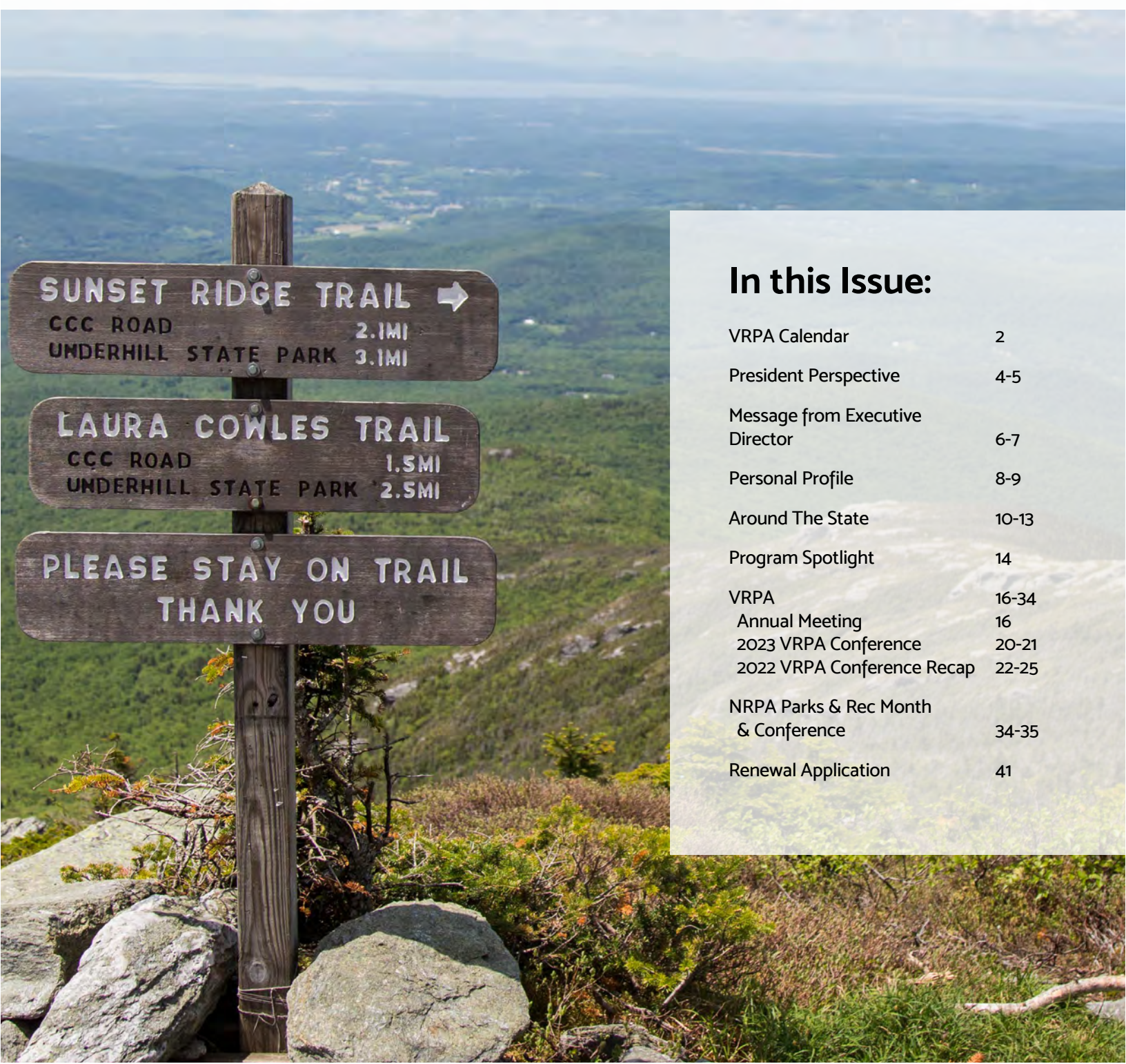




ISSUE 102 | ANNUAL 2023

# ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association



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VRPA PRESIDENT'S  
perspective



I hope everyone enjoyed the end of 2022 and had a terrific holiday season! With 2023 in full swing, I hope 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 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

ROB PETERSON

# Message

from the Executive Director



## *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*

Jessica Brodie

Executive Director



## Personal Profile

# JOHNNY CROSSLEY



### 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 love 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/softball, 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 covet those 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](http://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 Meiler 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](mailto:gwmoltz@gmail.com). ■



## 2023 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

*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](http://vermontseniorgames.org)

<b>Swimming</b>	May 21	The Edgar May Center in Springfield
<b>10K Road Race</b>	June 10	Montpelier in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
<b>Track &amp; Field</b>	June 17	Burlington High School
<b>1500M Powerwalk</b>	June 17	Burlington High School
<b>Triathlon</b>	July 16	Lake Dunmore in partnership with VT Sun
<b>Golf</b>	August 7	Ralph Myhre Golf Course Middlebury
<b>Pickleball</b>	Aug 25-27	Colchester and Burlington
<b>5K Road Race</b>	Sept 2	Northfield in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
<b>5K Powerwalk</b>	Sept 2	Northfield in partnership with Central Vermont Runners
<b>Table Tennis</b>	Oct 21	Shelburne





# Trail Mix

## + The Gold Standard for Conservation & Recreation

By Ross Saxton and Phil Huffman



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 skis. 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! ■

## CRV Steering Committee Members



CLARK AMADON	MadDog Trout Unlimited
LAURA ARNESEN	MRV Recreation District
ERIC BARUZZI	Mad River Ridge Runners
JOEY CAREY	Sugarbush Resort
JIM EDGECOMB	Warren Conservation Commission
TJ GREENWOOD	MRV Chamber of Commerce
PHIL HUFFMAN (co-chair)	Waitsfield Conservation Commission
AKHIL KAPLAN	Fayston Conservation Commission
BOB KOGUT	Mad River Riders
ALAN QUACKENBUSH	Duxbury Land Trust/Duxbury Rep
ROSS SAXTON (co-chair)	Mad River Path
JOSHUA SCHWARTZ	MRV Planning District
IRA SHADIS	Friends of the Mad River
STEVE SHARP	MRV Backcountry Coalition
CHRIS STEPHENSON	Moretown Recreation Committee & Stark Mountain Foundation
EMILY FRIEDMAN	Community Project Manager
ROSS SAXTON	Executive Director, Mad River Path Association
PHIL HUFFMAN	Longtime volunteer member of the Waitsfield Conservation Commission





## LOCAL MOTION WINTER WALK TO SCHOOL

Winter Walk to School Day is an initiative to encourage kids and families to walk or roll to school even in the winter months! If you want to run a Winter Walk to School Day (or multiple events!) we're here to support you. While the "official" date was 2/1/22, that date is just a suggestion. Any date that is celebrated in the winter counts!

### REQUEST YOUR WINTER WALK TO SCHOOL DAY KIT!

Celebrate Winter Walking (and rolling) anytime this winter! You can celebrate anytime you want this winter! We highly encourage Rec Departments to participate in this event as well!

This fun event encourages students to be #VermontTough by promoting walking and rolling as safe and healthy ways to get to school during the winter months. Schools (and other

organizations) that commit to hosting a Winter Walk and Roll to School Day will receive FREE hot chocolate and stickers for their events, courtesy of the SRTS team. No matter when you plan your event, we will send you cocoa and stickers!

Register your Winter Walk and Roll to School Day event [here](#) to receive your free hot chocolate and stickers!

### 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](mailto:education@localmotion.org). ■



Red Cross

## FIRST AID & CPR TRAINING

Instructed by  
Kirsten Santor

*Get Certified in  
First Aid & CPR*

- 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!

**\$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

REGISTER AT: [WWW.VRPA.ORG](http://WWW.VRPA.ORG)



VERMONT  
Recreation & Parks Association



# VRPA Annual Meeting

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



CEU SESSION

**ARWIN TURNER:**



**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!

**[Register here!](#)**

## 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  
**[Avile@essex.org](mailto:Avile@essex.org) & [Jessica@vrpa.org](mailto: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!**

### Organizations

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





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- Site Furnishings
- Bleachers
- Safety Surfacing
- Installation Services



Mark Gallagher | **800.861.1209** | [mark@nerecgroup.com](mailto:mark@nerecgroup.com)  
P.O. Box 1503 Westboro, MA



Register Today!

VRPA



Vendor Registration



Exhibitor Brochure

# 80<sup>th</sup> Annual VT CONFERENCE ON RECREATION & TRAILS SYMPOSIUM

*growing stronger together*

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





79th Annual Vermont  
Conference on  
Recreation



# RE-CAP

RESILIENCE.  
EXCELLENCE.  
COMMUNITY.

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. Their 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 attract 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 highlights 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 so much to each of our exhibitors that took the time to join us again this past year for our conference. Your support is greatly appreciated! *Do you know of a vendor who should be at our conference who wasn't? Please contact the 2023 Conference Chair with your ideas!*

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 Hausler 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](mailto:Jessica@vrpa.org) if you are interested.

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

Sincerely,

**2022 Conference Committee Members**



# Silent Auction Donors

On behalf of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association (VRPA) I would like to say THANK YOU VERY MUCH 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 State 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 really 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.

Bistro de Margot  
Chef's Corner Café and Bakery  
Jericho Tavern  
McGillicudy's  
Our House  
Park Place Tavern  
The Kitchen Table Bistro  
Homewood Suites  
Claussens  
Common Deer  
The Dog and Cat  
Hey June Stationery

Leugers Fine Photography  
Lift VT  
Phoenix Book Store  
NU Chocolat  
Paquette Full of Posies  
Rapunzel Salon  
Seaway Car Wash  
Snowflake Chocolates  
Strawberry Hill Sugarbush  
Big Spruce  
Hatchet  
Mirabelles  
Papa Nicks  
Silver Palace  
Sweet Simone's  
Lamoille Valley Bike Tours  
Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences  
K.C.'S Bagel Cafe  
King Arthur Flour  
VT Artisan Coffee & Tea Co  
Burke Mountain Resort  
Lawsons Finest Liquids  
Switchback Brewing Co.  
The Alchemist  
Lake Morey Resort  
Montshire Museum of Science  
Local Motion  
Ascutney Outdoors  
Brown Family Farms  
Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront

Hotel Vermont  
North Beach Campground  
Prouty Beach Campground  
The North Star Lodge  
Top Notch Resort and Spa

2/\$50 Gift Certificates  
\$20 Gift Certificate  
\$25 Gift Certificate  
Gift Card  
2/ \$50 Gift Certificates  
2/\$50 Gift Certificates  
\$50 Gift Certificate  
2 Night Stay w/breakfast  
Gift Certificate  
Canvas Bag/Backpack  
\$35 Gift Certificate  
Gift Basket/Notecards, Notebook, Pad,  
Jello Puzzle, Eraser pencil stand, Micro  
Tip Pens, Happy Camper Stickers  
School Bus Yellow  
1 Month Membership  
Cookbook & Child book  
Gift Certificate  
Gift Certificate  
Hair Cut Gift Certificate  
10 Wash Pass  
7 oz. Box of Assorted Chocolates  
Maple  
Gift Certificate  
4/\$25 Gift Certificates  
Gift Certificate  
2/Gift Certificates  
3 Gift Certificates  
2 Gift Certificates  
2/ Half Day E-Bike Tour Pass  
2 One Day Passes  
2/Gift Certificates  
Baking Bundle  
Gift Certificate  
2 Lift Tickets  
Gift Card  
Sign, Cup, Koozie, Key Chain, Hat  
T-Shirt, Hat, Socks, & Hot Sauce  
1 Night Gift Certificate  
2 person certificate  
Bike Rental for 2  
A 2021-22 Season Pass  
Maple Syrup and Pancake Mix Gift Box  
2 Free Nights of Camping at North Beach  
Campground for the 2020 Season  
One Night Stay  
Weekend stay in a Leanto  
Prouty Beach Camping Certificate  
Two One Night Stay  
50 Minute Spa Service

Audubon Vermont  
Euro Stickers  
Birds of Vermont Museum

Bromley Mountain

Cabot Creamery  
Cathy Stevens Pratt

Cedar Knoll Country Club  
ECHO Center  
Elmore Mountain Farm Soap Works

Farm Way Inc  
Green Mountain National  
Green's Sugarhouse  
Halladay's Harvest Barn

Kingdom Trails  
Lake Champlain Maritime Museum  
Laughing Moon Chocolates  
Opulenza Sterling Silver Jewelry  
Petra Cliffs  
Read Custom Soils

Rocky Ridge Golf Club  
Scott Terry  
Shelburne Farms  
Shelburne Museum  
Sidehill Farm  
Skida Headware and Accessories  
Smugglers Notch  
Spirit of Ethan Allen

Spruce Peak Performing Arts Center  
Sweet Clover Market  
The Quechee Club  
Trader Joe's in South Burlington  
Vermont Country Deli  
Vermont Snowflakes

Vermont Sweetwater Bottling Co.  
Waterbury Sports  
Vermont Teddy Bear  
VT Salt Cave Spa & Halotherapy Center

Half Gallon Maple Syrup & AV

4 Guest Passes and 2 Book  
'Nature Friendly Garden and  
Touch a Butterfly' & \$10  
Coupon to Gift Shop  
Two Adult Lift Tickets for the  
2021-22 Season  
Gift Basket you Put together  
10x15 Secret Door Painting in  
Handmade Frame  
4 Greens Fees  
Small Family Membership  
Assorted Gift Bag of Soap (12)

Goat Milk  
Gift Certificate  
2- 2 Person Golf Rounds  
Gift Box of Maple Products  
Vermont in a Box/Dips and  
Seasonings  
4x One Day Memberships  
Book, Hat, Magnet and Sticker  
\$25 Gift Card  
Filigree Earrings  
Two Beginner Packages  
Hiking Travel Backpack, Men  
Women Camping Daypack  
Outdoor, 2 Aloye Hiking  
Poles, VT State Parks 10 Passes  
Two Greens Fees  
Original Oil Painting  
1 Year Membership  
Family Day Pass Certificate  
8 Pack of Jams  
3 Hats, Woman, Men, Baby  
1 2021/22 Bash Badge  
2 Tickets to the Scenic Narrated  
Cruise

\$75 Gift Certificate  
\$50 Gift Certificate  
1 Foursome of golf w/Carts  
Bag of Goods  
Gift Card  
2021 Framed Snowflake Print  
and Ornament  
One Case of Mixed Sodas  
5 Punch Skate Sharpen  
20" World's Softest Bear  
Spa Day Package for Two

# 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.

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- BCI Burke
- Clivus New England, Inc.
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- Durgin and Crowell Lumber Company
- Franklin Paint
- Game Time Park & Playground Equipment/ MRC
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- SLR International Corporation
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- SOLitude Lake Management
- UltiPlay Parks & Playgrounds, Inc
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- Weston & Sampson
- WICKED COOL FOR KIDS
- Wickham Park



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Phone: 802-862-3002



VRPA

# 2023 VT STATE PICKLEBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

**Finals - August 11-13 - Chittenden County**

**Regionals - June/July - locations in each region TBD**

**\$60**

**PER TEAM**

**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](http://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**

*The Tournament Committee reserves the right to modify playing brackets to ensure the broadest possible participation and playing opportunities.*

**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](http://www.vrpa.org)







**VERMONT**

Recreation & Parks Association

## Summerama Camp Staff Training

**Friday, June 16, 2023**  
8am-4pm

Robert Miller Community Center  
Burlington, VT



### 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

**MORE INFO**



**Vermont  
Afterschool**

**A TRAIL MAP TO OUR FUTURE**

*Together toward success*



**BURLINGTON  
PARKS  
RECREATION  
WATERFRONT  
VERMONT**

**2023 VT**

# Maintenance Workshop



**Tues.  
June 6  
Middlebury**



**REGISTRATION**

**VENDOR INFO**

**VRPA**

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. ■







# VRPA /ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STATE TRACK MEET JULY 22, 2023

ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY

1000 MAIN STREET  
ST. JOHNSBURY, VT

[WWW.VRPA.COM](http://WWW.VRPA.COM)

Save the date!



## AGES 7-14

- ✓ 100, 200, 400, 800 Meter Dash
- ✓ 4x100 Meter Relay
- ✓ Long Jump
- ✓ Discuss & Shotput
- ✓ Hurdles
- ✓ Softball throw

## EVENT DETAILS

The VRPA in conjunction with St. Johnsbury Academy are excited to offer our in-person State Track & Field Meet again this coming summer! Stay tuned for more details and the registration packet!

[Complete the commitment form today!](#)

WE ARE SO  
EXCITED TO  
HOST OUR  
ANNUAL  
STATE TRACK  
& FIELD MEET  
IN PERSON  
AGAIN THIS  
SUMMER!



VRPA

# ST. JOHNSBURY ACADEMY STATE TRACK & FIELD MEET

**T**he 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-shirt's 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 [this commitment form](#) by June 16th, 2023. ■







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[www.nrpa.org/CPRP](http://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

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YEAR-LONG!**

**Northstar**  
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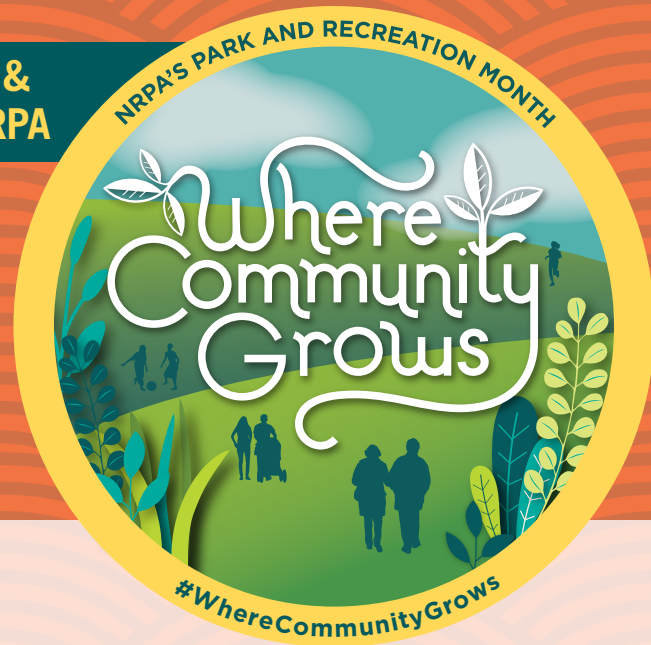
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*Burlington Bay, Independence Day Celebration*





**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!**



[www.nrpa.org/july](http://www.nrpa.org/july)

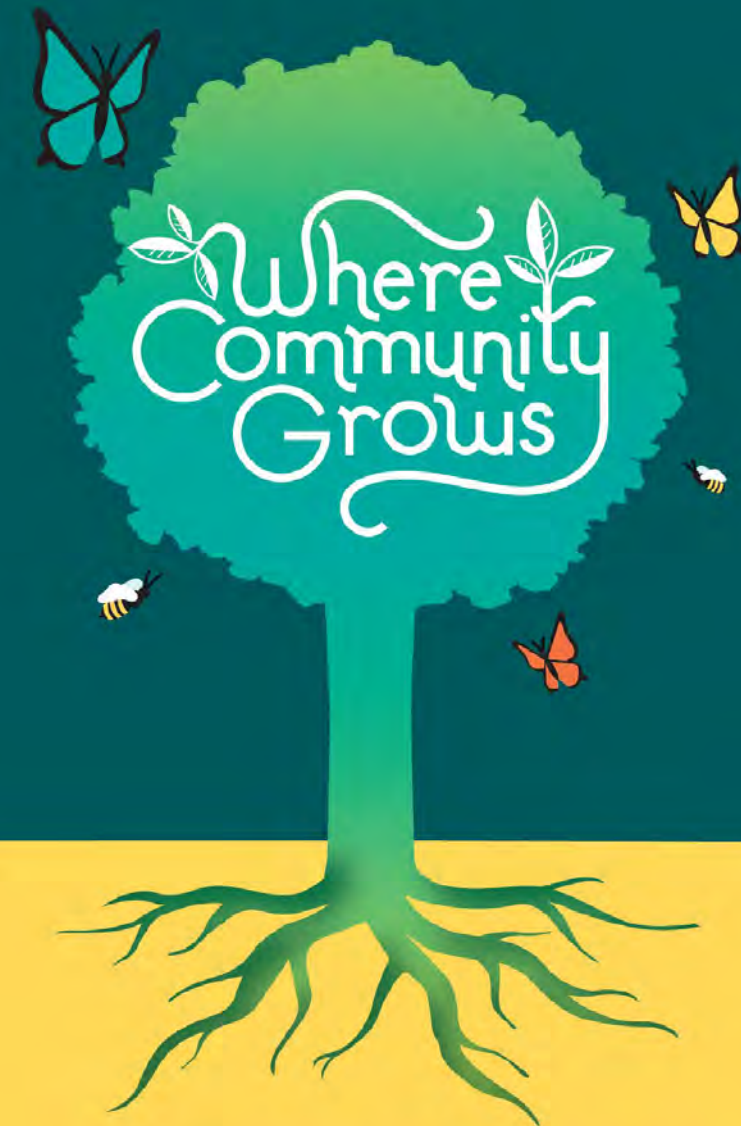
**MERRELL**



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



**NRPA National Conference**



**OCTOBER 10-12, 2023  
DALLAS**

**REGISTRATION OPENS  
MAY 8, 2023**

 [nrpa.org/conference](http://nrpa.org/conference)





# Tennis is always open for everyone.

All through May, join in on the celebration and get out and play!

MAY IS NATIONAL TENNIS MONTH



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## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

for park & recreation professionals

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.



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



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.

[Register HERE](#)

Want more info? [info@110percent.net](mailto:info@110percent.net) or 720.304.2167

"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

**WHEN:** November 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 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.

### 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.

### Supporting HOST Sponsors







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**KELSY MAXIE**, Frisco, Colorado



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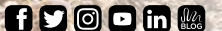
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Application

May 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024

## APPLICATION & ANNUAL RENEWAL

Membership renewals are due May 1, 2023 - [Click here](#) to renew online!

- Align yourself with 400+ professionals & volunteers who operate with a shared mission, vision, and values.
- Access tools and resources to position recreation and parks as essential community services.
- Develop strategies to advance and thrive within your profession and as an agency/organization.
- Build your skills and your professional network too.
- Shape our profession today and tomorrow.

As a VRPA member, you will receive:

- Recreation Check-in: Weekly info & 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: ccess the VRPA website at vrpa.org.

NAME		TITLE	
ORGANIZATION			
STREET ADDRESS		CITY	STATE
			ZIP CODE
OFFICE PHONE		CELL PHONE	
EMAIL			

### CLASSIFICATION (See next page for classification descriptions)

	No. of Persons	Membership Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> Agency (check one)		
<input type="radio"/> 3-5 staff	_____	\$320
<input type="radio"/> 6-8 staff	_____	\$560
<input type="radio"/> 9-11 staff	_____	\$720
<input type="radio"/> 12-19 staff	_____	\$960
<input type="radio"/> 20+ or more staff	_____	\$1,500
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional	1	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Board/Commission*	_____	\$140
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial (check one)**		
<input type="radio"/> 1 staff only	1	\$230
<input type="radio"/> 2-5 staff	2-5	\$340
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organization (1-4 staff)	1-4	\$165
<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Retiree (check one)	1	\$30
<input type="checkbox"/> Honorary Life	1	Complimentary

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

☐ Check enclosed   ☐ Payment being mailed    Total amount due \$ \_\_\_\_\_

New 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!

- |  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership          | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter             | <input type="checkbox"/> Performance Showcase                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Summerama            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Executive Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> Track & Field          | <input type="checkbox"/> Awards                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance Workshop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Conference    | <input type="checkbox"/> Northern NE Conference | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways you'd like to help: _____ |   |

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





# ADVOCATE

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Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

ISSUE 102 | ANNAUL 2023