



# VRPA Advocate

Issue 85

Vermont Recreation & Parks Association

Winter 2016

## VRPA Presidents' Perspective

Andy Cappello, Director,  
Newport Parks & Recreation



*I just got back from the Northern New England Recreation and Parks Conference at the Attitash Grand Summit Resort in Bartlett, NH. Jess (Booth) and I both went to soak up the educational and networking opportunities available at our regional conference. Unfortunately we couldn't spend the night and take advantage of the great social activities the conference has to offer; we'll be sure to be there for those in the years to come.*

*Coming from Newport, it's a relatively short drive for us. It's a beautiful trip heading southwest through the Crawford Notch and around the White Mountains to Bartlett. It takes us about two hours of driving time. A typical drive for a VRPA quarterly meeting is about 2 hours. Heck, to get the grocery store is nearly an hour for us here in the Kingdom, so a 2 hour drive is nothing.*

*Jess coming from Irasburg, met me, coming from Island Pond, at the White Market in Lyndonville. We missed the exit to Interstate 93, then missed the exit for Route 302 just past Littleton. I should have been paying attention to the road and instead I was engaged in our conversation and forgot that I had to keep an eye out for the exits. We made it to Attitash just in time for start of the day's first sessions.*

*I hustled to the room that I wanted to go to and discovered in the hallway about six people looking at one another wondering how they could get in the room to hear the speaker. Every seat in the room was full and all standing*

(Continued on page 12)

## VRPA Hosting Certified Pool/Spa Operator Course on March 15-16, 2016

The Vermont Recreation and Parks Association is hosting a Certified Pool/Spa Operator (CPO) Course on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 15th and 16th at the Best Western Windjammer Inn & Conference Center in South Burlington. The course schedule and registration materials are available on the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org).



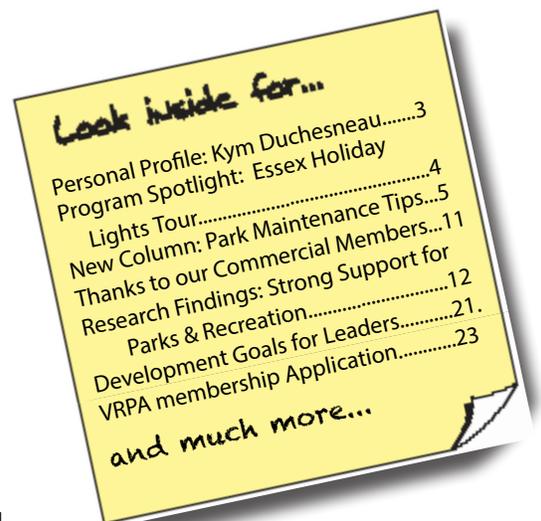
The CPO training is a nationally recognized course which teaches advanced techniques in safety, water chemistry, maintenance, and management. This course is recognized as the standard in the industry. The CPO seal of approval is assurance to pool and spa owners, from motels to Olympic-sized municipal and college pools, that their facilities and their swimmers are under the supervision of trained certified professionals. Those who complete the program and pass an open-book written examination receive certification and a registration number which is valid for five years in all 50 states.

Who Should Attend? Service Technicians, Pool Directors, Pool Managers, Health Inspectors, Apartment/Condo/Building Managers, Recreation Directors, Engineering Staff, Spa Personnel, Maintenance Personnel, Aquatic



Staff, Recreation Facility Managers of community recreation centers, swim clubs, municipalities, hotels, motels, swim parks, resorts, health clubs, country clubs, colleges, universities, military installations, hospitals, schools – any facility with a pool, spa, or aquatic feature.

For more information, contact the VRPA office at 802-878-2077.





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ASSOCIATION

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**VRPA Office**

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**VRPA Newsletter**

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

Editor – Betsy Terry Circulation – 400

Deadline for the next issue is May 1, 2016.

Send information to [info@vrpa.org](mailto:info@vrpa.org) or by snail mail to: VRPA, 721 Main Street, Colchester, VT, 05446.

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**VRPA Calendar of Events**

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Feb 10    | VLCT Local Government Day, Montpelier              |
| Mar 10    | VRPA Quarterly Meeting                             |
| Mar 15-16 | Certified Pool/Spa Operators Course, S. Burlington |
| Mar 31    | VRPA Executive Committee Meeting, Barre            |
| May TBD   | VRPA Annual Meeting, Location TBD                  |
| TBD       | Summerama  |
| Jul 23    | VRPA – St. Johnsbury Academy State Track Meet      |
| Sep 13    | VRPA Executive Committee Retreat                   |
| Sep 21-22 | 73rd Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation       |
| Oct 6-8   | NRPA Conference, St. Louis, MO                     |
| Nov 3     | VRPA Executive Committee Meeting, Barre            |
| Nov 17    | Vermont Performance Showcase, Lake Morey           |
| Dec 8     | VRPA Quarterly Meeting                             |

*Message from the Executive Director*

The start of each new year is a time when we often reflect on the past and think about things we might like to do a little differently in the year ahead. In a way, it gives us a good



excuse to think about re-creating ourselves, in some small ways. I typically try to set myself some SMART goals, things I am confident are realistic and achievable.

Recently a friend was helping me set up my new laptop and we got to talking about how quickly things change in today’s world. Technology certainly allows us to do things that we never could have years ago but think about how many new things we have to learn every year, just to begin to keep up with the newest piece of hardware or the next generation of software, or the latest social media format. I’m not sure that we really have much choice about re-creating ourselves to keep up these days. I am grateful for friends and colleagues who can coach me through some of this stuff and just love it when I can reciprocate and show them something new.

I know that making time to recreate helps me with my recreation. I can’t imagine a week without a few walks around Colchester Pond or other outdoor pursuits. I’ve learned that for me, it’s gotta be outside. Whatever

form of recreation suits you best, take time to squeeze some into your days and weeks. It is so important.

As I reflect on the past year, I am grateful to each of you for choosing to be a member of the Vermont

Recreation and Parks Association and for choosing to be actively involved. You are an amazing group of people and the synergy created by your combined efforts is inspiring. You make Vermont one of the best places in the country to live and play, recreate and re-create. Thank you.

As you think about how you might help re-create yourself and the people you work with, think about these words spoken by Benjamin Franklin, “Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” There are lots of ways for you to become involved with VRPA. Just say the word and we will be happy to let you know some of the options.

All the best in the year ahead.

Betsy Terry, CPRP  
VRPA Executive Director

**VRPA Mission:**

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

# Kym Duchesneau, Recreation Coordinator, Town of Milton

By Betsy Terry, CPRP

**K**ym Duchesneau has been serving on the Vermont Recreation Conference Committee for six years now and this seems like a perfect opportunity for all of us to learn a little more about her.

Kym grew up in Wilbraham, MA and her family spent amazing summers at her grandparents' camp near Basin Harbor on Lake Champlain. Because of these positive experiences, she dreamed of going to college in Vermont and so when it came to choosing a college, UVM it was. She graduated with a Bachelors Degree in Merchandising, Consumer Studies and Design with a concentration in Related Art.

"Hmmm, merchandising and related art to parks and recreation? Like many of us, Kym's path to a career in recreation was not exactly part of her original plan. She explained to me that during the summer of 2007, as a Milton community volunteer wearing many hats, she noticed that there were countless organizations in the community doing great things, however many residents had no idea of all the opportunities available to them. In the hopes of remedying this even a little bit, she volunteered to work with the Milton Community Youth Coalition (MCYC) to spearhead a "Milton Activities Fair." The first MCYC Activities Fair was held in September 2007 and the Milton community enjoyed an evening of one-stop-shopping to sign up for and/or gather information about over 45 organizations serving youth and adults in Milton. The Fair also provided a wonderful opportunity for these organizations to network with each other regarding future project and program collaborations. Soon after the first Activities Fair, she was approached by the Milton Town Manager and Recreation Coordinator at the time and asked if she would consider applying for the Assistant Recreation Coordinator position. She shared, "Once I accepted the position and began working in the profession, I realized that this is what I love to do and have enjoyed every minute." As a sidebar, the Milton Activities Fair has been a wonderful



success and will celebrate its 10th year in 2016.

Things she counts among her greatest career accomplishments? Working with community members, community partners, town staff, boards and others in always striving to make Milton a great place to live, work, visit and play.

Her greatest challenges as a parks and recreation professional and advocate include working in a profession where often large projects take a long time to come to fruition. She has learned that patience, a positive attitude, and flexibility are key.

There are lots of things about the Vermont Recreation and Parks Association that Kym likes. One of the things she values most about being a VRPA member is the networking, meeting and sharing with others in the same profession. Kym told me, "It is wonderful to work in a profession where we all have the same vision – making the world a better place by providing positive opportunities (and fun!) to community members of all ages. I love that we are not in competition with each other, rather complement each other. We are able to work together and learn from each other with a common goal."

Kym has really enjoyed being a part of the annual Vermont Conference on Recreation planning committee. She

volunteered that "It is a fantastic group of dedicated people and it is such a joy working hard with the committee and then seeing the Conference details come to fruition and attendees enjoying the Conference each year." As a fellow conference committee member, I can tell you that Kym is a valuable member of this planning team. She is very thoughtful and methodical and has contributed a variety of great ideas over the years; you won't find a more organized person.

In addition to working in Milton, Kym lives in Milton with her husband Seth, whom she met at UVM. Their son, Alex, is a CPA and currently lives in Burlington and their daughter Liza recently graduated from Stonehill College and is doing a year of service with Amate House in Chicago. She added that "our kids have left the nest however we have three crazy cats to keep us entertained at home."

In her leisure time, Kym enjoys spending time with family and friends, walking, skiing, snowshoeing, kayaking, reading, organizing and travelling.

When asked for a few words of wisdom, she offered this, "Have fun! Love what you do! When things don't go exactly as planned, stand back, take a deep breath and implement Plan B, Plan C or even Plan Z with a smile – things will all work out in the end."

# Holiday Lights Tour 2015

By Adriane Martin, Program Director, Essex Parks & Recreation

*“Twas the week before Christmas  
when all through the Town,  
not a dusting of snow  
had yet to come down.  
The lights were hung  
on the homes with care,  
in hopes that the Senior Van  
might soon be there.  
The seniors were buckled  
all snug in their seats,  
while visions of holiday treats  
could be seen through the streets.  
And with Ally on the blue van  
and I on the green,  
we embark on our route  
of the sights to be seen...”*



beginning the last week in November via posters, Front Porch Forum, email and Facebook. Households were invited to register (free of charge) under one of these three categories: Classic Lights, Colored Lights and Most Creative. Several local businesses graciously donated \$25 gift cards to serve as the prizes for each category (based on the senior’s votes, of course!). We were thrilled to receive lots of positive feedback and excitement, 28 registered homes, and 9 on the waitlist (and a partridge in a pear tree).

After planning our route and checking it twice, we set off one evening to view these festive displays. The Senior Van

drivers led us through the streets of town, slowing down to view the decorations and then speeding up onto the next stop. The seniors were thrilled by the lights; amazed by the time and effort put into the decorations. These homes made it onto the “nice list”, that’s for sure. Some of our



The anticipation of the senior Holiday Lights Tour of 2015 made me feel like a ‘kid at Christmas’ again. Participating in an event that fills our seniors with joy and glee is sure to put even a “Scrooge” in the holiday spirit. Every December, Essex Parks and Recreation fills two Senior Vans with twenty-two Essex senior citizens for a tour of holiday decorations in their community. Year after year, our seniors look forward to this popular and festive event.

However, each year the tour seemed to get shorter and shorter as fewer families decorated their homes for the holidays. To combat this challenge we came up with the ‘Holiday Lights Contest’. We encouraged our community to channel their inner Clark W. Griswold and decorate their home. We spread the word



favorite stops included a visit from a baby in an elf costume delivering cookies and an impressive lights display synchronized to music. Several hours later we made our way back to the Essex Area Senior Center for treats and refreshments provided to the seniors by Town of Essex employees. Bellies were full, spirits were high and it was beginning to feel a lot like Christmas.

We received so many requests for our route that we created a list of the best sights and made it available to anyone who asked. In addition to making the holidays ‘a little brighter’ for the seniors, this event succeeded in creating more holiday spirit for us all! We look forward to recreating this successful event next year!

# Park Maintenance Tips



*This picture was taken down at the waterfront in Burlington, where occasionally they need to clear areas for winter events; this time it was for the Penguin Plunge. They have had good results because the plow does not cut into the turf but safely glides over it.*

**A**t our December Quarterly Meeting, one of the breakout groups discussed ways to improve the VRPA newsletter. A suggestion was made to add a column with park maintenance tips and this is the first of hopefully many such columns. We welcome your tips so feel free to share any good ones that you think someone else might like to try; email them to [info@vrpa.org](mailto:info@vrpa.org).

## Tips for Buildings...

**(1) Select Good Entrance Mats** - If your budget allows, spend the money for good and more floor mats. They will pay for themselves in the long run. Experts say people track in 80 percent of the dirt found in buildings with their feet. And the cost to remove it is estimated to be between \$500 and \$700 per pound. Buildings should have mats placed both outside (if possible) and inside entrances and exits, giving people three steps on a mat with each foot. Mats also help to alleviate potential slip hazards!

**(2) Change Air Filters** - We've been programmed to change our smoke detector batteries during the seasonal time changes. Likewise, the start of the heating season is a good reminder to change your HVAC systems' air filters. All the dirt and dust that has been carried

in on our feet or blown in when an outside door is opened is now in your system filters. The same is true for your spring cooling, dust from dried salt and people removing and putting on layers of clothes throughout the cold season also contribute to clogged filters. So make sure you are replacing those filters at least every time the clocks change. Why? Because dirty air filters increase a system's energy use and shorten equipment life cycles.

**(3) Daily Window Checks** – How often have you found that people using your buildings open windows to adjust temperature in a room? Another problem can be the upper section of a double hung window being down just enough that the window lock will not engage. These are all areas of energy loss. Windows have their tightest seal when closed and locked. It is a good idea to make this part of a daily check list for your buildings.

*Tips in this column were provided by Harlan Smith, Essex Junction Recreation & Parks, and Marty Hornick, Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront. Thank you!*

## Tips for Outside:

At Burlington Parks, Recreation & Waterfront, they have fabricated a turf guard for their snow plow with a 4" diameter pipe, the same length as the plows cutting edge. They removed a 3" strip the length of the pipe and welded a chain on both ends. The pipe guard fits over the cutting edge of the plow and the two chains are attached to the sides of the plow. Each chain has a turnbuckle for adjustment of tension.

This section of the Burlington Bikepath is subject to a lot of erosion due to high water and strong winds. Bikepath Maintenance Specialist, Cory Campbell constructed this barrier from posts of a retired playground structure and trees from a forestry thinning practice. General back fill was added and capped with topsoil and grass seed.



**Before**



**During**



**After**

# Enjoy<sup>the</sup> Outdoors<sup>TM</sup>

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obesity



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and feel good about yourself

**Stay Healthy**  
and reduce your risk of many conditions



**Help the Planet**  
by reducing air pollution

Get walking every day with these tips:



10 Minutes + 10 Minutes + 10 Minutes = 30 Minutes

## Start Slow

Just 10 minutes at a time is a great way to get started!



## Make a Plan

Put walking on your calendar to make sure you have time to walk.



## Walk Fast

Fast enough that you cannot sing, but are able to talk.



## Find a Buddy

Walk with a partner to help you stick to your walking plan and connect with others.



## Walk Instead of Drive

Find a safe route to walk to work, school, the store or other places you normally would drive.



## Change Your Scenery

Walk in a park or trail you've never visited. Discover new places and have fun!

Your local park is a great place to walk everyday.



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



The US Tennis Association is excited to announce that their first cycle of 2016 grants is open! The first application deadline will be February 23rd (funding spring & summer programs) and the second cycle application deadline will be June 15th (fall & winter programs). You will be notified a month after the application deadline about your grant. For 2016, they have made some updates to their grant process to better align with their Strategic Plan. They have created grant categories that directly relate to their strategic priorities. Organizations will be able to apply for support for their programs that fit into those categories. In addition, only tax exempt or non-profit organizations will be eligible to receive a monetary grant. This includes but is not limited to schools, park and recreation departments, CTA's, NJTL's and service organizations. Click here to see the grant categories and applications. If you have any questions, please contact Alex Blanchard, USTA New England at [Blanchard@newengland.usta.com](mailto:Blanchard@newengland.usta.com).



# 72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Vermont Conference on Recreation



Network • Learn • Empower

*Thanks very much to all our speakers! We so appreciate you taking the time and making the effort to share your insights with the conference attendees.*

- |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| Brian Bevacqua | Ben Rose       |
| Neelay Bhatt   | Josh Ryan      |
| Mark Brislin   | Jenn Turmel    |
| Jen Francis    | Ally Vile      |
| Dan Homeier    | Cindi Wight    |
| John LaRue     | Giles Willey   |
| Joel Lynch     | Carol Williams |
| Rebecca Phelps | Diana Wood     |
| Jeff Price     |                |

## By the Numbers...

- 5** of Mrs. Brungardt's Relatives in Attendance
- 12** Conference Committee Members
- 17** Speakers
- 22** Session Moderators
- 36** Hours of Educational Sessions
- 52** Exhibitors
- 72** Years & Going Strong
- 104** Conference Attendees
- 150** in attendance at the Awards Luncheon
- 162** Silent Auction Items



*There was lots of problem solving going on in John Larue's Team Building session.*

**Special thanks to all our exhibitors and sponsors. We couldn't do it without you. Thank you very much!**

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- Musco Sports Lighting
- [MyRec.com](http://MyRec.com)
- New England Park Association
- New England Recreation Group
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- USTA New England
- Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports
- Vermont Display
- Vermont League of Cities and Towns
- Vermont Senior Games Association
- Vermont Systems
- Vermont Youth Conservation Corp
- Young Hacks Academy
- YMCA



## VT Conference on Recreation (cont'd)

# 2015 Theresa S. Brungardt Awards

Each year at the Vermont Conference on Recreation, the coveted Theresa S. Brungardt Awards are presented to a professional, friend and organization who has made significant contributions to parks and recreation in Vermont. At the conference last October, Brungardt Awards were presented to Thomas Hark of Williston (Friend), Local Motion based in Burlington (Organization), and Hartland's recently deceased Recreation Director Ray Sapp (Professional).

Thomas Hark recently retired after thirty years of service as the Executive Director of the Vermont Youth Conservation Corp. Over the course of those 30 years, the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps flourished and now employs more than 350 young people each year. The VYCC has completed tens of millions of dollars' worth of high-priority conservation projects throughout the State of Vermont, all under the passionate

leadership and expansive vision of Thomas Hark. For thirty years, VYCC and Thomas Hark have provided transformational learning experiences to nearly 6,000 young people, and as adults, they are effecting positive change in their communities and the environment across the nation.

Local Motion was founded in 1999 to pursue the idea of re-connecting the Burlington Bike Path and the Colchester Causeway. In time, the organization broadened its sights on making the Greater Burlington area a better place to walk, bike, run and ski. The organization flourished and today Local Motion helps communities build more sidewalks, trails and safe streets; hosts events like Intervale XC Skiing and Great Ice to keep people active all year long; runs a community bicycle shop in Burlington's Old North End; operates the Causeway Bike Ferry; and operates a Trailside Center on the Burlington waterfront providing maps, rentals and advocacy information.



*Scott Weaver, Dana Hark, Thomas Hark, Bob Coates*

The Professional Award was presented posthumously to Ray Sapp, Past-President of the Vermont Recreation & Parks Association and Director of the Hartland Parks & Recreation Department until his untimely death last July. Ray was remembered for being a passionate professional who would coach multiple teams and officiate games within a single sport's season, set up all the games and paint the fields where the games were played. Former employee and current VRPA president, Andy Cappello, recalled that whenever VRPA needed help, the organization could always turn to Ray Sapp. He was the only individual to ever serve the association as president for three years. Andy recalled that Ray applied careful measurements to all of his decisions and with tough decisions, Ray always sided with the child, making every effort to ensure that recreational opportunities were available to everyone who wanted to play. Ray's son, Josh, accepted the award on behalf of his father.

It was a special treat to have five of Mrs. Brungardt's relatives assisting with the presentation of the plaques. They were nephew, Dave Schmidt, and his wife Joann, nieces Lois Peterson and Nancy Walden, and great-niece, Wendy Flickinger.



*(from L to R): Sandy Sapp, Josh Sapp - son of Ray Sapp, Brungardt Professional Award Recipient, posthumously, Wendy Flickinger, Nancy Walden, Lois Peterson, Thomas Hark - Brungardt Friend Award Recipient, Joann Schmidt, Dave Schmidt, Emily Boedeker and Brian Costello - Accepting the Brungardt Organization Award for Local Motion.*



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# A very big thank you to all our commercial VRPA members!

CLICK ON the "Commercial Members" tab on the VRPA website for a direct link to each of their websites. Please remember to support our commercial members with your business and be sure to include them on your bid lists when you are purchasing services, supplies and equipment. Here at VRPA we couldn't do half of what we do without their ongoing support.

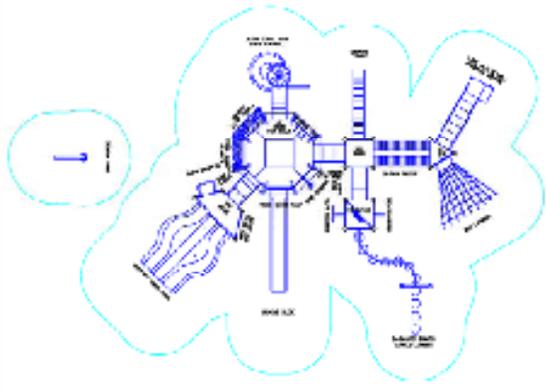
Thank you very much. We really appreciate you choosing to be a VRPA commercial member!

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 Vermont Systems  
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# The Results Are In: Americans Have a Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services

Americans have a passionate and unwavering support for local and community parks according to a new study commissioned by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) and conducted by The Pennsylvania State University. They see local park and recreation services as a valuable part of their communities with 83 percent stating that they personally benefit from local parks and 92 percent stating that their communities benefit from these services. Even a majority of non-users saw a benefit from these services.

Americans' Broad-Based Support for Local Recreation and Park Services is an update to a study originally conducted in 1992 by The Pennsylvania State University. From 1992 to the present, much has changed — Americans are older, better educated, more diverse and urbanized, and more technologically advanced. What has not changed, however, is how people, regardless of age, income or political affiliation, remain passionate about and supportive of their local park and recreation services.

“What’s truly amazing about the results of this new study is that despite the ever-increasing demands for our attention in an oversaturated world of data, parks and recreation is still a highly-valued and essential part of our communities,” said Barbara Tulipane, NRPA President and CEO. “Providing places for Americans to get healthy, engage with nature and connect with each other offline is now more important than ever and people recognize that.”

“During the last quarter century, America changed in ways that might lead one to believe that support for local government park and recreation services would decline. That belief turns out to be false. If anything, Americans’ use of and support for these services actually increased,” said Andrew Mowen, lead study investigator. Working with colleagues Alan Graefe, Austin Barrett and Geoffrey Godbey, the Penn State research team was able to draw numerous comparisons with the earlier 1992 study.



Americans agree that their parks are beneficial and worth investing in. In an environment where public agencies are forced to do more with less money, it is telling that 4 in 5 Americans believe their local parks are well worth the average amount of \$70 per person paid in local taxes every year. Even Americans who don't use these services agree they are worth this investment.

Americans also agree key areas of focus for parks and recreation should be conservation, health and wellness, and social equity, matching the priorities highlighted in NRPA's Three Pillars. More than three-quarters of respondents agreed that parks and recreation should prioritize items such as conserving the natural environment, offering facilities and services to improve physical and mental health, and ensuring that facilities and programs are accessible to all members of the community.

Across demographics, Americans believe local park and recreation agencies provide essential services for our communities. In a time where leisure devices can be carried in pockets, parks are still a priority, and Americans agree that they should be funded as an essential service.

## Pres Perspective (continued)

spaces were occupied. This type of situation is relatively common when you have high caliber speakers.

All day long the session break out rooms were filled with great ideas, valuable information, new approaches to old problems, engaging speakers, and the best parks & recreation professionals this side of the Mississippi. Jess and I bounced from session to session, meeting in between to talk about how much we had gained in our previous sessions and how we could implement the new ideas into our ongoing programs and facilities. We purposely go to different sessions to maximize the amount of information we take in.

During time with vendors we were able to book two fireworks displays, research equipment for a playground project we're in the middle of, learn about what is entailed in an Environmental Review we are about to conduct for a park, and saw products and services that we didn't even know existed.

At lunch Jess won a \$500 scholarship to attend the National Recreation and Parks Association's Annual Conference taking place in St. Louis, MO. I got a tasty barbecue chicken and ribs lunch with all the fixins' and a chance to shoot the breeze with great folks from Kennebunkport, Maine and Lincoln, New Hampshire.

From my perspective we have two of the best conferences offered in the United States right here in New England. Our Vermont Conference on Recreation and the Northern New England Recreation and Parks Conference are wonderful opportunities to hear high quality speakers, network with fellow parks and recreation professionals, find great products, and get reinvigorated. Not to mention the fact that they give departments a chance to spend quality time together. So quality, in fact, that you might even get lost on your way there.

Respectfully,

Andrew Cappello  
VRPA President

# First Day Hikes Gain Popularity – In Vermont and Across US

By Rochelle Skinner, Parks Sales & Service Manager, Vermont State Parks



Jessica Savage, Recreation Coordinator for Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation agrees. “All of the kids on the hike were so excited to go off trail and play in the snowy woods, it was great to see.”

First Day Hikes are part of a nationwide initiative led by America’s State Parks to encourage people to get outdoors. All fifty states participated in the event and which had over 28,000 participants last year.

Relatively mild temperatures and a light coating of snow provided a delightful backdrop for Vermont State Park’s 2016 First Day Hikes. Over 100 people participated in ten hikes led by volunteers on state lands on New Years’ Day.

the hikes ended around a campfire and hot cups of cocoa.

“First Day Hikes are a wonderful way to welcome in the New Year in a fun, healthy way”, said Craig Whipple, Director of State Parks. “Now in our fourth year, the word is getting out and we’re seeing more and more people joining the hikes each year. Participants tell me how much they love the hikes and thank us for providing such a great family activity.”



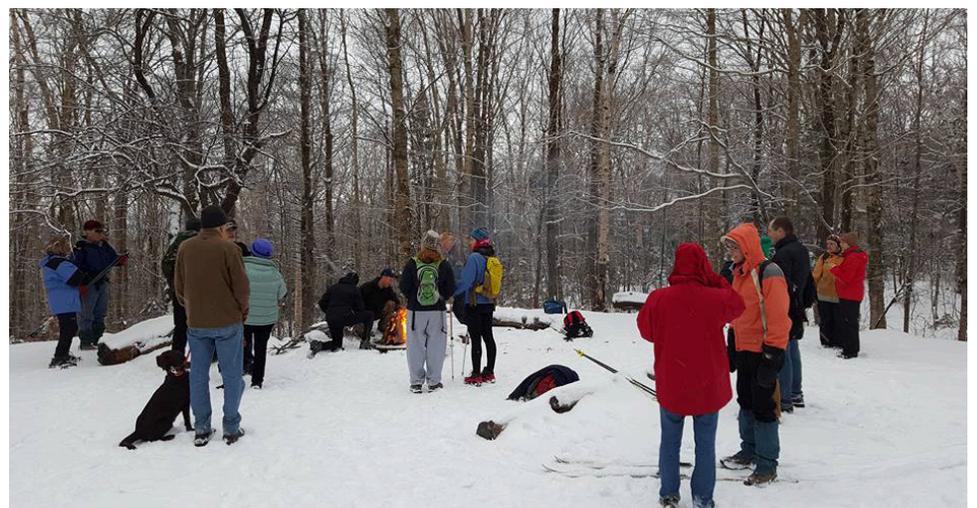
**Niquette Bay State Park**

Visit Vermont State Parks to learn about other family program offerings at [www.vtstateparks.com](http://www.vtstateparks.com), [facebook.com/vtstateparks](https://www.facebook.com/vtstateparks), [youtube.com/vtstateparks](https://www.youtube.com/vtstateparks), and [vtstateparks.blogspot.com](http://vtstateparks.blogspot.com).



**Smugglers Notch Bay State Park**

Trips ranged from easy family hikes at Grand Isle and Quechee State Park to challenging summit hikes at Bald Mountain and Hogback Mountain. There was even a birding hike at Button Bay State Park where trip leaders provided loaner binoculars and spotting scopes. Many of



**Underhill State Park**



## Around the State (cont'd)

# 12 VYCC Corps Members Provide a 'Before and After'

By Naomi Galamidi, Development Director, VT Youth Conservation Corp

**T**hank you, friends of recreation, for hiring and working with our crews in 2015, and ensuring Vermont continues to be a great place for all of us to get outside. Here is a "Before and After" from last year's Corps Members – change you helped make possible for our youth:

Before VYCC, I had only been camping once. / I was dependent on technology. I took a lot of things for granted. / I would spend the day in my room and play video games / I was angry, bored, and disinterested. / I felt I had no control of the direction my life took. / I solved most of my problems through anger. / I took too many shortcuts when working. / I was doubtful

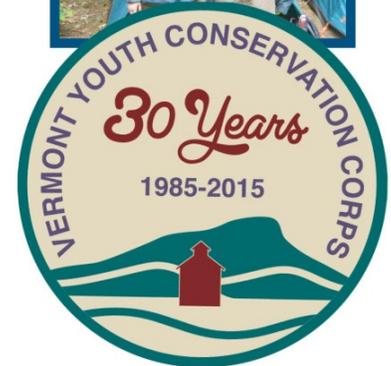
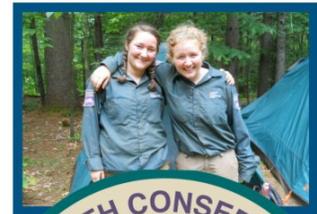
of my ability to persevere through difficult circumstances. / I was addicted to my cell phone. / I was very focused on I looked like. / I was having trouble quitting smoking. / I had no idea what it meant to be passionate and proud about my work.

Since joining VYCC, I am less likely to take things for granted. / I love living in direct connection to our natural world. / I've realized community is the most important thing. / I have learned better and more positive ways of solving problems. / I have become more patient, open minded, respectful, and thoughtful. / I can put my phone down and still enjoy the day. / I feel stronger and healthier than I ever have. / I appreciate the beauty of a well-main-



**In 2015:**

**350** young people completed  
**212** weeks of conservation projects on public lands in  
**83** communities and donated food to  
**400** families.



tained trail. / [I know] I'm not promised anything in life and I have to work hard to get the things I want.

You know as well as we do that getting young people outside, working with their peers and their hands, can be transformative. We are now preparing to serve more young people for the 2016 season. We would welcome the chance to partner with you to engage young people in completing conservation projects. VYCC is soliciting project proposals and also accepting applications for youth positions ([www.vycc.org/positions](http://www.vycc.org/positions)). Please contact Nick Prechel ([Nick.Prechel@vycc.org](mailto:Nick.Prechel@vycc.org)) to discuss 2016 projects. Thanks, and we'll see you on the trail!

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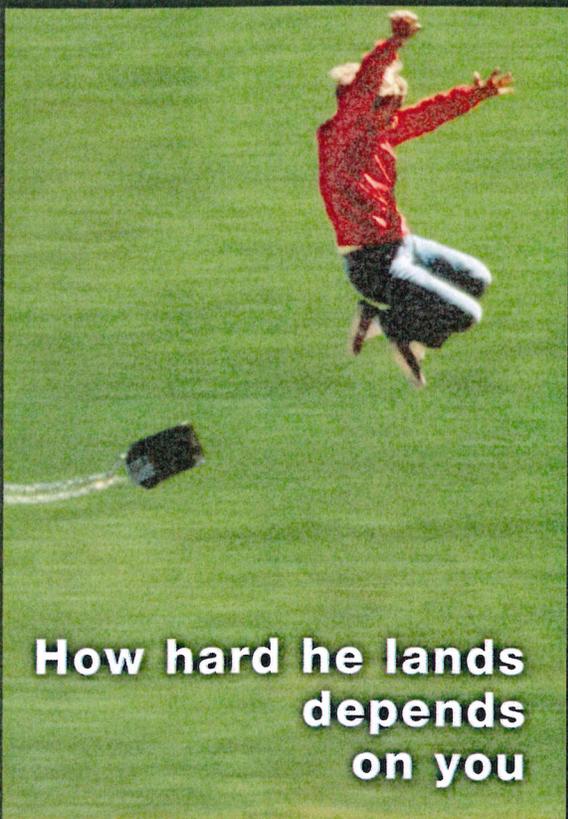
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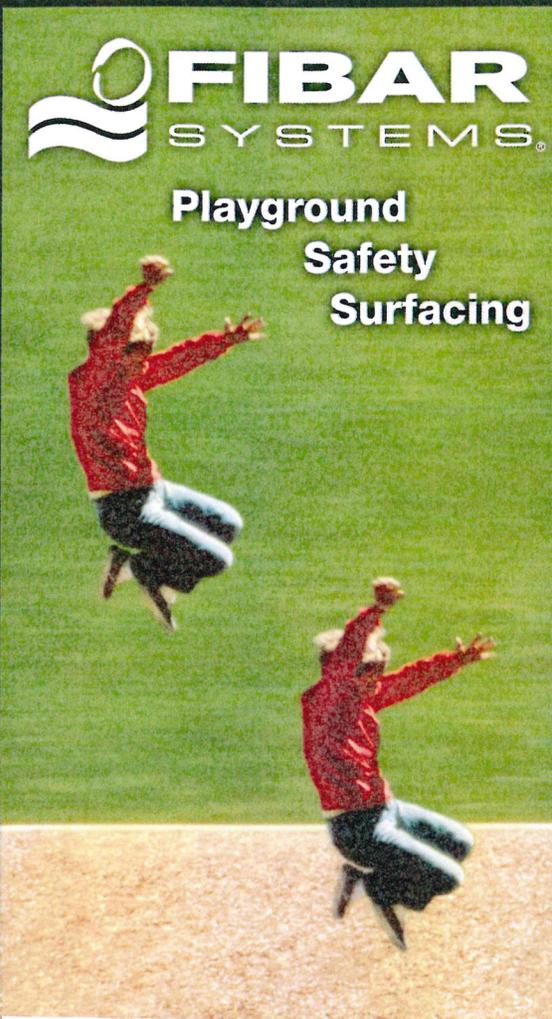
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## Around the State (cont'd)

# Vermont Senior Games

*Be the first to figure out the hidden meaning of Team Straflo and win a bag of Cindi's homemade granola. Send your guesses to Cindi Wight at [cindiw@rutlandrec.com](mailto:cindiw@rutlandrec.com).*

By Cindi Wight, CPRE, Superintendent, Rutland Recreation & Parks

I have been secretly looking forward to turning 50. Now, that might seem a bit odd but when I turn 50 I can participate in the Vermont Senior Games. Now, I doubt I will qualify for Nationals but that isn't why I want to participate. I think it will just be plain fun to have one more way to get some friendly competition and expand my social network. I'll start by hoping I don't get smoked by the 80 year olds!

I have been helping with the basketball tournament for over a decade and with Don Kjelleren (the former VSGA President who passed away last September) being so inspiring in wanting more new sports, I tried to find something we could host in Rutland. I knew it had to be something that we are already doing as it would then be easier to host. I tried getting our Softball Commissioner to get behind a softball tournament but had no success. I then asked Don about adding a mountain bike race even though it isn't a National Sport and he agreed.

Why did I want to add something in Rutland? Well for one I think the Senior Games organization is doing great things for the 50+ adults in our state. Secondly,



I thought it would be a great way to bring people to see our amazing Pine Hill Park and lastly I thought it would give our local 50+ athletes a chance to compete against like-minded and aged individuals from around the state. It has been a very positive experience to host with VSGA and the athletes have enjoyed themselves.

We'll start with three events that we are comfortable pulling off locally and then survey participants to see if there are other sports they would like to participate in while in town that weekend. We hope to pull in our local athletes along with athletes from around the state plus, since VT is an open state, we will welcome athletes from our neighboring states.

If you are interested in hosting a sport, contact Barbara Jordan, VSGA Games Co-Chair, at [barbarajordan@moomail.net](mailto:barbarajordan@moomail.net). You can find a complete listing of Vermont sports and National sports at [www.vermontseniorgames.org](http://www.vermontseniorgames.org) and [www.nsga.com](http://www.nsga.com). Let 2016 be the year you host a Vermont Senior Games event!



To add more Games I realized I needed to look at it from a regional perspective. A reach out to Kim Peters from Killington Parks and Recreation was met with great enthusiasm. Kim and I are working on details to add a weekend of swimming, road cycling and a 5K at their public park.



# From Tennis Balls to Tennis Courts: A Fitting End (And Resting Place) For Old Tennis Balls

**D**id you know that almost all of the 125 million tennis balls sold in the US each year end up in our landfills- and are expected to take 450 years to decompose? This is because tennis balls have required a separate grinding/recycling process, and there has never been an economic rationale to create that. Yes, Golden Retrievers, elderly walkers and school desks can use some used balls but not nearly enough. Discarded tennis balls have – up until now – been a black hole in our commitment to recycling.

Recently, Ace Surfaces and Advanced Polymer Technology, the manufacturer of Laykold, the official tennis court surface of the Miami Open since 1984, installed the first of the Tennis Ball Courts at Tenafly Racquet Club in Tenafly, NJ. “It’s time for the tennis industry to wake up and be a part of the solution”, says Andreas Schulze Ising, CEO of Advanced Polymer Technology.

Tennis balls that have bounced their last on the court will now leave a legacy for the bounce of future generations of tennis balls as they can now be ground up and incorporated as a component in tennis court construction and resurfacing. And the surfaces are the best in the business, combining excellent playability with durability, while offering a shock-absorption that is unmatched, even by clay courts.

Up to 10,000 tennis balls are incorporated into a single cushioned court surface and can provide a 21% force reduction. By lessening the impact traditional hard courts have on a player’s joints, these courts will extend the tennis careers of players of all abilities, protect young players whose bodies are not fully developed, and perhaps pull a few seasoned players out of a too early retirement.

“Many years of ideas, discussions, trials and product development culminate in these high performance tennis courts” said Franz Fasold, owner of Ace Surfaces and the mastermind behind the

implementation of the recycled tennis ball courts. “The Laykold Masters 5 and Laykold Masters 8 are designed to be world class and the systems can be installed as new construction or overlay existing, cracked tennis courts.”

Retour Tennis, who provides a specialized tennis ball collection bin for public and private facilities to begin a recycling program, has partnered with Reboundes, a tennis industry supplier focused on recycling, to enable communities and clubs to contribute to these new efforts.

## How to Recycle Your Tennis Balls

Individuals, clubs or organizations can simply collect 200 balls, request a pre-paid shipping label at [tennisballrecycling.com](http://tennisballrecycling.com), and send the box of tennis balls to Reboundes. The balls are then sorted and consolidated prior to their final trip to be ground.

For more information about how to begin recycling tennis balls, go to [www.retourtennis.com](http://www.retourtennis.com).



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# Fun was had by all at the 12th Annual Vermont Performance Showcase.

The Program Booklet from our Showcase is a valuable resource when it comes time to book your performers because it includes the contact information for all the performers. Go to the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org) and click on the Programs tab for copies of the Program Booklets from the last several Vermont showcases.

**Mark your calendar for the 13th Annual Vermont Performance Showcase on Thursday, November 17, 2016 at Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee, VT.**



Adam Wilber



Troy Wunderle.



Joe Howard with his two assistants, April Cioffi's daughters, Piper and Autumn



Kilted Colin



Buddy the Clown



Jungle Jim



Les Julian



Devlin Miles

Special thanks to our MC, Les Julian, and our official event photographer, Simon Brooks.



Root 7



Simon Brooks, storyteller



Andrew Pinard

# Three Strategies for Successful Coach Development

By Bob Barcelona, Ph.D.

*“As a youth sports coach, the #1 goal should be player development. Not winning.”*

The quote above was recently posted to the Facebook site of the Positive Coaching Alliance. Almost immediately it received over 3,000 likes, almost 100 comments, and more than 2,500 shares. The post certainly hit a chord.

Most of us agree that youth sports should be about player development. However, successful player development depends, in large part, on the quality of the coach. Athletes who receive quality coaching are more likely to have positive sport experiences, higher levels of intrinsic motivation, and higher levels of sport commitment.

The first step in developing players is developing quality coaches. Yet research shows that between 70 and 90 percent of youth sport coaches receive no formal training prior to coaching, and it is safe to say that most get little in the way of on-going education or development as they progress.



There are many good training programs in the marketplace that offer foundational information that can be helpful in providing a baseline for many coaches. However, relying on an out-of-the-box online or video-driven training program is a minimalist approach, and often doesn't meet the needs of adult learners. A



successful coach development program should consider supplementing basic training with some of the following ideas:

### 1. Incorporate hands-on experiences.

This could consist of on-field or on-court opportunities for coaches to lead drills, work on giving feedback or answering questions, or practice making adjustments. If this isn't possible, think about including classroom experiences where coaches work through problems, engage in simulations or role playing, or complete key coaching tasks like practice or game planning.

**2. Provide opportunities to share and reflect.** Coaches value facilitated reflection. Clicking through an online training program or passively watching a lecture without having an opportunity to discuss the ideas presented misses an opportunity. Consider providing opportunities for coaches to discuss what they are learning, to reflect on their experiences, and to discuss challenges and problems to help arrive at helpful solutions.

**3. Give ample feedback.** Learning diminishes quickly without continual feedback. Yet most volunteer coaches receive little or no formal feedback on how they are performing their roles. Consider implementing a formal evaluation system

for your coaches. If this isn't possible, then consider using experienced coaches as mentors, and training the mentors to provide feedback on your behalf.

Developing quality coaches is the first step in developing quality athletes. There are many good, free resources available as you begin to build a coach development program in your community. The CoachSmart Program at UNH is one such resource. The key is to make a commitment to developing your volunteer coaches so they can do the important work of developing your young athletes.

Bob Barcelona, Ph.D., is an associate professor in the Department of Recreation Management and Policy at UNH and the Program Director for the CoachSmart Program. He can be reached at [bob.barcelona@unh.edu](mailto:bob.barcelona@unh.edu). Like CoachSmart on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/coachsmarth>.

*Dr. Barcelona will be one of the speakers at the 2016 Vermont Conference on Recreation scheduled for September 21-22, 2016. Mark your calendar to be there and hear more of his ideas on developing youth sport coaches.*

# New Year's Development Goals for Leaders: 2016 Edition

By Dan McCarthy, Director, Executive Development Programs at the University of New Hampshire



For many of us, making and breaking promises to ourselves for the New Year has become an annual tradition. We say we're going to lose that 10 pounds, quit smoking, change jobs, read more, be more positive, etc., and start off all Tigger-like with energy and great intentions. Then, when the going gets tough we lose interest, motivation, and momentum and at the end of the year we're back to where we started.

Credit: Pixabay

For this new year, let's break that cycle! Let's set our yearly leadership development goals and put some best practices in place to help us achieve those goals. We'll start with 10 goals. Don't get too ambitious, just pick one or two, or maybe these will inspire you to come up with something better of your own. Then, make sure you include the three "goal boosters" at the end.

1. Pick one thing you like to do or are good at but probably should not be doing at your level and delegate it. That's right, let it go! Just be sure to provide appropriate support and coaching to your delegee (new made-up word).

2. Practice in-the-moment, "don't get distracted by shiny objects," focused active listening. It's called "leadership presence," and it's the single most important thing you can do as a leader.

3. Let someone on your team know where they really stand. Good or bad, doesn't matter, just commit to some honest, caring, constructive developmental straight talk.

4. Pick one thing that's not broke and make it better. Look for an innovative breakthrough solution, not just incremental improvement.

5. Look for at least one thing someone is doing well and tell them about it. While each day would be a nice stretch goal, weekly may be more realistic.

6. Gain clarity on your leadership values and share those values with your team.

7. Get feedback on your leadership skills. Take a formal 360-degree

assessment or use some other method to get more informal feedback. Then do something about the feedback!

8. Take a leadership course. Whatever program you chose to attend, just make sure it's grounded in solid theory (no flavor of the month fads), builds self-awareness, and includes lots of practical on-the-job application.

9. Read at least four leadership books. That's one a quarter. Believe me, it's harder than it sounds. Keep an action log of new ideas that you are going to try out.

10. Find a new mentor or coach and/or mentor or coach someone new. Get a little, give a little.

Bonus content: Three proven ways to help you achieve your leadership goals:

1. Write them down. Be SMART about it — specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

2. Tell others about them. Make "public declarations."

3. Find an "accountability partner." Someone to check in with you once a month to review progress on your goals (or each other's goals).



Dan McCarthy is the director of Executive Development Programs at the University of New Hampshire and runs the Management & Leadership channel of *About.com*. He

writes the award-winning leadership development blog *Great Leadership* and is consistently ranked as one of the top digital influencers in leadership and talent management. He's a regular contributor to the NRPA SmartBrief and a member of the SmartBrief on Workforce Advisory Board. E-mail Dan McCarthy at [danmccarth@gmail.com](mailto:danmccarth@gmail.com).

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# Meetings

By Porter Knight, Founding Partner, Productivity Vermont

Everyone complains about meetings. There are too many. They are ineffective. They take us away from other, more meaningful work.

But people equally lament the amount of email they receive, and we all know that face-to-face communication can be vastly more efficient and more pleasurable than long, complicated email chains, especially if numerous players are involved.

Meetings are a natural and valuable part of working in a dynamic collaborative environment. The key is to make sure that every meeting is concise and productive. Here are 5 tips to ensure productive meetings:

- 1. WHAT & WHY** - Every meeting needs a clearly stated purpose. Don't meet because you "always meet on Tuesdays" or because "we've always had a staff meeting once a month." Meet when you have something substantive you need to conduct with other people. Know going into the meeting exactly what you want to get out of it.
- 2. WHO** - Only include those who need to be there. Everyone has lots to do, and people should be exempt from a meeting unless their presence is critical. Meeting participants should be actively engaged the whole time they're in the meeting. I call this the GIVE/GET. You belong in the meeting if you are GIVING valuable information that others need (and can't get another more efficient way) or you are GETTING valuable information that you need (and can't get another more efficient way).
- 3. WHEN/WHERE/HOW LONG** - Meet in a convenient, reasonably comfortable location for as a brief a period as possible. Consider walking or standing meetings if your agenda is short (which ideally it will always be) and if it isn't absolutely necessary that folks have papers or visuals in front of them. Though not practical for all meetings, standing or walking can change the energy of the discussion and make it more dynamic.
- 4. HOW** - There are numerous methodologies for conducting effective meetings, but common themes include: clear agenda and expectations, set times for discussion, clear decisions, and next steps.
- 5. IT'S NOT OVER WHEN IT'S OVER** - Meetings exist in order for something ELSE to occur. Be sure that any time you schedule a meeting you also schedule time after the meeting to do the work you promised you'd do and to follow through on any commitments you made during the meeting.

Let me know how you change your meetings for the better. And keep in touch!

This has been shared from an e-newsletter blog that Porter Knight writes. She can be reached at [www.productivityvermont.com](http://www.productivityvermont.com).



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- ❖ 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. ❖ 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, 2015 to April 30, 2016  
APPLICATION AND ANNUAL RENEWAL**

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

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

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

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

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

| <b>Classification*</b>                     | <b># of Persons</b> | <b>Cost</b> | <b>Amount</b> |
|--|---------------------|-------------|---------------|
| Agency**                                   |                     |             |               |
| 1-4 FT staff                               | _____               | \$250       | _____         |
| 5-10 FT staff                              | _____               | \$350       | _____         |
| 11 or more FT staff                        | _____               | \$450       | _____         |
| Individual Professional                    | _____               | \$65        | _____         |
| Board/Commission**                         | _____               | \$100       | _____         |
| Commercial (inc. link from VRPA website)   | _____               | \$150       | _____         |
| Student/Friend/Retiree (please circle one) | _____               | \$25        | _____         |
| Honorary Life                              | _____               | FREE        | _____         |

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

\* Go to the VRPA website at [www.vrpa.org](http://www.vrpa.org) for descriptions of the membership classifications.

**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 also.**

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

- Membership    Newsletter    Performance Showcase    Summerama    Executive Committee  
 Awards    Track & Field    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?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to VRPA and mail to: VRPA, 721 Main Street, Colchester, VT, 05446.  
Agency and Board/Commission Members – Please list all members.**