering the growth of our communities. As park and recreation professionals, you make a positive impact on the lives of your community members every single day. Let’s come together this year and show the world just how much parks and recreation means to our communities.

We can’t wait to celebrate “Where Community Grows” with you!

There’s no better way to celebrate Park and Recreation Month than by highlighting the people who faithfully serve their communities all year long.

To celebrate & continue to help serve the Parks & Recreation professionals statewide, the VRPA has teamed up with several agencies & businesses to offer a new VRPA fundraising raffle drawing that will take place on Thursday, July 27th.

All you have to do qualify is donate a minimum of $25 to the VRPA before July 21st!

We will draw raffle winners from our list of VRPA donors on Thursday, July 27th.

Donate Today!

The VRPA is a 501c3 organization & all donations are tax deductible.
The VRPA is a 501c3 organization & all donations are tax deductible.

WHEN: November 13th-15th, 2023
LOCATION: Concord Recreation Center
14 Canterbury Road, Concord, NH 03301
PRICE: $350
1.5 CEUs are available

The New Hampshire Park & Recreation Association is proud to work alongside the host sponsors listed to provide this important program for our members.

“Inspiring, transformative, and even a bit provocative (in a good way) – this is not your average training! If you want to challenge yourself and connect with other amazing pros, you don’t want to miss this opportunity. Thanks for another fantastic program!”
Karen O’Donnell, Director
Wheat Ridge Parks & Recreation

Together we can create a movement to strengthen financial acumen in parks and recreation - one person and one agency at a time.

This eye-opening and engaging experience will be one you won’t forget.

As park and recreation professionals, we are privileged to be the stewards of taxpayer dollars. Each and every day we get to spend their money. What a responsibility!

We hold in our hands the power to impact communities by how we manage these resources. How we spend, how we generate revenues, and how we work to create a financially sustainable future for our organizations and for the field of parks and recreation.

It’s finally here! New England here we come!

Supporting HOST Sponsors

Jamie Sabbach, Program Instructor
Jamie has spent her entire adult life serving the public park and recreation profession. Afforded opportunities few will ever have, she has been a practitioner, an educator, and consultant. She speaks from a place of experience, realism, and observation.

Jamie has taught hundreds of professional development and training programs across North America and Europe and has had the privilege of testifying in front of the United States Congress on the critical importance of public lands and recreation.

She currently works alongside organizations from coast to coast assisting them in creating financially sustainable service models for their communities. She also teaches financial management at Indiana University in the School of Public Health’s masters program.

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The New Hampshire Park & Recreation Association is proud to work alongside the host sponsors listed to provide this important program for our members.
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Let’s take a spin toward tomorrow.

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At Landscape Structures, we believe playstructures should complement their surroundings. But more than that, they should complement childhood. Every aesthetic choice is also backed by evidence to challenge, excite and energize kids of all abilities. Because play is an important part of shaping better adults. And that’s what really matters. Learn more by contacting your local playground consultant, O’Brien & Sons, Inc. at 508.359.4200.

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“Vermont Systems continues to grow and improve. They help bring us up to the next level.”

KELSY MAXIE, Frisco, Colorado

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Learn more and hear stories from your peers.

“Vermont Systems continues to grow and improve. They help bring us up to the next level.”

KELSY MAXIE, Frisco, Colorado
APPLICATION & ANNUAL RENEWAL

Membership renewals are due May 1, 2023 - Click here to renew online!

As a VRPA member, you will receive:
• Recreational Check-in: Weekly offers & happenings, via email.
• The Advocate: Annual digital VRPA newsletter
• VRPA Membership Directory: Annual digital directory of member contact info.
• Discounted Fees: Conferences, workshops & event registration fees & advertising rates.
• Professional Assistance: In person & online.
• VRPA website: access the VRPA website at vrpa.org.

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CLASSIFICATION (See next page for classification descriptions)

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* (Includes ALL board/commission members) ** (inc. link from VRPA website)

- Check enclosed □ Payment being mailed □
- Total amount due $_____

Now memberships received in the months of Nov, Dec and Jan are half price. New memberships received in the last three months of our fiscal year (Feb, March and April) are full price and include the following year membership also.

MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

Would you like to become more involved with VRPA? Listed below are the various VRPA committees. Please check if you are interested and someone will contact you. Thank you for your interest!

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- Executive Committee
- State Conference
- Field & Track
- Performance Showcase
- Awards
- Summertime
- Maintenance Workshop

Is there a VRPA member who influenced your decision to join? If yes, who?

Are you a member of NRPA? □ No □ Yes

Online: vrpa.org  |  Mail: send printed application to VRPA, P.O. Box 33, Brownsville, VT 05037
Questions? Call the VRPA office at 802-878-2077

*IPEMA CERTIFIED TO ASTM F1951 – 14 STANDARD. CHIPS ARE DELIVERED TO VT, NH, MA AND ME.

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