



ISSUE 99 | FALL 2021

ADVOCATE

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

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- [Drew Pollak-Bruce](#), CPRP (SE Group) 735-2370

VRPA Office

Executive Director
 Jessica Brodie
 PO Box 33, Brownsville, VT 05037
 802-952-0030 | Jessica@vrpa.org | vrpa.org

VRPA Webmaster
info@vrpa.org

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 17, 2021
 Send to: Jessica@vrpa.org or by mail to:
 VRPA, PO Box 33
 Brownsville, VT, 05037

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure to check our website and our weekly Rec Check-In emails, a VRPA member benefit, for more details and updates as they become available!

2021-2022

October 13 & 14	VT Conference on Recreation – Lake Morey Resort
December 1	VRPA Quarterly Meeting
January 11-13	Northern New England Recreation & Parks Conference
February 2021	Playground Maintenance Training (PMT) course
March 9	VRPA Quarterly Meeting – VT State House
March 22–24	Certified Pool Operator (CPO) Course
May 11	VRPA Annual Meeting

If you have any suggestions for future trainings, workshops, or special events please let us know! Email Jessica@vrpa.org with your suggestions. We hope to see you all soon!

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.”



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VRPA PRESIDENT'S
Perspective

My favorite time of year is here! The change in weather, the change in wardrobe, the change of routines and programming and the beautiful change in colors outside.

After a busy summer, we may be ready for this change. We may also be exhausted from changes as life happens and COVID continues to keep us on our toes.

Everyone's level of comfort in change is different, but it doesn't mean those speed differences are bad or unhealthy. Change is healthy; without it, the routine becomes stagnant. I've worked in that environment before and didn't thrive. It was almost as if life wasn't moving along eight hours of the day; the only life that was fun and enjoyable was when I wasn't in that work environment. That adds up to A LOT of time being unhappy and unfulfilled! Then, like magic, things fell into place and change happened almost naturally. Those changes are fun, exciting, energizing, and healthy in their own way!

Then there are the moments of change that are scary or intimidating and overwhelming. When you must trudge through the tough times, the challenges, the uncomfortable of it all, knowing there will be the reward at the end, but you're just not sure when

you'll see that finish line. You won't have all the answers to your questions, or the questions coming from every other direction. And that's ok, because you WILL find those answers and you WILL release those endorphins as you check the box and move onto the next task at hand.

This change is what helps you grow; you need to get out of your comfort zone to challenge yourself and rebuild that confidence. It sure isn't fun though; internalizing it won't help either. We have finally opened-up about mental health awareness and ridding the stigma it once had in our day to day lives. This is still new and fresh for many, but it's there, it's happening, it's real! Find those people who will, support you, comfort you and encourage you. As you work through the changes and reach your end-goal you might also bring back the spirit you once used to exude! You got this!

Happy Fall – see you at the Conference in October! ■

Ally Vile
 Ally Vile, CPRP
 VRPA President



Message

from the Executive Director



“Hit the Reset Button”

Happy Fall! As school starts again and fall programs and activities pick back up, the start of a new season is always a good time to hit the reset

button. Take an hour, a minute, or a day to write down some goals for the season ahead. One goal might simply be to not lose our minds from ongoing Covid-19 changes, and that is ok – write it down and work toward that goal. Take a moment to admire all the summer programs you were just able to run and enjoy. Take a walk through one of your parks, write a list of things you learned, talk to co-workers about their experience, or whatever else works for you to see all the good that your work is providing your communities. We need to celebrate all we have accomplished, overcome, provided, and adapted to. 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 we will be sure to work hard to help you with those this year and beyond. We are excited to start offering some select in-person meetings and trainings again this year, and would love to hear about any new opportunities your staff may be interested in.

Our 78th annual conference on recreation is taking place October 13th & 14th at Lake Morey Resort. We are so excited to see you all again in person and hope you will join us! We have learned a lot this past year just like all of you, and hope to continue to deliver quality trainings, meetings, resources, and networking opportunities in the format that most makes sense. We learned that some virtual meeting options were

really helpful and resulted in higher participation, so we will continue some virtual offerings in the future as well as in person.

As I reflect personally on the past few months, it has been an ongoing balance of juggling 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. My son broke his elbow the first weekend of summer vacation this year and needed surgery, so we learned to get really creative with plastic bags and swimming with arms in the air this summer. He is better now and back to scaring me daily with his biking tricks. Our girls are doing well and love having the horses home in our backyard. We are so thankful for all the great parks and programs our kids are able to explore and participate in around the state. Thank you all for making those possible!

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. To all of our commercial members and vendors that joined us at first ever virtual conference last 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 appreciate, thank you! It is amazing to see all the talented and hard working professionals come together to do great things – keep up the amazing work everyone and I look forward to seeing you all soon! ■

Sincerely,

Jessica Brodie

Jessica Brodie
Executive Director

BREAKING



BARRIERS

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AROUND

THE

STATE

GRAND OPENING OF THE NEW ASCUTNEY DISCOVERY TRAIL



There is one more reason to visit Mount Ascutney. The finishing touches have been made on the new Ascutney Discovery Trail that had a grand opening celebration on Sunday, September 5 at 1 p.m. The Ascutney Discovery Trail is a 1-mile interpretive trail that features 11 interpretive stations with interactive activities such as a 3D map, artist-created benches, tree stump playground and chairlift swing. The Trail introduces visitors to the natural and cultural history of the mountain as they take in breathtaking views while walking through the forest and over the ski slopes.

[Ascutney Outdoors](#) cut the ribbon on this new interpretive trail on September 5th and offered a guided tour with light refreshments. The event began at 1 pm at the Ascutney Outdoors Center with a dedication followed by a trail walk.

The Ascutney Discovery Trail (ADT) offers an entirely new experience for visitors on the mountain, inviting and encouraging people to learn more about this



special place in a fun and engaging way. While many come to Mount Ascutney to mountain bike or ski the challenging terrain, the ADT is designed as an easy-entry experience that can be enjoyed in part or as a whole. For instance, a walk from the Outdoors Center to the Valley Vista interpretive stop can be a whole trip, with this scenic picnic spot a great option for families with small children.

The trail was designed with professional help from the National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program and Murphy & Smith Interpretive Solutions. Trail planning brought many stakeholders together

to specifically envision a much better system of connecting trails and offering more entry-level physical activities and education opportunities on the mountain. Ascutney Outdoors volunteers put in a tremendous amount of time to install all of the trail elements in order to provide the local match to the grants secured for the project. ■

For more information:
Natalie Starr | natalietstarr@gmail.com

Stay & Play Directory
The Vermont Chamber's tourism team has developed an [improved directory](#) on VermontVacation.com. [Learn more](#) about the new directory and [explore the new tool on VermontVacation.com](#). Please complete this [form](#) to submit information for a free basic listing. If you are interested in learning about the more robust aspects of a featured listing, view our [media kit](#).

Events Calendar
In partnership with VDTM, the Vermont Chamber has launched a new events calendar on [VermontVacation.com](#). The events calendar is still being populated. Learn more and submit your event [here](#).

For more information:
Megan Bullard, Member Engagement Specialist | 802-578-6159
Vermont Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 37, Montpelier, VT 05601

SEPTEMBER 29 +
OCTOBER 4 - 8

2021 TOWN FAIR

VERMONT LEAGUE OF CITIES & TOWNS

Training for Tomorrow

Join VLCT and municipal officials from across Vermont for a hybrid conference, starting with a full day of in-person training, networking, and annual meetings, followed by an entire week of virtual trainings and exhibitors.

Town Fair 2021 is your opportunity to connect with colleagues, learn about new products and services from virtual exhibitors, win prizes, and hear from topic experts about the issues most important to municipalities right now. ■

Schedule

TOWN FAIR IN-PERSON DAY

September 29 • Doubletree in South Burlington

Join us for a whole day of catching up with colleagues, annual meetings, training, and more!

VIRTUAL TOWN FAIR WEEK

October 4-8 • Virtual

Don't miss this an entire week of virtual trainings, each day focuses on a theme — ARPA, Equity, Infrastructure, Human Resources, and Cyber Security—and a virtual expo!

FIVE THEMATIC TRACKS

Cost

In-Person September 29	\$48.00
Virtual Week October 2-8	\$68.00
Both Events September 29 & October 2-8	\$100.00

Can't attend the sessions live?

Register to gain access to all of the conference recordings.

View Schedule & Register Today



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VT SENIOR GAMES



It has been a stellar start to the 2021 season for the Vermont Senior Games!

After being able to stage only three events due to COVID complications in 2020, the VSG started later this spring to allow vaccinations and safety protocols to progress. With a more compact schedule, and most of the events stacked between June and the beginning of October, it's been busy, and the athletes are responding in record numbers.

Thus far, VSG has seen its largest enrollments ever in pickleball, triathlon, swimming, and tennis, and solid numbers in the 10K run, golf, and track and field. Well over 400 seniors have competed in various events thus far in 2021, with the 5K run, 3-on-3 basketball, cycling, cornhole, and the powerwalk still to come.

In organizational news, VSG President Janice Lange will be handing the reigns over to Burlington's Kevin Plette at the end of the year. Thank you so much to Janice for helping to build the team over the past few years! Kevin's fantastic connections and energy ensure a bright future for the Vermont Senior Games.

In fact, one of the biggest changes for the VSG has been new sponsors coming on board to provide financial support and enthusiasm, thanks to Kevin and Maggie Leugers. Vermont Blue Advantage has stepped forward to become our title sponsor this year, and AARP is providing support as well. Vermont Systems continues as our tech foundation, and Hall Communications has entered a marketing agreement with us to spread the word about our games. Very exciting!

Several new event partners highlight our season's developments in 2021.

The Central Vermont Runners welcomed us in making

the Capital City Stampede in early June our 10K qualifying race for Nationals in Fort Lauderdale in 2022. With 53 senior runners in the field, more than half of the athletes at the starting line in Montpelier for the event were seniors.

For the triathlon, VSG joined up with the Vermont Sun series in Lake Dunmore for their mid-July challenge, and despite torrential rain our athletes performed admirably.

With indoor events still somewhat tentative when it comes to health and safety, swimming was problematic to schedule until VSG determined to go outside. The Sand Hill Pool in Essex proved to be a fantastic host, and we had an awesome meet, with "TEST" (the Town of Essex Swim Team) youths doing the bulk of the timing for the senior swimmers.

The Vermont Senior Games also hosted the inaugural "Barbara Jordan Track and Field Championships" in June, honoring one of our long-time most celebrated athletes and volunteers. Barbara organized and competed in the track and field meet for years before passing away in November of 2020 after a long battle with cancer. She and her family were recognized in a touching ceremony before the running events began.

The Pickleball tournament has become our biggest event, to the point that we now need two venues to host the number of athletes. We are staging the bulk of the draws at Airport Park in Colchester (kudos to Derek Mitchell for being a great partner in arranging that!), but also sending pools to Leddy Park in Burlington (credit there to Meghan O'Daniel). Well over 100 athletes are prepping for the competition, with many of them entered in multiple events. ■

George Moltz - Vermont Senior Games Coordinator
gwmoltz@gmail.com 802-779-6119

Huge congrats to the Vermont Senior Games Association and all the volunteers and sponsors who made the 2021 Barbara Jordan VT Senior Games Track and Field Championships a success. A magnificent example of how to hold a track meet.

**Tim Hogeboom,
Hardwick, VT**



Vermont Adaptive Sports Facility

Construction Underway on Vermont Adaptive's New \$2.5 Million Adaptive Sports Facility at Sugarbush Resort's Mt. Ellen; Anticipated Grand Opening for Winter 2021-2022



Construction continues on Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports' new \$2.5 million adaptive sports facility at Sugarbush Resort's Mt. Ellen, setting the stage for an anticipated grand opening of this state-of-the-art facility for the Winter 2021-2022 ski and snowboard season.

"As with at any ski resort, community is a big part of the entire experience and that holds true for everyone who enjoys Mt. Ellen, whether as an independent skier/snowboarder or someone participating with us," said Erin Fernandez, executive director at Vermont Adaptive, the largest year-round organization in the state to offer daily adaptive sports programs to people with disabilities.

"With our building connected to the existing base lodge, all of our guests will have access to everything in the Mt. Ellen lodge – the cafeteria, bathrooms, bar and pub on the third floor, the retail shop. There is no division. Friends and family can recreate, get ready together and apres-ski together. The elevator will be a game changer, too. This new building will be the foundation and home for an incredible community of athletes, volunteers, local community members and tourists who can all now recreate together – year-round - with ease."

With exterior work nearing completion this month, interior work will begin to take shape this fall on this long-awaited project. Until now, Vermont Adaptive has

operated out of 400 sq. ft. of borrowed space in the lodge. This new 4,000 sq. ft. facility at Sugarbush is the second of three permanent homes to be built in Vermont for the national nonprofit.

The first permanent home, the Andrea Mead Lawrence Lodge, was built in 2013 at Pico Mountain in Killington. The third will be a new home on the Burlington waterfront and bike path, in the next two to three years.

"It's been a long haul since we began this second building three years ago with many twists and turns including a global pandemic, which none of us could have foreseen," said Fernandez. "This year has had its own set of challenges. There are major supply chain issues and materials are more expensive. With that said, we are grateful to have Naylor and Breen on the project doing everything they can to keep things on schedule and as close to budget as possible."

The organization still has about \$400,000 left to raise for the Sugarbush project.

Naylor & Breen Builders, Inc. is the general contractor for the project, and the building was designed by Jeffrey Dunham Architecture. The new facility is specifically designed with the Vermont Adaptive participants, volunteers, staff, and community in mind in order to bring year-round accessible sports and recreation to the entire Mad River Valley area.

The new facility at Sugarbush will include three floors for adaptive sports programming, retreats, veterans' programs, workshops, and wellness seminars as well as the following:

- Access for All Elevator for three floors at Mt. Ellen at

Sugarbush.

- Year-round storage for expensive state-of-the-art adaptive equipment.
- Bag and gear storage space for staff, volunteers and guests.
- Connecting pathways to existing and new spaces – connection to Sugarbush's main base lodge level for food, the fireplace, seating, and retail.
- Accessible entryways and exits for getting ready for and hitting the slopes.
- Dedicated space for program check-in, accessible restrooms, program space, personal storage and changing space, volunteer break room, educational lending library, and more.
- Specially-designed soundproof sensory room for those who need a comfortable retreat away from noise and overstimulation.
- Multi-purpose space for classroom activities, retreats, yoga workshops, wellness camps, and other holistic activities.
- Space to work on equipment with a mechanical equipment closet included.

Vermont Adaptive arrived at Sugarbush Resort in 1991, when it expanded its programming locations to include Sugarbush in addition to its then-home base at Mt. Ascutney, where programs began in 1987. (The statewide headquarters is now at Pico Mountain.) The longstanding partnership between the organization and Sugarbush Resort has thrived for the past 30 years. ■

To learn more about the facility and to view designs and renderings, [click here](#).

MOUNT PHILO STATE PARK TRAIL

Rejuvenation Nearing Completion

Mount Philo State Park has seen substantial increases in visitation over the past decade and has experienced related impacts to trail and park infrastructure. The Mount Philo State Park Trail Project updates major sections of the main trail to provide a more sustainable and safer ascent and features a universally accessible trail that improves access at the summit.

Designed and constructed by Timber and Stone, LLC, this project addresses the most serious of these impacts, relocating the main trail to follow an improved grade and surface and widening the trail to enable visitors to walk side by side or with leashed dogs. It features multiple stone staircases—over 300 stone steps in total—and crushed stone surfacing, and a design shape that minimizes steep pitches to shed water and snow more effectively. The result is a more durable and sustainable trail that will last for generations without the need for continual maintenance. In addition, the universal access summit trail from the upper parking lot will enable more visitors to enjoy Mt. Philo’s iconic views.

This project will not only improve visitor experience and address environmental concerns, but also support larger state efforts to promote and expand outdoor recreation. The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC), created by Governor Scott in 2017, works to grow Vermont’s economy through outdoor recreation, supports outdoor recreation businesses, strengthens the stewardship of recreation resources, increases participation, and recognizes the public health and wellness benefits of outdoor recreation.

Timber and Stone, LLC sourced all materials from as close to the park as possible. Stone surfacing came from a local quarry and was trucked by a local company, and lumber for a wooden bridge was harvested and milled in Vermont. Machinery used for the project was purchased from local vendors, while hand tools came from a retailer in Central Vermont. Materials that

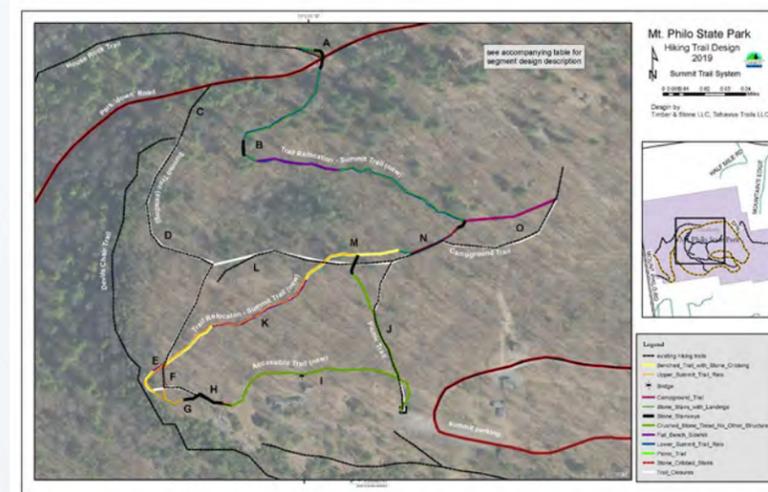
needed to be purchased out of state came from just across Lake Champlain in upstate New York.

Josh Ryan, principal of Timber and Stone, LLC, is a VOREC steering committee member. Ryan says, “This project is an on-the-ground example of all that outdoor recreation stands for in Vermont: Reducing barriers and encouraging people to get out and stay healthy, creating a trail that’s inviting to visitors and protects the land it’s built on, supporting the local economy, and providing meaningful employment to seven full-time staff.”

Timber and Stone has completed the new section of the Summit trail above the “down road” and are constructing new segments and upgrading others as they make their way to the summit. They have completed a universally accessible section from the upper parking to the lawn area. Work continues and aims to see project completion by the end of 2021.

This project is funded through many federal and state sources, including the federal Recreational Trails Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, and CARES Act, and the state of Vermont’s Capital Budget. To learn more about Mt. Philo State Park, [click here](#). ■

To view the project map (PDF) [click here](#).



LIVING MEMORIAL PARK, PERSEVERANCE

SKATEPARK

Brattleboro, VT

After nearly two decades of disappointment, obstacles, challenges, fundraising, and persistence the Town of Brattleboro Recreation and Parks Department has a beautiful 5,000 square foot skatepark at Living Memorial Park. Stantec designed the skatepark with community design input meetings. The park was constructed by a Vermont based company, SkateParker Construction of Hardwick, VT with the assistance of local contractor DMI Construction. The crews worked thru the 90-degree days during the summer of 2020 in the middle of a pandemic and constructed "Perseverance Skatepark". The Park opened in October 2020.

Perseverance Skatepark consists of the following features: A bowl, upper

plaza quarter pipe, lower quarter pipe, two Hubba ledges, ledge C-Channel, A-Frame, China Bank, stair rail and flat rail.

Planning for the construction of the park was a seventeen-year process. The community group along with Recreation and Parks Department, raised over \$350,000.00 raised from more than 140 businesses, organizations, foundations, and individuals. Without the community support, this park would not have been possible. It is obvious how the park got its name. This was no simple task, but we feel it showcases the power of perseverance and community dedication.

A recent user of the skatepark made the following comment - *There's a really good street section flow that kind of angles off into this bowl, and then a bowl corner, mini ramp, and then it just like, kind of flows back into the street like a weird, offset 'L,'* "Everything feels smooth. And there's different weird wall rides to try out and it's sweet." Another skater recently stated

- Before the skatepark went in, I would skate the streets of Brattleboro, at the local Boys and Girls Club or travel outside of Brattleboro. Now I skate four or five days a week at Perseverance. "I skated all over New England," "And this is my favorite spot."

Perseverance Skatepark located in Brattleboro at Living Memorial Park at the top of the Park. As you drive up Living Memorial Park Drive along the road that winds its way up the Brattleboro Ski Hill, a small slope accessed in the winter by a T-Bar, you come upon Perseverance Skatepark. The location of is high on the hill and provides expansive views of rolling green mountains to the north and east.

Perseverance Skatepark was recently highlighted in Vermont Sports Magazine as one of Vermont Best Skateparks. Please stop by Brattleboro and check out Living Memorial Park – Perseverance Skatepark and all our other facilities. ■



Ready to Roll

BIKE PROGRAM KITS

In 2021, the Safe Kids VT Ready to Roll program kicked-off on Bike to School Day (BTSD) and Safe Kids coalitions, together with local volunteers and partners, implemented wheeled safety programming to teach safe riding behaviors through classroom activities (virtual and in-person) and community events throughout the summer and fall. Providing multiple activities has allowed for extended reach into communities, increased impact, and increased knowledge gained around wheeled sports safety.

Safe Kids Worldwide, with support from program sponsor Bell, was able to award grants to coalitions around the state to help conduct bike and wheeled safety education and events to enhance awareness of road safety messages for children and promote behavior change.

The VRPA was one of the coalitions that was able to work with Safe Kids VT along with the help of Vermont's "Local Motion" Bike Smart program to create kits that were shared among several recreation departments around the state this past summer. These kits have already been to St. Albans & Randolph, and will be making their way to other events this fall as well. Several helmets were also given to several departments to help with their programs as well including St. Johnsbury, Windsor, Rutland, and St. Albans.

Any departments interested in borrowing a Bike Kit for a program should contact Jessica Brodie with the VRPA.

Thank you to Safe Kids VT and Local Motion for their partnership to make these kits accessible. ■

BIKE TO School Day

Safe Kids VT has been a huge help to many programs around the state this past summer into the fall. In June of 2021, "Bike to School Day" took place nationwide and several states took part in the event. In Brownsville, VT over 30 kids biked and/or walked to school as part of Bike to School Day.

The event was delayed one day due to heavy rains, but well worth the wait seeing all the smiles as kids of all ages rolled into school that morning. The Windsor Police department was one site to hand out special bike bells to the students, which were donated from VT Safe Kids for the event. A few new bicycle helmets were also handed out to a few students who didn't have their own.

The event was a great day to start the day and included music and the first "gathering" that occurred during the 2020/21 school year. The kids needed that break and fun moments and kicked off the day with loads of smiles and good exercise. Many of the kids that biked to school that day carried on the tradition and biked to school several more times before the school year ended.

Thank you to Safe Kids VT for the bells, banner, and helmets! ■



The Heart of Every Community

78th Annual Conference Parks & Recreation

**Wednesday & Thursday
October 13 & 14, 2021**

Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, VT

Attendee Registration



“Our 78th Annual Conference on Recreation is just around the corner! We’re thrilled to bring

you speakers from around the region and country compiling a total of 30 educational sessions geared towards Directors, Programmers, Parks & Trails staff and Customer Service Professionals- there is something for everyone!

We are honored to have Ian Hill as our Keynote Speaker this year. Ian fulfills many roles and wears many hats, one of which including The National Council for Community and Justice Humanitarian of the Year. Ian’s Keynote

session “Catalyst for the Renaissance”, will provide insight and keys to leading your community through change, including life after a pandemic.

This long-overdue reunion of Parks & Recreation professionals will leave you feeling inspired, re-energized, and ready to take on the world!

Covid safety protocols will be in place and outlined for all attendees. This may include but not limited to masking indoors and vaccine/negative testing requirements to attend in person.

We look forward to seeing you all October 13th & 14th! ■

Adriane Martin
Conference Committee Chair



Education

Join us for another jam packed VRPA conference! We've done it again and had so many great education sessions that we increased the number of sessions that you have to choose from during each time block! There are sessions for everyone - admin. Staff, programmers, park staff, and all those in between. There will be sessions on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion; providing internal and external organizations opportunities on a budget; various sessions on inclusive programming and design; and more! Don't miss out on the chance to reconnect in person over these hot topics!

Exhibitors

What if we could just get all the vendors that are already serving this industry into one room so that in a couple of short hours you could be reconnect with longtime partners that you have not seen in years, be introduced to that next great idea, and be reminded of that project you had put on the shelf 20 months ago?! What if that room was conveniently located just downstairs from that inspirational session on trying new things in your town? Well look no further and join us for the 78th Annual VT Conference on Recreation.

Do you struggle with meeting new people? Well walk the floor with a colleague and introduce each other to your existing contacts and brave meeting new people together.

Don't miss out on this opportunity to meet industry experts who have helped people just like you with challenges just like ones that you might be facing.

Social

Since we'll be back in person you can look forward to the built in social time associated with VRPA's conference. Along with the delicious food that is provided, we have also planned a handful of morning activities to choose from on the 2nd day as well as night time activities. Join us for Happy Hour in the Exhibit Hall featuring beverages and popcorn, followed by dinner with our exhibitors, and then an amazing Fireworks Display brought to you by NorthStar Fireworks! Board and lawn games, and fun conversations will follow the fireworks display.



Keynote: Ian Hill

CEO & President of the National Grassroots Broadcasting Network

Humanitarian, Business Leader, Award Winning Social Innovator and world record holder; these are some of the words that are often used when referring to Ian Hill.

Whether running a multi-million dollar business operation with over 1000 employees, or spearheading first of their kind life-changing community projects, Ian Hill has been recognized for being a catalyst for positive change throughout the Globe.

Today, Ian is CEO and President of the National Grassroots Broadcasting Network and it's family of Networks. These Connected TV networks reach into 185 million households across the US and 3.1 billion mobile devices around the world.

Ian is also known for his humanitarian effort, "Let Them Be Kids", of which he is the founder and volunteer CEO. This first-of-its-kind initiative builds playgrounds in areas of extreme need. Let Them Be Kids has

impacted over 150 communities across North America and as far away as Africa.

Ian's latest social project is to bring light to alarming suicide rate and mental health issue amongst middle aged men, through his effort to break the world record for the oldest man to play college football. This will be his second world record and is already impacting men and their families across the United States and Canada.

The National Council for Community and Justice recognized Ian for his commitment to positive change, by naming him Humanitarian of the Year, The Stand for Children Organization, named him its Child Advocate of the Year. Most recently, Ian's Let Them Be Kids program was named one of the foremost innovative social leisure programs in the world by the World Leisure Congress.

VRPA Keynote Session: "Catalyst for the Renaissance"

Ian Hill, "The Changing Point"

Throughout history after every Pandemic there has been a renaissance! The recreation, parks, arts, culture and heritage (the Quality of Life sector) is poised to be the catalyst for this renaissance in the Communities they serve. This sector is both figuratively and literally the heart of any community; it pumps life-giving blood throughout any region, touching in a meaningful way, every citizen. In these increasingly complex and challenging times, those at the top must be able lead like never before. Designed specifically for those in this critical sector, this life changing keynote will remind all who attend why we do what we do, while discussing leading edge collaborative strategies and proven concepts for building community capacity needed to take on the challenges of today.

OUTCOMES

- Attendees will learn the 3 keys to leading a renaissance for the stakeholders and communities they serve.
- Participant will have a better understanding of the dynamics of rapid change and how to navigate to their vital outcomes.
- Participants will have deeper knowledge of the value they bring to a community and be able to articulate the impact of their department in these changing times.

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Silent Auction

It's almost that time of year when we huddle together around the tables checking out the items for this year's VRPA Silent Auction. The committee has been working hard to put together a selection of auction gifts that will provide something of interest to everyone. Some of you will be happy to know that the case of soda from Vermont Sweetwater Bottling has already been confirmed!

The auction items will be on display at the conference but you won't need to be there to bid...all bidding for this year's conference will be online so make sure you have a smart device with you when you come to the conference. The auction list will be emailed to all VRPA members prior to the conference...please forward it to all your friends so that they can bid too. This is a VRPA fundraiser and the more bidders we have, the merrier!

EXCITING NEWS...the bidding for this year's auction will begin two weeks before the conference. Visit the [website](#) any time after September 27th and click on the auction link on the VRPA homepage to start your bidding.

Each year we take time to repeat our auction founder's words, "Bid high and bid often." Thank you, Carol Hartshorn for getting this all started for us!

If you'd like to make a donation, contact Joanne Putzier at jputzier@burlingtonvt.gov. Auction items will continue to be added right up through the auction closing so be sure to check back often.

Bidding Now Open



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A great conference for all recreation professionals from entry-level interns to administrative assistants and directors.

Registration

Under "Education" on the [VRPA](#) homepage, scroll to the drop down page for the VRPA Annual Conference for more information and registration links.

Early Bird Pricing good through September 10!

Category	Two Days	One Day
PROFESSIONAL		
VRPA Member	\$195	\$130
<i>VRPA, N.E. State Rec Association members, NRPA, VTGC</i>		
Non-VRPA Member	\$225	\$150
COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS / RETIREES / FRIEND		
VRPA Member	\$130	\$80
<i>VRPA, N.E. State Rec Association members, NRPA, VTGC</i>		
Non-VRPA Member	\$150	\$90
STUDENTS	\$125*	\$80*
**Fees waived for student volunteers		
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*Available for purchase through December 31		
VRPA Member	\$90	--
<i>VRPA, N.E. State Rec Association members, NRPA, VTGC</i>		
Non-VRPA Member	\$125	--

Recorded Sessions Include:

- The Benefits of Diversity in the Workplace | Dr. Samose Mays, Bryan County (GA) Recreation
- How & Why to Become a Certified Park & Recreation Professional (CPRP) | Simon Bradbury, Tellico Village Property Owners Assoc. (TN)
- Ian Hill | KEYNOTE: Catalyst for the Renaissance
- How Do E-Bikes Fit Into Your Trail System? | Drew Pollak-Bruce, SE Group
- Implementing Strategies to Include Participants with Disabilities | Lisa Drennan, MERGE Consulting
- Creating a Culture of Innovation | Ryan Hegreness, Westminster Parks & Recreation (CO)
- How to Create a 20-Mile Trail System on a Shoe String | Simon Bradbury, Tellico Village Property Owners Assoc. (TN)
- How to Successfully Implement Change | Ian Hill, The Changing Point
- Closing KEYNOTE | Governor Scott & Panel of Speakers



Registration Instructions

1. Visit [vrpa.org](#), click on the conference registration link under "Upcoming Events."
2. Scroll down the page and click on "Register."
3. Enter your email, click "Next."
4. Choose your registration type, click "Next."
5. Complete all required fields*
6. Agency members – if you want to register multiple people and include them all on one invoice, follow the instructions above and prior to step (7) you will see an "Add Guest" button in the upper left part of the page. Click and fill out all the required info and sessions for each person you are registering. You can add as many attendees as you need within the registration type of the main person registered. If you need a different type you will have to register those people separately.
7. At the end of the registration process you will have the choice to pay with a credit card or print off an invoice and send a check to: VRPA, PO Box 33, Brownsville, VT 05037.

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stages in the sun

Vermonters and visitors to the state were hungry for safe ways to gather and experience art this summer—and musicians and other performing artists were eager to connect with audiences again. The Stages in the Sun initiative combined two of the very best things Vermont has to offer: a vibrant arts scene and our incomparable landscape.

To encourage the safe celebration of the arts and the outdoors, the VRPA teamed up with the VT Arts Council and Vermont Department of Tourism & Marketing to spread the word about the incredible array of great outdoor arts experiences being coordinated by parks, arts, and community organizations. From free concerts in a park to poetry readings in the woods, from jugglers at a farmers market to world class theater in an outdoor amphitheater, there was something for everyone to enjoy this summer.

Organizers in all corners of the state were invited to jointly promote the array of great safe outdoor performances that are available this year through the new and improved [Vermont Vacation Events Calendar](#).

We are looking for events that:

- performing arts or humanities of any kind—music, dance, theater, readings, circus arts, comedy, storytelling
- were held outdoors (covered shelters are fine)
- were paying the performers (unless it is a volunteer community band or community theater troupe)
- were being held in 2021—July 4 or beyond
- were compliant with ADA requirements for physical and programmatic access
- were led by organizers who will pledge to follow the “Universal Guidance” outlined in the [State’s Vermont Forward plan](#)
- were willing to use the “Stages in the Sun” branding in promoting your event(s)
- were either free or ticketed events

Together, the VT Arts Council, VRPA, and VDTM were able to receive \$30,000 to use as sponsorships for events around the state. A total of 20 events were each given \$1,500 this summer to help with their events.

A huge thank you to the Vermont Community Foundation for helping support the new Stages in the Sun initiative by a generous COVID-19 Response Grant from the Vermont Community Foundation.

This initiative brought to you by: VRPA, VAC, VDTM, VDTM ■



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BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE VERMONT RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

The members of the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association **meet four times a year:** in March and December for Quarterly Meetings which include a 0.1CEU Education Program, for the Annual Meeting each May, and in the Fall for the state recreation conference known as the Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation. All current members receive notice of these meetings either via mail or email. These are all great opportunities to network with parks and recreation colleagues from throughout the state.

The **VRPA newsletter, *The Advocate***, is published three times each year in the Winter, Spring, & Fall. All current members receive an electronic copy and is posted on the VRPA website.

Nearly every Friday, the **weekly Recreation Check-In** is sent to all current members via email. This provides up-to-date information about VRPA news, current issues in parks and recreation, funding and grant opportunities, employment opportunities, and an opportunity to ask questions of other VRPA members and get help with your issues and challenges. Many members consider this to be the most significant benefit of being a VRPA member. ■



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CLASSIFICATION (See next page for classification descriptions)

Classification	No. of Persons	Membership Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> Agency (check one)		
<input type="radio"/> 1-4 staff	_____	\$285
<input type="radio"/> 5-10 staff	_____	\$395
<input type="radio"/> 11+ staff	_____	\$510
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Professional	___1___	\$80
<input type="checkbox"/> Board/Commission*	_____	\$115
<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial**	___1___	\$190
<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Friend <input type="checkbox"/> Retiree (check one)	___1___	\$25
<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!

- Membership
- Newsletter
- Performance Showcase
- Summerama
- Executive Committee
- Track & Field
- Awards
- Maintenance Workshop
- State Conference
- Northern NE Conference
- Other ways you'd like to help: _____

Is there a VRPA member who influenced your decision to join? _____

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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

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

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