



# VRPA Advocate

Issue 86

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

Spring 2016

## VRPA Presidents' Perspective

Andy Cappello,  
Outgoing President



**T**here is no beginning and no end to recreation. Whether you rock on the porch and watch the wind blow or paddle through class V rapids in heartpounding white water, recreation truly exists in the hearts and minds of the beholder. The most important thing is that you find the time to recreate in a positive way; doing whatever it is that you enjoy. My wife, Juli, and I find that spending time recreating in the garden not only produces beautiful flowers and tasty fruits and vegetables, but rejuvenates our spirit and improves our quality of life.

(Continued on page 7)

Scott Hausler, CPRP,  
Incoming President



**A**s I prepare to take over as President of the Vermont Recreation & Park Association, my emotions are full of enthusiasm and anxiety as I truly look forward to leading the association. It is a great honour to be involved in VRPA as President.

I would like to thank outgoing President Andy for his past several years of service as President-Elect and President of VRPA. I'm grateful he will be around another 2 years as the Past-President as his experience and wisdom as a leader will be helpful to me.

Being involved in VRPA means a tremendous amount to me personally and professionally. Most recently, an invitation to attend the Forest Parks & Recreation

(Continued on page 7)

## Brains on Fire Co-Founder to be Keynote at this Year's VT Conference on Recreation

**R**obbin Phillips gets out of bed each morning inspired by a single focus: to make a positive, meaningful change in the world. As one of the founders and the Courageous President of Brains on Fire, Robbin is committed to the belief that marketing has the power to truly touch lives.



Inspired by the power of purpose, passion and people, Robbin and her team rally daily to deliver innovative, impactful solutions that elevate and celebrate a diverse range of clients including Love146, Foundations Recovery Network, Anytime Fitness, Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, BMW, DeVry University, GreenDot Public Schools, Fiskars Brands, Perception Kayaks, Ryobi Tools, Colonial Williamsburg, the National Center for Families Learning and Best Buy. Go to [www.brainsonfire.com](http://www.brainsonfire.com) to learn more.

During Robbin's tenure, *Brains on Fire* has received numerous national awards including a GOLD EFFIE and the Word of Mouth Marketing Association's WOMMY Award. She is co-author of the books *Brains on Fire: Igniting Powerful, Sustainable, World of Mouth Movements* and *The Passion Conversation: Understanding, Sparking and Sustaining Word of Mouth Marketing*.



In addition to Robbin Phillips, the 2016 Conference Committee is pleased to announce the following list of conference speakers:

**Andrew Mowen**, Associate Professor, Penn State University

**Bob Barcelona**, Associate Professor, UNH, and Project Director, CoachSmartNH

**Brooke Scatchard**, Owner, Sinuosity, LLC

**Dean Haller**, President, Live Like Benjo Foundation, and former HR Executive with Green Mountain Coffee Roasters and IDX

**Frank Spaulding**, Parks Projects Coordinator, Vermont State Parks

**Giles Willey**, President, Vermont Systems

**Harriet Grayson**, President, Five Star Seminars, and Author

**Holly Baker**, Assistant Director, South Burlington Recreation & Parks

**Jake Hemmerick**, Planning Director, Town of Milton

**Jamie Sabbach**, Founder & CEI (Chief Executive Idealist), 110 Percent

**Josh Ryan**, Principal, Timber & Stone, LLC

(Continued on page 14)

*Look inside for...*

Personal Profile: Brian Bevacqua, Nicole Densmore, & Jenn Turmel.....	3
Facility Profiles.....	4-6
VRPA Annual Meeting Report.....	10-11
VRPA Discount Ticket Program.....	16
Healthy Parks, Healthy Communities.....	20
USTA Tennis Opportunities.....	21
Vermont Senior Games.....	23
VRPA Membership Application.....	25

*and much more...*



**VRPA Executive Committee Officers**

President Scott Hausler (Hartford) 295-5036  
 Pres-Elect Melissa Cate (Burlington) 865-5399  
 Secretary Ally Vile (Essex) 878-1342  
 Treasurer Jenn Turmel (Colchester) 264-5643  
 Past President Andy Cappello (Newport) 334-6345

**Executive Committee Members-at-Large**

Brian Bevacqua (Quechee) 299-2135  
 Geoff Beyer (Montpelier) 223-7335  
 Nicole Densmore (Rutland) 773-1822  
 Matt Frazee (Stowe) 295-5036

**VRPA Office**

Executive Director – Betsy Terry, CPRP  
 721 Main Street, Colchester, VT 05446  
 Phone 802-878-2077 • FAX 802-878-2921  
 betsy@vrpa.org • www.vrpa.org

**VRPA Webmaster**

Andy Cappello-- webmaster@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 – Betsy Terry Circulation – 450

Deadline for submissions for the next issue is August 1, 2016  
 Send information to [info@vrpa.org](mailto:info@vrpa.org) or by snail mail to:  
 VRPA, 721 Main Street, Colchester, VT, 05446.

**Advertising Rates (Member/Non-member)**

1/2 page \$25/50 1/2 page \$100/150  
 1/4 page \$50/100 Full page or insert \$150/300

PUBLISHED AS A FREE SERVICE TO MEMBERS

**VRPA Calendar of Events**

2016	
Jul 23	VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy State Track Meet
Sep 1	VRPA Executive Committee Meeting
Sep 21-22	73rd Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation
Oct 4-8	NRPA Conference, St. Louis, MO
Nov 17	Vermont Performance Showcase
Dec TBA	VRPA Quarterly Meeting
2017	
Jan 5-7	NNE Recreation Conference, Attitash, NH
Mar TBA	VRPA Quarterly Meeting
Mar TBA	Certified Pool/Spa Operators Course
Apr 4-6	Certified Playground Safety Inspector Course
May TBA	VT/NH Maintenance Workshop

*Message from the Executive Director*

I came away from the recent Recreation Summit hosted by State Recreation Coordinator, Jessica Savage, and her team of colleagues at the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR), with a clear sense of being part of the Vermont recreation team. First of all, the summit was held in the new Agency of Human Services state office building in Waterbury which is located on the site of the old FPR Office Building. Wow, what an impressive building! Next time you are in Waterbury, you should swing by to have a look. With any luck perhaps someday we will hold one of our meetings in their conference room...it is a great spot for some good thinking with windows from ceiling to floor overlooking the river.



CPO (Certified Pool/Spa Operators) Course, CPSI (Certified Playground Safety Inspector) Course and the VT/NH Maintenance Workshop. We would love to have you help us plan one of them. Your participation will make the event better, hopefully make you better too, and you will get some extra VIP points

The goal of this Summit was to foster mutual understanding of what makes a good partnership with the VT Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation. I was invited to bring one of our members and was thrilled when incoming VRPA President, Scott Hausler, agreed to join me. I was inspired by the passion of the people who filled the room and reminded of the value of coming together to talk about achieving common goals. It was great to see familiar faces and meet new ones. And for those of you who have been around for a while, you will be happy to know that the department has once again fully embraced the “R for Recreation” at the Dept. of FPR. When the notes from the day are organized and distributed, I will happily share them with you.

It is a challenge these days to take time away from the office and still accomplish all the work on your desk, but most often it is worth it. I believe that the networking opportunities provided by events like this summit and all our VRPA events, make us better professionals and in the long run, make our jobs easier.

In 2017, VRPA will be hosting a

which might just win you a \$1,000 professional development scholarship.

As you embark on another busy summer recreation season, my wish for you is that you dare to take some risks. Sure, risk-takers make some mistakes but they also achieve things that might have seemed unimaginable. Successful people make mistakes. As hard as we try to get everything right, mistakes happen to all of us. When they happen to you, come clean, dust yourself off, and move on. I hope this will be a great summer for you, your program participants, and all your park users.

To Todd Goodwin, Jill Niles, and Ejay Bishop, thank you very much for serving on the VRPA leadership team for a combined 21 years between you. You helped to make our meetings fun and I will miss having you seated at the Executive Committee table. At the same time, I am excited about the opportunity to work with Brian Bevacqua, Nicole Densmore, and Jenn Turmel. Welcome to the VRPA Executive Committee!

Have a great summer and please... don’t forget to make some time for your own recreation.

Betsy Terry, CPRP  
 VRPA Executive Director

**VRPA Mission:**  
*Provide training and resources to help Vermonters to  
 “Create Community through People, Parks and Programs.”*

## Meet Your Newest VRPA Executive Committee Members: Brian Bevacqua, Nicole Densmore, & Jenn Turmel



**B**rian Bevacqua joins the VRPA Executive Committee as a Member-At-Large after having been a Summerama speaker for the last five years and serving on the Summerama Committee for the last two. Brian currently works as the Recreation Programs Coordinator at the Quechee Club. He is founder and president of Vermont Youth Adventures, a non-profit organization in the southern Vermont area that offers youth outreach opportunities, after-school programming, summer camps, and adventure education. He cites starting his own non-profit as his greatest professional accomplishment to date.

Brian has a bachelor's degree from Green Mountain College in Adventure Education, Youth Development and Camp Management. When asked how he came to be a park and recreation professional, he said, *"I had trouble in school as a kid, and recreation really helped get me through school and college. Attending camps and rec programs, including Boy Scouts, helped me make friends and feel like I had a purpose as a kid. I wanted to share that with others, and give other children and teens that same feeling."*

He appreciates VRPA for the professional development and networking opportunities, and the platform to share and learn new ideas. He loves mentoring and offers this, *"If anyone is interested in assistance entering the recreation field, please feel free to reach out to me!"* In his personal recreation time, Brian enjoys whitewater kayaking, hiking, and camping.

**Nicole Densmore** also joins the VRPA Executive Committee as an At-Large Member. She has a bachelor's degree in Sports Administration from Castleton University (it was Castleton State College at the time) and a master's degree in Elementary Education from the College of St Joseph.

Nicole's current position as Program Director with the Rutland Recreation and Parks Department is her first career position in the parks and recreation field. Prior to this, she was a special educator. She shared that *"I made the decision to become a parks and rec professional because it gave me the opportunity to combine my two passions in life - sports and working with young children."* She cites being named to the Vermont Business Magazine's Rising Stars in 2015 as her greatest career accomplishment so far. She currently serves on the Rutland Young Professionals board of directors and the executive committee of the Rutland City Rotary Club.

The benefit of being involved with VRPA that Nicole appreciates most is the opportunity to network. *"Developing relationships with other park and rec professionals provides me with a whole group of people to talk to when I need advice on something."* In her free time, Nicole enjoys playing golf and other pick up sports, dancing, hiking, and boating.



**Jenn Turmel** joins the VRPA Executive Committee to be our Treasurer. She comes to VRPA with a lot of finance experience having served as treasurer of the Recreation Association when she was in college and treasurer of the Colchester Center Volunteer Fire Department for 10 years. In her previous work with VRPA, Jenn served on the Conference Committee for four years and has been on the Performance Showcase Committee for the past 9 years. She too especially appreciates the networking opportunities provided by VRPA and the chance to earn continuing education credits for her CPRP and CYSA certifications.



Jenn is currently the Program Director at the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department, where she has worked since 2002. She has a bachelor's degree in Recreation Management and Policy from the University of New Hampshire and a master's degree in Legal Studies from Kaplan University. Jenn began working in the parks and recreation field when she became a certified lifeguard at the age of 15. She recalls receiving the VRPA Young Professional Award in 2010 as her career highlight.

In addition to her full-time position, Jenn continues her coaching interest with side jobs coaching swimming at the University of Vermont and junior-varsity field hockey at Colchester High School. Recreationally she says that she enjoys almost anything! In her spare time, you can find her kayaking, mountain biking, and playing with her pups, Bentley and Sophie.

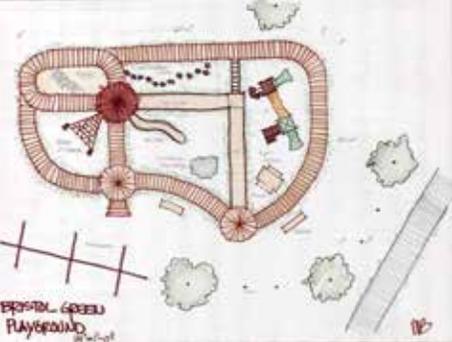
# Bristol Green Playground

By Darla Senecal, Director, Bristol Recreation Department

In the spring of 2013, a committee was formed to update the aging playground on the Town Green in Bristol. The existing playground, while well-loved and much used by generations of Bristol kids, was showing its wear and age. The structures were not ADA compliant and there was nothing for toddlers to play on. The Bristol Recreation Department and the Bristol Downtown Community Partnership, along with several community members, came together to help make the updates possible.

We started with a community wide survey asking adults and kids what they liked and wanted to see in the new playground. Overwhelmingly they wanted no bright colors, natural play elements and accessibility for all. From there we held a design contest. The entries were incredible! The committee selected a design submitted by Mary Beth Stillwell and MB architecture + design. The design included a treehouse as a central element and it was beautiful.

We brought our insurance carrier, Vermont League of Cities and Towns, into the process early in the planning to be sure we were on the right track. We worked with Ultiplay Parks & Playgrounds and M.E Obrien & Sons to complete the design.



Accessibility became our goal. The surfacing used under the main area is an artificial turf that requires no maintenance, drains incredibly well, and is stable enough for walkers, wheelchairs, and anyone who might have mobility issues regardless of age. It is a fantastic product called “XGrass” and consists of

a soft realistic layer of synthetic “grass”, padding made from recycled sneakers, and lots and lots of gravel and compacted stone dust as the base. The grass is weighted in place by sand. It is cool on the hottest days and dry on the wettest. And best of all, users of the playground can get everywhere.

We began our fundraising process with an Indiegogo campaign. A friend of a committee member was a film maker and helped us raise our first \$12,700. Other fundraising events included “Pedal for the Playground” where participants collected pledges for laps around the town green. We held a fundraiser night at the Bob Cat Café and there was a downtown “shopping spree” where a portion of the day’s sales



*Photo: Ian Albinson*

went to the playground. The local pizza shop, Cubbers, donated a portion of sales every Thursday for four months. It became the battle cry of the town “Go to Cubbers to support the playground!” Grants were written in support of the project and sent to Kaboom!, Vermont Community Foundation, Ben & Jerry’s Foundation, Ronald McDonald Charities, and The Bolger Foundation. The Town of Bristol gave \$25,000 to the project. There were many, many private donations as well. The total cost of the playground was \$92,848.

The playground was built over the course of four weeks with volunteers from Vermont Coffee Roasters, Green Mountain Access, Middlebury College Women’s Hockey team, The Bristol Police Department, the local football team, parents and grandparents. It was a beautiful thing.



The Bristol Green Playground is now a destination for families who come to Bristol. The new playground is used most everyday. Even in the winter months and in the generally wet spring, the playground is full of families. The local library is installing a Little Free Library at the playground this year where families can take or leave books for others. The Lawrence Memorial Library will also be hosting story time on Wednesdays at the playground this summer. The Recreation Department hosts a myriad of programs on the site from play groups to free lunch-time performances. The best part is hearing all the laughs and giggles from kids playing there, in my office across the street. Community efforts are grand.



*Just before the Mt. Abe High School Prom*

# Andy A\_Dog Williams Skatepark Burlington's New Skatepark

The new Burlington Skatepark is part of the recently completed Waterfront Access North (WAN) project which included brownfield remediation, the extension of Lake Street and public parking, utility under-grounding, sidewalks, bike path rehabilitation, a new state-of-the-art skatepark facility, landscaping, stormwater retention and treatment, and lighting improvements.

Burlington voters approved a not-to-exceed project cost of \$6,550,000 that would be funded through City bonds (via tax increment financing), the TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) Discretionary Grant program, and other local funding sources. Grindline designed the new \$1.4 M Andy A\_Dog Williams Skatepark which had a soft opening last November.

City officials collaborated with consultants, Grindline, SE Group, Engineering Ventures, RSG, and Stantec to develop comprehensive and integrated design elements throughout the project site. Simultaneously, the Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront staff worked with consultant, VHB, to rehabilitate the Burlington Bike Path on both the north and south ends of the WAN project

site. City staff also worked closely with the Burlington community to create a skatepark design that would be multi-generational and function as a regional attraction while improving the accessibility of the entire waterfront. Concrete was determined to be the most appropriate construction material for the skatepark because of the Northeast climate, durability of the product, and to provide a quality, safe user-experience for skaters.

A\_Dog Skatepark was named for Andy "A\_Dog" Williams, a local hero who was the epitome of generosity, positivity and curiosity. His passion and innovation in music and skateboarding earned him recognition as a musical talent and cultural icon. Andy succumbed to leukemia in December of 2013 but his legacy lives on through this park.

With countless amenities in the 42 parks of the Burlington parks system, there was - and is - only one skatepark in the City. Burlington's original skatepark, which was located proximate to the new facility, was a wooden structure that lasted nearly 12 years before succumbing to the elements and breaking down beyond repair. Community skaters formed the Burlington Skatepark Coalition, facilitating an active collaboration and vision for

the project. The original skatepark was federally funded and its replacement was required within the WAN project scope. That designation, the award of the TIGER funding, the City's ability to access Tax Increment Financing (TIF), along with strong community support, helped create the vision and momentum for the realization of the Andy A\_Dog Williams Skatepark. This vision aligned with the City's need to recreate amenities on the Waterfront that ultimately contribute to the economic engine of the area and provide quality amenities to the public.

Burlington's population is 42,000 which fluctuates based on college students that make their home in the area during the academic year. The BPRW Master Plan (2015) identified replacing the skatepark, which also serves as a BMX facility, as a priority. The WAN project completed renovations include road, sidewalk, and bike path construction that significantly improved access to the area, further complimented by the accessible and significantly larger skatepark. The Burlington Bike Path also provides opportunities for skateboarders, however, a dedicated facility that fosters community and allows for programming and skill development are major benefits of this project.



# Middlebury Recreation Facility

By Terri Arnold, Director, Middlebury Parks & Recreation

In October 2012, when I arrived in Middlebury to interview for the Parks & Recreation Director position, I was awe struck by the beauty of the town and the quaintness of the village, with all its shops and friendly atmosphere.

Over the next day or two, I met with the Town Manager, Kathleen Ramsay, the Parks & Recreation Committee, individual community members, attended a



committee meeting, and the rest is a blur. One statement Ms. Ramsay made stuck out in my mind – she said that Middlebury was planning on building a new Recreation Facility within the next three years. I wondered if this was just a lure or if she really was speaking in earnest. That statement stuck with me as I plotted my next career move and Middlebury really tugged at me.

I arrived in Middlebury in January 2013 and about nine months later, talks began about building a new Town Office and a new Recreation Facility. The college (Middlebury College) and town began negotiating land, buildings, and financing. Soon, I was invited to become part of a Buildings and Facilities Committee and we began working with a local design-build architecture company on renditions of what these facilities would look like.

Then came Town Meeting, 2014. It was time for the taxpayers to vote on financing these facilities via their taxes. It passed, however, members of the community began to question repurposing the old school building and asked for exploration of other options. A second vote became

necessary. It too passed and work began to bring the project from concept to reality.

It was determined that the size of this new building would be 11,507 sq. ft. and that it would include a new gymnasium to accommodate basketball, volleyball, and two pickleball courts. When high school property was chosen as the site for this new facility, the Middlebury School Union contributed nearly one-half million dollars to add desperately needed locker rooms to the building. This was a true partnership.

Happily, the first week of February 2016, the Middlebury Recreation Facility was completed and we moved in. Though it was the middle of winter and several things still needed to be buttoned up construction-wise, it was a day I will never forget. The place was clean, sleek, and simple.

Dustin Hunt, Program Coordinator, and I have to pinch ourselves daily when we realize that we have become the hub of the local community and a location for middle school kids, to drop-in and shoot hoops, study, check their I Phones, and hang out. *“This is the jewel of Middlebury”* one person was heard saying as they left after playing a rigorous game of pickle ball.

The construction of a new Recreation Center opened up so many new opportunities for the Middlebury



community. New offerings include free Tai Chi classes twice a week, Bone Builders for Seniors twice a week, Yoga for Little Ones twice a week, a two-hour Tot Time two days per week. Zumba classes three times per week; martial arts several times per week, Drop-In Adult Basketball, Volleyball, Pickle Ball and Dodge Ball. The multi-purpose rooms allow our seniors to receive meals on Tuesdays, a robust dance program serving over 160 students every day of the week, and a meditation group that meets weekly.

In addition, we rent out our multi-purpose rooms and the gymnasium for special events. Recently, we have begun working with Project Independence and Counseling Service of Addison County to expand our reach.



## Pres Perspective (continued)

Andy Cappello,  
Outgoing President

To start things off, we till the garden and mix up all the soil with last fall's compost. Then it's the careful planning of what to put where and what seeds to buy and transplants to plant. Sure, the raking puts blisters on our hands and the sowing of seeds makes our eyes and backs sore, but, there is something in that dirt that makes our souls complete. And, we don't mind dirty fingernails anyway.

Then the sprouts come up. Seeing the first sign of life in the garden is so exciting. I start to daydream of the yield we'll reap. Visions of plump strawberries and dilly beans inspire me to head back out and spend hours pulling weeds making room for the delicate plants to outcompete their more adapt relatives.

Soon we'll be enjoying our first harvest . . . likely spinach. Now I've eaten all sorts of spinach in my day, but none tastes nearly as good as the spinach that comes from our garden. With it's thick, crisp skin snapping with every bite to unleash a juicy mouthful of earthy delight. I swear after eating it my forearms and biceps grow. Mom said it was from all the raking and weeding, but I think there is something special in that spinach.

There is still a lot of work to be done before this year's growing season comes to an end. We'll develop many more blisters, but when the fruits of our labor come to fruition, it'll feel so nice. Plus our freezer and pantry will be filled with valuable nutrients that we and our growing children need. Not to mention the exercising, talking, daydreaming, enjoying each other, and so many more benefits that come along with harvesting a garden.

Recreation comes in all sorts of different forms. It just so happens that some of our many forms of recreation come with hard work. Juli and I find that the more we have to work to achieve that feeling of complete satisfaction, the more satisfying the feeling. Whether we're climbing a mountain for an undisturbed powder run down some back country trail, or bent over in a garden for months doing everything we can to ensure a great harvest.

From my perspective, through positive recreation we can eliminate the urge for people to engage in negative forms of recreation. Positive recreation doesn't always have to come with blood, sweat and months of hard work like gardening. I've heard that watching the wind blow is a great time, and

I plan on doing that someday. On the other hand, there are no benefits to negative recreation. With positive recreation the benefits are endless.

Respectfully,



Andrew Cappello  
VRPA President

Scott Hausler, CPRP,  
Incoming President

Summit in Waterbury, Vermont reassured my commitment to conservation issues, recreation trends state-wide and advocating for my passion, parks & recreation. This experience surrounded me with dozens of special interest groups and users of FPR lands throughout the state. Discussions throughout the day helped set the groundwork of collaboration to help FPR move forward in providing services through our states forests and parks. Attending the summit was a great experience and representing VRPA

put me in contact with more recreational resources, groups and organizations than I even knew existed in Vermont. Resources and connections I look forward to working with as the VRPA President and as a professional in the municipal parks and recreation field.

We in the Vermont Recreation and Park Association have a lot going on for us: an outstanding annual conference, engaging quarterly meetings and programs, an outstanding newsletter, an exceptional Executive Director compassionate about VRPA and parks & recreation, and a healthy and stable bank account. This gives the very foundation necessary to move forward in servicing you, our members.

I look forward to serving VRPA. The association is a leader in state park and recreation organizations throughout New England and we should all be very proud.

Respectfully,



Scott Hausler, CPRP



The Rutland community came out in full-force and passed a bond vote in March to replace their outdoor swimming pool that closed two years ago. Congratulations to the Rutland Recreation & Parks Department for all your hard work educating the community about this project.

# Four Must Try Healthy Activities for Summer Camps!

By Michelle Lombardo, President, The Organ Wise Guys



Summer time is a fantastic time to get outside, be active, and enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables! Summer camps certainly play a vital role in helping our children stay healthy. Published studies indicate that many children lose health improvements gained over the course of the school year during the summer months. Now that your summer camps are in full swing, here are some tips from [The OrganWise Guys](#) for providing health education to your campers while also making it FUN!

(1) Take a Camp Walk – Camp walks are not only an excellent time to make friends, but a great time to get in exercise too. If you have an open green space or hiking spot near your camp site, consider walking there to enjoy nature. Is your camp in a city? Make it an urban walk and enjoy the sights and sounds!

(2) Plant a Garden – gardening and watering plants is another example of a camp activity that also involves physical activity. Choose where the garden will be and what fruits and vegetables to grow. Then, watch over these summer months as your garden begins to grow. Finally, you will be able to enjoy the “fruits” of your labor in late summer/early fall by trying your camp grown foods. Not only is this physical activity, but it involves learning about healthy eating too.

(3) Visit a Health/Science Museum – for field trip days, take this time to learn instead about health. Visit a local health or science museum and afterwards, discuss as a camp what you learned.

(4) Play in a Sprinkler, Pool or Beach – water activities and summer go hand in hand! Be sure to take a field trip to a pool, beach, or a sprinkler at your own camp site yard to cool off in the heat.

Also, while getting lots of exercise playing, be sure to stay hydrated by drinking lots of water too!

Thanks to generous funding from the Walmart Foundation, The OrganWise Guys had the opportunity to work with NRPA and now the OWG programming is being used in over 1,000 summer camp/afterschool sites across the country. The result of this successful intervention is The OrganWise Guys Summer Camp/ Afterschool Kit, specifically designed for these dynamic settings to be used as a year-round resource.

The OrganWise Guys Summer Camp/Afterschool Kit is an evidence-

based, multi-media, cross-curricular program that uses fun characters based on the organs of the body (i.e., Hardy Heart and Peri Stolic, the large intestine), coupled with high energy activities, to teach children and adults how to make positive health, nutrition, and physical activity choices.

[Click here](#) to read a recent article highlighting statistically significant behavior changes in summer campers, parents and staff.

To discuss how you can get The OrganWise Guys in your summer camp, contact Michelle at 800-786-1730 or [michelle@organwiseguys.com](mailto:michelle@organwiseguys.com).



*Maintenance Tip – Marty Hornick from Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront submitted this photo of repurposed soccer goals made into a bucket for compost/driftwood/stones. They added a 2x4x3/16” steel post and adapted it to fit their John Deere loader. Recycling at it’s finest!*



# Memories from the 2016 VRPA Annual Meeting

The 2016-18 VRPA Executive Committee prepare for installation. (L to R) Melissa Cate (President-Elect), Geoff Beyer, Jenn Turmel (Treasurer), Nicole Densmore, Ally Vile (Secretary), Matt Frazee, and Brian Bevacqua. Missing from the photo: Scott Hausler (President) and Andy Cappello (Past-President)



Jess Booth presented the Unsung Hero Award to Jennifer Smith, volunteer extraordinaire with the Newport Parks and Recreation Department.



Holly Baker received the 2016 Young Professional Award. Shown here with her colleagues from the South Burlington Recreation & Parks Department (L to R) Tom Hubbard (Deputy City Manager), Maggie Leugers, Darla Champine, Holly, and Brett Leonard.

## Three Facility of Merit Awards were presented



Melissa Cate presented a Facility of Merit Award to Deryk Roach for the Andy A\_Dog Williams Skatepark in Burlington



Betsy Terry presented the Middlebury Recreation Department staff, Terri Arnold and Dustin Hunt, with a Facility of Merit Award for the new Middlebury Recreation Facility



Todd Goodwin presented Bristol Recreation Director, Darla Senecal, with a Facility of Merit Award for the new Bristol Green Playground



# VT Recreation & Parks Association 2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT

It was another good year at VRPA with membership continuing to grow, program registrations up and at all-time highs, and a fund balance adequate to cover a year of operating expenses. When we recently advertised openings on the Executive Committee, we had twice as many applications as openings, and promise to find meaningful committee work for everyone interested in serving. The Executive Committee conducted a member survey in January and will use the results to guide their decision making over the next two years. Thank you to everyone who completed a survey.

## MEMBERSHIP

VRPA is a membership organization and our members remain the heartbeat of our association. The majority of Vermont communities with paid recreation staff now have agency memberships which includes their full and part-time staff and board members. Membership fees increased this year for the first time in more than fifteen years and, in the future, the plan is to increase fees slightly every other year. We are grateful that our members found a way to handle the increase, and that membership numbers increased again this year despite the rate increase.

VRPA MEMBERSHIP				
2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
394 members	362 members	294 members	289 members	266 members

## EDUCATION

Registration for all our education programs was strong again this year. We broke 100 attendee registrations at our 2015 Conference for the second time in five years. The majority of conference attendees registered for both days and, for the first time, our exhibit hall was full. We had 144 participants at last year's Summerama and, as a result, made the decision to relocate to Hartford High School for this year's event. Interest in our quarterly meetings remains good and we continue to work hard to include education programs with continuing education units that are relevant to a broad range of people.

VRPA EDUCATION PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS					
	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
Annual Meeting	46	33	45	28	34
Certified Pool Operator Course	17	-	-	21	-
CPSI Playground Inspector Course	-	-	39	-	-
Quarterly Meeting – Dec. 2015	35	31	18	42	24
Quarterly Meeting – March 2016	31	45	24	24	30
State Conference - Delegates	104	98	100	91	68
State Conference - Vendors	40	34	30	22	26
Summerama	144	129	118	98	68
VT/NH Maintenance Workshop	-	81	-	77	-

## PROGRAMS

Once again, the St. Johnsbury Academy community did an outstanding job hosting our state track meet; special thanks to them! Continuing to attract new artists every year and build the audience at the annual Performance Showcase has become a little more challenging but we are committed to providing this opportunity for our members who hire performing artists. The sale of summer discount tickets, our largest revenue stream, was consistent with the previous year but continues in the downward trend. We have added new parks, including Arbortrek at Smugglers Notch last year and Killington Adventure Center this year, to expand these discount opportunities for Vermonters and maintain this income. We started a new winter lift ticket program but had limited success and will work to get the details out next year in time for our members' winter recreation guides.

VRPA PROGRAM PARTICIPATION					
	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12
State Track Meet	466	458	554	493	406
Showcase Audience	44	43	44	54	42
Summer Tickets Sold	6,463	6,632	7,127	7,637	10,269
Winter Tickets Sold	16	-	-	-	-

## VIP PROGRAM

Our VIP Program was unveiled two years ago; our first \$1,000 professional development scholarship was awarded at last year's VRPA Annual Meeting and the second one will be raffled at this year's Annual Meeting. The VIP Program is an incentive plan that rewards members for their professional development efforts and recognizes members for years of service, involvement and contributions to the VRPA and the industry. On a related note, Vermont has 4 new Certified Park & Recreation Professionals this year! We have many more active members than the number submitting VIP tabulation sheets – note to members, this is a good one to make time for!

## PUBLICATIONS

VRPA continues to offer our publications in electronic format, including three newsletters each year, all conference and meeting/event brochures, and weekly recreation check-ins. This allows us to continue our efforts to have a more “green” operation and has contributed significantly to our ability to maintain a lean budget. The weekly recreation check-in continues to be the most highly rated VRPA service.

## FINANCES

For many, the strength of an organization is measured by its fiscal stability. Below you will see the numbers for our FY2015-16 revenue and expenses. The Executive Committee had made a decision to expend up to \$10,000 from the reserve fund this year to adjust the contract with the Executive Director but in the end we only needed to use \$3,088, and have a balanced budget proposed for next year without any Reserve Fund transfer. We ended the year with \$86,813 in total assets, \$31,173 of which is in our reserve fund.

Our discount ticket program continues to be a significant revenue stream for VRPA and as sales have declined over the last several years, the Executive Committee and all our VRPA committees have made a concerted effort to increase income in other areas. In the revenue table below you will see that we have made significant strides in increasing revenues from membership and our annual state conference, allowing us to continue to maintain a stable budget.

We ended FY2015-16 year with:

- \$286,357.66 in revenue
- (Used \$3,088 in reserve funds)
- \$286,357.66 in expenses
- **\$86,813.44 in total assets**

VRPA REVENUE HISTORY - % of Total				
	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Tickets	72.2%	76.9%	74.4%	81.7%
Conference	10.5%	9.9%	7%	7.2%
Membership	5.3%	4.1%	2.5%	3.4%
Programs	4.6%	5.1%	5.5%	3.9%
Education	6.2%	2.6%	10.2%*	1.6%
Other	0.1%	1.4%	0.4%	2.2%

\* CPSI course offered

VRPA EXPENSE HISTORY - % of Total				
	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
Tickets	67.6%	71.6%	70.4%	77.6%
Member Services, inc. Exec. Director	19.6%	16.9%	15.0%	13.6%
Conference	6.4%	6.2%	3.5%	4.4%
Education/Progr.	4.1%	3.3%	9.5%*	2.8%
Gen'l Operations	2.3%	1.9%	1.6%	1.5%
Other	0%	<0.1%	<0.1%	<0.1%

\* CPSI course offered

An organization is only as strong as the sum of all its parts. Thank you to each and every member for choosing to join our association and for choosing to actively participate! To our leadership team and everyone who participated on one of our committees (and there are many of you), **thank you for all your efforts!** Special thanks to our Executive Committee members who are stepping down to give others the opportunity to serve: Todd Goodwin, Ejay Bishop and Jill Niles, between them they have 21 collective years serving on the Executive Committee. Thank you for your service!

We work hard to remain relevant and of value to our members. Your feedback is always appreciated; please don't ever hesitate to offer your suggestions. We look forward to working together in the year ahead.

### 2015-16 VRPA Executive Board

President-Andy Cappello President Elect-Scott Hausler Treasurer-EJay Bishop Secretary-Melissa Cate Past-Pres.-Todd Goodwin  
 President's Appointee Members-at-Large: Geoff Beyer Matt Frazee Jill Niles Ally Vile  
 Executive Director-Betsy Terry

## SAVE THE DATE

### 13th Annual Vermont Performance Showcase

Thursday, November 17, 2016

Lake Morey Resort

If you hire performing artists for any of your special events, you want to be at this event!

## THE AD-IN BIN

Where Tennis Ball Recycling Starts



What is the one item used every day in your parks that gets discarded, not recycled?  
**USED TENNIS BALLS.**

- Players typically open a new can of balls for every match, but...
- Tennis balls cannot be recycled along with other materials, so...
- An estimated 100 million balls enter US landfills every year.
- A set of courts can generate 200 discarded tennis balls each month.

Join communities across the US now recycling tennis balls.

Download "3 Steps to a Successful Tennis Ball Recycling Program" at [www.retourtennis.com](http://www.retourtennis.com)

SPECIAL OFFER FOR VRPA MEMBERS - Try our online customized decal tool to put your message/logo front and center on the AD-IN Bin. Use promo code **VRPAdecal** when ordering and the decal fee will be waived.

[www.retourtennis.com](http://www.retourtennis.com) ● 608.445.5034 ● [info@retourtennis.com](mailto:info@retourtennis.com) ● Madison, WI

### Start Thinking About Who You'll Nominate for a Brungardt Award

The deadline for submitting a nomination for this year's Brungardt Awards is August 12, 2016, but NOW is the time to start thinking about who you might nominate for this most prestigious award. It can be a professional, friend, or agency/organization. To learn more about the award criteria and how to submit a nomination, visit the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org/recognition](http://www.vrpa.org/recognition). In addition to honoring the efforts of someone in your community, you will earn yourself some VIP points.

## Franklin Paint™

259 COTTAGE ST FRANKLIN, MA 02038

[www.franklinpaint.com](http://www.franklinpaint.com)

### ATHLETIC FIELD MARKING PAINT

Winning Streak™ with Optical Brighteners

Half Time™ Stir and Spray

~ Quality Paint Since 1946 ~

Next Day Delivery if ordered by noon

( New England, NY & NJ )

Demonstrations Available

Sales & Service of Striping Equipment



800-486-0304 FAX 508-528-8152 [contact@franklinpaint.com](mailto:contact@franklinpaint.com)

Account Representative - Greg Chapin (cell) 603-581-4790



Certified Playground Chips  
Bark Mulch • Landscape Chips

Please call for a free quote today!

Alison Marcotte

Certified Playground Chips Sales  
1310 Old Concord Rd. • Henniker, NH 03242

(603) 428-7155 office • (603)428-7839 fax

[alison@cousineaus.com](mailto:alison@cousineaus.com)

- Our Certified Playground Chips are free of hazardous substances and meet the ASTM F2075 standard for engineered wood fiber.
- Our Certified Playground Chips are not chemically treated and they are an all-natural wood product.
- Our Certified Playground Chips will last the life of the playground provided the depth is maintained by occasional top-offs.



# St. Louis

HERE WE COME

**OCTOBER 5-8, 2016**  
AMERICA'S CENTER CONVENTION COMPLEX



**HUNDREDS OF  
EDUCATION SESSIONS**



**THE INDUSTRY'S LARGEST  
TRADE SHOW**



**NETWORKING  
OPPORTUNITIES**



[WWW.NRPA.ORG/CONFERENCE2016](http://WWW.NRPA.ORG/CONFERENCE2016)



## Brains on Fire (continued)

**Lee Dowling**, Communication Coach & [Lee.Speak LLC](#)

**Lee Krohn**, Senior Planner, Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission

**Molly Sullivan**, Certification Manager, National Recreation & Parks Association

**Nate Trautvein**, Assistant Professor, University of New Hampshire

**Porter Knight**, Founding Partner, Productivity Vermont, Certified Professional Organizer and Author

**Sherry Winnie**, Recreation Trails Grant Administrator, VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, Rick Kendall, Superintendent of the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park, will be our luncheon speaker.

The 2016 Vermont Conference on Recreation dates are Wednesday and Thursday, September 21st and 22nd at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, Vermont. Mark your calendar now. The conference brochure will be available in early July.

The Conference Committee has been hard at work since the day after last year's conference. If you'd like to volunteer to help out at this year's conference, please contact one of these committee members: Todd Goodwin, Chair, Donna Diaz, Holly Baker, Kym Duchesneau, Marge McIntosh, Muriel More, Rob Peterson, Josh Ryan, Jessica Savage, Evan Steele, Betsy Terry, and Ally Vile.



Are you barely surviving? ...or  
**Thriving with RecTrac!**



Call us today to learn how our Parks and Recreation Software can change your life forever.

### RecTrac™

Recreation Tracking Software

- Activity Registration
- Facility Reservation
- Pass Management
- Photo ID Cards
- League Scheduling
- Point of Sale/Inventory
- Equipment/Site Rentals
- Locker Reservations
- Trip Management
- Court Reservations
- Personal Trainer
- Accident Reporting
- Child/Youth Mgt.
- PDA Handheld Interface

### Golf Trac™

Golf Course Point of Sale Software

- Point of Sale/Inventory
- Memberships/ID Cards
- Handicaps
- Tee Time Reservations
- Touch Screen
- Gift Certificates
- Food & Beverage
- Credit Book
- Tournament Scheduling
- PDA Handheld Interface

### TeleTrac™

Integrated Telephony Software

- Registrations
- Tee Times
- Rentals
- Reservations

### PDA Trac™

Integrated PDA Software

- RecTrac (Visits)
- MainTrac (Inspections)
- GolfTrac (Tee Times)
- FinTrac (Time Swipe)

### MainTrac™

Maintenance Tracking Software

- Preventive Maintenance
- Work Orders
- Resource Tracking
- Facility Maintenance
- Equipment/Vehicles
- Material Inventory
- Personnel Scheduling
- Inspections/Results
- Planning/Budgeting
- Landscaping/Trees
- Maintenance Scheduling
- PDA Handheld Interface

### FinTrac™

Financial Tracking Software

- General Ledger
- Accounts Payable
- Payroll
- Time Management
- Purchase Orders
- PDA Handheld Interface

### WebTrac™

Integrated Internet Software

- Registrations
- Tee Times
- Personal Trainer
- Childcare Providers
- Reservations
- Memberships
- Locker Rentals
- Equipment/Site Rentals
- League Schedules
- E-RecTrac

### TracPlug-ins™

Integrated PDA Software

- Photo ID Card
- Access Control
- Credit/Debit Card
- E-Check Processing

## Vermont VS Systems

Recreation & Parks Software  
Making a name in the business,  
one satisfied customer at a time

Call us Toll Free  
877-883-8757

12 Market Place, Essex Jct., VT 05452  
www.vermontsystems.com  
sales@vermontsystems.com



Hinesburg Recreation Director, Jen McCuin, accepts a check from students in Mr. Lasher's 6th grade class at Hinesburg Community School. As part of their unit on community, their teacher spear-headed a "Pay It Forward" exercise and challenged his class to raise some money for the future Bissonette Recreation Fields in Hinesburg. The kids got really excited and pledged their own funds, asked for donations from businesses, and the teachers even got into it at the end to raise the stakes by offering to kiss a pig and rooster for extra donations! The entire school came together for this project and they raised \$4,735.33. What an impressive lesson in community.

# VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy Track Meet Set for July 23rd

## Athletes to Receive Performance Tees Thanks to Donation from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont



Thanks to our continued partnership with St. Johnsbury Academy, this year's VRPA State Track Meet will once again be held at St. Johnsbury Academy on Saturday, July 23rd. Athletes ages 7-15 years old as of 12/13/16 are eligible to compete on a team or as individuals. High school athletes are not eligible for

Site Sponsor:



this competition. Pavel Dvorak and his 8:02 Timing team will be providing the electronic timing and results.

For the first time, all athletes at this meet will receive a performance t-shirt, thanks to a generous donation from Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBSVT). This has been on our wish-list since the Hershey Track Program ended two years ago and we are grateful to BCBSVT for choosing to partner with us and provide a t-shirt to our 500+ athletes to remind them of their participation in this statewide athletic event and the importance of staying healthy and fit...so they will be ready for the meet again next year.

Participating in this meet is a great enhancement to any recreational track



T-shirt Sponsor:



### BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont

*An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.*

program. If your department has not yet registered don't delay, visit the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org), and register today. If you know of a local track program who might be interested, please pass this information on to them so their runners, jumpers, and throwers have the opportunity to compete.

If you plan to enter athletes and haven't already submitted your Commitment Form, contact VRPA Track Coordinator, Gary Rogers, at [grogers@burlingtonvt.gov](mailto:grogers@burlingtonvt.gov).



# VRPA Discount Ticket Program Adds More New Options – Killington Adventure Center & Mountain Biking Lift Pass & Bike Rental Package

For more than 25 years, the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association has been partnering with local parks and recreation departments to sell deeply discounted amusement park tickets. The benefits of being one of our ticket partners are endless. To name a couple, (1) you get new people through your doors that might otherwise never come in and while they are there they might learn about other programs you offer and (2) the residents of your community save considerably off the gate prices and will be thrilled that you helped them to save money. Online tickets are also available to accommodate people when offices are closed. The VRPA makes



a little bit on every ticket and that helps us to staff our part-time office and provide support and services throughout the year. It's a win-win.

New this year, we are offering discount tickets for some great summer fun at Killington. The Killington tickets are good Monday through Friday, except July 4th. Three different discounted Killington tickets are available: (1) a full-day pass at the Adventure Center, (2) full-day mountain bike trail & lift pass, and (3) a full-day mountain bike package that



includes a trail & lift pass and a bike rental.

Our discount ticket program is a consignment program with no up-front financial commitment

and we are always looking for new ticket partners. Contact the VRPA office at 802-878-2077 or [info@vrpa.org](mailto:info@vrpa.org) to find out how to become one of our ticket partners.



## VRPA Summer Discount Tickets 2016 FUN MENU

### **Arbortrek Canopy Adventures** (Smugglers Notch, VT)

\$45 Good-any-Day Tree Top Adventure & Climbing Adventure Tickets  
\$13 Good-any-Day Climbing Adventure Tickets

### **Bromley Adventure Park** (Manchester, VT)

\$31 Good-any-Day Adventure Center All-Day Tickets

### **Great Escape** (Glens Falls, NY)

\$39 Good-any-Day Tickets & Parking Passes (\$18)

### **Killington Mountain** (Killington, VT)

\$33 All-Day Adventure Center Pass (Good any Monday – Friday)  
\$33 All-Day Mountain Bike Lift & Trail Pass (Good any Monday – Friday)  
\$99 All-Day Mountain Bike Package - Lift, Trails & Bike Rental (Good any Monday – Friday)

### **Six Flags New England** (Agawam, MA)

\$39 Good-any-Day Tickets

For more details, go to [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org) and click on the “Programs” tab.

# Vermont Trail Projects Receive Over \$500,000 in Grants

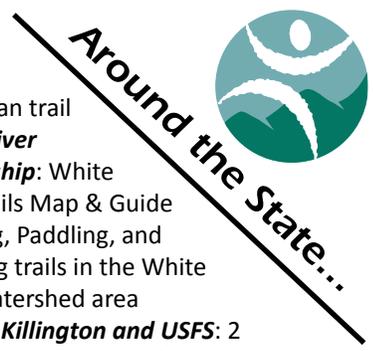
The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (VTFPR) recently awarded \$586,764 to fifteen significant trail projects. This funding, available through state and federal funds in the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), will go towards maintaining and building public trails all over Vermont.

“This is truly a banner year for this program,” said VTFPR Commissioner Mike Snyder. “We were able to fund some excellent and diverse projects all over the state. The health, economic and social benefits of trails are well-documented, and our department is proud to support these community-based efforts.”

The goal of the Recreational Trails Program is to provide grants to develop and maintain a wide variety of recreational trails for public use throughout Vermont. This year’s round of grants will go toward:

- Waterbury Area Trails Alliance (WATA):** Perry Hill Campfire mountain bike/pedestrian trail improvement project (Waterbury, VT)
- Northwoods Stewardship Center:** Wheeler

- Mountain pedestrian trail relocation project (Sutton, VT)
- Friends of Haystack:** Haystack Mountain pedestrian Trail Improvements (Pawlet, VT)
- Green Mountain Club:** Taft Lodge, Butler Lodge and Twin Brooks Tenting Area Repairs and Improvements (Underhill/Stowe, VT)
- Vermont Association of Snow Travelers:** Statewide Snowmobile Trail System Grooming
- Town of Dorset:** New pedestrian trail construction to the Gilbert Lookout at Owls Head Peak
- Sports Trails of the Ascutney Basin:** Ascutney mountain bike/pedestrian Trails System Maintenance (West Windsor Town Forest)
- Rochester Area Sports Trails Alliance:** Construction of a 3-mile pedestrian/mountain biking Wellness Trail Network (Rochester Ranger Station, USFS)
- Town of Plainfield:** Development of two pedestrian trailhead parking areas & two new trailhead kiosks
- Town of Northfield:** Trail restoration work to the lower section of Paine Mountain



- pedestrian trail
- White River Partnership:** White River Trails Map & Guide to Hiking, Paddling, and Canoeing trails in the White River Watershed area
- Town of Killington and USFS:** 2 miles of new beginner & intermediate pedestrian/mountain bike trails of a 15-mile multi-level mountain bike trail system planned in Killington on Green Mountain National Forest
- Green Mountain Audubon Center:** Trail restoration, new kiosks & signs for the Audubon’s pedestrian trail network
- Town of Bennington:** New universally accessible/pedestrian 700-foot boardwalk
- Mad River Riders:** Construction of two new pedestrian/mountain bike trails in Howe Block of Camel’s Hump SF (Evolution and Clinic Connector Trails)

Next year’s grant round will begin with pre-applications due in Fall of 2016, and full applications due in February of 2017. For more information on the Recreational Trails Program, please contact Sherry Winnie, RTP Administrator, at [sherry.winnie@vermont.gov](mailto:sherry.winnie@vermont.gov) or 802-760-8450.



**Rhapsody™ Outdoor Musical Instruments invite kids and adults of all ages to join the band.** This superior collection of chimes, metallophones and drums welcome polished musicians and musical newbies alike to explore the power of rhythm, experience subtle shifts in tone, and discover the many ways individual sounds can be creatively combined. Learn more about adding the joy of music to your environment at [playsi.com/rhapsody](http://playsi.com/rhapsody).

Contact your local playground consultant:



SEND ORDERS AND INQUIRIES TO:  
 P.O. Box 650 • 93 West Street  
 Medfield, MA 02052-0650  
 (508) 359-4200 • (800) 835-0056  
 Fax: (508) 359-2817  
 E-mail: [mail@obrienandsons.com](mailto:mail@obrienandsons.com)  
[www.obrienandsons.com](http://www.obrienandsons.com)



## Around the State (cont'd)

# Shallow Water Blackout

As we approach another season of swimming, the Live Like Benjo Foundation would like to remind all VRPA members with swimming facilities about the dangers associated with prolonged breath-holding especially when preceded by hyperventilating. As a primer, the body's urge to breath is triggered by the buildup of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the bloodstream. When the body's normal level, or threshold, of CO<sub>2</sub> is exceeded, a signal is sent to the brain that it is time to refresh the oxygen supply and the body breaths automatically. When a swimmer attempts to override this urge so they can stay under water longer by hyperventilating, which is a series of deep breaths and the rapid expulsion of the air taken in, and then follows this with a prolonged breath hold before submerging this reduces the CO<sub>2</sub> far below the threshold. This results in the brain not receiving the signal to breath; therefore, the swimmer does not



come to the surface for air. Because of the lack of fresh oxygen the brain will pass out and the next automatic response by the body is to take a breath. When this occurs underwater, the swimmer can and usually does drown. A victim will do so in two minutes or less.

The above practice of hyperventilating combined with prolonged breath-holding is known as hypoxic training and it is practiced by elite swimmers, Navy SEALs, free-divers and those who spear fish. It is done so to enable them to stay underwater longer. Unfortunately, there have been drownings in each category due to this practice and the cause of death has been labeled as Shallow Water Blackout (SWB).

However, deaths by SWB are not con-

finied to the above as many children have died from it as well. These deaths have been attributed to excessive physical exertion in or out of the water and then playing breath-holding games. These games include Marco Polo, challenging other children to see who can swim the most laps under water or just staying under water the longest.

Unless a SWB victim's pre-water activities are known it is almost impossible to assign SWB as the cause; therefore, many related drownings are simply labeled as accidental. While many SWB victims drown in water less than 15 feet deep, hence the name Shallow Water Blackout, in recent years a controversy has arisen about this term because SWB can occur at any depth. Terms such as swimming blackout, underwater faint and others have been proposed, but for now the Live Like Benjo Foundation has decided to continue to refer to the phenomenon as Shallow Water Blackout.

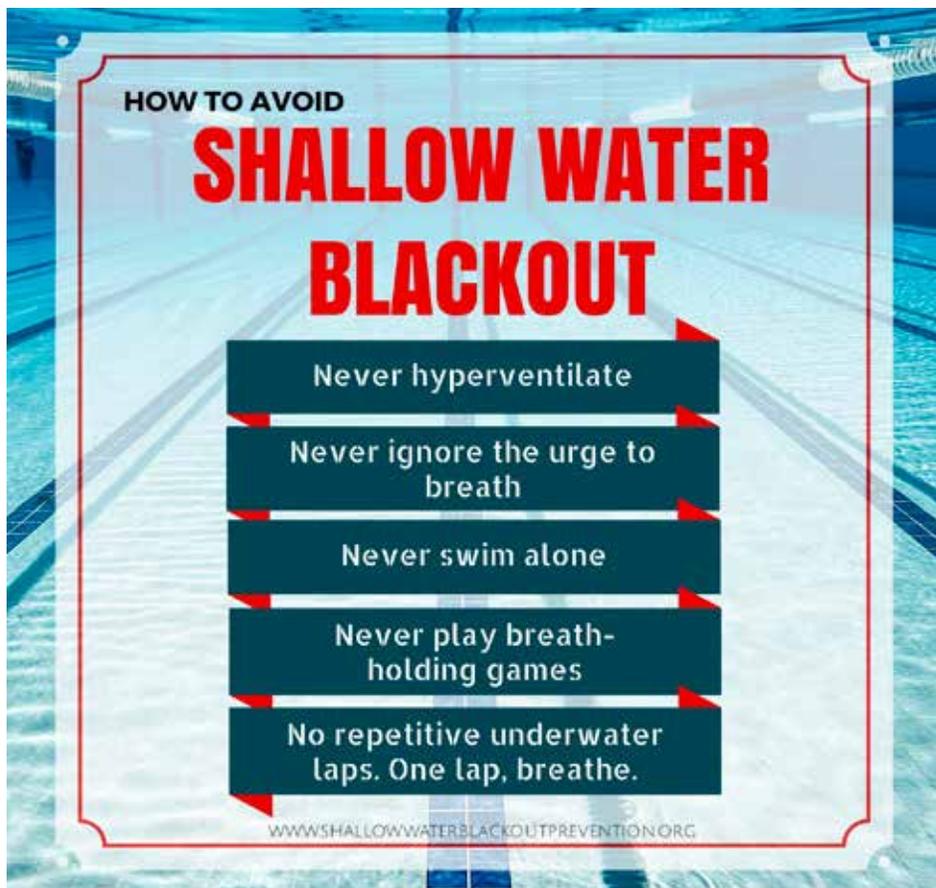
Our Foundation recognizes that holding one's breath is required during swimming and we do not advocate for the prohibition of it per se. However, we do advocate for the prohibition of prolonged breath-holding especially when preceded by hyperventilating. Additionally, we advocate for the prohibition of breath-holding games, the close monitoring of a child's activities before swimming, a never-ending vigilance of everybody in the water, and always swimming with a buddy.

Our Foundation came about after the tragic death of the Foundation's namesake Benjamin C. "Benjo" Haller on August 1, 2014. He was an accomplished swimmer, a SCUBA instructor with over fifteen hundred logged dives, a Rescue Diver and in excellent physical condition. He drowned in seven feet of water while spear fishing in the Bahamas. Prior to his last dive he was practicing hypoxic training.

We make speakers available free to any entity that would like to educate its staff about SWB and how it can be easily prevented. We also have a website that is full of information about SWB and other water safety-related resources. For more information about our Foundation and SWB visit [www.livelikebenjo.org](http://www.livelikebenjo.org).

Thank you and a safe swimming season to everybody!

The Live Like Benjo Foundation Board of Directors

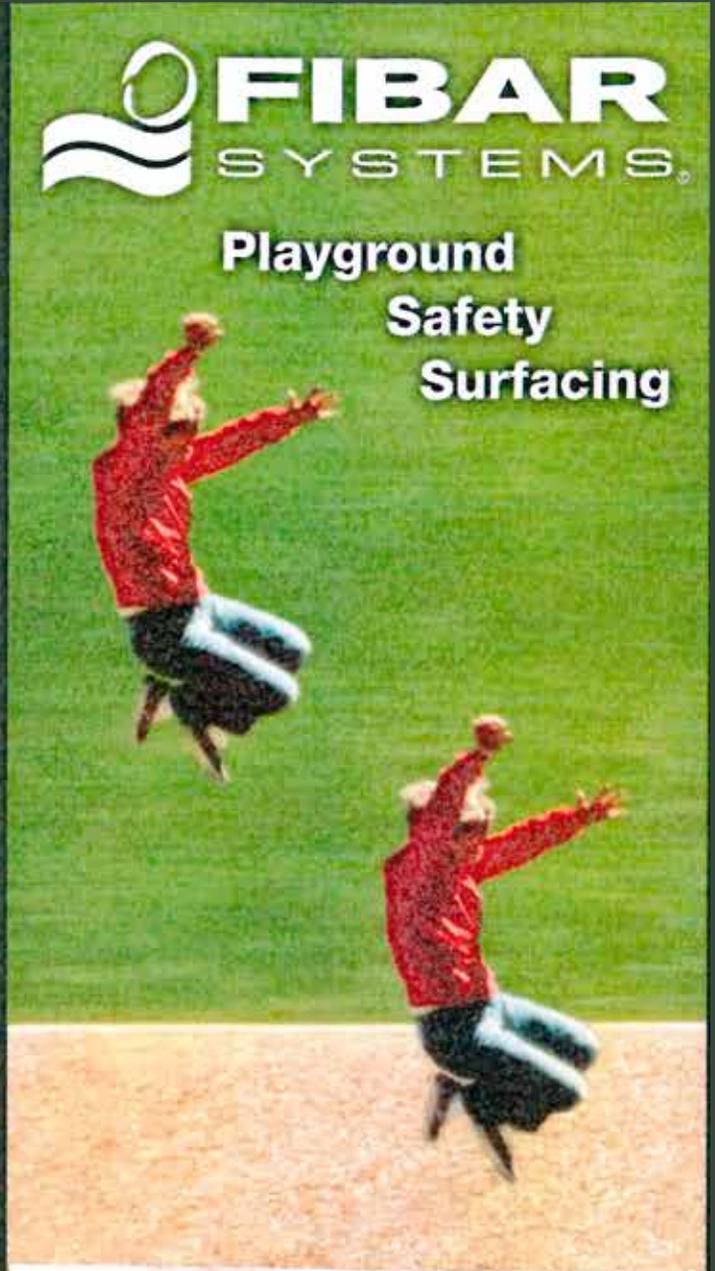




**How hard he lands  
depends  
on you**



**Playground  
Safety  
Surfacing**



**Vermont State Contract  
Call 800-861-1209**



## Around the State (cont'd)

# Healthy Parks, Healthy Communities: Promoting Healthy Foods at Vermont's Parks

By Ashwinee Kulkarni, Public Health Specialist, VT Department of Health

**P**arks play an essential role in promoting healthy Vermont communities. They serve as a place where children and adults can be outdoors and enjoy activity and sunshine. Spending time in nature can help increase physical activity, promote emotional wellbeing, and support healthy cognitive function. Providing healthy food options, alongside conventional favorites like “creamies”, helps to provide a balanced environment where people can have choices and variety in the foods they eat while enjoying the outdoors. The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation, with support from the Department of Health, is actively working toward healthy, balanced environments where individuals and families have access to healthy snacks while enjoying the many offerings of Vermont's state parks.



Elmore State Park, which provides access to Lake Elmore, campgrounds, and many hiking trails, launched a change in concession stand offerings over the last two summers and has seen healthy food options become a staple for its visitors. Nick Caputo, Northeast Regional Ranger Supervisor, started this work by evaluating what foods and beverages were being offered and how nutritional content compared to federal guidelines for healthy concessions.

Identifying areas for change, Elmore State Park rolled out initial changes two summers ago with the opening of a newly renovated concession stand. By summer of 2015, Elmore State Park's concession

stand prominently featured several healthy snack options, including Vermont Peanut Butter, local apples, and Vermont Kale Chips. While many of the traditional concession items remain on the menu, some of these such as soda are offered in reduced sizes to lower the overall calorie count. In these combined ways, visitors are better equipped to make healthier food choices while still enjoying expected treats. Plans include providing a laminated version of the menu with calorie counts and nutrition facts available to view. To date, the changes have been well received by park visitors and plans are in the making for expanding this concession concept to other state parks.

Elmore State Park can serve as a model for many types of parks across Vermont, including those operated by towns and municipalities. Learning from the successful implementation of a healthy concession initiative, parks can take a few steps to help promote healthy food environments:

**(1) Begin a conversation around the need for healthy food options at municipal, regional, or state parks with relevant parties.** This may include local lawmakers or other decision-makers. Refer to resources that the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has provided on healthy concessions at parks.

**(2) Assess current concession offerings and compare with federal guidelines for healthy concessions.** According to guidelines based on the Health and Sustainability Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations, healthy concession items must:

- Provide at least one serving of fruit, vegetable, and/or whole grains or non-fat/low-fat dairy products.
- 200 calories or less per portion as packaged



- No more than 35% of total calories from fat
- Less than 10% of total calories from saturated fat; zero trans fat
- 35% or less weight from total sugars
- 230 mg or less of sodium per portion as packaged.

**(3) Evaluate current concession stand sales and environment.** Ask:

- Why types of visitors (e.g., families with young children, young adults, older adults) visit the park?
- What are they currently purchasing?
- What does your concession area look like and what type of storage space and equipment is available?

**(4) Begin to educate staff.** Staff buy-in is very important in implementing change. Encourage staff to provide feedback on food choices and make sure they are educated on why these changes are being implemented. Ensure that staff are aware of any food handling or storage changes that may be incorporated.

**(5) Identify what concession items to introduce initially and whether these will replace any current choices.** Look at options for purchasing items, including ordering online. Try to promote local options. If any foods will be taken off the menu, evaluate which unhealthy options are less popular and replace these with the selected healthy items. **Price healthy foods competitively and display them prominently to help visitors become aware that these choices are available.**

**6. Continue to evaluate what options are popular among visitors and make changes as necessary.**



## Around the State (cont'd)

# USTA Vermont Ready to Help You Enhance Your Community Tennis Opportunities...Just Ask!



**U**STA VT is sponsoring two one-day camps for middle and high school tennis players. Errol Nattrass, Tennis Director at the Bridges Resort in Warren, is hosting a camp on Wednesday, June 22nd. Scott Barker, Tennis Director at First in Fitness in Berlin, is hosting his camp with the Montpelier Parks and Recreation Department on Saturday, June 25th. Both camps offer high quality instruction, free lunch and swimming for tennis players at the cost of \$25. Contact Errol at [enattrass@bridgesresort.com](mailto:enattrass@bridgesresort.com) and Scott at [sbarker@firstinfitness.com](mailto:sbarker@firstinfitness.com) for more information. We are hoping that you will help pass the

word along to interested middle and high school tennis players!

Does your city or town have a community festival or event this summer or fall? Find out how you can add tennis to the list of activities for that event. No courts required! Interested in hosting a Family Tennis Play Day? USTA can help run a successful event that is guaranteed to excite the entire family about tennis!

Have you ever considered running a fall tennis program? Keep the summer momentum going! Programs can even be run indoors in a gymnasium or multi-purpose room. In fact, you can apply for a monetary grant to help support a fall

tennis program! [Click here](#) to see the grant categories and applications.

USTA can provide you with information on offering creative formats when planning your tennis programs, such as in-house youth tennis teams! Don't forget about the adults – we can help you maximize your potential when running adult tennis classes or leagues. For more information on all of these exciting opportunities, contact Alex Blanchard, USTA New England Tennis Service Rep – Northern VT/ Northern NH – [Blanchard@newengland.usta.com](mailto:Blanchard@newengland.usta.com) or (203) 240-3359.



Design an awe-inspiring, **INCLUSIVE PLAY SPACE** that reconnects everyone in the community.

ads1401000 © 2014 Playworld Systems, Inc.



Contact us today to receive a **FREE** Inclusive Play Design Guide and a **FREE** consultation.

**UltiPlay**  
Parks & Playgrounds, Inc.

866-575-PLAY  
[www.ultiplayus.com](http://www.ultiplayus.com)



## Around the State (cont'd)

# VYCC Crews are Around the State

By Naomi Galimidi, Development Director, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps

**G**reen uniforms are here: more than 200 of them! This summer, young Vermonters are working in and around the towns of Barre, Bennington, Brattleboro, Dorset, Richmond, Rutland, Saint Albans, South Burlington, and Woodstock; throughout the Green Mountain National Forest; and across Vermont's state parks and forests.

The projects they complete during their time with Vermont Youth Conservation Corps will increase access to outdoor recreation, mitigate erosion, improve wildlife habitat, and enhance state park infrastructure. These projects are opportunities to impart employment skills and teach youth to take personal responsibility for their actions.

Corps Members are excited to work, to serve, and to learn. Their experience is enhanced when they have the opportunity to interact with members of the community.

Amanda, a Crew Leader for the 2015 crew in Barre, recently shared the powerful role passers-by play in motivating crews: "We would talk with people every day that would stop to thank us. Corps Members had a chance to engage with and feel valued by their community." WCAX interviewed the crew about the 100 year anniversary of town forests. Amanda shares that it gave the crew "a sense of pride that they were doing something important enough to be on the news".

Corps Members consistently cite interactions with project sponsors such as the US Forest Service and Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation as significant learning opportunities that expose the crew to career options and how to get a job in the field.

Three crews have been in the field since mid-May. All crews are active mid-June through early August, and longer crews work through September. We hope you will meet some of this year's Corps Members out on the trail. When you do,

consider enhancing their experience by introducing yourself and asking them about their project.

Learn more about the Corps at [www.vycc.org](http://www.vycc.org)



**VERMONT  
YOUTH  
CONSERVATION  
CORPS**





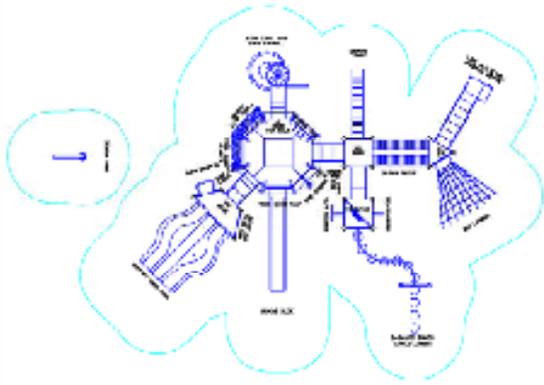
## Around the State (cont'd)

# Vermont Senior Games

The Vermont Senior Games State Bowling Championships were held recently at Spare Time in Colchester. Twenty bowlers competed in singles and doubles categories. The scores from three games were added together to determine the winners in each category. Medals were presented to the top three finishers in each 5-year age group. Nineteen of the bowlers competed in both the morning and afternoon events... pretty impressive when you know that 7 of the 20 athletes were 80 years old or older. Helen Paquette of Burlington is 90 years old; she bowled six games and scored her high score of 174 in the sixth game...amazing! Visit [www.vermontseniorgames.org](http://www.vermontseniorgames.org) for details on all 19 of this year's Vermont Senior Games events planned between now and October. Athletes will be qualifying in all these events for the 2017 National Senior Games being held in Birmingham, Alabama.



From Concept ...  ...To Completion



Call Bob Pettinelli for all your **playground** needs.

ONE CALL DOES IT ALL



Pettinelli & Associates  
PO Box 5814  
Burlington, VT 05402  
800-775-8154  
[playgrdbob@aol.com](mailto:playgrdbob@aol.com)

# Enjoy <sup>the</sup> Outdoors <sup>TM</sup> on Picnic Tables and Benches



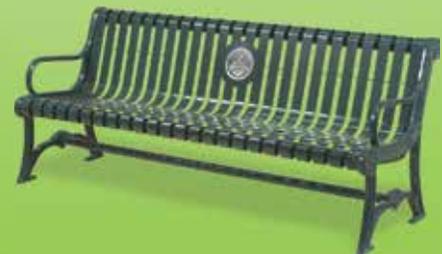
From sophisticated landscapes, to public parks and trails, to malls and patios,



to playgrounds and rec centers and athletic fields, to golf courses, to the school campus,



to RV parks and rustic campsites, to your backyard ...



Pilot Rock has the bench and picnic table design you need.

Serving the Business of Recreation Since 1959

RJThomas Mfg. Co., Inc.  
Cherokee, IA 51012  
Ph: 800-762-5002  
pilotrock@rjthomas.com  
www.pilotrock.com

**Pilot Rock**<sup>®</sup>  
PARK · STREET · CAMP  
SITE PRODUCTS



**BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE  
VERMONT RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION**

- ❖ 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 information and happenings, via email.
  - The Advocate* - VRPA newsletter – three issues a year, via email.
  - VRPA Membership Directory* – Annual directory of member contact information, electronic format.
  - Discounted Fees* – Conferences, workshops and event registration fees, and advertising rates.
  - Professional Assistance* – In person and online.
  - VRPA website* – Access the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org).

**May 1, 2016 to April 30, 2017  
APPLICATION AND ANNUAL RENEWAL**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Classification*	Number of Persons	Cost	Amount
Agency **			
__ 1-4 staff	_____	\$250	_____
__ 5-10 staff	_____	\$350	_____
__ 11 or more staff	_____	\$450	_____
Individual Professional	_____	\$65	_____
Board/Commission**	_____	\$100	_____
(Includes up to 3 members; \$10 each over 3)	_____	\$10	_____
Commercial (inc. link from VRPA website)	_____	\$150	_____
__ Student __ Friend __ Retiree (check one)	_____	\$25	_____
Honorary Life	_____	FREE	_____

**Date of Check** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Enclosed** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Refer to the description of each classification listed on page 2 of this membership application.  
 \*\* Please list all names & contact information for agency and board memberships on the next page. Thanks!

**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.**

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? If yes, who?** \_\_\_\_\_ Are you a member of NRPA?     Yes     No

**Please make checks payable to VRPA and mail to: VRPA, 721 Main Street, Colchester, VT, 05446.  
 Completed registration forms can be emailed to [info@vrpa.org](mailto:info@vrpa.org). Please keep a copy.**